

ERADICATING POVERTY BEYOND GROWTH

A Global Roadmap for a New Economy

ESCAPING GROWTH DEPENDENCIES: THE UN ROADMAP PROJECT

OLIVIER DE SCHUTTER



**NEW ECONOMIES FOR
ERADICATING POVERTY**



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United Nations

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General Assembly

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Eradicating poverty beyond growth

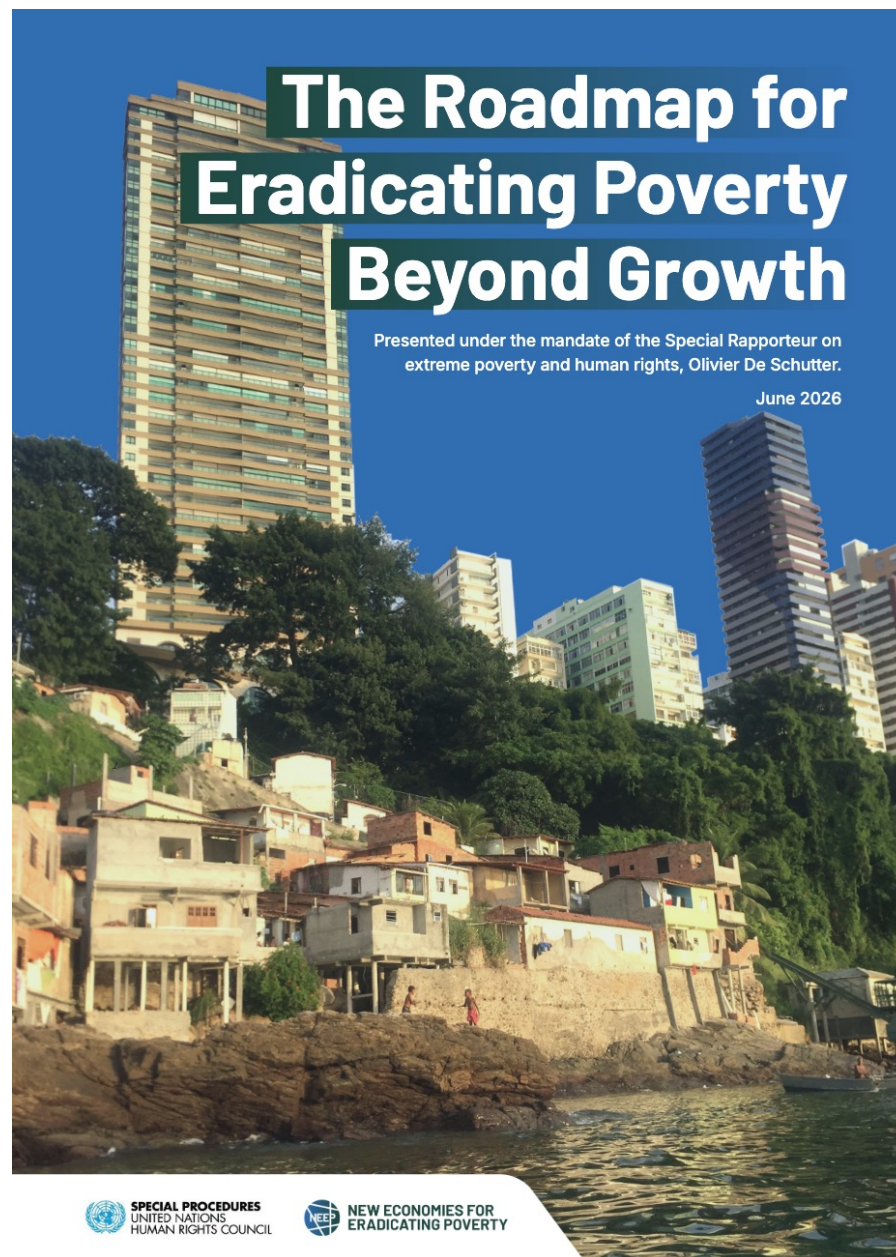
**Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human
rights, Olivier De Schutter**



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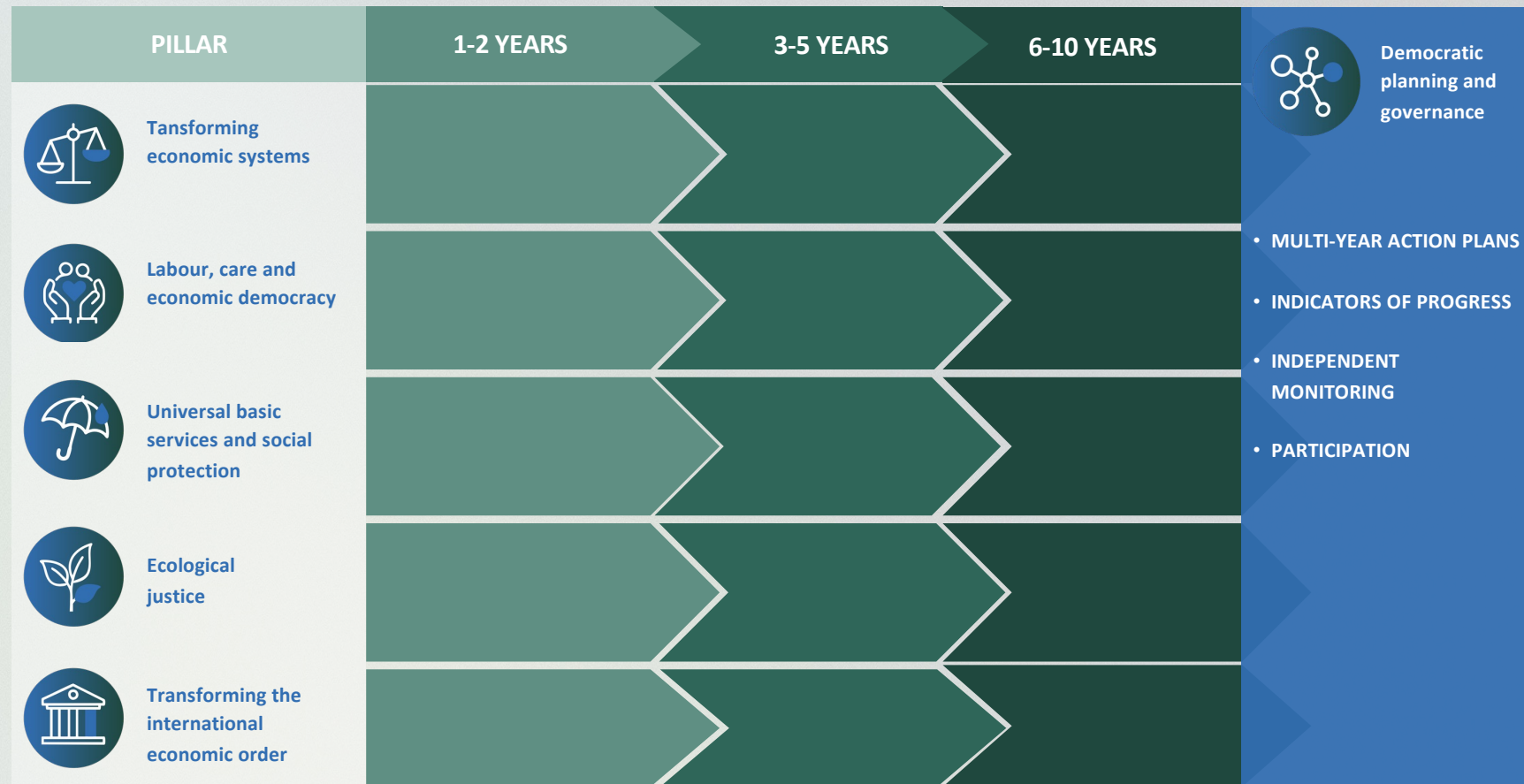


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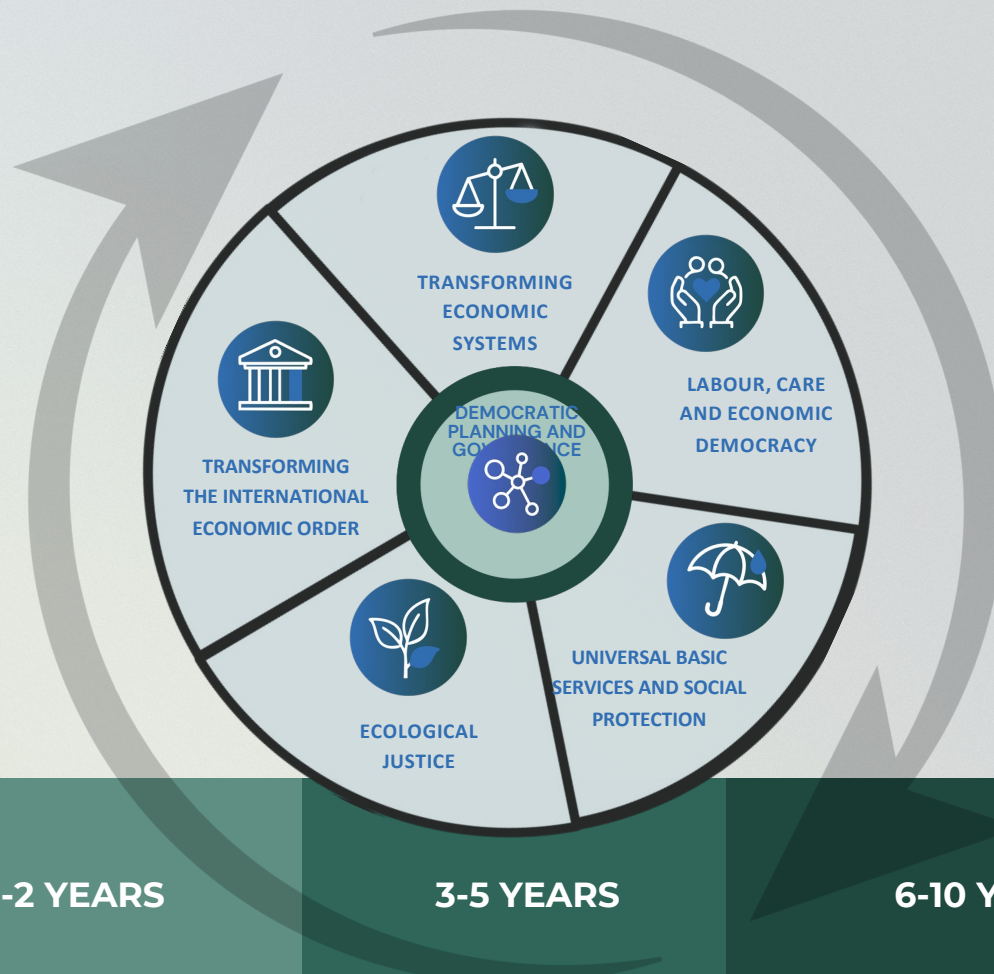
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1-2 YEARS

3-5 YEARS

6-10 YEARS

PARTICIPATION. A bottom-up process involving NGOs, social movements, unions, academic experts, UN agencies, and governments: new alliances.

