

The Sustainable Development Goals Report

2024



United
Nations



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The Sustainable Development Goals Report **2024**

Foreword

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024 makes for sobering reading.

It finds that only 17 per cent of the SDG targets are on track, nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress, and progress on over one third has stalled or even regressed.

The scarring effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating conflicts, geopolitical tensions, and growing climate chaos are hitting SDG progress hard.

Furthermore, systemic deficiencies and inequities in the global economic and financial system leave developing countries to tackle enormous and growing challenges with only a fraction of the international support they need and deserve.

Inequalities keep growing. The climate crisis continues to escalate.

Biodiversity loss is accelerating. Progress towards gender equality remains disappointing. And conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and beyond have left an unprecedented 120 million forcibly displaced people worldwide.

This situation is not going to improve on its own: developing countries, as a whole, face the worst medium-term economic outlook in a generation.

Against this backdrop, the steadfast unity of governments behind the 2030 Agenda, as demonstrated at the SDG Summit in September 2023, offers a glimmer of hope.

Their commitment to rescue the SDGs and to deliver an SDG Stimulus has generated fresh impetus behind the Goals.

This report also highlights that despite deeply worrying trends, progress is being made – with reductions in child mortality, HIV infections, and the cost of remittances and improvements in access to water, sanitation, energy, and mobile broadband.

To turn these green shoots into accelerated and transformative progress, bolder actions are required:

First, we need peace.

We must resolve ongoing armed conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy, and prevent future conflicts by upholding the principles and values of the Charter of the United Nations.

Second, we need solidarity.

Developing countries urgently require more financial resources and fiscal space. We must reform the outdated, dysfunctional and unfair international financial architecture to facilitate far greater investment in the SDGs.

Third, we need a surge in implementation.

Massive investment and more effective partnerships are needed to drive critical transitions across food, energy, digital connectivity and more, unlocking progress right across the Goals.

And underpinning all our efforts must be a more concerted effort to dismantle gender barriers and empower all women and girls – because we cannot expect to achieve the Goals without gender equality.

This report highlights the urgent need for stronger and more effective international cooperation to maximize progress starting now.

This year's Summit of the Future provides a vital opportunity, paving the way for further breakthroughs at the Financing for Development conference and World Social Summit in 2025.

With more than six years left, we must not let up on our 2030 promise to end poverty, protect the planet and leave no one behind.



Introduction

A promise in peril

Last September, Heads of State and Government gathered in New York for the SDG Summit to review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and deliberate on areas requiring acceleration. Crucially, they reaffirmed their commitment to the SDGs, agreeing on the need for urgent, ambitious and transformative efforts to achieve the Goals in full by 2030. In the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly, Member States recognized that “the achievement of the SDGs is in peril” and stated their determination “to make all efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the target year of 2030”.

Nearly a year later, intensifying, interconnected challenges continue to endanger the realization of the SDGs by the 2030 deadline. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024* reveals that progress has ground to a halt or been reversed across multiple fronts, despite reaffirmed pledges. The lingering impacts of COVID-19, compounded by conflicts, climate shocks and economic turmoil, have aggravated existing inequalities. An additional 23 million people were pushed into extreme poverty and over 100 million more suffered from hunger in 2022 compared to 2019. While some health targets improved, overall global health progress has decelerated alarmingly since 2015. The COVID-19 pandemic has undone nearly 10 years of progress on life expectancy. Education, the bedrock of sustainable development, remains gravely threatened as many countries see declines in student math and reading skills, jeopardizing core competencies that will determine future prosperity.

A world in great upheaval

Around the world, wars are upending millions of lives, driving the highest number of refugees (37.4 million) and forcibly displaced people (nearly 120 million) ever recorded. Civilian casualties in armed conflicts rose by 72 per cent between 2022 and 2023, the highest spike since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. In 2023, 4 in 10 civilians killed in conflicts were women and 3 in 10 were children.

The cumulative impact of multiple environmental crises is threatening the foundations of planetary ecosystems. In 2023, the world experienced the warmest year on record. For the first time, global temperatures were dangerously close to the 1.5°C lower limit of the Paris Agreement. Global greenhouse gas emissions and atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide reached new records yet again in 2022, with no signs of slowing in 2023.

Developing and vulnerable countries face vast development challenges. Per capita growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in half the world’s most vulnerable countries is now slower than in advanced economies for the first time this century. This trajectory threatens to reverse a long-term trend towards more income equality among countries. Furthermore, after a decade of rapid debt accumulation, the external debt stock in low- and middle-income countries remains at unprecedently high levels. The SDG investment gap in developing countries now stands at \$4 trillion per year. These problems are exacerbated by the fact that developing countries are inadequately represented in global economic decision-making, with their voting share falling far short of their membership in many international financial institutions.

A moment of choice and consequence

Time and again, humanity has demonstrated that when we work together and apply our collective mind, we can forge solutions to seemingly intractable problems. This report highlights some encouraging advancements. Increased access to life-saving treatment has averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths in the past three decades. In most regions of the world, girls have achieved parity and even pulled ahead of boys in completing schooling at all levels. Two thirds of the world’s population – 5.4 billion people – now have access to the Internet, just as work and employment opportunities are being profoundly transformed by technological innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI).

The world must now confront head on the multiple crises threatening sustainable development, marshalling the determination, ingenuity and resources that such high stakes demand. To get the SDGs back on track, one foremost priority for the global community is to rally all stakeholders to end the conflicts causing unimaginable suffering and misery globally. Sustainable development is simply not possible without peace.

Additionally, wealthy economies need to unlock greater financing for vulnerable countries, and developing countries must gain a more equitable role in global economic governance and the international financial system.

In all countries, doubling down to pursue a just climate transition is crucial to addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, air pollution and biodiversity loss while reorienting economies towards more sustainable growth. Achieving dignity for all people of all ages requires renewed commitments to gender equality as well as significantly increased investments in health, education and social protection.

The time for words has passed. The political declaration of the SDG Summit must be translated into actions. It is still possible to create a better, more sustainable and more inclusive world for all by 2030. But the clock is running out. We must act now, and act boldly.



Li Junhua

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Unlocking the power of data for sustainable development

Accurate, timely and disaggregated data are vital for measuring progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets. Data help identify challenges, formulate solutions, monitor implementation and make needed course corrections. Without high-quality data providing an evidence base, it will be impossible to truly understand where we are succeeding and falling short on the SDGs. *The Sustainable*

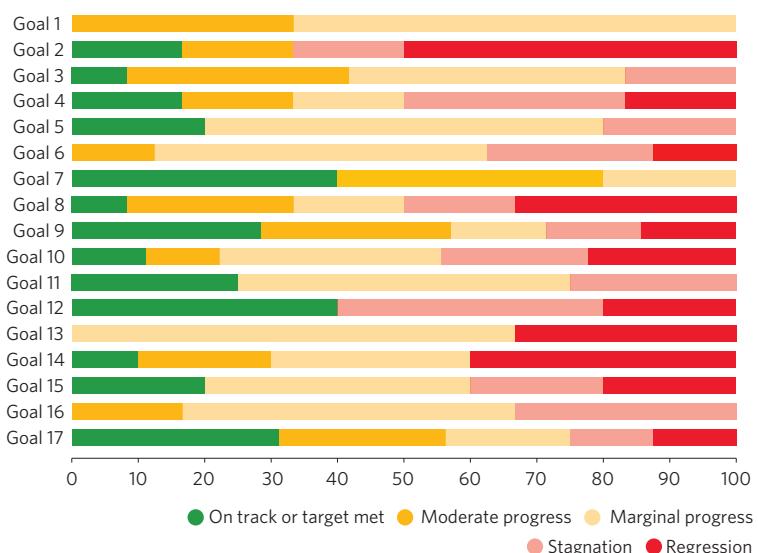
Development Goals Report 2024 provides a comprehensive overview of the world's progress nine years into the journey to 2030. Using the latest available data, the report highlights both successes and challenges as the international community strives to fully realize the ambitions and principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I. The current status of the SDGs: severely off track

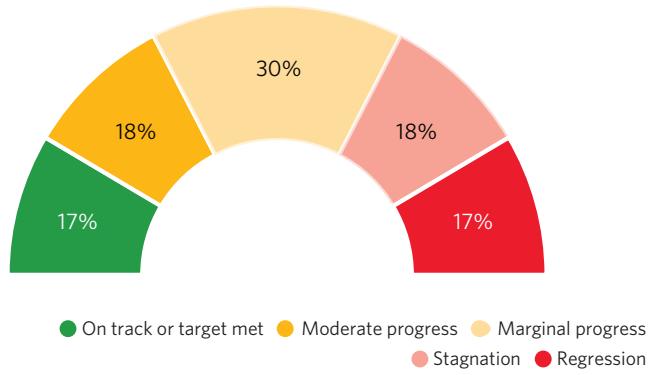
The progress assessment carried out in 2024 reveals that the world is severely off track to realize the 2030 Agenda. Of the 169 targets, 135 can be assessed using available global trend data from the 2015 baseline to the most recent year, along with custodian agency analyses; 34 targets lack sufficient trend data or additional analysis. Among the assessable targets, only 17 per cent display progress sufficient for achievement by 2030. Nearly half

(48 per cent) exhibit moderate to severe deviations from the desired trajectory, with 30 per cent showing marginal progress and 18 per cent moderate progress. Alarmingly, 18 per cent indicate stagnation and 17 per cent regression below the 2015 baseline levels.¹ This comprehensive assessment underscores the urgent need for intensified efforts to put the SDGs on course. Detailed analysis by target can be found at the end of this report.

Progress assessment for the 17 Goals based on assessed targets, by Goal (percentage)



Overall progress across targets based on 2015–2024 global aggregate data

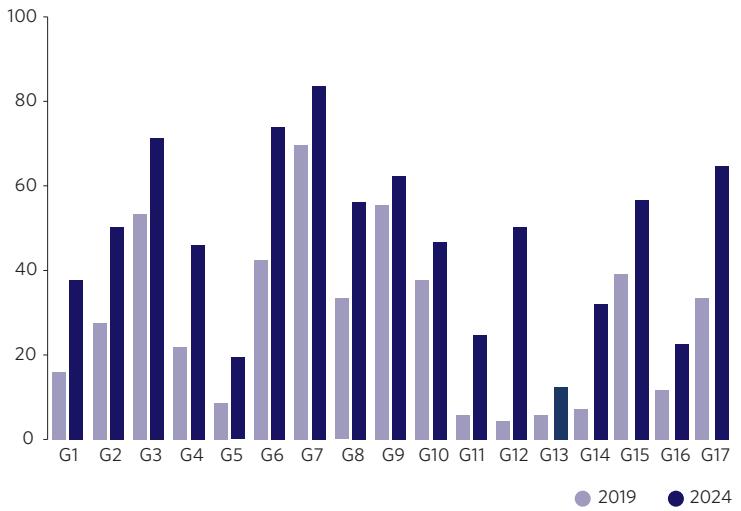


II. Despite commendable increases in data to monitor the SDGs, critical gaps persist

SDG progress assessment is affected by ongoing challenges in the availability and timeliness of data to monitor all 17 Goals. Overall, commendable progress has been made in improving internationally comparable data for SDG monitoring. In 2016, when the global indicator framework for the Goals and associated targets was initially adopted, only about one third of indicators had good data coverage (that is, data were available for more than 50 per cent of countries), and 39 per cent of the indicators lacked internationally established methodologies or standards. Today, 68 per cent of indicators have good data coverage. Since 2020, all 231 indicators have had well-established and internationally agreed methodologies. Good trend data are available for 51 per cent of the indicators (at least two data points since 2015) in more than half of all countries.

The variance in country data coverage plays out differently across the Goals, with major shortfalls in priority development areas, such as gender equality (Goal 5), climate action (Goal 13), and peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16). Moreover, data timeliness remains a challenge. Approximately one third of indicators lack data for the past three years, hampering the ability of policymakers to make timely informed decisions and course corrections.

Proportion of countries or areas with trend data (at least two data points since 2015), comparing 2019 and 2024 databases, by Goal (percentage)



¹ Due to new data and revised methodologies, this year's progress assessment is not comparable to those of previous years.

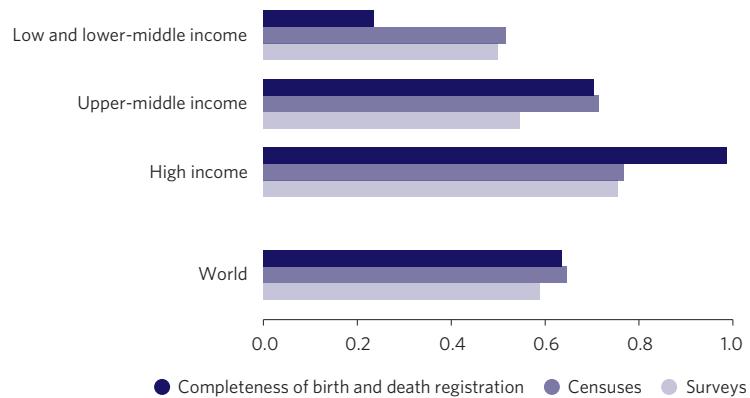
III. How to harness the power of data

Robust data build on a strong statistical foundation, innovation and integration

A strong statistical foundation draws on both traditional and innovative data sources. Traditional data sources include censuses, surveys and administrative data. Population censuses provide crucial data for national and subnational planning and also serve as denominators for numerous SDG indicators. Household surveys contribute data for about one third of SDG indicators, according to the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys. Birth and death registrations are vital for accurate population data and ensure individuals' legal rights, providing essential documentation for accessing health care, education and inheritances.

Many countries still face challenges, however, in building a robust statistical foundation with data from these three traditional sources. In 2022, overall performance on them across countries averaged around 0.6 (out of 1).

Statistical performance of countries on birth and death registration, censuses and surveys, by income level, 2022 (score 0–1)



Notable disparities existed across countries. High-income countries achieved nearly a full score for birth and death registration; upper-middle-income countries had an average score of 0.7; low- and lower-middle-income countries scored only 0.2. Disparities in censuses and surveys based on income level also persist, with scores from 0.5 to 0.8, although differences were less pronounced.

Data demand for SDG monitoring has spurred innovation and the integration of different data sources. For instance, Azerbaijan uses remote sensing to monitor the coverage of important sites for mountain biodiversity (SDG indicator 15.4.1). Colombia and Malaysia have integrated geospatial and population data to estimate the proportion of the rural population living within 2 kilometres of an all-season road (SDG indicator 9.1.1). Bangladesh has employed geospatial and survey data to generate local poverty estimates to inform government policies. Ghana and the United Kingdom have tapped into citizen science data to monitor marine litter (SDG indicator 14.1.1). Kyrgyzstan's statistical office collaborates with a network of civil society organizations to explore how citizen data can support the Voluntary National Review. Both the Netherlands and Uruguay monitor air pollution with national networks of sensors (SDG indicator 11.6.2).

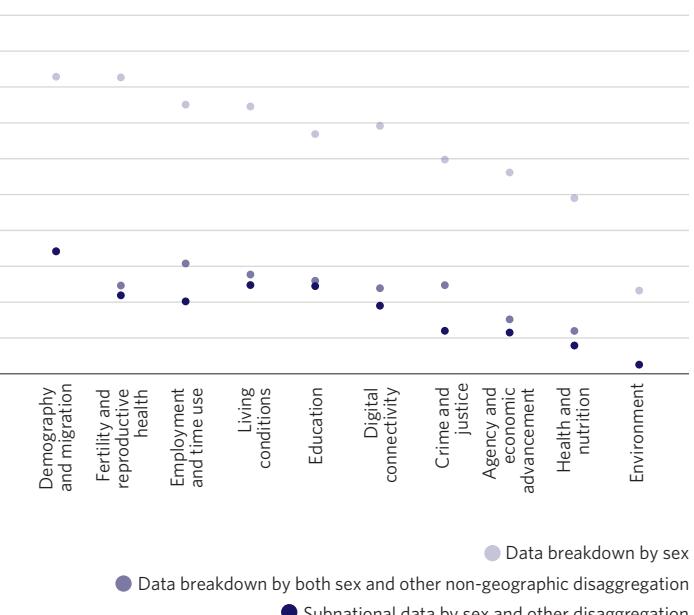
Countries worldwide are recognizing the need to invest in national statistical systems to produce high-quality, timely data for SDG monitoring. This involves not only financial resources but also requires building capacity, modernizing infrastructure and adopting international statistical standards. As countries continue to strengthen statistical foundations, embracing innovation and integrating diverse data sources and methodologies will be critical in overcoming challenges such as declining response rates as well as in fostering collaborative partnerships.

Engaging citizens in data production is essential to leave no one behind

The overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to leave no one behind. A comprehensive review by the Gender Data Compass, however, revealed significant gaps in disaggregated data for key social, economic and environmental indicators disseminated online by national statistical offices (NSOs). In 2023, the availability score for sex-disaggregated data ranged from 23 to 83 out of 100. Sex-disaggregated data were most available for indicators on demographics, migration, fertility and reproductive health (with a score of 83) and least available for environmental indicators (23).

Further disaggregation by additional characteristics resulted in a significant decrease in data availability. For example, the availability score for demographic and migration indicators dropped to 34 when including disaggregation by sex and other non-geographic characteristics. Subnational data availability was notably low, with average scores ranging from 3 to 34. Interestingly, high-income countries generally exhibited lower overall disaggregated data availability compared to low- and middle-income countries.

Data availability score by sex and other characteristics and type of indicator, 2022 (score 0–100)



Ensuring that no one is left behind calls for more than just data disaggregation. Uncovering the intersectional disadvantages faced by the most marginalized groups demands additional efforts. For example, a side event on citizen data at the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission showed that indigenous women and girls with disabilities in Bolivia faced significant challenges in accessing reproductive health information and care. Addressing these challenges and formulating relevant policies to overcome them is possible only when citizen data are collected with the active involvement and support of communities with firsthand knowledge of their own needs.

Data openness has improved; use and impact need more work

The increased openness, accessibility and effective use of data have been crucial to better data impact. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, countries have made significant progress in opening up official statistics for public use. According to Open Data Inventory, the average score on data openness for around 180 countries and areas increased from 44 in 2017 to 55 in 2022. The openness level was greater in high-income countries, with a score of 67 in 2022, compared to only 42 for low- or lower-middle-income countries. This score represents official statistics that are machine-readable, non-proprietary, have an open data licence or open data terms of use, include available metadata and offer accessible download options.

Data openness does not always translate into effective use and impact, however. Monitoring these dimensions has been challenging. The Statistical Performance Indicators framework covers data use by national legislatures and executive branches, civil society, academia and international organizations, but only data use by international organizations is available. More efforts are needed to strengthen data use and impact, and measure and document results.

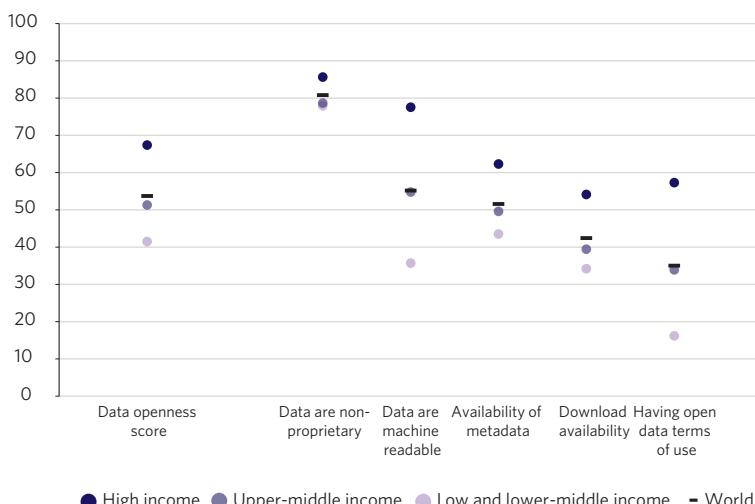
The role of national statistical offices as data stewards is evolving but challenges in data governance remain

Successful SDG monitoring requires NSOs to play a strong stewardship role within the national data ecosystem. According to a 2023 survey on data stewardship, nearly all NSOs reported having the mandate to coordinate the production and integration of official statistics across the national statistical system. Perceptions of successful data stewardship, however, varied. While almost 90 per cent of NSOs agreed that increased data sharing and reuse within the national statistical system were top priorities, they did not universally recognize active engagement with census and survey respondents, media interaction and improved data literacy as indicators of effective stewardship.

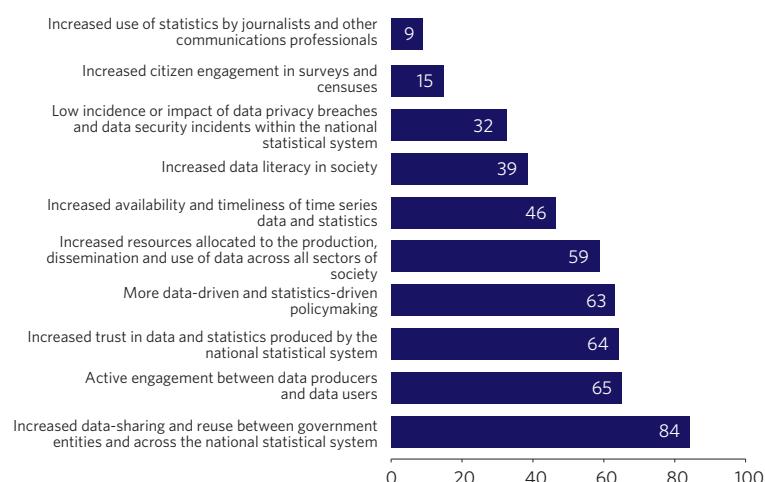
Ensuring data privacy and security is crucial in today's world, with data produced by both State entities and non-State actors, such as the private sector and civil society organizations. Surprisingly, only 30 per cent of NSOs considered this aspect important in their data stewardship role. This finding is consistent with responses to another survey question on which entities are responsible for different aspects of official statistics. While 80 per cent of NSOs either led or co-led technical and statistical standard-setting, only 50 per cent played a role in data security. This underscores the urgent need to establish national data governance systems that go beyond the current scope of NSO activities.

Involving citizens in data production signifies a shift towards a more collaborative and participatory model of governance, marking a new chapter in the social contract between State institutions and citizens. This refreshed dynamic embodies principles of transparency, participation and shared responsibility, reflecting an evolving relationship where citizens are not just subjects of governance but active participants in it. The newly proposed Copenhagen Framework on Citizen Data by the Collaborative on Citizen Data supports such engagement.

Data openness score, 2022



Proportion of NSOs agreeing on areas where successful data stewardship could contribute, 2023 (percentage)



Strengthening partnerships is key to more inclusive data

Building partnerships with diverse stakeholders makes SDG monitoring more inclusive and incorporates different perspectives and needs. According to a 2022 survey on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, 81 per cent of NSOs had institutional arrangements with the public sector, followed by international organizations at 66 per cent, academia at 56 per cent and the private sector at 45 per cent. Partnerships between NSOs and civil society organizations stood at 37 per cent. A similar trend was observed in the production of gender statistics, with government ministries being the most common partners. Around 90 per cent of NSOs had established regular or ad hoc collaborations with other government entities, compared to only 37 per cent with civil society organizations.

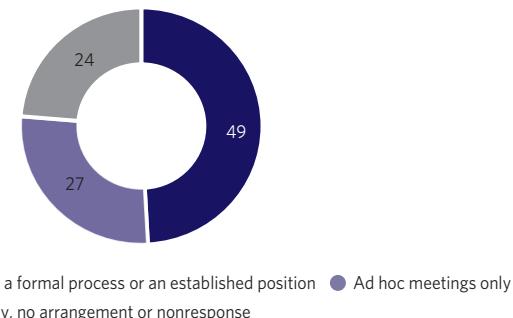
As more countries recognize the importance of adopting a “whole-of-society” approach to achieve the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda, increased efforts are being made to acknowledge the contributions of civil society. For example, with support from the Collaborative on Citizen Data and the United Nations country team, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics is establishing a formal partnership with civil society organizations to produce and use citizen data. This initiative represents a significant step for the country in recognizing data generated by non-state institutions.

Similar partnerships have flourished globally. At the SDG Summit in September 2023, the High Impact Initiative on the Power of Data was launched. It aims to deliver data needed to achieve the SDGs by mobilizing political support and investments in national data systems, fostering unified national data strategies, and strengthening partnerships, collaboration and

coordination. The expanding initiative currently comprises 15 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America and Caribbean. More countries and partners are encouraged to join this important effort to ensure that every government has data to monitor and drive SDG progress.

Partnering with local governments enables NSOs to gather more accurate, comprehensive and context-specific data, enhancing the overall effectiveness of SDG monitoring and the responsiveness of development efforts to local priorities. According to the 2023 data stewardship survey, 49 per cent of NSOs had established a formal process or dedicated position for collaborating with local officials; 27 per cent had organized ad hoc meetings for such collaboration; 24 per cent either had rare or no arrangements or did not respond to this question on the survey.

Mechanisms to collaborate with municipal/city government data stewards, 2023 (percentage)



Coordinated efforts can close funding gaps and boost national data and statistical capacity

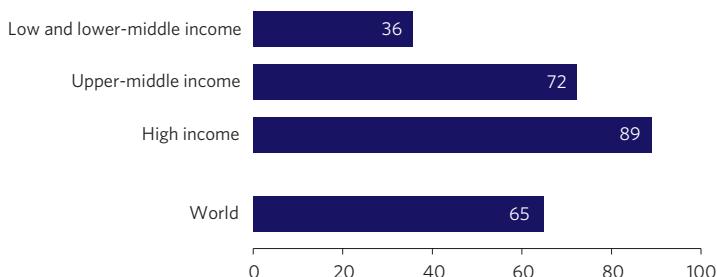
In 2023, only 65 per cent of countries had fully funded and implemented national statistical plans. The funding gap is more pronounced in low- and lower-middle-income countries, where only 35 per cent have sufficient funding, compared to only 11 per cent of high-income countries. Forty-five countries or areas received funding from donors; half were low- and lower-middle-income countries.

In the Hangzhou declaration on accelerating progress on the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, countries agreed on “an urgent and sustained increase in the level and scale of investments in data and statistics from domestic and international actors, from the public, private and philanthropic sectors, to strengthen statistical capacity in low-income countries and fragile states, close data gaps for vulnerable groups and enhance country resilience in the current context of economic crisis, conflict, climate change and increased food insecurity.”

While acknowledging the contribution of development partners in building national data and statistical capacity, a holistic approach to such support is crucial to prevent silos and duplicated efforts. Effective coordination and proper funding allocations between development partners and national

entities are imperative to systematically address data and capacity gaps. Mechanisms such as the Statistical Training Needs Assessment Tool, developed by the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training, can aid in systematically assessing national statistical capacities to guide funding allocations. Colombia and Ghana have used the tool to develop plans that help prioritize capacity-building needs.

Proportion of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, 2023 (percentage)





No poverty

- The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent shocks from 2020 to 2022 have hampered global efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. The global extreme poverty rate increased in 2020 for the first time in decades, setting back progress by three years. Since then, recovery has been uneven, with low-income countries lagging behind. By 2030, 590 million people may still live in extreme poverty if current trends persist. Without a substantial acceleration in poverty reduction, fewer than 3 in 10 countries are expected to halve national poverty by 2030.
- Despite increasing efforts and commitments to expand social protection programmes, significant coverage gaps left 1.4 billion children uncovered in 2023.
- Climate change is hindering poverty reduction, and disasters result in millions of households becoming poor or remaining trapped in poverty.



Traders transport charcoal to the market in Madagascar, among the countries with the world's highest poverty rates.

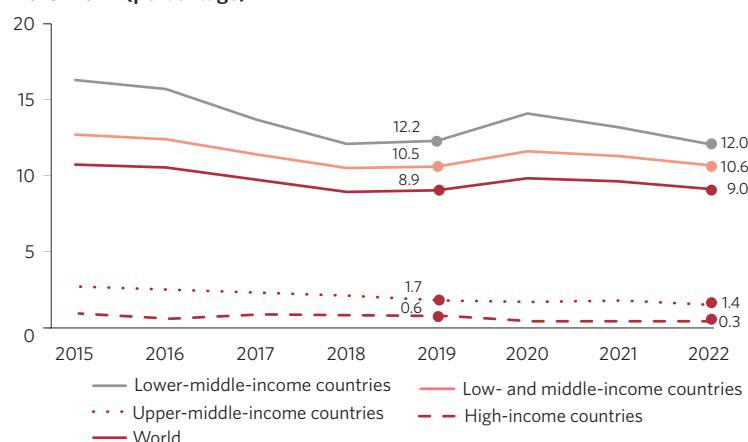
- Ending poverty requires a wide-ranging approach that combines comprehensive social protection systems, inclusive economic policies, investments in human capital, measures to address inequality and climate resilience, and international cooperation and partnership.

