

# Local lens for SDG implementation: lessons from bottom-up approaches



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CONTRIBUTE  
A SEED

SEEDS OF GOOD ANTHROPOCENES



**OBJECTIVE:** Identify “seeds” that have the potential to catalyse more radical transitions towards a sustainable future

**WHAT IS A “SEED”?:**

- New ways of thinking, doing, technological solutions, initiatives, approaches, networks...
- Exists at least partially or in prototype form already (experiments)
- Exists at the margins; not yet dominant/mainstream
- Can contribute to creating a positive future

PLANTING SEEDS  
OF THE FUTURE

# Multilevel perspective on transitions

**'Landscape'**

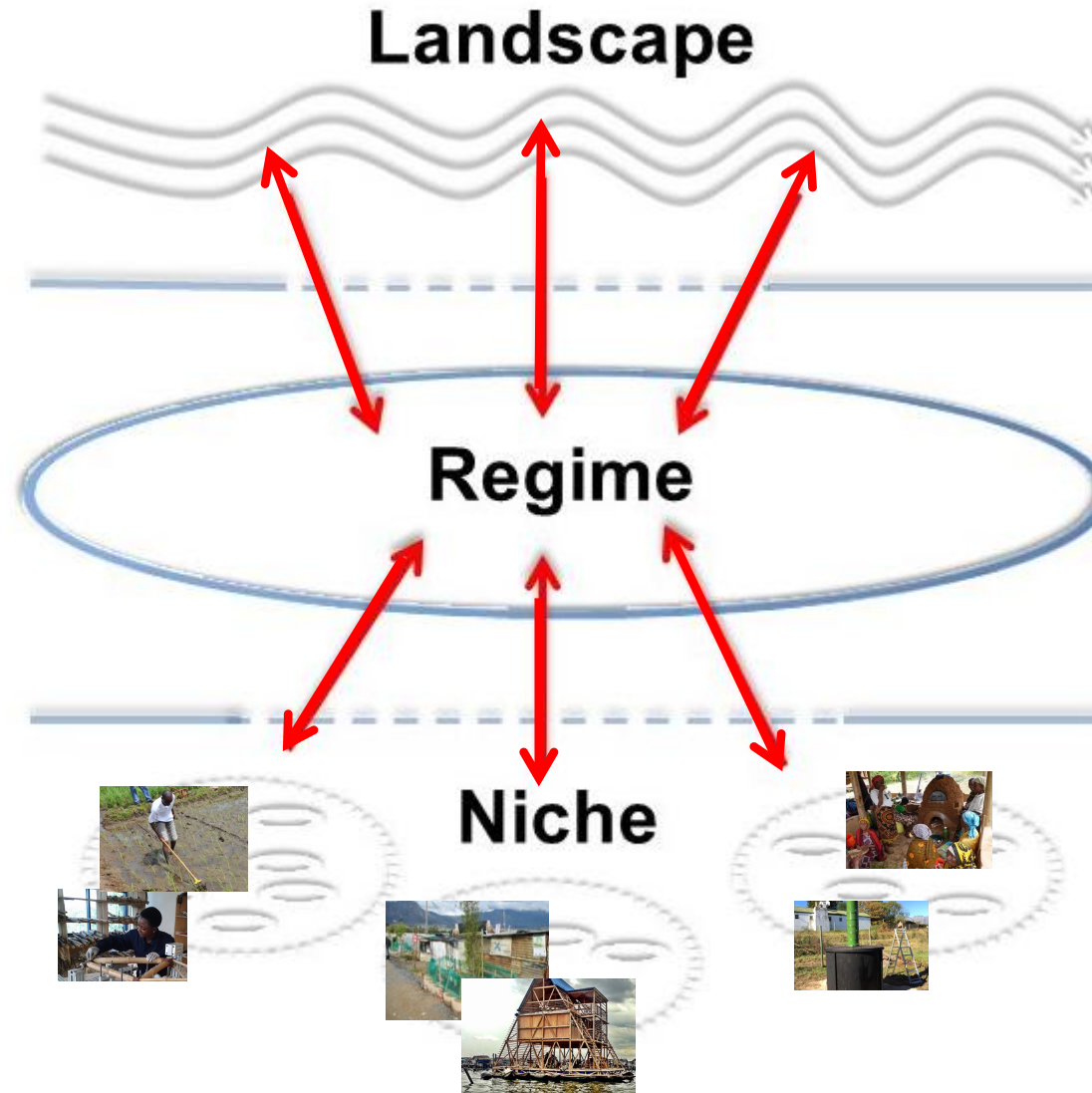
Broader societal trends

**'Regime'**

Dominant structure,  
culture and practice of  
system

**'Niches'**

Innovative experiments  
in which actors create  
alternative practices  
(compared to regime)



# Multilevel perspective on transitions

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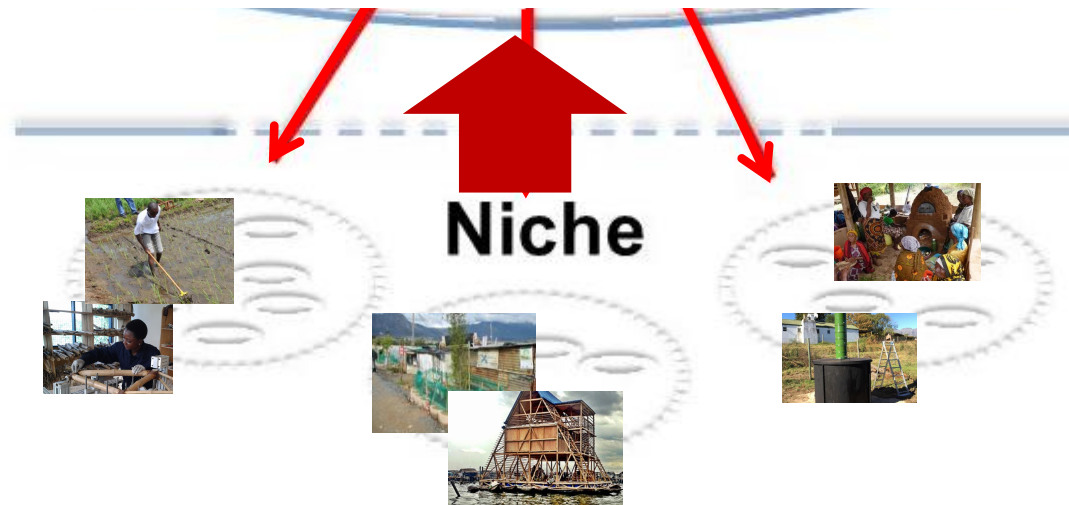
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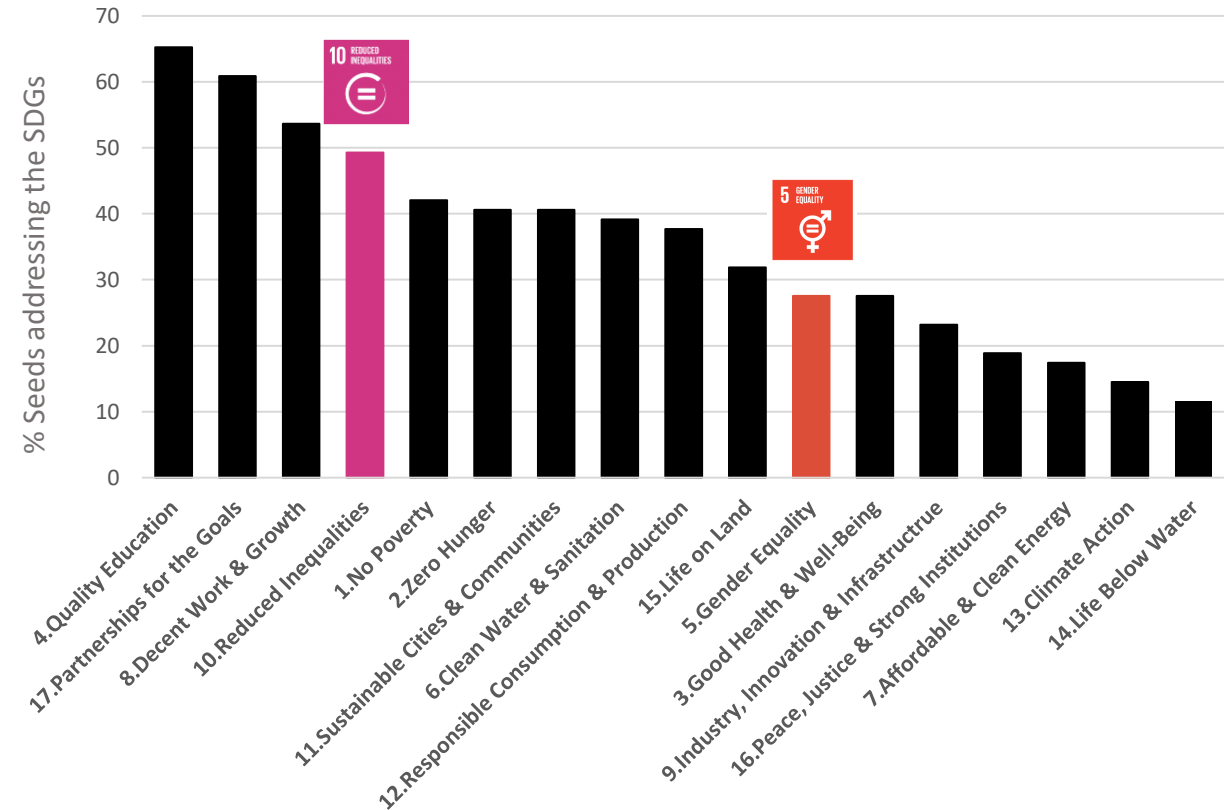
## 'Niches'

