



# INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS SOUTH SUDAN

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: SOUTH SUDAN

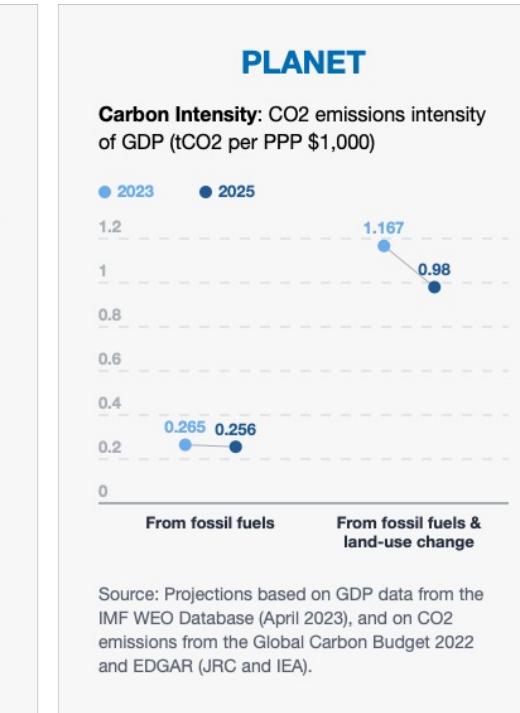
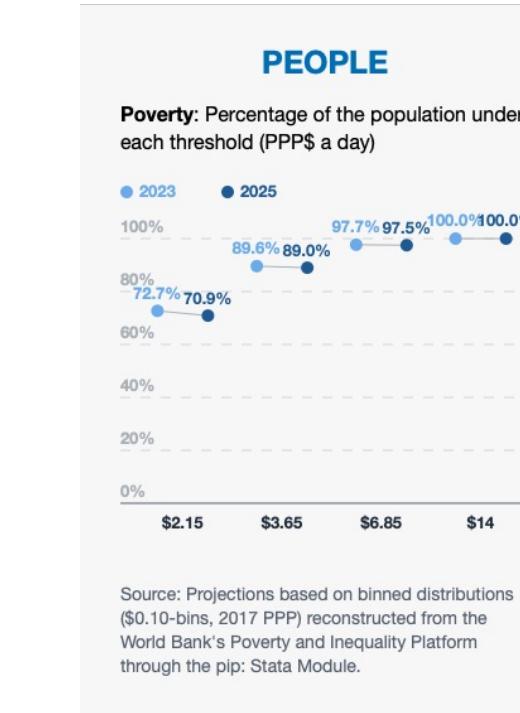
While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

South Sudan's economic growth cycle in 2023-2024 is in acceleration, but is expected to transition to more moderate growth by 2025.<sup>1</sup> This pace of growth is characterized by being 68% higher, on average, than the global figure (and aligned to the country's growth trajectory projected before the pandemic and subsequent crises).<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the country's commitments to achieving the SDGs are focused on consolidating peace, stabilizing the economy and returning to a path of sustainable development.

This pace of economic growth would exert a moderate positive impact on extreme poverty (at \$2.15 a day). Moreover, the growth cycle would be somewhat less dependent on carbon emissions as the country's fossil emissions intensity of GDP is projected to decrease at an annual rate of 1.7%, and of 8% when also considering land-use change.<sup>2</sup>

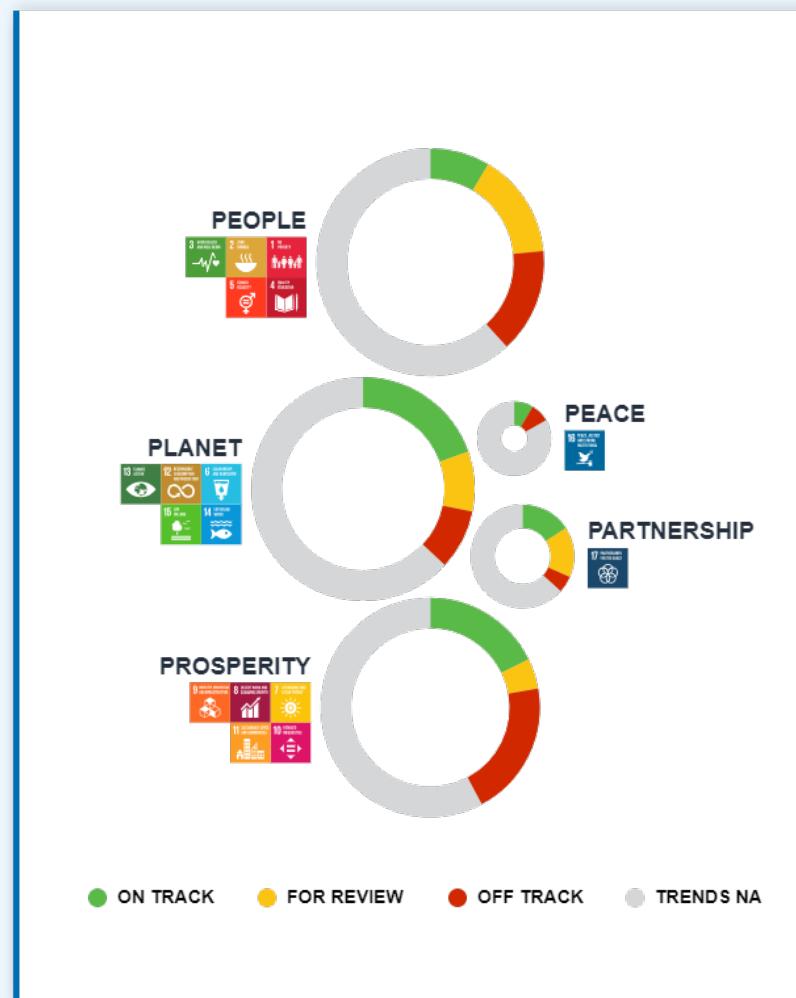
<sup>1</sup> The economic cycle is determined by adjusting the country's current GDP growth forecasts (April 2023) by their gap relative to the forecasts made before the pandemic and subsequent crises (October 2019). If the adjusted rates (not shown) are below 2%, the economy is considered in mitigation; 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).



