



# INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

This initiative supports the articulation of national commitments to SDG transformation, towards accelerated SDG action in the second half of the 2030 Agenda.



# HOW TO READ THIS REPORT



Integrated SDG Insights provides an overview of a country's economic growth trajectory, highlighting potential conflicts between growth, environmental concerns, and societal well-being (referred to as the **SDG Moment**).



It builds from the foundation of national SDG progress through the lens of the 5Ps and uses machine learning to analyse national development ambition with an SDG lens (**SDG Trends & Priorities**).



Combined, these insights are mapped against SDG interlinkages to define policy choices the accelerate SDG progress, tailored to national context (**SDG Interlinkages**).



These policy choices are made against fiscal constraints and opportunities for stimulus to ensure choices translate to development impact and leave no one behind (**Finance & Stimulus**).

# SDG MOMENT: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

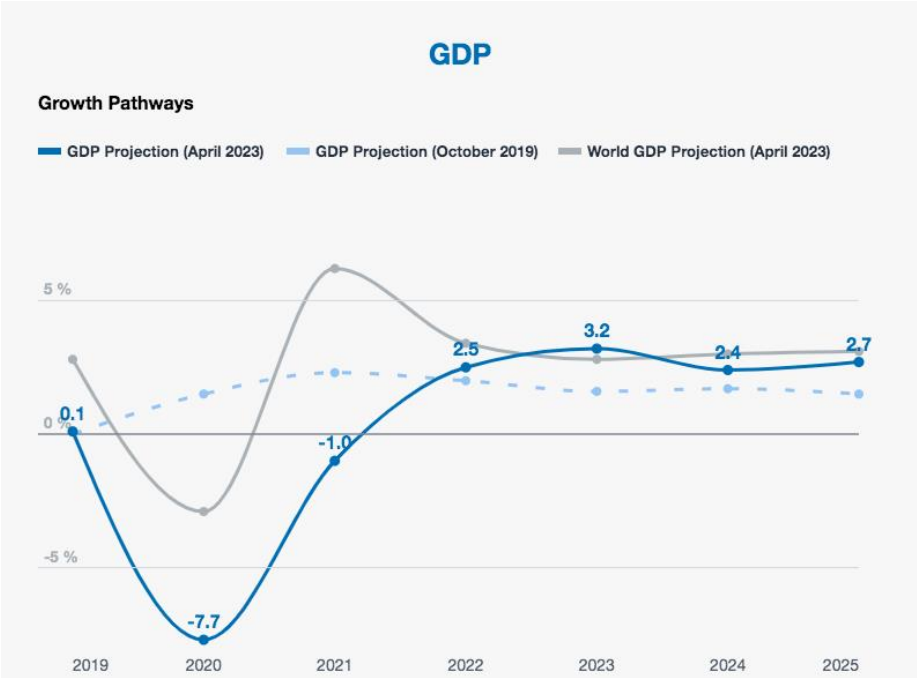
Trinidad and Tobago’s economy is projected to be, in general, in acceleration mode during the cycle 2023-2025.<sup>1</sup> This pace of growth is characterized by being well above the country’s growth trajectory projected before the pandemic, though still 7% lower, on average, that of the world. While economic growth will serve as an enabler for the SDGs in the short term, the implementation of a comprehensive country strategy will accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and sustain them in the medium to long term. Such a strategy will emphasize resilience through investments in:

- 1) people, governance and access to justice,
- 2) resilience through improved efficiency in government service delivery and digitization,
- 3) investments in new revenue-generating sectors to diversify the economic base, and
- 4) environmental and climate resilience.

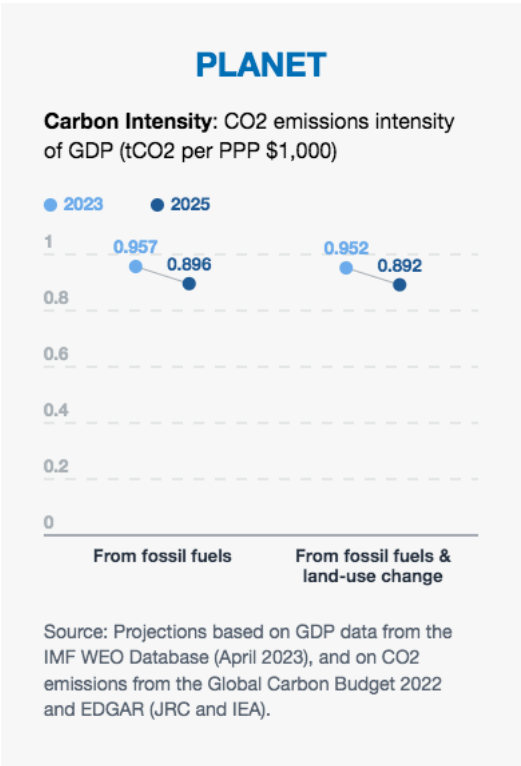
This economic expansion together with the digitization thrust is expected to result in more effective targeting of the poor and therefore have a positive impact on poverty reduction and equality. Further, despite being an energy-based economy, Trinidad and Tobago’s economic growth is expected to be less dependent on fossil fuels, as the country strives to reduce its carbon emissions by 15% by 2030, resulting in a reduction of carbon emissions intensity to GDP by an annual rate of 3.2%.

