GENDER GAPS IN DEFINITIONS, ANALYSES & IMPLEMENTATIONS OF SDGs

Elizabeth Pollitzer

VOICES COST Summer School, 6 July 2023
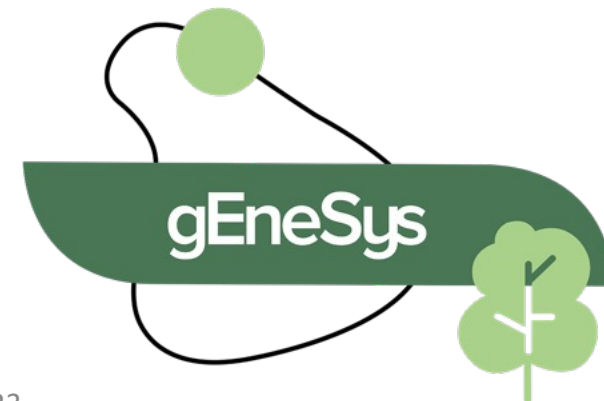
UN Agenda 2030 is failing women

"No country is on track to meeting the goal of gender equality – without
which none of the others will be met, and in fact, the gap in several [of them] is growing."
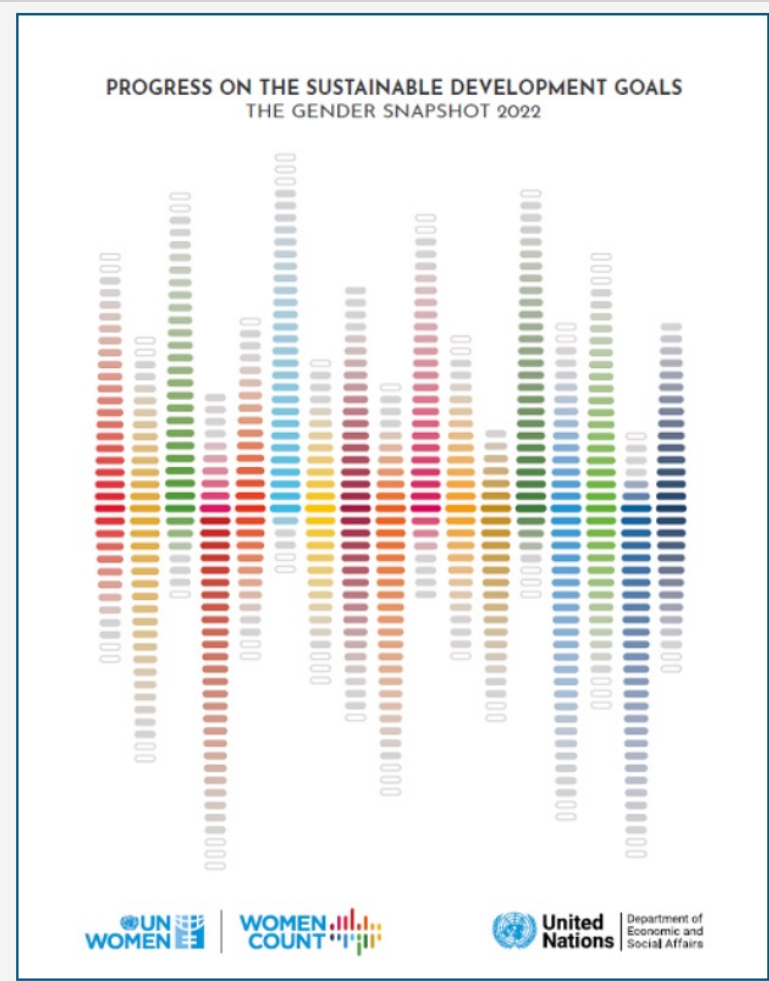
(Antonio Guterres, 2020)

Eight SDGs make no mention of women, girls, boys, men, etc. as targets for intervention

UN Women have identified 125 gender-related indicators but only for six SDGs

Lack of capacity at country-level to collect reliable data on SDGs

PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
THE GENDER SNAPSHOT 2022

An analysis of the indicators in the Global SDG Indicators Database reveals that for 4 of the 17 goals, less than half of 194 countries, or areas, have internationally comparable data. This lack of country-level data is particularly worrisome for Goal 5 where on average only about 4 in 10 countries have data available.

UN WOMEN | WOMEN COUNT

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UN has recommended that gender perspective should be integrated into analysis of each SDG

SDG6 *Dirty water kills more women than AIDS and breast cancer together*

SDG2 *Almost 1.0 million girls under 5 die annually from diarrheal diseases*

SDG9 *Women have 47% higher risk of injury in a car crash than men do*

SDG11 *Natural disasters make women's survival 4 times less likely than that of men*

SDG12 *75% of new diseases emerge from animals: women are at greater risk of exposure*

SDG7 *Women are at greater health risk from internal pollutions from cooking stoves*
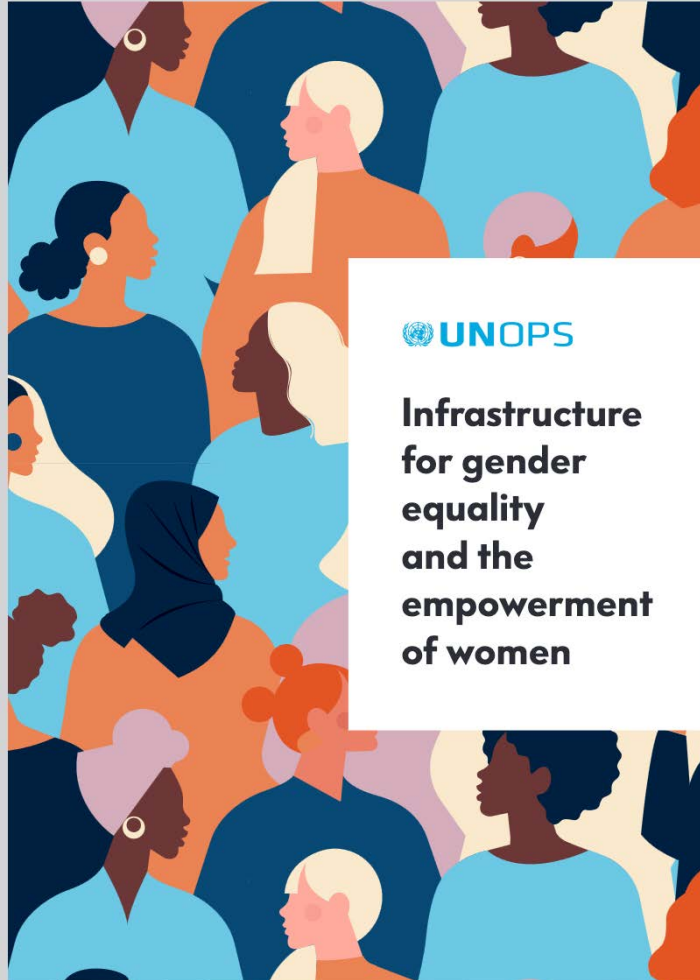
SDG15 *Women have better knowledge of local plants and their uses than men*

SDG10 *Women and girls spend much more time gathering fuel than men and boys*

TURNING PROMISES INTO ACTION:
GENDER EQUALITY IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
@UN WOMEN

Example: SDG9 has no gender indicators or gender targets, but it is gendered

@UNOPS

Infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women

The sheer volume of existing infrastructure that has been designed in a manner that fails to consider the specific needs of women and girls is alarming (Morgan et al 2020)

Example: SDG7 has no gender targets or gender indicators

7.1 By 2030, ensure **universal access** to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the **global energy mix**

7.3 By 2030, double the **global rate of improvement** in energy efficiency.

Examples of energy-related gender issues

The *gender cost of poor access to electricity* is estimated to be equal to 0.8 trillion USD annually (ESMAP, 2020).

Women perceive grid electricity as costly, unreliable and often unavailable. They feel excluded because men assume a moral right to make major decisions (Winther et al. 2018)

Gendered roles mean that men do not spend much time in the house and do not believe they benefit greatly from modern household energy technologies (Fingleton-Smith 2018)

Despite the trends in clean fuel uptake, the use of multiple stove and fuel combinations within the same household remains the norm (ESMAP 2021)

Empowering women to provide their own bioenergy requires extension services to enable effective sustainable planting, and loans for purchasing seeds, plants, oil presses and generators (Araujo 2008)

Individual preferences and investment attitudes as well as cultures differentiate how women and men participate in Renewable Electricity Production (Fraune 2015)

Women are neither the sole nor primary beneficiaries of access to electricity, even when appliances that would particularly benefit women are affordable by the household (Rosenberg et al. 2019).