# SDG TRENDS

Understanding how South Sudan 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.



*Trends in detail:*

<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/SSD/sdg-trends>

# SDG PRIORITIES

South Sudan's national priorities are analysed using machine learning to reveal the most prominent SDGs referenced in the South Sudan Revised National Development Strategy 2021-2024. This analysis uses a custom-built model for SDG classification. It considers 100k+ terms, including phrases and expressions.



*Key documents for analysis:*

1. South Sudan Revised National Development Strategy (NDS) 2021-2024

*Priorities in detail:*

<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/SSD/current-priorities>

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

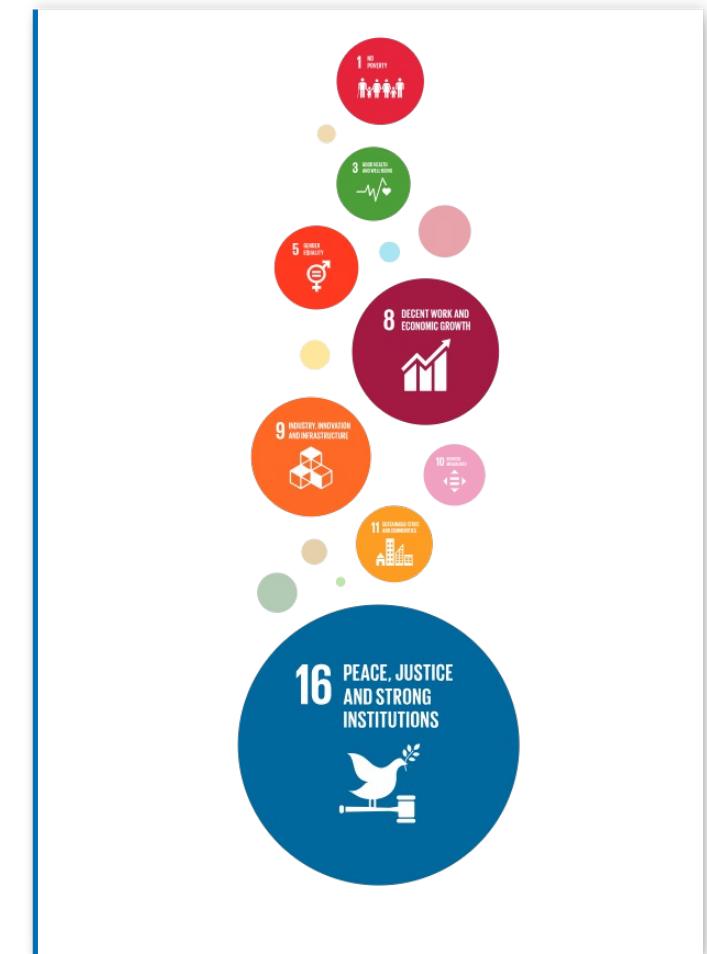
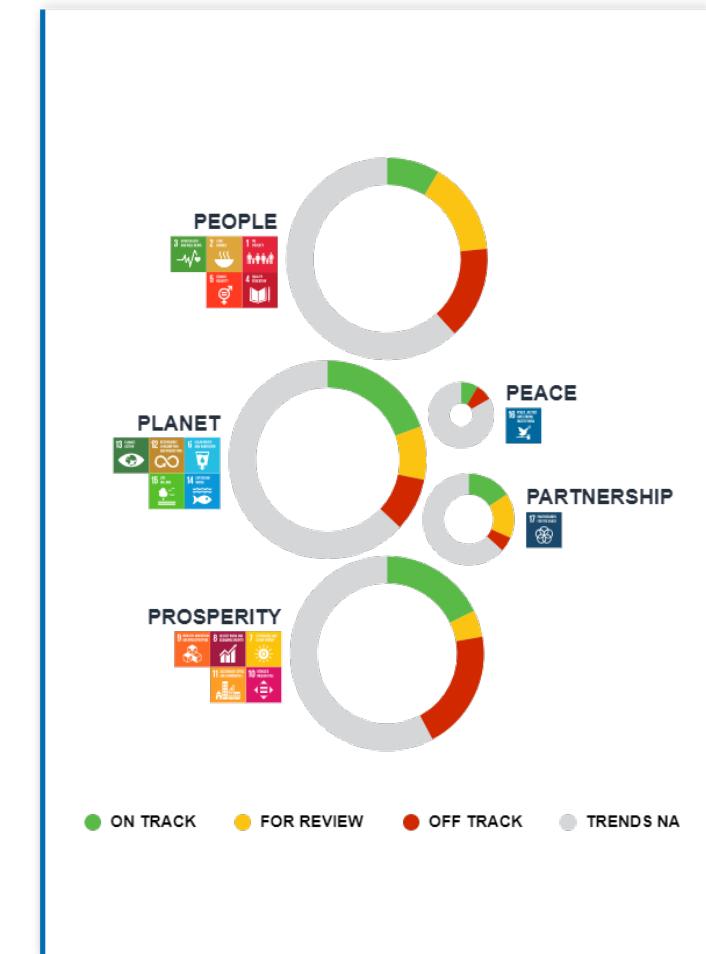
SDG interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help South Sudan to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, South Sudan's SDG progress is colour-coded at the target level.

