



B | Center for
**Sustainable
Development**
at BROOKINGS



CENTER FOR **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) generates cutting-edge research and empowers collaborative action to tackle the world's interwoven economic, social, and environmental challenges in all societies and at all scales.



WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

Pressing global issues like extreme poverty, inequality, and climate change require urgent and widespread action. But the problems are interconnected and rapidly evolving. Fast-shifting technology frontiers, fragile geopolitics, and frequently divergent interests between governments, business, and civil society only magnify the complexity. Progress hinges on both targeted insights and relentlessly collaborative approaches to surmount forces of inertia and political discord. To this end, CSD strives to promote public policies, institutional innovations, and multistakeholder enterprises that advance inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development for all people in all countries, with no one left behind.



WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE

Rooted in a focus on the needs of people being left behind, CSD harnesses a unique blend of outlooks to inform decisionmakers across international institutions, North American policy arenas, and platforms that connect perspectives across global geographies, sectors, and scales. We engage with leaders in venues ranging from the United Nations, World Bank, and G20, to national governments, mayoral offices, and local community organizations.

CSD scholars draw from experience in government, nonprofits, multilateral organizations, philanthropy, and academia to rally the attention of key actors toward issues and perspectives that too often remain overlooked in policy debates. By fostering insights and alliances across countries and constituencies, CSD amplifies its expertise on a range of critical issues. These include challenges like eradicating human deprivation, advancing gender equality, addressing climate change, mobilizing public finance, harnessing transformative technologies, fostering private sector alignment with sustainable development, and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.



OUR APPROACH

The heart of CSD's work is to inform public debates and engage with decisionmakers. Doing so hinges on a distinctive three-pronged approach to shaping debates, empowering stakeholders, and catalyzing long-term change.



Research leadership

We produce a blend of cutting-edge scholarly analysis, actionable insights, and pragmatic policy recommendations to inform decisionmaking and help stimulate systemic gains. This ranges from influential academic journal articles to highly practical policy briefs.

