



INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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: REPUBLIC OF CONGO

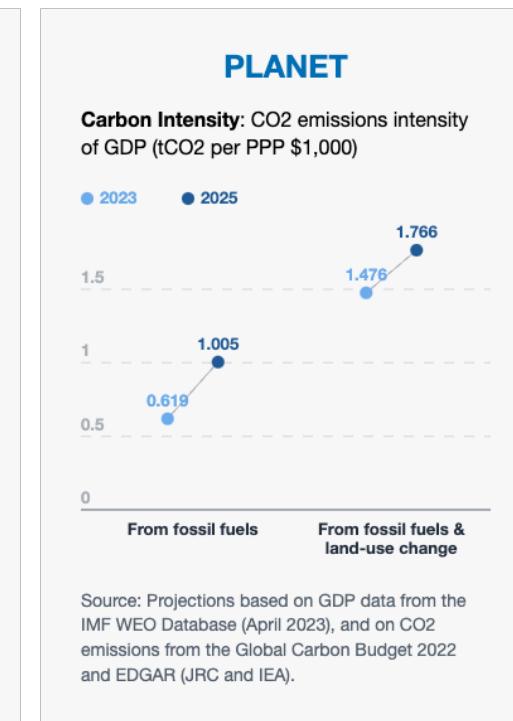
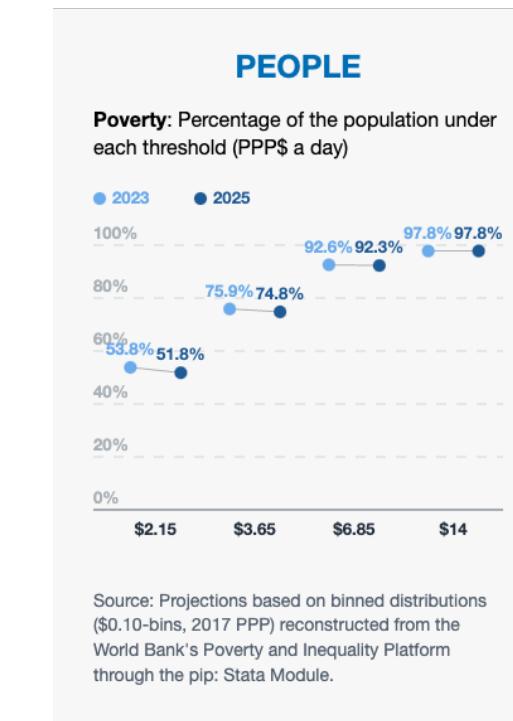
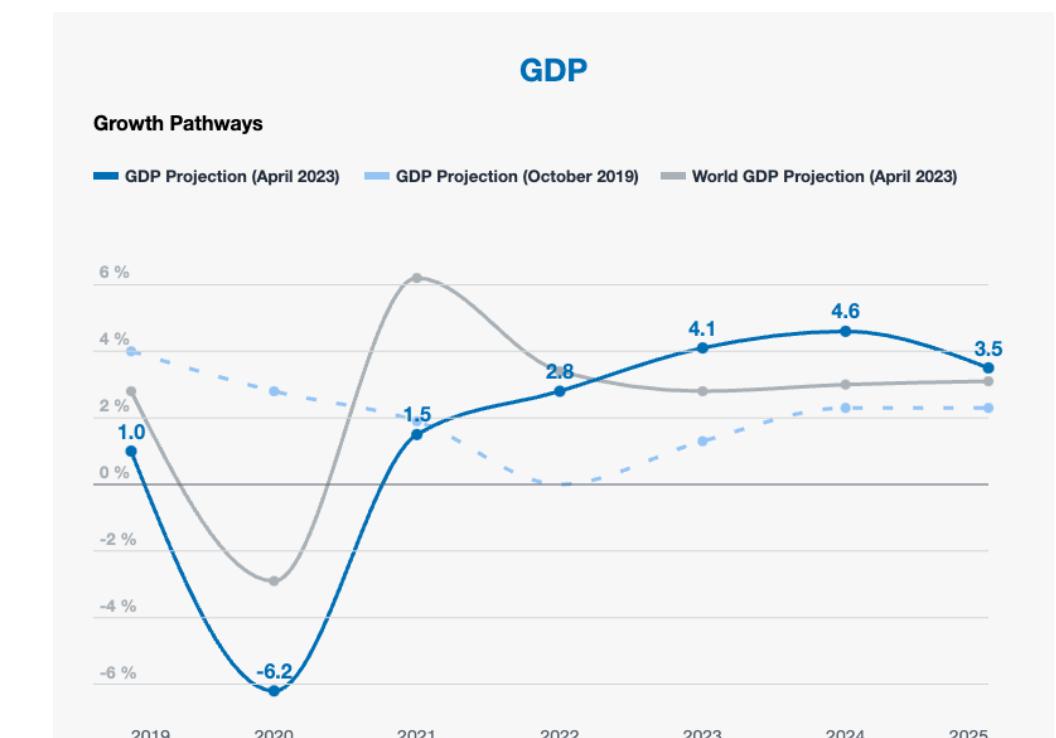
While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

