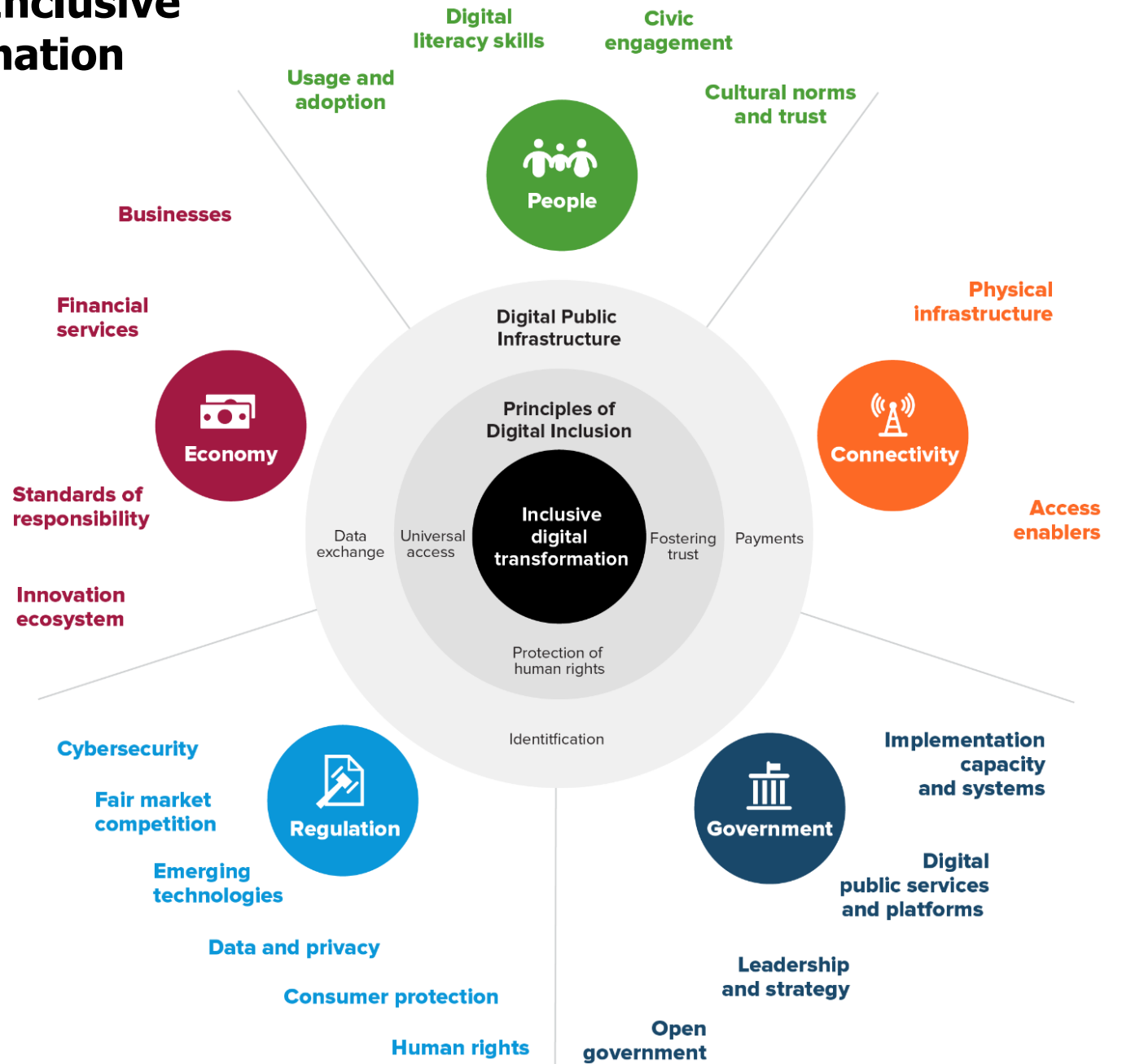# Pathway for Small Islands DIGITAL States in the Caribbean: People

People-focused Inclusive Digital Transformation Framework

Just as a thousand mice don't make an elephant, replicating small solutions won't solve a large problem at scale. For things to work at scale, they need to be designed such that problems get solved **exponentially** – not because of one idea or one ideator, but because it's easy for diverse actors to come together to solve.

Exponential: When every change induces more and rapid changes

Speed of Solving the Problems

Speed is a critical factor in achieving Impact at scale.