Building from national trends and priorities, the following integrated SDG pathways reflect policy choices with the most potential to accelerate the SDGs for South Sudan:

- Target 2.4: Sustainable food production and resilient agricultural practices
- Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay
- Target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related disasters
- Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions

These SDG targets could be the basis upon which South Sudan articulates its ambitions for the next seven years and makes commitments at the upcoming SDG Summit.



## ACCELERATION PATHWAYS

SYNERGIES

TRADE-OFFS

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

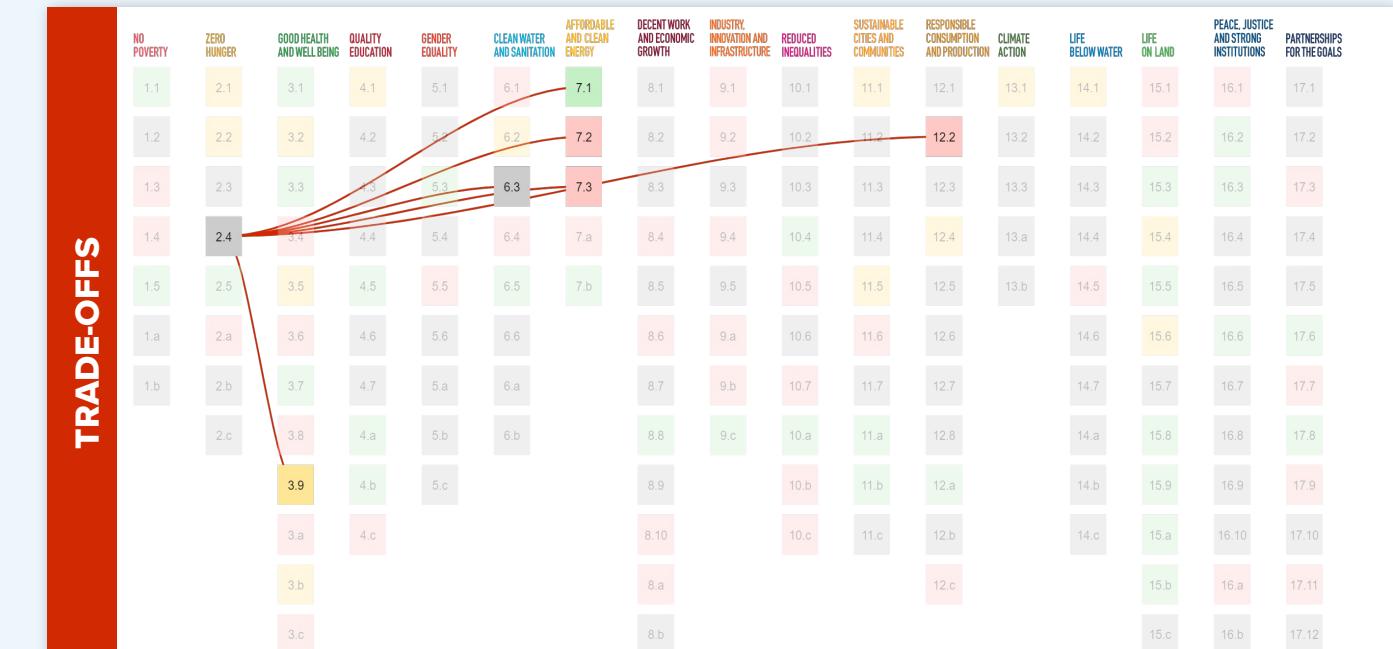
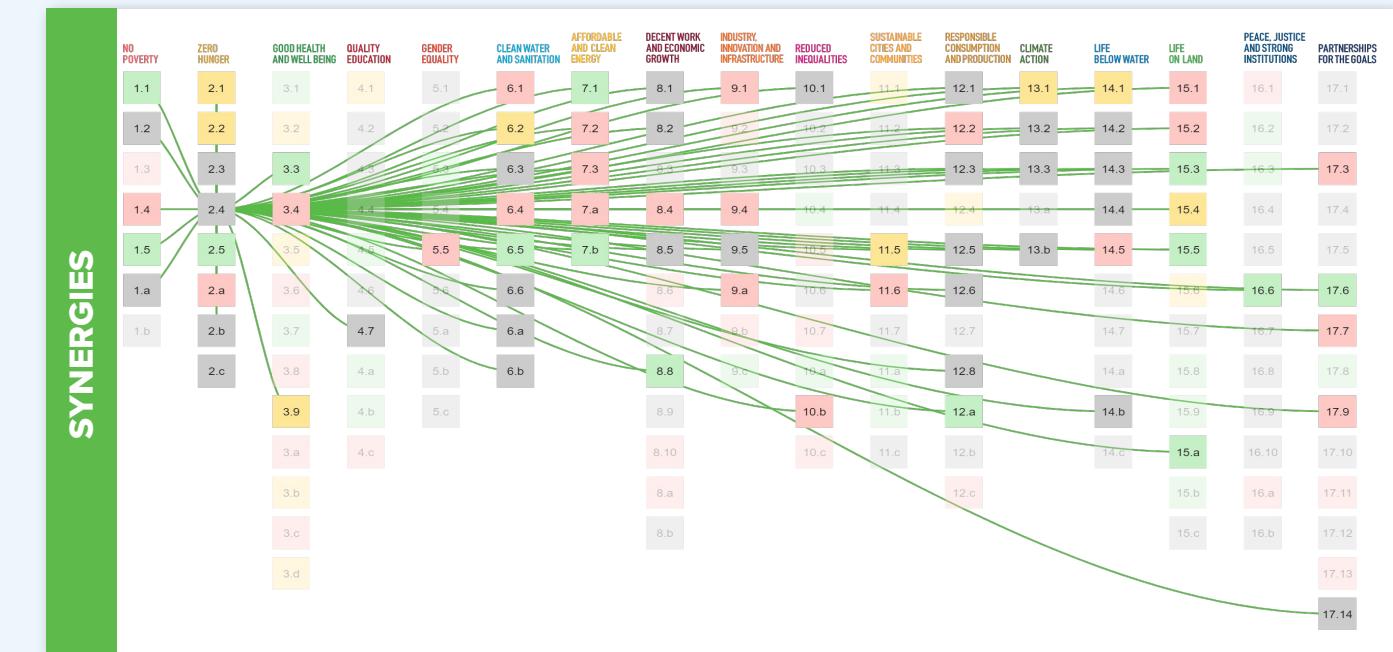
**2.4: By 2030 ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality**

