

MODULE 1: What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

Youth Workers 4 Global Goals

CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Module 1: What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

Introduction	2
I. What is Sustainable Development?.....	3
Sustainability	3
Development.....	6
Sustainable development	8
II. What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?	13
The Millennium Development Goals	13
The Sustainable Development Goals	15



INTRODUCTION

In September 2015, the leaders of all 193 member states of the UN adopted Agenda 2030, a universal agenda that contains the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. The 17 Goals in turn hold 169 targets and 230 indicators.

The Global Goals is the most ambitious agreement for sustainable development that world leaders have ever made. It integrates all three aspects of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental. For the goals to be met, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and the general public. The Goals affect all 7 billion people on Earth and for them to be met, it is crucial that everyone is aware of and have knowledge of them.

United Nations recognizes young people as rights-holders, and promotes and facilitates transparency, accountability, and responsiveness from governments, international organizations and others toward young people. Youth have the capacity to identify and challenge existing power structures and barriers to change, and to expose contradictions and biases. Youth activism is on the rise the world over, bolstered by broader connectivity and access to social media. Moreover, being innovative, young people understand the problems they face and can offer new ideas and alternative solutions.

In the following module, youth workers will learn more about what is Sustainability and Sustainable Development, what were the Millennium Development Goals and what are the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.



I. What is Sustainable Development?

Sustainability is development that satisfies the needs of the present without compromising the capacity of future generations, guaranteeing the balance between economic growth, care for the environment and social well-being. Therefore, Sustainable development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services based upon which the economy and society depend. The desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resources are used to continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural system. Sustainable development can be defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs¹.



To understand the meaning of sustainable development, let's take a look at the separate meaning of both words.

a. Sustainability

Sustainability is the ability to exist constantly

The name sustainability is derived from the Latin *sustinere* (to hold; sub, under). Sustain can mean "maintain", "support", or "endure".

Modern use of the term sustainability is broad and difficult to define precisely. Originally, sustainability meant making only such use of natural, renewable resources that people can continue to rely on their yields in the long term.

Moving towards sustainability is also a social challenge that entails international and national law, urban planning and transport, supply chain management, local and individual lifestyles and ethical consumerism. Ways of living more sustainably can take

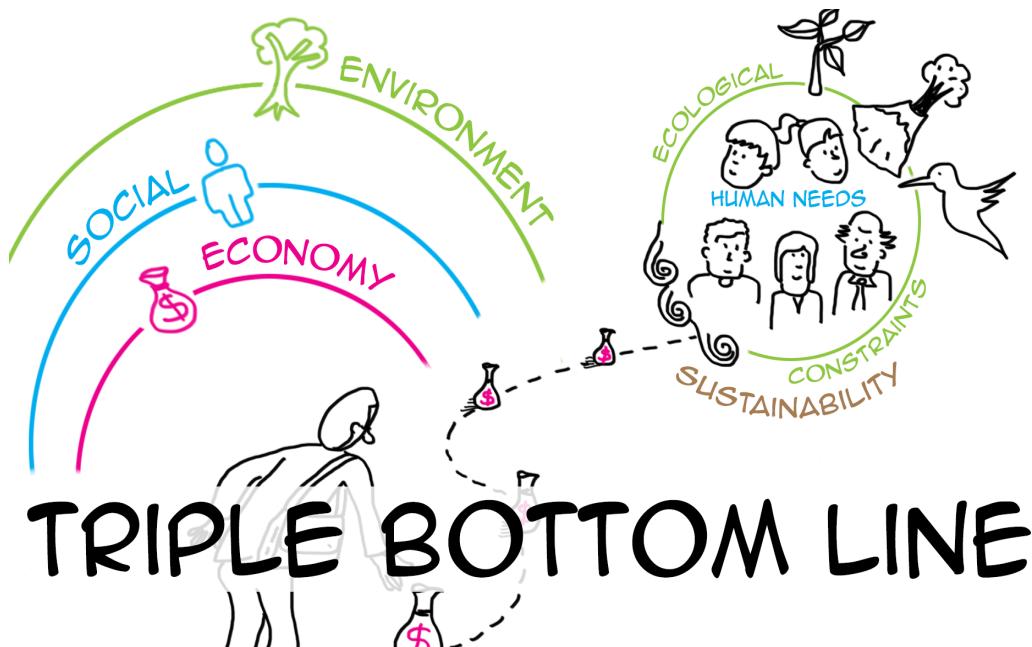
¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_development



