

Eleventh Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

“Driving job creation and economic growth through sustainable, inclusive, science-and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063”

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Highlights of the 2025 Africa Sustainable Development Report

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SDG	AGENDA 2063 (First Ten-Year Implementation Plan)
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Goal 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages.

Goal 3 – Healthy and well-nourished citizens.

Goal 5 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal 3 – Healthy and well-nourished citizens.
Goal 17 – Full Gender Equality in All Spheres of Life.

Goal 8 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goal 1 – A High Standard of Living, Quality of Life and Well Being for All Citizens.
Goal 4 – Transformed Economies.

Goal 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 6 – Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth.
Goal 7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities.

Goal 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Goal 19 – Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence.
Goal 20 – Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development.

Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

Fig 1: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, 2015–2023 (%)

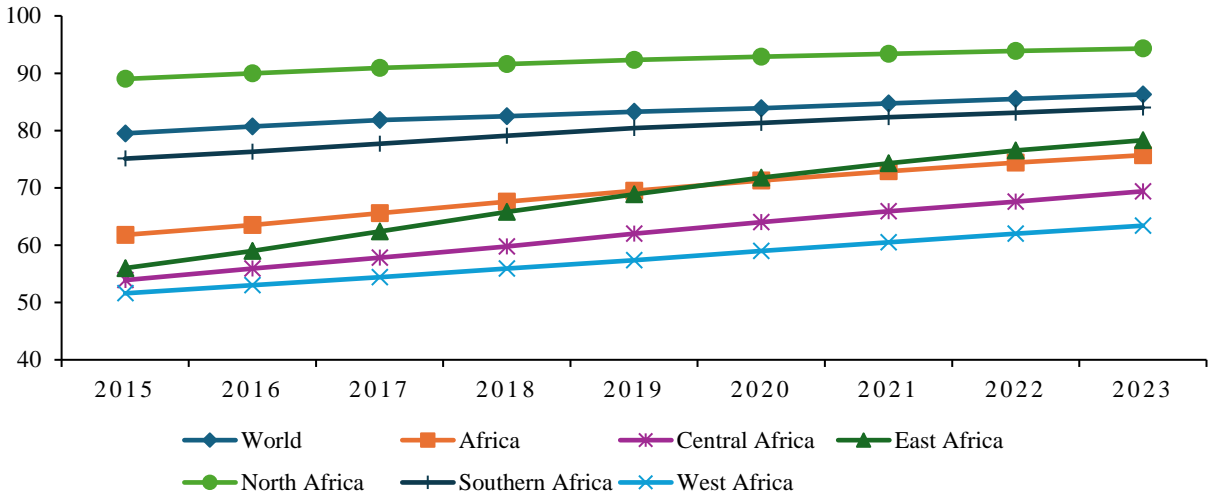
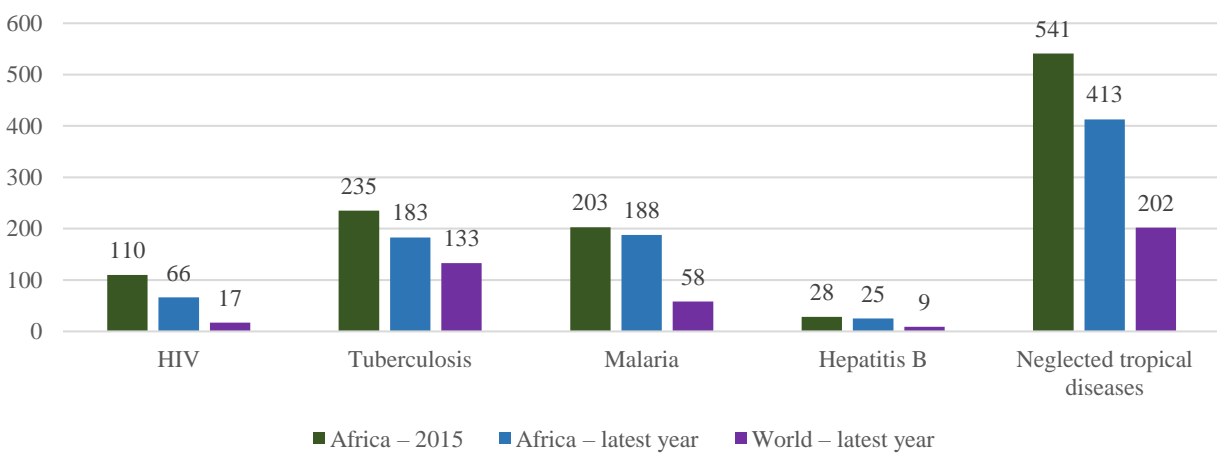


