



SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

Intersectionality as Economy:

Connecting SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 & 17 for Impact through Local Action and Powering Progress

An Offsite Side Event at the HLPF | New York | 14 July 2025

<p>Organised by: DoTheDream Youth Development Initiative Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO) NGO Committee on Dignity</p>	<p>In partnership with: Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations Mactay Foundation & Mactay Consultings (Member of IFTDO)</p>
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<p>SDG 6 Clean Water & Sanitation</p>	<p>SDG 7 Affordable & Clean Energy</p>	<p>SDG 9 Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure</p>	<p>SDG 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities</p>	<p>SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals</p>
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1. Background and Rationale

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for transformative, integrated approaches that leave no one behind. Yet progress on the most interlinked Sustainable Development Goals — SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) — remains fragmented, underfunded, and insufficiently localised.

Traditional policy frameworks often treat social equity, gender inclusion, and environmental sustainability as parallel tracks rather than as mutually reinforcing economic drivers. This siloed approach undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of SDG investments, particularly at the local level, where communities are best positioned to design, own, and sustain integrated solutions.

This side event introduces and operationalises the concept of Intersectionality as Economy — a framework that repositions the social, gender, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development not merely as ethical imperatives, but as core economic levers. When communities co-design and co-own integrated solutions, they generate compounding value: reduced costs, strengthened resilience, new employment, and measurable progress across multiple SDGs simultaneously.

The Core Argument

Social equity, gender inclusion, and environmental sustainability are not constraints on economic development — they are its most powerful catalysts. When local communities design and co-own integrated solutions across SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17, they unlock compounding returns: economic, environmental, and social.

2. Event Objectives

This side event aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Demonstrate how an 'Intersectionality as Economy' approach deepens and accelerates progress on SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17 through concrete local-level action and community co-ownership.
- Showcase practical models of water-smart energy systems, decentralised renewable infrastructure, and gender-inclusive innovation ecosystems implemented by women, girls, and youth in both urban and rural settings.
- Present financing mechanisms and investment frameworks that recognise intersectional co-benefits, enabling governments, development finance institutions, and private investors to mobilise capital for integrated SDG solutions.
- Identify measurement and accountability approaches that link grassroots outcomes to national Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), SDG reporting frameworks, and multilateral partnerships.
- Catalyse new partnerships and commitments among governments, civil society, the private sector, and multilateral institutions to co-produce SDG outcomes at scale through locally led, intersectional approaches.

3. Thematic Framework: Intersectionality as Economy

The 'Intersectionality as Economy' framework rests on three foundational premises:

3.1 Integration Multiplies Returns

Solutions that simultaneously address water access, energy provision, industrial innovation, urban sustainability, and partnership architecture generate non-linear returns. A community-managed minigrid powering safe water pumps does not merely solve two problems — it creates a new local economy: reduced health costs, increased school attendance (particularly for girls freed from water collection duties), new technical employment, and greater resilience to climate shocks.

3.2 Gender and Social Inclusion Are Productivity Gains

Excluding women, girls, and youth from the design, ownership, and management of infrastructure and innovation systems is an economic inefficiency, not merely a rights deficit. Evidence from community-led energy and water projects across Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America consistently shows that female-led governance improves maintenance rates, reduces leakage and waste, and increases community willingness to pay — all critical indicators of long-term sustainability.

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3.3 Local Action is a Global Asset

Local communities are not passive beneficiaries of SDG investments — they are active co-producers of SDG outcomes. When equipped with appropriate financing, technology, and governance frameworks, local actors generate innovations, build social capital, and create institutional knowledge that no top-down intervention can replicate. The HLPF's commitment to reviewing SDG implementation must therefore centre the local as the site of transformative change.

4. Panel Programme: Four Thematic Panels

The event is structured around four thematic panels, each aligned to the focal SDGs, followed by breakout dialogues and a synthesis plenary. Each panel runs for approximately 40 minutes, incorporating practitioner presentations, expert commentary, and facilitated exchange.

PANEL 1 SDGs 6 & 7

Water-Smart Energy Systems

Community-led minigrids connected to solar-powered water pumping stations, reducing both energy poverty and waterborne disease burden. Models from East Africa and South Asia demonstrate how integrated water-energy hubs managed by women's cooperatives achieve 40–60% lower operational costs than publicly managed equivalents. Panel focus: what works, what fails, and what enables scale.

PANEL 2 SDG 9

Gender-Inclusive Innovation & Industry

Local innovation labs and fabrication centres designed to include women, girls, and youth as inventors, entrepreneurs, and leaders. These hubs align with SDG 9 targets on inclusive industrialisation while creating pathways to formal employment and entrepreneurship in green and blue economies. Panel focus: from grassroots STEM participation to industrial co-ownership.