The Republic of Congo's growth trajectory over the 2023-2025 cycle is accelerating and is expected to be 38% higher than the global average, and well above the country's growth trajectory projected before the pandemic.¹

Although this rapid pace of growth has a positive impact on reducing the incidence of poverty to \$2.15 per day, there remain significant challenges to accelerate poverty reduction from the prevailing high levels. currently (50% according to the World Bank 2020). Accordingly, the Republic of Congo's commitments to achieving the SDGs are focused on building an economy for all. On the other hand, the country's economic expansion comes at the expense of the environment, as the carbon emissions intensity of GDP is expected to increase at an annual rate of 31% due to the use of fossil fuels, and by 10% if we also take into account the change in land use.²

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 the Republic of the Congo 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.



SDG PRIORITIES

The Congo'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. National Development Plan (NDP) 2022-2026

SDG INTERLINKAGES

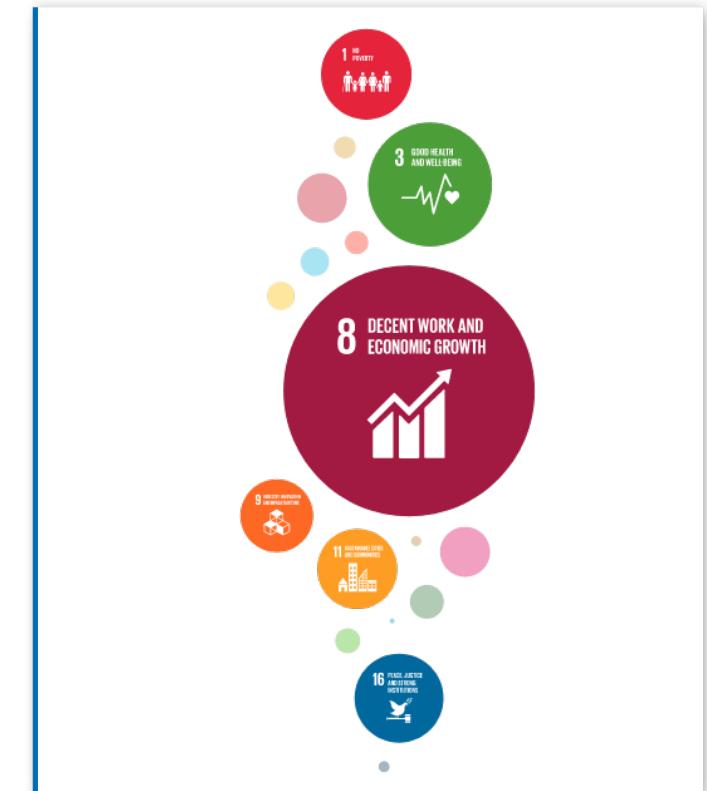
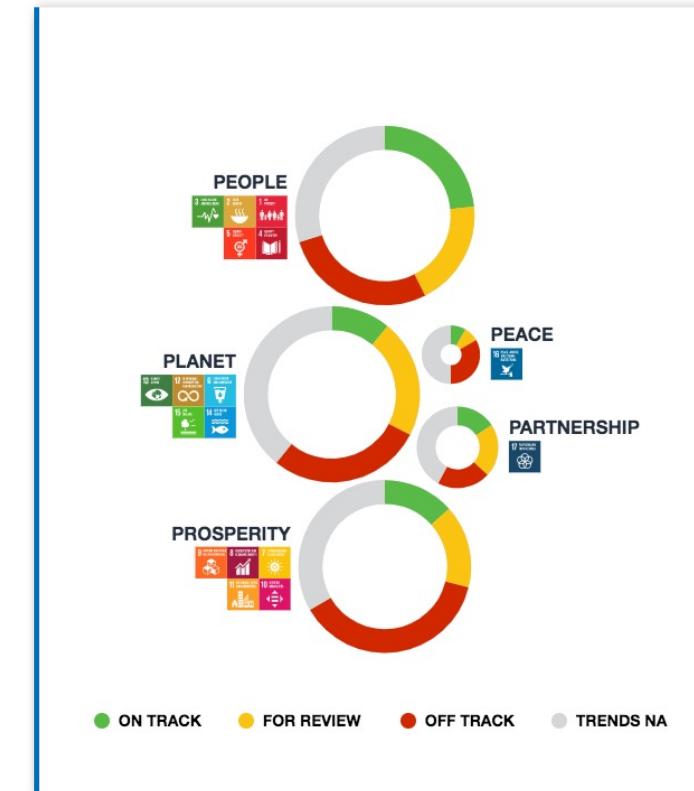
SDG interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help the Republic of the Congo to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, the Republic of Congo'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 the Republic of the Congo

- Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay
- Target 9.2: Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization
- Target 11.2: Affordable and sustainable transport systems

Note that the guidance for Member States is to identify a set of priority areas for investment and policy change that will help secure maximum progress across the SDGs. The three targets could form a basis for this. The other two include setting a national benchmark for reducing poverty and inequality, and an overview of planned adjustments in national planning and institutional frameworks that will better support the SDGs' achievement.



ACCELERATION PATHWAYS

SYNERGIES

TRADE-OFFS

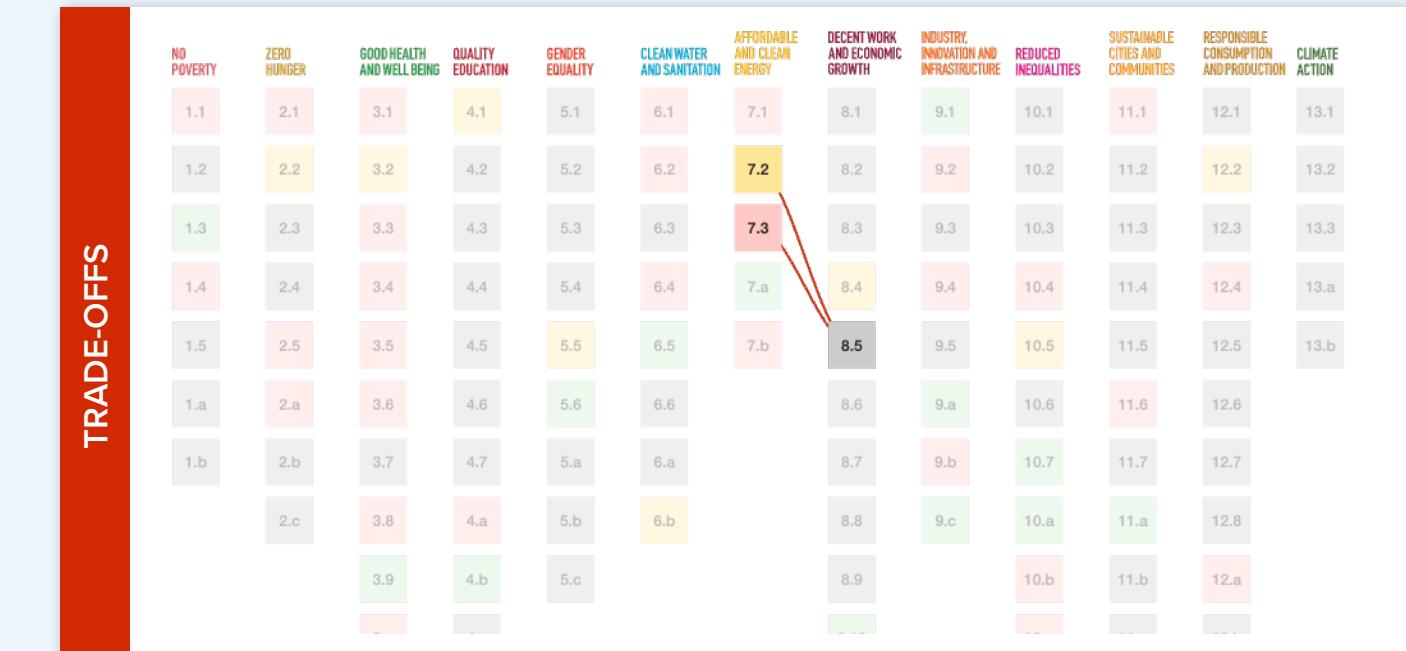
SDG INTERLINKAGES

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.