Fig 2: Incidence of major communicable diseases

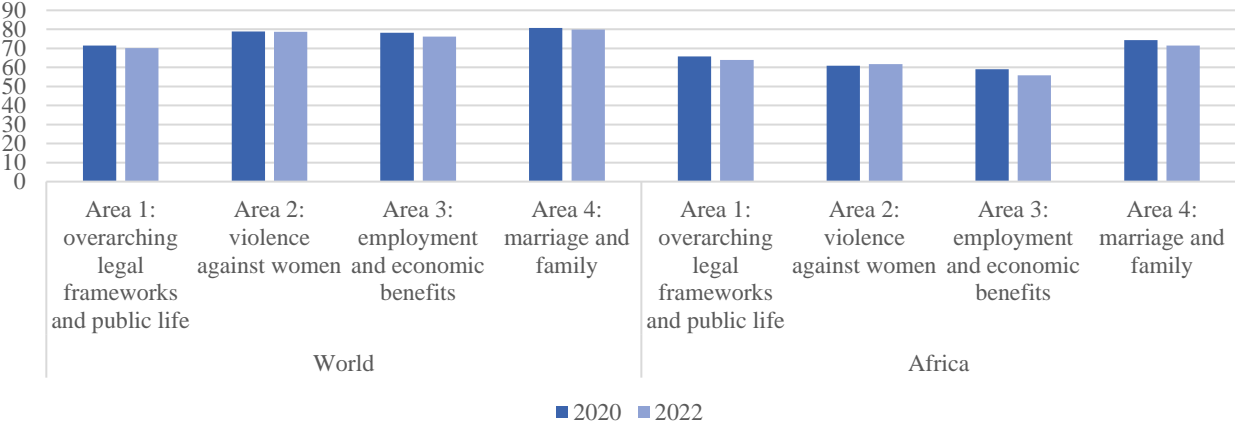


Source: ECA (2024)

- High maternal mortality of 487 deaths per 100,000 live births versus global average of 223 per 100,000 live births. Significant regional disparities with Southern and North Africa having fewer than 150.
- Increase in proportion of births attended by skilled attendants from 61.8% in 2015 to 75.7% in 2023. West and Central Africa are below the African average (Fig. 1).
- Decline in infant mortality from 53.2 to 45.5 per 1,000 births from 2015 to 2022. However, Africa still has 55.5% of global infant deaths.
- Mixed progress in incidence of communicable diseases since 2015 with significant drop of 40% in HIV cases, 23.6% for neglected tropical diseases, 22% for tuberculosis but 10% for hepatitis B and 7% for malaria (Fig. 2).
- Rise in non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer due to changing diets and lifestyles.
- Modest growth in universal health service coverage index which measures coverage of essential services from 45 in 2015 to 47 in 2021. This is below the global average of 68 in 2021.

