

## Policy Brief

# Governance Futures in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States: Key Insights and Policy Implications

**Abstract:** While progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains slow in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)—and in some cases faces serious setbacks—public servants remain committed to fostering forward-looking initiatives to drive change in the region. How Caribbean SIDS navigate uncertainty and prepare for the future will profoundly influence the well-being of their people, now and for generations to come. This Policy Brief explores possible governance futures in the Caribbean, drawing on insights from a regional workshop held in Barbados in May 2025 attended by government officials of sixteen SIDS. Through the lens of strategic foresight, it identifies and analyzes key drivers of change—political, economic, social, technological, and environmental—and considers how these forces may reshape governance by 2040. The Brief presents a range of transformational scenarios, their interconnections, and a shared vision for resilient, inclusive, and future-ready governance in Caribbean SIDS.

## Introduction

The **Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) – a Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity**<sup>1</sup> highlights that “the next ten years are critical for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). A new context is emerging wherein the economic, social and environmental as well as geopolitical threats to SIDS development are so great that they can only be ameliorated by a reinvigorated enabling environment that gives meaningful effect to their sustainable development.” (para.12)

Despite economic and social advancements in recent years, several adverse factors, including but not limited to the war in Ukraine, inflation, raise in tariffs, and impact of climate change, have resulted in both domestic and external challenges in the Caribbean region. Therefore, at the Fourth SIDS Conference held in 2024, Member States agreed that it is necessary to build strong institutions by, among other things, “investing in continuous education and training and professional development programs for public servants, and building public sector skillsets for the future, including in improving the agility of public service delivery and public procurement.”<sup>2</sup>

The Pact for the Future, adopted in 2024 by the United Nations General Assembly, further calls for “leveraging science, data, statistics, and strategic foresight to ensure long-term thinking and planning, and to develop and implement sustainable practices and the institutional reforms necessary for evidence-based decision-making, while making governance more anticipatory, adaptive, and responsive to future opportunities, risks, and challenges”. It also underlines the need for increased capacity-building efforts to bridge digital divides and foster innovation, futures thinking, and foresight among Member States. It

## Key Messages

- Governance institutions in the Caribbean region must address the cycle of mistrust in the digital age, the sustainability imperative, inequality and the labor market disruption nexus as well as data security and governance in an unequal world.
- To address these challenges and become more agile, adaptable, and forward-looking, the Caribbean region must embrace strategic foresight as a critical tool for resilience and adaptability.
- Strategic foresight empowers policymakers to anticipate disruptions, manage emerging risks, leverage opportunities, and design governance models that are resilient, inclusive, and better prepared for the future.
- Based on the strategic foresight workshop conducted with 16 Caribbean SIDS, the desirable future of governance is a **People-Powered & Inclusive Caribbean** shaped by inclusive, proactive, progressive and agile governance in the Caribbean 4.0 age of AI and digital governance with agile labor markets in Island heaven.

underscores that strategic foresight is necessary to ensure long-term thinking and planning.

As such, United Nations Member States have agreed “to develop and implement sustainable practices and the institutional reforms necessary

<sup>1</sup> United Nations (2024). Outcome document: The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) – a Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity. <https://sdgs.un.org/documents/outcome-document-antigua-and-barbuda-agenda-sids-abas-renewed-declaration-resilient>

<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 25 (section ii, d) of ABAS. <https://sdgs.un.org/documents/outcome-document-antigua-and-barbuda-agenda-sids-abas-renewed-declaration-resilient>

to ensure evidence-based decision-making, while making governance more anticipatory, adaptive and responsive to future opportunities, risks and challenges.”

Considering the above, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), organized a Capacity Development Workshop on “The Future of Governance: Changing Mindsets for Innovation and Public Sector Transformation”<sup>3</sup> held in-person from 25 to 27 May 2025 in Bridgetown, Barbados. During the workshop, participants from 16 Caribbean SIDS discussed the current state of governance in the Caribbean based on emerging drivers of change, as well as their desired governance vision and key actions for the Caribbean SIDS.

This policy brief provides an overview of the key insights of the 2025 Barbados workshop. The first section of the policy brief looks at why it is important to apply strategic foresight to governance in the Caribbean region. The second section highlights the identified drivers of change in the Caribbean region. The third section looks at the cross-cutting issues as major forces of change that need to be considered in public sector transformation. The fourth section outlines future governance scenarios in the region, which highlight the stakes of inaction and the opportunities of foresight-driven decision-making. The fifth section highlights the Caribbean regional vision that emerged from the workshop’s discussions and the final section provides recommendations on how to achieve the desired vision for the Caribbean region.

## I. Applying Strategic Foresight to Governance in the Caribbean region

In the Caribbean SIDS, progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is stagnant or faces significant or major challenges as indicated by the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Caribbean 2022-2026.<sup>4</sup> The public sector continues to face a capacity challenge in delivering change and transformation, with challenges being experienced in relation to mindsets, capacity, processes, and right skill sets. In addition, it struggles to anticipate global and domestic shocks, making it reactive to events that affect the SIDS’ livelihoods and people.

Promoting anticipatory governance and applying strategic foresight to governance in the Caribbean SIDS can greatly help these countries become more proactive and better address and mitigate risks while also

leveraging opportunities.

Strategic foresights is an effective method of navigating uncertainty and addressing complex challenges. Utilizing tools such as horizon-scanning and scenario development, strategic foresight empowers policymakers to anticipate disruptions, mitigate risks, leverage opportunities, and design governance models that are adaptive, inclusive, and future-ready. By systematically analyzing emerging trends and uncertainties, policymakers can better anticipate challenges and design forward-looking, anticipatory solutions.

To understand possible pathways forward and prepare for governance futures, the 2025 Barbados Workshop applied strategic foresight to explore governance futures, align on a vision for the Caribbean, and highlight key recommendations. The workshop explored the following key questions:

1. What is the current state of governance in the Caribbean based on emerging drivers of change?
2. How will the futures of governance in the Caribbean look like?
3. What is the desired governance future in the Caribbean region?

To answer these key questions and explore governance futures in the Caribbean, various strategic foresight exercises and tools were used, including horizon scanning, scenario development, visioning, and backcasting.

## II. Horizon Scanning and Drivers of Change in the Caribbean SIDS

To identify the current context in the Caribbean and the top drivers of change impacting governance now and, in the future, UN DESA designed an **online survey**<sup>6</sup> on horizon scanning. UN DESA then administered the survey to Permanent Secretaries, General Directors, Senior Public Officers at the level of Director Generals, CEOs and Heads of Agencies in charge of public policy implementation across the Caribbean. The survey examined key drivers of change<sup>7</sup> for governance in the Caribbean region across the political, economic, social, technological, legislative, and environmental (PESTLE)<sup>8</sup> domains. To facilitate exploratory data analysis of survey responses, several analytical tools were developed. These tools included an interactive dashboard<sup>9</sup>, network analysis, and an AI assistant.

