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2025 Executive Training Course for Policymakers on
the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Accelerating Synergies for Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Climate Action

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March 18, 2025

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I. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR)

Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030): 2030 Agenda

Universal, Indivisible, and Integrated Implementation

Global Sustainable Development Report Every 4 Years: 2019, 2023

- Independent Group of Scientists (IGS) appointed by the UN Secretary General (SG)
- Assessment of SDGs based on Scientific Evidence and Science-Policy Interface
- Policy Recommendations to the UN SG & Member States

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II. Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019

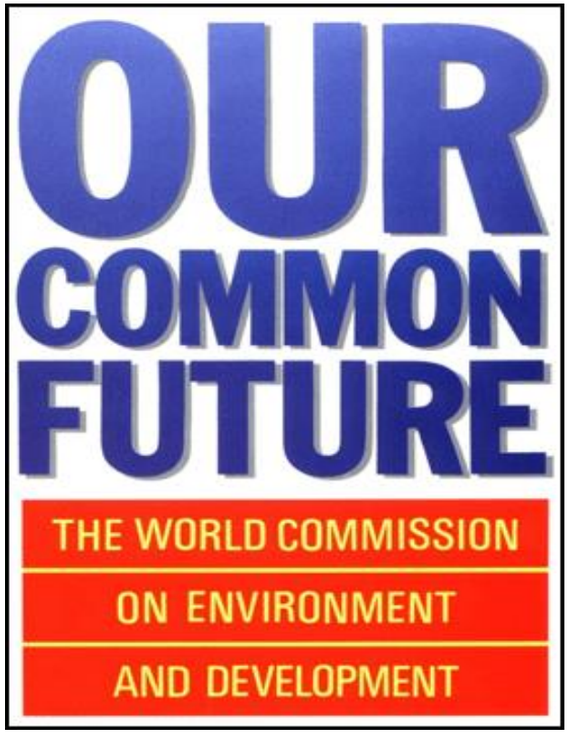
Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019

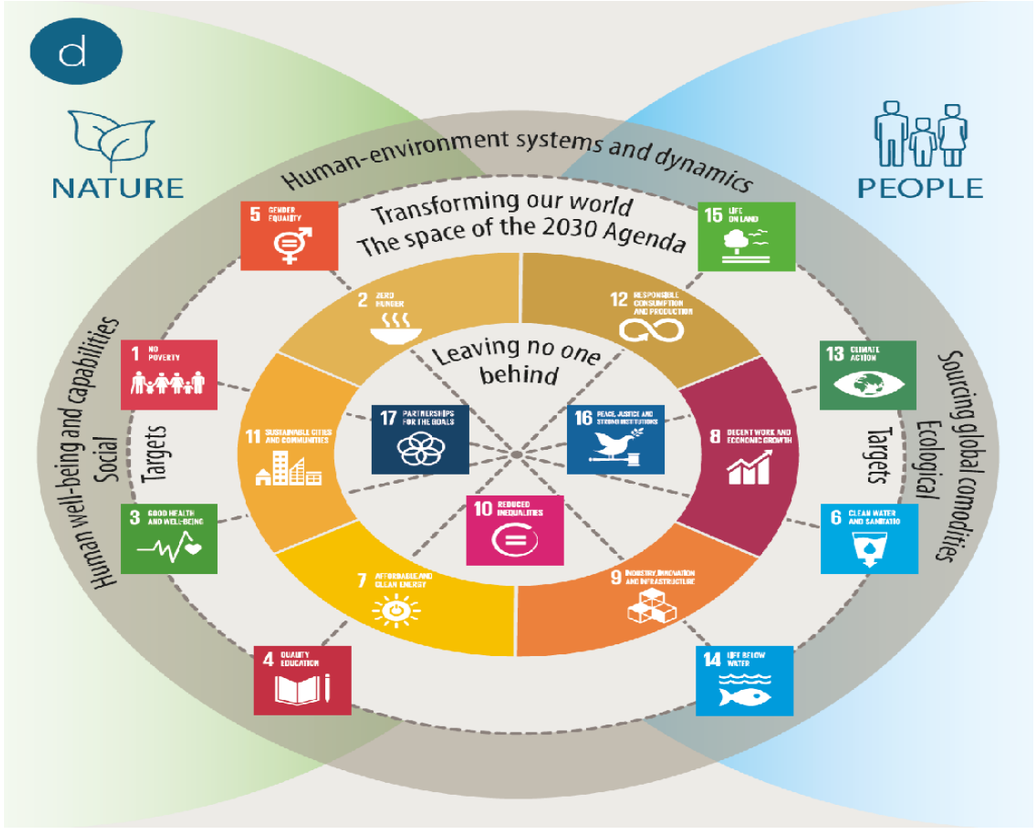
The Future is Now: Science for Achieving Sustainable Development

Inspiration for GSDR

The Brundtland Report (*Our Common Future*) 1987

Sustainable Development: Reconciling the Economy and the Environment





2019 GSDR

Transformation for Sustainable Development:

- **Integrated Approach**
- **Tough Choices**
- **Intentional Efforts**

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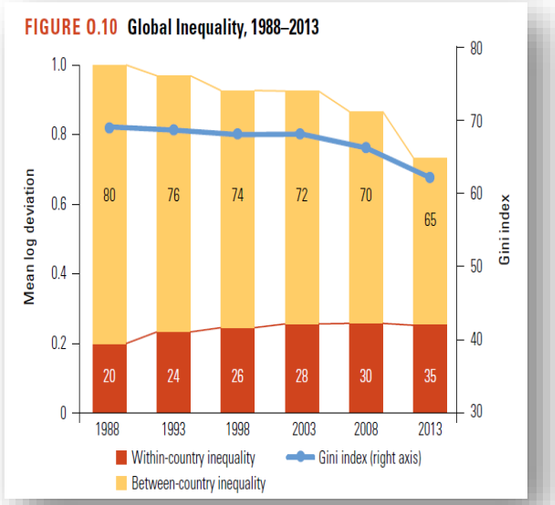
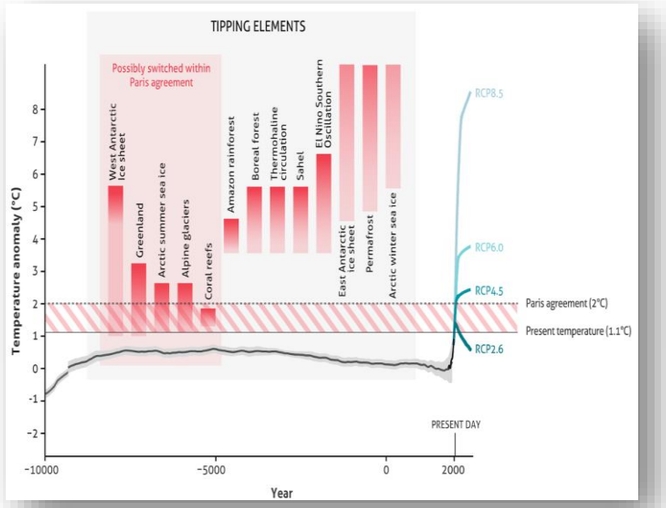
2019: SDGs' Implementation Going Backwards

