



INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS GHANA

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 that 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: GHANA

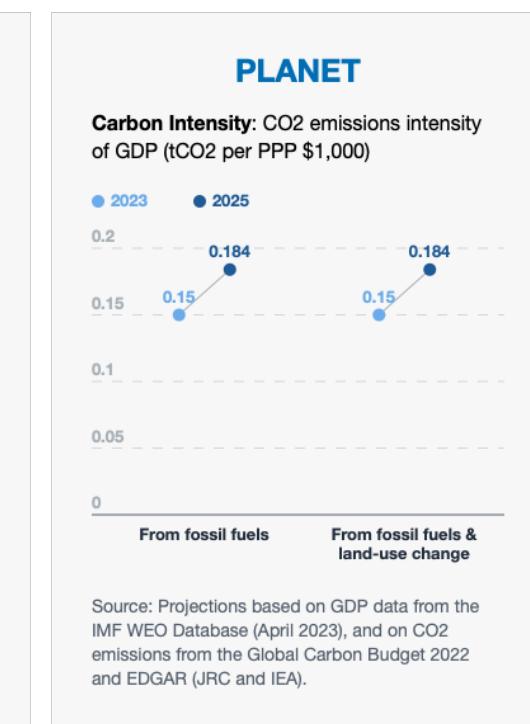
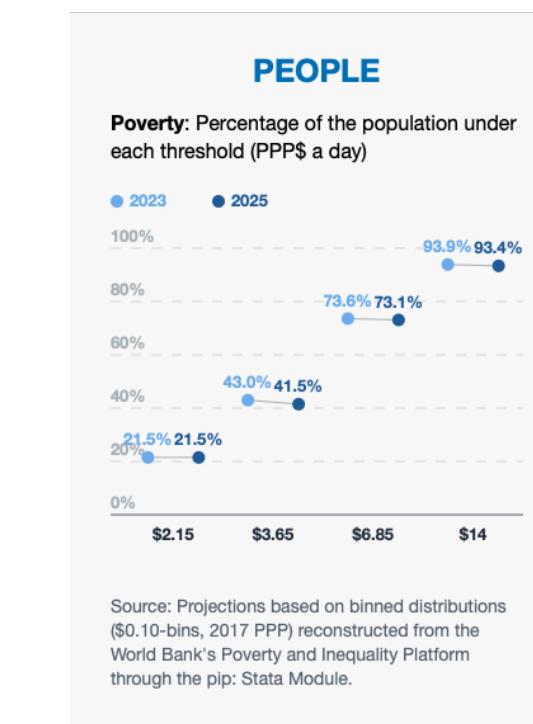
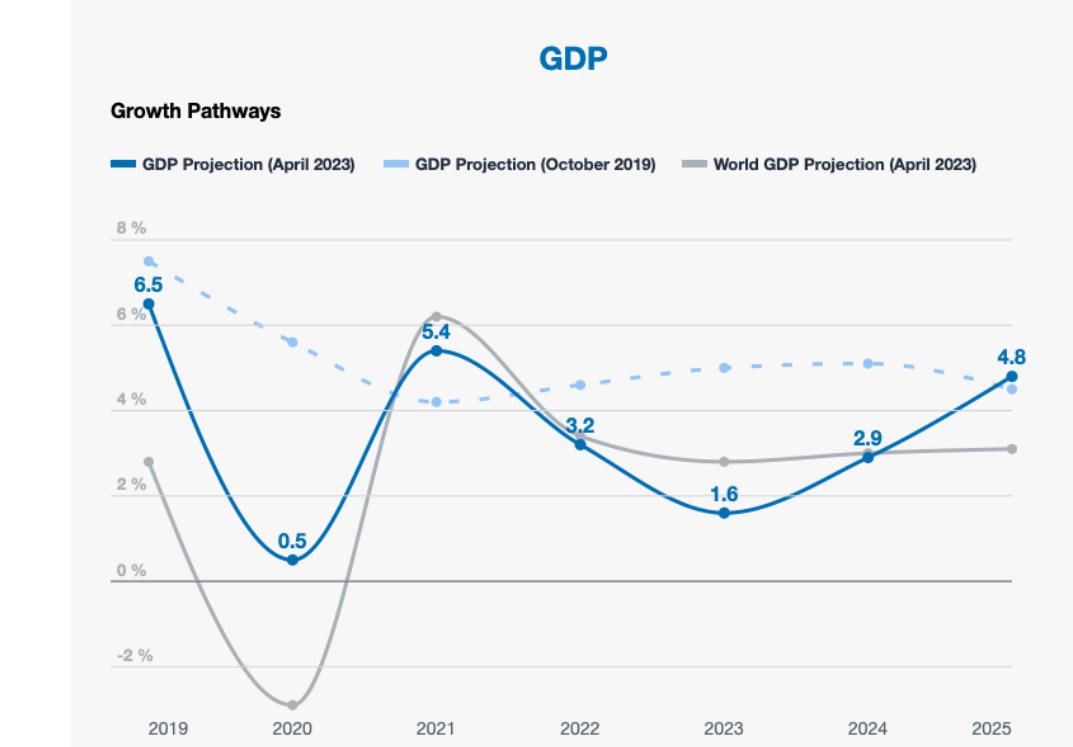
While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

Ghana's economic growth is in mitigation mode in 2023 and is projected to transition into acceleration mode by 2025.¹ This pace of economic growth is characterized by surpassing that projected for the world and converging to the country's growth trajectory forecast before the pandemic. Accordingly, Ghana's commitments to achieving the SDGs are focused on creating prosperity and equal opportunity for all through the Agenda for Jobs II: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All 2022-2025.