<sup>3</sup> <https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/events/future-governance-changing-mindsets-innovation-and-public-sector-transformation>

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Group (2021). United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Caribbean 2022-2026. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/multicountry-sustainable-development-framework-english-and-dutch-speaking-caribbean-2022>

<sup>5</sup> United Nations (2023). Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 11. [https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0\\_policy-brief\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/un-2.0_policy-brief_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> The survey was conducted 1 - 15 May 2025 and distributed to "The Future of Governance: Changing Mindsets for Innovation and Public Sector Transformation" workshop participants via email. Survey respondents included 22 participants from 12 Caribbean countries, including Anguilla,

Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, The British Virgin Islands, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

<sup>7</sup> Drivers of change are events or phenomena that may pose risks or present opportunities [UN Futures Lab (2023). Strategic Foresight Guide. <https://un-futureslab.org/project/un-strategic-foresight-guide/>.]

<sup>8</sup> Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2024). CIPD PESTLE template. [https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/factsheets/pdfs/8351-cipd\\_pestle-editable-template.pdf](https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/factsheets/pdfs/8351-cipd_pestle-editable-template.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> The interactive dashboard was developed to provide a high-level analysis of the drivers of change and summarized the most popular drivers by domain. It allowed users to filter by popularity and domain among other metrics

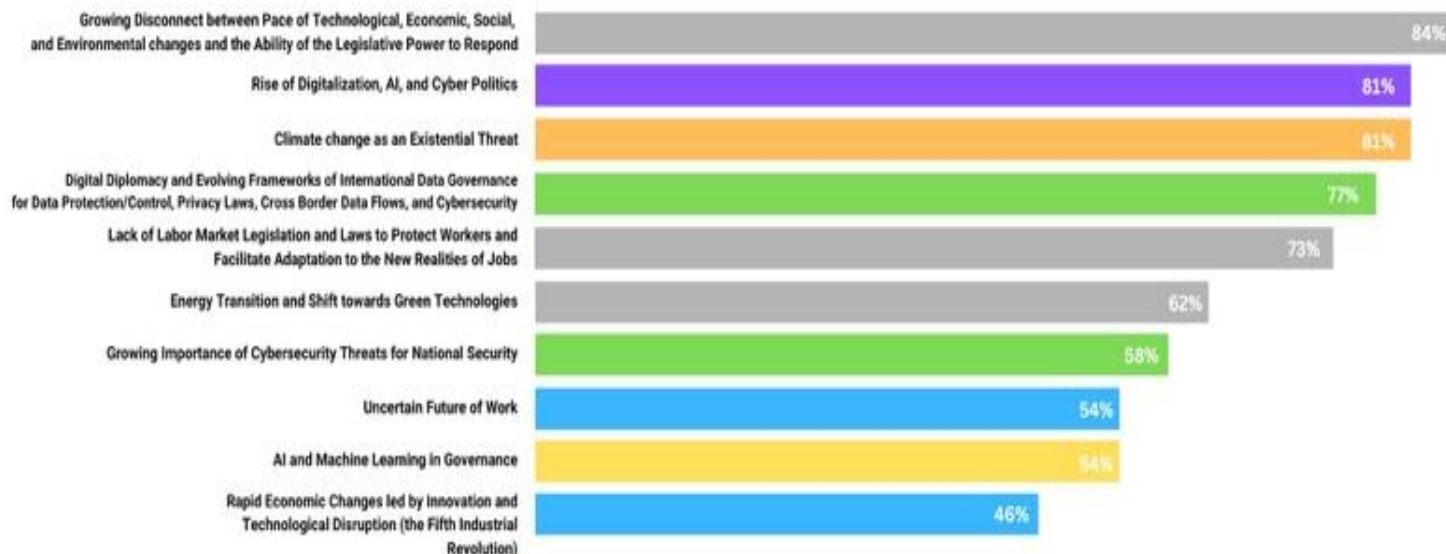


Figure 1 – Interactive Dashboard with Drivers of Change, UN DESA

The AI-powered data analysis began with an **interactive dashboard** that could dynamically filter the top drivers of change as chosen by participants (see Figure 1 above). This functioned as a preliminary exercise, designed to shape initial impressions of the respondents' views.

The second data visualization was a **network graph** of the survey responses, which showed which choices were made in combination. The nodes represented drivers and linkages represented those drivers being chosen by the same respondent. The nodes (drivers) were also colored by PESTLE category and sized by number of respondents that selected them. The purpose of the network was to show more holistically the choices that were made as a whole rather than separately and thereby giving a clearer overall picture of the survey responses. By contrast with the dashboard, which only showed how the choice of each driver related to those in the same category, the network gave a more complete view that could inform a more complete hypothesis about the priorities of the participants (see Figure 2).

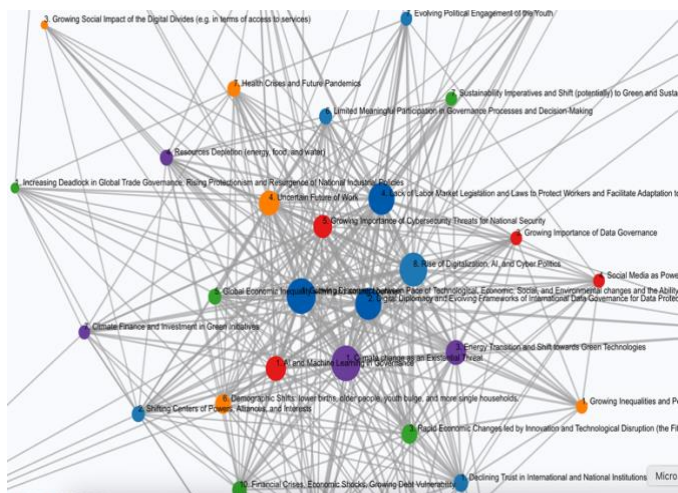


Figure 1 – Network graph showing survey response combinations, UN DESA

The information from the network, along with the survey responses, were then used to train an **AI chatbot** (see Figure 3). Making use of retrieval augmented generation from tabular data and the underlying structure of the network, the AI was able to produce detailed, coherent responses to queries about the survey and its responses. It functioned

to validate interpretations, suggest alternatives and provide both granular information about individual responses and a general overview.

