

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 Overview

Presented by the CAREC Secretariat  
Think Tank Meeting  
16<sup>th</sup> August 2023



# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

## Vision & Mission

### V I S I O N

In line with the overarching CAREC 2030 vision of “Good Neighbors, Good Partners, and Good Prospects,” the CAREC Digital Strategy 2030’s vision aims for:

- Inclusive Economic Growth & Social Well-being
- New jobs (including for the disadvantaged and minority populations)
- Better Services
- Higher Regional Competitiveness

### M I S S I O N

Creating a **Data-Driven Digital Regional Economy** with fast and reliable online access to relevant information and trusted, real-time, user-friendly digital services for all citizens, businesses, and administrations across the CAREC region.

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

## The Strategic Objectives

1

Encourage  
**Investment in the Digital infrastructure**  
across the region to close connectivity gaps.

2

Harmonize  
**Digital and Data Legislation**  
to promote an enabling environment.

3

Reduce regional trade barriers to  
**Increase Cross-border Trade** and  
expand business opportunities for  
companies across the region, particularly in  
e-commerce.

4

Develop new **Digital skills**, including for  
women, disadvantaged, and minority  
populations, to create jobs.

5

Attract **Talent** into the region to strengthen  
**CAREC's Innovation Ecosystem.**

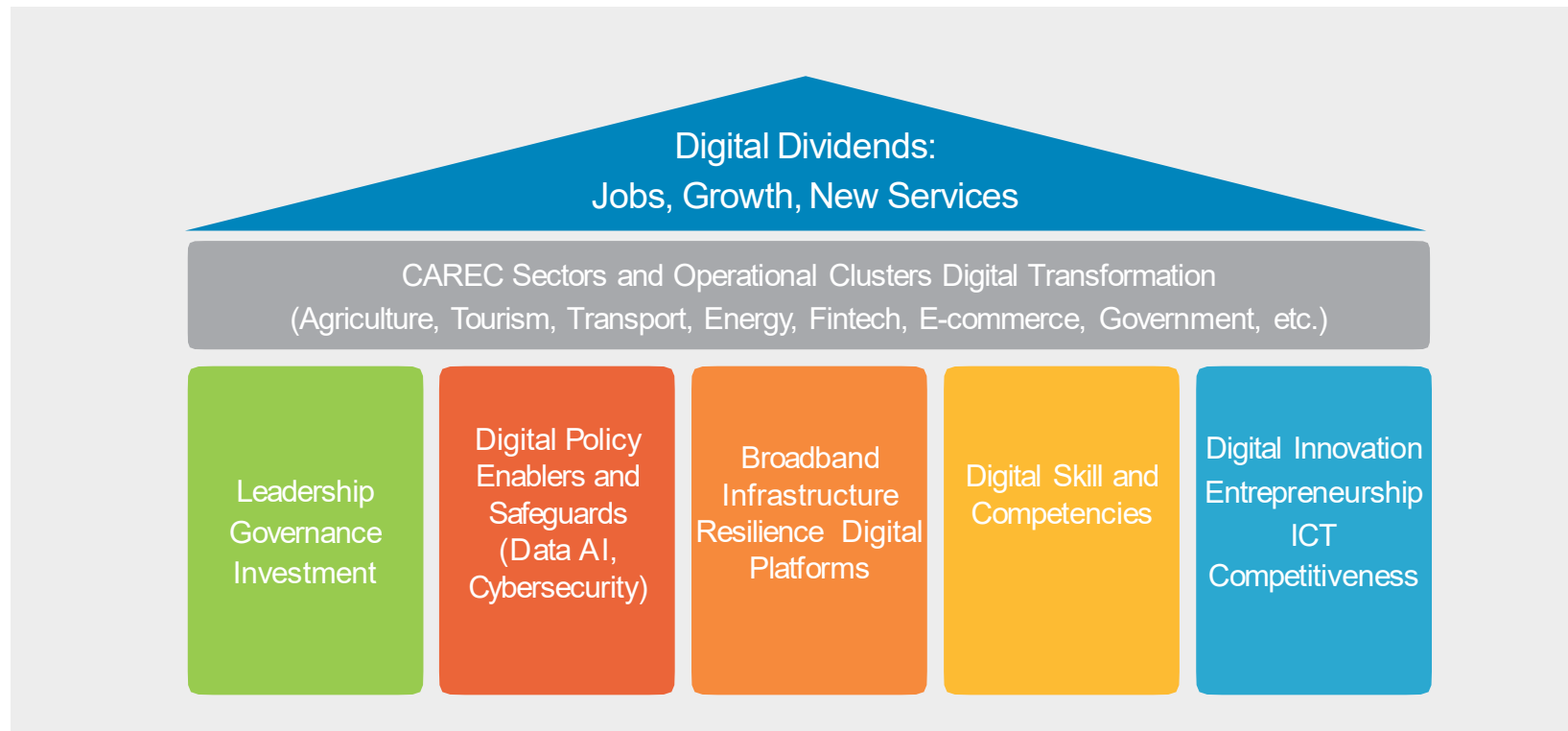
6

Improve the **Digital Foundations** and  
create interoperable digital platforms to  
enable the **development of CAREC's  
operational clusters.**

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

## The 5 Pillars of the Digital Foundations

To achieve the **Strategic Objectives**, the CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 will strengthen the following **Five Interconnected Pillars** through improved cooperation between CAREC member countries