Land-use changes affect women's livelihoods often in traumatic way through displacement and loss of community identity, impoverishment, and negative health impacts (Kropiwnicka and van Paassen, 2020)

Gender in tracking progress on SDG7 is limited to data from household surveys
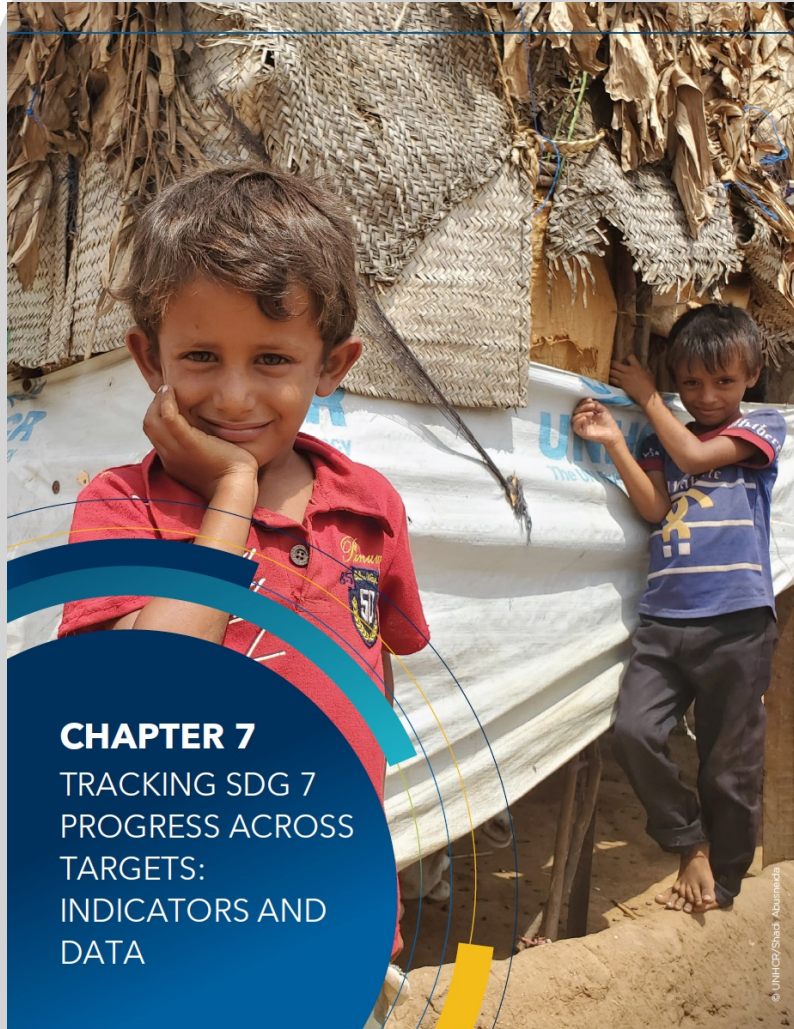

CHAPTER 7
TRACKING SDG 7
PROGRESS ACROSS
TARGETS:
INDICATORS AND
DATA

Household surveys are currently the main primary data source for analysing access to energy.

Efforts have been made by WHO and World Bank to harmonise survey design, but gender-related questions are limited to who gathers fuel and cooks.

A more complete picture is needed of what improved "access" means from a gender perspective.

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We need to include gender equality issues at household-, community-, productive-use levels
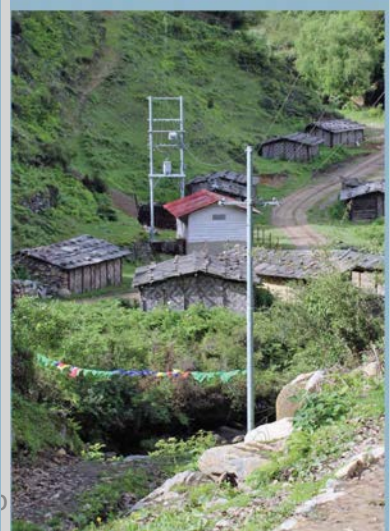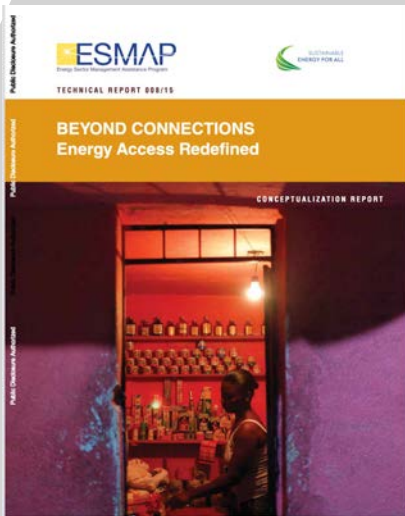
Unpacking SDG7 from a gender perspective

Which social groups should be targeted, included, measured?

How is affordable defined and do women and men agree?

Who controls access and how?

How are women involved in the consultation process?

What does "reliable" means for women and men in terms of their needs and behaviours

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

Are decisions favouring households, communities or enterprises: who decides

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix

Is this likely to impact on women/men farmers when land is used to produce biomass energy rather than food

7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

What is prioritised: household, community or productive use

Global South vs Global North?

Are women involved in setting the criteria

Are women researchers contributing solutions to this

Implementation strategies have focused on interlinkages between Goals/Targets with five key analytical approaches

Linguistic Approach	Literature Approach	Argumentative/ Expert Judgment	Quantitative Approach	Modelling Approach
• assess interlinkages based on common keywords • ambiguities when goals share meaning but no keyword or vice versa • requires qualitative text interpretation • First easy step to identify obvious interlinkages	• identifying interlinkages that are established in the scientific literature • exploratory approach • requires interpretation when scientific concepts have to be connected with respective targets	• often in combination with literature approach • links targets to each other by identifying relationships among the concepts involved • judgment made by individuals or groups of sector-specific experts	• identifying interlinkages by performing quantitative statistical analysis with the underlying indicators • historical data - often employed in data mining exercises • more robust than the qualitative approaches where individuals do the evaluation	• Modelling complex systems interactions can help to understand interdependencies among variables • no specific tool for modelling SDGs does exist so far • rather expanding on existing models by adapting them

Figure 1 The five methodological approaches developed to support analysis of interactions between different Goals and Targets[29]

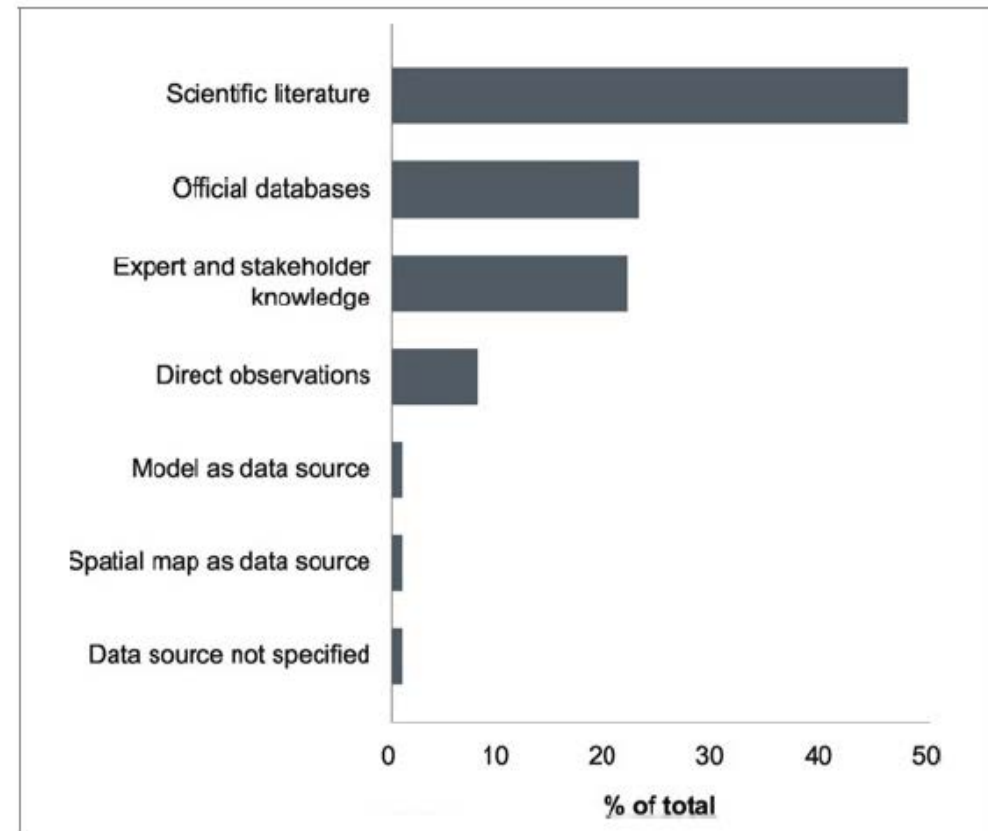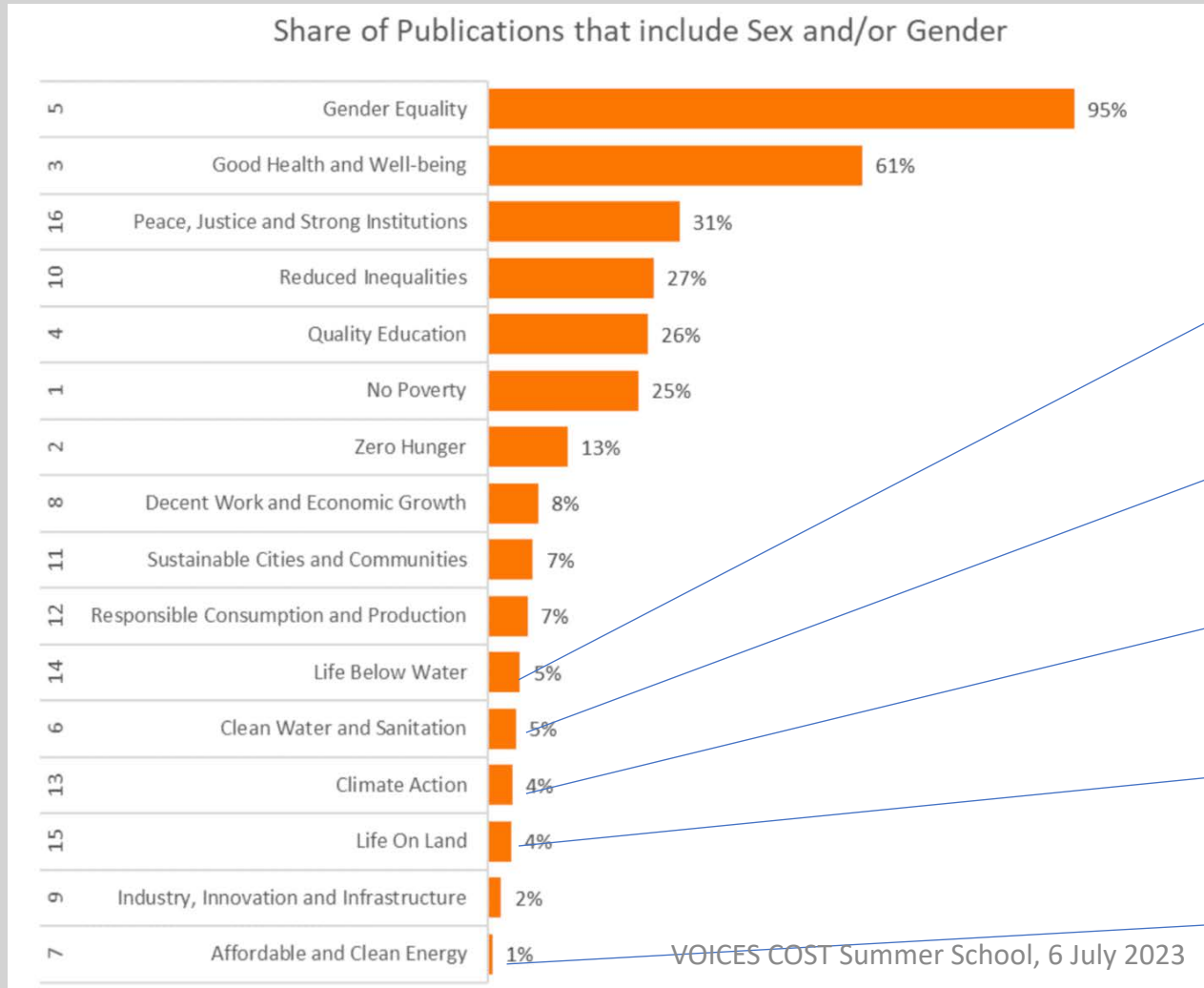# Gender gaps in scientific research, statistics, expert judgement, empirical evidence, and in models

