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# Accelerating implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063: leveraging the six transitions to scale up action at national and local levels

**Jürgen Gafke**
Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA

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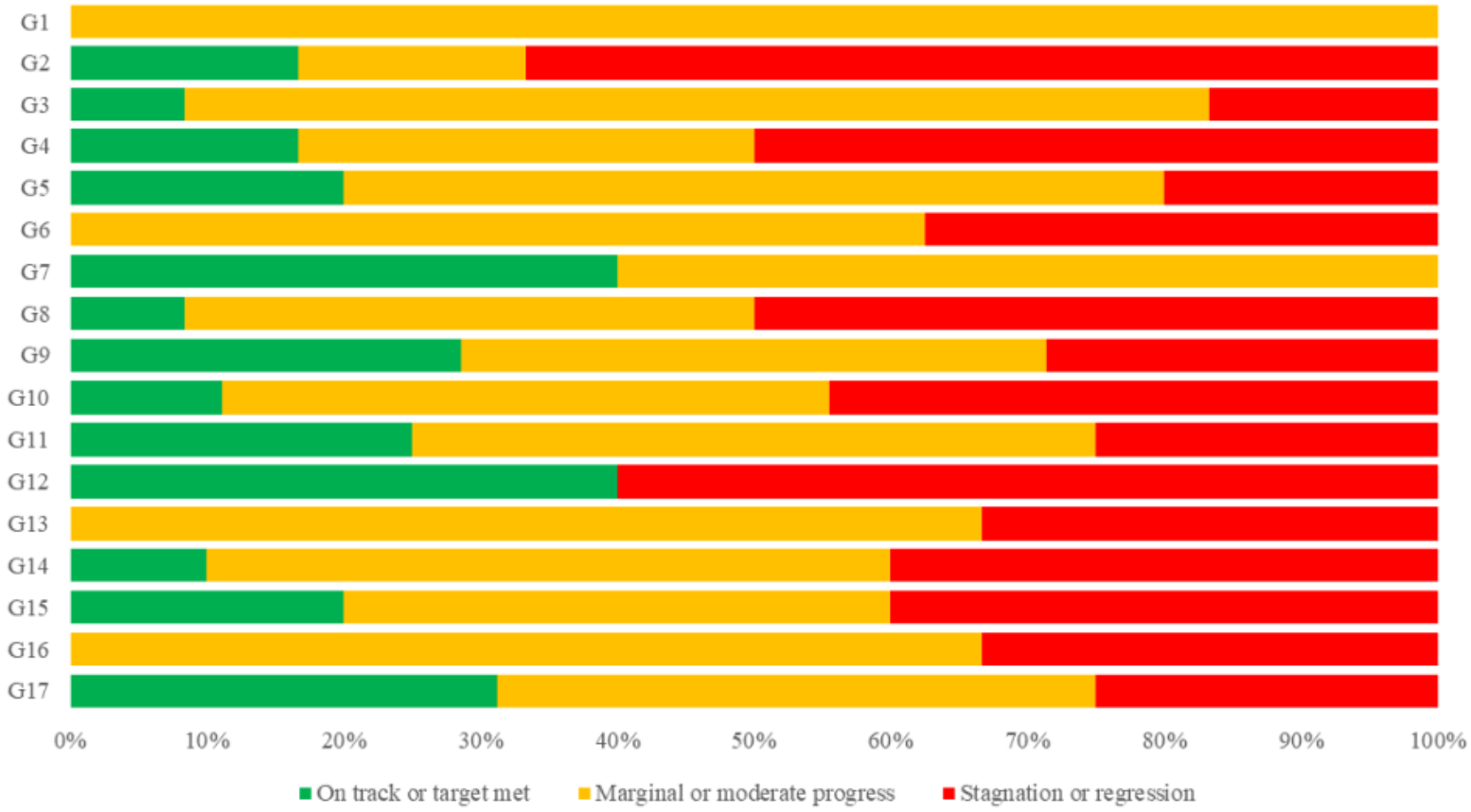
# 5 Years to 2030: Where are we

