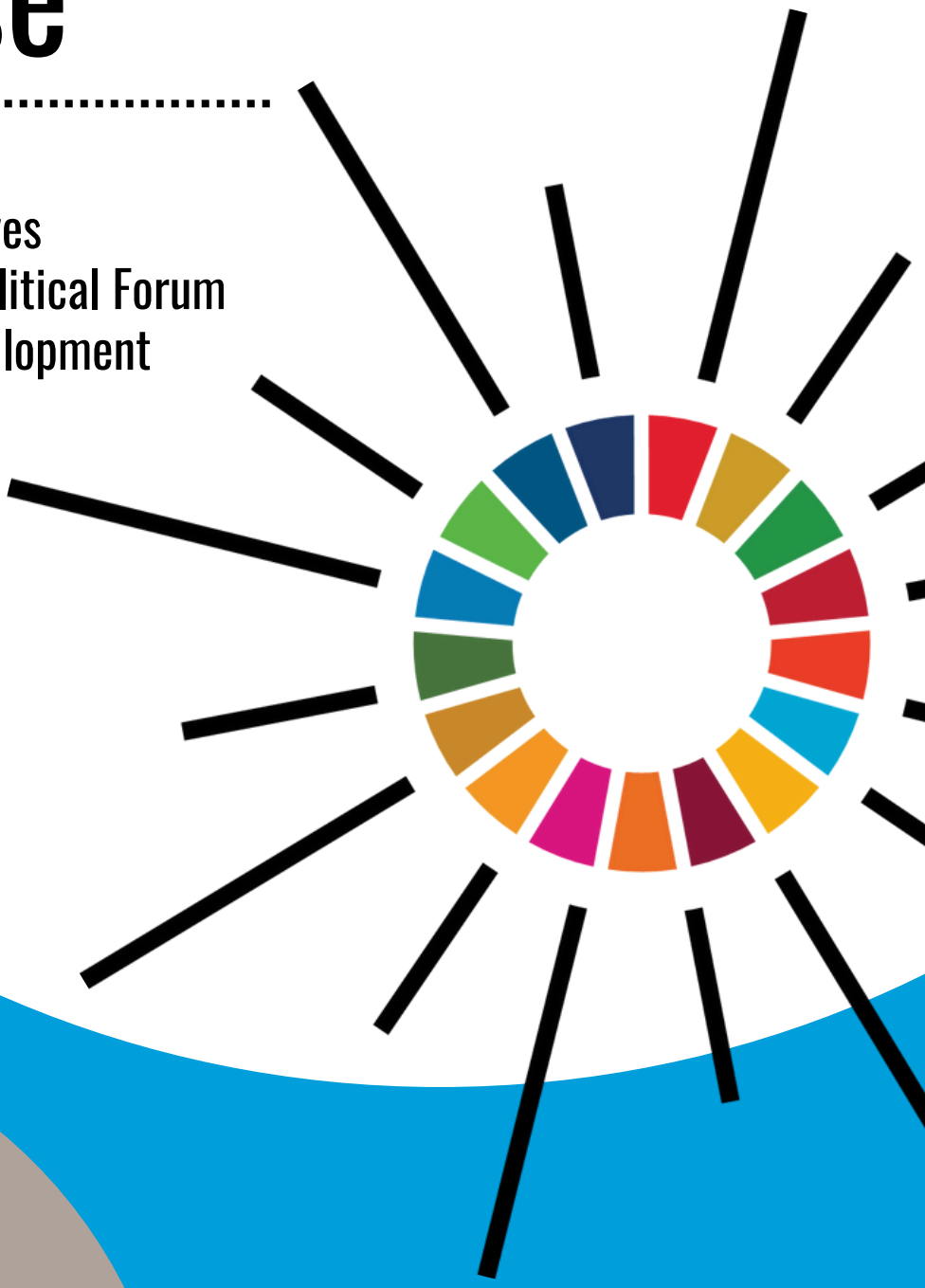
Keeping the SDG Promise

2024 Update on the High Impact Initiatives at the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development



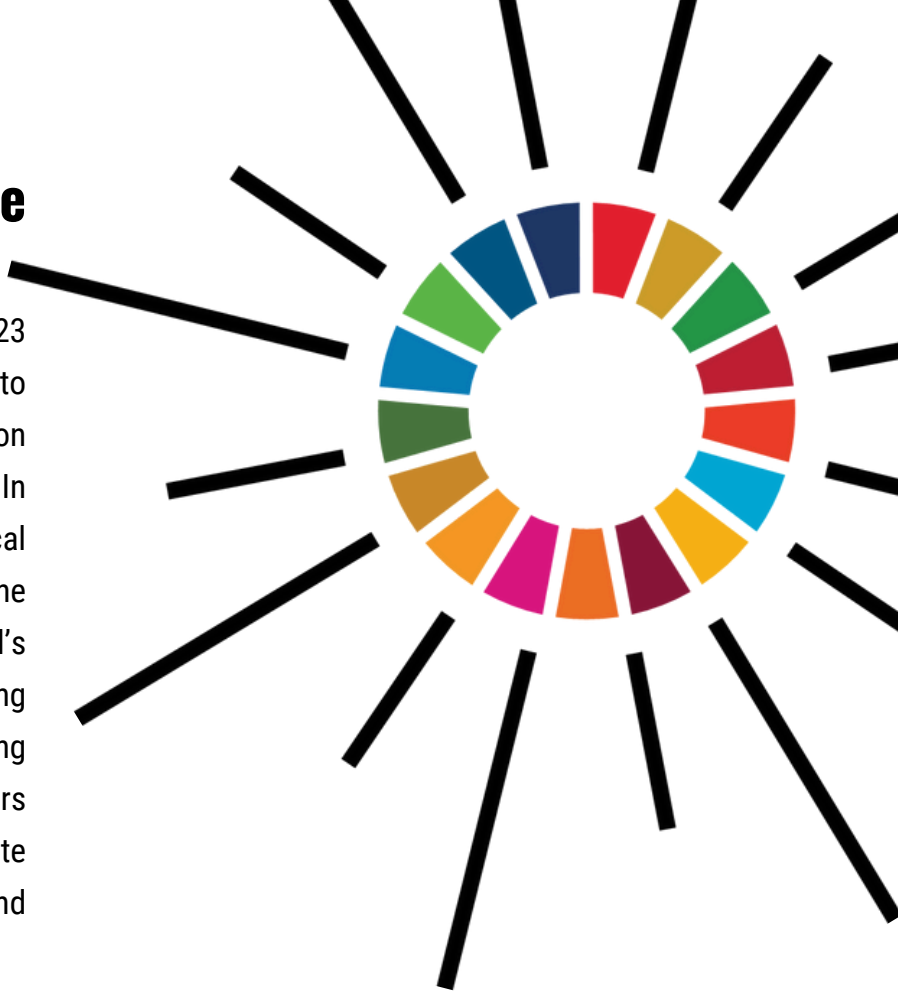
HIGH IMPACT INITIATIVES

Keeping the SDG Promise

2024 Update on the High Impact Initiatives at the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development



Keeping the SDG Promise



The SDG Summit in September 2023 addressed the stark reality that halfway to our 2030 deadline, the world was only on track to meet 15% of SDG targets. In response, in the SDG Summit Political Declaration, Member States reaffirmed the centrality of the 2030 Agenda - the world's overarching roadmap for achieving sustainable development - and overcoming the multiple crises the world faces. Leaders committed to working together to accelerate progress towards the goals between now and 2030.

To support this push for SDG acceleration, the UN development system joined forces with Member States and other partners around twelve **High Impact Initiatives** that serve as examples of the integrated, multi-stakeholder action needed to accelerate progress at scale in the years ahead. The HIIs are centred around six key transitions, which build on the findings of Global Sustainable Development Report, other SDG scholarship and UN-system experience on the ground and serve as critical investment pathways for accelerating progress across the goals. These are (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education and skills; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. The HIIs also include initiatives toward achieving gender equality and the means required for SDG implementation (finance, technology, localization, high quality data, and capacity strengthening). More information on the six transitions is available at https://unsdg.un.org/resources/six-transitions-investment-pathways-deliver-sdgs.

At the country level, UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams are increasingly moving to support Member States on their national transitions and acceleration pathways, by serving as engine rooms on the development of public sector capacities; shifts in policy and regulatory frameworks, design of bankable project pipelines and convening for the mobilization of finance.

