SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS | DELIVERING CHANGE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UNA-UK

Delivering change

CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE

Amina J. Mohammed | Eric Usher
Guido Schmidt-Traub | Ara Darzi
Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong
Claire Melamed | Phil Bloomer
Marta Foresti | Richard Jolly
Natalia Kanem | David Beasley
Erik Solheim | Azita Berar Awad
Mukhisa Kituyi | Summer Brown

SDG 3.3

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Contents


47


10

PRIORITIES

123

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Fulfilling the goals

Realising the SDGs will require action in five key areas

By **Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

In this third year of global efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, there are encouraging signs of momentum. The hope that accompanied the Agenda's adoption in 2015 is still with us. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have captured the imagination of leaders and general public alike. Member States are showing strong ownership – including through personal engagement by heads of state and government – and are aligning their plans and strategies accordingly.

We are seeing new champions stepping up, seeking to set the world on a path towards a more inclusive globalisation. Local authorities and responsible businesses are seizing the opportunities of climate action. Young people are taking on more and more responsibilities in the sustainability movement. The scientific and academic communities are contributing solutions and ideas.

At the same time, we know the clock is ticking, and the pace of progress is insufficient to fully meet our ambition. The global context is one in which we are still suffering from many protracted conflicts, with new ones arising, along with complex humanitarian crises and mass movements of refugees and displaced persons.

Inequality remains alarmingly high, including between women and men, where disparities have grown wider in many key respects. The impacts of climate change are spreading, and environmental degradation and pollution are worsening, threatening our long-term sustainability. Taken together, these obstacles risk throwing us off course in our efforts to meet the targets by the deadline of 2030.

Five imperatives

The SDGs are a beacon of hope for people around the world – an agreed set of priorities for the global common good. Looking ahead, it is clear that realising this transformative vision will require concerted action and changes in five key areas.

First, to achieve the SDGs, we must be guided by the principle of leaving no one behind. This commitment to inclusiveness and equality is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. It is also our best long-term strategy to prevent conflict and maintain peace and security. Marginalisation and discrimination can lead to social fissures and political unrest. Fair distribution of wealth and special attention to the vulnerable, on the other hand, contribute to social cohesion and political stability. We must strive to end poverty in its multi-dimensional reality, and ensure access to quality basic services and human rights for all.

We must also unleash the potential of half our populations, by ensuring women's full equality and protection from violence. We know that through women's meaningful participation in all aspects of life, we can increase food security, better address climate change, see greater resources flow to social protection, unlock trillions for the global economy and ensure more sustainable peace and security.

Young people, for their part, continue to face alarmingly high rates of unemployment and exclusion, and their voices are yet to be sufficiently included in the deliberations affecting their lives and futures. Those furthest behind must be our top priority.

Second, we must shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. According to NASA, 2017 was likely the second warmest year on record, behind only 2016. Last year also ties with 2011 for the highest number of billion-dollar disasters in a single year.

Climate change is an undeniable threat. There is no doubt that we must raise our ambition in implementing the Paris Agreement and putting the world on a safe trajectory of keeping global temperature increase below 2°C. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has decided to convene a climate summit in 2019 to accelerate momentum.

We must strive to end poverty... and ensure access to quality basic services and human rights for all. We must unleash the potential of half our populations, by ensuring women's full equality and protection from violence

We must also invest in science and technology to find more effective solutions to decouple growth from emissions and environmental degradation; develop incentives to guide the practices of businesses and communities, especially young people; and address the tensions between needs and wants in a world of 7.5 billion people.

Third, we must learn to think in an integrated way and work collaboratively with all sectors. The SDGs are interconnected. They are a network of interdependent, indivisible, mutually reinforcing targets – the DNA of our

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sustainable development agenda. In taking these interactions into account, we must strengthen collaboration among all relevant sectors and partners when making plans and strategies, allocating budgets or evaluating performance. Cohesive, joined-up decision-making is a must for the SDG era.

Fourth, we must mobilise resources through all possible channels – public and private, domestic and international. Official development assistance is an important commitment and still plays an indispensable role, but increasingly it is complemented by innovative forms of resource mobilisation, as well as South-South cooperation.

The financing requirements for realising the SDGs and the Paris Agreement are considerable. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides the framework and blueprint for global cooperation. Development banks have significant potential to scale up their contributions. But public finance alone is not sufficient. Financial systems will need to become more responsive and innovative, and aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Digital finance will play a major role in connecting the world.

Fifth, we must adapt our institutions to meet the greater demands of a new paradigm in international development. The interconnected nature of the agenda, and its ambition to take care of those who are furthest behind, require us to go beyond institutional barriers and intellectual silos. Many countries have established inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms within the government, as well as various channels for meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

▲ Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed visits a rehabilitation centre for disabled children in Belarus

The UN development system must also adapt. Guided by the 2030 Agenda, Secretary-General Guterres has set out a vision for transformation. This encompasses strengthening UN country teams and the Resident Coordinator system, and sharpening critical capacities.

Our aim is to build a UN system that is accountable, results-driven, responsive and cohesive in supporting Member States as they take the lead in building a better future for their citizens.

With concerted action across these five imperatives, we can move the SDGs from promise to practice. The United Nations looks forward to working with all partners to enable all humankind to enjoy a future of peace and prosperity on a healthy planet. ●

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We need actions *and* words

After years of discussion on the SDGs, it is tempting to say we should just get on with it. But prioritising delivery should not obscure the need for longer-term analysis

By **Natalie Samarasinghe**,
Executive Director,
United Nations Association – UK

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will turn three this year. To many of us working on international issues, it feels like they've been around for a lot longer.

Don't get me wrong – the emphasis placed on consultation and negotiation was necessary and commendable, especially when compared to the back-of-the-envelope genesis of their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). That the SDGs inspired the largest-ever global public survey, and that states gathered in Addis Ababa to discuss financing ahead of their adoption represents a welcome evolution in planning and participation.

But after years of speeches, meetings, reports, blogs and Buzzfeed quizzes ("Can we guess which SDG you are most passionate about?"), it feels like we need to stop talking and start doing. With 17 goals and 169 targets to deliver by 2030, surely we need to stop refining indicators at some point. As the UN Deputy Secretary-General states in her powerful foreword: "We know the clock is ticking, and the pace of progress is insufficient to fully meet our ambition."

This publication seeks to push things forward. Our authors – experts and practitioners from international institutions, business, academia and civil society – set out examples of projects and approaches that have produced results. This was the brief we gave them: don't re-state problems or offer abstract solutions. Show us how it's done. And they have, from building the innovative vaccine alliance, Gavi, to generating multi-stakeholder finance for hydropower in

◀ **Children in the rubble of a building in Jarabulus, one of the few places in Syria where work on reconstruction has started following the expulsion of ISIL. Peace and security and human rights work should be a greater focus for a reformed UN**

Costa Rica; from transforming Cape Town's water demand management to helping small businesses in France set decarbonisation targets.

The bigger picture

What is clear from their contributions, though, is that while case studies are important, we must continue to grapple with bigger-picture questions and to analyse the tools and resources necessary to scale up what is working well and adapt it to other contexts. For instance, while much attention is placed on technological and policy innovation, the SDGs' 15-year timeframe is unlikely to be sufficient to see these changes, which require upfront investment, make a difference on the ground.

This reflects the broader challenge of goal-setting: policymakers must balance the desire to demonstrate progress with the need to plan for the future.

Data is a good example. According to the Center for Global Development, about half of the 232 SDG indicators lack acceptable country coverage and this isn't purely a case of developing countries needing more capacity. Of the 72 states that don't collect information on the proportion of people living below the international poverty line, more than half are high-income countries. Clearly, we do need to keep refining how we measure success.

Then there's finance. Optimistic predictions about private finance remain way off track. Global private capital flows are still about a quarter of what they were in 2007, and low-income countries continue to receive a tiny share (1.7 per cent in 2016) of total flows to developing states.

Meanwhile, warm words on partnerships and inclusivity have yet to be adapted into evidence-based strategies that work in different contexts. And many rich countries seem reluctant to embrace the universality of the framework. Too few have internalised their obligations to deliver the SDGs within their borders.

What we need is a sort of SDG mindfulness. This should combine a ruthless focus on the present, where every opportunity is taken to make progress, with steps to address the longer-term challenges, continually re-evaluating knowledge and practice to lay the foundations for the world we need to become by 2030.

Alignment with the SDGs

UNA-UK was heartened to see the UN Secretary-General adopt this approach in his recent report on UN development reform, released in January 2018. It sets out proposals that can be put in motion straight away, such as improving coordination between regional bodies, alongside more fundamental changes – reinvigorating the UN's Economic and Social Council, for instance, which has never lived up to its founding potential.

It also states that all UN action on development will be aligned with the SDGs (the MDGs were never integrated in the same way). It outlines six new mechanisms for strengthening partnerships with the private sector and civil society, as well as a new funding compact, to be agreed by the end of this year. The compact would see Member States give UN bodies greater flexibility over their development funds – at present, less than 22 per cent are core. In return, measures to increase transparency and accountability are proposed.

