



2024 UNDP REGIONAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

PACIFIC SNAPSHOT

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT SIGNALS



POLYCRISIS

We are seeing an interconnected **'polycrisis'**, with conflicts, inflation, pandemics, energy security, disasters, climate, and environmental **degradation continuing apace.**

5x DISASTERS

Disasters have multiplied **five-fold** in the last 50 years, and the trend is only accelerating.

GENDER EQUALITY

Not a single indicator for SDG5, Gender Equality, has been met.



MORE CONFLICTS WORLDWIDE IN 2023

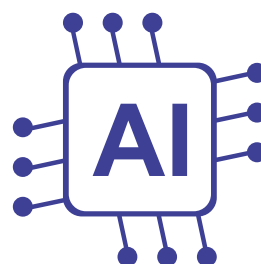


than in any single year **since World War II**



RISING TEMPERATURES

2024 is set to be the **warmest year on record.**



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

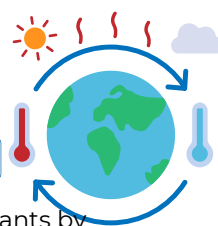
AI-powered misinformation is the world's **biggest short-term threat**, according to the World Economic Forum

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THE WORLD IS YOUNG

of the world's population is aged **under 30**, while the average age of political leaders worldwide is **62.**

CLIMATE MIGRATION



The number of climate migrants by 2050 is anticipated to range from between 25 million to 1 billion people.

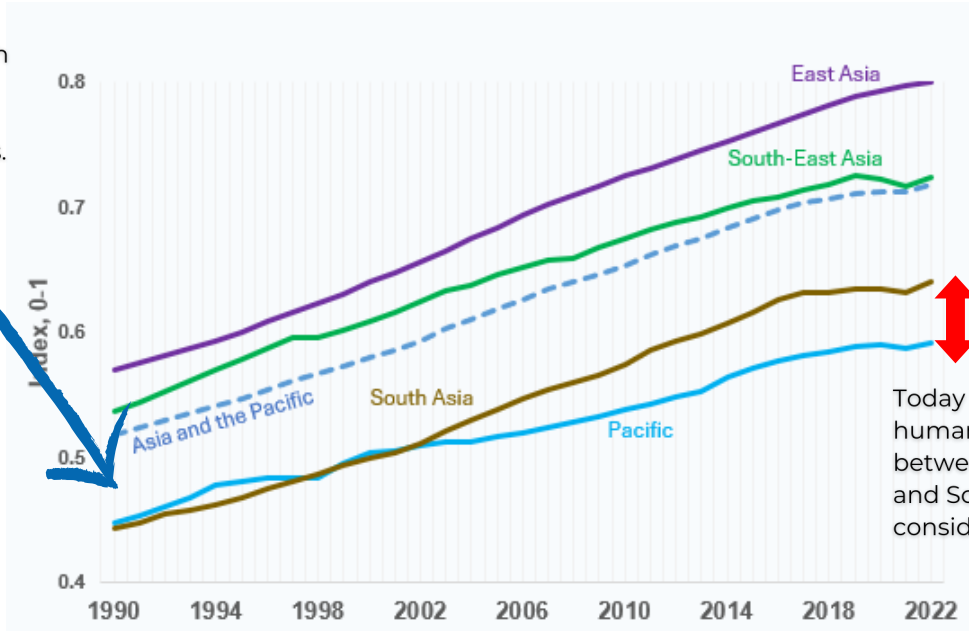
THE PACIFIC SIGNALS

Human development in the Pacific region has observed some progress, albeit very slow compared to other regions in the Asia-Pacific, along with persistent disparities and disruptions.

Starting from a lower base, the Pacific initially made good progress on human development, however since the early 2000s there has been a 'backslide' on key human development indicators.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

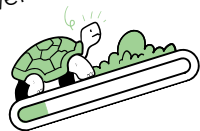
The Pacific and South Asia's human development was at similar levels in 1990s.