‘ONE CHALLENGE, MANY RECIPES’. A catalogue of policy tools that are not all relevant to all circumstances. Governments should design their national strategies through participatory processes, seeking inspiration from the Roadmap.

SEQUENCING. Moving beyond the dilemma between the short-term response to crises and the long-term vision of a world focused on well-being: the role of democratic planning and a purpose-driven economy.

INTERDEPENDENCY OF REFORMS. The six pillars are interdependent, and action at national level will only be possible within an enabling international framework.



I. The key messages

- Economic growth can become uneconomic, and growthism can become counterproductive
- The fight against poverty requires not only post-market compensation (growth & redistribution), but also in-market reforms and pre-market social investment

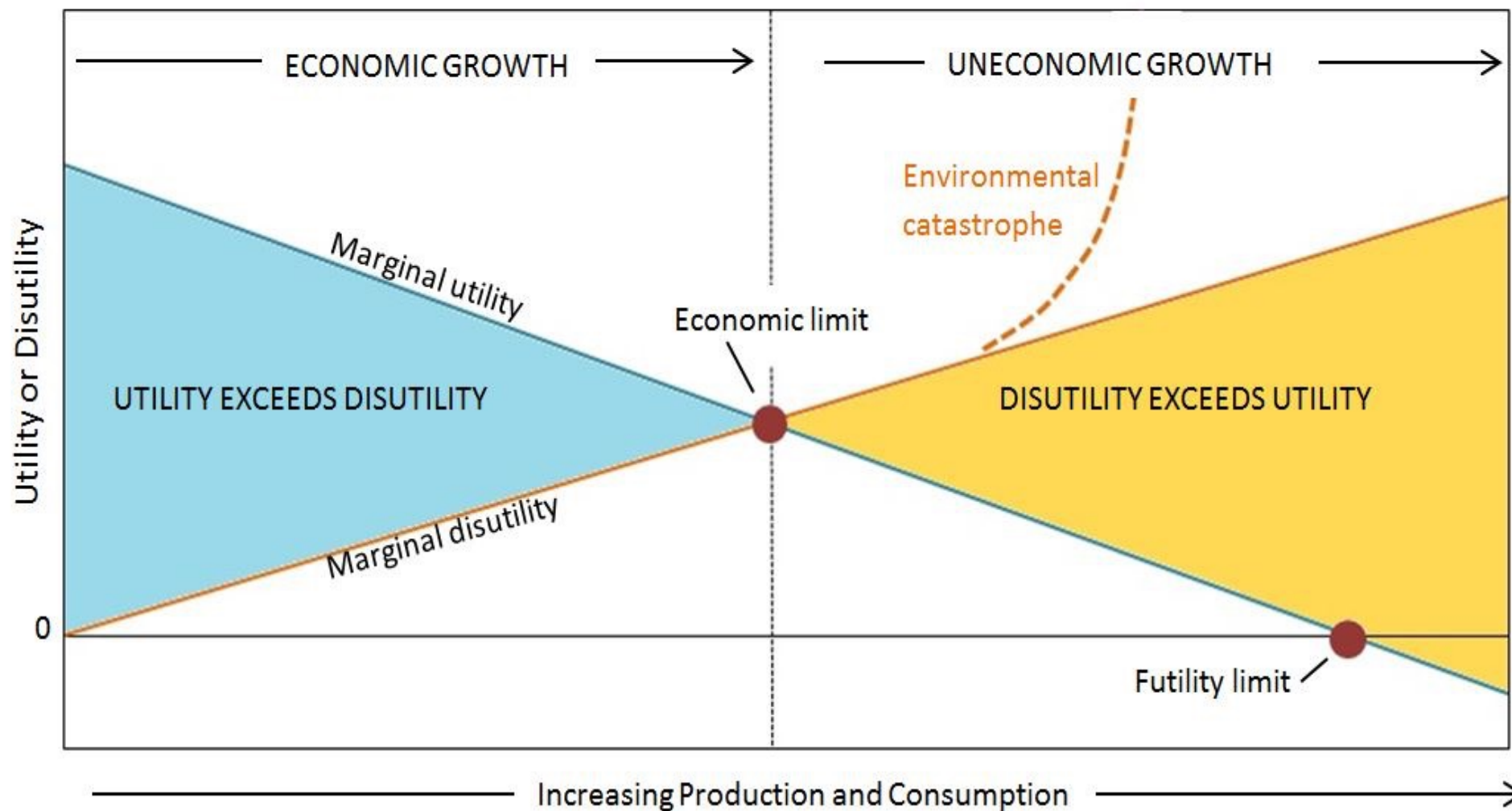
II. The challenges

- Major lock-ins exist, that create obstacles to moving from ‘beyond GDP’ to ‘beyond growth’
- To implement the Roadmap, we need a return to long-term planning, taking into account the interdependence of reforms
- Democratizing the economy is also a challenge for economics as a scientific discipline

III. The next steps



The Roadmap for Eradicating Poverty Beyond Growth



Source: H. Daly (Centre for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy, 2014)



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The promises

Jobs creation
Improved well-being
Debt servicing
Financing of social protection

The quest for growth

Flexibilizing labour
Labour-saving technologies
A business-friendly investment climate
Trade liberalization
Innovation

The impacts

Precarious work and growing inequalities
A burnout economy
Modernization of poverty
Environmental breakdown

Whatever progress is expected from higher GDP “can often be harmed by the ways it is generated – particularly for those on lower incomes and in more precarious work, and where private consumption is prioritised over public goods.”