UNA-UK applauds the comprehensive nature of these reforms. If implemented, they have the potential to transform the organisation, although securing buy-in remains a challenge.

We hope that the next iteration of proposals will build on this ambitious approach, and set out how the UN could tackle two broader obstacles to realising the SDGs:

- The democracy deficit. Today, thousands of actors work on UN issues – from huge multinationals to small NGOs – but the UN remains stubbornly state-centric in its decision-making and their participation is often ad hoc or tokenistic. If these actors are to take the lead in delivering the SDGs, they should be given a formal role in global governance. The International Labour Organization, with its tripartite state-business-labour structure offers one possible model.
- The peace, security and human rights deficit. Development accounts for roughly 75 per cent of total UN funding ($29 billion), two-thirds of its staff (50,000) and more than 1,000 offices. This work made sense when the UN was the only actor on the ground. Today, a host of studies have shown that other actors can be more successful, cost-effective and in tune with local needs. The UN should initiate a phased transfer of its development functions during the SDGs' lifespan, so that it can focus instead on its crucial peace and security and human rights work, which cannot be undertaken by others.

Successful implementation of the goals will require taking a deeper look at why some things are working and others are not. Often, the answers will be structural, and we must not shy away from seeking large-scale reform

Time for action

Addressing these deficits will be enormously difficult, and there is little bandwidth for further reform proposals at present. We are already one fifth of the way through the SDG timeline: it is time for action, not blue-sky thinking.

But successful implementation of the goals will also require taking a deeper look at why some things are working and others are not. Often, the answers will be structural, and we must not shy away from seeking large-scale reform. If we are to transform the world, we need to transform our flawed but indispensable world organisation. ●

Integrating the goals

From Pakistan to Brazil, the UN is helping to embed the SDGs into national and subnational policymaking

By **Achim Steiner,** Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set the global aspirations for economic progress, better standards of living, and a healthy planet for all. The commitment to leave no one behind, especially those furthest behind, represents a new social contract with every man, woman and child.

This bold vision requires a 21st century UN development system that is more focused on people, less on process; more on results for the poor and marginalised, less on bureaucracy; and more on providing integrated support across familiar silos, less on turf battles and competition. As the Secretary-General stated in his reform proposals to the General Assembly, business as usual is not an option.

These principles form the foundation of UNDP's four-year strategic plan. We aim to improve our ability to help countries achieve the 2030 Agenda and respond to new and emerging needs in a volatile world.

UNDP works closely with governments on their national development plans to incorporate the SDGs into their planning. Through a process dubbed MAPS – mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support – we're supporting countries to

© Muhammad Tohir/Barcroft Media via Getty Images translate the Global Goals into national and subnational plans and budgets with three objectives in mind:

- establishing practices for monitoring and reporting and raising public awareness (mainstreaming);
- identifying actions that will boost progress across several SDGs (acceleration);
- providing thematic policy support.

To date, with the UN family and other partners, UNDP has facilitated 27 'MAPS missions' to support national SDG implementation. These missions help identify policy overlaps and inconsistencies, while simultaneously identifying areas of opportunity for acceleration and investment.

In Pakistan, UNDP partnered with authorities in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province using an SDG local and urban governance dashboard to prioritise and align resources to mainstream the SDGs into local plans and budgets. This dashboard, developed with Microsoft, was also used in the provinces of Riau and Lampung in Indonesia to adjust annual development and investment plans.

In Tunisia, UNDP is working with the Governorate of Medenine to align its regional development plan with the 2030 Agenda. The process has resulted in the adoption of the Medenine Cooperation Guidelines, which identify the region's priority SDGs.

In Brazil, we have been working with the National Confederation of Municipalities to train thousands of elected officials and municipal managers on the 2030 Agenda so that the SDGs can be integrated into their municipal plans. Additionally, an interactive tool has been developed to track SDG progress in the 5,570 Brazilian municipalities according to 28 indicators, based on the 232 SDG indicators.

Some 1.4 billion people, or 18 per cent of the world's population, live in countries that are fragile or experiencing conflict. This poses a particular challenge to achieving the SDGs. To tackle this, MAPS missions in Burkina Faso, El Salvador, Mali, Sri Lanka and Sudan identified peace and justice as important accelerators for their development agendas. The missions helped governments bring together their different ministries' development, peace and justice priorities into an integrated SDG framework.

This MAPS work has gone a long way to lay the groundwork by integrating the 2030 Agenda in local, regional and national governance structures – and with good results. As we move into the third year of implementing the 2030 Agenda, now is the time to ensure that the UN development system can provide tailored policy support and help identify bottlenecks to speed up progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Despite a lot of positive momentum, it is clear that governments and the UN system cannot achieve the SDGs alone. There is still work to do in financing the goals and ensuring SDG-sensitive budgetary planning. There are additional gaps in data collection that must be addressed so that countries can efficiently monitor their SDG progress.

> ***Governments and the UN system cannot achieve the SDGs alone***

To eradicate poverty, address climate change and build peaceful and inclusive societies for all by 2030, countries – with governments at the helm – must drive SDG implementation at a much faster rate and at much larger scale.

To do this, we will need everyone to work together. We need investment bankers to work with rural farmers, policymakers to strategise with activists, and young leaders to work with civil engineers.

Only by tapping into the knowhow in all areas of society can we come together to explore innovative ways of achieving the goals and reach those furthest behind. ●

◀ Fishing from a beach polluted with rubbish, in Lampung Province, Indonesia. The province is using the UNDP's SDGs dashboard to target development

Also in this section

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Shaping development in Africa

The African Union played a key role in drafting the SDGs. It has now integrated global and African priorities into a single agenda that will help the continent to navigate challenges such as food security and resource mobilisation

◀ A census survey in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Improving data-gathering capability is a major priority in Africa – at present, six out of every 10 SDG indicators can not be tracked

By **Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong**, Director of Programmes, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency

Today the world is faced with many daunting challenges: climate change, migration, food and water security, economic inequality, terrorism – to name just some. While these problems are experienced locally, they cannot be addressed successfully without collective action and international coordination.

In 2015, we witnessed a monumental period in global governance with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The goals are a broad framework, which acts as the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This framework forms a launch pad for global action to promote shared prosperity and wellbeing for the next 15 years.

The SDGs encompass the political will of the global community to come together and critically think about problems shared by all humanity. These issues cannot be solved by states alone, but require cooperation and partnerships that involve multiple actors and that transcend borders. Germany's Chancellor Merkel reiterated the importance of the SDGs by stating: "We want to change our world, and we can." The SDGs are a recognition of the interdependence of the global community and therefore the need for collective actions.

Agenda 2063 covers social, economic and sustainability considerations, as well as political, cultural and other African priorities. By implementing Agenda 2063, AU Member States will meet global obligations under the SDGs

Two interrelated agendas

Africa, led by the African Union (AU) policymaking processes, played a critical role and strongly influenced the development of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The Union's Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, adopted by the AU Summit in 2014, formed a foundation for the Global Goals. Indeed, Africa was the only region to submit a well-articulated position in writing. Under the auspices of the AU, Member States participated fully in the development of the CAP. This, in turn, influenced the work of the Open Working Group and intergovernmental negotiating groups on the SDGs.

The AU's priorities have been articulated and contained in Agenda 2063. This is a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years. Agenda 2063 is a Member State-driven developmental framework with seven aspirations, 20 goals and 39 priority areas.

The 17 SDGs are all captured in, and fit neatly into, the 20 goals of Agenda 2063, which is somewhat broader in scope than the SDGs. Agenda 2063 covers social, economic and sustainability considerations, as well as political, cultural and other African priorities. Therefore, by implementing Agenda 2063, AU Member States will also be meeting global obligations under the SDGs. The priorities of Agenda 2030 are well aligned with Africa's development priorities.

Partnerships

Several partnerships have been established to support the implementation of the SDGs. The UN global registry of voluntary commitments and multi-stakeholder partnerships estimates that nearly 4,000 partnerships and commitments have been formed or made towards supporting the implementation of the SDGs. Will these partnerships lead to the SDGs being achieved across the board? Or, will power dynamics in the global governance system benefit some actors' interests over others, leading perhaps to a selective implementation of the goals?

The multilateral system is increasingly structuring the implementation of global processes through partnerships. These partners range from multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to policy networks. Africa is a fertile ground for such partnerships. While NGOs and experts from western countries have for a long time been present in Africa's development landscape, multinational corporations closely associated with the market are now also playing a key role.

The development of coalitions of public and private actors is often seen as a beneficial process. However, it is also a social practice through which development acquires a particular meaning – sometimes seen as negative.

For instance, over the last decade several stakeholders have been involved in the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme. While most of the interventions have had a positive effect in Africa's agriculture and food security, some have also disenfranchised local communities through land grabbing. Others have marginalised the voice of the local experts in setting what are considered as priority areas for action. The practice of partnerships should focus on achieving development goals, rather than being an expression of power relations.