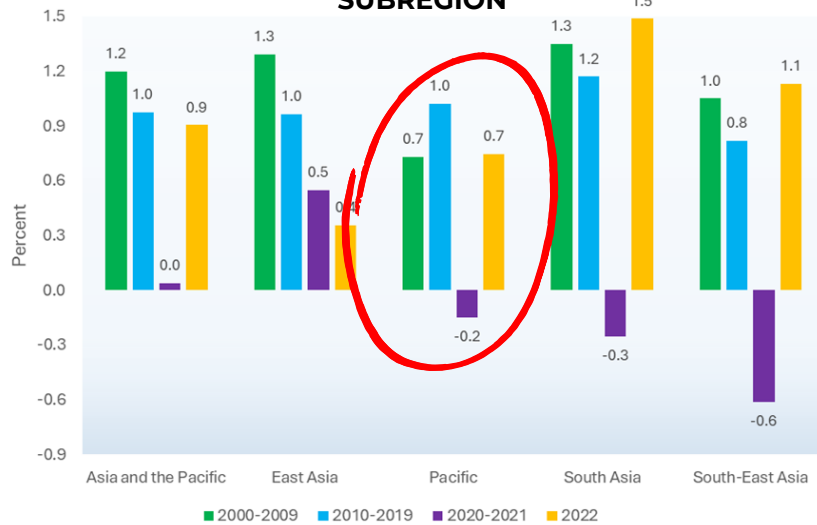
Today the gap in human development between the Pacific and South Asia has considerably increased.

SLOW PROGRESS

The Pacific has the **slowest progress** among the sub-regions in Asia-Pacific, even lower than South Asia.



AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH IN HDI BY SUBREGION



SLIDE IN INCOME



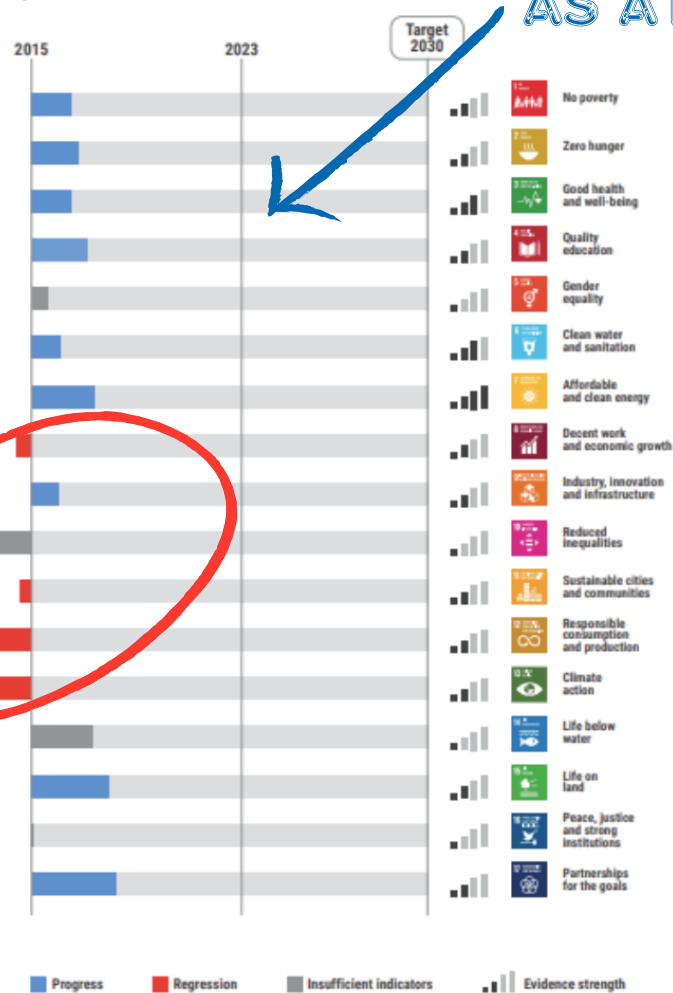
The slow progress in the Pacific's HDI can be linked to a slide in income, but also to poor health outcomes that were exacerbated following the pandemic.

WHERE IS THE PACIFIC PLACED ON THE SDGs?

AS AT 2023

The Pacific region - along with the rest of the world - is not on track to deliver any of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

It is now anticipated that the SDGs will **not be realized by 2030, but instead by 2065**.