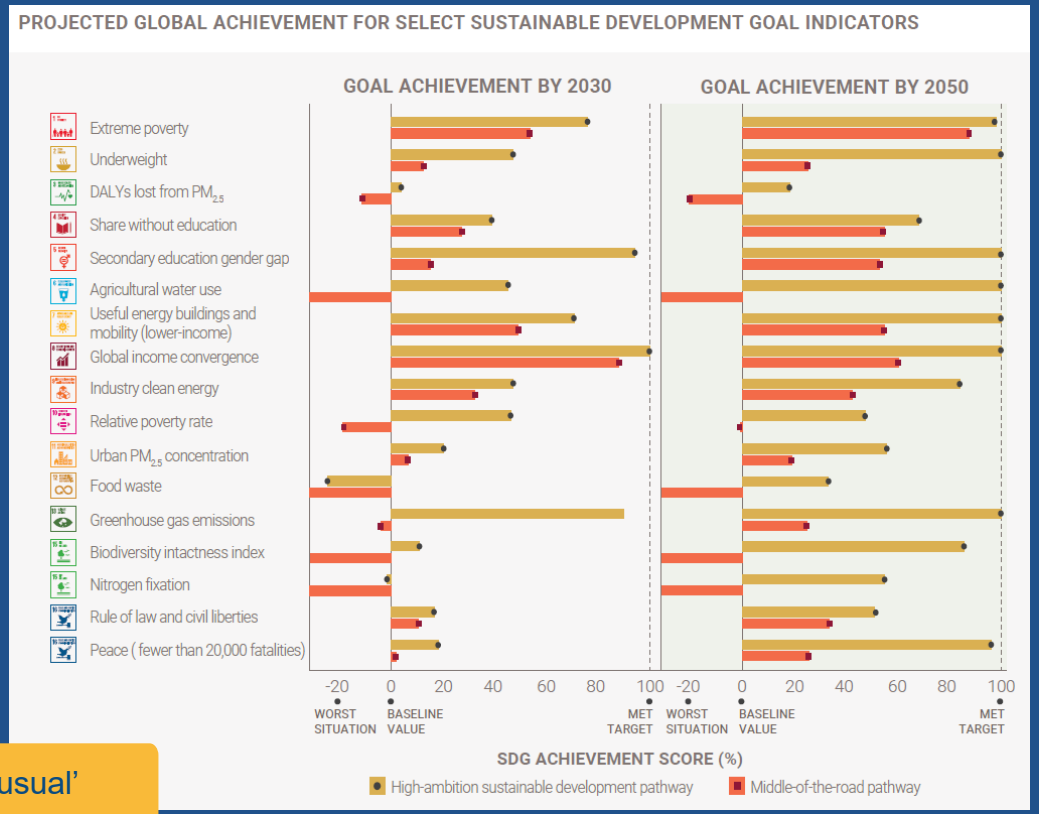
- 17% of the 135 targets are progressing as expected
- 48% of targets indicate marginal or moderate progress
- 35% of targets have stagnated or regressed below the 2015 baseline levels.
- Growing gap between high- and low-income countries
- Temporary shocks or ‘scarring’ effects - including COVID19?
- Future crises are expected

**Figure 2. Progress assessment for the 17 Goals based on assessed targets with trend data, by Goal, 2024 or the latest data**



