Sustainable Development Outlook

• Gathering storms and silver linings

An overview of SDG challenges
Sustainable development drivers

- Inequality
- Conflicts
- Climate change
- Economic growth
- Technological change

Sustainable Development Outlook: Gathering storms & silver linings
SDGs are facing significant headwinds

- Slowing economic growth
- High and rising inequality
- Growing climate risks
- Conflicts and increasing pressure of population displacement

- For too long, we tolerated the risks of rising inequality and climate change
  - In our relentless pursuit of economic growth
- LDCs are particularly vulnerable
The reach of rising inequality

Percentage of world population facing inequality, 2000–2013

- Increased inequality: 23%
- No change in inequality: 10%
- Reduced inequality: 67%

Source: UN DESA, based on the Standardized World Income Inequality Database.
Inequality matters
Vicious cycles

- Inequality breeds insecurity and discontent
  - More visible, stark and painful
- Costs of coping with climate change disproportionately fall on the poor,
  - eating up their income and wealth
  - leading to more inequality
- More inequality and insecurity increases demand for migration
  - Increasingly hard – people feel entrapped
  - Leading to more violence and conflicts
  - Accelerating environmental degradation
- Bold climate action and pro-immigration policies breed populism, nativism and nationalism
- Rising nationalism corrodes multilateral system and processes that are sine qua non for managing inequality, climate change and conflicts
LDCs are among the most climate-vulnerable countries.
Climate change and conflicts: vicious cycles

- Weakened multilateral effort to combat climate change and diffuse conflict
- Rise of anti-immigrant sentiment & nationalism
- Population displacement & immigration pressure
- Climate change & violent conflicts
Many paths to fighting inequality

- **Domestic policy**
  - Many dimensions of inequality
  - Tools
  - Progressives taxes, improved tax collection, greater social protection to reduce inequality in post-tax income
  - Capital gains and inheritance taxes for reducing intergenerational inequality
  - Targeting and reprioritizing public expenditures to equalize access and improve delivery of public goods
  - Land ownership and tenure security for reducing inequality in land-holdings and managing commons
  - Regular and orderly migration to reduce inequality, prevent conflicts and facilitate climate change adaptation
  - Greater international cooperation to improve access to technologies most needed for sustainable development

- **International cooperation**
  - Aging and youth population
  - Technology
  - Land and natural resources
  - Access and opportunities
  - Income
  - Wealth
Inequality is not inevitable

- It is a matter of choice – many paths and many solution exist for fighting inequality
  - no one size fits all
- Redistribution of income, wealth, access and opportunities
- Fiscal policy must play increasingly important role
  - redistributing
    - creating even playing fields for access and opportunities
- Regular and managed migration can be an important tool for
  - reducing inequality
  - adapting to climate change
  - preventing conflicts
Leveraging technology for sustainable development

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Technology presents a silver lining

- But technology can cut both ways
- Identifying and prioritizing right technology to address food, shelter, energy and health related insecurities
- Building a national innovation system
  - Develop, improvise and disseminate new technology
  - Manage risks with new and emerging technologies
- International cooperation will remain critical
Thank you.

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