Thailand Beyond 2030

The choices we make now

SDSN Thailand Public Forum 2026

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Photo published by UNDP Thailand, Wachirabenchathat Park

Progress must accelerate

14 of 117

measurable SDG targets on track

Asia and the Pacific

Regional assessment, not Thailand-specific

ESCAP, Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2026 [R9]

Photo: UNDP Thailand

01

A changing world



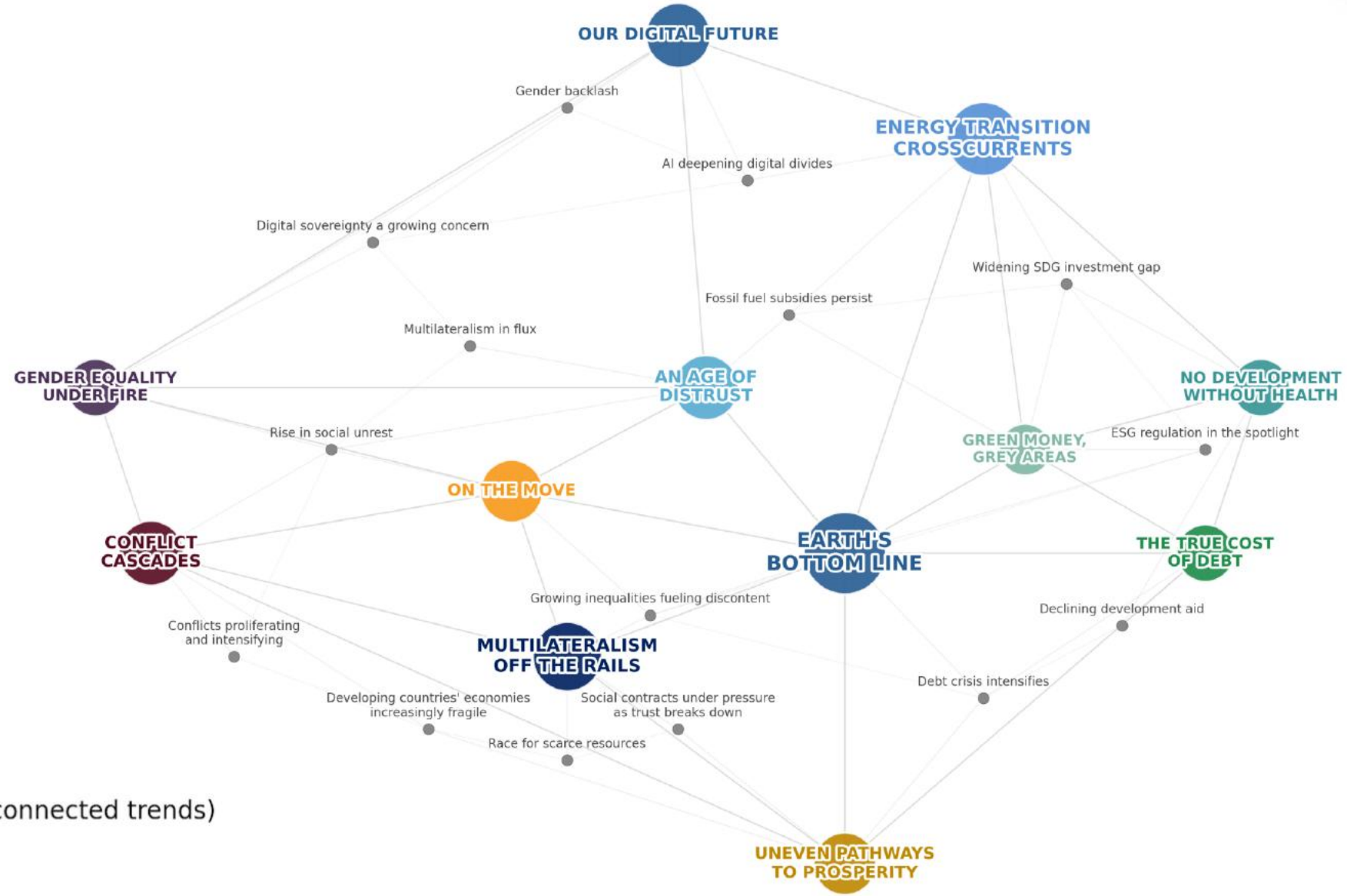
Photo published by UNDP Thailand, Bang Sue Education and Environmental Conservation Center

The landscape of development: UNDP trends update 2026

February 2026

The complexity of change

Given the speed and complexity of change today, major trends and risks should be seen not through pure geographic or thematic lenses, but as an interconnected system.