Rising Inequalities



World Bank, 2016

Climate Change



Future Earth, 2017, based on Schellnhuber et al. 2016

Biodiversity Loss

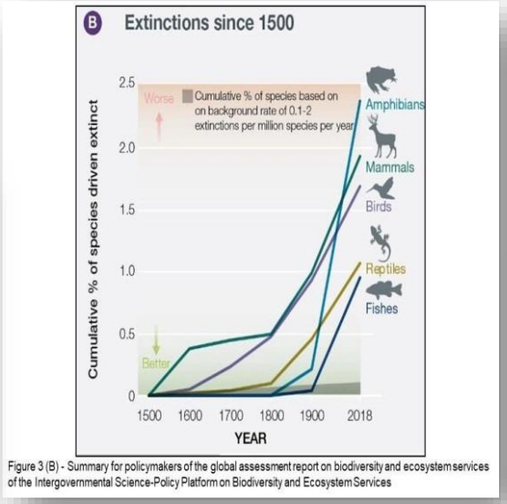


Figure 3 (B) - Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

IPBES, 2019

Ecological Footprint

OECD, 2023

Source: UN, 2019, *Global Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*

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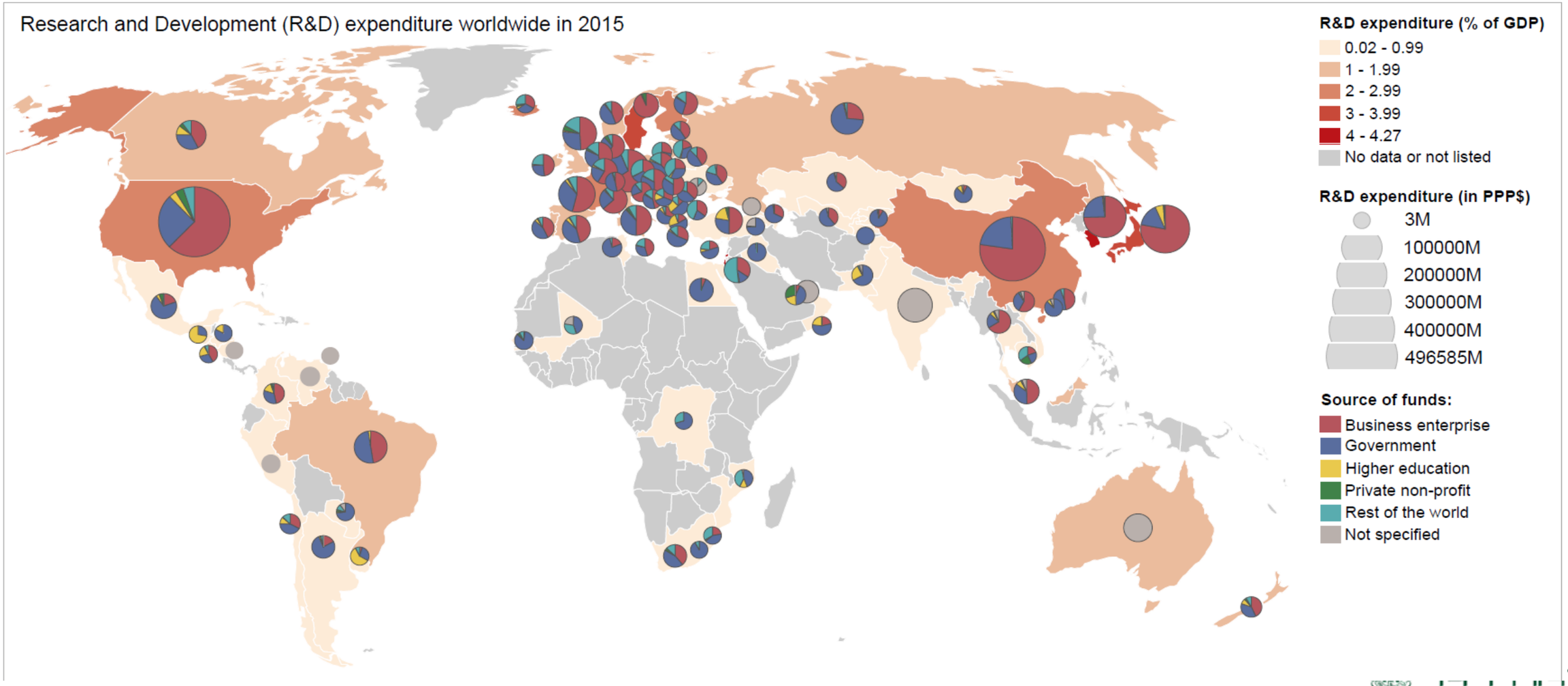
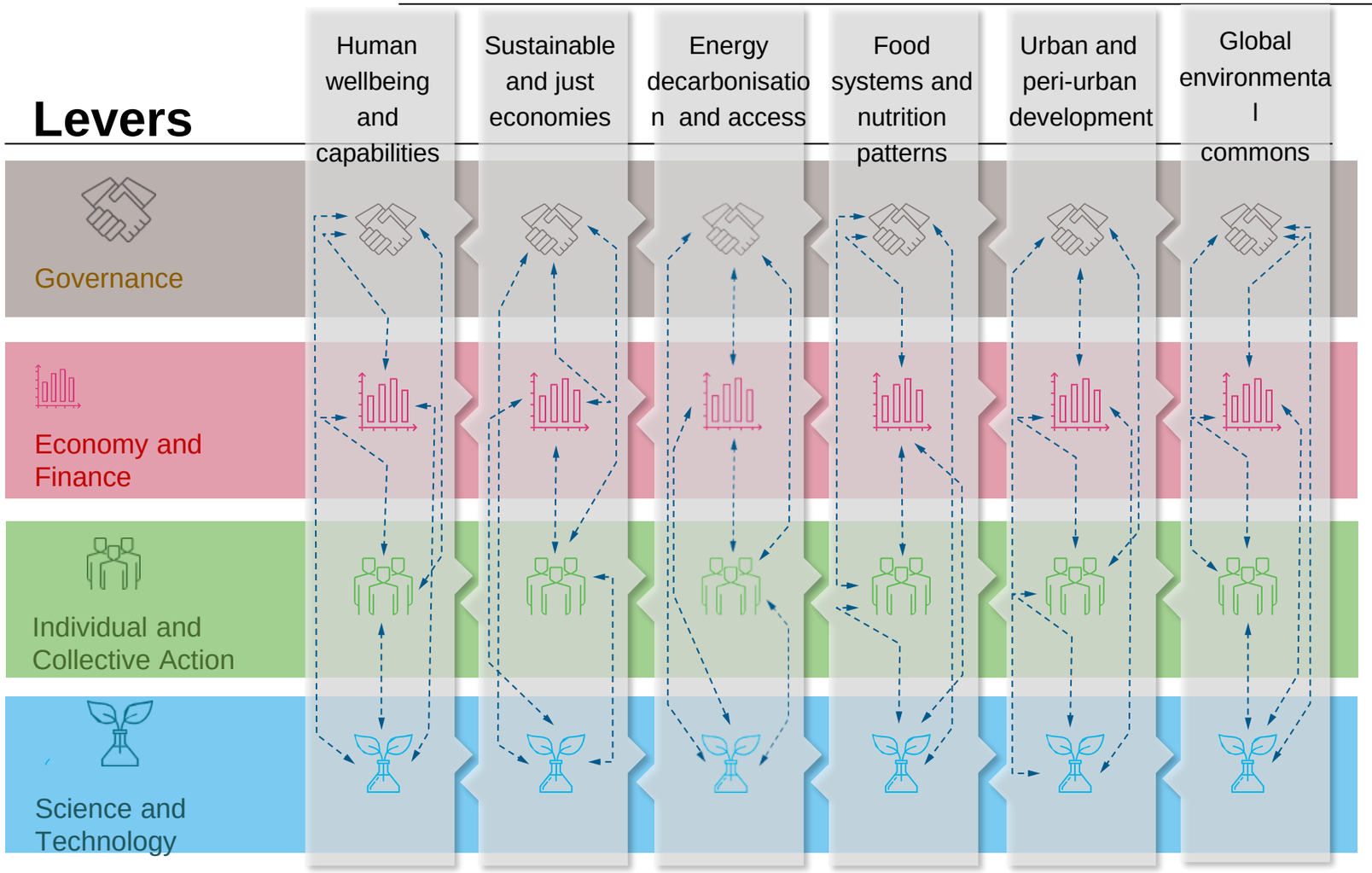
R&D Gap in the Global North vs. the Global South



Systemic Approach for Sustainable Development

Entry Points for Transformation



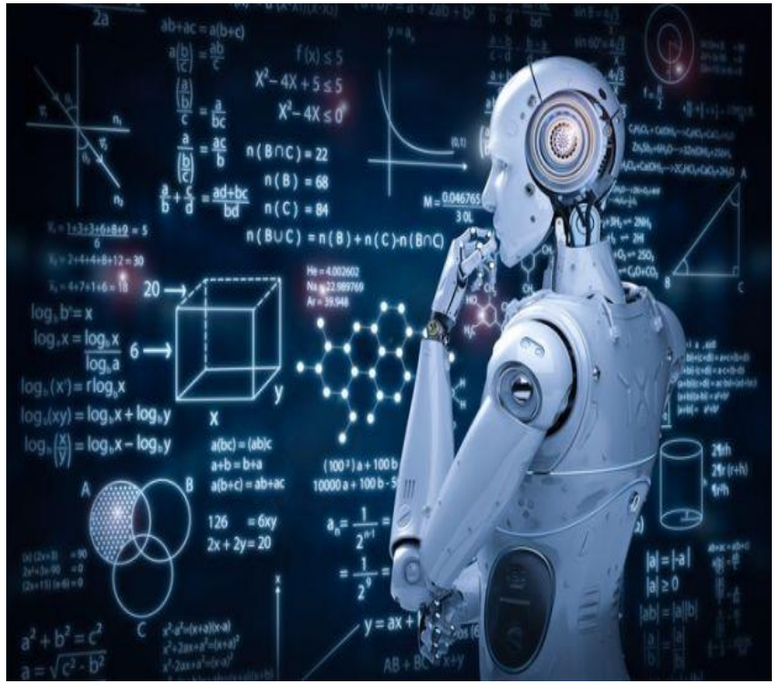
- Six Systems for an Integrated Approach to SDGs Implementation
- Asia's and South Korea's strengths: Human capacity and capability - Education
- Examples of excellent practices in implementing the SDGs in Asia: SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10

III. Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023

Times of Crisis, Times of Change: Science for Accelerating Transformations to Sustainable Development

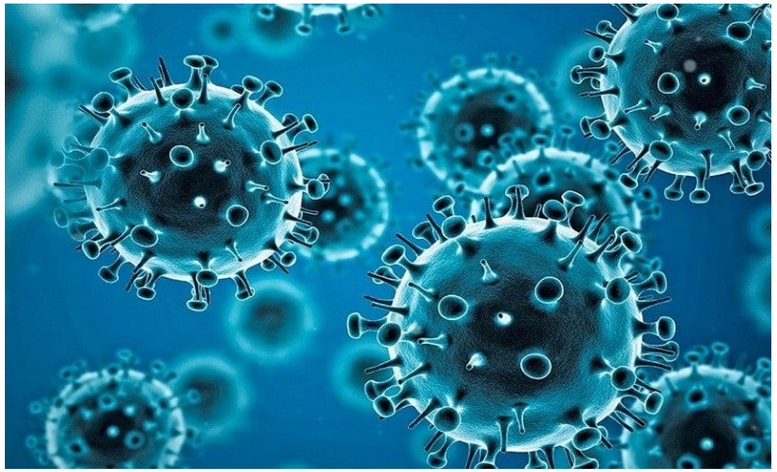
1. Major Global Changes between 2019 and 2023

Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Transformation)