SDG implementation in Africa

The SDGs and Africa's Agenda 2063, as well as existing frameworks such as NEPAD, have provided the necessary guiding frameworks to support the strengthening of partnerships. They have also helped to mobilise resources towards a coherent implementation of national and regional priorities.

In the wake of the adoption of the Global Goals, the AU prompted the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration to pursue a coherent approach towards implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The STC encouraged Member States to undertake: i) a joint domestication of the frameworks; ii) a single accountability instrument, catering for both agendas at the same time; and iii) a single periodic performance report. African countries and institutions are currently working closely towards developing a coherent and integrated monitoring and evaluation framework. This will be used to report on both Agenda 2063 and the SDGs at the continental level.

Tracking progress

Africa made some encouraging progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the 2015 MDGs report on Africa, the continent witnessed sustained economic growth, averaging five per cent a year since the start of the century. The report noted that Africa had also established ambitious social safety nets and designed policies for boosting education and tackling HIV and other diseases. However, the MDGs were hampered by poor implementation mechanisms and over-reliance on development aid. This affected the economic sustainability of several MDG interventions.

The 2017 *Africa Sustainable Development Report*, jointly produced by UN institutions, the AU and the African Development Bank, tracks progress on both Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. It indicates that slow progress had been made in reducing poverty, despite sustained growth over the last decade.

The report also notes that approximately 217 million people were undernourished between 2014 and 2016, six per cent more than during 2010 to 2012. The report underlines improvements in gender parity and school enrolments at both primary and secondary level, in line with SDG 4 and Agenda 2063 goals 1, 2, 16, 17 and 18. It also indicates that approximately six out of every 10 SDG indicators cannot be tracked in Africa due to severe data limitations.

Now, two years on from the launch of the SDGs, their implementation needs to be strengthened through a number of actions. These include adopting a harmonised framework for monitoring, reporting and verifying the progress of the goals.

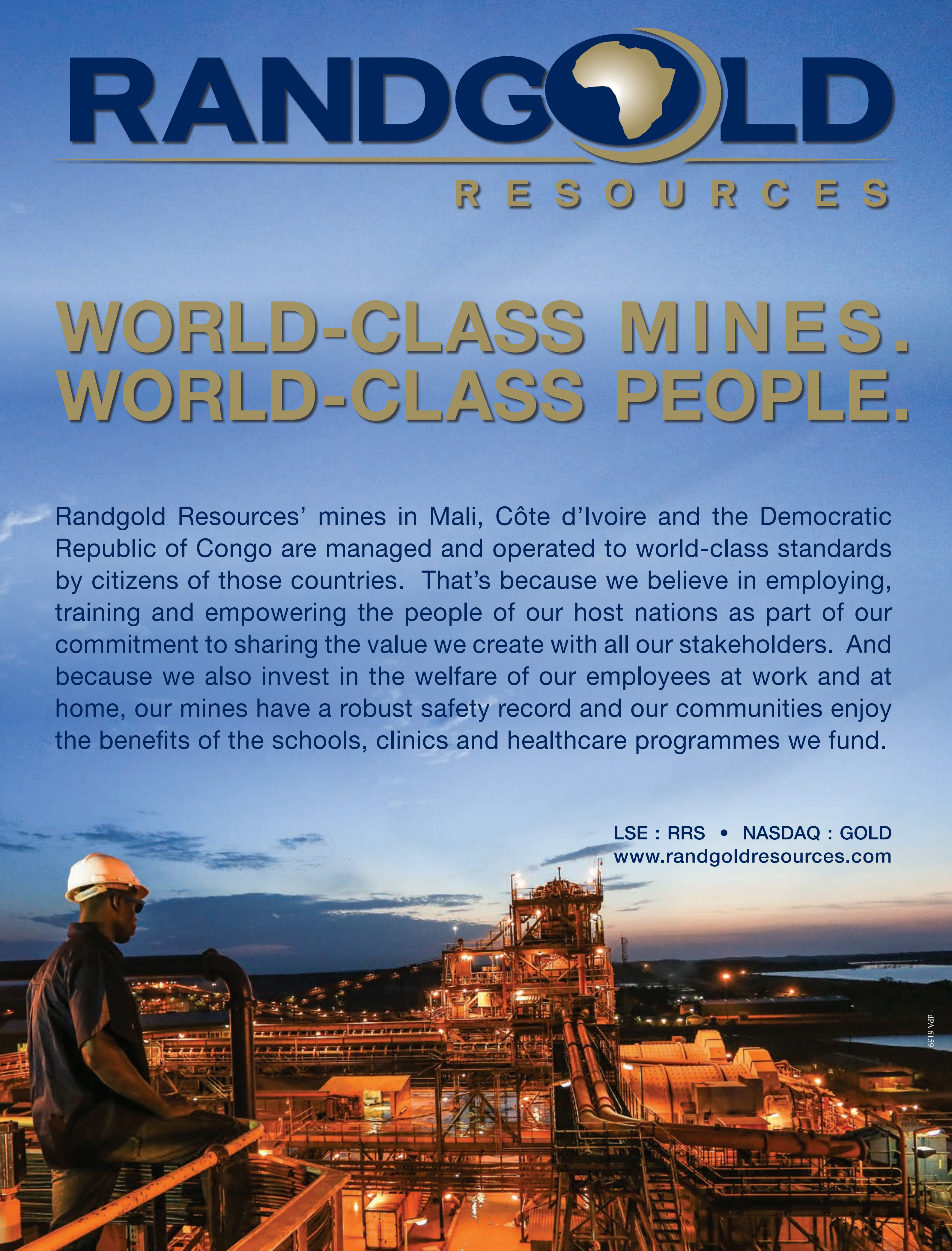
We also need to tackle the over-reliance on external funding, and strengthen statistical systems for data-gathering and management that will form the basis for informed decision and policymaking.

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in 2015, called for coordinated financial support from developed countries. But it also encouraged developing countries to deepen their domestic resource mobilisation efforts to support the implementation of developmental goals.

Shaping transnational relations so that African countries can reap the full benefits of partnerships with various actors and stakeholders will be instrumental in realising the SDGs across the continent

Shaping transnational relations so that African countries can reap the full benefits of partnerships with various actors and stakeholders – foreign experts, multinational corporations, NGOs, other Member States – will be instrumental in realising the SDGs across the continent. Partnerships should be built to encourage and support the flow of ideas and sharing of experience in policies, institutions and other practices.

This exchange of knowledge will serve not just as inspiration. It will also help to deliver tangible development by mobilising resources and deploying competence that will address the everyday plight of ordinary Africans, particularly women and young people. The various ambitions of the SDGs, Agenda 2063, the NEPAD framework and the national development strategies of African countries are, at their core, the same: to create opportunities for a better life for all. ●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Local action, first hand

In a world wondering about the outreach and impact of the UN, the SDGs will need widespread grassroots ownership if they are to create meaningful, lasting change. These examples, from Kenya and the UK, inspire hope and offer ways forward

By **Richard Jolly**, Honorary Professor and Research Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require local action – not merely to make them practical and to help them get implemented, but also to set priorities and mobilise support. This is a key step in adapting the 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators to the local context, and making them realistic. Here are two examples I witnessed recently – both of which show what can be achieved.

I came across the first in January 2018, when I was visiting Baringo County in Kenya, where I had worked in community development some 60 years earlier. I had returned not only to look back, but also to find out what was going on in Baringo today. I wanted to see what development was underway in one of the more underdeveloped districts of the country, where I had been so long ago, in the dying days of the colonial era. (I was a conscientious objector to military service and was sent to work in Kenya as alternative service.)

My hosts and guides in Baringo this time round were the Sambili family. I stayed in their home in Molo on the southern reaches of Baringo, about 150 miles north of Nairobi. The first stop on our visit was planned as a courtesy call on the county governor, a new and elected position. Under the old colonial system, this would have been the district commissioner. Today, development is a high priority for the local leader, a far cry from his

◀ **Discussing projects for the SDGs at a baraza (village meeting) in Baringo County, Kenya**

predecessors' focus on law and order back in the 1950s.

The governor was holding a meeting but made time to see us. He explained what the meeting was about, and by happy coincidence it was the SDGs. What was intended as a mere formality became a substantive discussion.

He explained: "We have a draft outline for the county, with its population of about 550,000. But during February we need to get specific proposals from each of the wards, about 30 in all."

Within the broad priority for poverty reduction and sustainability, there were needs for action on safe water, more health clinics, reforestation and improvements in roads. Coverage of primary education was fairly good, except among the Pokot people in the North. Many Pokot parents were still reluctant to send their girls, and even some of their sons, to school. There were needs also for better data: for monitoring progress as well as for understanding the basic situation.

Committed as I have been to the SDGs and their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals, I nearly fell off my chair in excitement and admiration for this modern grassroots example, linked to the 'Global Goals' of the UN today. Just 60 years ago, there had been widespread illiteracy here, primary schools only, grossly inadequate health services and people visibly ageing in their thirties and forties.