Trinidad and Tobago’s economic growth, however, would be less dependent on carbon emissions, as the country’s carbon emissions intensity of GDP is projected to decline at an annual rate of 3.2%.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The economic cycle is determined by adjusting the country’s current GDP growth forecasts (April 2023) by their gap relative to the forecasts made before the pandemic and subsequent crises (October 2019). If the adjusted rates (not shown) are below 2%, the economy is considered in mitigation; it is coping if the adjusted rates range between 2%-4%, and it is in acceleration if they are above 4%.  
<sup>2</sup> CO2 emissions intensity of GDP is computed as tonnes of CO2 per \$1,000 (2017 PPP).



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO) (April 2023 and October 2019).

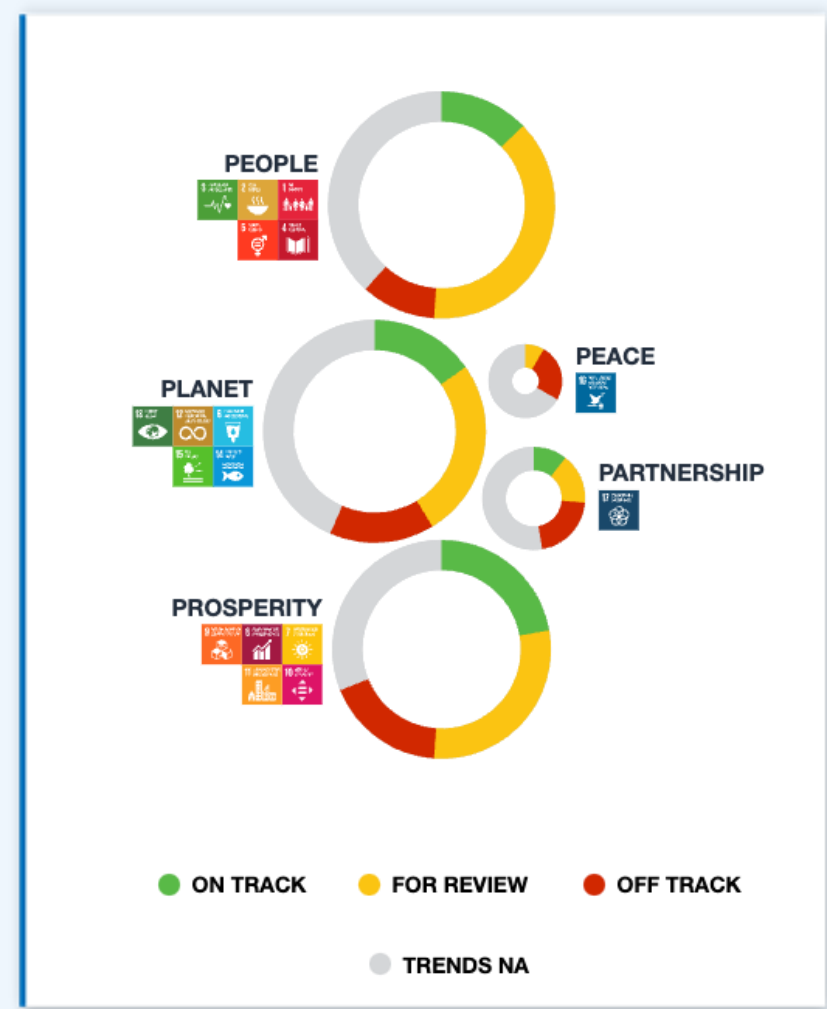


Source: Projections based on GDP data from the IMF WEO Database (April 2023), and on CO2 emissions from the Global Carbon Budget 2022 and EDGAR (JRC and IEA).

# SDG TRENDS

Understanding how Trinidad and Tobago performs against the SDG targets provides a baseline landscape against which to build integrated SDG pathways. SDG progress tracking follows [UN Stats](#) standards and [methodology](#), and is aligned with country profiles.