However, this pace of economic growth comes at the expense of the environment as the country's carbon emissions intensity of GDP is expected to increase at an annual rate of 11% due to fossil fuel usage.² Despite the moderate impact on lowering the incidence of poverty at \$2.15 and \$3.65 a day, there are still significant distributional challenges to accelerate the pace of progress in reducing poverty from its relatively high levels.

¹ 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%.

² CO2 emissions intensity of GDP is computed as tonnes of CO2 per \$1,000 (2017 PPP).



SDG TRENDS

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



SDG PRIORITIES

Ghana'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. Voluntary National Review 2022
2. National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework 2021–2025
3. Ghana Cares “Obataan Pa” Programme
4. The Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2021–2025)
5. Post COVID-19 Programme for Economic Growth

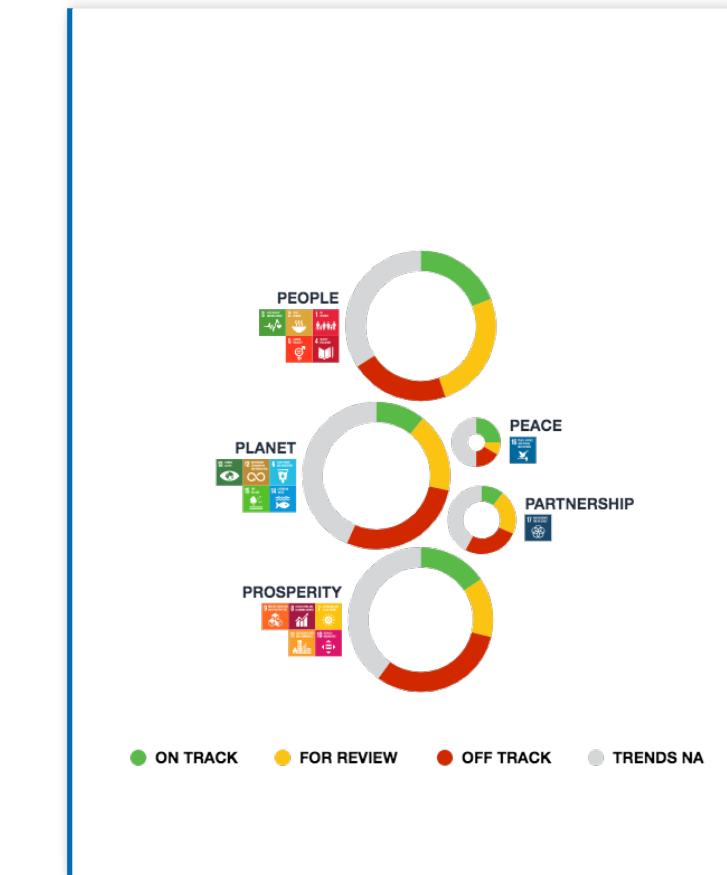
SDG INTERLINKAGES

SDG Interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG target can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help Ghana to achieve the 2030 Agenda and navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, Ghana's SDG progress is color coded at the target level.

Building from national priorities, the following pathways reflect policy investments with the most potential to accelerate the SDGs for Ghana. In addition to machine learning priorities, extensive consultations reflecting on the country's current context and the development and use of an 'in house weight-based assessment tool' produced the below 5 SDGs targets as priorities. They are carefully sequenced in order of priority:

- **Target 16.6:** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions
- **Target 8.5:** Full employment and decent work with equal pay.
- **Target 4.1:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **Target 6.2:** By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations
- **Target 7.3:** By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency



ACCELERATION PATHWAYS



SDG INTERLINKAGES

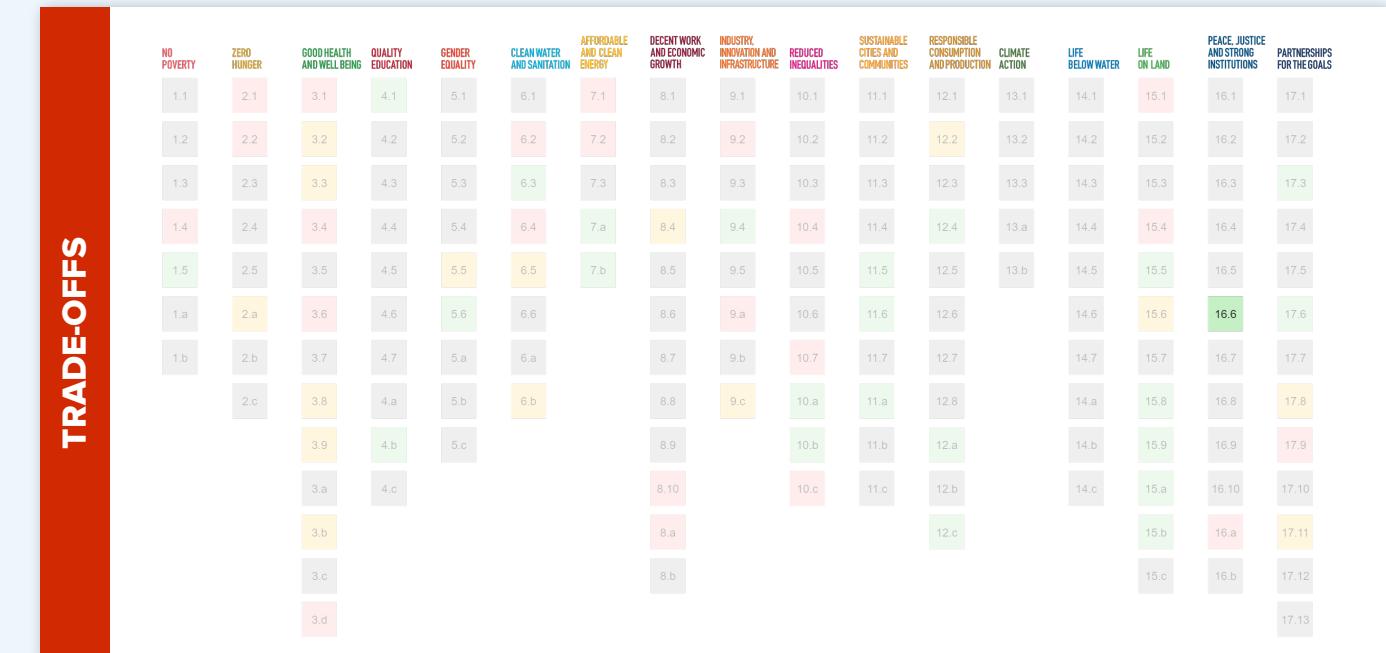
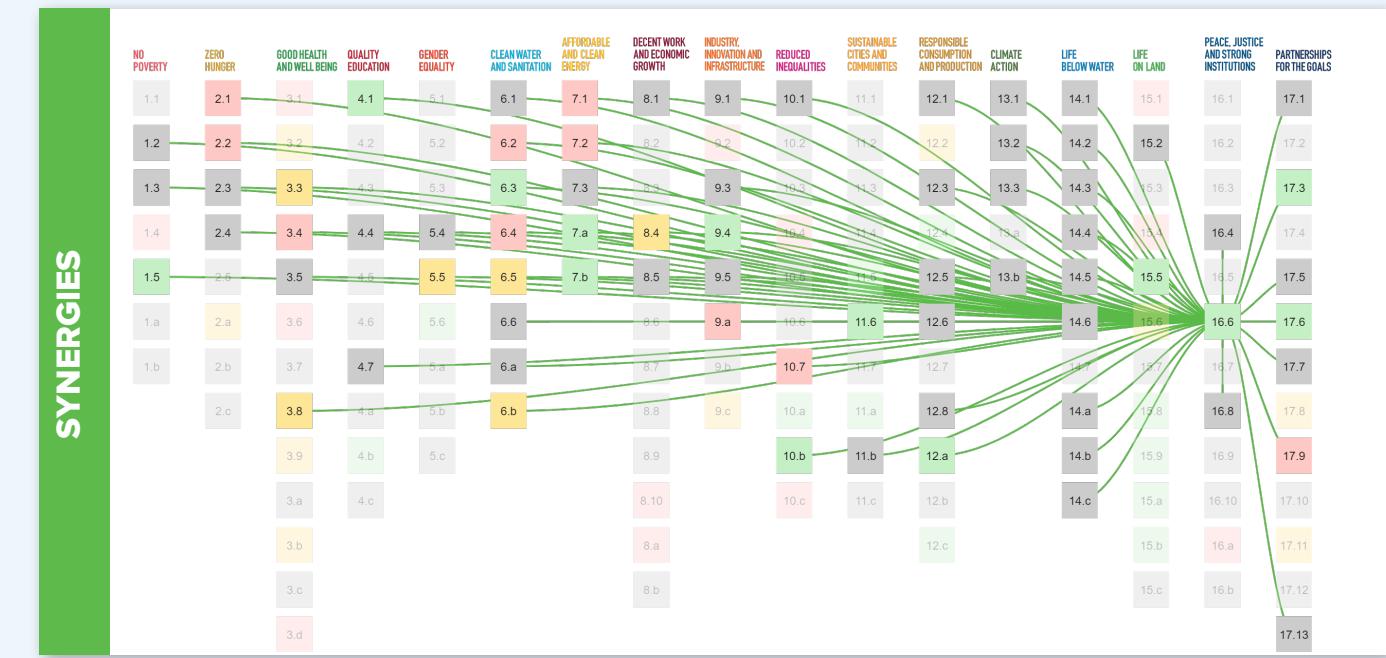
16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions

There are notable efforts to bolster governance frameworks and improve transparency and accountability within the public sector. However, perception of corruption and inefficiencies in the public sector remains high. While 69.7 percent of Ghanaians are satisfied with their most recent experience of public services, it is important to reflect on the transformative services needed to accelerate the SDGs.

Ghana's digital agenda (target 9.1), which signify the transformative services, when combined with investment in mobile technology (target 9.c) will ensure access to finance (target 8.10) and drive health (target 3.8) for all. The Agenda is digitizing government services (target 16.6), to build a biometric national identity register (target 16.9), to deploy a digital property addressing system (target 11.1), to develop mobile money interoperability and to institutionalize paperless port operations (target 9.1).

Ghana will take integrated actions which are drivers of progress across the SDGs: empower citizens to demand quality public services, strengthen feedback mechanisms in public service delivery and launch the National Monitoring and Evaluation Information System to monitor the quality-of-service deliver. The government will also intensify efforts for work on public-private partnerships, strengthening anti-corruption measures, enhancing e-governance, supporting open budget platforms, public financial management reforms and promoting public participation. This will be enabled by building and upgrading technological infrastructure which is essential for promoting transparent and efficient institutions.