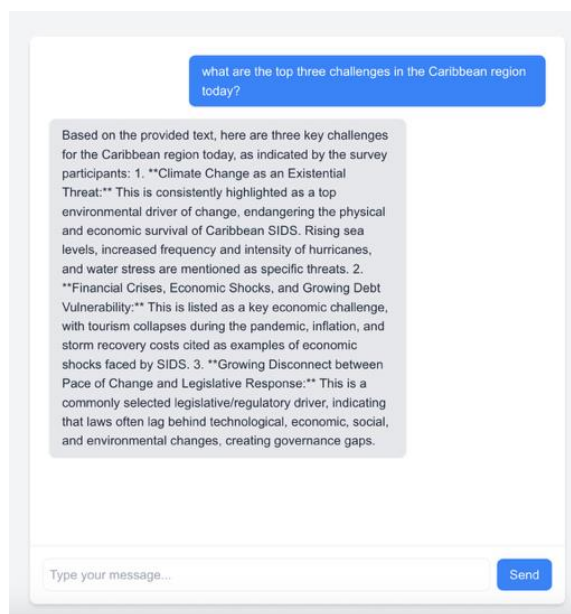


Figure - 2 AI chatbot trained on survey responses, UN DESA

The horizon scanning survey's results and analytical tools were presented during the 2025 Barbados workshop. Horizon scanning helps to observe the world and to look out for signals of change, things that might be small today but could be detrimental in the future. Changes in governance are shaped by drivers of change which are defined as internal and external pressures that shape change within an organization, industry, or society in general. However, drivers of change

cannot always be controlled and might cause major disruptions in society and push individuals, households, employees, teams, organizations, societies, and cultures to change over time. Thus, adaptability and flexibility to understand changes is essential.

Using the above-mentioned PESTLE framework, several key drivers of change shaping the current state of governance in the Caribbean were identified across political, economic, social, technological, legislative, and environmental spheres.

### Political Drivers of Change

Political commitments are needed to implement reforms, as well as principled and transformational leadership<sup>10</sup> that can support the necessary changes needed for a new governance structure.

Several key political drivers of change were identified for the Caribbean region, including shifting centers of power, evolving alliances, and increasing political polarization. These shifts have contributed to declining trust in both international and national institutions, with concerns raised over the disproportionate influence of powerful nations on local decision-making processes. Political stability was underscored as a critical foundation for good governance, particularly amidst ongoing geopolitical volatility.

Rising youth engagement, largely fueled by digitalization and social media, was viewed as both a promising development and a complex challenge. While youth activism is increasing, growing disillusionment driven by misinformation, polarization, and digital overload. This has created an urgent need for more effective strategies to meaningfully engage young people in governance processes.

Similarly, while the increasing presence of women in politics was welcomed, women often remain confined to limited spheres of influence, with insufficient access to leadership roles.

Broader issues of exclusion persist, particularly for historically marginalized and vulnerable groups. Limited participation across these populations undermines the potential for building inclusive, resilient, and representative governance systems.

Finally, rapid technological advances, especially in artificial intelligence, have introduced both opportunities and risks. Concerns around cybersecurity, political manipulation, and digital surveillance reinforce the growing need for governance systems that are not only resilient and transparent but also adaptive to the evolving digital landscape.

### Economic Drivers of Change

Although many Caribbean governance systems have made strides in reducing extreme poverty and promoting economic development, the workshop and survey's findings reveal growing concerns over global economic inequality, both within and among countries. A key vulnerability lies in the region's heavy dependence on tourism, which hampers the ability of tourism-reliant economies to recover swiftly and build resilience against mounting technological and environmental

shocks. There is an urgent need to diversify economies, with a focus on green innovation and sustainable development models.

Global economic volatility, manifested through financial crises, economic shocks, and rising debt vulnerabilities, has emerged as a significant driver of change. These disruptions are increasingly linked to concerns around food security and access to essential goods and services. Trade conflicts, protectionist policies, and shifting global supply chains have exposed deep inequalities and amplified vulnerabilities across nations.

At the same time, changing global dynamics have led to a growing informal sector in many countries. However, with limited social protection in place, this expansion is straining already fragile social safety nets. Additionally, the depletion of non-renewable resources such as food, energy, and water, are intensifying international competition. As major powers assert control to secure reliable access to these resources, smaller and poorer nations face disproportionate risks, ranging from internal unrest to cross-border conflict and regional instability. This dynamic has prompted calls for stronger attention to national and border security as a critical element shaping governance trajectories across the Caribbean.

### Social Drivers of Change

New technologies are reshaping production, labor, and economic systems, enhancing efficiency, lowering costs, and expanding global connectivity through e-commerce and digital platforms. While these advancements have brought significant benefits, they have also widened existing inequalities, particularly for marginalized communities with limited access to digital tools and quality public services. Participants also voiced concerns about the potential for corruption in the absence of effective oversight.

Labor markets are increasingly disrupted by automation and digitalization, with widespread gaps in skills, weak human resource management systems, and inadequate workforce planning. The uncertainty around the future of work is contributing to talent retention challenges and growing instances of brain drain. In response, many called for a revamp of education systems to improve digital literacy and equip future generations for the demands of a tech-driven global economy.

Demographic shifts are also altering the social landscape, with many countries in the Caribbean region moving from a youth population boom to an aging society marked by lower birth rates. While this transition may bring opportunities for innovation, it also presents challenges for social cohesion, service delivery, and economic productivity. In addition, youth unemployment and limited educational access continue to drive rising crime and violence rates in some areas.

Religion also emerged as a driver of social change in the Caribbean region, influencing community values, shaping public attitudes toward policy, and at times, contributing to polarized social norms. While it can foster social cohesion and moral guidance, religion has also been used to exclude or marginalize certain groups, especially in debates around

<sup>10</sup> Defined as “a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it

creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders.” - MacGregor Burns (1978)

gender, migration, and human rights. The evolving role of religious institutions in public life thus remains an important consideration for inclusive governance.

Finally, the exclusion of vulnerable and migrant populations from policy processes, combined with shifting social values, has weakened consensus-building across the region. As environmental, technological, and health shocks intensify, participants emphasized the need for a clearer, more unified regional voice, one rooted in inclusion, resilience, and forward-looking governance.

#### Technological Drivers of Change

Technology is increasingly shaping the global governance landscape, and as Caribbean countries deepen their integration into the digital economy, both opportunities and challenges have come to the forefront. Participants highlighted the urgent need to strengthen ICT infrastructure to capitalize on the growing potential of digital services, including e-governance. They also emphasized the importance of capacity-building in AI and machine learning, particularly in public administration, to ensure governments can adapt to and benefit from ongoing digital transformations.

A strong demand emerged for digital public service delivery and systems interoperability, facilitating cooperation among regional and international actors. This includes digitizing public records to improve service delivery, ensure accountability, and streamline cross-sectoral coordination.

However, the expansion of digital platforms has also raised concerns. Participants underscored the growing significance of effective data governance and cybersecurity, especially in light of rising digital threats and their implications for national security. Social media and online platforms have become vital spaces for youth political engagement and activism, further reinforcing the need for robust protections around data privacy and digital rights.

#### Legislative

Participants identified a growing mismatch between the pace of technological, economic, social, and environmental change and the ability of current legislative frameworks to respond effectively. Strengthening legal systems is critical for protecting workers and equipping institutions to adapt to the new realities of labor markets, particularly amid rapid digitalization and global uncertainty.

Many countries continue to face gaps in labor legislation, especially in securing rights, safety, and adaptability for workers navigating evolving job markets. To address this, there is a pressing need to reform legal and regulatory systems to better support workforce reskilling, restaffing, and the motivation of public sector employees.

