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From Diagnosis to Delivery: Implementation Toolkits for SDG 9 and 17 Acceleration Through Digital Means of Implementation

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ABSTRACT

The 2026 High-Level Political Forum reviewed SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) at a moment when only 36 per cent of Sustainable Development Goal targets are on track and the field is saturated with progress diagnoses. This report argues that the scarce and valued contribution now is not another assessment of how far the world has fallen short but usable implementation guidance that helps countries and civil-society organisations translate means-of-implementation commitments into operational delivery. Drawing on the outcomes of the 2026 ministerial declaration, the Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2026, and the Sevilla Commitment adopted at FfD4, the report identifies the specific implementation gaps in the finance, technology, capacity-building, and partnership domains that constrain SDG 9 and 17 acceleration. It then introduces a practical framework, the Acceleration Delivery Cycle, and demonstrates how two digital tools, the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS, both components of the AUN Digital ecosystem, can be deployed to close the gap between MoI commitments and on-the-ground results. The report concludes with a Partnership Effectiveness Matrix that maps the most common weaknesses of multi-stakeholder partnerships for the Goals against toolkit-enabled responses, offering a concrete contribution to the acceleration agenda that is actionable rather than merely analytical.

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Abstract

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Keywords: *SDG 9; SDG 17; means of implementation; SDG acceleration; implementation toolkit; digital public infrastructure; multi-stakeholder partnerships*

1. Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026, released by the United Nations Statistics Division on 7 July 2026, confirmed what development practitioners had long anticipated: only 36 per cent of assessable SDG targets are on track to make moderate progress, while 15 per cent have moved backwards from their 2015 baselines.[1] The Sustainable Development Report 2026, published by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network two weeks earlier, offered an even starker projection, estimating that only 16 per cent of targets are likely to be achieved by 2030.[2] These figures, while alarming, are no longer surprising. They have been

repeated, with minor variations, in every major SDG assessment since the first edition of the UN Secretary-General's SDG Progress Report in 2016. The field of SDG monitoring has produced an impressive and increasingly granular body of diagnostic evidence. What it has not produced, in anything like commensurate quantity, is actionable guidance on what to do about the gaps it documents.[1][2]

The 2026 High-Level Political Forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council from 7 to 15 July, reviewed five Goals in depth: SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 9, SDG 11, and SDG 17.[3] The inclusion of SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) in the same review cycle was not coincidental. Together, these two Goals constitute the operational backbone of the "means of implementation" cluster that underpins the entire 2030 Agenda. SDG 9 addresses the productive capacity, technological infrastructure, and innovation systems that determine whether developing countries can participate in and benefit from the global economy. SDG 17 provides the enabling framework of finance, technology transfer, capacity-building, trade, and multi-stakeholder partnerships that must be in place for any of the other sixteen Goals to be achieved. The HLPF's ministerial declaration, adopted on 15 July 2026, called for "urgent, transformative action" and emphasised the need to "move from commitment to results," language that implicitly acknowledged the diagnosis saturation problem and signalled a demand for implementation-oriented contributions.[3][4]

This report responds to that demand. Its central argument is that the implementation gap in the means-of-implementation cluster is not primarily a knowledge gap but a delivery gap. The international community knows, in considerable detail, what needs to be done to accelerate progress on SDG 9 and 17. What it lacks are operational tools and frameworks that translate that knowledge into action at the national and subnational levels where implementation occurs. The report demonstrates, through the concrete example of two digital tools in the AUN Digital ecosystem, the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS, how technology can be deployed not merely to monitor SDG progress but to drive it. The SDG Impact Mapper enables organisations to assess the alignment between development interventions and SDG targets, identifying gaps and overlaps that diagnostic reports highlight but do not resolve. AdvocacyOS provides a platform for managing the campaigns, stakeholder engagements, and partnership coordination that SDG 17's partnership targets require. Together, these tools operationalise a six-phase Acceleration Delivery Cycle that this report proposes as a practical framework for bridging the gap between MoI commitments and results.[5][6]

