



# INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS ESWATINI

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: ESWATINI

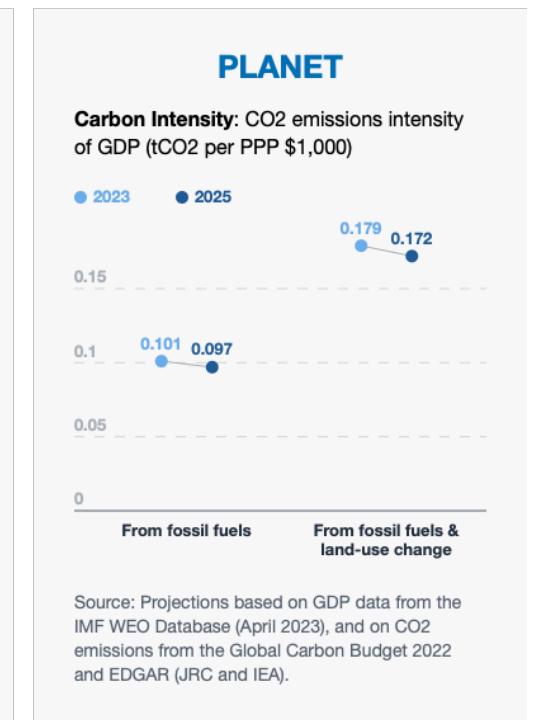
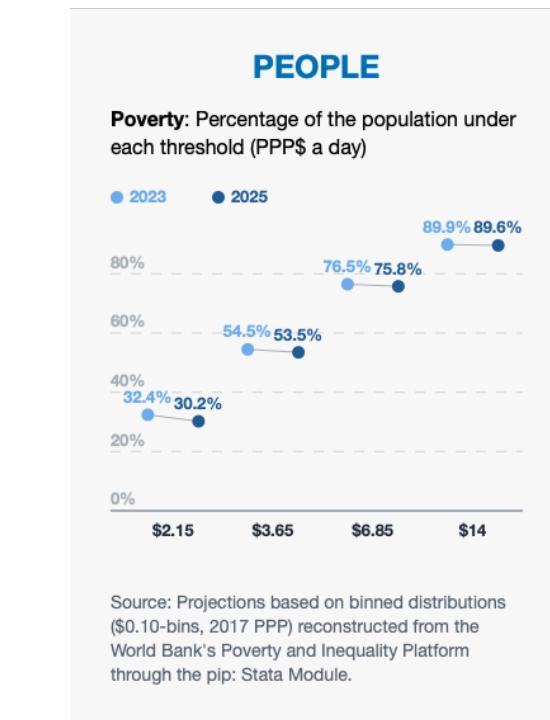
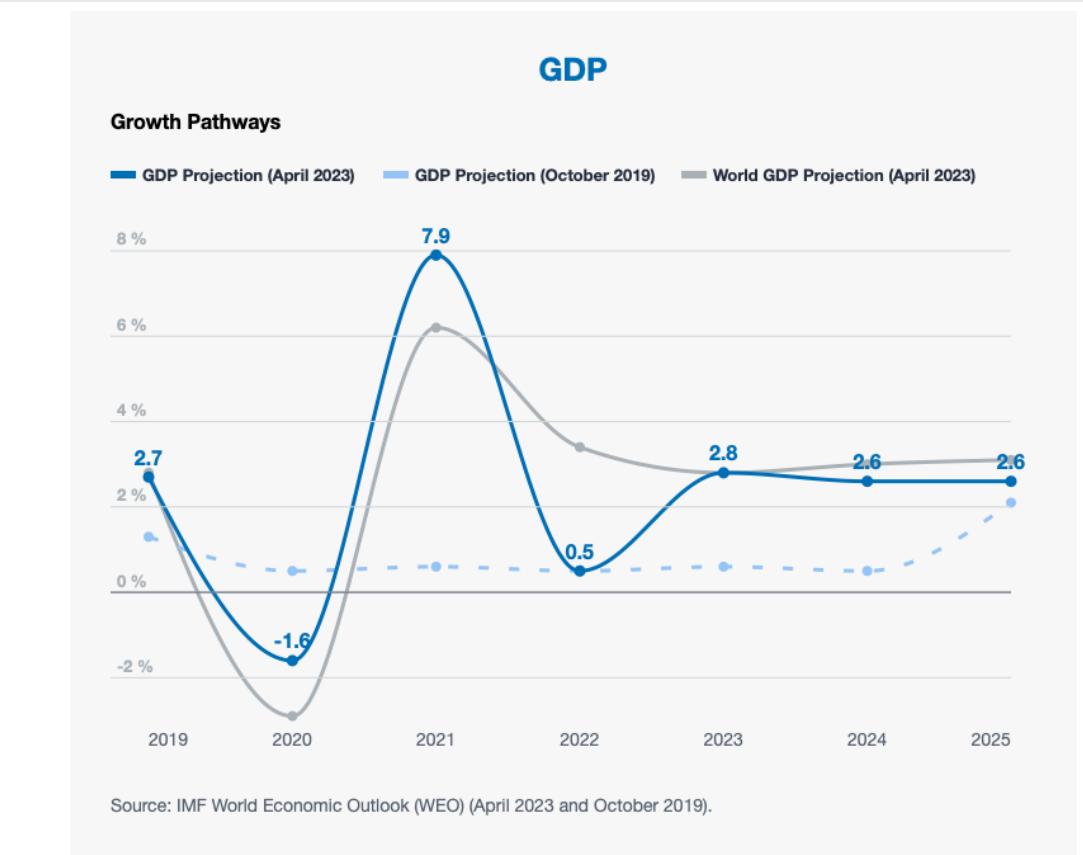
While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