Village meeting

There were other surprises. Driving up the road to Kabarnet, the county capital where I had lived for two years, we came across a baraza – a village meeting – being held under a tree near the roadside.

I remembered barazas from my time in Kenya long ago. Back then, they were mostly held by colonial officials, were attended by men and were hardly participatory. This one, by contrast, was being chaired by the elected mayor, supported by a bishop, and had about 130 men and women in attendance, mostly sitting on benches. We stopped to find out more and were told the topic was choosing specific projects for the SDGs in their location. The mayor explained: "We are first making a list of all the suggestions for projects, then we will consult on priorities before sending them to the governor."

A bit further along the road, we stopped and walked down a stony path for a couple of hundred yards, to a little stream. Hellen Sambili, an MP and university teacher with a doctorate from Lancaster University, explained the significance. "This is where I grew up. Our house was 200 yards further up the hill. When I was in primary school, I would get up each morning at 5am, fetch water, tend to the animals, and at 7am walk eight kilometres to the school. When I got back after school, I would do other household chores. If the animals were grazing, I would often sit, reading a book while looking after them."

Here, in the life of one exceptionally talented individual, was the development trajectory of Baringo – built on education, talent, hard work, initiative and persistence.

> ***Committed as I have been to the SDGs and their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals, I nearly fell off my chair in excitement and admiration for this modern grassroots example***

After being elected as an MP for Baringo, Hellen used her position to create new opportunities within the community. She gathered the funding to build a secondary school for girls in the very place where she went to primary school. The school now has 655 pupils.

Closer to home

I returned to the UK a little tired but also elated and enthused. The next day, I walked down the road in Lewes, East Sussex, and bumped into an old friend who had played a major part in establishing the 'Lewes Pound'. This is our local currency, useful for buying goods in neighbourhood shops and thus encouraging local trade.

"I want to have a meeting to discuss what the SDGs might mean for Lewes," he explained. "Will you come?" A further surprise – and, of course, an offer I could not refuse.

We had the meeting in early February, and recognised that it was merely the first of what would need to become a process. We are collecting data, contacting some elected officials and exploring other possibilities. We have already made some decisions.

While we expressed interests in all the goals, we decided to focus on three issues to start with:

- people sleeping rough, linked to SDG 1 (no poverty);
- food banks (Lewes has four), linked to SDG 2 (zero hunger);
- inequalities, linked to SDG 10.

An initial aim is to request the data that relates to these concerns in Lewes, mindful of the gaps in data for the groups that are, or feel, excluded. By working within the SDG framework, we intend to highlight both what we are doing well and where Lewes has issues to tackle.

We hope to develop a 'toolkit' of information and a platform with which to engage others. We also want to explore links with Transition Town Lewes, a group that is already active on environmental sustainability, supporting initiatives such as 'Plastic Free Lewes'.

Both these experiences – in Baringo and East Sussex – have charged me with new thinking and new commitments. Namely:

- there is probably more going on at grassroots level to support the ambition of the SDGs than many of us realise;
- we can all have a role in our local community;
- the SDGs can provide a framework for a wide variety of actions and priorities, linked to context and opportunity. ●

Making sustainability a vision

The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) recognises that the SDGs are key to establishing Dubai as a world leader in clean, efficient cities

Interview with HE Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, *MD & CEO, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA)*

What is DEWA's philosophy on sustainability?
Sustainability is the core of DEWA's strategy, vision and mission. DEWA is the first government organisation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to adopt sustainability in its vision and strategic plan to achieve specific long-term sustainability goals. Our vision is to become a sustainable, innovative, world-class utility.

DEWA is realising its vision by adopting sustainability as the main priority for its strategic direction, plans and initiatives.

This is in line with UAE federal and local strategies, as stipulated in *UAE Vision 2021*, *Dubai Plan 2021* and *The Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050* launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to transform Dubai into a global hub for clean energy and green economy by providing 75% of Dubai's total power output from clean energy sources by 2050.

In addition, DEWA works to achieve and support Dubai's Demand Side Management Strategy, to reduce energy and water demand by 30 per cent by 2030. Security of supply, energy efficiency, reliability, green economy and sustainability are top priorities for us. This is why the UAE, represented by DEWA, ranks first in the world in getting electricity, as per the World Bank's *Doing Business 2018* report.

How does DEWA integrate the SDGs into its corporate mindset?
The energy sector urgently needs sustainability and innovation to deal with the global challenges associated with growing demand for power, scarcity of natural resources and the effects of climate change.

The UN has played a substantial role in encouraging sustainable progress. The UAE also seeks to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and is committed to making every effort over the next 15 years to end poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change.

At DEWA, we believe in taking the long-term view, and going beyond mitigating harm to driving real sustainable progress. We took part in the Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015, where the 2030 Development Agenda was adopted.

Our support for the SDGs includes incorporating them internally and communicating them to our primary stakeholders. Our top management held in-depth internal discussions, including workshops and awareness campaigns, where all DEWA employees learned about the SDGs and their importance to our business.

For DEWA to successfully implement the SDGs, we have had to prioritise the goals that are aligned with our core business, without neglecting the rest. Through our internal platform Afkari ('My Ideas'), we invited our employees to post their ideas on the SDGs and how DEWA can make the greatest contribution. We are using their different opinions, perceptions and ideas to find new ways to be sustainable.

We have also communicated our sustainability progress and SDG contribution in our 2016 sustainability report. We are currently aligning our corporate strategy with the Global Goals.

Which goals are your priority and why?
Many of DEWA's main projects and initiatives already comply with the SDGs. After assessing these and keeping in mind our main impact areas, we have identified that DEWA's contribution is predominantly focused on six SDGs: 6, 7, 9, 12, 13 and 14.

As an electricity and water utility committed to empowering our customers and accelerating sustainability – both within our company as well as for our stakeholders – we consider the fundamental role of these six SDGs, while also paying attention to the rest.

In particular, DEWA is aligned primarily to SDGs 6, 7 and 13 on energy, water and climate change. These SDGs are central to nearly every major challenge the world faces today: be it jobs, security, food production, education or increasing incomes.

We have announced a number of major innovative electricity and water generation projects to improve efficiency that will also contribute to reducing carbon emissions. By working to generate 75% of Dubai's total power output from clean energy by 2050, we will ensure that Dubai will have the lowest carbon footprint of any city in the world.

To successfully implement the SDGs we had to prioritise the goals that are aligned with our core business, without neglecting the rest

DEWA's clean-energy projects include the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, the largest single-site solar energy project in the world. It will produce 5,000 megawatts by 2030, at a total investment of AED 50 billion. When completed, the solar park will lead to 6.5 million fewer tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

We should also mention our efforts to achieve the Smart Dubai initiative of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum – for Dubai to become the smartest and happiest city in the world. Shams Dubai will connect photovoltaic solar power to buildings; Green Charger will build the infrastructure and electric vehicle charging stations; and the smart meters and applications initiative will build smart grids that maximise the efficient use of electricity and water.

As well as innovation, equally important are sustainable consumption and conservation of our marine resources. We are looking to incorporate conservation into consumption using all available tools: from implementing regulations and standards, to incentives and integrated smart systems. We encourage the citizens and residents of Dubai to avoid wasting electricity and water, as well as the natural resources used to generate them. We share the global response to climate change by reducing or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions, wherever possible.

DEWA is currently working to establish a Research and Development centre at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, with a total investment of AED 500 million up to 2020. The work of the centre revolves around four main areas of operation: the production of electricity from solar power, smart grid integration, energy efficiency and water.

What are your aspirations? What will determine success?
Our ambitious visionary leadership and our strategies, at both federal and local level, are the main reasons behind our success.

DEWA is committed to supporting action to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. We will focus our efforts in the coming years to help overcome the negative effects of climate change and mitigate global warming.

Our main aspiration is to continuously upgrade our electricity and water infrastructure to be as efficient and reliable as possible. We want to achieve sustainable development in Dubai, enhance the leading position of the UAE, and ensure happiness for generations to come. DEWA plays an essential role in achieving all of these by reinforcing the renewable energy sector and fuel diversification to meet the objectives of the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050.

In addition, we are working to achieve the Demand Side Management Strategy, to reduce energy and water demand by 30 per cent by 2030. We are also committed to the Dubai Carbon Abatement Strategy to reduce carbon emissions by 16 per cent by 2021.

We know that to achieve all of these objectives, we need to establish proper alliances with our partners to share knowledge and experiences – bringing into practice Goal 17.

All of these goals provide focus, underpinned by wise leadership for a brighter sustainable future for the UAE, and Dubai especially. DEWA has a motto that defines the importance of sustainability: "For generations to come".