● ON TRACK ● FOR REVIEW ● OFF TRACK ● TRENDS NA



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

SDG INTERLINKAGES

8.5: By 2030 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

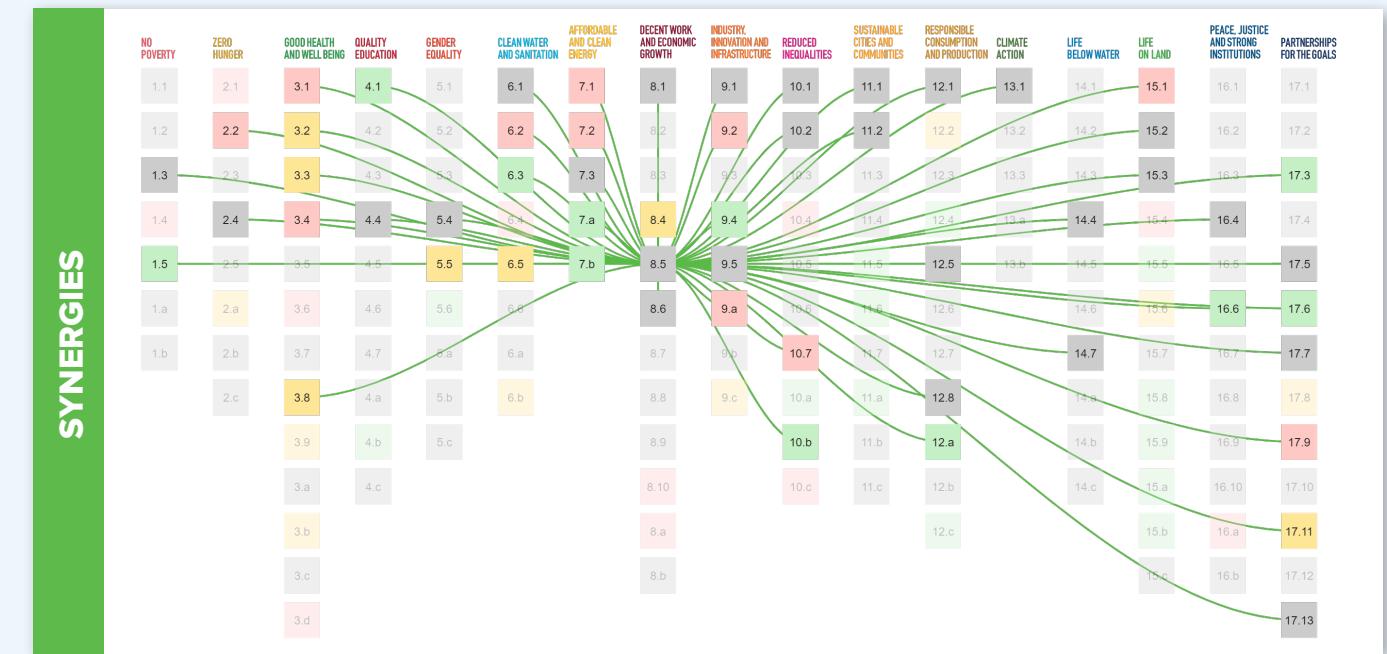
Unemployment rate in 2021 is 13.4% and it is higher for females (15.5%) than males (11.6%). It is much higher for young adults 15-24 years (32.8%).

Agenda for Jobs II is the main focus of the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework and of the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies for 2021-2025. Over this period Ghana intends to deepen its efforts started in the Agenda for Jobs I, including “One District, One Factory”, “One Village, One Dam”, and the implementation of the Ghana CARES programme.

To advance the transformational potential of the jobs and decent work ambition, policy combinations in the following areas can yield key multipliers:

- Close connection between national and local job creation, activating the 300 local authorities and leveraging local resources to power economic growth with social indicators for wellbeing.
- Rethinking incentive structures that minimize barriers in legislation and regulation for businesses to formalize their activities and to use this as an entry point for enhancement in key industries, in particular the service sector.
- Implement strategic initiatives such as the **YouState Programmes**, providing funding and technical support to youth and youth-led businesses; **Youth in Afforestation Programme**: job creation by youth's engagement in reforestation, rehabilitation and protection of degraded forests and **Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP)**: motivate youth to accept and appreciate farming/food production.

● ON TRACK ● FOR REVIEW ● OFF TRACK ● TRENDS NA



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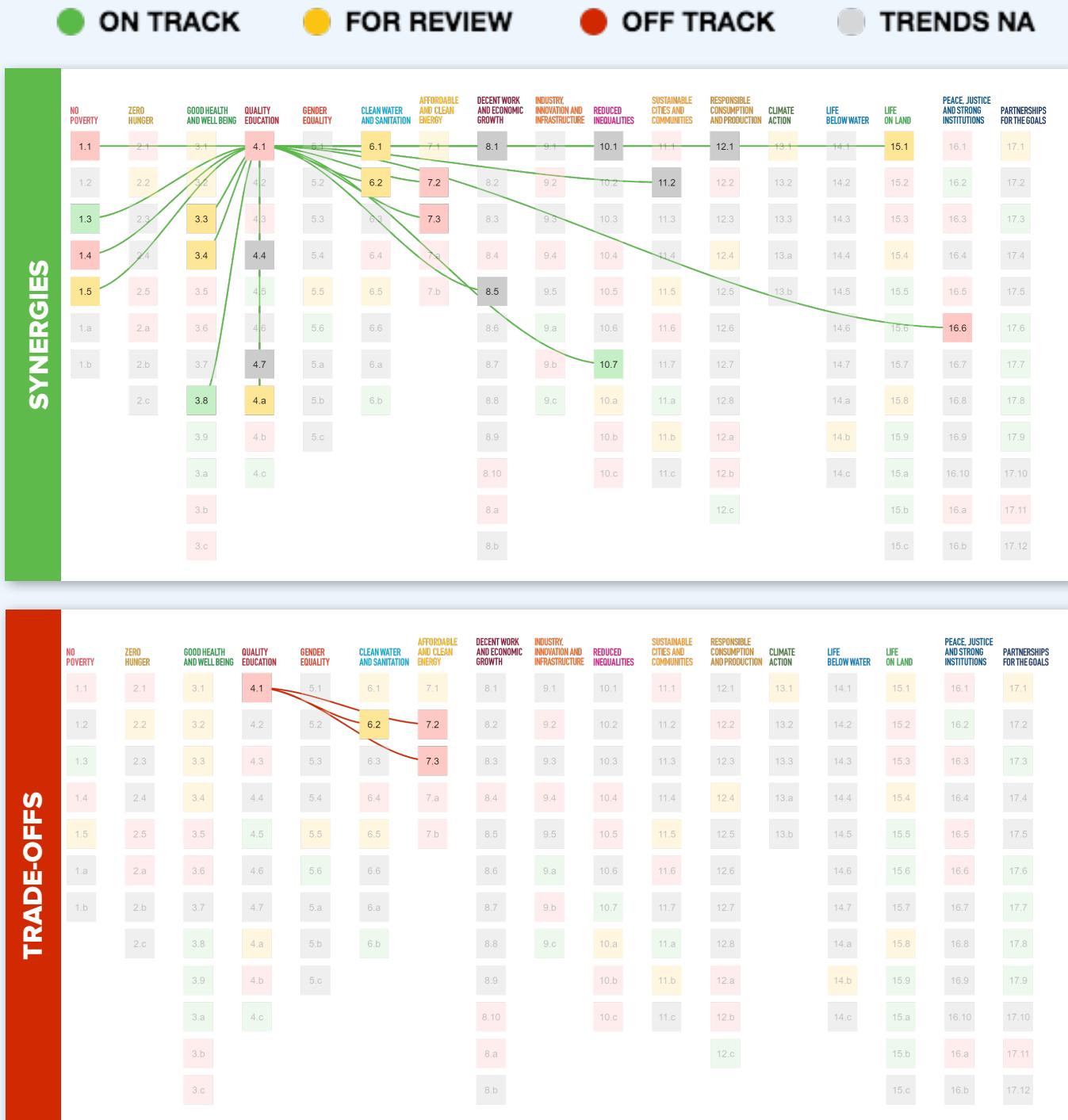
SDG INTERLINKAGES