2. The Means-of-Implementation Deficit: A Brief Mapping

This section provides a concise mapping of the implementation deficits in the five MoI domains that SDG 17 operationalises. Its purpose is not to offer another comprehensive progress diagnosis, a function already served by the UN SDG Report, the SDSN Sustainable Development Report, and the Financing for Sustainable Development Report, but to identify the specific operational gaps that implementation toolkits must address. The argument that follows rests on a distinction between diagnostic gaps, which describe shortfalls in outcomes relative to targets, and delivery gaps, which describe shortfalls in the operational capacity to close those diagnostic gaps. Progress diagnostics have improved dramatically over the past decade. Delivery capacity has not kept pace.[1][7]

2.1 Finance: The ODA Collapse and the Sevilla Commitment

The financing dimension of the MoI deficit has worsened materially since 2024. Official development assistance from DAC members fell to USD 174.3 billion in 2025, a 23.1 per cent decline, the largest annual drop on record, returning ODA to approximately its 2015 level.[8] Preliminary data suggest a further decline of 5.8 per cent in 2026. Total external debt reached a record USD 8.9 trillion in 2024, with interest payments

of USD 415.4 billion consuming an ever-larger share of developing-country budgets and net debt transfers remaining negative for a third consecutive year.[9] The Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2026, published in April, estimated the annual SDG financing gap at USD 4.3 trillion and outlined five priorities for closing it, centred on the rapid implementation of the Sevilla Commitment adopted by consensus at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2025.[7] The delivery gap in the finance domain is not the absence of a framework, the Sevilla Commitment provides one, but the absence of operational tools that enable developing-country governments and civil-society organisations to translate the Commitment's provisions into nationally specific financing strategies, track their implementation, and hold donors and creditors accountable for their commitments.[7][8]

2.2 Technology and Infrastructure: SDG 9 Indicators

The latest SDG 9 data reveal a picture of aggregate progress masking extreme disparities. Global manufacturing value added per capita reached a record USD 1,936 in 2024, but manufacturing employment share declined from 14.3 per cent in 2015 to 13.7 per cent in 2024, and only 32.7 per cent of small-scale manufacturing enterprises globally have access to credit or loans, a figure that falls to 19.1 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.[10] Global R&D spending as a share of GDP rose from 1.71 per cent in 2015 to 1.92 per cent in 2023, but investment in many developing economies remains below 1 per cent of GDP, and the share of medium- and high-tech manufacturing in total value added ranges from 49.6 per cent in Europe and North America to 14.3 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.[10] In connectivity, 5G covered 55 per cent of the global population in 2025, but only 4 per cent of the population in low-income countries, compared with 84 per cent in high-income countries.[11] These disparities define the delivery gap in the technology and infrastructure domain: the tools and data exist to identify where investment is needed, but the operational mechanisms for channelling investment to the specific enterprises, regions, and population groups that need it most remain inadequate.[10]

2.3 Partnerships: Fragmentation Without Impact

SDG 17's partnership architecture has expanded quantitatively without demonstrating commensurate impact. The Partnerships for SDGs online platform registers thousands of multi-stakeholder partnerships, but the 2026 ECOSOC Partnership Forum, held on 27 January, emphasised the need to move "beyond fragmented initiatives towards durable partnerships at scale."[4] Global foreign direct investment rose 14 per cent in 2025 to an estimated USD 1.6 trillion, but flows to developing economies declined by 2 per cent, and three-quarters of least developed countries saw stagnant or declining inflows.[9] Trade in environmentally sound technologies reached USD 2.7 trillion in 2024, a 16 per cent increase since 2015, but developing economies' share of world merchandise exports, at 48.3 per cent, masks the continued marginalisation of LDCs, whose share remains at just 1.13 per cent, far short of the target of doubling by 2020.[9] The delivery gap in the partnership domain is the gap between the registration of partnerships and their operational effectiveness, between commitments made in New York and Geneva and results delivered in Nairobi, Dhaka, and La Paz.[4][12]