The Joint SDG Fund also plays a vital role as the key instrument for RCs and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) to jointly deliver 'enabling actions' for SDGs acceleration. Looking ahead, the Fund's overarching strategy prioritises support to the work of UNCTs on the transitions, bringing to bear its successful track record in supporting integrated policymaking, Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs), and innovative financing mechanisms

To highlight the ongoing response of the UN development system and Member States to this call for acceleration, the Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Spain, has convened a Special Event at the 2024 High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development entitled ***Keeping the SDG Promise: Pathways for Acceleration*.** The event will examine the role of SDG transitions in SDG acceleration and profile concrete examples of progress, including a snapshot of progress made under the UN High Impact initiatives. The present document provides highlights of progress across the HII platform since its launch in September 2023, ahead of the SDG Summit.



DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE



The UN High Impact Initiative on Digital Public Infrastructure aims to catalyze the collective action necessary to unlock targeted support for DPI implementation and strengthening in 100 countries by ensuring that DPI is safe, accessible, affordable, green, financed, and future ready. The HII has identified and prioritized five key pillars that combine global initiatives with commitments from individual countries and organizations in support of this objective: (1) Universal Safeguards, (2) Innovations for Last Mile Inclusion (3) Affordable, safe, and scalable technologies, (4) Sustainable and green infrastructure, and (5) Financing.

Through the DPI Safeguards initiative (stewarded by UNDP and OSET), a multistakeholder process was established to develop a set of principles to guide DPI design and implementation worldwide. This includes the formation of six thematic working groups composed of 44 members, in addition to a consultative group with representatives from 11 international organizations. Their efforts thus far have culminated in the release of an interim report that outlines the first draft of the high-level principles of DPI safeguards for public engagement and feedback.

