



Partnerships for enhancing progress in science, technology, innovation, and digitalization for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States

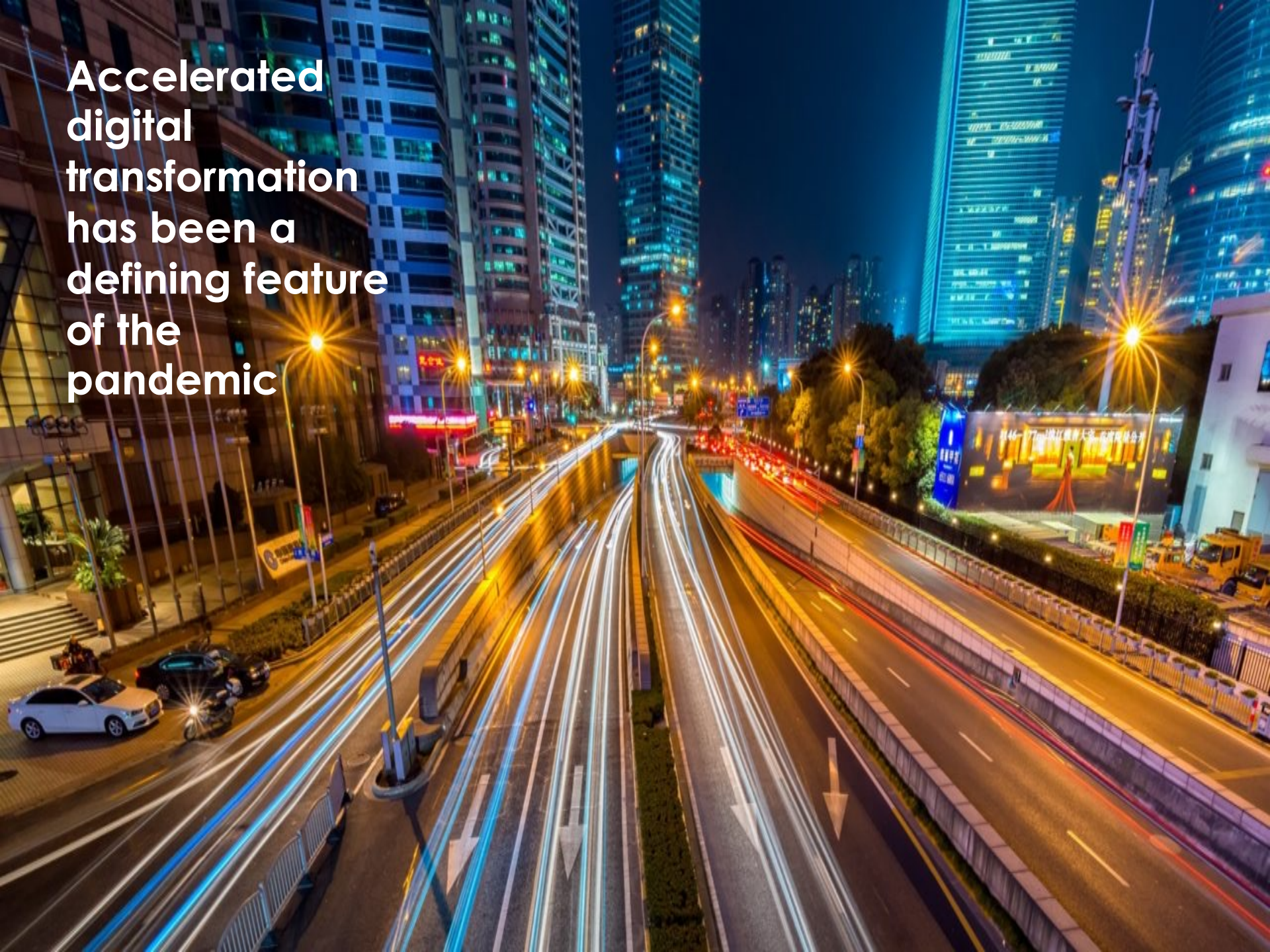
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Presentation