# What scenarios tell us

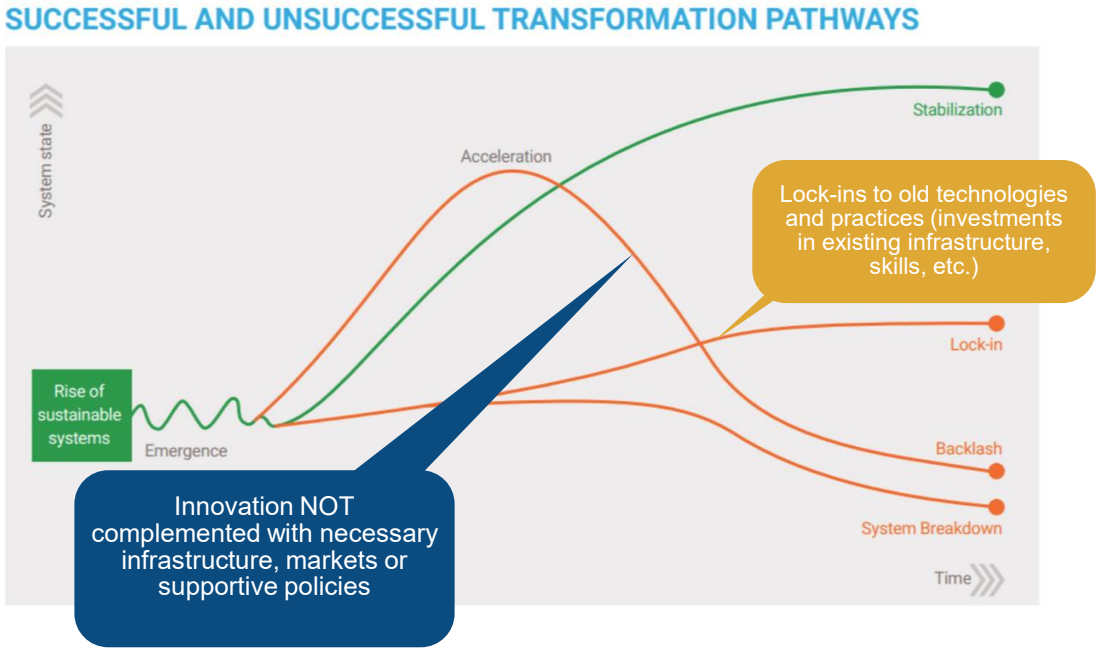
- Under a **high-ambition scenario**, most of the Goals will have **made progress** by 2030.
- By 2050 most Goals would be achieved or nearing the target levels, but such issues as air pollution and management of food waste would still be lagging behind.
- High-ambition scenario measures include: Price on carbon, Phasing out coal and biomass, Mandating electric vehicles, Adjusting energy subsidies, More determined shift towards sustainable consumption and diets.



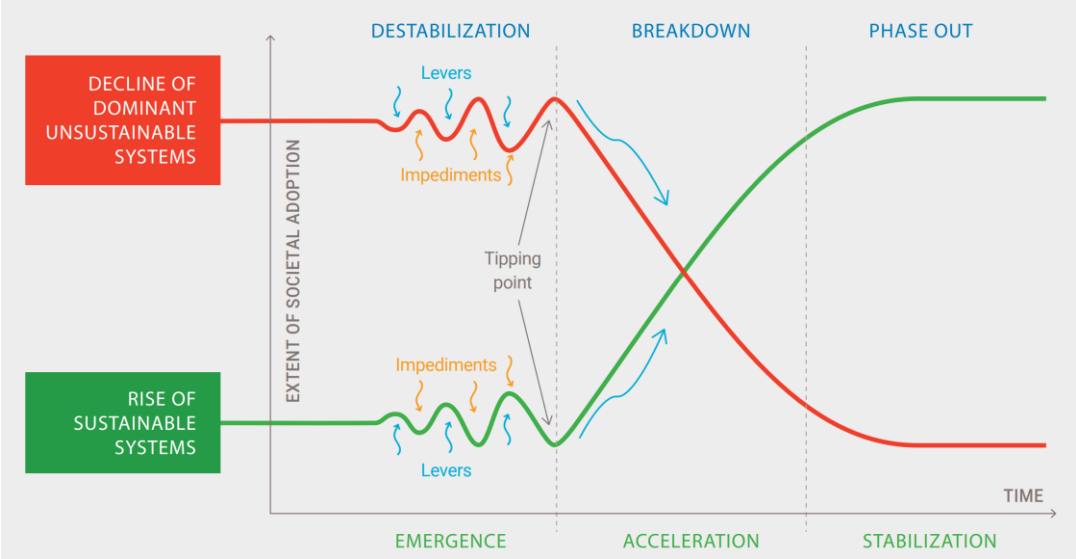

Soergel et al., 2021

- The SDGs won't be achieved by 2030 with 'Business-as-usual' pathways or incremental changes, or even by 2050
- **Transformations & game-changing interventions are needed**

