

UN Global Accelerator (GA) on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions PATHFINDER'S GUIDE



The [Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions \(GA\)](https://unglobalaccelerator.org/)¹, launched in September 2021 by the UN Secretary-General, is the main vehicle to support countries achieving one of the [Six SDG transitions](https://unsdg.un.org/resources/six-transitions-investment-pathways-deliver-sdgs)² with catalytic effects across the SDGs and one of the [High-Impact Initiatives](https://sdgs.un.org/SDGSummitActions/HII)³ to accelerate their achievement. Globally, it intends to **help bridge the 400 million global jobs gap and to extend social protection coverage to the over 4 billion people currently excluded**. The GA works in ‘**pathfinder countries**’ that made a high-level commitment to accelerating jobs and social protection for just transitions.

Accelerating impact

- ‘Pathfinder’ countries **commit** to accelerating jobs, social protection and just transitions, with particular attention to addressing gender and other inequalities ;
- **Adopt** coherent, prioritised, acceleration agendas on social protection, decent employment, skills development, sectoral and macro policies, and just transitions, based on social dialogue and broad consultations;
- **Carry-out** policy reforms supported by legislative and/or regulatory, fiscal and financial measures, linking with international financing.
- Globally the UN, development partners and international, regional and national financing institutions **synergise** their resources and promote investments that contribute to the GA goals.

Pathfinder countries:

- ✓ Strengthen and expand **social protection**,
 - ✓ Improve gender-responsive **employment, skills and entrepreneurship policies**, and
 - ✓ Strengthen **just transitions and sectoral policies**,
- As part of a **coherent and prioritised agenda**, based on social dialogue and broad consultations, to accelerate jobs, social protection and just transitions.

UN teams and the TSF:

- Facilitate **international partnerships and financing**,
 - Strengthen national **capacities** and consolidate **global knowledge**,
 - Avail technical assistance for **diagnostics, policy review and programme implementation**,
- within integrated coalitions at country and global levels.

¹ More information is available at <https://unglobalaccelerator.org/>

² <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/six-transitions-investment-pathways-deliver-sdgs>

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/SDGSummitActions/HII>

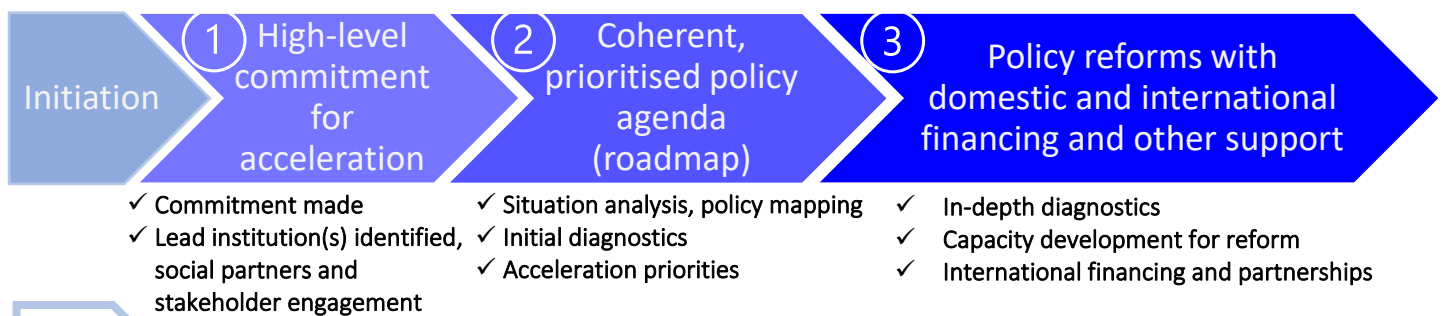
Context

At global level the GA involves not just the UN system but also governments, workers' and employers' organisations, development financing institutions, major development partners, and civil society. A **Technical Support Facility (TSF)**, led by the ILO and gathering expertise across UN agencies, provides strategic, technical, and operational guidance to the GA.

At country level, following initial exploratory dialogue, a high-level commitment is affirmed by the government to accelerating outcomes on decent jobs, social protection and just transitions. The GA TSF confirms the country as a GA 'pathfinder'. **Lead or co-lead government Institutions** are nominated and form a multi-stakeholder accelerator steering committees to lead the GA initiative in the country, and in particular to coordinate the development of a coherent and prioritised policy agenda (roadmap). The **UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC)** leads UN teams providing technical assistance and facilitating international partnerships and financing.