AI = artificial intelligence, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, ICT = information and communication technology. Source: CAREC Secretariat.

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

## The 5 Pillars of the Digital Foundations

### Leadership Governance Investment

- Strengthening Regional Institutions for Digital Leadership
- Creating Incentives for Regional Cooperation in the CAREC Digital Space
- Attracting Investment in the Digital Economy
- Promoting an Inclusive Regional Digital Economy
- Leveraging Digital Technologies to Pursue Cross-cutting Sustainable Development Goals
- Inclusion, Innovation, Sustainability, Resilience, Partnerships, and Participation.

### Digital Policy Enablers and Safeguards (Data AI, Cybersecurity)

- Harmonizing Legislation and Regulations across CAREC Member Countries and Adopting Regional Legislation to Promote Digital Partnerships
- Enhancing the Cybersecurity of the CAREC Region
- Aligning Data Policies across CAREC Member Countries
- Supporting the Development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Region

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

## The 5 Pillars of the Digital Foundations

### Digital Skill and Competencies

- Improving Education, Training, Life-long learning
- Developing Digital Skills: Basic and Professional
- Boosting digital Competencies

### Broadband Infrastructure Resilience Digital Platforms

- Connecting Digital Infrastructure to Bridge the Digital Divide
- Building Digital Resilience Capacity
- Building a CAREC regional PLATFORM economy

### Digital Innovation Entrepreneurship ICT Competitiveness

- Nurturing the Digital Innovation ecosystem
- Promoting the Adoption and Effective Use of Digital Technologies by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
- Promoting Regional Content
- Boosting ICT Exports

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

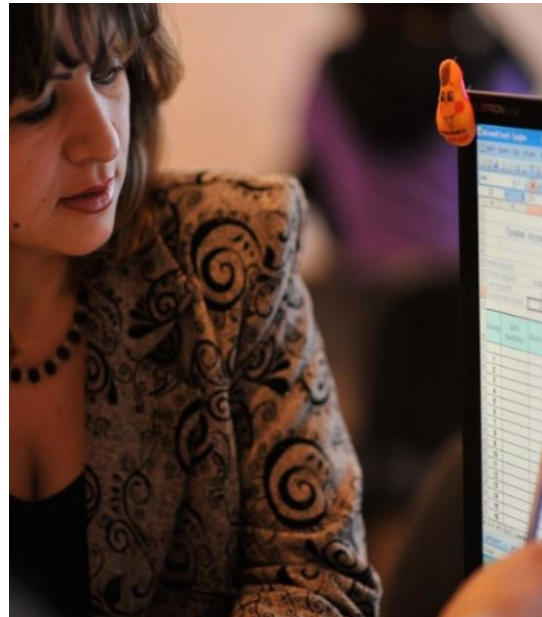
## Entry Points for Transforming CAREC Sectors & Operational Clusters

The CAREC 2030 Strategy emphasizes that integrating ICT across the spectrum of CAREC operations will be a cross-cutting priority.