many forms from reorganizing living conditions (e.g., ecovillages, eco-municipalities and sustainable cities), reappraising economic sectors (permaculture, green building, sustainable agriculture), or work practices (sustainable architecture), using science to develop new technologies (green technologies, renewable energy and sustainable fission and fusion power), or designing systems in a flexible and reversible manner, and adjusting individual lifestyles that conserve natural resources.

However, sustainability is most often defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It has three main pillars: economic, environmental, and social. These three pillars are informally referred to as people, planet and profits.

The triple bottom line (TBL) consists of social equity, economic, and environmental factors. The phrase, "people, planet, and profit" to describe the triple bottom line and the goal of sustainability, was coined by John Elkington in 1994 while at SustainAbility, and was later used as the title of the Anglo-Dutch oil company Shell's first sustainability report in 1997. As a result, one country in which the 3P concept took deep root was The Netherlands.



People, the social equity bottom line

"People" considers employees, the labour involved in a corporation's work, and the wider community where a corporation does business. Another way to look at "people" is, how much does a company benefit society? A triple bottom line company pays fair wages and takes steps to ensure humane working conditions at supplier factories.

Triple bottom line companies make an effort to "give back" to the community. The community benefits, and 3M provides itself a well-educated source of scientists and innovators for generations to come.



Planet, the environmental bottom line

The planet, environmental bottom line, or natural capital bottom line refers to sustainable environmental practices. A TBL company endeavours to benefit the natural order as much as possible or at the least do no harm and minimize environmental impact. A TBL endeavour reduces its ecological footprint by, among other things, carefully managing its consumption of energy and non-renewables and reducing manufacturing waste as well as rendering waste less toxic before disposing of it in a safe and legal manner. "Cradle to grave" is uppermost in the thoughts of TBL manufacturing businesses, which typically conduct a life cycle assessment of products to determine what the true environmental cost is from the growth and harvesting of raw materials to manufacture to distribution to eventual disposal by the end user.

Currently, the cost of disposing of non-degradable or toxic products is born financially by governments and environmentally by the residents near the disposal site and elsewhere. In TBL thinking, an enterprise which produces and markets a product which will create a waste problem should not be given a free ride by society. It would be more equitable for the business which manufactures and sells a problematic product to bear part of the cost of its ultimate disposal.



Moreover, the ecological bottom line is akin to the concept of eco-capitalism, also known as green capitalism². This is the view that capital exists in nature as "natural capital" (ecosystems that have ecological yield) on which all wealth depends, and therefore, governments should use market-based policy-instruments (such as a carbon tax) to resolve environmental problems.

Profit, the economic bottom line

The profit or economic bottom line deals with the economic value created by the organization after deducting the cost of all inputs, including the cost of the capital tied up. It therefore differs from traditional accounting definitions of profit. In the original concept, within a sustainability framework, the "profit" aspect needs to be seen as the real economic benefit enjoyed by the host society. It is the real economic impact the organization has on its economic environment. This is often confused to be limited to the internal profit made by a company or organization (which nevertheless remains an essential starting point for the computation). Therefore, an original TBL approach cannot be interpreted as simply traditional corporate accounting profit plus social and

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eco-capitalism>



environmental impacts unless the "profits" of other entities are included as a social benefit.

However, while every business pursues financial profitability, triple bottom line businesses see it as one part of a business plan. Sustainable organizations also recognize that "profit" isn't diametrically opposed to "people" or "planet."

For example, Swedish furniture giant IKEA reported sales of \$37.6 billion in 2016. The same year, the company turned a profit by recycling waste into some of its best-selling products. Before, this waste had cost the company more than \$1 million per year. And the company is well on its way to "zero waste to landfill" worldwide. According to Joanna Yarrow, IKEA's head of sustainability for the UK, "We don't do this because we're tree huggers, we do this because it's very cost effective³."



b. Development

The term "development" is very broad. It may refer to business such as business development, career development, green development, organizational or professional development. It often uses in biology and medicine (human development, youth development or personal development) or could be found also in computing such as artificial development, web development or software development.