This shows our commitment to provide a better place – not just for our children but for theirs as well. ■

هيئة كهرباء ومياه دبي
Dubai Electricity & Water Authority

UNA-UK thanks DEWA for its generous support for this publication

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A new bottom line

Businesses are critical to achieving the SDGs. We need industry leadership, government regulation and civil-society activism if they are to deliver for people and planet, as well as for profit

◀ **Women, protesting over unpaid wages, rest during a hunger strike at a garment factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Until the Rana Plaza fire in 2013, the developed world largely turned a blind eye to the suffering caused to feed its consumption**

By **Phil Bloomer**, Executive Director, and **Christen Dobson**, Senior Project Lead, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an extraordinary achievement. Governments, business and civil society have come together to transform all our societies towards shared prosperity and security, leaving no one behind.

A key shift from the previous Millennium Development Goals has been the inclusion of business as a key partner – of both the UN and governments – in this endeavour. This change reflects the extraordinary rise in the power of business in the last 40 years.

The shift holds huge potential for global development, but also severe risks. Many believe that respect for human rights by businesses will be the litmus test of their willingness to transform their own operations to deliver sustainable development.

The UN Working Group on business and human rights has stated: “For business, the most powerful contribution to sustainable development is to embed respect for human rights across their value chains… Business respect for human rights is not a choice, it is a responsibility.” This reflects a clear vision that businesses should start close to home: with their core business model.

Companies should ensure that they respect human rights across their immediate operations and supply chains. Only then will the envisioned massive investments and megaprojects – the foreseen ‘$12 trillion in market opportunities’ that the SDGs offer – deliver real benefits for the communities and societies they are meant to serve.

A key shift from the MDGs has been the inclusion of business as a key partner – of both the UN and governments ... This change reflects the extraordinary rise in the power of business in the last 40 years

A fast – and fair – transition

One example is renewable energy firms. They will be at the heart of our urgent transformation to a low-carbon economy – vital for the achievement of access to affordable and clean energy. We need a fast, but also fair, transition. At the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC), we have sounded the alarm about a growing number of allegations of abuse by renewables companies, especially from indigenous and tribal peoples, regarding land and water grabs.

For instance, in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico, indigenous communities have denounced concessions granted by the government for wind power projects. People are saying these concessions were authorised without free, prior and informed consent. Some community members who have demonstrated against these projects have faced death threats, violence and detention.

After her visit to Mexico in November 2017, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples made it clear that this is not an isolated case: “I heard consistent complaints about economic development projects that… led to land dispossession, environmental impacts, social conflicts and criminalisation of indigenous community members opposing them. These include mining, oil and gas, hydroelectric, wind, solar, infrastructure, tourism and agro-industrial projects.”

Renewable energy companies and their investors must act urgently to put human rights due diligence upstream in their planning. Otherwise, they will create irreparable damage to their social licence to operate. They will also lose the trust of the very communities that are essential for stable and remunerative investment.

Governments must also sharpen their thinking to regulate this fast-growing sector effectively – not to slow investment, but to prevent abuse and incentivise community benefit.

Workers' rights, shared prosperity

Another crucial issue for achieving the SDGs will be companies' approach to labour rights – from eliminating modern slavery to the provision of decent work and a living wage.

An estimated 40 million people are caught in modern slavery and there are 152 million child labourers. Almost every supply chain has modern slavery within it somewhere. A priority, therefore, must surely be to deliver the SDGs on inequality and workers' rights.

There are a cluster of leading companies that are taking bold action to eliminate forced and child labour and trafficking from their supply chains. KnowTheChain, an organisation that supports businesses in tackling forced labour, has highlighted the work of companies such as Apple, Hewlett Packard, Adidas, Gap, Unilever, Coca-Cola, Nestlé and Marks & Spencer in transforming their due diligence to identify key risk areas and find sources of abuse. While these firms are leading the way, the vast majority of corporates appear far behind.

Our recent survey of the largest companies' compliance statements for the UK Modern Slavery Act showed that 69 per cent of firms score four out of ten or below. Almost half did not meet the minimum standards of the Act. These companies must learn quickly from the best practice of their leading peers. Governments should insist on mandatory transparency and due diligence, and provide incentives to responsible business through public procurement.

Most people working in the world would benefit from the SDGs if companies transformed their business models to provide decent work and a living wage in their operations and supply chains. This is not easy, but it's also not rocket science.

The 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh killed 1,135 (mainly female) workers. As a result, more than 200 fashion brands and their manufacturers signed an accord with trade unions to make the factories they source from safe for workers. Over 600 factories have completed 90 per cent of the agreed improvements in fire and safety precautions to create decent workplaces. There is more to do, but action to ensure decent workplaces after the tragedy has shown what can be done.

What appears to be much harder to achieve is paying workers a living wage – despite the transformational impact on workers' lives. In an open letter on the SDGs in 2016, Professor John Ruggie, former UN Special Representative on business and human rights, said: "Living wages support families and enable the education of children."

For the millions of women workers in garment factories across South and Southeast Asia, a living wage would allow them the right to housing, health, food and a little leisure. But for the vast majority of these workers, take-home pay is set by a minimum wage – at or below poverty levels.

In Turkey, for example, many thousands of Syrian refugees are paid just half the minimum wage to make clothes for the high streets of Europe. This situation will only change when: i) workers are given freedom to organise; and (ii) fashion brands collaborate with trade unions to agree that all will pay the living wage – the Action, Collaboration, Transformation initiative is working to achieve this in markets such as Cambodia.

Governments must also enforce a minimum wage that meets a living wage level. In this way, all parties would deliver the promise of transformation that the SDGs were fashioned to create.

Can business embed the SDGs?

So, how can we encourage and insist on these core efforts by business to deliver the SDGs? It will require action on several fronts. First, we will need an assertive civil society to expose abuse and propose reform. Second, leading-edge companies and investors must show the way. They will have to step out from the pack and demonstrate what is both a moral imperative in their operations and also commercially viable. Third, governments must be bold enough to insist that companies deliver more for the common good.

CEOs report that a key factor in shifting their thinking is when they are ranked on their human rights performance. The Corporate Human Rights Benchmark ranks 100 of the largest global companies in three high-risk sectors: agricultural products, apparel and extractives. This provides leading companies with reputational reward, and laggard companies with reputational risk. We need investors to use rankings to start making capital cheaper and more accessible to companies that reduce their material human rights risks.

Most people working would benefit from the SDGs if companies transformed their business models to provide decent work and a living wage in their operations and supply chains. This is not easy, but it's not rocket science

Governments, meanwhile, must raise the bar of minimum corporate behaviour towards fuller respect for human rights, through regulation and public procurement.

The SDGs have made explicit the inclusion of business as a key development actor. The goals have thrown down the gauntlet to our societies to repurpose business to deliver both sustainable development and returns to shareholders.

This will require companies to move away from a singular focus on maximising short-term shareholder value. Instead, they must start working with – and for – a wider group of stakeholders: their workers, customers and the communities where they operate. ●

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Positive impact finance

The UN is working with financial institutions to close the SDGs funding gap by generating much-needed private sector finance

By **Eric Usher**, Head, UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)

With the 2017 launch of the Principles for Positive Impact Finance, UNEP FI has proposed a framework to help financial institutions adopt a holistic, impact-based approach to their commercial financing activities. In 2018, we're making it a reality. Sounds fancy? Don't get us wrong: there's no such thing as altruistic finance. Or rather, there is something called philanthropy, but philanthropy alone will not close the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) funding gap. Some estimates put the shortfall at $2.5 trillion a year – an amount the public sector can't afford and must hope that the private sector, somehow, will handle.

On the surface, this looks like an ominous, intractable challenge. Existing solutions – such as green bonds or blended finance – are growing, but have yet to make their mark at scale. What else is possible?

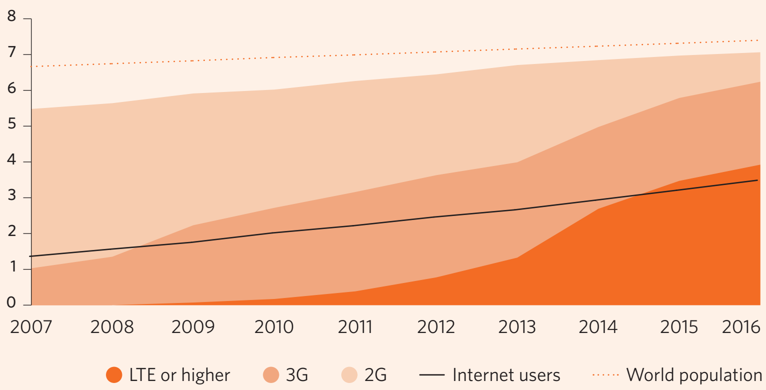
Let's remind ourselves of some facts and figures. First, the largest part of this financing gap comes in emerging markets. In Africa, the gap is estimated at an annual $1.3 trillion, or about 90 per

▲ Bridge under construction in the port of Maputo, Mozambique. Africa needs an estimated extra $1.3 trillion per year in funding to be able to meet the SDGs

