Sixth Needs Assessment Survey of the ACSH Participating Countries

Report Results

2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH) completed its sixth Needs Assessment Survey in December 2025, receiving 86 responses from a 20-country network across Central Asia, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and beyond. The survey identifies critical governance and digital transformation priorities for 2026–2027.

Key Findings:
- **Digital Government is the dominant priority:** 62% of respondents (53 of 86) selected it as a top-three focus, with an average importance rating of 4.31/5.0—nearly essential.
- **AI adoption is accelerating but stalled at scale:** 79% of organizations are exploring or piloting AI, but only 3% have achieved operational scaling, indicating a pilot-to-production gap requiring urgent governance frameworks.
- **Responsible AI is an emerging momentum area:** 43% selected it as a top-three priority despite a lower average rating (3.84), signaling strong adoption momentum among organizational leaders.
- **People and data are the real implementation bottlenecks:** Workforce skills gaps (50 responses), data quality (41), and funding (40) are the primary barriers to digital and AI progress. AI Literacy (55 responses) and Data Literacy (52) are overwhelmingly the most requested capability areas.
- **Peer learning and applied support are strongly preferred:** Respondents prioritize workshops, peer learning alliances, study tours, and use-case playbooks over traditional publications and passive knowledge transfer.

I. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR DIGITAL AND GOVERNANCE TRANSFORMATION
(24-MONTH HORIZON)

◎ Importance Ratings for Governance and Digital Focus Areas

Respondents rated ten governance and digital transformation focus areas on a 1–5 scale, revealing both consensus and emerging specialization.

Table 1: Importance Ratings and Top-Three Vote Concentration by Priority Area

Priority Area	Avg. Rating	Top-3 Votes	Rating Rank	Vote Rank
Digital Government	4.31	53	1	1
Citizen-Centric Services	4.21	30	2	5
Workforce and Leadership Skills	4.15	24	3	6
Trust, Integrity, and Accountability	4.12	35	4	3
Personnel Management / HRM	4.09	33	5	4
Data/Evidence for Decision-Making	4.07	13	6	7
Institutional Resilience/Crisis/Climate	3.85	12	7	8
Responsible AI in the Public Sector	3.84	37	8	2
Equity and Inclusion	3.76	11	9	9
Public Finance Transformation	3.67	10	10	10

Digital Government emerges as the clear, unequivocal priority with the highest average rating (4.31/5.0) and the largest top-three vote concentration (53, representing 62% of respondents). This consistency signals both broad agreement and urgency: respondents recognize digital transformation as foundational to all other reforms.

Responsible AI in the Public Sector shows a revealing pattern: a moderately high average rating (3.84, ranking 8th) paired with strong top-three votes (37, 43% of respondents, ranking 2nd by votes). This divergence—higher vote concentration than average rating—is a momentum signal indicating strong adoption momentum among organizational leaders and a pressing need for ACSH guidance on responsible AI frameworks.

Trust, Integrity, and Accountability ranks 4th by rating (4.12) with 35 top-three votes (41%). The coupling of Digital Government (53 votes) with Trust/Integrity (35 votes) signals an emerging institutional agenda: *invest in digital modernization, but pair it with credibility and control measures.*

Lower-ranked areas (Institutional Resilience 3.85; Equity and Inclusion 3.76; Public Finance 3.67) are rated as important but not currently top-strategic priorities, likely due to sequencing or relative satisfaction with existing approaches.

◎ Top Three Priorities—Consolidated Ranking

This question synthesizes respondent "top-three" selections into a single priority ranking.

Table 2: Consolidated Top-Three Priority Ranking

Rank	Priority Area	Votes	% Respondents
1	Digital Government	53	62%
2	Responsible AI in the Public Sector	37	43%
3	Trust, Integrity, and Accountability	35	41%
4	Personnel Management / HRM	33	38%
5	Citizen-Centric Services	30	35%
6	Workforce and Leadership Skills	24	28%
7	Data/Evidence for Decision-Making	13	15%
8	Institutional Resilience/Crisis/Climate	12	14%
9	Equity and Inclusion	11	13%
10	Public Finance Transformation	10	12%

Three key insights emerge from this ranking:

1. **Digital government is a dominant consensus priority** (62% of respondents), far ahead of all other areas. No other priority achieves majority selection, indicating that while respondents have diverse secondary interests, digital transformation is the nearly universal first choice.
2. **An AI-plus-governance cluster emerges in positions 2–4,** with Responsible AI (43%), Trust/Integrity (41%), and Personnel Management (38% as a people-enabler) representing a coherent agenda of "digital + safeguards + skills." This clustering suggests ACSH should position these three areas as interconnected rather than siloed.