4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Ghana has made significant progress in school attendance and completion rates. Gender parity has been achieved in kindergarten, primary and junior high school levels. Progress is also noted in improvement in schools accessing basic services such as electricity, basic water services and basic sanitation facilities. However, absenteeism and dropout among girls largely due to menstruation is persistent. There is also a challenge in junior high school (JHS) completion rates.

A focus on Target 4.1 will help build the adequate human capital and enhance employability skills (Target 8.2) that will support Ghana's industrialization drive (Target 9.2) and potentially lead to reduction in poverty (Target 1.1 and 1.2) and close inequality gaps (Target 10.2).

The government, in collaboration with development partners will forge a strong partnership in implementing the Ghana School Feeding Programme, Free Senior High School and Technical and Vocational Education, Ghana Teacher Licensure Examination (GTLE), Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics (STEM) The Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP). Implementing these programmes will lead to improved child nutrition, increased enrolment and retention, an inclusive society where everyone has access to education, promote the study of STEM and improve teachers professional standing and the overall quality of education.



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

SDG INTERLINKAGES

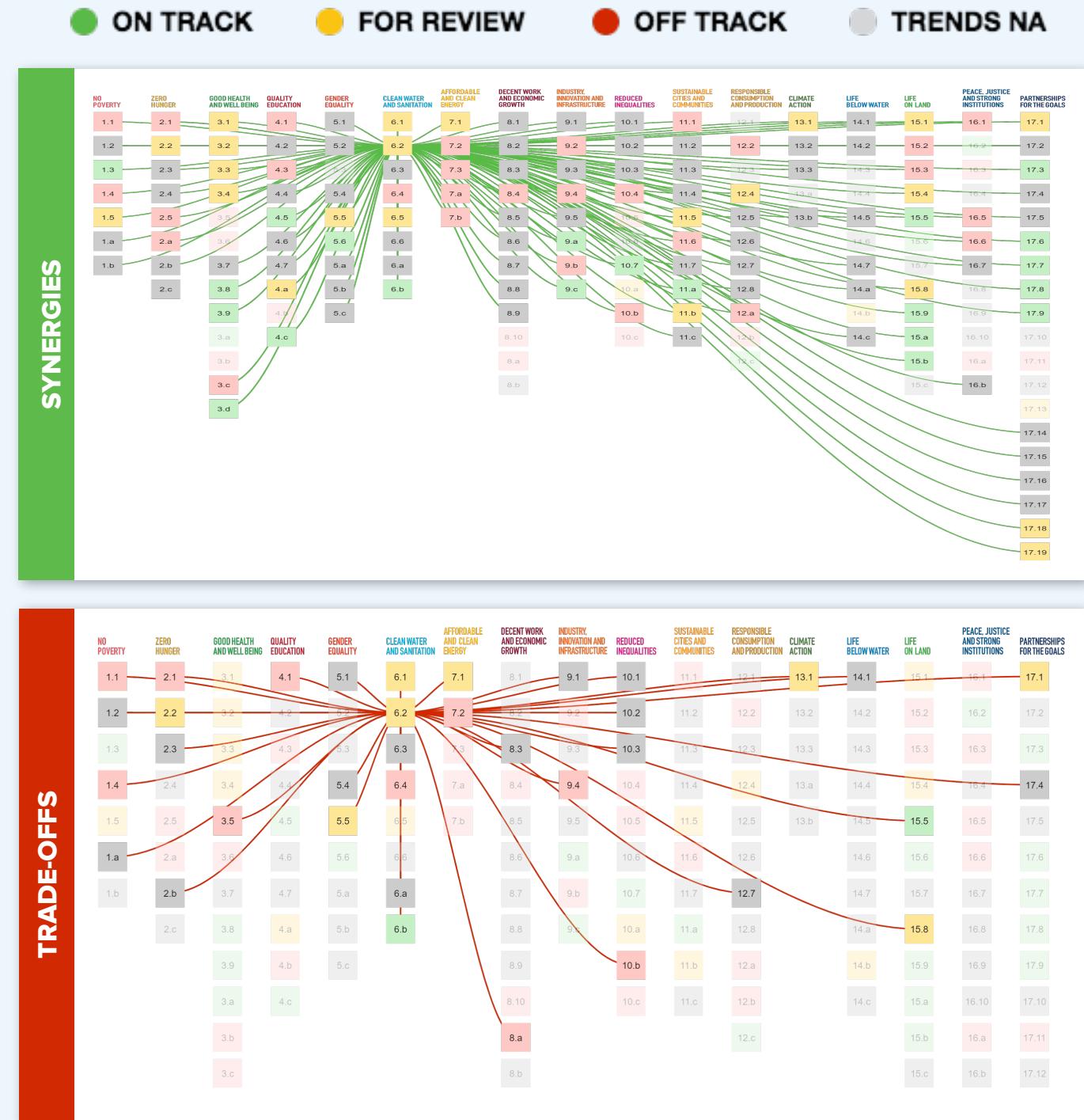
6.2: By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

