



Digital Technology as a Lever for Anticipatory Governance

From Crisis Response to Future Readiness in the African Public Sector

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Vera Obonyo | Deputy Director, Kenya School of Government





If your ministry knew today what would become tomorrow's crisis, would your current systems allow you to act in time?

We govern in an era of accelerating technological disruption, climate volatility, and demographic shifts. The challenge is no longer how to respond faster. The challenge is how to act before disruption becomes a crisis.

Anticipatory Readiness Check

Opening Exercise

Go to: menti.com

Code: 2184 1697

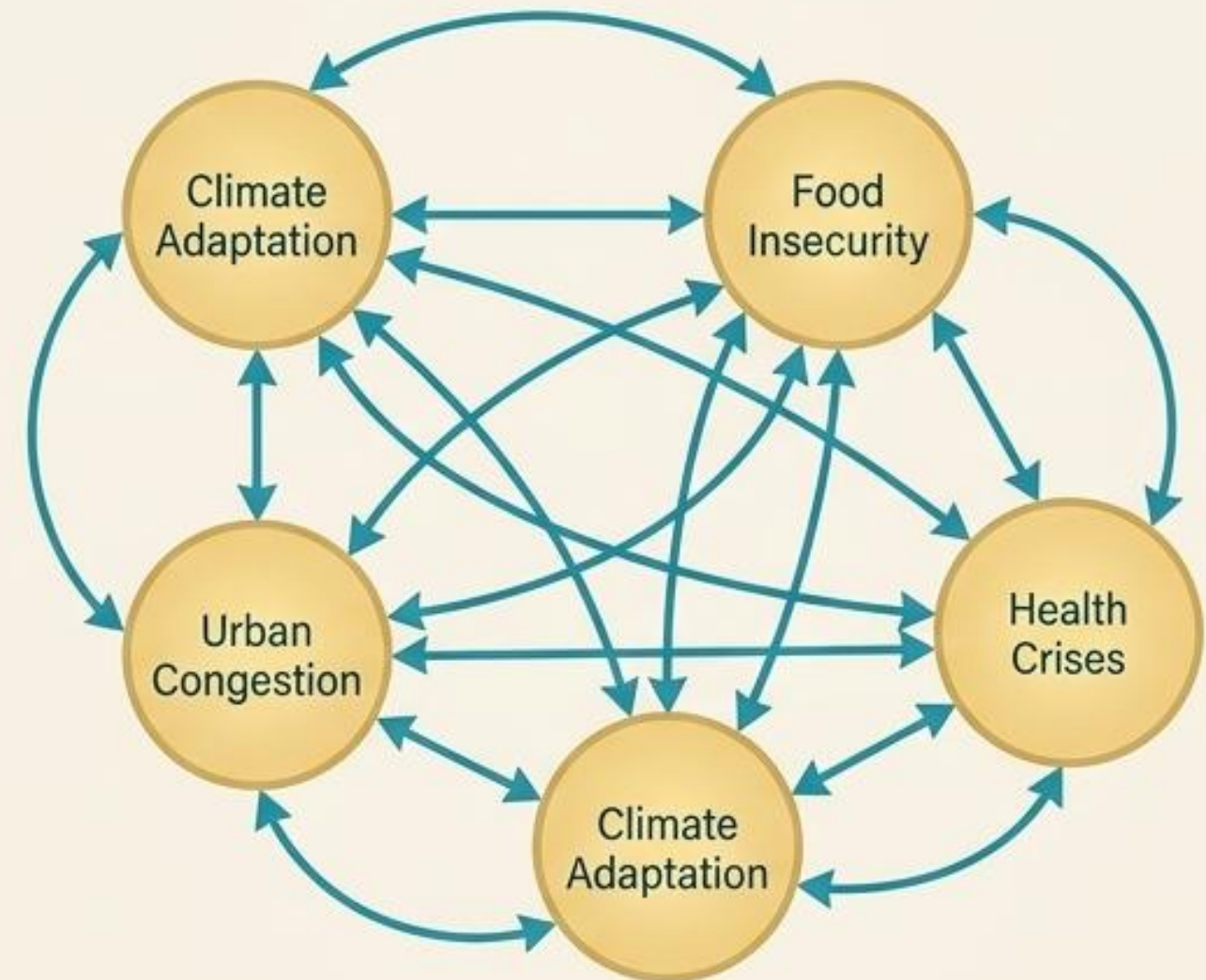
Where is your organization on the Anticipatory Governance Maturity Spectrum?

- **Level 1: Reactive** — We manage crises after they break out.
- **Level 2: Digitized** — We automated paper forms, but systems remain in departmental silos.
- **Level 3: Data-Driven** — We publish static dashboards and historical reports.
- **Level 4: Predictive / Anticipatory** — We use predictive analytics and real-time signals to act *before* disruption escalates.

Isolated Problems



Systems Reality



Digital technology without systems thinking digitizes existing problems.
Systems thinking without digital technology struggles to keep pace with complexity.

Technology + Systems Thinking = Anticipatory Power

The Strategic Shift: From Service Provider Provider to Future Shaper

	Traditional Governance	Anticipatory Governance
<i>Trigger</i>	Reactive (Crisis-driven)	Anticipatory (Scanning emerging signals)
<i>Tooling</i>	Historical Evidence	Predictive Analytics & Alternative Futures
<i>Structure</i>	Departmental Silos	Complex Interdependencies & Networked Integration
<i>Planning</i>	Linear Planning	Continuous Learning & Adaptive Decision-Making

**Key Takeaway: Moving from Prediction to Preparation;
Reaction to Anticipation.**



The Anatomy of an Anticipatory System



Strategic Foresight

Using horizon scanning, trend analysis, and risk modeling to spot emerging shifts.