Government as a Platform



Economic and Financial Stability: e-Finance/Fintech



Trade, Tourism and Economic Corridors



Infrastructure & Economic Connectivity (Smart Cities & Villages)



Agriculture and Water Cluster: Digital Agriculture



Human Development

# CAREC Digital Strategy Implementation Principles

- Adopt a **Holistic** digital transformation vision for an **Inclusive** digital ecosystem to strengthen the region's **Non-digital and digital foundations** to support both larger regional digital initiatives, as well as specific operational cluster and sectoral projects.
- Adopt an active CAREC policy framework for **Interoperability** at the legal, organizational, semantic, and technical levels.
- Discuss to develop **Regional Governance** structures and partnerships for collaboration and build digital managerial and leadership **Skills** to ensure sustainability.
- Initially focus on a prioritized project portfolio highlighting **Quick wins** and **Low-hanging fruit** in the shorter term and later progressing to more strategic, harder to execute projects – the must-haves.



# Key CAREC Digital Strategy Implementation Priorities

1

Developing the CAREC Digital transformation **Project Portfolio** and **Implementation Roadmap**.

2

Strengthening the **Enabling Environment** and **Capacity Building**.

3

Gathering and sharing **Best Practice** for digital development.

4

Establishing a **Monitoring System** for digital transformation progress and impact.

5

Building **Public-Private Sector Partnerships** for project portfolio development and implementation.

6

Working with **Development Partners** to secure project funding.

