



STRIDE ASSOCIATION

STRIDE ENTREPRENEURS' ASSOCIATION

The Challenges

- For Digital Entrepreneurial **Ecosystems**:
 - **Fragmented** entrepreneurial ecosystems within and across DCO member states
 - **Limited cooperation** and knowledge sharing collaboration across borders: market access, financing, mentoring, etc.
 - **Limited alignment** between governments, private sector, non-profit to support entrepreneurs across member states
- What Digital Entrepreneurs and Founders Need
 - **Voice**, advocacy (empowering) and grassroots mobilization for **agency** (focus on giving entrepreneurs responsibility and ownership)
 - Digital Ecosystem Support
 - digital and **technology skills**
 - technology **entrepreneurship education**
 - access to **mentoring**
 - networking, **linkages** and connections
 - digital, commercial and legal **infrastructure**
 - access to **capital**, finance and quasi-equity investment
 - access to local **markets** and customers
 - **Internationalization**, co-incubation opportunities and market export



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The Solution: STRIDE

Scale-up Trusted Resource for Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) (STRIDE) is an Association that aims to address the challenges faced by technology entrepreneurs, startups and digital MSMEs looking to grow their businesses across member states. STRIDE aims to enable and empower IDEs in their growth and development journey across member states

Targeted SDGs:



Targeted DCO Countries +:



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Vision, Mission & Objectives

Vision

To create a vibrant and inclusive global entrepreneurial ecosystem, where entrepreneurs thrive, innovation flourishes, and barriers to success are overcome, driving economic prosperity and social impact across DCO ecosystems.

Mission

To engage with, empower and catalyze the growth of entrepreneurs and startup ecosystems through collaboration, knowledge sharing, access to resources, fostering innovation, economic development and entrepreneurship and on the ground support for IDM Projects.

Objectives

- Support the sustainable and inclusive growth of of the Digital Economy in DCO ecosystem
- Harmonize policies between member states and streamline digital ecosystem integration in DCO countries
- Catalyze alignment between governments, private sector, non-profit to support entrepreneurs across DCO member states
- Serve as a platform for local expansion and support for IDM projects

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Ecosystem Intervention for Wider Impact – Entrepreneurs at Center Stage

Professional Services, Non-profit, non-government

Support services to entrepreneurs

Local and Global Markets

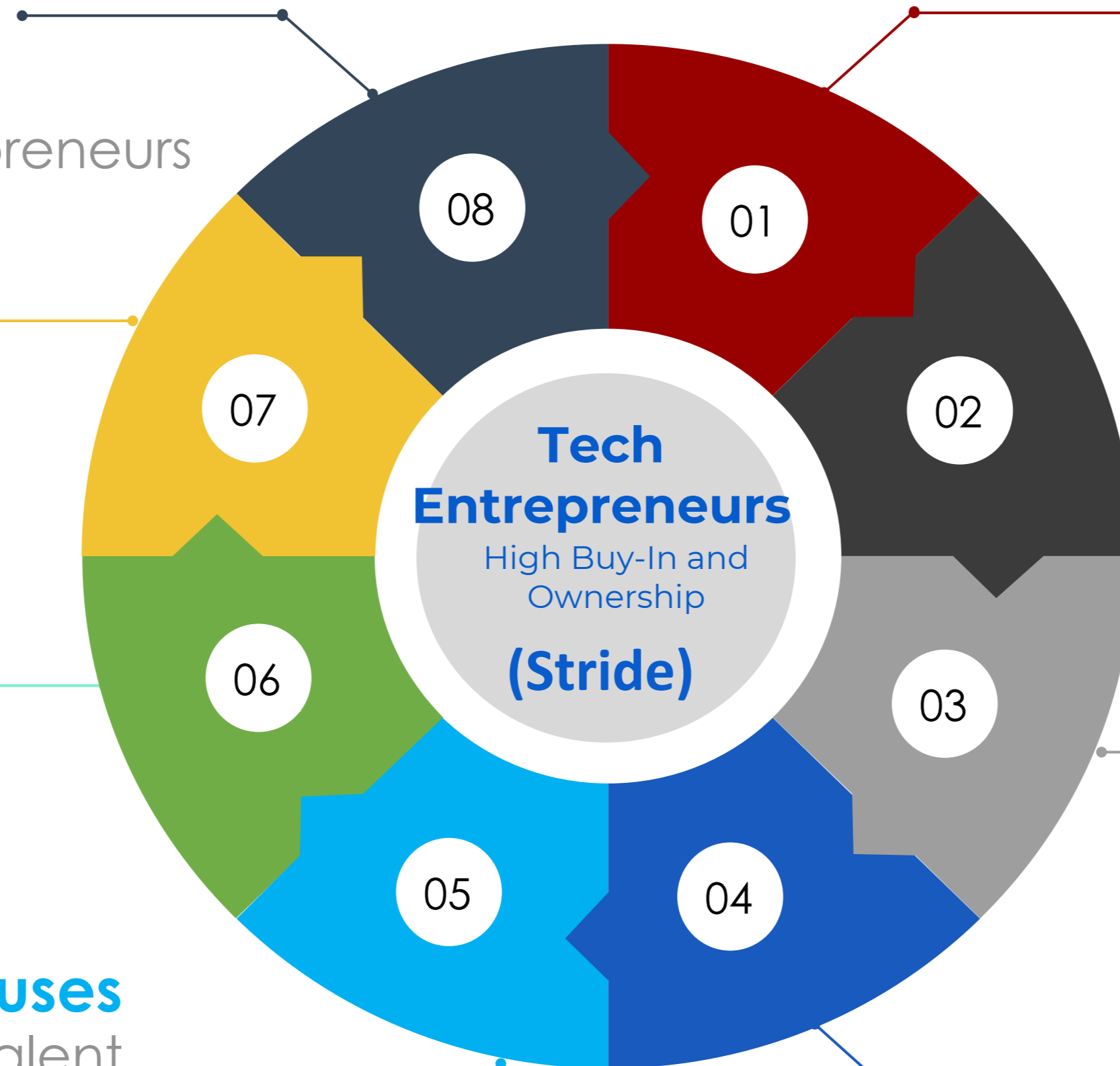
More accessible, structured, and digitized

