

## Joint Programme Document

### A. COVER PAGE

**1. Fund Name:** Joint SDG Fund

**2. MPTFO Project Reference Number**

**3. Joint programme title:** Accelerating SDG achievement through digital transformation to strengthen community resilience in Micronesia

**4. Short title:** Digital transformation in Micronesia

**5. Country and region:** Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru, and Kiribati

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**8. Government Joint Programme focal point:**

- Ministry of information communications transport and tourism development, Kiribati
- Ministry of foreign affairs and trade, Republic of Marshall Islands
- Department of foreign affairs, Federated States of Micronesia
- Department of information & communications technology, Nauru
- Ministry of public infrastructure & industries, Palau

#### 9. Short description:

Digital technology, as experienced worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic, serve as a powerful tool to facilitate the much needed social and economic transformations towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pacific Islands countries. An integrated approach embracing digital transformation across multiple sectors and customized to local needs and priorities can address multiple high priority challenges expressed by the citizens.

This Joint Programme (JP) aims to leverage digital transformation to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in the Micronesian countries and strengthen community resilience in the countries. Digital transformation is not just about the technology adoption, but on how digital connectivity, services and applications will change and "transform" citizen's experience and way of day-to-day business in a way that will lead to improvement in quality of life and wellbeing. It will accelerate the path to SDG attainment while leaving no one behind.

While digital technology contributes towards all the six UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) outcomes (Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Environmental Protection, Gender Equality, Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment, Equitable Basic Services, Governance and Community Engagement and Human Rights), the primary UNPS outcomes targeted include:

- Outcome 3: By 2022, people in the Pacific in particular youth, women, and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multi-dimensional poverty and inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment.

- Outcome 4: By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient, and quality basic services.

Using an integrated planning approach this JP aims to meet the above outcomes by:

- Accelerating the adoption of digital transformation related enabling policies, legislation and strategies across the various sectors (education, agriculture, health, employment, commerce, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) amongst others) that benefit communities and vulnerable groups in particular by advocating whole-of-government approach at national and community levels;
- Piloting smart islands approach in at least five remote islands and villages in the Micronesian countries (one each in the five countries). The smart islands approach will accelerate digital transformation at community level with access to a range of digitally enabled services, prioritized in consultation with the community, along with the required awareness and digital skills to harness its potential in a meaningful and safe way. The programme intervention is expected to meaningfully improve livelihoods; healthcare; enjoyment of human rights; skills in harnessing the digitally enabled services; education and job opportunities, food availability and nutrition; digital finance and information; response to natural disasters; and maritime security, which are identified as priority areas among the target Pacific countries.

At the end of the programme, it is envisioned that:

- a) the sectoral policy and strategy frameworks in early childhood development, nutrition and food-based diets, employment, shock responsive social protection and safety nets for children and vulnerable groups are enhanced to embrace digital solutions,
- b) There will be greater coherence amongst digital policy, legislative and strategy frameworks supportive of cross-sectoral digital transformation, and
- c) the target population in each of the five villages/islands will have the necessary knowledge of, access to, and skills for use of digital services in a safe and meaningful manner that improves quality of life and livelihood.

## 10. Keywords:

Digital transformation, smart islands, Micronesia, data protection and privacy, SDG, Nauru, Kiribati, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

## 11. Overview of budget

<b>Joint SDG Fund contribution</b>	<b>US\$3,809,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>US\$3,809,000</b>

## 12. Timeframe:

<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Duration</b> (in months)
<u>1 Sep 2022</u>	<u>30 Aug 2024</u>	<u>24</u>

## 13. Gender Marker:

GEM 2

**14. Target groups** (including groups left behind or at risk of being left behind)

List of marginalized and vulnerable groups	Direct influence	Indirect influence
Women	X	
Children	X	
Girls	X	
Youth	X	
Persons with disabilities	X	
Older persons		X
Rural workers	X	
Human rights defenders (incl. NGOs, journalists, union leaders, whistle-blowers...)	X	
Other groups: marginalized island communities		X

**15. Human Rights Mechanisms related to the Joint Programme**

1. Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

- First Cycle
- Second Cycle
- Third Cycle

2. Human Rights Treaty Bodies

- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Human Rights Committee (HRCtee)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

3. Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

- Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression
- Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy
- Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights
- Special Rapporteur on the right to development
- Special Rapporteur on the right to food
- Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

**16. Participating United Nations Organization (PUNO) and Partners:**

**16.1 PUNO**

- Convening agency: International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- Other PUNOs:
  - o Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Technical partner: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

## 16.2 Partners


Kiribati	Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture Developments Ministry of Education Ministry of Health and Medical Services Ministry of Employment & Human Resources Development Ministry of Justice Communications Commission of Kiribati Telecom Service Providers Island Councils/Local government Churches and Women Groups Radio Kiribati Trade Union Congress Kiribati Chamber of Commerce & Industry Kiribati Police Service
Federated States of Micronesia	Department of Transport, Communications and Infrastructure Department of Resources & Development Department of Education Telecommunication Regulator Telecommunication Service Providers Department of Health Department of Agriculture Department of Finance FSM National Police
Republic of Marshall Islands	Ministry of Transportation, Communications & IT Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce (Agriculture as well as Trade) Ministry of Justice, Immigration and Labour Telecommunication Service Providers Office of The Chief Secretary Ministry of Health and Human Services Ministry of Education Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs Marshall Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry Marshall Islands Teachers' Union Marshall Islands Police Department
Republic of Nauru	Ministry of Telecommunications and Media Telecommunication Regulator Telecommunication Service Providers Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment (Department of Agriculture) Ministry of Health Ministry of Education Nauru Police Force



Republic of Palau	Ministry of Public Infrastructure & Industries Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment Ministry of Education Ministry of Health Telecommunication Service Providers Ministry of Justice Palau Nurses Association Palau Chamber of Commerce
Other partners	Community based organizations Farmer associations Fisherman associations Livestock farmer associations Youth organizations Faith-based organizations Non-government organizations Women’s groups/councils/associations Journalists, media associations, human rights defenders Pacific Island Food Revolution Media/Broadcasters

Additionally, we envision the following potential partners:

- Ministries of Education, Health, Women, Youth and Social Affairs, Internal Affairs, Ministries of Labour, Employment, Youth and Welfare.
- Provincial and local governments
- Department of Resources and Planning (FSM)
- Finance sector regulators
- Civil society organizations:
- Pacific Island Forum
- Pacific Community (SPC)
- Private sector:
  - o Telecom service providers
  - o Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA)
- International Financial Institutions (with investments in connectivity and ICT access across the Pacific)
  - o World Bank
  - o Asian Development Bank
- Development Partners
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand)
- United States Agency for International Development

## SIGNATURE PAGE

<p><b>Resident Coordinator</b>          Jaap van Hierden          Date 11 August 20 [REDACTED]          Signature [REDACTED]</p>	<p><b>National Coordinating Authority</b>  <i>Name of institution</i>  <i>Name of representative</i>  <i>Date</i>  <i>Signature and seal</i></p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>          (lead/convening)  <b>ITU</b>          Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the          Telecommunication Development          Bureau [REDACTED]          Date 1 September 2022          Signature and seal [REDACTED]</p>	
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>FAO</b>          Xiangjun Yao, Sub-Regional Coordinator for the          Pacific          Date 11/08/22          Signature and seal [REDACTED]</p> 	<p>Kiribati  <i>Name of institution</i>  <i>Name of representative</i>  <i>Date</i>  <i>Signature and seal</i></p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>ILO</b>          Matin Karimli, Director of ILO Office for Pacific          Island Countries          [REDACTED]</p>	<p>Federated States of Micronesia  <i>Name of institution</i>  <i>Name of representative</i>  <i>Date</i>  <i>Signature and seal</i></p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNESCO</b>          Nisha, Director          Representative to t          Date          Signature and seal [REDACTED]</p>	<p>Republic of Marshall Islands  <i>Name of institution</i>  <i>Name of representative</i>  <i>Date</i>  <i>Signature and seal</i></p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNICEF</b>          Jonathan Veitch, UNICEF Representative          Date 2 Sept. 2022          Signature and seal [REDACTED]</p>	<p>Nauru  <i>Name of institution</i>  <i>Name of representative</i>  <i>Date</i>  <i>Signature and seal</i></p>
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<p><i>S. Kadwani</i></p> 	
<p><b>Technical Partner</b> <b>UNODC</b> <i>Jeremy Douglas, Regional Representative, Southeast Asia and the Pacific</i> Date 05.09.2022 <i>Signature and seal</i></p> 	

## B. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**Call for Proposal:** Building Resilience and Ending Vulnerability in Small Island Developing States (3/2021)

### 2. Relevant Joint SDG Fund Outcomes

- Outcome 1: Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement implemented with greater scope and scale.

### 3. Overview of the Joint Programme Results

This Joint Programme (JP) aims to leverage digital transformation to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in the Micronesian countries and strengthen community resilience in the countries.

#### 3.1 Outcomes

As digital technology can support various socioeconomic sectors, this JP is expected to have an impact across the six UNPS (2018-2022) outcomes viz., Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Environmental Protection, Gender Equality, Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment, Equitable Basic Services, Governance and Community Engagement and Human Rights. However, amongst the six, the primary UNPS outcome targets include:

- Outcome 3: By 2022, people in the Pacific in particular youth, women, and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multi-dimensional poverty and inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment.
- Outcome 4: By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient, and quality basic services

It aims to achieve the above impact by:

- Accelerating the adoption of digital transformation related enabling policies, legislation and strategies across the various sectors (education, agriculture, health, employment, commerce, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) amongst others) that benefit communities and vulnerable groups in particular by advocating whole-of-government approach at national and community levels;
- Piloting smart islands approach in at least five remote islands and villages in the Micronesian countries (one each in the five countries). The smart islands approach will accelerate digital transformation at community level with access to a range of digitally enabled services, prioritized in consultation with the community, along with the required awareness and digital skills to harness its potential in a meaningful and safe way. The programme intervention is expected to meaningfully improve livelihoods, healthcare, enjoyment of human rights, skills in harnessing the digitally enabled services, education and job opportunities, food availability and nutrition, digital finance and information, response to natural disasters, and maritime security, which are identified as priority areas among the target Pacific countries.

### 3.2 Outputs

- Output 1.1: Improved and integrated sectoral policy and strategy framework for communities and vulnerable groups, especially for gender and women's empowerment, building on multi-sectoral coordination platforms for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, and strengthened systems for maternal and child health and nutrition supporting digital transformation.
- Output 1.2: Improved and coherent digital policy/legal/strategies/frameworks/roadmaps supportive of cross-sectoral digital transformation, based on international human rights standards that ensure gender equality, human rights, openness, accessibility, multi-stakeholder participation, e.g., right to privacy, right to information, freedom of expression, and data protection.
- Output 1.3: Enhanced capacity among ICT policy and decision makers and regulators to adopt a whole-of-government, evidence-based approach with key stakeholders, focusing on vulnerable groups and gender equality on digital transformation, which in turn enhances the enjoyment of a range of human rights and improves cyber-safety.
- Output 1.4: Identified business cases to invest in digital solutions in line with the UN guiding principles on business and human Rights, that highlight the empowerment of women.
- Output 2.1: Improved access to affordable, resilient, and sustainable broadband connectivity, particularly among the vulnerable communities and groups and those at risk of "being left behind", while facilitating the empowerment of women.
- Output 2.2: Increased availability of and access to digitally enabled services with integration of emerging technologies and data driven decision making, which also supports law enforcement and ensures the protection of privacy and gender equality.
- Output 2.3: Enhanced capacity and digital skills with focus on the vulnerable communities and groups to access and use a range of digitally enabled services, taking into account changing skills needs generated by the development of broadband connectivity and digital transformation, and the empowerment of women.

## 4. SDG Targets directly addressed by the Joint Programme

### 4.1 List of targets

In summary, the following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 1.3; 2.1; 2.3; 4.2; 5.b; 8.3; 9.c; 16.6; 16.10; and 17.8.

**Goal 1:** 'No poverty' is targeted through promotion of digital transformation and providing the enabling environment, tools, and skills for creation of new income generation opportunities for targeted population. By promoting policy frameworks that are conducive to ICT use and acquisition of digital skills, the JP will promote access to and participation in the digital economy. Furthermore, by conducting trainings and deploying relevant digital tools (e.g. e-agriculture, e-marketing) in a number of pilot communities, the JP will support local producers and small-scale/family businesses, thus contributing to their livelihood improvement and financial security. (SDG targets to be addressed: 1.3).

**Goal 2:** 'Zero Hunger and Malnutrition' is addressed through capacity building in digital agriculture through JP's activities on data driven decision-making for food and nutrition,

development of e-agri-food systems strategy and deployment of a needs-based digital agriculture solution in pilot communities to support small-scale farmers and fishermen. (SDG targets to be addressed: 2.1, 2.3).

**Goal 4:** 'Quality Education' is targeted through support provided for development of policies and guidelines for life-long learning, organization of trainings at community level to build up market-oriented digital skills among target population, and making available access to education and knowledge resources digitally especially to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in an affordable manner. It would also positively impact the online research capacity of students by targeted training and increasing the affordability of access to such resources (SDG targets to be addressed: 4.2).

**Goal 5:** 'Gender equality' is promoted through JP's strong focus on closing the gender gap in access to digital tools and essential social services and through promotion of stakeholder awareness and gender-sensitive programming at national policy level. At community level, the JP will improve availability of digital devices that will promote gender equality in digital literacy and skills. (SDG targets to be addressed: 5.b). The JP takes into account gender equality in a larger context and aims at creating equal opportunity between men and women.

**Goal 8:** 'Decent work and Economic growth' is targeted through JP's focus on digital transformation, promotion of data-driven decision making, provision of guidance for improving employment policies and opportunities, and through strengthening of social security, including through digital solutions. (SDG targets to be addressed: 8.3).

**Goal 9:** 'Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure' is addressed through JP's support for formulation and rollout of relevant ICT policies and strategies for digital transformation, facilitating the synergy amongst digital components of sectoral strategies, and through capacity building. In addition, the JP will deliver improved connectivity to pilot communities in the five target countries, thereby contributing to better ICT infrastructure for both businesses and households. Additional benefits are expected to result for JP's work on identification and promotion of investment cases for digital solutions in communities. (SDG targets to be addressed: 9.c).

**Goal 16:** 'Just and strong institutions' is addressed through improvement of public access to ICT and information as well as through strengthening of legal frameworks for institutional practices, including privacy and data protection, and integrating human rights-based approach. (SDG Targets to be addressed: 16.6, 16.10).

**Goal 17:** 'Partnerships for the Goals' is enhanced through cross-sector collaboration on policy, legislation and strategy development and co-creation of multi-functional digital infrastructure and solutions at community level that can be leveraged by different stakeholders for sector-specific applications and services. (SDG Targets to be addressed: 17.8).

## 4.2 Expected SDG impact

The Joint Programme (JP) adopts an integrated and holistic approach embracing digital technology across multiple sectors to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in the Micronesian countries and strengthen community resilience in these countries. The programme, which adopts whole-of-government approach, is also designed to address local needs and priorities (Figure 1) across specific Micronesian communities. Beyond the current state, this integrated approach is forward-looking as it not only addresses the current challenges but also takes into account future opportunities.

Digital technology serves as a powerful tool to facilitate the much needed social and economic transformations including in Pacific Island countries. Currently, various government services are provided with limited coordination. Digital technology supported by appropriate policy enablers and capacities helps enable the governments to not only reach out to remote islands and communities in the service provision but also enhance efficiency and effectiveness among government service providers, if a whole of government approach is applied. An integrated and holistic planning approach, encompassing policy, legislation, strategy and delivery of digital services, will help various line ministries and agencies to capitalize on shared infrastructure and technology resources to provide sectoral services regardless of geographical location.

**Figure 1: SDG-based Approach**



Digital transformation will accelerate meeting all SDGs by enabling better targeted and more efficient interventions at all levels of society. Additionally, the gains obtained will not only accrue at the policy level, but in the remote islands, through better provision of digital services that improve daily lives.

In particular, this JP envisages to impact identified goals and targets (Section 4.1) through

- development of sectoral digital strategies including identification of solutions (agri-food systems, education)
- development of sectoral digital solutions (early childhood development, high impact nutrition food-based dietary guidelines, nutrition, health; employment, shock-responsive social protection system and safety nets for children and vulnerable groups) to support the implementation of sectoral digital strategies
- building capacity of ICT policy makers and decision makers to ensure the sustainability of JP interventions and support to non-ICT sectors and communities
- Smart Islands pilot (1 in each Micronesian country) including needs assessment, solutions to enhance affordability of services, digital skills, digital services that facilitate multiple sectors (education, social safety, health, agriculture, industry etc.) and accelerate the achievement of targeted SDGs.

Through the combination of the 6 PUNOs and the multisectoral expertise available, this JP will ensure that digital transformation touches every facet of society to sustain efforts towards achieving the SDG targets.

## 5. Relevant objective/s from the national SDG framework

	<i>Objectives</i>
<i>Federated States of Micronesia</i>	<p>The following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 1.3; 2.1; 2.3; 4.2; 5.b; 9.c; 16.6; 16.10; and 17.8.</p> <p>In the Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021, the following SDG areas were highlighted, which this JP can assist in addressing:</p> <p>SDG target 2.3: Double the agriculture productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers            SDG target 4.2: Ensure that all boys and girls have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education            SDG target 5.B: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote empowerment of women            SDG target 9.C. Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet            SDG target 17.8: Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity building mechanism and enhance the use of enabling IT technology</p> <p>FSM Infrastructure Development Plan (2016-2025), Telecommunications Sector goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. achieve accessible and affordable communications for all</li> <li>2. strengthen information and communications technology (ICT) human resources and increase human resource development opportunities through ICT</li> <li>3. improve economic growth and sustainable development through ICT</li> <li>4. utilize ICT for good governance</li> <li>5. create an enabling ICT environment through policy reform and improvements in legal frameworks</li> </ol>

<i>Republic of Marshall Islands</i>	<p>The following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 1.3; 2.1; 2.3; 4.2; 5.b; 8.3; 9.c; 16.6; 16.10; and 17.8.</p> <p>In the VNR 2021, the following SDG areas were noted that this JP can assist in addressing:</p> <p>EECO 4.2.3: Enhance capacity of agriculture sector stakeholders            ECO 4.3.1: Maximize the long-term value from its fisheries for the benefit of the economy and people of RMI            ECO 4.4.5: Promote partnerships among public-private and Civil Society Organizations            ECO 4.5.2: Improve access to affordable and competitive financial service</p> <p>INF 3.5.2: Provide resilient platforms for efficient and affordable connectivity            INF 3.5.3: Improve outer island connectivity</p>
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	<p>INF 4.5.1: Strengthen ICT legal and regulatory framework          INF 4.5.4: Revise ICT Policy 2012 and existing telecom laws and regulations for greater relevance to current setting</p> <p>S&amp;C 1.1.1: Strengthened response to non-communicable diseases, including nutrition, mental health, and injuries          S&amp;C 1.2.1: Improved early childhood development          S&amp;C 1.2.4: Enhanced skills and attributes necessary for a dynamic workforce and resilient economy          S&amp;C 1.2.7: Address TVET and Workforce Development issues through the NTC, and STEM program          S&amp;C 1.3.2: Ensure provisions and opportunities for equitable participation of all persons in society</p> <p>GG 5.1.2: Enhance capacity of public servants and employees of public agencies, including in particular those in the outer island          GG 5.1.4: Strengthen the connection and cooperation with civil society, private sector and outer island          GG 5.3.2: Require robust and unbiased enforcement of laws, justice and regulatory processes          GG 5.5.5: Establish safe, secure and accessible cyber environment</p>
<i>Kiribati</i>	<p>The following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 1.3; 2.1; 2.3; 4.2; 5.b; 8.3; 9.c; 16.6; 16.10; and 17.8.</p> <p><i>Kiribati 20-year vision (2016-2030)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved economic growth and poverty reduction</li> <li>• To improve ICT infrastructure development</li> <li>• Having highly educated and skilled population by the year 2036 for quality outputs</li> <li>• Having highly skilled qualified and efficient workforce</li> <li>• Increased access to decent employment opportunities</li> </ul> <p><i>Ministry of Information, Communications, Transport, and Tourism Development (MICTTD). Strategic Plan (2021-2024): Strategic Objective 3: To enhance access to communication technologies and quality information and services to all the people of Kiribati</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal ICT access to all the people of Kiribati</li> <li>• Uniform quality of services and quality of experience for the ICT services throughout Kiribati</li> <li>• Community ICT hub where required especially for small and isolated communities</li> <li>• Connecting the remote communities</li> <li>• Access to ICT services for disabled persons</li> <li>• Capacity building and awareness on the use, risks and opportunities of ICT to the general public</li> <li>• Enhance national ICT infrastructure to improve access to ICT services</li> </ul>
<i>Nauru</i>	<p>The following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 2.1; 2.3; 5.b; 9.c; 16.6; 16.10; and 17.8.</p> <p>National Sustainable Development Strategy 2019-2030:</p>

	<p>Econ-Goal 1: A stable macroeconomic environment conducive to private investment established</p> <p>Econ-Goal 2: Increased level of domestic agricultural production aimed at addressing food security and healthy livelihoods</p> <p>Soc-Goal 1: Improve the quality and broaden the scope and reach of education</p> <p>Soc-Goal 2: A healthy and productive population</p> <p>Soc-Goal 4: A cultural, socio-inclusive, cohesive and self-reliant community with sustainable livelihoods</p> <p>Soc-Goal 5: A just society that recognizes and respects the rights of women and children, that promotes equal opportunities</p> <p>Infra-Goal 4: Improve transport infrastructure and provide reliable and sustainable transport services</p> <p>Cross-Goal 1: Strengthen and develop the institutional capacity of the Nauru Public Service</p> <p>Cross-Goal 2: Strengthen parliament, audit, justice, law, order and border control</p>
<p><i>Palau</i></p>	<p>The following SDG targets are expected to be addressed under the joint programme: 2.1; 2.3; 5.b; 8.3; 9.c; 16.10; and 17.8.</p> <p>Palau VNR 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close gaps that impede full inclusion of persons with disabilities and fully implement the national disabilities policy. These gaps range from inaccessible public facilities to lack of appropriate services and continuing attitudinal barriers.</li> <li>• Lack of information and awareness is a deterrent to conservation and sustainable management of land and forest resources.</li> <li>• Improving land and forest management is critical for the health of Palau’s marine ecosystem.</li> <li>• Increasing domestic food production from both marine and agriculture sources is essential for food security and NCD prevention.</li> <li>• Recycling needs to extend to a wider range of products. E-waste and junked cars are among priorities</li> <li>• Enhance national food security, while improving health, by reducing dependence on imported food using a combination of supply and demand measures including those contained in the national policy on sustainable agriculture and aquaculture.</li> <li>• Enhance women’s performance in STEM subjects to achieve gender equality in education and the workplace.</li> <li>• Fully engage all possible domestic stakeholders in SDG implementation – civil society, state governments, traditional leaders, and the private sector.</li> <li>• Active measures are needed to implement the Gender Mainstreaming Policy across the public and private sectors; regular communications regarding implementation status are needed by women and women’s organizations.</li> </ul> <p>Palau National ICT Policy 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All citizens in the Republic of Palau shall have equitable and affordable access to ICT to improve the quality of life through socio-economic development</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote ICT human resource development to raise awareness of ICT, enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of Palau's workforce, and utilize ICT as a positive force for human resource development for the public and private sector</li> <li>• Appropriate, accessible and affordable ICT infrastructure will be developed to support socio-economic development in Palau</li> <li>• ICT will be effectively utilized by the Government and private sector to maximize economic growth and social development</li> <li>• Government will establish updated ICT policies, laws and regulations that will ensure a competitive market for ICT to flourish and create a strong regulatory framework in order to facilitate the fair development of ICT sector in a way that is appropriate for the people and cultures of Palau</li> </ul>
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## UNPS (2018- 2022)

Outcome 1: By 2022, people and ecosystems in the Pacific are more resilient to the impacts of climate change, climate variability and disasters; and environmental protection is strengthened.

Outcome 2: By 2022, gender equality is advanced in the Pacific, where more women and girls are empowered and enjoy equal opportunities and treatment in social, economic, and political spheres, contribute to and benefit from national development, and live a life free from violence and discrimination.

Outcome 3: By 2022, people in the Pacific in particular youth, women, and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multi-dimensional poverty and inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment.

Outcome 4: By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient, and quality basic service.