During the 2024 Open-Source Policy Summit, UNDP and ITU in partnership with the European Union launched the Open-Source Ecosystem Enabler initiative. The initiative will help countries strengthen open-source ecosystems as part of the wider digital public infrastructure, by providing technical support, practical guidance and frameworks, and training.

The 50-in-5 Campaign was officially launched, with the goal of ensuring that 50 countries in 5 years have designed, launched, and scaled at least one component of their digital public infrastructure stack in a safe, inclusive, and interoperable manner.

Attention to financing for digital infrastructure has also grown. Digital Transformation has been identified as a pivotal driver for the UN Joint SDG Fund and 2023 marked the first funding round fully dedicated to digital. Technical leadership for the digital funding round is provided by the Digital Transformation Technical Support Group coordinated by the ITU-UNDP Joint Facility for Digital Capacity-Building which includes a consultative group of UN entities. Twenty-three (23) countries have developed Joint Programmes for a total funding envelope of $40.3 Million, with a particular focus on investments in Digital Public Infrastructure.

During the Digital Pathways for SIDS 2.0 Conference held in Trinidad and Tobago this year, more than 100 participants agreed on the way forward to become Digital States. Co-Develop committed $1 Million to four Caribbean countries to enable DPI deployment.

UNDP, ITU and other partners also continue to leverage longstanding initiatives on digitalization to advance DPI objectives



Impact Story:

In Malawi, UNDP led the mobilization of ~US$7 million to support the country's inclusive digital transformation, including the development of the country's DPI strategy and implementation. It is estimated that Malawi could unlock significant economic value through digital transformation, achieving annual savings of over US $150 million. However, true digital transformation needs to be inclusive and requires a whole-of-society approach involving government, private sector, civil society, academia, and individuals. Accordingly, the work will focus on:

- **Establishing a safe and inclusive digital ID and CRVS system**
- **Enhancing digital governance to advance service delivery while safeguarding human rights; and**
- **Reducing the digital gender divide through increased literacy and productivity:**

ENERGY COMPACTS



Energy is a critical factor for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement's climate change objectives. Access to clean and affordable energy (SDG 7) is interconnected with various goals, including poverty reduction, food security, health, education, economic growth, gender equality, employment, transportation, water and sanitation, and women and youth empowerment. The UNFCCC COP28 conference emphasized the vital role of energy in combating climate change.

UN-Energy has sought to facilitate the mobilization of Energy Compacts to scale up bold commitments. UN-Energy brings together some 30 UN organizations and partners that are global leaders in their respective fields, leveraging their expertise covering together all aspects of energy and other SDGs to offer a host of services and programmes at the global, regional and national levels. Energy Compacts are voluntary commitments to action, with specific targets and timelines to drive progress towards achieving SDG7 by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050. They are designed to advance electricity access, clean cooking, renewables, efficiency, and means of implementation, especially finance and investment, in the global movement towards SDG7 and just energy transitions.

Since September 2023, there have been nine new or updated Energy Compacts, 15 expressions of interest and 19 new signatories on the 24/7 Carbon-Free Energy Compact. The overall finance commitment for SDG7 is now USD 1.42 trillion.

Learn more about Energy Compacts at www.seforall.org.



Impact Story:

The Renewables in Latin America and the Caribbean (RELAC) Energy Compact has 16 member countries from the region demonstrating leadership and collective action by committing to at least 70% of electricity consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean from renewable sources by 2030. This is a unique regional initiative with Barbados, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay agreeing to work together to set concrete renewable energy goals, establish a monitoring mechanism, and agreeing on an operational and governance structure led by the Ministries of Energy of these countries, setting the region on a pathway to carbon neutrality.

Looking at the potential climate impact of this commitment, considering a current emission factor of 603 tons of CO2 per GWh of non-renewable electricity generated, and if the share of renewables in 2030 is 70%, the region would save almost 90 million tons of CO2 each year, which would represent a 24% reduction in emissions associated with the electricity sector.

FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

Agriculture and food security depend on natural resources and thriving ecosystems. Resilience to extreme weather phenomena such as droughts and floods ensures continuous crop production and food availability. Effective management of food systems can foster political stability and significantly reduce malnutrition and hunger. At the same time, unsustainable food and agriculture production are key contributors to deforestation, environmental harm, and climate change. Solutions like integrated land and water management, along with biodiversity conservation, are crucial for addressing climate change and ensuring food security. By improving food production, resource management, and resilience to future challenges, the sustainable food systems can strengthen communities, promote stability, and address underlying causes of conflict. These interconnections make food systems a critical investment pathway for making transformative change for people and planet.

The High Impact Initiative on Food Systems Transformation has continued to mobilize commitments from Member States to prioritize their journey of food systems transformation to ensure food security and healthy diets for all. Championed by FAO, WFP the World Bank Group, UNEP, IFAD, UNDCO, WHO and UNIDO, the UN system is pulling together to provide technical and policy assistance support to selected countries to deliver on their Food Systems transformation Agenda; mobilize innovative means of implementation and solutions for action, including in the areas of finance, data and innovation; and support increasing commitments for national-level leadership, ownership and financing.