Latest data source: CEPAL



- Additional data has been incorporated to address gaps and provide a comprehensive overview for identification of SDG policy pathways.
- In Trinidad and Tobago, data on poverty and other social indicators is fragmented which makes analytic work challenging.

**Trends in detail:**  
<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/TTOWithCountryGovInput/sdg-trends>

# SDG PRIORITIES

Trinidad and Tobago's national priorities are analysed using machine learning to reveal the most prominent SDGs referenced in national policy documents. This analysis uses a custom-built model for SDG classification. It considers 100k+ terms, including phrases and expressions.



- Key documents for analysis:**
1. Trinidad and Tobago DRAFT Roadmap for SDG Implementation
  2. Trinidad and Tobago Digital Readiness Analysis
  3. Roadmap: Post Covid-19 Pandemic
  4. Roadmap: Transforming to a new economy and new society
  5. Vision 2030 Reporting on Progress 2015-2018 Tracking our Journey, Securing our Future
  6. Economic Bulletin January 2023
  7. Budget statement 2023
  8. Annual Economic Survey 2022

**Priorities in detail:**  
<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/TTO/current-priorities>

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

SDG Interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help Trinidad and Tobago to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, Trinidad and Tobago’s SDG progress is colour-coded at the target level.

Building from national priorities, the following pathways reflect policy investments with the most potential to accelerate the SDGs for Trinidad and Tobago:

- Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay
- Target 9.1: Develop sustainable, resilient and inclusive infrastructures
- Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels



