

U.N. Goals for Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.



Progress on one of the “Five P’s” must balance and support progress on another. In order to leave no one behind, the United Nations has set a target to achieve each Goal by 2030.

Read each Goal below to learn more about each issue and determine which category to place it in.



More than 700 million people, or 10% of the world population, still live in extreme poverty and is struggling to fulfil the most basic needs like health, education, and access to water and sanitation, to name a few. Having a job does not guarantee a decent living. In fact, 8% of employed workers and their families worldwide lived in extreme poverty in 2018. Poverty has many dimensions, but its causes include unemployment, social exclusion, and high vulnerability of certain populations to disasters, diseases and other phenomena which prevent them from being productive. Growing inequality is detrimental to economic growth and undermines social cohesion, increasing political and social tensions and, in some circumstances, driving instability and conflicts.



If done right, agriculture, forestry and fisheries can provide nutritious food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting rural development and protecting the environment. Right now, our soils, freshwater, oceans, forests and biodiversity are being rapidly degraded. Many rural families can no longer make ends meet on their land, forcing them to migrate to cities in search of opportunities. Poor food security also causes millions of children to be severely malnourished. If we are to nourish the 815 million people who are hungry today, and the additional 2 billion people expected by 2050, investments in agriculture are crucial to increasing the capacity for productivity and sustainability are necessary to help alleviate the perils of hunger.



Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being at all ages is essential to sustainable development. Significant strides have been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing child and maternal mortality, but achieving the target of reducing premature deaths due to incommunicable diseases by the year 2030 will require more efficient technologies and education. Many more efforts are needed to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues. By focusing on providing funding for health systems, improved sanitation and hygiene, increased access to physicians and more tips to reduce ambient pollution, significant progress can be made in helping to save the lives of millions.



Over 265 million children are currently out of school; additionally, even children who are attending school lack basic skills in reading and math. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels, particularly for women and girls. Basic literacy skills have improved tremendously, yet bolder efforts are needed to achieve universal education goals. For example, the world has achieved equality access in primary (elementary) education, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education. For quality education to be provided to the children of impoverished families, investment is needed in educational scholarships, teacher training workshops, school building and improvement of water and electricity access to schools.



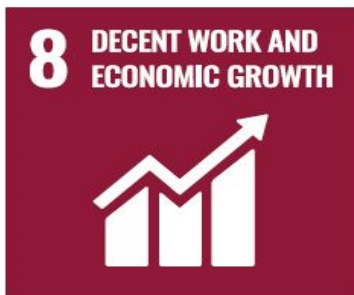
Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Unfortunately, while the world has achieved progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. Implementing new legal frameworks regarding female equality in the workplace and the eradication of harmful practices targeted at women is crucial to ending the gender-based discrimination prevalent in many countries around the world.



Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for poor families across the world. Due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, millions of people die every year from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene. More than 2 billion people are living with the risk of reduced access to freshwater resources. Drought particularly afflicts some of the world's poorest countries, worsening hunger and malnutrition. To improve sanitation and access to drinking water, there needs to be increased investment in management of freshwater ecosystems and sanitation facilities in several developing countries within Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, Southern Asia, Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia.



Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Focusing on universal access to energy, increased energy efficiency and the increased use of renewable energy through new economic and job opportunities is crucial to creating more sustainable and inclusive communities and resilience to environmental issues like climate change. Slightly less than 1 billion people are functioning without electricity (50% of them are found in Sub-Saharan Africa alone). Access to clean fuel, technology, and integrating renewable energy into buildings, transport and industry needs to be expanded. Public and private investments in energy also need to be increased with more focus on regulatory frameworks and innovative business models to transform the world's energy systems.



Even though the average annual growth rate of GDP per capita worldwide is increasing year to year, there are still many countries that are decelerating in their growth rates. As labor productivity decreases and unemployment rates rise, standards of living begin to decline due to lower wages. Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions to create job opportunities that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. Increased commitments to trade, banking and infrastructure will also help increase productivity and reduce unemployment levels in the world's most impoverished regions.



Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. Technological progress is the foundation of efforts to achieve environmental objectives, such as increased resource and energy-efficiency. Without technology and innovation, industrialization will not happen, and without industrialization, development will not happen. There needs to be more investments in high-tech products that dominate the manufacturing productions to increase efficiency and a focus on mobile cellular services that increase connections between people.



Despite significant strides towards lifting people out of poverty, inequality persists and large disparities remain regarding access to health and education services in the most vulnerable nations – the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing states. To reduce inequality, policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations. There needs to be an increase in duty-free treatment and continuation of favoring exports from developing countries, in addition to increasing the share of developing countries' vote within the IMF. Finally, innovations in technology can help reduce the cost of transferring money for migrant workers.



With the number of people living within cities projected to rise to 5 billion people by 2030, it's important that efficient urban planning and management practices are in place to deal with the challenges brought by urbanization. Common urban challenges include congestion (traffic), a shortage of adequate housing, declining infrastructure and rising air pollution within cities. Rapid urbanization challenges, such as the safe removal and management of solid waste within cities, can be overcome while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty. There needs to be a future in which cities provide opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more.



Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty. Sustainable consumption and production aims to reduce resource use, degradation and pollution while increasing quality of life. This includes educating consumers on sustainable consumption and lifestyles, providing them with adequate information and engaging in sustainable public procurement.



Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, weather events are becoming more extreme and greenhouse gas emissions are now at their highest levels in history. Climate change, however, is a global challenge that requires solutions that need to be coordinated at the international level. To strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, countries adopted the Paris Agreement, in which all countries agreed to work to limit global temperature rise beginning in November of 2016. As of April 2018, 175 parties (not including the United States) had ratified the Paris Agreement and 10 developing countries had submitted their first iteration of their national adaptation plans for responding to climate change.



Throughout history, oceans and seas have been vital conduits for trade and transportation while making Earth habitable for humankind. Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future. However, a continuous deterioration of coastal waters owing to pollution and ocean acidification is having an adversarial effect on the functioning of ecosystems and biodiversity. This is also negatively impacting small scale fisheries. Marine protected areas need to be effectively managed and well-resourced and regulations need to be put in place to reduce overfishing, marine pollution and ocean acidification.



Forests cover 30.7% of the Earth's surface and, in addition to providing food security and shelter, they are key to combating climate change, protecting biodiversity and the homes of the indigenous population. By protecting forests, we will also be able to strengthen natural resource management and increase land productivity. Even though up to 15% of land is currently under protection, biodiversity is still at risk. Land degradation, deforestation, and desertification – caused by human activities and climate change – pose major challenges to sustainable development. Efforts are being made to manage forests, combat desertification, and promote the use of resources in an equitable way.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



The threats of international homicide, violence against children, human trafficking and sexual violence are important to address to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. They pave the way for the provision of access to justice for all and for building effective, accountable institutions at all levels. There are still thousands of people at greater risk of intentional murder within Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and around Asia. Children's rights violations through aggression and sexual violence continue to plague many countries around the world, especially as under-reporting and lack of data aggravate the problem. To tackle these challenges, efficient and transparent regulations and comprehensive, realistic government budgets need to be put in place. One step towards protecting individual rights is the implementation of worldwide birth registration and the creation of more independent national human rights institutions around the world.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. Urgent action is needed to mobilize, redirect and unlock the transformative power of trillions of dollars of private resources to deliver on sustainable development objectives. Long-term investments, including foreign direct investment, are needed in critical sectors, especially in developing countries. These include sustainable energy, infrastructure and transport, as well as information and communications technologies. Review and monitoring frameworks, regulations and incentive structures that enable such investments must be retooled to attract investments and reinforce sustainable development. National oversight mechanisms such as supreme audit institutions and oversight functions by legislatures should be strengthened.