3. **Traditional public administration priorities** (Citizen-Centric, HR, Financial) occupy positions 4–10, indicating they remain important supporting areas but are not driving the strategic conversation. Respondents are signaling that digital modernization, AI governance, and trust frameworks should be ACSH's leadership priorities first; traditional reforms will follow sequentially.

II.   DIGITAL AND AI READINESS ASSESSMENT

Digital Building Blocks in Place

This question inventories key digital infrastructure elements, identifying where respondent organizations stand on the path to comprehensive digital government.

Table 3: Digital Building Blocks Currently in Place

Digital Building Block	Count	%
Data Governance/Catalogue	48	56%
Digital Identity	46	53%
Interoperability/Data Exchange	34	40%
Government Cloud Platform	32	37%
Cybersecurity Framework	26	30%
Open APIs	12	14%
None of the Above	6	7%
Other	2	2%
Total Respondents	**86**	---

The results reveal a foundation-building pattern. Data Governance/Catalogue (56%) and Digital Identity (53%) are the most widely deployed building blocks, indicating that most respondent organizations have begun establishing data management and citizen/entity identification systems — prerequisites for data-driven governance. However, only 40% report interoperability or data exchange systems, suggesting that while data foundations are emerging, the ability to connect systems across agencies remains limited.

Critically, only 37% have government cloud platforms, and just 30% report established cybersecurity frameworks. This gap — between identity/data foundations and integration/security layers — points to a common implementation pattern: organizations establish foundational systems first, then struggle with the more complex integration and security architectures required for comprehensive digital government. The 14% adoption of Open APIs is particularly revealing: APIs are technical medium for interoperability, and their low adoption explains the data exchange gap. Only 7% of organizations report having none of these building blocks, indicating digital readiness is not starting from zero for most respondents — but neither is it comprehensive. Most organizations are in a mid-stage of maturity.

⊚ AI Adoption Status

This question categorizes organizations by their stage of AI maturity, revealing the breadth of AI experimentation and the depth of scaling challenges.

Table 4: AI Adoption Maturity Distribution

AI Maturity Stage	Count	%
Exploring	45	52%
Piloting	23	27%
No Current AI Activity	15	17%
Scaling	3	3%
Total	**86**	**100%**

The AI adoption curve reveals a classic innovation challenge: most organizations are actively exploring (52%), a meaningful minority have launched pilots (27%), but scaling remains rare (3%). This 45:23:3 funnel — from exploration to piloting to scaling — represents the "pilot-to-production gap," a known bottleneck in AI implementation. The 79% combined exploring and piloting indicate strong interest and initial experimentation, but the drop to just 3 organizations at scale suggests that barriers to operationalization — governance, data quality, skills, procurement processes — are preventing wider deployment.

The percentage (17%) with no AI activity (15 respondents) may represent organizations not yet aware of AI's relevance or with limited capacity for experimentation. The skew toward early-stage adoption (79%) means respondents are likely looking to ACSH for guidance on navigating these early phases: what use cases are most tractable, how to set up governance structures, and how to move from pilots to scaled operations.

⊚ AI Domains Exploring/Piloting/Scaling

This question identifies where organizations are focusing their AI experimentation and early implementation.

The most common AI applications are pragmatic and operational: Analytics/Forecasting (37), Document Processing (36), and Contact Centers/Chatbots (29) reflect a focus on productivity gains and service enablement. In contrast, higher-risk decision contexts like Benefits/Eligibility (14) and Inspections/Risk Scoring (10) are less prevalent, suggesting organizations are cautious about deploying AI in contexts affecting citizen benefits and

administrative decisions. This pattern reflects responsible AI implementation sequencing: organizations are building AI literacy and infrastructure with lower-risk operational use cases before advancing to higher-stakes applications.

Table 5: AI Domains Where Organizations Are Active

AI Application Domain	Count
Analytics/Forecasting	37
Document Processing/OCR	36
Contact Centers/Chatbots	29
Benefits/Eligibility	14
Case Triage/Prioritization	11
Inspections/Risk Scoring	10

@ Biggest Barriers to Digital/AI Progress

This question identifies the primary implementation obstacles respondents face.