The National Development Plan indicates that "there is no doubt that the dynamism and interaction of the six strategic pillars that make up the core of the National Development Plan (NDP) will create jobs in all sectors of the economy"— this statement in the NDP 2022-2026 signifies the approach the Congo is taking to create jobs.

It is multisectoral one, which is in line with the positive interlinkages (green) resulting from SDG8.5 and where taking action is possible to create jobs. The Congo is also being pragmatic in its approach – using analysis to focus on economic activities that are within reach as a basis for value addition and job creation.

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



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

SDG INTERLINKAGES

9.2: Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.

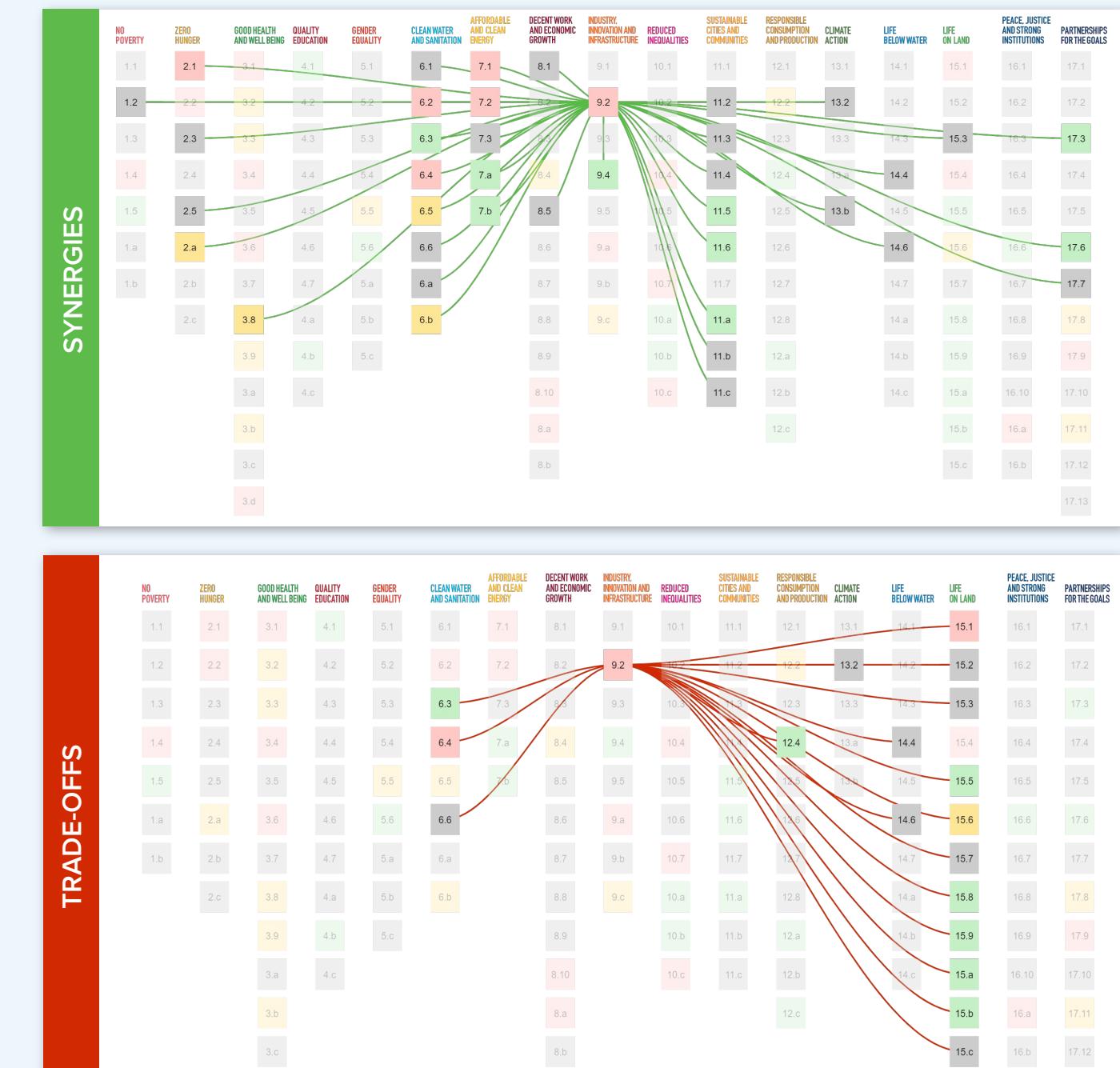
For the Republic of the Congo, industrial development is one of the three pillars of the NDP 2022-2026. The others are development of agriculture and of special economic zones.