Extreme poverty rates have returned to pre-pandemic levels except in low-income countries

The COVID-19 pandemic caused extreme poverty to rise in 2020 for the first time in decades, reversing global progress by three years. The share of the world's population living in extreme poverty rose from 8.9 per cent in 2019 to 9.7 per cent in 2020, driven by increases in low- and lower-middle-income countries. In contrast, extreme poverty continued to decline in upper-middle- and high-income countries, attributed to swift fiscal support for vulnerable groups. By 2022, extreme poverty had returned to pre-pandemic levels in most countries, except low-income ones. In 2022, 712 million people (or 9 per cent of the world's population) lived in extreme poverty, an increase of 23 million people over 2019. Projections suggest that by 2030, 590 million people, or 6.9 per cent of the global population, may remain in extreme poverty if current trends persist.

In the 75 most vulnerable countries, which qualify for concessional lending from the World Bank's International Development Association, one in four people live on less than \$2.15 a day - more than eight times the extreme poverty rate in the rest of the world. One in three of these countries are now poorer on average than before the pandemic.

Proportion of the population living below \$2.15/day, by country income level, 2015–2022 (percentage)



Note: The lack of recent survey data limits the reporting of extreme poverty estimates exclusively for low-income countries.

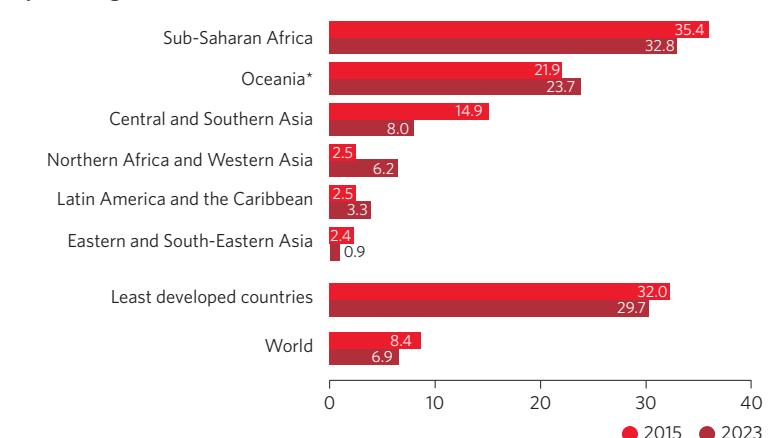
Working poverty has declined but still afflicts 241 million workers

The global working poverty rate slightly increased to 7.7 per cent in 2020 before declining to 6.9 per cent in 2023. This indicates a consistent downward trend in working poverty worldwide since 2015. Despite progress, nearly 241 million workers globally still lived in extreme poverty in 2023. Little positive change is expected in 2024.

There are wide regional disparities amid the overall positive global trend. Despite a falling working poverty rate, more than half of workers living in extreme poverty were still in sub-Saharan Africa (145 million). Central and Southern Asia notably reduced working poverty by 6.9 percentage points between 2015 and 2023. Conversely, Northern Africa and Western Asia saw an increase in the rate from 2.5 per cent in 2015 to 6.2 per cent in 2023.

Working poverty disproportionately affects some groups. Globally, youth are twice as likely as adults to be in working poverty. Women typically experience higher working poverty rates than men, with the most pronounced gender gap observed in the least developed countries (LDCs).

Proportion of the employed population living below \$2.15/day, 2015 and 2023 (percentage)



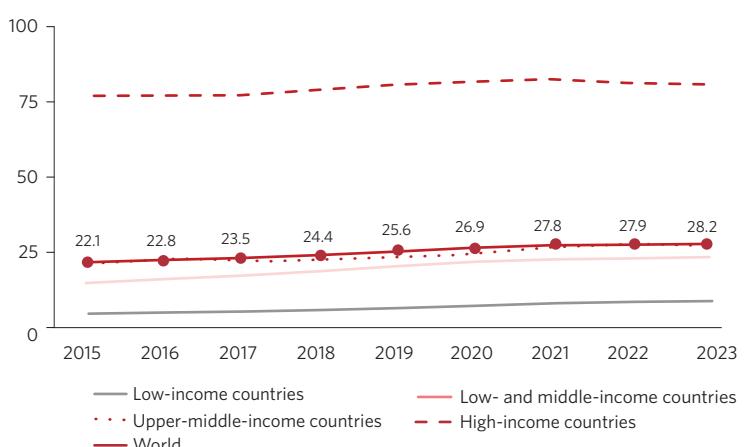
* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Despite improvement, 7 in 10 children worldwide still lack social protection coverage

In 2023, only 28.2 per cent of children aged 0 to 15 globally received child cash benefits, up from 22.1 per cent in 2015. This left 1.4 billion children without social protection coverage. Significant regional variations were evident, and despite a near doubling of coverage from 4.5 per cent in 2015 to 8.7 per cent in 2023, low-income countries were still far from universal coverage. During the same period, lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries raised coverage from 15.0 to 23.5 per cent and from 21.8 to 27.8 per cent, respectively. High-income countries maintained a continued progression towards universal coverage, with rates rising from 76.8 to 80.5 per cent.

Achieving universal coverage will require closing a major financing gap. To guarantee at least basic social security for all children, upper- and lower-middle-income countries would need to invest an additional \$98.1 billion and \$88.8 billion, respectively. Low-income countries would require an additional \$59.6 billion.

Proportion of children covered by social protection cash benefits, by country income level, 2015–2023 (percentage)

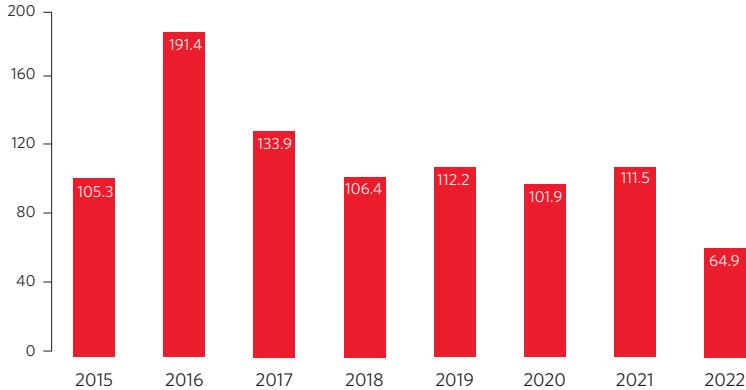


Efforts to reduce disaster impacts and risks have not yet stemmed billions in economic losses

Despite significant efforts to reduce disaster impacts, related economic losses remain stubbornly high. From 2015 to 2022, average annual direct economic losses exceeded \$115 billion worldwide, an amount equivalent to 0.3 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of reporting countries.

LDCs and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) suffer disproportionately from disasters. Disaster-related economic losses in LDCs are over six times the global average. From 2015 to 2022, this group of countries accounted for 6.9 per cent of global reported economic losses from disasters despite comprising only 1.1 per cent of reporting countries' combined GDP. Similarly, LLDCs reported 4.9 per cent of total economic losses, four times the global average, while accounting for only 1.1 per cent of reporting countries' combined GDP.

Direct economic losses from disasters, 2015–2022 (billions of dollars)

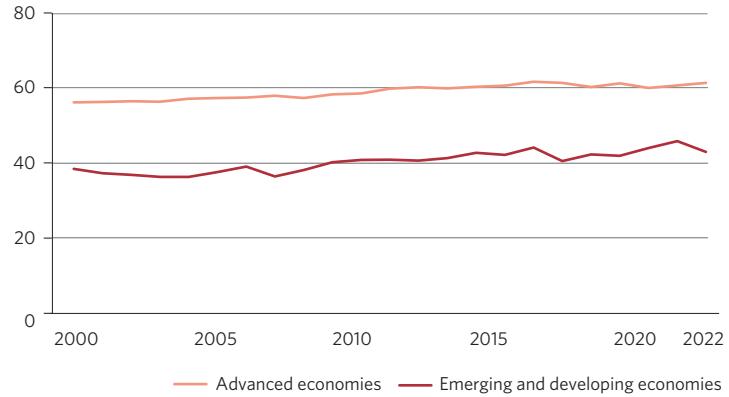


Government spending on essential services is ticking up but with a chronic gap between advanced and developing economies

Based on recent data from about 100 countries, worldwide government spending on essential services – encompassing education, health and social protection – averages around 50 per cent of total government expenditure. Among advanced economies, this figure rises to 60 per cent, while in emerging market and developing economies, it stands at 40 per cent. Over the past two decades, both groups have seen a slight uptick in their shares, maintaining a consistent 20-percentage-point gap between them.

On the components of essential services, advanced economies notably outpace emerging market and developing economies in social protection spending by roughly 15 percentage points on average, largely due to broader pension coverage. Health spending accounts for about 5 percentage points of this difference. The pandemic temporarily skewed these trends, with increased spending on social protection and health and a decline in education expenditure due to school closures. While these measures are expected to be short-lived, prolonged health issues and educational losses among individuals could potentially have long-term impacts on human capital.

Proportion of total government spending on essential services, 2000–2022 (percentage)





Zero hunger

- After rising sharply in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, global hunger and food insecurity remained persistently high and almost unchanged for three years. In 2023, about 733 million people faced hunger, and 2.33 billion people experienced moderate to severe food insecurity. Despite progress, 148 million children under age 5 suffered from stunting in 2022. If current trends persist, one in five children under age 5 will be affected by stunting in 2030.
- In 2022, almost 60 per cent of countries worldwide faced moderately to abnormally high food prices due to the spillover effects of conflicts, such as disrupted supply chains.
- Achieving zero hunger requires intensified efforts to transform food systems so they are sustainable, resilient and equitable. Moreover, accelerating improvements in diets, nutrition, health and hygiene is



A woman sells produce in a village on the southernmost tip of Madagascar, where farmers are struggling to harvest parched crops.

crucial to meeting the target of halving the number of children suffering from chronic undernutrition.

Hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition remain prevalent, calling for intensified efforts

After rising sharply from 2019 to 2021, global hunger, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment, persisted at nearly the same level for three years, affecting 9.1 per cent of the population in 2023 compared with 7.5 per cent in 2019. Between 713 and 757 million people faced hunger in 2023 – one in 11 people globally, and one in five in Africa. Moreover, an estimated 28.9 per cent of the world's population, or 2.33 billion people, were moderately or severely food insecure in 2023 – 383 million more than in 2019.

Malnutrition among children under age 5 remains a significant concern, posing heightened risks to their growth and development. Globally in 2022, an estimated 22.3 per cent of children under age 5, or 148 million, were affected by stunting (being too short for their age), down from 24.6 per cent in 2015. Based on current trends, one out of five (19.5 per cent) of children

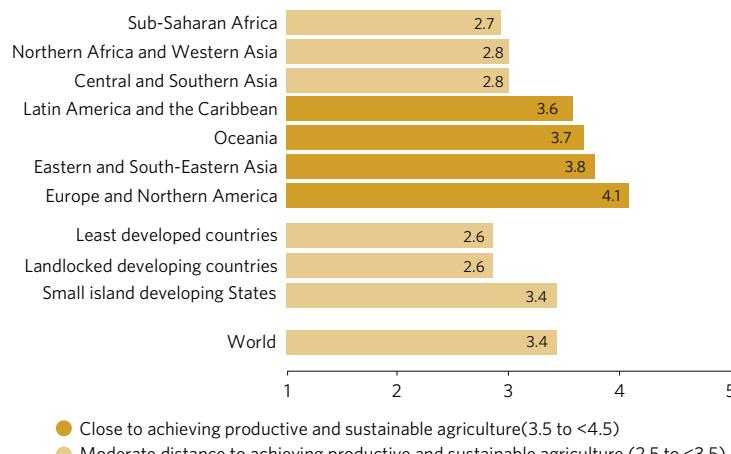
under age 5 will be affected by stunting in 2030. Some 37 million children (5.6 per cent) were overweight, while 45 million (6.8 per cent) experienced wasting, above the global target of 3 per cent by 2030. Three quarters of children under age 5 with stunting lived in Central and Southern Asia (36.7 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (38.3 per cent). More than half of those affected by wasting lived in Central and Southern Asia (56.2 per cent) and almost one quarter in sub-Saharan Africa (22.9 per cent).

To achieve Goal 2, significant efforts are needed to mitigate the impacts of climate change, conflict and economic crisis. Record-high food prices in 2022 worsened purchasing power and access to food, negatively impacting food security and nutritional outcomes. Increased global public expenditure on agriculture was at least one positive trend.

Accelerated action could bring productive and sustainable agriculture within reach globally

Productive and sustainable agriculture is key to ensuring the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs in present and future generations. To assess global progress in sustainable agriculture, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators adopted a new set of seven subindicators covering economic, social and environmental dimensions. Data from 2021 suggested that the world was at a moderate distance from achieving productive and sustainable agriculture (with a score of 3.4 out of 5) and had witnessed a slight improvement since 2015. Regional disparities were evident, however, with the highest score of 4.1 in Europe and Northern America compared to the lowest score of 2.6 in the LDCs. While more detailed analysis is required to investigate the root causes of varying rates of progress, evidence suggests that all regions urgently need to take sustained, concerted actions to improve productive and sustainable agriculture by 2030. They otherwise risk missing the target by a wide margin.

**Status in achieving productive and sustainable agriculture, 2021
(score between 1 and 5)**



Note: The score is derived using measures across economic, social and environmental dimensions. Scores are ranked based on five categories defined by the following criteria: productive and sustainable agriculture already achieved (4.5 to 5.5), close to achieving productive and sustainable agriculture (3.5 to <4.5), at a moderate distance to achieving productive and sustainable agriculture (2.5 to <3.5), far from achieving productive and sustainable agriculture (1.5 to <2.5), and very far from achieving productive and sustainable agriculture (1 to <1.5).

Small-scale food producers are vital in fighting hunger but earn less than half the income of larger-scale operations

Small-scale food producers play essential roles in agricultural and food production systems, enhancing resilience and fighting hunger. Despite their significant contributions, however, they are often among the most vulnerable groups in rural areas and within the broader agrifood system. In 95 per cent of countries with available data, the average annual income of small-scale producers is less than half that of larger-scale producers.

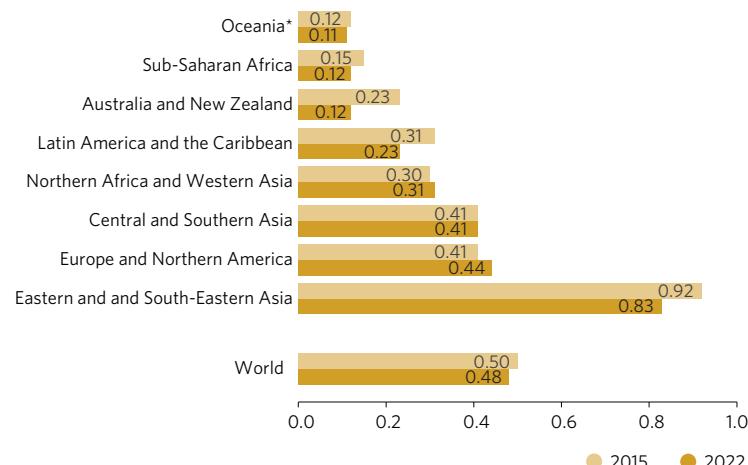
This income disparity persists across countries, regardless of income level. Small-scale food producers headed by men typically generate higher incomes than those headed by women. The latter had incomes that were less than 70 per cent of those earned by the former in nearly 50 per cent of countries with available data.

Global government spending and aid for agriculture surge amid economic challenges

Government spending reflects national priorities and can directly respond to economic and social challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters or inflation. Between 2015 and 2022, global government spending on agriculture increased steadily, reaching a record high of \$749 billion in 2022. Government expenditure on agriculture relative to the sector's GDP contribution, as measured by the agriculture orientation index, declined from 0.5 in 2015 to 0.43 in 2021 before rebounding to 0.48 in 2022. The pandemic contributed to the fall as government resources were allocated to other sectors.

From 2015 to 2022, the volume of aid for agriculture provided to developing countries increased by 47.2 per cent, from \$12.3 billion to \$18.1 billion (in constant 2022 prices). A 33 per cent increase from 2021 to 2022 was primarily driven by agricultural development projects and initiatives in agricultural policy, administrative management and financial services. Notably, Africa accounted for 65 per cent of the increase in 2022, mainly due to non-concessional loans for agricultural development projects from the Islamic Development Bank in Egypt.

Agriculture orientation index, 2015 and 2022



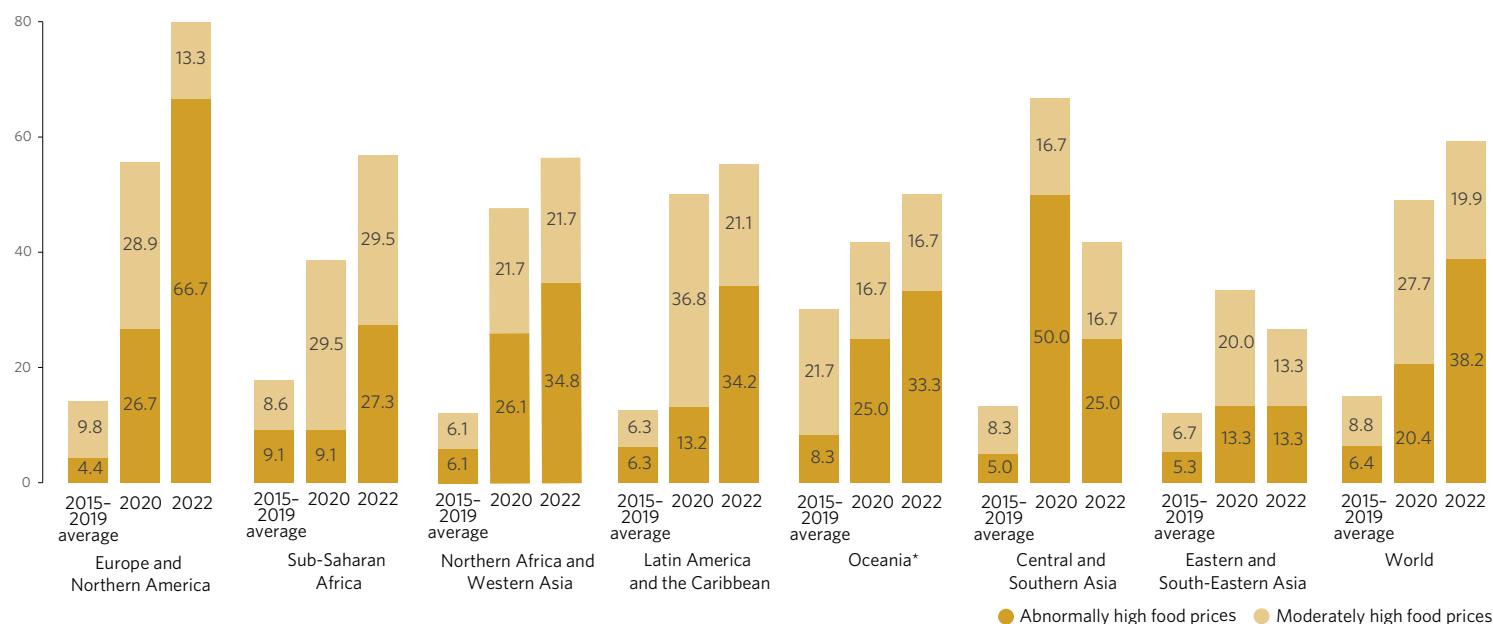
* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Nearly 60 per cent of countries faced moderately to abnormally high food prices in 2022

Globally, the proportion of countries facing moderately to abnormally high food prices rose sharply in 2022, reaching a new record high of 58.1 per cent. This represented a nearly fourfold increase from the 2015–2019 average level of 15.2 per cent. In Central and Southern Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, the share of countries facing moderately to abnormally high food prices in 2022 was lower than the peak in 2020 but

remained higher than the yearly average and the 2015–2019 average. The share steadily increased in sub-Saharan Africa between 2020 and 2022. Major disruptions to logistics and food supply chains after war broke out in Ukraine resulted in higher food and energy prices, particularly during the first half of 2022. The war also exerted strong upward pressure on fertilizer prices, adding uncertainty to farmer planting decisions.

Proportion of countries by region affected by moderately to abnormally high food prices, 2015–2019 average, 2020 and 2022 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.



Good health and well-being

- The COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged global health, undoing nearly 10 years of progress in life expectancy. While most health-related indicators are moving in the right direction globally, current trends are insufficient to meet targets set for 2030.
- The maternal mortality ratio is largely stuck at a level more than three times the 2030 target. Under-5 deaths reached an historic low in 2022, but progress has slowed. Without accelerated declines, 35 million children will not live to see their fifth birthday by 2030.
- The global response to infectious diseases has saved millions of lives and paved the way for healthier communities. Inequalities and emerging threats jeopardize these accomplishments, however, underscoring the need for sustained efforts and innovative strategies.
- More than half the world's population is not covered by essential health services, while an ageing health workforce must now meet growing demands from an ageing population. Ensuring universal health coverage without financial hardship is crucial to healthy lives and well-being for all.

The COVID-19 pandemic turned back progress in life expectancy and gains in combating communicable diseases

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected global health, reversing steady progress in life expectancy over the past two decades. Prior to the pandemic, global life expectancy rose consistently, from 66.8 years in 2000 to 73.1 years in 2019, reflecting years of improvements in health and related areas. COVID-19 swiftly reversed this positive trend, with global life expectancy plummeting to 71.4 years by 2021, back to the level of 2012.

Before the pandemic, non-communicable diseases had been steadily increasing as the leading cause of death, accounting for 59.5 per cent of all deaths in 2000 and 73.9 per cent in 2019. The share of communicable diseases dropped from 32.2 per cent in 2000 to 18.2 per cent in 2019. As COVID-19 emerged as a new infectious disease and started to take a toll on human lives, the share of deaths due to communicable diseases jumped back to the 2005 level (28.1 per cent) in 2021, while the share of deaths due to non-communicable diseases decreased to 65.3 per cent. COVID-19 ranked among the top three leading causes of death globally in 2020 and 2021, with striking regional variations.

An ageing health workforce struggles to meet rising demands from an ageing population

Progressing towards universal health coverage requires addressing the global shortage of health workers. Yet data from 2015 to 2022 reveal stark disparities, with low-income countries experiencing the lowest health worker density and distribution. Per 10,000 people, these countries had medians of only 1.1 medical doctors, 7.5 nursing and midwifery personnel, 0.04 dentists and 0.2 pharmacists, compared with medians in high-income countries of 35.6 medical doctors, 76.8 nursing and midwifery personnel, 7.0 dentists and 8.8 pharmacists.

Health systems are experiencing increased strains in catering to the mounting health needs of an ageing global population, more so because the health workforce itself is ageing. An estimated 1.8 million additional health workers are needed in 54 countries, primarily high-income ones, to replace retiring health professionals and maintain the current age-standardized density of health workers.



A child receives an oral polio vaccine during the launch of a nationwide polio campaign in Malawi.

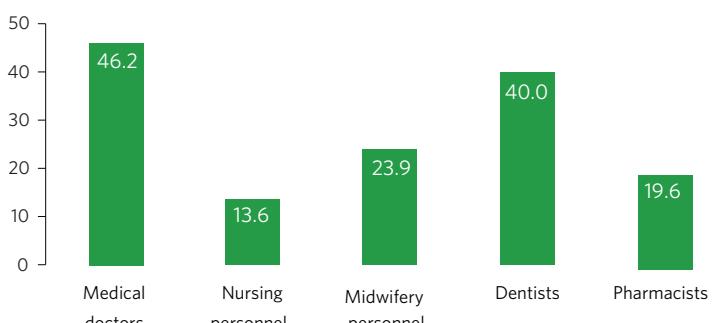
- The world is not on track to achieve Goal 3. Changing course requires prioritizing the achievement of universal health coverage, strengthening health systems, investing in disease prevention and treatment, and addressing disparities in access to care and services, especially for vulnerable populations.

Progress towards universal health coverage has slowed, leaving billions without care and subject to catastrophic costs

Essential health service coverage is measured using an index, reported on a score of 0 to 100, based on 14 indicators across four domains: reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health; infectious diseases; non-communicable diseases; and service capacity and access. The global score on the index increased remarkably from 45 in 2000 to 65 in 2015. Progress slowed thereafter, however, reaching a score of only 68 in 2021. The proportion of the population lacking essential health services fell by approximately 15 per cent between 2000 and 2021. Yet minimal progress after 2015 left about 4.5 billion people without coverage in 2021, especially in rural and poorer populations.

Financial hardship due to out-of-pocket health spending has worsened since 2015, affecting 2 billion people in 2019. They included 1 billion people facing catastrophic health expenditures exceeding 10 per cent of their household budget and 344 million driven deeper into extreme poverty by health costs. The proportion of the population with catastrophic expenditures increased from 12.6 per cent in 2015 to 13.5 per cent in 2019.

Share of countries with an ageing workforce, by health occupation, 2017–2022 (percentage)



Note: A health workforce is considered "ageing" when the share of health workers aged 55 years and above exceeds that of health workers aged 35 years and below.

Declines in maternal mortality have stalled, with wide disparities by region and income

Between 2015 and 2020, the global maternal mortality ratio declined only marginally from 227 to 223 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, over three times higher than the 2030 target of 70. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for 87 per cent of maternal deaths. In 2020, the maternal mortality ratio in low-income countries was 430 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births compared to 13 in high-income nations. The average maternal mortality ratio for very high and high alert fragile states was 551 in 2020, more than twice the global average. Achieving the 2030 target requires an annual reduction rate of 11.6 per cent between 2021 and 2030.

Improvements in adolescent birth rates and access to modern contraceptives do not benefit all women and girls equally

The adolescent birth rate for women aged 15–19 years declined to 41.3 births per 1,000 women in 2023, from 47.2 in 2015 and 64.5 in 2000. For girls aged 10–14 years, the rate fell from 3.3 births per 1,000 girls in 2000 to 1.8 in 2015 and 1.5 in 2023. Yet 13.1 million babies, approximately 10 per cent of the total number of births, were born to adolescent mothers in 2023. Central and Southern Asia witnessed the largest drop-offs in adolescent birth rates between 2000 and 2023, with a 72 per cent reduction in the 15–19 age group and a 90 per cent decrease in the 10–14 cohort. Sub-Saharan Africa continued to have the highest rates globally, at 97.9 births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 and 4.4 per 1,000 girls aged 10–14 in 2023.

The proportion of women of reproductive age (15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods has climbed from 76.5 per cent in 2015 to 77.6 per cent in 2024, corresponding to an additional 75 million women using modern contraceptive methods globally. By 2030, this proportion is projected to reach 78.2 per cent, a net increase of 45 million women. This marks a fair improvement but still falls far short of universal access.

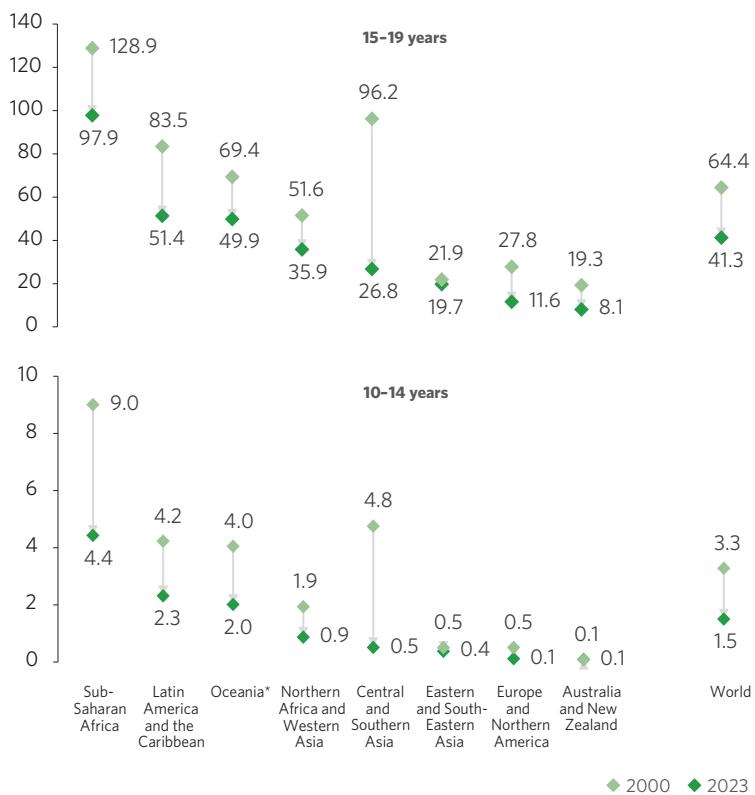
Under-5 deaths hit a record low in 2022; achieving the SDG target could save 9 million lives by 2030

Global under-5 deaths reached a historic low of 4.9 million in 2022, down from 9.9 million in 2000 and 6.0 million in 2015. Nearly half these deaths (2.3 million) occurred during the neonatal period (the first 28 days of life). The under-5 mortality rate was 37 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2022, a 51 per cent reduction since 2000 and a 14 per cent reduction from 2015. The global neonatal mortality rate fell to 17 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2022, a 44 per cent reduction since 2000 and a 12 per cent reduction since 2015.