New Approaches to Economic Challenges

Beyond Growth

TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC APPROACH

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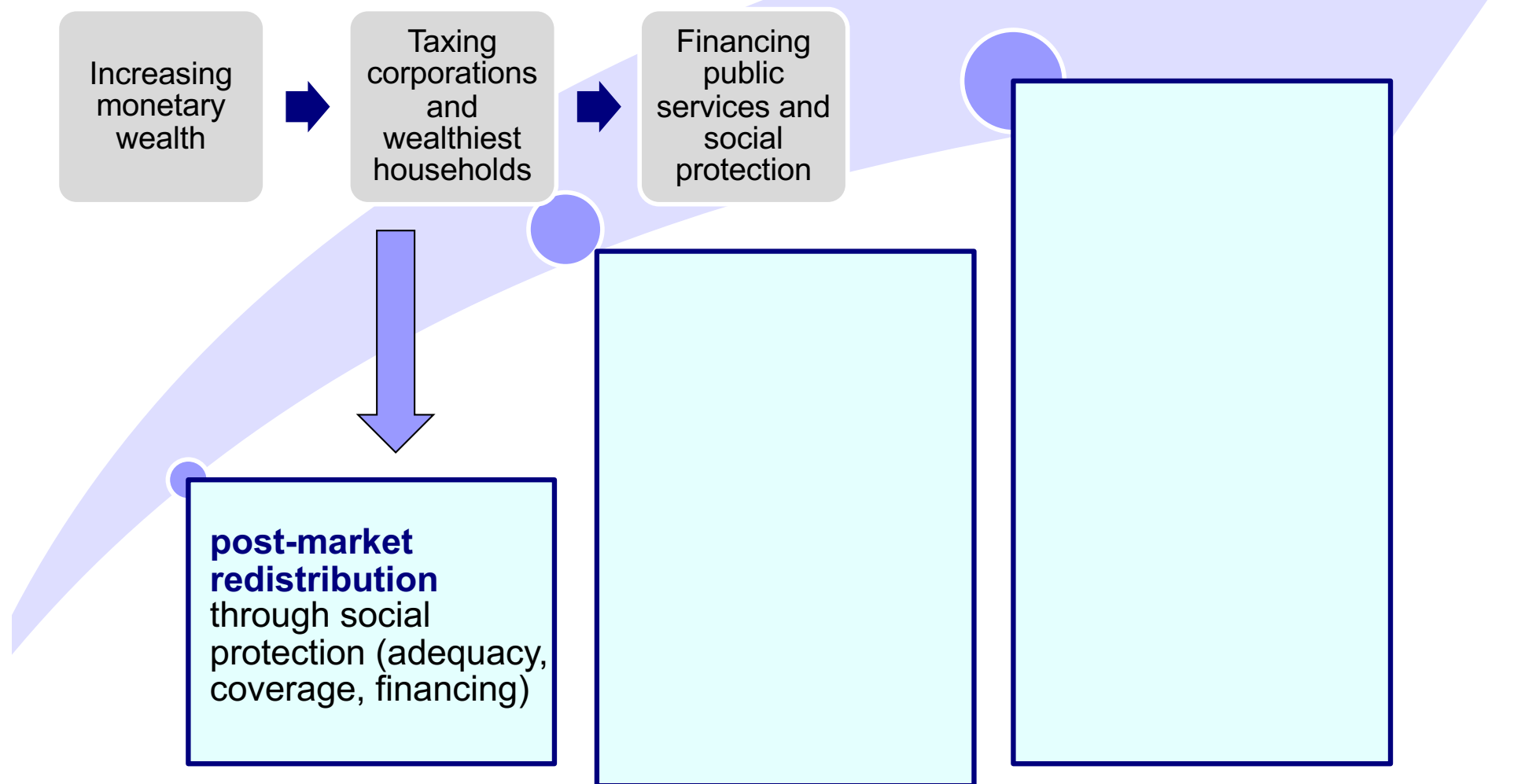
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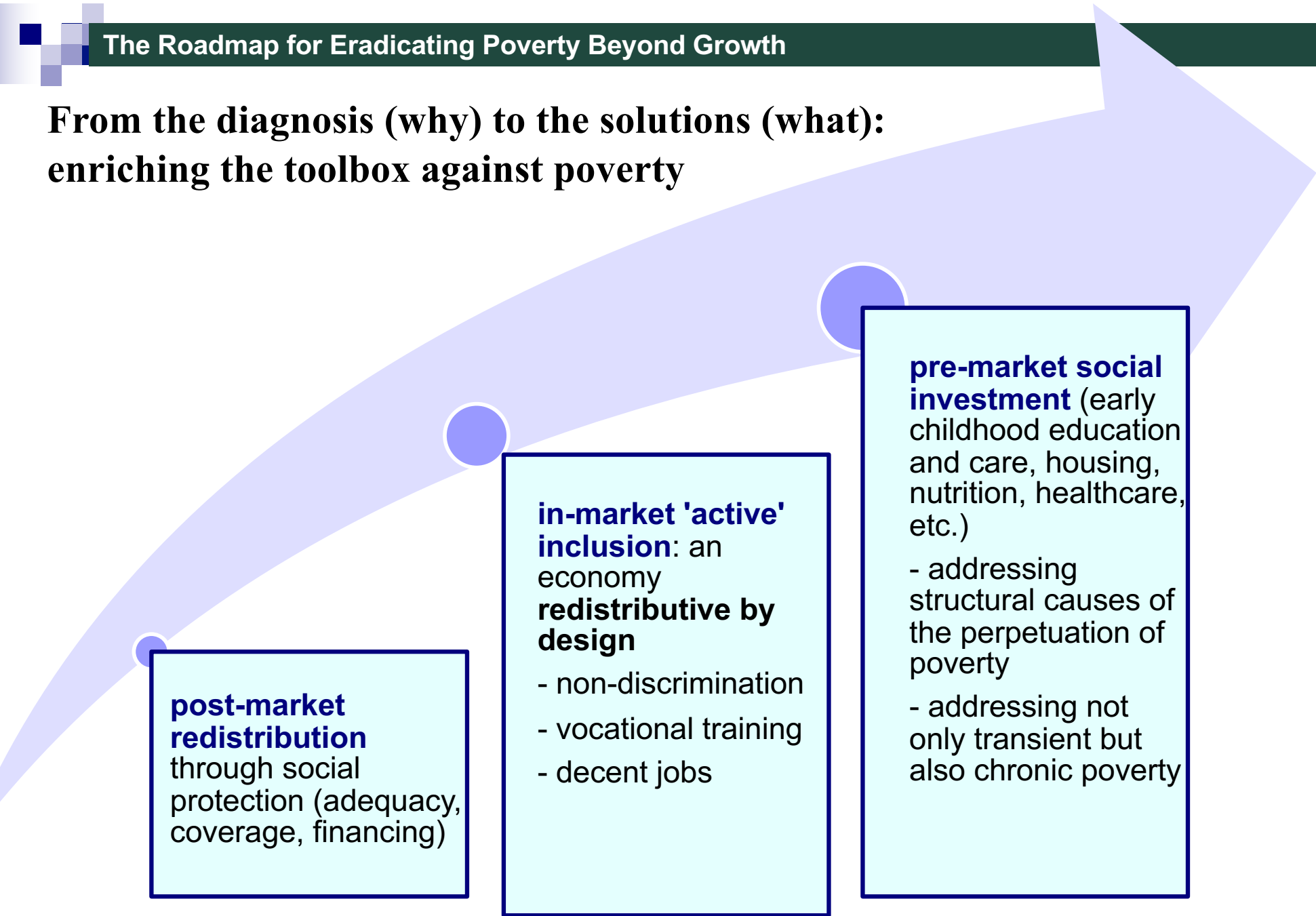
III. The next steps



From the diagnosis (why) to the solutions (what): enriching the toolbox against poverty



**From the diagnosis (why) to the solutions (what):
enriching the toolbox against poverty**



**post-market
redistribution**
through social
protection (adequacy,
coverage, financing)

**in-market 'active'
inclusion:** an
economy
**redistributive by
design**

- non-discrimination
- vocational training
- decent jobs

**pre-market social
investment** (early
childhood education
and care, housing,
nutrition, healthcare,
etc.)

- addressing
structural causes of
the perpetuation of
poverty
- addressing not
only transient but
also chronic poverty



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The Roadmap for Eradicating Poverty Beyond Growth

1973-1979

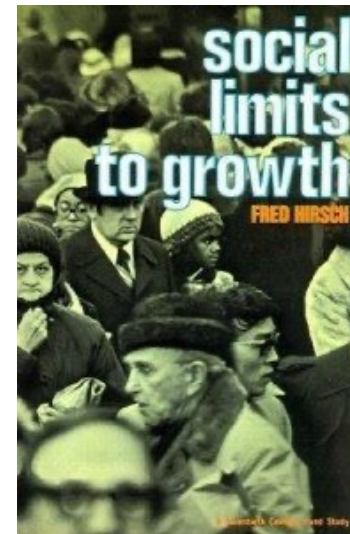
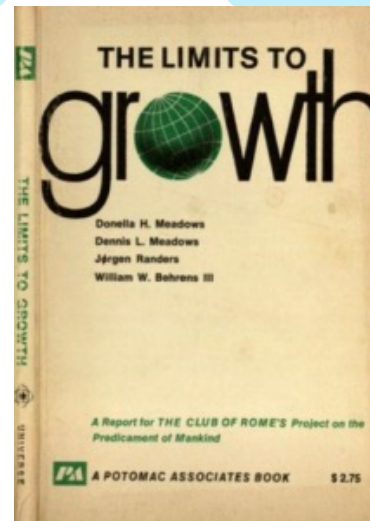
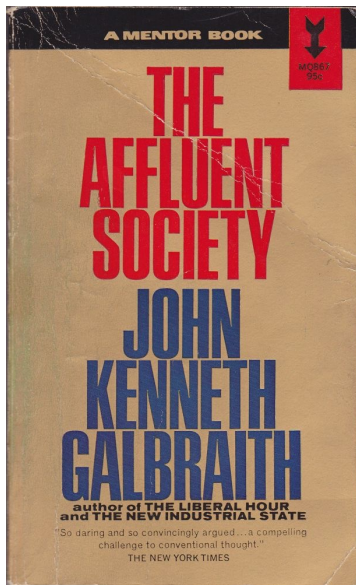
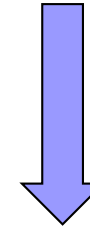
Favor consumption, expand markets, increase public revenue through taxation: the Fordist compromise



Environmental and social limits to growth



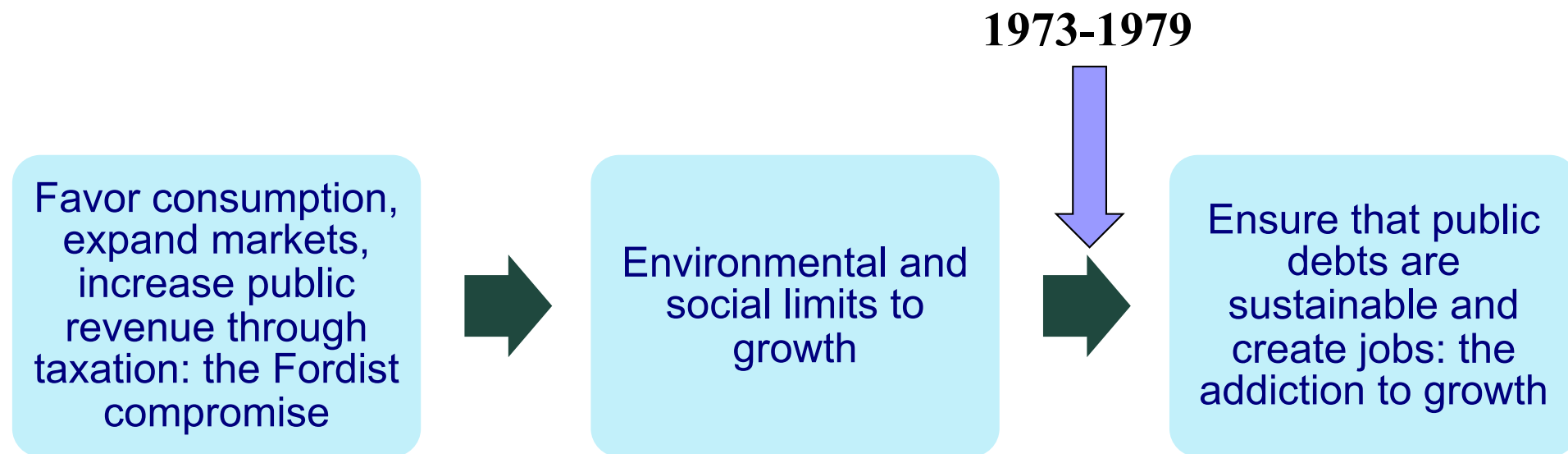
Ensure that public debts are sustainable and create jobs: the addiction to growth