PANEL 3 SDG 11

Sustainable Cities and Urban-Rural Linkages

Integrated urban infrastructure planning that connects peri-urban and rural water-energy systems to city-level sustainability plans. Community-designed public spaces, affordable housing with embedded clean energy, and resilient urban water networks governed through participatory mechanisms. Panel focus: urban resilience, equity, and the urban-rural development nexus.

PANEL 4 SDG 17

Financing, Partnerships & Accountability

Blended finance structures, community-based carbon and ecosystem credits, municipal SDG bonds, and multi-stakeholder partnership platforms. Measurement and VNR linkage innovations. Panel focus: closing the financing gap for intersectional local SDG action and connecting community outcomes to national accountability frameworks.

5. SDG Linkage Architecture

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The event explicitly maps how intersectional local action creates cascading progress across the focal SDGs:

SDG	PRIMARY LOCAL ACTION	INTERSECTIONAL ECONOMIC MULTIPLIER
SDG 6 Clean Water	Community water management by women-led cooperatives	Reduced health costs, increased school attendance, improved agricultural productivity, climate resilience
SDG 7 Clean Energy	Decentralised renewable minigrids with community ownership	New local employment, productive energy for SMEs, reduced household energy poverty, female economic agency
SDG 9 Innovation	Gender-inclusive green industry hubs and fabrication labs	Local innovation ecosystems, women's technical employment, climate-compatible industrial growth
SDG 11 Sustainable Cities	Participatory urban water-energy infrastructure planning	Resilient cities, affordable housing integration, inclusive public spaces, urban-rural linkages
SDG 17 Partnerships	Multi-stakeholder platforms pooling public, private, and civil society resources	Aligned financing, shared measurement, VNR accountability linkages, multilateral partnership leverage

6. Financing Mechanisms and Investment Frameworks

A central challenge to scaling intersectional local action is the fragmentation of financing streams. The event will present three financing models that address this challenge:

6.1 Integrated SDG Blended Finance Facilities

Development finance institutions and multilateral banks are increasingly exploring blended finance structures that pool concessional capital, climate finance (Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund), and private investment into integrated water-energy-infrastructure projects. The event will highlight emerging frameworks that explicitly price in intersectional co-benefits — gender equity premiums, community ownership dividends, and multi-SDG measurement results — to attract broader investment and reduce perceived risk.

6.2 Community-Based Carbon and Ecosystem Credits

Local communities managing clean water catchments, renewable energy microgrids, and green urban spaces are increasingly eligible for carbon, biodiversity, and ecosystem services credits. The event will discuss how verified, community-owned credit schemes can generate direct revenues for local actors, creating a self-sustaining financial engine for SDG co-production that does not depend on continued donor support.

6.3 Municipal and Sub-National SDG Bonds

An emerging frontier in SDG financing involves sub-national governments and municipalities issuing sustainability-linked bonds anchored to integrated SDG performance targets. The event will spotlight pilot programmes where city and district governments have successfully accessed capital markets by demonstrating www.dothedreamydi.org, info@dothedreamydi.org, admin@dothedreamydi.org, dodedream@gmail.com



credible, locally-anchored SDG measurement systems — directly linking the 'Intersectionality as Economy' framework to mainstream financial markets.

7. Measurement, Accountability and VNR Linkages

Progress without measurement is invisible. The event will present three innovative measurement approaches that capture the multi-dimensional value of intersectional local action and link it to national and multilateral SDG accountability processes:

- Multi-SDG Impact Dashboards developed by local communities and municipalities that aggregate progress indicators across SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17 into unified, real-time reporting systems accessible to national governments for VNR preparation.
- Gender-Disaggregated Infrastructure Data Frameworks that track not only physical infrastructure performance (water quality, energy access rates, connectivity) but also ownership, governance participation, employment, and capability development metrics — disaggregated by gender, age, and social group.
- Intersectional Return-on-Investment Methodologies that calculate the combined economic, social, and environmental returns of integrated local SDG investments — providing the evidence base needed to attract private capital, government budget support, and multilateral partnership commitments.

These measurement innovations directly support national governments in demonstrating to the HLPF how local action translates into national SDG progress, closing the critical accountability gap between community-level implementation and global-level review.

8. Event Format, Programme and Structure

The side event is designed as an offsite, participatory convening incorporating an Opening Plenary, four thematic panels, three parallel breakout dialogues, and a synthesis and commitments session. The structure enables genuine dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnership formation across all participant groups.