The Contribution of Science in Implementing the **Sustainable Development Goals**

German Committee Future Earth | DFG | UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY | futurearth research for global sustainability | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS NETWORK A GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
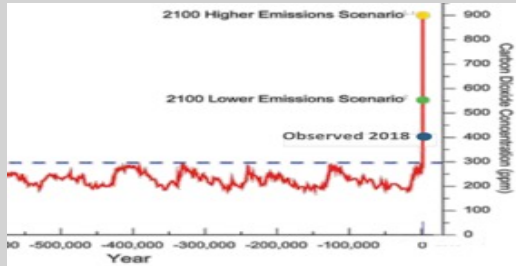

Figure 1. The sources of evidence used to underpin analyses of SDG interactions, from Bennich et al. 2020

Research on half of the SDGs is 'gender blind'

Herbert et al 2020

Share of Publications that include Sex and/or Gender

#		%
5	Gender Equality	95%
3	Good Health and Well-being	61%
16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	31%
10	Reduced Inequalities	27%
4	Quality Education	26%
1	No Poverty	25%
2	Zero Hunger	13%
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth	8%
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities	7%
12	Responsible Consumption and Production	7%
14	Life Below Water	5%
6	Clean Water and Sanitation	5%
13	Climate Action	4%
15	Life On Land	4%
9	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	2%
7	Affordable and Clean Energy	1%

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SDG 14: gaps in knowledge

Raised CO2: mortality of female shrimp increases

Cichlids – Inc. pH > females

Zebrafish – faster growth > females

Japanese flounder – male biased < 15°C & > 27°C, balanced 20-23°C

Eels – crowding associated with > males

Exposure to reduced seawater pH led to 16%more females in oysters
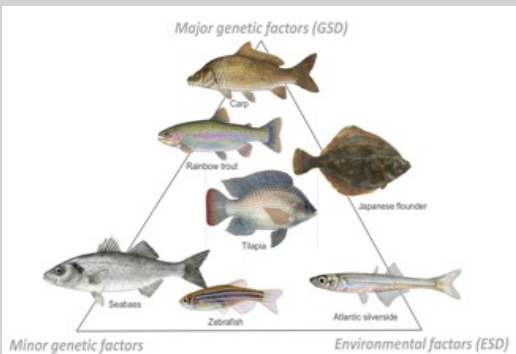
Male and female mussels respond differently to increased CO2

Sex has been reported in only 4% of marine species studies

(Ellis, R. et al, 2017)

Gender bias in UN agencies reports on SDGs
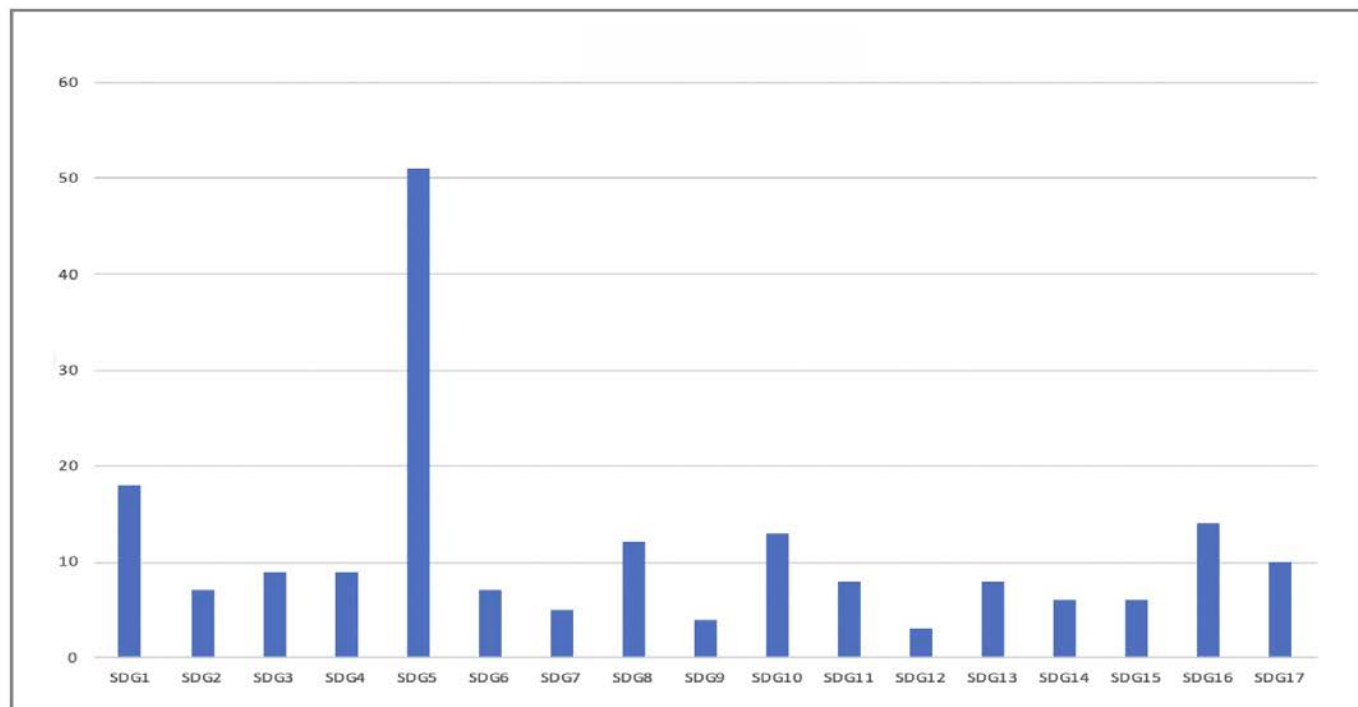
Figure 5. 51 UN entities include a focus on SDG5 in their main strategic plans, 18 on SDG1 (*no poverty*); 13 on SDG10 (*inequalities*), 12 on SDG8 (*decent work*), and 14 on SDG16 (*peace and justice*). Notable gaps are in relation to SDGs 7, 9, 12, 14, and 15. From: Report of the Secretary-General, E2019/54

Incorporation of gender perspectives in more technical thematic areas, such as infrastructure, energy and new technologies, remains weak relative to other areas of work. Notable gaps for SDG 7, 9, 12, 14, 15

Gender 'blind/biased' expert judgement
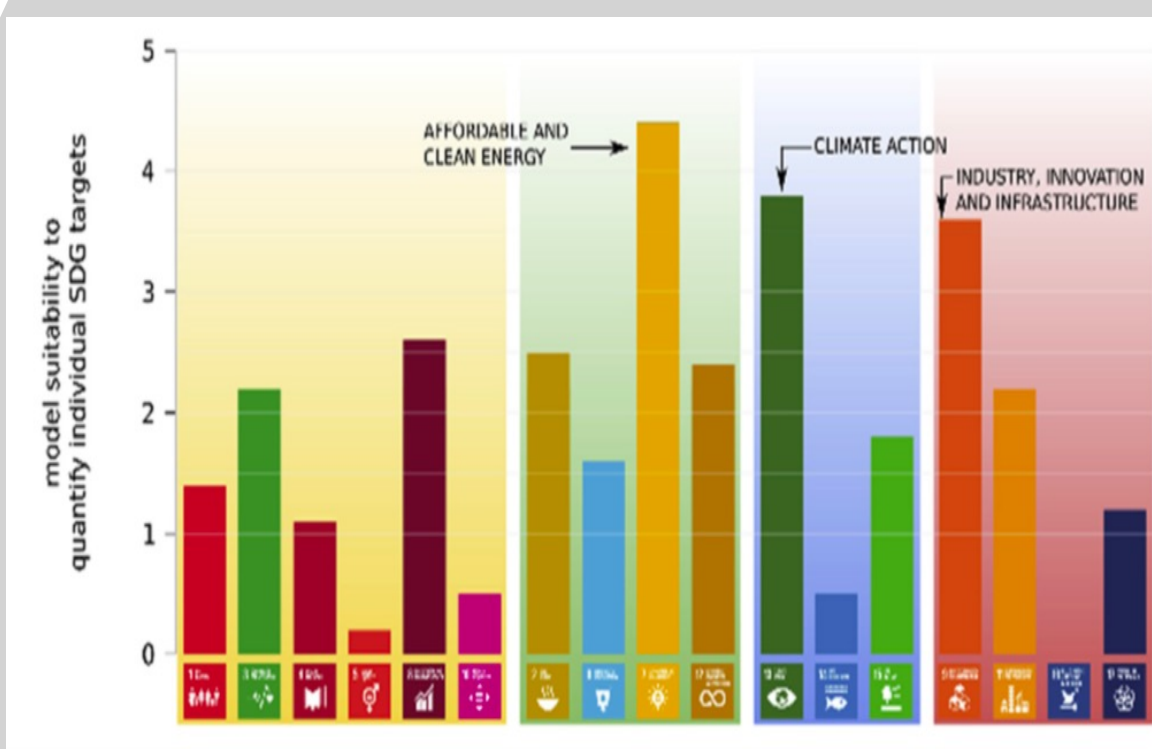
SDG	Number of respondents (groups 1-4)	Number of respondents (group 5: IISD mailing list)	Number of respondents (group 5), filtered	Number of respondents (together)	Number of respondents (together), filtered
SDG 1	0	3	2	3	2
SDG 2	0	1	1	1	1
SDG 3	2	2	1	4	3
SDG 4	1	5	1	6	2
SDG 5	0	0	0	0	0
SDG 6	1	2	2	3	3
SDG 7	3	4	3	7	6
SDG 8	0	4		4	2
SDG 9	1	0		1	1
SDG 10	1	0		1	1
SDG 11	3		4	7	7
SDG 12	0	3	3	3	3
SDG 13	0	3	3	3	3
SDG 14	1	0	0	1	1
SDG 15	3	4	2	7	5
SDG 16	1	4	2	5	3
SDG 17	2	4	4	6	6