Networked Integration

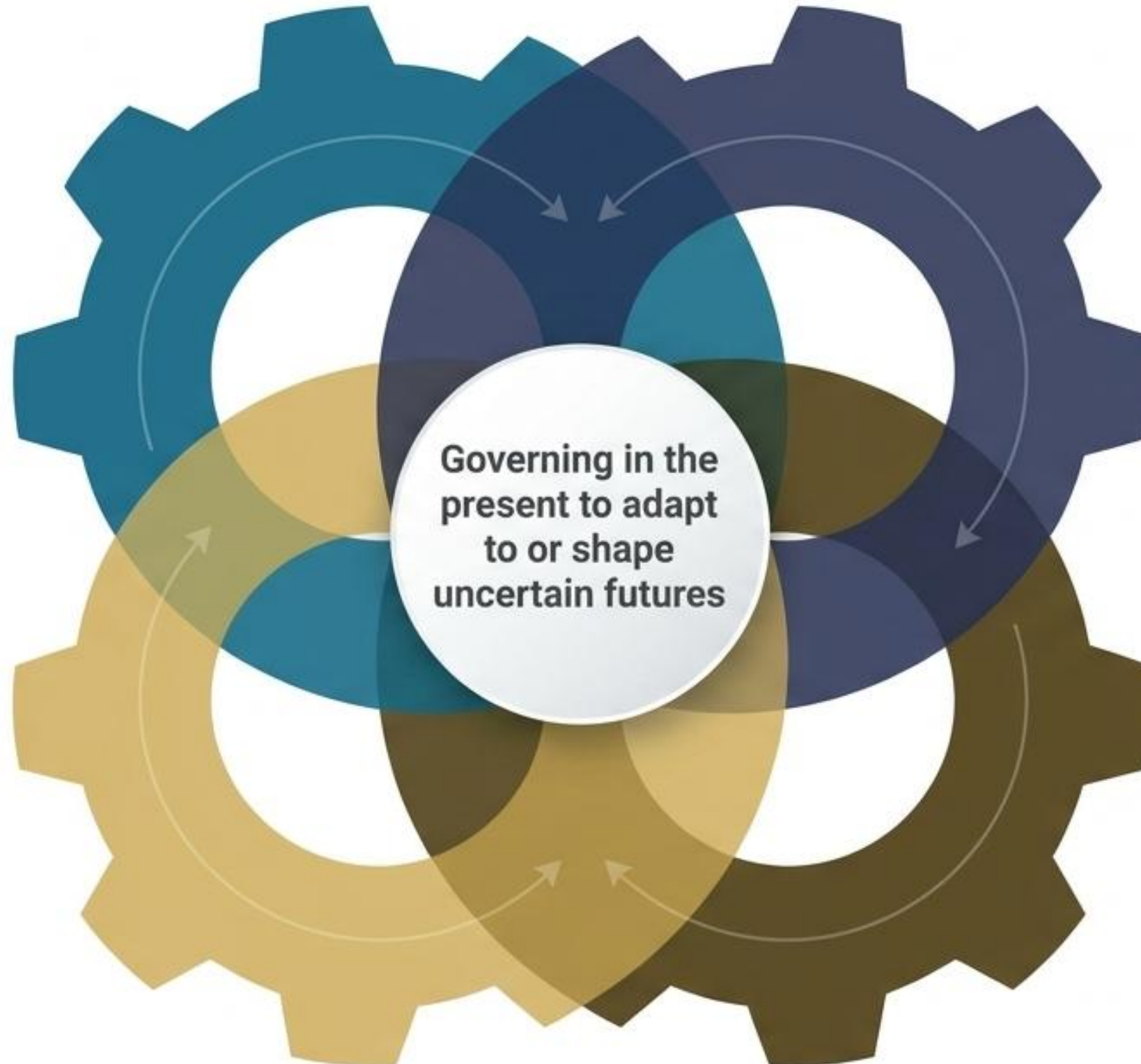
Embedding future-oriented insights directly into current policymaking (breaking silos).

Agility & Flexibility

Designing systems that adapt via real-time feedback, audits, and performance data.

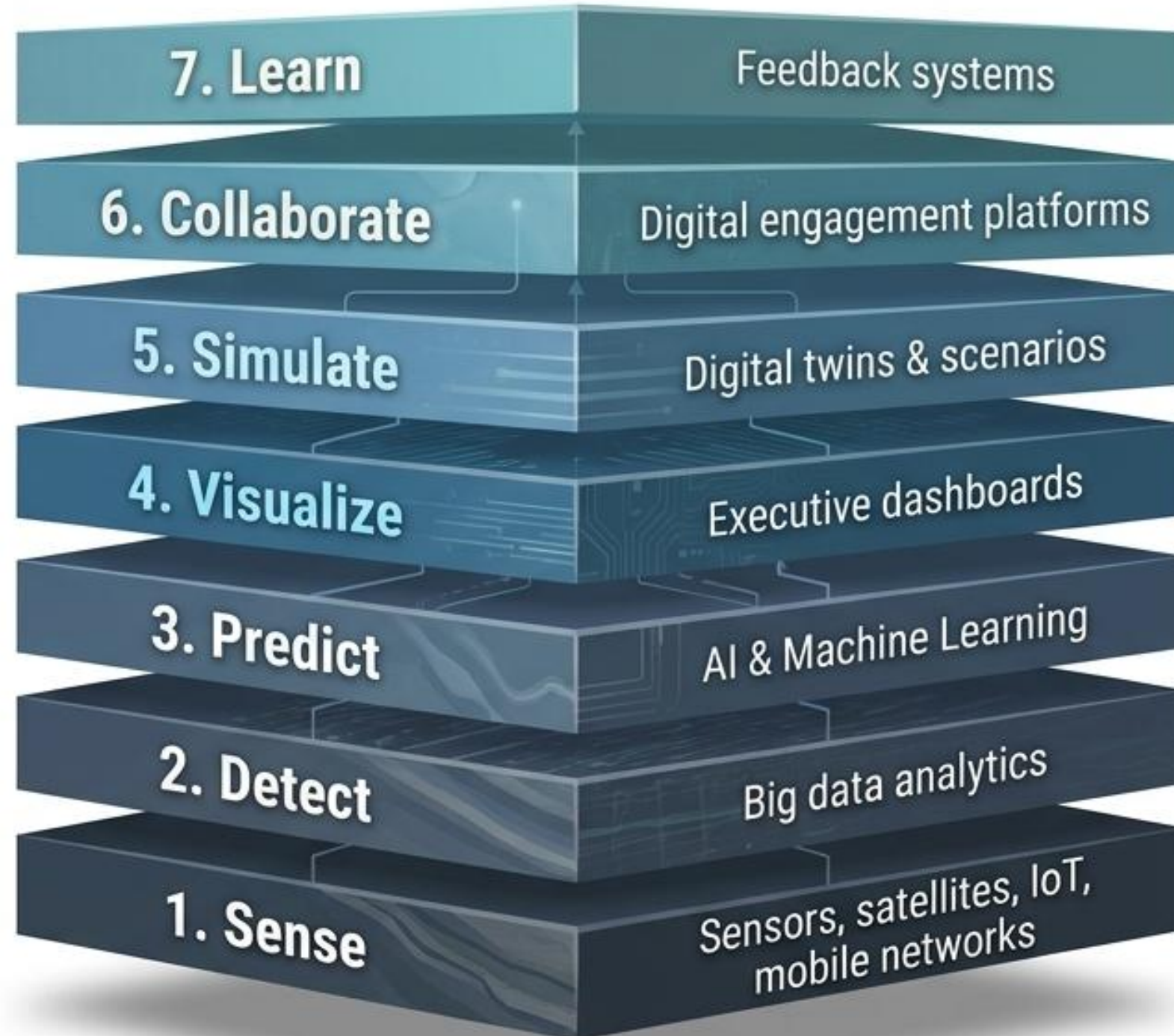
Stakeholder Engagement

Harnessing collective intelligence of citizens, scientists, and businesses.