Speed of execution

Speed of building solutions

Speed of getting the solutions to the citizens

Speed of responding to challenges as they emerge

All influence the speed of solving the problem

Radical Inclusion: by reimagining how the key actors of the society (like communities, markets, government, civil society) interact with each other

Enhanced Ability to solve: by creating assets & infrastructure that are open & accessible by all

Diverse Solutions: by designing spaces that allow everyone to solve in the way that works best for them

Restore Agency & Build Trust

Create an enabling environment that nurtures the freedom of choice for all individuals and organizations

Catalyze Interactions

Facilitate proactive participation, value exchange and co-creation between state, civil society, and markets.

Open Value Creation

Empower every actor to freely create and / or share solutions that create value in response to societal needs.

Build Public Goods

Make all scarce assets such as knowledge, processes, data, and technology open and available to all.

Empower with Data

Help stakeholders use data to generate value for themselves, strengthen existing solutions, and discover new ideas.

People are the greatest asset of SIDS for your digital transformation

Illustration of how technical principles of government and infrastructure help achieve societal outcomes for people:

- Interoperability: People have choice of solutions and services, scale of access and adoption means becoming more resilient and productive, and competition in the market to bring better choices and solutions for people.
- Minimalist, reusable building blocks: Feasibility and success of digital interventions in carbon markets, social protection, agriculture; Privacy protection based on minimalism, evolvability of systems to respond to people better.
- Diverse, inclusive innovation: Inclusion, scale, choice, resilience
- Federated and decentralized: autonomy of institutions to take action, fewer intermediaries means lower risks for people, and cybersecurity resilience avoiding overdependence on one system
- Security and trust: public trust and protection of individuals from harmful actors

People Sub-pillar: Usage and Adoption

Status Quo

While progress has been made in SIDS, digital adoption and engagement remain low among rural populations, marginalized, and minority groups, resulting in exclusion.

Opportunities

- **Position digital inclusion at the center of national digital strategy**
- **Support development of local digital content, products and services** that align with the needs of local communities
- **Identify the needs of marginalized groups** through digital inclusion surveys or direct outreach to citizens and civil society

Case Study: Trinidad and Tobago

In 2021, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago conducted a nationwide survey to measure the digital divide, exploring digital characteristics of household and citizen engagement in areas such as e-commerce and digital public services.

People Sub-pillar: Digital Literacy and Skills

Status Quo

Relatively low digital literacy in many SIDS despite a sizeable ICT sector. Further investment in ICT skills through the education system and upskilling programmes is needed to build digital literacy across society, starting with marginalized groups.

Opportunities

- **Develop holistic digital skill strategies -** mapping current and future skills gaps, considering the impact of new technologies like AI
- **Embed digital literacy in school curriculum -** ensuring upcoming generations are prepared to engage with technologies

Case Study: Barbados

The Government of Barbados has been partnering with Coursera to provide access to a significant library of online learning resources tailored to the Barbadians with 20,000 social impact scholarships given to develop entry-level digital skills.

84% of young people in the Caribbean consider digital as being 'very important' for their country

compared to 73% of young people in the other SIDS regions.

People Sub-pillar: Cultural Norms

Status Quo

Caribbean SIDS have shown strong appetite for digital and confidence in its benefits, but some fears remain, especially around the impact of ai. Creating more local content and services will help to meet the needs of communities and reflect SIDS' unique heritage.

Opportunities

- **Undertake extensive community engagement** through events, roadshows to showcase the power and potential of digital
- **Ensure a positive digital culture by addressing risks** e.g., initiatives for digital wellbeing, disseminating information on scams and risk associated with digital platforms
- **Share learning and replicate successes across SIDS**

Case Study: Curaçao

The Government of Curaçao and partners ran a 3-day virtual event, Curaçao Data Days, to increase engagement and understanding of data, including its role in education and public health.

Case Study: Dominica
The Government of Dominica hosted a series of roadshows, radio shows and podcasts to discuss the potential of digital, as part of launching the National Digital Strategy.

People Sub-pillar: Civic Engagement

Status Quo

Dynamic civil societies working on a range of development priorities with strong links to communities, but not leveraging digital tools extensively to achieve reach and impact.

Opportunities

- **Leverage existing civic engagement tools** – many developed by other governments and innovators are free and open source
- **Go where the citizens are** – use channels popular among citizens
- **Build digital skills of civil society** – improve the reach and quality of citizen engagement through use of CRM tools, chatbots, and cybersecurity efforts

Case Study: Belize

The Government of Belize launched a countrywide network of Digital Connect Centers to promote digital inclusion for disadvantaged communities. The centers will promote MSME development and provide access to digital literacy trainings to upskill youth, unemployed, and the elderly. Cybersecurity competitions further engage people.