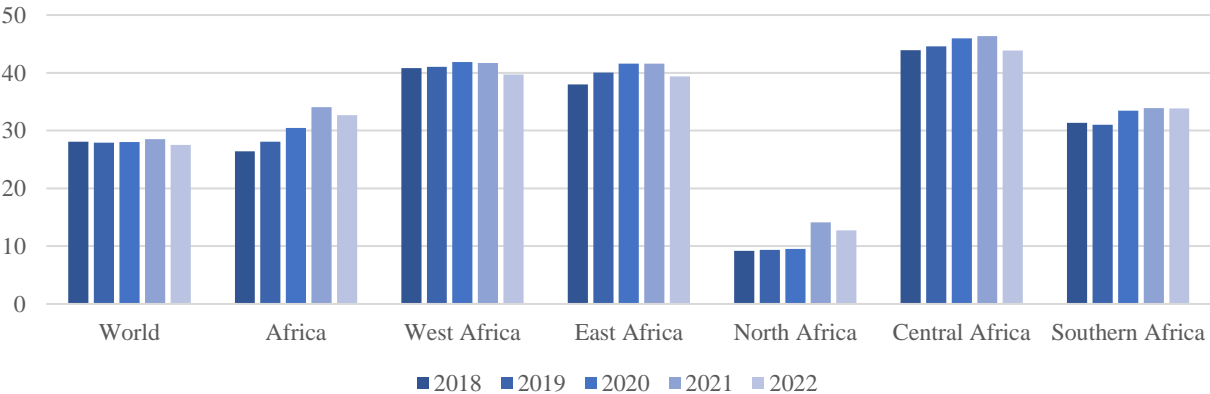
Goal 5: Gender Equality

Fig 3: Legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality, by area (% of achievement)



Source: United Nations, Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database (2024)

Fig 4: Proportion of Women in Managerial Positions

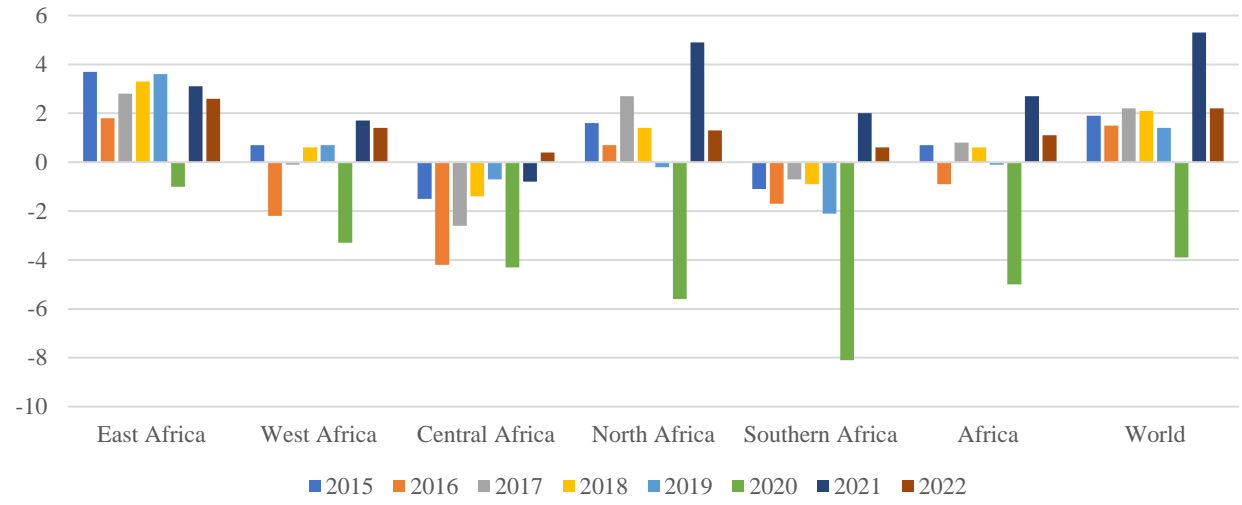


Source: United Nations, Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database (2024)

- Average achievement of 63% across 4 areas in promoting, enforcing and monitoring legal frameworks for gender equality in 2022 (global average of 76%); with achievement for employment and economic benefits being least at 55% (Fig. 3).
- Increasing representation in public and private offices over the years. While 25.6% of women hold positions in parliament, this is still below gender parity.
- 32.7% women representation in managerial positions in 2022, higher than 27% globally. However, there are significant regional disparities with Central Africa leading at 43% (Fig 4.).
- Slight decrease in prevalence of child marriages from 33% in 2017/2018 to 31% in 2022/2023 of women aged 20 to 24 married before 18, still higher than global averages of 21% and 19% at the same time.