Climate Change → Climate Crisis

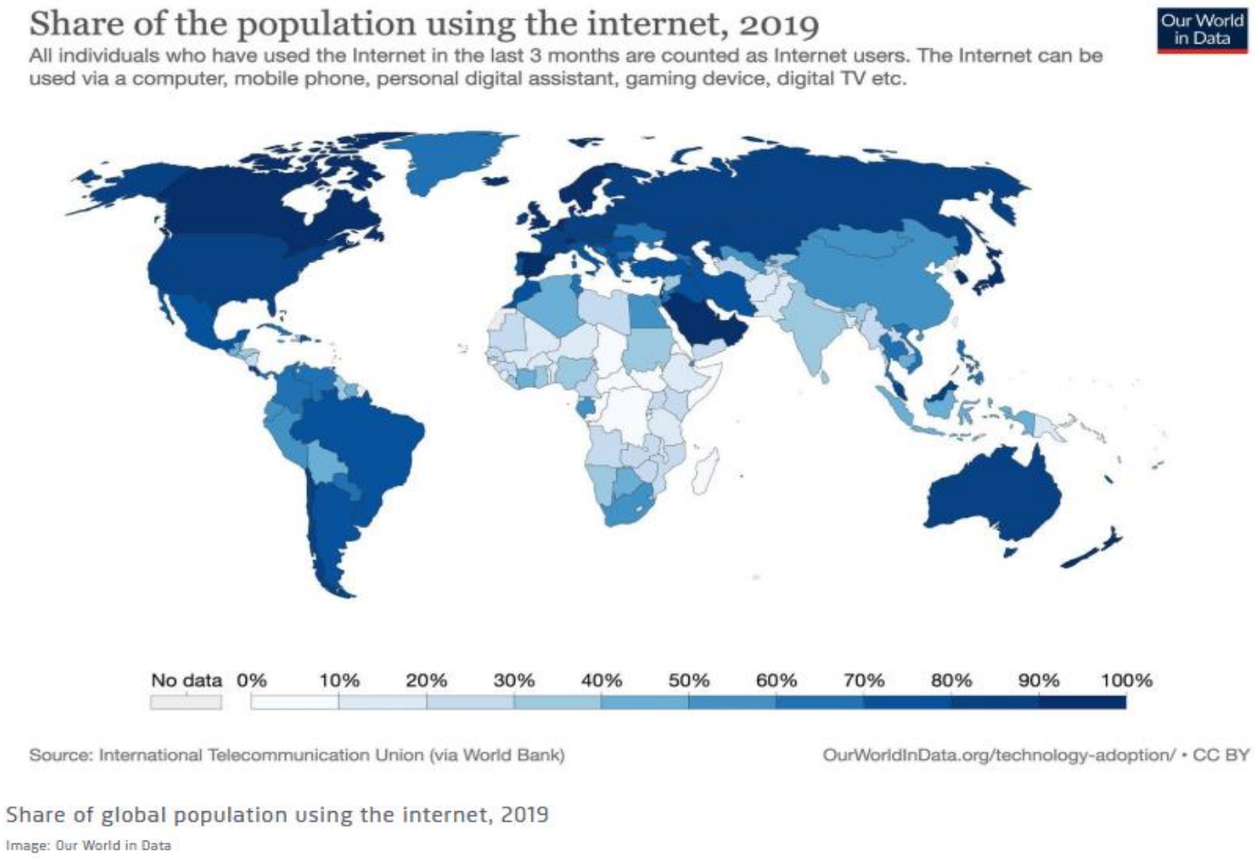
COVID-19 Pandemic



Wars & Conflict

(1) Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Transformation)

Digital Gap Widened between the Global North and the Global South



Share of global population using the internet, 2019

Image: Our World in Data

Source: Our World in Data (2019)

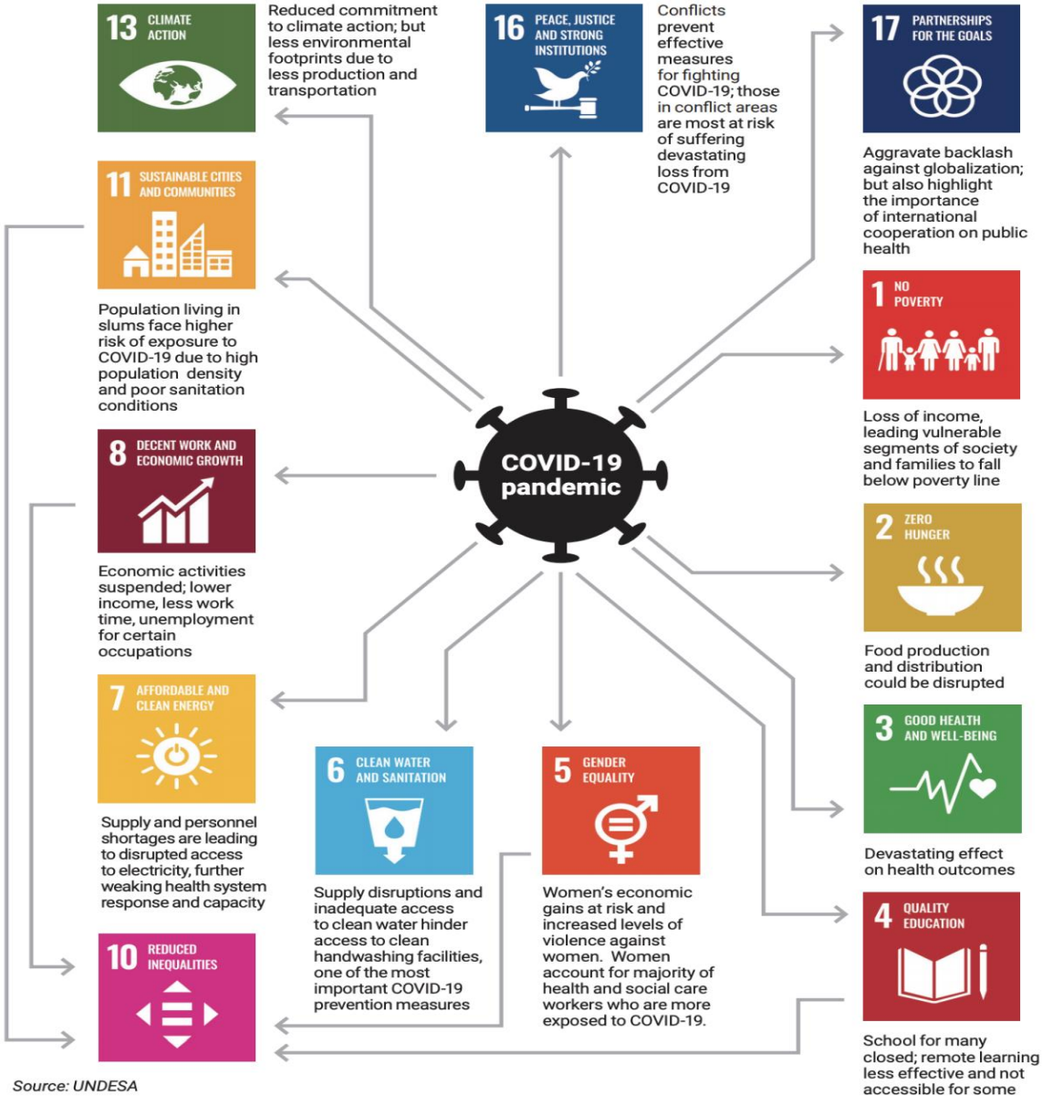
- Customer Interactions that are Digital: 2008 20%, 2019 38%, 2020 58% (McKinsey & Co.)
- **Internet Access Gap**:
  - North America, Western Europe, and parts of East Asia (such as Japan and South Korea) exhibit the highest internet usage, with rates close to or exceeding 90%
  - Large parts of Africa, particularly in Central and West Africa, as well as some regions in South Asia, show low internet penetration, often below 30%
- **Internet Connectivity**: Became less affordable in 2021 due to decrease in income. Affects developing countries more due to greater economic vulnerability.

(2) COVID-19 Pandemic

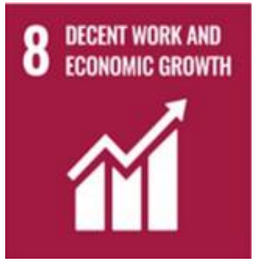
- ❖ **COVID-19 pandemic has reversed the progress of SDGs**
- ❖ **Increased the financial burden for SDGs implementation**
- ❖ **Gender Gap has exacerbated**
- ❖ **Health inequality has exacerbated**
- ❖ **Extreme poverty has increased for the first time since the 1990s**

- **The most vulnerable have been hit the hardest** including women, children, the elderly, and informal workers.

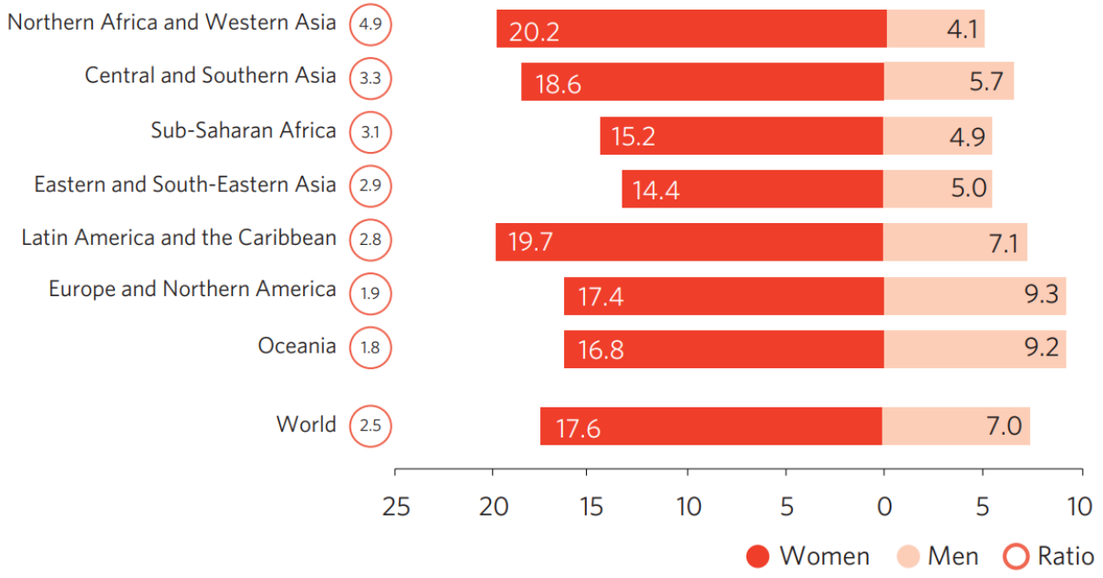
Source: UN (2020)