SOURCE: 2024 ESCAP ASIA PACIFIC REPORT

NOT ALL IS DOOM AND GLOOM



NATURE POSITIVE COMMITMENTS ARE INCREASING

Finance to nature-based solutions increased from US\$150 billion (2021) to US\$154 billion (2022) – though still less than half of the US\$384 billion needed



RENEWABLE ENERGY DEPLOYMENT IS INCREASING

2023 investments in renewable energy outpaced those in fossil fuels for the first time, reaching US\$2.8 trillion.

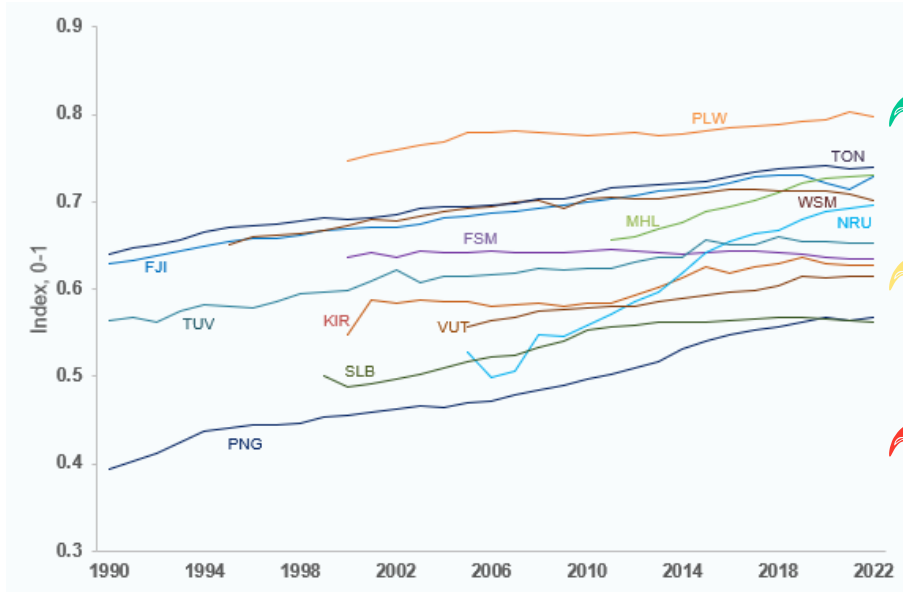


POVERTY CONTINUES TO DECLINE

Extreme poverty declined from from 38% to 9% between 1990 and 2018. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is increasingly the centerpiece of poverty eradication strategies, with huge added value potential, including digital identification, e-services and financial tools for the “unbanked.”

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CROSS-COUNTRY COMPARISONS

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX BY COUNTRY



Palau and Tonga see the highest Human Development Index figures, with Fiji and Samoa not far behind.

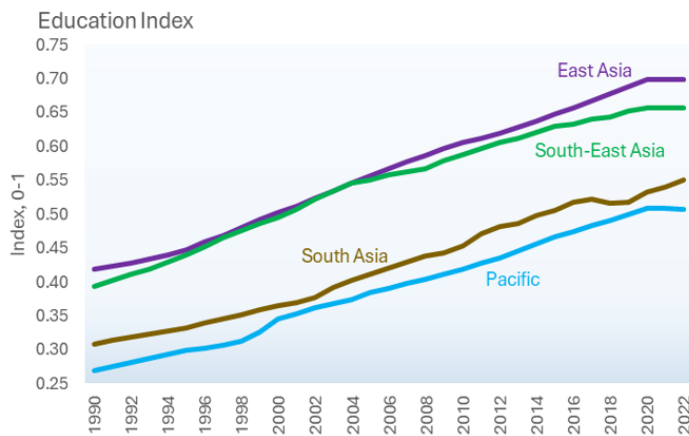


Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Vanuatu remain in the middle ground.