Enhancing the sustainability of food systems confronts a key challenge of food insecurity in South Sudan (target 2.1) and in combination with national priorities relates to sustainable growth, can spur the development of local economies (target 11.1). While South Sudan has significant potential to develop resilient food systems, food insecurity persists, exacerbated by social and economic fragmentation, where local economies are disconnected from each other due to infrastructure and conflict. For instance about 75% of the land area is suitable for agriculture while approximately one-half of the total 64.7 million hectares of land is suitable for cultivation, which points to the potential.

Improvements in food production systems requires combination of investment through local, national and international partnerships that build resilience (target 17.3).

Advancing sustainable food systems cannot be disconnected from progress in peacebuilding, in particular violence reduction (target 16.1). The Partnership for Recovery and Resilience is a driver of integrated progress in this respect, fostering partnerships across regional and central government.

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



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

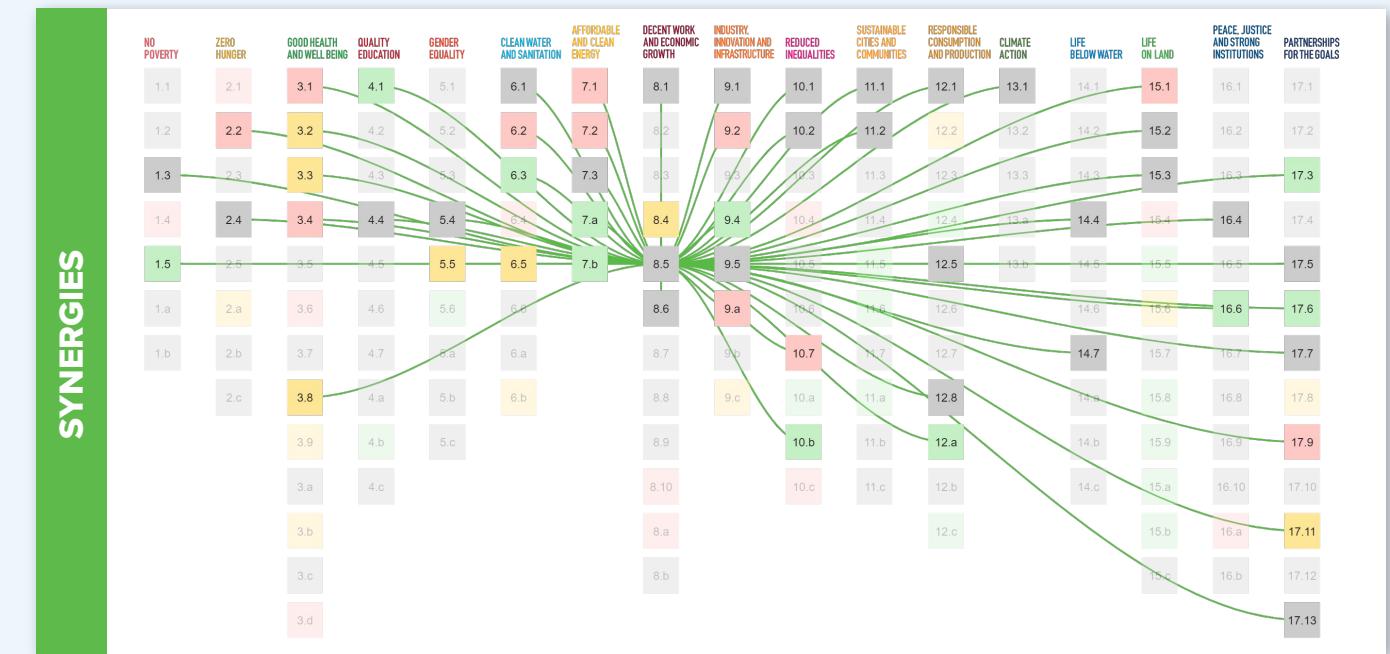
## 8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

Decent work for all is a foundational priority of the government of South Sudan, and directly related to is ambition to build just and peaceful societies. Critical in this respect is advancing decent work for all men and women, young people and people with disabilities – equally critical as an investment to stabilize and build from peace dividends. Decent work was amplified across stakeholder groups engaged in national dialogue and consultations carried forward into the South Sudan National Development Strategy.