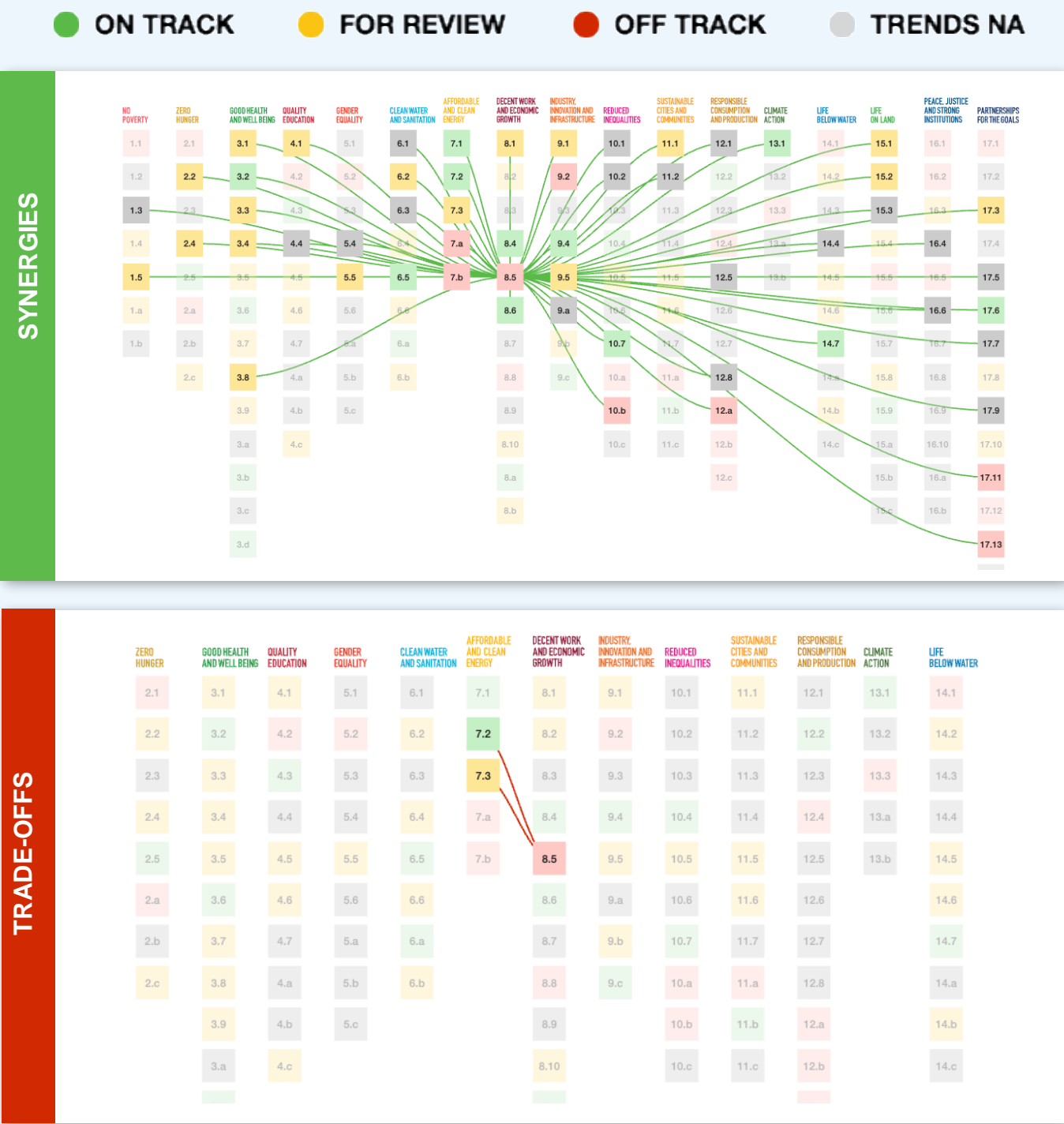


# SDG INTERLINKAGES

## 8.5: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

The economy of Trinidad and Tobago is heavily reliant on oil and gas production which constitutes more than 30 percent of GDP and 80 percent of the country's exports. Recognizing the vulnerability of the country based on this dependence, diversification efforts into the non-energy sector are a priority for building resilience.

Key investment pillars have been identified in agriculture, ICT and manufacturing. While unlocking the growth potential of the non-energy sector, efforts must be accompanied by inclusive policies to support a ‘just transition’ including the participation of women, young persons and persons with disabilities. Priority areas under 8.5 could also focus on climate adaptation efforts and climate mitigation measures per the country’s NDC commitments such as investment in green infrastructure, renewable energy and disaster risk reduction.



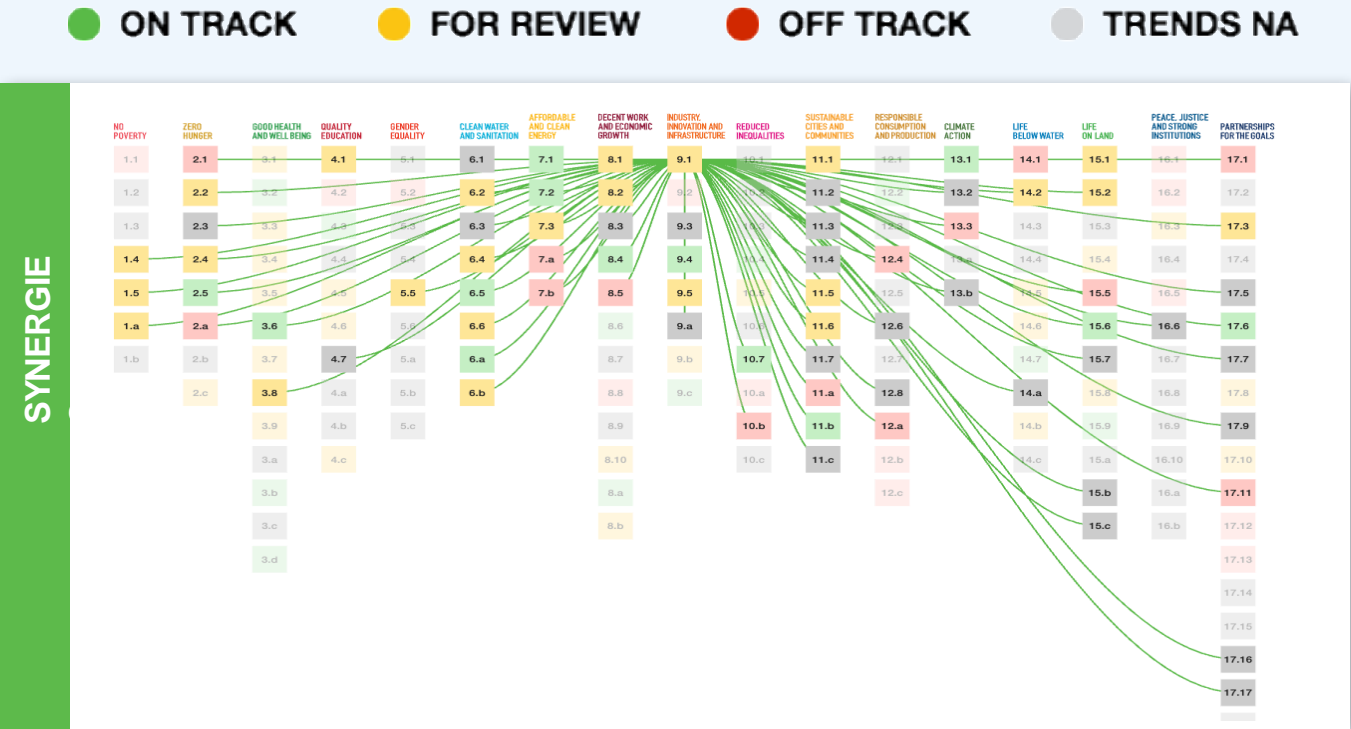
# SDG INTERLINKAGES

**9.1: Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all**

Resilient infrastructure (9.1) refers to a modern and sustainable built environment as well as the IT infrastructure that support equitable access to opportunities to participate in social, political, commercial public life.