FUTUREGOV



Major investment is needed to strengthen public sector capabilities to unlock accelerated delivery of the SDGs. Critical public sector capabilities for the future must create the conditions necessary for advancement across the sustainable development transitions, through (1) adapting and learning at an institutional level in the face of incomplete information and radical uncertainty; (2) using systems thinking and foresight to govern effectively, making the most of data and digital solutions; and (3) tapping into social and policy innovation beyond digitalization. The FutureGov initiative aims to help Member States build these three public sector capabilities to unlock accelerated delivery of the SDGs.

A number of countries and institutional partners have joined the Group of Friends of FutureGov, so far in 2024, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Ecuador, Japan, Romania and the United Arab Emirates, and institutional partners like the World Bank, EU and OECD. At the invitation of UN DESA and UNDP (co-leads of FutureGov), thirteen member states attended the first meeting of the FutureGov's Group of Friends (GoF) on February 14th, 2024, at the UN Secretariat. Ministers, senior government officials, and IFI's representatives all reiterated the urgency to transform public sector to accelerate the SDGs and support the Pact of the Future. On 17 Feb 2024, as part of its planned deliverables, the initiative developed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Group of Friends of FutureGov and as well the TOR for the FutureGov Facility. Both ToRs have been shared with Member States, including the initial coalition of eight countries (Ecuador, Georgia, Italy, Panama, Romania, Rwanda, Singapore, United Arab Emirates) and institutional partners.

At an event in the margins of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administrations (CEPA), in April 2024, experts and delegates discussed the way forward for the FutureGov HII, including on how countries could step up efforts in public sector transformation, from building public sector

skillsets for the future, to shifting mindsets towards system thinking and foresight, and to enabling broader and more impactful innovation; the role of the Group of Friends of FutureGov in advocacy and informal consultation; and how the FutureGov Facility could fulfil its role as a public sector capability-building platform.

At the operational level, UNDP and UN DESA, in coordination with the World Bank are formulating a technical assistance and exchange programme that could include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Chad, China, Dominica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Romania, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and the United Arab Emirates amongst others.

A project proposal has been submitted for consideration to be funded by UN Peace and Development Fund (UN PDF) 2030 Sub-Fund. The FutureGov Portal remains under development.





GLOBAL ACCELERATOR

The Global Accelerator (GA) on jobs and social protection for just transitions aims to facilitate the transition to a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy. By developing and implementing policies that strengthen institutions for social protection, decent jobs creation, skills development and support to enterprises, the GA facilitates just transitions towards formalization and low-carbon, care and digital economies, especially for youth and women. This will be supported through effective financing mechanisms including both public and private domestic investments, complemented by international financial support, with the aim of creating sufficient fiscal space for social investments.

The first funding round of USD 17.9 million was approved by the Operational Steering Committee of the Joint SDG Fund on 27 February 2024. Three calls for proposals were launched between March and May 2024. It included one call for proposals for early-stage pathfinder countries ("seed funding track"), to support the development of Global Accelerator national roadmaps and prepare the ground for implementation, a second call for proposals for advanced-stage pathfinder countries ("high impact track"), to start the implementation of parts of the finalized national roadmaps and catalyse further resource mobilization, and a third call for proposals for UN-World Bank collaboration on decent jobs and social protection in early-stage and advanced-stage pathfinder countries ("M-GA track"). This M-GA stands for Multistakeholder Engagement to implement the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions and the World Bank Social Protection and Jobs Compass. A second funding round is scheduled to take place in Q4 2024.

The UN Technical Support Facility created in September 2022 is now fully operational and includes representatives from ILO (coordinating agency), UNICEF, UNDP, UN WOMEN, WFP and FAO. At national level, UN resident coordinators and UN country teams are supporting the Global Accelerator's design and implementation in the pathfinder countries. Six countries will start implementing their Global Accelerator roadmaps within the Q3 and Q4 of 2024.

The **Global Accelerator Steering Group** was launched on 20 February 2024. Composed of pathfinder country governments, donors, social partners, public development banks, civil society and UN agencies, it provides strategic direction for all engagements on the Global Accelerator. A technical level meeting to provide strategic guidance on the UN Joint Programme proposals from early-stage pathfinder countries took place on 15 May. Two meetings at technical level will take place in July: One meeting to provide strategic guidance on the UN JPs from advanced-stage pathfinder countries, and one meeting to share the Global Accelerator results framework and discuss how the Global Accelerator can support the financing of integrated policies, including through links with climate finance.