Read More

Small Island **Digital** States

HOW DIGITAL CAN CATALYSE SIDS DEVELOPMENT

HOW DIGITAL IS **TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE** IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Digital is the present and future

Example: Payment to Climate Champions

Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) = innovative scheme, complicated process

- PES is a growing results-based finance mechanism to fast-track local climate action with nature-based solutions

- Compensates farmers and local communities for conserving forest ecosystems, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, water cycle regulation etc.

- There are >550 active programs around the globe and an estimated US$36–42B in annual transactions.[1]

- Complicated process flow managed manually or with multiple applications

1) Salzman, James & Bennett, Genevieve & Carroll, Nathaniel & Goldstein, Allie & Jenkins, Michael. (2018). The global status and trends of Payments for Ecosystem Services. Nature Sustainability. 1. 10.1038/s41893-018-0033-0
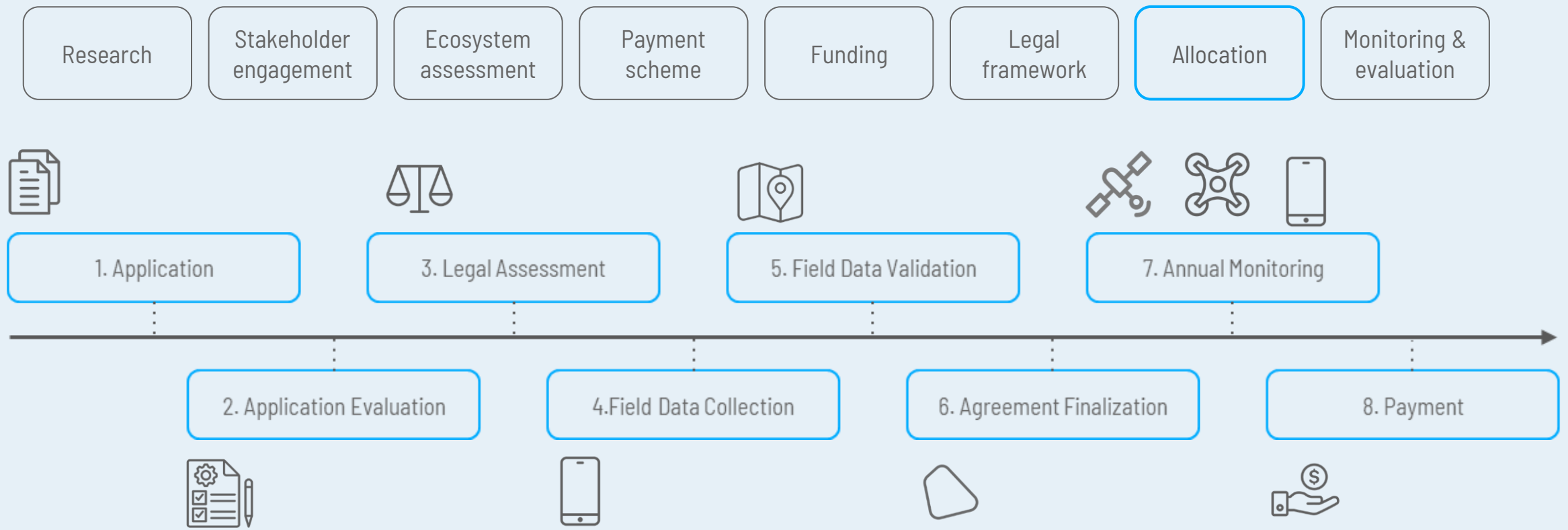
Digital barriers to effective management of PES

- **Lack of a holistic approach.**
  Community data collection, forest monitoring, and payments are often developed as separate, non-interoperable solutions that do not effectively exchange information.
- **Limited ability to update to new technology options.**
  Once built, difficult to switch to newer, cheaper technology.
- **Lack of interoperability**
  and open data policies, hindering data sharing with other national systems..

Digitalization with Climate Champions

People across this value chain

| Research | Stakeholder engagement | Ecosystem assessment | Payment scheme | Funding | Legal framework | Allocation | Monitoring & evaluation |

1. Application

3. Legal Assessment

5. Field Data Validation

7. Annual Monitoring

2. Application Evaluation

4. Field Data Collection

6. Agreement Finalization

8. Payment

Thank You