The policy combination for creating jobs is closely connected with transforming education (Target 4.1, Target 8.2) building in part from the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study Update, trade (Target 17.11) and reshaping the role of government at all levels (Target 16.6). While there are ongoing reforms prescribed in Chapter IV of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), their domestication in the states and counties (11.1) will further advance job creation.

The above policy combinations have demonstrated most impact when approached through a local lens, address geographies and specific needs and vulnerabilities with hyperlocal tailoring. That is where unlocking progress to build social cohesion (Target 10.2) and facilitating movement through resilient infrastructure (Target 9.1) will yield significant gains.

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# SDG INTERLINKAGES

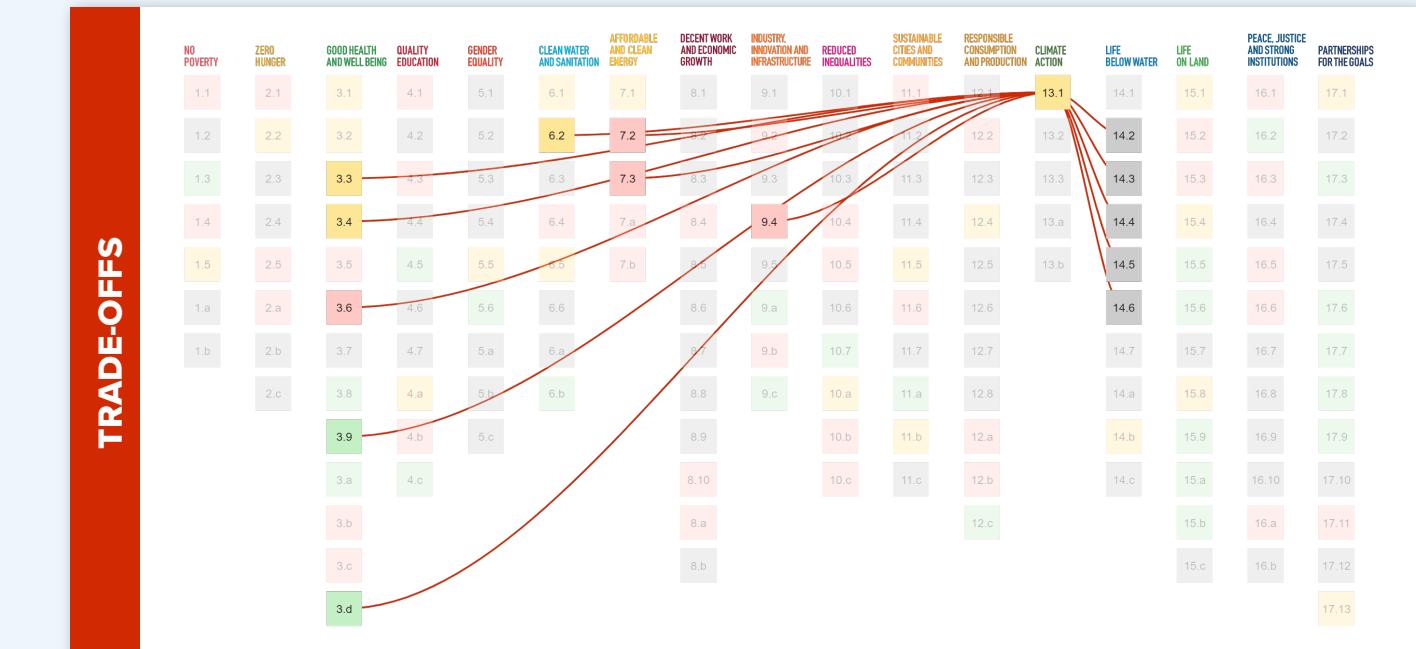
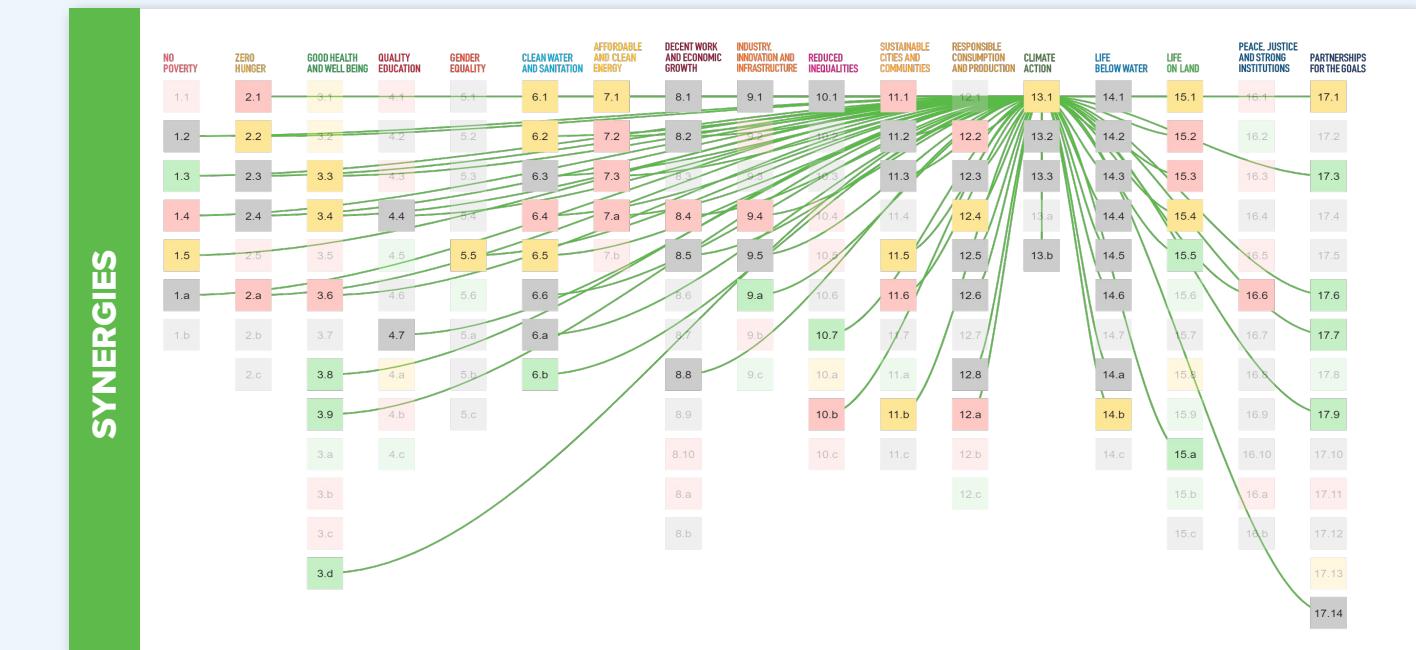
## 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

