



# **INTEGRATED SDG ACTION: TOWARDS SDG ACCELERATION FOR A FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY FROM COVID-19**

This initiative is developed by the UNDP SDG Integration team, in cooperation with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), on behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in support of countries to recover forward. This document serves as a brief overview of the design process for an evidence-based diagnostic to identify acceleration pathways toward progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that support a fair, sustainable recovery from COVID-19. It is intended for our partners, Country Offices, development specialists, and other policy decision makers, as a cutting-edge tool to support them in attaining their 2030 ambition. It can be adapted to country needs, context, and stage of development.

## **Why do we need acceleration actions?**

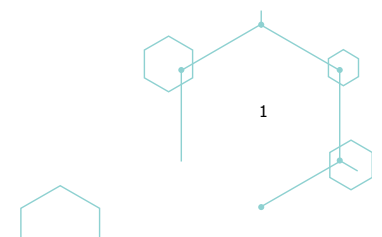
The COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts have impeded progress towards the SDGs, making their achievement urgent and necessary.

A recent publication by UNDP, [Leaving No One Behind: Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), demonstrates the potential impact of a slow and fragmented recovery from COVID-19 on progress towards the SDGs. The study finds that a staggering 79-86 percent of all people pushed into extreme poverty by the pandemic are likely to be found in countries with low or medium levels of human development in 2030. However, through an ambitious but feasible set of integrated SDG investments (identified in the 'SDG Push' scenario) covering governance, social protection, green economy and digitalization, 100 million people in these countries could be lifted out of extreme poverty by 2030, even when taking COVID-19 impact into account. The future scenarios investigated in this study demonstrate the need for a transformative recovery that accelerates implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by not only addressing the current crisis but also anticipating and reducing risks from future potential crises.

## **What is SDG Push?**

The SDG Push establishes a quantitative and qualitative framework that combines the power of data, innovation and finance to sharpen the evidence-base, and build coalitions, for interventions that accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

Developed through user-centred design, prioritizing iterative testing and prototyping, the SDG Push is a process that combines analytical capabilities with qualitative methods to assess context, options, and bottlenecks to determine effective policy choices, investments and pathways that meet the development needs and ambitions within a particular context. Moreover, the SDG Push tackles the 2030 Agenda in a holistic manner by focusing on all SDGs and looking at a snapshot of the current state of development progress across the three dimensions (economic, social, and environmental) of sustainability.



While the SDG Push can guide policymakers along an investigatory process all the way to practical implementation, it can also be applied by module and adapted depending on where the country is in its development journey.

## Where can I access the SDG Push?

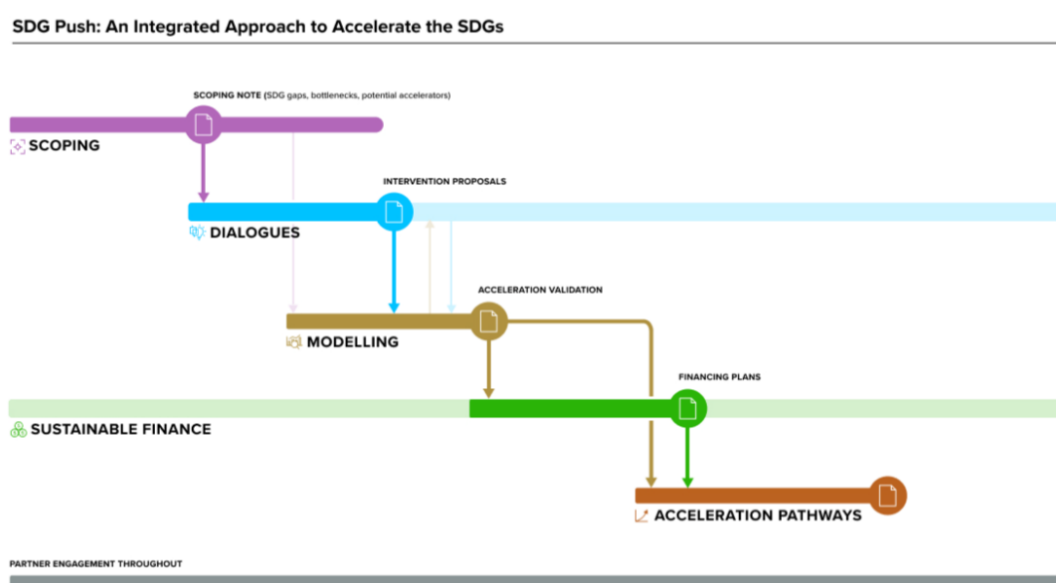
The SDG Push is co-designed with the UN family and accessible through a [user-friendly web-platform](#).

The process starts with assessing gaps and bottlenecks, walking the policymakers through the current state of SDG progress via a [Diagnostic](#) integrated into the [Data Futures Platform](#) which then feeds into the validation and consultative review of SDG accelerators, bottlenecks, and financing.

## What are the components of the SDG Push?

The SDG Push comprises five key components: [Scoping](#), [Dialogues](#), [Modelling](#), [Sustainable Finance](#), and the [Acceleration Pathways](#).


The SDG Push comprises five key components, essential in identifying development gaps, challenges and drivers, developing potential interventions to address each challenge, and systematically assessing the costs, interlinkages and trade-offs related to the acceleration plan. These components, explained below, work as an integrated iterative process, where progress in each component reinforces the other elements of the SDG Push.