However, the development in which we will focus in our module is the social science development or more specifically, the sustainable development. Before to explain what actually this means, let's see a small definition on the term "development".

³ <https://sustain.wisconsin.edu/sustainability/triple-bottom-line/>



Development is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components. The purpose of development is a rise in the level and quality of life of the population, and the creation or expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities, without damaging the resources of the environment. Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, and includes an aspect of quality change and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change.

A multitude of meanings is attached to the idea of development because the term is complex, contested, ambiguous, and elusive.



The development could be seen also as political term and it has a range of meanings that depend on the context in which the term is used, and it may also be used to reflect and to justify a variety of different agendas held by different people or organisations. The idea of development articulated by the World Bank, for instance, is very different from that promoted by

Greenpeace activists. This point has important implications for the task of understanding sustainable development, because much of the confusion about the meaning of the term 'sustainable development' arises because people hold very different ideas about the meaning of 'development' (Adams 2009).

Another important point is that development is a process rather than an outcome: it is dynamic in that it involves a change from one state or condition to another. Ideally, such a change is a positive one - an improvement of some sort (for instance, an improvement in maternal health). Furthermore, development is often regarded as something that is done by one group (such as a development agency) to another (such as rural farmers in a developing country). Again, this demonstrates that development is a political process, because it raises questions about who has the power to do what to whom⁴.

But development is not simply about the interactions between human groups; it also involves the natural environment. So, from another point of view, development is about the conversion of natural resources into cultural resources. This conversion has taken place throughout the history of human societies, although the process has generally increased in pace and complexity with time. If we use a system diagram to illustrate - in very general terms - what an economy does, we see that the basic function of an economy is to convert natural resources (in the forms of raw materials and energy) into products and services that are useful to humans. Inevitably, because conversion processes are never totally efficient, some waste is produced which is usually discarded into the environment as various forms of pollution. Therefore, the environment is both

⁴ https://www.soas.ac.uk/cedep-demos/000_P501_USD_K3736-Demo/unit1/page_12.htm



a source and a sink in relation to economic processes: it is a source of raw materials and energy and a sink for pollution, as illustrated in the picture below.



The fact that economic growth means an increase in the throughput of an economy raises several issues:

- Whilst some raw materials (such as air) are ubiquitous and others are readily available, many raw materials are scarce and their availability cannot be guaranteed indefinitely.
- Similarly, some sources of energy (such as the wind) are renewable and freely available, whilst others (such as fossil fuels) are non-renewable and finite.
- Most pollution sinks have a limited capacity to absorb the waste by-products of economic processes.
- In affluent societies, problems of overconsumption have emerged and questions are now being raised about the extent to which the acquisition of additional products and services actually improves well-being in those societies⁵.

Consequently, without any change in the fundamental economic processes involved, the production of more products and services will inevitably require much raw materials and energy, and will generate more waste.

c. Sustainable development

According to United Nations (UN), sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet.

For sustainable development to be achieved, it is crucial to harmonize three core elements: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. These elements are interconnected and all are crucial for the well-being of individuals and societies⁶. Last but not least, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. To this end, there must be promotion of sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater

⁵ https://www.soas.ac.uk/cedep-demos/000_P501_USD_K3736-Demo/unit1/page_12.htm

⁶ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>



opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.



Sustainable development has its roots in ideas about sustainable forest management which were developed in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. In response to a growing awareness of the depletion of timber resources in England, John Evelyn argued that "sowing and planting of trees had to be regarded as a national duty of every landowner, in order to stop the destructive over-exploitation of natural resources" in his 1662 essay *Sylva*. In 1713 Hans Carl von Carlowitz, a senior mining administrator in the service of Elector Frederick Augustus I of Saxony published *Sylvicultura economics*, a 400-page work on forestry. Building upon the ideas of Evelyn and French minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, von Carlowitz developed the concept of managing forests for sustained yield.