Outcome 5: By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes; accountable and responsive institutions; and improved access to justice.

Outcome 6: By 2022, people in the Pacific effectively enjoy strengthened legal framework and institutions that deliver human rights protection in accordance with international commitments under relevant treaties and Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

## 6. Brief overview of the Theory of Change (ToC) of the Joint programme

### 6.1 Summary

Fundamentally, this JP focuses on the following core problem

*"Lack of integrated approach across sectors at policy and implementation levels impedes the Micronesian countries capacity to leverage digital transformation to accelerate SDG achievement at national and community levels"*

In order to address the core problem, this JP aims to address the following key issues at policy and community levels.

### **Policy level**

- Policies and strategies across sectors (ICTs, agriculture, education, health, employment etc.) lack coherence to embrace digital transformation and implement digital solutions
- ICT policies need update to embrace digital transformation, data protection and privacy frameworks lacking, sectoral digital strategies and roadmaps (education, agriculture)
- Inadequate capacity amongst policy and decision makers in various sectors relating to ICTs and digital transformation

### **Community level**

- Limited access to broadband connectivity
- Insufficient affordability of access to digital services
- Insufficient digital skills
- Limited digital services and access to information (accessibility, scale and scope)

Details are provided in Section 2.2.

By improving the sectoral level policy, legislation and strategy frameworks to deliver services digitally, socio-economic sectors (education, nutrition, employment, social sectors) will have better capacity and capability to harness the digital opportunities and advance transformation in the respective sectors. It will also improve cross-sectoral engagements and develop synergies of these sectors (e.g. finance, commerce, governance). with the ICT sector

By identifying the existing gaps and strengthening digital policies, legislations, and regulations, countries will improve the enabling environment for digital services in the sectors identified for this JP and beyond. Further, of the developed e-strategies and action plans (e-agriculture, e-education), this JP will help address the sectoral requirements for digital connectivity, institutional cooperation across agencies and services and help identify concrete actions required to meet the sectoral policy goals mentioned above. By raising awareness and building capacity of relevant stakeholders, the JP will also be able to support better coordination in future digital transformation projects and activities across government agencies, donors and industry while meeting the national commitments to protect citizen rights and develop a safe online environment.

This programme aims at supporting enabling policy and regulatory frameworks, catalysing efficiencies between central and local governments and demonstrating concrete outcomes from connecting remote islands and providing digital services on a pilot basis, as detailed below. By doing so, the JP will be able to demonstrate investment opportunities to governments, international and regional organizations and industry partners - the opportunities to scale up and replicate outputs, such as smart islands initiative beyond pilot. The JP may also encourage other sectors, which are not covered in this JP, and stakeholders to join the activities and capitalize on the established frameworks and smart islands and contribute financially. The provision of additional sectoral digital services will increase the use of digital infrastructure, which will then enhance the sustainability of the programme.

Furthermore, with improved access to connectivity and the necessary digital tools and services in small outer islands/rural villages, the people in these islands/villages will benefit from digitization and new opportunities offered by digital technology. Improved digital infrastructure and digital skills will also function as a strong empowering factor as it will provide access to a wealth of existing and customized digital services, resources, and applications relevant to the target population.

**Figure 2: JP key expected results, deliverables and role of PUNOs**

Sectoral policy, legislative and strategy level interventions that support digital transformation in respective sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Early childhood development (ECD)</b> policy, including capacity building on public finance management</li> <li>• High impact <b>nutrition interventions framework</b> and policies</li> <li>• <b>Food Based Dietary Guidelines</b></li> <li>• National <b>employment policies / solutions</b> and life-long learning for <b>economic transformation</b> and environmental responsibility</li> <li>• Shock-responsive <b>social protection system and safety nets for children</b> and vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	Capacity building for ICT policy makers, decision-makers (and stakeholders)	UNICEF FAO ILO
Digital policy, legislative and strategy framework are established or improved for digital transformation and capacity built	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mapping of existing policies, legislations (including regulations), strategies</b> with reference to digital transformation and develop a roadmap</li> <li>• Identification and <b>analysis of laws which need to be amended or adopted in an online environment</b> (including relevant recommendations issued by international human rights mechanisms), advocacy and technical support</li> <li>• <b>Digital Transformation Policy / Review and update of ICT Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Right to Information and Data Protection and Privacy</b> normative frameworks</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital Agrifood Systems Strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>ICT for education strategy</b></li> </ul>	Capacity building for ICT policy makers, decision-makers (and stakeholders)	ITU UNESCO
Identifying investment and financing cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified <b>business cases to invest in digital solutions</b> in line with UN Guiding principles on Business and Human Rights</li> </ul>	Capacity building for ICT policy makers, decision-makers (and stakeholders)	ITU FAO
Smart Islands Pilot  5 villages/islands 1 in each country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to affordable, resilient, and sustainable broadband connectivity (<b>vulnerable communities, groups at risk of "being left behind", empowerment of women</b>).</li> <li>• Increased availability of and access to <b>digitally enabled services with integration</b> of emerging technologies and data driven decision making, which also supports law enforcement reach (including improved protection of vulnerable groups and maritime protection) while ensuring the protection of privacy and gender equality</li> <li>• Enhanced <b>capacity and digital skills</b> among the vulnerable communities and groups to access and use a range of digitally enabled services,</li> </ul>	Capacity building for ICT policy makers, decision-makers (and stakeholders)	ITU UNOPS UNESCO FAO ILO UNICEF

UNODC (partner)

Figure 2 above highlights how this JP is structured, with the responsible PUNOs involved in the delivery of outputs which are expected to lead to the achievement of results.

## 6.2 List of main ToC assumptions to be monitored:

- There is commitment across the national government stakeholders in the target countries to implement and review the integrated policy solutions during and beyond the joint programme lifespan, which will accelerate SDGs as well as leverage additional financing, in line with the political commitment towards Addis Ababa Action Agenda
- National development strategies and budgets in the target countries are centred on poverty reduction, digital infrastructure, digital services, inclusion, blue investment and resilience and the 2030 agenda
- Civil society, private sector, academia, and development partners remain engaged in addressing gender and social inclusion issues and in promoting human rights and equitable sustainable development.
- The national governments in the target countries agree to adopt policy, legislative, and strategic frameworks proposed and developed by this JP
- The national governments facilitate whole-of-government approach and foster inter agency cooperation to build synergies across ongoing policies, programmes and projects relevant to this JP.

- The national governments agree to allocate resources to support the programme outcomes during and beyond the JP.
- The national governments in the target countries identify suitable islands/villages for the intervention that can take advantage of this programme and agree to scale-up the programme considering the good practices and learnings from the pilots.
- The national governments in the target countries agree to create and staff project management office (PMOs) for the smart islands
- The national governments in the target countries as well as the national stakeholders (e.g. telecom service providers), can support connectivity to the designated smart islands, for the purposes of this intervention and sustain after the end of programme
- The national governments agree to approach financial institutions and investors to invest in pilot program, promote reuse of existing infrastructure, introduce new services (during and beyond JP) and scale out to other islands.
- All stakeholders can agree on local governance structures to manage the smart islands programme
- There is local appetite to adopt connectivity and the e-services contemplated
- Political changes, natural disasters, or worsening COVID-19 pandemic aspects do not delay the creation and roll out of smart islands programme

## **7. Trans-boundary and/or regional issues**

The Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway features transboundary issues and regional priorities relevant to the JP which are: (a) Climate change and disaster risk reduction; (b) Sustainable management and use of oceans; (c) Regional integration (trade, energy, ICT, transport); (d) Social inclusion and poverty alleviation; and (e) Integrated policies, mechanism and review of SDG and the SAMOA Pathway with an emphasis on enhancing data and statistics.

Digital transformation has the potential to accelerate achieving the SDGs in the Pacific. Digital transformation necessitates an ecosystem approach including policies, legislations, strategies, and frameworks (digital and other linked cross-sectoral); digital infrastructure; cybersecurity; capacity building; digital services; emergency telecommunications and digital inclusion amongst others. At community level, it can be manifested through smart islands concept that envisages an integrated development approach.

Pacific Island countries have embarked upon digital economy and digital transformation policies, strategies and plans. For example, Papua New Guinea has adopted a Digital Transformation Policy in 2020, Fiji has a digital transformation programme (Digital Fiji) while Samoa has Digital Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister and envisages establishing a digital transformation authority. Countries such as Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati have undertaken digital government initiatives while Solomon Islands recently published a digital economy scorecard. COVID-19 has further accelerated the digital transformation journey of the Pacific Island countries for the private sector with the rise of digital applications.

The Pacific region has also seen significant progress in terms of infrastructure development including submarine cable, terrestrial networks <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/tnd-map-public/>, and broadband satellite connectivity, but much more need to be done. Operators in the Pacific continue to deploy 4G systems to increase access. Satellites too continue to play an important role given the remoteness of the islands not only for connectivity during normal time but also to provide critical services especially during disasters. The improving connectivity and

emerging technologies are becoming increasingly relevant to the post-pandemic recovery. Further, emerging technologies such as cloud computing, blockchain, artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) and 3D printing, are transforming industry and some of these are also relevant to this JP. To facilitate the integration of these emerging technologies, the programme will consider digital connectivity and technology options relevant to the Micronesian countries and to the JP in addressing the SDG-related needs of target communities. in this JP. Details on emerging technologies also available here

1. Equally important is the need for data driven transformation, which has been emphasized by UN Secretary General in UN Data Strategy.
2. Data-driven decision making is one of the approaches promoted in Smart Village / Smart Islands programme.
3. It highlights the importance of establishing an effective mechanism and platform for collecting, storing and analyzing data as an integral part of the initiative. The established connectivity and use of digital applications through the Smart Islands will provide essential means to collect data. Such data is essential to the uptake of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, which depend heavily on the availability of quality data. It is also important to ensure that the collected data is meaningful for socioeconomic policy and decision making.

Collection of such data will facilitate establishing baseline data and understanding of the environment that will guide the development of targeted and effective interventions for data-driven policy and decision making (see above related response to questions on data driven policy making) and piloting during the JP and will provide valuable insights for future interventions.

Moreover, it is expected that the JP will address the needs for awareness raising and capacity development among decision and policy makers on the utility of emerging technology and data-driven decision makers. The data collected and data analysis tools will be available to guide data driven decision making beyond the duration of the JP with a potential to scale up and replicate in various socioeconomic sectors.

In the Pacific, to generate economies of scale in the implementation of digital solutions, a regional approach is also needed. It is expected that policy level interventions to facilitate digital transformation and smart islands pilots will lead to better exchange of experience and learnings throughout the Micronesian region, and then more broadly among the Pacific Island countries, as well as policy harmonization. Across Micronesia, this JP will also increase a regional pool of experts and users with digital skills and create greater market for digital services and applications at the regional level.

It will also facilitate engagement and partnerships with other agencies that are engaged in digital transformation. For example, Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association has a number of activities on digital solutions that will be leveraged to support and promote the activities in this JP.

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1 Emerging technologies, including cloud computing, m-services and OTTs: Challenges and opportunities, economic and policy impact for developing countries (<https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/D-STG-SG01.03.2-2021/>)

2 [https://www.un.org/en/content/datastrategy/images/pdf/UN\\_SG\\_Data-Strategy.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/datastrategy/images/pdf/UN_SG_Data-Strategy.pdf)

3 Building Smart Villages: A blueprint As piloted in Niger ([https://www.itu.int/dms\\_pub/itu-d/opb/str/D-STR-SMART\\_VILLAGE.NIGER-2020-PDF-E.pdf](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/str/D-STR-SMART_VILLAGE.NIGER-2020-PDF-E.pdf))

Some of the regional and transboundary issues that may have impact include:

- Regionally, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the countries socially and economically, as well as with travel restrictions. While the programme has noted COVID-19 in the Risk Matrix and is planning digital interventions where possible, there is always the possibility that new outbreaks and lockdowns will affect implementation, especially if the government is focused on managing new outbreaks or if the island/village of intervention is unable to receive physical infrastructure for Outcome 2;
- International and regional agencies/organizations are also implementing cross-border digital transformation and cooperation project which can be leveraged by this JP;
- Natural disasters may afflict multiple countries simultaneously, which may lead to a need for regional disaster response and recovery coordination.
- Improved regional digital response to outbreak of other diseases such as African Swine flu and any other emergencies.

## C. JOINT PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

### 1. Baseline and Situation Analysis

#### 1.1 Problem statement

Currently, geographic isolation, scattered location, small size, and poor availability of infrastructure and resources in the small islands developing states contribute to the vulnerability of their people, especially in communities in remote areas and outer islands, where access to information, transport, health and education services is very limited.<sup>4</sup> High cost of electricity<sup>5</sup>, limited human resources, and lack of affordable connectivity<sup>6</sup> rank among the biggest challenges among the Pacific Island countries. Not only does the absence of digital connectivity contribute to the digital divide, but also deprives the disadvantaged small island communities of the opportunity to leverage digital solutions to obtain better access to essential services. There is also lack of strategic alignment between sectoral initiatives and programmes and the roll out of digital infrastructure and applications.

However, beyond the broad-based problem overview in the previous paragraph, there are specific sectoral issues at play that hinder inclusive and sustainable development among the beneficiary countries. Fundamentally, the problems statement can be divided into the following categories: Gender disparities; Issues related to social development and food security; Maritime resources issues; Limited digital connectivity and technology; Cybersecurity, data protection and privacy issues.

The JP addresses these issues through activities that contribute to addressing these problems. It includes facilitation of the appropriate enabling environment for digital policies and strategies, alignment of identified sectoral policies for digital development, demonstrating the impact through a pilot, and building skills and awareness.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40834127/Investing+in+rural+people+in+the+Pacific+Islands.pdf/d6ed649c-4de5-497a-a527-8494d1800a4a>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Jan/IRENA\\_Transforming\\_SIDS\\_Power\\_2018.pdf](https://www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Jan/IRENA_Transforming_SIDS_Power_2018.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://news.itu.int/challenges-and-opportunities-to-connect-small-island-developing-states-video/>

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the socio-economic situation. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)'s Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2021<sup>7</sup> notes that "the Pacific subregion is not on track to achieve any of the 17 Goals by 2030,"

## **Gender disparities**

Pacific region is not on track to meet measurable targets under gender equality (Goal 5)<sup>8</sup>. Breaking it down further among the five Micronesian countries of focus in this JP, gender inequality is deep-rooted at both the macro and micro levels. UNESCAP's 25-year review of the Beijing Platform (including FSM, RMI, Kiribati, and Palau) noted how, for all UNESCAP Pacific subregion Member States, that "the translation of policies, plans, and programs into concrete actions is stifled by adverse gender norms and stereotypes"<sup>9</sup>.

Gender issues vary between Pacific Island countries according to their levels of economic development; social and cultural norms; levels of population, migration and emigration; and political climate. While many Pacific Island countries have committed internationally and regionally to promoting gender equality, considerable disparities remain between them in terms of the extent to which governments have adopted complementary national policies.<sup>10</sup>

Certain gender issues cut across many Pacific Island countries. These include low levels of women's political representation; poor working conditions; violence against women; increased risk of HIV/AIDS and STIs; declining access to customary land rights and low levels of legal literacy about rights to land and property; and culturally-enforced discrimination and inequality of women.

According to the UNICEF Situation Analysis of Children, "Socio-cultural norms and traditional perceptions around gender roles can act as barriers and bottlenecks to the realization of children and women's rights in a number of SDG outcome areas, including in WASH, where menstruation can be seen as taboo, leading to absenteeism from school, distraction, embarrassment and shame. Norms also affect gender outcomes in child protection, where traditional gender roles support and facilitate high rates of violence against women and girls, create socio-cultural barriers to the reporting of violence and have a discriminatory impact on, for example, child marriage practices, which disproportionately affect girls."<sup>11</sup>

When women are employed, they are usually working in vulnerable jobs in the rural sectors with unfair working conditions and low income, with no legal support or opportunity for starting a business. Their roles are often subsistence-related, such as farming, putting them at increased risk for impacts by climate-related disasters. Flooding, rising sea levels, and heatwaves can all impact the ability of women to maintain consistent working days and support their families. These informal and vulnerable jobs also offer no social or economic support in the event of these disasters. Women are less likely to have access to unemployment insurance or paid sick leave in the event of injury, leaving them helpless in the face of any unfortunate event of natural disaster. Outside of subsistence jobs, women often work in the retail or food service industries, which has been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the closure of borders and complete absence of tourism to the

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP\\_Asia\\_and\\_the\\_Pacific\\_SDG\\_Progress\\_Report\\_2021.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP_Asia_and_the_Pacific_SDG_Progress_Report_2021.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP\\_Asia\\_and\\_the\\_Pacific\\_SDG\\_Progress\\_Report\\_2021.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP_Asia_and_the_Pacific_SDG_Progress_Report_2021.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP\\_B25\\_Pacific\\_Report\\_20200126.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/ESCAP_B25_Pacific_Report_20200126.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Research Report: Gender in the Pacific Islands; Governance and Social Development Resource Centre

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF Situation Analysis of Children in Pacific Island Countries, 2016

area. Because of this, more women than men lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. Many women have been forced to stay home with children or elderly family members as lockdowns are put in place and travel is restricted.

The gender digital divide only exacerbates the already existing gender gaps in the five countries. Furthermore, there is a lack of disaggregated and granular data at the national level. The gap in access to/use of the Internet, gap of digital skills, gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) participation, and gap in tech leadership/entrepreneurship manifest themselves into unequal outcomes for women and girls. Ensuring digital skills and digital access to use digital technology to both men and women, boys and girls equally allows all to participate in the society and economy and access digital services, leading to more sustainable and inclusive development.<sup>12</sup> The JP will work with the participating governments in multi-sectors to help collect and utilize disaggregated data and deepen understanding and addressing gender inequality in access to information, basic services, and outcomes. It adopts facilitating gender equality in digital transformation related policies, strategies, capacity building and delivery of solutions as a key principle.

### **Issues related to social development and food security**

The five Micronesian governments continue to face significant challenges in the provision of quality services to young children and their families. At a systems level, there are severe weaknesses in policy, planning, capacity and implementation. Services for young children are often scattered across public agencies across education, health, and social welfare with poor coordination between central government, local units and community partners. These services do not always converge on the same children due to inadequate resources, limited coverage and access as a result of challenging geography. Lack of coordination and fragmentation leads to sporadic and episodic activities, results in inefficiencies, wastes precious public resources, and fails to optimize quality of services. The targeting of social protection programmes also appears to have a gender dimension in Pacific. Overall, the Social Protection Index (SPI) for women in the Pacific is 0.8 per cent of GDP per capita, compared with 1.1 per cent of GDP per capital for men.<sup>13</sup> This is attributed to the differential access of women and men to social insurance measures. In addition, social insurance measures also have a gender bias, as access is generally restricted to formal sector workers, who are predominantly male.

Public expenditure for pre-primary education remains low (less than five per cent of total education expenditure), with many dependent on donor aid or community contributions. There is a low and fluctuating level of public investment. Public expenditure on pre-primary education as a percentage of GDP is also far below the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 1.1 percent. Significant disparities within countries in child outcomes like mortality rates and education enrolment implies that governments are also unable to provide equitable access to early childhood development (ECD) services, leaving out the most vulnerable children. The high prevalence of stunting in RMI,- and undernutrition more broadly, has been attributed to a complex range of factors including household food insecurity, limited availability of nutritious local foods, poor maternal nutrition during pregnancy, unhealthy household environments (e.g., lack of clean water, poor sanitation), a presence of micronutrient deficiencies throughout infancy and young childhood, and poor child feeding practices (e.g., limited breastfeeding, poor complementary feeding

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/backgrounders/Pages/bridging-the-gender-divide.aspx#:~:text=ITU%20is%20working%20to%20raise,jobs%20on%20an%20equal%20basis.>

<sup>13</sup> ADB, 'The Social Protection Indicator: The Pacific', 2016.

practices).<sup>14</sup> There are also dichotomies within countries, between rural and urban areas and poor and wealthy households necessitating an urgent need to address this challenge because disadvantaged households often have the strongest need for ECD. Moreover, the largest returns of early investments result from those that target the most vulnerable children.

The Micronesian countries face a 'triple-burden' of malnutrition whereby undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity exist simultaneously within a population, alongside increasing rates of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). While, micronutrient deficiency, particularly anaemia among children and women of reproductive age is a moderate to severe public health problem in all countries, stunting is a concern for RMI and Nauru, and to some extent for Kiribati. In addition, overweight and obesity among children is growing, and among adolescent and adults, both men and women is already at alarming levels. Despite this, the feeding practices are sub-optimal with low production and consumption of the locally available foods, with increasing reliance on high calorie, low nutrient processed foods. There are no sufficient health programs implemented to address anaemia among children and adolescents, and there is limited high impact nutrition interventions including lack of digital platforms to promote healthy diets, recipes and the training and education materials to educate health workers and public on these issues. These issues can be addressed by developing action plan that uses digital solutions for delivery. For example, awareness content can be created and distributed through digital means.

In response to COVID-19 and to increase resilience in education and expand modes of quality education delivery, many of the Pacific States are enhancing ICT in Education. In this transition, equitable access to online and multimedia teaching and resources by all, boys and girls, persons with disabilities, those living in remote locations, etc. need to be ensured, in order not to widen the digital divide.

### **Maritime resources issues**

The achievement of SDGs relates to both land-based SDG goals and maritime SDG goals. Most Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) have maritime jurisdictions many times the size of the land area and limited awareness of exploitation and illicit activity. For example, Kiribati has 811 km<sup>2</sup> of land area with 3,440,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (4000 times). Therefore, economic growth of SIDS is inherently linked with maritime resources. It is estimated that over 23,000 persons are directly employed in the fishing industry in the Pacific, and more importantly over 70% of the protein in the Pacific Island diet is from fish. Therefore, it is imperative that maritime resources are an integral part of SDG achievements across the Pacific. However, a major threat facing Pacific Island countries is illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing and encroachment by foreign fishing fleets. The estimated catch loss due to IUU fishing in the Pacific is estimated to be 300,000 tonnes, with an estimated revenue loss of USD 616 million to Pacific Island countries. The improvement in enforcement capabilities will prevent revenue loss that could significantly improve the living standards and basic infrastructure as well as protect the destruction of maritime resources and marine biodiversity. The coastal communities have a vital responsibility to report incidents of encroachment to strengthen maritime enforcement. As an example, Village Headman in Fiji are being trained to report information sourced by the community of suspicious activity at sea.

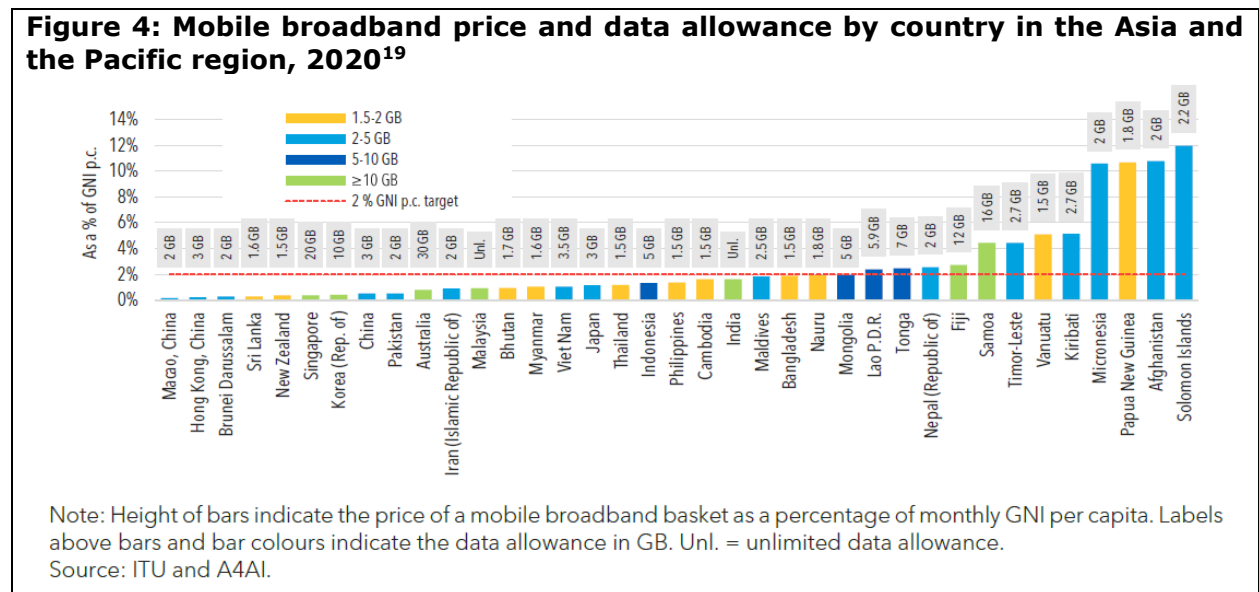
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<sup>14</sup> Republic of the Marshall Islands Ministry of Health, RMI National Statistics Office and UNICEF, author. Republic of the Marshall Islands Integrated Child Health and Nutrition Survey 2017, Key Findings. Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands: Republic of the Marshall Islands Ministry of Health, RMI National Statistics Office; 2017

## Limited digital connectivity and technology

Lack of connectivity to the Internet ranks among the biggest challenges. By 2021, ITU estimates that 36% of the SIDS population does not use the Internet. In the Pacific Island countries specifically, where 61% of the population are rural and 14% do not have access to electricity, less than one third (33%) of residents use the Internet.<sup>15</sup> Among the Micronesian countries being targeted in the JP, the most recent ITU data highlights that the total individuals using the Internet ranges among countries, with Kiribati (15%) FSM (35%), RMI (39%), and Nauru (62%).<sup>16</sup> For Palau, only 37% of total individuals use the Internet.<sup>17</sup> Overall, average access to the Internet in the target countries is lower than the average across developing countries (44%). Unfortunately, gender-disaggregated data and the ICT skills data are not available from ITU statistics in the five JP countries. Lack of data is one of the key challenges. This JP will enable gathering more gender aggregated data. In order to address the data availability challenges, this JP aims to conduct community level needs assessment and collect primary data, which include sex disaggregated data.