7

**Strategic Planning, Future Thinking** and **Strategic Foresight** for CAREC digital cooperation

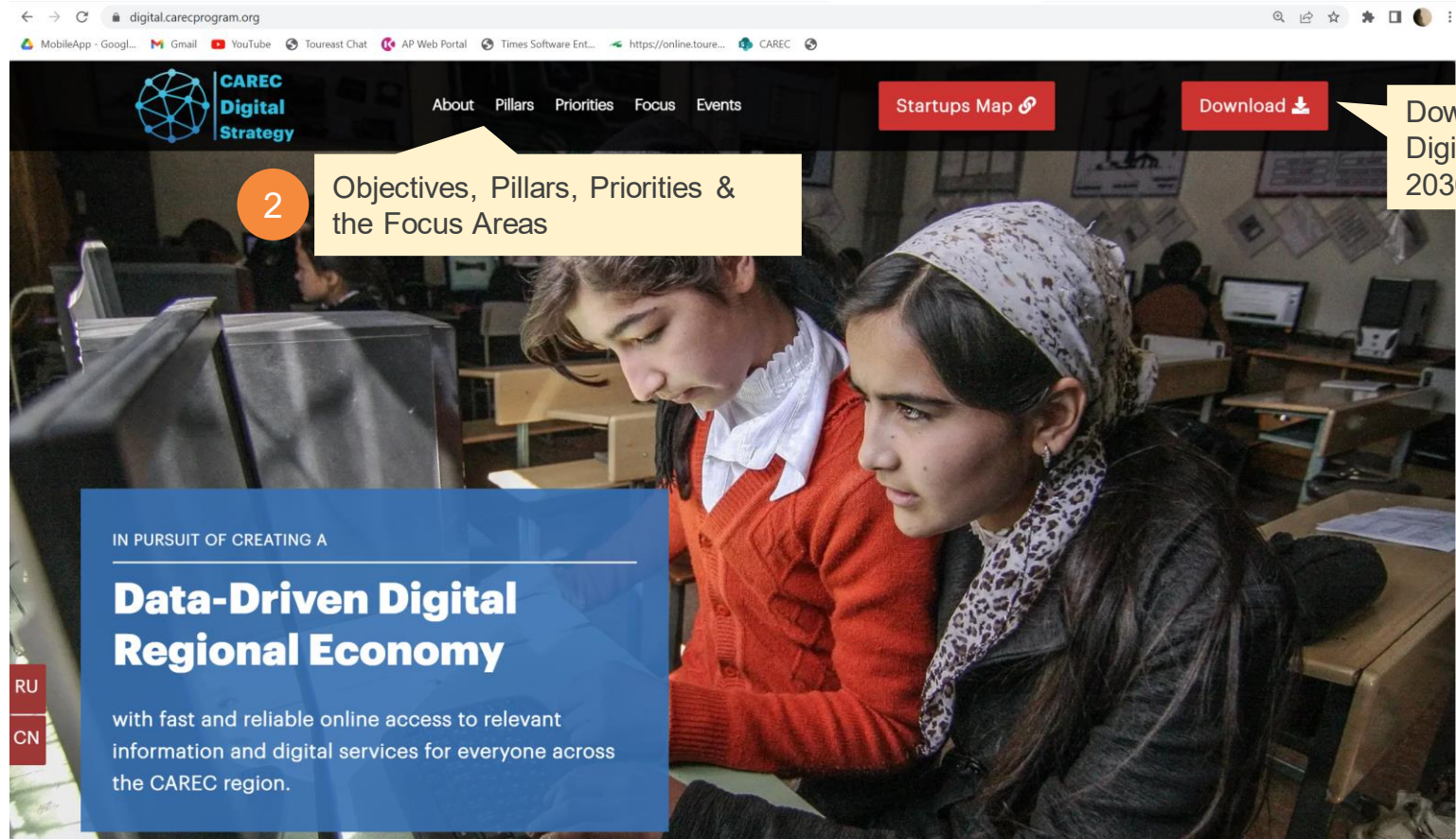
8

Developing a **Strategic Communication Plan**

# CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

Published Online for everyone to Access

1 For More Information Visit: [HTTPS://DIGITAL.CARECPROGRAM.ORG](https://digital.carecprogram.org)



3 Available in English, Russian & Chinese

4 Download CAREC Digital Strategy 2030

# Establishment of the CAREC Digital Strategy Steering Committee (DSSC)

A **CAREC Digital Strategy Steering Committee** has been established to **Drive the Implementation** of the CAREC Digital Strategy 2030.

**Led and constituted** by Governments of the CAREC member countries,

**Facilitated** by the CAREC Secretariat.

Chaired by CAREC countries on a **Rotational Basis** following the CAREC chairmanship rules.

Based on **Mutual Good Will** and an **inclusive multi-stakeholder consultation model**.

# Role of the CAREC Digital Strategy Steering Committee (DSSC)



To have Regular meetings to coordinate all aspects of the **Implementation Process**.



To Agree upon **Annual Deliverables** and communicate them to the **Ministerial Conference**.



To Engage with all the **Members of the CAREC Digital Transformation ecosystem** like:



Public sector organizations across CAREC, NGOs



Private sector companies, regional and global IT players



Academic institutions, the expert community

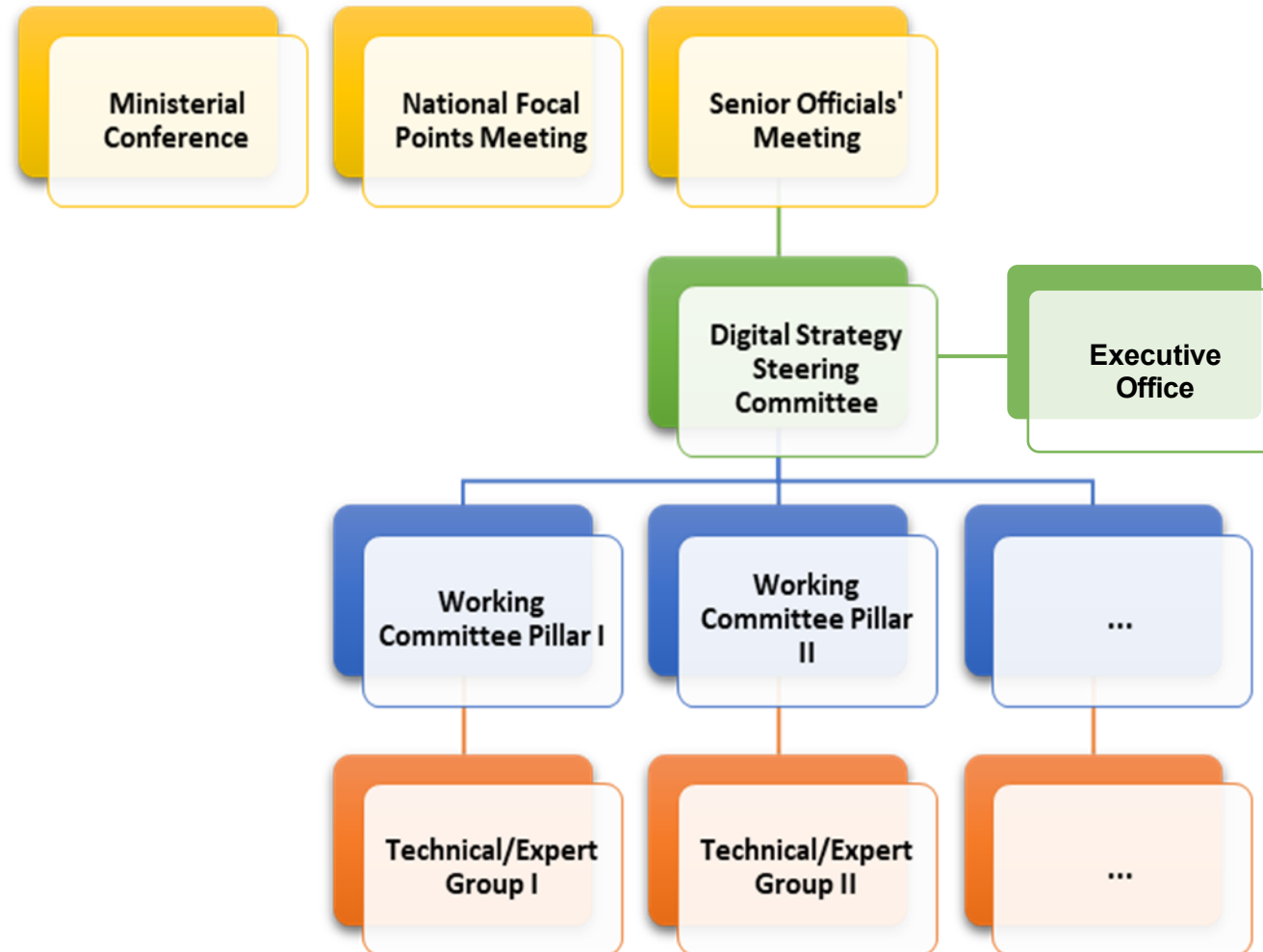


International donor organizations



Citizens organizations, others.