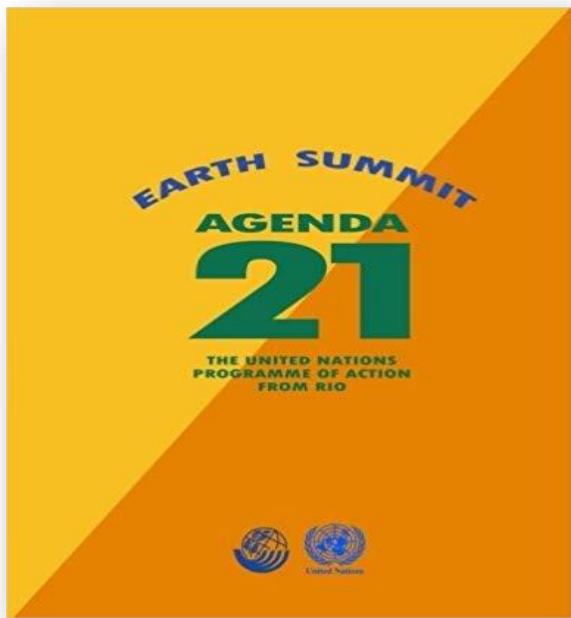
In 1980 the International Union for the Conservation of Nature published a world conservation strategy that included one of the first references to sustainable development as a global priority and introduced the term "sustainable development". Two years later, the United Nations World Charter for Nature raised five principles of conservation by which human conduct affecting nature is to be guided and judged. In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development released the report *Our Common Future*, commonly called the Brundtland Report. The report included what is now one of the most widely recognised definitions of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:



- ***The concept of 'needs', in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and***
- ***The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.***

However, after this report the concept of sustainable development has developed beyond the initial intergenerational framework to focus more on the goal of "socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth". In 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development published the Earth Charter, which outlines the building of a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century. **The action plan Agenda 21** for sustainable development identified information, integration, and participation as key building blocks to help countries achieve development that recognises these interdependent pillars. It was created after the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. Moreover, it is an action agenda for the UN, other multilateral organizations, and individual governments around the world that can be executed at local, national, and global levels.



Agenda 21 is a 350-page document divided into 40 chapters that have been grouped into 4 sections:

- **Section I:**
Social and Economic Dimensions is directed toward combating poverty, especially in developing countries, changing consumption patterns, promoting health, achieving a more sustainable population, and sustainable settlement in decision making.

- **Section II:**

Conservation and Management of Resources for Development includes atmospheric protection, combating deforestation, protecting fragile environments, conservation of biological diversity (biodiversity), control of pollution and the management of biotechnology, and radioactive wastes.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



YW4GG
YOUTH WORKERS 4 GLOBAL GOALS

- **Section III:**

Strengthening the Role of Major Groups includes the roles of children and youth, women, NGOs, local authorities, business and industry, and workers; and strengthening the role of indigenous peoples, their communities, and farmers.

- **Section IV:**

Means of Implementation includes science, technology transfer, education, international institutions, and financial mechanisms.

It's important to notice that the presented agenda has been constantly evolving. In 1997, the UN General Assembly held a special session to appraise the status of **Agenda 21 (Rio +5)**. The Assembly recognized progress as "uneven" and identified key trends, including increasing globalization, widening inequalities in income, and continued deterioration of the global environment. A new General Assembly Resolution (S-19/2) promised further action.



10 years after the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, **The World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002**, took place in South Africa and it was convened to discuss sustainable development organizations. The Johannesburg Declaration was the main outcome of the Summit but there were several other international agreements as well. The Johannesburg Declaration is an agreement to focus particularly on "the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people, which include: chronic hunger; malnutrition; foreign occupation; armed conflict; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; natural disasters; illicit arms trafficking; trafficking in persons; terrorism; intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis."

Following the original Agenda 21 that did not discuss culture in great depth, in September 2002, in Porto Alegre is held **the first World Public Meeting on Culture**.



The Agenda 21 for culture has 67 articles, divided into three sections: principles, undertakings, and recommendations. The "Principles" include core values such as cultural diversity and human rights, as well as perspectives on which actors will implement the agenda. Cities are envisioned as primary sites for cultural production and governance, as well as places where cultural policy is necessary for harmonious



coexistence. Culture itself is described as an essential part of constructing citizenship for people of all ages. Participation in culture takes place through channels including internet, public spaces, and work⁷. By 2010, over 400 governments and organizations had joined Agenda 21 for culture in some way and by 2015 membership exceeded 500.



