

Overcoming Digital Exclusion: The example of Lormes (France): The village of the future

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**LDnet Webinar | New exclusions: How communities are combating digital, food and health
exclusions**

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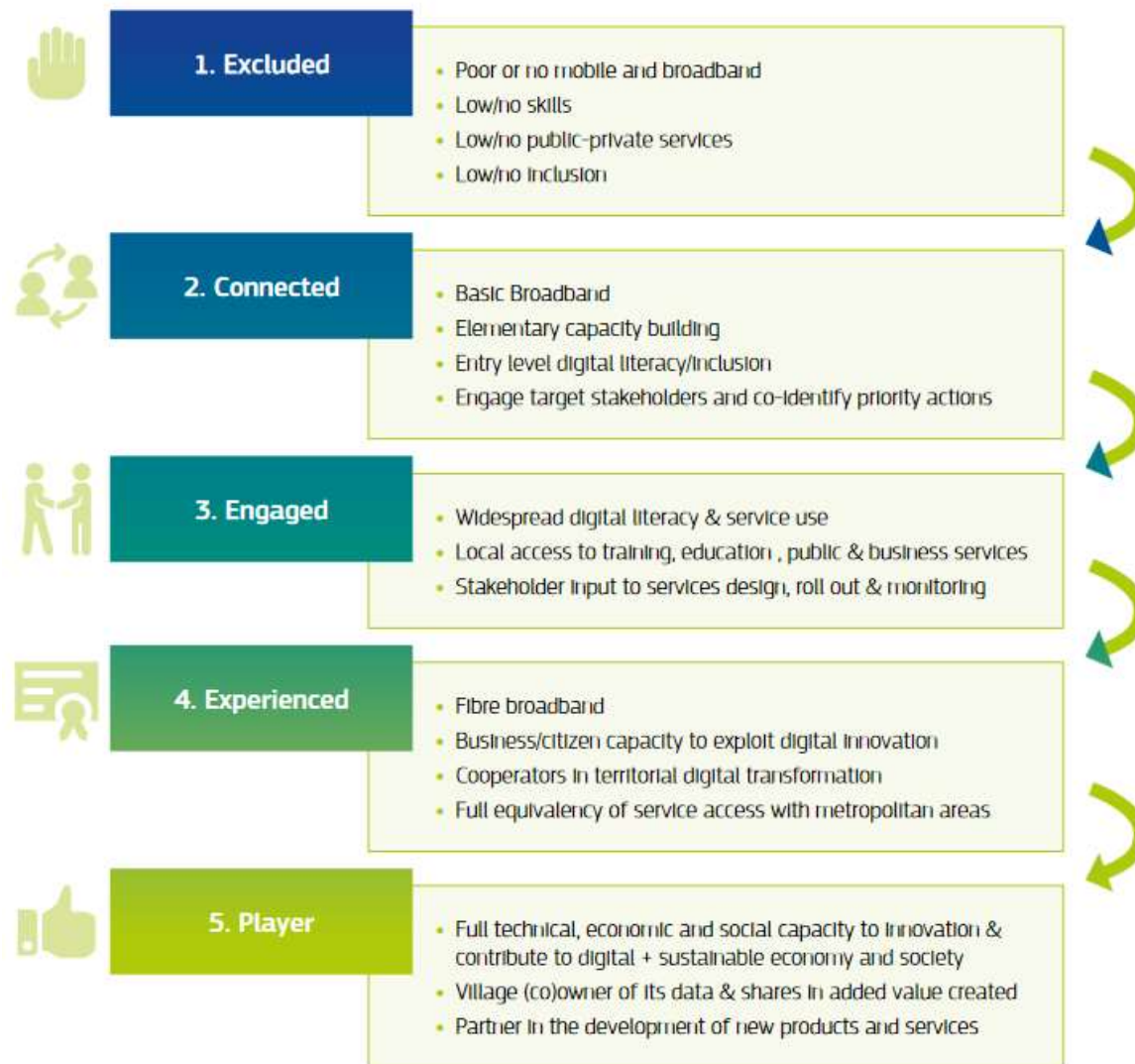


The concept of Smart Villages

- “Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use **innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities.**
- They rely on a **participatory approach** to develop and implement their strategy to improve their economic, social and/or environmental conditions, in particular by mobilizing solutions offered by **digital technologies.**
- **The use of digital technologies is not a precondition for becoming a Smart Villages”.**

*Which can help **empower** rural inhabitants to take **action** in response to the major challenges and opportunities they face*

The digital transformation of rural villages



Lormes: the village of the future

Lormes is a small market town (1 300 residents) located in the Morvan area.

2000

1- EXCLUDED: Start of a digital and social journey with a ground-breaking district-level **digital policy**;

2003

2- CONNECTED: **'Digital Mission' association** to provide digital inclusion and education support services to the community (with France Telecom);

2007/8

3- ENGAGED: Rural Hub **'Portes du Morvan'** - eight offices, connection to the high-speed broadband network (FTTH fibre-optic 100 Mb), etc.

Lormes: the village of the future



Community leader (Mayor) & engagement



Rural Hub & capacities



Lormes: the village of the future

2014/16

4- EXPERIENCED: First rural FTTH pilot was conducted in Burgundy together with a community consultation to prioritise **new digital services** to accompany the deployment of FTTH, the expansion of **Rural Hub** and the launch of the ‘Villages of the Future’ process focusing on wider **community-led social and economic regeneration**;

2017

5- PLAYER: ‘the ‘Village of the future’ (16) process got financial support. The **Rural Hub** started to act as a **competence centre** for the business, public and community sectors by delivering training and mediation services on behalf of the county and regional government.

Lormes: the village of the future

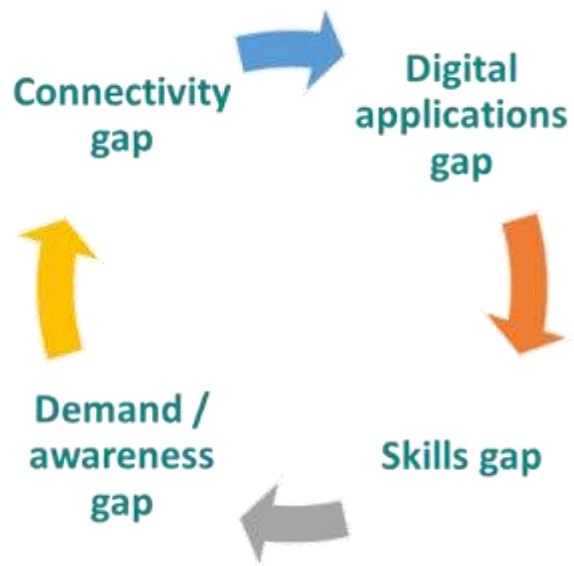
Infrastructure



New businesses and services



What about the future



- **Covid:** those areas prepared coped better to the shock (business, services went virtual fast).
- Well-being a competitive advantage: **rural areas attract to people**
 - Social integration and displacement (conflicts)
 - Services provision (secondary homes & taxes)
- **Co-designing digital pathways.** Bottom-up & top-down. Consider the wider socio-economic impacts.

Some resources

Smart Villages and rural digital transformation



https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/smart-and-competitive-rural-areas/smart-villages/smart-villages-portal/smart-villages-toolkit_en

Recommendations to boost sustainable digitalisation of agriculture, forestry and rural areas by 2040



<https://desira2020.eu/contribution-Itvra-recommendations/>

THANK YOU!

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