

DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)/2030 Agenda:

Forming the core of the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs are 17 goals agreed upon by all UN Member States relating to environmental issues, the economy, development, good governance and peace. Responsibility for implementing these goals primarily sits with individual governments, however, the need for partnerships has also been recognised. With 2030 soon approaching, experts report that many goals may not be reached. To support their implementation, some are pushing for stronger financial commitments - the Bridgetown Initiative recently garnered significant support at COP.



2030 Agenda Principles:

- Universality - they are applicable to all countries, of all income levels, to strive to achieve sustainable development.
- Leaving no one behind - a concerted and proactive effort to help all in need.
- Interconnectedness and indivisibility - understanding that the 17 SDGs are not individual siloed items to tick off, but rather should be considered and approached in their entirety in order to achieve them.
- Inclusivity - the need for participation from all members of society, irrespective of race, gender, identity, etc
- Multi-stakeholder participation - establishing partnerships with a range of stakeholders to support delivery of SDGs.

Key Terms:

GDP - A measure of the total value of all products and services produced in a country during a set period.

UN2.0 - Refers to plans to update the UN to better tackle 21st century global challenges. The quintet of change refers to five concentrations to transform the UN. These include: 1) data, analysis and communications, 2) innovation and digital transformation, 3) strategic foresight, 4) performance and results orientation, 5) behavioural science.

Build Back Better - Expression coined by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to refer to the need to link Covid-19 recovery efforts with actions aimed at achieving the SDGs.

Debt-for-climate/nature swaps - "Debt-for-climate swaps and debt-for-nature swaps seek to free up fiscal resources so that governments can improve resilience without triggering a fiscal crisis or sacrificing spending on other development priorities. Creditors provide debt relief in return for a government commitment to, say, decarbonize the economy, invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, or protect biodiverse forests or reefs."

High-Level Political Forum - Annual meeting of Heads of State/Ministers of Member States who gather at the UN headquarters to review SDG implementation (through Voluntary National Reviews - VNRs).

Regional Sustainable Development Forums - Regional forums take place annually in each of the five UN regions to promote regional dialogue, support countries' efforts to implement the SDGs and conduct VNRs.



¹Lieberman Amy: "SDGs show slow progress: not on track to reach 2030 targets: UN reports". June 22, 2018, Accessed March 9, 2023. URL - <https://www.devex.com/news/sdgs-show-slow-progress-not-on-track-to-reach-2030-targets-un-reports> 9297

²UN Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development: "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", 2017. Accessed March 9, 2023. URL - <https://www.un.org/development/desa/ipo/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2017/02/2030-Agenda-for-Sustainable-Development-KCSD-Primer-new.pdf>

³IMF: "Swapping Debt for Climate or Nature Pledges Can Help Fund Resilience", December 14, 2022, Accessed March 9, 2023. URL - <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2022/12/14/swapping-debt-for-climate-or-nature-pledges-can-help-fund-resilience#:~:text=Debt%2Dfor%2DClimate%20swaps%20and%20spending%20on%20other%20development%20priorities>

DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES: WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

Key Proposals

- **Updating the SDGs:** Whilst ensuring the integrity of the SDGs is preserved, updates could be made to reinforce links between the goals, include the management of global commons like cyberspace and outer space, and strengthen the connections to human rights, peace and security. Providing additional detail with focused targets/indicators and governance arrangements would support effective understanding and action.
- **Clarifying implementation responsibilities:** Assigning clear responsibility for SDG implementation among existing institutions and promoting more integrated work among national, regional and local levels are needed to deliver on many SDGs.
- **Global Resilience Council:** There is a clear need for cooperation between the fragmented global governance architecture to address multi-dimensional global challenges like climate change and pandemics. A Global Resilience Council could ensure a more coherent and inclusive decision-making process, and better coordination between inter-governmental bodies, state and non-state actors in effectively addressing these challenges to human security.
- **An alternative to GDP:** There is an urgent need to find a different measure of development as GDP fails to illustrate progress on inequality, creation/destruction of assets, climate change, etc. and therefore provides a distorted picture and the wrong incentives. The Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress from 2009 recommends using a dashboard of indicators to avoid oversimplification. However, it is worth considering whether there should be one key indicator. There are some candidates already, like the UN's Human Development Index and the OECD's the Better Life Index.

Other Considerations from the E-consultation:

As part of UN 2.0, the UN's capacity to provide support to regional and national efforts on the SDGs should be strengthened with accountable, trackable, and feasible annual work programmes. A UN 2.0 could also include new approaches to consensus building on global plans and policies and should include a broader range of stakeholder networks.

There is a need to build the capacity of countries to deliver on the SDGs, through funding, technology and data analysis.

Every policy aimed to implement the SDGs, at every level, should adopt an action-oriented approach. After many years of discussion about problems and obstacles to Sustainable Development, now is the time to focus on action.

The 2030 Agenda and the implementation of SDGs should apply lessons learned from other binding international agreements and bolster monitoring, reporting and follow-up processes

Institutions dealing with UN reform, international finance, and the measurement of Sustainable Development should be more open and accountable, and ensure a meaningful civil society participation in their debates and decision-making.