Earth Summit 2012 was the third international conference on sustainable development aimed at reconciling the economic and environmental goals of the global community. It is also known as The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), Rio 2012 or Rio+20.

The ten-day mega-summit, which culminated in a three-day high-level UN conference, was organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and included participation from 192 UN member states – including 57 Heads of State and 31 Heads of Government, private sector companies, NGOs and other groups⁸. The conference had three objectives: securing renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing the progress and implementation gaps in meeting previous commitments and addressing new and emerging challenges.

The primary result of the conference was the nonbinding document, "The Future We Want," a 49-page work paper. In it, the heads of state of the 192 governments in attendance renewed their political commitment to sustainable development and declared their commitment to the promotion of a sustainable future. The document largely reaffirms previous action plans like Agenda 21.

Coming back to the preparation for this conference, in July 2011 Colombia proposed the idea of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during the meeting held in Indonesia. In September 2011, this idea was picked up by the United Nations Department of Public Information 64th NGO Conference in Bonn, Germany. The outcome document proposed 17 sustainable development goals and associated targets. Consequently, in the run-up to Rio+20 there was much discussion about the idea of the SDGs and the Rio+20 outcome document mentioned that "at the outset, the OWG [Open Working Group] will decide on its methods of work, including developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society, Indigenous Peoples, the scientific community and the United Nations system in its work, in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience".

In January 2013, the 30-member UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was established to identify specific goals for the SDGs.

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agenda_21_for_culture

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Conference_on_Sustainable_Development



The Open Working Group was tasked with preparing a proposal on the SDGs for consideration during the 68th session of the General Assembly, September 2013 – September 2014. Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary-General from 2007 to 2016, has stated in a November 2016 press conference that: "*We don't have plan B because there is no planet B.*" This thought has guided the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



II. What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

The Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals, are a call from the United Nations to all countries around the world to address the great challenges that humanity faces and to ensure that all people have the same opportunities to live a better life without compromising our planet.

The SDGs were developed to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015. Therefore, before describe the SDGs, we will take a look at the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals were eight international development goals for the year 2015 that had been established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. All 191 United Nations member states at that time, and at least 22 international organizations, committed to help achieve the following Millennium Development Goals by 2015:



- To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- To achieve universal primary education
- To promote gender equality and empower women
- To reduce child mortality
- To improve maternal health
- To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
- To ensure environmental sustainability
- To develop a global partnership for development

Each goal had specific targets, and dates for achieving those targets. The 8 goals were measured by 21 targets. To accelerate progress, the G8 finance ministers agreed in June 2005 to provide enough funds to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the African Development Bank to cancel \$40 to \$55 billion in debt owed by members of the heavily indebted poor countries to allow them to redirect resources to programs for improving health and education and for alleviating poverty⁹.



Although there have been major advancements and improvements achieving some of the MDGs even before the deadline of 2015, the progress has been uneven between the countries. In 2012 the UN Secretary-General established the "UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda", bringing together more than 60 UN agencies and international organizations to focus and work on sustainable development. Some countries achieved many goals, while others were not on track to realize any. A UN conference in September 2010 reviewed progress to date and adopted a global plan to achieve the eight goals by their target date. New commitments targeted women's and children's health, and new initiatives in the worldwide battle against poverty, hunger and disease.

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium_Development_Goals



The Post-2015 Development Agenda was a process from 2012 to 2015 led by the United Nations to define the future global development framework that would succeed the Millennium Development Goals. The SDGs were developed to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015. The gaps and shortcomings of MDG Goal 8 (To develop a global partnership for development) led to identifying a problematic "donor-recipient" relationship. Instead, the new SDGs favour collective action by all countries.



The Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all." The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of UN Resolution 70/1, the 2030 Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests¹⁰.