The New Policy Intelligence Stack

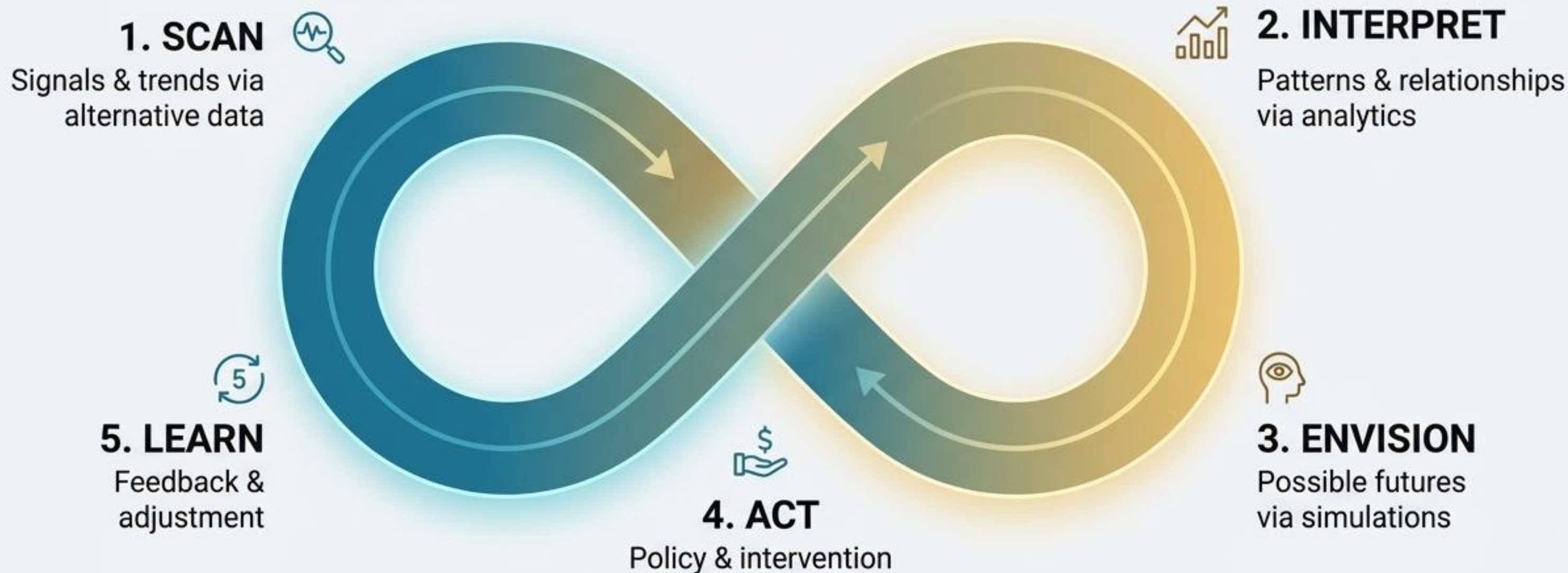


Datafication shifts the critical policy question.

We are no longer asking:
'What happened?'

We are asking:
'What is emerging?'

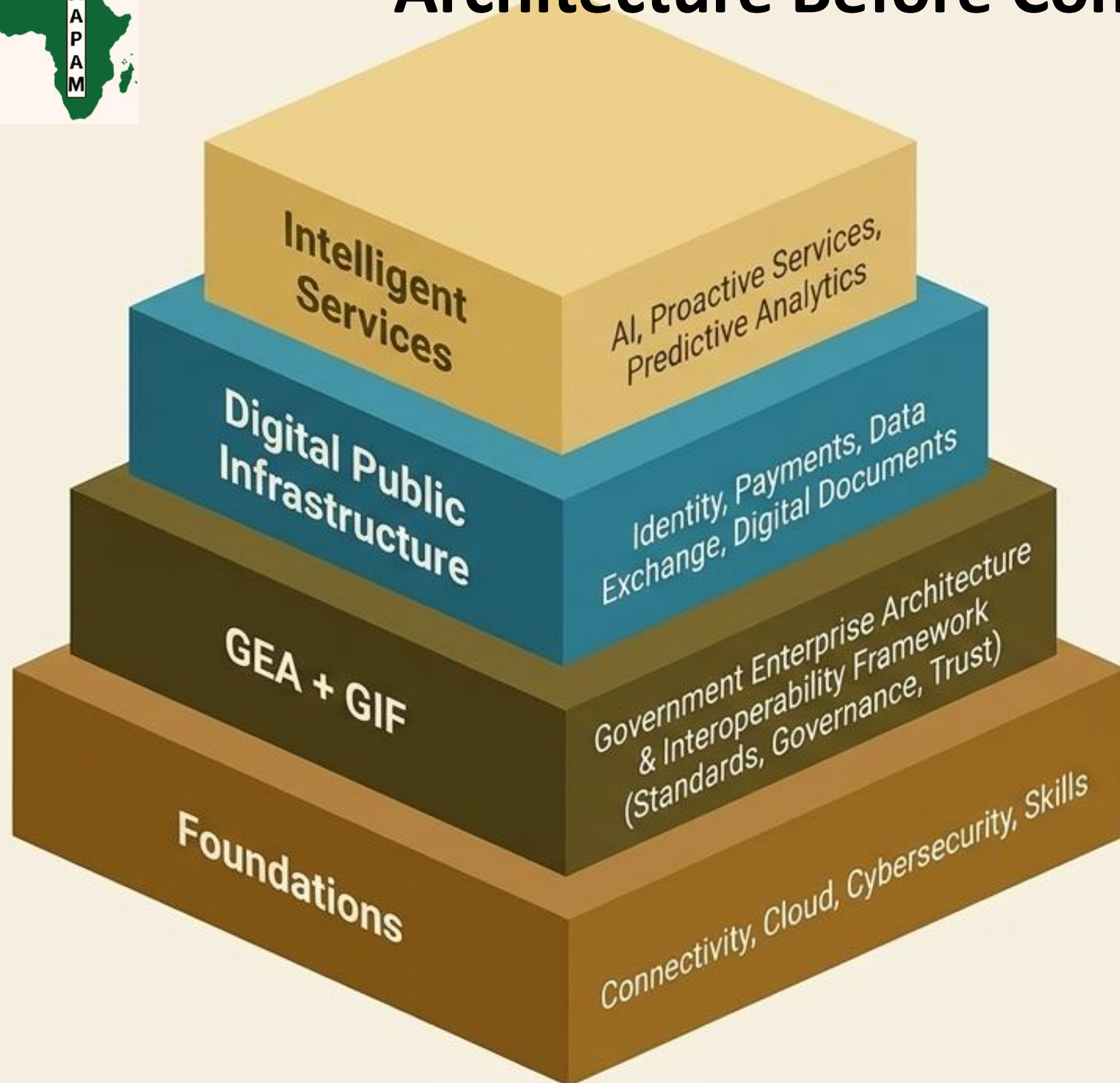
From Data to Anticipation: The Operating Loop



Key Insight: Anticipatory capability is not just about technology adoption ("What tool do we deploy?"), but about decision capability ("How will insight move into authority, action, learning, and adaptation?").