The challenges are further exacerbated in the SIDSs owing to the need to connect remote islands, lack of human and financial resources, inadequate digital skills, and high costs of these services. From an affordability perspective, while a key benchmark is the 2% Gross National Income (GNI) per capita by 2025 target<sup>18</sup>, the costs of broadband access remain high amongst the Pacific Island countries (Figure 4).



More information on digital transformation in the Pacific is provided in Annex 7.

<sup>15</sup> <https://data.pacific-island-small-states>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-palau>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/IPB.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> Source: [https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/prices2020/ITU\\_ICTPriceTrends\\_2020.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/prices2020/ITU_ICTPriceTrends_2020.pdf)

Beyond connectivity, the Micronesian countries all face challenges in adopting digital government services. According to the 2020 United Nations E-Government Development Index, out of 193 countries ranked, this joint programme's target countries are globally ranked as follows: Palau (125), Kiribati (145), Nauru (154), RMI (156), and FSM (161). Breaking it down at the sub-component index level, none of the five countries scored above 0.5/1.0 (standardized Z-score) under either the Online Services Index or the Telecommunications Infrastructure index.<sup>20</sup> These scores highlight that there is a need for further digital government development among the five countries.

The ICT policies in most of the beneficiary countries are more than five years old and require update to address digital transformation adequately. Some of the policy requirements necessitate review of existing legislations and regulations that do not address the challenges posed by digital services adequately (e.g., misinformation, consumer protection, data protection and privacy, data sharing frameworks) by legislators.

Lack of digital resources and adequate digital skills impede the potential of Micronesians to develop, operate, maintain, and utilize digital solutions. As digital infrastructure and services roll out in the Pacific, lack of competencies to harness these opportunities would aggravate the digital divide while dependence on international human resource to develop and maintain digital solutions reduces the cost efficiency. With travel restrictions posed by COVID-19, the need to build requisite local expertise at beginners, intermediate and advanced levels is unprecedented.

While the need for digital skills and literacy across the board is well established, the challenges posed to vulnerable populations (women, youth, persons with disabilities) are greater. These originate from existing socio-economic conditions, unavailability of services, unaffordability of devices or inability of general programmes to meet the special needs. Targeted endeavors are needed to ensure a truly inclusive digital enabled community.

Furthermore, the slow and siloed approach to digital transformation hampers the uptake of digital technology for efficient public service provision and calls for strengthened coordination and policy coherence for delivery of social services for young children and vulnerable groups through improved planning, greater coverage and access, and enhanced capacity in remote islands to address some of the above-mentioned challenges.

### **Impact of digitalization on women**

The digital gender gap continues to grow in many developing countries, including Pacific Island countries, creating a specific need to support digital gender equality. Globally, women and girls use the Internet 12.5 per cent less than men and boys. The gender digital gap is translated in four areas: a gap in access and use of the Internet, a gap in digital skills and use of digital tools, gap in participation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, and a gap in tech sector leadership and entrepreneurship<sup>[1]</sup>. Digital technology and social media networks have enabled a growing proportion of women, especially those with care responsibilities and those who are unable to travel safely, to participate in digital platforms. While these jobs can provide good opportunities for women, oftentimes are in the informal sector, unstable, insecure and does not enjoy good working conditions. Therefore, to avoid an increase of inequalities, there is a need for a regulation and protection for online workers (including from online violence and harassment) and providing social protection and safety nets<sup>[2]</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data-Center>

## Cybersecurity, data protection and privacy issues

There has been an unleashing of misinformation globally due to the COVID-19 crisis, and the Pacific Island countries are not immune. Previous research highlighted how the critical issues of absence of safeguards to protect users online, limited capacity of media to counter falsehoods, and cybersecurity polices/strategies not yet adjusted to the new information space, have led to this situation.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, infodemics have spread, including through the leak of personal data in COVID-19 contact tracing that has led to patients' stigmatization, as well as inability for governments of Pacific Island countries to share official information in an accessible, credible, and consistent manner (e.g. fake government social media accounts, and inelegantly designed governmental websites in English rather than local language).<sup>22</sup> Finally, awareness of cyber safety in the region is low among the general public, with inability to spot fake or misleading online materials, as well as low digital and media literacy among the citizenry.<sup>23</sup>

Data protection and data privacy have been some of the major concerns of governments in the Pacific as countries embrace digital government and adopt digital services. Data protection and privacy frameworks, which are critical to protect citizens, are lacking in the Micronesian countries posing risks to the citizens and institutions. Several countries have requested to assist in creating appropriate policy and legislative frameworks while building awareness and skills inter-alia.

### Inputs from government consultations

From August – November 2021, PUNOs carried out a series of consultations with Government Ministries and counterparts to generate and validate the overall scope of the Joint Programme. Outputs and activities were shared and discussed in detail during the consultation.

Summary of the consultations are as follows:

- Palau: Meetings were undertaken with the Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Public Infrastructure and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Environment to present the JP and gather feedback. The Government of Palau (GoP) confirmed that digital transformation is critically needed to deliver the much needed social and economic transformation for disadvantaged small island communities. The current National ICT Policy for Palau of 2013 also highlights how the country needs to reap the benefits of a whole of government approach to ICT technologies to support the attainment of the SDGs and inclusive development. While GoP is working on updating ICT policy, it also confirmed their interest in introducing a framework for digital transformation that is user centric, and focussed on sustainability, and multi sector collaborations. GoP also expressed keen interest in piloting smart islands with focus on digital skills and digital services. There was also interest from the industry in the programme. Another meeting was also organized by the ILO tripartite committee in Palau chaired by the government where the JP was discussed, covering issues related to digital skills and skills diversification for youth, women and MSMEs.

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<sup>21</sup> [https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-Pacific-COVID-19-Infodemic\\_Jan4.2021.pdf](https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-Pacific-COVID-19-Infodemic_Jan4.2021.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>[1]</sup> See ITU: [Bridging the gender divide, 2021](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> See ILO: [Game Changer: Women and the Future of Work in Asia and the Pacific, 2018](#)

- FSM: National ICT and Telecommunications Policy 2012 guides the ICT policy framework in the country until now. Discussions were held with the Department of Finance, Department of Social Affairs and Department of Research & development with regard to strengthening policy, legislative and strategy framework that benefit communities and vulnerable groups that accelerate achieving SDGs and digital transformation for early childhood development, food security, nutrition, and social protection. The Department of Transport, Communications and Infrastructure expressed a need for mapping of digital policies, legislations, strategies; developing digital transformation policy; supporting data protection and privacy frameworks and expressed a keen interest in piloting Smart Islands. During consultations, synergies with Digital FSM project was also discussed. The FSM Police indicated a need to access low-cost solutions for maritime surveillance to better safeguard marine resources from encroachment by foreign fishing vessels.
- RMI: RMI's ICT policy was last updated in 2012 and needs to be updated to embrace digital transformation. RMI Public School System Act 2013 specifies the achievements of educational goals to include "instruction intended to produce attainment of responsible levels of proficiency in all major academic subjects, including basic communication and computation skills. Discussions were held with the Office of Chief Secretary and the Ministry of ICT regarding strengthening policy, legislative and strategy frameworks that benefit communities and vulnerable groups that accelerate achieving SDGs and digital transformation for early childhood development, food security, nutrition and social protection. RMI expressed a need for mapping of digital policies, legislations, strategies; developing digital transformation policy; supporting data protection and privacy frameworks and expressed a keen interest in piloting Smart Islands. Meetings were also held with the government and experts to explore synergies with the Digital RMI project. Under the National Youth Strategy in RMI, the government endorsed the components in the JP on issues related to skills development for returning migrants as well skills diversification, particularly for youth. The Marshall Islands Police indicated a rapid increase in maritime drug detections in the last two years with possible negative impacts on the fisheries communities. Strengthening of maritime surveillance will support law enforcement and protect fisheries resources.
- Nauru: Several meetings were held with the Ministry of Telecommunications and Media as well as large part of the government. The Government of Nauru expressed a need for mapping of digital policies, legislations, strategies; developing digital transformation policy; supporting data protection and privacy frameworks and expressed a keen interest in piloting Smart Islands. The existing Nauru ICT Policy needs to be updated. The Police Commissioner of Nauru participated in the consultations and explicitly indicated the need to improve maritime surveillance using digital solutions. The Commissioner also explained that the proposed system will positively contribute to the establishment of a new Police Maritime Surveillance centre
- Kiribati: The National ICT Policy was last updated in 2019. In 2021, the country adopted a digital government framework and a national cybersecurity strategy. Additionally, there is the Kiribati 20-year vision, which includes a component on developing ICT infrastructure. Finally, the Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development and State-Owned Enterprises (MICTTD) has a 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, which highlights a number of key objectives around ICT. Consultations were held with various government departments. MICTTD expressed the need to undertake mapping of digital policies, legislations and development of digital transformation policy, data protection and privacy framework. Discussions were held with the Ministry of Education in regard to strengthening policy, legislative and strategy framework that benefit communities and vulnerable groups that accelerate achieving SDGs and digital transformation for early childhood development, food

security, nutrition and social protection. Kiribati has also developed an ICT for Education strategy. Government has also expressed a keen interest in Smart Islands and will like to explore synergies with its ongoing efforts in bringing digital services to communities. In addition, the Kiribati Police Service expressed the need to improve maritime surveillance using low-cost digital solutions to protect the domestic artisanal fisheries sector. Synergies have also been explored with ongoing IFAD projects in Kiribati (Annex 1).

Moreover, in August 2021, FAO in partnership with ITU and the Government of Fiji as the co-host, organized a SIDS Solutions Forum during which heads of states/governments, ministers, farmers, fishers, various civil society groups, the private sector, etc. that discussed agriculture innovation and digitalization. FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau and RMI were fully represented. This proposal is therefore informed by the Forum's recommendations on digital agriculture.

In 2021, FAO completed a forward-looking consultative review of its national programming frameworks 2018-2022 in each these countries, and agriculture innovation and digitalization was highlighted as a key priority by national counterparts. All of the various stakeholder consultations revealed common interest from all countries on developing E agri-food systems strategy and for capacity building on identified elements of this JP. There were also positive interests from all five beneficiary countries to contribute to the telecom connectivity for smart islands pilot.

The issue of sustaining the connectivity in Smart Islands was discussed with the government. The main responsibility of providing connectivity to the islands is with the government while partial support may be considered from this JP for a short period if needed from this JP. During the consultations, the governments and partners have shared their intentions to support the sustainability of connectivity. For example, in Palau, the operator expressed willingness to share spare satellite capacity for the JP. The regulator in Kiribati is also considering to develop a village level digital project that can create synergy with this JP. Sustainability may further be enhanced by adopting a whole-of-government approach with the inclusion of different sectors and agencies which can contribute their budget to connectivity and digital services. It will increase the efficient use of infrastructure, while providing a sustainability model for government and private sector operators beyond the JP. It was also discussed that the focus of this JP digital infrastructure support is not on backbone connectivity, but the local infrastructure needed to provide services (wi-fi hotspots, servers etc.) can be considered under this JP.

### **Discussion with other stakeholders**

Discussions were also held with the private sector, e.g. telecom service providers (Nauru, Palau) as well as other organizations (e.g., employers' organization). For example, in Palau, there was an interest from telecom service providers to support connectivity. The concept of Smart Islands in the Pacific has also been discussed and presented to the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA). Following the finalization of JP, partnerships will be further explored with other private sector entities during the inception phase.

Consultations were held with development agencies. For example, inputs from IOM, IFAD, UNHCHR (who were part of the proposal earlier) are included and the JP proposes to continue engagements with them. IFAD projects relevant to this JP were identified in this JP. Partnerships are also being explored with other UN agencies.

## **1.2 Target groups**

The project envisions the following target groups that will be targeted by the activities and outcomes in this JP.

Target Group	Level	Needs and JP response
Children	National	<p>There is a need to strengthen coordination and implementation of early childhood development, food security and nutrition throughout the Pacific Island countries, as evidenced by Outcome 4 in the UNPS.</p> <p>Therefore, the JP will have activities dedicated to improving multi-sectoral policies for young children, including, but not limited to health, food security and nutrition, early childhood education, and social protection and will also leverage on digital solutions.</p>
Line Ministries and Regulators	National	<p>Line ministries and regulators throughout the Micronesian nations have requested for assistance with digital transformation, especially in light of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. There are also growing concern on data protection and data privacy amongst the countries. A whole of government approach is needed to address this request to enable digital transformation at all levels of government.</p> <p>Therefore, this JP will conduct a stocktake of all digital transformation related policies, legislations, strategies and assist with the development of digital transformation policies (upon request) and selected sectoral policies pursuant to government request. It would also, take into account the international human rights obligations. Capacity building will also be provided to line ministries and regulators to harness the digitalisation initiatives.</p>
Women	National	<p>Gender is a core component of the JP and will be addressed at the policy, digital skills, and digital services level in the programme. Globally, lack of access to equal opportunities to education, business and employment, adverse gender norms and stereotypes continue to inhibit the translation of gender-related policies into action. JP will contribute to review and analysis of existing gender inequality in digital policy, services, and skills, in particular among those who are coming from remote areas with low socio-economic status.</p> <p>To assess the specific challenges and needs of women, women’s groups will be consulted in the development of policies, legislations, strategies and engaged in the implementation of other components of the programme. The governmental and non-governmental partners will be consulted to help identify social geographic, economic and other factors contributing to gender inequality in digital policy, skills and services and possible strategies and interventions to address these inequalities.</p>

		In support of Outcome 1 at policy and strategy level, GEWE CSOs will be engaged in identifying and analysing gender inequalities and in developing possible strategies in concerned sectors.
Journalists, media associations, human rights defenders	National and local	Consultations will be held with journalists, media associations and human rights defenders to assess any existing gaps regarding the right to seek, receive and impart information online, and to determine any legislative and/or policy measures that are needed. These consultations will also explore whether data privacy and protection-related assistance can help these stakeholders in their work.
Communities/villages	Local	<p>Communities at the village level, especially in rural and remote areas, are most at risk of “being left behind”, and face challenges accessing basic services, including education, health care and social services. This challenge is especially pronounced in the digital literacy and digital skills aspects, where those coming online might not have the knowledge to use connectivity meaningfully and safely.</p> <p>Therefore, this JP will utilize the smart islands approach to provide e-services that match the needs of identified village/island, while considering local language and other factors. This will also involve cyber safety awareness enhancement and digital skills development for all (emphasis on vulnerable communities especially women, youth, and persons with disabilities), to ensure they can access digital services and online information safely.</p> <p>An enabling digital environment, which facilitates access information, including through the adoption of access to information legislation, will also enhance government accountability and transparency which will benefit communities.</p>
Women	Local	<p>For women, increased ability to access specific content (e.g., health, finance, education) and digital skills training (e.g., access to various platforms for information and services) can allow for informed decision making at the individual, household and community levels, increased participation in the economy and the society. Through multi-sector digital policy and legislation mapping and review as well as consultation and development of pilot interventions, JP will contribute to increased understanding on sub-groups of women that may be more vulnerable than others, as well as underlying causes contributing to gender inequality, which will be the basis for policy review and strategy development.</p> <p>Therefore, this JP will specifically mainstream a Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach when determining what e-</p>

		<p>services to provide and designing e-services, as well as ensuring that trainings are targeted, specifically with GESI considerations in mind. It will also analyse laws and policies to ensure that the rights of women are protected, including from a data privacy, Rights, Openness, Accessibility to all, Multi-stakeholder participation (ROAM), and human rights approach.</p> <p>In development of pilot interventions under Outcome 2, GEWE CSOs in each country would be consulted and engaged as much as possible, including but not limited in gender analysis, program design, training plan and provision, and monitoring and evaluation.</p>
Children	Local	<p>With education moving online/remote learning, there is a significant risk for children to be left behind or dropping out of school if they are not able to access new educational resources, especially during lockdown and school closure in event of containment measures for COVID-19 pandemic in case of outbreak and high level of local and community transmission in these five countries. High costs of internet access also hinder affordable access to education content.</p> <p>Therefore, this JP will specifically analyse the needs of children and e-learning platforms when designing e-services. For digital skills training, there will be a specific focus on Child Online Protection and cybersafety, to ensure the negative aspects of connectivity can be mitigated to the extent possible.</p>
Persons with Disabilities	Local	<p>There is often a lack of inclusivity when designing ICT services, especially for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Therefore, this JP will specifically consider accessibility concerns with e-services, including from a language standpoint. Options to improve accessibility will be built-in to all e-services and smart islands pilots, where possible.</p>
Farmers, fishermen, and informal workers in the agricultural sector	Local	<p>In Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Kiribati, agriculture, and fishing account for more than 20% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>24</sup> Yet, many family farmers and fishermen continue to face financial insecurity and lack access to modern tools and knowledge to improve their productivity.<sup>25</sup> In addition, many of them lack access to social security schemes, which further contributes to their vulnerability.</p>

<sup>24</sup> World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files. Retrieved from World Bank Data portal [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org) (11.08.2021)

<sup>25</sup> IFAD. (2021). Investing in Rural People in the Pacific Islands. Accessible at: <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40834127/Investing+in+rural+people+in+the+Pacific+Islands.pdf/d6ed649c-4de5-497a-a527-8494d1800a4a> (Accessed: 11.08.2021)

		This JP will empower small-scale farmers and fishermen with digital skills and solutions that would make them more resilient and efficient, contributing to the improvement of their livelihoods as well as the financial security of their families.
Private sector	National and Local	The JP will work with the industry and industry associations to facilitate digital connectivity and delivery of services.  The JP will also partner with Pacific Island Food Revolution and to spin-off the programs targeting the caregivers of young children, adolescents, and women, at schools and communities. This will be amplified through different media platforms.
Academia	Regional and National	The JP will work with academia to impart required trainings and skills.
Donor community/ civil society organizations	Global	The JP will explore SDG financing and will work with donors, development banks, civil society organizations and financial institutions to scale up the programme, strengthen partnership and bring synergies.

### 1.3 SDG targets

The core strategy of this JP is to accelerate efforts across multiple SDGs, leveraging on an inclusive and sustainable digital transformation framework. Especially under the COVID-19 pandemic, digital connectivity has demonstrated its indispensable role in accelerating the achievement of 8 SDGs. This JP will leverage the expertise and strengths of 6 PUNOs specializing in different sectors working together, in line with SDG 17 'Partnerships for the Goals'. Goal 17 also highlights the importance in enhancing the use of enabling technology, policy coherence, and financial resource mobilization, which underpin the design of this JP. This JP will also support the implementation of the Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and Common Agenda

At the sector level, this JP will contribute towards 8 SDGs and 10 targets (Refer Section 4.1).

Fundamentally, there are systematic linkages among these SDGs. What binds them together is the ability to ensure transformative impact through integrated policy frameworks, delivery of digital services and the capacity to harness these opportunities in a safe manner. The JP will help develop a human rights-based, secure, and safe enabling environment for the people, with focus on vulnerable groups, to capitalize on new digital services. It will also demonstrate, through a pilot, the viability of such connectivity and digital service delivery across different SDG targets for investment and financing opportunities.

### 1.4 Stakeholder mapping

The robustness of the integrated digital policy solutions in Micronesian countries depends on the quality of the national and subnational consultations and the participation of the wide range of stakeholders during its design and implementation phases to secure ownership and sustainability.

The following are the key stakeholders and their envisaged roles:

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Involvement, Interest, Relationship</b>
PUNO	<p>Each PUNO is designated to its outputs and activities and accountable for the delivery as per the workplan (Annex 5.3).</p> <p>ITU as the lead UN agency will be responsible for coordination with all PUNOs under the overall leadership of United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC), and partner ministries in the beneficiary countries to achieve the outputs and outcomes of this project. For Palau, FAO and UNOPS will be the key focal point at national level.</p>
United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO)	<p>UNRCO would be leading the strategic coordination with the national governments of the target countries. UNRCO will be monitoring the implementation of the joint programme, with the involvement of Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. UNRCO will also chair the joint steering committee of this Joint Programme and provide strategic guidance.</p>
Government departments (or Telecommunications) and telecommunication regulators	<p>The Ministries of ICT will be the lead government agency focal point for this JP. The Ministries of ICTs (along with telecommunication regulators) will be responsible for articulating the detailed technical assistance needs at the policy level, for selecting island/village for the pilot, and for providing connectivity to the identified pilot village (s) on the island in partnership with service providers and other partners. They will also be responsible for providing project management support (e.g., national level coordination, facilitating meetings, supporting logistics, facilitating required permissions and approvals, etc.) and to support stakeholder buy-in at the local level.</p> <p>Additionally, the Ministry of ICT will have overarching responsibility for coordinating with all national and local level stakeholders, based on a whole-of-government approach.</p> <p>Given that this JP works in a cross-sectoral nature, the provision of e-services and integrated policy frameworks necessitate a whole-of-government approach. The PUNOs will have engagement with their counterpart ministries (e.g., education, agriculture, labour, ICTs) that will be leveraged to ensure that synergies across the departments are harnessed. Identified government departments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- education and communication</li> <li>- agriculture (including fisheries, farming and livestock)</li> <li>- health (especially nutrition)</li> <li>- security (maritime security)</li> <li>- women</li> <li>- Others as relevant</li> </ul>

<p>Village/Island local governments</p>	<p>As the beneficiary of this JP, local governments are vital in identifying connectivity options and the different e-services being posited. Therefore, they will be one of the key points of consultation from the very beginning to engender project buy-in, especially to ensure that connectivity can be harnessed by the most vulnerable in that intervention site. In doing so, ROAM and human rights principles will be important consideration. The Smart Islands pilots require active engagement of the local government in all stages (needs assessment, local level governance, digital skills and awareness, sustainability, space availability amongst others).</p>
<p>Legislative and executive branch</p>	<p>Policy component in this project (Outcome 1), may lead to recommendations that require action from the legislative and executive branches. The programme will work with the relevant counterparts in the government in this area.</p> <p>Additionally, under Outcome 2, smart islands will have a direct effect on villages/ islands in certain Legislator’s districts. Therefore, the project will ensure the relevant legislators are kept appraised, especially in the context of discussions with the local governance structures.</p>
<p>Civil society</p>	<p>Civil society at the national, regional, and local levels is vital towards ensuring that both the integrated policy frameworks and the smart islands approach do not inadvertently entrench pre-existing biases or vested interests. Therefore, they will be consulted, especially as policies are being designed to ensure beneficiary targeting leaves no one behind. There will be a specific focus on civil society working on women’s empowerment issues.</p> <p>Consultations with community groups will be undertaken in refinement and implementation of the programme. Outcome 2 of the JP focuses on delivery of services to community and partnership with community groups will also be explored in addition to consultations. There will be a specific focus on community groups working on women’s and youth empowerment issues.</p> <p>For the implementation and monitoring of this project, governmental and non-governmental Disability Reference Group (DRGs) will play key roles in ensuring inclusive policy and strategy development serving the needs of persons with disabilities and providing relevant training. By working with these existing entities and engaging them in the efforts to strengthen the on-going initiatives, the project will both gain from the previous efforts and achievements as well as ensure sustainability of the project.</p>
<p>Academia</p>	<p>The engagement of Academia is important for undertaking digital skills, conducting studies, providing education content, promoting e-learning, and sustaining the endeavours beyond the joint</p>

	programme period. They will primarily be engaged in the capacity building programs.
Journalists and media associations	Consultations with journalists and media associations are important to assess the enjoyment of the right to seek, receive and impart information online, and to determine the legislative and policy measures that would help facilitate the exercise of this right. They will be consulted during the implementation phase of policy, regulatory and legislative reviews associated with Outcome 2.
Private sector	The project will engage with private sector partners in ICT, communication considering the critical roles they play and contributions. This would include availability and affordability of connectivity, development a delivery of digital services, financing and investing in the digital solutions. Their engagement would also help multi-sectoral collaboration and efficient use of resources. Private sector will also facilitate scale out of these solutions in other countries/ areas.