Gender Gap Exacerbated



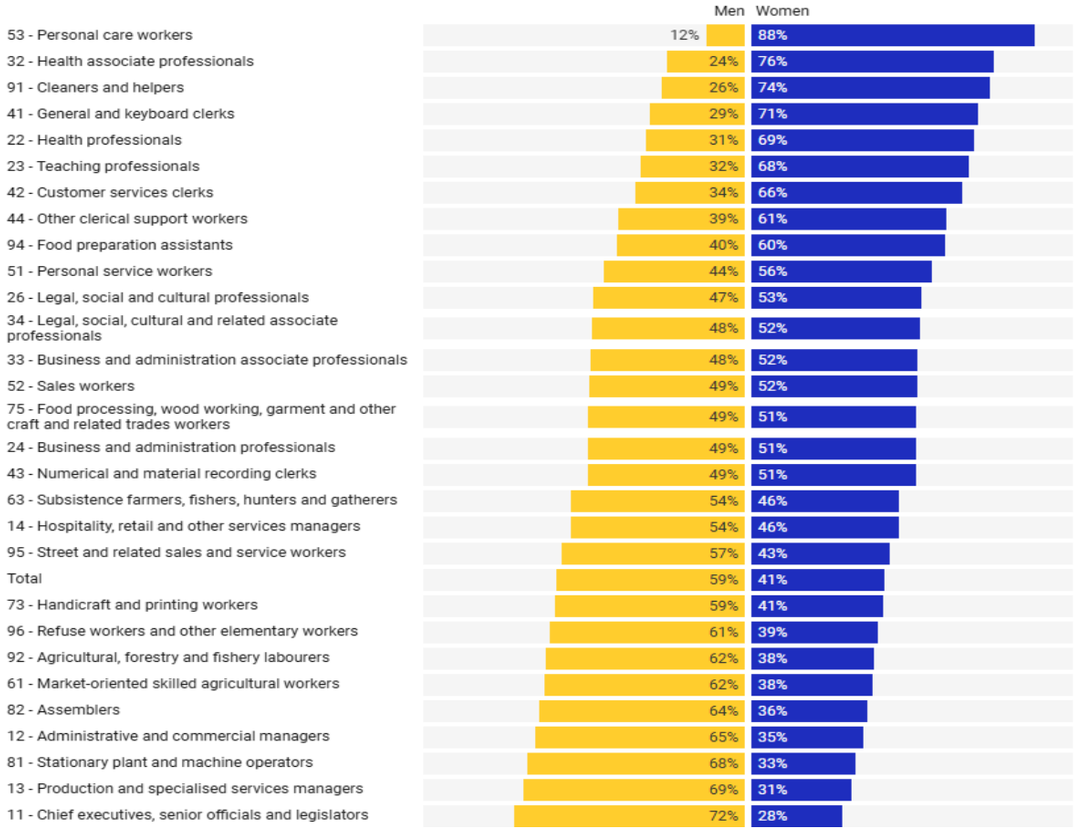
Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex (percentage) and ratio between women and men (bubbles), 2000–2022



Source: UN (2024)

Occupations by gender

Percent of employment by sex and occupation (ISCO-08 at the 2-digit level), weighted average for 121 countries using the latest year available

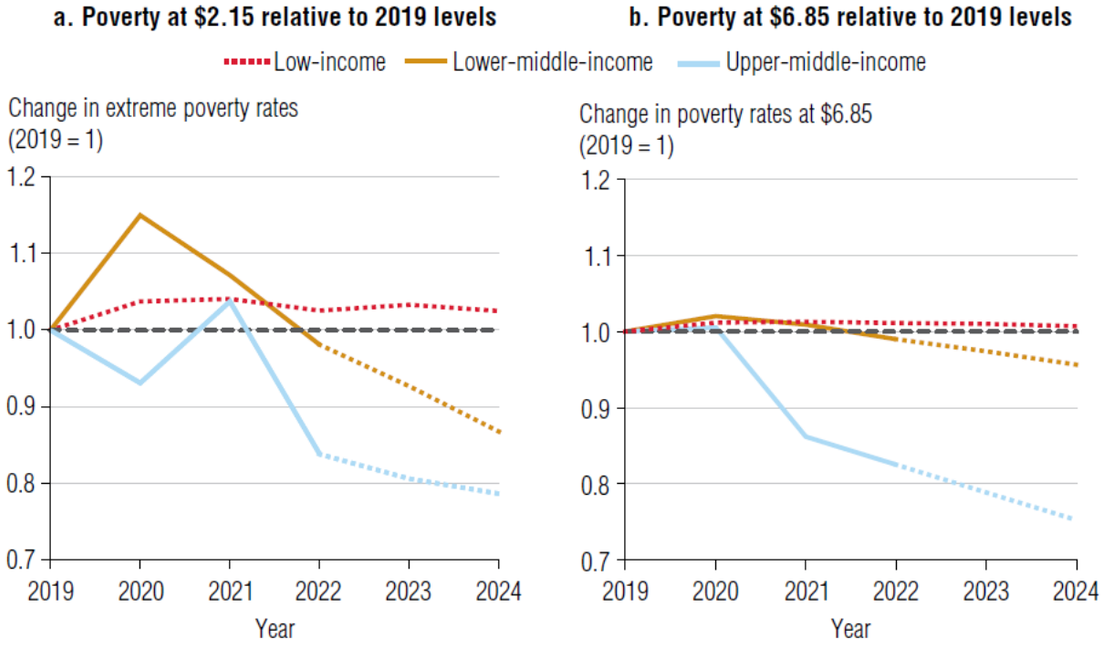


Source: ILOSTAT. https://ilostat.ilo.org/blog/these-occupations-are-dominated-by-women/#:~:text=By%20far%20the%20most%20female,female%20compared%20to%2012%25%20male

Extreme Poverty and Health Inequality Exacerbated

Global Extreme Poverty Rate Increased in 2020 for the first time since the 1990s

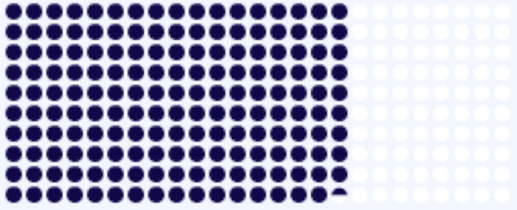
Extreme poverty is still above prepandemic levels in low-income countries



Source: World Bank, Poverty and Inequality Platform (version September 2024), https://pip.worldbank.org.

Health Inequality Increased: Vaccine Access and Vaccine Affordability

High income countries: 1 in 1 people, or



67.92%

have been vaccinated with at least one dose as of Feb 2, 2022.

WHO

Low income countries: 1 in 9 people, or

11.67%

have been vaccinated with at least one dose as of Feb 2, 2022.

WHO

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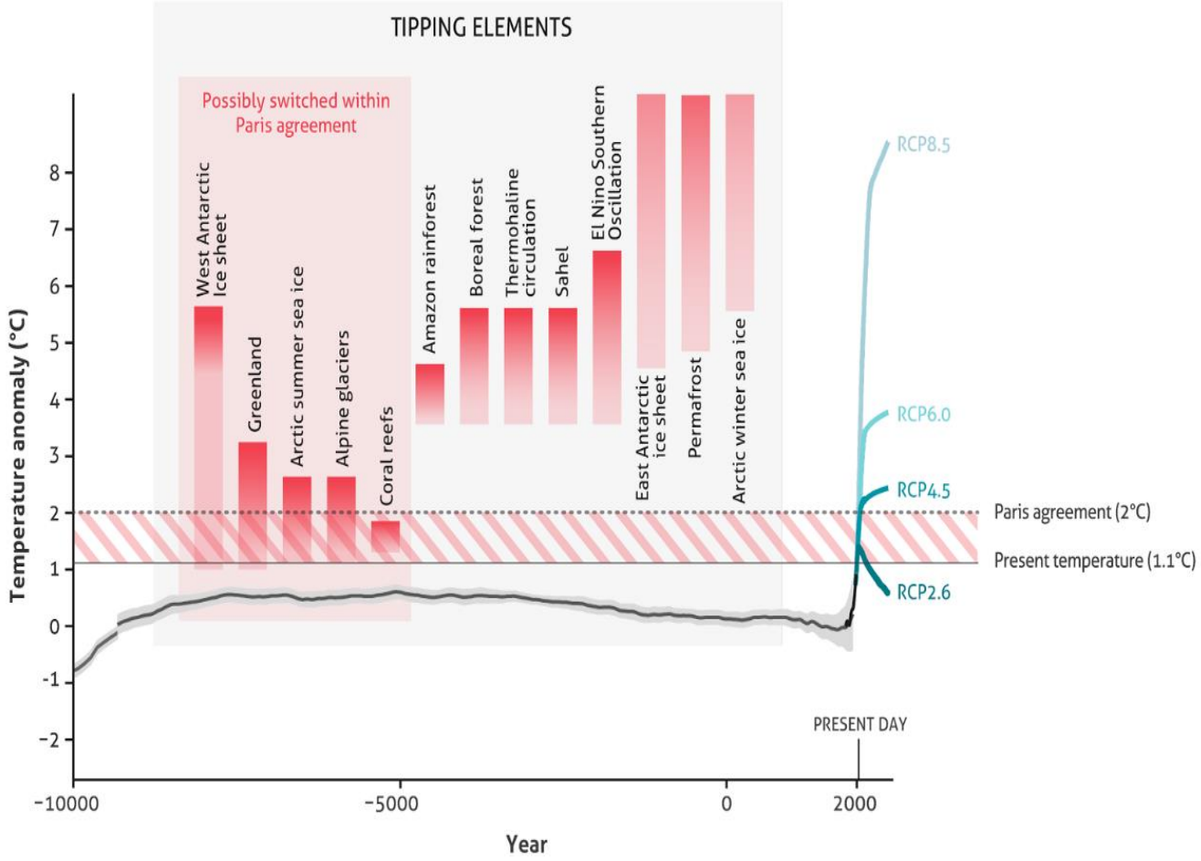
(3) Climate Change ➔ Climate Crisis