Survey of researchers building models of SDGs interactions (van Soest et al 2019)

*In the different models of influential interconnections between SDGs the **least included are SDGs related to inequalities: SDGs 5 and 10** (van Soest et al 2019)*

How SDG experts have perceived the influence of each goal on other goals

Little attention to the role of SDG5 suggesting absence of gender experts

*SDG7 dominates analyses suggesting dominance of technology experts*

SDG5 →

SDG7 →
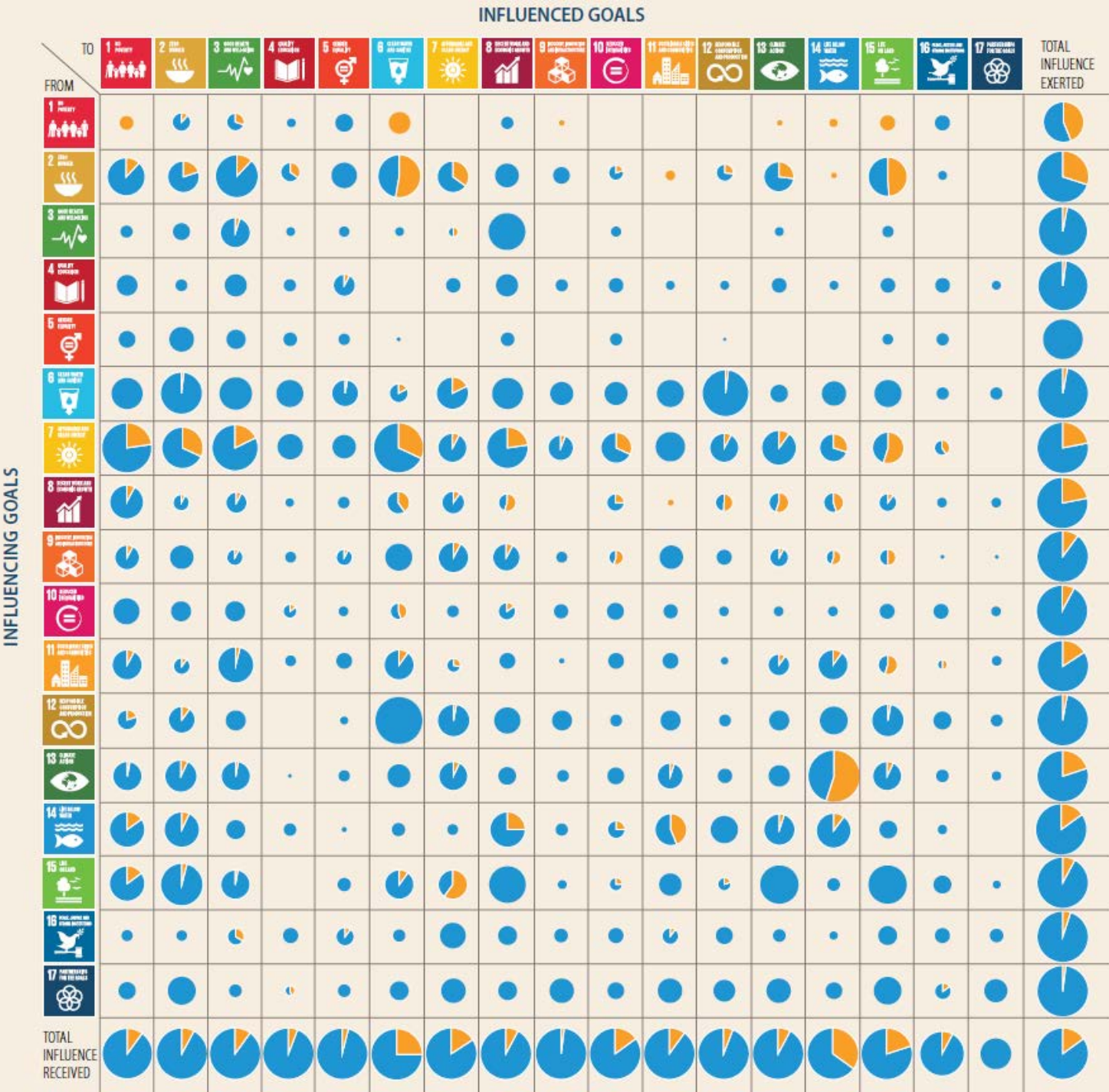
The 7-point scale commonly used in expert judgement to prioritize SDGs for implementation

Interaction label	Interpretation
+3 Indivisible	Progress on one target automatically delivers progress on another
+2 Reinforcing	Progress on one target makes it easier to make progress on another
+1 Enabling	Progress on one target creartes conditions that enable progress on another
+/- Consistent	There is no significant link between the progress of the two targets
-1 Constraining	Progress on one target constrains the options for how to deliver on another
-2 Counteracting	Progress on one target makes it more difficult to make progress on another
-3 Cancelling	Progress on one target automatically automatically leads to a negative impact on another

Figure 7. The 7-point scale developed by the International Council for Science (ICS)[41]

Examples of methods using a qualitative scale to represent expert judgement
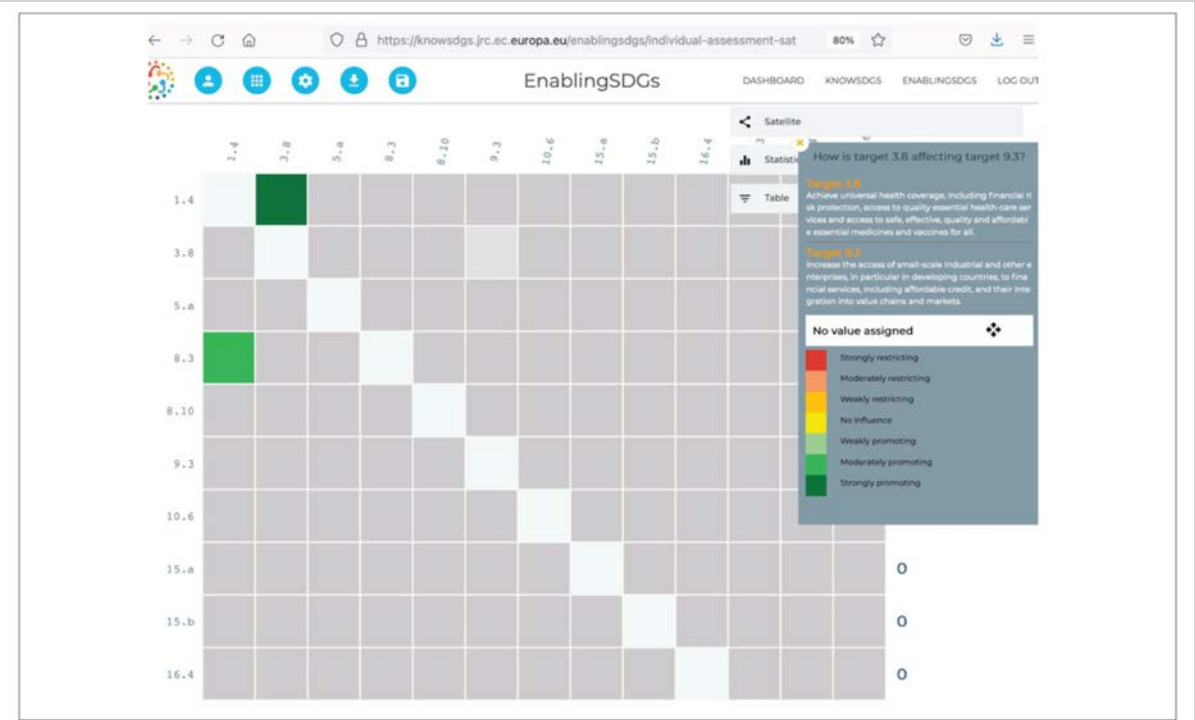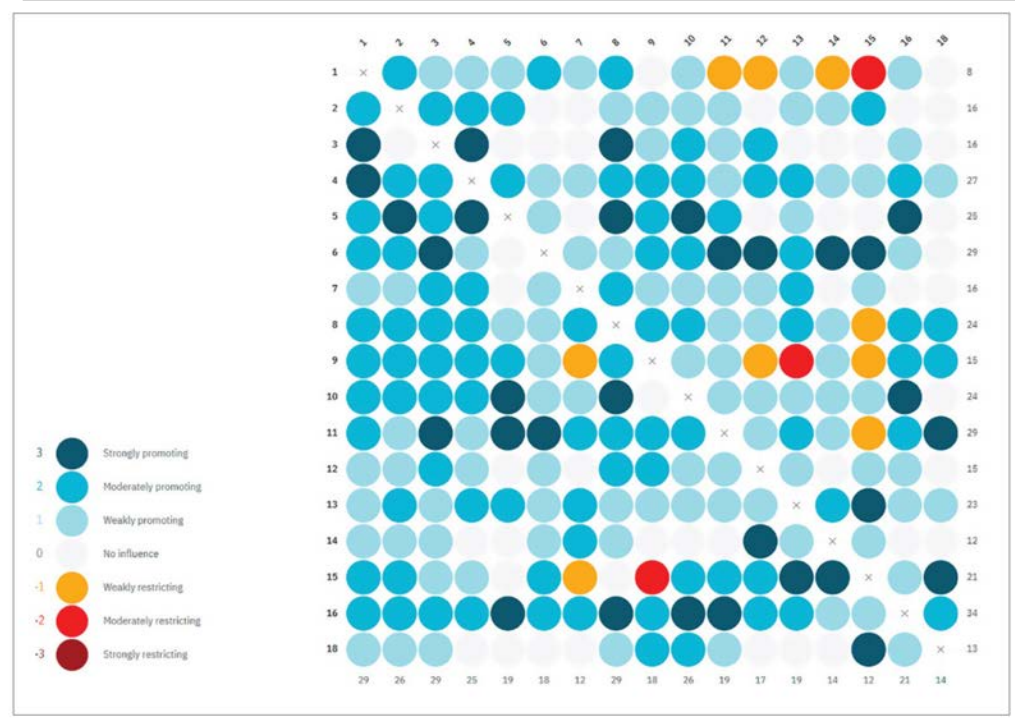
Stockholm Environment Institute: SDG Synergies https://tool.sdgsynergies.org/assets/docs/ SDG_Synergies_Manual.pdf