Unfortunately, the annual rate of reduction in under-5 mortality contracted from 3.8 per cent in 2000–2015 to 2.1 per cent in 2015–2022. The neonatal mortality rate followed a similar pattern, declining from 3.0 per cent to 1.8 per cent. If current trends continue, an estimated 35 million children will die before reaching their fifth birthday by 2030. If all countries met the target for under-5 mortality, an estimated 9 million lives could be saved by 2030. As of 2022, 134 countries had already met the target. Seven more were on track but 59 countries, nearly three quarters of which are in sub-Saharan Africa, will need faster progress to meet the target.

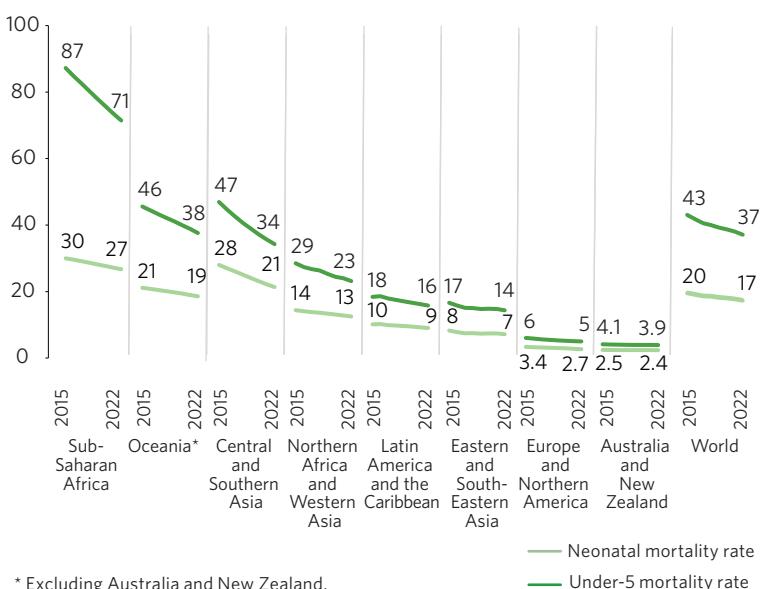
Skilled birth attendance has improved globally, rising from 80 per cent of births in 2015 to 86 per cent in 2023. Improved care quality could save the lives of up to 1 million newborns and 150,000 mothers annually. Yet progress is stalling: 18 million births occurred without skilled assistance in 2023. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 73 per cent of births were attended by skilled personnel in 2023, the lowest rate worldwide. In contrast, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia achieved a rate of 96 per cent.

Adolescent birth rate, by age group, 2000 and 2023 (births per 1,000 women or girls in each age group)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Under-5 and neonatal mortality rate, 2015–2022 (deaths per 1,000 live births)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Efforts to combat communicable diseases have prevented millions of deaths but are threatened by inequalities and emerging threats

HIV/AIDS: The world has made significant strides in combating HIV. In 2022, an estimated 1.3 million new infections represented a 27 per cent decrease since 2015 and a 38 per cent reduction since 2010. Sub-Saharan Africa, the region most affected by HIV, has more than halved new infections annually since 2010. In 2022, 29.8 million of the 39 million people living with HIV were receiving life-saving treatment. Increased access to treatment has averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths in the past three decades. In addition, the integration of HIV testing and treatment with maternal and childcare services has prevented over 3.4 million HIV infections in children since 2000. Stronger linking of services for HIV and tuberculosis has averted an estimated 6.4 million tuberculosis-related deaths among people living with HIV from 2010 to 2022.

Not everyone is benefiting equally from these advancements, however. In 2022, 43 per cent of the 1.5 million children living with HIV were not receiving treatment. Every week, 4,000 adolescent girls and young women acquired HIV; 3,100 lived in sub-Saharan Africa. Almost a quarter of new HIV infections were in Asia in 2022. Steep increases of new HIV infections have continued in Northern Africa and Western Asia. These worrying trends are primarily due to a lack of preventive services for people from marginalized and key populations, punitive laws, violence, social stigma and discrimination.

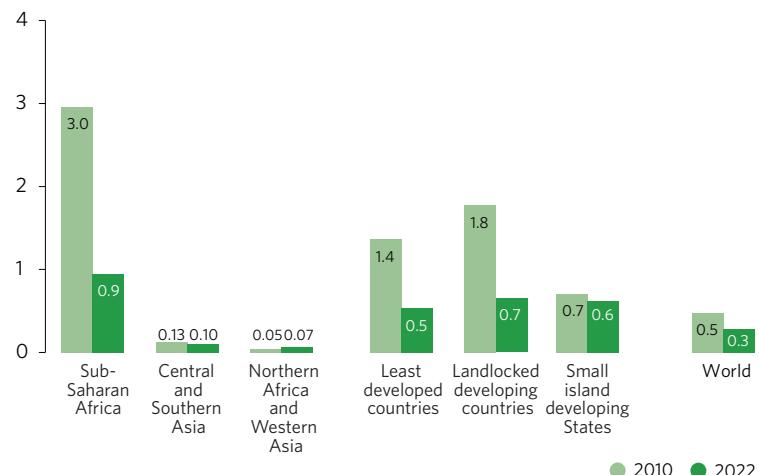
Tuberculosis: The reported number of people newly diagnosed with tuberculosis reached 7.5 million in 2022, the highest figure since global monitoring began in 1995 and above the previous historical peak of 7.1 million in 2019. Worldwide, an estimated 10.6 million people developed tuberculosis in 2022, up from 10.3 million in 2021 and 10.0 million in 2020. The disease remains the world's second leading cause of death from a single infectious agent, with an estimated 1.3 million deaths in 2022. This was down from the estimated 1.4 million deaths in both 2020 and 2021 and almost back to pre-pandemic levels. The global net decrease in tuberculosis-related deaths between 2015 and 2022, however, was 19 per cent, well below the target of a 75 per cent reduction by 2025. The estimated disease incidence rate was 133 new cases per 100,000 population in 2022, a fall of 8.7 per cent since 2015. A return to the pre-pandemic downward trend may occur in 2023 or 2024.

Malaria: An estimated 249 million malaria cases occurred globally in 2022, 16 million more than in 2019 before the pandemic. The disease claimed an estimated 608,000 lives in 2022, an increase of 32,000 compared to 2019. Since 2015, insecticide-treated net use among young children and pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa has stagnated at around 56 per cent. In 2022, an estimated 58 per cent of at-risk pregnant women did not receive the recommended preventive malaria therapy, and about one third of children with fever did not receive care from a health provider. Alongside disruptions caused by COVID-19, the global malaria response faces increasing threats, including drug and insecticide resistance, humanitarian crises, funding constraints, delays in programme implementation and climate change impacts. Despite these challenges, some important achievements sustain progress towards elimination in many countries with a low malaria burden, with 25 countries reporting fewer than 10 cases in 2022. Thirteen countries have been certified malaria-free since 2015.

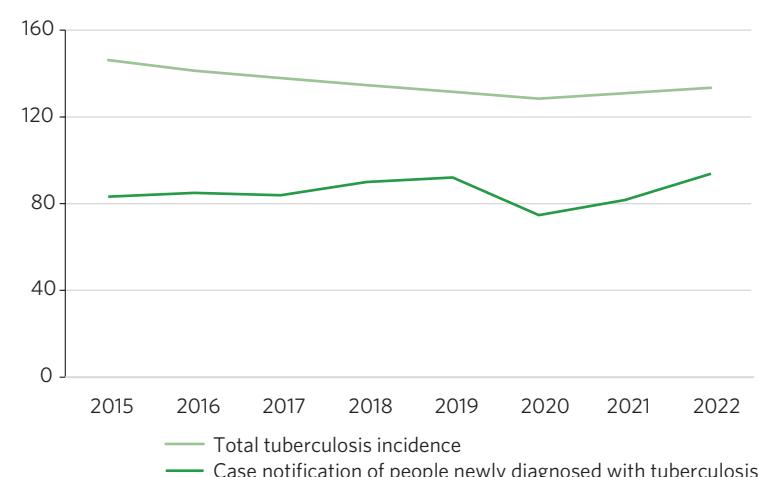
Neglected tropical diseases: In 2022, 1.6 billion people required treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases, a 26.1 per cent decline from 2010. The proportion of the population living in LDCs who required interventions for these diseases decreased from 79 per cent to 45 per cent during this period. As of December 2023, 50 countries, territories and areas had eliminated at least one neglected tropical disease, demonstrating the power of comprehensive interventions combining mass and individual treatment, vector control, veterinary public health and provision of safe water and sanitation.

Progress has not been fast enough to meet the target of reducing the global population requiring interventions for neglected tropical diseases by 90 per cent between 2010 and 2030. Achieving this target demands a renewed effort to scale up interventions, particularly in high-burden countries, many of which are LDCs.

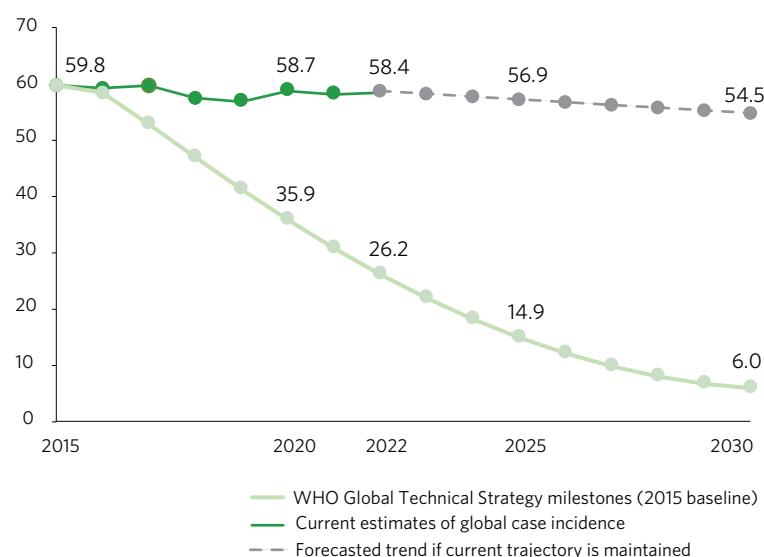
HIV incidence rate, 2010 and 2022 (number of new infections per 1,000 uninfected adults aged 15–49 years)



Tuberculosis estimated incidence rate and case notification rate, 2015–2022 (new cases per 100,000 population per year)



Malaria case incidence, 2015–2030 (cases per 1,000 population at risk)



Twenty-one million children missed out on life-saving vaccines in 2022

Between 2000 and 2019, the proportion of children receiving three doses of the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP3) vaccine rose from 72 to 86 per cent, then dipped to 81 per cent in 2021 before rebounding to 84 per cent in 2022. In 2022, 20.5 million children missed at least one routine vaccine and 14.3 million received no vaccines at all. Coverage of two doses of the measles vaccine and three doses of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine increased in 2022, reaching 74 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively, following stagnation in 2020–2021. Global coverage of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, critical for women's and girls' health, stood at only 15 per cent in 2022, despite 130 countries introducing it in their national immunization services by the end of the year.

Treatment reaches only marginal shares of people with drug and alcohol disorders

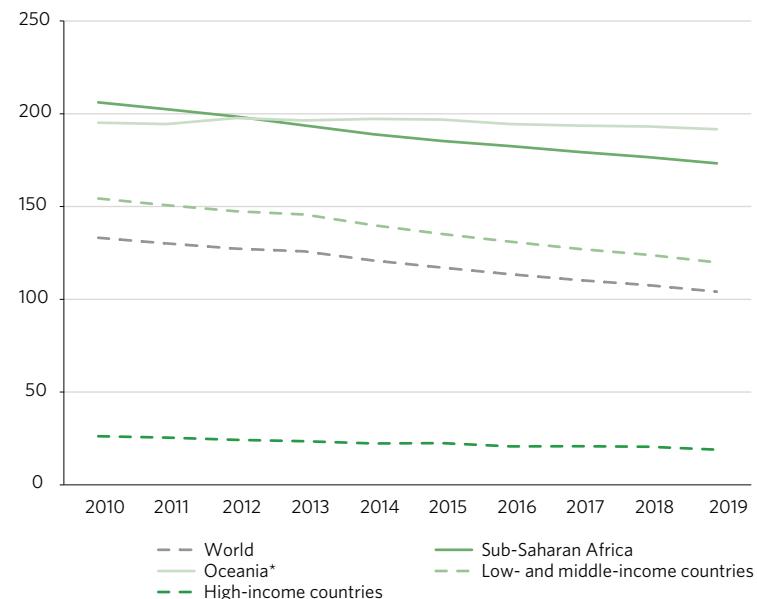
Newly available estimates reveal that globally, only about 1 in 11 individuals with drug use disorders received related treatment in 2022. Coverage decreased from 11 per cent to under 9 per cent between 2015 and 2022, and has notably decelerated in the Americas and Asia. Treatment coverage for women consistently lags behind that for men across all regions, with over 13 per cent of men receiving treatment compared to less than 6 per cent of women in 2022. Data on access to treatment for those with alcohol use disorders indicate a dire situation, with coverage ranging from 0.3 per cent to a maximum of 14 per cent in reporting countries. Considering that approximately 283 million people or 5 per cent of the adult population lives with alcohol use disorders, hundreds of millions are going without needed treatment and care.

More than 9 in 10 deaths caused by air pollution occur in lower- and middle-income countries

Particulate air pollution caused approximately 104 deaths per 100,000 people annually by 2019, despite a slight decrease in the global mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution since 2010. Ninety-three per cent of the burden fell on low- and middle-income countries in 2019, primarily in Asia and Africa. Non-communicable diseases accounted for 85 per cent of air pollution-related deaths, while acute lower respiratory infections made up the remaining 15 per cent. Concerningly, 31 per cent of deaths from acute lower respiratory infections occurred in children under age 5.

Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand), sub-Saharan Africa and most of Asia have the highest mortality rates attributable to air pollution. This is largely due to significant exposure to air pollution in households, a large proportion of which rely on polluting fuels and technologies for cooking, lighting and heating. Health risks from household air pollution are particularly high among women and children, who tend to spend more time in and around cooking stoves.

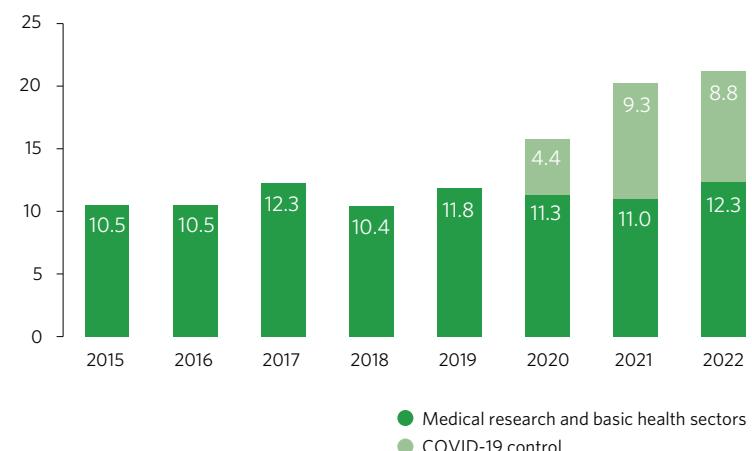
Age-standardized mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution, 2010–2019 (deaths per 100,000 population)



Official development assistance for health has scaled up but with a major share spent on COVID-19

Total net official development assistance (ODA) for medical research and basic health sectors has significantly increased in recent years, primarily driven by the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ODA for basic health care from all donors more than doubled in real terms between 2015 and 2022, rising from \$10.5 billion to \$21.1 billion (in constant 2022 prices). It rose 4.4 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021. In 2022, COVID-19 control constituted the largest share of ODA for basic health care at 42 per cent, totalling \$8.8 billion, of which \$1.6 billion was for COVID-19 vaccine donations. Between 2020 and 2022, COVID-19 control received \$22.5 billion in total ODA. Other ODA expenditure in 2022 comprised \$3.7 billion on infectious disease control, \$2.4 billion on malaria control and \$2.2 billion on basic health care. By region, sub-Saharan Africa received the largest volume and share of aid for basic health care, amounting to \$6.6 billion.

Total official development assistance to medical research and basic health sectors, 2015–2022 (billions of constant 2022 US dollars)





Quality education

- Progress towards Goal 4 has been slow since 2015, with only 58 per cent of students worldwide achieving a minimum proficiency in reading by 2019. Recent assessments reveal a significant decline in math and reading scores in many countries, highlighting a set of factors beyond the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on global education.
- Many countries face challenges such as inadequate education infrastructure, teacher shortages and insufficient teacher training. While technology has expanded educational opportunities, it has also widened inequalities, leaving millions of people, especially in marginalized and low-income communities, without access to education.
- To meet national 2030 education targets, which have been scaled back compared to the original Goal 4 targets, countries must annually enrol 1.4 million children in early childhood education, admit a new child to school every two seconds until 2030 and triple annual progress in primary completion rates.



A volunteer teacher gives a lesson to children in a camp for displaced people in eastern Myanmar.

- Accelerating progress could have a catalytic impact on achieving the overall 2030 Agenda. Prioritizing increased education funding, teacher training, and inclusive and accessible schools are essential steps, along with leveraging technology and bridging the digital divide to achieve equitable access to quality education.

Global upper secondary school completion growth slows yet Eastern and South-Eastern Asia displays remarkable progress

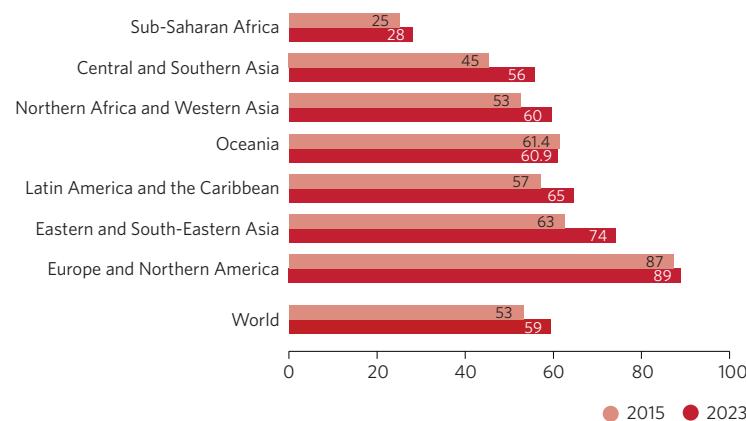
Between 2015 and 2023, the primary school completion rate increased from 85 to 88 per cent, the lower secondary completion rate from 74 to 78 per cent, and the upper secondary completion rate from 53 to 59 per cent. However, only two in three children in sub-Saharan Africa complete primary school on time.

Progress in upper secondary completion slowed from 1.3 percentage points annually (2010–2015) to 0.9 percentage points annually (2015–2023), with Oceania experiencing negative growth. Yet some regions made notable progress. Eastern and South-Eastern Asia was the fastest growing region, with the completion rate climbing from 63 per cent in 2015 to 74 per cent in 2023.

Globally, girls' completion rates exceed those of boys by 2 to 3 percentage points in both primary and secondary education. At the upper secondary level, girls hold a notable advantage, with a 14 percentage-point gap in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, 8 points in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 4 to 5 points in most other regions. In Central and Southern

Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, boys maintain a slight lead of 2 to 3 percentage points. These regional disparities underscore the need for targeted efforts to achieve equal educational opportunities for all children.

Upper secondary school completion rate, 2015 and 2023 (percentage)



COVID-19 and other factors have exacerbated declines in reading and mathematics

Based on the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment test at the end of lower secondary school in 81 member and partner countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), from 2018 to 2022, mean performance in mathematics plummeted by a record 15 points. Reading scores declined by 10 points, twice the previous record. Reading proficiency followed a downward trajectory for a decade prior to these results; mathematics scores were relatively stable from 2003 to 2018. An unprecedented drop highlights the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global education.

Significant data shortfalls in tracking learning outcomes, especially in early education, pose challenges in assessing global trends and disparities among countries. With data available for only one in five countries at the end of primary school, recent initiatives to close the gaps show promise in expanding cross-national assessments.

An urgent need for enhanced climate change and sustainability education and teacher training

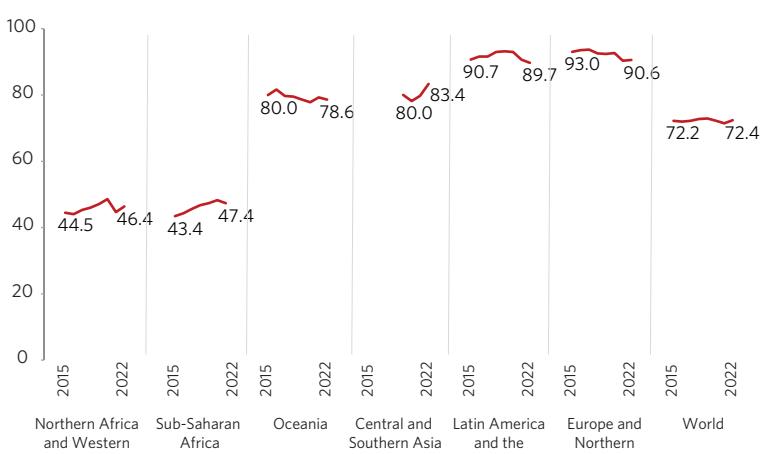
Although 90 per cent of countries report that they mainstream sustainable development and global citizenship subjects in national education systems, evidence suggests scattered uptake. A 2023 study of more than 530 ninth grade science and social science curricula found that 69 per cent did not mention climate change and 66 per cent omitted sustainability. Despite claims by some teachers that these topics were covered, 50 per cent admitted to not teaching them. Three quarters of countries expressed intentions to revise their curricula within the next three years to prioritize climate change and sustainability. Simply revising curricula may not be sufficient, however, if teachers lack the confidence or willingness to teach these subjects. Comprehensive support from schools, training institutions, communities and governments is essential to encourage educators to effectively transmit sustainability principles to future generations.

Universal pre-primary education is hindered by inadequate legal guarantees and financial barriers

Globally, pre-primary education has stagnated since the SDGs were agreed. Seven out of 10 children globally attended organized learning one year before the official primary entry age in 2022, a rate unchanged since 2015. In sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Africa and Western Asia, less than half of children attended pre-primary school, despite previous progress.

COVID-19 reversed growth in pre-primary education, causing a decline of 1.5 percentage points. This particularly impacted the poorest children, as pre-primary education can mitigate disadvantages. Legal guarantees for free and compulsory pre-primary education are crucial to school readiness and equal opportunities, yet only a quarter of countries make it compulsory and only half offer it for free. Financial barriers persist in regions where the private provision of education is prevalent; in sub-Saharan Africa, 32 per cent of pre-primary students attend private institutions. Overall, children from the richest households are twice as likely to attend preschool compared to those from the least affluent households.

Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), 2015–2022 (percentage)



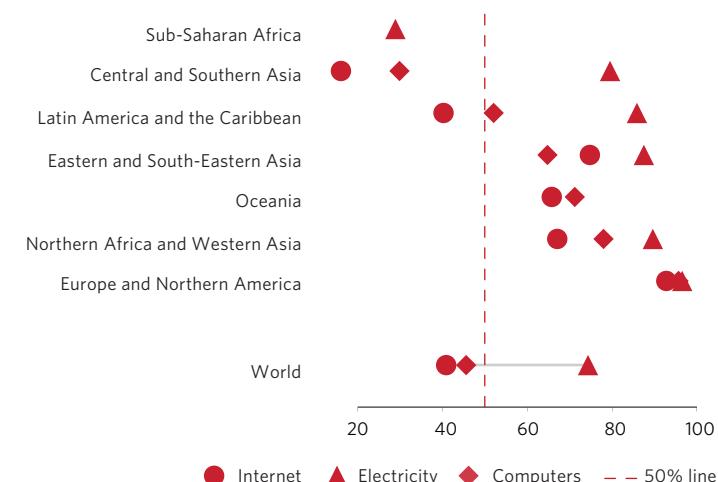
Note: No data are available for Eastern and South-Eastern Asia between 2015 and 2022.

Lags in basic services in schools continue to marginalize girls and students with disabilities

Despite basic services in schools being essential for fair learning opportunities, progress has been slow, particularly affecting students with disabilities and girls. Globally, only half of primary schools and just 62 per cent of secondary schools have basic infrastructure for students with disabilities. In Latin America and the Caribbean, only a third of primary schools can accommodate students with disabilities. Globally, over 20 per cent of primary schools have no separate sanitation facilities for girls. A lack of handwashing facilities in 2 out of 10 schools poses health risks, especially during pandemics.

Between 2021 and 2022, the growth rate in schools' Internet access for pedagogical purposes doubled globally and even tripled in some regions. At the upper secondary level, 91 per cent of schools had access to electricity, 81 per cent had computers and 69 per cent were connected to the Internet. Significant disparities remained, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where less than a third of primary schools and about half of secondary schools had access to electricity, hindering the use of technology.

Proportion of primary schools with access to basic services (percentage) by type of service, 2022 or most recent year

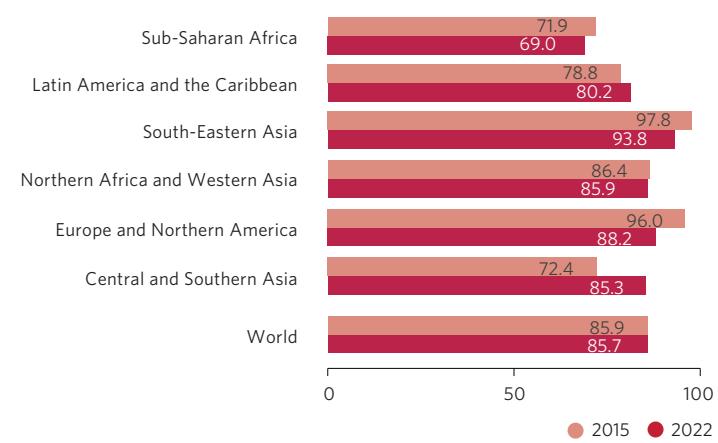


A substantial number of teachers are not trained according to minimum standards in their country

Teachers are the single most important factor in student learning. Yet a significant teacher qualification gap persists globally. On average, 15 per cent of teachers lack minimum qualifications, constraining progress across all levels of education.

Sub-Saharan Africa faces the steepest challenge, with only 60 per cent of pre-primary teachers meeting standards compared to 90 per cent in Europe and Northern America in 2022. At the primary level, 7 out of 10 teachers in sub-Saharan Africa met minimum required qualifications compared to 9 out of 10 in most other regions. Teacher shortages and limited in-service training compound this problem, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where enrolment growth outpaces teacher hiring. Inconsistency in national teacher qualification standards further obstructs progress. The International Standard Classification of Teacher Training Programmes was endorsed in 2021 to define a minimum global standard for trained teachers but has yet to be widely implemented.

Proportion of primary school teachers with minimum required qualifications, 2015 and 2022 or most recent year (percentage)





Gender equality

- The world continues to lag in its pursuit of gender equality by 2030. Harmful practices are decreasing but not at a rate keeping up with population growth. One in five girls still marry before age 18. A staggering 230 million girls and women have been subjected to female genital mutilation. Far too many women still cannot realize the right to decide on their sexual and reproductive health. Violence against women persists, disproportionately affecting those with disabilities.
- Parity in women's participation in public life remains elusive, and in management positions, at current rates, parity will require another 176 years. Women carry an unfair burden of unpaid domestic and care work, spending 2.5 times more hours a day on it than men.
- Strong and sustained commitments to changing biased social norms, eliminating harmful practices and abolishing discriminatory laws are



Women in the fishing industry in Burundi demonstrate against gender-based violence during an annual campaign for the elimination of violence against women.

urgently needed. Enhancing women's roles in leadership and decision-making and adequately scaling up investments in gender equality on national, regional and global scales are top priorities.

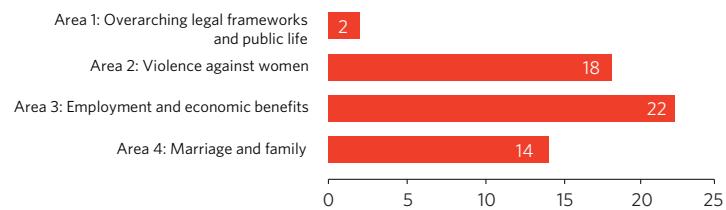
The dismantling of discriminatory laws is encouraging but gaps persist, notably in land rights

Data from 120 countries show that from 2019 to 2023, 56 positive legal reforms focused on removing discriminatory laws and establishing legal frameworks to advance gender equality. Twenty-two reforms centred on equal rights to employment and economic benefits and 18 on stopping violence against women. The reforms included lifting restrictions on women working in specific sectors, guaranteeing equal remuneration for work of equal value and prohibiting marital rape. Gaps remain, however; no reporting country earned a perfect score across all areas of legislation.