- Global average temperature rose at least 1°C (vs. pre-industrial times)
- Predicts 3℃ increase by 2100
- Increase of natural disasters due to extreme weather
- Growing vulnerability to food and water security
- Climate change is expected to reduce global economic growth by 11-14% by 2050



Sources: UN (2017) “The Climate Crisis – A Race We Can Win” https://www.un.org/en/un75/climate-crisis-race-we-can-win; Swiss Re Institute (2021) “The Economics of Climate Change” https://www.swissre.com/institute/research/topics-and-risk-dialogues/climate-and-natural-catastrophe-risk/expertise-publication-economics-of-climate-change.html

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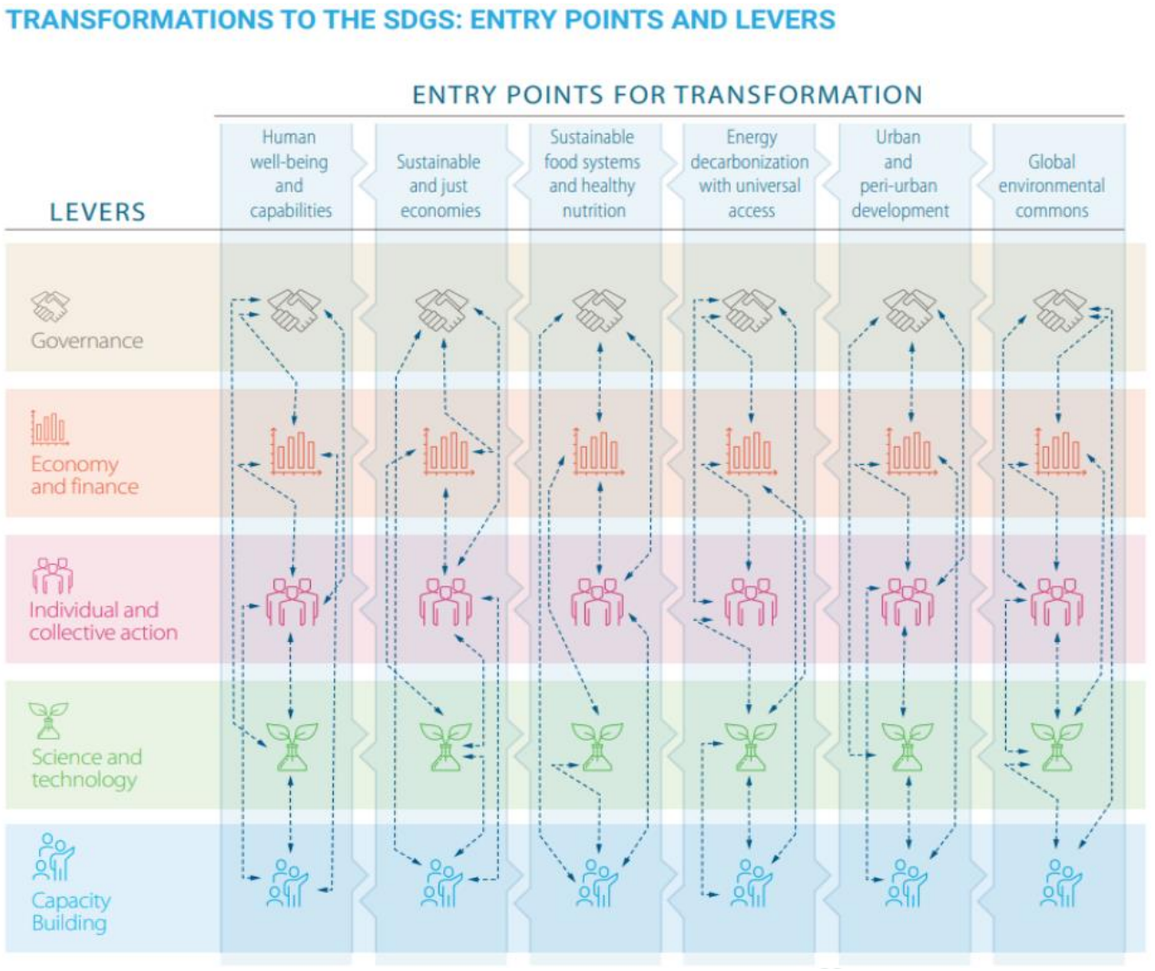
2. Lessons from GSDR 2023

(1) From 2019: Integrated and Coherent Approach to Transformation

Entry Points and Levers for Transformation:

- Take an integrated and coherent approach to implementation to ensure that interventions target priority entry points for systems change
- Trade-offs are managed, and synergies are harnessed

- Entry Points for Transformation: (1) Governance, (2) Economy/Finance, (3) Science and Technology, (4) Individual and Collective Action, **[Newly Added] (5) Capacity Building**



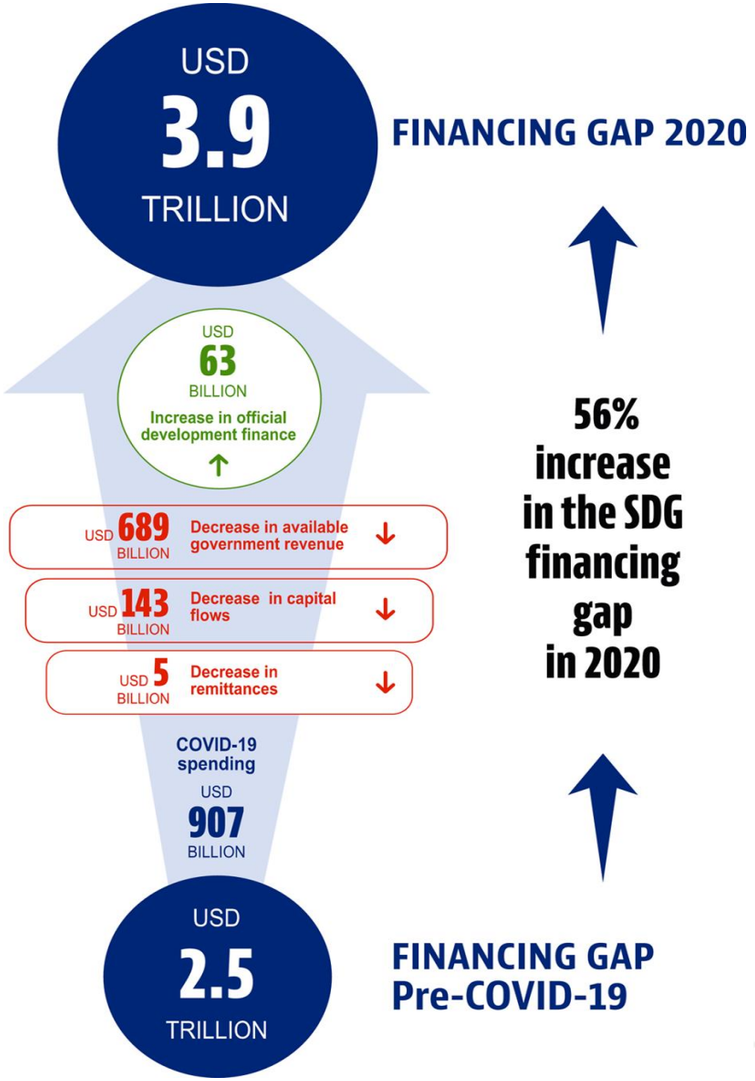
Source: UN (2023) "Global Sustainable Development Report 2023"

(2) Financing for SDGs: Need Innovation, Inclusion, and Partnership

- **SDGs Financing Gap** has increased by 56% due to the pandemic (USD 2.5 trillion) ➔ USD 3.9 trillion (2020)

Next Steps for Financing SDGs:

- Governments, multilateral development banks, private finance, philanthropists and others must support the **piloting, prototyping and commercialization of new knowledge**
- Establish strong mechanisms for **knowledge sharing** to address global challenges
- Invest in **empirical research**
- Ensure access to **science-based solutions**
- **SDGs bonds** to **support developing countries**



Source: UN (2023) "Global Sustainable Development Report 2023"

Source: OECD (2022)