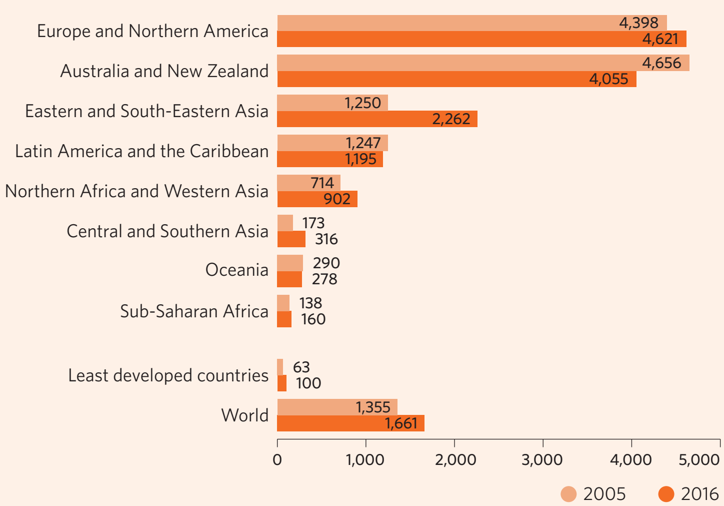
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

Number of people covered by a mobile network, by technology, 2007-2016 (billions)



Manufacturing value added per capita, 2005 and 2016 (constant 2010 US dollars)



Infrastructure, industrialisation and innovation are three drivers of economic growth. When inclusivity, resilience and sustainability are factored into the implementation of these driving forces, economic growth can support sustainable development

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

cent of financing needs. Might one see the makings of a huge opportunity?

Second, while many of us have been concerned about the SDG financing gap, what we see is first and foremost a solutions gap. Think about frontier and emerging markets. These regions and populations have very little in the way of infrastructure – from energy to healthcare, education to mobility. It's often less of a gap and more of a void. Here, again, are the makings of an unparalleled opportunity.

This is how it works: the public sector is frequently tasked with providing essential services such as energy, mobility, healthcare or education to citizens. This involves public planning and tendering chief mechanisms. Public authorities may choose to contract out these services in the form of projects to specialist suppliers. Companies, governments and development institutions will turn to banks to secure financing for the projects – such as loans, project finance or trade finance. The banks will then sell the financing instruments onwards to institutional investors – for example by aggregating them, and offering the package in the form of bonds or other investment products.

What we see here is a mechanism by which a macroeconomic policy objective is turned into a string of microeconomic business solutions. For example, a city's goal to educate its children translates into schools and school financing. But there is a risk. The schools' walls may be built, but there is no guarantee that the public sector's initial goal of education will be met.

Consider how local authorities tend to approach service provision. Typically, they provide services in a discrete way, by which individual public services or contractors are called on to meet one social or environmental objective or another – street lighting, air quality monitoring, public transportation, and so on. This multiplicity of solution providers results in a very high cost-to-impact ratio.

Instead, governments can challenge the private sector to develop solutions by issuing impact-based requests for proposals. In response, companies, in association with the finance sector, would compete on designing business and financing solutions to the

Think about frontier and emerging markets. These regions and populations have very little in the way of infrastructure. It's often less of a gap and more of a void. Here are the makings of an unparalleled opportunity

SDGs, with the best cost-to-impact and public-to-private financing ratios.

With such an impact-based approach, integrated solutions addressing multiple needs can help to reduce costs. For instance, public lamp posts can be fitted with technology and used in many different ways: to monitor air quality, to provide video surveillance, or to serve as a charging station for electric cars or other appliances. Some of these services can generate revenues and sustain private sector interest in the business.

This shows the need for the private sector to innovate based on an impact analysis of the market. So, what are the impact value chains contained in the SDGs, and what role might the private sector play in that chain?

The finance sector for its part needs to become actively involved in developing such business models with its clients and investee companies. This is key if we want to realise the big business opportunity of the SDGs and, indeed, achieve the SDGs themselves. To play this role, finance needs to equip itself with the means to understand impact in the first place.

Principles for Impact Finance

What positive impacts can be generated and what negative impacts can result from a given activity and hence through a given investment? What risks are inherent to financing certain activities where negative impacts cannot be addressed? What business opportunities reside in the positive impact – or potential for positive impact – linked to a company's activities and profile?

How can this potential be developed so that the investable SDG market can grow?

This is where the Principles for Impact Finance kick in, to help financial institutions adopt a holistic, impact-based approach: from the very first stages of identification and analysis, to those of product structuring, distribution and, finally, monitoring and reporting.

In doing so, the principles prepare financial institutions for an economy where impacts will become more central. They offer a common language to all actors, public and private, that need to engage with each other in this transition.

UNEP FI is drawing on its deep expertise of collaboration with the financial sector to lay the groundwork for Positive Impact Finance. We have been working in partnership with leading global banks, investors and markets to develop solutions.

In 2018 we will be exploring how different financing solutions, debt, equity or notes can adopt a positive impact approach. We will use real-life examples and case studies, and develop guidance notes. We are exploring impact-based tendering through concrete partnerships with municipalities. A new research paper will provide deeper insights into the solutions we propose.

At its heart, Positive Impact Finance proposes we start with objectives front and centre in mind. It builds on the knowledge that public sector engagement of the private and finance sectors at the planning stages is a necessary evolution. As the Carillion story shows in the UK, there is no shortage of business risks to public–private partnerships. But the numbers don't lie: private finance and business are the core force underpinning the realisation of the SDGs.

To 2030 and beyond, Positive Impact Finance will reconcile economic opportunities with people's basic needs and respect for the environment. ●

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► Geothermal power plant near the Blue Lagoon hot springs in Iceland. A 500MW geothermal project has recently commenced in the Corbetti caldera in Ethiopia. The project, which brings together technology from Iceland and private equity finance, supported by core finance from MDBs, is a good template for bridging the SDG funding gap

Index investors can shape the future

There are multiple ways for 'tracker' funds to help foster better financial and societal outcomes

Meryam Omi,
Head of Sustainability and Responsible Investment Strategy at Legal & General Investment Management (LGIM)

Markets depend on information: traders and fund managers compete for the key insights that they believe will give them an edge over their peers. But markets cannot live on information alone.

Over recent decades, people have increasingly recognised economic growth as being dependent upon a complex hierarchy of resources, from a stable environment to a healthy workforce. Indeed, an agenda set by the UN has been built on this view, adopted internationally as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which has significant implications for long-term investors. Some pension funds, for example, use this when making decisions for the coming decades. Will the investments of today be resilient in the future? And, more importantly, are these investments financing a world worth retiring in? Both of these questions are pressing; both require comprehensive answers.

The face of traditional investing is changing. Stocks worth hundreds of billions of dollars are still traded daily, but a growing number of investors are turning to index investing. Rather than attempting to beat the market by picking securities that are likely to outperform, index fund managers seek to track the market. In equities, they own shares in every company that form part of an index, such as the S&P 500. This can result in a diversified portfolio, but with lower management costs than funds that are actively managed. As such, index fund managers may be less concerned with the fate of any particular stock, but will probably care about the systemic issues that can affect entire markets.

Automation, digitalisation or climate change are examples of such macroeconomic trends. Carrying both investment risks and opportunities, we do not know with certainty the future winners and losers they will give rise to. But we do know that the impact of these trends is likely to be felt across all sectors. We also know that the timeframes are narrowing: it takes less time for changes in technology, policy and consumer preferences to have a significant effect on markets. We believe index investors should be alert to such shifts.

Diversification can help reduce risk, but only up to a point. Consider that, out of every £1 paid in dividends by the largest 100 UK companies, about 20p comes from just two large energy companies, our research suggests. More broadly, around a third of the world's equity and bond markets are linked to carbon-intensive sectors, such as energy, utilities and mining.[1] As the pressures stemming from climate change intensify, how many of these companies will reinvent their business to survive – or even thrive – in the low-carbon economy?

Collectively, investors may be consistently underestimating the changes that lie ahead. Of course, none of us can predict the future, but this should not be an excuse for inaction. In fact, in a conventional globally diversified equity portfolio, investors could be unknowingly financing global warming of 4°C compared to the pre-industrial period – a world of "unprecedented heat waves, severe drought, and major floods in many regions," according to the World Bank. It goes without saying that portfolio returns are unlikely to be positive when even the road to the ATM might be under water.

Active fund managers may see this as an opportunity to reallocate capital to solutions that are not yet valued properly by the market, enabling them to select investments that are likely to outperform at the same time as benefiting the global economy. But managers in index funds have little scope to change positions. This does not mean they are powerless, though. We outline a few options below.

Tilting

There is more than one way to construct an index. One useful option is 'tilting', which starts from a broad universe of companies and then increases or reduces their index weight according to specific criteria (for example, the management of climate change risks).

Index provider MSCI has found that starting from an alternatively weighted multi-factor index, a tilt in favour of companies that scored better on environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria, suggested that passive investors could improve the ESG characteristics of their strategies without having a negative impact on their ability to capture market returns efficiently.