Impact Story:

The Global Accelerator in Namibia is taking a whole of Government approach, coordinated by an inter-ministerial troika structure composed of the Ministry of Labour (MLIREC), the Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises (MFPE), and the National Planning Commission (NPC). This has enabled the Ministry of Labour to establish a much stronger governance structure in support of employment and social protection policies and address the coordination gaps which were prevailing. As co-chairs of the GA national steering committee that oversees the development of the Global Accelerator, they are supported by six further ministers that are particularly relevant for employment creation and expansion of social protection. This helps draw greater attention to the need for employment creation, including through employment impact assessments which the government is planning to institutionalise and undertake in other priority sectors.

The national steering committee has identified two sectors, the agriculture/agri-processing sector and the biomass value chain, as key areas for potential impact, and empowered the Ministries of Agriculture and of Trade to organise inclusive roundtable discussions. Participants included ministries, institutions such as the training authority, social partners, civil society organisations, banks, and donors. Through this much more inclusive form of social dialogue, participants were able to jointly develop concrete interventions and take responsibility for accelerating progress towards employment creation and social protection expansion for just transitions. This contributed to breaking the otherwise siloed approach of working in government

LOCAL2030 COALITION



Despite the importance of local actions and solutions to global challenges and increased recognition in advancing the SDGs, local and subnational governments often face insurmountable challenges. The High Impact Initiative on Local2030 aims to accelerate all SDG transitions through three action areas: (1) advocacy, to generate a deeper understanding of the imperative of Localization to accelerate the SDG transitions; (2) action, to facilitate local implementation through technology, capacity-building, and financing; and (3) monitoring and reporting on SDG implementation at the local level, including exchange of knowledge and perspectives, SDG Voluntary Local Reviews and their linkages to national level reporting mechanisms. The initiative has established two thematic working groups, focusing on the six SDG transitions. The first working group will focus on “Localizing the six transitions” while the second will be dedicated to “financing the six transitions at the local level”.

Partners from 12 national and subnational governments are committed to supporting locally-driven actions and a large number of them have been involved in the Local2030 Coalition, either by participating in its steering committee, signing cooperation agreements, or playing a prominent role in Local2030 Coalition advocacy events. Several others have expressed an interest in engaging with the Coalition in different ways.

The Coalition has undertaken a number of initiatives since September to advance SDG localization. These have included launch of the “Local2030 Coalition Knowledge and Scientific Network” with Italy and co-organizing EU-UN Dialogues on SDG Localization. Discussions are also underway with funding institutions to collaborate on an initiative and Expert Group Meeting (EGM) to integrate the local SDG financing dimension into investments for the just, green energy transition.

To move the initiative forward, the Local2030 Coalition has partnered with the Joint SDG Fund and. thanks to the support of the Spanish government, $10 million has been committed to catalytic initiatives at the local level through a call for seed funding proposal for SDG Localization, which will be distributed to 29 UN Country Teams. There has also been advancement in the establishment of Local2030 Hubs. The Government of Egypt, with support from UN-Habitat and UNDP, is establishing a Local2030 Hub in Cairo and the Hawaii Green Growth Local2030 Hub is expanding its multi-year stakeholder engagement process through the Aloha+ Dashboard.

Impact Story:

In 2024, the Local2030 Coalition, UN-HABITAT, the Government of Italy, CeSPI ETS, and the International Network of Doctoral Schools on the SDGs launched the Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network, which aims to support the acceleration and localization of the SDGs by bridging the gap between research, data and knowledge and policy and decision-making. It does so by following an innovative approach which brings together research institutes, doctoral programs, and universities, around the theme of SDG Localization through national coalitions to produce research on local policy, develop training activities and engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships. Currently, the initiative is being piloted in two countries: Jordan and Tunisia with workshops on urbanization and local challenges taking place throughout the year as well as a policy brief expected to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2024. The Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network is creating impact at the local level by connecting the dots between academia and policymaking and by giving a space for multistakeholder collaboration in research to ensure new and innovative themes are taken into consideration at the national level and in policy spaces where they may not be so evident.



NATURE DRIVING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Nature has the power to drive economic transformation, as reflected in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by 193 parties in 2022. Based on principles of sustainable use, equity and access and benefit sharing that leave no one behind, delivery of this Framework can catalyze greater action in support of key SDGs. The High Impact Initiative on Nature focuses on assisting countries to fundamentally shift economic policymaking in favour of sustainability, resilience, risk reduction and equity. A group of champion countries committed to sustainable use of biodiversity will be launched and will demonstrate viable pathways for change for a diverse set of contexts. The initiative stands on three main pillars: (1) advocacy, (2) environmental-economic accounting frameworks, and (3) concrete action.

Since September 2023, the initiative has undertaken initial awareness raising at global, regional, and national level in some countries. Ongoing coordination with the UN system is also under way. Brazil has stepped up as a front-runner country, with strong progress in terms of government ownership, leadership, and UN coordination. The initiative is working closely with G20 stakeholders to advance the concept in the context of their work.



Impact Story:

Brazil has undertaken a process to develop a new national bioeconomy policy to be adopted in 2024 by H.E. Minister Marina Silva, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. To date, the work supporting Brazil's bioeconomy agenda has focused on technical inputs to the designing process of the National Bioeconomy Policy and Plan and to the review process of bioeconomy financing instruments. In addition to the ongoing work to develop the National Bioeconomy Policy & Plan in Brazil, Brazil has also launched the G-20 Initiative on Bioeconomy as the Chair of the G20 to promote alignment about the High-Level Principles for Bioeconomy. This initiative will elevate the political importance of bioeconomy to the G20 Member States.