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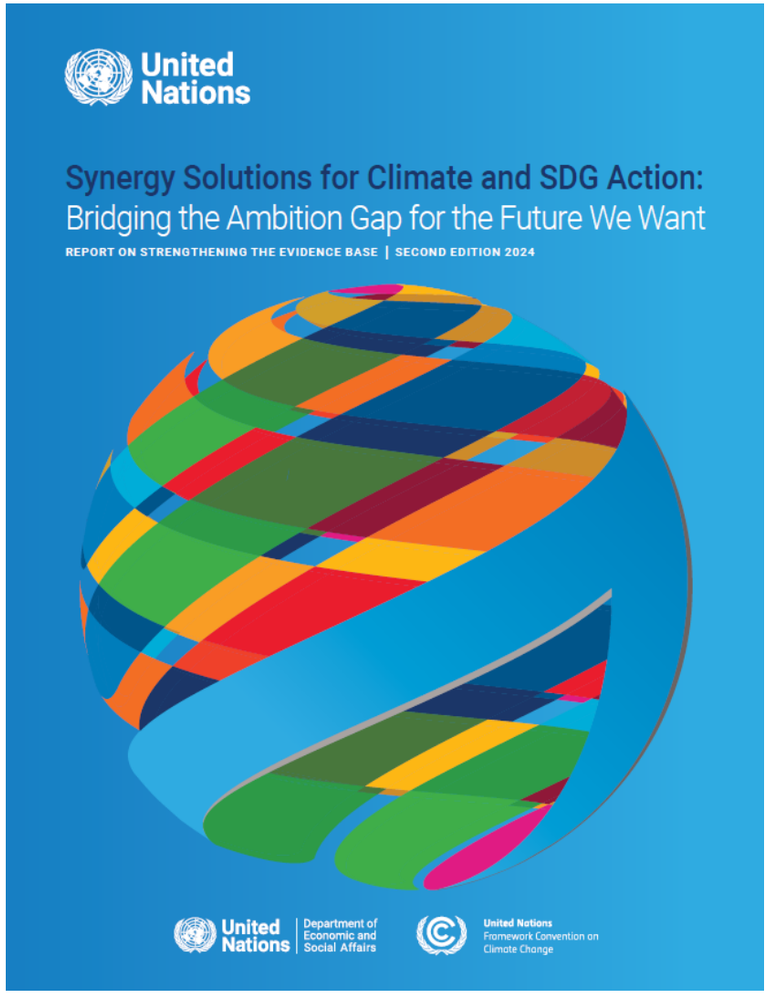
3. GSDR 2023 Call to Action

1. 2019 ➔ 2023: Pandemic, Climate Change, War, Global Inequality on the Rise
2. Broader multilateral cooperation and actions at all levels are needed
3. Science and technology for SDGs
4. Evidence-based policy and decision-making have become critical more than ever
5. Economic assistance and capacity building for the Global South are needed to achieve the SDGs **to mitigate the effects of Climate Change**, and **to better prepare for the next Pandemic: Official Development Assistance (ODA), Human Capacity Building (Higher Education), and Global Public Health are needed for the Global South**

IV. Synergies for Integrated SDGs and Climate Action

2024 Report: *Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want*



1. **Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy**: UNDESA and UNFCCC co-convened an expert group; prepare a report building the evidence base for how action tackling both the climate emergency and sustainable development can be a win-win solution.
2. **2023 Report**: ***Harnessing Climate and SDGs Synergies***

"We live in a world increasingly affected by climate change, and if we fail to take decisive measures, the temperature rise will continue and soon exceed the **Paris Agreement** targets of 1.5°C and even 2°C. It becomes ever less useful to talk about development plans and climate policies in a vacuum. The objectives of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals must be the hinge of all climate change policies and plans. Linking the two agendas of climate action and sustainable development is imperative." Link **Paris Agreement** on Climate Change & **SDGs**

3. **2024 Report**: Based on 4 thematic areas of financial systems, policy frameworks, cities, and knowledge and data.
4. **Roadmap for Transformation**: Roadmap to reduce fragmentation and achieve transformative changes needed for Climate & SDGs Action

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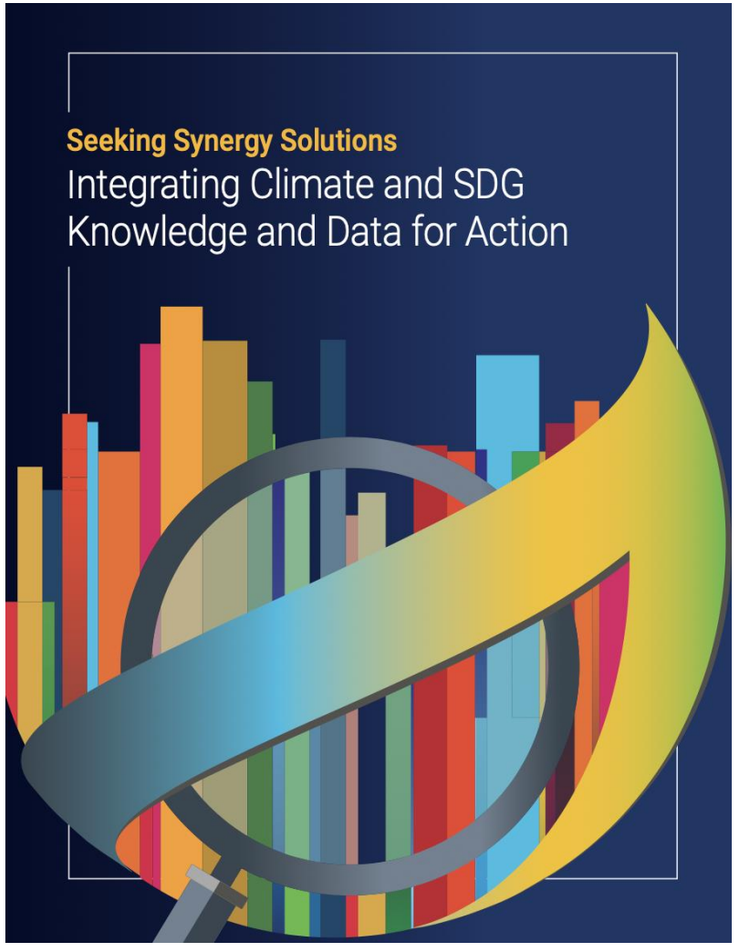
Source: UN (2024)

2024 Report and the Four Thematic Reports

Source: UN (2024)

1. Thematic Report on Knowledge and Data for Action



1. **Challenges to Integration:** **Fragmented institutions**, **financing** issues, and **data gaps** weaken policy linkages between climate action and the SDGs.

2. **Role of Knowledge & Data:** **Knowledge and data** are essential for analyzing synergies, engaging stakeholders, and linking national commitments to local action.

3. **Path to Solutions:** Integration requires **inclusive data, policy tools, risk assessment**, and **embedding climate considerations** in global decision-making.

Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: Integrating Climate and SDG Knowledge and Data for Action”

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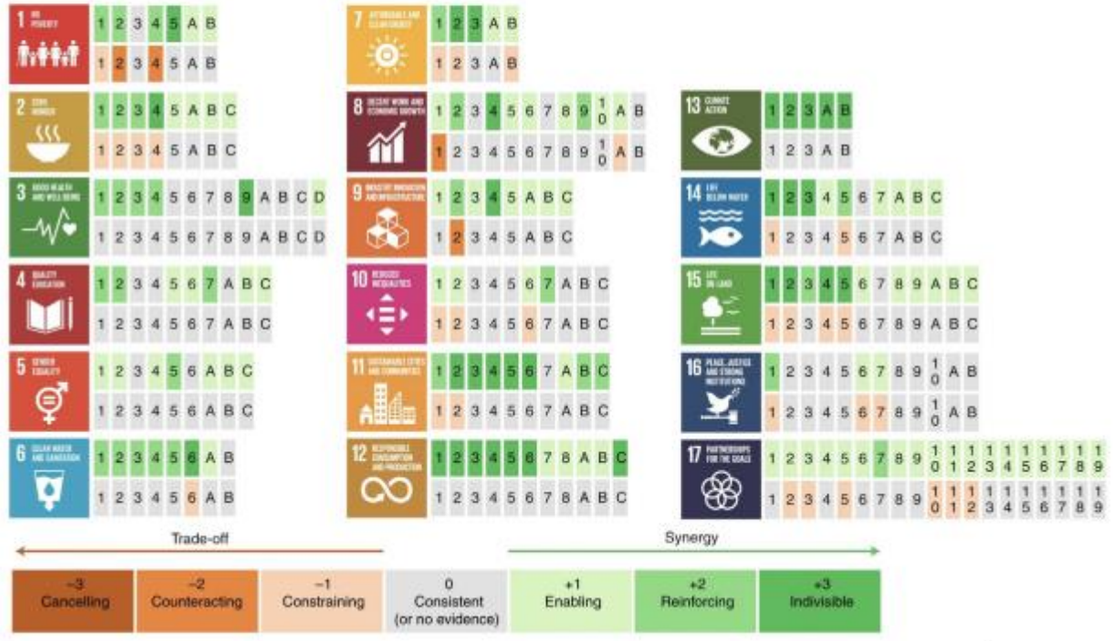
FIGURE 5. Positive synergies (co-benefits) and trade-offs between climate action and the SDG targets. Each rectangle to the right of the relevant SDG represents a Target. The highlighting represents the strength of an interaction, while its absence indicates the absence of identified evidence, which may not necessarily imply the absence of an interlinkage. As illustrated above, there is still little evidence of the impacts of climate on many targets, particularly regarding trade-offs.



Source: Fuso Nerini *et al.*, 2019.

- **Research Gaps:** There is a lack of research, quality data, and comprehensive indicators **across sectors**.
- **Co-benefits vs. Trade-offs:** While co-benefits are well-known, **managing trade-offs between policy goals is less understood**.
- **Focus Areas:** Existing research mainly covers broad SDG interactions and climate impacts, with **significant gaps in sector-specific understanding**.
- **Need for More Knowledge:** **Additional data and research** are crucial to clarify synergies and address institutional, financial, and sectoral challenges.