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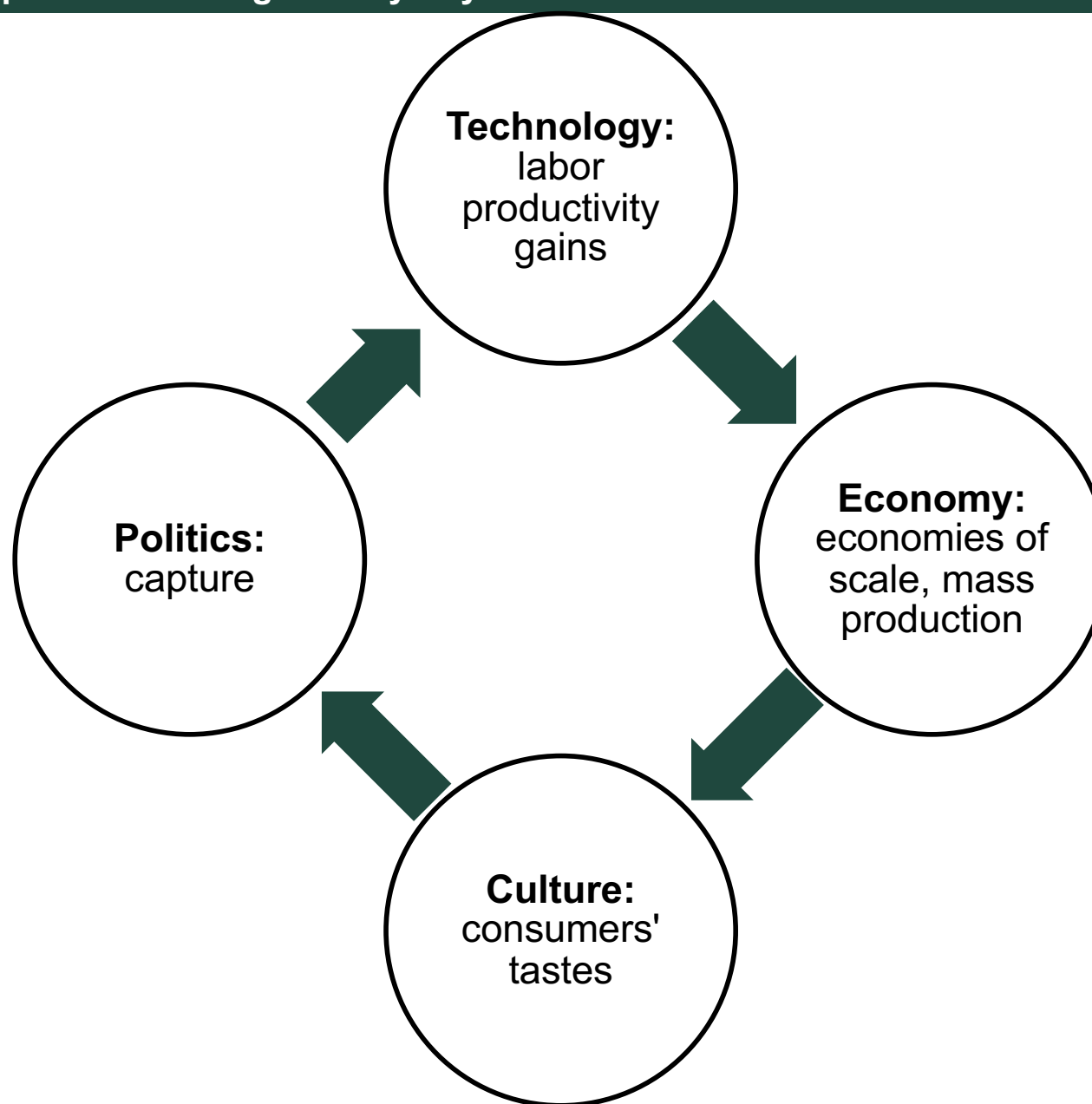


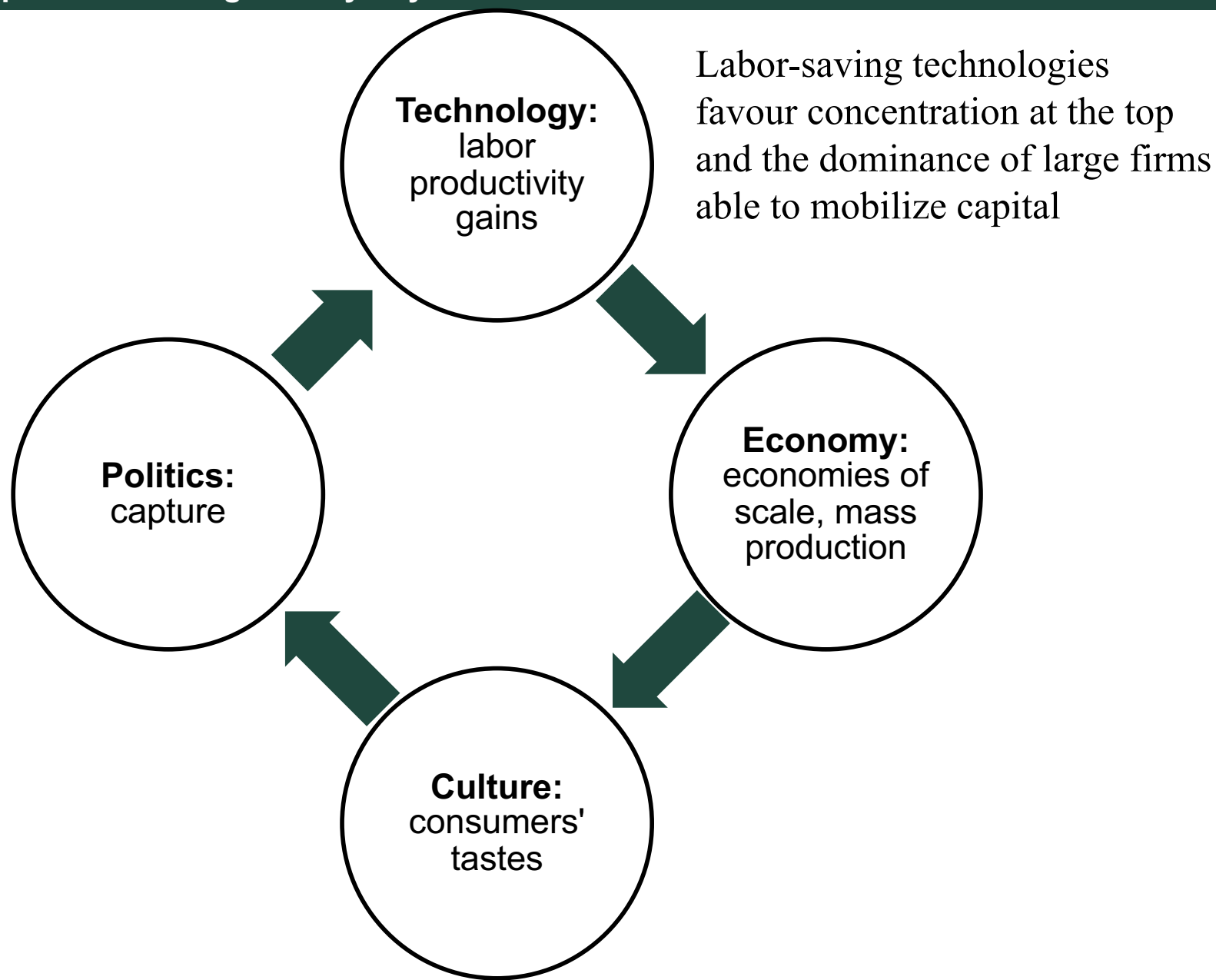
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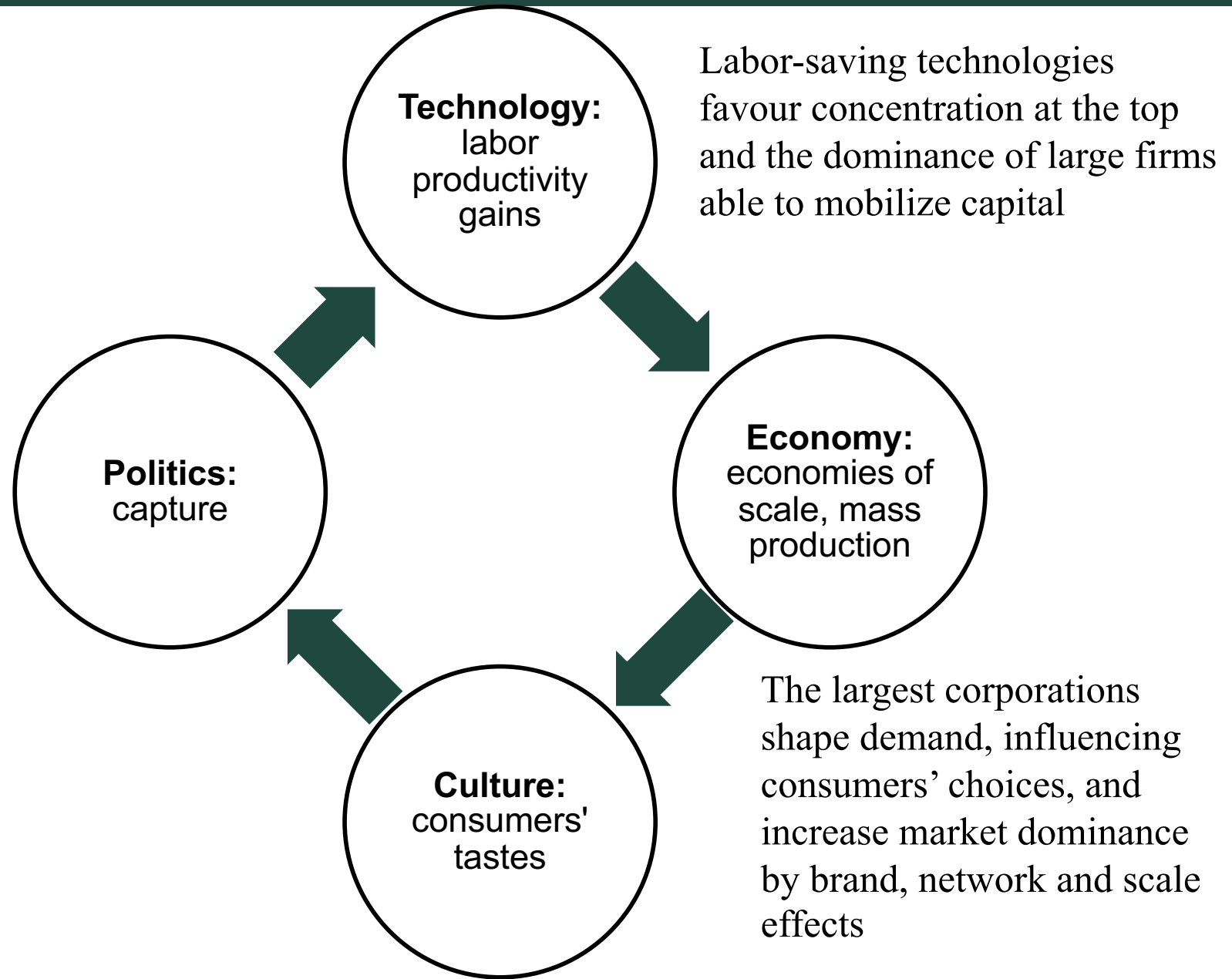