Eswatini's pace of growth during the cycle 2023-2024 is in acceleration but expected to plateau under 3% by 2025.<sup>1</sup> This pace of growth is projected to be 10% lower, on average, than the world figure, but well above the country's growth trajectory projected before the pandemic.

This pace of growth is not projected to exert a significant effect on lowering the rates of poverty at \$2.15 and \$3.65 a day due to the negative impact of higher food and energy prices on low-income households, at least in the short-term. Hence, the country's commitments to achieving the SDGs should focus on prioritizing stronger growth, increasing employment and eradicating poverty. This cycle of growth could be somewhat less dependent on carbon emissions as the country's carbon emissions intensity of GDP is projected to decrease at an annual rate of 1.9% under current conditions.<sup>2</sup>

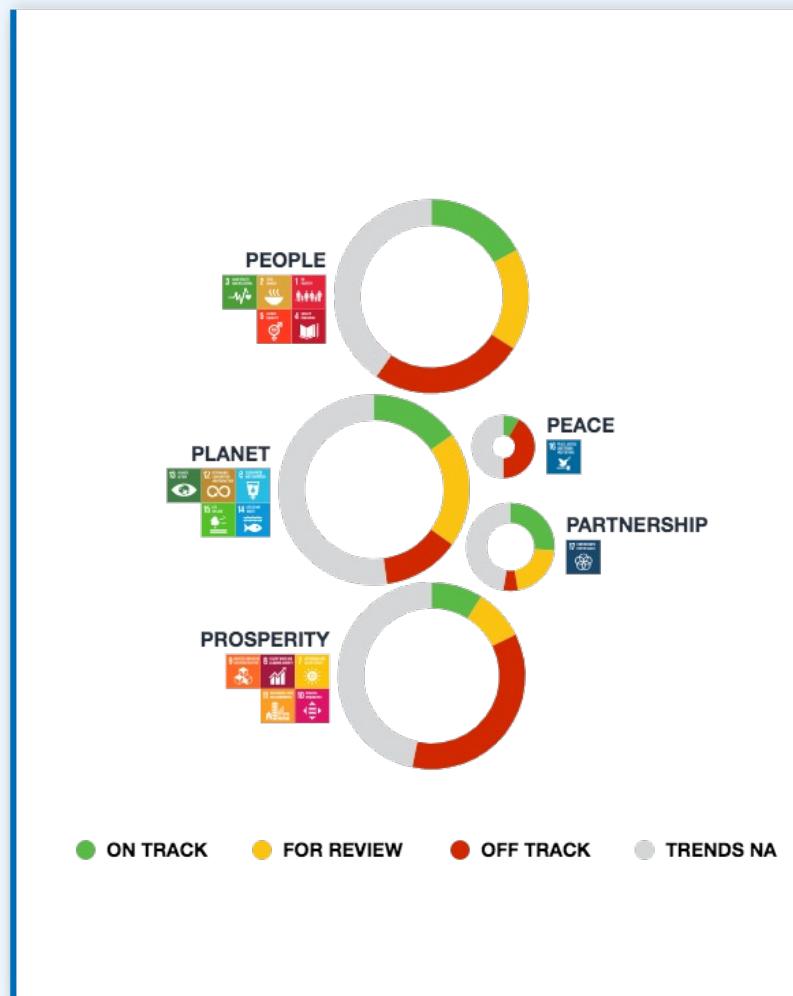
<sup>1</sup> The economic cycle is determined by adjusting the country's current GDP growth forecasts (April 2023) by their gap relative to the forecasts made before the pandemic and subsequent crises (October 2019). If the adjusted rates (not shown) are below 2%, the economy is considered in mitigation;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