Table 6: Barriers to Digital and AI Progress

Barrier to Digital/AI Progress	Top 3 Votes
Workforce Skills Gaps	50
Data Quality/Access	41
Funding Limitations	40
Legacy IT Systems	35
Ethics/Compliance	22
Legislative and Regulatory Issues	18
Procurement Challenges	18
Change Resistance	14

Constraints are predominantly execution-related rather than conceptual. Workforce skills gaps (50) dominate, followed by data quality/access (41), funding (40), and legacy IT (35). This pattern clearly indicates that capacity and enabling conditions are the main bottlenecks, not lack of vision or desire for reform. Organizations understand what needs

to be done but struggle with implementation capacity. This finding strongly supports ACSH's focus on skills training and peer learning as key support mechanisms.

Desired ACSH Support

This question captures what types of support respondents believe would most enable digital and AI progress.

Table 7: Support Modalities Most Valued by Respondents

Desired ACSH Support	Top 2 Votes
Skills Training	55
AI/Digital Use-Case Playbooks	47
Peer Exchanges/Case Clinics	40
AI Governance Templates/Guardrails	33
Vendor-Neutral Guidance	4

Demand strongly favors practical, implementation-oriented support. Skills training (55) leads overwhelmingly, followed by use-case playbooks (47) and peer exchanges/case clinics (40). The very low demand for vendor-neutral guidance (4) is striking and suggests respondents want actionable "how-to" support more than abstract comparative analysis.

III.TRUST AND INTEGRITY

⊙ **Mechanisms Used for Trust and Integrity**

This section assesses how organizations currently promote trust, transparency, and integrity.

Table 8: Trust and Integrity Mechanisms Currently in Place

Trust/Integrity Mechanism	Count
Open Data Portal	42
Citizen Feedback Loops	39
Code of Ethics	35
Whistleblowing Mechanism	24
Audit/Data Analytics	24
Proactive Disclosure	21
Conflict-of-Interest System	19
None	3

Most organizations report having trust/integrity mechanisms in place—especially open data portals (42), citizen feedback loops (39), and codes of ethics (35). Very few report none (3), indicating baseline institutional awareness of transparency and accountability importance.

⊙ **Biggest Pain Points in Trust and Integrity**

This question identifies where organizations struggle in maintaining accountability and public confidence.

Table 9: Trust and Integrity Pain Points

Pain Point	Count
Complaint Resolution	22
Limited Analytics Capacity	22
Data Timeliness	18
Ethics Training	16
Fragmented Oversight	8

The main practical bottlenecks are complaint resolution (22) and limited analytics capacity (22), followed by data timeliness (18). These findings highlight that while mechanisms exist, operational capacity to manage them effectively is constrained.

⊚ Support Wanted for Trust and Integrity

This question identifies where respondents need ACSH support to strengthen accountability.

Table 10: Desired Support for Trust and Integrity

Support Type	Count
Integrity Training	40
Audit/Data Analytics	29
Complaints Triage (incl. AI)	28
Behavioral Insights	27
Citizen Participation Methods	25

Support demand focuses on capacity-building: integrity training (40), audit/data analytics (29), and AI-assisted complaints triage (28). This aligns with barriers identified earlier — organizations need training and tools to operationalize existing mechanisms.

IV.WORKFORCE, LEARNING, AND HR TECH

Top Skills to Build

This question identifies the capability areas organizations believe are most critical for future competitiveness.

Table 11: Top Skills to Build by Respondent Priority

Skill/Capability Area	Count
AI Literacy	55
Data Literacy	52
Cybersecurity Awareness	34
Agile/Change Leadership	30
Innovation Methods	30
Project/Program Management	25
Policy Analysis/RIA	24
Monitoring/Evaluation	21
Service/Product Management	20
Procurement/Commercial Skills	8

Workforce modernization is being driven by future-facing capabilities. AI Literacy (55) and Data Literacy (52) dominate overwhelmingly — far exceeding traditional public administration skills like policy analysis (24) or procurement (8). This shift represents a fundamental reorientation of the civil service skills agenda toward digital and data-driven government competencies.

Preferred Learning Methods

This question identifies how respondents prefer to develop new capabilities.
Learning preferences favor scalable, practice-based formats. Short online modules (48) lead, while cohort programs (37) and peer learning alliances (36) are nearly as important—suggesting demand for blended learning plus community-of-practice support rather than purely individual self-directed training.