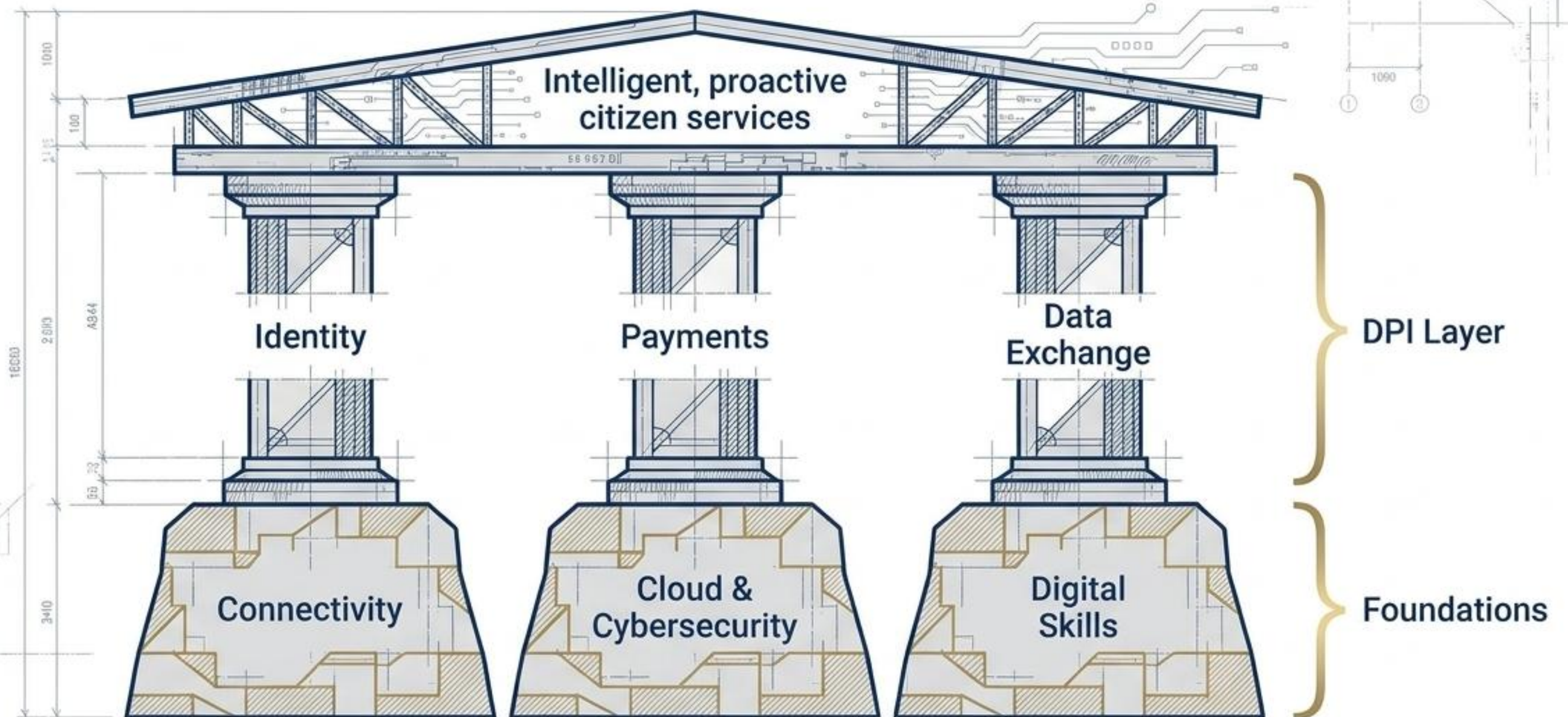


Architecture Before Construction



“Architecture before construction. No city builds roads, water, and power without a common plan. Government should not either.”

“No city builds roads and power without a common plan. Government shouldn’t either.”



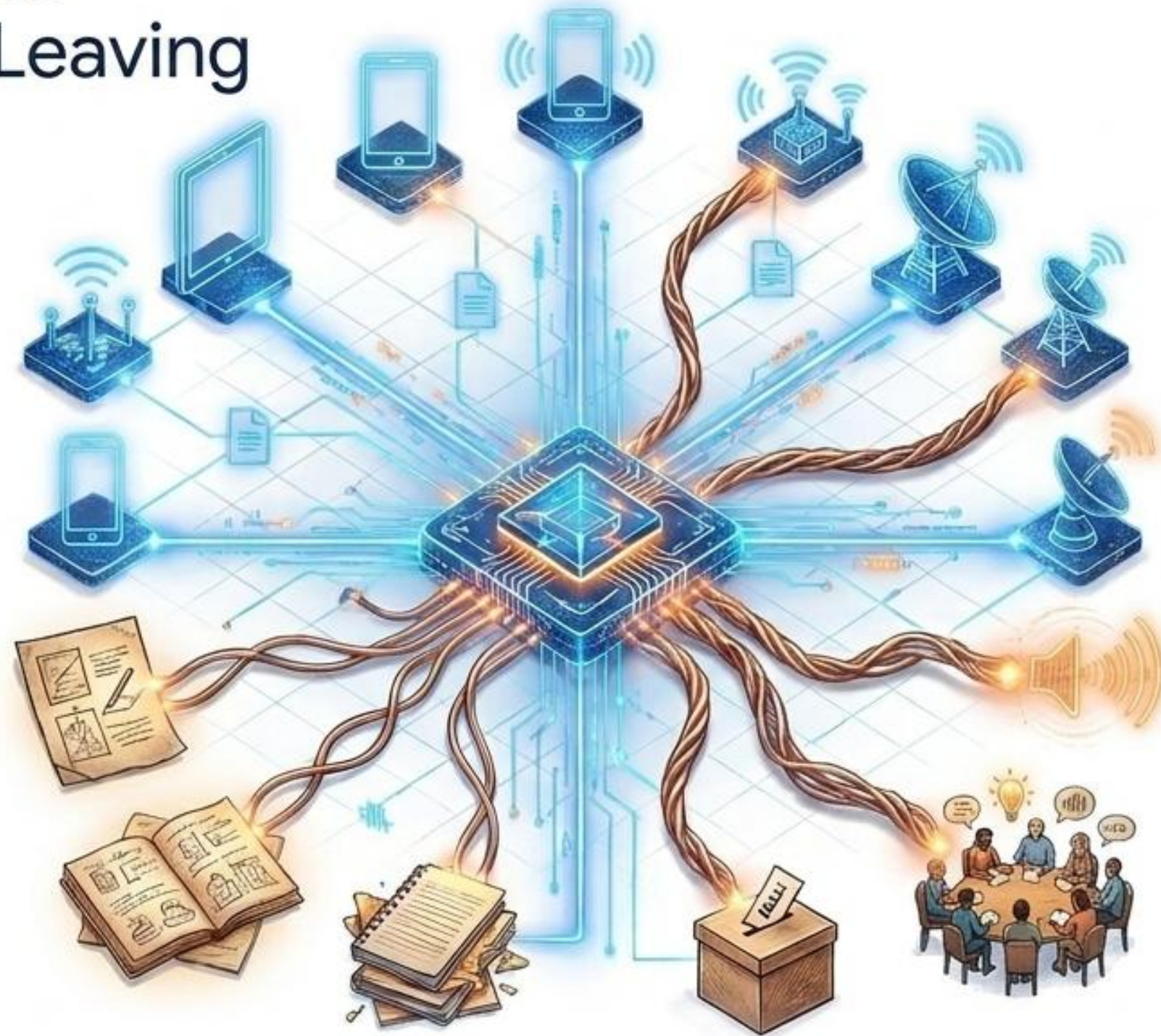
Hybrid Ecosystems: Subsidiarity and Leaving No One Behind

The Risk

Purely digital governance risks severe digital exclusion.

The Method

Collective Intelligence Governance—continuously capturing citizen experience and community signals.



The Shift: From participation-after-policy → co-creation-before-policy.

The Continental Vanguard: Institutionalizing African AI

AU Data Policy Framework

Establishing a common vision for open, secure datasets that underpin AI development while protecting citizen privacy.