3. The Diagnostic Saturation Problem

3.1 Mapping the Progress Report Ecosystem

The ecosystem of SDG progress monitoring has grown into a substantial and sophisticated infrastructure. The UN Statistics Division's annual SDG Report, the SDSN's Sustainable Development Report and SDG Index,

UNDP's Human Development Report, UNCTAD's Technology and Innovation Report, the Financing for Sustainable Development Report, and the World Bank's Digital Progress and Technology Report together produce thousands of pages of diagnostic analysis annually.[1][2][7][13] Country-level Voluntary National Reviews, 190 of which had been presented by 2026, add another layer of national diagnostic detail. Specialised reports from UNIDO on SDG 9, from the ITU on connectivity, and from the OECD on digital government provide sector-specific diagnostics of increasing granularity.[10][11][14] These reports are, without exception, well-produced, data-rich, and analytically rigorous. They serve an essential accountability function, and they provide the evidentiary foundation for advocacy and policy engagement. But they share a common structural limitation: they describe the problem rather than solving it.[1][2]

A systematic review of the SDG monitoring landscape conducted for this report identified over thirty distinct periodic publications that assess some dimension of SDG progress, but not a single one that provides operational, step-by-step implementation guidance for translating diagnostic findings into programme design, resource mobilisation, or partnership development. The UN Statistics Division's SDG Monitoring and Reporting Toolkit for UN Country Teams supports the monitoring function, and the UNECE's National SDG Tracker enables national data visualisation, but both are diagnostic tools, not implementation tools.[15][16] The SDSN SDG Impact Assessment Tool helps institutions assess their impact on the Goals, and the JRC KnowSDGs Mapper enables document-level SDG alignment analysis, but neither addresses the operational delivery challenge of moving from assessment to action.[17][18] The gap is not in the supply of data but in the demand for, and supply of, operational guidance that translates data into delivery.

3.2 Why Another Diagnosis Does Not Help

The diagnosis saturation problem is not merely an academic observation; it has practical consequences for the effectiveness of the SDG architecture. First, it creates a paradox of awareness without agency: stakeholders at all levels are increasingly well-informed about the scale of the implementation challenge but no better equipped to address it. The UN SDG Report 2026's finding that only 36 per cent of targets are on track has been widely cited since its publication, but the citation has not been accompanied by a commensurate increase in operational responses.[1] Second, diagnostic saturation generates fatigue. When every major report arrives at substantially the same conclusion, that progress is insufficient, the marginal informational value of each additional report declines, and the attention that policymakers and practitioners are willing to devote to new diagnostic products diminishes. The 2026 HLPF ministerial declaration's emphasis on "transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions" rather than on progress assessment reflects this fatigue and signals a shift in institutional demand from diagnosis to delivery.[3]

Third, and most fundamentally, the diagnostic orientation of the SDG monitoring ecosystem creates an epistemic bias toward retrospective analysis at the expense of forward-looking operational planning. Progress reports are, by their nature, backward-looking: they assess what has happened since the last reporting cycle. Implementation requires forward-looking tools that help stakeholders plan what should happen between now and the next one. This is not to argue that progress monitoring should be abandoned; it is to argue that the ecosystem needs to be complemented by an equally robust infrastructure of implementation toolkits that occupy the operational space between diagnostic evidence and programme delivery. The SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS are designed to occupy precisely that space.[5][6]

4. HLPF 2026 and the Acceleration Imperative

4.1 The Ministerial Declaration and SDG 9/17 Outcomes

The 2026 HLPF ministerial declaration, adopted on 15 July after a week of negotiations, provides the most authoritative intergovernmental signal of the direction in which SDG implementation policy is moving. Its treatment of SDG 9 and SDG 17 is instructive. On SDG 9, the declaration calls for stronger industrial policies to build local industries and technological capacities, with explicit attention to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states, and middle-income countries, the categories of country where the delivery gap is widest.[3] The declaration's emphasis on industrial policy represents a significant evolution from the 2030 Agenda's own language, which treated industrial development primarily as a matter of infrastructure investment and technology access. The shift toward industrial policy reflects a growing recognition, articulated most clearly in UNIDO's framing of SDG 9 as "the production engine of the 2030 Agenda," that structural transformation requires not just infrastructure but active policy intervention to build productive capacity in sectors where developing countries can compete and create decent employment.[10]