The rise of digital diplomacy and global debates on international data governance also require stronger regional legal frameworks, ones that ensure inclusive access to technology while safeguarding data privacy, security, and trust. Participants underscored the importance of data interoperability: without compatible systems and shared data standards, even well-funded institutions risk operating in silos, ultimately undermining governance effectiveness.

In addition, calls were made for more agile and shock-responsive public budgeting processes, enabling governments to allocate scarce resources more efficiently during times of crisis. Legislative change is also seen as essential for institutional reform, promoting more participatory, transparent, and decentralized systems of governance. This includes ensuring citizen engagement at all levels of policymaking to foster inclusive and locally sustainable public service delivery.

#### Environmental Drivers of Change

Environmental factors, particularly climate change, continue to pose significant external threats to governance and development across the Caribbean. Participants emphasized that the region is especially vulnerable to climate-related shocks, which are intensifying in frequency and scale. These environmental pressures have become a major driver of change, demanding urgent attention in governance and policy planning.

Rapid urbanization is further straining public infrastructure and service delivery systems, especially in coastal and low-lying areas. Simultaneously, the depletion of essential resources, energy, food, and water has become more acute, highlighting the need for long-term strategies to secure sustainable access and reduce dependency. An energy transition toward green technologies and climate-smart innovation was strongly encouraged. Participants called for a shift from reactive to proactive climate and disaster risk management approaches. This includes integrating environmental resilience into national planning frameworks and prioritizing prevention and adaptation strategies across all levels of government.

### III. KEY MAJOR FORCES OF CHANGE AFFECTING GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

Utilizing the AI tool, which was informed by the survey responses, four major forces, inter-linking the drivers of change and shaping governance systems in the Caribbean region toward 2040 were identified: (1) the cycle of mistrust in the digital age, (2) the sustainability imperative, (3) the inequality and labor market disruption nexus, and (4) data security and governance in an unequal world.

#### The Cycle of Mistrust in the Digital Age

The cycle of mistrust in the digital age, which interlinks the rise of digitalization, AI, and cyber politics, is a major force of change in the Caribbean region. This is also linked to declining trust in institutions, which can be fuelled by misinformation and polarization on media platforms.

At the same time, Governments in the Caribbean are increasingly adopting digital technologies in positive ways to improve public service delivery, enhance efficiency, and expand citizen engagement. In particular, the rapid advance of digitalization and artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping Caribbean governance structures in novel ways.

AI tools can accelerate sustainable development and support transformational growth. According to ECLAC, Caribbean countries with relatively small populations and limited capacity, could use AI to support evidence-based decision making across a variety of fields, while reducing the need for human involvement.<sup>11</sup> However, rapid digitalization and increased use of AI introduces new governance challenges. The Caribbean has become a target for cybercrime due mostly to a growth in online presence and low levels of cyber resilience.<sup>12</sup> Cybersecurity threats can undermine trust in public institutions and destabilize democratic processes.

Recognizing this, the Caribbean Artificial Intelligence Initiative<sup>13</sup>, led by UNESCO, aims to develop a sub-regional strategy on the ethical, inclusive and humane use of AI in the Caribbean SIDS. Some Caribbean nations have developed AI strategies and task forces, such as the Dominican Republic<sup>14</sup> and Jamaica.<sup>15</sup> Still, many Caribbean countries lack comprehensive AI and cybersecurity frameworks, leaving systems vulnerable to external and internal attacks. With AI and technological advancements being an emerging field, AI and digital governance challenges persist.

Trust in government institutions has declined globally, especially since the 2008 global financial crisis. Mistrust of government is especially an issue of concern in the Caribbean. From 2010 to 2020, an average of fewer than 3 in 10 Latin American and Caribbean citizens trusted their government.<sup>16</sup> This trend of declining trust in institutions challenges effective governance. Social media exacerbates this challenge, with mis- and disinformation having increased across the region, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and crises.<sup>17</sup>

### The Sustainability Imperative

The sustainability imperative reflects the critical need in the Caribbean to address climate change, transition to green economies with a shift towards renewable energy and manage resource depletion, backed by legislative frameworks that support these changes. Climate change acts as an existential threat, demanding a shift towards green technologies to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate its devastating

effects. The transition to green economies is further fueled by the imperative to conserve depleting resources like energy, food, and water. Resource depletion calls for a move towards circular economy models and sustainable practices, all of which are interconnected and essential for global resilience and long-term well-being. As one example, leaders from the Bahamas have publicly called on countries more engaged in climatically negative activities to provide financial aid to countries more negatively affected by those activities.

Climate change also poses a significant threat to digital infrastructure in SIDS. Extreme weather events and rising sea levels directly damage data centers, cables, and energy systems. Climate-related disruptions to energy production further undermine the reliability of digital systems. Addressing these challenges requires increased climate finance for resilient infrastructure and disaster preparedness. Economic shocks caused by climate change, such as tourism collapse, exacerbate existing financial constraints on investments in digital resilience. These climate impacts compound existing vulnerabilities in SIDS, including limited resources, digital divides, and cybersecurity weaknesses, acting as a "threat multiplier."

Among the 26 countries within the region, most are island nations. SIDS contribute only 1 percent of the global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions<sup>18</sup> yet are on the front line of climate change impacts. As stated by the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda during the 79th session of the UN General Assembly, "our islands are on the frontlines of a climate catastrophe we did not cause."<sup>19</sup> Facing rising sea levels, extreme weather events and natural disasters, high temperatures, and biodiversity loss, the effects of climate change on the Caribbean are devastating.

International and regional frameworks provide actionable guidance and commitment to addressing environmental challenges in the Caribbean region. Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts is Goal 13 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a specific target to promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States.<sup>20</sup> The Antigua

<sup>11</sup> ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (2023). Artificial Intelligence for Caribbean Sustainable Development.

<https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/69078-artificial-intelligence-caribbean-sustainable-development>

<sup>12</sup> The Commonwealth Cybercrime Journal

<https://thecommonwealth.org/publications/commonwealth-cybercrime-journal-volume-1/funding-crime-online-cybercrime-and-its-links-organised-crime-caribbean>

<sup>13</sup> UNESCO Caribbean Artificial Intelligence Initiative.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-caribbean-artificial-intelligence-initiative>

<sup>14</sup> Estrategia Nacional de Inteligencia Artificial (2023).

[https://agendadigital.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final\\_ENIA-Estrategia-Nacional-de-Inteligencia-Artificial-de-la-Republica-Dominicana-.pdf](https://agendadigital.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final_ENIA-Estrategia-Nacional-de-Inteligencia-Artificial-de-la-Republica-Dominicana-.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> The National Artificial Intelligence Task Force (2024). National Artificial Intelligence Policy Recommendations. <https://opm.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/National-Artificial-Intelligence-Task-Force-Policy-Recommendations-Final-1.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Inter-American Development Bank (2022). Trust: The Key to Social Cohesion and Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

<https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Trust-The-Key-to-Social-Cohesion-and-Growth-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean-Executive-Summary.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Public Media Alliance (2022). Situation Report: Media literacy, disinformation & misinformation in the Caribbean.