Acceleration process

Each path to accelerating results on decent jobs, social protection and just transitions is specific to each country. Each pathfinder country starts from a specific context and adopts its own agenda. **Three stages** can be broadly defined in a government-led process supported by the UN and international partners to accelerate jobs and social protection for just transitions:



Initiation Country-level exploratory discussions are organised with Governments, social partners and other country stakeholders, including RCs, ILO and other UN agencies.

1 High-level commitment The Government commits to accelerating its action on jobs, social protection and just transitions in a coherent, prioritised agenda. Lead government agencies, engagement with other stakeholders, existing and additional assessments and diagnostics mapped out.

2 Policy agenda (roadmap) The Government diagnoses advancement and pace of progress on decent jobs, social protection and just transitions, and identifies policy options. Employers, workers and other stakeholders are engaged and international technical assistance is provided. Acceleration priorities and preliminary financing options are agreed typically over a 3 to 5 year timeframe.

3 Policy reforms and programme implementation The Government carries out prioritised policy reforms and programmes on social protection, employment, and sectoral and macroeconomic policies. Domestic and international financing is mobilised to strengthen reform capacities, for budget support and capital investments.

COUNTRY ROADMAP TEMPLATE

1. ADVANCEMENT AND PACE OF PROGRESS

1.1. Decent jobs, social protection and just transitions

Policy agendas or “roadmaps” start with a brief (3-5 pages) summary of advancement and pace of progress against the SDGs, focusing on the areas of decent jobs, social protection and the just transition, including gaps and barriers based on income, gender, age, race/ethnicity, geographical location and other characteristics as relevant. Driving questions included in Annex 1 can further assist this work.

High-level indicators (ref. 3.), disaggregated by gender and other characteristics when possible, include:

Social transformation	Economic transformation	Just transitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demographic trends ▪ Poverty level and trends ▪ Access to care services (education, health, child-, and long-term care), time-use (time spent on unpaid care, domestic work) ▪ Social protection coverage, trends ▪ Unemployment, vulnerable, informal employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment-to-population ratios, employment by sector ▪ Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex (SDG 8.3.1) Labour productivity, wages, gender wage gap, skills and occupational trends ▪ Per capita income growth, exports, BoP, public revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate change risks and commitments, pace of progress, green investments (public and private) ▪ Formalisation, digitalisation, care





1.2. The policy context

A brief (3-5 page) mapping of the policy, institutional context is then provided. This should cover:

<p>a) Social protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the scope and comprehensiveness of the existing national social protection framework? (social health protection, old-age and survivors pensions, unemployment, employment injury, maternity, children and disability benefits, care); institutional gaps, resilience and responsiveness of the system to shocks ▪ Gaps in coverage and adequacy, including access barriers faced by different groups, in particular women and youth; ▪ Social protection financing gaps, role of external funding; <p>b) Employment, skills and entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are there national employment, skills, entrepreneurship, formalisation policies? What is the ambition? Are they youth-focused? Gender-responsive? ▪ Active labour policies: spending, scope, quality, governance ▪ Skills: spending on TVET, relevance (skills needs), quality, governance (social partners) ▪ SME and entrepreneurship policies and programmes; <p>c) Sectoral policies and just transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the economic sectors currently promoted? What are their expected effects on employment, social protection and the just transition? Are the fiscal, financial, trade measures in place commensurate with the objectives? How is progress monitored and dialogue entertained? ▪ How are gender equality, care services, inclusion of informal workers, digitalisation promoted? ▪ What are the commitments made for the green transition (NDC, NAP, JTEP and financing)? Are they on track? 	<p>d) Fiscal space, macroeconomic policies and financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a medium-term framework to increase fiscal space for jobs, social protection, sectoral and other transition policies? ▪ How much is the macroeconomic configuration promoting long term developmental objectives beyond just ensuring stability? <p>e) international treaties and conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are there key issues on the application of international treaties and conventions related to social protection and decent jobs, including international labour standards, that the GA roadmap may help in addressing? ▪ Situation regarding Freedom of Association, collective bargaining, social dialogue institutions and practice, and the participation of the civil society in policy. <p>f) Policy coherence and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transversal priorities: gender equality, youth, children, other ▪ Linkages with UNSDCF and relevant national coordination structures. ▪ Inter-ministerial coordination and institutional capacity to manage integration between macro-sectoral, social and employment policies, and just transitions <p>g) Knowledge and data gaps</p>
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2. AGENDA FOR ACCELERATION

Priority policy changes and interventions are agreed upon to address salient socio-economic challenges (1.1) against the policy context (1.2). *Changes* may refer both to policy that has already been agreed and that can be accelerated, or new policy that will or would be pursued following further analysis⁴.