Legal protections of women's land rights remain grossly inadequate. Among 77 countries, only 20 per cent has high levels of protection. Only 9 countries have legal provisions for financial resources to strengthen women's land

ownership. Just 23 countries have quotas ensuring women are represented in land administration or management institutions; 13 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Positive legal reforms by area of law, 2019–2023 (number)



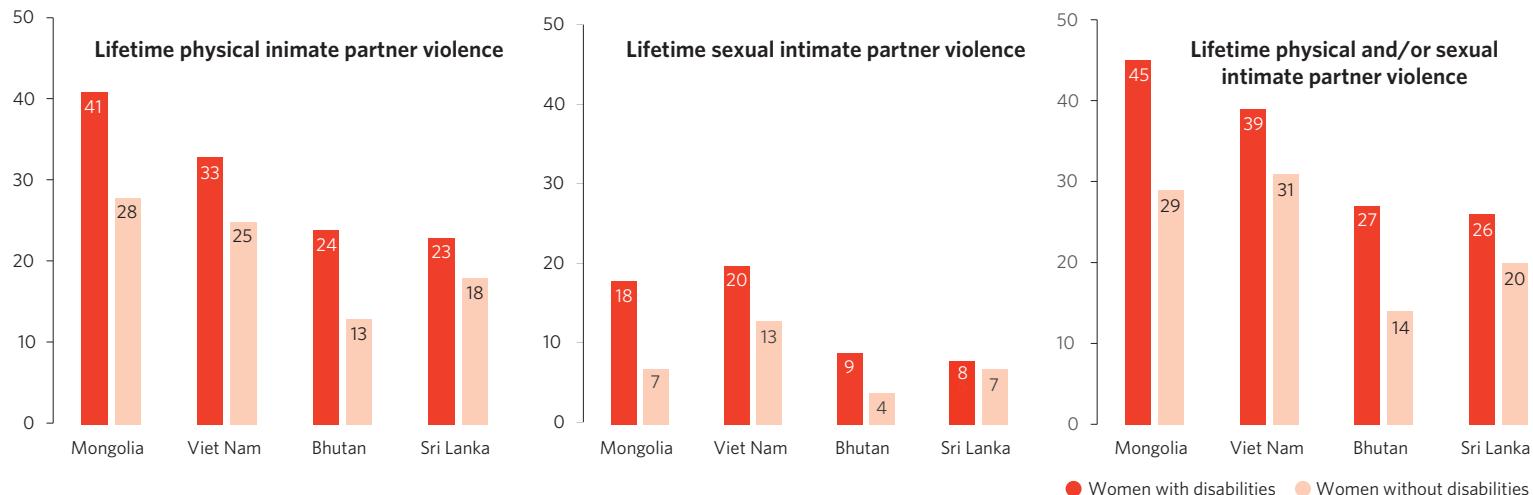
Limited data mask far greater risks of intimate partner violence among women with disabilities

Existing evidence shows that the prevalence of intimate partner violence, in all forms, is higher among women with disabilities than those without disabilities. Data from four countries in Asia and the Pacific indicate that in Mongolia, 41 per cent of women with disabilities has experienced physical violence by a partner compared to 28 per cent of women without disabilities. In Viet Nam, 1 in 5 women with disabilities has been subjected to sexual violence by an intimate partner compared to 2 in 15 women without

disabilities. Differences in the prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence range from 6 to 16 percentage points in the four countries.

Prevalence estimates are limited by the underrepresentation of women with disabilities in population-based surveys on violence against women and by the non-inclusion of forms of violence specific to women with disabilities. Without data, women with disabilities remain "invisible" in policies, prevention and response strategies.

Prevalence of lifetime physical, sexual and physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence among ever-partnered women aged 15–64, by disability status, latest data from 2017 or 2019 (percentage)



Harmful practices are declining but not at rates keeping up with population growth

Child marriage and female genital mutilation violate the rights of girls and have lifelong consequences. An estimated 640 million girls and women were married in childhood globally, with one third in India alone. Some progress has been made. One in five girls was married before 18 today compared to one in four 25 years ago; 68 million child marriages were averted in this period.

Over 230 million girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation. Some countries have made strides towards ending it, but new estimates show

an increase of 30 million cases compared to eight years ago. In Africa, over 144 million girls and women have undergone the practice, with notably high levels in Djibouti, Guinea and Somalia, where at least 90 per cent of girls and women are affected. Asia and the Middle East are home to significant numbers affected by female genital mutilation as well, at over 80 million and over 6 million, respectively. Demographic trends pose challenges, as populations are projected to grow fastest in regions where harmful practices are common.

From legislatures to corporate boards, women have made insufficient gains in leadership

Women's political participation remains constrained. As of 1 January 2024, women occupied 26.9 per cent of seats in national parliaments, up from 22.3 per cent in 2015. Only six countries had 50 per cent or more women in the lower or single chamber (Andorra, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates). Two lower chambers now have no women members (Oman and Yemen), down from five in 2015. In local government, women occupied 35.5 per cent of elected seats in 2023. Gender quotas largely determine progress.

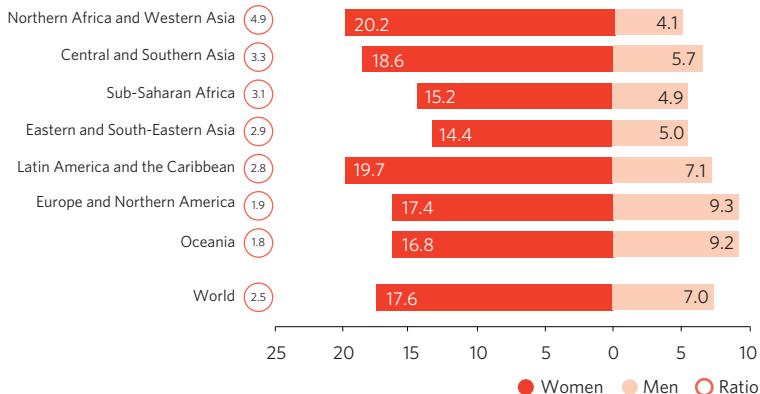
While women hold 40 per cent of global employment, they only occupied 27.5 per cent of managerial positions in 2022, the same share as in 2016. Parity in managerial roles will take 176 years at current rates of change, with discrimination, restrictive laws and inadequate social protection creating daunting barriers. Sub-Saharan Africa shows progress is possible. It has achieved an 11.3 percentage-point increase in female managers since 2000, reaching 38 per cent in 2022. The global increase was only 2.8 percentage points over the same period.

Heavy burdens of unpaid domestic and care work trap women in poverty and inequality

Despite variations across regions and country-specific differences, women in general perform most unpaid domestic and care work. This disproportionate burden is amplified in lower-income households, contributing to poverty, inequality and precariousness, including by limiting labour-market participation.

On average, each day, women spend 2.5 times more hours on unpaid domestic and care work than men. Regional disparities are marked, at five times more in Northern Africa and Western Asia compared to about two times more in Oceania, Europe and Northern America. Differences are primarily attributed to men allocating more time to unpaid work than to regional differences among women's engagement in unpaid labour.

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex (percentage) and ratio between women and men (bubbles), 2000–2022

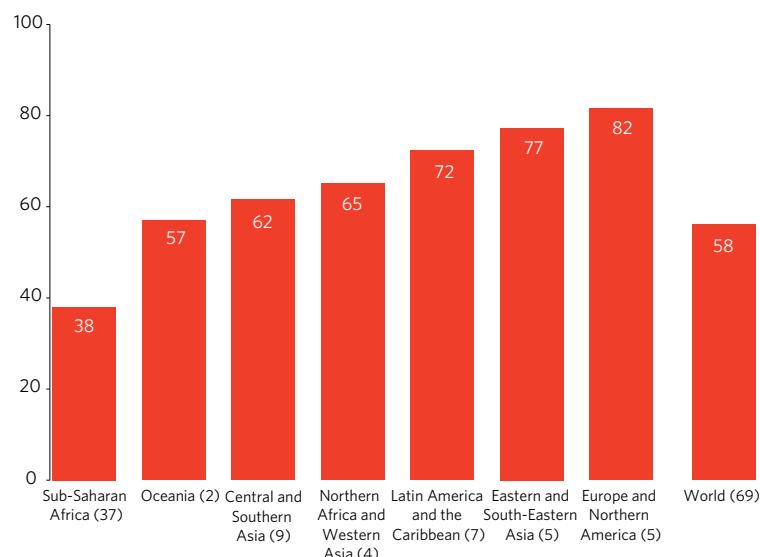


Women's empowerment in sexual and reproductive health decisions remains restricted globally, although positive strides are evident in some places

Data from 69 countries show that 56 per cent of married or in-union women aged 15–49 can decide on their sexual and reproductive health and rights, ranging from 38 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa to over 80 per cent in Europe. Although 89 per cent of women can autonomously decide to use contraception, one in four cannot make health-care decisions or say no to sex. New data from 32 countries show that 19 have seen a positive trend in women's ability to make decisions on sexual and reproductive health, particularly in Eastern and Southern Africa. Conversely, Western and Central Africa has experienced notable declines.

Socioeconomic factors such as household wealth, education and place of residence may shape these outcomes. For instance, data reveal shifts in the urban-rural gap, with some countries seeing decreased disparities and some, such as Armenia and Uganda, experiencing widening gaps. Understanding the trends is crucial in developing policies and programmes for vulnerable groups. Focusing on rural populations, the lowest wealth quintiles and individuals with limited education could help bridge significant gaps.

Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights, 2007–2022 (percentage)



Note: The number of countries with comparable survey data included in the regional aggregations is presented in parentheses. Based on the Demographic and Health Surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and other national surveys conducted from 2007 to 2022.



Clean water and sanitation

- Despite some improvements, progress in water and sanitation remains insufficient. At the current speed, in 2030, 2 billion people will still live without safely managed drinking water, 3 billion without safely managed sanitation and 1.4 billion without basic hygiene services.
- In 2022, roughly half the world's population experienced severe water scarcity for at least part of the year. One quarter faced "extremely high" levels of water stress. Climate change worsens these issues, posing significant risks to social stability. While 153 Member States share transboundary waters, only one region is on track to cover all transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers with cooperation arrangements by 2030.
- Sustainable management of water resources underpins prosperity and peace for all. It demands increased funding; more data-driven decision-making; skilled workforce development; innovative technology, including



A family washes vegetables in a sink outside their home in Guatemala. The local community has improved water, sanitation and hygiene services.

artificial intelligence (AI); and robust cross-sector collaboration. Coordinated global action on integrated water management to address climate change impacts as well as better management of shared waters are also key.

More people have safe drinking water and sanitation but billions still go without

Between 2015 and 2022, the proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water increased from 69 to 73 per cent. Shares with safely managed sanitation rose from 49 to 57 per cent and with basic hygiene services from 67 to 75 per cent. In 2022, however, 2.2 billion people still lacked safely managed drinking water, 3.5 billion went without safely managed sanitation (including 419 million who practised open defecation) and 2 billion still had inadequate basic hygiene services (including 653

million with no facilities at all). Additionally, 1.8 billion people had no on-premises drinking water, with women primarily responsible for water collection in two out of three households. Achieving universal coverage by 2030 will require a sixfold increase in current rates of progress for safely managed drinking water, a fivefold increase for safely managed sanitation and a threefold increase for basic hygiene services.

Degraded water quality is likely a global trend yet data gaps constrain understanding and action

In 2022, based on 73 countries reporting both total wastewater generation and treatment, 76 per cent of total wastewater received some treatment. In 42 countries specifying treatment levels, 60 per cent of total wastewater flows were safely treated (with at least secondary treatment). Far fewer countries reported on the generation or treatment of industrial wastewater. Data on household wastewater from 140 countries and territories show that 58 per cent received safe treatment. Trends in domestic wastewater suggest that little, if any, progress is being made towards the target of halving the proportion of unsafe discharges by 2030. Large gaps in monitoring and reporting, particularly in low-income countries, result in an unclear picture of global wastewater.

In 2023, data on 91,000 water bodies from 120 countries revealed that 56 per cent had good water quality. Reporting on this indicator increased from 71 countries in 2017 to 120 in 2023. The 40 highest-income countries

reported on 75 per cent of these water bodies, while 80 other countries reported on the remaining 25 per cent. More countries monitored rivers (101) than lakes and groundwater (71 each) due to technical challenges. This is concerning, as groundwater often constitutes the largest share of freshwater while lakes are vital ecosystems. Agriculture and untreated wastewater are major threats to water quality, releasing harmful excess nutrients.

Degradation in water quality since 2017 is a concerning trend based on data from countries with extensive monitoring programmes. This trend may be global, given lower wastewater treatment rates in many low-income countries, but insufficient data limit confirmation. The lack of data obscures early warning signs, impedes restoration efforts and jeopardizes freshwater ecosystem services.

Permanent water bodies grew by over 2 per cent from 2005 to 2022

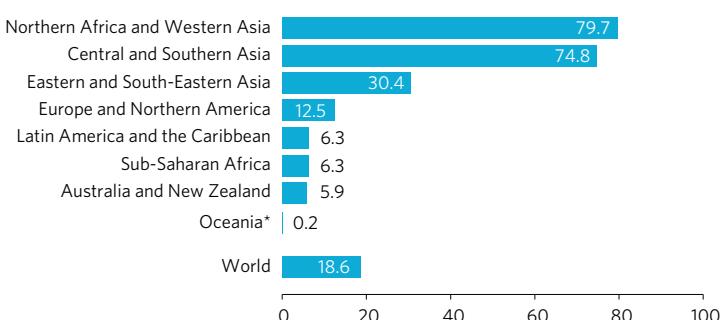
Using millions of satellite images, scientists mapped permanent water bodies globally from 2005 to 2022. The analysis revealed a net global increase of 2.1 per cent (53,672 km²) in permanent water area since 2005. Much of the increase comes from climate change and reservoir filling. While

the global net gain in permanent water is positive, global data also reflect losses of permanent water linked to droughts and rising water demand in some regions, notably Australia and New Zealand, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central Asia.

Water stress is increasing, with devastating consequences for sustainable development

The water stress level measures all freshwater withdrawals relative to total freshwater resources. A withdrawal rate above 75 per cent of renewable water resources represents high water stress; more than 100 per cent is critical. High water stress can have devastating consequences for the environment and hinder or even reverse economic and social development. Globally, the water stress level reached an average of 18.6 per cent in 2021, with Central and Southern Asia facing high stress and Northern Africa in critical stress. From 2015 to 2021, global water stress increased by 3 per cent. Stress levels in Northern Africa and Western Asia rose 12 per cent, exacerbating already critical levels. Agriculture accounts for 72 per cent of freshwater withdrawals globally, followed by industry (15 per cent) and services (13 per cent).

Level of water stress, 2021 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Global water use efficiency has risen by varying degrees depending on the structure of economies

Global water use efficiency increased from \$17.4/m³ in 2015 to \$20.8/m³ in 2021, a 19 per cent increase in efficiency. Efficiency improved in all economic sectors. Agriculture saw the greatest rise, at 36 per cent, followed by industry at 31 per cent and services at 6.3 per cent. Efficiency varies widely, influenced by a country's economic structure and the sectoral distribution of water. In 2021, estimates ranged from below \$3/m³ in agriculture-dependent economies to over \$50/m³ in highly industrialized, service-based ones.

Despite the average increase globally, around 58 per cent of countries still exhibit low water use efficiency (less than \$20/m³). Regionally, Oceania, Europe and Northern America have exceeded the global average, while Central and Southern Asia are falling behind. From 2015 to 2021, Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia experienced growth of 44 per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean witnessed a 7 per cent decline. Countries are adopting various strategies to enhance water use efficiency, including infrastructure modernization, more efficient irrigation and wastewater reuse.

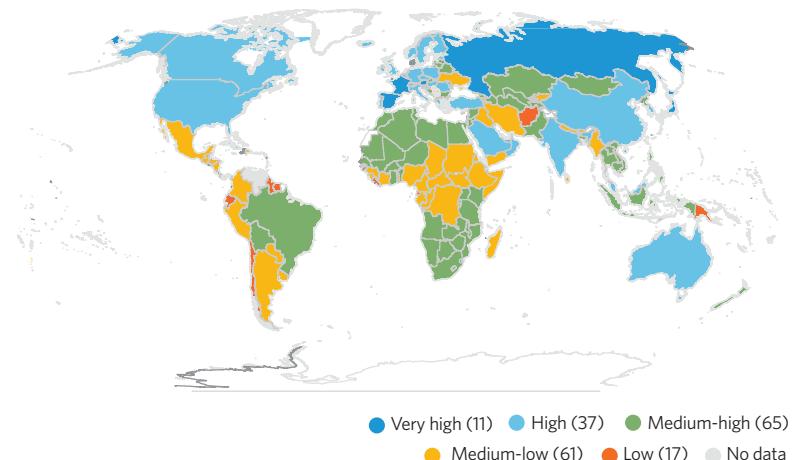
Much more effort is needed to realize the full potential of transboundary water cooperation

Cooperative agreements among countries sharing transboundary water resources (rivers, lakes and aquifers) are essential for advancing sustainable development and addressing climate change. In 2024, only 43 out of 153 Member States sharing transboundary waters have operational arrangements covering 90 per cent or more of these resources. Over 20 countries lack any such arrangements. While progress has been notable in sub-Saharan Africa, where 16 countries now cover 90 per cent of their transboundary basins with operational arrangements, only a few countries in Asia, Latin America and North Africa have adequate arrangements. Alarmingly, nearly 43 per cent of countries lack flood alarm systems for any of their transboundary water bodies, 63 per cent go without drought alarm systems, 59 per cent have no joint climate change adaptation strategies for any of their transboundary basins and 64 per cent have yet to enact joint disaster risk reduction strategies. Since 2020, only around 10 new cooperation arrangements have been adopted for previously uncovered transboundary water bodies. Achieving coverage of all transboundary basins by 2030 will require significantly accelerated progress.

Integrated water management boosts resilience to multiple crises, including climate change

Tackling climate change, water scarcity and other crises requires a comprehensive approach to managing water resources, across sectors and borders. Countries with higher levels of integrated water resources management (score 0 to 100 per cent) are more resilient to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Global progress in implementing integrated water resources management remains slow, however, edging up from a score of 49 per cent in 2017 to only 57 per cent in 2023, far short of the 2030 target of 91 to 100 per cent. Significant efforts to accelerate implementation are needed, particularly in Central and Southern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa. Countries report that their main challenges are the lack of coordination across sectors and insufficient financial, institutional and technical capacity. Successful countries demonstrate that mainstreaming water resources in climate planning and financing allows them to build resilience and advance multiple development objectives, including for food, energy and ecosystems.

Implementation levels of integrated water resources management, 2023 or latest available year



Note: Number of countries per level in parentheses.



Affordable and clean energy

- Considerable strides have been made in achieving sustainable energy targets. The number of people lacking access to electricity dropped from 958 million in 2015 to 685 million in 2022. The number without clean cooking fuels declined from 2.8 billion to 2.1 billion over the same period. Global capacity to generate electricity from renewable energy has begun expanding at an unprecedented rate, a trend expected to continue.
- Recent events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, have disrupted progress, including by exacerbating already insufficient international financial flows for clean energy in developing countries. Without a change in course, an estimated 660 million people will still lack electricity access and around 1.8 billion will go without clean cooking fuels and technologies by 2030.
- To achieve universal access to clean energy by 2030, robust policies are needed to accelerate electrification, enhance energy efficiency



Workers install solar panels to power a public hospital in Yemen, restoring operations affected by ongoing conflict.

and increase investments in renewable energy. These efforts, coupled with fostering innovative solutions and creating supportive regulatory frameworks, are pivotal to advance towards Goal 7 and meet climate objectives.

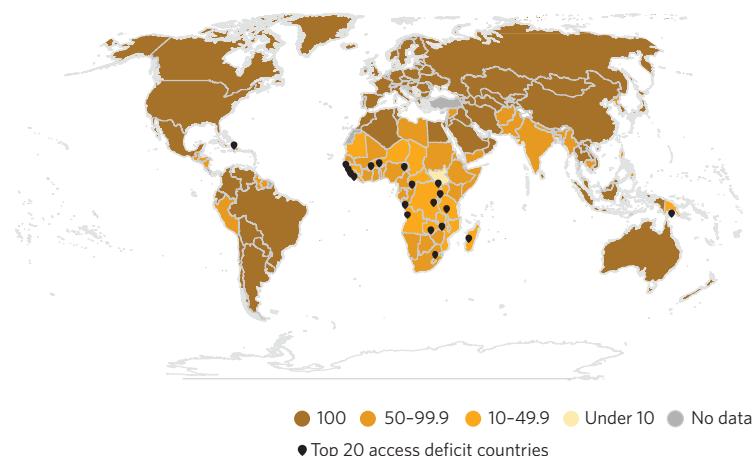
The number of people lacking electricity access grew for the first time in a decade

In 2022, although the global electricity access rate held steady at 91 per cent, 685 million people still lacked electricity, 10 million more than in 2021 due to population growth. This marked the first such increase in a decade. The setback is largely attributed to the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic and Ukraine conflict, which affected energy prices and markets. Those without access to electricity are predominantly in low-income households or located in remote areas.

Progress varies by region. Central and Southern Asia reduced the regional gap from 235 million people in 2015 to 33 million in 2022. Sub-Saharan Africa had a growing share of the global access deficit, at 83 per cent (or 570 million people) in 2022, up from 50 per cent in 2010. While access to electricity grew globally at 0.77 per cent annually on average from 2010 to 2020, the rate slowed to 0.43 per cent from 2020 to 2022. With projections indicating that 660 million people globally will remain unserved by 2030, achieving universal electricity access will require a 1.08 per cent annual increase. Investing in decentralized renewable energy, including stand-alone

off-grid solar and mini-grids, together with electricity-as-a-service models holds significant potential to bridge the access gap.

Proportion of the population with access to electricity, 2022 (percentage)

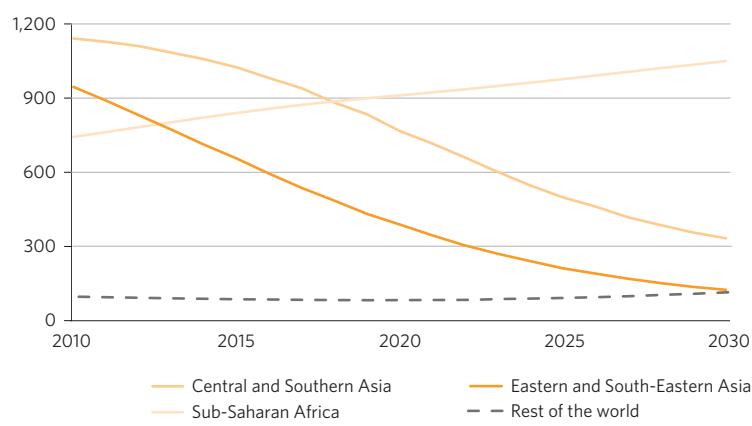


Without faster progress, by 2030, around 1.8 billion people will still prepare meals using polluting stoves and fuels

In 2022, 74 per cent of the global population had access to clean cooking. The global access deficit fell to 26 per cent, down from 36 per cent in 2015. This still leaves around 2.1 billion people relying on polluting fuels and technologies, such as wood, charcoal, dung and crop waste, as their primary energy source for cooking. Without stepped-up interventions, around 1.8 billion people or 21 per cent of the world's population could lack access to clean cooking by 2030.

Among the regions, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and Central and Southern Asia have seen consistent improvements. By contrast, sub-Saharan Africa remains the only region where the deficit is rising; it could exceed 1 billion people without access by 2030. Globally, urban-rural disparities are stark, with 88 per cent of urban households compared to 54 per cent of rural households having access to clean cooking solutions. A reliance on traditional stoves and polluting fuels worsens health and environmental risks, particularly for women and children, who bear the brunt of cooking and fuel collection burdens.

Population without access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking, by region, 2010–2030 (millions)

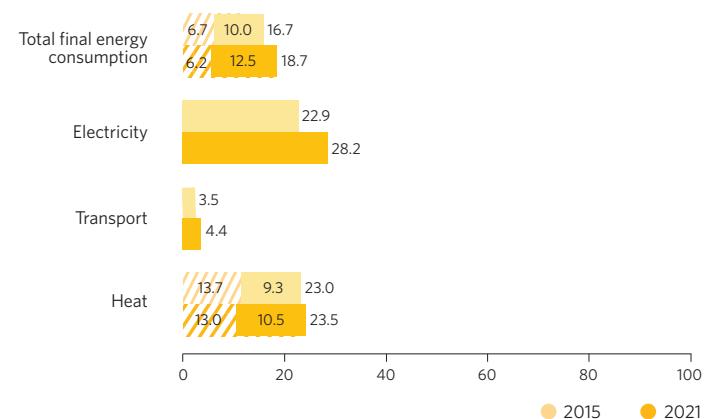


Electricity is at the forefront in the shift to global renewable energy; hurdles remain in heating and transport

The share of renewable energy in the world's total final energy consumption rose from 16.7 per cent in 2015 to 18.7 per cent in 2021. Excluding traditional forms of biomass, the share of modern renewable sources climbed gradually from 10 per cent in 2015 to 12.5 per cent in 2021. Traditional uses of biomass accounted for slightly over a third of total renewable energy consumption.

The electricity sector has emerged as a frontrunner in adopting wind and solar technologies due to their declining costs. Renewables constituted over 28.2 per cent of total final energy consumption for electricity in 2021, up from 22.9 per cent in 2015. This signals how the world's capacity to generate renewable power is expanding at an unprecedented rate, presenting a tangible opportunity to triple global capacity by 2030, as agreed at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2023. Yet increases in renewable energy use remain constrained in the heating and transport sectors, which account for four fifths of total final energy consumption.

Share of renewable sources in final energy consumption and by end use, 2015 and 2021 (percentage)

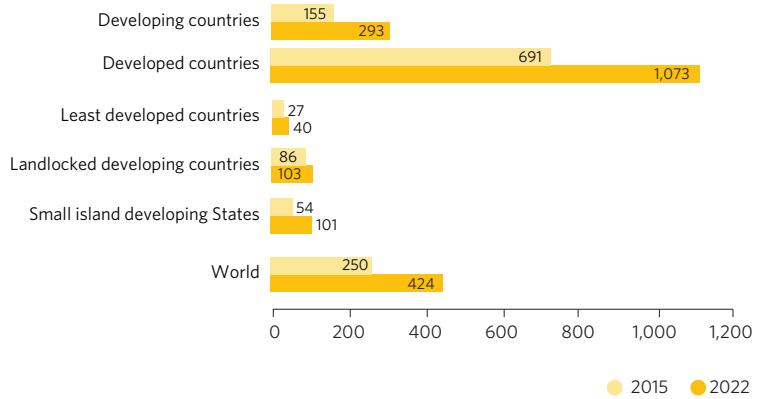


Note: The solid area of each bar represents modern renewable sources, and the striped area represents traditional use of biomass.

Impressive overall average gains in electricity generated with renewables obscure slow progress in some places

Globally, per capita installed capacity for generating electricity with renewable energy nearly doubled from 250 watts in 2015 to 424 watts in 2022. The past five years saw an all-time high compound annual growth rate of 8.1 per cent. Developing countries witnessed substantial expansion from 155 to 293 renewable watts per capita. Developed countries saw a milder rise from 691 to 1,073 watts per capita, even as they have 3.7 times more installed capacity than developing nations. Disparities are more evident for the LDCs, LLDCs and small island developing States, which in 2022 achieved 40, 103 and 101 watts per capita, respectively. At current rates of expansion, LDCs would require nearly 41 years, LLDCs 38 years and small island developing States 11 years to match the 2022 levels in developing countries. This wide divide indicates an urgent need to bridge gaps in achieving equitable access to sustainable energy.

Installed capacity for renewable electricity generation, 2015 and 2022 (watts per capita)



Global investment needs to triple to rectify marginal gains in energy efficiency

Global primary energy intensity improved from 4.9 megajoules per dollar (2017 purchasing power parity) in 2015 to 4.6 in 2021. The energy intensity improvement rate for 2021 was only 0.8 per cent, however, influenced by a robust economic recovery after the pandemic and a shift towards energy-intensive industries. The rate has remained under the 1.2 per cent average observed during the last five years.

To meet the Goal 7 energy efficiency target by 2030, annual improvements must now average around 4 per cent. Key actions include switching to more

efficient fuels, such as by electrifying final uses and providing universal access to clean cooking. Improving the technical efficiency of equipment and processes and using energy and materials more efficiently are also important. Further, global investment in energy efficiency would need to triple by 2030. High interest rates pose a challenge as financing new projects has become more expensive, particularly in emerging markets and developing economies.

International public financial flows for clean energy rebounded in 2022 but remain insufficient

In 2022, international public financial flows supporting clean energy in developing countries rebounded to \$15.4 billion, an increase of 25 per cent over 2021 yet still around half the 2016 peak of \$28.5 billion. This declining trend could impede progress towards Goal 7, especially for the LDCs, LLDCs and small island development States.

Financing commitments have become marginally more widely distributed. In 2021, 80 per cent of commitments went to 19 countries, a figure rising to 25 in 2022. Trends in technology over the last decade have shifted investments from hydropower to solar energy and multiple/other renewables. In 2022, almost half of flows went to multiple/other renewables. Solar energy received 35 per cent, wind energy 11 per cent and hydropower 7 per cent.