POWER OF DATA

Stronger data systems are essential to good policy, and foundational to the digital transformation and improvements in public services that will accelerate progress worldwide. The Power of Data High Impact Initiative is tackling the data gap and strengthening national data systems to accelerate SDG progress. The High Impact Initiative is driving change through: (1) political leadership for new national data partnerships, (2) more and better investment from development partners from a transparent and strategic approach to financing data and statistical systems, and (3) demonstrating progress by raising the percentage of available SDG data in countries.

Since the launch of the initiative, 10 committed countries have launched national data partnerships with a clear articulation of priorities and follow-up mechanisms, five committed countries are exploring steps to launch national data partnerships in 2024, and 10 new countries are being engaged or explored based on expressed interest or opportunities identified by the co-leads.

Impact Story:

The Power of Data is on track in growing the number of national data partnerships with interest from new countries continuing to increase. National data partnerships in the Dominican Republic and Botswana have been able to unlock catalytic funds from the World Bank's Global Data Facility as a precursor to a multi-million-dollar programme to support their national data systems and to further help catalyze larger lending operations in their respective regions for national data/statistical system modernization and harmonization. Every Power of Data country is prioritizing steps to better use administrative data to fill SDG data gaps and accelerate progress on the SDGs. The Director General of the Somali National Statistics Office has committed to collecting 100% of Tier 1 SDG indicator data by 2025.





SPOTLIGHT INITITIAVE

Investing in women and girls is our greatest and most underused path to accelerate the full achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We will only achieve the Goals if every woman and every girl, everywhere, can live a life of dignity and security, free from violence. Spotlight Initiative is the world's largest effort to end violence against women and girls. Based on an independent assessment, the Initiative's approach will have prevented violence for more than 21 million women and girls by 2025, saving at least two lives a day.

A global, pooled funding instrument, Spotlight Initiative has the ambition of mobilizing $1 billion in funding by the end of 2028, in support of sixty country programmes. Spotlight Initiative has been successful in broadening the donor base, with new donors – such as Belgium and USAID – joining the Initiative. To its initial funding envelope of USD 530 million for 2017-2023, during 2023-2024, the Initiative mobilized additional financial support, with roughly USD 108 million in signed and hard pipeline contributions.

The Initiative has also supported 20+ new countries in their efforts to launch Spotlight Initiative programmes. Legacy countries (such as Uganda and Ecuador) have secured additional funding for continued Spotlight Initiative programming to further scale up efforts. 2024 has also seen the launch of new and renewed partnerships, including with the World Bank, other bilateral and multilateral entities, and private sector actors.

In 2024, Spotlight Initiative rolled out the Online Learning Centre – an interactive, how-to guide for designing and implementing comprehensive programmes to end violence against women and girls, grounded in the latest evidence and practical experiences from Spotlight Initiative's first phase. Spotlight Initiative also published a Global Compendium of Innovative and Good Practices and Lessons Learned to support the design of successor programmes.

Spotlight Initiative engaged in a yearlong co-design process with diverse civil society organizations. Led by the Initiative's Civil Society Global Reference Group, 700 civil society stakeholders from all over the world were engaged in a participatory process, generating four principles to guide the Initiative's work going forward. The co-design process has ensured a rights-based, participatory approach to programme design and partnerships, holds the initiative accountable to rights holders, and ensures its continued relevance and responsiveness to diverse communities.



Impact Story:

With Spotlight Initiative's support, the government of Jamaica established a new victim data dashboard and geographic information system (GIS), strengthening efforts to prevent and, over time, reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls. The Early Warning Awareness and Response System (EWARS) enables stakeholders, including law enforcement, to map violence hotspots, conduct risk assessments, and develop predictive analysis through heat mapping in all parishes in the country. Data collected is used to inform service providers' strategies, and the development of prevention programming across the country. This helps ensure programming is responsive and appropriately targeted to reduce the incidence (and prevalence) of violence against women and girls in Jamaica.



THE SDG STIMULUS

The SDG Stimulus addresses both short-term urgencies and the need for long term sustainable development finance. It calls for an increase in financing for sustainable development of at least $500 billion per year. It includes three areas for immediate action: (1) Tackle the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress. (2) Scale up long-term affordable financing for development by $500 billion per year. (3) Expand contingency financing to countries in need.

The SDG Stimulus aims to accelerate progress across all areas of sustainable development (sector-specific and cross-cutting) and involve both public and private actors (e.g., public development banks, private investors, philanthropies, civil society), in support of poverty reduction, climate action and equality (including gender equality), and more broadly on implementation of the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The SDG Stimulus was welcomed by UN Member States in the September 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and echoed by leaders in the Bridgetown Initiative and in the Paris Pact for People and Planet (4P). The Group of Twenty (G20) also welcomed the SG's efforts through the SDG Stimulus. Its Independent Expert Group on multilateral development bank reforms elaborated the concept, showing how scaling up international official finance by $500 billion annually, in conjunction with greater international private finance and domestic finance, can close the global SDG financing gap.