On SDG 17, the declaration calls for expanding fiscal space, tackling unsustainable debt, lowering the cost of capital, and "rapidly implementing the Sevilla Commitment."[3][7] The ECOSOC Partnership Forum's 2026 session, which fed into the HLPF, had already underscored the need for partnerships that are "practical, demand-driven, and aligned with national priorities" and for solutions that are "co-created with local actors."[4] The SDG Global Business Forum, co-organised by UNIDO, the UN Global Compact, the International Organisation of Employers, and UN DESA during the HLPF, focused specifically on the private sector's role in closing the financing gap for sustainable industrialisation, addressing a dimension of SDG 17 that has received less attention than development assistance but that is, in quantitative terms, far more significant for long-term productive capacity.[10][3] The cumulative message from these forums is clear: the institutional demand has shifted from "how are we doing?" to "what do we do now?", and the answer must be operational, specific, and implementable.

4.2 The Sevilla Commitment and FSDR 2026 Priorities

The Sevilla Commitment, adopted by consensus at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2025, with over 15,000 participants, represents the most significant multilateral agreement on development financing since the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of 2015. Its implementation is the central operational priority for the means-of-implementation cluster in 2026 and 2027.[7] The FSDR 2026 outlines five implementation priorities: closing the USD 4.3 trillion annual financing gap by scaling up investment, maximising sustainable development impact aligned with the Sevilla Commitment, strengthening international collaboration, supporting developing-country productive capacity, and rapidly implementing the Commitment itself.[7] These priorities provide the macro-level framework within which implementation toolkits must operate. The contribution of digital tools like the SDG Impact Mapper is not to replace this macro-level framework but to operationalise it at the meso and micro levels, enabling individual organisations, national coalitions, and sector-specific partnerships to align their activities with the Sevilla Commitment's priorities and to track their contributions to its implementation.

5. From Data to Delivery: The Implementation Toolkit Architecture

5.1 Principles of Implementation-Focused Tools

Implementation-focused SDG tools differ from diagnostic tools in four critical respects. First, they are forward-looking rather than retrospective: their primary function is to support planning and decision-making

for future action, not to assess past performance. Second, they are actionable rather than analytical: they produce outputs that can be directly translated into programme design, resource allocation, and partnership development decisions, rather than outputs that describe the state of the world. Third, they are user-centric rather than data-centric: they are designed around the workflows and decision-making processes of the practitioners, policymakers, and advocates who will use them, rather than around the structure of the datasets they draw upon. Fourth, they are integrative rather than siloed: they connect the different dimensions of the means of implementation, finance, technology, capacity-building, trade, and partnerships, rather than treating each in isolation, reflecting the interconnected nature of the SDG architecture itself.[5][6][15]

These four principles are not merely design preferences; they are operational necessities. The means-of-implementation challenge is, by its nature, cross-cutting. A government seeking to accelerate progress on SDG 9 cannot address infrastructure, industrial policy, innovation, and access to finance as separate problems; they must be addressed as an integrated system in which investments in one domain enable and constrain progress in others. Similarly, a civil-society organisation advocating for stronger SDG 17 partnerships cannot treat finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building as independent advocacy targets; they are elements of a single package that must be negotiated and coordinated. Implementation tools that mirror this interconnectedness in their design are more likely to produce useful outputs than tools that reflect the institutional silos of the UN system or the thematic compartmentalisation of the academic literature.[5][19]

5.2 The SDG Impact Mapper: Translating Indicators into Action

The SDG Impact Mapper, a component of the AUN Digital ecosystem, is designed to address the delivery gap in the technology and capacity-building dimensions of the means of implementation. Its core function is to enable organisations to assess the alignment between their development interventions and specific SDG targets, identifying both gaps, areas where no intervention is addressing a relevant target, and overlaps, areas where multiple interventions are addressing the same target, potentially creating inefficiencies or coordination failures.[5] The tool operates at the intersection of two capabilities that are individually common but rarely combined: the ability to map interventions to SDG targets with granularity, and the ability to assess the relative impact and coverage of those interventions across the dimensions of the means of implementation.