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dc9534f03129631666a717f/t/63c7fedfbf0a945775036e30/1674051300575/Media\\_Information\\_Literacy\\_Caribbean-2022.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dc9534f03129631666a717f/t/63c7fedfbf0a945775036e30/1674051300575/Media_Information_Literacy_Caribbean-2022.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> UNDP (2022). Snapshot: Small Island Developing States. The State of Climate Action. <https://climatepromise.undp.org/research-and-reports/snapshot-small-island-developing-states>

<sup>19</sup> United Nations (2024). Warning Time Is Running Out, Small Island Developing States Demand Urgent Action to Address Climate Crisis They Did Not Create, as General Debate Continues.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12638.doc.htm>

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13-targets-and-indicators>

and Barbuda Agenda for the SIDS (ABAS) stresses urgent action on climate change with the support of the international community, including to “scale-up climate action and support, including climate finance, in line with existing commitments and obligations under UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.”<sup>21</sup> Enabling resilience in the face of climate change is essential for Caribbean nations, requiring national governments to invest in improving infrastructure, disaster risk reduction, and public service delivery.

### **The Inequality and Labor Market Disruption Nexus**

Rapid economic change led by technological disruptions is a major force of change that can lead to increased inequality if not adequately addressed. This impacts the social fabric and creates an uncertain future of work, requiring new regulatory frameworks for labor markets and social protection. The interconnectedness of economic inequality and labor market disruption, particularly concerning the digital economy and technological advancements, should be carefully considered. The rapid expansion of the digital economy is seen as a key driver of deepening economic inequalities both within and among Caribbean countries.

Simultaneously, innovation and technological disruption, including AI and automation, are reshaping labor markets, leading to job displacement and an uncertain future of work. This nexus presents a significant challenge to governance, requiring policy interventions to address digital divides, promote skills development and adaptability, and ensure social protection for those left behind by these rapid economic and technological shifts. The vulnerability of the Caribbean economies and workforces to these trends, highlights the need for sustainable economic strategies and proactive labor market policies.

### **Data Security and Governance in an Unequal World**

Data security and governance are growing concerns, especially in light of widening digital divides. The growing importance of data governance and cybersecurity threats for national security cannot be overlooked. Cybersecurity is a key technological driver of change, given the increasing dependence on data-driven decision-making within governments. The urgent need for cross-border cooperation, evolving international data governance laws, and digital taxation should be addressed in the Caribbean region, by addressing legislative challenges. These factors all point towards the need to address data security as a critical issue, especially within countries that may lack the infrastructure or technological capabilities to do so.

Several interlinkages exist between data security and governance within the context of an unequal world, particularly impacting SIDS. The digital divide limits equitable access to digital services and opportunities, which impacts data governance. Many countries face

unreliable internet, limiting digital education and services. In addition, cybersecurity threats as a critical issue for national security. SIDS are particularly vulnerable due to limited resources and expertise in this area. This can lead to cyberattacks on public infrastructure and services, as evidenced by government websites in The Bahamas being targets of cyberattacks. The pace of technological change, including in data governance, is outpacing the ability of legislative power to respond. Legislation on AI, digital privacy, and fintech is lagging in many Caribbean countries. Cross-border data flows remain legally unclear across CARICOM countries, thereby limiting cloud computing and cybersecurity cooperation.

Limited digital infrastructure and cybersecurity capabilities can hinder SIDS' participation in the global digital economy. Only a few countries like Jamaica and Barbados have modern privacy laws aligned with global standards. Cross-border data flows remain legally unclear across CARICOM countries, thereby limiting digital trade. The rise of digitalization, AI, and cyber politics as political drivers affect the definition of power and who the power players are in the world.

Furthermore, limited meaningful participation in governance processes is exacerbated by social media's role in information and political engagement. In the Caribbean, data is seen as the dominant strategic resource, and with the increasing use of AI and data in governance, transformation is pervading almost every sector of the economy. Governments are moving towards more data-intensive processes and digitization, so cybersecurity becomes a major threat. As countries move to digital governance, inequalities between industrialized countries and SIDS are deepened by the limited capacity in smaller states. The technological revolution is reshaping industries at breakneck speed, while inequalities continue to widen. In essence, addressing data security and governance in an unequal world requires bridging the digital divide, strengthening cybersecurity infrastructure and expertise, updating legislative frameworks, and promoting international cooperation to ensure that SIDS can participate equitably in the digital economy while safeguarding their data and sovereignty.

## **IV. GOVERNANCE FUTURES SCENARIOS**

Based on the AI-identified interlinkages between drivers of change, participants were asked to explore what governance could look like in 2040 when examined through the lenses of each cross-cutting issue. Nine groups were assigned to explore one of four major forces of change, previously identified as (1) The Cycle of Mistrust in the Digital Age, (2) The Sustainability Imperative, (3) The Inequality and Labor Market Disruption Nexus, and (4) Data Security and Governance in an Unequal World.

<sup>21</sup> See Section III, part B of ABAS.

<https://sdgs.un.org/documents/outcome-document-antigua-and-barbuda->

[agenda-sids-abas-renewed-declaration-resilient](https://sdgs.un.org/documents/outcome-document-antigua-and-barbuda-agenda-sids-abas-renewed-declaration-resilient)

Each group developed two potential future governance scenarios for their force of change: a baseline (status quo/no change) scenario and a radical scenario (major structural transformation resulting from revolutionary responses).

Two distinct governance futures for 2040 were discussed:

- **Baseline Scenarios:** A world where governance evolves incrementally, adapting to changes but maintaining traditional hierarchical structures.
- **Radical Scenarios:** A future where governance undergoes transformational change, embracing AI-augmented democracy, decentralized power, and dynamic citizen participation.

Combining their inputs, eight scenarios (four baseline, four radical) emerged as a result. These scenarios provide insights into both positive and negative outcomes that can either foster good governance or exacerbate current instability. Using these scenarios, public servants can better anticipate risks and seize opportunities to build more resilient and inclusive governance systems.

## Baseline Future Scenarios—Slow Changes to the Status Quo

These scenarios depict slow or insufficient responses to global and regional challenges, leading to governance stagnation or fragmentation based on the four major forces of change identified above.

### The Cycle of Mistrust in the Digital Age: **Reactive and Authoritarian Governance**

This major force of change encompasses the rise of digitalization, AI, and cyber politics as key issues. It also involves declining trust in institutions, which can be fueled by misinformation and polarization on media platforms. With these factors in consideration, one group's baseline scenario, "**Reactive Governance**," featured an increase in inequality and greater resistance to both risk and innovation. They foresaw a general mistrust in institutions, including fear of digital platforms, and slower, reactionary governance due to inefficient decision-making. Poverty, frustration, and resource constraints increased as well as malicious intent, fraudulent activity, and scams.