<sup>2</sup> CO<sub>2</sub> emissions intensity of GDP is computed as tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per \$1,000 (2017 PPP).



# SDG TRENDS

Understanding how Eswatini 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/SWZ/sdg-trends>

# SDG PRIORITIES

Eswatini 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 2023/2024 – 2027/2028

*Priorities in detail:*

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

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

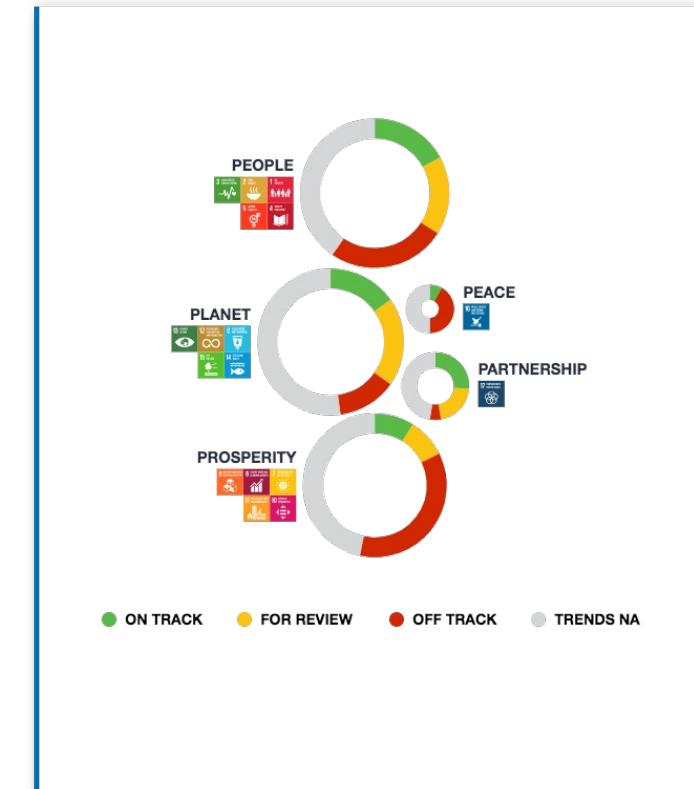
SDG interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help Eswatini to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, Eswatini'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 Eswatini:

- Target 5.5: Ensure full participation in leadership and decision-making
- Target 6.2: End open defecation and provide access to sanitation and hygiene
- Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay

Note: Target 8.5 was identified through machine learning analysis of the Development Plan (SDG 8 being of highest priority). Through regional and national consultations, Target 6.2 was deemed a quick win with wider positive impacts across other targets, and Target 5.5 was deemed to require affirmative action.