In practical terms, the SDG Impact Mapper enables a developing-country government or civil-society coalition to conduct a rapid assessment of how its existing portfolio of programmes, partnerships, and investments aligns with the SDG 9 and 17 target framework. For SDG 9, this might reveal, for example, that while significant investment is flowing to broadband infrastructure (Target 9.c), little is being directed toward small-scale industrial access to credit (Target 9.3) or toward research and development capacity in specific industrial sectors (Target 9.5). For SDG 17, the mapper might identify that partnership activity is concentrated in the data and statistics domain (Target 17.18) while the technology transfer and capacity-building domains (Targets 17.6 to 17.9) remain under-served. These are not findings that require new primary data collection; they are findings that emerge from applying an integrative analytical lens to existing information. The value of the SDG Impact Mapper lies in making that lens systematic, reproducible, and actionable.[5][6]

5.3 AdvocacyOS: Campaign Management for MoI Advocacy

AdvocacyOS, the second component of the AUN Digital toolkit deployed in this framework, addresses the delivery gap in the partnership and finance dimensions of the means of implementation. While the SDG Impact Mapper diagnoses where interventions are needed, AdvocacyOS provides the platform for

coordinating the advocacy campaigns, stakeholder engagements, and partnership development activities that translate diagnostic findings into operational commitments. Its campaign management capabilities enable organisations to plan, execute, and monitor advocacy strategies aimed at specific MoI targets, tracking stakeholder engagement, measuring campaign progress, and coordinating multi-organisation advocacy efforts.[6]

In the context of SDG 17 acceleration, AdvocacyOS is particularly valuable for addressing the fragmentation that the 2026 ECOSOC Partnership Forum identified as the principal challenge facing multi-stakeholder partnerships. The platform enables partnership coordinators to map the landscape of existing partnerships for a given country or sector, identify gaps where new partnerships are needed, and track the development of partnership commitments from initial engagement through to implementation and impact reporting. Its integration with the broader AUN Digital ecosystem, including the SDG Impact Mapper and the PolicyPulse AI legislative monitoring system, means that advocacy campaigns can be informed by real-time data on SDG alignment and policy developments, creating a feedback loop between diagnostic evidence and operational action that is absent from most partnership coordination processes.[4][6][19]

5.4 Integrating Digital Public Infrastructure for SDG Delivery

The broader digital public infrastructure ecosystem provides the foundational layer on which tools like the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS operate. UNDP's DPI initiative, the OECD's 2024 report on digital public infrastructure for digital governments, and the UN Innovation Network's compendium on DPI for the SDGs have documented the potential of digital identity, payments, and data exchange systems to accelerate progress across multiple Goals simultaneously.[20][21][22] The concept of digital public infrastructure is particularly relevant to SDG 9 and 17 because it operates at the intersection of infrastructure development (SDG 9.1), technology access (SDG 9.c), digital cooperation (SDG 17.6 to 17.8), and data availability (SDG 17.18 and 17.19). When well-designed, DPI can serve as a multiplier for MoI effectiveness, enabling more efficient targeting of development resources, more transparent tracking of partnership commitments, and more inclusive access to the digital tools and data that implementation requires.[20]

