

## Sustainable Development

- Sustainable development is a central concept for our age. It is both a way of understanding the world and a method for solving global problems.
- Ours is a world of fabulous wealth and extreme poverty: billions of people enjoy longevity and good health unimaginable in previous generations, yet at least 1 billion people live in such horrible poverty that they struggle for mere survival every day. The poorest of the poor face the daily life and-death challenges of insufficient nutrition, lack of health care, unsafe shelter, and the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation.

- The world economy is not only remarkably unequal but also remarkably threatening to Earth itself. Like all living species, humanity depends on nature for food and water, materials for survival, and safety from dire environmental threats, such as epidemics and natural catastrophes. Yet for a species that depends on the beneficence of nature, or on what the scientists call “environmental services,” we are doing a poor job of protecting the physical basis of our very survival! The gigantic world economy is creating a gigantic environmental crisis, threatens the lives and wellbeing of billions of people and the survival of millions of other species on the planet.

- Notice that sustainable development recommends a holistic framework, in which society aims for **economic, social, and environmental goals**. Sometimes the following shorthand is used: **SDGs** call for socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth. To achieve the economic, social, and environmental objectives of the SDGs, a fourth objective must also be achieved: **good governance**. Governments must carry out many core functions to enable societies to prosper. Among these core functions of government are the provision of social services such as health care and education; the provision of infrastructure such as roads, ports, and power; the protection of individuals from crime and violence; the promotion of basic science and new technologies; and the implementation of regulations to protect the environment. Of course, this list is just a brief subset of what people around the world hope for from their governments. In fact, all too often they get the reverse: corruption, war, and an absence of public services.


## Definition:

- The Brundtland Commission gave a classic definition of the concept of sustainable development, one that was used for the next twenty-five years: “Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland 1987, 41).”
- This “intergenerational” concept of sustainable development was widely adopted, including at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. One of the key principles of the Rio Declaration was that “development today must not threaten the needs of present and future generations.” Over time, however, the definition of sustainable development evolved into a more practical approach, focusing less on intergenerational needs and more on the holistic approach linking economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

- In 2002, at the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, the WSSD Plan of Implementation spoke of “the integration of the three components of sustainable development—economic development, social development and environmental protection—as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars” (World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, 2).

## 17 ta Goals :

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- The Goals of Sustainable Development

A photograph of two young children, likely of African descent, smiling and embracing each other outdoors. The child on the left is wearing a beaded necklace. The background is a blurred natural setting with trees and foliage. The text "#1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**#1: End  
poverty in all  
its forms  
everywhere**