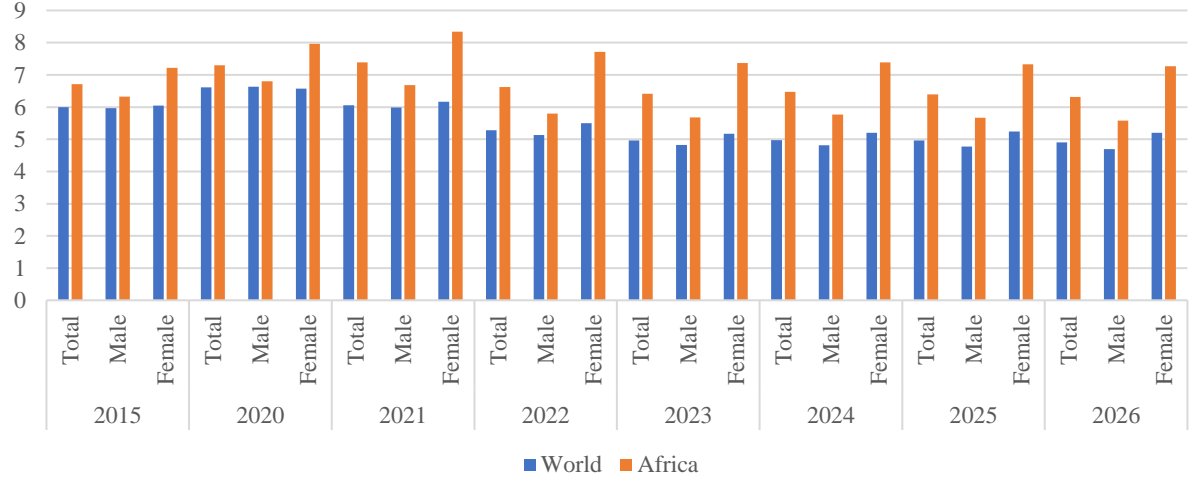
Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth

Fig 5: Annual growth rate of real gross domestic product per capita, 2015–2022



Source: ECA Calculations (2024)

Fig 6: Unemployment in Africa and the World, 2015–2026 (% of labour force)

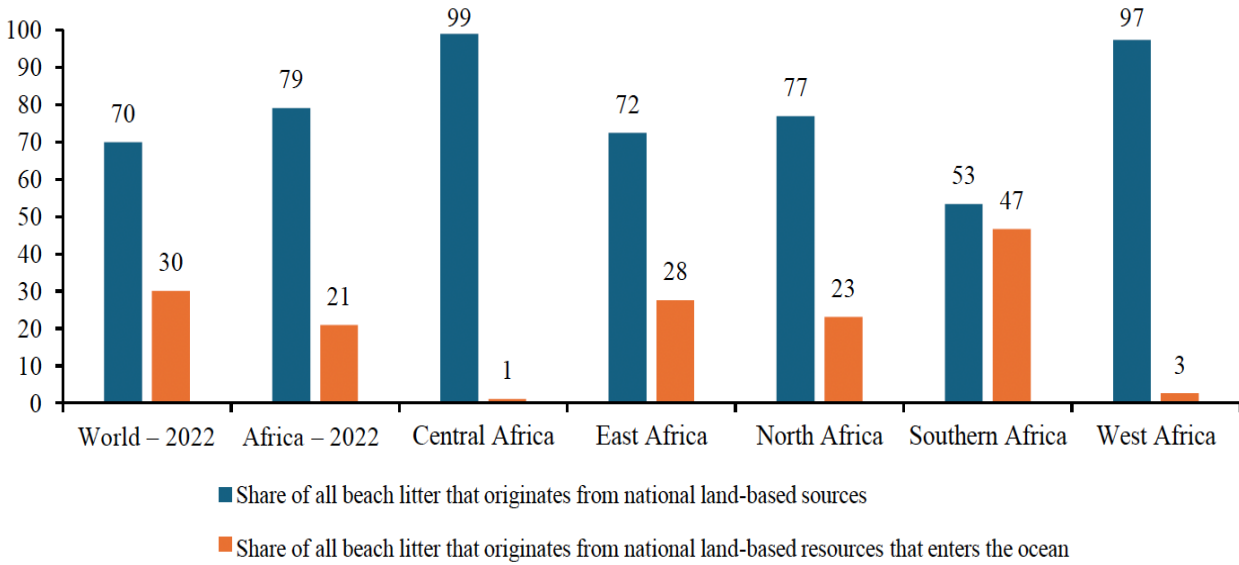


Source: ILO, SDG Labour Market Indicators (2024)