AU Continental AI Strategy (2024)

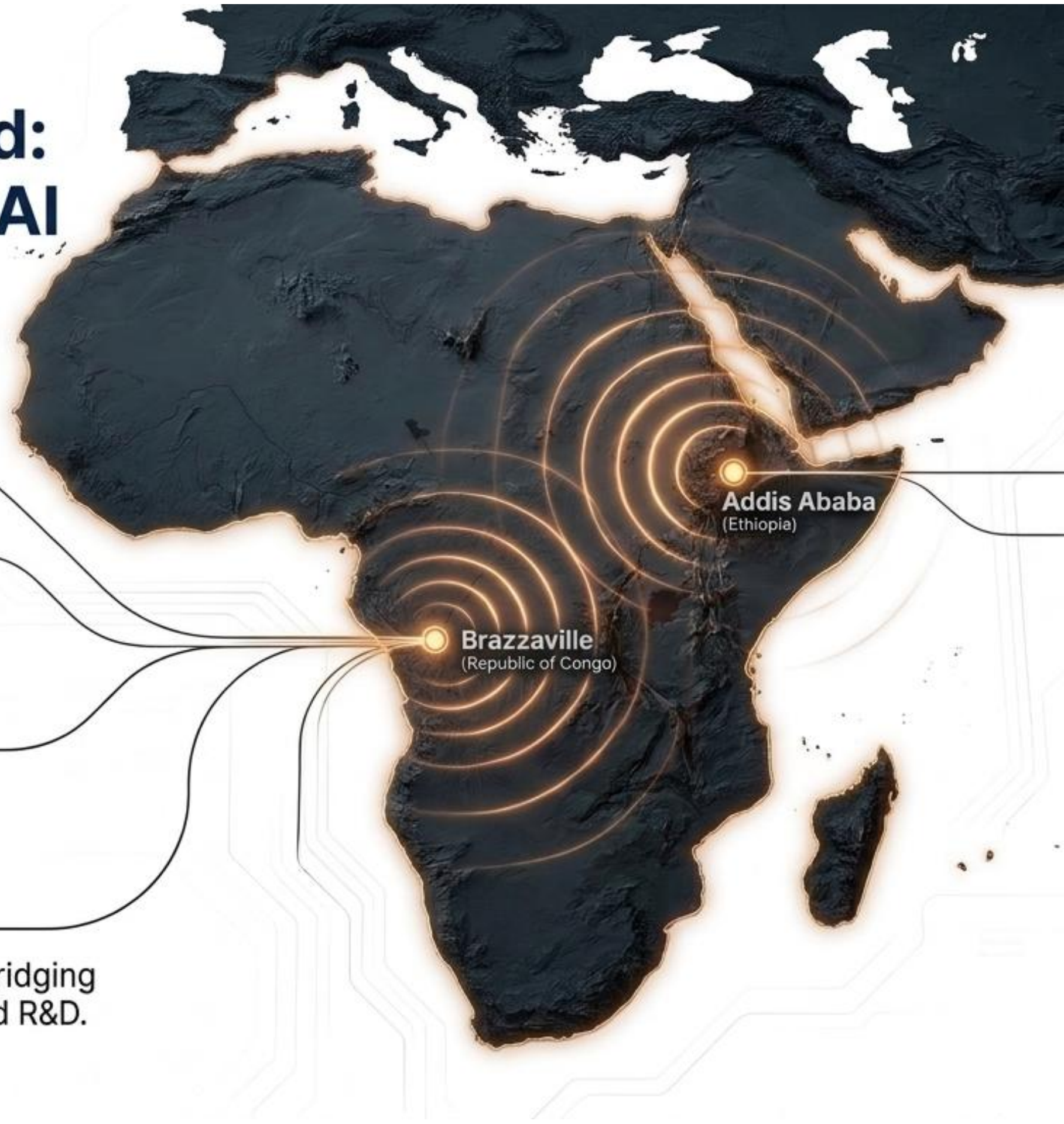
Mandating investments in infrastructure, local datasets, and homegrown AI skills to maximize socio-economic benefits.

AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol

Creating a unified, borderless digital market and harmonized data ecosystem.

UNECA ARCAI (Republic of Congo)

The African Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence, bridging the digital divide through technical training and localized R&D.



Institutionalizing Data Governance: From Addis to Your Desk



Continental

AU Data Policy Framework & Continental AI Strategy (Creating a single digital market by 2030).

Regional

Economic Community Frameworks (EAC, ECOWAS).

National

Domestic Data Protection Acts and Regulators.

Institutional

Your Ministry's ownership, classification, and documentation habits.

Key Takeaway: Governance is not an IT project or a data center. It is the decisions made by **named, accountable individuals**.

National Pioneers Orchestrating Foresight



Benin



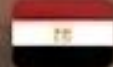
Laying foundations through massive investments in national data infrastructure and big data ecosystems.



Senegal



Prioritizing human capacity building and inclusive AI ecosystems for sustainable national development.



Egypt



Driving NLP (Natural Language Processing) innovation and fostering robust AI startup capacity.



Rwanda



Positioning as Africa's premier AI Lab; established the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR) to drive public sector AI adoption.



Mauritius



Utilizing AI for smart ports, maritime traffic anticipation, and fintech resilience since 2018.

Sectoral Foresight in Action

Predictive Agriculture

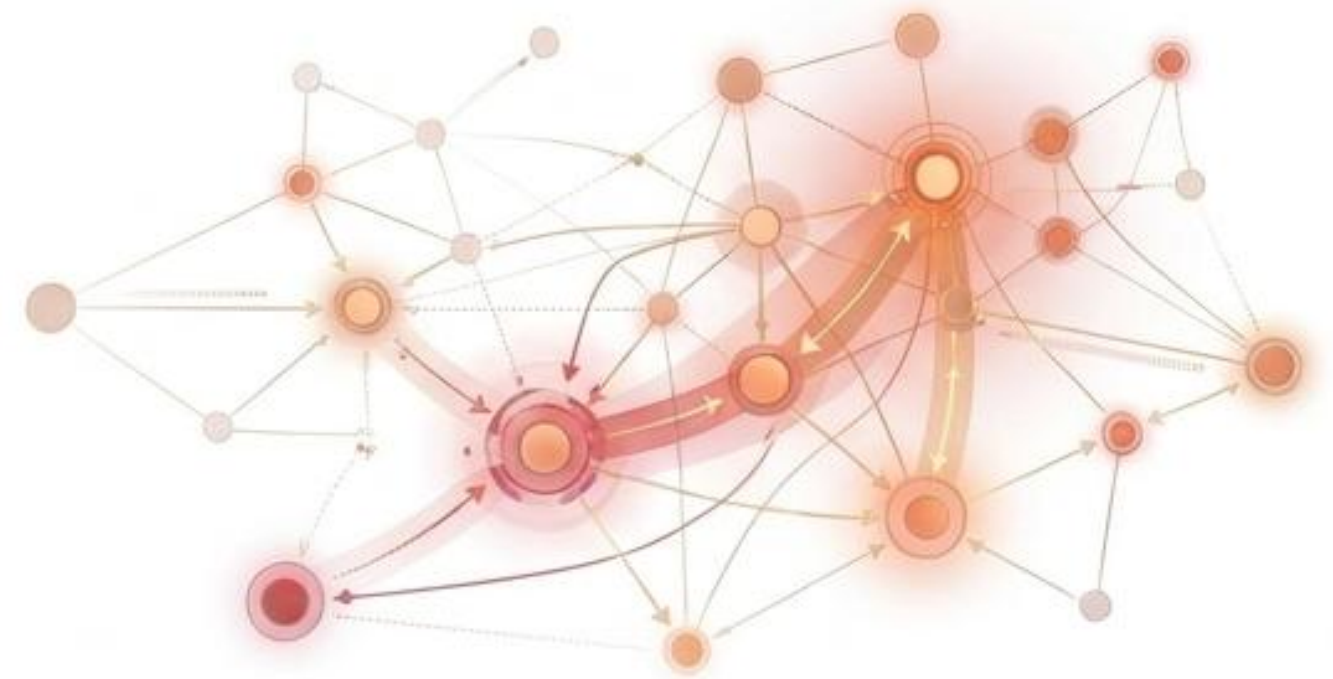
From reactive farming to precision yield.