Table 12: Preferred Learning Methodologies

Learning Method	Count
Short Online Modules	48
Cohort Programs	37
Peer Learning Alliances	36
Mentoring/Coaching	27
Simulations/Labs	19

HR/Civil Service Priorities

This question identifies reform priorities in human resources and civil service management.

Table 13: HR and Civil Service Reform Priorities

HR/Civil Service Reform Priority	Count
Performance Management	42
Workforce Planning	38
Competency Frameworks	34
Merit-Based Promotion	34
Leadership Pipeline	34
Ethics/Integrity	32
Recruitment Speed/Quality	21
Diversity/Inclusion	18
Pay/Benefits Reform	17
Hybrid/Remote Work	16

Performance management is the leading priority (42), followed by workforce planning (38) and competency frameworks (34). These form the backbone of modern HR modernization.

HR Pain Points

This question identifies where organizations experience the greatest challenges in workforce management.

Table 14: Key HR and Workforce Management Pain Points

HR Pain Point	Count
Skills Gaps	57
Leadership Gaps	36
Uncompetitive Pay	33
Weak Performance Management	29
Lack of Workforce Data/Analytics	19
Retention/Turnover	26
Limited Training Budget	25
Slow Hiring	18
Limited Mobility	12
Rigid Rules	7

Skills gaps (57) dominate overwhelmingly, followed by leadership gaps (36) and uncompetitive pay (33). These three factors represent the core workforce modernization challenge: having insufficient skilled personnel, weak leadership pipelines, and compensation structures that may drive talent loss.

HR Support Needed from ACSH

This question identifies what ACSH support respondents believe would address these pain points.
Support demand shows strong alignment with pain points and priorities. Performance management redesign (47) leads, followed by leadership capability development (39) and recruitment modernization (31). These reflect a coherent HR modernization agenda focused on capability, pipeline, and process improvement.

Table 15: HR Support Needed from ACSH

ACSH Support Type	Count
Performance Management Redesign	47
Leadership/Manager Capability	39
Recruitment Modernization	31
Workforce Analytics Starter Kit	28
Mobility/Career Pathways Models	27
Competency Frameworks/Templates	26
Pay/Benefits Benchmarking Approaches	14

V. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND CORE GOVERNANCE

Administrative Reform Priorities

This section focuses on core governance and public administration reforms.

Table 16: Administrative Reform Priorities

Administrative Reform Priority	Count
Policy Quality (RIA, Consultation)	48
Anti-Corruption/Oversight	36
Transparency/Open Government	34
Center-of-Government Coordination	29
Monitoring/Evaluation	28
Organizational Design/Mandates	26
Decentralization/Subnational Capacity	25
Service Standardization/One-Stop	23
Regulatory Simplification	21
Public Procurement Reform	10

Priorities concentrate on policy quality (RIA and consultation) (48), anti-corruption/oversight (36), and transparency/open government (34), while procurement reform is comparatively low (10).

Barriers to Administrative Reform

This question identifies what prevents organizations from implementing governance reforms.

Table 17: Barriers to Administrative Reform Implementation

Reform Barrier	Count
Weak Interagency Coordination	33
Capacity Constraints	33
Funding Limits	33
Data Availability/Quality	32
Change Resistance	30
Overlapping Mandates	28
Legal Rigidity	21
Fragmented Oversight	14
Procurement Hurdles	9

Main blockers are coordination, capacity, and resourcing. Weak interagency coordination (33), capacity constraints (33), and funding limits (33) are the top three—highlighting that governance reform requires both cross-agency alignment and institutional resources.

Desired ACSH Support for Core Governance

This question identifies the extent of support respondents need to implement governance reforms.

Table 18: Desired ACSH Support for Governance Reform

Support Type	Count
Practical Toolkits/Playbooks	49
Peer Case Clinics/Exchanges	48
Diagnostics and Reform Roadmaps	35
Implementation Coaching	35
Regulatory Simplification Labs	23
M&E/Results Frameworks	22

Most requested support is hands-on implementation help — toolkits/playbooks (49) and peer case clinics/exchanges (48), plus diagnostics/roadmaps (35) and implementation coaching (35). This reinforces the pattern observed across all sections: respondents want practical, applied support more than theoretical guidance.

VI. RESILIENCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Resilience Focus Areas

This section assesses organizational resilience and risk management capacity.