## 2. Programme Strategy

### 2.1. Overall strategy

#### Background and Context

Promoting inclusive and sustainable development of small island communities is of critical importance in fulfilling the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia and the Pacific region. To achieve these development goals, the Pacific leaders had called on to the United Nations system to “align its work programmes and operations to support internationally agreed outcomes, including the SAMOA Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the Pacific region” (2015 GA res. 69/318).

The UNPS 2018-2022, outlines the collective response of the UN system to the development priorities in 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) across six outcomes and identifies national priorities.

- OUTCOME 1: Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Environmental Protection
- OUTCOME 2: Gender Equality
- OUTCOME 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment
- OUTCOME 4: Equitable Basic Services
- OUTCOME 5: Governance and Community Engagement
- OUTCOME 6: Human Rights

Digitalization cuts across all six of the above outcome areas, which demonstrates the need to promote it in an integrated manner through a whole-of-government approach. The COVID-19 pandemic has further emphasized the urgent need of digital transformation to bridge the digital divide and promote inclusive and sustainable development in the region. The UN Secretary General’s Report on Roadmap for Digital Cooperation notes,

*"As the world grapples with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, it is witnessing first-hand how digital technologies help to confront the threat and keep people connected."*

It recognizes the need for multi-stakeholder efforts and identifies important areas across Global connectivity, Digital Public Goods, Digital Inclusion, Digital Capacity Building, Digital Human Rights, Artificial Intelligence, Digital Trust and Security, and Global Digital Cooperation and the availability of United Nations to serve as a platform for policy dialogue.

The UN Secretary General's Report "[Our Common Agenda](#)" (2021) also emphasizes on the importance of leaving no one behind (digital inclusivity); improving digital cooperation (connecting all people to the Internet including all schools, avoiding Internet fragmentation, protecting data, application of human rights online, introducing accountability criteria for discrimination and misleading content, promoting regulation of artificial intelligence, digital commons as public goods); listening to and working with youth (high-ambition coalition to promote green and digital economy job creation); abide by international law and ensure justice (application of human rights online and to frontier issues and new technology, universal access to the Internet as a human right). In addition, digital transformation also has impacts across other commitments of the UN's Common Agenda.

### **Approach to overall strategy**

Limited access to broadband, digital services and information in remote islands/villages curtails the opportunity for remote islands and villages to advance socio-economic development and improve livelihoods leveraging on digital transformation. The JP aims to improve the policy environment and enhance the capacity of Micronesian countries to leverage digital transformation for socio-economic development while addressing gender disparities, specific needs of persons with disabilities, enhancing youth engagement, protecting data and privacy, improving cybersafety and respecting human rights. In addition to facilitating the policy environment, it aims to demonstrate the impact of multi-sectoral digital intervention and enhance resilience at community level through Smart Islands pilot. The UN partnership in the JP will help accelerate the adoption of digital solutions and services in the identified sectors and among the stakeholders during the next two year and will also provide insights and incentives for synergies for future projects.

The pilot demonstration in this JP will capitalize on the available and tested tools at ITU and other UN agencies, while experimenting the integration of approaches for greater synergies and impact. The policy, legislation and strategy approaches will be guided by international best practices and past experiences. For example, ITU has been actively engaged in advising countries on telecommunication/ICT policies and regulations. FAO and ITU have been working together on developing e-agriculture strategies (based on National e-agriculture strategy guide 26) in several countries and also documenting case studies of emerging technology applications in agriculture 27. UNESCO has assisted countries (including Kiribati) on ICT for Education Masterplan, ITU and World Bank have published Digital Regulation Handbook 28. Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook 29 and Digital Skills Toolkit 30 and Last-mile Internet Connectivity Solutions Guide<sup>31</sup> are references that will be used in the JP. The formulation of multi-sectorial ECD and nutrition related policies and strategies will be guided by international best practices, guidelines and past experience. For example, the Nurturing care framework for ECD: A framework for helping children survive and thrive to transform health and human potential developed by WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank Group. The process will be participatory and informed by national defined standards and dialogues. UNICEF has been supporting developing countries with development of ECD and nutrition related policies and strategies. The policies and strategies will be aligned to sectorial and national development plans and strategies.

ILO will assist countries covered under the JP in meeting the skills needs of the emerging sectors by conducting a globally recognized approach called STED ([Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification](#)) which is expected to play an important role in leading economic and social development. Through its operation, STED approach aims also to develop and strengthen public-private and inter-governmental institutional arrangements among national and sector partners in applying skills anticipation to the governance of skills development systems. To the extent that these are institutionalized, they make the national and sector skills development system more forward-looking and more responsive to the emerging skills needs of the industry.

In the Pacific, Smart Islands programme was piloted in Vanuatu (Smart Islands South [Malekula](#) 32) by ITU and Government of Vanuatu. A preliminary needs assessment of South Malekula village in Vanuatu, undertaken by the ITU as part of its support to the Government of Vanuatu, demonstrates the following outcomes that digital connectivity can positively contribute towards: (i) reliable and quality communication; (ii) training on the use of smartphone and other devices that improve business activities; (iii) improved educational environment, and (iv) improved health environment with digitally literate health workers. The programme has now matured and been adopted by the government in Vanuatu. Since the start of Smart Islands programme in Vanuatu, several partners (e.g. UNCDF, Government of Australia) are supporting its implementation. The policy makers and regulator are keen to improve digital connectivity in the island through Universal Service Policy / other government support. It also attracted significant interests from the ICT community. Since its launch, more than ten countries in the Pacific have expressed their interest in the programme. The Smart Village programme, which adopts a similar approach, is also currently ongoing in Niger and Pakistan.

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26 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/9c7d2a60-1a15-471e-8409-6436824351ba/>

27 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/e-agriculture-in-action.aspx>

28 <https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/D-PREF-TRH.1-2020/>

29 <https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/research-publications/digital-skills-insights/digital-skills-assessment-guidebook>

30 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Youth-and-Children/Pages/Digital-Skills-Toolkit.aspx>

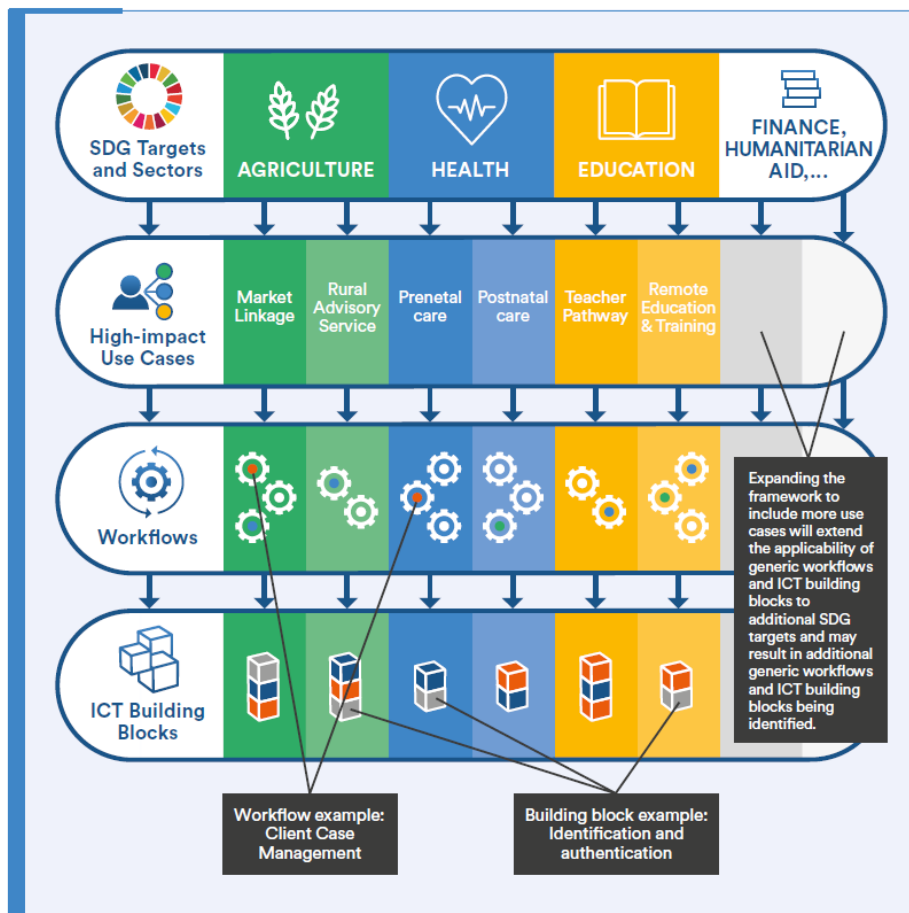
31 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Technology/Pages/LMC/LMC-Home.aspx>

32 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/smart-islands.aspx>

Community networks are not new; in fact there are mixed results and evidence about the effectiveness as a means to sustainably connect unconnected and remote communities. This JP aims to address the previously identified challenges based on the evidence and whole-of-government approach by involving various sectors and stakeholders.

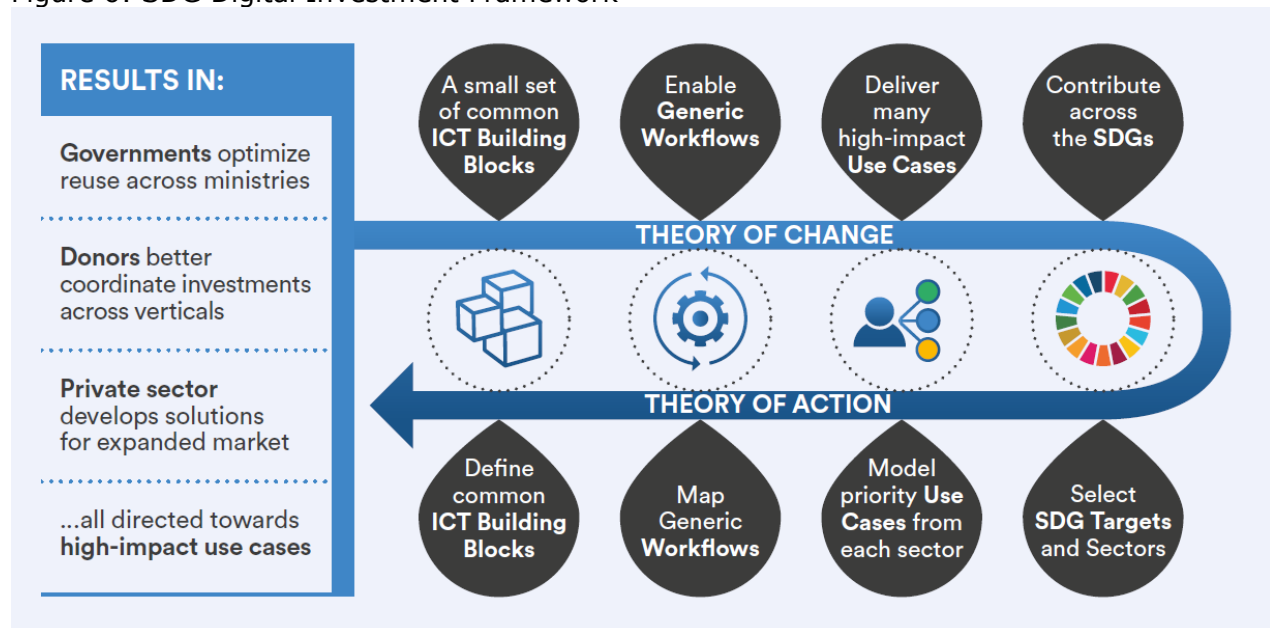
An integrated and holistic planning approach (Figure 5) which takes into account local needs and priorities can support multiple high priority challenges in a more sustainable and effective manner.

Figure 5: Example architectural map using the SDG Digital Investment Framework



Source: SDG Digital Investment Framework: A Whole-of-Government Approach to Investing in Digital Technologies to Achieve the SDGs (<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/ICT4SDG.aspx>)

Figure 6: SDG Digital Investment Framework



An SDG Digital Investment Framework (including some identified sectors) helps governments and their partners to take a whole-of-government approach to invest in shared digital infrastructure to strengthen SDG programming across sectors. It aims at efficient use of digital infrastructure and builds cross-sectoral synergy in implementing whole-of-government approach. It relies on a holistic approach to analyzing ICT needs across multiple sectors to ensure that the necessary ICT Building Blocks are put into place that can support diverse user needs and scale up as needed. Common ICT Building Blocks<sup>33</sup> (e.g., identification, digital payments, registries, data collection, messaging etc.) enable generic business processes, or workflows, that can be combined and repurposed in multiple ways to deliver priority use cases that contribute to SDG Targets (Figure 6).

Examples include, integrated digital skills development programs linking content from multiple sectors with applications and joint awareness and skills programme, utilizing the digital infrastructure to gather data and conduct surveys across sectors, use the infrastructure to deploy new services. In future it would also integrate with digital government initiatives and SDG digital investment framework <sup>34</sup> as countries work to deploy various building blocks. This will help governments optimize reuse across ministries, assist donors better coordinate investments across verticals, and incentivize private sector to develop solutions for expanded market.

The JP also follows up on recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms to countries of the North Pacific, notably the UPR of the Human Rights Council that all five countries have undergone for the third time in 2020 or 2021. Some of the recommendations supported by the States under review urged them to establish more inclusive and resilient systems to ensure that economic and social rights are guaranteed for their populations, to build up their social protection systems in the response to/ recovery from Covid-19 and to

<sup>33</sup> More details on ICT building blocks at <https://www.govstack.global/building-blocks/>  
<sup>34</sup> <https://www.itu.int/pub/D-STR-DIGITAL.02-2019>

ensure the rights to information and to freedoms of expression and assembly/association, including specific recommendations to adopt access to information legislation in accordance with international standards.

Fundamentally, the JP is structured in two components. Component 1 focuses on the enabling environment addressing the ***Policies, Legislations, Regulations and Strategies***, whereas Component 2 is aimed at demonstrating the benefit by adopting the ***smart islands approach***. For both components, an initial 3-6-month Inception Phase is envisioned to establish the pre-requisites (needs assessment study, awareness raising, required digital connectivity, staffing etc.) under both approaches, before moving further into implementation for the remaining 18-21 months. Both components focus on the most vulnerable groups (children, women, youth, persons with disabilities, elderly) not only as a beneficiary but also a contributor in its design.

The overarching strategy to achieve both concurrent components is as follows:

### **Policy, Legislation and Strategy Component**

Under this component, the project will work with governments in partnership with civil society organizations, industry, and academia to improve laws, strategies, regulations and policies through an integrated approach that leaves no one behind, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups in national development efforts. Under component 1 the JP will support policies, legislations, regulations, and strategies that will lead to:

- Improved nutrition through the creation and implementation of digital, food based dietary guidelines, food composition tables and nutrition education; high-impact nutrition intervention framework and training materials for health workers;
- Efficient digital agri-food systems value chain strategies integrated social protection management information system.
- Formulation of High Impact Nutrition Intervention Framework, digitization of the training materials and its roll-out.
- Digitization of healthy diets and recipes, and promotion across interpersonal, mass, and social media platforms
- Improved multi-sectoral coordination mechanism and policy implementation for early childhood development.
- Identification of gaps through policy, legislation, and strategy mapping to embrace digital transformation.
- Improved digital policy framework through development of digital transformation policies and strategies.
- Identification and analysis of laws which need to be amended or adopted to ensure that human rights are fully guaranteed in an online environment.
- Improved enjoyment of human rights in the digital space, including the right to seek and receive information online, through the adoption of right to information and data protection and data privacy normative frameworks;
- Improved employment policy frameworks that support skills development, job creation and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital economy.
- Improved integration and utilization of ICT in education policies and strategies, with an emphasis on equitable access. The JP aims to promote inclusive ICT policy review, update, and implementation in education and communication. It will support training to develop capacity in support of ICT inclusion for disabled persons as well as digital literacy and skills with a focus on vulnerable groups. In this support, UN will utilize the

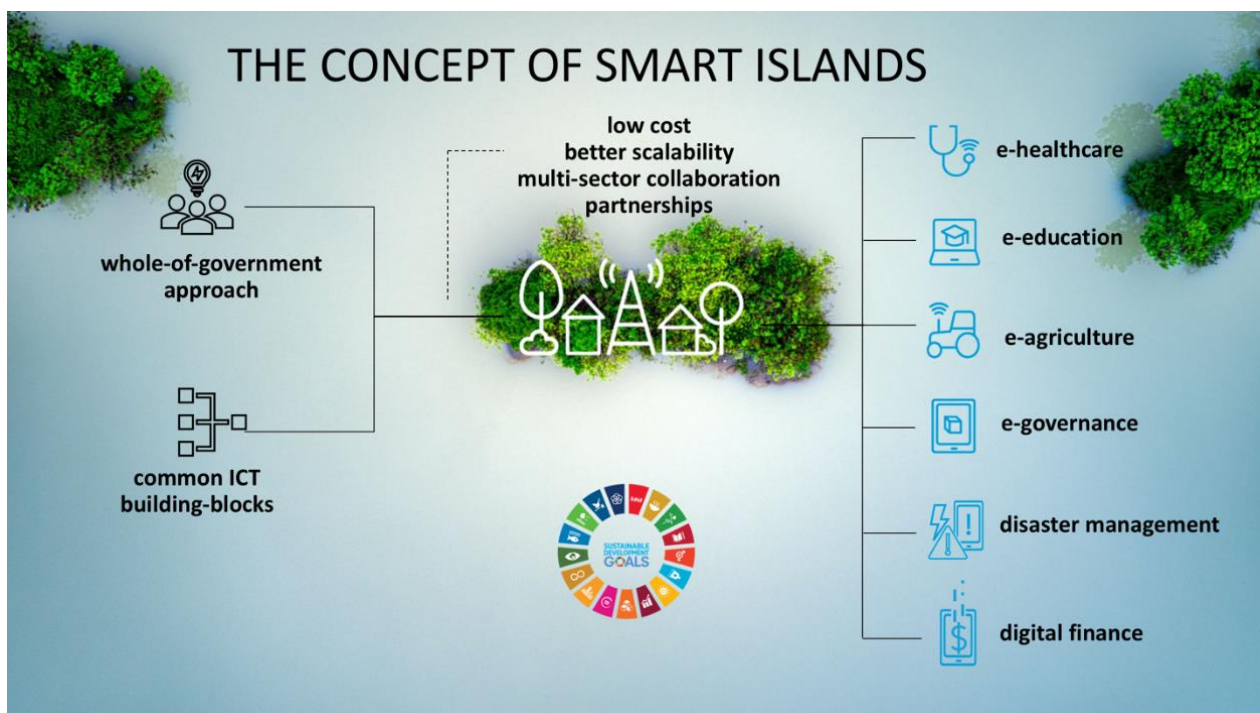
Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Framework (PRIEF) which was formulated through inter-agency and country consultation.

The programme will ensure compliance with international human rights standards, including in relation to the right to seek, receive and impart information as well as the right to privacy, as well as following the ROAM principles.

### Smart islands component

The smart islands<sup>35</sup> is based on a whole-of-government approach. It is demand-driven (Figure 7), user-centric, flexible, and focused on sustainability, scalability, and multi-sector collaboration. It is designed to manifest digital transformation at the community level with an emphasis on vulnerable populations (women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons) to leave no one behind. Annex 3 provides the Smart Islands problem-solution tree. The initiative leverages the four pillars of (i) improving broadband connectivity (ii) making broadband affordable (iii) enhancing digital skills and (iv) providing digital services, to impact people's lives based on their local priorities.

**Figure 7: Cross-sectoral potential applications in smart islands**



The smart islands programme can improve the provision of digital services across various sectors:

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/smart-islands.aspx>



**Health:** the deployment of telemedicine and mHealth services to improve access to diagnosis, while also reducing the cost to the healthcare system. For example, mHealth programmes for diabetes prevention and control could be deployed based on the ITU-WHO joint 'Be Healthy Be Mobile' initiative.



**Education:** access to open and distance learning opportunities will enable capacity building for teachers and education administrators, while also providing equitable access to inclusive quality education, lifelong learning and skills programmes for children, youth, and adults. Local teachers could improve their qualifications and experiences of their students by using engaging education content, curated and uploaded on digital platforms.



**Agriculture:** e-Agriculture services can support efficient and productive farming capabilities among farmers, making rural communities more resilient from both the economic and nutritional standpoints. A specialized app could be provided that would help farmers better access markets or detect and treat pests in a timely manner, based on the analysis of photos taken by conventional smartphones.

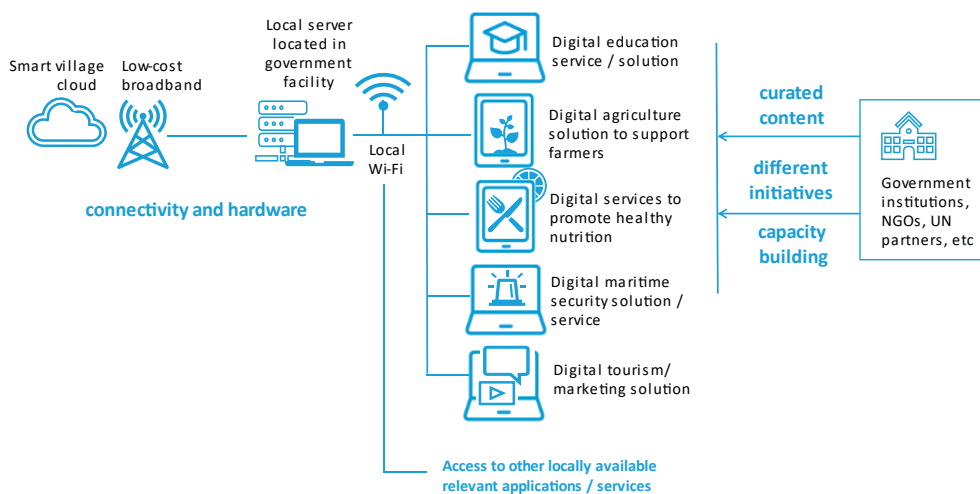


**Digital financial services:** provide access to much needed digital financial services and accelerate financial inclusion goals



**Tourism and fishing:** the applications could support access to e-commerce and e-marketing to improve income opportunities and in turn support livelihoods.

**Figure 8: Smart islands implementation – high level schematic**



The JP envisages provision of village level infrastructure for service delivery (wi-fi hot spots, micro servers with the possibility of some devices/ tablets), it does not aim to provide devices to people at large but create value through adding new services. However, this JP aims to leverage partnerships with private sector companies, development partners and government agencies to facilitate better access to devices and services. Figure 8 highlights some of the digital services that are proposed, which will be further confirmed through needs assessment planned during the inception phase. More details on implementation are provided in Annex 7.

Smart islands programme is designed in three steps (Figure 9). This project JP focuses on Step 1 (Programme development and islands needs assessment) and part of Step 2 (Programme roll out, projects development, governance set up, stakeholder engagement and pilot services. It will also facilitate activities to lead up to Step 3, which focuses on scale out of this programme to other islands as well as introduction of new digitally enabled services beyond the two years through its adoption by the government at the national level and continued engagement of community, public sector, private sector, and donors.

**Figure 9: Smart Islands: 3 Step**



The learnings from the Smart Islands pilot in Vanuatu and experiences of deploying digital solutions in the Pacific can be applied to Micronesian countries given there are common problems and challenges with other countries in the Pacific and the interest and endeavor to leverage digital solutions. It can also draw some insights of deploying digital services in other smart villages programmes (e.g., Niger 36).