The implementation of a resilient built environment in Trinidad and Tobago could advance on achievement of targets related to affordable and clean energy (7), decent work and economic growth (8) and sustainable cities and communities (11). These are important priorities given the estimate of clean energy consumption at 0.47 percent in 2020[1], the high level of labor informality and the state of aged architecture on the islands. Further, improvements to the transportation network can reduce pollution, and thus counteract marine pollution from land-based activities (14).

Investments in ICT infrastructure can improve an array of services including the provision of welfare by the government, access to financial services for underserved populations and quality education in remote and rural areas, thereby impacting upon Goal 1: No poverty, Goal 10: Reducing inequalities and Goal 4: Quality education. ICT builds on existing comparative advantages including an existing digital infrastructure, strong human resources and internet permeability as well as usage of smartphones.



Explore the interlinkages at:

<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/TTOWithCountryGovInput/synergies-and-tradeoffs>

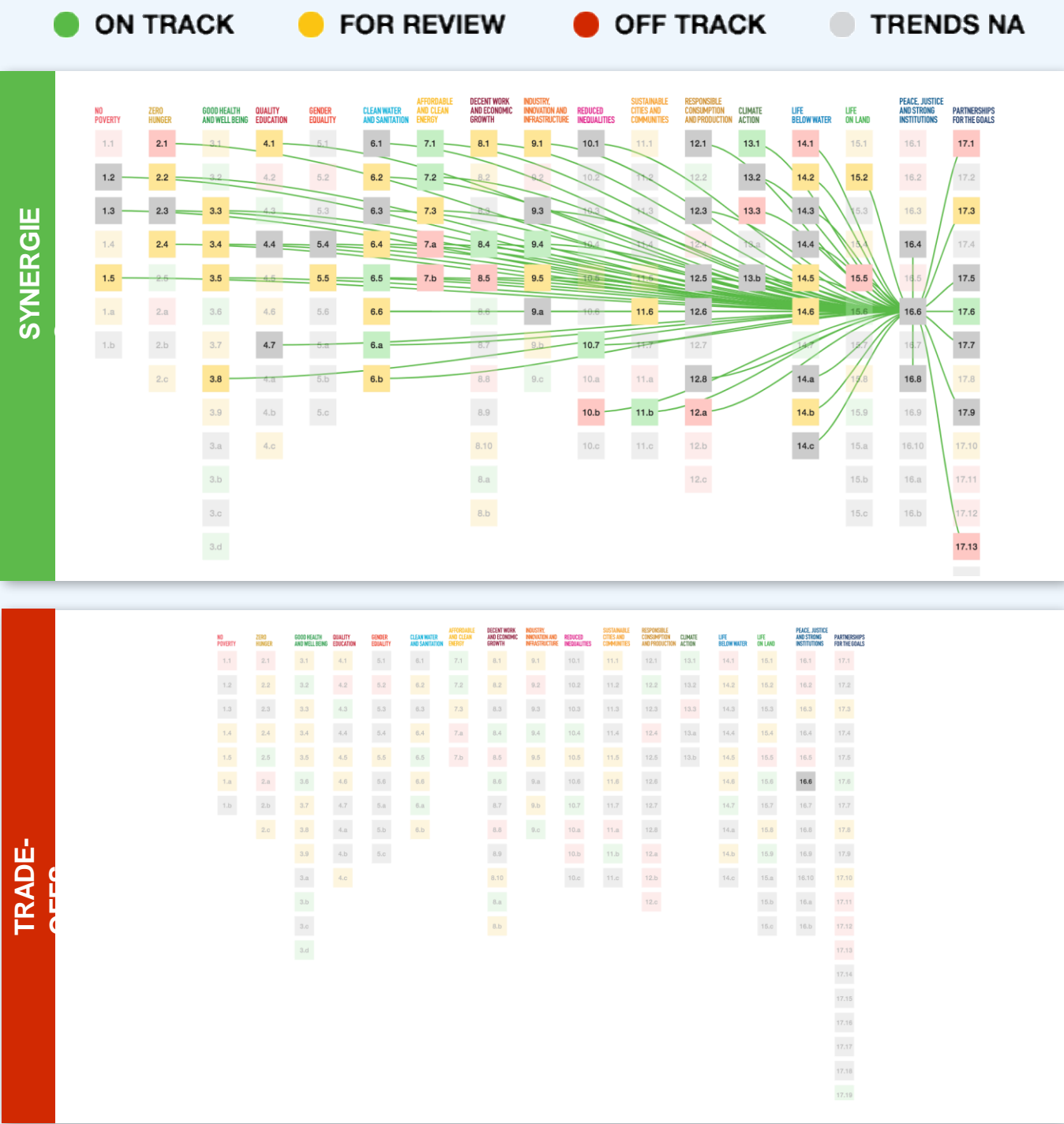