# CAREC Digital Strategy Steering Committee: Proposed Evolution



# Initiatives under Pillar 1: *Leadership, Governance, Investment*

## Completed:

- Establishment of the Digital Strategy Steering Committee (DSSC)
- Establishment of the CAREC Digital Strategy Website (to evolve into a collaboration platform)
- Inauguration of the DSSC (25.10.2022)
- Agreement on the Terms of Reference (25.10.2022)

## Going forward:

- Agreement on the Initial project portfolio: existing projects to scale + projects proposed by the CAREC member countries during the Strategy development process.
- Agreement on CAREC Secretariat facilitation of the initial Strategy implementation activities that may include
  - Launch Strategic Communication Plan
  - Support the development of the DT Project Portfolio
  - Support the evolution of the CAREC Digital Collaboration Platform
  - Help align funding with implementation priorities
  - Support the creation of a regional tax-free digital innovation zone

# Initiatives under Pillar 1 – going forward (Cont.)

- Trainings and best practice sharing proposed by the CAREC member countries
  - Smart Cities and Villages best practices (Azerbaijan)
  - Leveraging broadband access for development best practices (Georgia)
  - Broadband rollout in remote and mountainous regions and digital transformation awareness-building best practices (Georgia)
  - Launching awareness-raising programs on the benefits of broadband for populations in rural, remote, and mountainous areas to help people understand how to make the internet work for them. (Georgia)
  - E-government, mobile e-government services, intelligent transport (e-freight) best practices; regional cooperation on digital identity (Kazakhstan)
  - Leveraging digital technologies to address epidemics like COVID-19 best practices (Kazakhstan)
  - Digital Agriculture best practices (Pakistan)
  - E-education and training best practices (China)
  - Training and capacity building in the use of digital technologies for senior citizens best practices (China)
- The DSSC may authorize the above content to be prepared and CAREC Secretariat will facilitate access to it and presentation to interested CAREC audiences.

# Initiatives under Pillar 2: Digital Policy Enablers and Safeguards

## Under implementation:

CITA-2030 - E-commerce laws and policies to move forward the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda

## Going forward:

- Propose specific initiatives on the harmonization of regulation to enable priority regional digital initiatives
  - these may include cybersecurity, data sharing and privacy, etc

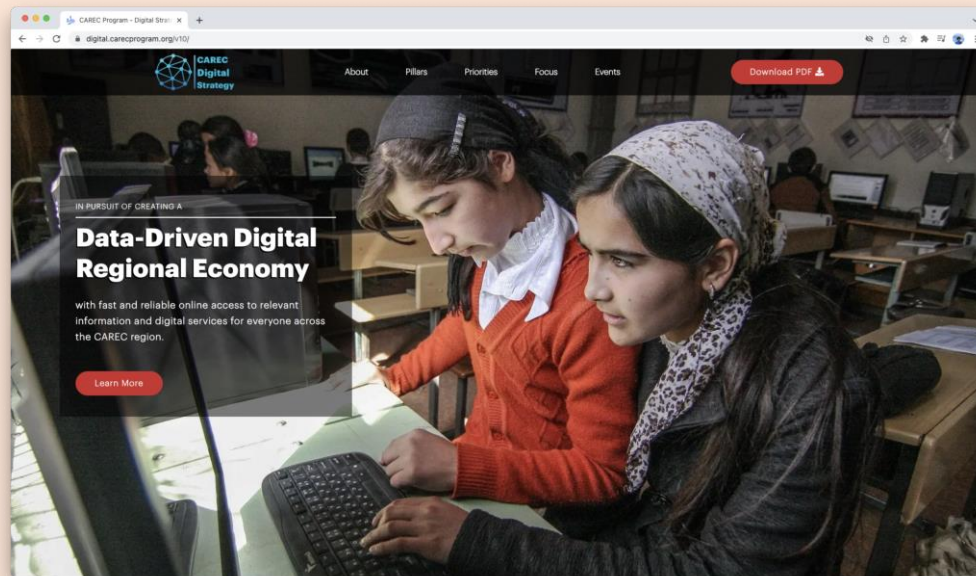


# Initiatives under Pillar 3: Broadband Infrastructure, Resilience, Digital Platforms

## Under implementation:

CAREC Digital Strategy Portal

[@digital.carecprogram.org](https://digital.carecprogram.org)