Table 19: Organizational Resilience and Risk Management Focus Areas

Resilience Focus Area	Count
Business Continuity	43
Cyber Resilience	41
Data Recovery	36
Crisis Communications	36
Climate Adaptation	22
Supply Chain Resilience	16
None	4

Resilience focus is strongest on operational and digital continuity—business continuity (43), cyber resilience (41), data recovery (36), and crisis communications (36)—while climate adaptation (22) and supply chain resilience (16) are lower priorities.

Barriers to Resilience Reform

This question identifies obstacles to building organizational resilience.

Table 20: Barriers to Resilience Implementation

Resilience Barrier	Count
Capacity Constraints	41
Funding Limits	38
Weak Interagency Coordination	37
Data Availability/Quality	29
Change Resistance	27
Overlapping Mandates	25
Legal Rigidity	18
Fragmented Oversight	11
Procurement Hurdles	6

The biggest barriers mirror broader reform constraints: capacity (41), funding (38), and weak interagency coordination (37), with data quality/availability also significant (29).

Desired ACSH Support for Resilience

This question identifies support respondents need to strengthen organizational resilience.

Table 21: Desired ACSH Support for Resilience Building

Support Type	Count
Practical Toolkits/Playbooks	53
Peer Case Clinics/Exchanges	49
Diagnostics and Reform Roadmaps	42
Implementation Coaching	28
M&E/Results Frameworks	22

Support demand is highly practical and delivery-oriented: toolkits/playbooks (53) and peer case clinics/exchanges (49) lead, followed by diagnostics/roadmaps (42). Remarkably, this mirrors the pattern from governance reform: respondents consistently prioritize hands-on tools and peer learning over consultant-led advisory.

VII.DELIVERY MODALITIES AND CROSS-REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Preferred ACSH Offerings

This question captures how respondents prefer to engage with ACSH.

Table 22: Preferred ACSH Service Offerings

Delivery Modality	Count
Seminars/Workshops	46
Peer Learning Alliances	39
Study Tours	39
Academies/Certifications	37
Toolkits/Playbooks	32
Pilots/Sandboxes	32
Forums/Conferences	29
Publications/Case Studies	27
Advisory Missions	26
Ministerial/Leadership Roundtables	15

Preferred delivery is strongly practical and experiential. Seminars/Workshops lead (46), with peer learning alliances and study tours close behind (39 each). Implementation-oriented formats also rank high — toolkits/playbooks and pilots/sandboxes (32 each) — while leadership roundtables are lowest (15).

Cross-Regional Collaboration Interests

This question identifies where respondents seek to learn from and partner with peer organizations.

Central Asia and Caucasus: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan—focusing on practical case exchanges, joint research, and governance reforms.

Europe and EU: Germany, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Eastern Partnership countries, Western Balkan public administration institutions, Scandinavia—emphasizing EU-funded projects, civil service twinning, and AI regulation frameworks.

Asia-Pacific: South Korea, Japan, China, ASEAN countries (including Laos), Belt and Road countries — targeting partners ahead in digital government and AI governance.

Global Partners: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Gulf countries, UN agencies, World Bank, OECD, UNDP — emphasizing capacity-building, training, and study visit partnerships.

Key Collaboration Interests: Knowledge and experience exchange on public administration reforms, HRM, digitalization, and e-government; joint projects, workshops, study visits, and peer-learning networks; development of practical toolkits, playbooks, and reform roadmaps; learning from countries ahead in AI governance, regulatory frameworks, and digital government.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Digital Government is the dominant strategic priority, with the highest average importance score (4.31) and the most top-three votes (53), indicating both breadth of consensus and urgency.

The reform agenda is not digital-only: Trust, Integrity, and Accountability scores high (average 4.12, 35 top-three votes), signaling that respondents expect digitalization to be paired with safeguards, transparency, and credible accountability systems.

Responsible AI shows a momentum pattern: Its average score is mid-tier (3.84), yet it ranks 2nd in top-three votes (37), suggesting it is rapidly becoming a strategic priority for a significant subset of organizations.

Digital Foundations and Readiness Levels

Digital foundations are relatively widespread but uneven:
- Data governance/catalogues: 48 (56%)
- Digital ID: 46 (53%)
- Interoperability: 34 (40%)
- Government cloud: 32 (37%)

AI maturity remains early-stage: Most respondents are exploring (45) or piloting (23), while only a few are scaling AI (3), revealing a clear pilot-to-production gap.