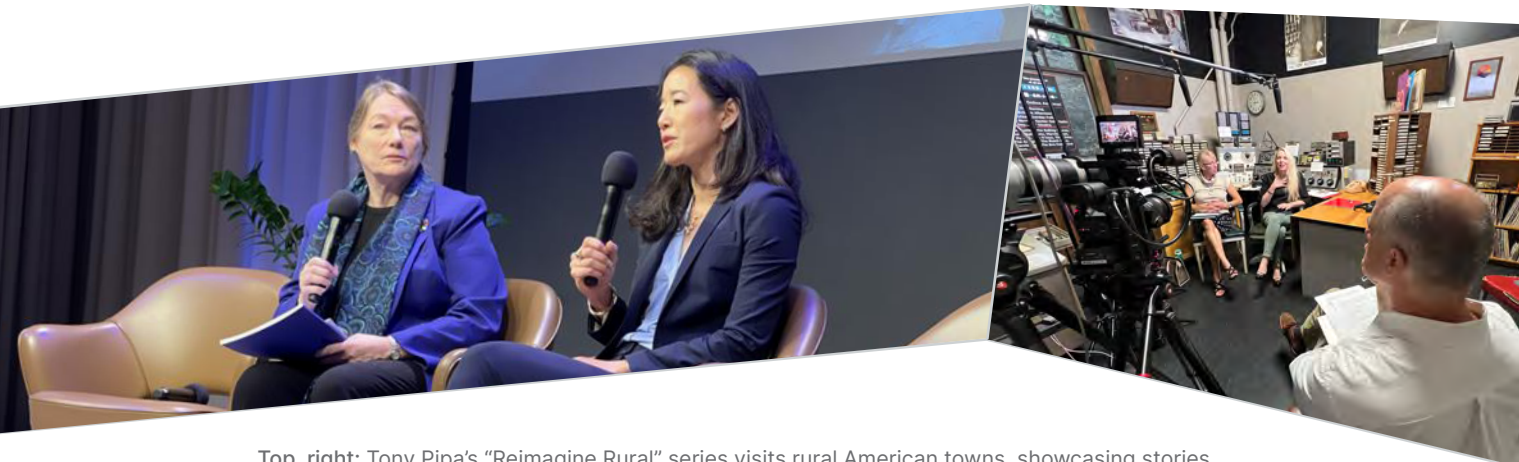


Knowledge hub

Embracing a collaborative ethos in knowledge creation, we harness, distill, and elevate insights from a broad constellation of academics, policymakers, and practitioners. This is done through an array of mediums, from edited book volumes tapping into leading experts around the world to podcasts introducing fresh voices into national policy debates.



Left: Amar Bhattacharya presented six main priorities for world leaders at the 2023 Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact. Right: Homi Kharas (second from left) authored two multilateral development bank reform reports, commissioned by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for the G20.



Top, right: Tony Pipa's "Reimagine Rural" series visits rural American towns, showcasing stories of progress and ingenuity, featuring local perspectives and national policy intersections. Left: CSD Nonresident Senior Fellow Jane Nelson and Microsoft's Chief Sustainability Officer Melanie Nakagawa discussing private sector sustainability roles. Right: Tony Pipa with Betsy Kramer and Kim Wheeler, revitalization coordinator and executive director of a local economic development organization (SEDA-COG), at an old radio station in Shamokin, Pennsylvania.





Network catalyst

Our teams actively convene and strive to empower diverse groups of leaders and innovators from around the world. We curate the exchange of viewpoints to bridge gaps and advance problem-solving at every level, ranging from local and national efforts to global-scale endeavors. The innovative 17 Rooms initiative, convened in partnership with The Rockefeller Foundation, is CSD's flagship platform supporting both international-scale and bottom-up actions to advance practical actions for sustainable development.



Left: Fairfax County Public Schools students (Virginia, U.S.) took part in a one-day 17 Rooms-X event in 2023, promoting local SDG actions. Right: At the U.N.'s SDG Pavilion, former 17 Rooms co-leads Cina Lawson (Togo's Minister of Digital Economy and Digital Transformation) and Kristen Leanderson Abrams (Senior Director of Combatting Human Trafficking at the McCain Institute) join CSD Director John McArthur in 2023 to discuss pioneering initiatives that grew out of 17 Rooms.

FOCUS AREAS

CSD's research pillars strategically reinforce each other to advance foundational progress toward inclusive, resilient, and sustainable prosperity for all. Our specialized focus areas include:

- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS AND EMPIRICS**
An array of analytical economics and quantitative studies help shape global debates on sustainable development paradigms, measurement methodologies, trend assessments, and frameworks for alignment across private and public sectors.
- GENDER EQUALITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
Our newest multi-dimensional workstream focuses on financing for gender equality and women's empowerment, updating global institutional architectures, and the evolving needs of the care economy amid challenges of climate change.
- NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
Leveraging place-based insights and data-driven peer learning networks, we create opportunities for national and subnational leaders around the world to augment their own cross-cutting economic, social, and environmental strategies.
- FINANCING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
Through applied research and direct engagement with policy leaders tackling the biggest challenges of climate and sustainable development, we tackle key issues of public finance, private finance, philanthropy, and resource effectiveness.
- TOOLS TO ADVANCE SDG IMPLEMENTATION**
We propose new instruments to unlock stubborn policy challenges, generate guidebooks to inform entrepreneurial decisionmakers, and build innovative problem-solving platforms such as the "17 Rooms" initiative to empower practical SDG actions across geographies and sectors.

CSD is also actively exploring the launch of a sixth research pillar on private sector alignment with global sustainable development. This will likely place special emphasis on frameworks to inform future global sustainable development objectives post-2030.