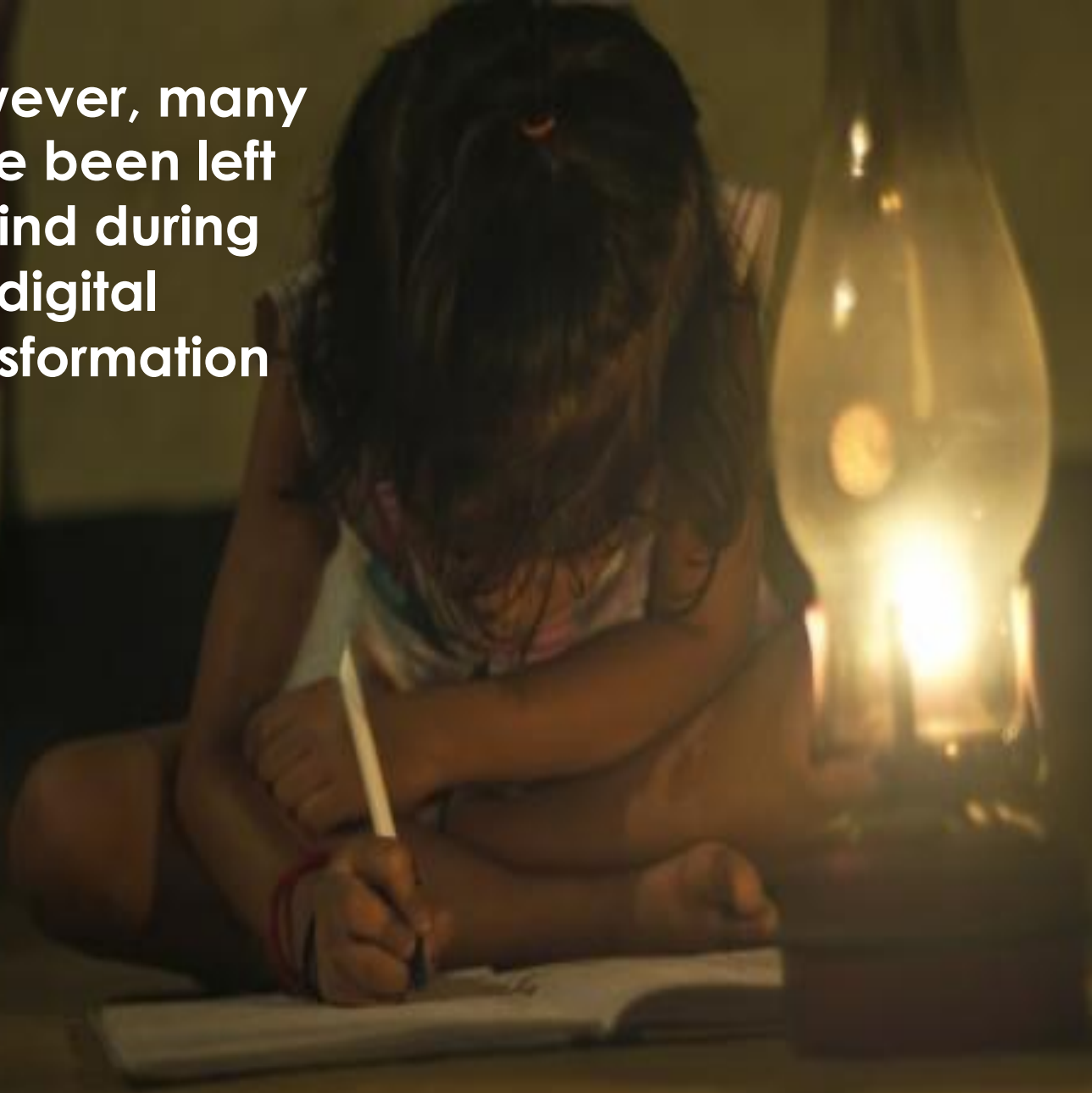
Strategies for an inclusive digital future