## Going forward:

- Establish the CAREC Digital Collaboration Platform to enable coordination, training and best practice sharing as part of the CAREC Digital Strategy Implementation process (see Pillar 1)
- Identify key regional connectivity and infrastructure needs and work with regional telecom operators on the implementation
- Identify existing weaknesses and vulnerabilities to propose key resilience initiatives

# Initiatives under Pillar 4: Digital Skills and Competencies

## Completed:

Enhanced use of digital tools in the CAREC Program under the 'Virtual CAREC' initiative – ICT trainings and equipment for CAREC member governments

## Going forward:

- CAREC member countries have volunteered to offer the following trainings:
  - Digital leaders and change managers training (Azerbaijan)
  - Start-up training (Kyrgyz Republic)
  - Digital competencies training (PRC)
  - Start-up training (IT Park Uzbekistan)
- DSSC will request these countries to prepare these trainings and CAREC Secretariat will work with CAREC members to facilitate organization and attendance.

# Initiatives under Pillar 5 Digital Innovation and SMEs enablement

## Under Implementation:

- CAREC Startup Map – connecting entrepreneurs with funding and talent
- CAREC Community Activation Hub – connecting stakeholders
- CAREC Innovation Network – enable collaboration across the region
- CAREC University Startup Generator – a competition to help university students develop entrepreneurial skills

## Going forward:

- A regional acceleration program for start-ups to be launched by Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA);
- Specific SMEs solutions for e-commerce, e-business, and e-government that can be scaled across the region to be proposed by GITA (in cooperation with Georgian private sector companies).
- Hosting start-ups from across the region in Georgia for training and networking.
- A regional start-up hub in Kazakhstan
- Start-up acceleration to be launched by the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Joint incubation and acceleration for start-ups to be offered by the information technology (IT) Park Uzbekistan
- The DSSC may request these countries to prepare the above initiatives.

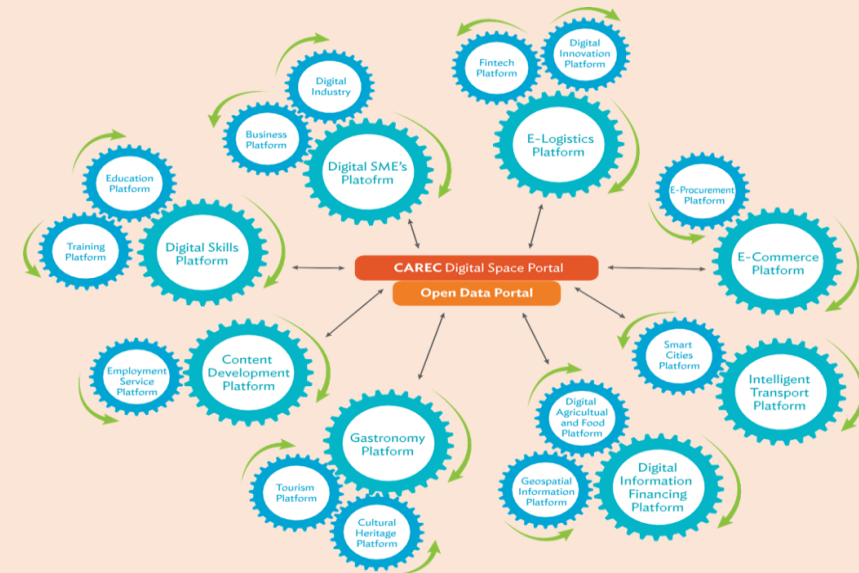
# Digital Transformation in CAREC Sectors and Operational Clusters