In Kiribati, FSM, RMI, Nauru and Palau too as part of this JP, stakeholder analyses and needs assessment will provide a broad list of e-services that will address local challenges meaningfully. These services will be prioritized by importance and local need based on community level study, to create a scalable digital services portfolio that is sustainable. A

36 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/smart-village.aspx>

data driven approach will be undertaken as mentioned earlier. The programme will support (where appropriate) the use of digital data and innovative data collection tools.

It will be supported by the policy component (explained earlier), capacity building, governance mechanism, awareness raising and partnerships that will lead up to its scalability beyond the programme period.

## 2.2 Theory of Change

Post COVID-19, digital solutions have taken centre stage to accelerate SDGs and countries have adopted policies, plans and strategies (including in the Pacific) to accelerate digital transformation. Such cross-sectoral approach in the Micronesian countries is impeded as there is lack of integrated approach at policy and implementation level that addresses the challenges in a holistic manner.

At the policy level, the countries lack

- integrated and coherent policy framework for communities and vulnerable groups, especially for gender and women’s empowerment, multi-sectoral coordination platforms for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, and strengthened systems for maternal and child health and nutrition that facilitate digital transformation.
- coherent digital policy/legal/strategies/frameworks/roadmaps supportive of cross-sectoral and sector-specific digital transformation, based on international human rights standards that ensure gender equality, human rights, openness, accessibility, multi-stakeholder participation, e.g., right to privacy, right to information, freedom of expression, and data protection.
- adequate capacity and knowledge amongst ICT policy and decision makers across sectors (ICTs, education, health, agriculture etc.) to effectively implement digital transformation at national level and adopt whole of government approach.

On the implementation side, the countries

- do not have access to affordable, resilient, and sustainable broadband connectivity, particularly among the vulnerable communities and groups and those at risk of “being left behind”.
- lack adequate availability of and access to digitally enabled services in remote communities.
- do not have the necessary capacity and digital skills (especially among the vulnerable communities and groups) to access and use a range of digitally enabled services.
- lack sufficient identified business cases (national or multi-country level) that can attract private sector investment or donor financing.

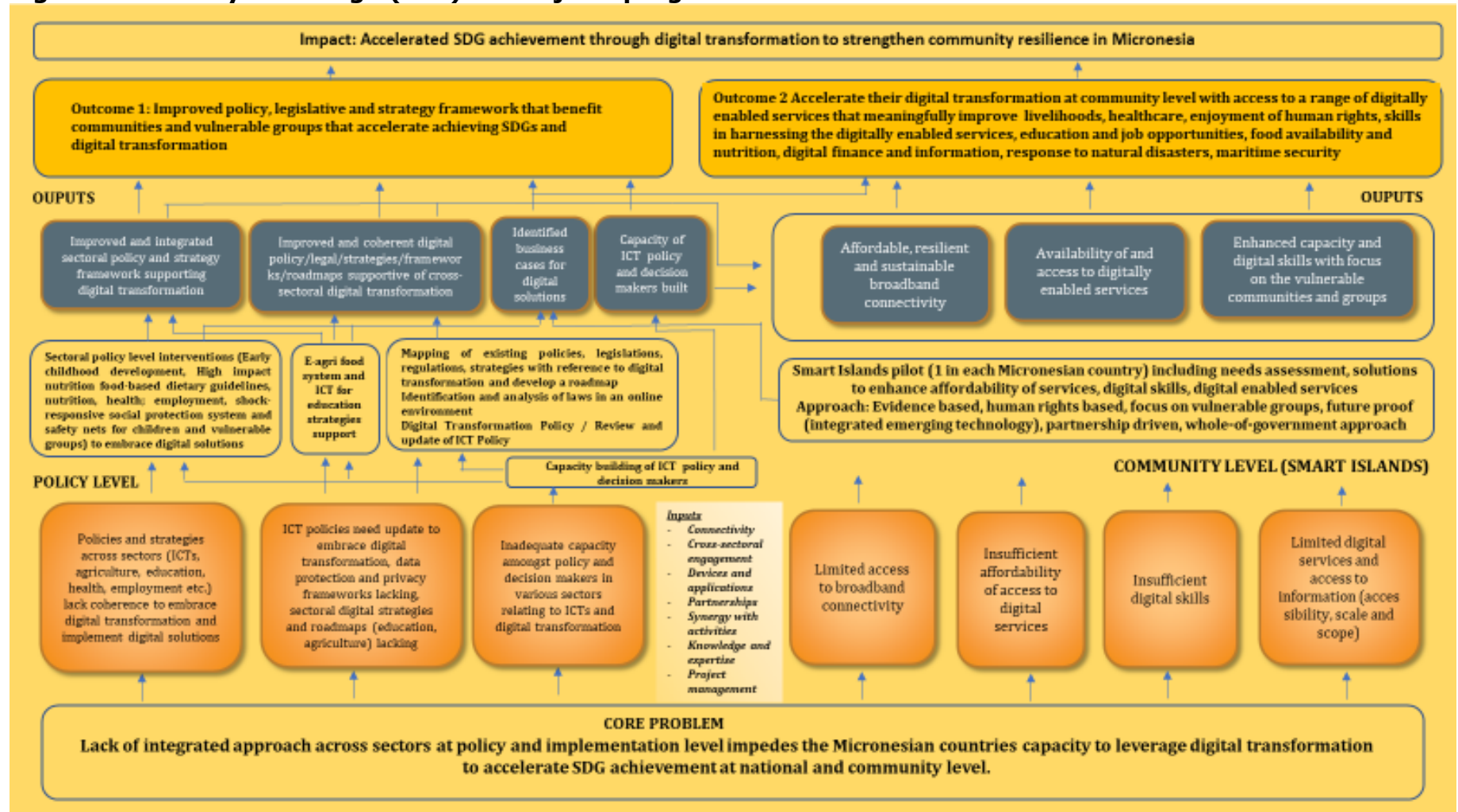
**IF the Micronesian governments are assisted in developing the enabling policy/regulatory/ strategy framework for digital services at national level and communities in identified remote islands/villages are empowered with access to broadband, priority digital services and information, and the required digital skills and awareness, then this JP will enhance the ability of Micronesian states to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs through integrated whole-of-government approach, strengthen community resilience, and augment COVID recovery leveraging on digital transformation. (Figure 10)**

Upon completion of the JP, it is expected that there will be set of policy, legislation, strategies, and frameworks that would be developed for the government to be adopted and the necessary capacity and inter institutional linkages strengthened. The JP is designed for mutual

reinforcement between digital and other sectoral policy and strategy development. Digital policy and strategy should take into account the requirements emanating from sectoral policies and strategies, vice versa. It is believed that such mutual reinforcement would provide a meaningful avenue for a whole of government approach and sectoral synergies.

In addition, there will be positive demonstration of the impact of digital solution at the community level (through pilots) that can be scaled up as national programmes. In addition, the pilot also aims to attract interests from donors and private sector to provide new digital services. At the same time, there would be increased demand for digital solutions (smart islands) from communities as a result of enhanced awareness, skills and visible impact.

**Figure 10: Theory of Change (ToC) of the joint programme**



The assumptions underlying this ToC are:

- There is commitment across the national government stakeholders in the target countries to implement and review the integrated policy solutions during and beyond the joint programme lifespan, which will accelerate SDGs as well as leverage additional financing, in line with the political commitment towards Addis Ababa Action Agenda
- National development strategies and budgets in the target countries are centred on poverty reduction, digital infrastructure, digital services, inclusion, blue investment and resilience and the 2030 agenda
- Civil society, private sector, academia, and development partners remain engaged in addressing gender and social inclusion issues and in promoting human rights and equitable sustainable development.
- The national governments in the target countries agree to adopt policy, legislative, and strategic frameworks proposed and developed by this JP
- The national governments facilitate whole-of-government approach and foster inter agency cooperation to build synergies across ongoing policies, programmes and projects relevant to this JP.
- The national governments agree to allocate resources to support the programme outcomes during and beyond the JP.
- The national governments in the target countries identify suitable islands/villages for the intervention that can take advantage of this programme and agree to scale-up the programme considering the good practices and learnings from the pilots.
- The national governments in the target countries agree to create and staff project management office (PMOs) for the smart islands
- The national governments in the target countries as well as the national stakeholders (e.g. telecom service providers), can support connectivity to the designated smart islands, for the purposes of this intervention and sustain after the end of programme
- The national governments agree to approach financial institutions and investors to invest in pilot program, promote reuse of existing infrastructure, introduce new services (during and beyond JP) and scale out to other islands.
- All stakeholders can agree on local governance structures to manage the Smart Islands pilot
- There is local appetite to adopt connectivity and the e-services contemplated
- Political changes, natural disasters, or worsening COVID-19 pandemic aspects do not delay the creation and roll out of smart islands programme

### 2.3 Expected results and impact

The JP is designed to achieve outcomes at policy and community level. At the end of the programme, it is envisioned that:

- a) the following policy, legislative and strategy framework are enhanced by digital transformation:
  - ECD policy, including capacity building on multi-sectorial coordination and public finance management.
  - High impact nutrition interventions framework and guidelines will be formulated, digitization of training materials and recipes and their promotion in all five countries. Food based dietary guidelines, including integration and adoption of innovation and digitalization in agriculture, food, nutrition, health the environment.

- National employment policies and life-long learning for economic transformation and environmental responsibility.
  - Shock-responsive social protection system and safety nets for children and vulnerable groups.
- b) the digital policy, legislative and strategy framework are improved through
- mapping of existing policies, legislations, regulations, strategies to identify any gaps with reference to digital transformation and develop a roadmap.
  - identification and analysis of laws which need to be amended or adopted to ensure that human rights are fully guaranteed in an online environment, including through consultations with stakeholders and considering relevant recommendations issued by international human rights mechanisms.
  - advocacy and technical support to governments to make progress on improving laws based on the identification of gaps and obstacles that impede individuals to exercise their human rights online.
  - technical assistance on Digital Transformation Policy / Review and update of ICT Policy (cross-sectoral and sector specific as needed).
  - technical assistance on Right to Information and Data Protection and Privacy normative frameworks.
  - technical assistance on development of Digital agri-food systems strategy and ICT for education strategies.
- c) the target population in each of the five villages/islands will have knowledge of, access to, and skills for use of digital services that will allow for an improved quality of life.

The programme will adopt an approach that promotes gender equality at policy and community level. In addition, to address vulnerable population needs, the JP will focus on women, children, youth, and persons with disabilities in both policy and smart islands components.

Smart Islands component specifically engage women in needs assessment, organization of trainings, the design and rollout of digital services to ensure they can be easily accessed and utilized by women, and to reduce the risk of gender-biased design. Programme implementation (as far as practicable) at local level will involve nomination of females from village who will support and preferably supervise service rollout and will be responsible for outreach and inclusion. They will also help form local ICT committees from local women. Together with the female workers, these committees will promote the uptake and the use of services among women and girls in target communities. Evidence from the past projects indicates that female influencers may change perceptions among women and can act as role models for local female community members.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, the enabling policy and legal framework will support the utilization of the benefits from digital transformation across multiple sectors. Specific training programmes addressed to the needs of persons with disabilities. Based on the successful piloting, the JP hopes to catalyse both public and private investment towards replicating this model across other interventions throughout the five Micronesian countries, and also more broadly in the Pacific.

In this first instance, the success of the JP outcomes will build government support for adopting appropriate policy interventions and deploying the solutions in other places that are being/already connected in the country. It will also help other government projects (e.g.,

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<sup>37</sup> IDEO & BMG. *Women & Money: Insights and a Path to Close the Gender Gap*. Accessible at: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d94e54cb06c703e5199d288/t/5ddd853c238a18316c54b560/1574798673/537/Women\\_Money\\_Global\\_Report\\_11.26.pdf?page34](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d94e54cb06c703e5199d288/t/5ddd853c238a18316c54b560/1574798673/537/Women_Money_Global_Report_11.26.pdf?page34) (Accessed: 11.08.2021)

digital government) to integrate with the whole-of-government approach here and test new services. The five countries will improve investment opportunities by identified business cases to invest in digital solutions in line with UN Guiding principles on Business and Human Rights and by awareness raising stakeholder’s workshops and meetings on digital transformation opportunities in Micronesian countries.

The JP will have the following outcomes and outputs.

**Outcome 1: Improved policy and legislative framework that benefit communities and vulnerable groups that accelerate achieving SDGs and digital transformation.**

- **Output 1.1:** Improved and integrated sectoral policy and strategy framework for communities and vulnerable groups, especially for gender and women’s empowerment, building on multi-sectoral coordination platforms for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, and strengthened systems for maternal and child health and nutrition supporting digital transformation.
- **Output 1.2:** Improved and coherent digital policy/legal/strategies/frameworks/roadmaps supportive of cross-sectoral and sector-specific digital transformation, based on international human rights standards that ensure gender equality, Human Rights, Openness, Accessibility, Multi-stakeholder participation, e.g., right to privacy, right to information, freedom of expression, and data protection.
- **Output 1.3:** Enhanced capacity among ICT policy and decision makers and regulators to adopt a whole of government approach with key stakeholders, focusing on vulnerable groups and gender equality on digital transformation, which in turn enhances the enjoyment of a range of human rights while ensuring cyber safety
- **Output 1.4:** Identified business cases to invest in digital solutions in line with UN Guiding principles on Business and Human Rights, that highlight the empowerment of women.

**Outcome 2: Accelerate digital transformation at community level with access to a range of digitally enabled services that meaningfully improve livelihoods, healthcare, enjoyment of human rights, skills in harnessing the digitally enabled services, education and job opportunities, food availability and nutrition, digital finance and information, response to natural disasters, maritime security.**

- **Output 2.1:** Improved access to affordable, resilient, and sustainable broadband connectivity, particularly among the vulnerable communities and groups and those at risk of “being left behind”, while facilitating the empowerment of women.
- **Output 2.2:** Increased availability of and access to digitally enabled services with integration of emerging technologies and data driven decision making, which also supports law enforcement reach (including improved protection of vulnerable groups and maritime protection) while ensuring the protection of privacy and progressing gender equality
- **Output 2.3:** Enhanced capacity and digital skills among the vulnerable communities and groups to access and use a range of digitally enabled services, taking into account changing skills needs generated by the development of broadband connectivity and digital transformation, and the empowerment of women.

**2.4 Financing**

This programme is vital in SDG acceleration and setting up a holistic digital transformation framework driven by whole of government approach and integrated planning at policy and delivery level among the beneficiary countries.

The JP will enable financing through improved enabling environment, reducing the policy and regulatory risks, identification of investment opportunities. Additionally, it has the power to attract private sector (telecom, service providers from other sectors using digital solutions) and donor agencies (World Bank, ADB, UNCDF, and IFAD) in investing in digital development in various sectors. and scaling out the model in scale (to other islands) and scope (adding digital services from other sectors not covered under the JP). It will also encourage the governments and private sector to finance new services and solutions that build on the infrastructure and awareness developed. For example, partnership discussions with IFAD are being ongoing for synergy with other projects in the region.

The JP will aim at long term sustainability for smart islands e-services. E-services will be provided considering realistic and practical plan for them to continue after the two-year lifespan of this project, whether that be through government or private/commercial funding. The financial sustainability of digital services will be enhanced by reusing the infrastructure, awareness, and skills to deliver new services. This will be institutionalized at the planning and identification stage of every digital service, prior to the actual creation of said service.

As the programme will emphasize on the importance of improved access to digital connectivity and services in remote and unconnected islands, it will act as a catalyst to raise government budgets through mechanisms such as Universal Service Obligation (USO) and. or other policy mechanisms. In Vanuatu (Smart Islands) and Pakistan (Smart Villages), keen interest has been taken by agencies responsible for universal service in this regard to support digital infrastructure.

With the support of the PUNOs the JP will aim at sustaining the JP activities and if possible, replicating and expanding the scope of activities beyond the initial 5 islands/villages. JP partners will work as One UN to outreach to donors and other investors about the potential of this JP approach in their respective sectoral networks and partners. The success of this JP will also create incentive amongst UN agencies / development partners / partners to build future joint programmes and / or use other projects to further scale up this programme. A specific report on identifying investment business cases is also planned under the JP to attract financing and investment.

## **2.5 Partnerships and stakeholder engagement**

The JP will rely on the premise of institutional ownership and leadership by the governments, with a view to supporting a sustainability model beyond the operational and funding date of the project. It will nurture government ownership through participatory processes in the design, implementation and assessment of the activities. It will also engage a range of stakeholders (refer section 1.2 and 1.4) and partners (refer section 16.2). This participatory approach in capacity development is a core approach of the United Nations.

This JP will have implementation led at the top level by each country's Ministry of ICT as the key focal point. The Ministry of ICT will coordinate among sectoral line ministries and other regulators to determine priority needs for this JP, including the policy technical assistance needs as well as the prioritization of e-services. PUNOs specializing in their specific sectors (FAO, ILO, ITU, UNICEF, UNESCO) and technical partner (UNODC) will work with respective

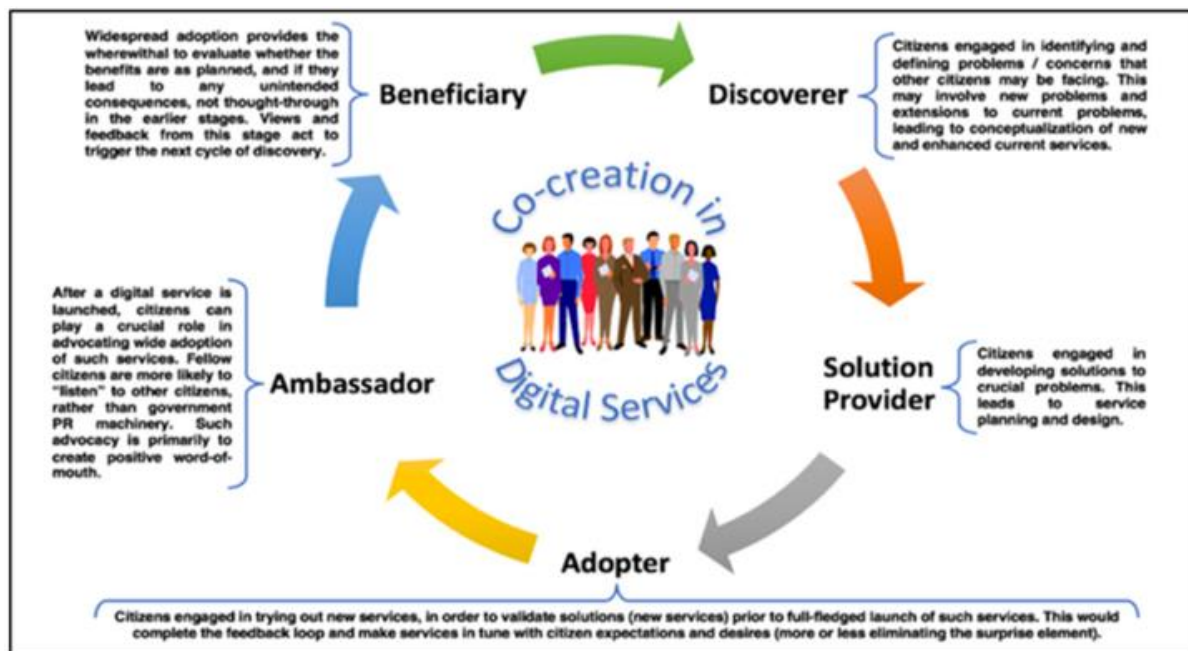
line ministries to facilitate commitment to the common national goal. It will also benefit from partnership with other UN agencies supporting projects and programmes on digital transformation.

**Local and national government engagement:** The programme seeks to maintain active engagement through the lifetime of the programme and develop mechanisms that sustain engagements beyond the JP. One of the core objectives of the programme is to gradually transfer the ownership of services to government institutions. Service owners, which are often government ministries, are responsible for setting the requirements of a sector specific service e.g., health, agriculture, etc., monitoring its deployment, analyzing collected data, and deciding on courses of action. These roles will assume the following responsibilities:

- a. Managing domain services for each of the sectors e.g., in health, education and agriculture which fall under the jurisdiction of respective government ministries.
- b. Managing domain content for each of the sectors e.g., in health, education and agriculture, which will fall under the jurisdiction of respective government ministries.

**Citizen engagement:** The programme will also seek to actively engage with citizens and local civil organizations to maintain their involvement in and beyond design of the initial solution.

**Figure 11: Citizen engagement in digital services**



**Private sector engagement:** Additionally, the government will also choose the island or village for the smart islands pilot that has (or can be provided) a requisite level of connectivity that can be harnessed for the smart islands programme. Discussions were also held with private sector on the provision of connectivity as mentioned in Section 1.1. The concept of smart islands have also been discussed and presented to Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association as well as to other organizations (e.g. employers organization). Following the finalization of JP, partnerships will be explored with private sector during the inception phase.

Partnership with national government and telecom service providers is also envisaged. Private sector engagement will be sustained through the building of favourable ecosystem/environment that both benefits from development of local solutions and encourages their emergence and growth. An example could be a digital solution for e-marketing. Such solutions would both support local businesses by providing a practical tool for growing the client base and encourage these businesses to invest in promotion and upgrading of that platform which would create demand for various types of services (creative content production, web design and development, etc.). It would also facilitate in identifying business cases. In addition, the JP outcomes and opportunities will be presented and discussed at forums such as PITA events, where private sector from the Pacific linked with ICT engage actively.

Beyond PUNOs, national governments, citizens and UN agencies, the JP expects strategic contributions from other partners, including ongoing projects already in the region. Additionally, the JP envisions coordination with civil society stakeholders. This is especially pertinent for other donor programmes that foster connectivity, including World Bank (in FSM and RMI in particular) and Asian Development Bank programmes in the Pacific Island countries. This will also facilitate engagement with Joint SDG fund donors who are present in the Micronesian countries, to ensure synergy with pre-existing initiatives while promoting visibility of this JP. UNICEF in partnership with FAO and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) will closely work with World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Australian government, and New Zealand government to complement existing programmes on early childhood development, food security, nutrition and social protection.

### 3. Programme implementation

#### 3.1 Governance and implementation arrangements

The programme will be a joint programme, designed according to the guidelines provided in the UN guidance note on joint programmes. With six different PUNOs involved spanning five countries, there is a need for a focused, clear implementation and governance arrangement (Figure 12).

The UNRC Pacific Islands will have a key role to play. ITU will be the point of contact for managing relationships with the government focal points for this JP in each country and in doing so will work closely with UNRCO.

While the ITU will be the lead agency, FAO and UNOPS would facilitate the implementation in Palau. All PUNOs and technical partners will be working in a coordinated manner bringing their own sectoral knowledge. Additionally, while the intra-governmental coordination will be done by the Ministries of ICT, PUNOs can coordinate with their respective line ministries to assist with stakeholder engagement to address the concerned policy and e-services needs.

The ITU as the UN specialized agency for ICTs has knowledge and expertise on a range of ICT and digital issues across various digital transformation elements ITU is actively engaged with countries and sub-regional organizations in the Pacific. ITU has been promoting Smart Village Blueprint<sup>38</sup>, GovStack, digital government and applications<sup>39</sup>, digital inclusion<sup>40</sup>,

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<sup>38</sup> [https://www.itu.int/dms\\_pub/itu-d/opb/str/D-STR-SMART\\_VILLAGE.NIGER-2020-PDF-E.pdf](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/str/D-STR-SMART_VILLAGE.NIGER-2020-PDF-E.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/digital-government.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/digital-inclusion/>

cybersecurity<sup>41</sup>, child online protection<sup>42</sup> and capacity development<sup>43</sup> among other relevant topics.

FAO has ongoing projects in these countries and will therefore draw on the existing partnerships with the ministries of agriculture, health, and education to contribute to the implementation of this project. Beyond partnerships and collaboration, FAO's comparative advantage is in agriculture, nutrition, and climate change resilience over which it is currently working with these governments. Under this project, FAO will lead over the digitalization of agriculture, nutrition, and climate change resilience. FAO will also bring in experiences from its digital village initiative. The digitalization of agriculture, nutrition, health and the environment are key priorities for which the countries have approached FAO.

ILO's participation will benefit from the current initiative in supporting the formulation of national employment policies in the Micronesian Pacific Island countries, supported by stakeholders' consultation and action plan for implementation. The support of the ILO helps to prioritize areas for resilience-building through the promotion of skills diversification with special focus on digital skills, business development services, entrepreneurship, and decent employment. In the immediate term, this support will help to strengthen the national economies in the North Pacific to reactivate labour markets and getting people back to work with some protection measures. On the longer term, ILO will support countries to find ways toward safeguarding themselves against labour market vulnerabilities that were revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and addressing trends shaping the world of work, including climate change. This requires reorienting national employment policies towards promoting a more job-rich and resilient recovery.