Decent work and economic growth

- Progress towards Goal 8 faces headwinds from the COVID-19 aftermath, trade tensions, rising debt in developing countries, conflicts and geopolitical strains – collectively threatening global economic growth. While global real GDP per capita growth rebounded in 2021, it slowed in 2022 and is projected to stabilize through 2025.
- Global unemployment hit a historic low of 5 per cent in 2023 yet persistent roadblocks remain in achieving decent work. Women and youth face higher unemployment rates. Informal employment poses a significant global challenge, with over 2 billion workers in informal jobs lacking social protection in 2023. In the LDCs, and in sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia, nearly 9 in 10 workers are informally employed. Alarmingly, over one in five young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Compliance with fundamental labour rights has deteriorated.



Workers operate a production line in an electronics factory in Viet Nam.

- Accelerating progress demands sustainable economic policies, support for entrepreneurship and innovation, formalization of the informal economy, safeguards of workers' rights, social justice, and inclusive employment opportunities, especially for women and youth.

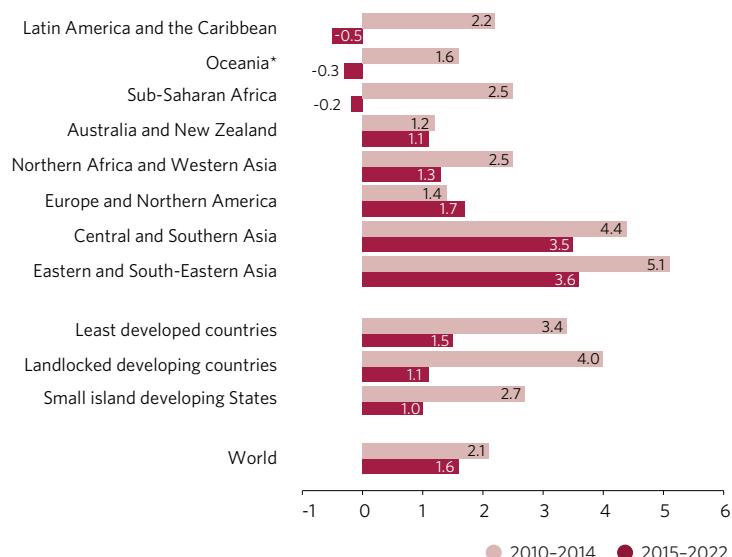
Global GDP growth has waned and productivity is stagnant, posing risks to economic development

Global real GDP per capita grew at an average annual rate of 2.1 per cent from 2010 to 2014, slowing to 1.6 per cent from 2015 to 2022. The decline stemmed from slower growth in most regions and decreases in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand). Global real GDP per capita inched up 1.8 per cent annually from 2015 to 2019 but fell by 3.9 per cent in 2020 before recovering with a 5.3 per cent increase in 2021. Growth slowed to 2.2 per cent in 2022 and is estimated to further drop to 1.0 per cent in 2023. The projected growth rate will be 1.8 per cent in 2024 and 1.5 per cent in 2025.

Annual growth in real GDP in the LDCs retreated from 5.1 per cent in 2019 to just 0.7 per cent in 2020 before partially recovering to 3.8 per cent in 2021. Growth strengthened to 4.6 per cent in 2022 and is predicted to rise by 4.4 per cent in 2023, 5.5 per cent in 2024 and 4.9 per cent in 2025, still well below the 7 per cent target.

Annual growth in economic productivity, defined as the growth rate of real GDP per employed person, stagnated in 2022 and 2023 below 0.5 per cent, a stark contrast to the period from 2015 to 2019, when the average growth rate exceeded 1.5 per cent. The pandemic interrupted this trend, with 2020 registering a 1.1 per cent decline as output fell faster than employment, although this was fully offset by a short-lived rebound in 2021. The slow pace of productivity growth in the last two years poses a risk to economic growth and development.

Average annual growth of real GDP per capita, 2010–2014 and 2015–2022 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

The global youth NEET rate dipped after the pandemic but stark gender disparities persist

In 2023, the global NEET rate among young people was 21.7 per cent, a notable decrease from 23.8 per cent in 2020. It closely matched the 2015 baseline of 21.8 per cent and is expected to persist through 2025. Northern Africa and Western Asia and Central and Southern Asia reported higher rates of 28.5 per cent and 27.4 per cent, respectively. Central and Southern Asia saw significant improvement, reducing its rate by 7.5 percentage points since 2005. Sub-Saharan Africa experienced an increase. Globally, young women are over twice as likely as young men to be NEET. In Central and Southern Asia, nearly half of young women are NEET compared to only

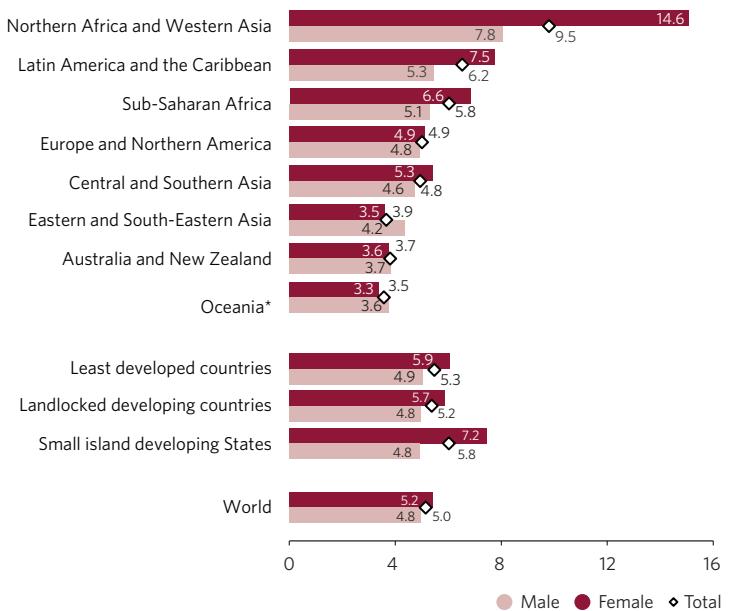
12.3 per cent of young men. Northern Africa and Western Asia echo this disparity. With about 269 million young people globally not in education or work in 2023, intensified efforts are needed to reduce NEET rates, particularly among young women.

Fewer countries had an operationalized national strategy for youth employment in 2023 compared to previous years. Only 36 of 87 reporting countries had implemented such a strategy. Around one third had a strategy but without evidence of implementation. One fifth were developing one.

Global unemployment fell to a record low yet gaps remain for women and youth

In 2023, the global unemployment rate fell to a record low of 5.0 per cent since 2000. The rate is projected to further drop to 4.9 per cent in 2024 and to stay the same level in 2025. Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, the LDCs and LLDCs saw unemployment rates rise from 2019 to 2023. Northern Africa and Western Asia had the highest rate at 9.5 per cent, despite declines since the pandemic. Women and youth continued to face higher rates globally and across regions. In 2023, gender unemployment gaps were similar to those in 2015, with the largest disparities in Northern Africa and Western Asia. Central and Southern Asia has made strides in narrowing the gap due to improved labour market access for women, particularly in Southern Asia. Youth unemployment was over three times higher than adult rates globally, at 13.0 per cent compared to 3.7 per cent, respectively. While headline unemployment figures improved, persistent challenges such as working poverty and informal employment highlight ongoing struggles in realizing decent work.

Unemployment rate by sex, 2023 (percentage)

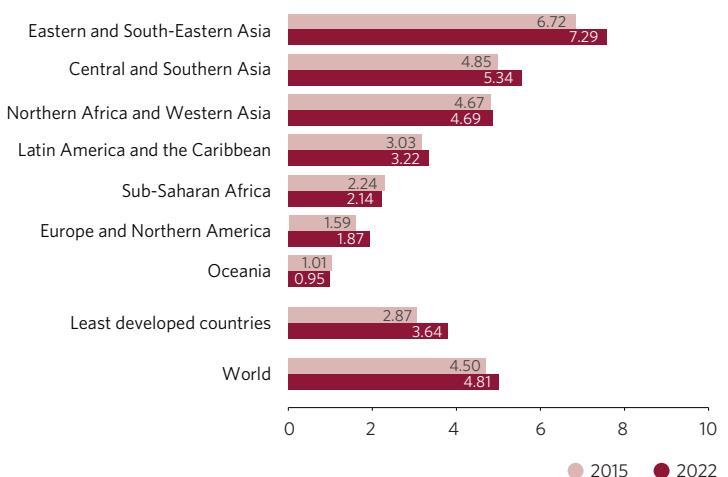


* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Substantial declines in labour rights plague all regions, worsening prospects for social justice

From 2015 to 2022, the global average level of national compliance with labour rights declined by 7 per cent, with the average score worsening from 4.50 to 4.81. This indicator, ranging from 0 to 10, signifies national compliance with freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, with 0 indicating the highest compliance and 10 the lowest. The deterioration has affected developed, developing and least developed countries, with decreases of 0.2, 0.3 and 0.8 points, respectively, since 2020. Scores have worsened for 33 per cent of International Labour Organization (ILO) member States since 2020; only 11 per cent have improved their scores, partly due to legislative reforms. Regional averages reflect substantial declines in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Central and Southern Asia, Europe and Northern America and Latin America. Northern Africa and Western Asia saw marginal improvements. Increased violations and restrictions on civil liberties, especially in union formation and bargaining rights, drive the trend. Freedom of association and collective bargaining are enabling rights to exercise fundamental rights at work, with a crucial role in social justice.

Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, 2015 and 2022 (scale 0–10)



More than 2 billion workers globally were in informal employment in 2023

Globally, over 2 billion people were in informal employment in 2023, comprising 58.0 per cent of the global workforce, a share projected to slightly decrease to 57.8 per cent in 2024. This rate is down from 58.4 per cent in 2015, reaching its lowest point, but the number of informal workers is at its highest level. This suggests that widespread formalization is unlikely soon. Economic challenges are pushing workers into informal jobs without social protection, a significant barrier to social justice. Informal

employment persisted most notably in the LDCs at 89.1 per cent in 2023, a rate nearly unchanged since 2015. The rate in Europe and Northern America was only 11.4 per cent. Women, particularly in the LDCs and regions with high informality rates, experienced a disproportionate increase in informal employment during the pandemic. Over 90 per cent of employed women in the LDCs and nearly 90 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia performed informal work.

A crucial sector of many economies, tourism is mostly on the rebound post-pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic inflicted unprecedented damage on tourism. Its contribution to the global economy plummeted from 3.8 per cent of GDP in 2019 to 1.8 per cent in 2020. In 2022, the sector rebounded to 82 per cent of its 2019 level, contributing to 3.1 per cent of global GDP, as it tapped pent-up demand following the end of travel restrictions and resumption of air connections. While most regions are nearing 2019 levels, challenges persist for Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) and the small island

developing States, with the economic performance of tourism at 68 per cent and 43 per cent of pre-pandemic levels, respectively. Tourism remains crucial for jobs, local ecosystems, peacebuilding and poverty reduction through income generation and tax revenues. Challenges such as inflation, climate change, geopolitical conflicts and uneven economic recovery threaten the sustainable development of the sector, particularly in small island developing States, which rely heavily on tourism.



Industry, innovation and infrastructure



- Since 2022, manufacturing sector growth has plateaued at around 2.7 per cent, a level expected to persist into 2024 due to the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions. The medium- and high-tech sector maintained its manufacturing value added share at around 46 per cent in 2021. The air transport industry is rebounding strongly. Small enterprises continue to face hurdles such as limited access to credit, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the LDCs; only around 17 per cent has access to loans or credit lines.
- Despite reduced carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions intensity, global emissions have hit a record high. The mobile broadband coverage gap persists at 5 per cent.
- To accelerate progress towards Goal 9, a concerted effort is needed to promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, foster innovation

A woman works at Port Victoria, Seychelles, providing services for the country's largest industry — industrial tuna fishing.

through increased investment in research and development, prioritize and accelerate the green transition, and facilitate access to information and communications technology.

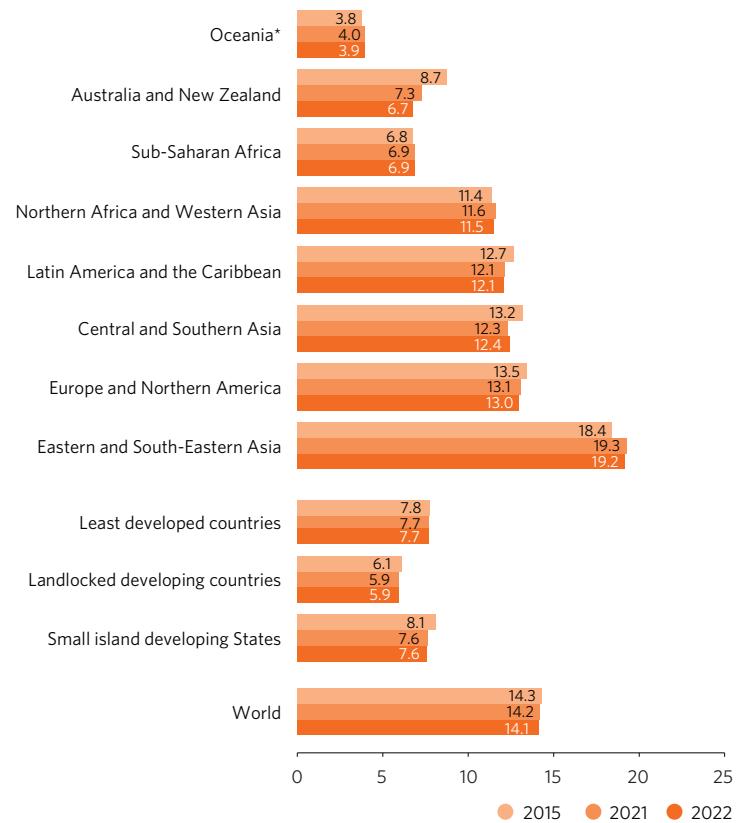
Global manufacturing shows slow growth, and the global share of manufacturing employment declines

Since 2015, the global manufacturing value added per capita has risen by 16 per cent, from \$1,653 (at constant 2015 prices) to \$1,922 in 2023. The manufacturing sector's contribution to total economic activity, however, only marginally increased from 16.3 to 16.7 per cent during the same period. In 2022, manufacturing growth plateaued at around 2.7 per cent and is anticipated to remain stagnant in 2024. This can be attributed to factors including geopolitical uncertainty, inflation, logistical challenges, elevated energy costs and broader global economic deceleration.

In the LDCs, manufacturing value added per capita increased by 35 per cent from \$125 in 2015 to \$169 in 2023, with the share of manufacturing value added in GDP rising by 2.5 percentage points, from 12 to 14.5 per cent, respectively. Even so, the pace of progress may not be sufficient for the LDCs to reach the target of doubling their 2015 level of manufacturing value added in GDP by 2030.

Between 2015 and 2020, the global share of manufacturing employment in total employment remained relatively stable at 14.3 per cent. It dropped to 14.1 per cent in 2022, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical crises that profoundly affected manufacturing sectors worldwide. Most regions witnessed a decline in the share of manufacturing employment between 2021 and 2022, except for sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia.

Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment, 2015, 2021 and 2022 (percentage)



*Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

After a pandemic-induced plunge, the airline industry begins a strong rebound

In 2020, international passenger traffic plunged by 60 per cent, with just 1.8 billion passengers taking to the air compared to 4.5 billion in 2019, reverting to 2003 levels. Seat capacity was cut in half. In the same year, airlines suffered \$370 billion in losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Airports and air navigation services providers lost \$115 billion and \$13 billion, respectively.

A strong recovery began in 2022 as passenger numbers reached 73 per cent and revenues hit 87 per cent of 2019 levels. Air passenger numbers

increased by 43 per cent and revenue passenger kilometres rose by 62 per cent over 2021 levels, driven by international route recoveries. Airlines experienced a 44 per cent growth in annual passenger revenues from 2021 to 2022.

In 2024, the air transport industry is expected to support 87.7 million jobs globally, with a direct and indirect economic impact of \$3.5 trillion, equivalent to 4.1 per cent of world GDP.

Closing the mobile broadband coverage gap of 5 per cent remains a challenge

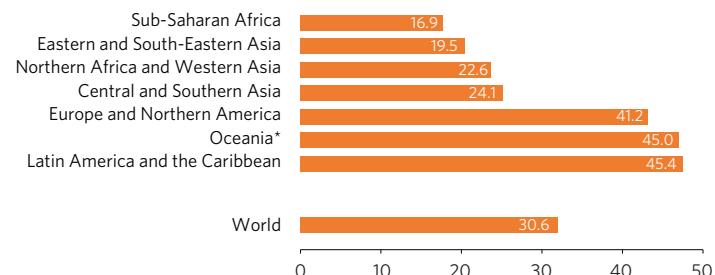
In most developing countries, mobile broadband (3G or above) is the main way – and often the only way – to connect to the Internet. Around 95 per cent of the global population now has this form of access. Bridging the “coverage gap” for the remaining 5 per cent poses significant challenges. Since surpassing the 90 per cent mark in 2018, global 3G coverage has

increased by only 4 percentage points. In Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand), the gap remains substantial at 31 per cent. Sub-Saharan Africa has seen some progress but still faces a notable 17 per cent gap, especially in central and western Africa. Mobile broadband remains inaccessible to 18 per cent of people in the LDCs and LLDCs.

Access to credit is vital for small enterprises, but only a small share can obtain it

Small enterprises are the backbone of economies worldwide, providing job opportunities and supporting livelihoods across communities. Despite playing a pivotal role in closing economic and social gaps, they face myriad challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic, including rising operational expenses due to inflation in energy and transportation and high interest rates on loans. Especially in lower-income nations, small enterprises bear the brunt of shocks due to their greater vulnerability. Access to credit, crucial for their survival, remains difficult. According to survey data from 2006 to 2023, only 16.9 per cent of small-scale manufacturing industries in sub-Saharan Africa received loans or lines of credit, well below the global average of 31 per cent. Inclusive industrial policies are imperative for fostering the growth, competitiveness and resilience of small enterprises.

Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit, 2006–2023 (percentage)



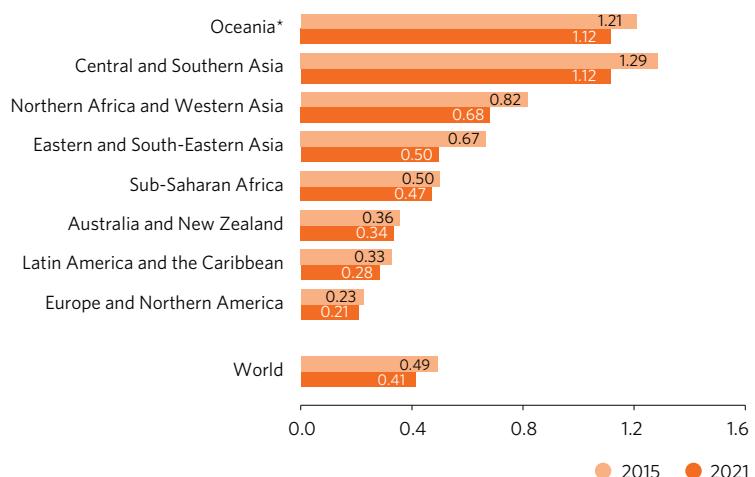
*Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Continued declines in CO₂ emissions intensity are not yet enough to cut global emissions

In 2023, global CO₂ emissions from energy combustion and industrial processes increased by 1.1 per cent to an unprecedented 37.4 gigatons. The rate rose at a slower pace compared to 1.3 per cent in 2022 and was significantly lower than the global GDP growth rate of 3 per cent. This deceleration can be attributed to the significant surge in clean energy technologies since 2019. Coal was the primary driver of emissions growth, contributing over 65 per cent of the uptick in 2023.

Emissions per unit of GDP consistently decreased, dropping 11.5 per cent from 0.29 kilograms per dollar (purchasing power parity) in 2015 to 0.25 in 2021. In manufacturing, emissions intensity decreased by 16 per cent, although regional disparities persisted. Progress in reducing emissions intensity to cut global emissions overall has been insufficient. Developing strategies for low-carbon energy and green manufacturing calls for collaboration and approaches tailored to each country's unique strengths.

CO₂ emissions per unit of manufacturing value added, 2015 and 2021 (kilograms of CO₂ per constant 2015 dollars)



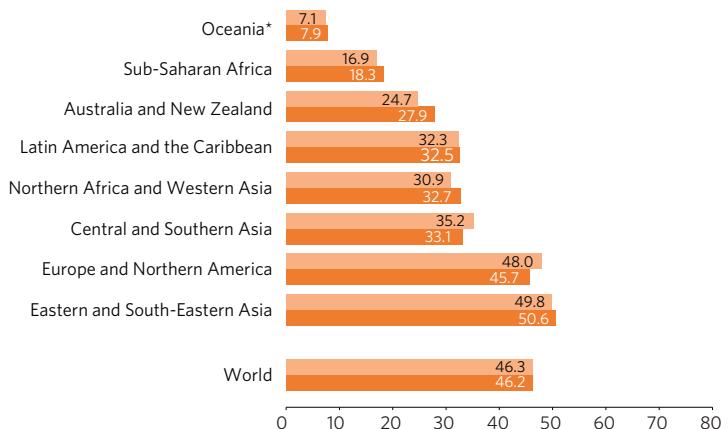
*Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Medium- and high-tech industry demonstrate resilience despite global economic challenges

The proportion of medium- and high-tech manufacturing value added in total value added rose from 46.34 per cent in 2015 to 46.88 per cent in 2019, an upward trend slightly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis highlighted the resilience of higher-technology industries, which experienced only a marginal decline of 0.67 percentage points in 2021.

Significant regional disparities exist in shares of medium- and high-tech manufacturing. In Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, the sector accounted for approximately 50.6 per cent of total manufacturing in 2021, whereas in sub-Saharan Africa, it represented just 18.3 per cent. Prioritizing investments in education and skills development is crucial to expedite the growth of medium- and high-tech industries by equipping the workforce to compete effectively in a dynamic global manufacturing landscape.

Proportion of medium- and high-tech manufacturing value added in total manufacturing value added, 2015 and 2021 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.



Reduced inequalities

- Despite the economic disruptions of the pandemic, the global share of people living on less than half the median income has been declining due to social assistance programmes. However, workers' wages have not kept pace with productivity, and labour's share of GDP has resumed its long-term decline.
- A historic reversal is threatening improvements in inequality among countries. The economies of half the world's most vulnerable countries have been growing at slower rates than those of wealthy countries.
- More people died on migration routes in 2023 than in any other year on record. The number of refugees worldwide reached a historic high.
- Developing countries are not fairly represented in international economic decision-making. Strengthening their voice and participation is crucial to ensuring a more inclusive and equitable global economic system.



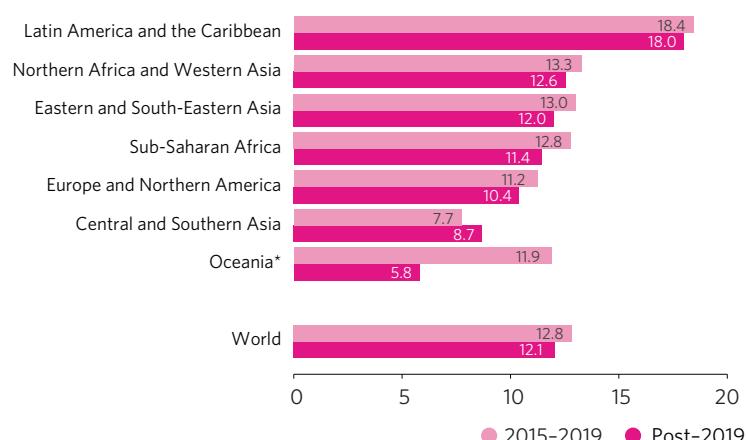
Displaced people in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 7 million people have been internally displaced.

- Addressing inequality both within and among countries necessitates equitable resource distribution, investment in education and skills, social protection measures, efforts to stop discrimination, support for marginalized groups, and international cooperation for fair trade and financial systems.

The proportion of people living below half the median income is falling globally

Since 2000, two thirds of countries with data have reduced the proportion of their population living on less than half the median income. This trend continued during the pandemic. Data from 82 countries, representing 70 per cent of the world's population, indicate a slight decline in the proportion of people living below half the median income post-2019 compared to 2015–2019, dropping from 12.8 to 12.1 per cent. Progress has occurred in all regions except Central and Southern Asia, where the proportion remains relatively low at 9 per cent. Social assistance programmes, particularly in wealthier countries, largely explain reduced inequality during the pandemic. Latin America and the Caribbean has high levels of within-country inequality with at least 18 per cent of the population living on less than half the median income.

Proportion of population living on less than half the median income, 2015–2019 and post-2019 (percentage)



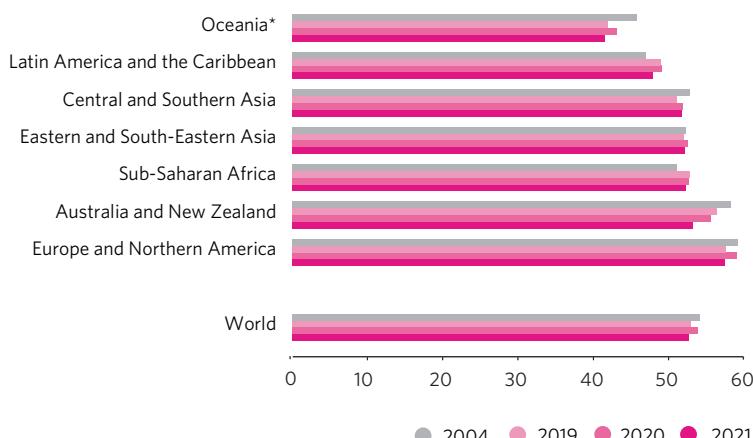
* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Labour's share of GDP returns to a long-term decline as capital returns increase

Bucking a downward trend going back to the 1970s, the global labour income share of GDP rose sharply during the pandemic from 52.9 per cent in 2019 to 53.8 per cent in 2020. This increase should not be misinterpreted as a net gain for workers. During this period, global labour income decreased by 1.5 per cent in 2020, while global output fell even more, by 3 per cent. In 2021, the labour income share of GDP resumed its long-run decline.

The labour income share of GDP dropped from 54.1 per cent in 2004 to 52.7 per cent in 2021, representing a loss of \$568 (purchasing power parity) per worker. This negative trend implies that rising labour productivity has not fully translated into higher labour compensation. Earnings from work are particularly important for less well-off and vulnerable people. At the same time, returns to capital have been rising, which can increase inequality as capital income is concentrated among the affluent.

Labour income share of GDP, 2004, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (percentage)

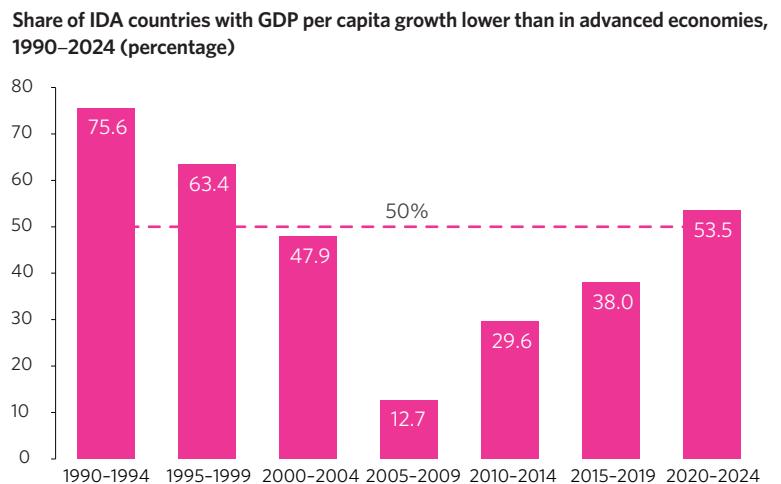


* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Half of the most vulnerable countries face a widening income gap with the wealthiest economies

For the first time this century, half of the 75 most vulnerable countries – those eligible for concessional lending from the World Bank's International Development Association (or IDA) – are experiencing a widening income gap with the wealthiest economies. A quarter of the global population – 1.9 billion people – live in IDA countries. One in three of these countries are poorer than before the pandemic.

Between 2020 and 2024, one in two IDA countries has achieved slower growth in income per capita than in the wealthy economies, the highest share since 2000. One in four people in IDA countries live on less than \$2.15 a day, an extreme poverty rate that is more than eight times the mean for the rest of the world. Ninety per cent of people facing hunger and malnutrition live in IDA countries, half of which are in debt distress or at high risk of it.



Developing countries remain underrepresented in international economic decision-making

Developing countries make up 74 per cent of United Nations General Assembly Members but have limited voice and participation in international economic decision-making, norm-setting and governance. At the World Bank's main lending arm, developing countries hold only 39 per cent of voting rights, far short of their 75 per cent share of the bank's membership. At the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector lending arm, developing countries have just over 32 per cent of voting rights.