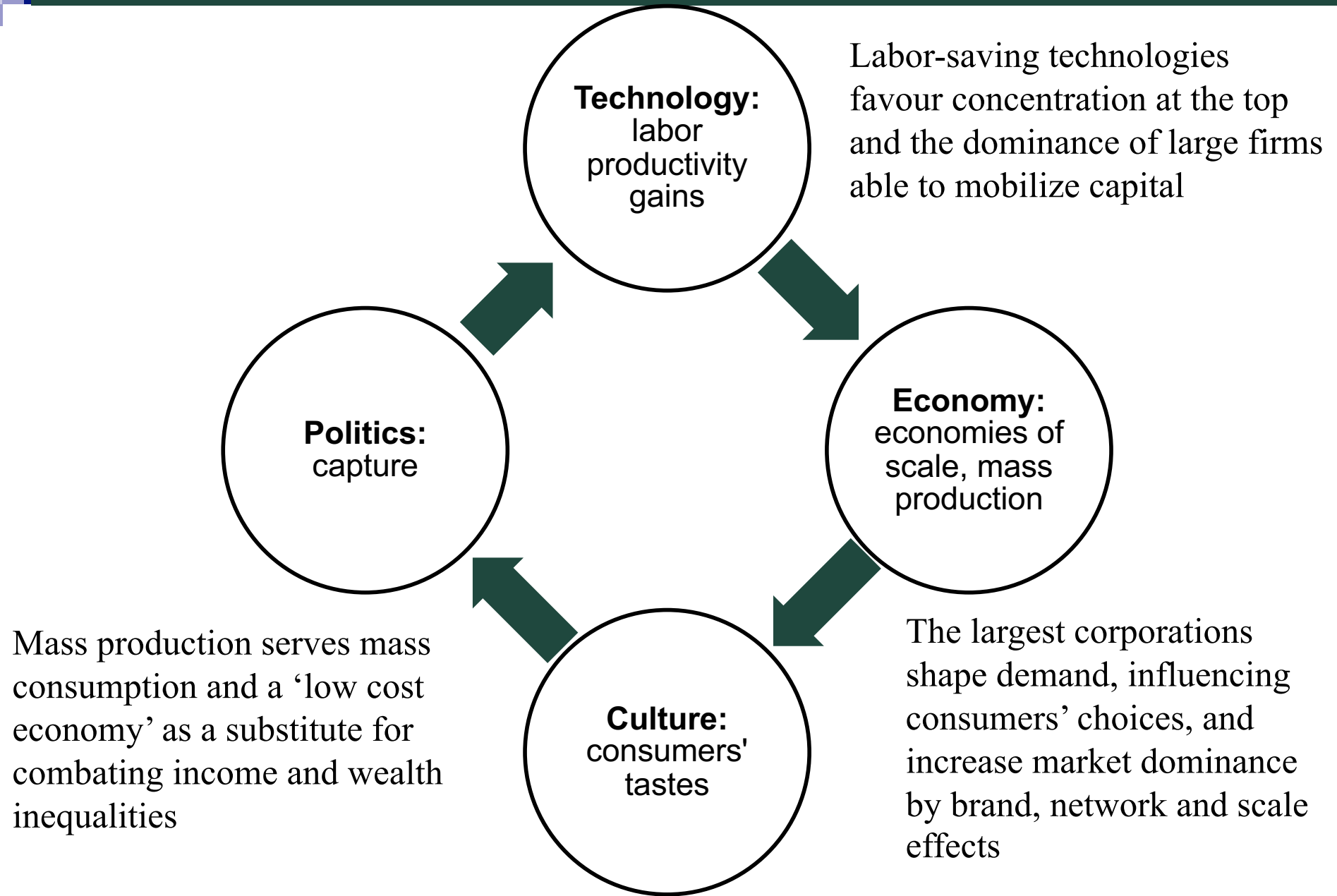
The lock-ins or growth dependencies

- **macroeconomic:** debt and financing of public services and social protection
- **microeconomic:** shareholder capitalism and the profit-driven economy
- **cultural:** the narrative of ‘more is better’









The Roadmap for Eradicating Poverty Beyond Growth

Governments favour globalization and technological change which perpetuate cheap, mass consumption

Technology:
labor
productivity
gains

Labor-saving technologies favour concentration at the top and the dominance of large firms able to mobilize capital

Politics:
capture

Economy:
economies of
scale, mass
production

Mass production serves mass consumption and a 'low cost economy' as a substitute for combating income and wealth inequalities

Culture:
consumers'
tastes

The largest corporations shape demand, influencing consumers' choices, and increase market dominance by brand, network and scale effects