EU JRC: KnowSDGs https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

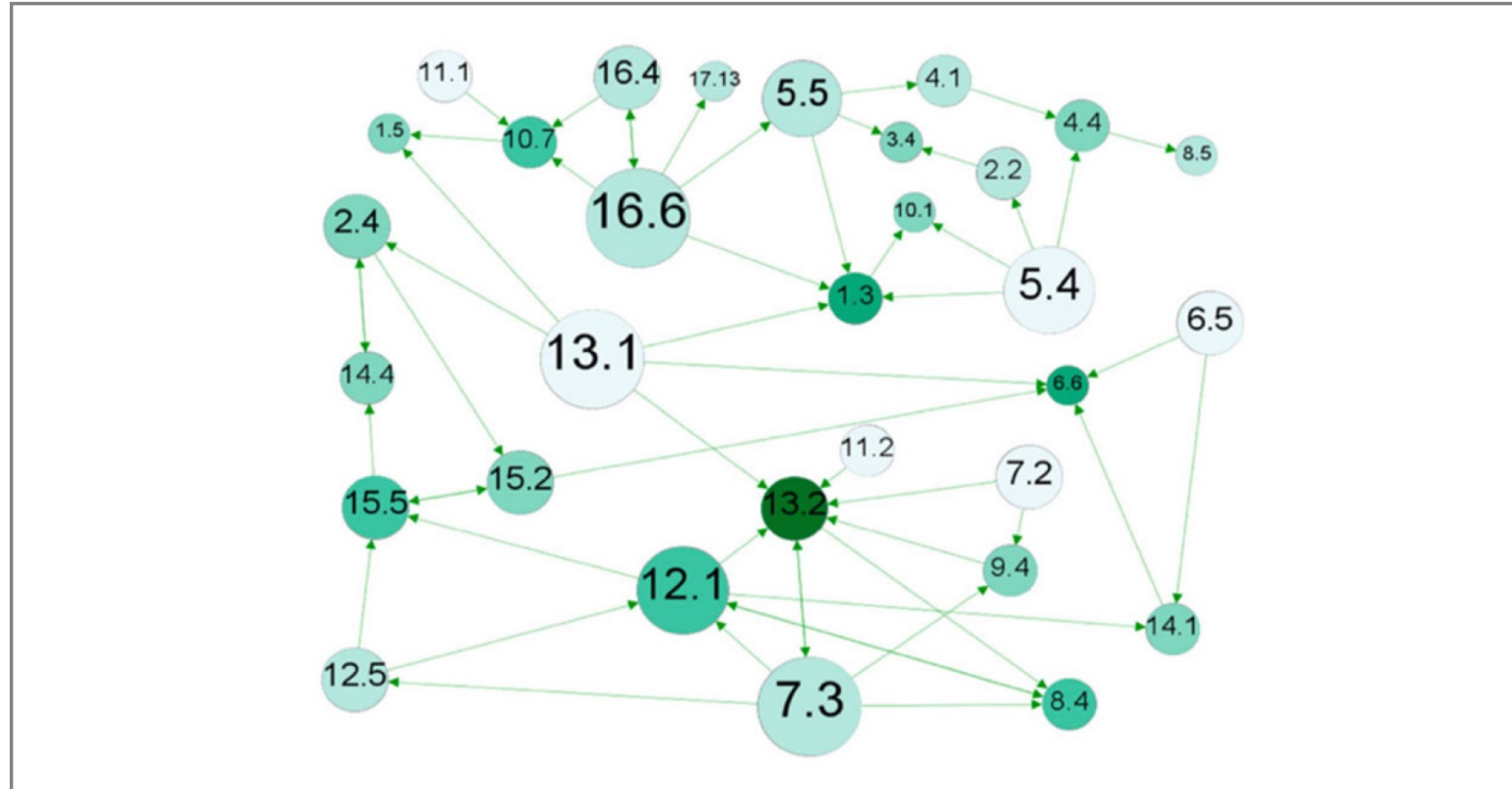# Example of priority interlinkages identified to guide Swedish policy on SDGs implementation

Figure 10. Sub-network of (+3) interactions from Weitz et al 2018[63]. The size of the nodes (targets) is proportional to the degree of influence. The colour is proportional to the degree of being influenced by other nodes. [influential interlinkage has been identified between targets 16.6 and 5.5]

Size of nodes is proportional to the degree of influence
The colour represents the degree if being influenced

16.6 – transparent institutions, 13.1 – resilience & adaptive capacity, 7.3 – energy efficiency, 5.4 - public services and welfare protection, 5.5 – women as leaders and decision makers
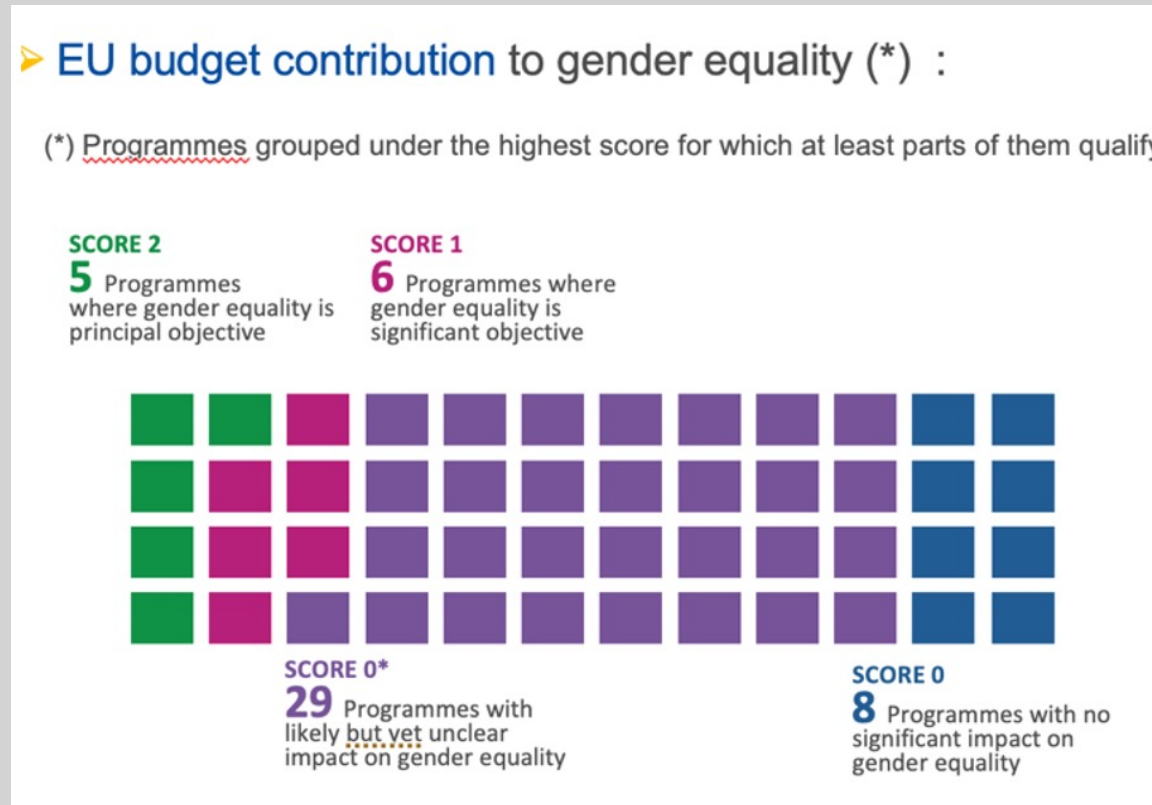
Example: Promoting science-policy coherence as a tool for interlinking SDGs for implementation in the EU
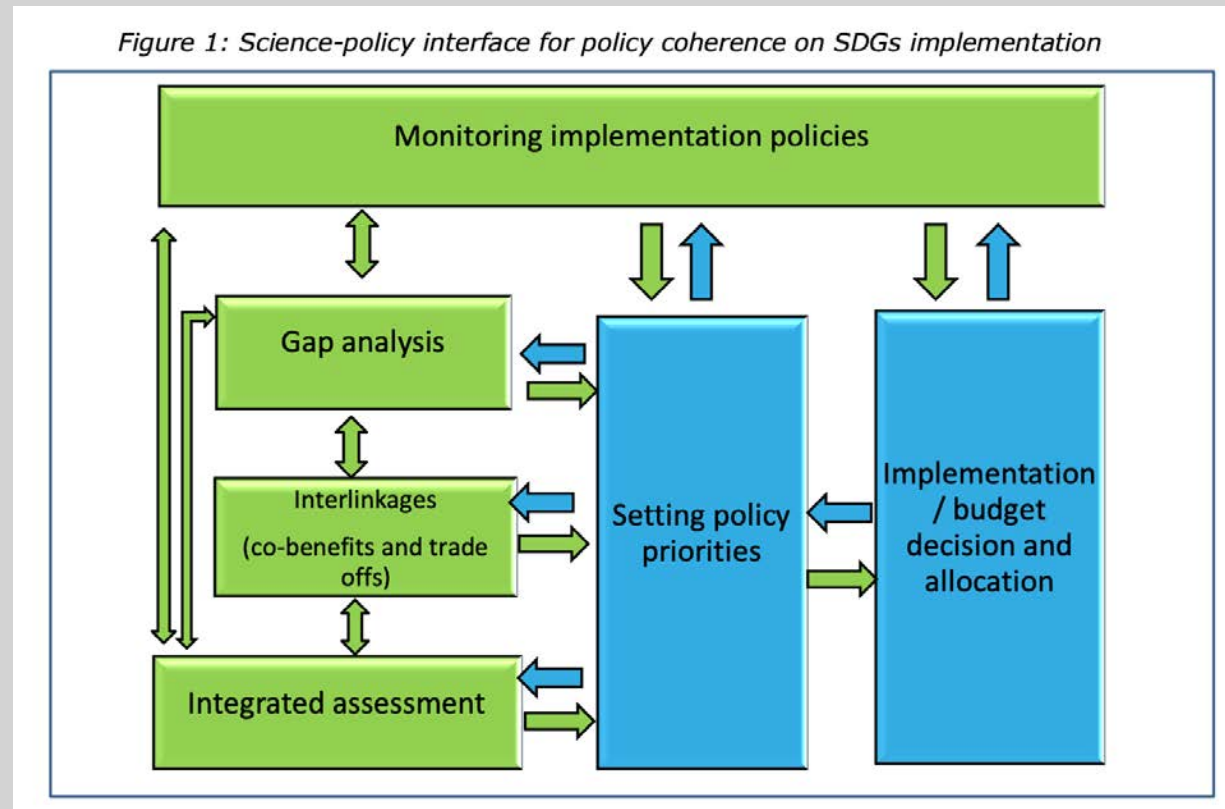
Only one source on gender equality consulted