The International Monetary Fund completed two general reviews of quotas in 2019 and 2023 without any changes to their distribution (which helps to determine voting rights), leaving developing countries with only 37 per cent of voting rights. Other international financial institutions, such as regional development banks, have not undertaken any voting rights reforms since 2015 or announced plans to do so. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025 presents an opportunity to address these shortcomings and strengthen the legitimacy of global governance arrangements.

Remittance costs have fallen but not enough; digitalization could accelerate further decreases

Over the past decade, the cost of remittances has fallen significantly. The global average cost of sending \$200 decreased from 7.42 per cent in 2016 to 6.18 per cent in 2023. This is still above the 3 per cent SDG target, however. In 2023, the highest costs for sending \$200 in remittances were in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) and sub-Saharan Africa, at 8.33 per cent and 7.36 per cent, respectively, despite substantial progress in both regions since 2011.

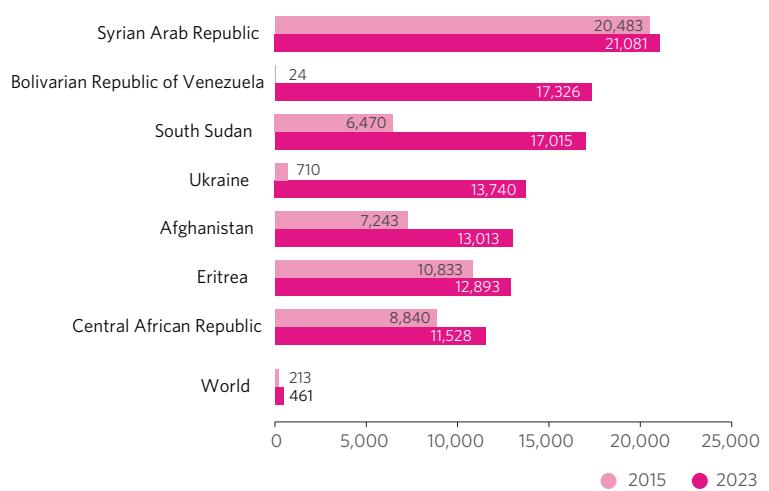
Digital remittance services could help reach the target faster. In 2023, the global average cost of digital remittances was 4.84 per cent compared to 6.77 per cent for non-digital/cash-based remittances. Digital services comprised 30 per cent of all services in 2023. To achieve the SDG target, stakeholders could leverage digitalization to reduce costs, increase efficiency and improve remittance accessibility. Regulators need to address challenges such as limited competition, high compliance costs, account access barriers, transparency issues, and low digital and financial literacy.

2023 saw the highest number of refugees and was the deadliest year on record for migrants

By end 2023, a record 37.4 million refugees under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) remained forcibly displaced from their countries due to war, conflict, persecution, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order. The number of refugees has increased year-on-year for more than a decade and doubled in less than seven years, outpacing durable solutions. By the end of 2023, 461 of every 100,000 people worldwide were refugees, more than double the 213 per 100,000 people at the end of 2015.

In 2023, a tragic milestone occurred as it became the deadliest year on record for migrants, with 8,177 fatalities documented. The majority of deaths occurred on routes taken by migrants affected by crises. Since 2015, over 57,000 migrant deaths have been recorded, although data collection challenges and limited responses mean that the actual number is likely much higher. The top countries of origin in terms of migrants losing their lives have active armed conflicts. They include Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Syrian Arab Republic. Safe and accessible migration pathways are imperative as people continue to risk their lives on irregular routes given limited alternatives.

Countries of origin with the highest proportion of the population who are refugees, 2015 and 2023 (number of refugees per 100,000 people)





Sustainable cities and communities

- Over half the world's population currently resides in cities, yet urban areas confront myriad complex challenges. Globally, approximately one quarter of the urban population lives in slums, with the total slum population reaching 1.1 billion in 2022. The lack of equitable access to public transportation is a significant concern, particularly in LDCs, where only 4 in 10 individuals have convenient access.
- While air pollution levels have declined in most regions, they are still significantly higher than the recommended air quality guidelines for public health protection.
- Only 40 per cent of city dwellers can easily reach open public spaces. Between 2000 and 2020, cities sprawled up to 3.7 times faster than they densified, resulting in negative impacts on the natural environment and land use.
- With urbanization on the rise and nearly 70 per cent of the global



A woman fills drinking-water bottles in the slums of Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan.

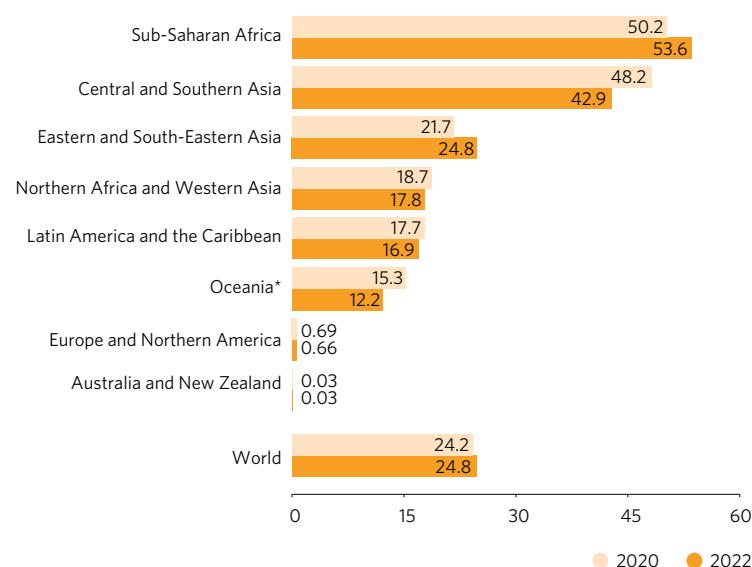
population projected to reside in cities by 2050, the development of critical infrastructure, affordable housing, efficient transport systems and essential social services is imperative to create resilient and sustainable cities that meet the needs of all.

A deepening global slum crisis requires urgent action on housing, transportation and services

In 2022, 24.8 per cent of the urban population lived in slums or informal settlements, slightly lower than 25 per cent in 2015 but higher than 24.2 per cent in 2020. The total slum population was 1.12 billion in 2022, 130 million more than in 2015, marking a reversal from the consistent decrease observed from 2000 to 2020. The setback was mainly in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (from 21.7 per cent in 2020 to 24.8 per cent in 2022) and sub-Saharan Africa (from 50.2 per cent in 2020 to 53.6 per cent in 2022).

Over 85 per cent of all slum dwellers in 2022 were in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (362 million), Central and Southern Asia (334 million) and sub-Saharan Africa (265 million). Projections suggest that sub-Saharan Africa will experience the most substantial proportional increase, with an estimated extra 360 million slum dwellers by 2030 if current trends persist. This emphasizes the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to addressing the housing crisis, including through diverse housing options, while achieving equitable access to public transportation and essential services.

Proportion of global urban population living in slums, 2020 and 2022 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

High rates of unregulated urban sprawl pressure the environment and diminish quality of life

Urban sprawl is characterized by the unplanned, low-density, uncontrolled expansion of urban areas into previously undeveloped rural or suburban areas. This unregulated growth has negative impacts on the natural environment and land use, contributing to increased air pollution and the loss of open spaces, wildlife habitats and agricultural land. Cities sprawled or grew outwards up to 3.7 times faster than they densified or grew upward from 2000 to 2020, based on recent data from 1,217 cities in 185 countries.

Globally, from 2000 to 2010, the average annual rate of sprawl reached 5.6 per cent while the annual densification rate lagged at 1.47 per cent.¹ The sprawl rate slightly declined from 2010 to 2020, dropping to 3.6 per cent annually. Yet the gap with the densification rate, estimated at 0.95 per cent annually during the same period, remained substantial. Sustainable urban development calls for mitigating the adverse impacts of urban sprawl and achieving a balanced approach to urban growth.

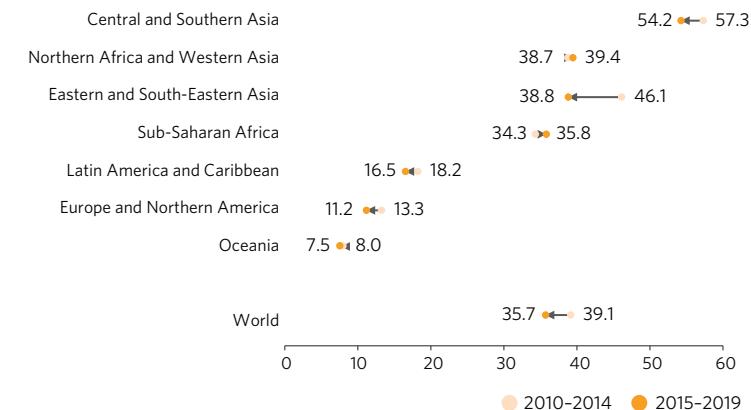
¹ The annual rate of sprawl is calculated as the annual rate of change in built-up areas outside urban boundaries in 2000 (but within 2020 urban boundaries) per city. The annual rate of densification is calculated as the annualized rate of change in built-up areas within the 2000 urban boundaries per city.

Air quality has improved but still falls short in terms of fully protecting public health

Each year, an estimated 4.2 million people die due to ambient air pollution. Globally, the population-weighted exposure to fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) dropped from 39.1 µg/m³ in 2010–2014 to 35.7 µg/m³ in 2015–2019, a 9 per cent decline. Yet the level remains significantly higher than the recommended air quality guideline of 5 µg/m³ for public health protection. Eastern and South-Eastern Asia markedly improved air quality in 2015–2019, after having the world's second-highest PM_{2.5} concentrations in 2010–2014. Similar advances in Europe and Northern America highlight the positive impacts of international cooperation and legislation, including the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. By contrast, air pollution in sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Africa and Western Asia increased from 2010–2014 to 2015–2019.

Improved air quality monitoring has been instrumental in confirming regional successes and informing policy decisions. Between 2011 and 2022, monitoring capacity worldwide grew sixfold, although 92 per cent of this expansion took place in high- and middle-income countries.

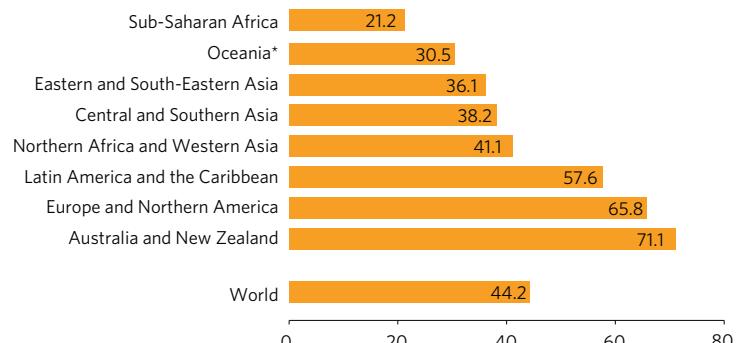
Five-year average population weighted PM_{2.5} concentrations in urban areas, 2010–2014 and 2015–2019 (micrograms per cubic metre)



Vibrant cities depend on open public spaces yet too few residents have ready access

Open public spaces in urban areas foster inclusive and vibrant cities. Yet only 44 per cent of urban residents have an open public space conveniently located within a 400-metre walk, according to 2020 data from 1,365 cities across 187 countries. This lack of access disproportionately impacts people in the LDCs, where less than 30 per cent of urban dwellers can conveniently access open public spaces. Conversely, high-income regions such as Australia and New Zealand as well as Europe and Northern America have much greater rates of access, with 60 to 70 per cent of urban inhabitants living near public open spaces. The data underscore a pervasive global challenge. Without concerted efforts, the majority of urban populations will struggle to access vital amenities, particularly the most vulnerable residents.

Proportion of urban population with convenient access to open public spaces, within a 400-metre walking distance, 2020 (percentage)

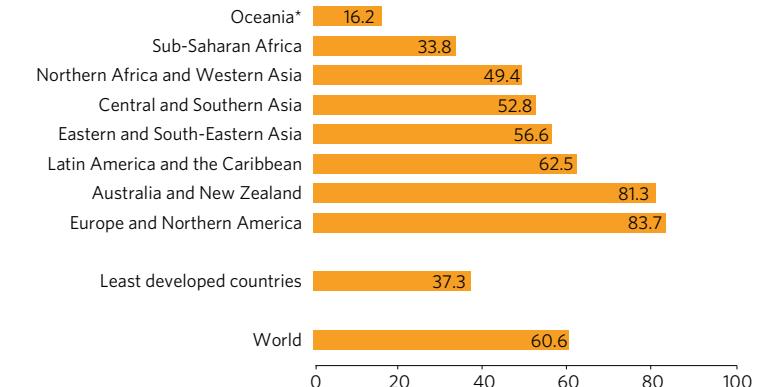


* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Public transit remains out of easy reach for 40 per cent of urban residents worldwide

Ensuring equitable access to public transportation helps to reduce food insecurity, boost economies, empower women, and connect people to key health, education and financial services, especially vulnerable urban populations. Yet many cities worldwide lack adequate urban transit infrastructure. Only 6 in 10 urban residents have convenient access to public transit, based on data collected in 2023 from 2,039 cities in 188 countries. The shortfall is particularly problematic in the LDCs, where less than 4 in 10 urban residents have accessible public transportation options, compared to 8 in 10 in more affluent regions. Accelerated investments are needed to extend public transit services to the most marginalized communities, both in developing regions and impoverished urban neighbourhoods in developed countries. This effort is essential to foster inclusive urban development and improve the livelihoods of the urban poor.

Share of population with convenient access to public transportation in urban areas, 2023 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.



Responsible consumption and production

- Countries have made strides in meeting obligations under international environmental agreements on hazardous waste and other chemicals and implementing comprehensive approaches to combat environmental degradation. Patterns of unsustainable consumption and production persist, however. In 2022, global food waste reached 1.05 billion metric tons, yet only 9 of 193 countries included food waste in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) on climate change actions. The rapid growth of global e-waste remains largely unaddressed, with only 22 per cent collected and managed sustainably.
- While domestic material consumption and material footprints continue to expand, growth rates have slowed. Regional disparities underscore the need for targeted interventions based on varying consumption patterns and environmental impacts.
- Achieving Goal 12 requires fostering circular economy models, sustainable production practices and responsible consumption. These



A young man in Ghana burns scrap electrical cables to recover copper after migrating from his village to Accra to engage in e-waste work.

approaches can take advantage of opportunities at every stage of production to reduce resource and fossil fuel use, drive innovation, conserve energy and mitigate emissions. Progress largely depends on robust regulatory frameworks, financial incentives and public awareness campaigns.

The world wastes 1.05 billion metric tons of food even as hundreds of millions face hunger

In 2021, 13.2 per cent of food produced globally was lost after harvest and during transport, storage, wholesale and processing. An alarming 19 per cent of all food at the retail or consumption stage was wasted in 2022, totalling 1.05 billion metric tons of all food available to consumers. Most food waste occurred in households (60 per cent); each person wasted an average of 79 kilograms annually, more than the weight of the average person. Globally, an estimated 1 billion meals of edible food are wasted every day, equivalent to 1.3 meals per person impacted by hunger per day, considering that 783 million people faced hunger in 2022.

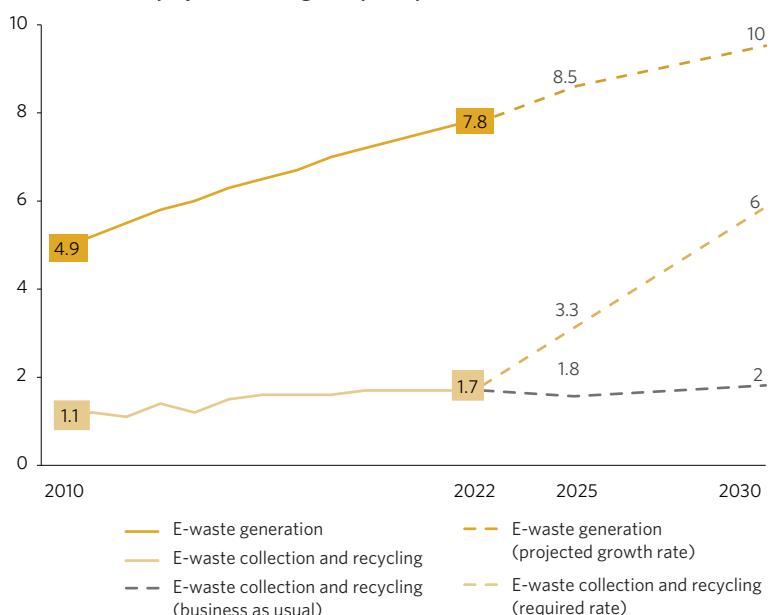
Data suggest that household food waste varies by just 7 kilograms per capita each year across high-income, upper-middle-income and lower-middle-income countries. Hotter countries tend to have higher waste per capita, possibly due to increased consumption of fresh food with substantial inedible parts and inadequate refrigeration. Further, each year, food loss and waste generate 8 to 10 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, costing over \$1 trillion and straining land resources and biodiversity. At the same time, as of 2022, only 9 of 193 countries had included food waste in their NDCs, revealing a significant gap in connecting this issue with climate action and the objective of halving food waste and reducing losses by 2030.

High rates of consumption and insufficient reuse or recycling are producing vast piles of e-waste

Uncontrolled disposal of electronic and electrical equipment fuels vast e-waste stockpiles, exacerbated by rising consumption, short product life cycles and little repair. E-waste generation rose from 6.3 to 7.8 kilograms per capita from 2015 to 2022, reaching a total of 62 million metric tons of e-waste in 2022. Only 1.7 kilograms per capita was collected and managed in an environmentally sound manner. High-income countries achieved collection rates of over 40 per cent, yet most e-waste was inadequately recycled or exported to lower-income countries where management infrastructure is not developed, inadequate or absent. In Central and Southern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa, collection rates are below 5 per cent. Inappropriate management by the informal sector results in environmental pollution and health hazards for workers and communities.

By 2030, e-waste generation is projected to increase to 10 kilograms per capita per year (or 82 million metric tons in total). If all countries boost their collection rates to 60 per cent, 54 million metric tons of e-waste would be managed in an environmentally sound manner, with 30 million metric tons of metal resources viably recovered. This would also prevent 34,000 kilograms of mercury emissions and 209 million metric tons of CO₂-equivalent emissions in 2030.

E-waste generation and environmentally sound e-waste management, 2010–2022 and 2023–2030 projections (kilograms per capita)



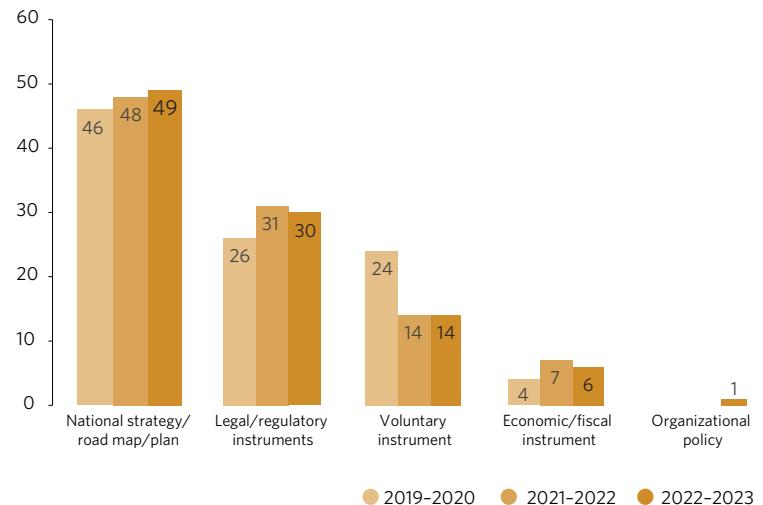
More countries and companies are stepping up to report on sustainability measures

From 2019 to 2023, 62 Member States and the European Union reported 516 policy instruments to accelerate the transition to sustainable consumption and production patterns. Half the policies are national road maps or strategies; 30 per cent are legal instruments; and 14 per cent are voluntary instruments. New policies in 2023 integrated sustainable consumption and production patterns into high-impact sectors. The Philippines sought to promote responsible mining and enhance compliance with environmental laws, for instance. The United States planned to transform its food system for broader benefits. Australia's Water Efficiency Labelling and Standard Scheme initiated efforts to reduce water demand and encourage efficient technologies.

International standard setters have developed sustainability reporting standards for both the public and private sectors. While this represents positive progress, challenges persist given a lack of interoperability and inconsistency in national reporting requirements. In 2021–2022, 73 per cent of sampled companies published sustainability reports, triple the share in 2016, with growth in all regions. Reporting is more common on environmental (water, emissions and energy efficiency) and governance (gender diversity, board meetings, bribery and corruption) dimensions than on social ones (human rights, health and safety, diversity and opportunity). The number of stock exchanges with written guidance on environmental,

social and governance reporting continues to grow, from fewer than 10 a decade ago to 69 in 2022.

Policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production, by type, 2019–2023 (percentage)



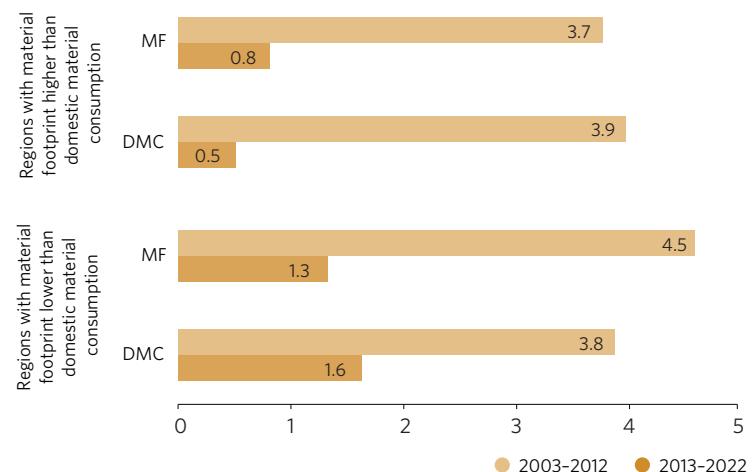
Global material consumption growth slows but regional disparities persist

Domestic material consumption measures materials directly used within an economy, including those that are extracted and imported but without those that are exported. From 2000 to 2022, domestic material consumption grew by 69 per cent, from 56.6 billion metric tons to 96.0 billion metric tons. The compound annual growth rate slowed, however, from 3.9 per cent in 2003–2012 to 0.8 per cent in 2013–2022. The global material footprint, representing raw materials extracted to meet final consumption demands, increased by 71 per cent from 57.4 billion metric tons in 2000 to 98.0 billion metric tons in 2022. Its compound annual growth rate declined from 3.9 per cent in 2003–2012 to 0.9 per cent in 2013–2022. Structural shifts in the composition of the material footprint stem from escalating reliance on non-metallic minerals and the diminishing relative impact of biomass.

In regions where the material footprint exceeds domestic material consumption, the latter decelerates faster, notably in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Europe and Northern America, and Northern Africa and Western Asia. In these regions, the compound annual growth rate of the material footprint declined from 3.7 per cent to 0.8 per cent from 2003–2012 to 2013–2022, while the domestic material consumption rate dropped from 3.9 to 0.5 per cent. In regions where the material footprint is lower than domestic material consumption, including Central and Southern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania, the compound annual growth rate decreased from 4.5 to 1.3 per cent for the former and from 3.8 to 1.6 per cent for the latter from 2003–2012 to 2013–2022.

A widening regional gap between the two indicators signifies varying environmental pressure from material consumption.

Compound annual growth rate of material footprint and domestic material consumption, 2003–2012 and 2013–2022 (percentage)



Note: Material footprint (MF) is based on estimates while domestic material consumption (DMC) combines estimates and country data (mainly from European Union member States).

Monitoring tourism in line with sustainable development is progressing yet more is needed

National monitoring based on the Tourism Satellite Accounts and the System of Environmental Economic Accounts provides a good indication of a country's capacity to measure the economic and environmental sustainability of tourism. In 2019, a record 99 countries used at least one table under the accounts for evaluating key tourism sustainability indicators.

A subsequent decline in use from 2020 to 2022 was likely due to a natural lag in data production. While global monitoring capacities have improved across all regions since 2008, in most, less than 50 per cent of countries can report data.



Climate action

- Climate records were shattered in 2023 as the climate crisis accelerated in real time. Rising temperatures have not abated and global greenhouse gas emissions continue to climb. Communities worldwide are suffering from extreme weather and increasingly frequent and more intense disasters, destroying lives and livelihoods daily. Meanwhile, fossil fuel subsidies hit a record high.
- The global community faces a critical juncture. All countries must urgently speed up economy-wide, low-carbon transformations to avoid escalating economic and social costs. The upcoming 2025 cycle of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) presents a chance for ambitious climate action plans that drive economic and social progress. These must have increased ambition to close implementation gaps, cover entire economies and all greenhouse gases, and align with the target of limiting global temperature rise to no more than 1.5°C.



Young climate activists stand on an artificial beach in Malé, Maldives, highlighting messages urging climate action.

- The road map to halting warming at 1.5°C and avoiding the worst of climate chaos is clear but cannot afford any delays or half measures. Drastic reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions must take place by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050.

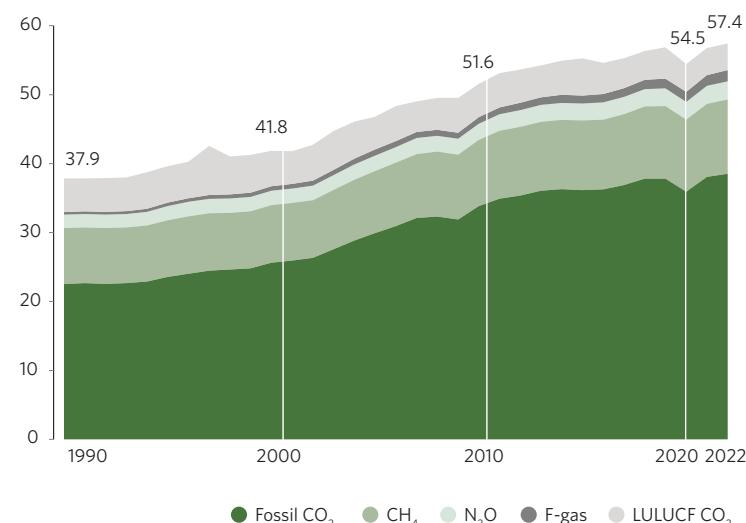
Highest-ever greenhouse gas emissions reveal a global failure to meet climate goals

In 2022, global greenhouse gas emissions reached a new record of 57.4 gigatons of CO₂ equivalent, according to the United Nations Environment Programme's *Emissions Gap Report 2023*. About two thirds of emissions comprised CO₂ from fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes. Except transportation, emissions from all major sectors have rebounded since the pandemic and now exceed 2019 levels. The energy sector, responsible for 86 per cent of global CO₂ emissions, remains the largest contributor, driven by the expansion of coal- and gas-fired power generation. Governments plan to produce around 110 per cent more fossil fuels by 2030 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.

Keeping warming to 1.5°C calls for a 42 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, requiring an 8.7 per cent annual decline. For a 2°C limit, a 28 per cent drop by 2030 is necessary or a 5.3 per cent annual decrease. The only comparable fall was by 4.7 per cent during the pandemic from 2019 to 2020.

Current national policies set the world on track for warming of 3°C. NDCs lower this to 2.5°C, while all net-zero pledges would put warming at 2°C, although these pledges are highly uncertain. There is currently only a 14 per cent chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C, underscoring the urgency of immediate, accelerated action to significantly cut emissions this decade.

Total net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, 1990–2022 (gigatons of CO₂ equivalent)



Note: Total net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions include CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels and industry (fossil CO₂), CO₂ emissions and removals from land use, land use changes and forestry (LULUCF CO₂), methane (CH₄) emissions, nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions and fluorinated gas (F-gas) emissions reported under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Source: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). 2023. *Emissions Gap Report 2023: Broken Record – Temperatures hit new highs, yet world fails to cut emissions (again)*. Nairobi: UNEP.

Reaching the \$100 billion climate finance goal is a milestone yet trillions are needed for national action plans

Climate finance is crucial in backing global mitigation and adaptation efforts. Developed countries committed to mobilize \$100 billion annually in climate finance for developing countries by 2020 and through 2025. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports that the commitment was met for the first time in 2022. Climate finance increased by 30 per cent from 2021 to reach \$115.9 billion in 2022, with 60 per cent of the total allocated to mitigation. Total adaptation finance rose to \$32.4 billion from \$10.1 billion in 2016. The 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact urged developed nations to double adaptation finance to developing countries from

2019 levels by 2025. Based on OECD figures, by 2022, developed countries were approximately halfway towards meeting this goal.