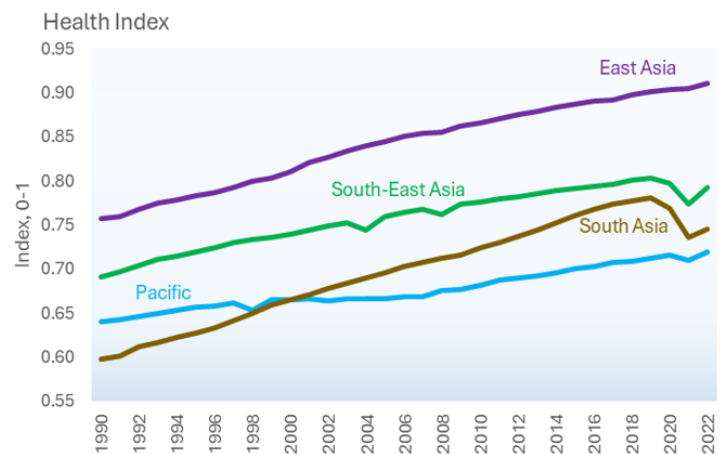


Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea are lagging behind.

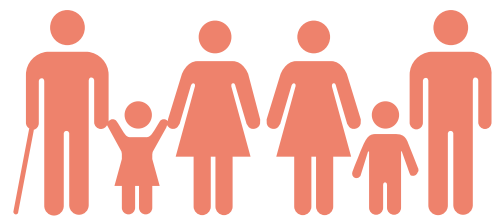
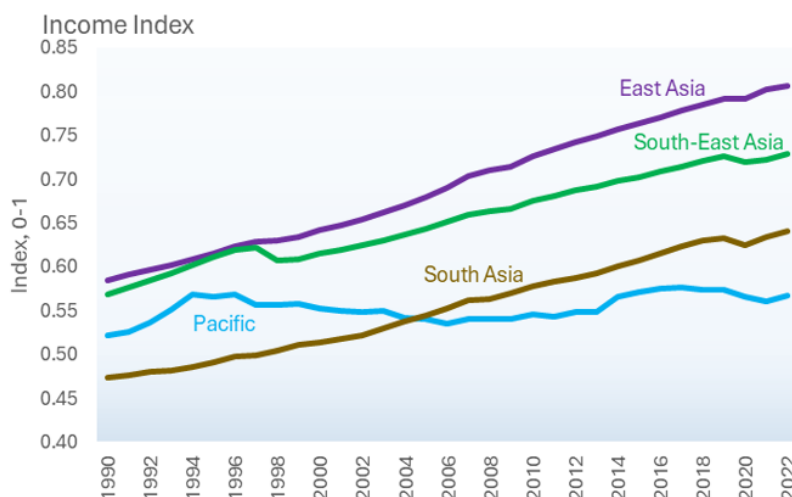
EDUCATION COMPONENT Adult literacy surged from 87.6% in 1990 to 94.2% in 2021. This resulted in a 15% hike in the Pacific's HDI, but Pacific is still the region with the lowest HDI in the Asia-Pacific sub-region.



HEALTH COMPONENT Under 5 mortality dropped from 88.3 live births per thousand in 1980 to 38.9 in 2021. Life expectancy rose from 59 to 66 years for the same period.



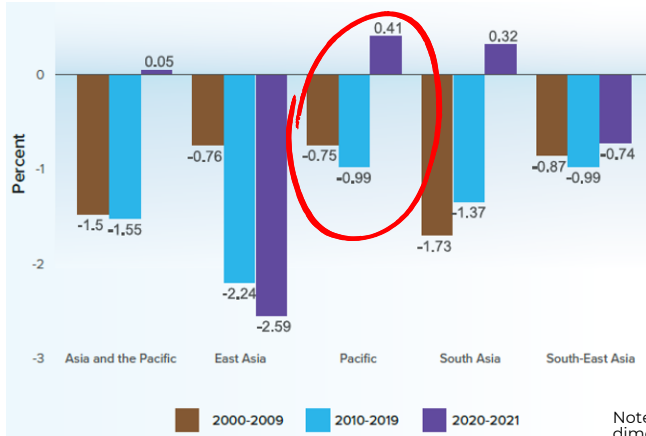
INCOME COMPONENT Countries like Fiji and Kiribati have managed to curb income inequality considerably. While countries like PNG, Solomon Islands have only made some progress.



GENDER INEQUALITY BACKSLIDE

We are witnessing alarming delays in achieving gender equality. The Pacific has seen its worst decline in gender equality in two decades.

AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH IN GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX (GII) BY SUBREGION



Serious setbacks in gender equality are largely being driven by trends in South Asia and the Pacific- reflected in increases in their GII scores.