	Policy change / interventions	Integrated financing	UN, IFIs, DPs support
 Expanding and strengthening social protection <i>Contributory and non-contributory social protection as part of an integrated system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1-3 policy changes or accelerations: means and targets, lead institution(s), timeframe ➤ How are employment, sectoral and green objectives integrated or linked to these changes?⁵ 	Fiscal space, public finance management, financial and macroeconomic adjustments to accelerate jobs, social protection and just transitions. Alignment and mobilisation of public and private, national and international financing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Technical assistance for diagnostics, policy review, programme implementation ➤ Global knowledge and capacity strengthening ➤ Alignment of bilateral donor programmes and financing
 Improving employment, skills and entrepreneurship policies <i>Active and passive labour policies, skills, entrepreneurship.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1-3 policy changes or accelerations: means and targets, lead institution(s), timeframe ➤ How are social protection and sectoral and green objectives integrated or linked to these changes?⁶ 		
 Strengthening sectoral and just transitions policies Key economic sectors, green, energy, agro-food systems, education, formalisation, care, digitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1-3 policy changes or accelerations: means and targets, lead institution(s), timeframe ➤ How are social protection and employment objectives integrated or linked to these changes?⁷ 		
 Ensuring policy coherence and the application of international commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Application of international treaties and conventions including Freedom of Association, collective bargaining, social dialogue, and participation of civil society. ➤ Transversal priorities: how are policy changes prioritising or integrating transversal priorities such as gender equality, sustainability, discrimination, youth and others. ➤ Coherence and synergy between the policy areas, with the wider development goals. 		

⁴ The interventions should identify sectors of the economy that have an important potential for growth and decent job creation, social and environmental impacts. A key added value of the GA is to generate positive feedback loops from economic, social and transition investments and that social and rights-based measures are built-in for the quality of jobs, social protection and inclusiveness.

⁵ For instance, an initiative to extend social protection coverage will allow to 'formalise' jobs (ie. make employment more 'decent'), and may integrate employability, entrepreneurship or job counselling (ie. 'employment and enterprise') measures.

⁶ For instance, an expansion of active labour market policies to help the unemployed access decent jobs can be complemented with unemployment benefits linked to activation criteria (actively searching, participating to training or counselling, etc).

⁷ For instance, revenues from the reduction of fuel subsidies are used to mitigate the impact on lower-income households and on specific economic sectors (ie. employment in those sectors), and may thus include social protection and job transition services.

3. IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

The priority policy changes defined in the previous section allow to achieve a desired **impact** on jobs, social protection and the just transition. As part of a coherent, prioritised agenda for change, advancing decent jobs *and* social protection *and* just transitions amounts to more than the sum of each individual measure. A key added value of the GA is in generating positive synergies and feedback loops between social, economic and environmental investments for sustained, broad-based change.

Each country defines its own pathway to accelerating jobs, social protection and just transitions and its areas of prioritizations. Country results can be measured against a common, global set of higher-level impact indicators. “**Core impact indicators**” for countries to report on are available on the Global Accelerator [website](#). A set of elective **outcome- and performance-level indicators** is also available to select from and further detail theories of change. Country-specific indicators may be added as needed.

4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Accelerating outcomes on jobs, social protection and just transitions involves work across multiple policy portfolios and sectors, including social protection, labour, skills, enterprise, sectoral and macroeconomic policies. Success relies on solid, broad-based government coalitions, effective participation of the social partners, and consultation with other stakeholders. A multi-stakeholders accelerator committee may be set up involving key ministries - planning or economy, finance, women and gender equality, labour and other sectoral ministries – and workers’ and employers’ organisations, as well as civil society, and the UN country team. A lead or co-leading government institution(s) needs to ensure leadership and coordination.