In South Sudan, there is a strong connection between conflict and climate. Conflict reflects lingering disputes over land, livestock and water, and these tensions are expected to worsen with the climate crisis. Pastoralist communities move their cattle in search pasture and water. They often come into conflict with communities that are mainly crop farmers.

Government and partners can strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters (target 13.1) at the local level by leveraging current priority investments in integrated water resource management (target 6.5) and directly aligned with South Sudan's priority to advance just and peaceful societies through civilian disarmament. (target 16.1).

The gendered experience of conflict and climate in South Sudan requires differentiated strategies that address the movement of pastoralist men with livestock and the experience of women often struggling with the effects of the drought on households.

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Explore the interlinkages at:

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# SDG INTERLINKAGES

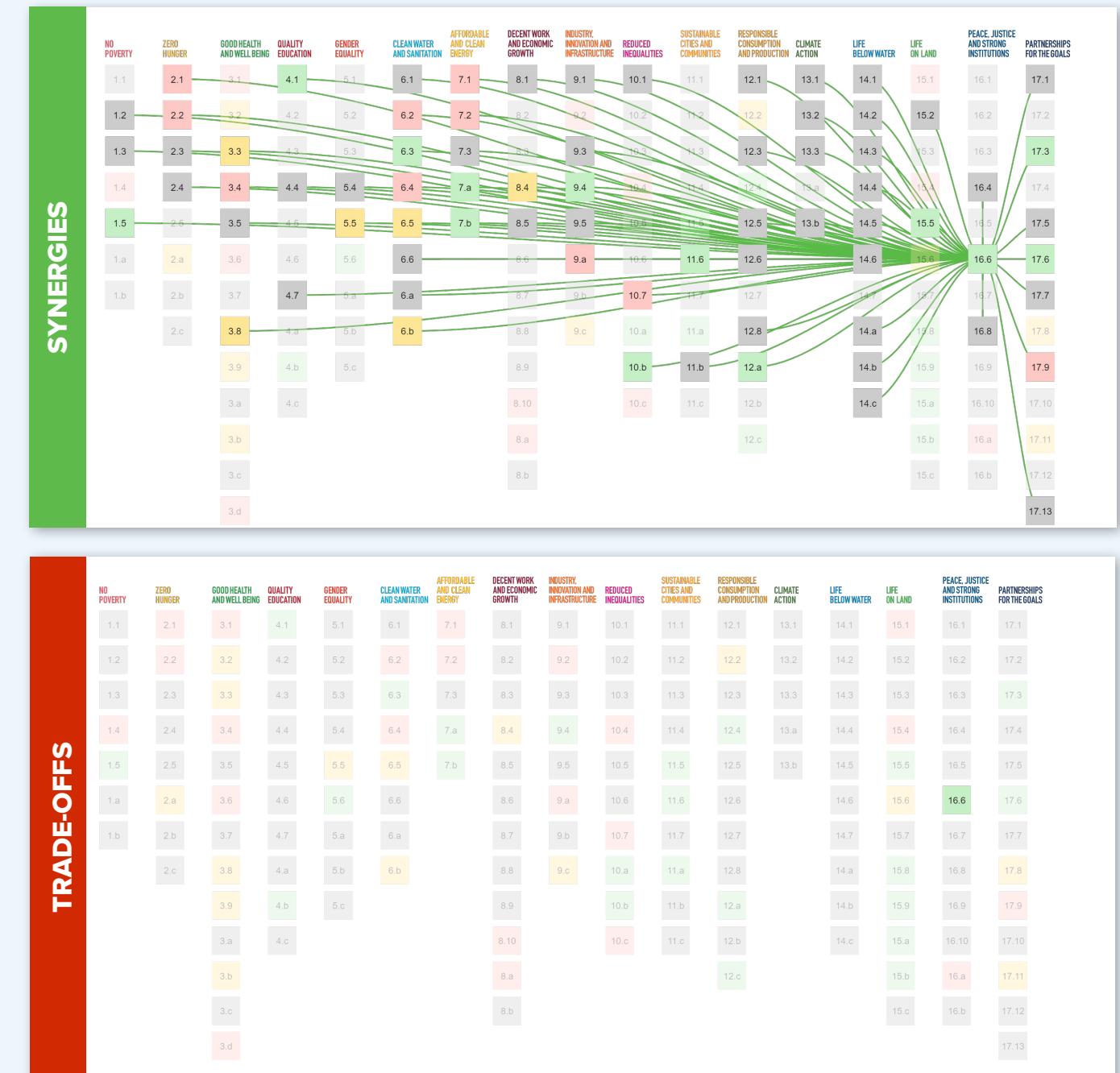
## 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

The thrust of South Sudan's development blueprint is to consolidate peace, stabilize the economy and return to a path of sustainable development. This prioritization reflects South Sudan's focus on peace, justice and effective governance to catalyse the achievement of multiple SDGs.