# Overcoming impediments for dynamic transformations




- **Acceleration** is Key
- Nurture **innovation**
- Give **strategic direction**
- **Goals Matter**
- **Foresight** capacity
  - Use scenarios and models
- Standardization and quality assurance
- Innovation (COVID-19 and virtual meetings)
- Powerful actors support new ways of thinking, doing and acting




# How to transform? Dynamics of transformative change

**"S-curve" model for transformation: drive transformation through its phases**

- Emergence
- Acceleration
- Stabilization

Identify levers enable sustainable solutions

Tipping points:

ex.

- Major societal shifts **in perspectives** (single-use plastics)
- Innovations suddenly become easier to use or more socially desirable (smart phone)

# Consider SDG interlinkages

- Review of scientific literature shows mainly synergies
- Synergies: SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 17
- Drivers of trade-offs: SDGs 2 (hunger and food) and 8 (decent work and economic growth)
- SDGs 14 and 15 are most negatively affected by progress in other areas
- SDG interlinkages are context-specific: geography, time, income groups, policy design


*Source: Bennich, Therese et al.*
*One Earth, Volume 6, Issue 11, 1465 - 1476.*

# Transformative Transitions to Accelerate Progress Towards the SDGs

- Key criteria: potential **catalytic, multiplier** and **accelerator effects** across the SDGs
- The UN Sustainable Development Group identified **six transformative transitions:**
  - Food systems
  - Energy access and affordability
  - Digitalization (connectivity, artificial intelligence)
  - Education
  - Jobs and social protection, and
  - Addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

# Transformative Transitions to Accelerate Progress Towards the SDGs

- These **transitions are not a new agenda**. They are a framework that recognizes the **integrated**, **universal**, and **indivisible nature** of the 17 SDGs
- They are characterized by **long-term change** and **based on disruption and innovation**
- They entail **simultaneous transformation** of **multiple systems**, (e.g. energy, agriculture) and **dimensions** (e.g. technological, organizational, cultural and political)
- They **create winners and losers**, hence **must be just**, **offer alternatives to potential losers**, and **must be implemented with support from all parties**

# (i) Foods Systems Transition

- Food systems: All the **elements** (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and **activities** that relate to the production, processing, distribution, procurement, preparation and consumption of food, and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.
- Food systems transformation: contributes towards affordable healthy diets and protecting the environment.
- Food systems **contribute to one-third** of global **human-induced GHG emissions** and are the **main driver of biodiversity loss.**

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

ENTRY POINT:
Food systems and nutrition patterns

## Key Shifts

- Shift to **regenerative ecological** and **multifunctional agricultural systems**.
- Improve **irrigation and fertilizer efficiency**.
- **Reduce food waste** by 50 per cent and **scale up proven nutrition interventions**.
- **Halve consumption of meat** in high-consumption regions and adapt **plant-based diets**.

## Interventions by lever

**GOVERNANCE**

- **Sustainable Food Systems:** policy reform and investment in enabling conditions including improved value chains, finance, extension, gender-responsive policies and investments, social protection, water management, implementation of carbon payments and smart subsidies, and agroecological and landscape approaches. Investing in education and social security can address lock-in effects of unskilled workers in agriculture.
- **Healthy nutrition/diets**: investment in public health information and educational materials and guided food choices through incentives or disincentives, including regulations.