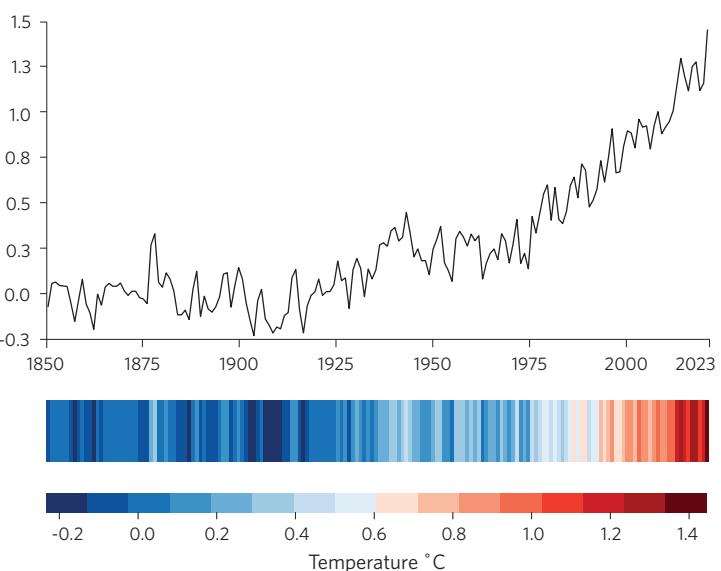
Negotiations are under way to establish a new climate finance goal from 2025 onwards, starting from a floor of \$100 billion annually, and taking into account developing countries' needs and priorities. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) estimates that nearly \$6 trillion is needed for developing countries' climate action plans by 2030, underscoring the need to massively scale up finance.

Another broken record – 2023 was the warmest year yet

The world continues to shatter temperature records. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) confirmed that 2023 was the hottest year on record, with global average temperatures soaring to approximately 1.45°C above pre-industrial levels. The 10 warmest years in the 174 years with records have all occurred during the last decade. Extreme weather events, including heatwaves, major floods, droughts, wildfires and tropical cyclones, have disrupted the lives of millions of people and caused billions of dollars in economic losses.

As of June 2024, a WMO climate update underscored an 80 per cent likelihood of at least one year temporarily exceeding 1.5°C from 2024 to 2028. In 2015, the probability for such a temperature spike was near zero. The global mean near-surface temperature for each year from 2024 to 2028 is predicted to be 1.1°C to 1.9°C higher than the 1850–1900 baseline. At least one of the next five years will likely surpass 2023 as the warmest on record.

Global annual mean temperature relative to pre-industrial levels (1850–1900 average), 1850–2023 (degrees Celsius)



Source: The figure and climate stripes are drawn from the World Meteorological Organization's *State of the Global Climate 2023* report, which combines six international data sets for temperature: HadCRUT.5.0.1.0 (UK Met Office), NOAAGlobalTemp v5 (USA), NASA GISTEMP v4 (USA), Berkeley Earth (USA), ERA5 (ECMWF), and JRA-55 (Japan).

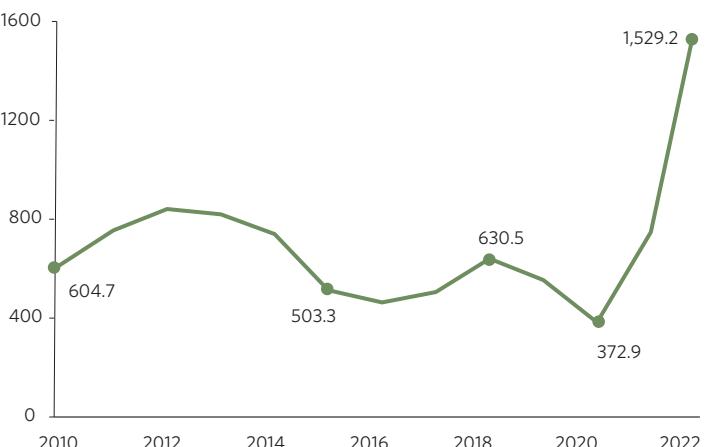
Fossil fuel subsidies hit a historic high globally in 2022, exceeding \$1.5 trillion

Fossil fuel subsidies reached a record high of \$1.53 trillion in 2022, driven by rising energy prices post-pandemic and the impact of the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine, which disrupted global energy markets. The increase widened the gap between consumer prices and actual energy costs, prompting many governments to introduce support measures to shield industries and populations from inflation. Public funds shoring up the production and consumption of oil, coal and gas more than doubled between 2021 and 2022, and more than tripled from their 2015 levels, reversing progress made between 2012 and 2020 and hindering the net-zero transition.

All regions saw higher subsidies between 2021 and 2022, with the highest in Europe and Northern America (\$455 billion), followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia (\$327 billion) and Central and Southern Asia (\$322 billion). By artificially lowering fossil fuel prices, subsidies harm the competitiveness of cleaner energy sources and hinder the low-carbon transition. They strain national budgets, especially in countries facing fiscal constraints and high debt levels. Although intended to aid vulnerable households, subsidies often disproportionately benefit wealthier people, who

consume more energy than lower-income households, as well as carbon-intensive companies. Despite numerous national, regional and global pledges to phase out fossil fuel subsidies, data show minimal action.

Global estimate of fossil fuel subsidies, 2010–2022 (billions of dollars)



As disasters become more probable, better preparedness has lowered mortality rates

According to the WMO, recorded disasters increased fivefold over the past 50 years, driven partly by human-induced climate change. The number of persons affected by disasters per 100,000 population rose from 1,169 (2005–2014) to 1,980 (2013–2022), a 69 per cent increase, as reported by the Sendai Framework Monitor. The total affected population averaged 133 million people annually from 2015 to 2022, up from 29 million annually from 2005 to 2014. If current trends continue, it is projected that 560 medium- to large-scale disaster events could occur annually by 2030, an average of 1.5 per day.

In LDCs, the disaster-affected population per 100,000 people is 20 per cent higher than the global average, and the mortality rate is 170 per cent higher. This illustrates that the catastrophic impact of disasters is much greater in these countries.

Improved preparedness, including early warning systems and evacuation measures, have significantly reduced disaster mortality in recent years. Global disaster mortality per 100,000 population dropped by 49 per cent, from 1.62 in 2005–2014 to 0.82 in 2013–2022 (excluding COVID-19 related cases). This translates to an average annual mortality of 42,553 people between 2013 and 2022, a one-third decrease from the annual average in 2005–2014. National long-term risk reduction strategies and plans, reported by 129 countries; the establishment of effective multi-hazard early warning systems, reported by 104 countries; and comprehensive resilience plans are key to minimizing disaster impacts on people and economies.



Life below water

- Oceans face significant challenges from eutrophication, worsening acidification, declining fish stocks, rising temperatures and widespread pollution. All these factors destroy habitats, diminish biodiversity and threaten coastal communities and the health of marine ecosystems, vital to over 3 billion people.
- Efforts to address these mounting concerns remain uneven. Key actions include implementing sustainable fishing practices, expanding marine protected areas to safeguard key biodiversity areas, increasing capacities to monitor ocean health and addressing the pollution that is choking waterways.
- Comprehensive global action is under way, yet it must accelerate. Priorities include ensuring that the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies enters into force as soon as possible; increasing participation in the Agreement on Port State Measures to combat illegal, unreported and



A group of bleached corals in a reef in Indonesia. Record high ocean temperatures have triggered a fourth global coral bleaching event.

unregulated fishing; adopting a global plastic pollution instrument; and ensuring that the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction enters into force as soon as possible to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of oceans.

Overfishing, pollution, climate change and poor management drive continued declines in fish stocks

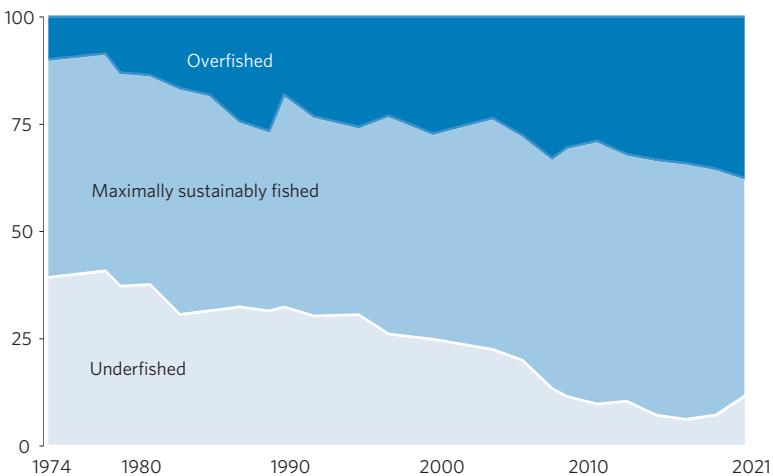
The sustainability of global fishery resources declined from 90.0 per cent in 1974 to 64.6 per cent in 2019 and further to 62.3 per cent in 2021, due to overfishing, pollution, poor management and other factors. Fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels, however, comprised around 76.9 per cent of global marine fish landings in 2021. Averaging 80 million tons annually, global marine fish landings have remained relatively stable since 1995.

Trends in 2021 for major fishing regions vary greatly, from 33 per cent to 84 per cent of fish stocks at sustainable levels (underfished and maximally sustainably fished). The Southeast Pacific had the highest percentage of overfished stocks at 66.7 per cent, followed by the Mediterranean and Black Sea at 62.5 per cent, the Northwest Pacific at 56 per cent and the Eastern

Central Atlantic at 51.3 per cent. In contrast, the Eastern Central Pacific, Northeast Atlantic, Northeast Pacific and Southwest Pacific had the lowest proportions of overfished stocks, ranging from 16 to 24 per cent.

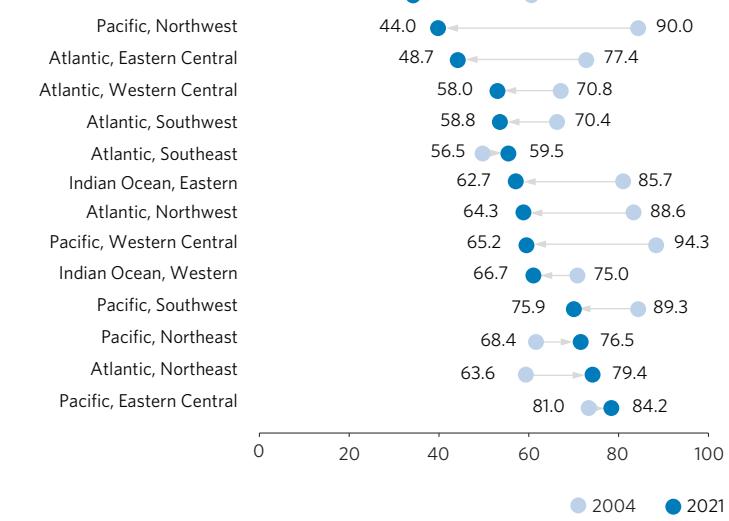
Overfishing can harm biodiversity, ecosystems and fisheries production, and imposes adverse social and economic costs. Effective fisheries management can possibly reverse these effects (if they are driven by overfishing and not factors such as habitat degradation, pollution or climate change) and lead to optimal stock levels while supporting global food security and coastal communities. The ongoing albeit decelerated decline in biologically sustainable fish stocks worldwide underscores the need for enhanced regulatory frameworks and efficient monitoring systems.

Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable and biologically unsustainable levels, 1974–2021 (percentage)



Note: Underfished and maximally sustainably fished stocks are considered within biologically sustainable levels. Overfished stocks are considered at biologically unsustainable levels.

Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels, by marine region, 2004 and 2021 (percentage)

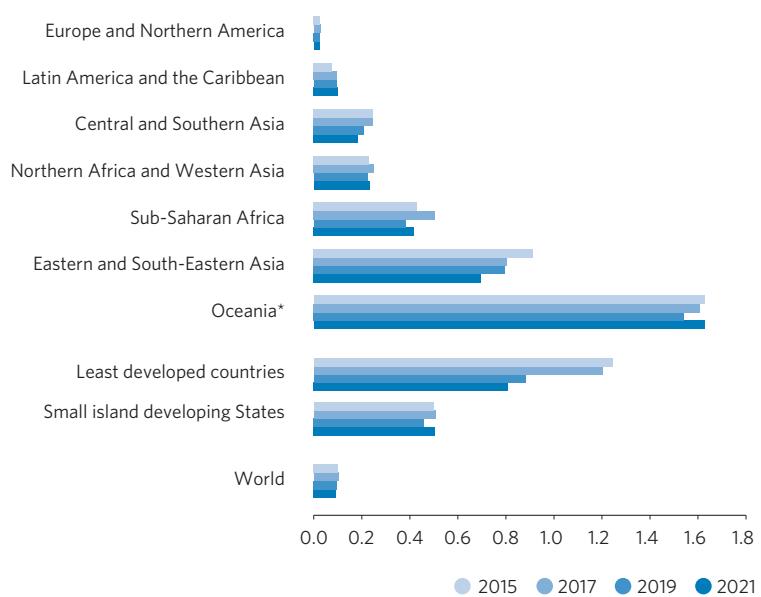


Sustainable fisheries' contribution to GDP dropped worldwide yet several regions saw positive trends

The value added of fisheries and aquaculture rose by 10 per cent from 2019 to 2021. The contribution of sustainable fisheries to GDP declined 5.4 per cent in 2021, however, mainly due to the expansion of other economic sectors and the declining sustainability of several fish stocks in some regions. This marks a second consecutive drop following a brief period of growth from 2015 to 2017. Recovery from COVID-19 disruptions has been challenging, with the industry facing volatile demand and rising costs.

Several countries that depend heavily on fisheries for livelihoods and food security, however, have seen positive developments. In sub-Saharan Africa, the contribution of sustainable fisheries to GDP climbed from 0.38 per cent in 2019 to 0.42 per cent in 2021. Small island developing States have similarly shown promising growth, from 0.46 per cent of GDP in 2019 to 0.51 per cent in 2021. Pacific small island developing States, which rank among the countries most dependent on fisheries globally, increased their share from 1.54 per cent of GDP in 2019 to 1.63 per cent in 2021. This rise underscores the sector's potential to drive economic development. Sustaining economic dividends from fisheries, however, requires judicious fish stock management practices that prevent overexploitation and depletion.

Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP, 2015–2021 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

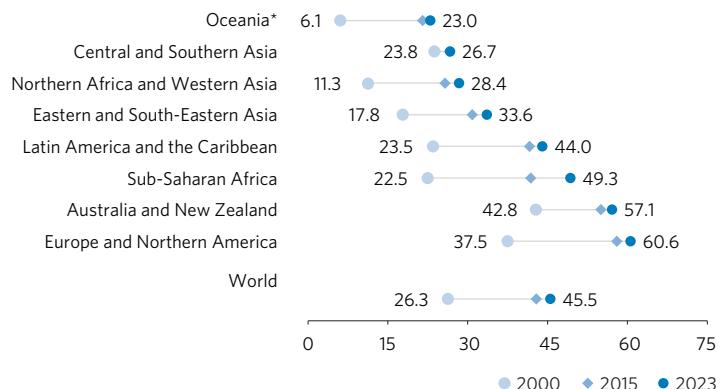
Global agreements could renew momentum to protect key biodiversity areas in the oceans

As of May 2024, there are 18,200 marine protected areas and 199 other effective, area-based conservation measures¹ covering over 29 million square kilometres or 8.12 per cent of the ocean. This represents a more than tenfold increase in marine protected area coverage since 2000, largely due to the establishment of very large areas exceeding 100,000 square kilometres. Progress has stalled since 2020, however. Reaching the 10 per cent SDG target by 2030 calls for effectively managing important sites covering an average additional 1.13 million square kilometres of ocean each year. Renewed momentum for marine conservation is expected from global agreements. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework commits to establishing protected areas to safeguard areas of particular importance for biodiversity, adding up to cover 30 per cent of oceans by 2030. Additionally, the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction aims to protect marine biodiversity in international waters and seabed. Adequate management of such protected areas will be crucial to realize conservation benefits.

Marine designations should be strategically located to safeguard key biodiversity areas. Since 2000, average protected area coverage of marine key biodiversity areas has nearly doubled, but growth has stagnated since 2015. From 2000 to 2015, Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) saw a staggering 255 per cent increase in key biodiversity area coverage, followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia (128 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (86 per cent). Since 2015, sub-Saharan Africa has led with an

18 per cent increase, followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia (10 per cent). Less than 30 per cent of marine key biodiversity areas in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand), Central and Southern Asia, and Northern Africa and Western Asia are protected, however, highlighting a critical need for action within the next six years.

Mean proportion of each marine key biodiversity area covered by protected areas, 2000, 2015 and 2023 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Note: The figure for Central and Southern Asia in 2015 was 26.5 per cent.

Record-high ocean temperatures have triggered a fourth global coral bleaching event

Rising ocean temperatures are raising new concerns for coral reefs, which support a quarter of marine species, provide resources for hundreds of millions of people in coastal communities and generate trillions of dollars in revenue annually. According to the World Meteorological Organization, as of April 2024, sea surface temperatures had reached record highs for 13 consecutive months. In 2023, ocean heat content soared to its highest level in 65 years; over 90 per cent of the ocean experienced heatwave conditions at some point during the year. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration confirms the world is currently experiencing its fourth global coral bleaching event, the second in a decade. Bleaching has been observed

in 53 countries and territories, including throughout the tropics, the Great Barrier Reef, large parts of the South Pacific, and the Atlantic and Indian ocean basins.

As oceans continue to warm amid rising global temperatures, the frequency and severity of coral bleaching will likely increase. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that up to 90 per cent of corals could be lost by 2050 at 1.5°C of warming and up to 99 per cent at 2°C. The survival of coral reefs is vital for ocean health and humanity's well-being.

¹ These measures provide sustained, positive conservation outcomes even if they are managed primarily for other purposes.



Life on land

- Global trends underscore persistent challenges to biodiversity and forests, despite their critical roles as planetary life-support systems. Global forest area continues to decline, primarily due to agricultural expansion, despite notable progress in sustainable forest management. Alarmingly, species are silently becoming extinct, the protection of key biodiversity areas has stalled and global illicit wildlife trafficking has steadily increased, posing serious threats to biodiversity and the benefits it provides to people.
- Efforts are under way to tackle these challenges, with countries advancing implementation of access and benefit-sharing instruments and integrating biodiversity values into national accounting systems. There's also a growing global commitment to biodiversity conservation, reflected in increased funding and the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Urgent action is imperative. Addressing pressing environmental challenges and their underlying drivers and interconnections –



A national park manager surveys tree nursery saplings in a desert area of central Saudi Arabia that is being regreened to combat land degradation, desertification and drought.

including climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, desertification and deforestation – demands intensified, accelerated efforts, and a comprehensive and integrated approach at local, national and global levels.

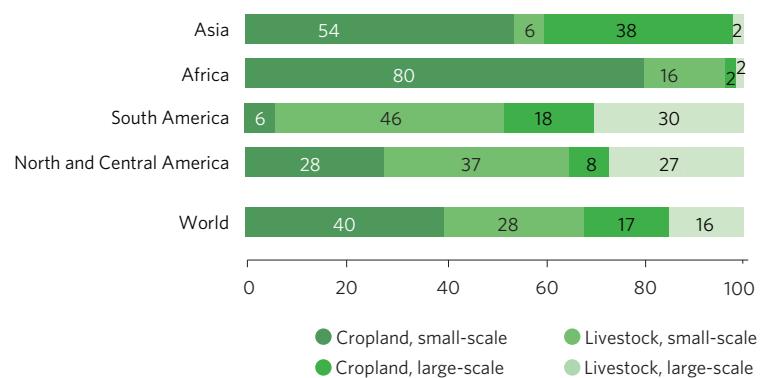
Reducing deforestation depends on improving food security, income and land rights

Between 2000 and 2020, the proportion of forest cover decreased from 31.9 to 31.2 per cent of total land area, resulting in net forest area losses of nearly 100 million hectares. Agricultural expansion drove almost 90 per cent of global deforestation; cropland accounted for 49.6 per cent and livestock grazing for 38.5 per cent. Globally, small-scale farming caused 68 per cent of agriculture-driven deforestation, while large-scale farming contributed to 32 per cent. In Africa, small-scale farming was responsible for 97 per cent of agriculture-driven deforestation. Forest losses due to large-scale farming were highest in South America at 48 per cent (mainly linked to livestock

grazing), followed by Asia at 38 per cent (primarily due to large-scale crop production, particularly for oil palm plantations).

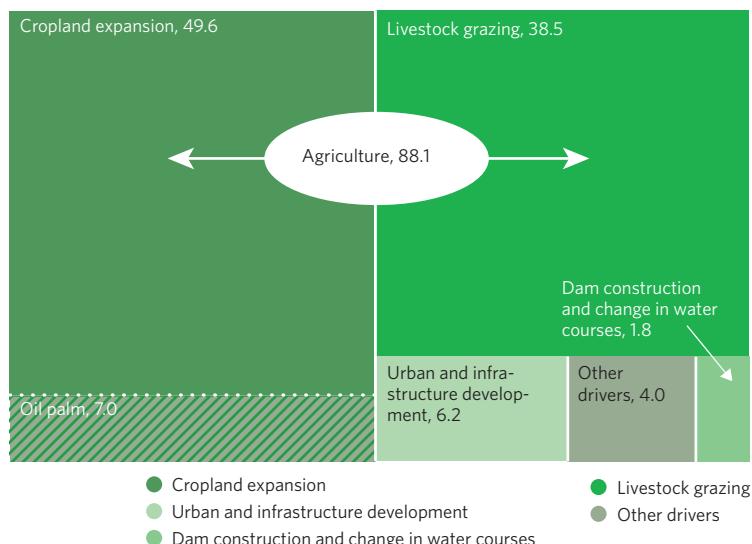
These findings suggest that efforts to reduce deforestation must tackle production system weaknesses while addressing critical needs such as food security, income and land tenure rights for local communities. Stemming deforestation also demands a comprehensive approach blending regulatory measures, market incentives and stakeholder collaboration to promote sustainable land management and preserve forest ecosystems.

Share of regional agriculture-driven deforestation associated with large-scale and small-scale livestock and cropland, 2000–2018 (percentage)



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100 per cent.

Main drivers of global deforestation, 2000–2018 (percentage)

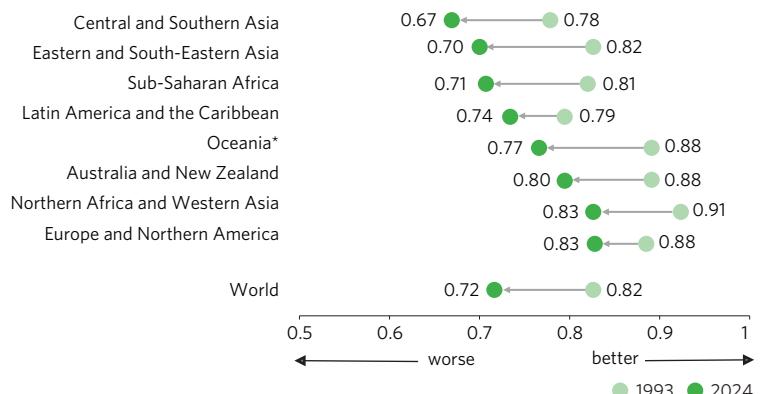


Note: "Other drivers" refers to severe degradation affecting natural regeneration whereby forests are transformed into bare soil or other wooded land. Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100 per cent.

Risks to species continue to escalate globally

Global biodiversity faces ongoing threats, evidenced by a 12 per cent deterioration in the Red List Index between 1993 and 2024. Over 44,000 species, or 28 per cent of almost 160,000 assessed species, are currently threatened. They include 70 per cent of cycads and 41 per cent of amphibians. The latter are particularly impacted by climate change, habitat conversion and invasive fungal disease. For example, Buckley's glass frog, assessed as Critically Endangered and found only in the Ecuadorian Andes, faces increased extinction risk due to habitat loss from expanding agriculture and livestock grazing, fungal disease and climate change. Regionally, severe biodiversity declines across all species groups are evident in Central and Southern Asia as well as in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia. Stopping the ongoing decline in biodiversity is an urgent race against time, making accelerated conservation efforts imperative to safeguard the irreplaceable and intricate web of life on the planet.

Red List Index of species survival, 1993 and 2024



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

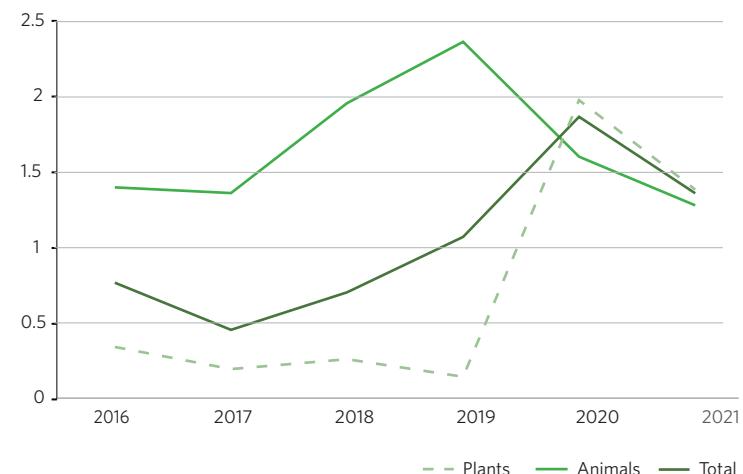
Note: A Red List Index value of 1.0 means that all species are categorized as of "Least Concern"; hence, none are expected to become extinct in the near future. A value of zero indicates that all species have gone extinct.

The share of illegally traded wildlife has been on the rise since 2017 peaking during the COVID-19 pandemic

Illegal wildlife trade persists worldwide despite two decades of concerted action at international and national levels and poses a significant threat to global biodiversity, endangering a wide range of terrestrial and marine species. Illegal trade has affected around 4,000 plant and animal species in 162 countries and territories from 2015 to 2021. This exploitation jeopardizes the survival of species and undermines ecosystem functions, especially when compounded by other pressures, such as habitat loss and climate change.

Recent estimates indicate that the intercepted illegal wildlife trade as a proportion of all wildlife trade (legal and illegal) has been on the rise since 2017, peaking during the COVID-19 pandemic. Wildlife seizures comprised over 1.9 and 1.4 per cent of global wildlife trade in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Trends likely reflect a disproportionate reduction in legal trade during the pandemic and an increase in enforcement efforts for certain wildlife commodities. For instance, more wildlife seizures were primarily attributed to new regulations targeting high-value timber species from South America, alongside intensified enforcement actions.

Trend in the proportion of wildlife trade represented by wildlife seizures, 2016–2021 (percentage)

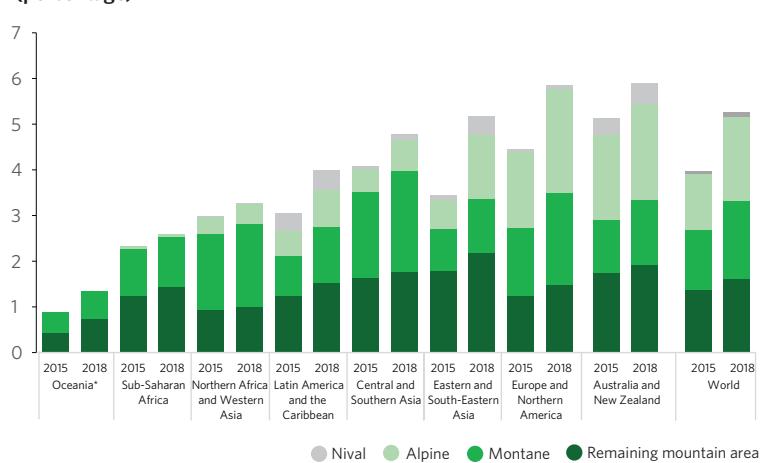


Detrimental land cover changes are impacting mountain ecosystems

Between 2015 and 2019, at least 100 million hectares of productive land were degraded annually, adversely impacting global food and water security. This degradation, driven by changes in land use and coverage, significantly contributes to biodiversity loss, including in fragile mountain ecosystems. The widespread transformation of mountain ecosystems is due to various natural and human-induced factors, such as climate change, natural hazards, unplanned agriculture and urbanization, timber extraction and recreation. Globally, only about a third of mountain key biodiversity areas are safeguarded by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures.

Global data from 2000 to 2018 indicate that degradation affects about 1.6 per cent of the world's mountainous areas. The highest proportion of degraded mountain land is in the alpine areas of Europe and Northern America (2.29 per cent), followed by the montane areas of Central and Southern Asia (2.22 per cent) and the lower mountain belts of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (2.17 per cent). Mountain ecosystem degradation threatens downstream water provision, through reduced glacial coverage, as well as biodiversity and other ecosystem services, thereby undermining efforts to protect terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. Furthermore, diminished forest and vegetation coverage increase soil erosion, heightening the risk of downstream landslides and flooding.

Proportion of degraded mountain land by bioclimatic belt, 2015 and 2018 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

Note: Mountains can be subdivided vertically into seven bioclimatic belts based on average temperatures, which helps account for latitudinal changes in the elevation of thermally similar areas in the world's mountains. This facilitates global comparisons. Indicator 15.4.2 aggregates seven bioclimatic belts into four (nival, alpine, montane and remaining mountain areas). The treeline is between the alpine and montane belts.