UNESCO will support enabling environment and capacity building to promote equitable access to information by all, in particular among the vulnerable populations, those coming from remote, low socio-economic communities, and persons with disabilities. UNESCO will bring in cross-sectoral assistance in education and communication/information to build on countries' efforts in integrating ICT in education through teaching and learning processes, administration, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning and support inclusive digital transformation and technologies for quality education.

UNICEF will either utilize the existing SDG/national planning and monitoring committee or establish a technical committee to coordinate and implement this joint programme. UNICEF will closely work UN agencies and line government ministries to review and strengthen evidence based integrated multi-sectorial policies focusing on early childhood development, early learning, food security, nutrition, and social protection. UNICEF will also leverage on ground presence in FSM and existing partnership with World Bank, FAO, IFAD and ADB. UNICEF will continue working with Ministries of Health for ensuring high impact nutrition intervention framework are formulated and implemented, as well as build on its current partnership with Pacific Island Food Revolution and other communication platforms in the five countries to digitize and promote healthy and nutritious diets.

UNOPS, will facilitate pilots implemented under the responsibility of the lead agency across 5 countries (outcome 2) by procuring and delivering good to the PUNO in charge of the pilot implementation. UNOPS will operate in collaboration with ITU, other UN agencies, project partners and national governments. UNOPS will also support overall activities with Human Resources, and procurement expertise, aimed at accelerating the delivery of the programme

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/cybersecurity/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP.aspx>

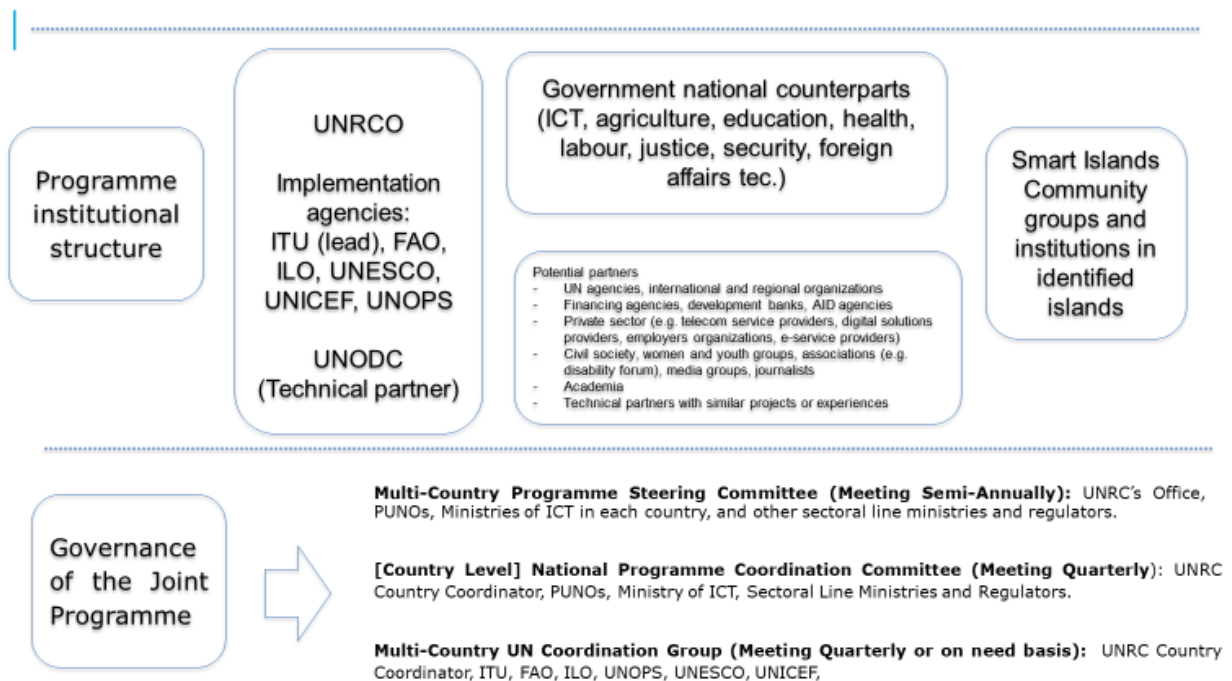
<sup>43</sup> <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/capacity-development/>

through targeted operational support. UNOPS presence across Micronesia has grown steadily since 2018, with ongoing activities in Palau, FSM, and RMI in the areas of infrastructure development and procurement. UNOPS will coordinate activities in Palau, together with FAO. UNOPS will manage the activity on maritime security in the JP where UNODC will be the technical partner.

UNODC already has the active Global Maritime Crime Programme in the Pacific to strengthen maritime domain awareness (MDA) capability to counter illicit activity at sea. UNODC provided new equipment to upgrade maritime surveillance centers in Cook Island, Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga and Tuvalu. In addition, installed a x-band coastal radar in Tarawa Island in Kiribati. UNODC has provided near real-time access to satellite AIS vessel entry alert system to Forum of Fisheries agencies (FFA), Cook Island, French Polynesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. Further to this UNODC in partnership with the Pacific Island countries' Chiefs of Police (PICP) and Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC) provide regular training in maritime investigation and MDA analysis to law enforcement personnel in the Pacific.

UNHCHR has actively contributed towards the development of the programme documents from international human rights mechanisms such as the UPR to adopt appropriate laws and policies. In addition, contributions have also been received from IOM and IFAD.

Figure 12: JP institutional structure and governance



### Governance of the Joint Programme

The governance of the JP will entail mechanisms for coordination at the multi-country level, national level and participating UN agency level, consisting of the below mechanisms.

## **Multi-Country Coordination Mechanism**

At the multi-country level, there will be the following committee that is responsible for overarching joint programme coordination across the five countries.

**Multi-Country Programme Steering Committee (Meeting Semi-Annually):** UNRC's Office, PUNOs, Ministries of ICT in each country, and other sectoral line ministries and regulators.

This steering committee will be chaired by UNRCO. The committee is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction of the JP across five countries. The steering committee will provide overall quality assurance, approve workplans, monitor progress and reporting. It is expected to focus on partner and donor outreach, as well as to provide lessons learned for joint programming across all five countries. It will also be a key conduit in highlighting the JP's potential and where new funding opportunities can be leveraged to further expand the JP beyond its initial pilot intervention sites.

## **National Coordination Mechanism**

From a coordination standpoint, in each country, there will be the following committees / Groups for decision-making and coordination:

**[Country Level] National Programme Coordination Committee (Meeting Quarterly):** UNRC Country Coordinator, PUNOs, Ministry of ICT, Sectoral Line Ministries and Regulators.

At the country level, this committee is tasked to discussing the project's quarterly and annual workplan and to stock-take on implementation progress. This committee will be co-chaired by the government representative and lead agency. The project implementation team will report to this Project Steering Committee, and to report on progress made and any issues that may arise. It will also serve as an opportunity for the governments to troubleshoot any issues that may have been raised over the past quarter's implementation, and potential ways to rectify these concerns.

## **Coordination amongst PUNOs**

**Multi-Country UN Coordination Group (Meeting Quarterly or on need basis):** UNRC Country Coordinator, ITU, FAO, ILO, UNOPS, UNESCO, UNICEF,

This Group is responsible for programme coordination at technical and programming level amongst PUNOs. The group will be chaired by Lead Agency (ITU). PUNOs are listed as responsible for achieving certain activities and outputs per the log frame, and this committee will be utilized to check status, identify synergies (multi country or national level) and provide feedback on any issues that may arise.

While the above committees and groups are structured to provide regular coordination outlets, it is expected that ad-hoc coordination groups will be set up amongst concerned PUNOs on needs basis combining a set of common activities separate from these events.

## **3.2 Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation**

Reporting on the Joint SDG Fund will be results-oriented, and evidence based. Each PUNO will provide the Convening/Lead Agency with the following narrative reports prepared in accordance with instructions and templates developed by the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, this JP will provide the below report:

- *Annual narrative progress reports*, to be provided no later than one (1) month (31 January) after the end of the calendar year, and must include the result matrix, updated risk log, and anticipated expenditures and results for the next 12-month funding period;
- *Mid-term progress review report* to be submitted halfway through the implementation of Joint Programme<sup>44</sup>; and
- *Final consolidated narrative report*, after the completion of the joint programme, to be provided no later than two (2) months after the operational closure of the activities of the joint programme.

ITU, as the Convening/Lead Agency, will compile the narrative reports of PUNOs and submit a consolidated report to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, through the Resident Coordinator.

The Resident Coordinator will be required to monitor the implementation of the joint programme, with the involvement of Joint SDG Fund Secretariat to which it must submit data and information when requested. As a minimum, joint programmes will prepare, and submit to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, 6-month monitoring updates. Additional insights (such as policy papers, value for money analysis, case studies, infographics, blogs) might need to be provided, per request of the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. The joint programme has adequately allocated resources to undertake monitoring and evaluation in the budget.

Data for all indicators of the results framework will be shared with the Fund Secretariat on a regular basis, in order to allow the Fund Secretariat to aggregate results at the global level and integrate findings into reporting on progress of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs will be required to include information on complementary funding received from other sources for the activities supported by the Fund, in the reporting done throughout the year.

PUNOs at Headquarters level shall provide the Administrative Agent with the following statements and reports prepared in accordance with its accounting and reporting procedures, consolidate the financial reports, as follows:

- Annual financial reports as of 31st December each year with respect to the funds disbursed to it from the Joint SDG Fund Account, to be provided no later than four months after the end of the applicable reporting period; and
- A final financial report, after the completion of the activities financed by the Joint SDG Fund and including the final year of the activities, to be provided no later than 30 April of the year following the operational closing of the project activities.

In addition, regular updates on financial delivery might need to be provided, per request of the Fund Secretariat.

After completion of this JP, a final, *independent and gender-responsive*<sup>45</sup> evaluation will be organized by the Resident Coordinator. The cost has been budgeted, and in case there are no

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<sup>44</sup> This will be the basis for release of funding for the second year of implementation.

<sup>45</sup> [How to manage a gender responsive evaluation, Evaluation handbook, UN Women, 2015](#)

remaining funds at the end of the joint programme, it will be the responsibility of PUNOs to pay for the final, independent evaluation from their own resources.

The programme will be subject to a joint final independent evaluation with an established arrangement for managing the joint evaluation. The final evaluation will be managed jointly by the PUNOs as per established process for independent evaluations, including use of a joint evaluation steering group and dedicated evaluation managers not involved in the implementation of the joint programme. The evaluations will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, using the guidance on Joint Evaluation and relevant UNDG guidance on evaluations.

The management and implementation of the joint evaluation will have due regard to the evaluation policies of the PUNOs to ensure the requirements of those policies are met; and with use of appropriate guidance from PUNOs on joint evaluation. The evaluation process will be participative and will involve all relevant programme's stakeholders and partners. Evaluation results will be disseminated amongst governments, donors, academic institutions and stakeholders of civil society (including workers' and employers' organizations) and a joint management response will be produced upon completion of the evaluation process to be made publicly available on the evaluation platforms or similar of the PUNOs and through the UNEG database.

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system will be developed following the logical framework and result based management system. The M&E system shall take into account participatory monitoring approach, gender perspectives, and community-based needs. The primary data collected through needs assessment will be used as a baseline to guide activity planning and monitor the implementation of this JP.

Once the beneficiary communities are connected through the JP interventions, it is expected that new data collection methods will be possible which will provide more granular data on network and application usage, while available secondary data will be used to offset data gaps and for triangulation.

### **3.3 Accountability, financial management, and public disclosure**

The JP will be using a pass-through fund management modality where UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will act as the Administrative Agent (AA) under which the funds will be channelled for the JP through the AA. Each PUNO receiving funds through the pass-through has signed a standard Memorandum of Understanding with the AA.

Each PUNO shall assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent of the Joint SDG Fund (Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office). Such funds will be administered by each UN Agency, Fund, and Programme in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures. Each PUNO shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.

Indirect costs of the Participating Organizations recovered through programme support costs will be 7%. All other costs incurred by each PUNO in carrying out the activities for which it is responsible under the Fund will be recovered as direct costs.

Funding by the Joint SDG Fund will be provided on annual basis, upon successful performance of the joint programme.

Procedures on financial transfers, extensions, financial and operational closure, and related administrative issues are stipulated in the Operational Guidance of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs and partners must comply with Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, which includes information on donor visibility requirements<sup>46</sup>.

Each PUNO will take appropriate measures to publicize the Joint SDG Fund and give due credit to the other PUNOs. All related publicity material, official notices, reports and publications, provided to the press or Fund beneficiaries, will acknowledge the role of the host Government, donors, PUNOs, the Administrative Agent, and any other relevant entities. In particular, the Administrative Agent will include and ensure due recognition of the role of each Participating Organization and partners in all external communications related to the Joint SDG Fund.

### **3.4 Legal context**

#### **Republic of Marshall Islands**

Agency name: UNESCO  
Agreement title: 20 C/Resolutions, pp. 116-19, [Basic Texts](#)  
Agreement date: 30/06/1995

Agency name: UNICEF  
Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement  
Agreement date: 1996

Agency name: UNODC  
RMI on 15 June 2011 completed accession to the 2000 UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and a basis for UNODC support.

Agency name: FAO  
Agreement Title: Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2022  
Agreement date: October 2017

Agency name: UNOPS  
Agreement Title: Exchange of Letters  
Agreement date: 12/04/21

#### **Federated States of Micronesia**

Agency name: UNESCO  
Agreement title: 20 C/Resolutions, pp. 116-19, [Basic Texts](#)  
Agreement date: 19/10/1999

Agency name: FAO  
Agreement Title: Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2022  
Agreement date: October 2017

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.jointsdgfund.org/resources>

Agency name: UNICEF  
Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement  
Agreement date: 1996

Agency name: UNODC  
FSM on 24 May 2004 completed accession to the 2000 UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and a basis for UNODC support.

Agency name: UNOPS  
Agreement Title: Exchange of Letters  
Agreement Date: 18/09/2020

### **Kiribati**

Agency name: UNESCO  
Agreement title: 20 C/Resolutions, pp. 116-19, Basic Texts  
Agreement date: 24/10/1989

Agency name: FAO  
Agreement Title: Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2022  
Agreement date: October 2017

Agency name: UNICEF  
Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement  
Agreement date: 25 June 2008

Agency name: UNODC  
Kiribati on 15 Sept 2005 completed accession to the 2000 UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and a basis for UNODC support.

### **Nauru**

Agency name: UNESCO  
Agreement title: 20 C/Resolutions, pp. 116-19, Basic Texts  
Agreement date: 17/10/1996

Agency name: FAO  
Agreement Title: Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2022  
Agreement date: October 2017

Agency name: UNICEF  
Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement  
Agreement date: 21 May 2004

### **Palau**

Agency name: FAO  
Agreement Title: Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2022  
Agreement date: October 2017

Agency name: UNESCO

Agreement title: 20 C/Resolutions, pp. 116-19, Basic Texts

Agreement date: 20/09/1999

Agency name: UNICEF

Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement

Agreement date: 6 October 1997

Agency name: UNOPS

Agreement Title: Host Country Agreement

Agreement date: 23/09/2019

## D. ANNEXES

### Annex 1. List of related initiatives

Name of initiative/project	Key expected results	Links to the joint programme	Lead organization	Other partners	Budget and funding source	Contract person (name and email)
Development of Satellite Communications Capacity and Emergency Communications Solutions for the Pacific Islands (end 2020)	Providing connectivity to islands to provide digital services	Satellite terminals under the project can potentially be deployed for connecting smart Islands (FSM, Nauru and Kiribati).	ITU	Ministry of ICTs	Project ended but some satellite terminals can be deployed	Aamir Riaz (aamir.riaz@itu.int)
ITU Asia-Pacific regional initiatives Project	<a href="https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/regional-initiatives.aspx">https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Pages/regional-initiatives.aspx</a>	The Asia-Pacific regional initiative has several programs and projects that can complement this joint programme.	ITU	ITU Members and several partners	The current Asia-Pacific Regional Initiative project will continue until 2022. ITU and Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Australia).	Ashish Narayan (ashish.narayan@itu.int)
Kiribati, RMI	Strengthening nutrition and food safety	Digital agriculture and nutrition	FAO	SPC and government ministries	\$300,000 FAO	Xiangjun Yao <a href="mailto:Xiangjun.yao@fao.org">Xiangjun.yao@fao.org</a>
Palau	Strengthening agriculture production	Digital agriculture and climate change resilience	FAO	Government ministries	\$300,000	Xiangjun Yao <a href="mailto:Xiangjun.yao@fao.org">Xiangjun.yao@fao.org</a>
IFAD Kiribati Outer Islands Food and Water Project	Enhancing farmers capacity of to produce food and store water in the outer islands	Satellite terminals under the project can potentially be deployed for connecting smart islands in Kiribati	IFAD	Ministry of Environment of Agriculture, Environment	US\$4,5m	s.tubuna@ifad.org
Small Islands Food and water Project	Enhancing farmers capacity to reduce fragility by enhancing traditional	Satellite terminals under the project can potentially be deployed for connecting	IFAD	GAFSP	US\$15.04m	s.tubuna@ifad.org

Name of initiative/project	Key expected results	Links to the joint programme	Lead organization	Other partners	Budget and funding source	Contract person (name and email)
	food systems and water storage in the outer islands	smart islands in Kiribati, FSM and RMI				
World Bank ECD Project	Strengthening policy, planning and service deliver at national and sub-national level for early childhood development	World Bank project will compliment this JP in RMI to strengthening ECD multi-sectorial coordination and build national system and capacity for early childhood development	World Bank/ Government of Marshall Islands	UNICEF	USD 10 million	Kino Kabua : <a href="mailto:dcskabua.rmi@gmail.com">dcskabua.rmi@gmail.com</a>
Smart islands support to Vanuatu	ITU continues to assist the Government of Vanuatu in planning, design and implementation of smart islands. This project leverages the smart islands methodology per Outcome 2 of this Joint Programme, and its ongoing lessons learned will feed into the implementation of this Joint SDG Fund programme	Outcome 2 of JP	ITU	Government agencies, UN agencies		Ashish.narayan@itu.int
GIGA	UNICEF ITU initiative to connect all schools ( <a href="https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Initiatives/GIGA/Pages/default.aspx">https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Initiatives/GIGA/Pages/default.aspx</a> )	Outcome 1 and 2	ITU UNICEF	Partners		
Kiribati ICT in Education Master Plan	Development of costed 5 year master plan to assist implementation of policy	Outcome 1	UNESCO	Related government agencies		NyiNyi Thaug Nn.thaug@unesco.org
Inclusive Economic Recovery through Sustainable Enterprises in the Informal Economies of Fiji, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu	This ILO led UN joint project is a COVID-19 recovery project funded by UN Secretary General's Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). Targeting informal sector enterprises and workers in the creative industries and the agriculture sector, the	Outcome 1 and 2	ILO, UNESCO, UNDP, IFAD		UN MPTF	bernard@ilo.org

Name of initiative/project	Key expected results	Links to the joint programme	Lead organization	Other partners	Budget and funding source	Contract person (name and email)
	project is implemented jointly by UN agencies.					

## Annex 2. Overall Results Framework

### 2.1. Targets for Joint SDG Fund Results Framework

**Joint SDG Fund Outcome 1:** Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement implemented with greater scope and scale

Indicators	Targets	
	Year 1	Year 2
1.1: integrated multi-sectoral policies / legislations/ regulations / strategies / frameworks have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scope <sup>47</sup>	4 digital transformation policies / plans/frameworks (including data protection & privacy), 4 digital strategies / roadmaps supported in areas such as agri-food systems, education	5 digital transformation (including data protection & privacy), 5 digital strategies / roadmaps supported in areas such as agri-food systems, education
1.2: integrated multi-sectoral policies / legislations / regulations / strategies / frameworks have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scale (number of countries) <sup>48</sup>	5 (All five-country support to start in 2022)	5 (All five-country support continued in 2023)

**Joint SDG Fund Output 3:** Integrated policy solutions for accelerating SDG progress implemented

Indicators	Targets	
	Year 1	Year 2
3.1: # of innovative solutions that were tested <sup>49</sup> (disaggregated by % successful-unsuccessful)	2 per smart island (At least 1 successful)	2 per smart island (At least 1 successful)
3.2: # of integrated policy solutions that have been implemented / finalized for implementation with the national partners in lead	4 (early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills)	6 (early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills)

<sup>47</sup>Scope=substantive expansion: additional thematic areas/components added, or mechanisms/systems replicated.

<sup>48</sup>Scale=geographical expansion: local solutions adopted at the regional and national level, or a national solution adopted in one or more countries.

<sup>49</sup>Each Joint programme in the Implementation phase will test at least 2 approaches.

Indicators	Targets	
	Year 1	Year 2
	and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition), 1 (food based dietary guidelines),	and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition), 4 (food based dietary guidelines),
3.3: # and share of countries where national capacities to implement integrated, cross-sectoral SDG accelerators has been strengthened	5	5 (continued from 2022)

### Joint SDG Fund Operational Performance Indicators

- Level of coherence of UN in implementing programme country<sup>50</sup>
- Reduced transaction costs for the participating UN agencies in interaction with national/regional and local authorities and/or public entities compared to other joint programmes in the country in question
- Annual % of financial delivery
- Joint programme operationally closed within original end date
- Joint programme financially closed 18 months after their operational closure
- Joint programme facilitated engagement with diverse stakeholders (e.g. parliamentarians, civil society, IFIs, bilateral/multilateral actor, private sector).
- Joint programme included addressing inequalities and the principle of “Leaving No One Behind”.
- Joint programme featured gender results at the outcome level.
- Joint programme undertook or draw upon relevant human rights analysis, and have developed or implemented a strategy to address human rights issues.
- Joint programme planned for and can demonstrate positive results/effects for youth.
- Joint programme considered the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Joint programme made use of risk analysis in programme planning.
- Joint programme conducted do-no-harm / due diligence and were designed to take into consideration opportunities in the areas of the environment and climate change.

## 2.2. Joint programme Results framework

Row	Result / Indicators	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
	Outcome 1					
1	Number of policy frameworks, legislative frameworks or other regulations, finalized for further	0	11 (Row 3, 4, 10, 11)	18 (Row 3, 4, 10, 11)	Email records from government	

<sup>50</sup> Annual survey will provide qualitative information towards this indicator.