The focus is to enable the Congo to fully participate in the global value chains. The country has identified the following constraints which have to be addressed, notably energy, skills, finance, value addition and business. Significant resource mobilization is required to address and overcome these obstacles.

The Congo may consider a similar approach to that adopted on jobs, which is to leverage analysis and build upon existing industries while creating room for new ones. In that case, the country will be able to address challenges with feasible solutions.

It is important to also explore what actions are needed to make sure that, as the Congo pursues industrialization, it does so without negatively impacting the environment. That seems to be the case at moment, which is an opportunity to turn things around.

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



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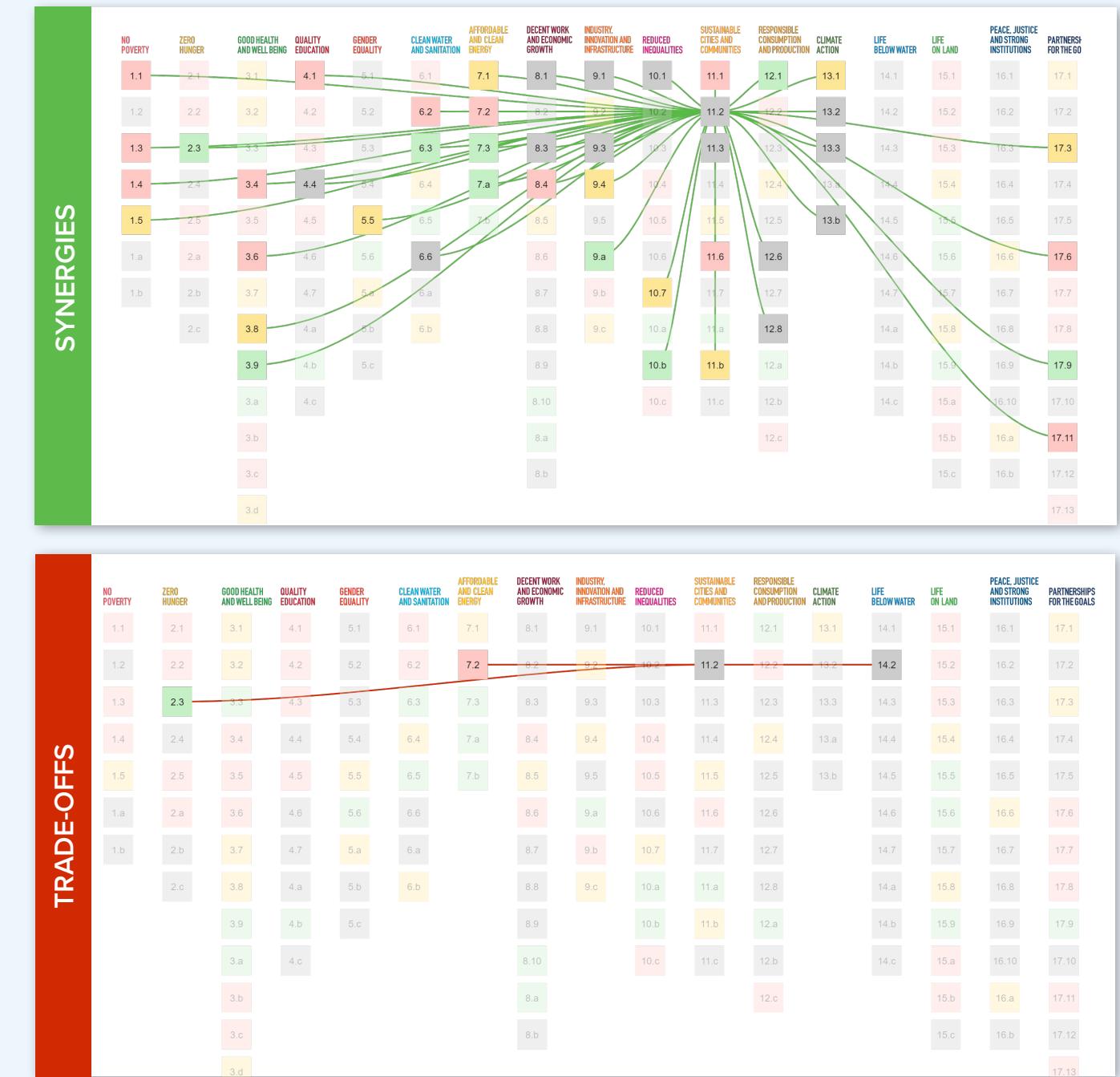
11.2: By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

Satisfaction with public transport is about 53.2 percent. This notwithstanding, the development of public services for the Congo is important for jobs and for facilitating value addition. For instance, due to COVID-19, the prices of public transport has increased.

In addition, the transport of goods across the country is important for value addition. In many countries the cost of transport is usually a sizable component of trade.

Many countries across the continent are exploring ways to strengthen the governance of its transport system as a quick win. In doing so they are developing a transport master plan for the country that includes air, road, rail and water. The Master Plan also looks both at the travel time and the cost. The Congo may consider a possibility of prioritizing this as a post-SDG Summit action.

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



Explore the interlinkages at:

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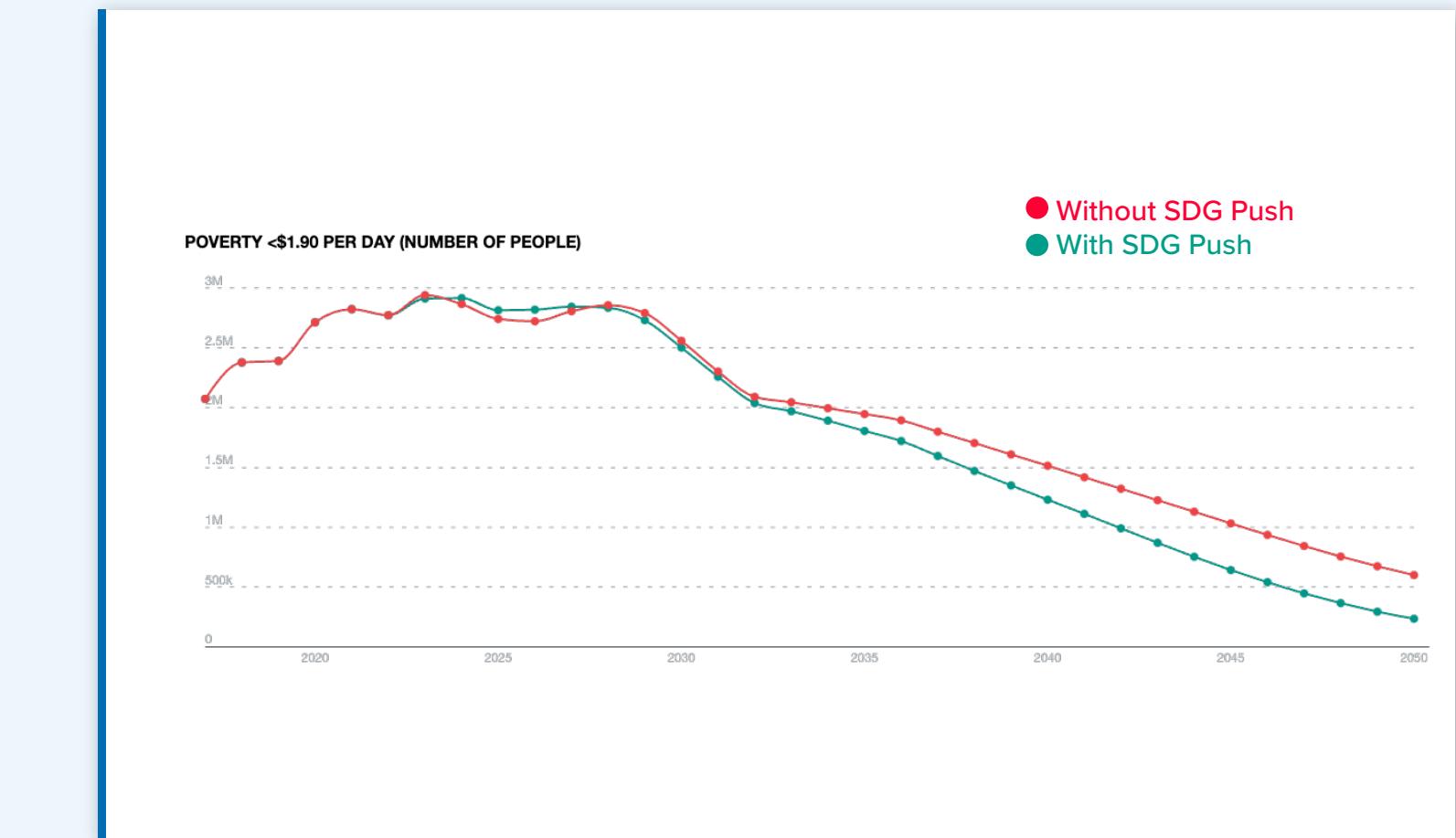
FUTURES SCENARIOS

Achieving the SDGs is possible.

The ‘SDG Push’ is a futures scenario based on 48 integrated accelerators in the areas of Governance, Social Protection, the 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 the Republic of the Congo can reduce the number of people living in poverty over time.

People living in poverty	By 2030	By 2050
Without the SDG Push	2.6 mn	600,000
With the SDG Push	2.5 mn	240,000



Explore SDG Futures Scenarios at:

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

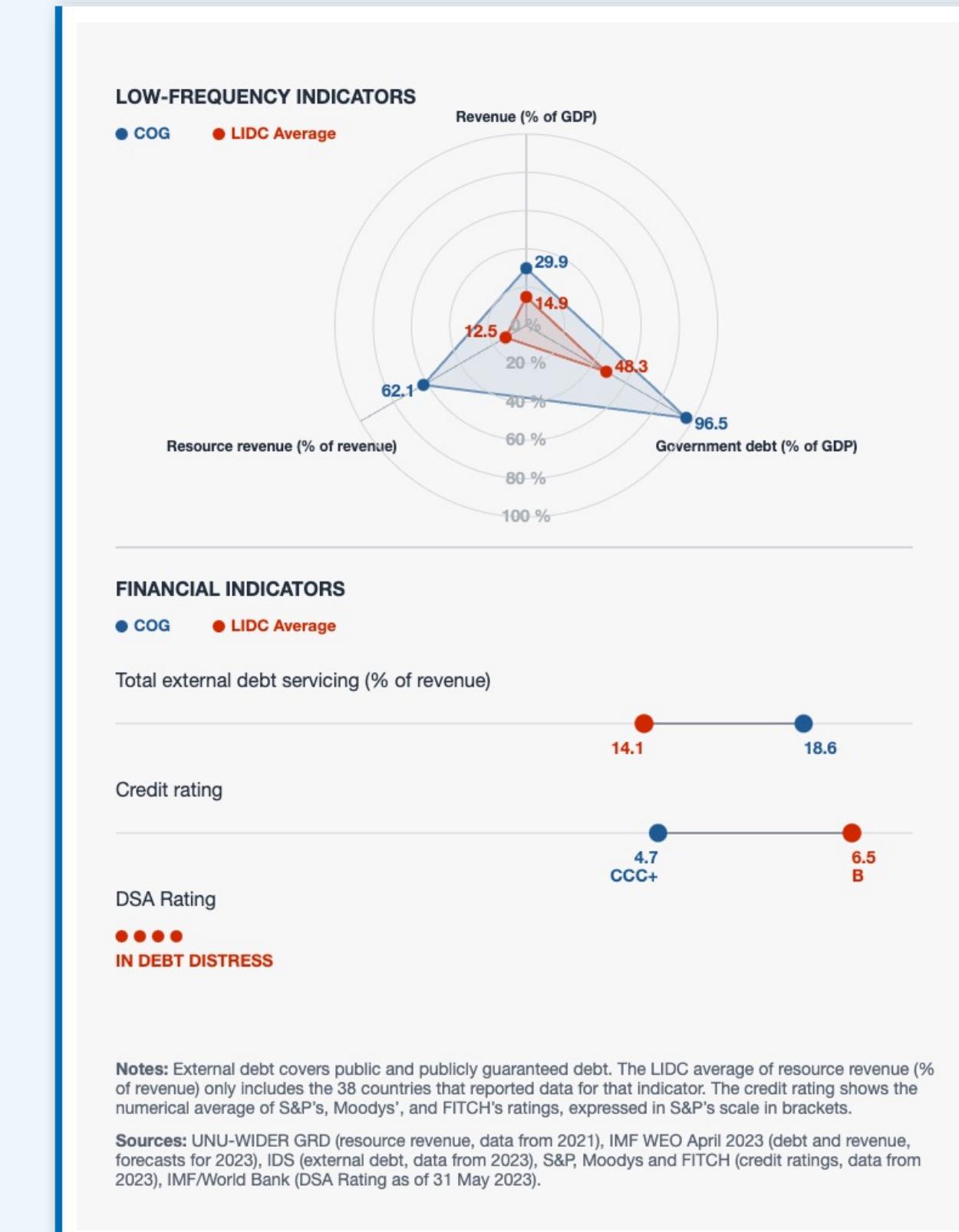
FINANCE & STIMULUS

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, the sovereign credit rating and the country's latest Debt Sustainability Assessment (DSA) risk rating.

The Republic of the Congo's gross government debt, projected at 96.5% of GDP in 2023, is double the low-income developing countries (LIDC) group average of 48.3%. Additional to its official debt, the Congo amassed significant hidden resource-backed debt owed to oil traders that are not recorded as public debt. The country is expected to collect 29.9% of GDP in revenue this year – double the LIDC average of 14.9% – with natural resources, mostly oil, accounting for 62.1% of that revenue.

The Congo's public external debt servicing this year is projected to reach 18.6% of revenue compared to 14.1% for the LIDC average. The country's credit rating is currently in the 'extremely speculative' category. Due to the high government and non-government debt, fiscal deficits due to deflation in refined oil prices, and prolonged unsettled external arrears, the latest World Bank and IMF DSA from February 2023 rates the Congo 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 the Republic of the Congo, 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).