Private and Corporate Sector

Corporate Entrepreneurship Programs, R&D Programs, Investing in Startups, Innovation Programs, Early Adopters, Infrastructure

Universities and Training Houses

As catalysts and source for talent
Skilling/Upskilling of Digital Skills
Technology Entrepreneurship Education
Students and Workforce Development



Government Support & Policy

Regulatory Framework, Commercial Laws, Ecosystem Elements Support, Entrepreneurship Support Programs

Funding and Finance

Flow of Capital, Finance and Quasi Equity Funding

Culture

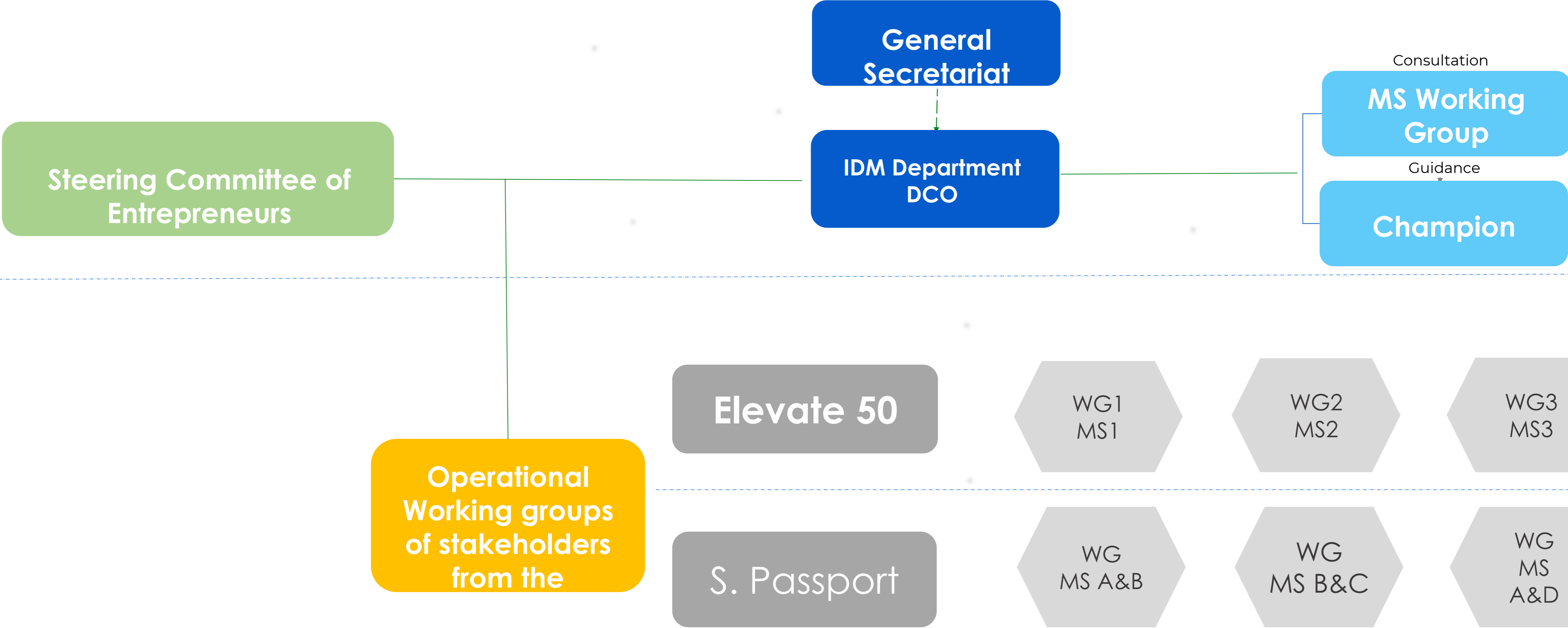
Conducive for Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Mentoring and Advisory