Governance arrangements

- **Lead or co-lead Government Institution(s)** and representative(s) identified by the Government;
- Composition and terms of reference of a **high-level ‘accelerator committee’ which includes social partners**, which may be backed up by a technical working group for more frequent, technical-level work;
- **Workplan/ process of engagement** with stakeholders throughout the development of the roadmap, including the social partners, civil society organizations, academia and development partners; capacity development for the key stakeholders to meaningfully engage, including government, social partners and civil society: support expected from the UN country team, (facilitation, analytical work, capacity development); monitoring, reporting and accountability arrangements to report back to the national political authorities and GA global group; and
- **Communications plan**

ANNEX - Guiding Questions

The following key questions are provided to assist the preparation of the different sections of the roadmap.

1. Advancement and Pace of Progress

- ▶ What are the key high-level indicators that reflect the current situation and trends in terms of decent work, social protection and just transitions? (disaggregated by sex and other characteristics)
- ▶ What is the situation regarding freedom of association, collective bargaining, and participation of civil society? What are the social dialogue institutions and what is the practice for social dialogue? What is the situation of human rights? Are there key issues on the application of international treaties and conventions, including international labour standards that the GA roadmap may help in addressing?
- ▶ What institutional mechanisms exist for civil society participation?
- ▶ What are key national policy and strategy documents adopted related to jobs, social protection, climate change, transition to formality, gender equality, etc? What are the priorities set by these documents?
- ▶ What are the sectors prioritised in industrial policy, trade, education plans, other development plans, climate and environment transition strategies? What are the sectors with current/upcoming large investments?
- ▶ What are the expected impacts of the policies in place? on national growth, creation of decent jobs, reduction of greenhouse gases emissions and climate change mitigation, formalisation, gender equality and access and strengthening of social protection system? Which accompanying measures have been put in place (if any) to improve the social impact of the investments?
- ▶ What is the current macroeconomic environment? (Debt levels, fiscal space constraints, monetary policy environment, exchange rate regime)
- ▶ Are these employment, social protection, just transition and sectoral policies already costed? How are they financed? Do financing levels match expectations?
- ▶ What are the main policy gaps in terms of social protection, employments, care, gender, skills and entrepreneurship, sectoral policies and green investment?
- ▶ What are the processes in place to monitor progress of these policies? Are financial allocations made based on adequate evidence? Are sufficient safeguards in place to ensure transparency and accountability of management decisions and to prevent leakages?
- ▶ What are the processes in place to ensure these policies and plans leave no one behind? Are they expected to be sufficient for identified vulnerable groups? What are the additional measures to be taken to ensure more equitable benefits for all?
- ▶ How does the social protection system perform against national social protection objectives? How are the major social protection programs in the country performing? What are the main gaps in terms of inclusiveness, adequacy, appropriateness, cost effectiveness, coherence and integration, responsiveness? What are the opportunities to improve? How can programs' complementarities inside and outside the social protection system be reinforced?
- ▶ Are well functioning implementation mechanisms in place to accurately identify all potentially eligible individuals or households and have a robust way of determining their eligibility; facilitate low-cost ways to access programs while still preserving the dignity of beneficiaries and their families; ensure that the goods, cash or in-kind care services are reaching in-need households; and monitor and evaluate results?
- ▶ Do the objectives of employment, skills development and lifelong learning, social protection for all and climate adaptation and mitigation policies reinforce each other? Do they each refer to other goals? Are they integrated within an overall country framework for human development / just transition? What are employment and social outcomes of climate action goals?
- ▶ To what extent are existing policies (employment, skills development, social protection, fiscal, enterprise) responding to the needs arising from the digitalization of the economy? Demographic changes? Formalization? Migration? And are these policies and measures seizing the new opportunities created by these transitions?
- ▶ Are there mechanisms for policy coordination across employment, social protection, and other relevant just transition policy areas? Are there integrated delivery systems? What are the missing synergies?
- ▶ How conducive are these policies to support individual pathways with adequate access to the labour market and education, and adequate and comprehensive social protection, including for women and youth? Are these policies able to redress growing inequalities and social exclusions, and enable the enjoyment of human rights?

- ▶ Which social target groups are currently prioritised in employment and social policies? Which are those that do not appear? What are the vulnerabilities of different demographics if objectives related to decent jobs and social protection do not materialize?
- ▶ What is the joint country and UN strategy to accelerate the [key transition on jobs and social protection](#)?