- 9 of the world’s top 20 fastest-growing economies in 2024. Real GDP projected to grow from est. 2.9% in 2024 to 4.1% in 2026, higher than global averages of 2.8% and 2.9% in those years, respectively.
- Low annual GDP per capita growth averaging -0.01% from 2015–2022, compared with 1.6% globally (Fig. 5). East Africa had the strongest growth figures at 2.5%.
- Labour force productivity is also low with real GDP per worker at -0.1% in 2023, and 0.8% projected for 2024, below projected global average of 2.1% for 2024.
- Informal employment remains high at 83% of workers in 2024 and unchanged since 2015, with 29% of workers living in extreme poverty (earning below \$2.15 per day) in 2023.
- Unemployment is generally low at 6.5% in 2024, est. 1.5% below the global average (Fig. 6). However, gender disparities exist with male unemployment at 5.8% and female at 7.4%.
- Youth unemployment remains a challenge, with youth (ages 15 – 24) not in employment, education and training at 22.5% and largely unchanged since 2015.
- Child labour is persistent with, 1 in 5 children, 92.2 million (aged 5 to 17) employed in 2020.

Goal 14: Life below water

Fig 7: Marine waste from land-based sources, 2021/22 (percentage)

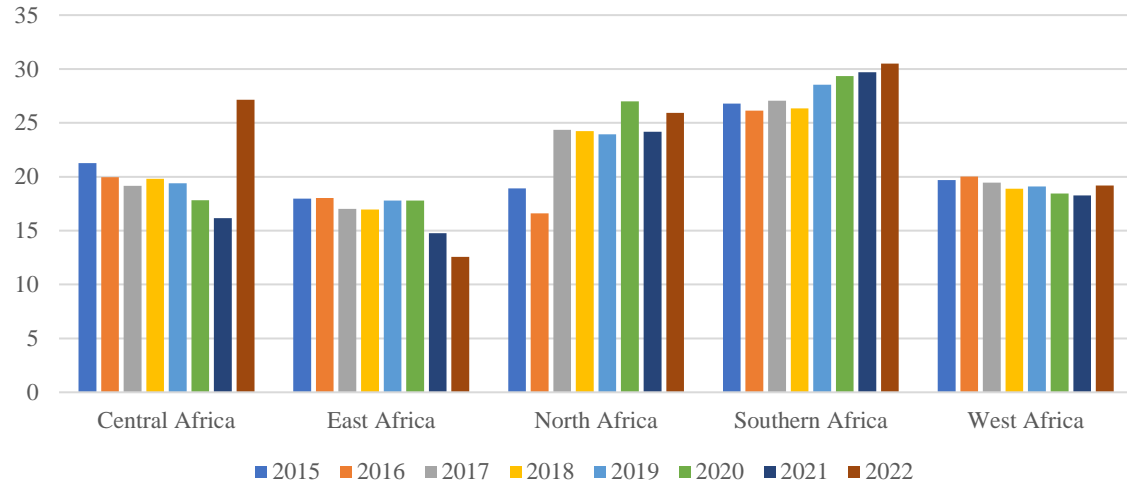


Source: United Nations, Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database (2024)

- Observed progress in marine biodiversity protection with 46.7% of key marine biodiversity areas in Africa protected in 2023, slightly above the global average of 45.5%.
- Increased marine pollution with over 2 million tonnes of litter entering African beaches in 2022, up from 1.7 million tonnes in 2017, with 79% of beach litter originating from land-based sources (Fig 7).
- Chlorophyll-a deviations, an indicator of ocean health, showed a drop from 4.5% (2015–2019) to 3.7% (2020–2022). Improvement could be attributed to temporary reductions in industrial and agricultural activities during COVID.
- Only 18 African countries have ratified the 2022 WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies which aims to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and overfishing.