Peace, justice and strong institutions

- Rising conflicts and violent organized crime persist around the world, causing immense human suffering and hampering sustainable development. The number of forcibly displaced people reached an unprecedented 120 million in May 2024. Civilian casualties in armed conflicts surged by 72 per cent in 2023.
- Corruption continues to divert resources from sustainable development, with one in five people reporting being asked to pay or having paid a bribe to a public official in the last 12 months. With one third of prisoners unsentenced worldwide, achieving just judicial processes and improving prison conditions is imperative.
- Governments globally are struggling to restore pre-COVID-19 budget reliability. New international pressures affecting economies have increased budget expenditures beyond initial approvals.
- All SDGs depend on establishing lasting peace and preventing violent



A Palestinian family with their children flees their home in Rafah, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip.

conflicts. Urgent action is needed to combat corruption and organized crime, strengthen the rule of law and access to justice, build effective and inclusive governance institutions, and protect rights and fundamental freedoms.

Civilian deaths in armed conflict saw the steepest rise since 2015

In 2023, civilian casualties in armed conflicts surged by a staggering 72 per cent, the steepest rise since 2015. Despite fewer civilian deaths in some conflict zones, others witnessed significant increases, with 7 in 10 recorded deaths occurring in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2023. For the second consecutive year, the number of civilians killed in conflict rose dramatically, reversing a downward trend from 2016 to 2019. By 2023, civilian casualties had soared to over 33,400, nearing the 2015 peak. Additionally, the number of women killed in conflict increased for the first time since 2015. In 2022, 2 in 10 civilians killed in conflicts were women; 1 in 10 were children. By 2023, 4 in 10 were women and 3 in 10 were children. These alarming figures indicate that the road to global peace and security, essential for sustainable development, has been diverted. The trend must be reversed, conflicts must end, and parties to conflicts must strictly abide by international humanitarian and human rights obligations to protect civilians' lives.

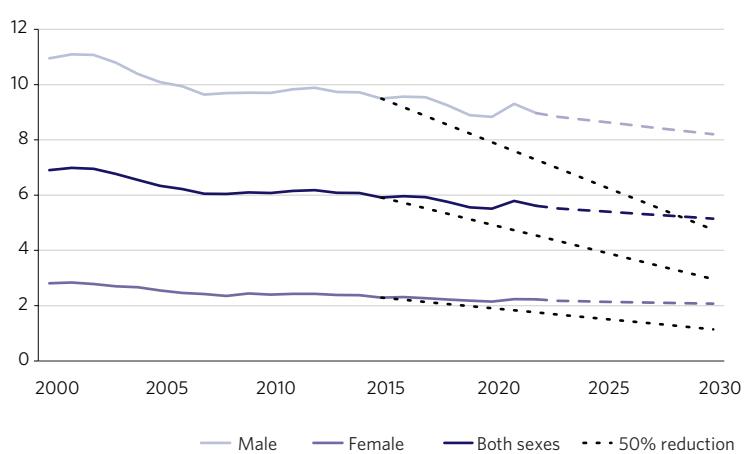
Number of civilian conflict-related deaths and percentage change from previous year, 2015–2023



Slow progress in reducing homicides continues even as the world has moved past a 2021 spike in rates

The global homicide rate gradually decreased from 5.9 victims per 100,000 population in 2015 to 5.5 in 2020. This downward trend was disrupted in 2021, when the rate sharply rose to 5.8 before slightly retreating to 5.6 in 2022. The global homicide rate declined by 5 per cent between 2015 and 2022. If this pattern persists, the rate is projected to be 5.1 per 100,000 population by 2030, an overall decrease of just 13 per cent since 2015. The two regions with the highest rates are Latin America and the Caribbean, which is plagued by organized crime and gang activities, and Africa, which has a large youth population, increased incidences of extreme heat and persistent inequality. In 2022, 88,000 women became homicide victims globally compared to 360,000 men.

Homicide rate, by sex, 2000–2030 (victims per 100,000 population)



Note: Projections for the years 2023–2030 represent linear extrapolations of trends observed for the years 2015–2022.

The experience of bribery differs by national income level

About 19 per cent of people reported being asked to pay or having paid a bribe to a public official in the last 12 months, based on 138 countries with available data from 2015 to 2022. Notable regional variations were apparent. In Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa, an average of 29.7 per cent and 26.6 per cent of the population, respectively, experienced bribery in the last 12 months, compared to 10.1 per cent in Europe and Northern America.

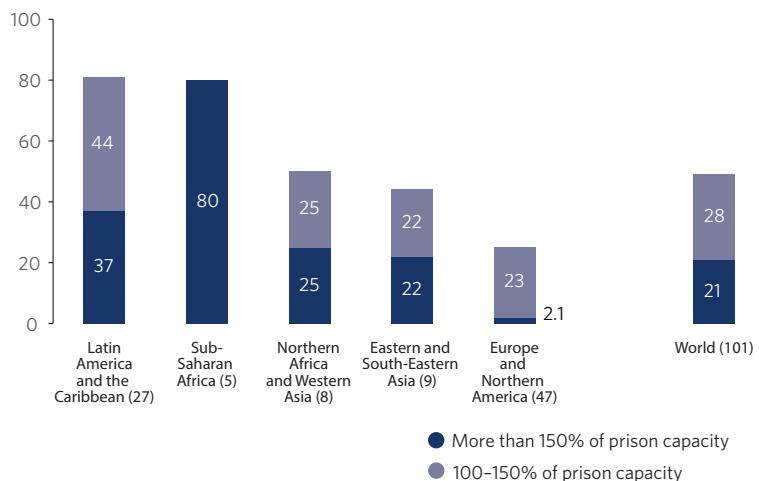
The prevalence of bribery varied by national income level, ranging from an average of 9 per cent in high-income countries to 32 per cent in low-income countries. Data from 18 countries from 2010 to 2021 suggested that men were more likely than women to engage in bribery, often influenced by differing interactions with male-dominated sectors like the police or customs.

Half of countries have overcrowded prisons, sparking concerns about health and human rights

The global prison population rose from 11.1 million in 2015 to 11.5 million in 2022, a growth rate slower than that of the world population as a whole. Consequently, the prisoner-to-population rate decreased from 150 prisoners per 100,000 population in 2015 to 144 per 100,000 in 2022. Central and Southern Asia had the lowest rates at 54 per 100,000, while Latin America and the Caribbean had the highest at 277 per 100,000.

Access to justice is a fundamental human right. In 2022, however, nearly a third (3.5 million) of the global prison population was held in pretrial detention, a share that remained stable between 2015 and 2022. While most regions showed some improvements, Central and Southern Asia saw a worrying rise; almost 60 per cent of prisoners was held unsentenced. Overcrowding in prisons operating at over 100 per cent of intended capacity was a concern in half of countries with data. This issue was particularly severe in Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa, where over three quarters of countries reported overcrowding. Globally, one in five countries operates prisons at over 150 per cent of intended capacity, with documented harm to health and higher rates of mortality.

Proportion of countries where prisoners outnumber the prison capacity, 2022 or latest year available (percentage)



Note: Numbers in parentheses are the number of countries with data in each region.

Killings of human rights defenders decreased but remain high, and more journalists died in conflict zones

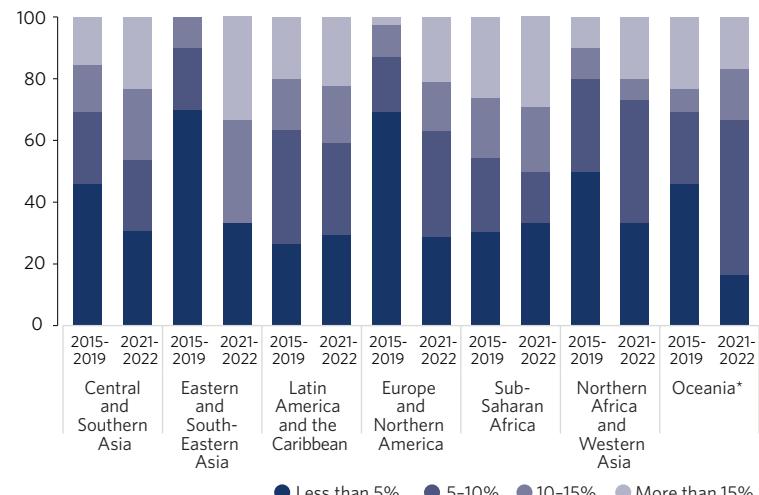
In 2023, 320 human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists in 40 countries were killed, down from 448 cases in 36 countries in 2022, based on cases recorded by national human rights institutions and the United Nations. Conflict zones saw a sharp increase in the killings of journalists and media workers, with 40 lives lost, reversing a downward trend since 2017. Latin America and the Caribbean remained the deadliest region, accounting for 70 per cent of all killings. Enforced disappearances globally nearly doubled for the second consecutive year, with at least 54 cases reported in 14 countries in 2023.

Nearly a decade since Member States committed to zero killings and attacks against defenders of rights and freedom of speech, incidents have been observed in at least 97 countries. The total number of annual killings has not fallen below 300 since 2015, with peaks in 2018 and 2022. Kidnapping, detention, legal harassment and online attacks are other major threats. Strong protection frameworks are needed to stem this trend, particularly in countries where violent conflict or social unrest erupts or escalates.

Multiple crises affect government budget reliability

Governments across the world have found it difficult to return to pre-COVID-19 levels of budget reliability, in part due to new international challenges impacting economies, including global political instability, inflation and volatile resource prices. Attempts to support economic activity and address social stresses have resulted in higher budget expenditure than originally approved across all regions. Budget reliability improved in 2021 and 2022 compared to 2020 but remained weaker than pre-pandemic levels. Northern Africa and Western Asia, Central and Southern Asia, and Europe and Northern America experienced the highest spending deviations relative to the pre-pandemic period, likely due to factors such as geopolitical tensions, inflation and higher-than-expected revenues. Multiple crises emphasize the need for governments to better prepare for future emergencies.

Comparison of deviations between approved and executed expenditure, 2015–2019 and 2021–2022, by region and category (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.



Partnerships for the Goals

- Developing countries face a \$4 trillion annual investment gap to achieve the SDGs. Foreign direct investment flows to developing countries have decreased while gains in remittances and ODA have been modest. The Secretary-General has urged countries to support an SDG Stimulus of at least \$500 billion annually.
- External debt stock levels have remained unprecedentedly high in developing countries. About 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it.
- Approximately 67 per cent of the world's population was online in 2023, up 69 per cent from 2015. Investment in infrastructure and affordable Internet access for the remaining 2.6 billion people is crucial for inclusive development.
- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of high-quality, timely and disaggregated data for informed decision-making. Yet funding gaps threaten the resilience of statistical systems in developing countries.

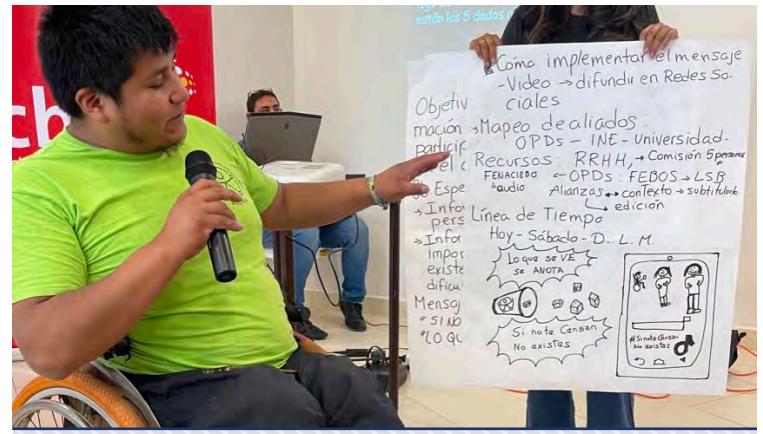
The trillions needed to achieve the SDGs require world leaders to rapidly scale up investments

Mobilizing financial resources is crucial for driving global recovery and achieving the SDGs. In 2023, the annual SDG investment gap in developing countries was estimated at about \$4 trillion, with over half, or \$2.2 trillion, needed for the energy transition alone. The current investment gap is 60 per cent higher than the \$2.5 trillion estimated in 2019. The increase results from shortfalls since 2015, compounded by multiple global challenges, including the pandemic and the food, fuel and financing crises.

In 2023, ODA from Development Assistance Committee members totalled \$223.7 billion, representing 0.37 per cent of members' combined gross national income. This marked a 1.8 per cent increase in real terms from 2022 and a 47 per cent rise from 2015, making it the fifth consecutive year of record-high ODA. The increase was primarily driven by aid for Ukraine, humanitarian assistance and contributions to international organizations. Net bilateral ODA flows to Africa increased by 2 per cent and to LDCs by 3 per cent.

Global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows in 2023 amounted to \$1.33 trillion, a decrease of 2 per cent from 2022. Excluding a few European conduit economies that registered large swings in investment flows, global FDI flows were 10 per cent lower than in 2022. FDI flows to developing countries fell by 7 per cent to \$867 billion and declined or stagnated in most regions.

Remittances have proven resilient. They have become the premier source of external finance for developing countries in the post-COVID-19 period. In 2023, remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached an estimated \$669 billion, reflecting a normalization of flows following the post-pandemic robust growth. The United States remained the largest source of remittances in the world, followed by Saudi Arabia and Switzerland. The global average cost of sending a \$200 remittance was 6.4 per cent in 2023, more than twice the SDG target of 3 per cent. Development impacts of remittances can be augmented by reducing remittance costs and worker-paid recruitment costs.



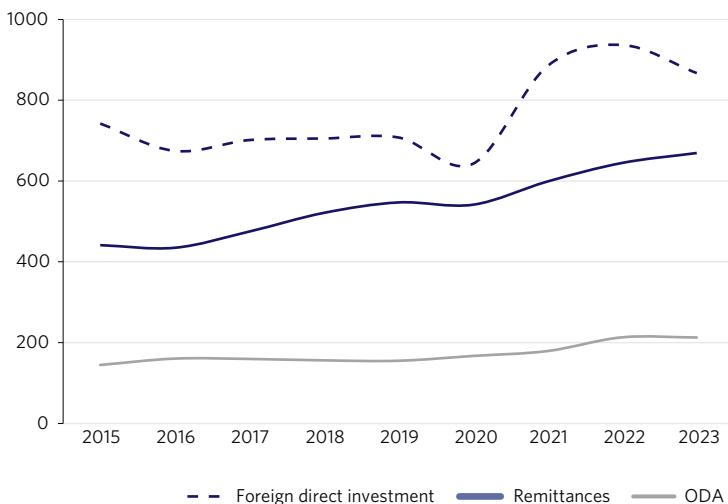
Gary Ramirez presents an action plan to advocate for data on persons with disabilities. It was developed in a workshop for Organizations of Persons with Disabilities in the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

- In a landscape of declining international cooperation and rising geopolitical tensions, strengthened global partnerships and enhanced cooperation are urgently needed to address widening financing gaps, reinforce post-pandemic recovery and promote sustainable development, particularly in the LDCs and other vulnerable countries.

In 2022, additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources, reported by 101 bilateral and multilateral providers to measure total official support for sustainable development (TOSSD), amounted to \$342.1 billion. This included \$276.6 billion in official resources, \$55.3 billion from private finance and \$10.2 billion from private grants for development. Sustainable development grants (both official and private) decreased from \$129.2 billion in 2021 to \$127.5 billion in 2022. Sustainable concessional development loans increased by 6 per cent from \$54.8 billion in 2021 to \$58.0 billion in 2022, while non-concessional loans decreased from 106.9 billion in 2021 to \$101.3 billion in 2022. Mobilized private finance increased by 21 per cent from 2021.

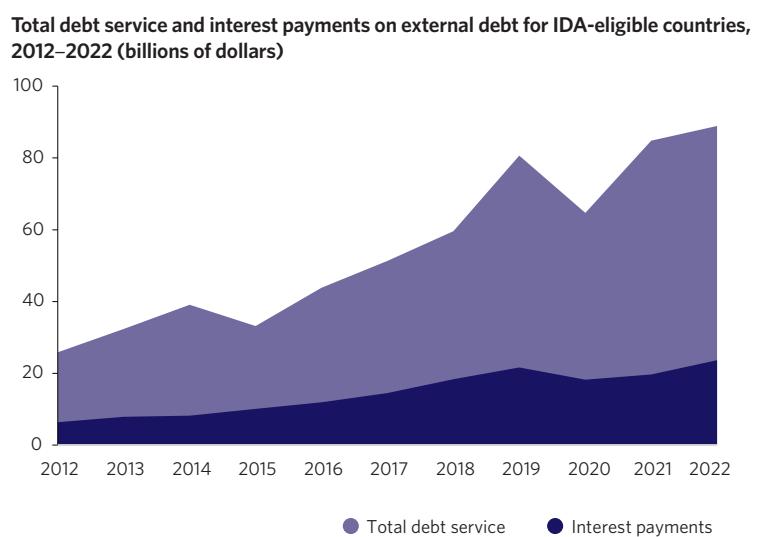
At the SDG Summit in September 2023, Heads of State and Government committed to advancing the Secretary-General's SDG Stimulus proposal of unlocking \$500 billion in additional financing and investment annually.

Remittances, foreign direct investment and ODA flows to developing countries, 2015–2023 (billions of dollars)



Rising borrowing costs put developing countries at risk of debt crises

In 2022, the external debt stock of low- and middle-income countries fell for the first time since 2015, dropping to \$9.0 trillion from \$9.3 trillion in 2021. Even so, external debt stock levels remained unprecedentedly high after more than a decade of rapid debt accumulation. In 2022, the external debt stock of countries eligible to borrow from the International Development Association (IDA) – which supports the poorest countries in boosting economic development – increased by 2.7 per cent, reaching a record high of \$1.1 trillion. Public and publicly guaranteed debt service payments by low- and middle-income countries hit a record \$444 billion and are forecast to continue growing. Interest payments on total external debt stock by IDA-eligible countries have doubled since 2015 to \$23.6 billion and are expected to rise further as global interest rates trend upward. About 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it. Increasing borrowing costs have and will continue to divert scarce resources from critical development needs such as poverty reduction, climate action, health and education.



COVID-19 impacted global data collection for the SDGs, highlighting the need for increased investment in statistical systems

High-quality, timely and disaggregated data are crucial for guiding decision-making on all SDGs. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly hindered the ability of national statistical offices to collect recent data. This has led to a small decline in the average Open Data Inventory (ODIN) coverage scores from 2020 to 2022, mainly in low- and middle-income countries. Even in the most resource-rich countries, the average ODIN data coverage score remains below 60 out of 100, highlighting the urgent need for increased investment in data infrastructure and production. Despite these gaps, the long-term trajectory of data coverage score tracks upward.

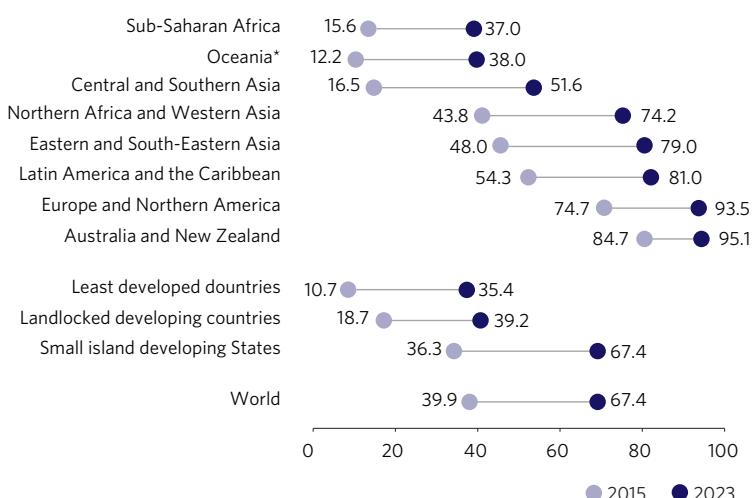
Based on the Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI), global scores on the Data Sources Performance Index and Data Infrastructure Performance Index improved between 2016 and 2023. Data sources gained only 3 points, held back in part by COVID-19 disruptions, while data infrastructure, both the hard and soft infrastructure to produce data, increased by around 14 points.

In 2023, 159 countries and territories reported having statistical legislation compliant with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, up from 132 in 2019, indicating significant progress in modernizing national statistical systems. Additionally, 163 countries implemented national statistical plans, up from 143 in 2019, with 109 fully funded. International support for data and statistics development has increased, reaching \$799 million in 2021, 14 per cent above 2020 and 44 per cent above 2015. Funding gaps remain a major issue, particularly in Africa and the LDCs, where only a fraction of plans is fully funded. This resource insufficiency threatens the resilience of statistical systems and risks leaving vulnerable populations behind. Addressing these challenges requires more funding, mainstreamed data activities and strategic planning aligned with emerging development priorities.

Globally, one in three people are still offline, underscoring the urgency of infrastructure investments and affordable Internet access, particularly in underdeveloped regions

Approximately 67 per cent of the world's population, or 5.4 billion people, was online in 2023, 4.7 per cent more than in 2022 and 69 per cent more than in 2015. Internet use continues to correlate with regional development. Australia and New Zealand and Europe and Northern America have achieved universal usage (above 95 per cent), while only 37 and 38 per cent of people in sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand), respectively, are online. Although the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily accelerated Internet adoption, recent growth rates have reverted to pre-pandemic levels. Worldwide, 70 per cent of men use the Internet compared to 65 per cent of women, with 244 million more men than women online in 2023. Fixed broadband subscriptions grew at an annual rate of 6.4 per cent between 2015 and 2023, reaching 19 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants globally. These connections are scarce in low-income countries, however, due to high costs and inadequate infrastructure. Investments in infrastructure and affordable Internet access are crucial, especially in underserved regions.

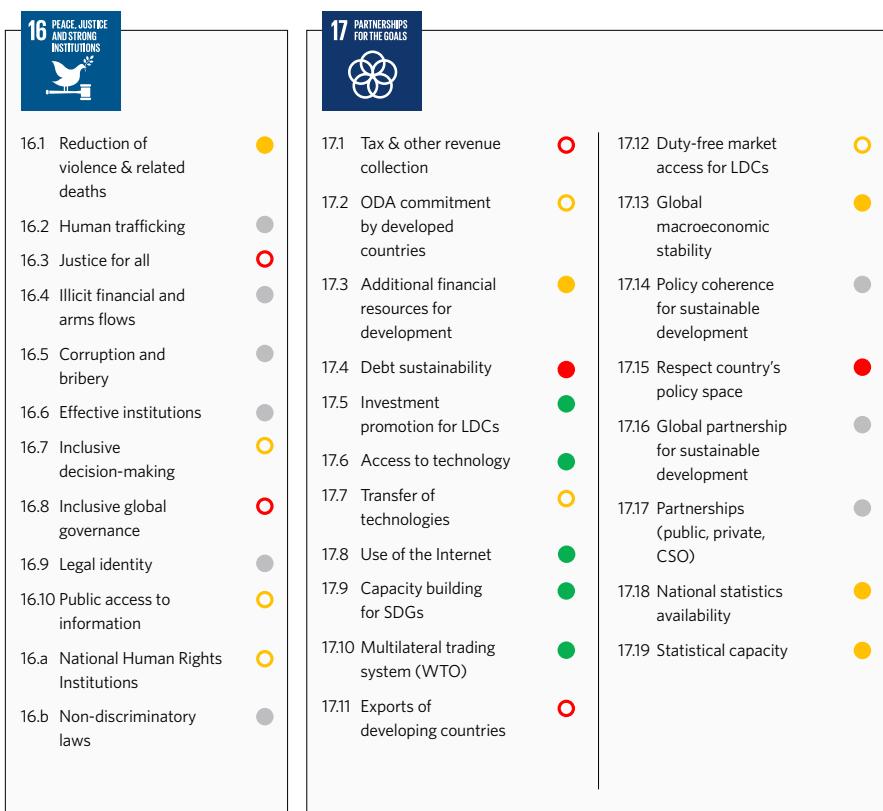
Proportion of individuals using the Internet, 2015 and 2023 (percentage)



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

SDG progress by target





Legend

- On track or target met
- Moderate progress, but acceleration needed
- Marginal progress, and significant acceleration needed
- Stagnation
- Regression
- Insufficient data

List of Acronyms

- CSO: Civil society organization
 ICT: Information and communications technology
 NCD: Non-communicable disease
 NEET: Not in employment, education or training
 R&D: Research and development
 SME: Small and medium enterprise
 TVET: Technical and vocational education and training
 UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
 UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
 WTO: World Trade Organization

For further details, please see the SDG Progress Chart 2024 Technical Note at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/>

Note to the reader

Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals

The information presented in this report is based on the latest available data (as of June 2024) on selected indicators in the global indicator framework¹ for the Sustainable Development Goals. The global indicator framework is used to review progress at the global level and was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and adopted by

the General Assembly on 6 July 2017 (see resolution 71/313, annex). The choice of indicators used in the report does not represent a prioritization of targets, since all Goals and targets are equally important. Additional indicator analysis and information can be found in the "SDG Extended Report 2024" online.²

Data sources

The values for most of the indicators presented in the report are regional and/or subregional aggregates. In general, the figures are weighted averages, using the reference population as a weight, of national data produced by national statistical systems and calculated by international agencies with specialized mandates. The national data are often adjusted for comparability and, where lacking, are estimated. As decided by the Statistical Commission and in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6, estimates used to compile the global indicators should be produced in full consultation with national statistical authorities. The criteria and mechanisms for validation by national statistical authorities are outlined in the report of the IAEG-SDGs³ and were endorsed by the Statistical Commission at its fiftieth session.⁴

Although the aggregate figures presented here are a convenient way to track progress, the situation of individual countries within a given region, and across population groups and geographical areas within a country, may vary significantly from regional averages. Presenting aggregate figures for all regions also obscures another reality: the lack, in many parts of the world, of adequate data to assess national trends and to inform and monitor the implementation of development policies.

A database of available global, regional and country data and metadata for the SDG indicators is maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>. Owing to the emergence of new data and revised methodologies, data series presented in this report may not be comparable with previous data series.

Regional groupings

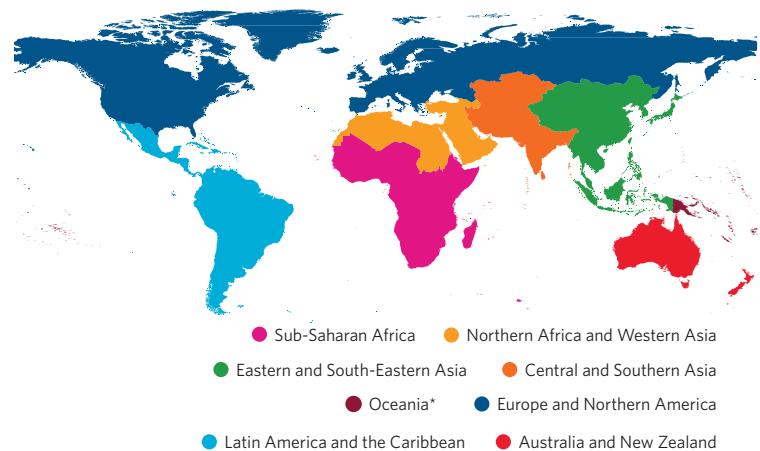
This report presents data on progress made towards achieving the SDGs worldwide and by various groups. The country groupings are based on the geographic regions defined in the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (known as M49)⁵ of the United Nations Statistics Division. The geographic regions are shown on the map to the right. For the purpose of presentation, some of the M49 regions have been combined.

The use of geographic regions as the basis for country groupings is a major change from *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016* and the progress reports on the Millennium Development Goals. Previously, data were presented for countries in "developed" and "developing" regions, which were further broken down into geographic subregions. Although there is no established convention for the designation of "developed" and "developing" countries or areas in the United Nations system, data for some indicators in this report are still being presented for developed and developing regions and countries for the purpose of statistical analysis only, and are based on the practice employed by the international agencies that provided the data.⁶

The text and figures present, to the extent possible, data for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which are country groups requiring special attention.

A complete list of countries included in each region and subregion and country group is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/>.

The term "country" used in this report also refers, as appropriate, to territories and areas. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



- Notes:
- Oceania* refers to Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand, throughout the publication.
 - The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this and other maps throughout this publication do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

1 The complete list of indicators is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>.

2 See the "SDG Extended Report 2024" at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/extended-report/>.

3 See the "Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators" (E/CN.3/2019/2), annex I.

4 See Report of the Statistical Commission on its fiftieth session (E/2019/24-E/CN.3/2019/34).

5 Full details of the M49 standard can be found on the United Nations Statistical Division website at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>.

6 A discussion note, "Update of the regional groupings for the SDG report and database," of 31 October 2016 describes the details of this change and is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/>.

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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
International Energy Agency (IEA)
International Forum on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (IFT)
International Labour Organization (ILO)
International Monetary Fund (IMF)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
International Trade Centre (ITC)
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
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Save the Children
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United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
UN-Energy
UN-Ocean
UN Tourism
UN-Water
World Bank Group
World Health Organization (WHO)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

For more information, visit the Sustainable Development Goals website of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>.



“We have a rescue plan before us, in the [SDG Summit] political declaration.

Now is the time to lift the declaration’s words off the page, and invest in development at scale like never before.”

— ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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