OUR IMPACT

CSD pushes beyond academic discourse to pursue ideas and collaborations for enduring change. We tap and grow frontier networks to chart future policy paths. We build platforms that empower others to craft new approaches driving their own sustainable development forward. Our foremost concern is to support sustainable development for all the world's people—including eight billion today and future generations to come.

2020

17 Rooms Flagship

The pioneering initiative convenes its first all-virtual flagship summit.



DEC 2021

Breakthrough

The Center's first edited volume curates diverse insights from 15 leading experts on the promise of frontier technologies for sustainable development.

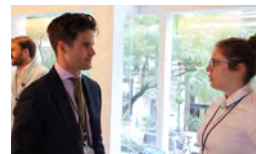


SEPT 2022

New workstream on gender and sustainable development

The workstream, led by Caren Grown, is centered on the economics of advancing gender equality at the core of sustainable and inclusive development.

The SDGs will need action, bonding, and ritual: Lessons from collective intelligence



In a popular commentary, CSD Fellow Jacob Taylor suggests a focus on collective intelligence may be the best hope for SDG success.

2020

Founding of the Center for Sustainable Development

The public launch event includes keynote from U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, alongside remarks and congratulations from many distinguished leaders around the world.

MAY 2022

Locally driven development

George Ingram publishes a major essay exploring how the United States can better support locally-led development globally. The publication is accompanied by 15 development experts' independent commentaries, adding a wide range of perspectives to the debates.



NOV 2022

Future Development commentary series

Officially hosted by CSD since November 2022, the prominent blog features a diverse selection of topics and guest authors, revolving around frontier international policy debates shaping sustainable development worldwide.

JAN 2023

Sub-national diplomacy

In partnership with Meridian International Center, Tony Pipa hosted an event to discuss the evolving role of cities and regions in global sustainable development, with remarks from the first U.S. special representative for subnational diplomacy, Amb. Nina Hachigian, along with Amb. Jorge Argüello of Argentina and Mayor Kate Gallego of Phoenix, Arizona.

APR 2023

The SDG Second Half: Ideas for doing things differently

Leading up to the midpoint of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) timeline, CSD released a compendium of a dozen short essays to spotlight innovative strategies and actions with the potential to elevate trajectories out to 2030.



Beyond gender mainstreaming: transforming humanitarian action, organizations and culture

In a pioneering study, Caren Grown and co-authors examine the effectiveness of the United Nations and major humanitarian organizations in promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls.

MAY 2023

USAID Policy Framework launch



CSD hosted a Brookings public event with high-level representatives from USAID and civil society to drill down into elements of the newly released USAID Policy Framework.

OCT 2023

The SDG second half: launch event in Canada

CSD partnered with Aga Khan Foundation Canada to co-host events in Ottawa exploring global and Canadian perspectives on how to do things differently toward sustainable development.

FEB 2023

Keys to climate action digital release



To elevate attention to the needs of emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs), holding aside the special case of China, this edited volume brought twenty-five authors together to describe new economic narratives and global actions that can help catalyze EMDE progress toward inclusive, sustainable, and resilient growth.

JULY 2023

Strengthening multilateral development banks: The triple agenda

An independent report prepared for the Indian presidency of the G-20 lays out a three-pronged agenda to strengthen multilateral development banks. Homi Kharas and Amar Bhattacharya served as lead author and key advisor, respectively.

NOV 2023

The Rise of the Global Middle Class: How the Search for the Good Life Can Change the World



In his popular new book, Homi Kharas traces the history of the middle class and highlights its pivotal role in steering our planet toward a sustainable and prosperous future.

CSD Scholars and Staff

RESIDENT SCHOLARS

AND FOCUS AREAS

AMAR BHATTACHARYA

Senior Fellow. Climate and sustainable development; development and climate finance; sustainable infrastructure; international financial architecture reform.

CAREN GROWN

Senior Fellow. Advancing gender equality; innovative paradigms for care and climate change; financing and fit-for-purpose approaches to gender work among international donors.