There is a strong spatial inequality on access to sanitation and hygiene services in Ghana. Estimates show a 41% access in urban areas and just 13% in rural areas. Household toilet coverage has increased from 46% in 2010 to 59.3% in 2021.

There is a positive correlation between improved access to sanitation services, health outcomes, increased productivity and economic growth. Improved access to sanitation services supports better health by reducing water related diseases (Target 3.3), enhances education through improved school environments (Target 4.7), boosts economic growth by raising productivity and lessening health related costs (target 8.4) with positive impact on Ghana's industrialization drive (Target 9.2) with residual benefits through job creation (Target 8.5) and poverty reduction (Target 1.1 and 1.2).

The National Environmental Sanitation Policy and Investment Plan that seeks to ensure the sustainable management of environmental sanitation; the integrated Recycling and Composting Plana (IRECoP) a PPP partnership to improve waste recycling and a project for Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area to increase access to improved sanitation and water supply.

Above all, rallying support for two critical initiatives that the government is pioneering, the toilet-for-all initiative to ensure universal access to sanitation and the waste-to energy investment holds great potential for achieving SDGs 6 and related goals.



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

SDG INTERLINKAGES

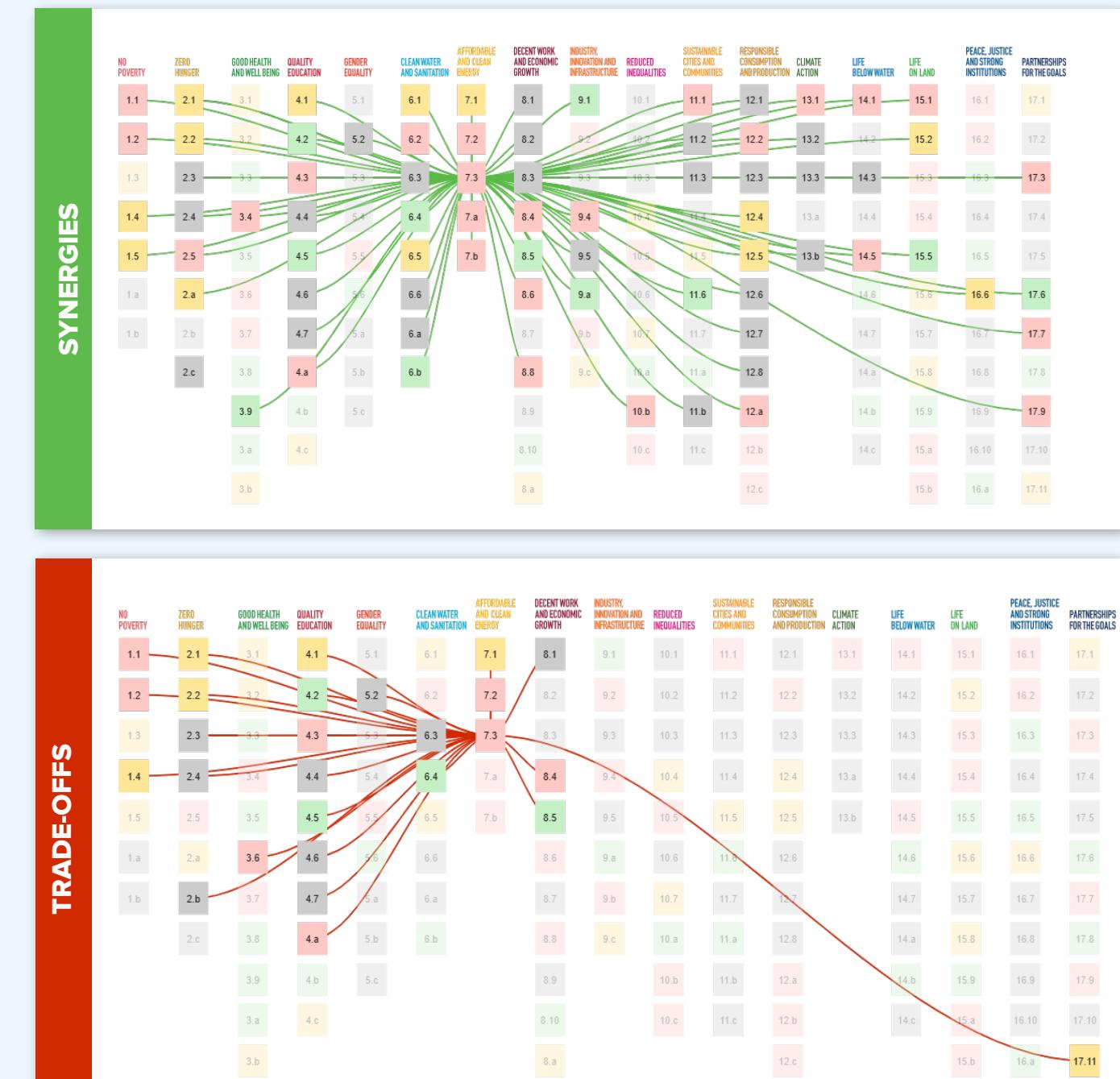
7.3: By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

Ghana is on track to achieving universal access to electricity with 86.3 percent of the population connected to the national grid in 2021; the coverage was higher in urban areas, 95.2% and 72.6% in rural areas; this is more than four times the rural coverage in 2000. Recent data show that 88.5% of the country's population has electricity access of which 65.3% is thermal, 34.1% hydro and 0.6% renewables.