Another group depicted a world of polarization driven by distrust in institutions and digital disinformation, naming the scenario "**Authoritarian Democracy**." Citizens avoid tech due to fears of surveillance and misinformation, and civil freedoms are reduced as authoritarian tendencies in government continue to rise.

The last group, in a scenario titled "**It Is What It Is, Until It Isn't**," also

narrated a continued public mistrust in government as well as the appearance of an intergenerational divide in tech use and workforce integration.



3Credit: Image generated by DALL·E, an AI model created by OpenAi

### The Sustainability Imperative: **Climate-related Chaos**

In this scenario, climate change is a significant threat as the shift towards sustainability remains slow and reactive. There are little-to-no advancements in energy transition, and resource management is inefficient without support from legislative frameworks. Resource depletion is also examined as an environmental factor that can either drive or hinder the economic shift toward sustainability. One group's baseline 2040 scenario saw Caribbean communities facing severe impacts from sea-levels rising. Public services are overwhelmed, responses remain reactive, and climate finance becomes harder to access. Climate-related diseases increase and economies dependent on tourism collapse. The other group also saw tourism decline as coastlines erode, and climate financing remains unreliable despite global commitments. Food insecurity worsens with rising import costs.

### Climate-related Chaos



5 Credit: Image generated by Google Gemini

### The Inequality and Labor Market Disruption Nexus: **Non-responsive or Reactive Governance in Islander Drift**

This major force of change includes rapid economic change due to technological disruption that leads to increased inequality. These changes impact the social fabric and create an uncertain future of work, requiring new regulatory frameworks for labour markets and social protection. One group created a baseline scenario titled “**Non-Responsive or Reactive Governance**,” where governments are not responding to citizen’s calls to participate in decision making, leading to discontent. They wrote of data security concerns (i.e., identity theft and misinformation) and increasing distrust in a government that remains reactive instead of proactive. The workforce feels undervalued, and AI adoption leaves many jobless. The digital divides deepen generational and class gaps. The other group named their baseline scenario ‘**Islander Drift**’ where islands have struggled to weather the storm of technological destruction and advances in AI. They also saw AI replacing human jobs as well as a resentment towards governments. There is an unprepared local workforce excluded from the digital economy accompanied by brain drain and competition from tech-savvy expats. The population blames the government for failing to provide opportunities for advancement, and unemployment increases.

### Data Security and Governance in an Unequal World: **Digital Refugees and Analog Governance**

This issue highlights the growing importance of data governance and cybersecurity. In the baseline scenario, a failure to address digital divides and implement appropriate frameworks for data protection and privacy exacerbates inequalities, limits access to services and creates security risks.

One group titled their scenario “**Digital Refugees**,” which features governments who did not embrace global change and the deterioration of education, health, and tourism sectors occurring as a result. They envisioned AI scams and digital refugees dominating the governance landscape. Poor cybersecurity infrastructure exists as does a reliance on outsourced IT support. Caribbean governments are fragmented and isolated from one another.

The other group named their scenario “**Analog Governance**,” which features uncontrolled data security, limited regulations, mistrust in government systems, and decline in economic activity. Entrenched interests and outdated legal frameworks prevail as analog governance dominates. Rampant cybercrime and mistrust lead to foreign divestment. Economic stagnation persists.



6 Credit: Image generated by Google Gemini

### Radical Future Scenarios

These scenarios explore governance breakthroughs or systemic breakdowns driven by major disruptions or innovations based on the major forces of change identified above.

### The Cycle of Mistrust in the Digital Age: **Caribbean 4.0 - Progressive and Agile Governance**

One group imagined a radical scenario, “**Progressive Governance**,” in which technology rebuilds trust by eliminating human bias. Governance becomes human-centric and proactive, and automated governance services are transparent and data-driven. Improved efficiency, better integration, and increased productivity are all realized. However, due to rapid integration and dependency on technology, there is a high risk for human disconnect and social awkwardness, leading to a sort of ‘soulless’ workforce. In another group’s scenario, “**Agile Democracy**,” there is broader civic participation and legislative reform in social media regulation.

Regional ICT integration streamlines service delivery, and government is agile with predictive planning capabilities. Another group also saw regional ICT cooperation streamlining public services and a world where citizens increasingly trust and accept ICT and digital public services. They named this scenario “**Caribbean 4.0: Let’s Make It What It Must Be**,” and saw more citizen involvement via focus groups and training programs as well as education for the workforce and legislative changes for social media use.

### The Sustainability Imperative: **Sustainable Island States**

One group envisioned a “**Sustainable Island States**” model in which Caribbean governments sustain, thrive, manage, and mitigate impacts of climate change. They have embedded climate financing, and the Caribbean is powered by renewable energy and AI. In 2040, the 1.5°C target is met; economies are resilient, and regional cooperation

strengthens governance structures. Climate-conscious data use guides policy, and the Bridgetown Initiative is expanded to address other inequalities. The other group's scenario, "**Archer Revolution**," sees region-wide solar farms and reduced fossil fuel dependence. There is increased food self-sufficiency and AI-assisted resource management, as well as a reduction in the import bill and overall global warming. Additionally, Caribbean nations implement foresight methodologies and assert stronger climate diplomacy on the international stage.

#### Sustainable Island States



*7 Credit: Image generated by DALL-E, an AI model created by OpenAI*

#### The Inequality and Labor Market Disruption Nexus: **Inclusive Governance and Agile Labor Markets in Island Heaven**

One group sees a "**Participatory Governance**" scenario in which agile labor markets adapt via skill reallocation and upskilling. Inclusive governance models are developed to address automation fallout, and governments embrace participatory decision making and systematic reform. AI boosts productivity and supports human centric design; tech is affordable and allows for more leisure and pleasure as people use it to be more productive and efficient.

Another group envisions an "**Island Heaven**," a perfect island paradise constantly applauded by citizens and regional counterparts. It boasts an inclusive and productive digital economy and regional alliances promoting digital upskilling and cooperation. Online service delivery increases access for vulnerable groups, and proactive governments reform education and training systems.

#### Data Security and Governance in an Unequal World: **Proactive Governance in the Age of AI and Digital Governance**

One group highlighted a scenario, "**Proactive Governance**," where governments proactively adopt AI and build citizen-centric services. CARICOM unites to address data policy and digital governance, and national digital divides close, harmonizing infrastructure. Local governments are empowered with more responsibilities. Another

group named their scenario "**Age of AI and Digital Governance**," which sees updated legislation reducing cybercrime and boosting investor confidence. There is an increased public awareness and data literacy, and the workforce adapts to AI-driven roles and has more confidence immersing themselves in technological changes. Both groups did note the possibility of increased unemployment in these scenarios as AI replaces much of the work done by humans.

## V. Fundamental Values and the Desired Governance Future in the Caribbean Region

Using the UN DESA AI tool, the visioning exercise was mapped into a living network of choices, linking participants' ideas to the key drivers of change. As conversations unfolded, new connections emerged, reshaping the original network and revealing deeper interlinkages. This evolution shows the unique value of in-person workshops: they create space for dialogue that challenges assumptions, surfaces shared priorities, and makes underlying beliefs visible—turning abstract visions into actionable pathways for the future.