## ACCELERATION PATHWAYS

SYNERGIES

TRADE-OFFS

# SDG INTERLINKAGES

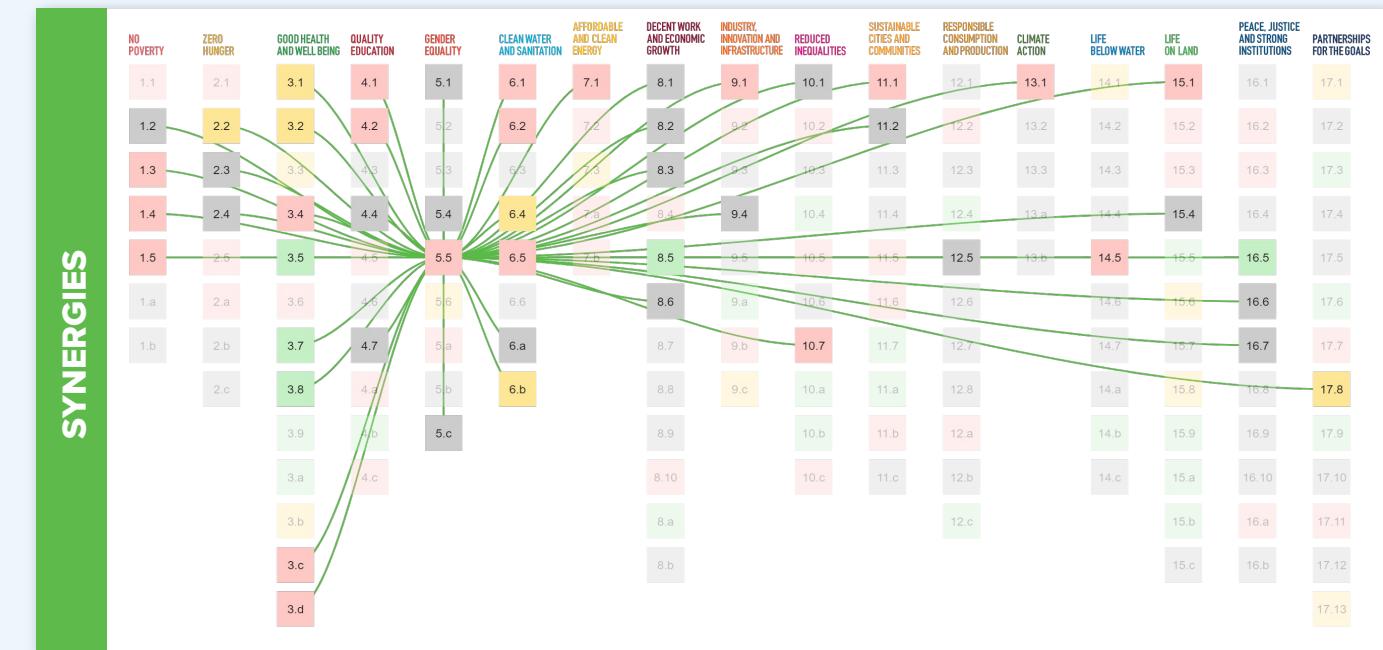
## 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

Elections will be completed by the time the 2023 SDG Summit is convened. The number of women who will be elected will be a result of previous actions. The time to prepare for the next elections and put in mechanisms for greater women participation is now.

Election is not only the only avenue for ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. Affirmative action for women is needed in for example the creation of decent jobs (target 8.5). Where as there is a narrowing in labour force participation rates (54.0% men vs 47.1% females), the share of women in vulnerable jobs (38.2%) is far greater than that of men (26.8), according the World Bank.

For Eswatini, investment in opportunities for women also needs investment in tackling inequalities (target 10.1) by extending services to the chiefdoms, especially in rural areas (target 11.1). According to Eswatini VNR 2022, poverty is most pronounced in rural areas at 70.2% than urban area 19.6% (2017).

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



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

Sanitation, especially in Eswatini's homesteads is considered not just a quick win, it will also impact other 132 SDG targets positively. Yet, according to the VNR 2022, only 46% households have improved sanitation, when it is 72% and 82% for water and electricity respectively.

Investment in sanitation will also drive local manufacturing (target 9.2) of basic inputs for an improved latrine, which are a concrete block, a pipe and a roof. If these are manufactured locally, they will create jobs (target 8.5), improve living conditions (target 11.1) and, above all, improve health outcomes (target 3.8).

Therefore, for this to be realized, Eswatini will nurture partnerships with the private sector (e.g. local manufacturers), with local authorities in the Chiefdoms and with civil society.