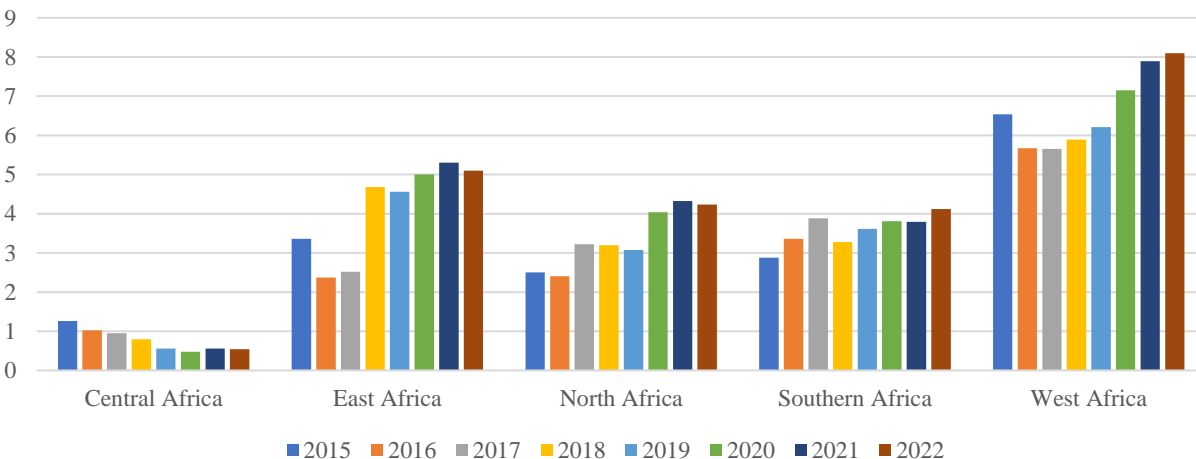
Goal 17: Partnership for all goals

Fig 9: Total central government revenue, 2015–2022 (% of GDP)



Source: ECA, Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database (2024)

Fig 10: Volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP, 2015 – 2022 (\$)



Source: ECA, Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database (2024)

- African countries face constrained fiscal space. Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services increased from 8.3% in 2015 to 9.6% in 2022, limiting resources for development investments.
- Low tax-to-GDP ratio of 21% versus global average of 33.2% in 2022 (Fig 9). Southern Africa followed by Central Africa showed the highest in 2022.
- Concessional financing being increasingly limited with ODA to Africa at 0.37% of GNI in 2023, short of 0.7% target set by donor countries.
- Remittances accounted for 3.4% of GDP in 2022, higher than global average of 0.8%, with West and East Africa receiving greater volumes than other subregions (Fig 10).
- FDI dropped by 3.4% to \$52.6 billion in 2023, representing 6% of total FDI to developing countries.
- Africa’s share of global merchandise exports has remained low, fluctuating around 2.4–2.5% since 2015.

Recommendations

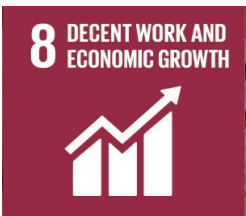
To achieve progress in the goals, the following are recommended:



- Strengthen healthcare systems by increasing investments in training and improving access to essential services. Investment in preventive measures such as health education to address for communicable and non-communicable diseases is also key.



- Implement gender-responsive budgeting and legal reforms to promote equitable resource allocation and ensure women's full economic participation in all sectors.
- Promote gender equality through legal reforms that enhance women's participation in leadership, eliminate discriminatory labour practices, and expand access to economic opportunities.



- Enhance job creation by investing in diverse economic sectors, supporting youth employment programs, and formalizing informal work to ensure sustainable livelihoods.



- Combat marine degradation by enforcing stricter waste management laws, reducing overfishing through stronger regulatory measures, and expanding marine biodiversity protection efforts.



- Boost resilience by increasing domestic revenue generation, improving debt management, exploring ways for utilizing remittances, and ensuring global financial architecture reforms for sustainable and long-term development.
- Expand digital infrastructure by improving broadband access, fostering global technology partnerships, and ensuring digital inclusion in underserved regions.



**THANK
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Ideas
to
Action