Utilizing AI, the nine vision statements from the foresight exercise session on visioning were synthesized. This resulted in three variants which demonstrated characteristics of all nine vision statements. Among the vision statements there are commonalities but also divergences, yet the majority's opinions were reflected across all three vision statements.

The workshop participants who were divided into 9 groups produced different vision statements that were then summarized by AI into three vision statements (see below). The participants were then asked to vote on their preferred vision statement for the Caribbean region.

Ultimately, **Vision 2 "The People-Powered & Inclusive Caribbean"** was selected as the vision for the Caribbean with 18 votes from participants, compared to 16 for Vision 1 and 9 for Vision 3. The three visions were as follows.

#### **Vision 1: The Technologically Advanced & Agile Caribbean**

By 2040, the Caribbean will be a globally recognized model of innovative, agile, and sustainable governance. We envision a future-ready region where public administration is not only responsive but proactive, powered by a deep commitment to progress. This vision is rooted in a dynamic framework that embraces change, leverages cutting-edge solutions, and continuously evolves to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world, securing a prosperous and progressive future for all.

The engine of this transformation will be a comprehensive embrace of digital, AI-driven, and data-informed governance. We will construct a multi-level framework built on digital trust, utilizing technology to drive radical efficiency, transparency, and innovation in service delivery.

Through secure e-participation platforms and robust data governance, we will create a system where legal and regulatory safeguards ensure that technological advancement always supports broad inclusion and tangible benefits for every citizen, fostering a new era of accessibility

and accountability.

Ultimately, this technological leap is in service of our people. A government empowered by technology is one that can better empower its citizens. This agile and digital governance model is designed to be deeply collaborative and citizen-centric, fostering impactful partnerships between the public and its institutions. Rooted in unwavering ethical leadership, this approach will ensure that as we innovate, we build a more resilient, inclusive, and interconnected Caribbean, leaving no one behind in our shared journey forward.

**Vision 2: The People-Powered & Inclusive Caribbean**  
confident and strong Caribbean, defined by a democracy that evolves in lockstep with its people. We will build a deeply collaborative and participatory system of governance where empowered citizens and dedicated public officers work as intentional partners. The government's primary role will be to foster this partnership, creating a flexible and inclusive environment that safeguards the safety, well-being, and prosperity of all, ensuring our governance structures are fit for the future.

This people-powered democracy will be built on a foundation of unshakeable core values: transparency, accountability, equity, and social solidarity. We commit to a system that is not only responsive but also proactive, fostering progressive engagements that empower minorities and cultivate shared understanding. Through active collaboration and diplomacy, we will build a society where trust is paramount and every voice matters, creating a thriving future where empathy and collective intelligence guide our path.

The ultimate outcome of this citizen-driven approach is a resilient and unified Caribbean. By placing citizens at the heart of governance—powered by innovation and rooted in ethical leadership—we ensure that development is both sustainable and just. This vision fosters a shared responsibility for our collective future, building resilience not just in our institutions, but in every community and for every generation, creating a legacy of strength and unity.

**Vision 3: The Resilient & Ethical Caribbean**

We envision a Caribbean by 2040 that stands as a resilient and inclusive island state, fortified against future challenges and united in its purpose. Our primary goal is to establish a governance system that excels in foresight and sustainability, with the capacity to anticipate risks and govern through transparent, stable, and effective systems. This proactive stance will ensure the long-term security and prosperity of our region, creating a safe harbor for generations to come.

The foundation of this resilient state will be a progressive and institutional system grounded in ethical principles. We will build a multi-level governance framework that champions accountability, safeguards truth, and operates with complete transparency. This structure will be supported by robust legal and regulatory frameworks that ensure our governance is not only strong but also just, fostering a climate of trust, collaboration, and diplomatic strength on the world stage.

This ethical and resilient framework exists to serve one ultimate purpose: to empower communities and deliver tangible benefits to all

citizens. By integrating sustainable practices and enabling our systems with appropriate technology, we foster innovation that strengthens every institution. This approach ensures that our governance is not only prepared for adversity but is also actively building a future where shared responsibility drives collective success and empowers every individual to contribute to our vibrant, thriving, and enduring Caribbean civilization. The fundamental values that are evident in the vision statements include the following:

| Fundamental Values                                                                                                               |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Core Governance Values                                                                                                           | Innovation & Agility Values                                                                       | Resilience & Sustainability Values                                                                                 | Collaboration & Solidarity Values                                                                        |
| <b>Transparency:</b><br>open decision-making, clear processes, and accessible information                                        | <b>Innovation:</b><br>embracing new solutions, technology, and creative approaches to governance  | <b>Resilience:</b><br>readiness to withstand and recover from crises while ensuring stability                      | <b>Partnerships:</b><br>strong cooperation between citizens, institutions, and across sectors            |
| <b>Accountability:</b><br>responsibility at all levels, ensuring actions align with commitments                                  | <b>Agility:</b><br>adaptability to rapidly changing circumstances and challenges                  | <b>Sustainability:</b><br>integrating long-term environmental, social, and economic considerations into governance | <b>Social Solidarity:</b><br>fostering unity, empathy, and shared responsibility for the collective good |
| <b>Ethical Leadership:</b><br>integrity, fairness, and truth as guiding principles                                               | <b>Digital Trust:</b><br>secure, inclusive, and transparent digital platforms and data governance | <b>Foresight:</b><br>proactive planning to anticipate risks and opportunities                                      | <b>Diplomatic Engagement:</b><br>constructive participation on the regional and global stage             |
| <b>Equity &amp; Inclusion:</b><br>ensuring all citizens, including minorities, have equal opportunities and voices in governance |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                          |
| <b>Citizen-Centricity:</b><br>placing people at the heart of policy, planning, and service delivery                              |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                          |

## VI. Policy Recommendations and Key Actions to Achieve the Desired Vision of the Caribbean Region

Based on insights from the workshop, key actions needed to advance the desired governance future of The People-Powered & Inclusive Caribbean were identified. The recommendations address actions at the institutional, organizational and individual levels as follows.