However, the deployment of DPI for SDG delivery is not without risks. The concentration of data and digital identity in centralised systems raises concerns about surveillance, exclusion, and the digital sovereignty of developing countries. The OECD's 2024 report emphasised that DPI must be designed with robust governance frameworks from inception, embedding data protection, interoperability standards, and accountability mechanisms into the system architecture rather than treating them as after-the-fact constraints.[21] For the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS, this principle translates into a design requirement that the tools themselves model the governance standards they are intended to support: data privacy, user consent, transparency in algorithmic decision-making, and accountability for the outputs they produce. This reflexive design principle, whereby implementation tools embody the governance principles of the Goals they serve, is a distinguishing feature of the AUN Digital approach and one that aligns with the broader reflexive governance framework developed in the CyberSec Journal's 2026 flagship report.[23]

6. The Acceleration Delivery Cycle: A Practical Framework

Drawing on the analysis in the preceding sections, this report proposes the Acceleration Delivery Cycle as a six-phase practical framework for translating means-of-implementation commitments into operational delivery for SDG 9 and 17. The Cycle is designed to be tool-enabled, with each phase supported by specific capabilities of the SDG Impact Mapper, AdvocacyOS, and the broader AUN Digital ecosystem. Its six phases are sequential but iterative: completion of one phase feeds into the next, but findings at later phases may

require revisiting earlier ones. Table 1 maps each phase to the MoI domain it addresses, the specific SDG 9 and 17 targets it supports, and the primary tool capabilities deployed.

Table 1. Acceleration Delivery Cycle: Six Phases for SDG 9 and 17 Implementation

Phase	Activity	MoI Domain	Key SDG Targets	Primary Tool
1. Diagnostic Alignment	Map existing interventions against SDG 9/17 targets; identify coverage gaps and overlaps	Technology / Data	9.1, 9.3, 9.5, 17.18, 17.19	SDG Impact Mapper
2. Stakeholder Mapping	Identify key actors, partnership landscapes, and advocacy targets for MoI delivery	Partnerships / Capacity	17.16, 17.17, 9.b	AdvocacyOS + Impact Mapper
3. Resource Mapping	Assess finance flows, technology access, and capacity-building programmes against delivery needs	Finance / Technology	17.1–17.7, 9.a, 9.c	SDG Impact Mapper
4. Campaign Design	Develop targeted advocacy strategies for specific MoI delivery gaps; set measurable objectives	All five MoI domains	17.14–17.16, 9.1–9.5	AdvocacyOS
5. Partnership Activation	Initiate, formalise, and launch multi-stakeholder partnerships; coordinate with DPI systems	Partnerships / Trade	17.6, 17.7, 17.16, 17.17	AdvocacyOS + DPI Integration
6. Impact Tracking	Monitor delivery against commitments; report results; feed findings back to Phase 1	All five MoI domains	17.18, 17.19, 9.1	SDG Impact Mapper + AdvocacyOS

The Cycle's design reflects three key principles derived from the analysis in this report. First, it treats the five MoI domains as interconnected rather than as separate tracks, recognising that effective implementation requires coordination across finance, technology, capacity-building, trade, and systemic issues. Second, it is iterative rather than linear, acknowledging that implementation is a learning process in which initial plans must be adapted in response to emerging evidence and changing circumstances. Third, it is tool-enabled but not tool-dependent: the framework can be applied using manual processes if digital tools are unavailable, but the tools significantly enhance the speed, accuracy, and scalability of each phase.[5][6][7]

In practical application, the Acceleration Delivery Cycle can be initiated at any scale, from a single civil-society organisation assessing its own SDG alignment to a national government coordinating a whole-of-government SDG acceleration strategy. The SDG Impact Mapper's diagnostic alignment capability (Phase 1) is the logical entry point, as it provides the evidence base for all subsequent phases. AdvocacyOS's campaign management and partnership coordination capabilities then support Phases 2 through 5, while both tools contribute to the impact tracking function in Phase 6. The Cycle's iterative design ensures that the impact

tracking findings feed back into the diagnostic alignment assessment, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation over time.[5][6]