The development blueprint considers local public services of a transformative nature including disarmament, access to justice before the law, public finance management and e-governance. No data is available citizens' experience with public services. Innovative ways to collect data, and directly combine with health (Target 3.8) and education (Target 4.1) mutually reinforce progress to build effective public services for all.

To unlock progress, capabilities development has been identified as a key driver (Target 17.9).

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# FUTURES SCENARIOS

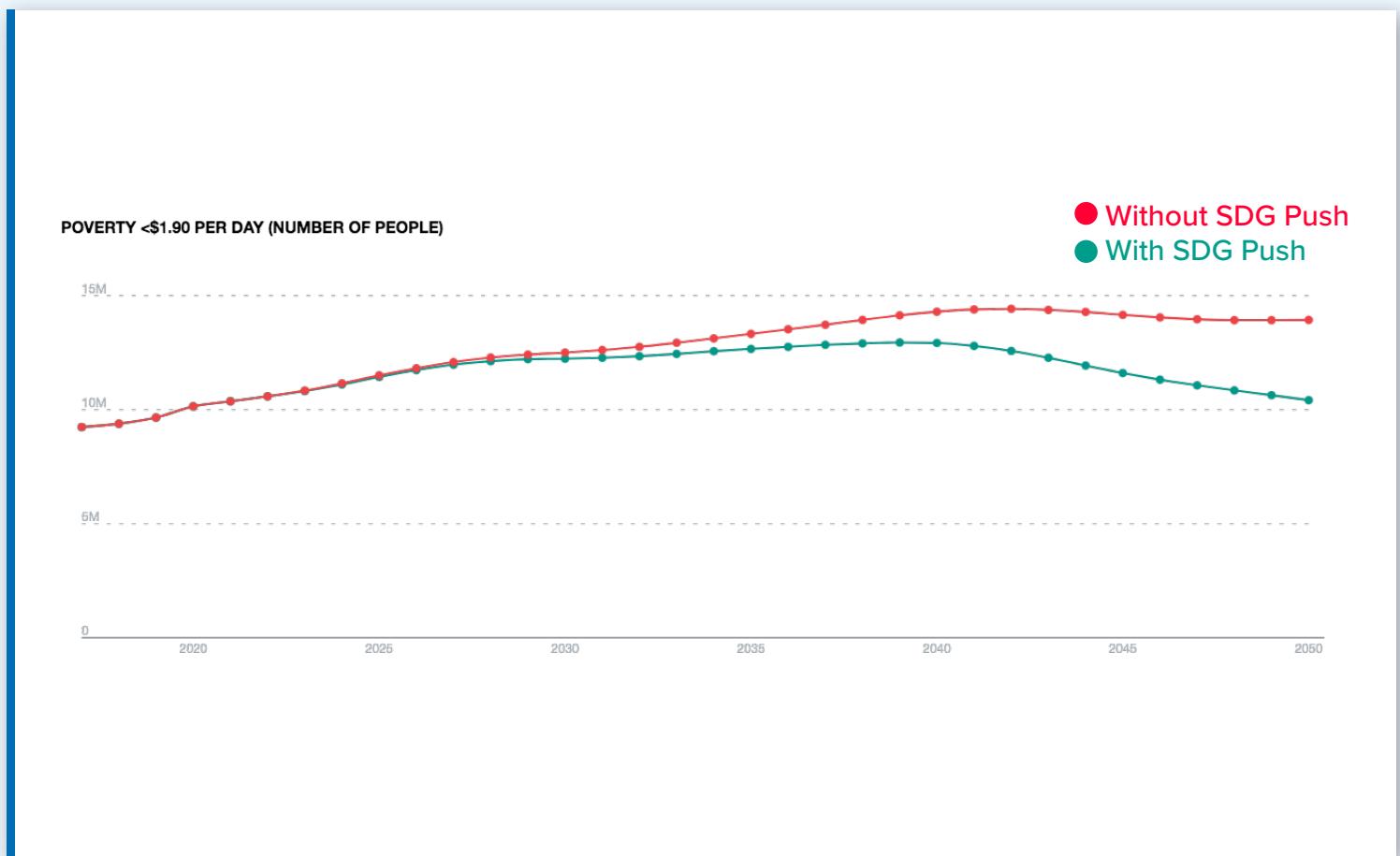
Achieving the SDGs is possible.

South Sudan believes achieving the SDGs is possible and wants to build the ‘SDG Push’ along the lines of a transformative state, creating jobs and driving local manufacturing. It is through this that South Sudan hopes to reduce poverty by 2030 and by 2050, and to build the resilience needed to maintain the middle-income status of the country.

South Sudan has a priority: to establish mechanisms that enable the nation to know whether the nation is making progress (measurement and data), to set realistic goals and to deliver on those targets.

People living in poverty	By 2030	By 2050
Without the SDG Push	13M	14M
With the SDG Push	12M	10M

Targets for the share of population satisfied with various public services, number of jobs and local manufacturing.



Explore SDG Futures Scenarios at:

<https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/SSD/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.