Gender mainstreaming policy not included

Policy coherence on SDGs requires integrating gender mainstreaming across the policy framework

EN 2021 **10**

Special Report | **Gender mainstreaming in the EU budget:** time to turn words into action

EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS

➤ EU budget contribution to gender equality (*) :

(*) Programmes grouped under the highest score for which at least parts of them qualify

SCORE 2
5 Programmes where gender equality is principal objective

SCORE 1
6 Programmes where gender equality is significant objective

SCORE 0*
29 Programmes with likely but yet unclear impact on gender equality

SCORE 0
8 Programmes with no significant impact on gender equality

The EU is failing to integrate gender mainstreaming across science-policy intersections and into SDG related policies and budgets, e.g., energy transition, Green Deal

# Example of a system-level impact analysis of implementing SDG5 as a priority
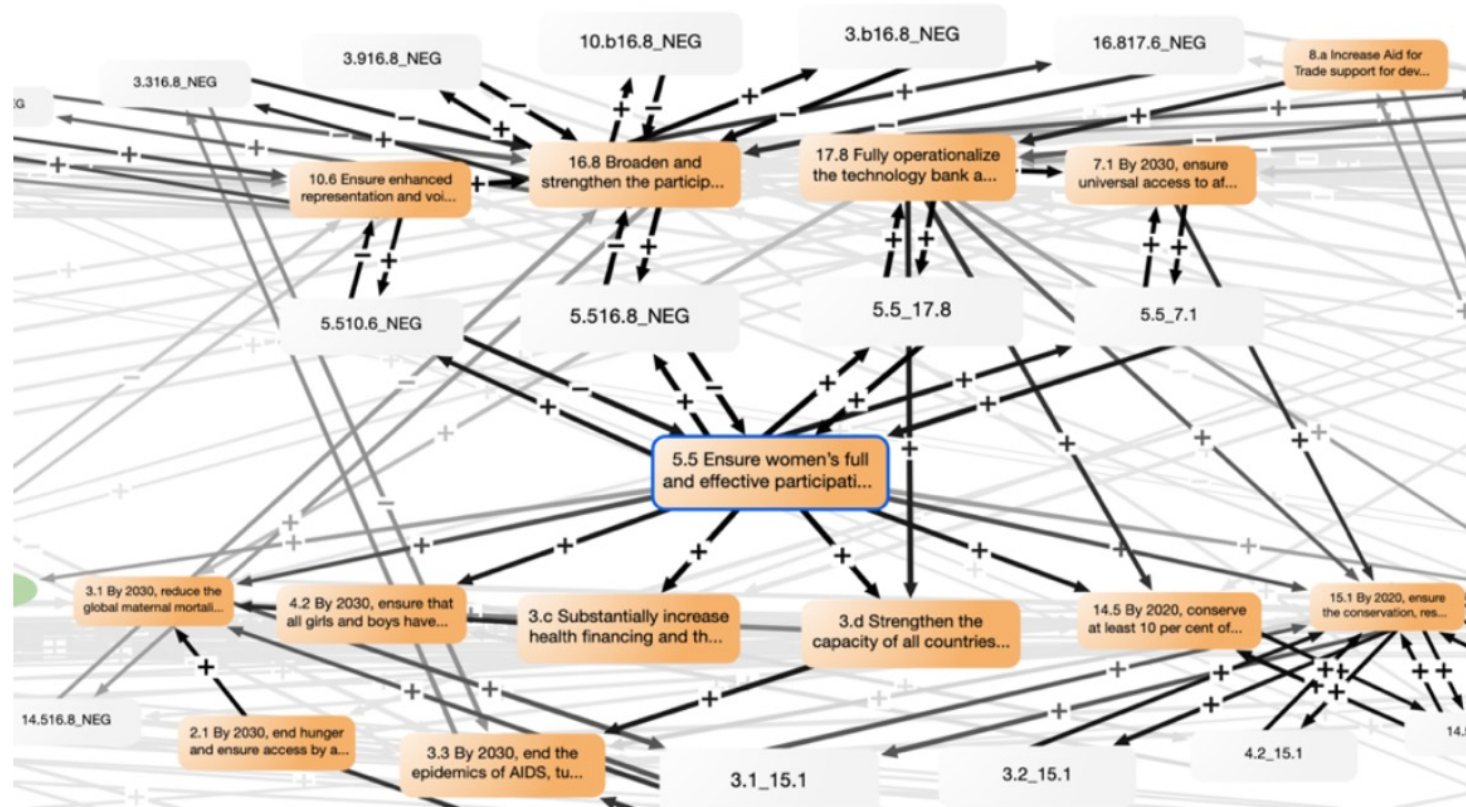
Figure 6. Example of system-level interconnections among Targets based on policy scenarios[57]

Promoting gender analysis of interlinkages at ecosystem level
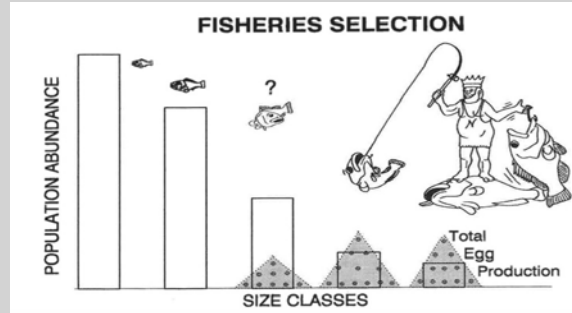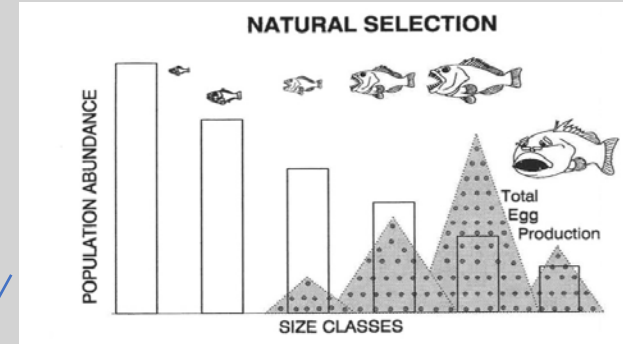
SDG 14: Sustainability through the gender/sex lens
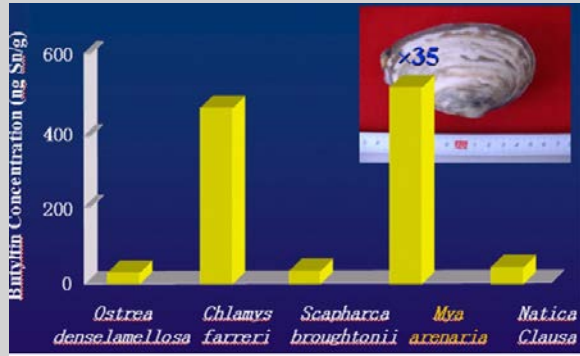
Bioaccumulation of marine pollutants (e.g. microplastics) impact on reproduction (male/female balance), interaction dynamics & biodiversity (G.W.Bryan. 1979)
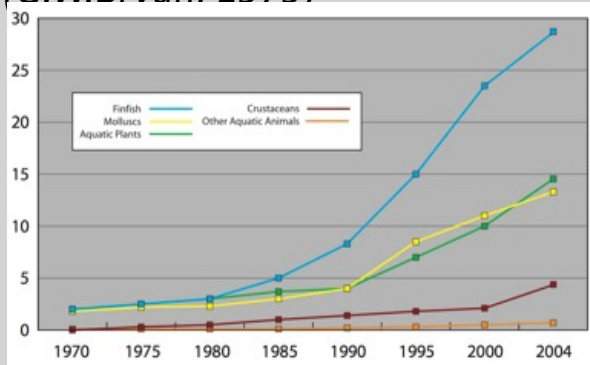
Aquacultures: either the male or the female grow bigger and faster: how to control this safely without chemicals?
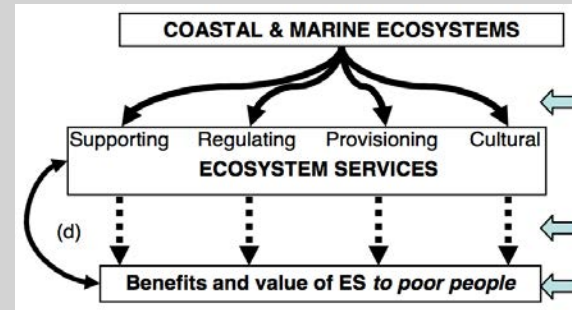