This approach can benefit both investors and society. For example, the alternative investment approach of one of Legal and General Investment Managements (LGIM's) funds has lowered exposure to the carbon emissions of its underlying companies equivalent to that produced by 20,000 cars (compared to traditional index investing). Without sacrificing diversification, profits and long-term purpose can be combined, in our view.

Engagement

Traditionally, active fund managers can buy or sell stocks at will. But index fund managers must hold on to stocks for as long as they are part of an index. So they will want all the companies they invest in to do well. This raises the importance of engagement – using one's shareholder rights to hold companies accountable and help shape their business models. We will meet company boards, have a direct dialogue and vote at shareholder meetings to send a consistent message to the companies in which we invest. During 2017, for example, LGIM supported 100% of shareholder resolutions calling for better disclosure on climate change.

Evidence is mounting that this strategy works: a recent study from the London School of Economics found a firm's returns were about 2% higher in the year following an initial engagement and 7% higher following a successful engagement. Moreover, by calling on companies to raise their standards and increase transparency, engagement helps to make markets work more efficiently, to the benefit of everyone. This is why, as a positive-sum game, engagement offers opportunities for collaboration.

Divestment/Reduction in holding weights

Blanket divestment from companies and entire sectors can be a risky strategy, since it results in a more concentrated portfolio. Yet limited exclusion – and the threat of it – can still be a potent tool: research has shown that the targeted exclusion of certain stocks (e.g. the companies with the worst ESG record) need not have significant impact on the tracking error of index funds, or the difference between their returns and those of the index they follow.[2] At LGIM, we have designed index funds, that exclude companies that consistently fail to meet sustainability standards, but with very little impact on overall performance.

These tools at our disposal are not mutually exclusive. In fact, we believe they are best used in combination. We seek to provide index portfolios with the risk/return profiles that are desired by our clients, while aiming to make a positive market impact in a way that protects their future.

To further strengthen this effect, LGIM has implemented the Climate Impact Pledge, a systematic way of analysing and engaging with companies on the topic of climate risk. We work directly with the companies in which we invest, communicating clearly our expectations for governance and disclosure in relation to the energy transition. Most importantly, we support companies over time to improve their resilience and performance. A failed engagement can ultimately lead to divestment, where stocks can be excluded within a tightly controlled tracking error margin in designated funds. As a result, the impact on returns is expected to be minimal, while the message to the companies is magnified. Our commitment to disclose publicly the methodology and final divestment candidates means there is a tangible incentive to respond to engagement, thereby improving the market practice overall.

At LGIM, we offer index investors the opportunity for exposure to entire markets, while seeking to lower the chance of 'nasty surprises' in their holdings. In addition to helping lead to better financial outcomes, we believe this approach can also make a positive contribution towards societal goals. ■

1 www.bankofengland.co.uk/speech/2015/breaking-the-tragedy-of-the-horizon-climate-change-and-financial-stability
2 Tim Verheyden, Robert G. Eccles, Andreas Feiner (2015) – ESG for All? The Impact of ESG Screening on Return, Risk, and Diversification

The value of any investment and any income taken from it is not guaranteed and can go down as well as up, and investors may get back less than the amount originally invested. Legal & General Investment Management Ltd, One Coleman Street, London, EC2R 5AA www.lgim.com Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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The real wealth of nations

The SDGs must be grounded in a 'capability approach' – where 'success' is measured not by economic indicators but by people leading meaningful, fulfilled lives

By **Sabina Alkire**, Director, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford, and **Séverine Deneulin**, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath and Visiting Fellow, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame

Recent articles published by UNA-UK, such as 'Keeping the 2030 Agenda Alive' by Köhler et al, have expressed some concern about the risk of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remaining an empty aspiration if social and economic policies do not shift.

The authors note that authoritarianism, not democratic governance, is on the rise. Rather than being guided by concern for ecological balance and the wellbeing of people – especially the most vulnerable – policy decisions are influenced more by the concerns of the wealthy, and financial interests. The impact of budgetary austerity is being felt throughout most OECD countries. The quest for universal social protection and labour rights remains elusive. Meanwhile, the poorest continue to suffer the most from climate change, to which they have hardly contributed.

Countries have begun reporting – albeit still voluntarily – on their progress in meeting the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs, as measured by 232 indicators. These voluntary national reviews have the potential to serve as powerful accountability mechanisms and to mobilise stakeholders. This SDG reporting might catalyse change and reverse the policy trends highlighted above. But will it be enough to sustain policy change over time? Are the SDGs offering a robust normative framework – setting standards against which actions will be judged – to rethink the way we understand social and economic progress and to frame policies accordingly?

Like their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs are targets born from a results-based management mindset. They are, however, much more inclusive. The SDGs are the product of global consultation processes, and relevant for all people everywhere. Nonetheless, they remain results based, and focused on the pragmatic level. But development history tells us that if a pragmatic policy framework is not

◀ **Children celebrating the Hindu festival of Holi in Chennai. The capability approach departs from wealth-based perspectives of development and focuses on the types of lives that people are able to live**

rooted in some strong normative basis, its sustainability is vulnerable to external shocks.

This was the case with the demise of the basic-needs approach pioneered by the World Bank and its then-director Robert McNamara. We argue that the SDGs need a more robust conceptual framework that is both results- and process-based, and which grounds them in stronger foundations to help withstand shocks. Our contention is that the 'capability approach', which originates from the work of economist and philosopher Amartya Sen, can provide just that. We offer four reasons for this.

First, like the SDGs, the capability approach offers a new perspective to assess the progress of societies. For far too long, how well countries were doing was assessed according to the material wealth their economies produced and not how their people were doing. Offering a different approach, Sen introduced the idea of capability in the late 1970s. He proposed it as an alternative to utility, income or consumption as the informational basis with which to make value judgements about how well societies were doing.

What ultimately matters are the types of lives that people are able to live – whether they can function well as human beings, and be and do things they value and have reason to value. This may include whether people are able to work decently for a living wage, to shape their own lives, to live free of fear, violence and shame, to be adequately nourished and sheltered, to live in a clean environment with access to safe drinking water, and so on. In the words of UNDP's flagship annual *Human Development Report*, which has served as a vehicle to translate into policies the ideas of the capability approach, it is people who are the 'real wealth of nations'.

Like the SDGs, the capability approach takes a multi-dimensional perspective on progress and on poverty. The first SDG is to eradicate "poverty in all its forms and dimensions", and this phrase recurs seven times in the SDG foundational document *Transforming Our World*. National multidimensional poverty indices (MPIs) – and the global MPI designed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative for the *Human Development Reports* – can help achieve that goal. MPIs can also facilitate the recognition of overlapping inequalities and deprivations, just as the SDGs similarly recognise the interlinkages across goals, targets and indicators – for example, how access to safe water and health outcomes are connected.

Second, like the SDGs, the capability approach is applicable to all societies: materially poor and rich ones alike. Just as the SDG concern is for "all people, everywhere", so is the concern of the capability approach to assess situations everywhere from the perspective of all people and how they are doing. This includes how well their natural environment is doing, for humans are part of a wider ecosystem and their quality of life is co-dependent on the good functioning of the ecosystems in which they live. The underlying anthropology of the capability approach, which recognises that humans are interdependent and often group based, can also bring a richer analysis of how the ability of some people to live well is connected to how others live.

The road to human dignity, which the SDGs call on us to embark upon, is not only about outcomes but also about processes

Both the SDGs and the capability approach have interconnectedness across dimensions at their core: for example, how targets of sustainable consumption in one place can be linked to better health outcomes and working conditions elsewhere. More work is needed to distil the complex web of interconnections between the various SDG targets across countries, and to determine how the choices that people make in one place affect the choices people can make in others.

Third, like the SDGs and their concern for "leaving no one behind", the capability approach sees each person as an end. Every person is interconnected and also unique. This echoes the SDGs' call for disaggregated data: to break down information by ethnicity, disability status, gender, age, geographical location, and so on. This is already being done in the indicators related to SDG 1, with the global MPI being disaggregated according to the various characteristics of a person – from how old they are to whether they live in a rural or urban area.

By doing this, one can see over time whether the poorest are catching up – or not. Each person matters equally, but those who are lagging far behind and those who suffer most severely from deprivations in multiple dimensions of their lives – the poorest, in other words – should be our priority. It is not by accident that the first SDG relates to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Every other SDG has to be considered from that perspective: from that of the lives of the poorest people.

Fourth, the capability approach emphasises that the road to human dignity, which the SDGs call on us to embark upon, is not only about outcomes but also about processes. Humans are the only living creatures who can author the story of their lives. They are the actors of their destiny. This is why the capability approach focuses on processes as well as outcomes. It stresses empowering poor people as 'agents' – to shape their own lives and communities, as well as act on behalf of others. It also emphasises public action, which includes and goes beyond state action. The SDGs may have less of an explicit focus on empowerment, but (as highlighted above) they are the result of global consultation processes, and states have committed to engaging the private sector and civil society.