## The Diagnostic components explained:

### SCOPING

Scoping is a foundational process that reviews country context, policy, evidence, and institutional mechanisms to map out SDG gaps, bottlenecks, interdependencies, and opportunities. This is done together



with country experts to support country specific needs that clearly articulate the story of SDG progress, challenges, and opportunities.

The Scoping process is also supported by the Diagnostic, which walks the user through identifying gaps to achieving the SDGs, as input to acceleration dialogues by showing interlinkages between the SDGs and an AI tool that classifies documents developed by government.

These gaps, priorities, interlinkages, and opportunities identified by the Diagnostic and research inform the Scoping Note, laying the framework for the work ahead.

## **DIALOGUES**

The analysis from the scoping phase is explored through multi-stakeholder dialogues to understand strengths (what is working), gaps (what needs attention), trends (what are emerging risks and opportunities), and interlinkages (interconnection of issues, solutions, and SDG indicators).

The dialogues are held in two phases, taking place in person and/or online. The initial in-person dialogue phase focuses on a structured interrogation and validation of the insights from the scoping phase. This includes methodologies for systemic mapping of complex high-priority issues to identify cross-sector interlinkages, causal relationships, and initial identification of accelerators.

The second phase could be held digitally or in-person and examines relevant initiatives to identify intervention points and optimal acceleration pathways. This dialogue is structured to derive learning and actionable insights from previously implemented policies and strategies or other contexts. These insights will be used to determine potential combinations of accelerators the government and its partners will take forward in modeling phase.

## **MODELLING**

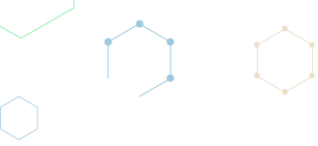
Modelling is a purposeful learning process for action. It engages the implicit and explicit knowledge of stakeholders and applies advanced analytics to develop and test a set of evidence-based policy options that consider SDG interlinkages.

Building from the acceleration dialogue and decisions on potential accelerators to explore, is a costing and analytical modeling exercise with focus on groups and geographies to stress test impact of policy interventions. The cost of the acceleration options is critical for planning and feasibility of the proposed interventions.

A participatory modelling approach will be applied that develops customized analytical tools for evidence-based policymaking. While a specific type (or combination) of model will be applied (General Equilibrium models, Agent based models, Integrated Assessment models, to name a few), as part of the participatory modeling, highlighting results of the evaluation of evidence-based studies will also be an important guide to identifying interventions during the dialogue.

## **SUSTAINABLE FINANCE**

Sufficient, well-aligned public and private finance, steered by the right international and national policies, will largely determine whether we live in peace and prosperity or insecurity and constant want. Sustainable Finance helps countries move from spending choices that focus on short-term gains to those delivering long-



term benefits through appropriately budgeted interventions, protecting people during risks, and planning for the future.

Financing options and feasibility is critical for implementation of the accelerators identified through the diagnostic process. Together with country stakeholders and development partners, this component integrates SDG finance tools and experience in financing the SDGs to develop investment options to fund the accelerators.

Sustainable financing starts with costing viable policy choices and aligning them to financing that is better aligned with national demands, unwinding multiple sources of risk and uncertainty, and managing the play of local and global dynamics.

Analysis from tools including the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) and UNDP’s “Budgeting for SDGs” guidance support countries to weigh the options and implications of different policy choices.

## ACCELERATION PATHWAYS

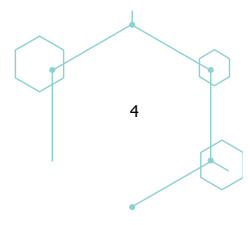
The Pathways documents the insights from the SDG Push, identifying accelerators and detailing proposals for how to move forward based on the evidence, insights, and findings from the process.

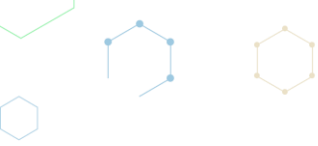
## Piloting the SDG Push

The SDG Push, which began development in Q3 2021, is being piloted in five countries – Indonesia, Moldova, Namibia, Peru, and South Africa – throughout 2022. Through this process, the acceleration roadmaps developed will be country- and context-specific, building on current national development plans and priorities, serving to identify bold policy choices, needed investments, and development pathways that can accelerate the most pressing SDGs in each country.

## Definition of Key Terms

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>SDG Push</b>         | The process of examining evidence in country-context, exploring policy options, and identifying pathways to reaching SDG development agendas   |
| <b>SDG Accelerators</b> | The difference between the targeted SDG level and the current state and trend of the SDG for a country   |
| <b>Future Scenario</b>  | A scenario that outlines the impact of targeted policy interventions that can accelerate progress towards a more fair, resilient, and green future.  |
| <b>Diagnostic</b>       | The Diagnostic identifies SDG gaps and national priorities and helps to assess the impact of a set of country-specific accelerators, designed to address these gaps and recovery pathways considering national priorities. |





**Participatory Modelling**

A purposeful learning process for action by engaging the knowledge of stakeholders to co-formulate and diagnose the problem and create a shared representation of reality.

**INFF**

Integrated National Financing Framework (INFFs) is a tool to finance national priorities and operationalize the Addis Ababa Action Agenda by supporting the identification of how national sustainable development strategies will be financed and implemented.

**Budgeting for SDGs**

An approach for aligning domestic budgets with the SDGs.