¹⁰ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>



There are 169 targets for the 17 goals. Each target has between 1 and 3 indicators used to measure progress toward reaching the targets. In total, there are 232 approved indicators that will measure compliance. The United Nations Development Programme has been asked to provide easy to understand lists of targets, facts and figures for each of the 17 SDGs. The 17 goals listed below as sub-headings use the 2-to-4 word phrases that identify each goal. The paragraphs that follow present some information about a few targets and indicators related to each goal.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Goal 1: No poverty



More than 700 million people, or 10% of the world population, still live in extreme poverty and is struggling to fulfil the most basic needs like health, education, and access to water and sanitation, to name a few. The majority of people living on less than \$1.90 a day

live in sub-Saharan Africa. Worldwide, the poverty rate in rural areas is 17.2 per cent—more than three times higher than in urban areas.

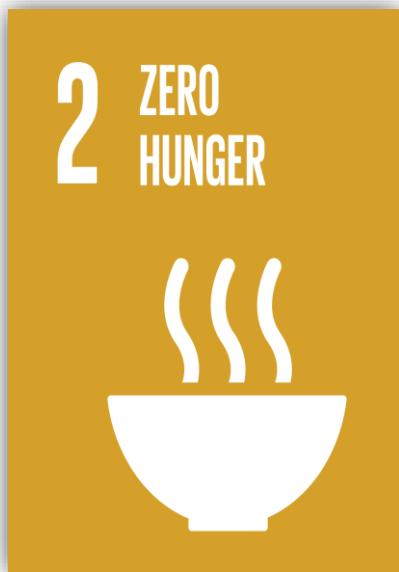
Having a job does not guarantee a decent living. In fact, 8 per cent of employed workers and their families worldwide lived in extreme poverty in 2018. Poverty affects children disproportionately. One out of five children live in extreme poverty. Ensuring social protection for all children and other vulnerable groups is critical to reduce poverty¹¹.

¹¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>



Achieving Goal 1 is hampered by lack of economic growth in the poorest countries of the world, growing inequality, increasingly fragile statehood, and the impacts of climate change.

Goal 2: Zero Hunger



Goal 2 states that by 2030 we should end hunger and all forms of malnutrition. This would be accomplished by doubling agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers (especially women and indigenous peoples), by ensuring sustainable food production systems, and by progressively improving land and soil quality. Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40% of the global population. It is the largest source of income for poor rural households. Women make up about 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, and over 50% in parts of Asia and Africa. However, women own only 20% of the land.

Investments in agriculture are crucial to increasing the capacity for agricultural productivity and sustainable food production systems are necessary to help alleviate the perils of hunger.

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

Significant strides have been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the common killers associated with child and maternal mortality, but working towards achieving the target of less than 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030 would require improvements in skilled delivery care.



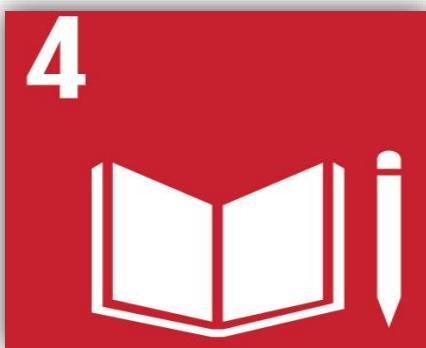
SDG Goal 3 aims to reduce under-five mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births. But if current trends continue, more than 60 countries will miss the SDG neonatal mortality target for 2030. About half of these countries would not reach the target even by 2050.

Goal 3 aims to achieve universal health coverage, including access to essential medicines and vaccines. It proposes to end the preventable death of new borns and children under 5 and to end epidemics such as AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and water-borne diseases, for example.



Attention to health and well-being also includes targets related to the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, deaths and injuries from traffic accidents and from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

Goal 4: Quality education



Major progress has been made in access to education, specifically at the primary school level, for both boys and girls. The number of out-of-school children has almost halved from 112 million in 1997 to 60 million in 2014.

Access does not always mean quality of education or completion of primary school. 103 million youth worldwide still lack basic literacy skills, and more than 60 percent of those are women. In one

out of four countries, more than half of children failed to meet minimum math proficiency standards at the end of primary school, and at the lower secondary level, the rate was 1 in 3 countries. Target 1 of Goal 4 is to ensure that, by 2030, all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education.