Improved energy efficiency is linked to an uptake in renewables, which ultimately limits the emission footprints (Target 13.2) thereby creating opportunities for more green industries (Target 9.2) which has implications for creating new and green jobs (Target 8.5) and reducing poverty (Target 1.1 and 1.2).

To achieve target 7.3, Ghana is working towards a gradual improvement in the share of renewables in energy generation mix, decrease the cost of solar panels, address the continuous disparity in access to electricity between the northern and southern parts and reduce the number of households depending on wood fuel/charcoal by reducing cost of LPG. Also, the Power Sector Development and Management programme, Energy Efficiency and Demand-side Management, Renewable and Alternative Energy Development Programme and the 4. Ghana Energy Development and Access Project (GEDAP) will yield greater results given the country's established framework (policy and legislation) for engaging the private sector and development partners in infrastructure development.

● ON TRACK ● FOR REVIEW ● OFF TRACK ● TRENDS NA



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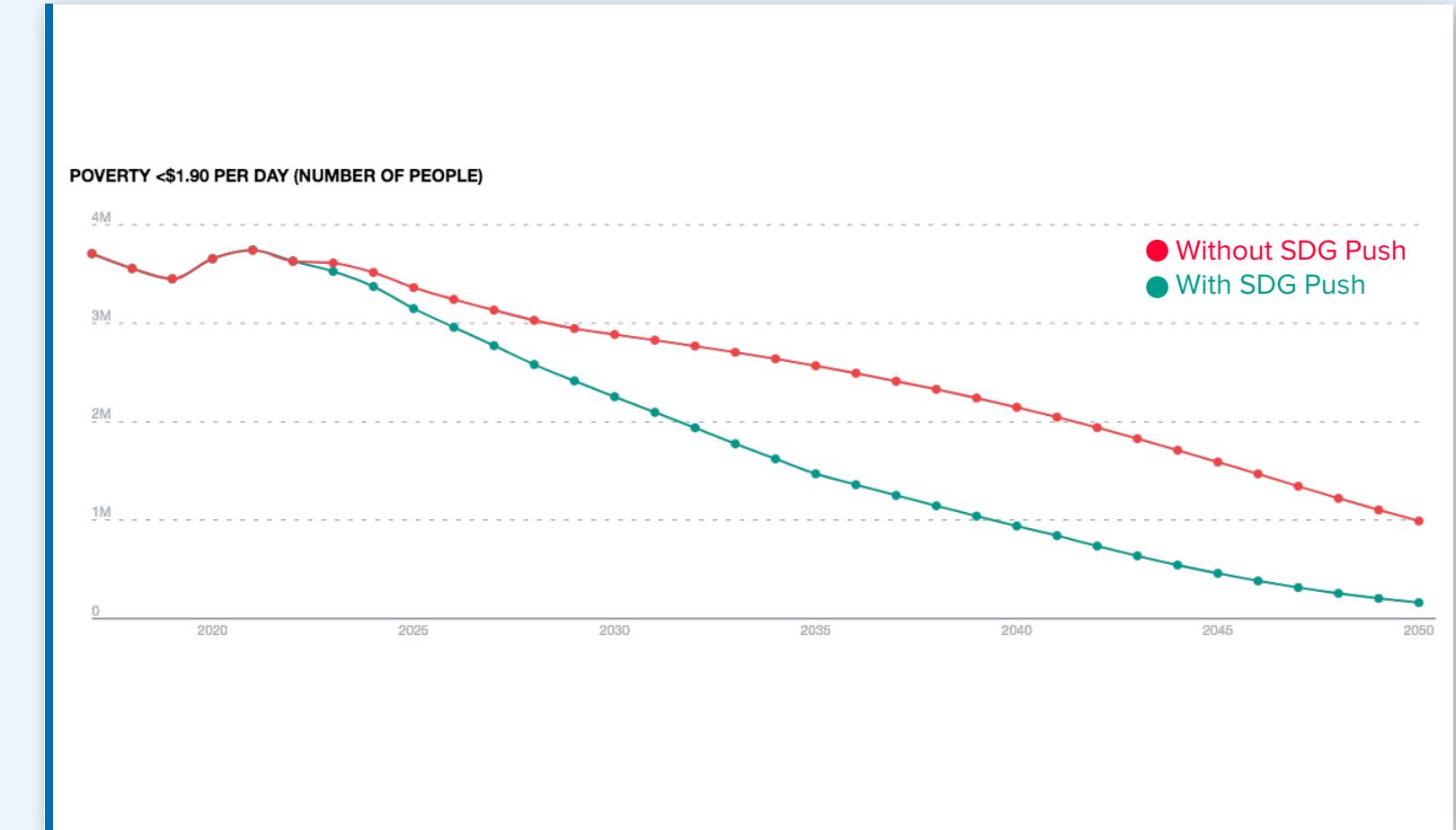
FUTURES SCENARIOS

Achieving the SDGs is possible.

The ‘SDG Push’ is a futures scenario based on 48 integrated accelerators in the areas of Governance, Social Protection, thea Green Economy and Digital Disruption. It uses national data to explore the impact on human development by 2030 and by 2050 across key SDG indicators.

Incorporating ‘SDG Push’ accelerators into development interventions in Ghana can reduce the number of people living in poverty over time.