AI applications are pragmatic and operational: Analytics/forecasting (37), document processing (36), chatbots/contact centers (29) dominate, while higher-risk decision contexts (benefits/eligibility 14; inspections/risk scoring 10) are less prevalent.

Implementation Constraints

Constraints are primarily execution-related rather than conceptual:
- Workforce skills gaps: 50
- Data quality/access: 41
- Funding limits: 40
- Legacy IT systems: 35

This indicates that capacity and enabling conditions are the main bottlenecks, not lack of vision or desire for reform.

Workforce Modernization Agenda

The skills conversation has fundamentally shifted: AI Literacy (55) and Data Literacy (52) are overwhelmingly the most requested capabilities, far exceeding traditional public administration skills like policy analysis (24) or procurement (8).

Preferred learning methods are blended: Short online modules (48), cohort programs (37), and peer learning alliances (36) all rank highly, suggesting demand for community-based, practice-oriented learning rather than isolated individual training.

Support Preferences

Demand strongly favors practical, implementation-oriented support:

- Skills training: 55
- AI/digital use-case playbooks: 47
- Peer exchanges/case clinics: 40
- AI governance templates: 33

Delivery modalities are consistently practice-focused: Seminars/workshops (46), peer learning alliances (39), study tours (39), and academies/certifications (37) are preferred over publications (27) and advisory missions (26).

Recommendations for ACSH Strategic Direction 2026–2027
Tier 1: High-Impact, Foundational Investments

1. Establish a Responsible AI Governance Programme. Develop AI governance frameworks, bias-mitigation checklists, and use-case playbooks adapted to the public sector context and ACSH member countries' regulatory environments. Host quarterly peer case clinics where organizations share AI pilots and learn collaboratively. This addresses the urgent momentum and pilot-to-production gap.

2. Expand Digital Transformation Training Academies. Build on the demand for skills training (55 responses) and preferred learning modalities to establish credential-bearing academies in: (a) Digital Government Fundamentals, (b) Data Governance and Analytics, (c) Cybersecurity Awareness, and (d) AI Literacy for Managers. Deliver through blended format: online modules + cohort cohesion + peer alliances.

3. Launch Peer Learning Alliances by Theme. Formalize peer learning communities in: Digital Transformation Leaders, AI and Data Champions, and Trust and Integrity Reform Teams. Meet quarterly for study tours, case clinics, and collaborative problem-solving. This directly addresses demand for peer learning (39 responses) and creates sustained engagement beyond one-off events.

Tier 2: High-Demand, Catalytic Investments

4. Develop AI/Digital Use-Case Playbook Series. Produce detailed playbooks documenting implementations from ACSH member countries across priority areas: analytics and forecasting, document processing, contact centers, and responsible AI governance. Make playbooks practical — include decision trees, sample policies, procurement language, implementation timelines, and lessons learned. Distribute through ACSH platform and update quarterly.

5. Create HR Modernization Toolkit. Develop templates and implementation guides for: Performance Management Redesign, Competency Frameworks, Merit-Based Promotion Systems, Leadership Pipeline Development, and Workforce Analytics. Pilot with 4–5 volunteer countries over 12 months. Use pilot outcomes to refine and scale.

6. Fund Pilot/Sandbox Programs. Allocate ACSH resources to support 3–4 participating countries in running structured pilots testing new approaches in: AI-assisted complaint management, data-driven policy design, peer learning implementations, or other priority areas. Document and disseminate results quarterly to peer network.

7. Establish Resilience and Business Continuity Playbooks. Given the high interest in business continuity (43) and cyber resilience (41), develop practical playbooks and

diagnostic tools to help organizations assess and strengthen operational resilience. Pair with peer learning clinics and study tours to high-resilience organizations.

8. Develop Trust and Integrity Support Suite. Respond to the 40 requests for integrity training and 28 for AI-assisted complaints triage by creating training modules, templates for complaints management systems, and audit/analytics capacity-building materials.

RESPONDENTS

Country Representation

To shape the strategic agenda, an online questionnaire was circulated among the Hub's member countries. It consisted of 28 questions grouped into eight thematic sections, ranging from participant profiles and digital government priorities to issues of ethics, administrative reform, and human capital management. The study, completed in December 2025, collected responses from 86 representatives across 20 countries, ensuring a representative balance of perspectives from both senior-level leaders and practitioners from ministries and civil service academies. The survey focused primarily on identifying critical barriers to reform—such as shortages of digital skills and leadership competencies—and on determining the most in-demand support tools, including practical guidelines and training programs in HR modernization.