The reasons for lack of quality education are due to lack of adequately trained teachers, poor conditions of schools and equity issues related to opportunities provided to rural children. For quality education to be provided to the children of impoverished families, investment is needed in educational scholarships, teacher training workshops, school building and improvement of water and electricity access to schools.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

According to the UN, "gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will nurture sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large". A record 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their constitutions as of 2014. However, another 52 had not taken this step. In many nations, gender discrimination is still woven into the fabric of legal systems and social norms. Even though SDG5 is a stand-alone goal, other SDGs can only be achieved if the needs of women receive the same attention as the needs of men. Issues unique to women and girls include traditional practices against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, such as female genital mutilation.





Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all



The Sustainable Development Goal Number 6 has eight targets and 11 indicators that will be used to monitor progress toward the targets. Most are to be achieved by the year 2030. One is targeted for 2020. Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in and there is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this.

However, due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, millions of people including children die every year from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

At the current time, more than 2 billion people are living with the risk of reduced access to freshwater resources and by 2050, at least one in four people is likely to live in a country affected by chronic or recurring shortages of fresh water. Drought in specific afflicts some of the world's poorest countries, worsening hunger and malnutrition.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Working towards this goal is especially important as it interlinks with other Sustainable Development Goals. Focusing on universal access to energy, increased energy efficiency and the increased use of renewable energy through new economic and job opportunities is crucial to creating more sustainable and inclusive communities and resilience to environmental issues like climate change.

Targets for 2030 include access to affordable and reliable energy while increasing the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

As of 2017, only 57 percent of the global population relies primarily on clean fuels and technology for cooking, falling short of the 95 percent target¹².



¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_Development_Goals#cite_note-SDGChildren2018-29



Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth



Roughly half the world's population still lives on the equivalent of about US\$2 a day with global unemployment rates of 5.7% and having a job doesn't guarantee the ability to escape from poverty in many places. This slow and uneven progress requires us to rethink and retool our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty.

By 2030, the target is to establish policies for sustainable tourism that will create jobs. Strengthening domestic financial institutions and increasing Aid for Trade support for developing countries is considered essential to economic development. The Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries is mentioned as a method for achieving sustainable economic development.

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

Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. It has long been recognized that growth in productivity and incomes, and improvements in health and education outcomes require investment in infrastructure.



Manufacturing is an important driver of economic development and employment. At the current time, however, manufacturing value added per capita is only US\$100 in the least developed countries compared to over US\$4,500 in Europe and Northern America. Another important factor to consider is the emission of Carbon Dioxide during manufacturing processes. Emissions have decreased over the past decade in many countries but the pace of decline has not been even around the world.

Mobile-cellular signal coverage has improved a great deal. In previously "unconnected" areas of the globe, 85 percent of people now live in covered areas. Planet-wide, 95 percent of the population is covered.



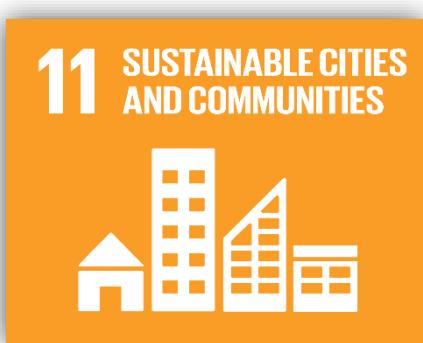
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries



The international community has made significant strides towards lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations – the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing states – continue to make inroads into poverty reduction. However, inequality persists and large disparities remain regarding access to health and education services and other assets.

Target 10.1 is to "sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average". This goal, known as 'shared prosperity', is complementing SDG 1, the eradication of extreme poverty, and it is relevant for all countries in the world.

Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Cities are hubs for ideas, commerce, culture, science, productivity, social development and much more. At their best, cities have enabled people to advance socially and economically. With the number of people living within cities projected to rise to 5 billion people by 2030, it's important that efficient urban planning and management practices are in place to deal with the challenges brought by urbanization.

The target for 2030 is to ensure access to safe and affordable housing. The indicator named to measure progress toward this target is the proportion of urban population living in slums or informal settlements. Between 2000 and 2014, the proportion fell from 39 percent to 30 percent. However, the absolute number of people living in slums went from 792 million in 2000 to an estimated 880 million in 2014. Movement from rural to urban areas has accelerated as the population has grown and better housing alternatives are available.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all.



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty.