Access to opportunities, contacts, knowledge

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Kick Start Governance Structure and Activities





 Elevate50

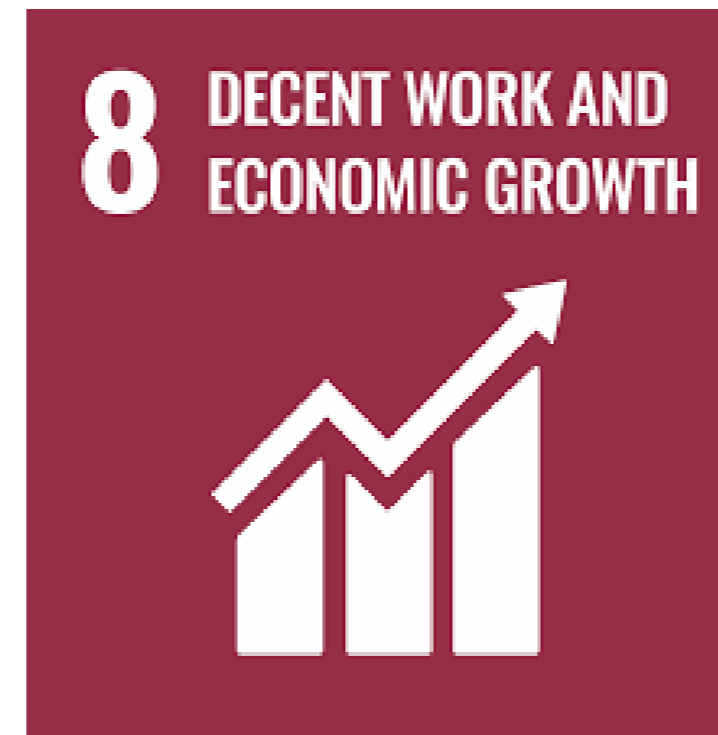
The Rationale: Gender Gap in MSMEs

- **Today**, the global e-commerce market is expected to total **\$6.3 trillion** and projected to reach over **\$8.1 trillion by 2026**. (UN)
- While MSMEs are recognized to play a significant role in **achieving national SDGs**, boosting **economic growth** and **jobs creation**, the gender gaps cost the economy some **15% of GDP**. (UN)
- In this context and with the objective of **unleashing the potential of women entrepreneurship in the digital era**, the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) launched the Elevate50 Initiative with a mission to help **50,000 offline women-led MSMEs** join the digital revolution



The Objective

Elevate50 helps achieving the **6 UN SDGs** mainly related to empowering women entrepreneurship



The Pillars

- Elevate50 aims to provide women-led MSMEs with the opportunity to join the digital revolution with a multi-faced approach.
- To achieve this outcome, the Elevate50 initiative is built on **4 pillars**:

Business Acumen and
Digital Skills Training

Access to Market & E-
store Creation

Access to Finance &
Financial Inclusion
Tools

Enabling Women-
friendly Regulatory
Reforms

The Pillars

Business Acumen & Digital skills

- Design and implement **business acumen** and **digital skills** training programs tailored to the specific needs of W-MSMEs.
- Trainings on digital skills could cover areas including but not limited to general digital literacy, eCommerce management, online marketing, and website development.

The Pillars

Access to Market & E-store Creation

- Subsidize the onboarding on **fully integrated** and user-friendly e-commerce platforms that provide **centralized marketplaces** to promote and display the products and services, expand the reach and foster connections with a broader customer base, and thus, increase sales opportunities.
- Explore **continued subsidization for the smallest businesses**, i.e., micro businesses, for a defined period to ensure continuity of the business as well as a smooth phase out for the subsidization.