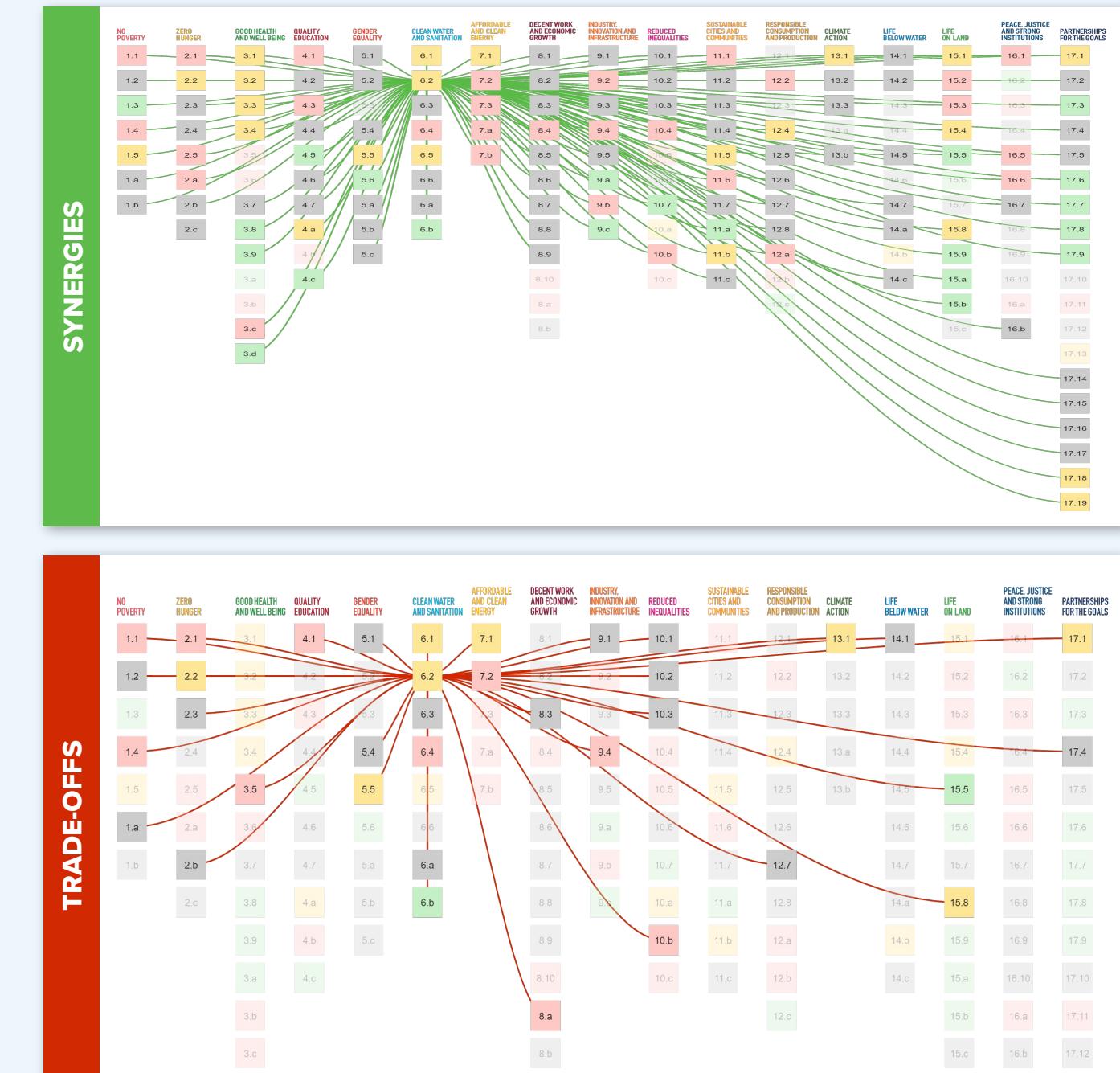
Eswatini will also invest in data (17.18) to measure progress to inform the Quarterly SDG Conversations. Examples will include the number of improved latrines constructed across the 300 chiefdoms, which in itself will enhance the voices of citizens.

● ON TRACK

● FOR REVIEW

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● TRENDS NA



Explore the interlinkages at:

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

# 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 creation of decent jobs is Eswatini's priority, due to the high level of unemployment (58.2% Source: LSF 2021), but also because of the positive impact this would have on other SDGs' and sectors' outcomes contained in the National Development Plan. The concern is also creating jobs whose earnings are commensurate with the standard of living.