Table 1: Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents

Country	Respondents
Tajikistan	20
Kazakhstan	10
Uzbekistan	9
Kyrgyzstan	8
Armenia	6
South Korea	4
Laos	4
Poland, United States, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Mongolia, China, Afghanistan, Philippines (2 each)	18
Greece, North Macedonia, Chile, Estonia, United Kingdom, Finland (1 each)	6
Total	**86**

Central Asia dominates with 47 responses (54.7%), reflecting ACSH's regional anchor status in the Astana hub. However, the survey also captures representation from Asia-Pacific, Europe, South Caucasus, and the Americas, demonstrating ACSH's expanding global engagement and cross-regional relevance in public administration governance.

Institution Type

The survey reflects balanced engagement across capacity-building and government practitioner institutions.

Table 2: Institutional Distribution of Respondents

Institution Type	Count	%
Academia/Research	18	21%
Subnational Government	17	20%
Training Academy/Civil Service Academy	16	19%
Central Ministry	14	16%
Agency	8	9%
Other	8	9%
State-Owned Enterprise	3	3%
CSO/NGO	2	2%
Oversight/Audit	0	0%
Total	**86**	**100%**

Capacity-building institutions (Academia/Research and Training Academies) represent 34 respondents (39%), while government practitioners (Central Ministries and Subnational Government) represent 31 respondents (36%). This balance is strategically important: capacity-building institutions design and deliver reforms, while government practitioners provide feedback on implementation barriers. The near-absence of Oversight/Audit institutions (0 responses) and minimal CSO/NGO engagement (2 responses) suggest opportunities for ACSH to broaden its governance accountability network.

Professional Roles and Seniority

Respondent roles span the organizational hierarchy, from frontline practitioners to senior strategic leaders.

Table 3: Professional Roles and Seniority Levels

Role/Seniority	Count
Specialist/Practitioner	25
Researcher/Academic	21
Senior Leadership	19
Manager	15
Other	6
Total	**86**

This vertical diversity enriches the survey's insights: specialists and practitioners (25, 29%) identify implementation constraints; researchers and academics (21, 24%) bring evidence and analytical depth; senior leadership (19, 22%) represent strategic decision-making; and managers (15, 17%) bridge operational and strategic levels. The concentration of specialists and practitioners indicates ACSH's strong engagement with delivery-level personnel, while senior leadership representation ensures findings influence high-level policy agendas.

Primary Functions
Respondents operate across diverse functional areas, with Training/Research and Policy Development leading.

Table 4: Primary Functions of Respondents

Primary Function	Count	%
Training/Research	36	42%
Policy Development	27	31%
Human Resources Management/Civil Service	24	28%
Digital/IT	14	16%
Service Delivery	12	14%
Public Finance/Budget	6	7%
Oversight/Audit	5	6%
Other	4	5%
Procurement	2	2%
Total	**86**	**100%**

Training and Research functions lead (36, 42%), reflecting the concentration of academic and training academy respondents. Policy Development (27, 31%) and HR/Civil Service (24, 28%) follow closely, indicating strong engagement in core governance functions. Digital/IT (14, 16%) and Service Delivery (12, 14%) represent emerging modernization areas. The low representation in Oversight/Audit (5, 6%) and Procurement (2, 2%) aligns with institutional composition data and suggests capacity-building gaps in accountability and procurement reform.

Prior Engagement with ACSH
ACSH's convening strength is evident, with significant opportunity for deepening engagement.

Table 5: Prior Engagement with ACSH

Engagement Type	Respondents
Seminars, Workshops, Forums, Conferences	45
No Prior Engagement	36
Publications/Case Studies	15
Study Visits	14
Advisory/Technical Assistance	7
Peer Learning Alliances	6

Nearly half of respondents (45, 52%) have participated in ACSH events —demonstrating the organization's effectiveness in convening. However, 36 respondents (42%) report no prior engagement, indicating underutilization or lack of awareness. Deeper engagement modalities (Publications 15; Study Visits 14; Advisory Services 7; Peer Learning Alliances 6) are significantly lower, suggesting that while ACSH convenes efficiently, it has limited capacity for sustained, intensive engagement. This signals an opportunity to convert event participants into longer-term learning communities and to develop advisory services supporting implementation beyond workshops.