Innovative experiments in which actors create alternative practices (compared to regime)



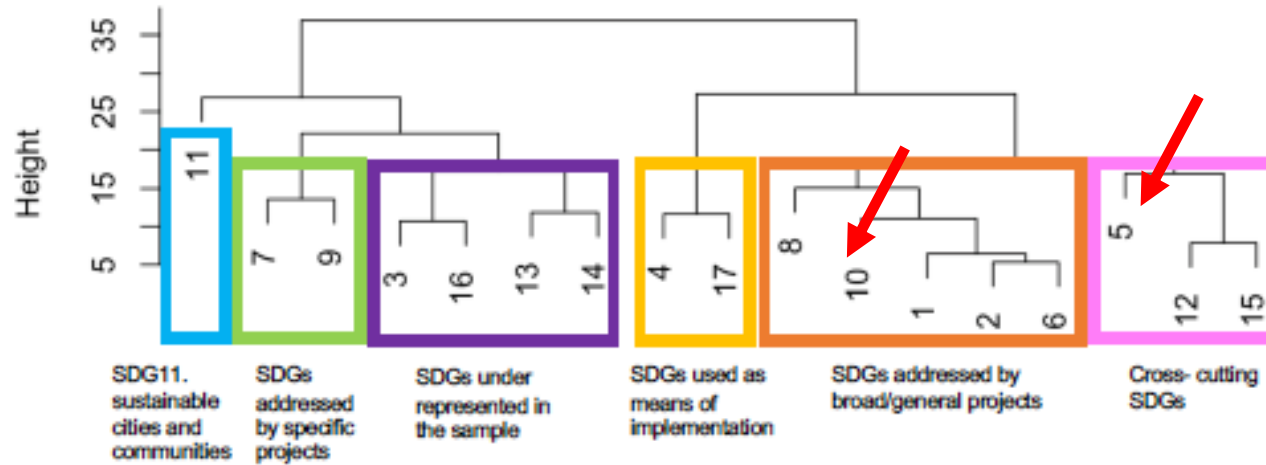
# How gender equity and inequalities are addressed by the seeds?