**BUSINESS & FINANCE**

- **Sustainable Food Systems:** agricultural R&D investments of USD4 billion per year have the potential to nearly end hunger by 2030 while a further USD6.5 billion per year in technical climate-smart options can achieve GHG emissions reductions consistent with the 1.5°C pathway. Increased trade liberalisation; abolishment of import tariffs and export subsidies on agricultural products.
- **Healthy nutrition/diets:** investments to address stunting cost USD19.75 billion between 2019 and 2030. Investments to address wasting cost USD275.97 billion between 2019 and 2030. Interventions to address anaemia cost USD16.98 billion between 2019 and 2030.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

- **Sustainable Food Systems**: a rapid uptake of improved technologies, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America; investments in R&D, yieldaugmenting technologies, management improvements and irrigation technologies to reduce losses in conveyance and application; adoption of new crop varieties; precision agriculture and automation, redesigning agricultural practices including intercropping and agroforestry.
- **Healthy nutrition/diets:** increasing R&D investments of USD4 billion per year above the baseline could reduce hunger incidence to 5% globally by 2030.

**INDIVIDUAL& COLLECTIVE ACTION**

- **Healthy nutrition/diets**: influencing social norms around diet for younger population (ages 15-44).

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Build capacities to implement each lever and overcome impediments including building institutional capacities for navigating revenue collection and redistribution, overcoming political resistance, managing environmental and economic trade-offs, designing and delivering carbon taxes to address financing gaps, developing markets for sustainable innovations, and shifting ingrained unsustainable behaviors and attitudes.

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

ENTRY POINT:
Energy Decarbonisation & Universal Access

## Key Shifts

- Large-scale deployment of renewables and best available technologies, appliances and equipment
- Rapidly scaling up infrastructure investment and support for universal electricity access and clean cooking alternatives
- Phasing down of fossil fuels by 2030 in a domestically and globally just manner
- Major changes in global consumer behaviour to reduce energy consumption and end-use electrification.

## Interventions by lever

**GOVERNANCE**

- Access: subsidies to stimulate the adoption of cleaner cooking fuels/technologies or regulations to near-complete phase out biomass cookstoves by 2030.
- Decarbonisation: carbon pricing of emissions and subsidies for renewables. Energy system policies for faster phase out of coal and near-complete phase out of traditional biomass by 2040, restrictions on nuclear capacity additions and bioenergy potential, and faster phase out of fossil energy subsidies by 2030. Mandatory targets to increase share of renewables in electricity generation and ban new installations of coal power plants by 2025 (HICS) or 2030 (LMICs).
- Demand: introduction of a progressive carbon tax affecting energy demand, regulations to improve energy efficiency, incentives to improve dwelling energy performance and change behaviour to reduce energy consumption; designing and enforcing national standards and labelling for household appliances and efficient equipment; subsidies, appliance rebates and access to credit for lower income households to benefit from modern energy technologies.

**BUSINESS & FINANCE**

- Access: increase public and private investment in electricity infrastructure in Africa from 1% to 3% GDP per annum to 2030.
- Decarbonisation: divestment from fossil fuel activities reaching more than 170 Billion USD per year by 2030 and used to partially fund USD910 billion per year on efficiency and low-carbon resources. Recycling of carbon revenues whereby developed countries devote part of their revenues to an international fund that supports clean energy and R&D in developing countries (USD50 billion per annum).

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

- Decarbonisation: public and private investment in innovation in renewable energy technologies; spatially optimised bioenergy with carbon capture/storage.
- Demand: promote digital technologies for energy use, transmission and monitoring and innovation in high quality housing with highly efficient facilities for cooking, storing food and washing, low-energy lighting.

**INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE ACTION**

- Demand: incentivize behaviour change to reduce energy consumption.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Build capacities to implement each lever and overcome impediments including for designing and implementing market conditions, incentives and regulatory settings for investment in sustainable energy infrastructure and improving revenue collection, navigating political resistance from sunk investments in capital stocks, managing trade-offs and competition between socioeconomic and environmental goals, building coalitions and public support in favour of decarbonisation, and shifting towards sustainable consumption behaviours.

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

ENTRY POINT:
## Global Environmental Commons

## Key Shifts

- Protect and restore life on land by expanding protected areas to all priority conservation areas and biodiversity hotspots reaching 40-50% of terrestrial areas by 2050; preserving 85% of tropical/ boreal forest and 50% of temperate forest on each continent; abandoning agricultural land in protected areas or areas with >5% threatened species; ambitious reforestation of all degraded forest areas; and implementing a 1.5°C land-sector roadmap for 2050 combining avoided deforestation and land conversion, restoring forests and wetlands, improving forest management, lifestyle changes (diets, waste) and reduced reliance on BECCS. Protect other global environmental commons including ensuring environmental flow requirements; greater conservation of water by households, farms and industry, and improved air quality control.