- AI-driven pest and disease diagnosis.
- Precision crop yield forecasting based on soil and satellite telemetry.
- Automated early warning systems for weather and drought volatility.

Anticipatory Healthcare

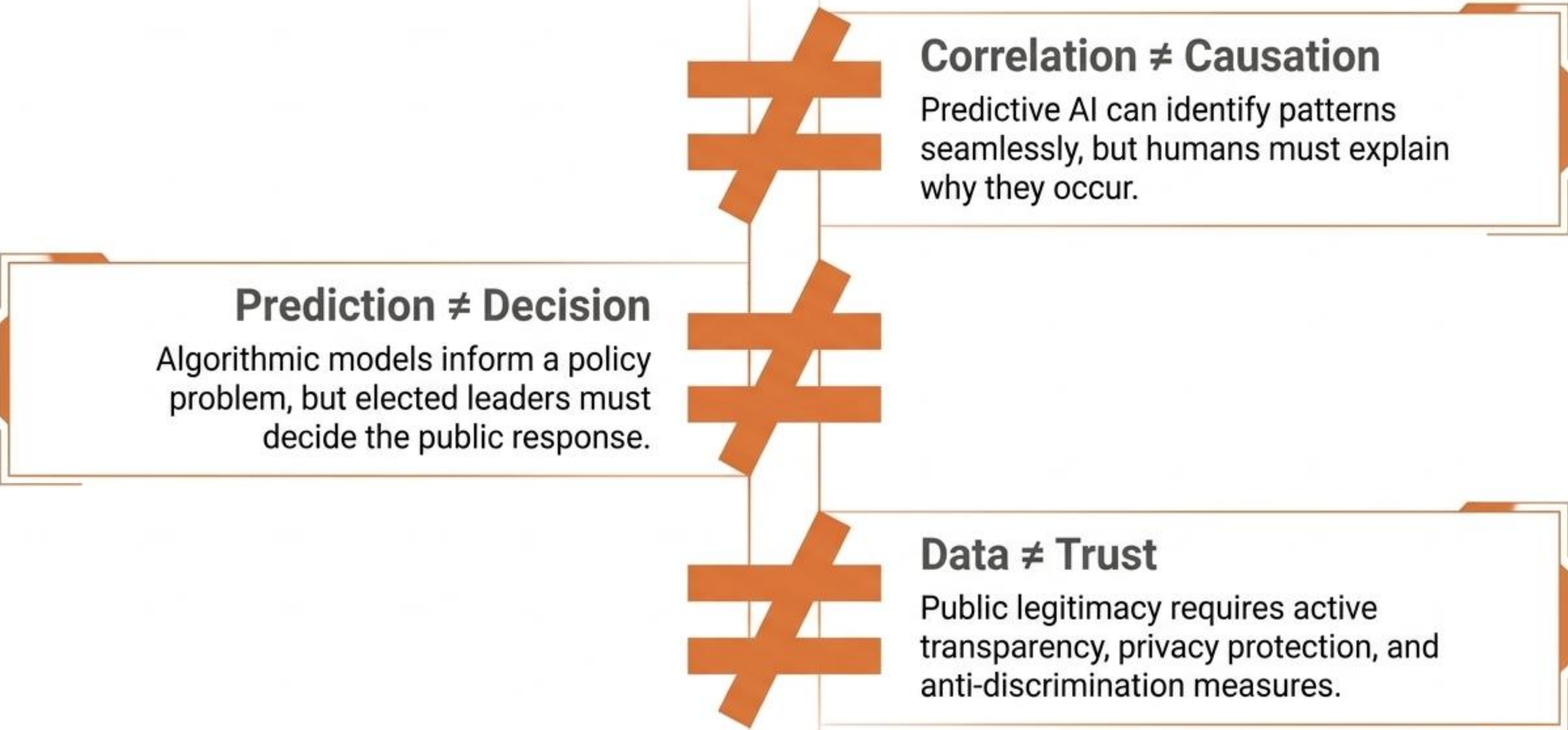
From outbreak containment to epidemic prevention.



- Real-time disease surveillance and epidemic risk stratification.
- Proactive resource deployment ahead of critical supply shortages.
- Oncology tracking and predictive health interventions.

The Paradox of Data-Driven Statecraft

Core Insight: More data does not automatically mean better governance.



Correlation ≠ Causation

Predictive AI can identify patterns seamlessly, but humans must explain why they occur.

Prediction ≠ Decision

Algorithmic models inform a policy problem, but elected leaders must decide the public response.

Data ≠ Trust

Public legitimacy requires active transparency, privacy protection, and anti-discrimination measures.

Anticipation in Action: Kenya's Predictive Livestock Insurance

The Problem

Recurring drought losses devastating pastoralist communities.

The Technology

Satellite data and predictive analytics used to model drought impacts before they occur.

The Result

Farmers receive financial support before catastrophic livestock losses happen.

The Strategic Shift

Government shifts from compensation **AFTER** disaster to **protection BEFORE** disaster.





THREE MODULAR MODELS FOR GOVERNANCE



The Policy Dashboard State

Integrated government data for real-time executive monitoring.

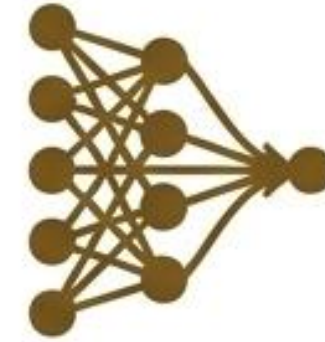
Example: Energy analytics (infrastructure + consumption) to anticipate grid needs.



Data Collaboratives

Cross-sector intelligence partnerships (Telco, Health, Financial data).

Example: UN Centre for Humanitarian Data combining streams for regional preparedness.