A focus on creating decent jobs will trigger investments in sustainable agriculture systems (target 2.4), modern energy (target 7.1), digital public infrastructure (target 9.2) and in other sectors of the economy that will hold great promise. This may trigger new industries, for example in research and innovation.

To make this happen, it will be critical for Eswatini to invest in making data and analysis on the number of jobs being created and the associated earnings available on a regular basis. This could be every month or every quarter to inform appropriate conversations. One avenue to be explored is the use of PAYE data collected every month by the Eswatini Revenue Service. This is also an opportunity to negotiate for gender disaggregated data to enable Eswatini to track any shifts in gender dimensions for job creation.

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



Explore the interlinkages at:

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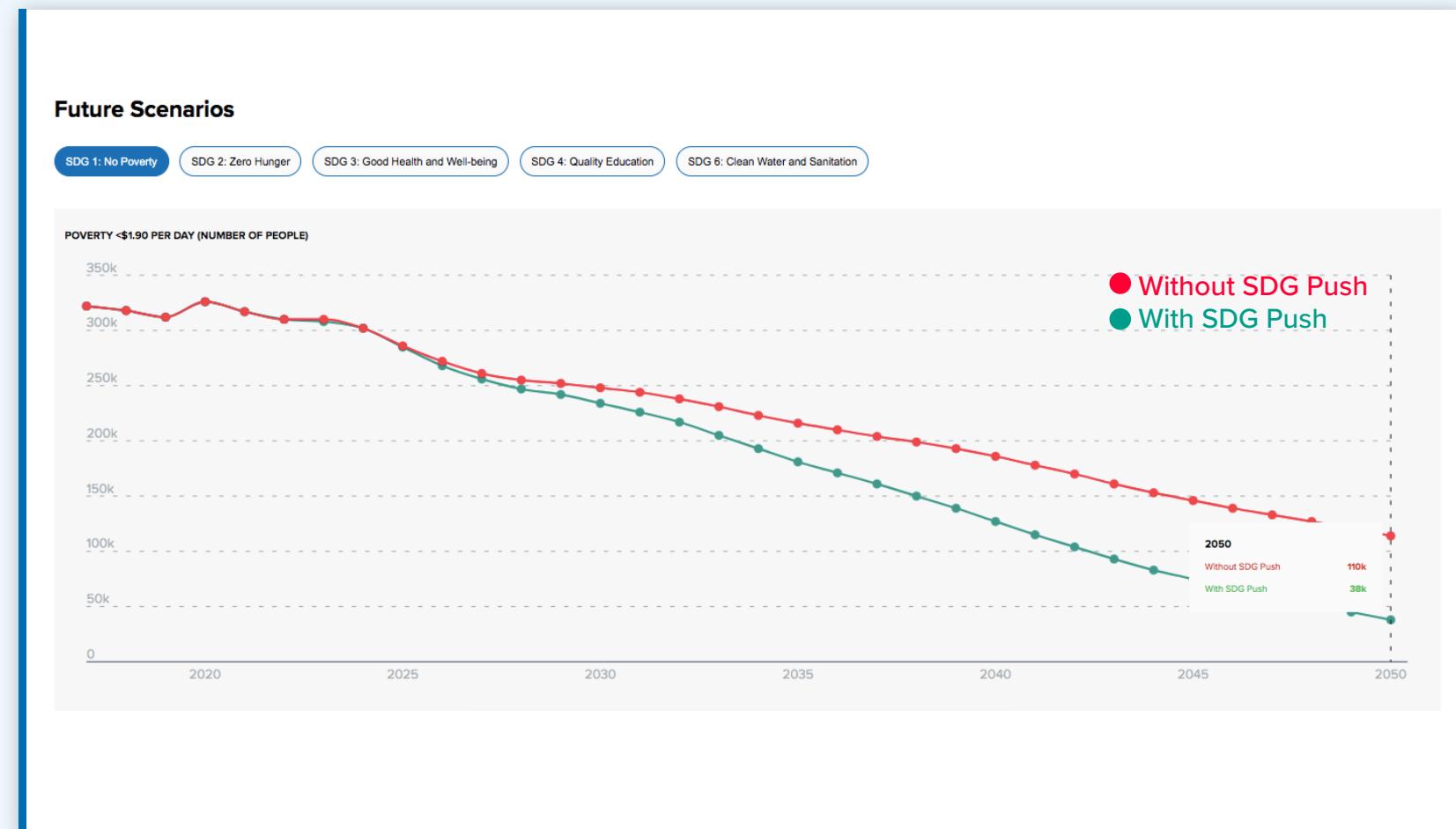
# FUTURES SCENARIOS

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 Eswatini can reduce the number of people living in poverty over time.