To further facilitate decision-making and global consensus on financing for development and the SDG Stimulus, the Secretary-General has convened an SDG Stimulus Leaders Group. The Leaders Group, co-chaired by H.E. Prime Minister Andrew Holness of Jamaica and H.E. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, will advocate at the highest level for equipping developing countries

with the financial resources they require to invest in the SDGs. The membership of the Leaders Group includes Heads of State and Government of Barbados, Brazil, Canada (co-chair), France, India, Italy, Jamaica (co-chair), Kenya, South Africa and Spain.

With regard to the rechannelling of special drawing rights (SDRs), the G20 achieved its target of re-channelling an initial $100 billion worth of SDRs, primarily through the IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust and Resilience and Sustainability Trust, with $108.7 billion worth of SDRs pledged to the IMF facilities. This falls short of the Stimulus target so far; however, an important milestone was achieved on SDR rechannelling through multilateral development banks (MDBs). In May 2024, the IMF officially approved mechanisms to rechannel SDRs through MDBs, with an initial cap of SDR 15 billion (~$20 billion) which could then be leveraged to increase lending by $100 billion.

Climate resilient debt clauses, which suspend debt payment in the case of disasters, have seen significant additional update from official lenders, and are now being introduced by the AfDB, the EBRD, the IADB, the World Bank, Canada, France and the UK. Six debt swap transactions have been negotiated in five countries since 2023, involving both official and private sector creditors. Yet these efforts fall far short of addressing the ongoing crisis. 50 per cent of low-income countries are at risk of, or in, debt distress, and as global interest rates remain high, debt servicing is crowding out critical SDG spending and investments.

Further information on the SDG Stimulus can be found here.



TRANSFORMING4TRADE



International trade has been an engine for development for decades. However, trade has not been inclusive. Increased inequalities are particularly evident in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), where economies reliant on one or few commodities are left highly vulnerable to shocks. These countries need support with improving productive capacities to diversify their economies. The High Impact Initiative Transforming4Trade provides political guidance for holistic, multisectoral and multiyear programmes to foster productive capacities and structural economic transformation. It operates in several inter-related economic policy areas simultaneously, with an intent to move the development model away from short-term and narrow sector-based interventions. The new approach is based on a clear identification of comparative advantages and key binding constraints to development. It blends National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments (NPCGAs), which apply the multidimensional **Productive Capacities Index,** with a careful examination of domestic policy and institutional challenges to articulate key pillars of the holistic programme.

In line with the objectives of the initiative, regional groups and Member States are increasingly adopting the paradigm shift narrative for development policy, as is the UN system. This is the case in particular for eight countries who have already adopted or are developing their holistic programmes. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) integrated the holistic approach to economic development, focusing on productive capacities development. Paragraph 7 of the document notes that “[i]n order for small island developing States to achieve sustainable development and resilient prosperity, we must assist small island developing States to diversify their economies and strengthen State and productive capacities”. The ABAS gives further attention to integrating the components of the holistic approach to economic development, including the need to prepare NPCGAs and implement Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes to help SIDS advance on their structural transformation path.



Impact Story:

In December 2023, UNCTAD completed the implementation of the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme “Train for Trade II” in Angola, as part of the Transforming4Trade High Impact Initiative. The initiative advocates for innovative policy approaches to stimulate economic development, with a specific emphasis on enhancing countries’ productive capacities and achieving structural economic transformation through evidence-based and sustained policy implementation.

Read more about the impact of Transforming4Trade and its work in Angola in the February 2024 special edition of **African Renewal**



TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Securing equitable access to quality and relevant education and lifelong learning for all is central to achieving progress across the SDGs. The twin crises in education –one of equity and access and one of quality and relevance –compounded by a lack of adequate financing, are having dramatic consequences for learners worldwide, especially the most vulnerable.

At the Transforming Education Summit (TES) in 2022, countries and partners came together to tackle this crisis and generate new momentum for action. The Transforming Education High Impact Initiative aims to help drive that action forward through (1) highlighting and advocating for political leadership; (2) accelerating ongoing work on education financing and strengthen global support for developing countries; and (3) strengthening global support for movements of youth groups, teachers, civil society, and others to advocate for transforming education at the national, regional, and global levels.

UNESCO and UNICEF, working with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, have pushed for further discussions on improving education finance in global fora including the World Bank/IMF annual meetings (Fall 2023) as well as at the Leaders' Meeting of the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee (Spring 2024). These discussions have focused on expanding fiscal space for governments through tax reform as well as addressing debt burdens for low-income countries.