## Interventions

GOVERNANCE

- Conservation policies, establishment of protected areas, land use regulation and law enforcement, integrated land use planning, sustainable forest management (optimising rotation and stocks, low-impact logging, certification, fire management), improved land tenure, sustainable commodity production, improved supply chain transparency, procurement policies, commodity certification, cleaner cookstoves, investments in ecosystem restoration and nature-based solutions, integration of agroforestry into agricultural and grazing lands, limit water extraction to local environmental flow requirements in low, intermediate and high flow periods.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

- Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes, including Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE ACTION

- Shift societal preferences from production to conservation land use and enable lifestyle changes around diets and waste.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

- Build capacities to implement each lever and overcome impediments including for managing trade-offs between food production and biodiversity protection, designing and implementing effective financial conservation schemes, establishing sustainable land management regulations, institutions and governance systems.

# Science-Policy Interface Foci for Advancing the SDGs

- **Coherent Strategies for SDG Interactions**: need strategies that align economic, social, and environmental goals by identifying synergies and minimizing conflicts between SDGs.
- **Utilizing Scientific Models**: helps policymakers assess the long-term impact of policies and design future-focused strategies. Strengthening and expanding these models can accelerate SDG progress by providing insights for better decision-making.
- **Developing Practical Tools for Policymakers**: tools that translate scientific findings into actionable solutions are essential for integrated decision-making. Co-develop these tools with stakeholders to ensure more effective and inclusive SDG implementation.

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# Transformative Transitions to Accelerate Progress Towards the SDGs

- Transitions must be planned in an **integrated manner, with intelligent foresight** to help **drive shifts across policy and regulatory frameworks**
- To achieve durable progress on one, it's imperative to make substantial gains on the others
- This means designing and implementing a **new generation of public policies** that are informed by a **clear national vision**, **strategic governance** and **anticipatory management + capacities for innovation and foresight**
- **Adapt global scenarios to fit local realities** while ensuring they remain flexible and responsive to the priorities of local policymakers

# Importance of Foresight

- **How do we get from where we are now to where we want to be?**

i) **Make Sense of Change** – what is happening? Identify developments that might appear insignificant today but could have a big impact tomorrow (importance of horizon scanning)

ii) **Imagine Possible Futures** – involves **building scenarios** and identifying **what a desired future might look like** + potential **risks** & **opportunities**

iii) **Take Action** – what transformations need to happen to bring about the desired future? Involves having a **Change Agenda** (6 transitions), **Back Casting**, & **Wind Tunnel Testing** (stress-test policies/plans/strategies)



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# Importance of Foresight, con't

- Requires systems thinking – socioeconomic, ecological and technological systems
- Strategic visioning and planning require reliable, accurate, timely, disaggregated data
- Strong institutional capacities for implementation at all levels
- Adequate financing, budget alignment, and right set of incentives
- Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches that are inclusive and participatory

# Way Forward

- Identify **national entry points for SDG acceleration**
- Scale up synergistic policies that can help **advance on multiple fronts, reduce trade-offs, and manage short-term transition costs** to specific groups and communities.
- Avoid excessive focus on programming for **past problems** and **anticipate the challenges of the future**
- The global crises food, fuel, finance, disease pandemics, climate change make it clear that **the future is not an extrapolation of the past**

# UN Support

- The United Nations development system is mobilizing behind **12 High Impact Initiatives** that correspond with six major transitions (energy, education, food systems, social protection, and jobs, digitalization, and our natural environment), five critical means of implementation (finance, trade, data, governance, and localization), and an example of the transversal priority of gender equality.
- UN DCO and Country Teams identify **catalytic projects** that leverage on the six transitions for SDG acceleration

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