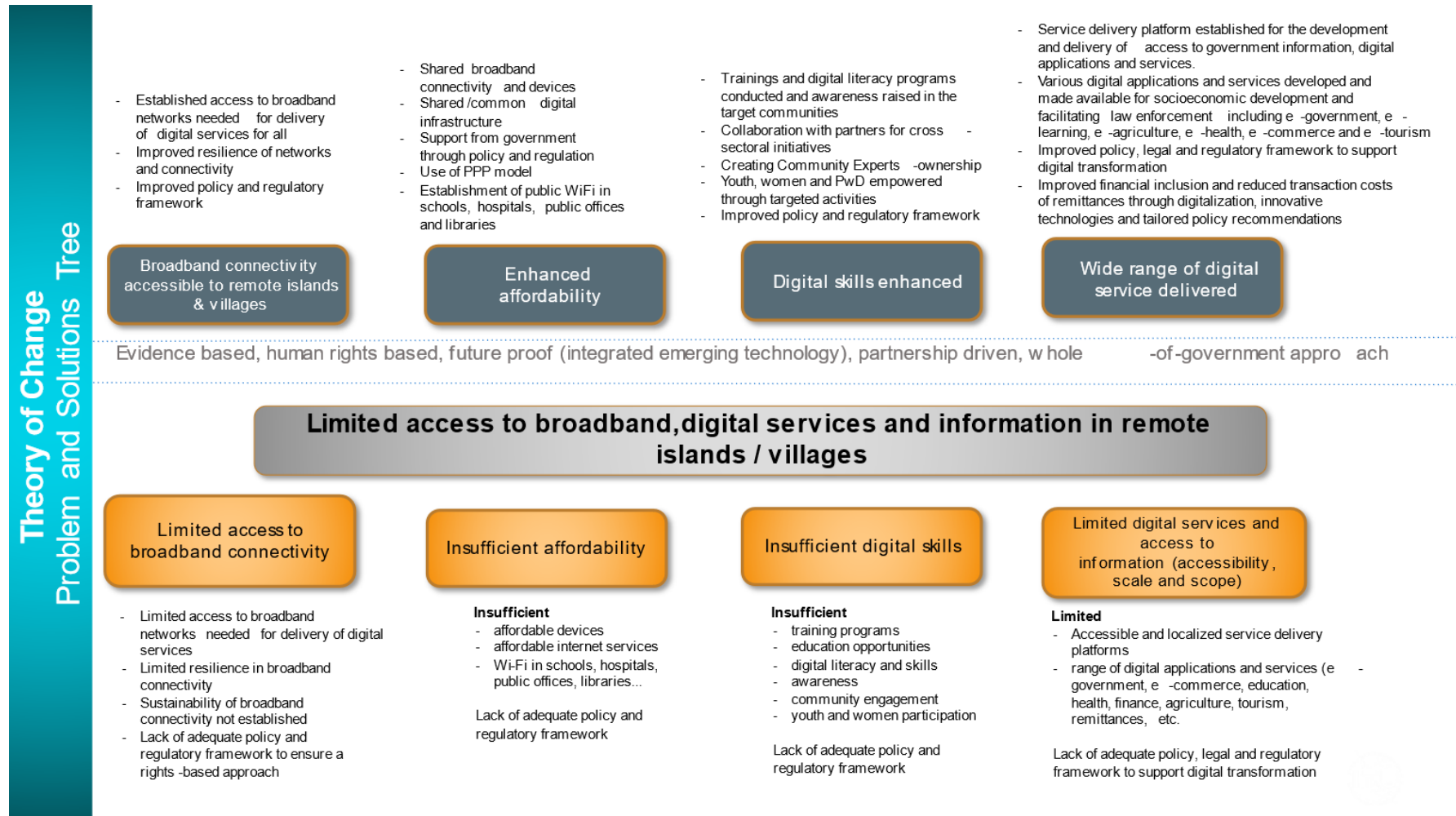
Row	Result / Indicators	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
	adoption by Micronesian governments with JP support				counterpart, self-reporting by PUNOs	
2	Number of investment (public or private) opportunities identified for investment in digital solutions in Micronesian countries	0	5	5	Final report that identifies investment cases documented and shared	ITU
<b>Output 1.1</b>						
3	Number of integrated policies and solutions review completed on early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills and strengthened systems for maternal and child health and nutrition and enhanced by digital transformation.  (ECD policies 3, Nutrition 4, employment and skills - 3)	0	4	6	Final review/assessment reports, policies and strategies; consultation reports	UNICEF, FAO, ILO
4	Number of national Food Based dietary guidelines that are digitalized	0	1	4	Final review/assessment reports, policies and strategies; consultation reports	FAO, UNICEF
5	Multi-sectorial coordination mechanism established and strengthened	0	1	2	Terms of Reference, email records, white/cabinet paper	UNICEF
6	Number of countries with healthy recipe digitized and promoted	0	2	2	Digital healthy and nutritious recipe for social and mass media platforms	UNICEF
7	Number of countries developed High Impact Nutrition Intervention	0	2	2	Final High Impact Nutrition	UNICEF

Row	Result / Indicators	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
	framework and digitized health and nutrition promotion.				Intervention framework  Digital healthy and nutritious recipe for social and mass media platforms	
8	Number of ECD multi-sectorial steering committee meeting held.	0	4	6	Meeting minutes, Committee work plan	UNICEF
<b>Output 1.2</b>						
9	Number of mapping studies completed to identify gaps in policies, legislations, regulations, strategies with reference to digital transformation	0	5	0	Final Study saved	ITU, UNESCO
10	Number of policies, legislations normative frameworks supported for cross-sectoral digital transformation (including data protection & privacy) based on ROAM and human rights principles, assisted with JP support  <i>Digital Transformation ICT Policy – 4; Data Protection and Privacy Framework – 5.</i>	0	4 (Digital Transformation/Data Protection)	5 (Digital Transformation/Data Protection)	Email record from government counterpart, Final report	ITU, UNESCO
11	Number of inclusive digital strategies / roadmaps supported in areas such as agri-food systems, education  <i>e-agri food systems strategies – 5; e-education – 4).</i>	0	4 (e-agri-food, e-education)	5 (e-agri-food, e-education)	Email record from government counterpart, Final report	ITU, UNESCO, FAO
<b>Output 1.3</b>						
12	Number of policymakers who gained knowledge on whole-of-	0	50	50	Pre/Post training forms.	ITU, FAO, UNESCO, ILO

Row	Result / Indicators	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
	government, evidence-based, human-rights approach digital policies, legislations, strategies, frameworks (gender disaggregated)					
13	Number of training activities under outcome 1	0	4	4	Number of trainings	ITU, FAO, UNESCO, ILO
<b>Output 1.4</b>						
14	Number of studies completed on financing and investment opportunities	0	0	1	Final Study saved	ITU, FAO
15	Number of stakeholders (gender disaggregated) located outside the Micronesian countries who attend workshops/meetings on digital transformation opportunities	0	0	30	Registrations/sign-in forms, physical and digital	ITU, FAO
<b>Outcome 2</b>						
16	Number of village/islands with improved availability of digitally enabled services. <i>(5 villages/islands assisted for 2 years)</i>	0	5	5 (continued)	Government statistics and Government PMO	ITU, FAO, UNOPS
17	Number of people that improved uptake of digitally enabled services	0	TBD (Expected 100) based on village size (gender disaggregated)	TBD (Expected 200) based on village size (gender disaggregated)	Government statistics and Government PMO	ITU, FAO, UNOPS
18	Number of digital services introduced to the community and vulnerable population	0	At least 2 per village	At least 2 per village	Report, Village level study	ITU, FAO, UNOPS
<b>Output 2.1</b>						
19	Number of studies conducted on village/island priority and stakeholder mapping including gender sensitivity	0	5	0	Final Study saved	ITU, FAO
20	Number of people (vulnerable population disaggregation) in selected village/island able to access (directly or indirectly) digitally enabled service	TBD per baseline studies	TBD (Expected 200) based on village size, disaggregated by vulnerable group	TBD (Expected 400) based on village size, disaggregated by vulnerable group	Government statistics and Government PMO	ITU, FAO, PUNOs

Row	Result / Indicators	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
Output 2.2						
21	Number of digitally enabled services provided at the village/island level	0	At least 2 per village	At least 2 per village	Number of services launched	ITU, FAO, UNOPS
22	Number of users (gender disaggregated) at the village/island level who use the digitally enabled services on a monthly basis	0	TBD (Expected 100) based on village size, disaggregated by gender	TBD (Expected 200) based on village size, disaggregated by gender	Government statistics and Government PMO	ITU, FAO, PUNOs
23	Number of coastal monitoring services provided	0	Two technology-based services and associated training provided.	Two technology-based services and associated training provided.	Project records, evaluation reports	UNOPS, UNODC (technical partner)
Output 2.3						
23	Number of users at the village/island level who have participated in capacity building events, disaggregated by gender, youth, older persons, ethnic minorities, and PwD.	0	TBD (Expected 200) based on village size (At least 50% women)	TBD (Expected 400) based on village size (At least 50% women)	Registrations/sign-in forms, physical and digital	ITU, FAO, UNOPS, UNESCO

## Annex 3. Smart Islands Problem-Solutions Tree



## Annex 4. Gender marker matrix

<b>Indicator</b>		<b>Score</b>	<b>Findings and Explanation</b>	<b>Evidence or Means of Verification</b>
<i>N°</i>	<i>Formulation</i>			
1.1	Context analysis integrate gender analysis	<b>2</b>	<p>The context analysis highlights gender-disaggregated data (where available) on the issues surrounding digital transformation, specifically the gender digital divide among the JP North Pacific countries. There is also analysis of the gender inequality issues and the current policies within each country, as well as the human rights mechanisms available.</p> <p>The gender analysis has also included an assessment of the intersecting risks women face, including disability, age and vulnerability to climate risks where data is available. Unreliable and limited sex-disaggregated data remain key challenges.</p>	Text in this programme document
1.2	Gender Equality mainstreamed in proposed outputs	<b>2</b>	Among the seven outputs, gender equality/empowerment, participation and inclusion of women, men, boys and girls are visibly named in each and every output.	Output names per this Programme document
1.3	Programme output indicators measure changes on gender equality	<b>2</b>	Among the proposed output indicators, 40% are specifically focused on gender-disaggregated data, within the range of 33-50%. These indicators measure changes in gender equality in line with SDG 5, and will include gender-disaggregated targets.	6 out of 15 proposed indicators (40%) are gender-disaggregated.
2.1	PUNO collaborate and engage with Government on gender equality and the empowerment of women	<b>2</b>	<p>The proposal was developed based on current SDG interventions of the respective UN agencies. In this context, the national women actors, key relevant government departments and CSOs are part of the integrated SDG policy solution interventions.</p> <p>In the development of the proposed JP, PUNO have consulted with Governments that fosters gender equality within the current proposed project. The women groups and women representative from the key</p>	<p>Number of women participations in multi-sectorial mechanism</p> <p>Number of consultations with women groups</p> <p>Discussions with UNRC coordinators about who has</p>

Indicator		Score	Findings and Explanation	Evidence or Means of Verification
N°	Formulation			
			<p>government departments will participate in programme consultations for the context analysis, strategic prioritization, implementation, M&amp;E. In particular, the key government ministries and department will be part of the steering committee to influence and make decisions on the SDG digital policy solutions as well as being involved in implementation. Women’s councils and CSO’s will also be consulted.</p> <p>In FSM, the consultations included a representative from the Department of Health &amp; Social Affairs’ Social Affairs Division, which covers gender issues for the FSM government. Additionally, a representative from the FSM Sustainable Development Goals Working Group was consulted during the design.</p> <p>In Nauru, the Ministry of Health will be consulted. This agency has a section leading gender equality/promotion in the response to COVID-19 pandemic and it works hand in hand with the Department of Women Affairs and Social Development</p> <p>In Kiribati, the Ministry of Women, Sport and Social Welfare will be consulted as part of the continuing consultations even after the JP is submitted to the SDG fund.</p> <p>In RMI, the Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs (which covers gender-related matters) will be further consulted on this project even after the JP is submitted to the SDG fund.</p> <p>As per the coordination mechanism proposed for the JP proposes, the participation and inclusion of women, men, boys and girls representing different government agencies and CSO’s in various technical committee, meeting and consultation at national and sub-national level. The formulation of integrated policies and digital solutions will be participatory and leaves no one behind.</p>	<p>been consulted, and who will be consulted/sensitized on this JP even after submission.</p>

<b>Indicator</b>		<b>Score</b>	<b>Findings and Explanation</b>	<b>Evidence or Means of Verification</b>
<i>N°</i>	<i>Formulation</i>			
2.2	PUNO collaborate and engages with women's/gender equality CSOs	<b>2</b>	<p>While the JP's consultations have been at the national government level and also benefitted from feedback/community consultation during National Food Summit to inform interventions related to food security and nutrition. Over the coming months the team will continue to consult with CSOs, including women's/gender equality CSOs such as women council/association/group, faith-based organisation, youth and children's organizations in each of the 5 countries. This will help refine the thinking of the programme as it enters its initial 3-month inception phase.</p> <p>As this JP builds on UN's current work, the engagement of women and gender equality CSOs are part of consultation, and dialogue to inform formulation of integrated policy solutions consultations and mechanism.</p>	<p>Discussions with PUNOs on who has been consulted, and who will be consulted even after submission.</p> <p>Project M&amp;E reports</p> <p>Number of consultations with GEWE CSOs</p> <p>Meeting minute of ECD Multi-sectorial committee</p>
3.1	Programme proposes a gender-responsive budget	<b>2</b>	<p>This JP is gender-responsive as the resources as described in the Project Document (Prodoc) works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys) by ensuring gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. More than 50 percent of the beneficiaries are women and girls.</p> <p>Currently, 1.01% of the full budget is fully dedicated to a gender specialist. Additionally, each and every output includes gender equality mainstreamed. At the activity level, a percentage of each activity-level budget has been estimated as going towards GEWE (0%, 50%, 60%, 75%, or 100%) based on that intervention.</p> <p>In total, based on these calculations, 37% of the total project budget is allocated to GEWE. The programme will realign the budget across activities based on experiences for maximum impact.</p>	<p>Per the budget calculations and details on beneficiary groups is included in the JP Prodoc.</p> <p>Programme and consultation reports</p>
<b>Total scoring</b>		<b>2.</b>		

## Annex 5. Budget and Work Plan

### 5.1 Budget per UNSDG categories

The table provides a summary of the PUNOs' expenses per UNGD Budget as well as the PUNO contributions to the Joint Programme.

Note that per UNSDG guidance, we have also budgeted 2% of the total \$3,809,000, within ITU's budget, for an independent evaluation. This is equivalent to \$76,180. In the below budget, we have only included columns where there are PUNO contributions (in-kind). PUNO contributions are also envisaged through synergies from other projects (Annex 1).

UNGD BUDGET CATEGORIES	ITU		UNOPS	UNICEF		FAO		UNESCO		ILO		TOTAL	
	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)
1. Staff and other personnel	0	140,000	0	70,000	60,000	94,793	440,000	140,000	96,558	72,000	169,678	376,793	959,306
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	50,000		130,352	20,000		69,088		0	4,000	273,440			
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	0		49,502	0		-		5,457	5,000	59,959			
4. Contractual services	787,887 <sup>51</sup>	50,000	647,341	180,000		-		223,415	191,103	2,029,746			
5. Travel	92,000		92,340	27,290		59,088		16,243	20,000	306,961			

<sup>51</sup> This number is inclusive of USD 76,180 that is programmed for an independent evaluation.

UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES	ITU		UNOPS	UNICEF		FAO		UNESCO		ILO		TOTAL	
	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	0		0	170,000		168,100		18,000		0		356,100	
7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	0		32,820	0		76,221		12,773	3,070	35,000		156,814	
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>929,887</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>952,355</b>	<b>467,290</b>		<b>467,290</b>		<b>415,888</b>	<b>99,628</b>	<b>327,103</b>		<b>3,559,813</b>	
8. Indirect Support Costs (Max. 7%)	65,093		66,665	32,710		32,710		29,112		22,897		249,187	
<b>TOTAL Costs</b>	<b>994,980</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>1,019,020</b>	<b>500,000</b>		<b>500,000</b>		<b>445,000</b>	<b>99,628</b>	<b>350,000</b>		<b>3,809,000</b>	
<b>1st year</b>	<b>397,150</b>		<b>609,850</b>	<b>250,000</b>		<b>250,000</b>		<b>222,500</b>		<b>175,000</b>		<b>1,904,500</b>	
<b>2nd year</b>	<b>597,830</b>		<b>409,170</b>	<b>250,000</b>		<b>250,000</b>		<b>222,500</b>		<b>175,000</b>		<b>1,904,500</b>	

## 5.2 Budget per SDG targets

SDG TARGETS		%	USD
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	4.59%	174,658
2.1	By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	15.28	582,194

SDG TARGETS		%	USD
2.3	By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment	13.85%	527,613
4.2	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	12.23%	465,755
5.b	Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	9.55%	363,871
8.3	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	7.64%	291,097
9.c	Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020	16.55%	630,370
16.6	Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	8.57%	326,464
16.10	Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	8.60%	327,484
17.8	Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology	3.14%	119,495
<b>TOTAL for SDG Targets</b>			
<b>TOTAL FOR JOINT PROGRAMME</b>			<b>3,809,000 *</b>

\* Common costs and indirect costs have been allocated to SDG targets.

### **5.3 Work plan**

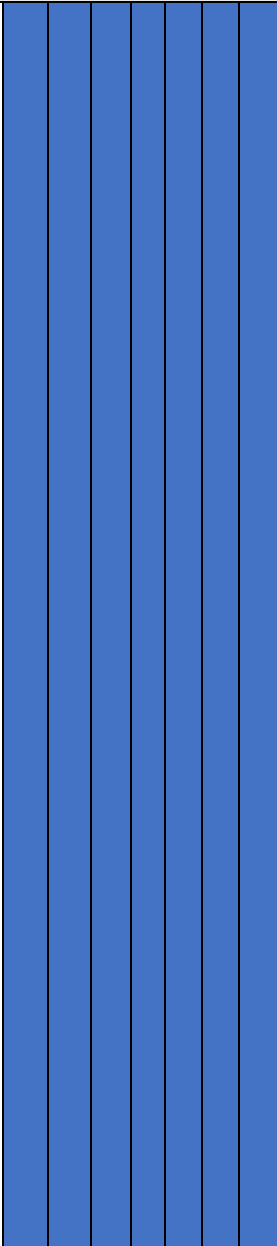
The workplan is sequenced assuming a 3-month inception phase (Quarter 1 from start date) within the overall 24-month programme. This inception phase will be used to hire staff, facilitate connectivity, set-up project governance and coordination mechanisms, ensure the connectivity/electrification parameters of the island/village chosen for Outcome 2 by the national government, and to design the overarching project plans, including Communications, Gender & Social Inclusion, and Monitoring & Evaluation plans. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will also include provisions to measure the JP's contribution to the SDG targets identified.

During this inception phase, the project will also start the State Analysis for all 5 smart islands, as well the initial mapping in all 5 countries of existing policies, legislations, and strategies regarding digital transformation. These activities will start during the inception phase and will be finalized once implementation starts and will serve as part of the foundational documents for the remainder of the project. Additionally, the JP will discuss the creation of a Project Management Office from the government, for the management of Outcome 2 at the local village/island level. The work plan will be refined in consultation with the national stakeholders during the inception phase. As uncertainties around COVID-19 travel restrictions continue to impact planning activities in the beneficiary countries, the work plan has kept broader timelines.

During Implementation, the team will implement according to the activities below. Each activity/cluster of activities has a designated lead PUNO that will be responsible for coordinating implementation and reporting upwards. Throughout this JP, PUNOs will submit quarterly and annual progress reports to the UNRC for SDG Fund.

### **OVERVIEW OF OUTCOME 1**

Outcome 1																	
Output	Annual target/s		List of activities	PUNOs Involved	Countries	Time frame											
	Year 1	Year 2				Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4				

<p><b>Output 1.1 - Improved and integrated sectoral policy framework for communities and vulnerable groups, especially for youth, gender and women's empowerment, building on multi-sectoral coordination platforms for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition supporting digital transformation</b></p>	<p>9 research studies completed on early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition and enhanced by digital transformation.</p> <p>6 integrated policy frameworks for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition and enhanced by digital transformation, improved or created with JP Support</p>	<p>9 research studies completed on early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition and enhanced by digital transformation.</p> <p>9 integrated policy frameworks for early childhood development, resilient social protection systems, employment, skills and strengthened systems for child health and nutrition and enhanced by digital transformation, improved or created with JP Support</p>	<p>Support strengthening of multi-sectoral coordination and implementation of early childhood development (ECD) policy, including capacity building on public finance management</p>	<p>UNICEF</p>	<p>FSM, RMI, Kiribati</p>	
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			Support formulation and roll-out of high impact nutrition interventions framework and policies	UNICEF, FAO	FSM, RMI, Palau, Kiribati													
			Formulation/review and implementation of Food Based Dietary Guidelines, including integration and adoption of innovation and digitalization in agriculture, food, nutrition, health, and the environment	FAO, UNICEF, ITU	All 5 countries													
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct in-depth resource and market assessment and consultations for productive economic opportunities in the digital sector, considering sub-sectors analysis, potential market demand for digital skills and digital literacy, as well as natural resources, and examining the links between actors operating in the same industry and others, and identifying market channels for driving digital entrepreneurship.</li> <li>Conduct an</li> </ul>	ILO	RMI, Kiribati, Palau													

			<p>assessment for the application of ILO programme Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) to provide sector-level technical assistance on identifying the skills development strategies required for future success in local and international trade with the focus on e-commerce and digital transformation. The strategies will be designed to support growth and decent employment creation in digital sectors that have the potential to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and contribute to economic diversification.</p>											
			<p>Support review and strengthen shock-responsive social protection system and safety nets for children and vulnerable groups</p>	<p>UNICEF, ILO</p>	<p>FSM, RMI, Kiribati</p>									

<p><b>Output 1.2 - Improved and coherent digital policy/legal/strategies/frameworks/roadmaps supportive of cross-sectoral digital transformation, based on international human rights standards that ensure gender equality, Human Rights, Openness, Accessibility, Multi-stakeholder participation, e.g., right to privacy, right to information, freedom of expression, and data protection.</b></p>	<p>5 mapping studies completed to identify gaps in policies, legislations (including regulations), strategies with reference to digital transformation</p> <p>4 policies legislations normative frameworks supportive of cross-sectoral digital transformation (including data protection &amp; privacy) based on ROAM and human rights frameworks</p> <p>4 digital strategies / roadmaps supported in areas such as agrifood systems, education, health, finance,</p>	<p>4 policies legislations normative frameworks supportive of cross-sectoral digital transformation (including data protection &amp; privacy) based on ROAM and human rights frameworks</p> <p>4 digital strategies / roadmaps supported in areas such as agrifood systems, education, health, finance,</p>	<p>Mapping of existing policies, legislations (including regulations), strategies to identify any gaps with reference to digital transformation and develop a roadmap</p>	<p>ITU, UNESCO, ILO</p>	<p>All 5 countries</p>			
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			<p>Identification and analysis of laws which need to be amended or adopted to ensure that human rights and workers' rights practices are fully guaranteed in an online environment, including through consultations with stakeholders and taking into account relevant recommendations issued by international human rights mechanisms</p>	UNESCO, ITU, ILO	All 5 countries														
			<p>Advocacy and technical support to Governments to make progress on improving laws based on the identification of gaps and obstacles that impede individuals to exercise their human rights online</p>	UNESCO	FSM, RMI														
			<p>Digital Transformation and ICT Policy Review, Update and implementation (It will include all sectors including nutrition, health, education and the environment)</p>	ITU, FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO	FSM, RMI, Nauru, Kiribati														
			<p>Technical Assistance for Right to Information and Data Protection and Privacy normative frameworks</p>	UNESCO, ITU	All 5 countries														

			Digital Agri-food Systems Strategy Development	FAO, ITU, UNICEF	All 5 countries																
			ICT in Education Policy development/review and update from inclusion perspective	UNESCO, ITU	FSM, RMI, Nauru, Palau																
<b>Output 1.3 - Enhanced capacity among ICT policy and decision makers and regulators to adopt a whole of government, evidence-based approach with key stakeholders, focusing on vulnerable groups and gender equality on digital transformation which in turn enhances the enjoyment of a range of human rights while ensuring cybersafety</b>	50 policymakers who gained knowledge on whole-of-government, evidence-based, human-rights approach digital policies, legislations, strategies, frameworks  4 training activities under outcome 1	50 policymakers who gained knowledge on whole-of-government, evidence-based, human-rights approach digital policies, legislations, strategies, frameworks  4 training activities under outcome 1	Digital Government/Transformation and Policy/Regulation Capacity Building	ITU, UNOPS	All 5 countries																
			Digital Services capacity Building, digital skills including e-agriculture, e-commerce, e-health, digital infrastructure, digital finance, digital innovation, cybersecurity and cybersafety for gov, etc	ITU, FAO, UNESCO, ILO	All 5 countries																
			Big/Open Data/ Access to Information/ ICT Statistics capacity building	UNESCO, ITU	All 5 countries																
			Climate change and E-WASTE	ITU	FSM, RMI, Nauru, Kiribati																
<b>Output 1.4 - Identified business cases to invest in digital solutions in line with UN Guiding principles on Business and Human</b>	N/A	1 study completed on financing and investment opportunities  2 stakeholders	Awareness raising stakeholders workshops and meetings on digital transformation opportunities in Micronesian countries.	ITU, FAO	All 5 countries																

<b>Rights, that highlight the empowerment of women.</b>		located outside the Micronesian countries who attend workshops/meetings on digital transformation opportunities	Study on financing and investment opportunities	ITU, FAO	All 5 countries										
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## OVERVIEW OF OUTCOME 2

Outcome 2														
Output	Annual target/s		List of activities	PUNOs Involved	Countries	Time frame (Quarters from the start of the project)								
	Year 1	Year 2				Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	
	<b>Output 2.1 - Improved access to affordable, resilient, and sustainable broadband connectivity, particularly among the vulnerable communities and groups and those at risk of “being left behind”, while facilitating the empowerment of women.</b>	<b>5 studies conducted on village/island priority and stakeholder mapping</b>  <b>(TO BE DETERMINED)</b> <b>Number of people (vulnerable population disaggregation) in selected village/island able to access (directly or indirectly)</b>				<b>5 studies conducted on village/island priority and stakeholder mapping</b>  <b>(TO BE DETERMINED)</b> <b>Number of people (vulnerable population disaggregation) in selected village/island able to access (directly or indirectly)</b>	Conduct state analysis and needs assessment for identified village/island (policy, priorities, existing infrastructure, demand) – Include Stakeholder Mapping. This will include:  - Baseline study on network coverage, resilience and quality and end of project situation. Study on device availability, affordability, digital literacy and demand in project area - Improve device	ITU, FAO, UNOPS	All 5 countries					