TES initiatives have continued to develop products and outputs. The TES Stocktake was conducted in Paris under the auspices of the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee, hosted by UNESCO, in June 2024. The stocktake covered progress made since the Transforming Education Summit in 2022 and

kickstarted a series of high-level meetings to determine the state of play two years after the Transforming Education Summit (2022). This includes a high-level meeting convened by the Secretary-General on the sidelines of the HLPF in July 2024, and the Global Education Meeting in November 2024. The next step is to accelerate adoption of tools and products by countries.

A shortlist of ten member states is in the process of being identified in collaboration with partners to be supported through the Joint SDG Fund on education initiatives.



Co-leads, partners and participating Member States:

The **Digital Public Infrastructure** Initiative is coordinated by UNDP and ITU. | *Institutional partners*: Agence Francaise de Developpement, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure, CivicData Lab, Climate Action Data Trust, Co-Develop, DataKind, Digital Cooperation Organization, Digital Impact Alliance Digital Public Goods Alliance, EkStep Foundation, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Space Agency, Inter-American Development Bank, International Emissions Trading Association, International Science Council, Linux Foundation, Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, Open Society Foundations, PATH Digital Square, Radiant Earth, UNEP, UNFCCC, UN Foundation, UNICEF, USAID, Wellcome Trust, World Bank Group, World Resources Institute. | *Donor partners:* European Union, Finland, Norway, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Co-Develop, Rockefeller Foundation | *Implementing countries:* Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Namibia, Nigeria, Norway, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, Uruguay, Vietnam, Zambia. | *Contacts:* Keyzom Ngodup (kezyom.ngodup@undp.org) and Carolina Anselmino (carolina.anselmino@itu.int)

Support to the initiative on **Energy Compacts** is provided by UN DESA as the Secretariat of UN-Energy in collaboration with Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) in collaboration with UN-Energy members and partners. | *Country champions:* Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Panama, Nauru, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of American, Zambia | *Contact:* Minoru Takada (takada@un.org)

Food Systems Transformation is supported by FAO, IFAD, UNEP, UNDCO, UNIDO, WFP, WHO and the World Bank Group | *Contact:* Maximo Torero (Chief-Economist@fao.org)

FutureGov is co-led by UNDP and UN DESA | *Institutional partners:* World Bank Group | *Contacts:* Wai Min Kwok (kwok@un.org), Patrick Duong (Patrick.duong@undp.org)

Co-leads, partners and participating Member States (continued):

Global Accelerator is led by ILO | *Institutional partners:* FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, World Bank and World Food Programme | *Champions/donors:* Belgium, France, Germany, Republic of Korea, Spain. | *Pathfinder countries:* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Malawi, Namibia, Nepal, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam | *Contacts*: schmittv@ilo.org; kleinj@ilo.org; brachtendorf@ilo.org

The **Local2030** Coalition is co-led by UN-Habitat, UNDP and FAO | *Institutional partners:* ESCAP, IOM, OECD, UNDESA, UNECE, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, USAID, WHO, UN Joint SDG Fund, Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, Hawai'i Green Growth Hub, Liverpool 2030Hub, Parana Hub, and Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network | *Country Donors:* Italy, Spain| *Implementing countries:* Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Sweden | *Contact:* Francine Melchioretto, francine.melchioretto@un.org

Nature Driving Economic Transformation is led by UNEP in collaboration with FAO, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNDP, UNDRR, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, WFP and WIPO. | *Implementing countries:* Brazil and Indonesia | *Contacts:* Doreen L. Robinson doreen.robinson@un.org, Mara Angelica Murillo Correa murillom@un.org

Power of Data is co-led by UNDP, UNFPA, UNDESA, UNICEF, CCS-UN, the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data | The UN Regional Economic Commissions are engaged to facilitate political engagement, advocacy and coordination at the regional level. | Donor countries: UK | *Implementing countries:* Bangladesh, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Paraguay, Rwanda, Somalia, Togo, Uruguay | *Contact:* Jenna Slotin, jslotin@data4sdgs.org

Co-leads, partners and participating Member States (continued):

Spotlight Initiative is implemented by multiple *UN agencies* working in partnership: UN-Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, PAHO/WHO, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNODC, UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. | Implementation has also been supported by the following *institutional partners*: ECLAC, FAO, OCHA, UNAIDS, UNIC, WFP, UN Global Pulse and the World Bank. | *Donor partners:* European Union, Belgium, USAID, Portugal and Albania. | In 2024, Uganda, Ecuador, Sierra Leone, and Liberia are Spotlight Initiative *"country champions"*. | *Contact:* Andrew Billo (Andrew.bilo@un.org)

The SDG Stimulus: Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, support to the SDG Stimulus is provided by UNDESA, UNCTAD and UNDP | Contact: Oliver Schwank, schwank@un.org

The **Transforming Education** initiative is coordinated by UNESCO, UNICEF and ILO working with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General | *Contact:* Asif Saeed Memon (asif.memon@un.org)

Transforming4Trade is *co-led* by UNIDO and UN DESA | *Champions/donors:* European Union, China through the 230 Agenda Sub-Fund | *Member State partners/implementers:* Angola, [Forthcoming: Kenya, Zambia, Ethiopia] | *Contact:* Johanna Silvander, johanna.silvander@un.org





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