Reproductive success is important for managing fish stocks. Current policies fail to consider impact of sex

Relevant to: SGD1; SDG2, SGD3; SGD5; SGD8; SGD17

*Empowering women through ecosystem services & value chains protects livelihoods and the ecosystems (WorldFish, 2008)*


Old female fish produce lots of high-quality eggs, but fishing policy advises taking big fish out and leaving young in J.A. Bohnsack, 2014

Dangers of using hormones to change sex of farmed fish (tilapia) which human then consume

SDG 15 through the sex/gender lens
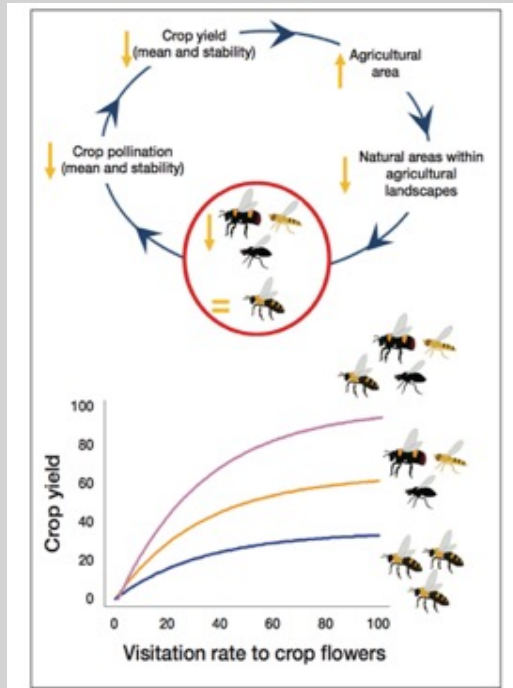
Pollinators improve yields and quality of plant food. More pollinators means less chemicals. Only two percent of wild bee species pollinate 80 percent of bee-pollinated food crops!
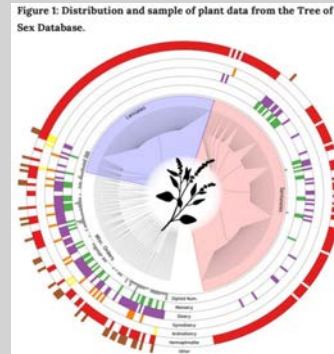https://www.ecpa.eu/sites/default/files/Pollinators%20brochure_B%C3%A0T2.pdf
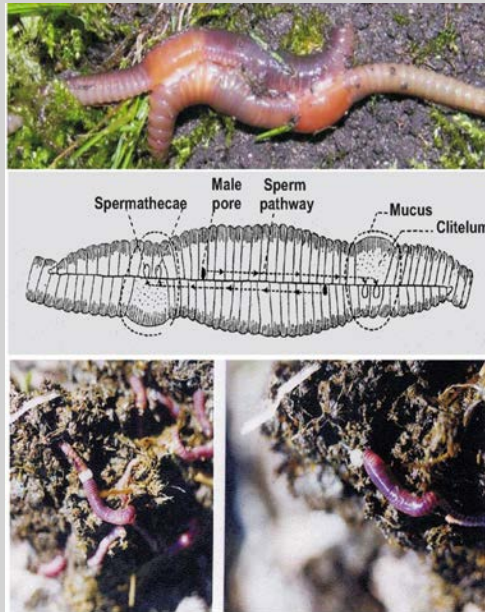
Earthworms form the biggest soil biomass. They also can reproduce sexually (important for genetic diversity). They are critical for terrestrial ecosystems by significantly affecting soil's physical, chemical and biological properties
J.Domínguez & A. Velando, Applied Soil Ecology 69 (2013) 21–27

Reproduction systems in plants are very sensitive to environmental stresses
http://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201415

Understanding pathogen resistance of male and female flowers can ensure healthy crops without artificial insecticides (A.Stephenson, 2012)

Sex determination in flowering food plants – e.g. the multi-use kokum tree: distinction between male and female plants can not be done until it flowers at 10-12 years
K.S. Thatte, 2012
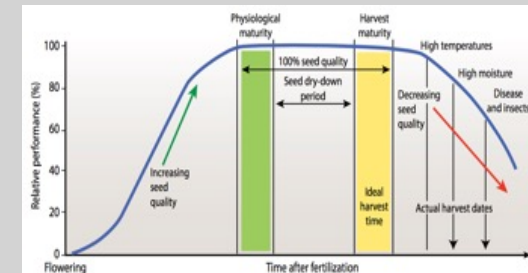
Ensuring quality of maize seed after fertilization can improve plant resilience (R.Gu eta al 2017)

Relevant to: SDG1, SDG2, SDG3, SDG5, SDG8; SDG13; SDG15

Interconnecting the 32 targets from 14 Goals that share in their text the keyword "access"

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure <mark>access</mark> by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, <mark>access</mark> to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal <mark>access</mark> for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable <mark>access</mark> to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

9.3 Increase the <mark>access</mark> of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.
Etc.,

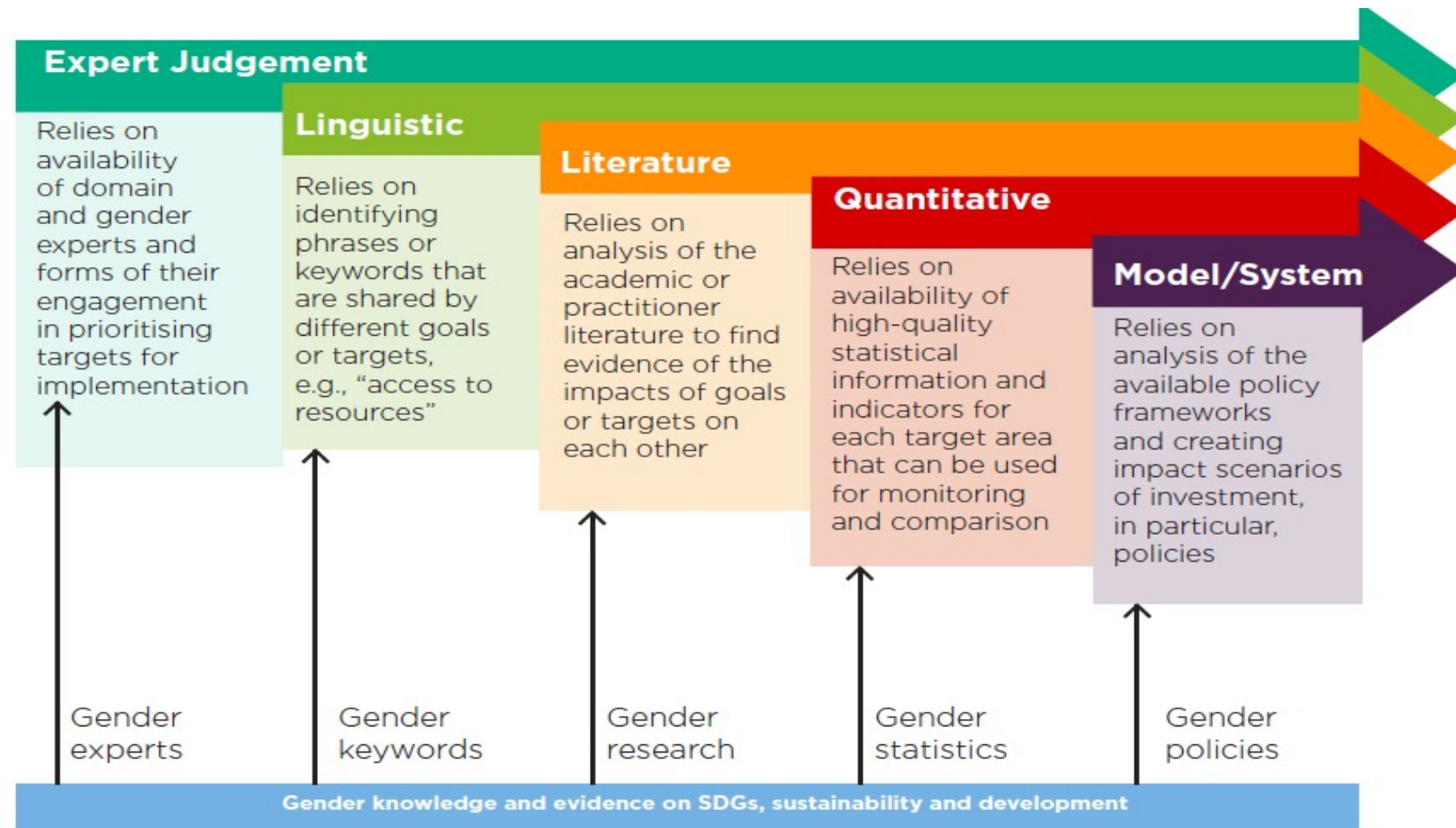# Common methods used to analyze SDGs and the different gender perspectives

Figure 2: Five commonly used methodological approaches developed to support analysis of interactions between different goals and targets[48] and how they can be made more responsive to gender concerns.