The targets of Goal 12 include using eco-friendly production methods and reducing the amount of waste. By 2030, national recycling rates should increase, as measured in tons of material recycled. Further, companies should adopt sustainable practices and publish sustainability reports.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

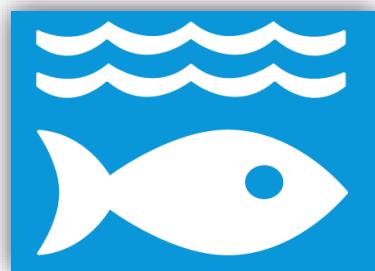


Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, weather events are becoming more extreme and greenhouse gas emissions are now at their highest levels in history. Without action, the world's average surface temperature is likely to surpass 3 degrees centigrade this century. The poorest and most vulnerable people are being affected the most.

To strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, countries adopted the Paris Agreement at the COP21 in Paris, which went into force in November of 2016. In the agreement, all countries agreed to work to limit global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees centigrade. As of April 2018, 175 parties had ratified the Paris Agreement and 10 developing countries had submitted their first iteration of their national adaptation plans for responding to climate change.

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

The world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. Our rainwater, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food, and even the oxygen in the air we breathe, are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea.



Sustainable Development Goal 14 aims “to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.” Effective strategies to mitigate adverse effects of increased ocean acidification are needed to advance the sustainable use of oceans. As areas of protected marine biodiversity expand, there has been an increase in ocean science funding, essential for preserving marine resources. The deterioration of coastal waters has become a global occurrence, due to pollution and coastal eutrophication (overflow of nutrients in water), where similar contributing factors to climate change can affect



oceans and negatively impact marine biodiversity. "Without concerted efforts, coastal eutrophication is expected to increase in 20 per cent of large marine ecosystems by 2050."

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

This goal articulates targets for preserving biodiversity of forest, desert, and mountain ecosystems, as a percentage of total land mass. Achieving a "land degradation-neutral world" can be reached by restoring degraded forests and land lost to drought and flood. Goal 15 calls for more attention to preventing invasion of introduced species and more protection of endangered species.



Forests have a prominent role to play in the success of Agenda 2030, notably in terms of ecosystem services, livelihoods, and the green economy; but this will require clear priorities to address key tradeoffs and mobilize synergies with other SDGs.

Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies



Reducing violent crime, sex trafficking, forced labour, and child abuse are clear global goals. The International Community values peace and justice and calls for stronger judicial systems that will enforce laws and work toward a more peaceful and just society. By 2017, the UN could report progress on detecting victims of trafficking. More women and girls than men and boys were victimized, yet the share of women and girls has slowly

declined (see also violence against women). In 2004, 84 percent of victims were females and by 2014 that number had dropped to 71 percent. Sexual exploitation numbers have declined, but forced labour has increased.

One target is to see the end to sex trafficking, forced labour, and all forms of violence against and torture of children. However, reliance on the indicator of "crimes reported" makes monitoring and achieving this goal challenging. SDG 16 also targets universal legal identity and birth registration, ensuring the right to a name and nationality, civil rights, recognition before the law, and access to justice and social services. With more than a quarter of children under 5 unregistered worldwide as of 2015, about 1 in 5 countries will need to accelerate progress to achieve universal birth registration by 2030.



Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development



Increasing international cooperation is seen as vital to achieving each of the 16 previous goals. Goal 17 is included to assure that countries and organizations cooperate instead of compete. Developing multi-stakeholder partnerships to share knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial support is seen as critical to overall success of the SDGs. The goal encompasses improving North-South and South-South cooperation, and public-private partnerships which involve civil societies are specifically mentioned.

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

The previous pages contain a brief description about each goal, what problems SDGs are targeting, what are the objectives and expectations of the experts. However, as a young person who play a crucial role on the achievement of this goals we recommend you to learn more in details about SDGs, following the United Nations page dedicated to [the Sustainable Development Goals.](#)

United Nations recognizes young people as rights-holders, and promotes and facilitates transparency, accountability, and responsiveness from governments, international organizations and others toward young people. Youth have the capacity to identify and challenge existing power structures and barriers to change, and to expose contradictions and biases. Youth activism is on the rise the world over, bolstered by broader connectivity and access to social media. Moreover, being innovative young people understand the problems they face and can offer new ideas and alternative solutions.