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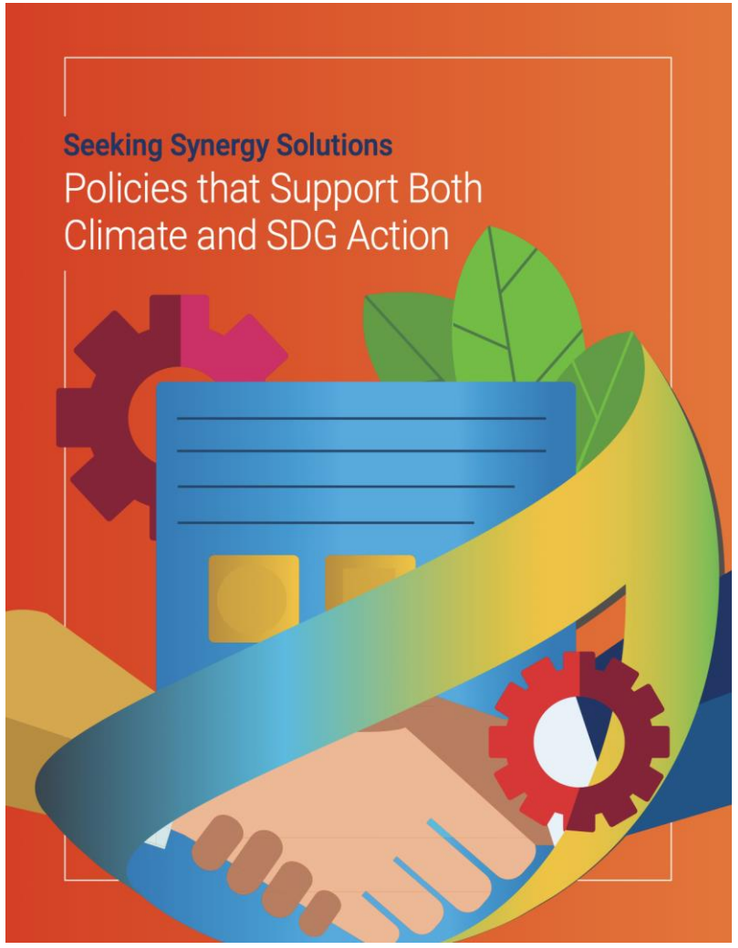
Source: UN (2024) "Seeking Synergy Solutions: Integrating Climate and SDG Knowledge and Data for Action"

2. Thematic Report on Policies Supporting Climate and SDG Action



1. **Global Achievements at Risk:** Failure to implement the SDGs and Paris Agreement threatens hard-won progress.

2. **Need for Policy Synergies:** Governments must explore synergies between climate and sustainable development policies.

3. **Contextual Approach:** Translating synergies into policies requires consideration of **national contexts** and **constraints**.

4. **Coherent Climate Action:** The international community must **align Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), SDGs,** and **domestic policies** to prevent fragmentation and enhance ambition.

Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: Policies that Support Both Climate and SDG Action”

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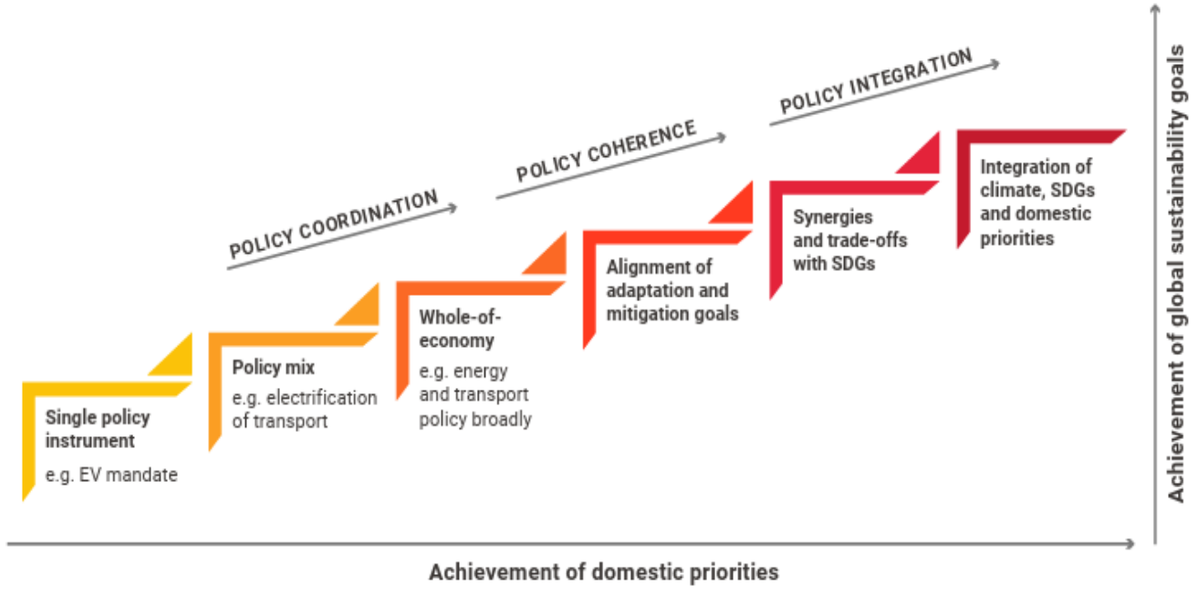
FIGURE 4. Policy processes for synergistic action



- **Context-Dependent Synergies: Identifying and implementing synergies varies by national context**, with factors like income, vulnerability, and climate risks influencing the focus on different SDGs and targets.

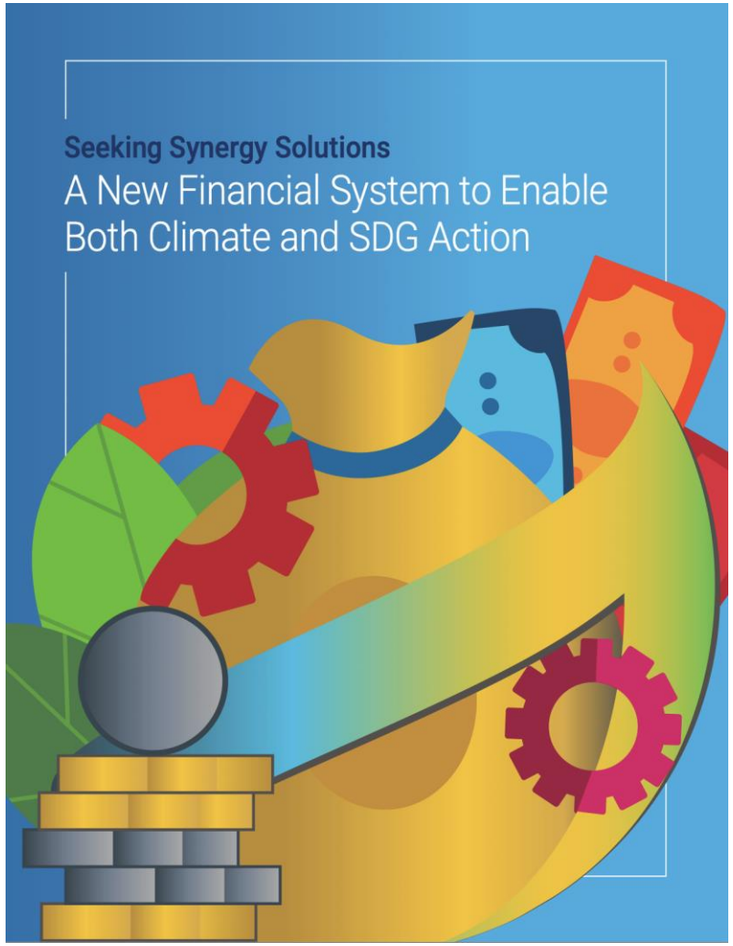
- **Universal Policy Process:** Despite differences, synergistic actions—**coordination, coherence, and integration**—are priorities for all governments committed to the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

- **Policy Coordination:** Effective policy formulation requires both **vertical** and **horizontal coordination** across **ministries, departments, civil society,** and **affected communities**.

- **Policy Coherence:** Ensuring coherence **within** and **between ministries** is crucial for addressing complex policy interactions and making strategic decisions.

Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: Policies that Support Both Climate and SDG Action”

3. Thematic Report on Financial System to Enable Climate and SDG Action



1. **Finance for Climate & Development:** Climate and development finance have been central to negotiations but have often been addressed separately, highlighting the need for **integrated national investment plans** and **new finance models**.

2. **Optimizing Resources:** **Strategic synergies** can help optimize resource allocation to **bridge gaps** in **planning, financing, institutions, capacity,** and **other financial constraints**.

3. **Financial Architecture Reforms:** In response to evolving challenges, new initiatives are emerging to support climate and development synergies, with a focus on ensuring **greater equity for poorer developing countries**.

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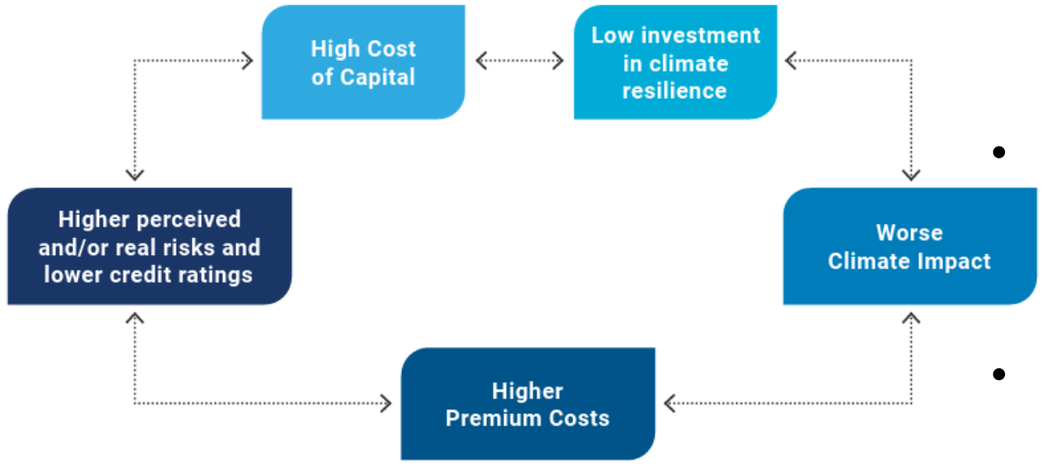
Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: A New Financial System to Enable Both Climate and SDG Action”