Major hurdles to gender equality include lack of equality in law, persistent income gaps, disparities in labour markets, gender-based violence and persistent social norms and cultural attitudes to gender equality.

Note: GII is a composite metric of gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, political empowerment, and participation in the labour market. A high GII value indicates high inequality between women and men, and vice versa. Hence, a negative change reflects improvement while positive change indicates deterioration.

INEQUALITY REMAINS A MAJOR CHALLENGE

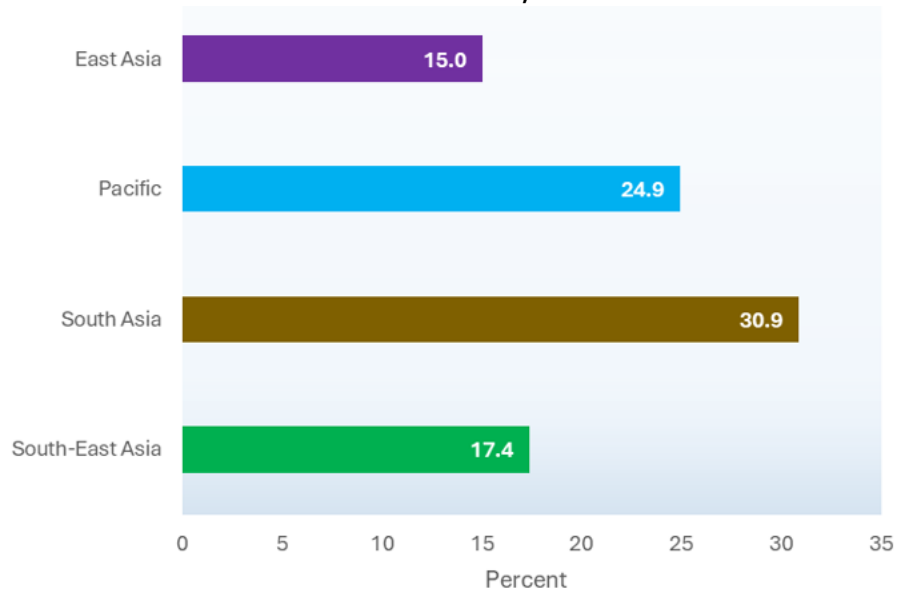
This applies not just to the Pacific, but to the whole of the Asia-Pacific region. Human Development Index losses due to inequalities are largest in South Asia, and second-largest in the Pacific.



While countries like PNG and Solomon Islands have made some progress, they still have GINI indices that remain higher than the regional mean.

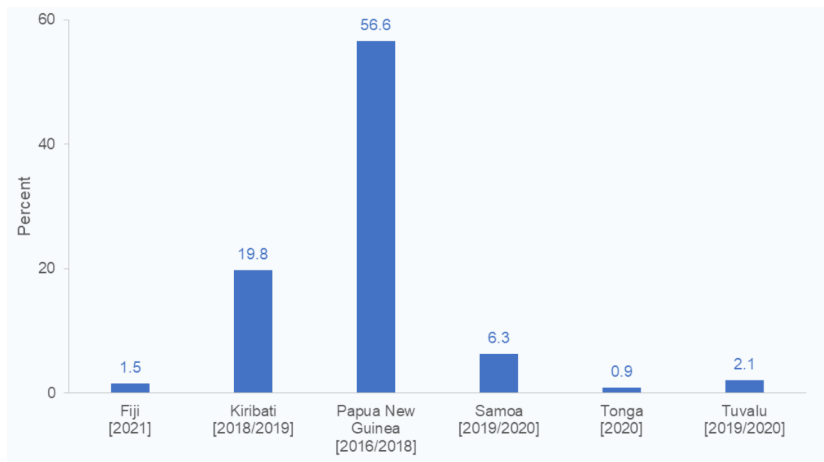
PNG, Federated States of Micronesia and Samoa are among the top 10 countries with highest GINI index in the Asia-Pacific region.

HDI LOSS DUE TO INEQUALITY BY ASIA-PACIFIC SUBREGION, 2010-2022



MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY AND DEBT DISTRESS

The prevalence of multidimensional poverty stems from a low standard of living, which encompasses various factors such as inadequate access to education, healthcare, clean water, and decent housing.