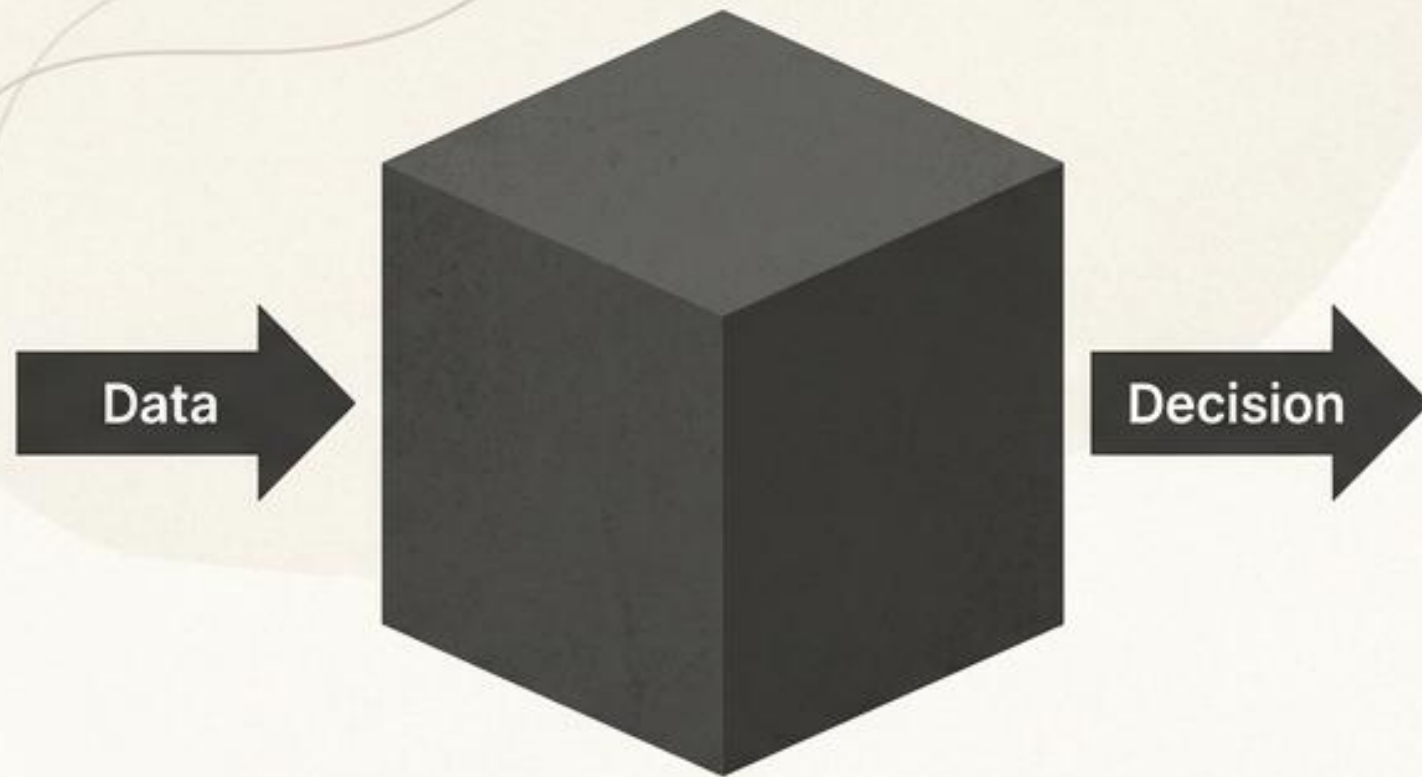


Collective Intelligence

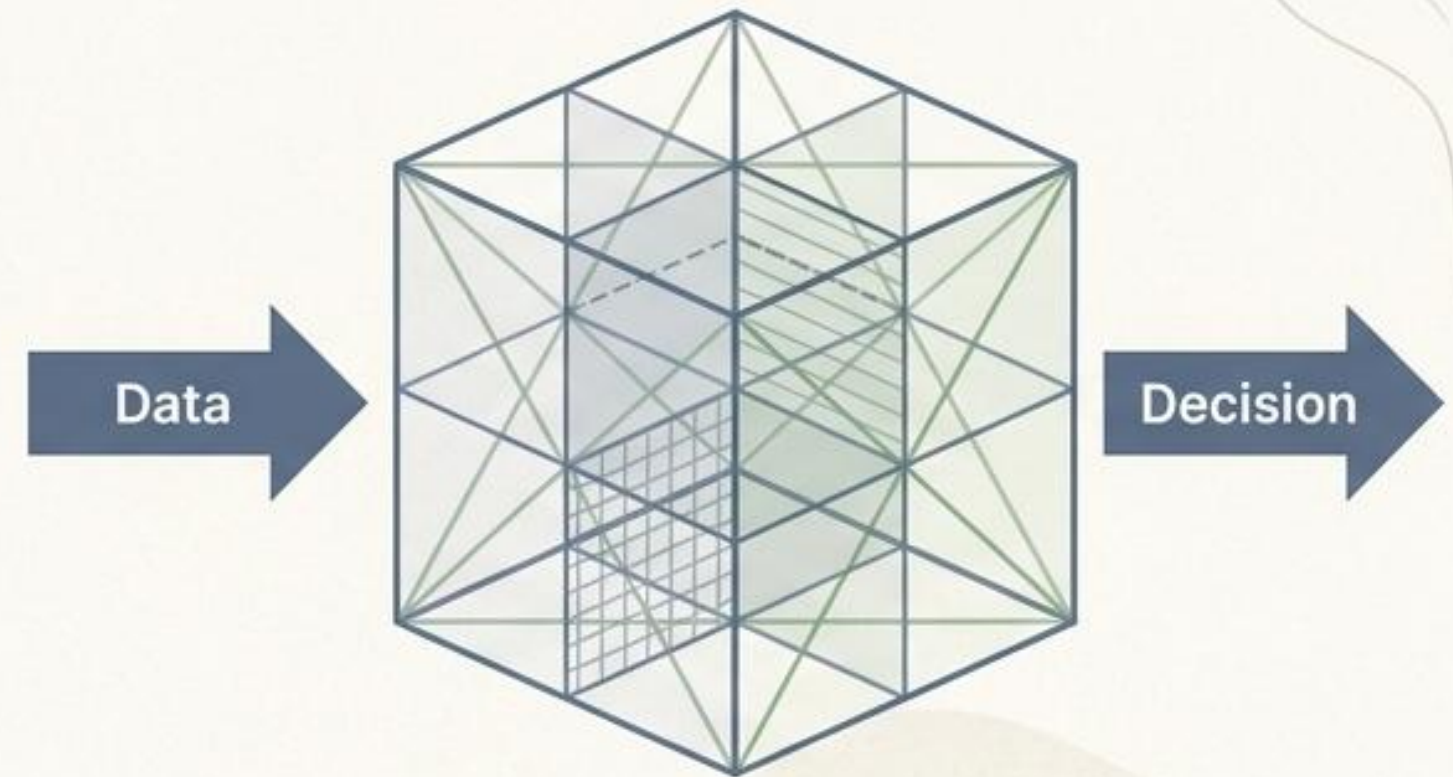
Machine learning applied to continuous community signals.

Example: Digital engagement platforms identifying consensus before policy is drafted.

The Dark Side of the Algorithm: Ethical & Legal Barriers



The Black Box (Unexplainable / Legally Risky)



The Glass Box (Duty of Reasoning Fulfilled)

Barrier 1: Black Box Opacity

- Deep learning models create an accountability crisis. If leaders cannot explain outcomes, they violate the citizen's right to due process.

Barrier 2: Algorithmic Bias

- Machine learning reliant on historical training data risks reproducing and amplifying structural inequalities under the guise of math.