	<b>digitally enabled service</b>	<b>digitally enabled service</b>	<p>accessibility, particularly for women and other vulnerable population groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study on device availability, affordability, digital literacy and demand in project area</li> <li>-Identify priority digital services for delivery and highlighting sustainability model</li> </ul>																
			Facilitate provision of affordable broadband - wifi hotspots, satellite bandwidth and moving equipment, computer	UNOPS, ITU	All 5 countries														
			Evaluate best options for connectivity	ITU, UNOPS, FAO	All 5 countries														
			Facilitate provision of affordable broadband - cost of connectivity	UNOPS, ITU	All 5 countries														
			Improved device availability, in particular for women and vulnerable groups - tablet/computer cost	UNOPS, ITU, FAO	All 5 countries														

<p><b>Output 2.2 - Increased availability of and access to digitally enabled services with integration of emerging technologies and data driven decision making, which also supports law enforcement reach (including improved protection of vulnerable groups and maritime protection) while ensuring the protection of privacy and gender equality</b></p>	<p><b>2 digitally enabled services provided at the village/island level</b></p> <p><b>(TO BE DETERMINED)</b>  <b>Number of unique male and female users at the village/island level who use the digitally enabled services on a monthly basis</b></p>	<p><b>2 digitally enabled services provided at the village/island level</b></p> <p><b>(TO BE DETERMINED)</b>  <b>Number of unique male and female users at the village/island level who use the digitally enabled services on a monthly basis</b></p>	<p>Conduct business requirements analysis and system design for selected priority services taking into account cross-sectoral synergies across SDGs (health, education, agriculture, disaster), sustainability, and GESI</p>	<p>ITU, FAO</p>	<p>All 5 countries</p>							
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			centre for enforcement action.																	
			Use of digital connectivity to expand the reach of law enforcement and associated services to vulnerable target groups in coastal communities and create awareness of such services.	UNOPS, UNODC (technical partner)	FSM, RMI, Nauru, Kiribati															
Output 2.3 - Enhanced capacity and digital skills among the vulnerable communities and groups to access and use a range of digitally enabled services, taking into account changing skills needs generated by the development of broadband connectivity and digital transformation, and the empowerment of women.	(TO BE DETERMINED) Number of men and women at the village/island level who have participated in capacity building events , disaggregated by gender, youth, older persons, ethnic minorities, and PwD.	(TO BE DETERMINED) Number of men and women at the village/island level who have participated in capacity building events , disaggregated by gender, youth, older persons, ethnic minorities, and PwD.	Conduct trainings and provide support for the uptake of smart island digital services with focus on women and vulnerable groups (at-risk youth, persons with disabilities)	ILO, ITU, FAO, UNESCO	All 5 countries															
			Promote digital entrepreneurship, startups to increase the demand for digital products, services and	ILO	All 5 countries															

			solutions, drawing on the best lessons from other countries																
			Targeted capacity building exercise to enhance capacity to use digital finance and agritech platform	FAO, ITU	All 5 countries														
			Awareness creation among the population over the power of innovation and existing digital tools to accelerate achievement of the SDGs related to agriculture, food, nutrition, health and the environment	FAO, UNICEF, ITU, ILO	All 5 countries														

### OVERVIEW OF JOINT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Joint programme management	List of activities			Time frame										
				Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4			
Coordination Mechanisms	Project Launch	All PUNOs	All 5 countries											
	Multi-Country Programme Steering Committee (Semi-annual)	All PUNOs	All 5 countries											
	National Programme Coordination Committee (meeting every quarter)	All PUNOs active in that country	All 5 countries											

Joint programme management	List of activities			Time frame									
				Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4		
	Multi-Country UN Coordination Group (Meeting Quarterly or on need basis)	All PUNOs active in that country	All 5 countries										
<b>Reporting Requirements</b>	Creation of Life of Project Workplan	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Creation of Gender and Social Inclusion Plan	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Creation of Monitoring & Evaluation Plan	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Creation of Communications Plan	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Submission of Quarterly Progress Reports	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Submission of Annual Narrative Progress Reports	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Review Project's Implementation against SDG Targets	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Submission of Mid-term Progress Review Report	ITU	All 5 countries										
	Submission of Final Consolidated Narrative Report	ITU	All 5 countries										

## Annex 6. Risk Management Plan

Beyond the below identified risks, the PUNOs understand the importance of following United Nations principles and international norms and standards. All PUNOs will follow the UN Charter, and will ensure that Joint Programme personnel ensure safeguarding (including protection against sexual exploitation and abuse), financial compliance, due diligence, and other cross-cutting principles are enshrined at all levels of implementation, to ensure the protection of not only the United Nations reputation, but to also follow the maxim of do-no-harm.

Risks	Risk Level:	Likelihood:	Impact:	Mitigating measures	Responsible Org./Person
<b>Contextual risks</b>					
Lack of engagement among national stakeholders and policymakers	9	3	3	Stakeholder analysis to identify stakeholder interests / concerns. Hiring of local project managers with good knowledge of relevant institutions to facilitate liaising. Targeted awareness-raising activities to draw attention of national policymakers to the relevance of the project to SDGs and overall development.	PUNOs
Adverse natural events (cyclones, floods, tidal surges, etc.) affect implementation of the programme	8	2	4	Active situation monitoring. Forward planning to factor in logistical and operational challenges associated with local environment. Close collaboration with national stakeholders.	PUNOs
Change of priorities identified by recipient countries after programme commenced	9	3	3	The stakeholder analysis will identify any potential priority changes. The Government PMO will also coordinate closely with the JP on a day-to-day basis.	PUNOs
Political / social instability leads to difficulty in maintaining local support	8	2	4	The team will work closely with UNRCO to identify any potential markers of political/social instability. They will also form relationships at the local level directly with the island/village, to ensure continuation of Outcome 2 delivery even in the event of national level instability.	PUNOs

Risks	Risk Level:	Likelihood:	Impact:	Mitigating measures	Responsible Org./Person
Social norms and related gender roles prevent girls and women (or vice versa, boys and men) from full participation in education, training and employment	8	5	5	The JP will help collect and analyze disaggregated data in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental partners. PUNOs will apply strategies and good practices from the region as well as other countries in developing transformative strategies.	PUNOs
<b>Programmatic risks</b>					
Challenges in activity implementation risking completion within time and budget; and / or achievement of results, continued impact of COVID-19 and inability to organize physical meetings and activities	12	3	4	During inception phase, Review work-plan to determine if delays can be recovered within the grant's timeframe and review activity (theory of change) to determine if design could be adapted.	PUNOs
Duplication of project outcomes by other organizations in the region	12	3	4	Annex 1 in this JP notes the range of other donor programs in the region highlighting similar work. During the Inception stage, the JP with the UNRCO will work closely with other donors and stakeholders to identify any overlaps and ensure there is a division of labour, working closely too with the coordinating department at the governmental level.	UNRCO, PUNOs
COVID-19 travel restrictions or local lockdowns	12	4	3	Plan virtual activities until time permits. For physical island/village interventions, try and get procurements approved and delivered ASAP.	PUNOs
Project unable to convert to online or virtual delivery, if required	8	2	4	The JP has been defined to be focused on online-first from a delivery standpoint. They will identify any issues that arise with delivery of equipment, should	PUNOs

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Risk Level:</b>	<b>Likelihood:</b>	<b>Impact:</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>	<b>Responsible Org./Person</b>
				there be issues with physical installation under Outcome 2.	
Need to adjust generic tools / solutions to the local context	9	3	3	Invest in needs assessment to identify functional requirements beforehand. Collaborate with solution providers/developers. Leverage the wide network of partner entities (including local institutions) to consult and gather expertise.	PUNOs
Organizational/Operational Capacity Risk, including lack of adequate experts to manage the project activities, lack of project staff capacity, or high project staff turnover	12	3	4	Identify a large pool of experts (more than needed) at national and international level in advance and provide support in implementation.	PUNO
The smart islands component do not have a sustainable business model and are not able to continue without donor support following the conclusion of this JP	12	3	4	The JP will aim at long term sustainability. All digital services will be designed with sustainability in mind, and the project will continuously highlight sustainability in discussions with both national and local government counterparts for future service provision.	ITU
Lack of connectivity and required equipment	10	2	5	It will be a pre-condition to the selection of island / village by the country.	ITU
Lack of regular accessible electrification at the smart island level	10	2	5	It will be a pre-condition to the selection of island / village by the country.	ITU
<b>Institutional risks</b>					
Purpose of programme is not appreciated, and local stakeholders perceive donor / programme / as: biases and are not interested in engaging with the programme, leading	10	2	5	Whole-of-government consultations have been conducted with the Ministries of ICT in each country, as well as with sectoral line ministries, to	PUNO

Risks	Risk Level:	Likelihood:	Impact:	Mitigating measures	Responsible Org./Person
to a lack of champions at the national or local levels.				ensure their high-level buy-in at the JP development stage. Additionally, the island/village chosen for intervention will be designated by the national government. Local level stakeholder engagement will begin once the island/village is identified	
Constraints (e.g. lack of expertise) to identification and provision of services for particular needs of the target countries / communities	6	2	3	Engage specialists with a good knowledge of the local needs / conditions. Cross-leverage capacity / expertise among organizations involved	ITU, PUNOs
Coordination gaps owing to large number of stakeholders involved	12	4	3	Strong M&E and coordination mechanisms will be set up amongst PUNOs and with UNRCO	UNRCO, PUNO
Safeguarding risks - Safeguards are in the activity but are not well designed / working in practice	8	2	4	Gender and Social Inclusion Plan will also look at Safeguards, focussing especially on vulnerable groups	ITU, PUNO
<b>Fiduciary risks</b>					
Financial constraints emerge due to underestimation of costs associated with certain on-the-ground project activities or due to unexpected expenditures	6	2	3	Cross-leveraging of investments. Negotiating with providers for preferential rates / conditions. Leveraging of inputs / contributions from local stakeholders. Public-private partnerships.	PUNOs
Diversion of project funds to Partners/individuals/organisations who are involved in terrorist activities	4	1	4	Each PUNO should conduct vetting and due diligence on their vendors/suppliers and subcontractors to avoid links with organisations that have criminal, terrorist, political and military activities etc	PUNOs
Potential misuse of funds and/or fraud or corruption is suspected	8	2	4	Closely monitor financial management practices and agreed performance improvement actions within the project. All PUNOs will	PUNOs

Risks	Risk Level:	Likelihood:	Impact:	Mitigating measures	Responsible Org./Person
				manage funds in line with their own financial management guidelines	

## [Annex 7: Digital transformation in the Pacific and the approach of this joint programme](#)

Digital transformation provides a unique opportunity to address some of these challenges (especially post COVID-19) through an integrated approach and offer new opportunities to accelerate the path to SDGs.

Recognizing the importance, Pacific Island countries have embarked upon digital economy and digital transformation policies, strategies and plans. For example, Papua New Guinea has adopted a [Digital Transformation Policy](#) in 2020, Fiji has a digital transformation programme (Digital Fiji) while Samoa has Digital Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister and envisages establishing a digital transformation authority. Countries such as Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati have undertaken digital government initiatives while Solomon Islands recently published a digital economy scorecard. COVID-19 has further accelerated the digital transformation journey of the Pacific Island countries for the private sector with the rise of digital applications.

Digital transformation necessitates an ecosystem approach including policies, legislations, strategies, and frameworks (digital and other linked cross-sectoral); digital infrastructure; cybersecurity; capacity building; digital services; emergency telecommunications and digital inclusion amongst others. It can also be manifested through smart islands concept that envisages an integrated development approach.

While many of the Pacific states make progress towards digital transformation and broader usage of ICT, addressing to narrow the digital divide is still a critical element to achieving SDG with the principle of leaving no one behind. This requires improvement in access to broadband, affordability, relevant digital skills and access to digital services. The Joint SDG programme will review ICT policy in key sectors, including education, especially from gender equality and equitable access for persons with disabilities. It will also help develop capacity in ICT inclusion for persons with disabilities and digital skills among the vulnerable groups.

To better understand the digital environment and identify the areas which require support, the ROAM (Rights, Openness, Accessibility, Multi-stakeholder participation). [ROAM-X](#) Indicators will be applied. UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators are a set of 303 indicators that aim to assess the state of Internet development at the national level according to the ROAM principles of human Rights, Openness, Accessibility, Multi-stakeholder participation. Through these indicators and ROAM principles, the JP will assess the state of internet development, identifying the areas that require support and producing targeted recommendations with the aim to create an enabling digital environment. The results of this assessment will form the basis for both enabling policy environment as well as the capacity building element.

In Micronesian countries, the current ICT policy framework in country is largely driven by the following frameworks relating to digital transformation

- **Federated States of Micronesia** – [National ICT and Telecommunications Policy 2012](#) guides the ICT policy framework in the country. FSM in 2014 also passed the legislation establishing the FSM Telecommunication Regulations Authority and the FSM Telecommunications Cable Corporation. Additionally, an executive order was issued by the President for a centralized IT unit under the Department of TC&I - Division of Communications, to centralize the management/maintenance of all government ICT resources. The FSM has connected most of its states and is now working to get its

remaining state (Kosrae) connected to the submarine cable. In addition to the landing of the submarine cables, the FSM is taking connectivity further to bring high quality fiber to the premise; and as much as possible, connect homes, hospitals, schools, government buildings, businesses, etc. The plan for the outer islands is to provide "4G-like" connectivity to allow service providers the ability to provide services to those parts. Currently, FSM's education sector is also integrating cybersecurity into its curriculum, training for higher levels of government (judiciary, legislative, law enforcement) to better execute cyber laws, etc. Education Sector Strategic Development Plan 2020-2024 specifies the needs for ICT training for students and teachers to utilize online education resources as well as for the Ministry staff to enhance monitoring and data-based decision making. Under the World Bank's Digital FSM project, a number of components including Digital ID platform is included in addition to digital services such as passport services, online payments for Ministry of Finance, etc. Additionally, there is a component on e-Government and cybersecurity.

- **Kiribati** – The [National ICT Policy](#) was last updated in 2019. In 2021, the country adopted a digital government framework and a national cybersecurity strategy. Additionally, there is the Kiribati 20 year vision which includes a component on developing ICT infrastructure. Finally, the Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development and State-Owned Enterprises (MICTTD) has a 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, which highlights a number of key objectives around ICT.
- **Nauru** –Nauru's inclusive access to quality education is guided by the Education Act 2011 and Inclusive Education Policy and Guidelines in 2017.
- **Palau** - The government is currently working to update the National ICT policy. They have had fiber-optic cable connectivity since 2017 and are working on a 2<sup>nd</sup> cable now, to provide access to Northern states, though every state already has some form of connectivity. The Ministry of Finance is also working on digital government. Palau's Education Master Plan 2017-2027 identifies establishing technology as an integrated teaching and learning tool to better meet instructional needs. More specifically, this includes (i) adopting Technology Use Policy for staff and students, (ii) Internet connectivity with schools; (iii) access to hardware and software with standards; (iv) establishing distance delivery system for teachers and student; (v) providing instructional technology training; and (vi) providing ICT maintenance staff.
- **Republic of Marshall Islands** – RMI's ICT policy was last updated in 2012. RMI Public School System Act 2013 specifies the achievements of educational goals to include "instruction intended to produce attainment of responsible levels of proficiency in all major academic subjects, including basic communication and computation skills.," These ICT policies need updating to embrace digital transformation. In addition, the legislative frameworks also need to address the rights and safety of the citizens in the online world. There is a priority need to map the various policies, legislations and strategies that govern the digital space across the Micronesian countries. Mapping of policies, legislations, strategies relevant for digital transformation is planned under this JP to create a roadmap and identify gaps that would guide the work of national governments as well as development agencies. Analysis of digital transformation related policies, legislations and sectoral strategies and technical assistance on identified priorities is also planned.

## Staging of the Programme

During the initial stage JP will conduct a mapping of existing policies, legislations, regulations, strategies to identify any gaps with reference to digital transformation and develop a roadmap for the government for any further improvement.

Additionally, the project will conduct a stakeholder-based analysis from the five governments to reconfirm the priority areas pursuant to the outputs under Outcome 1. Although a consultation was done during the JP design stage, this is the opportunity to modify and adapt the approach towards policy and strategy development should there have been any changes from a political, socio-cultural, or economic standpoint.

Smart islands programme is designed in three steps (Figure 7). This project JP focuses on Step 1 (Programme development and islands needs assessment) and part of Step 2 (Programme roll out, projects development, governance set up, stakeholder engagement and pilot services). It will also facilitate activities to lead up to Step 3.

### Smart Islands: 3 Step Programme





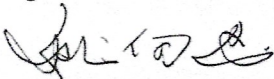




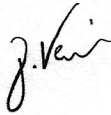
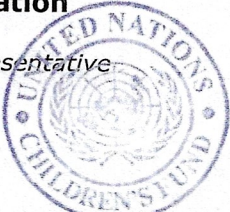
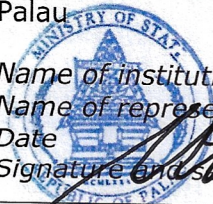
The smart islands programme has the following major components built-in:

Component	Description
<b>Governance</b>	<p>Smart islands PMO will be set up to establish and manage the programme in terms of continuously overseeing overall progress, resolving technical issues, uploading new relevant content, pushing new innovations and applications, collecting feedback, coordinating capacity development activities including digital literacy and skills development programs, etc. The PMO will be specifically responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project.</p> <p>At the local level, relevant smart village committee/mechanism will be constituted to coordinate the work at the village/island level, identify needs, ensure sustainability and proper use of devices and services, receive and deliver capacity development for local community and ensure</p>

Component	Description
	<p>inclusive access and use including by women, elders, children and other vulnerable groups.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>An assessment will be conducted in each selected village leveraging on ITU Last Mile Connectivity toolkit or other means to assess and identify what are the best technical and economically viable connectivity options to be deployed at an identified location in a village. The infrastructure component could include equipment and devices such as Wi-Fi access points repeaters, local server capacity, tablets, power generators/solar power (if needed), etc. that will be deployed to ensure proper access to Internet and other digital services. Infrastructure planning exercise would be undertaken as part of the project. An assessment of the required bandwidth will be evaluated as well based on the services/applications to be deployed.</p> <p>A local Wi-Fi hotspot will be established around smart village centers identified that could be used in an appropriate manner to access internet, provide priority digital services, deliver training, provide support/guidance to community members, etc. The focus is to reduce the costs of Internet access to the users, which remains high in Pacific Island countries.</p> <p>The location of this access center/point within the village will be best identified to be accessible by citizens including targeted vulnerable groups easily within the village. The decision on where to locate this access center/point will be discussed and agreed upon with the relevant stakeholders. These centers would also accelerate the adoption of the services amongst the village community.</p> <p>Affordable access will also be considered for schools, health centers and other important social services.</p> <p>Provision of secure and safe access ensuring child online protection to Internet will be provided to community centers.</p> <p>A thorough business feasibility study will also be conducted to identify viable business models for community ownership of local equipment and connectivity.</p>
<p><b>Community Mobilization</b></p>	<p>Community involvement is critical to the success of the uptake and sustainability of the project. Initial community consultation will be conducted with the aim to identify priority needs based on current context and establish required village committee/mechanism and local focal points for the project. Local focal point will ensure proper continuous liaison with the PMO and enhance community engagement aimed at leaving no one behind.</p> <p>The established smart village / Islands center(s) will act as a public "Access point" to digital services where community members can come to access on a free or paid basis. These centers would also accelerate</p>

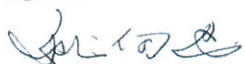

Component	Description
	awareness raising and capacity development in relation to the project deliverables.
<b>Capacity Development</b>	A series of local capacity development in the area of digital literacy and priority skills will be conducted on a continuous basis using a “Training of Trainers” approach where the initial training will be delivered to identified focal points (including youth, women and other vulnerable groups) who will consequently replicate the training to other community members. Local training providers such as NGOs, service providers and educational institutions will be identified to deliver the trainings.
<b>Digital Services</b>	<p><b>Smart Villages Digital Services:</b></p> <p>This will include a core set of priority digital services to be delivered using a service delivery infrastructure. Those specialized services with emphasis on vulnerable groups (women, youth, persons with disabilities) will be provided by different local providers that could be disseminated on top of the common service infrastructure. Examples include applications for (to be identified per village):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital agriculture services</li> <li>- Digital education</li> <li>- Digital nutrition</li> <li>- Digital tourism/marketing</li> <li>- Maritime security</li> <li>- Others</li> </ul> <p>Some of the above services will be selected based on initial needs assessment and discussion with partners.</p> <p>Some providers might be also interested to promote and deliver their services on their own for free or against a fee. The Smart Villages project will provide an opportunity for those providers to promote their services and to reach out with their innovations to local communities. It will be up to local community members to avail those services.</p>
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>	This includes continuous collection of usage data and citizen satisfaction. An M&E framework will be developed by PMU based on the priority services that will be delivered.

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<p><b>Resident Coordinator</b>          Jaap van Hierden          Date 11 August 2022          Signature </p>	<p><b>National Coordinating Authority</b>          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>          (lead/convening)  <b>ITU</b>          Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the          Telecommunication Development          Bureau          Date 1 September 2022           Signature and seal</p>	
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>FAO</b>          Xiangjun Yao, Sub-Regional Coordinator for the          Pacific          Date 11/08/22          Signature and seal  </p>	<p>Kiribati          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>ILO</b>          Matin Karimli, Director of ILO Office for Pacific          Island Countries          Date          Signature and seal </p>	<p>Federated States of Micronesia          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNESCO</b>          Nisha, Director of Office and UNESCO          Representative to the Pacific States          Date 02/09/2022          Signature and seal  </p>	<p>Republic of Marshall Islands          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNICEF</b>          Jonathan Veitch, UNICEF Representative          Date 2 Sept. 2022          Signature and seal  </p>	<p>Nauru          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNOPS</b>          Samina Kadwani, Director, Thailand Multi Country          Office          Date 19-Aug-2022          Signature and seal</p>	<p>Palau   The National Government          Name of institution          Name of representative The Hon. Gustav N. Aitaro          Date          Signature and seal Minister of State          21 October 2022</p>

<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> (lead/convening) <b>ITU</b> Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau Date 1 September 2022 Signature and seal</p> 	
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<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> <b>UNICEF</b> Jonathan Veitch, UNICEF Representative Date 2 Sept. 2022 Signature and seal</p>  	<p>Nauru <b>Ministry of Communications</b> <b>Secretary for ICT</b> Geoffrey Harris Date 18/11/22 Signature and seal</p>  
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> <b>UNOPS</b> Samina Kadwani, Director, Thailand Multi Country Office Date 19-Aug-2022 Signature and seal</p>	<p>Palau Name of institution Name of representative Date Signature and seal</p>



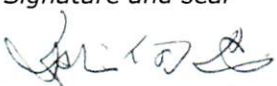








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<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNESCO</b>          Nisha, Director of Office          and Representative to the Pacific          States          Date <b>02/09/2022</b>          Signature and seal</p>	<p>Republic of Marshall Islands          Kino Kabua, Chief          Secretary of GRMI,          Office of the Chief          Secretary          Date: 16 March 2023          Signature and seal </p> 
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b>  <b>UNICEF</b>          Jonathan Veitch, UNICEF Representative          Date 2 Sept. 2022          Signature and seal</p>	<p>Nauru          Name of institution          Name of representative          Date          Signature and seal</p>

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<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> <b>FAO</b> Xiangjun Yao, Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Pacific Date 11/08/22 Signature and seal  </p>	<p>Ministry of Information, Communications, and Transport (Government of the Republic of Kiribati) Mr. Mitateti Mote Tira, Secretary of Information, Communications and Transport Signature and seal  16 November 2022 </p>
<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> <b>ILO</b> Matin Karimli, Director of ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries Date Signature and seal </p>	<p>Federated States of Micronesia Name of institution Name of representative Date Signature and seal</p>
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<p><b>Participating UN Organization</b> <b>UNESCO</b> Nisha, Director of Office and Representative to the Pacific States Date 02/09/2022 Signature and seal  </p>	<p>Republic of Marshall Islands Name of institution Name of representative Date Signature and seal</p>
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