Sustainability scientists have been devising many possible ways to interconnect SDGs so that groups of targets could be delivered together
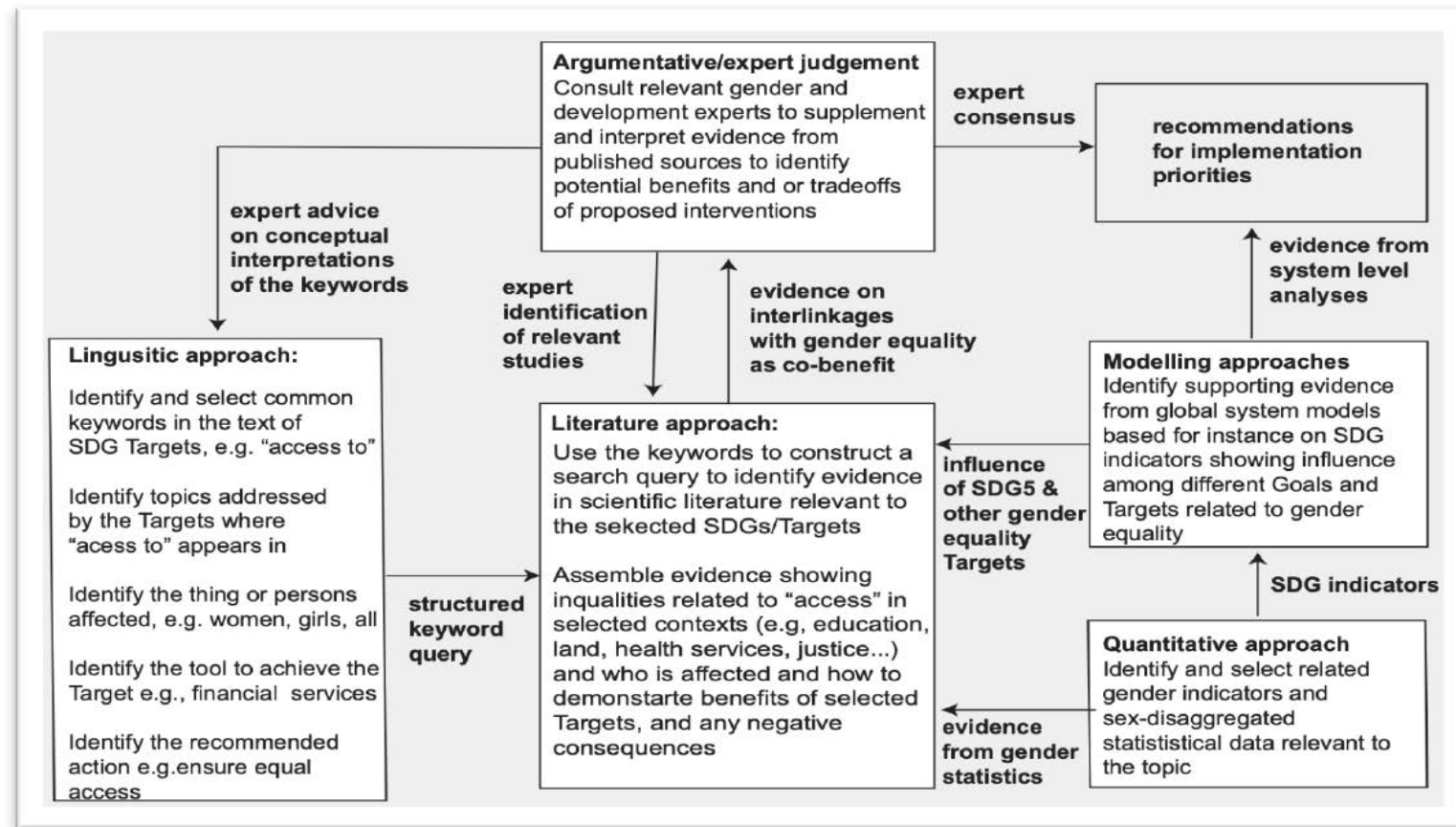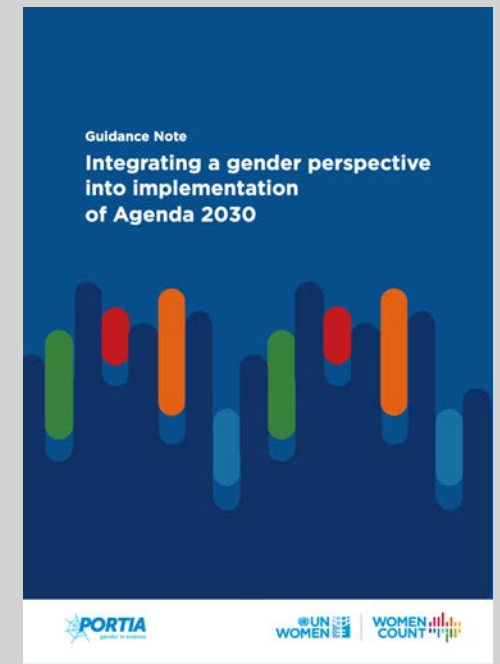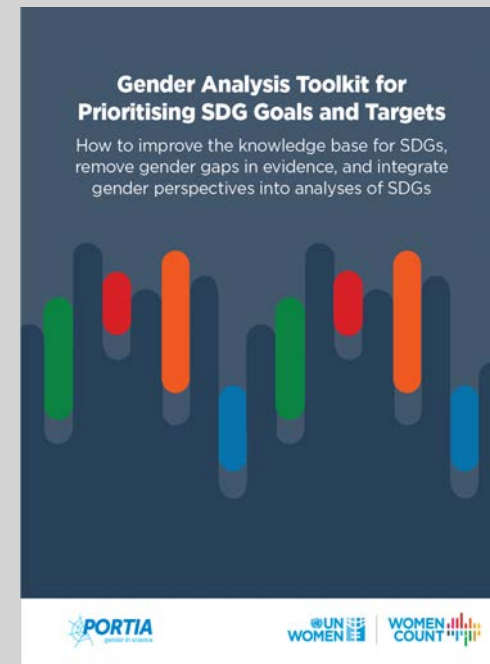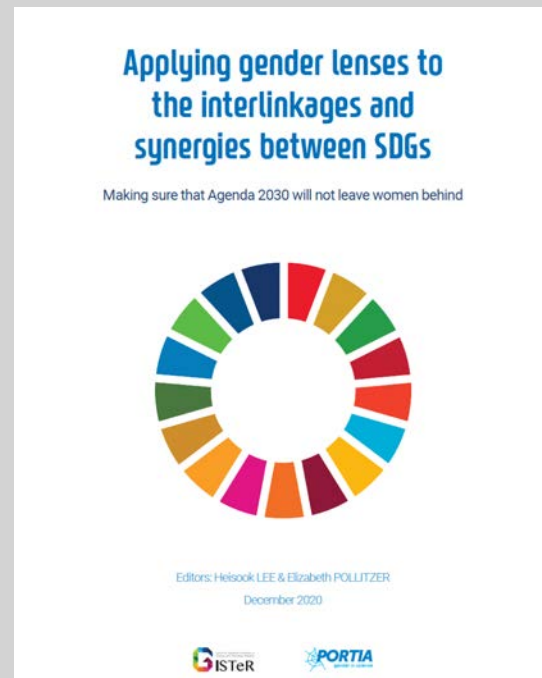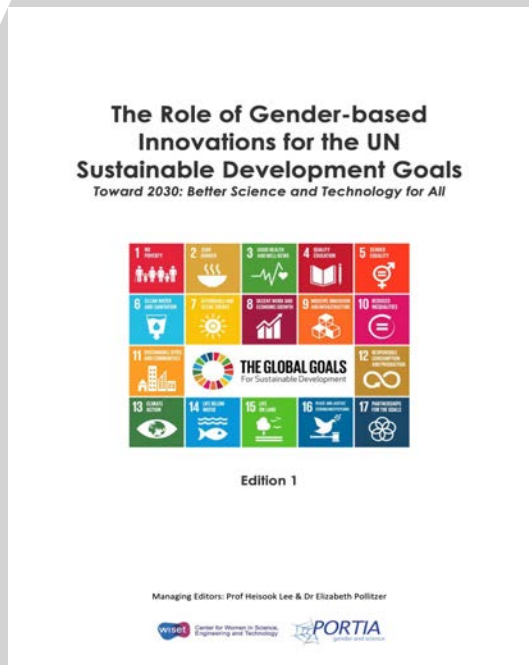

Figure 7. Combining the five most common approaches to effectively interlink SDG Targets for Implementation by maximising access to evidence on gender aspects

Where to find more information
https://portiaweb.org.uk/resources.html

The Role of Gender-based Innovations for the UN Sustainable Development Goals
Toward 2030: Better Science and Technology for All

Edition 1

Managing Editors: Prof Heisook Lee & Dr Elizabeth Pollitzer

Applying gender lenses to the interlinkages and synergies between SDGs

Making sure that Agenda 2030 will not leave women behind

Editors: Heisook LEE & Elizabeth POLLITZER

December 2020

Gender Analysis Toolkit for Prioritising SDG Goals and Targets

How to improve the knowledge base for SDGs, remove gender gaps in evidence, and integrate gender perspectives into analyses of SDGs

Guidance Note
Integrating a gender perspective into implementation of Agenda 2030

Thank you