## Under Implementation:

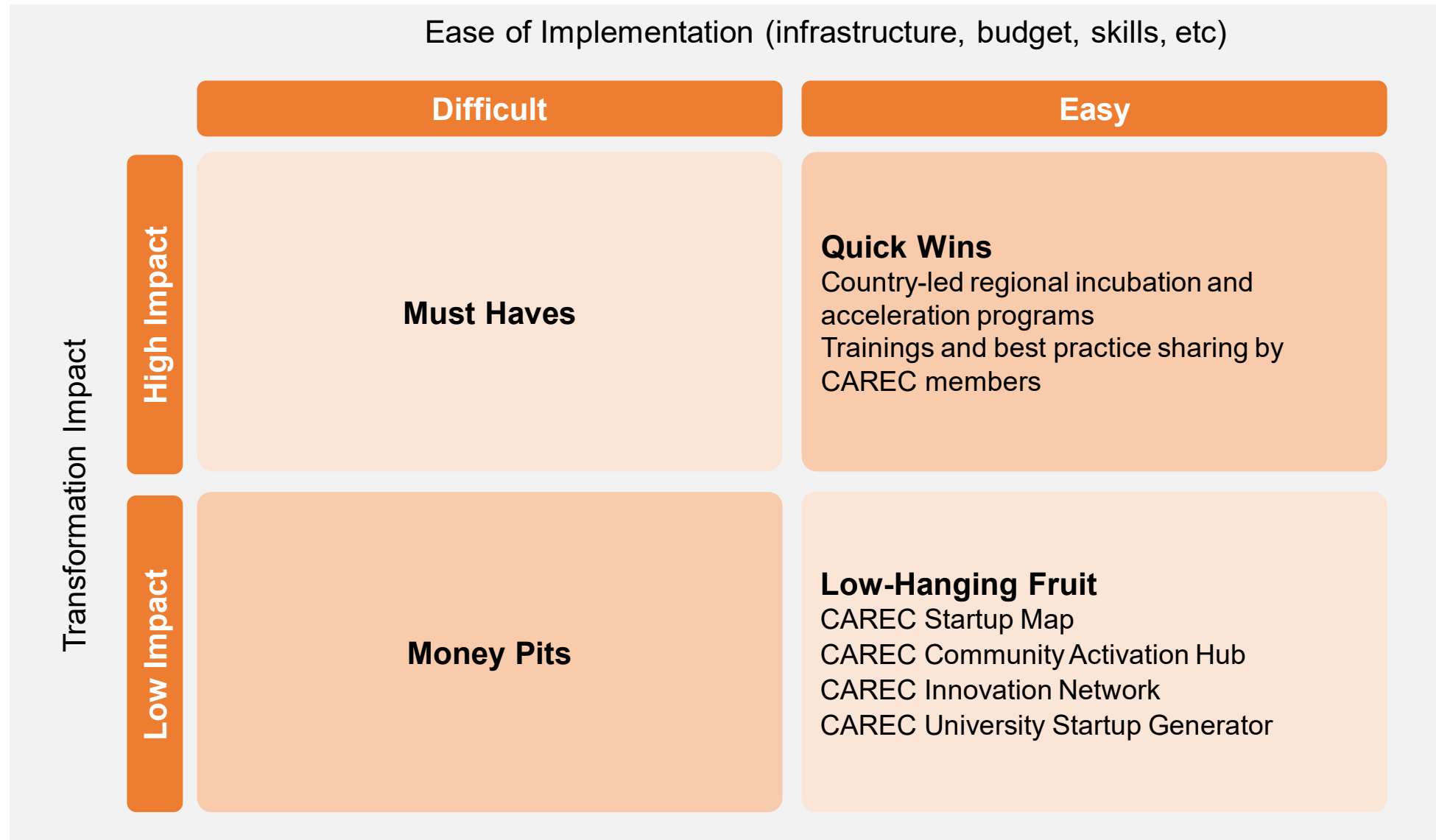
- Transport: E-freight in aviation, E-visa
- Health – COVID reporting across the region

## Going forward:

- Tourism: enabling the use of national identity cards for travel across the region
- Agriculture: scaling Pakistan's Digital Dera initiative
- Prioritize CAREC sector-specific platforms



# Prioritization Matrix for the Digital Transformation Project Portfolio



# Discussion & Feedback



Thank you! 😊