| 1. Institutional, Regulatory and Policy Changes  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1 Identify Policy Champions & Promote Ministerial Buy-in                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure strong buy-in from ministers and policy champions to drive change.</li> <li>Define and assess the future state of governance at the national level, involving stakeholders and assessing resources (financial, human, tools).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1.2 Devise Legal and Policy Frameworks for Reform                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enact legal frameworks and policies that support innovation and transparency in decision-making.</li> <li>Revise legislative processes to ensure inclusivity, responsiveness, and client-centric service delivery.</li> <li>Require citizen consultation before new laws are implemented.</li> <li>Promote decentralization and community-level engagement for responsive public service.</li> <li>Introduce performance metrics for evaluating legislative bodies.</li> <li>Adopt a SMART goal for enacting comprehensive parent legislation by a specified deadline.</li> </ul> |
| 1.3 Overhaul Governance Structures & Promote a Whole-of-Government Approach                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster collaboration across ministries through whole-of-government approaches.</li> <li>Revise governance frameworks to enable broader participation from labor unions, private sector, and civil society.</li> <li>Establish transformation structures such as innovation labs or national forums to drive change.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1.4 Establish Formal Engagement Mechanisms                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create permanent platforms for consultation at all levels (e.g., public national forums, digital platforms, biannual town halls).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2. Organizational Culture and Structures         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2.1 Promote a Culture of Innovation and Engagement                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurture a culture where desired behaviors are visible, celebrated, and replicated.</li> <li>Establish awards programs that recognize alignment with public service values.</li> <li>Encourage community engagement through participatory decision-making and local-level training.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2.2 Ensure Fit-for-Purpose HR and Collaborative Structures                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit recruitment, retention, and training policies to align HR with organizational needs.</li> <li>Create innovation hubs and collaborative environments encouraging public-private-civil society partnerships.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2.3 Advance Agile and Digitally-Enabled Government                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote agile structures that enable collaboration across ministries and responsiveness to changing demands.</li> <li>Digitize key services and ensure interoperability across ministries.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 2.4 Build Strategic Reskilling and Capacity                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce workforce-wide onboarding, reskilling, and continuous development initiatives.</li> <li>Align training with industry and governance needs to enhance performance.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3. Individual Mindset and Behavioral Changes   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3.1 Modernize HR and Development Policies                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design recruitment and development policies that foster continuous growth and fit-for-purpose staff.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for peer learning and cross-departmental knowledge sharing.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.2 Promote Leadership & New Mindsets                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage collaborative, participatory, and initiative-taking mindsets across public service staff.</li> <li>Enforce performance appraisals prioritizing competency, innovation, and accountability.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3.3 Implement a Competency Framework                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define mindsets, skills, standards, and expectations for all staff at every level.</li> <li>Monitor progress through digital systems linked to performance reporting.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3.4 Reward & Recognition Systems                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish recognition programs for individuals who exemplify desired public service behaviors.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3.5 Shift Public Perception and Behaviors                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge traditional notions of authority and compliance; promote empowerment and transparency.</li> <li>Engage citizens in visioning and decision-making to build trust and ownership.</li> <li>Use youth-friendly communications and social media to incentivize positive behavioral change.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.6 Capacity Building for Change                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide targeted training and sensitization, especially on governance and reform.</li> <li>Offer leadership-focused reskilling programs for officials.</li> <li>Encourage participation in regional and peer-learning forums.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Key Takeaways

Workshop participants shared the main takeaways and lessons learned as summarized below in four main areas.

### 1. Mindset Change and Building New Competencies

- Public sector transformation starts with individual commitment to change mindsets.
- Changing mindsets is essential to foster innovation and improve public services.
- Behavioural change will create institutional change.
- Mindsets should be addressed in strategic planning.
- Transformation begins with moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.

### 2. Collaboration and Inclusion

- A whole-of-government approach is needed to foster innovation and transformation.
- Promoting inclusiveness, unity, and collaboration are vital to advance the Caribbean public service.
- Knowledge-sharing, collective problem-solving, and cross-ministerial cooperation can lead to citizen-focused solutions.
- SDG-focused collaboration strengthens innovation.
- Moving from endurance to resilience depends on collaborative action.
- Advancing public service in the Caribbean requires regional commitment and unity.

### 3. Innovation and Technology

- Innovation is essential for small islands and can be applied effectively in practice.
- Adopting AI tools supports evidence-based decision-making and can accelerate transformation and organizational goals.
- Technology can be leveraged to enhance public service delivery.

### 4. Strategic Planning and Foresight for Governance Reform

- Integrating SDGs into planning, training, and performance management embeds sustainability and increases accountability in governance.
- Anticipatory governance and strategic foresight approaches enable institutional and structural reform.
- Transformation requires long-term commitment beyond political cycles.
- Governments urgently need to set national agendas for change.

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Deep gratitude goes to Francesca Tomasino, Individual Contractor, DPIDG/UN DESA as well as Naomi George-Edward, and Katherine Bourlakis, DPIDG interns who compiled the inputs from the 2025 Barbados Workshop.

A special mention goes to Devon Rowe (CARICAD), Lois Parkes (CARICAD), Trudy Waterman (CARICAD), Vaughn Graham (CARICOM), Dale Alexander (ECLAC), and Leroy Hill (ECLAC) for their collaboration.

Deepest appreciation to the participants of the 2025 Barbados Workshop for their insights and lively discussions which inform this policy brief, namely Perin A. Bradley (Anguilla, British Overseas Territories), Kelly Clark (Anguilla, British Overseas Territories), Ornette Edwards-Gumbs (Anguilla, British Overseas Territories), Shereka Jackson-Pryce (Antigua and Barbuda), Nazrin Aliyeva (Azerbaijan), Mahammadali Khudaverdiyev (Azerbaijan), Vusal Rustamov (Azerbaijan), Thayer Braynen (Bahamas), Donnavia Dorsett-Albury (Bahamas), Christopher Farrington (Bahamas), Sharon Martin (Bahamas), Howard Thompson, Jr. (Bahamas), Kathy Smith (Bahamas), Zimronn Andrews (Barbados), Gail Atkins (Barbados), Charley Browne (Barbados), Fay-Marie Browne (Barbados), Nicola Callender (Barbados), Stephanie Charles-Soverall (Barbados), Jasmine Cozier-Griffith (Barbados), Debra Dowridge (Barbados), Sharon Drayton (Barbados), Mark Franklin (Barbados), Claudette Hope-Greenidge (Barbados), Anthony Headley (Barbados), Rudy Headley (Barbados), Mark Hurley (Barbados), Jennifer Hunte (Barbados), Jenifer King (Barbados), David Leacock (Barbados), Wendy Odle (Barbados), Janet Phillips (Barbados), Faye Prescod (Barbados), Tameishal Rochester (Barbados), Roje Sealy (Barbados), Joy-Ann Skinner (Barbados), Keishana Trotman (Barbados), Erika Watson (Barbados), Cordelia Natasha Belezair (Belize), David Archer Jr. (British Virgin Islands), Kishann Cupid-Braithwaite (British Virgin Islands), Lydia Capitolin-Toussaint (Dominica), Lyndonna Hillaire-Marshall (Grenada), Maria Thompson Walters (Jamaica), Kerisia Williams (Montserrat, British Overseas Territories), Janet Barnard (Saint Lucia), Seryozha Cenac (Saint Lucia), Augusta Duval-Toussaint (Saint Lucia), Kentus Eugene (Saint Lucia), Verna Khadoo (Saint Lucia), Denise Joseph (Saint Lucia), Marlon Narcisse (Saint Lucia), Thelma Richard (St. Kitts and Nevis), Emma Jackson (St. Vincent and the Grenadines), Abigail Bynoe (Trinidad and Tobago), and Malika Lyons-Best (Trinidad and Tobago).

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