7. Partnership Effectiveness: From Registration to Impact

The 2026 ECOSOC Partnership Forum's call to move "beyond fragmented initiatives towards durable partnerships at scale" identified the central challenge facing SDG 17's partnership architecture: the gap between the registration of partnerships and their operational impact.[4] Despite the growth of the Partnerships for SDGs platform, which now registers thousands of multi-stakeholder initiatives, systematic evidence on partnership effectiveness remains scarce. A comprehensive review by Beisheim and colleagues, published in the Annual Review of Environment and Resources, documented both the promises and the pitfalls of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development, finding that while partnerships have generated valuable innovation and resource mobilisation in some domains, their aggregate impact has been limited by fragmentation, weak accountability mechanisms, and the absence of standardised effectiveness metrics.[12]

Table 2 proposes a Partnership Effectiveness Matrix that maps the most common weaknesses identified in the partnership literature against toolkit-enabled responses available through the AUN Digital ecosystem. The matrix is not intended as a comprehensive evaluation framework but as a practical diagnostic that partnership coordinators can use to identify where their partnerships are underperforming and what operational responses are available. The matrix draws on the partnership effectiveness criteria identified by UN DESA's 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator, the academic literature on multi-stakeholder governance, and AUN's own operational experience in supporting SDG-related partnerships.[4][6][12]

Table 2. Partnership Effectiveness Matrix: Common Weaknesses and Toolkit-Enabled Responses

Partnership Weakness	Description	Toolkit-Enabled Response
Alignment Deficit	Partnerships not aligned with national SDG priorities or SDG 9/17 targets	SDG Impact Mapper diagnostic alignment (Phase 1) identifies target coverage gaps and steers partnership design
Fragmentation	Multiple overlapping partnerships without coordination; duplication of effort	Stakeholder mapping (Phase 2) + AdvocacyOS coordination dashboard provides partnership landscape visibility
Accountability Gap	No systematic tracking of partnership commitments against deliverables	Impact tracking (Phase 6) + AdvocacyOS campaign monitoring with measurable milestones
Exclusion of Local Actors	Partnerships designed in global forums without meaningful local co-creation	Stakeholder mapping identifies missing local actors; AdvocacyOS engagement tracking ensures inclusion
Finance-Implementation Disconnect	Funding commitments made without operational delivery mechanisms	Resource mapping (Phase 3) connects finance flows to delivery needs; enables gap analysis
Data Deficiency	Partnerships lack baseline data and impact indicators for SDG 9/17 targets	SDG Impact Mapper provides target-level data integration; supports M&E framework design

The matrix's practical value lies in its actionability. Each weakness-response pair identifies not only the problem but a specific tool-enabled intervention that addresses it. A partnership coordinator facing an alignment deficit, for example, can use the SDG Impact Mapper's Phase 1 diagnostic to identify which SDG 9 and 17 targets are underserved by the existing partnership portfolio and use that evidence to advocate for the design of new partnerships that fill the identified gaps. A coordinator confronting fragmentation can use AdvocacyOS's stakeholder mapping and coordination dashboard to visualise the partnership landscape, identify overlaps and gaps, and facilitate coordination among existing partners. The matrix is designed to be used as a living tool, updated as new weaknesses are identified and as the capabilities of the AUN Digital ecosystem evolve.[4][5][6][12]

8. Counterarguments and Limitations

The framework and toolkit approach proposed in this report is subject to several important limitations. First, the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS are tools developed and maintained by a single organisation, the Advocacy Unified Network, and their adoption depends on organisations' willingness to integrate external digital tools into their workflows. In a landscape where many organisations already use multiple platforms for monitoring, evaluation, and partnership management, the addition of yet another tool may face resistance on grounds of interoperability, data governance, or simply the cognitive burden of learning a new system. The

report's argument that the tools fill a genuine operational gap does not eliminate the practical challenge of adoption, which requires investment in training, trust-building, and evidence of incremental value over existing tools and manual processes.[5][6]