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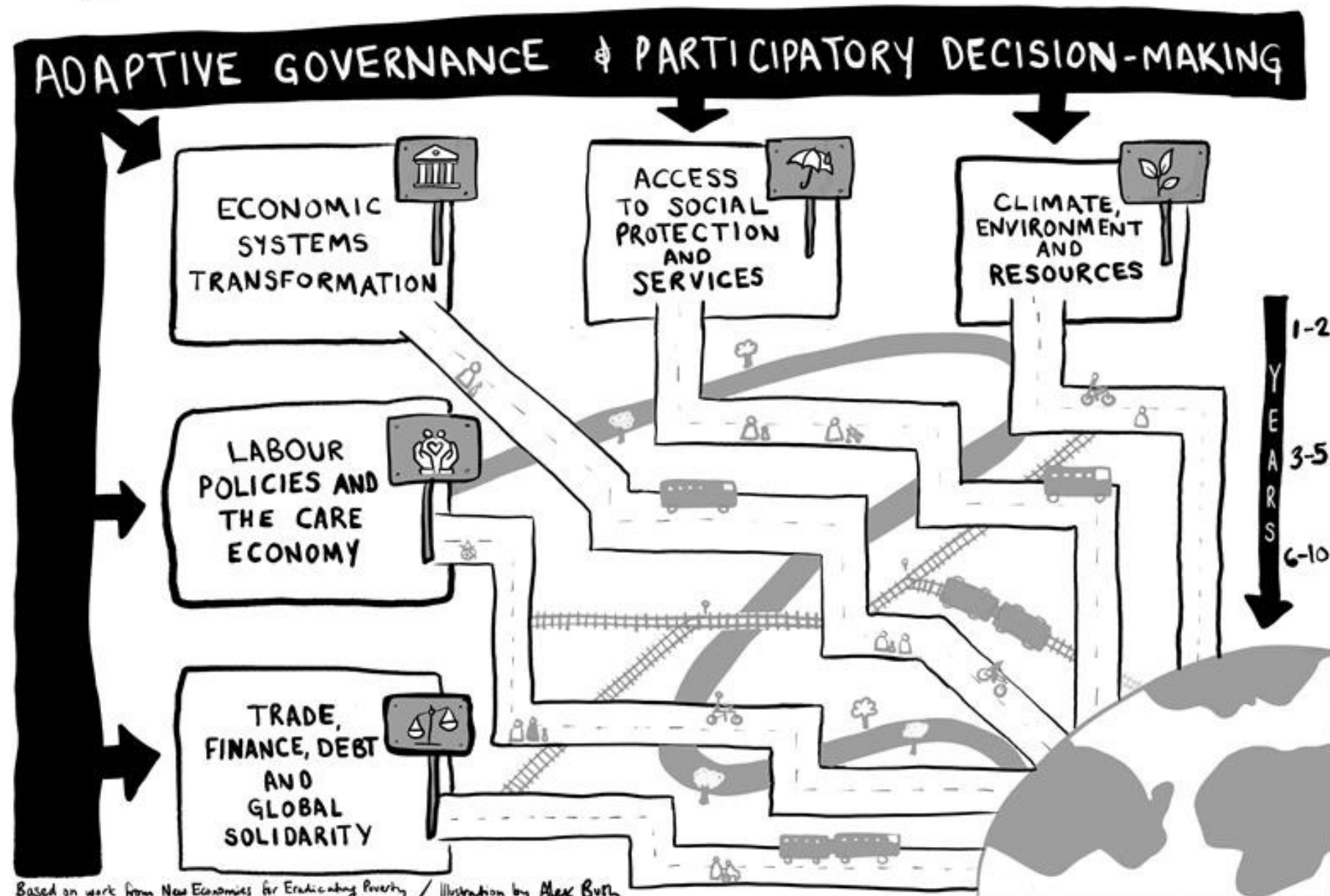
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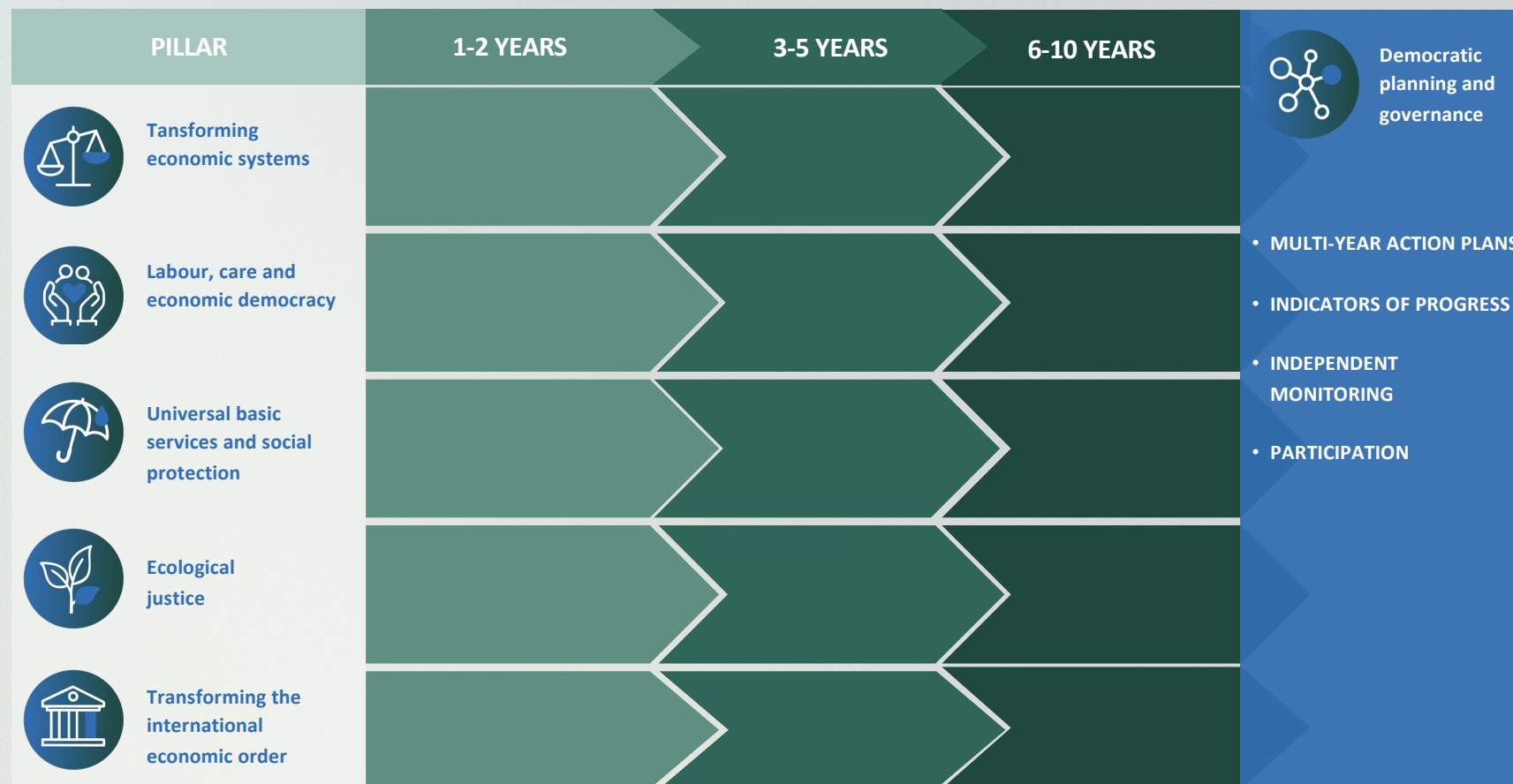
III. The next steps



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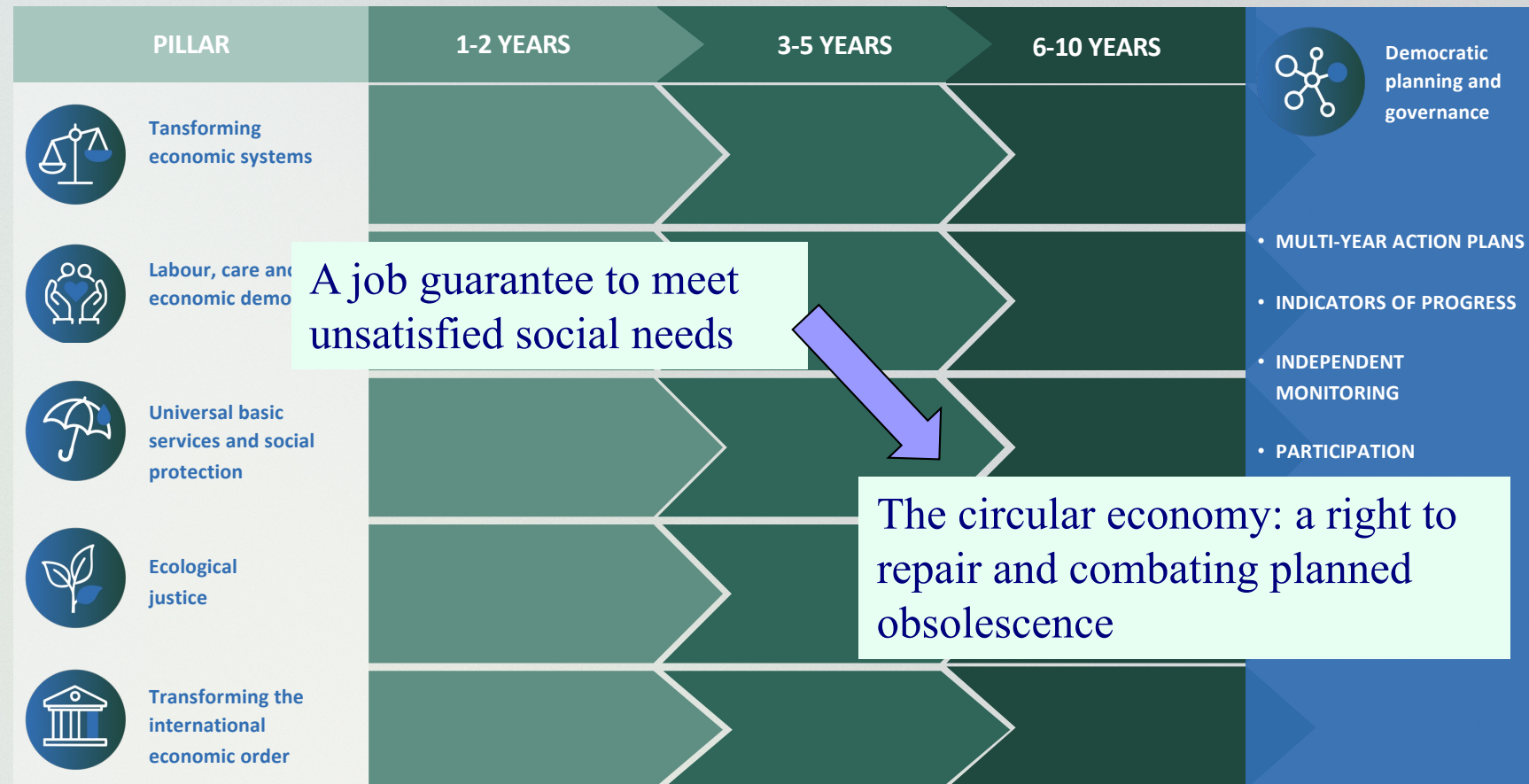


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Combating unequal exchange, debt justice, climate finance, tax cooperation, the GFSP



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THE GOVERNANCE PILLAR: DEMOCRATIC PLANNING AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

- Institute **democratic planning** that enable governments and communities to direct investment, production, and distribution toward eradicating poverty and meeting human needs beyond growth imperatives
- **Redefine measures of progress beyond GDP** by centering wellbeing, ecological sustainability, and redistribution as the core benchmarks of success
- Expand and deepen **participatory and deliberative democratic institutions** so that workers, communities, and marginalized groups can meaningfully shape decision-making at all levels
- Build durable **countervailing power** among working-class and poor communities to meaningfully contest entrenched social and economic power and give teeth to the democratic planning mechanisms outlined in the Roadmap.

The role of national anti-poverty strategies – multiyear planning to reduce growth dependencies

1. **Trans-sectorial coordination.** Ensuring that all (sectorial) policies contribute to eradicating poverty
2. **Participation.** Building on the knowledge and experience of people in poverty by ensuring participation (beyond mere consultation)
3. **Accountability.** Regular and independent monitoring of progress towards SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)
4. **Long-term planning.** Ringfencing resources to ensure the fight against poverty is sustainably financed and to gradually reduce the addiction to growth.