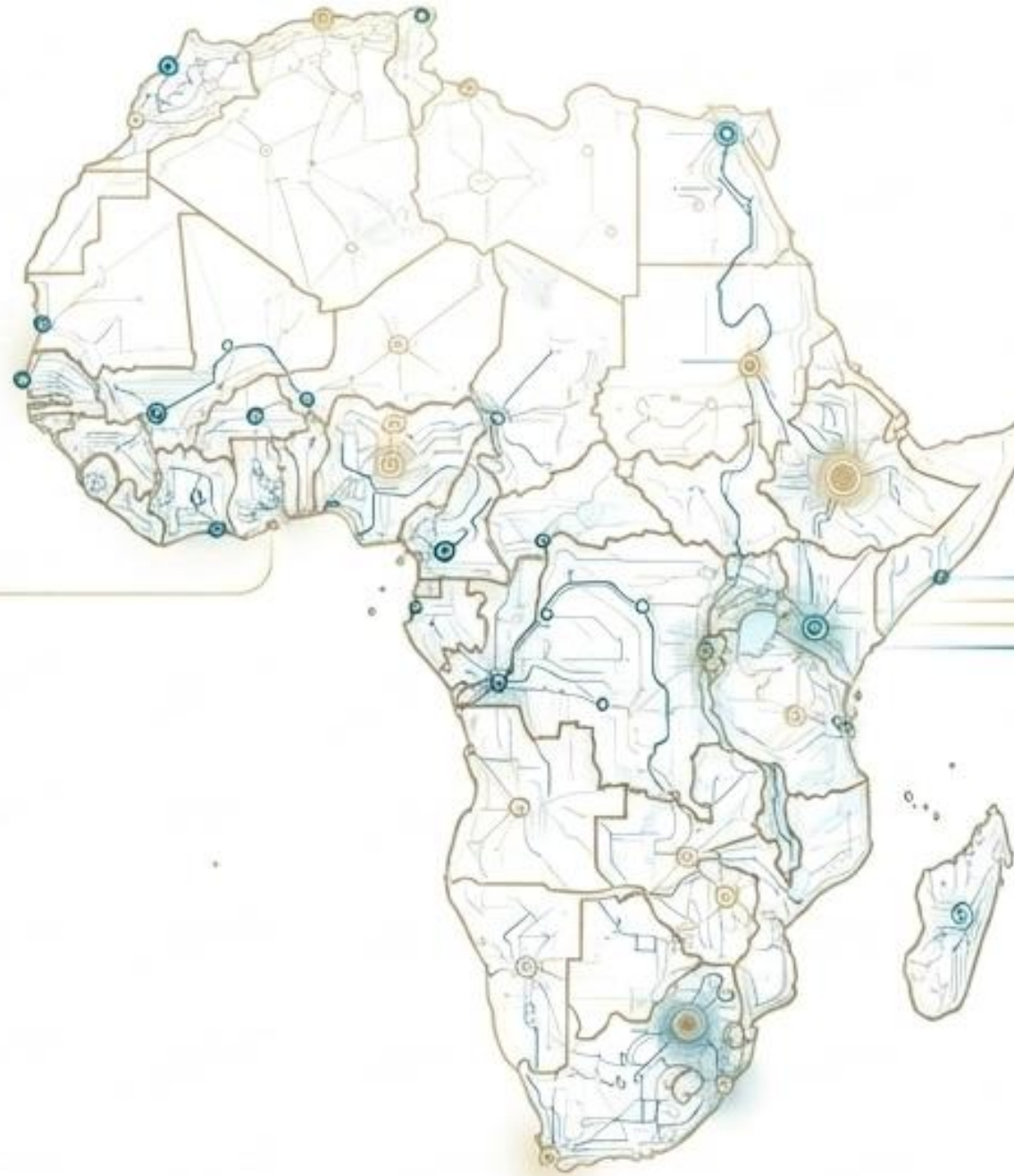
Barrier 3: Privacy & Surveillance

- The massive aggregation of Big Data enters a structural conflict with fundamental privacy rights.

The African Opportunity: Leapfrogging legacy systems

The Foundations

-  Mobile penetration
-  Expanding digital identity
-  Young population
-  Emerging AI ecosystems



Targets for Anticipation: Climate

Drought forecasting & precision agriculture

Targets for Anticipation: Health

Next-gen disease surveillance

Targets for Anticipation: Economic

Labor market & skills planning

Targets for Anticipation: Security

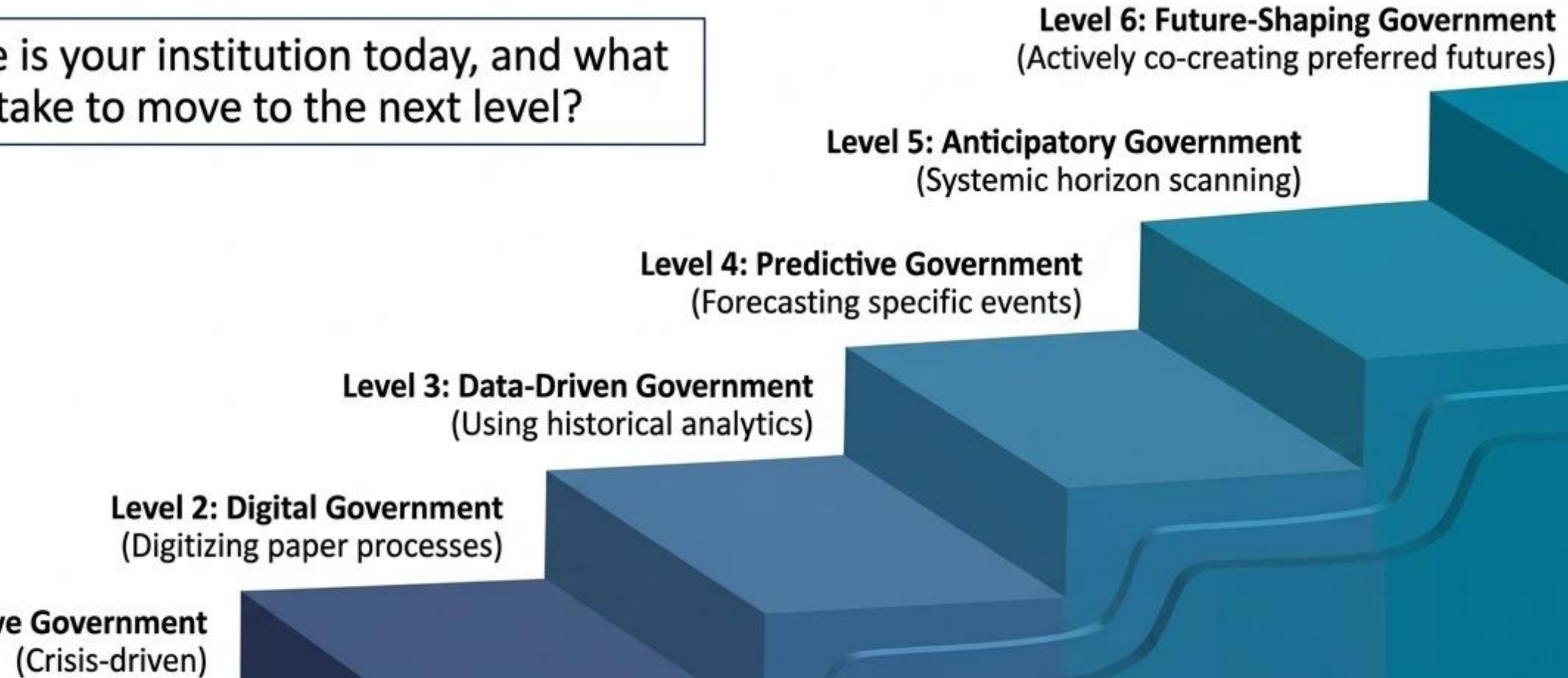
Early warning conflict monitoring



The Anticipatory Governance Maturity Model



Where is your institution today, and what will it take to move to the next level?



The African Opportunity: Leapfrogging to the Future

Unburdened by entrenched legacy IT systems, Africa can leverage mobile penetration, digital identity, and young AI ecosystems to leapfrog directly to future-shaping governance.

The most successful governments of the next decade will not be those that react fastest to change, but those that see change first.

Strategic Questions for AAPAM:



1. What anticipatory capabilities are currently missing in our institutions?
2. What data assets remain underutilized for public value creation?
3. How do we institutionalize foresight rather than conduct it as a one-off exercise?
4. How will we enforce the 'Duty of Reasoning' in our AI deployments?



**Regional Centre
of Competence**

Digital and AI Skilling in the Public Sector



Free online courses for the Public Service

1. Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation in Government (MOOC) *in partnership with Oxford University, UNESCO*

(Select Management when registering)

2. FDT: Foundations of Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence in the Public Service

3. ADT: Application of Digital Technologies and Artificial Intelligence in the Public Service



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