The Pillars

Access to Finance & Financial Inclusion Tools

- Subsidize the onboarding on **fully integrated** and user-friendly e-commerce platforms that provide centralized marketplaces to promote and display the products and services, expand the reach and foster connections with a broader customer base, and thus, increase sales opportunities. Explore **continued subsidization for the smallest businesses**, i.e., micro businesses, for a defined period to ensure continuity of the business as well as a smooth phase out for the subsidization.
- Establish partnerships with public financial institutions and venture capital firms to provide and **facilitate financing** through government subsidized loans, micro-finance, business angel interventions and equity investments.
- Facilitating MSME's **access to financial inclusion tools** that could include business bank accounts, mobile banking apps, credit facilities, digital payment solutions, Point of sales systems, digital lending platforms, accounting software, insurance products, etc...

The Pillars

Enabling Women-friendly Regulatory Reforms

- Engage with the government to raise awareness around the importance of **gender-responsive policies and regulations** and advocate for policies that notably streamline business regulations and provide tax incentives to ensure a “soft landing” into a more transparent business environment.

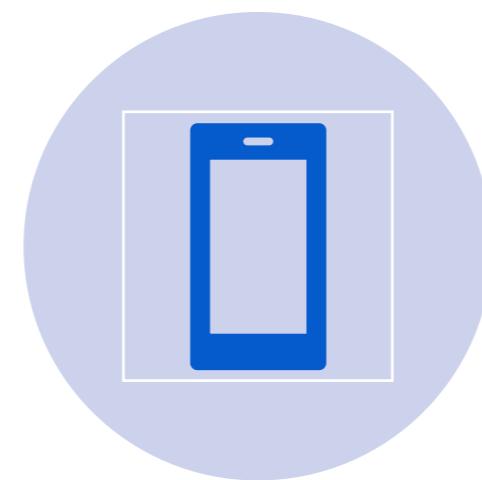
The Process



**IDENTIFYING ELIGIBLE
BUSINESSES**



**REACHING OUT TO
ELIGIBLE BUSINESSES**



**BUSINESS ACUMEN &
DIGITAL UPSKILLING**



**ONBOARDING ON E-
COMMERCE
PLATFORMS**



**MONITORING AND
EVALUATING**

The Phases

The project may have different phases, depending on different criteria:

a. The legal and financial situation of the business

- **Phase 1:** Onboarding the offline businesses that are formally registered and have a high probability of success upon the digitization.
- **Phase 2:** Onboard the offline business that are registered and need more support, notably in terms of access to finance and government incentives, to succeed.
- **Phase 3:** "The hard-to-reach businesses" that are not registered but conduct informal online commerce using social media channels. These require extensive work and collaboration to identify and reach out to them. An attractive regulatory environment is required to ensure their "soft landing" in a regulated business environment, such as a tax exemption during the first few years.

The Phases

b. The geographic location

The project can also have different phases depending on the geographic location of the business, i.e., **starting with urban zones then covering rural areas**, considering internet coverage and connectivity, both **for the W-MSMEs as well as their target customer base.**

Local and International Partners and Stakeholders

Note: Elevate50 will be executed by Stride Association, i.e., a platform that brings together all relevant stakeholders, local and international, from the public sector, the private sector, academia, and international organizations to execute multistakeholder programs designed by the DCO.





Startup Passport

The Startup Passport?

- Despite significant potential global demand for their solutions, **startups face legal, financial and administrative hurdles to expand their businesses across borders**, with startups citing more than a year of administrative processes solely to navigate the regulatory processes associated with expanding their offering globally.
- DCO Member States should work together to offer **more integrated and seamless** digital regulations for their startups and entrepreneurs.



- The Startup Passport is an important step in creating the **borderless environment** that the entrepreneurs need to prosper, thus enabling business growth and job opportunities for Member States.
- The Startup Passport provides **expedited entry and support** in the markets of DCO Member States.
- The Startup Passport is a program that helps startups do business across borders **more efficiently while maintaining their footprint in their country of origin**.

The Startup Passport

Addressing the challenges of :

- **Reducing** administrative and financial **burdens**.
- **Accelerating corporate registration** and other processes for entrepreneurs in one DCO Member State to enter the markets of other DCO Member States.
- **Opening new opportunities** for Startups of DCO Member States.



Opening new opportunities

Analysing additional challenges and **translating them in legal provisions:**

- Visa facilitation for the founders
- Investment facilitation
- Intellectual property protection
- Access to funding and grants
- Data protection and privacy
- Collaboration in research and development
- Cross-border talent mobility
- Regulatory sandbox
- Other - TBD



How can we proceed?

Signing a non-binding MOU between Member States to join the initiative.

Identifying the barriers/constraints and the required changes.

Signing bilateral agreements to be adopted and implemented by Member States.

Legal implementation in the domestic law. IT implementation.

Thanks