TIME	SESSION	DESCRIPTION
0:00 – 0:20	OPENING PLENARY	Framing 'Intersectionality as Economy.' High-level opening remarks from DoTheDream YDI, the Permanent Mission of Nigeria, and a community leader from a featured model country. Keynote on the strategic imperative of integrated local SDG action.
0:20 – 1:00	PANEL 1 — SDGs 6 & 7 Water-Smart Energy Systems	Practitioners present water-energy nexus solutions: solar-powered water pumps, community minigrids, women-led cooperative models. 10-min presentations + facilitated exchange on replication and scale.
1:00 – 1:40	PANEL 2 — SDG 9	Local innovation labs, green fabrication centres, and female-led industrial

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	Gender-Inclusive Innovation & Industry	hubs. Discussion of pathways from grassroots STEM participation to formal employment and entrepreneurship.
1:40 – 2:20	PANEL 3 — SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Urban-Rural Linkages	Participatory urban planning models, affordable housing with embedded clean energy, resilient water networks, and peri-urban connectivity. Case studies from African, Asian, and Latin American cities.
2:20 – 3:00	PANEL 4 — SDG 17 Financing, Partnerships & Accountability	Blended finance structures, community carbon credits, municipal SDG bonds, VNR linkages, and multi-stakeholder partnership platforms. Focus on measurement, reporting, and closing the accountability gap.
3:00 – 3:30	BREAKOUT DIALOGUES (3 Parallel Tables)	(i) Financing intersectional SDG action (ii) Measurement and VNR linkages (iii) Partnership architectures for local co-production Each table produces a one-page summary of insights and recommended actions.
3:30 – 4:00	SYNTHESIS, COMMITMENTS & CLOSE	Rapporteur synthesis of dialogue findings. Launch of the Partnership Commitment Register. Adoption of the 'Intersectionality as Economy' statement. Closing reflections from youth and women leaders.

9. Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

#	DELIVERABLE	DESCRIPTION
OUTCOME 1	Endorsed Concept Framework	A co-endorsed statement on 'Intersectionality as Economy' signed by participating governments, civil society, and private sector actors — transmitted to the HLPF Secretariat as a contribution to the 2027 Ministerial Declaration.
OUTCOME 2	Practical Toolkit	Replicable models, financing templates, and measurement frameworks for integrated SDG action across SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17, for use by local governments, community organisations, and development partners.
OUTCOME 3	Partnership Commitments	A register of new or deepened partnership commitments specifying resources, timelines, and mutual accountability mechanisms — to be monitored and reported at HLPF 2026.
OUTCOME 4	Policy Recommendations	Targeted recommendations for integrating 'Intersectionality as Economy' principles into national SDG implementation plans, VNR methodologies, and multilateral SDG financing frameworks.

10. Target Audience and Participation

The event is designed to convene a diverse, action-oriented constituency representing the full spectrum of stakeholders needed to advance intersectional SDG action:

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STAKEHOLDER GROUP	FOCUS / ROLE
Governments	National delegates attending HLPF; line ministries responsible for water, energy, infrastructure, urban development, and finance
UN System	UNDP, UN-Water, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UN Women, and UNFCCC bodies
Development Finance	Multilateral banks, Green Climate Fund, bilateral development agencies, and regional development banks
Local Governments	Sub-national governments and municipal networks with experience in integrated SDG implementation
Civil Society	Women's organisations, youth networks, and civil society organisations active in water, energy, infrastructure, and urban sustainability
Private Sector	Renewable energy, water technology, green infrastructure, and sustainable finance actors committed to gender-responsive, community-inclusive models
Research & Academia	Institutions specialising in SDG measurement, intersectionality frameworks, and local governance

11. Organising and Co-Sponsoring Partners

This side event is organised by DoTheDream Youth Development Initiative, in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations, the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), the NGO Committee on Dignity, and Mactay Foundation & Mactay Consultings (Member of IFTDO).

Additional co-sponsors and partners committed to advancing intersectional, locally led approaches to SDG implementation are warmly welcomed. Expressions of interest to co-sponsor, present, or participate in the Partnership Commitment Register should be directed to the contacts below by 4 July 2025.

12. Conclusion

The 2030 Agenda is a covenant between governments, communities, and the planet. With fewer than four years remaining, the pace and quality of SDG progress must fundamentally change. This side event demonstrates that the key to accelerating progress on SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17 lies not in doing more of the same, but in doing it differently: by treating intersectionality not as a complication to be managed, but as an economy to be built.

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When communities design and co-own integrated solutions, when women and youth lead innovation ecosystems, when water and energy are planned together with urban sustainability, and when partnerships genuinely pool public, private, and civil society resources — the returns compound, the costs fall, and the SDGs become not aspirational targets but lived realities.

We invite governments, international organisations, civil society, and the private sector to join us in New York to co-create the frameworks, commitments, and partnerships that will power this progress.

"Intersectionality is not a cost — it is the compound interest of sustainable development."

For Enquiries and Partnership Expressions of Interest

PRIMARY CONTACT	CO-LEAD CONTACT
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