Papua New Guinea bears the brunt of multidimensional poverty, with a whopping 56.6% of its population in poverty.

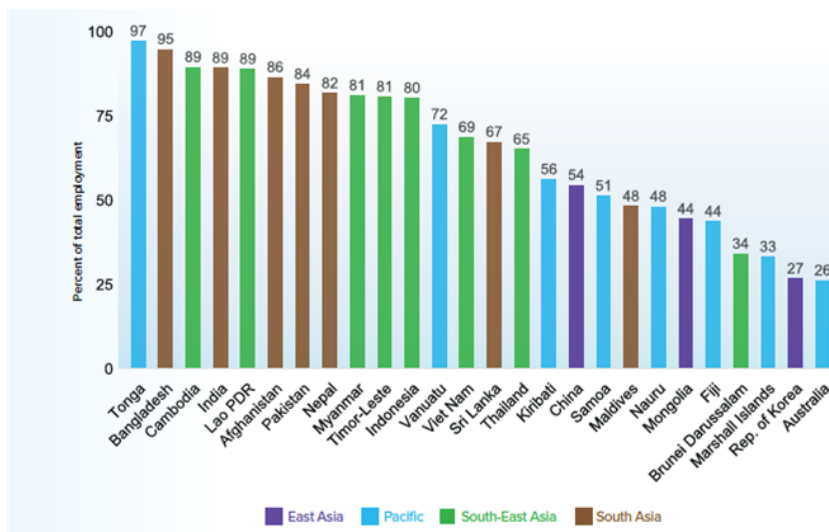


Kiribati follows closely behind, facing similar challenges that push a significant portion of its citizens into multidimensional poverty.



This complex issue is rooted in a low standard of living, marked by limited access to essentials like education, healthcare, clean water, and proper housing.

INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT



The Pacific continues to wrestle with job insecurity and informality. Across the Asia-Pacific region, at one end of the spectrum is Tonga at 97% of total employment, and at the other the Republic of Korea sits at just 27%.

A 'PLANETARY-PRESSURES' DIVIDE

While Pacific contributes to 0.1% of total carbon emissions, the region has seen the largest impact of climate shocks.

The fiscal measures required to tackle this crisis are on the verge of exhaustion, with six out of 10 Pacific Island Countries at risk of high debt distress.



NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Pacific faces three major clusters of risk. First, the existential threats from climate change and pandemics. Second, new trends in globalization and in and technological change that are reshaping economic growth and job markets. And third, demographic challenges including escalating labor, climate and urbanization induced human migration.

Thus, what can we do now, to best prepare our Blue Pacific for the future?

Revitalizing our development strategies to close existing gaps and boost human security, with an unrelenting focus on governance, the politics of reform and on the day-to-day practice of delivery- is the order of the day.

Mainstreaming Human Development

Human development is not achieved automatically by growth alone.

1

To achieve this, the human development approach needs to become more central in the region's decision-making arenas.

We must focus on both empowering people today and safeguarding the future for generations to come. This means expanding opportunities by dismantling barriers, nurturing potential, and ensuring safety.

We can achieve this through revamped social programs, universal healthcare, and development strategies that anticipate and address risks.

Additionally, it is crucial to fulfill our obligation to the future by protecting our environment, investing in solutions for climate change, and managing public finances responsibly.

Recalibrating our Growth Strategy

The path to future prosperity lies in leveraging technology and innovation.

2

"Agriculture 3.0" can optimize production with digital tools, renewable energy, and climate-resilient practices, creating new growth opportunities.

Similarly, the Blue Economy will utilize technology and investment to sustainably manage marine resources, benefiting both Pacific Island Countries and their coastal communities.

This approach will foster sustainable ocean use that prioritizes economic growth, job creation, and social inclusion, while safeguarding marine ecosystems.

Turning new ideas into practice will need greater focus on the politics of reform and on the day-to-day practice of delivery

3

Governance for the future – A central pillar for recharging human development is to future-fit governance that can offer clear directions for change, along with the right incentives and opportunities. **A future-fit delivery system** that would be anticipatory – able to foresee potential problems and opportunities and changes in the environment. It would be adaptable – modifying strategies and plans to evolve with changing conditions or shifting priorities.



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