# SDG INTERLINKAGES

**16.6 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all**

Developing effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels is essential for sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago. These institutions promote good governance, ensuring responsible management of resources and reduced corruption. Transparent practices attract investments, fostering economic diversification, growth and stability.

Equitable distribution of resources through accountable institutions leads to inclusive development, which reduces poverty and social tensions. Further, with proper regulations enforced by transparent bodies, environmental protection is also prioritized, thereby safeguarding the nation's natural assets. Effective and transparent institutions form the bedrock of civic engagement and encourage citizens' participation in decision-making, aligning policies with citizens' aspirations.

Strong institutions enhance the country's resilience to external shocks, contributing to a positive global reputation and attracting investment, international cooperation (SDG 17) and support, which in turn impacts upon all the SDGs.





# FINANCE & STIMULUS

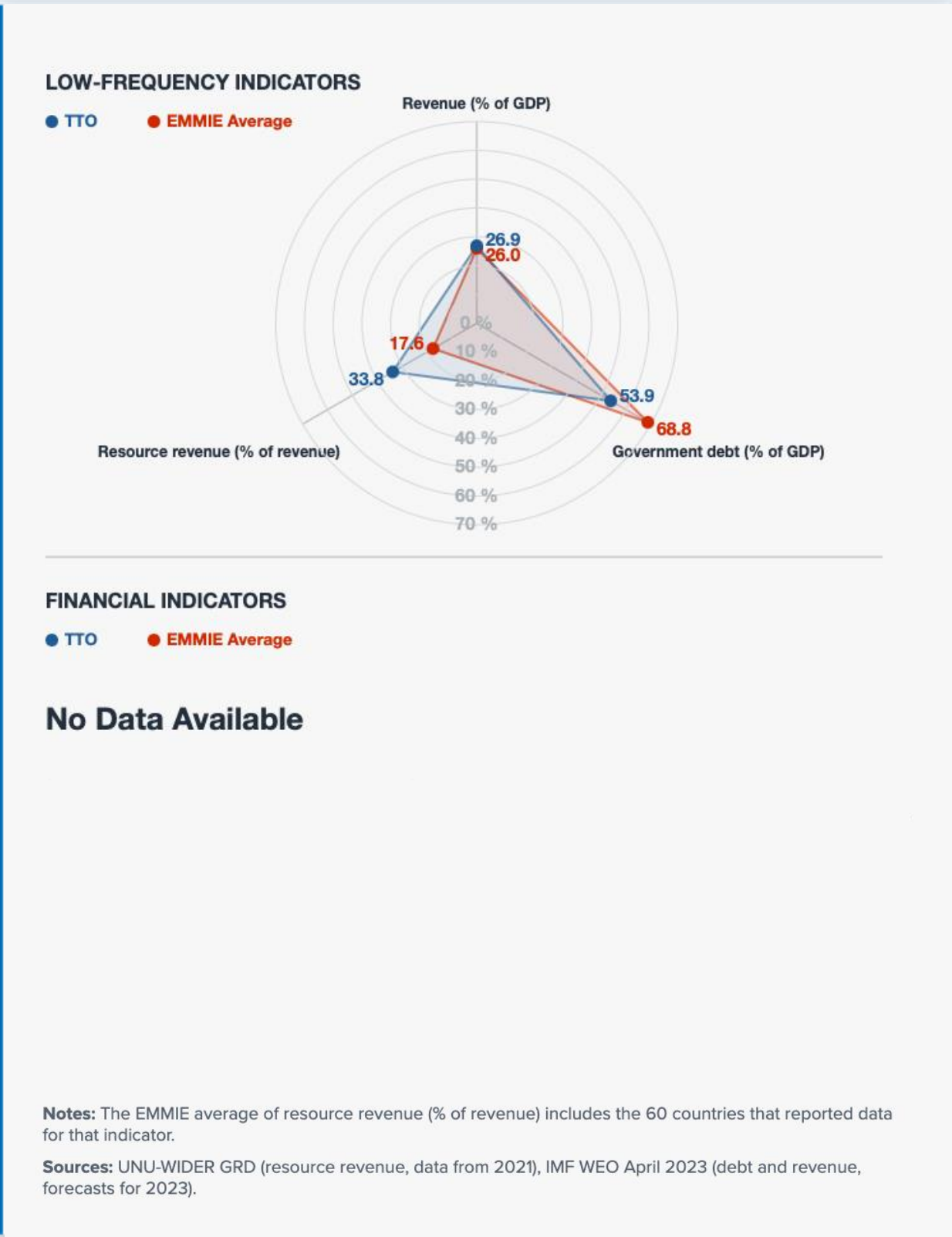
Many countries are facing reduced fiscal space, high debt levels, rising interest rates and downgrades on credit ratings. Fiscal and financial constraints tend to slow or even reverse SDG progress.