- Reduced inequalities (SDG 10): addressed by 50% of the seeds
  - 7/10 targets addressed
  - employment generation for the poor (10.1)
  - empowerment and inclusion (10.2)
- Gender equality (SDG 5) < 30%
  - Less than half of the targets of SDG 5 addressed (4/9)





# How gender and inequalities are addressed by the seeds?



	SDG 11	SDGs addressed by specific projects	SDGs under-represented in the sample	SDGs as means of implementation	SDGs addressed by broad projects	Cross-cutting SDGs
Standard residuals (observed targets vs expected)	<i>high</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>very low</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>low</i>
% seeds addressing a SDG	<i>high</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>high</i>
Average degree of SDG	<i>very low</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>very low</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>very high</i>
% interactivity within the SDG	<i>low</i>	<i>very high</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>very low</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>very low</i>
% interactivity inter-SDGs	<i>low</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>high</i>

- **SDG 10: Goals addressed by general or broad projects:**
  - Projects target multiple SDGs, wide aims definition
  - Develop many activities (or programs) addressing multiple goals, e.g., Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (Kenya)
- **SDG 5: Cross-cutting**
  - Addressed in many different projects
  - Not priority agenda
  - E.g., by inviting women to meetings and dialogues

# SDG 5: a goal left behind?

## GENDER EQUALITY

- Strong positive influence of SDG 5 targets for the achievement of other SDGs (Weitz et al. 2018)
- Gender equality is often conceived narrowly in development strategies (Miller and Razavi 1995; Struckmann 2018)
- New(?) strategies under the same paradigm:
  - % of women participants in the project
  - Micro-credits for women
  - Green-business for women
  - Business skill training programs



# Some reflections: transformations toward more equitable development

- Achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda will require diversity and alignment of bottom-up and top-down approaches.
- **Development agencies:**
  - identify, recognise and support the creation of polycentric networks of seeds
  - work on those SDGs left behind, or requiring higher level action.
- **Critically examine:**
  - how the people are engaged in the process of development
  - how different perspectives, knowledge systems and agencies are integrated into the diversity of strategies and visions for sustainable development



# Thank you!

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE



## Local lens for SDG implementation: lessons from bottom-up approaches in Africa

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### Abstract

The Anthropocene presents a set of interlinked sustainability challenges for humanity. The United Nations 2030 Agenda has identified 17 specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a way to confront these challenges. However, local initiatives have long been addressing issues connected to these goals in a myriad of diverse and innovative ways. We present a new approach to assess how local initiatives contribute to achieving the SDGs. We analyse how many, and how frequently, different SDGs and targets are addressed in a set of African initiatives. We consider goals and targets addressed by the same initiative as interacting between them. Then, we cluster the SDGs based on the combinations of goals and targets addressed by the initiatives and explore how SDGs differ in how local initiatives engage with them. We identify 5 main groups: SDGs addressed by broad-scope projects, SDGs addressed by specific projects, SDGs as means of implementation, cross-cutting SDGs and underrepresented SDGs. Goal 11 (sustainable cities & communities) is not clustered with any other goal. Finally, we explore the nuances of these groups and discuss the implications and relevance for the SDG framework to consider bottom-up approaches. Efforts to monitor the success on implementing the SDGs in local contexts should be reinforced and consider the different patterns initiatives follow to address the goals. Additionally, achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda will require diversity and alignment of bottom-up and top-down approaches.

**Keywords** 2030 Agenda · Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) · Interactions · Bottom-up · Local initiatives · Africa

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