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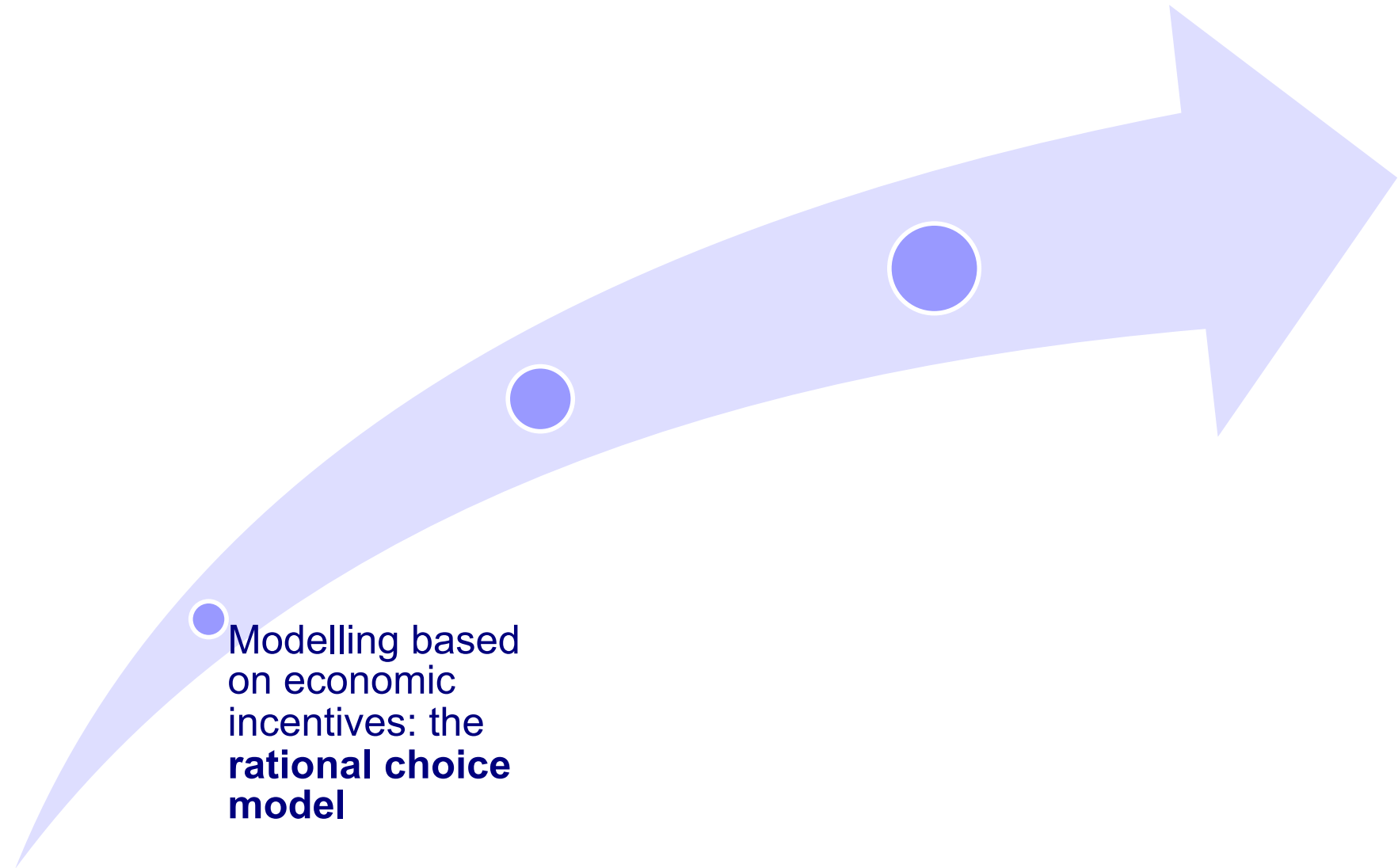
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Economics as a positive science: the nostalgia of social physics



Economics as a positive science: the nostalgia of social physics

Social transformation
through economic
incentives and
regulation: shaping
behaviour from the
outside

Modelling based
on economic
incentives: the
**rational choice
model**



The empirical turn in the study of human behaviour

Test what works through RCTs, and design the choice architecture to nudge behaviour

Accounting for biases and emotions:
bounded rationality

Modelling based on economic incentives: the
rational choice model



**Taking empowerment seriously:
from human behaviour to agency**

Work with people to co-construct solutions – not only for the community, but through the community

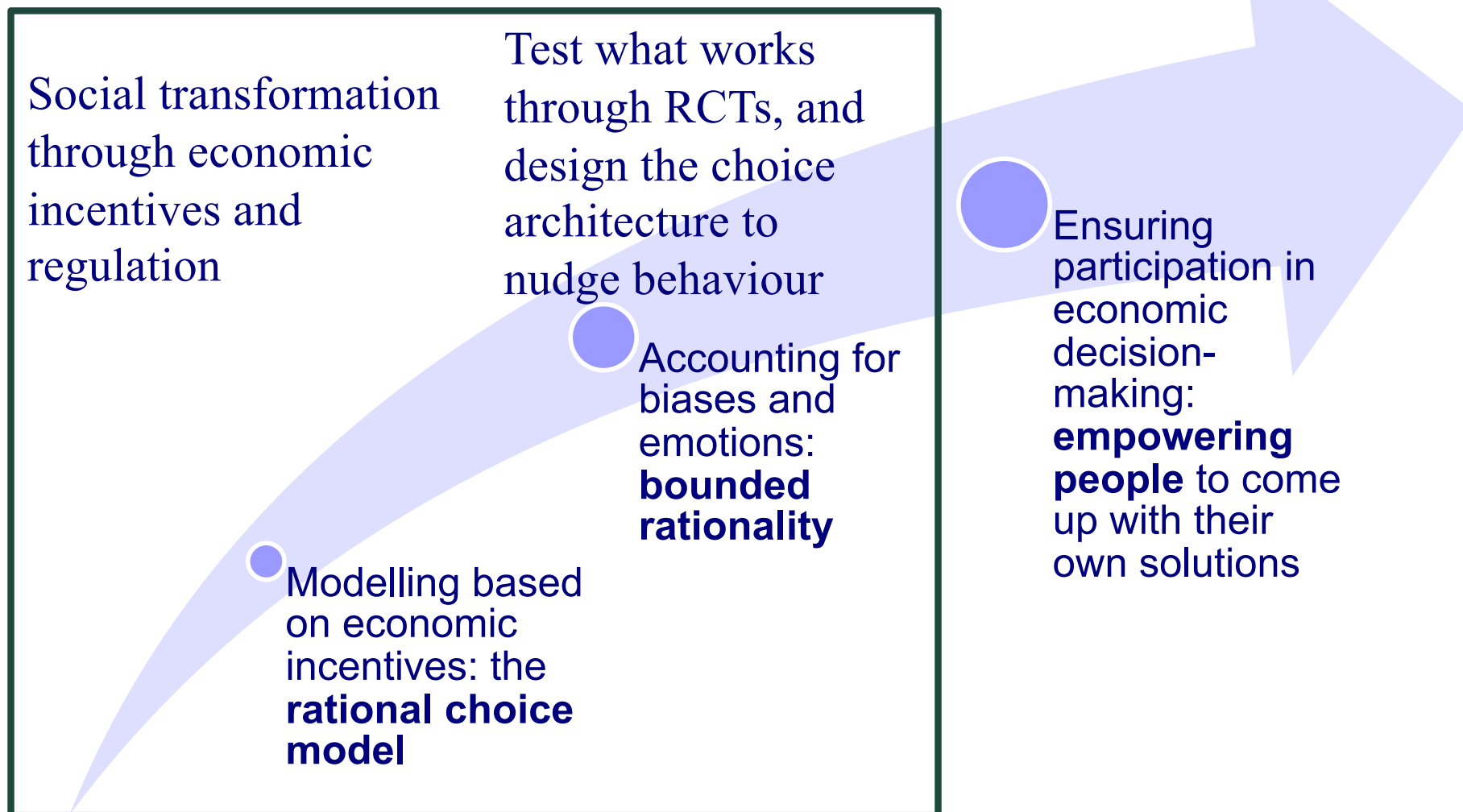
Modelling based on economic incentives: the **rational choice model**

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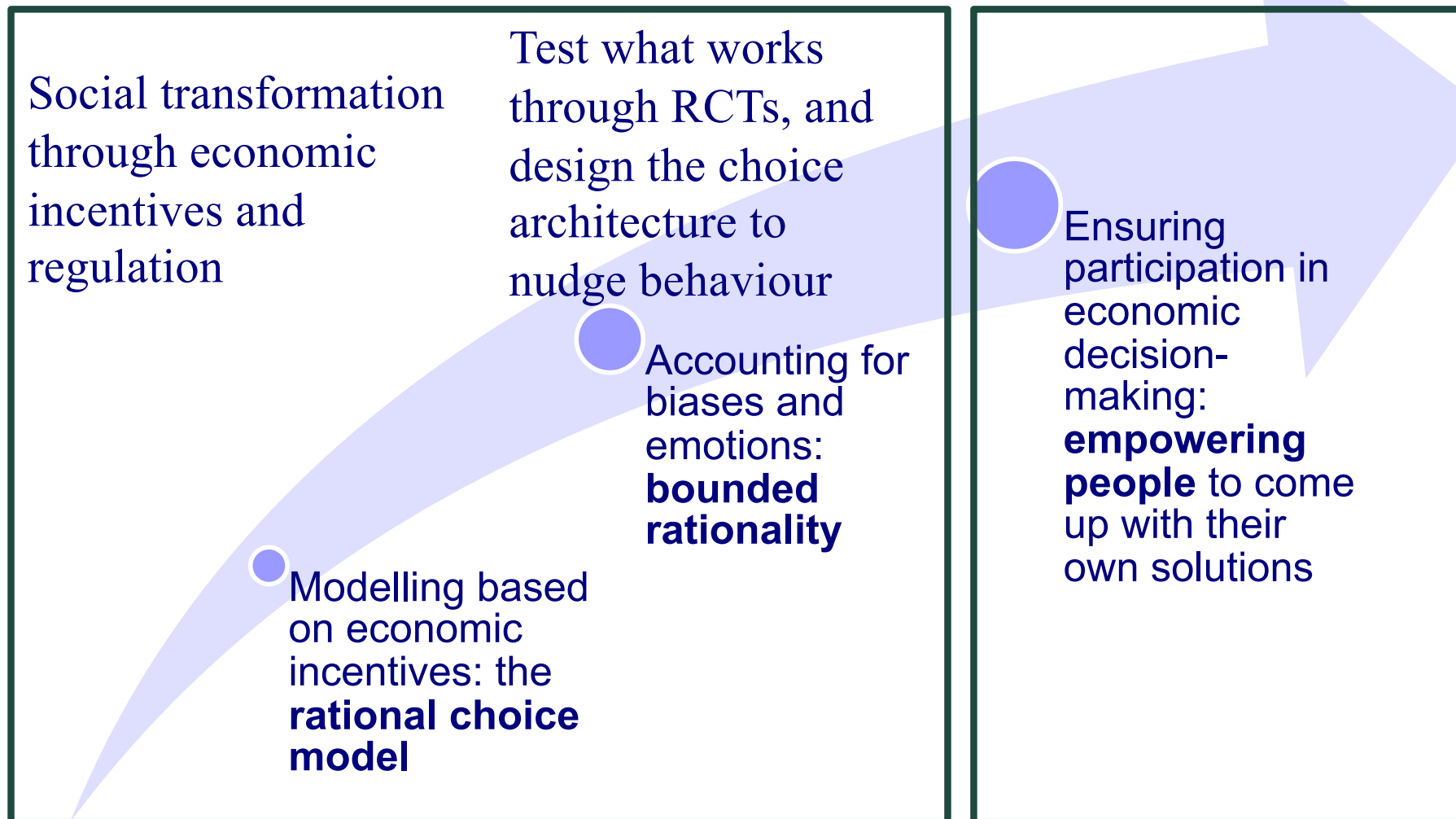
Ensuring participation in economic decision-making: **empowering people** to come up with their own solutions