The radar diagram shows low frequency data points linked to government revenue and debt as a proportion of GDP as well as the natural resource share of total revenue. No data are available for Trinidad and Tobago for the selected financial indicators.

Trinidad and Tobago's gross government debt is expected at 53.9% of GDP in 2023, which is 14.9 percentage points below the group of emerging market and middle-income economies (EMMIE) of 68.8%. The country is expected to collect 26.9% of GDP in revenue this year, close to the EMMIE average of 26%. Natural resources account for about one-third of the country's revenue, which is nearly twice the EMMIE average.

Trinidad and Tobago is in a relatively stable fiscal and monetary position compared the emerging market and middle-income economies (EMMIE) country classification. Trinidad and Tobago's gross government debt is expected to be 53.9% of GDP in 2023, which is 14.9 percentage points below the group of emerging market and middle-income economies (EMMIE) of 68.8%. The country is expected to collect 26.9% of GDP in revenue this year, close to the EMMIE average of 26%. Natural resources account for about one-third of the country's revenue, which is nearly twice the EMMIE average. National import cover, currently at 8.6 months, has been relatively stable over the last 5 years and against a backdrop of declining liquidity the average repo rate has also been stable at 3.5 percent.

Despite stable conditions, Trinidad and Tobago must take decisive steps towards broadening its economic base by investing in new economic sectors to protect against international energy price volatility and logistical disruptions linked to dependence on imports of food and non-capital items. Existing vulnerabilities may be compounded by the global trend towards renewable energy technologies which threaten to dampen prices for fossil fuels and their derivatives.