2. Agenda for Acceleration

- ▶ What are the overall objectives of the proposed agenda for acceleration?
- ▶ What could be the priority actions / incentives that would be taken in the context of the Global Accelerator, to improve policy integration, financing, delivery on the ground and coordination?
- ▶ Which of these priority actions has the potential to have the highest impacts in terms of decent jobs creation, the expansion of social protection and the realization of just transitions?
- ▶ If the existing policies, strategies, laws, and/or programmes related to the strategic policy changes and accelerations are not adequate, which policy changes are needed and are they feasible within the timeframe of the GA (four years)
- ▶ Which integrated policy approaches, increased investments, or improved coordination are proposed?
- ▶ How will this strategic policy changes or accelerations lead to the creation of decent jobs, extension of social protection and just transitions? What are the potential economic, social and environmental benefits and how can they be assessed?
- ▶ How will strategic policy changes or acceleration contribute to reducing inequalities, including gender gaps in access to decent jobs and social protection?
- ▶ If there are restrictions on freedom of association and collective bargaining, or weak social dialogue and social dialogue institutions, which policy changes are needed and are they feasible within the timeframe of the GA (four years)?
- ▶ How will these results be sustained and/or scaled up?
- ▶ Would the development and implementation of these actions be feasible within the timeframe of the GA (four years)?

Integrated Financing & UN, IFIs and DPs support

- ▶ What is the estimated cost of achieving the proposed actions? If not available, how will the country assess the net cost of priority actions and inaction?
- ▶ What are the integrated financing strategies and options that can realistically be envisioned?
 - Domestically: reallocating budgets, improving budget execution, raising new resources from tax reforms, expanding contributory social security, private investments, etc.; increasing private investments
 - International financial assistance: alignment/repurposing of existing budget support and loans, new ODA, etc
- ▶ What are the monitoring and review systems and governance structures required to improve budget execution?
- ▶ How can the country ensure that its priority policy measures on employment, social protection and just transitions are adequately addressed in its overarching Financing Strategy?
- ▶ To what extent does INFF initiative (if any) responding to the envisaged financing strategy for the GA? Does INFF covers social protection, jobs and just transitions dimensions?
- ▶ How to better involve employers' and workers' organizations, international financial institutions, and civil society organisations on the issue of financing investments in decent jobs, social protection and just transitions?
- ▶ How to monitor the financing gaps and investments?
- ▶ What kind of technical assistance and capacity development intervention would be expected from the UN, IFIs, and development partners?

Policy Coherence and Participation

- ▶ How do the objectives of employment, skills and entrepreneurship, social protection, and sectoral and green transition policies reinforce each other?
- ▶ How are policy changes prioritising or integrating key transversal priorities including global commitments, gender equality, youth and others
- ▶ How to ensure the effective and gender-balanced participation of workers' and employers' representatives as well as consultations with CSOs and other national stakeholders?

3. Impact and Outcomes

- ▶ What will be the overall development objectives of the GA approach in the country?
- ▶ What are the key impact indicators to report progress on?
- ▶ More specifically for which SDGs and which NDC policy(ies) will the GA in your country accelerate achievement?

4. Governance and Management

- ▶ Which government institutions or ministries are leading or co-leading the GA design and implementation?
- ▶ What is the name and composition of the tripartite high level coordination body (at Ministerial level and with which social partners) to steer the overall process, adopt the roadmap and coordinate the subsequent implementation of the GA?
- ▶ What is the name and composition of the technical coordination body that would have developed the roadmap for the GA, including social partners, participating UN agencies, participating IFIs, participating development partners, participating civil society organizations and academia?

Workplan/process of engagement

- ▶ What will be the participatory strategy with social partners, and engagement strategy with the stakeholders throughout the development of the roadmap?
- ▶ How will this governance structure interact with the body overseeing the INFF and the other relevant international frameworks and initiatives?
- ▶ Which other institutions (public, private) will be involved, in what capacity and through which mechanisms?
- ▶ How to ensure meaningful coordination among the key actors for increased impact?
- ▶ What accountability mechanisms will be implemented? What coordination body or institutions will be responsible for monitoring and reporting the results achieved and financial management?
- ▶ What kind of support and expertise would be expected from the UN Country Team?