People living in poverty	By 2030	By 2050
Without the SDG Push	250,000	110,000
With the SDG Push	230,000	38,000



Explore SDG Futures Scenarios at:

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

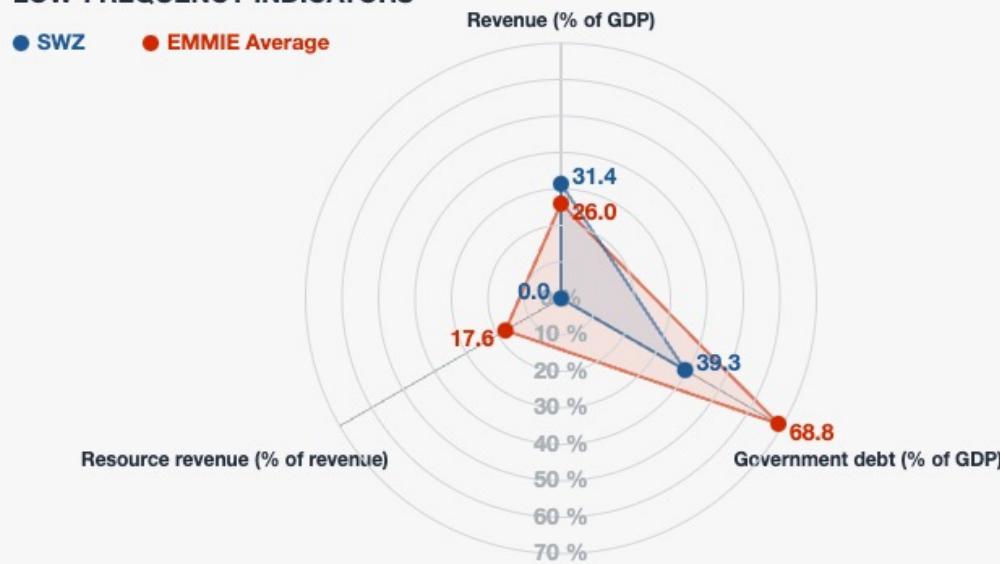
The radar diagram shows low frequency data points linked to government revenue and debt as a proportion of GDP and the natural resource share of total revenue. The financial indicator graph shows external debt servicing relative to revenue.

Eswatini's gross government debt is projected at 39.3% of GDP in 2023, which is nearly 30 percentage points below the emerging market and middle-income economies (EMMIE) group average of 68.8%. The country is projected to collect 31.4% of GDP in revenue this year, thus about a fifth more than the EMMIE average of 26%. Eswatini's external debt servicing this year is projected to be 3.7% of revenue, which is less than a third the EMMIE average of 12.3%.

Eswatini is using an 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 strengthening the capacities of the tax authorities and associations to support tax administration and voluntary compliance, and developing an enabling cross-border remittance licensing regime.

## LOW-FREQUENCY INDICATORS

● SWZ ● EMMIE Average



## FINANCIAL INDICATORS

● SWZ ● EMMIE Average

Total external debt servicing (% of revenue)



**Notes:** External debt covers public and publicly guaranteed debt. The EMMIE average of resource revenue (% of revenue) includes the 60 countries that reported data for that indicator.

**Sources:** UNU-WIDER GRD (resource revenue, data from 2020), IMF WEO April 2023 (debt and revenue, forecasts for 2023), IDS (external debt, data from 2023).

# 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 Eswatini, possible funding options for the investments derived from the identified interlinkages are mechanisms identified in the SDG Stimulus as follows:

- Tax and revenue reform
- Tax for SDGs
- Debt for SDGs, especially leveraging carbon markets
- Climate finance
- Blended and public-private finance
- 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).