Second, the Acceleration Delivery Cycle, while designed to be tool-agnostic in principle, is calibrated to the capabilities of the AUN Digital ecosystem. Organisations that lack access to these tools, or that operate in contexts where digital infrastructure is inadequate to support their use, may find the framework's emphasis on digital tool-enablement less relevant. The report's acknowledgment that the Cycle can be applied using manual processes partially addresses this concern, but the efficiency and scalability advantages of the digital tools are significant, and their absence would materially reduce the Cycle's practical utility. This limitation is, in essence, a microcosm of the broader digital divide that SDG 9 and 17 are intended to address: the tools designed to accelerate SDG implementation are themselves dependent on the digital infrastructure whose expansion is one of the targets of that implementation.[10][11]

Third, the Partnership Effectiveness Matrix, while practical, is necessarily simplified. The six weaknesses it identifies are drawn from the academic literature and from AUN's operational experience, but the real-world challenges facing multi-stakeholder partnerships are more numerous, more context-specific, and more deeply rooted in political economy dynamics than any matrix can capture. Power asymmetries between partners, conflicting institutional incentives, domestic political constraints, and the unpredictable effects of geopolitical shifts on development cooperation all influence partnership effectiveness in ways that are not easily reduced to a diagnostic framework. The matrix is intended as a starting point for analysis, not as a comprehensive explanation of partnership failure, and its utility will vary significantly across different institutional and national contexts.[4][12]

Fourth, the report's emphasis on implementation toolkits should not be interpreted as an argument that diagnostic monitoring is unimportant. Progress assessments, Voluntary National Reviews, and thematic reports provide the evidentiary foundation without which implementation guidance would be directionless. The argument is for balance: the SDG ecosystem needs a more robust infrastructure of implementation tools, not a replacement of its diagnostic infrastructure. The relationship between the two is complementary, not competitive, and the value of implementation toolkits is greatest when they are informed by and responsive to the diagnostic evidence that the monitoring ecosystem produces.[1][2][15]

9. Conclusion

The 2026 High-Level Political Forum's review of SDG 9 and SDG 17 has confirmed both the urgency and the direction of the means-of-implementation challenge. The ministerial declaration's call for "urgent, transformative action" and its emphasis on moving "from commitment to results" signal a shift in institutional demand from progress diagnosis to implementation delivery.[3] The Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2026 and the Sevilla Commitment provide the macro-level financing framework.[7] The UN SDG Report and the SDSN Sustainable Development Report provide the diagnostic evidence.[1][2] What has been missing is the meso-level operational infrastructure, the tools and frameworks that enable individual organisations, national coalitions, and sector-specific partnerships to translate these macro-level frameworks and diagnostic findings into concrete, trackable, and accountable delivery actions.

This report has argued that the field of SDG monitoring has reached a point of diagnostic saturation, where the marginal value of additional progress assessments is diminishing while the demand for implementation guidance is growing. It has proposed the Acceleration Delivery Cycle as a six-phase practical framework for bridging the gap between means-of-implementation commitments and operational results, and it has

demonstrated how the SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS, two components of the AUN Digital ecosystem, can be deployed to support each phase of the Cycle. It has introduced a Partnership Effectiveness Matrix that maps common partnership weaknesses against toolkit-enabled responses, offering a concrete, actionable tool for addressing the fragmentation that the 2026 ECOSOC Partnership Forum identified as the principal challenge facing SDG 17's partnership architecture.[4][5][6]

The forward runway to 2030 is short, and the scale of the delivery challenge is immense. The SDG financing gap stands at USD 4.3 trillion per year, ODA is in sharp decline, external debt is at a record high, and only 36 per cent of targets are on track.[1][7][8] But the tools for addressing these challenges are better than they have ever been. Digital public infrastructure is expanding, data availability is improving, and the institutional frameworks for coordination and partnership are maturing. What is needed now is not more diagnosis but more delivery, not more reports about what is wrong but more toolkits for making it right. The SDG Impact Mapper and AdvocacyOS are AUN Digital's contribution to that delivery imperative. Global Perspectives is honoured to publish it.

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