People living in poverty	By 2030	By 2050
Without the SDG Push	2.9 mn	990,000
With the SDG Push	2.3 mn	160,000



Explore SDG Futures Scenarios at:

<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/GHA/future-scenarios>

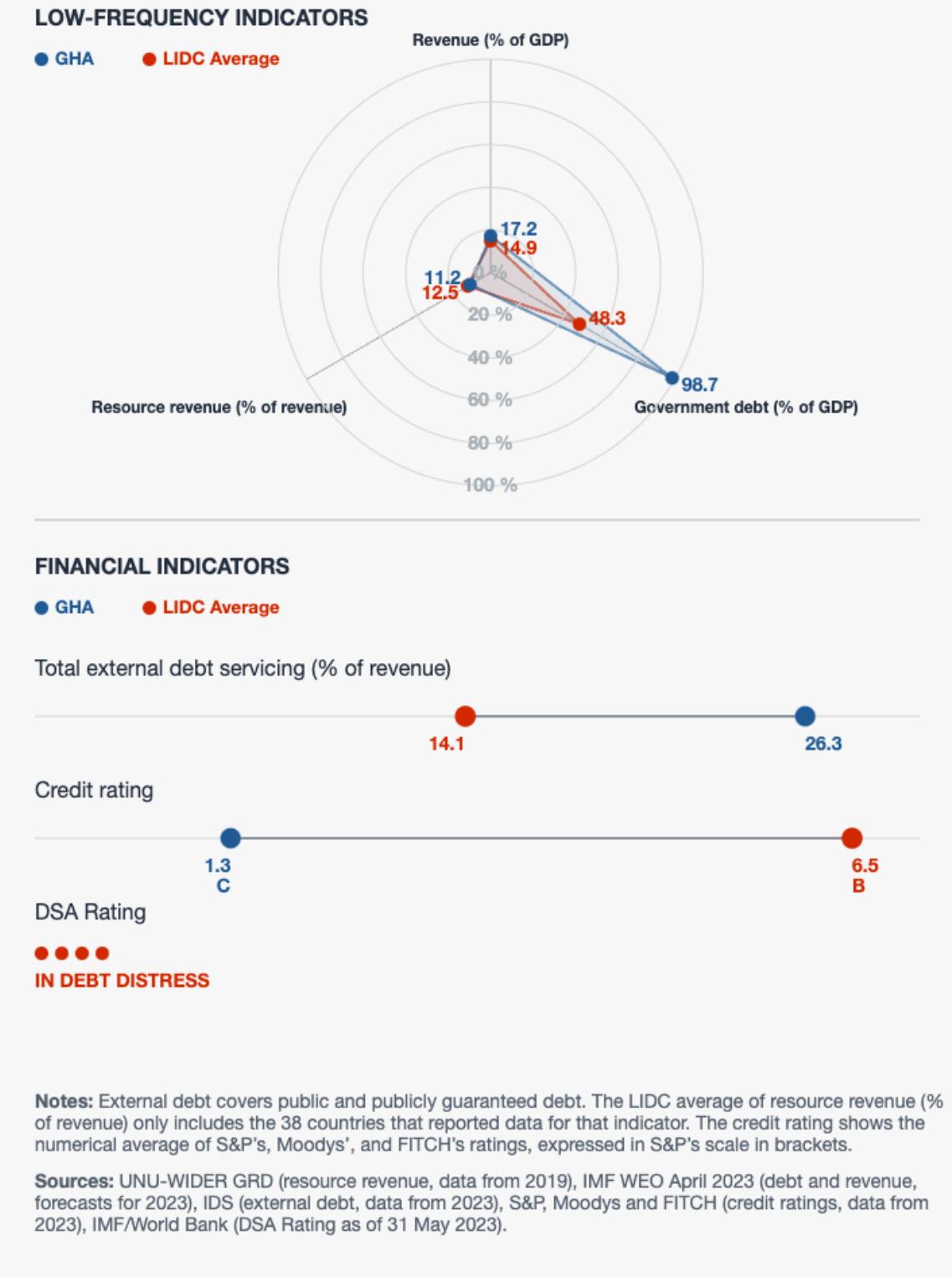
FINANCE & STIMULUS

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 and the natural resource share of total revenue. The financial indicator graph shows higher frequency data on external debt servicing relative to revenue, the sovereign credit rating, and the country's latest Debt Sustainability Assessment (DSA) risk rating.

Ghana's gross government debt, projected at 98.7% of GDP in 2023, is more than double the level of the low-income developing countries (LIDC) group at 48.3%. Ghana has been battling a debt crisis since late 2022 and is one of four countries negotiating a debt restructuring under the Group of Twenty's Common Framework. The country is expected to collect 17.2% of GDP in revenue this year – 2.3 percentage points more than the LIDC group – with natural resources accounting for about 11.2% of said revenue.

Ghana's public external debt servicing this year is projected to be as high as 26.3% of revenue compared to 14.1% for the LIDC average. Since late 2022 the country's credit rating has been in the 'default' category and the country has lost access to international capital markets. Similarly, Ghana's latest World Bank and IMF DSA from May 2023 rates the country as 'in debt distress'.



SDG STIMULUS

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

- Providing liquidity to support recovery in the near term
- Enhancing debt relief for vulnerable countries
- Expanding development financing by MDBs
- Aligning financial flows with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, according to country-level priorities and needs, for example through the roll-out of the UN Integrated National Financing Framework (INFFs).

Given the projected fiscal and financial constraints faced by Ghana, possible funding options for the investments derived from the identified interlinkages are as follows:

- Tax and revenue reform
- Debt for SDGs
- Climate finance
- Blended and public-private finance
- SDG-aligned business environment and investment
- Accessing financial markets and insurance
- Remittances, philanthropy and faith-based financing

**United Nations
Secretary-General's
SDG Stimulus
to Deliver
Agenda 2030**

FEBRUARY 2023



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 CO₂ 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).