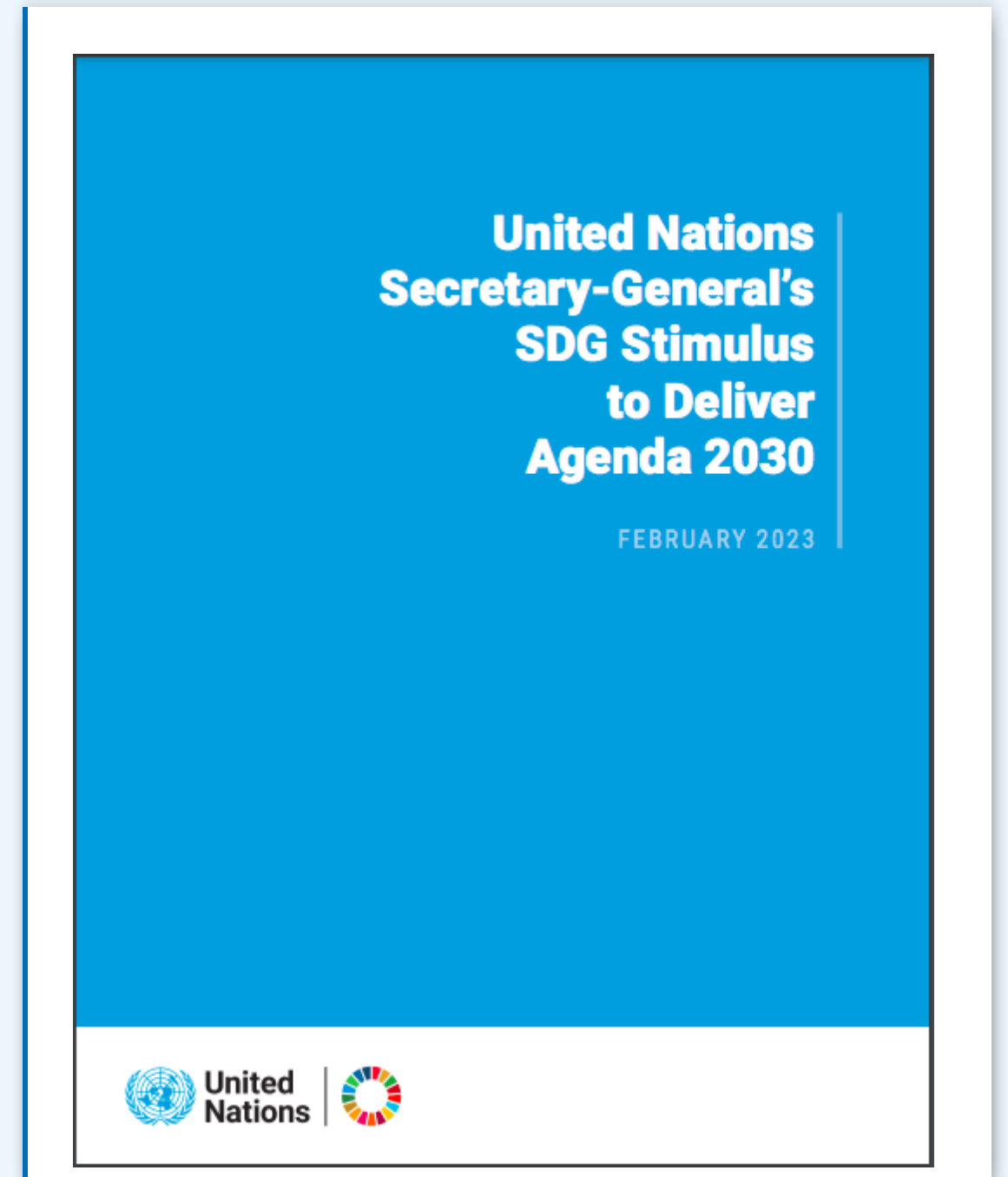
# SDG STIMULUS

The [UN Secretary General's SDG Stimulus Plan](#) lays out a blueprint for action within the existing financial architecture. It includes:

- Tackle the high cost of debt and rising risks of indebtedness.
- Massively scale-up affordable long-term financing for development.
- Expand contingency financing to countries in need.

Trinidad and Tobago investments for accelerated progress towards the SDGs can benefit from several stimulus measures, including:

- Aligning financial flows with the SDGs and Paris Agreement, according to country-level priorities and needs, for the example the rollout of UN Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs).
- Accessing financial markets and insurance for development priorities and vulnerabilities.
- Diversifying the economy through investments that leverage existing petrochemical infrastructure and expertise to transition to clean energy (vertical diversification); and expand the offer of exportable products (horizontal integration).
- Intensifying fiscal reforms to improve revenue collection, including the establishment of institutions to enhance revenue mobilization congruent with national priorities.
- Accelerating the digitalization agenda to expand the efficient delivery of public services, improve the business environment and enhance the social safety net, with a focus on the financial system and its requisite cybersecurity.
- Implementing comprehensive information management systems that generate quality statistics in a timely manner to enhance transparency and government responsiveness to environmental priorities and underserved needs of the population.



# METHODOLOGY

Click [here](#) to view the Methodological Note for the Integrated SDG Insights



## SDG MOMENT

### Methodology

Assesses challenges and opportunities in national growth trajectories with insights on environmental sustainability and inclusiveness.

### Data Sources

Future trajectories to 2025 are based on IMF-WEO GDP projections, distributions of per capita income or consumption from the World Bank, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the Global Carbon Budget 2022 and EDGAR (JRC and IEA).



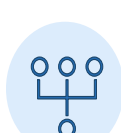
## TRENDS & PRIORITIES

### Methodology

SDG trends tracks progress from 2015 to date for the 231 indicators. National priorities are analysed using machine learning to reveal the most prominent SDGs referenced in national policy documents.

### Data Source

Trends utilizes official [UN statistics](#) to assess [SDG progress](#), supplemented with national data when available. Priorities uses a custom-built model for SDG classification. The policy documents analyses are provided by Governments.



## INTERLINKAGES

### Methodology

Global target-level interlinkages are drawn from the [KnowSDGs Platform by European Commission](#). SDG interlinkages were retrieved through a structured literature review in Scopus and Google Scholar to tap both grey literature and peer-reviewed publications as a source of information.

### Data Source

The exercise globally considered a total of 454 documents published from 2015 to August 2022. ([Miola et al., 2019](#) updated in [2021-2022](#))



## FINANCE & STIMULUS

### Methodology

Provides insight into indicators of fiscal and financial stress with options (INFF) for stimulus and other means to accelerate progress.

### Data Source

Most recent resource data from UNU-WIDER GRD (between 2018 and 2021), debt and revenue from IMF WEO (between 2020 and forecasts for 2023), external debt from IDS (2023), yields from Haver Analytics (8 June 2023), credit ratings from S&P, Moodys and FITCH (2023), and DSA ratings from World Bank/IMF (31 May 2023).