**#2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**



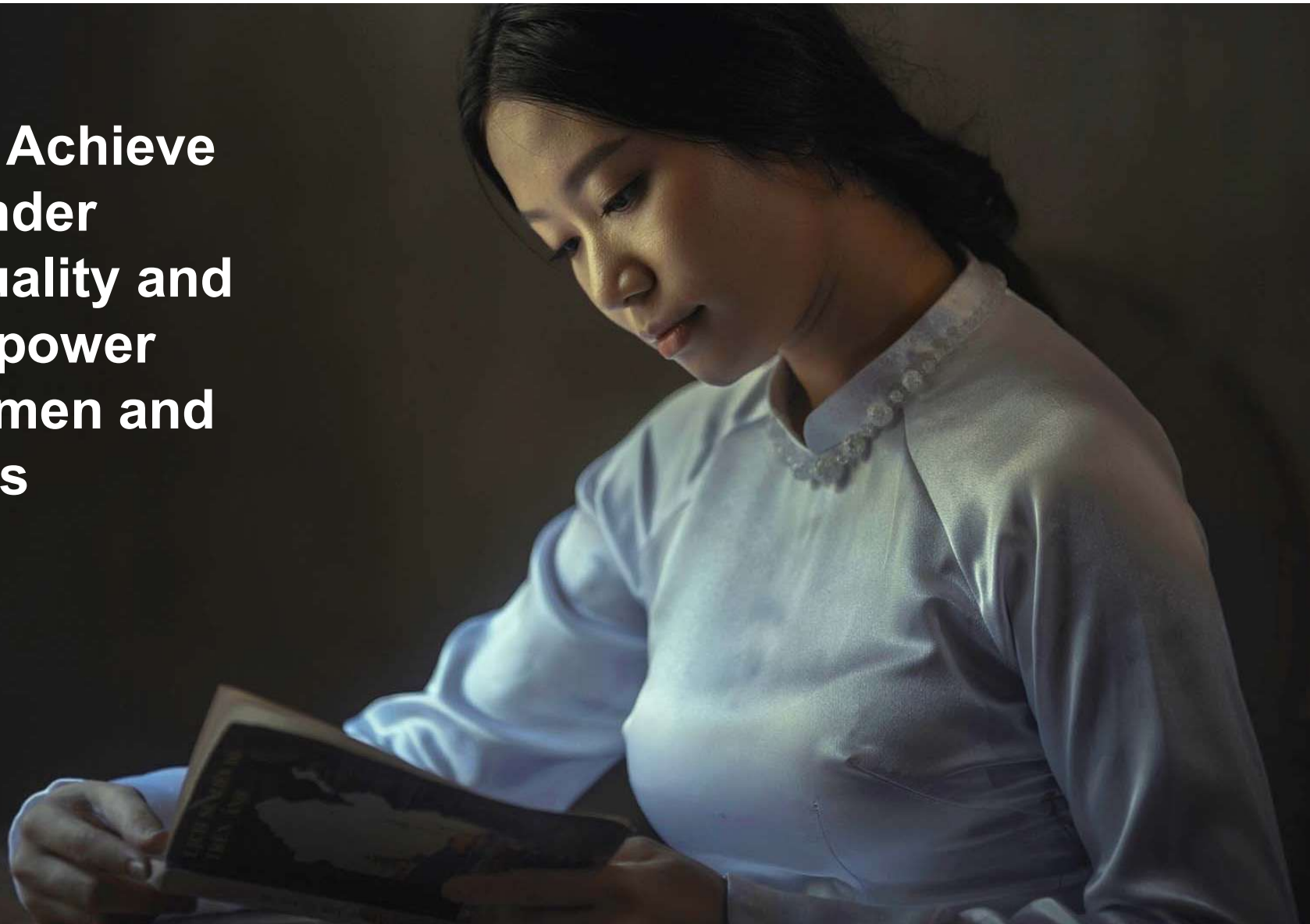


**#3: Ensure  
healthy lives  
and promote  
well-being for  
all at all ages**



**#4: Ensure inclusive  
and quality education  
for all and promote  
lifelong learning**


**#5: Achieve  
gender  
equality and  
empower  
women and  
girls**





**#6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all**



A person wearing a white lab coat and white gloves is shown from the waist down, leaning over a grid of solar panels. The solar panels are illuminated with a bright yellow light, creating a glowing effect. The person's hands are resting on the grid. A dark watch is visible on the person's left wrist. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**#7: Ensure access to  
affordable, reliable,  
sustainable and modern  
energy for all**



A high-angle photograph of a floating market scene. In the center, a woman in a blue shirt is cooking in a large pot on a gas stove inside a wooden boat. The boat is filled with various food items, including bowls of prepared dishes, baskets of noodles, and fresh produce like bananas. To the left, another boat carries several large potted plants. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders are visible as they look towards the food vendor. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding boats and structures.

**#8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all**



A person stands in the center of a large, dark, circular tunnel. The tunnel's interior is lined with several tall, vertical concrete pillars that create a series of bright, rectangular light paths leading towards the far end of the tunnel. The person, seen from behind, is holding a laptop and looking towards the light. The overall atmosphere is one of depth and modern infrastructure.

**#9: Build resilient  
infrastructure, promote  
sustainable  
industrialization and  
foster innovation**

**#10: Reduce  
inequality within  
and among  
countries**





**#11: Make cities  
inclusive, safe,  
resilient and  
sustainable**







**#12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**



**#13: Take urgent  
action to combat  
climate change and  
its impacts\***





A vibrant underwater scene featuring a massive school of small, silvery fish swimming in a synchronized pattern across the upper two-thirds of the frame. Below them, a diverse coral reef is visible, with various types of coral in shades of brown, orange, and green. Small, colorful fish, including some with bright red stripes, are seen swimming near the coral. Sunlight filters down from the surface, creating a bright, shimmering effect in the center of the image.

**#14: Conserve and  
sustainably use the  
oceans, seas and marine  
resources**



**#15: Sustainably manage  
forests, combat desertification,  
halt and reverse land  
degradation,  
halt biodiversity loss**





A large crowd of people, mostly seen from behind, looking towards a bright horizon. The image is heavily blue-toned and has a soft, ethereal quality. The text is overlaid in the lower center.

**#16: Promote just, peaceful  
and inclusive  
societies**



**#17: Revitalize the  
global partnership for  
sustainable  
development**