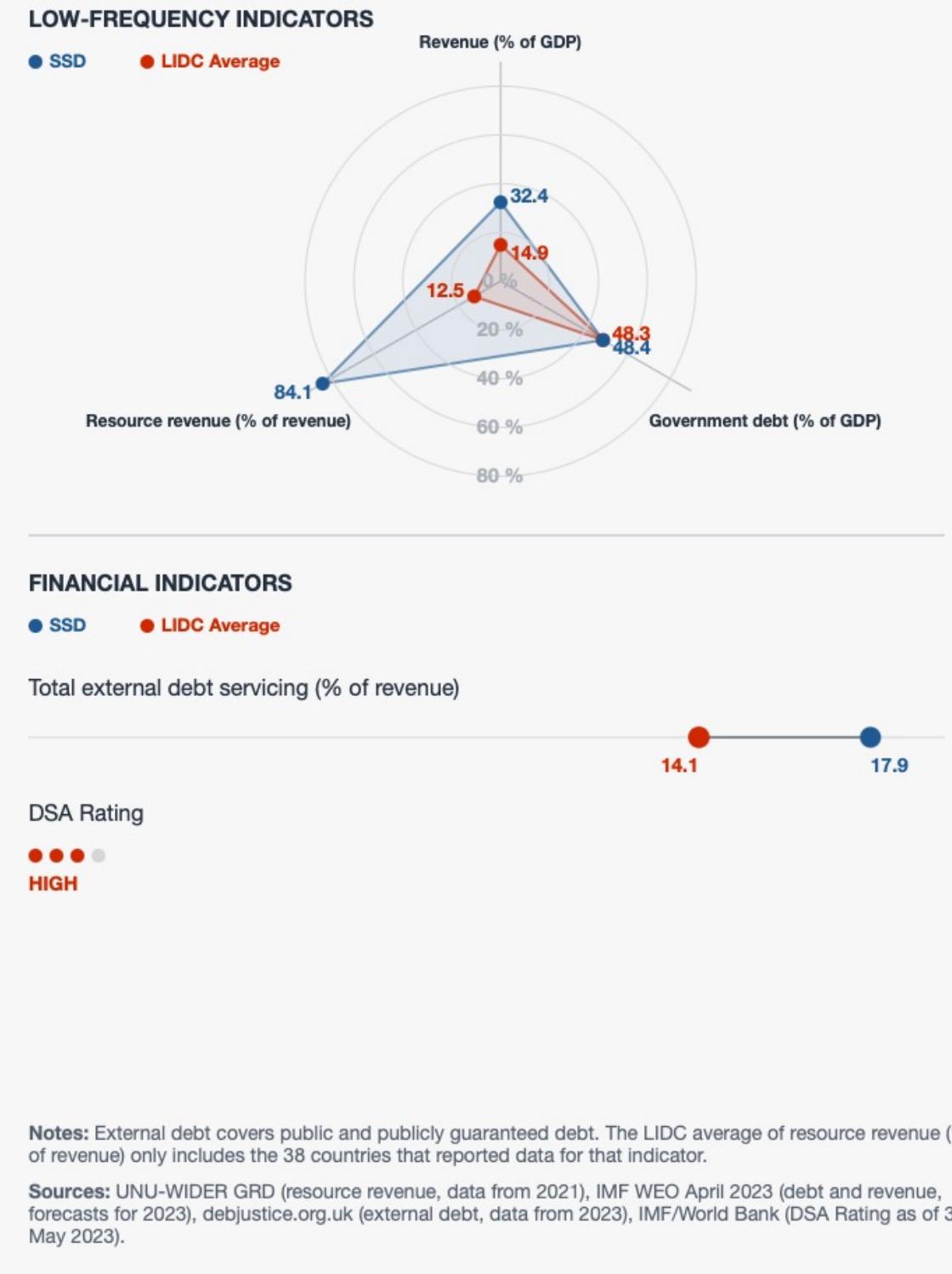
The radar diagram shows low frequency data points linked to government revenue and debt as a proportion of GDP and the natural resource share of total revenue. The financial indicator graphs show external debt servicing relative to revenue and country's latest Debt Sustainability Assessment (DSA) risk rating.

South Sudan's gross government debt, projected at 48.4% of GDP in 2023, is nearly identical to the low-income developing countries (LIDC) group of 48.3%. The country is expected to collect 32.4% of GDP in revenue this year, which is more than double the LIDC group ratio of 14.9%.

South Sudan's public external debt servicing this year is expected to be as high as 17.9% of revenue compared to 14.1% for the LIDC average. The latest World Bank and IMF DSA from March 2023 rates the country at 'high risk' of debt distress.

Growth is projected to rebound in 2022/23 due to increased oil export receipts. This is anticipated to be driven by industry and by private consumption and investment. Inflation is projected to increase to 16% in 2022/23 because of drought and higher food prices. Fiscal consolidation, the IMF Special Drawing Rights allocation (about 3.8% of GDP) and increased oil revenues will generate a fiscal surplus of 8.9% of GDP in 2022/23.

South Sudan is using a UN Integrated National Financing Framework to address key fiscal and financial constraints and to build a more sustainable financial architecture at the national level. Priority actions include the strategic management of oil revenue; broadening and deepening the revenue base; enhancing local content in development projects; and the contribution of FDI to national development priorities.



# 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 South Sudan possible funding options for the investments derived from the identified interlinkages are as follows:

- Tax and revenue reform, with the focus on increasing non-oil revenue
- Debt for SDGs, through Central Bank Treasury bills and accessing concessional financing
- Blended and public-private finance, increasing commercial banks' lending to the private sector
- SDG-aligned business environment and investment
- Accessing financial markets and insurance

## 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 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).