GEORGE INGRAM

Senior Fellow. Development effectiveness (local ownership, accountability, transparency); development finance; digital development.

HOMI KHARAS

Senior Fellow. Global middle class; debt sustainability; development finance; multilateral development system reform; poverty reduction; the SDGs.

JOHN W. MCARTHUR Director and Senior Fellow.

Sustainable development economics; ending extreme poverty; multilateral renewal; private sector alignment; innovations in SDG implementation.

ALLISON MINOR

Visiting Fellow. Strengthening U.S. tools to prevent violent conflict, including improving alignment of diplomatic and development assistance tools, with a focus on the Middle East.

ANTHONY F. PIPA

Senior Fellow. Reimagine Rural Policy initiative; strengthening U.S. leadership on the SDGs; sub-national diplomacy.

JACOB TAYLOR

Fellow. Advancing mechanisms of collective intelligence for sustainable development; the role of AI systems in supporting or inhibiting SDG outcomes.

REBECCA WINTHROP Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Universal Education.

Global education, with special attention to the skills young people need to thrive in work, life, and as constructive citizens.

NONRESIDENT SCHOLARS

MARGARET BIGGS

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Former President, Canadian International Development Agency; Former Chairperson, International Development Research Centre.

MATTHEW BISHOP

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Former Business Editor and New York Bureau Chief, The Economist; Co-founder and Board Member, Social Progress Imperative.

RAJ M. DESAI

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Professor of International Development and Government, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.

PATRICK FINE

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Former CEO, FHI 360; Former VP, Millennium Challenge Corporation.

MARIA FLORO

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Emeritus Professor of Economics at American University.

TAREK GHANI

Nonresident Fellow. Assistant Professor, Olin Business School, Washington University in St. Louis.

JOHANNES F. LINN

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Co-Chair, Scaling Community of Practice; former World Bank Vice President.

JULIE MCCARTHY

Nonresident Fellow. Co-CEO, Nature Finance.

SARAH E. MENDELSON

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Distinguished Service Professor of Public Policy and Head of Heinz College in Washington, D.C., Carnegie Mellon University.

JANE NELSON

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Founding Director, Corporate Responsibility Initiative, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

MARI PANGESTU

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Former World Bank Managing Director; Former Minister of Trade and Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy for Indonesia.

NAHEED SARABI

Nonresident Senior Fellow. Co-founder, Institute for Development and Economic Affairs (IDEA).

ADAM TRIGGS

Nonresident Fellow. Partner and Co-founder, Mandala; Research Fellow, Crawford School, Australian National University; Researcher, e61 Institute.

PRIYA VORA

Nonresident Fellow. CEO, Digital Impact Alliance.

STAFF

DANIEL BICKNELL

Senior Project Manager

ALEXANDRA BRACKEN

Assistant Director, CSD

LAURA MARTINEZ

Senior Project Manager

CLEA MCELWAIN

Project Coordinator

ODERA ONYECHI

Research Analyst

CHARLOTTE RIVARD

Research Analyst

ZOE SWARZENSKI

Project Manager



| Learn more

To learn more about our work, please visit
<https://www.brookings.edu/sustainabledevelopment>

Questions or inquiries, please contact Alexandra Bracken at ABracken@brookings.edu

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover: The Brookings Center for Sustainable Development supports the Sustainable Development Goals.
"Why our work matters" and "our work": Junjie Ren, on behalf of the Brookings Institution. "Our Approach"
left to right: Screenshot from 'LIVE: Summit for a New Global Financing Pact,' Paris, YouTube livestream by Reuters; Homi Kharas, Junjie Ren, Tony Pipa, Ryan McElveen, and the 17 Rooms Secretariat. USAID Policy Launch image and "CSD scholars and staff" by Junjie Ren. Inside covers stock images: Shutterstock.



BROOKINGS

1775 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 797-6000
www.brookings.edu