Climate, nature and economic change

1 in 5

cars sold globally was electric in 2024

UNDP Trends Update 2026, PDF pp. 16–17 [T2, T3]



Zimbabwe. Photo: UNDP Zimbabwe

ENSO/El Niño 2026-2027

Not a future risk: An unfolding emergency

80–90%+

WMO probability of El Niño, Jun–Nov 2026

63%

NOAA probability of a Very Strong event by Nov–Jan 2027

>40M

People at risk of acute food insecurity in Africa alone

$4–7

Return on every US$1 invested in anticipatory action

A compounding, not isolated, crisis

The 2026–27 El Niño event arrives alongside Middle East-driven fuel and food price volatility, active conflict in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ukraine and Mozambique, and development baselines in many countries still weakened by the 2023/24 El Niño.

The window is open now — and closing

Anticipatory action reaches populations 6–10 months earlier than traditional response, at a 30% net financial benefit. That advantage erodes progressively from August 2026 as institutional attention shifts to crisis response.

Development business, not a humanitarian exception

UNDP treats El Niño risk management as one continuous monitoring–preparedness–response–recovery continuum anchored in national development planning, not an episodic emergency that ends when the crisis passes.

Photo published by UNDP Bangladesh

Development finance under pressure

3.4 billion

people live in developing countries that spend more on debt interest than on health or education

Global finding

UNDP Trends Update 2026, PDF pp. 6 and 14 [T4, T5]

Sri Lanka, 2022. Photo: FAO / Reza Akram, published by UNDP

Who can take part in progress?

Ageing and care
Equal access
Security through change

UNDP Trends Update 2026 [T6, T10]; Thailand CPD [R10]



Odisha, India, 2022. Photo: UNDP India

Technology should expand opportunity

2.2 billion

people worldwide
remained offline in 2025

Who can use the technology?

UNDP Trends Update 2026, PDF p. 10 [T7]



Bangladesh: access to digital services



India: digital skills for older people

Photos published by UNDP Bangladesh and UNDP India

Trust grows through everyday experience

57%

felt a moderate or high sense of grievance

Survey across 26 countries

Does the system work for people?

UNDP Trends Update 2026, PDF p. 13 [T8]



Sri Lanka. Photo: UNDP Sri Lanka

02

What the SDGs have taught us



Connected decisions, local opportunity



Narathiwat Old Town

Sustainable tourism, livelihoods and cultural heritage

Photo published by UNDP Thailand

National direction, local delivery

15

provincial SDG Profiles

Local evidence informs priorities
Reviews connect data and people’s perspectives

EU–UNDP Strengthening SDG Localisation in Thailand partnership [L1–L3]



Photo published by UNDP Thailand, Pattani coast

Connect finance to the outcomes we want

20 baht

visitor fee in Koh Tao

Public services and environmental management

UNDP BIOFIN, Investing In Our Planet: Koh Tao [L4]

Photo published by UNDP Thailand, pier service fee collection

Can people feel the difference?

Greater capabilities
Security through shocks
Progress that can last

Human development, resilience and sustainability



Photo: Karnklon Raktham / UNDP Thailand

03

Three choices for Thailand

FIRST CHOICE

People equipped and protected through change

Skills connected to work
Care and accessible services
Protection before shocks

Thailand CPD [R10]; Insurance and Risk Finance Roadmap [L5]



Photo: Karnklon Raktham / UNDP Thailand

SECOND CHOICE

A more productive, greener economy

Technology that helps firms improve
Investment linked to skills and jobs
Opportunities for smaller businesses

Thailand CPD [R10]; NDC 3.0 [R17]; National Adaptation Plan [R18, R19]

Photo published by UNDP Thailand, Phetchaburi local enterprise

THIRD CHOICE

Institutions that deliver across sectors and places

Clear responsibility and budgets
Local capacity to act
Participation and room to learn

SDG Localisation [L1–L3]; Thailand Policy Lab [L6]

Photo published by UNDP, Bangkok stakeholder platform

What will we do with what we have learned?

One shared outcome
Connected decisions
Progress people can feel



Photo published by UNDP Thailand