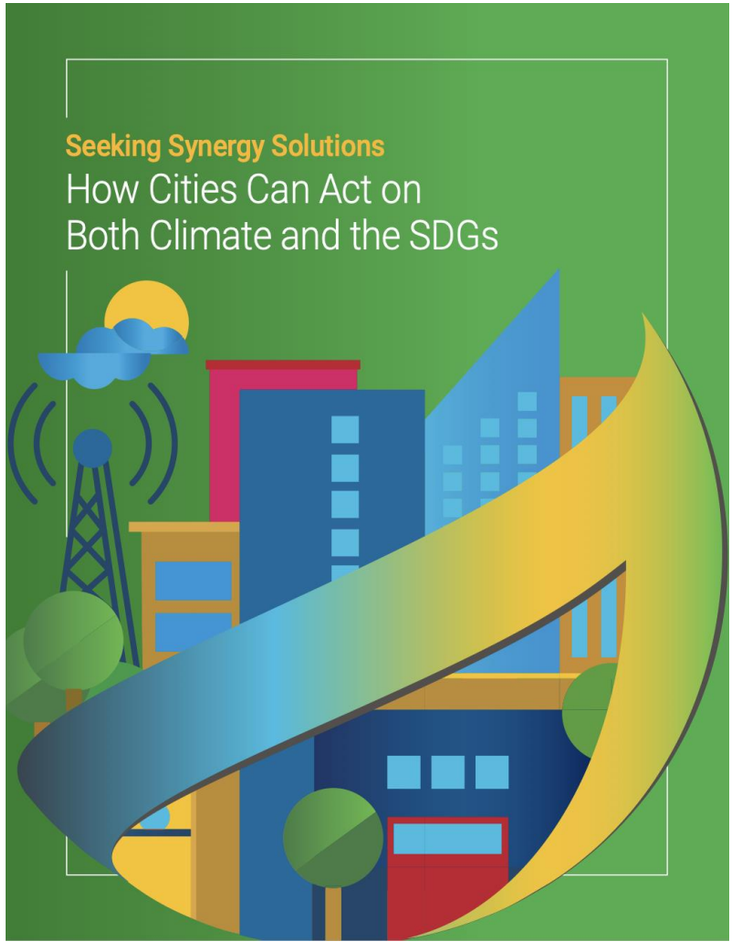
FIGURE 5. The Resilience Financing Trap



- **Insurance & Protection Gap**: **Insurance reduces economic losses** from climate disasters, **but coverage is low in developing countries**, worsening the protection gap.
- **Rising Costs & Market Challenges**: Climate-related insurance losses are increasing, leading **insurers to withdraw from high-risk areas** and causing **premium spikes**.
- **Public-Private Solutions**: **Governments** are partnering with insurers to maintain coverage. However, **vulnerable nations struggle** to finance such schemes.
- **Financial Risks for Vulnerable Economies**: Low insurance coverage limits access to affordable finance, increasing vulnerability and slowing disaster recovery.
- **Building Resilience**: Long-term insurability depends on resilience investments, with insurers incentivizing **climate-proof infrastructure through lower premiums**.

Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: A New Financial System to Enable Both Climate and SDG Action”

4. Thematic Report on Cities in Climate and SDG Action



1. **Urban Synergies**: **Cities offer opportunities** to align climate action with SDGs, but **knowledge and institutional barriers hinder progress**.

2. **Demand-Side Solutions**: **Changing behaviors** can address climate change at its root while improving essential services and urban livability.

3. **Key Action Areas**: **Cooling, energy efficiency, sustainable transport, and circular waste management** link strongly to climate goals and SDGs.

4. **Governance & Reform**: **Cross-sectoral reforms** and **inclusive governance** are essential to unlocking these synergies and driving transformation.

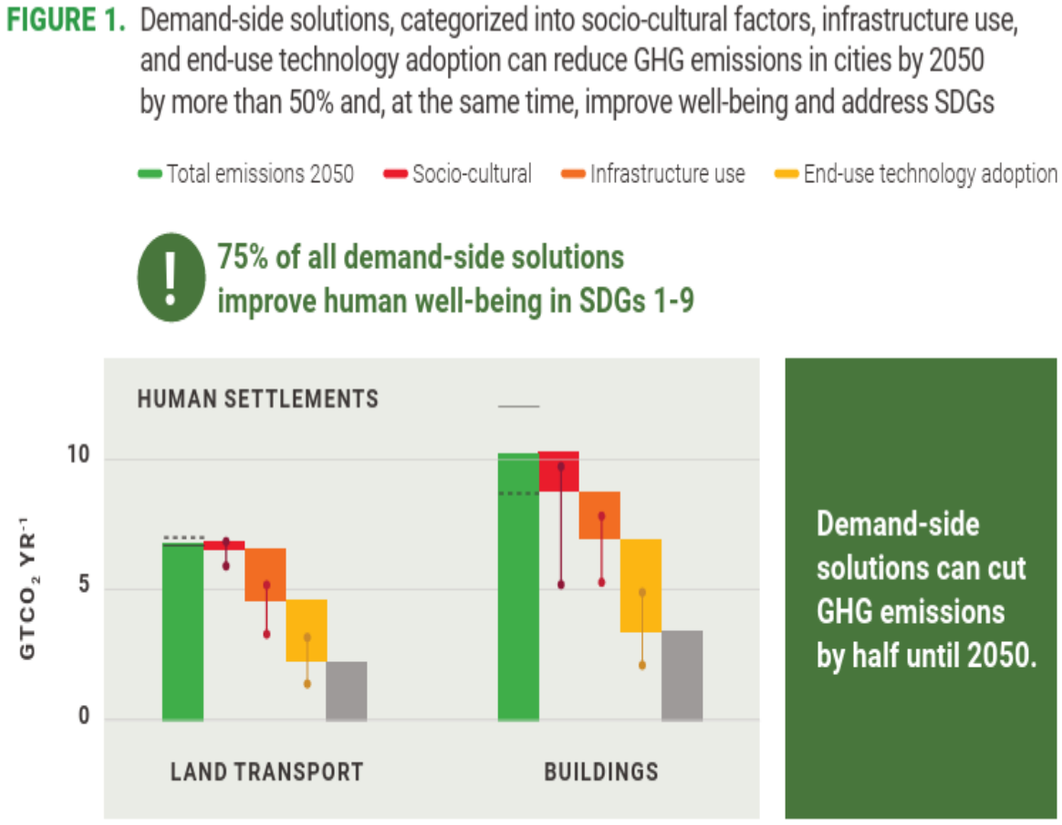
Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: How Cities Can Act on Both Climate and the SDGs”

TABLE 1. Connections between SDG 11 Targets and Other SDGs

Sustainable Cities and Communities	
Target 11.1: Safe and affordable housing	✓
Target 11.2: Affordable and sustainable transport systems	✓
Target 11.3: Inclusive and sustainable urbanization	✓
Target 11.4: Protect the world's cultural and natural heritage	✓
Target 11.5: Reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters	✓
Target 11.6: Reduce the environmental impacts of cities	✓
Target 11.7: Provide access to safe and inclusive green and public spaces	✓

- **Cities' Role in Climate Action**: Cities can play a pivotal role in **integrated planning and coordination** across multiple objectives.
- **Prioritization of SDG 11**: Many cities focus on **SDG 11** (Sustainable Cities and Communities), which naturally connects with other SDGs, and is in their **Voluntary National Reviews** (VNRs).
- **Rising Importance of SDG 13: SDG 13 (Climate Action)** has become more important as a priority in their VNR since 2018.
- **Leveraging SDG Connections**: Cities can be effective in climate action as well as contribute to overall SDGs, if they understand the **interconnections** with other SDG goals.

Source: UN (2024) "Seeking Synergy Solutions: How Cities Can Act on Both Climate and the SDGs"



Source: IPCC, 2022

- **Potential of Demand-Side Solutions:** Demand-side solutions have significant potential to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by influencing **consumption patterns, behaviors, and demand for goods and services**.
- **Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Demand-side measures directly reduce GHG emissions by **promoting low-carbon transportation, plant-based diets, and energy-efficient technologies (e.g., heat pumps, electric vehicles)**.
- **Alignment with the SDGs**: Demand-side strategies align with multiple SDGs by shifting to plant-based diets to reduce emissions **(SDG 13 climate action)** and **promoting health (SDG 3)** and **sustainable land use (SDG 15)**.
- **Resource Efficiency and Sufficiency**: Demand-side solutions foster a culture of **resource efficiency** by optimizing resource use, reducing pressure on resources and facilitating a transition to a more sustainable and resilient system.

Source: UN (2024) “Seeking Synergy Solutions: How Cities Can Act on Both Climate and the SDGs”

V. Call to Action

1. **Climate Change**, war, **Pandemic**, and waning influence of **international organizations** ➔ **Synergies to achieve both SDGs and Climate Action** are needed more than ever!
   ➔ **Only 5 years left until 2030!**

2. **Changing Global Political Landscape** for Climate Action and SDGs:

- January 20, 2025: US President Trump announcement to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, and to leave the WHO
- February 4, 2025: US President Trump said "UN is not being well run," and stopped US engagement with UNHRC (Human Rights Council), etc.
- March 10, 2025: US Dept. of Government Efficiency (DOGE) will cut 83% of USAID programs, and the remaining 18% of programs will be run under the State Dept.

3. **Synergies for SDGs & Climate Action**: **Coordinated Policy Frameworks**, **Financial Systems**, **Data-Driven Decisions**, and **Effective Use of Cities** to Overcome Climate Change and Achieve SDGs are Needed More than Ever! And, **We Must Act Now and Together!**

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Thank you very much!