Partnerships with private sector for innovation

**Accelerated
digital
transformation
has been a
defining feature
of the
pandemic**



**However, many
have been left
behind during
this digital
transformation**

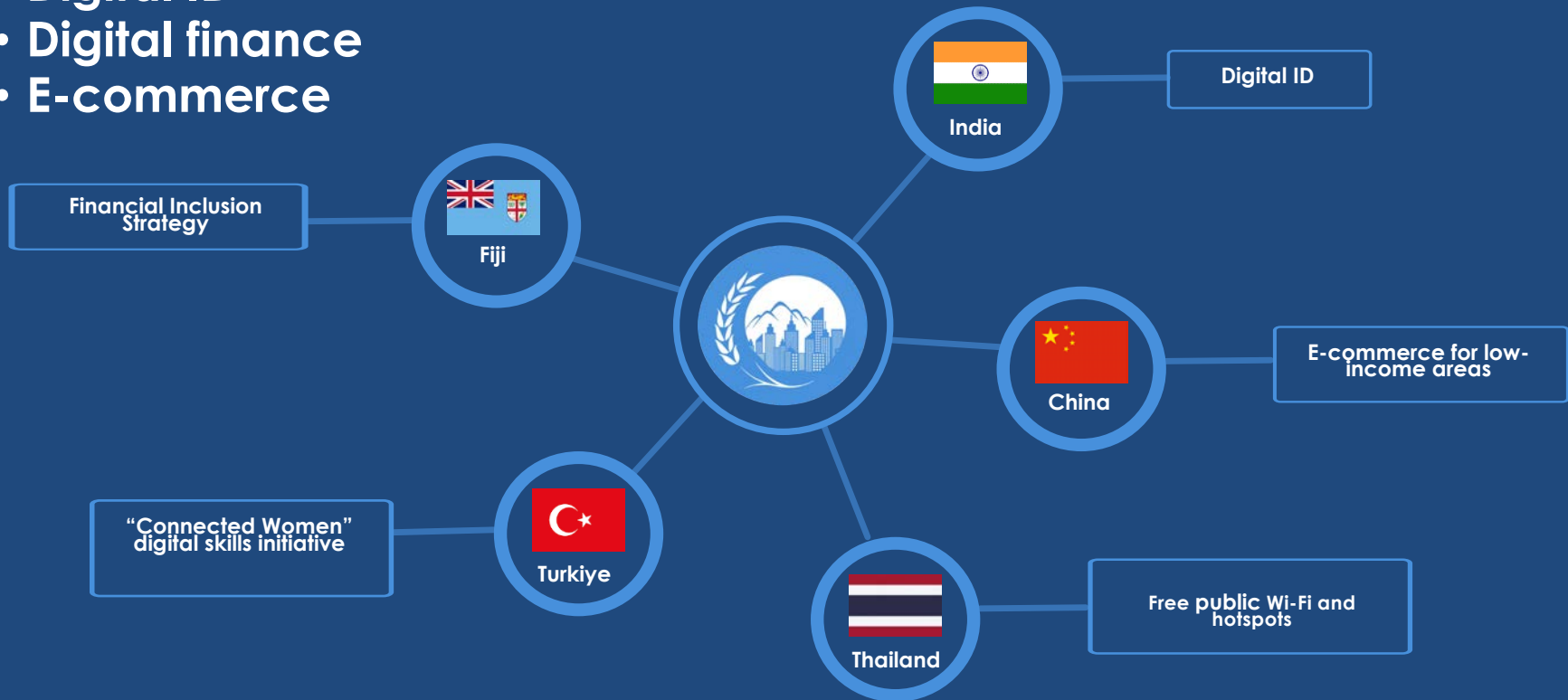


In this context, inclusion must be at the heart of government digital transformation strategies and new economic frameworks

Policy priorities for an inclusive digital future

Core foundations of digital economies and societies

- Digital connectivity
- Digital skills
- Digital ID
- Digital finance
- E-commerce



This will all need digital investment

Foreign direct Investment (FDI) in particular is the largest financial flow in to developing countries. Three core areas for digital investment attraction include:

- digital infrastructure development,
- adoption of digital technology by businesses and in the wider digital economy,
- digital business ecosystem development.

Actively attracting FDI into these three areas will not only require a favorable and open business environment but also a carefully designed and appropriately incentivized digital investment strategy.

It is imperative that such a strategy be based on an assessment of national digital FDI needs and also reflect the competitive strengths of the country in its development context.

**So why are private sector partnerships
for innovation so important?**

Why are private sector partnerships for innovation so important?

1. Investment and know-how

South Pacific Connect Initiative: A partnership with Google to establish a new subsea cable to digitally connect the United States, Fiji, Australia, and French Polynesia.

2. Solutions of the SDGs

In Fiji, support was provided to Cyber Food, an online platform and payments integration for restaurants and food delivery. With support from ESCAP, Cyber Food developed an app and integrated payment gateway and trained and onboarded women owned MSMEs in the food industry, supporting the expansion of their businesses.

In Samoa, e-commerce solution SkyEye was supported to introduce an online marketplace (Maua), with the specific goal of helping women in rural areas that have difficulty accessing markets to sell their produce, alongside a payment gateway which will allow for interoperability of payments in the country. These developments have supported women entrepreneurs to become banked and allow for digital payment history to support women-enterprise in accessing additional financial services.

3. Advancing technology together

For example, AI presents both opportunities and challenges. Collaboration between the private and public sectors in advancing technology typically works well for several reasons. Firstly, companies in the private sector often have the financial resources, innovation, and agility required to drive technological breakthroughs. On the other hand, the public sector can provide regulation and a broader societal perspective. Government agencies can set standards, ensure ethical and fair use of technology and address critical societal challenges.

Key Messages

Digital technology can be a force for inclusion but also for increasing inequality. Government digital strategies and policies must have inclusion at their heart.

Private sector partnerships for innovation will be critical to bridge the digital divide, meet the ambitions of the SDGs and shape the future of emerging technologies such as AI.

Recommendations for Public-Private Collaboration for Technology and Innovation

- Knowledge sharing: E.g. information asymmetries to promote digital investment.
- Open policy making: E.g. the private sector must be engaged in government policies and strategies that affect them.
- Private sector capacity development: Enable private sector actors to better understand the SDGs and integrate withing their business models to better align people, planet and profit.



ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission
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Thank You

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