Beneficiaries are passive: the question is how to influence them ‘from the outside’



Beneficiaries are active: the question is how to involve them to ensure that they are ‘intrinsically motivated’



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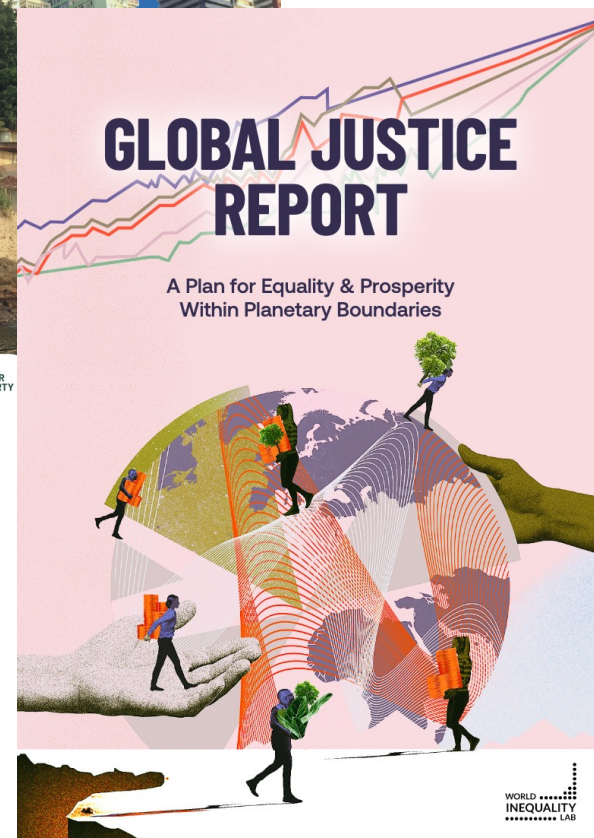
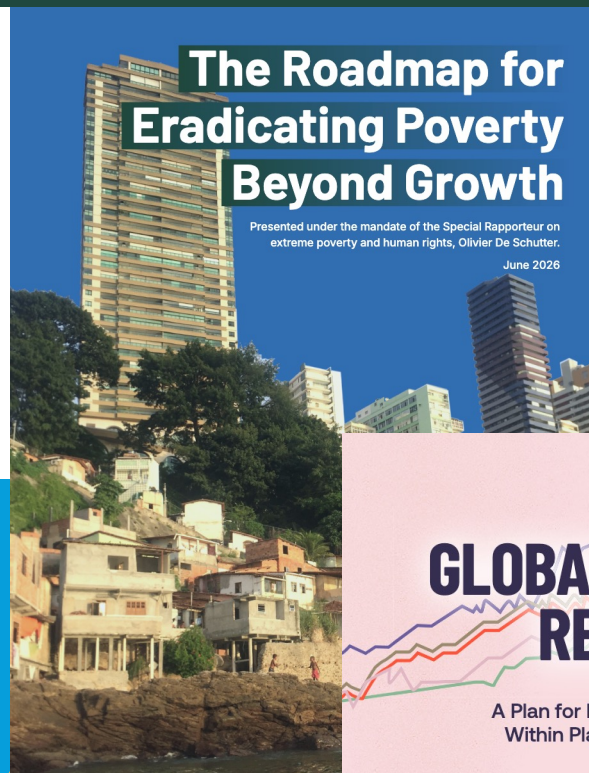
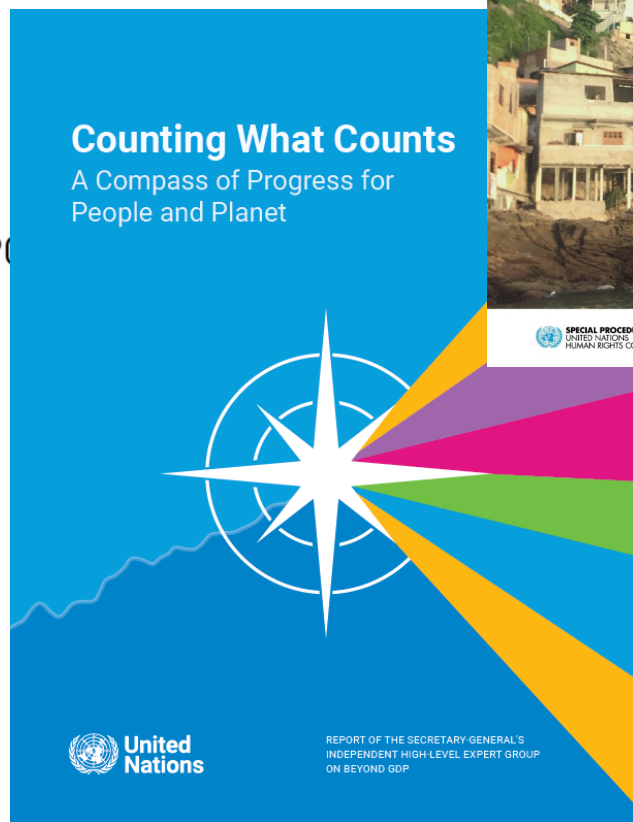
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G20 EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS ON GLOBAL INEQUALITY

SUMMARY AND FULL REPORT

Commissioned by the
G20 South Africa Presidency
November 2025



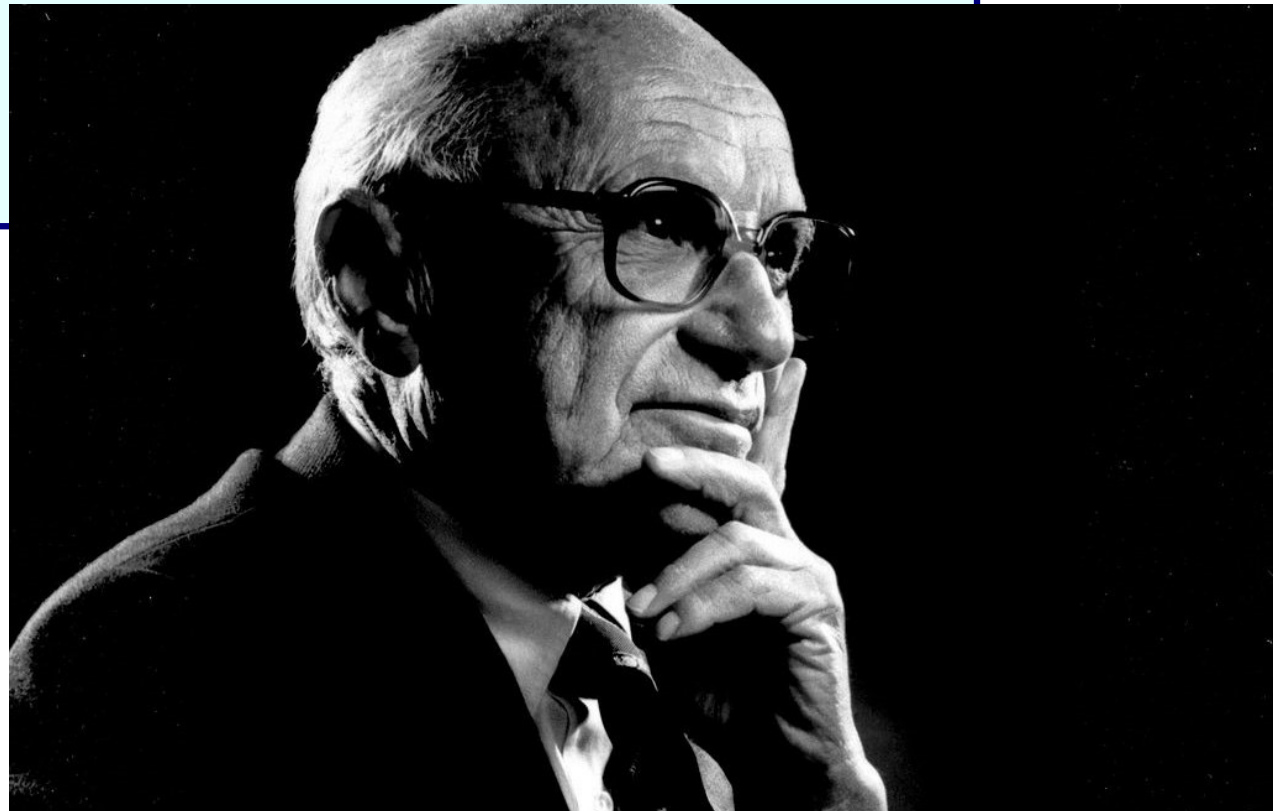
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“Only a crisis - actual or perceived - produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable.”

Milton Friedman



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