Every person, everywhere, knows that we have only one planet Earth to call home. Our challenge is to create and improve continually the conditions for every human being to develop and flourish in all dimensions of her or his life. We hope that by using the capability approach as a normative framework to underpin the SDGs, we will make the Global Goals stronger. We also hope that by cultivating 'agency', we will enlist the creativity and imagination of new actors in this common goal. ●

The Human Development Index – a better indicator for success?

When faced with the complexity of the Sustainable Development Goals, we need a digestible, precise way of measuring progress

By **Hayley Lashmar**,
United Nations Association – UK

Produced by the UN Development Programme in 1990, the first *Human Development Report* outlined a new approach to development, focused on people and their opportunities rather than economic growth alone. The Human Development Index (HDI) was introduced as a way to quantify this approach. Nearly 30 years later, the Sustainable Development Goals have rekindled discussions on how we measure progress. Does the Index offer a way forward?

The HDI framework comprises three indices:

- Life Expectancy Index, based on life expectancy at birth. The index is 1 when it is 85 years and 0 when it is 20 years.
- Education Index, based on mean years of schooling (15 is the projected maximum for 2025) and expected years of schooling (18 is the projected maximum – this is the equivalent of achieving a postgraduate degree in most countries).
- Income Index, based on Gross National Income (GNI) per capita by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), which considers exchange rates and inflation adjustments when determining individual wealth. The index is 1 when GNI per capita is US$75,000 or above, and 0 when it is US$100.

Together, these three indices provide, in broad-brush terms, an indication of a person's capabilities and wellbeing. They provide a richer picture of progress than gross domestic product (GDP), which relates to a country's wealth, or even GDP per capita, which tells us something about an individual's means but nothing about their life outcomes.

Of course, the HDI has its limitations. It omits several factors that can have a significant influence on quality of life, such as environmental degradation. Industrial pollution and deforestation, for example, can lead to complex health problems (e.g. lymphatic filariasis) or mental health conditions that do not necessarily have an impact on mortality rates but which can severely impair one's mobility or quality of living.

But all indices will have limitations. Overall, the HDI has the potential to provide a simple impression of development that can be unpacked to indicate progress with respect to the SDGs. It can be used to complement alternative measures of development. And while factors such as conflict may not be reflected in the HDI, they may be captured in relation to their impact on wealth, access to education and life expectancy.

Just as the SDGs built upon the relatively static targets of the Millennium Development Goals to reflect a more nuanced understanding of development, the HDI could serve as a reference point for new indices as we move towards understanding human development in a more comprehensive and capabilities-focused way.

Why should we encourage HDI over GDP?

With their emphasis on leaving no one behind, it is clear that the SDGs will require a deeper understanding of development outcomes on the ground. However, as the framework swells in complexity – with 17 goals, 169 targets and even more indicators – there is also a need for a simple way to measure progress. Over a 15-year timeframe, the HDI will do a better job than GDP of capturing what progress is being achieved. It reflects a more nuanced understanding of human development while being simple enough to remain inclusive: unlike other more complex indices, the HDI is based on data that is likely to have been collected in many countries for a number of years.

Despite this, most countries still use GDP to assess standard of living and 'development', and it is easy to understand why. GDP is a measurement developed in the 1930s to measure the size of a state's economy by giving consideration to the value of goods and services produced within the country.

The data used in determining GDP is relatively easy to access, and measurements are straightforward. Moreover, this very narrow definition of wealth is easy to apply universally, hence its popular use as an indicator of quality of life. It remains the preferred indicator of politicians.

However, even as a measurement of wealth, GDP leaves a lot to be desired. It does not consider levels of inequality within a country – whether it be the gap between the rich and poor or any instances of social or political discrimination. It also does not consider the methods of the creation or accumulation of wealth, such as the detrimental effects of the exploitation of natural resources. In this regard, GDP does not measure a standard of living at all – it should instead be seen as a measure of economic activity.

Human development, on the other hand, concentrates on qualitative outcomes. The HDI's consideration of life expectancy and education – alongside per capita income – allow us to flesh out this picture a little. These relatively simple forms of data are very important indicators of social welfare and freedom.

Unexpected results

When looking for the factors determining quality of life outside of GDP, some specific instances can shed light on just how differently data is perceived when compared to the HDI.

Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE – all top 10 countries by GDP (PPP) per capita, standing at first, seventh and eighth place respectively – drop quite significantly in ranking in the HDI: to 33rd, 51st and 42nd place. While Chile was 56th on the 2016 GDP Index, in the same year it ranked 38th on the HDI. Similarly, Barbados was 73rd on the GDP Index, while the HDI ranked it 54th.

Clearly, as the Gulf states demonstrate, high GDP is no guarantee of high HDI. Equally, Chile and Barbados have shown that it is possible to punch above one's weight. Taking a capability approach to development, as described by Sabina Alkire (p.30), may explain these successes and failures.

Secrets to success – Norway

The HDI criteria are designed to be broad enough to be inclusive of countries' social, political and economic diversity while being indicative of a country's quality of life. With the exceptions of 2007 and 2008, Norway has topped the HDI chart in every year since 2001. The UN also regards Norway as ranking high in its implementation of the SDGs. So why has it been so successful?

Norwegians have a relatively high life expectancy of 81.7 years – one of the highest in the world. This is in part due to Norway's accessible and affordable public healthcare system. Norwegians spend an average of 17.7 years in school – a measurement reflecting on levels of knowledge as well as freedom of choice, both of which indicate a high level of human development.

Human Development Index top 40

COUNTRY	HDI RANK	GDP PER CAPITA RANK
Norway	1	7
Australia	2	18
Switzerland	2	8
Germany	4	16
Denmark	5	19
Singapore	5	3
Netherlands	7	13
Ireland	8	11
Iceland	9	21
Canada	10	20
United States	10	10
Hong Kong, China (SAR)	12	9
New Zealand	13	28
Sweden	14	14
Liechtenstein	15	-
United Kingdom	16	23
Japan	17	27
Korea (Republic of)	18	29
Israel	19	32
Luxembourg	20	2
France	21	25
Belgium	22	22
Finland	23	24
Austria	24	17
Slovenia	25	36
Italy	26	30
Spain	27	31
Czech Republic	28	35
Greece	29	46
Brunei Darussalam	30	5
Estonia	30	40
Andorra	32	-
Cyprus	33	34
Malta	33	37
Qatar	33	1
Poland	36	45
Lithuania	37	42
Chile	38	53
Saudi Arabia	38	12
Slovakia	40	39

Source: 2016 Human Development Report

It is true that at US$67,614, Norway's GNI per capita is the seventh-highest in the world: Norwegians have a lot of purchasing power, which is likely to translate into a high potential for choice. However, this alone is not sufficient to explain Norway's performance. Strong institutions and a holistic and capability-based approach to development also play a significant role.

For instance, Norway ranks first on the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), first published in UNDP's 2016 *Human Development Report*, which compares country's HDI rankings to their levels of inequality. The IHDI is sensitive to the level of human development lost when inequality is high, allowing for a more complex understanding of the relationship between development and welfare distribution.

This approach has yielded progress on the SDGs too. Norway has made strides in environmental sustainability – through projects and agreements related to resource management and climate change mitigation, for example. It strives for gender parity, in parliament (where around 40 per cent of members are women) and beyond. Norway tops two UNDP gender indices: Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). It also provides financial assistance to vulnerable countries in respect to resource sustainability and eradicating poverty. And each governmental department follows up on the SDG targets incorporated into their agendas as part of their budget proposals. By linking the SDGs to budget allocation in the treasury, the goals are incorporated into a robust institutional process.

When we talk about what makes a country a success or failure with respect to the SDGs, GDP simply does not reflect the progress of human development. Though the HDI may not fully capture all the complexity of the 17 SDGs and 169 targets, it is not realistic to expect any index that accommodates the diversity of all countries' development to do so. Rather, the HDI can be used as an easy and more accurate indicator of progress as it considers factors that serve as valuable forecasts of quality of life. ●

Delivering the SDGs

The UN urgently needs to reform to be fit to support its Member States in realising Agenda 2030

By **Stephen Browne** and **Thomas G. Weiss**, Co-Directors, Future United Nations Development System Project

The approval in 2015 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was welcomed as much with relief as triumph. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were the culmination of a protracted process that had begun in 2012 at the Rio+20 summit and continued with a high-level panel chaired by three serving heads of government. The process then continued with an 'open working group' (OWG), which reinvented rather than reinforced the panel's report and the comprehensive declarations of earlier summits.

Discussions encompassed a wide range of litigants – not only from governments but also from UN organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. It is hardly surprising, then, to find within the SDGs various elements that seek to please lots of different people.

Instead of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the panel had proposed 12, which the OWG expanded to 17, accompanied by 169 explanatory paragraphs, described as 'targets'. A belated attempt by the UN Secretariat during the negotiations to consolidate the expanding goals into six groups of objectives amounted to whistling in the wind. As one sceptic noted in the *New York Times*: "Having 169 priorities is the same as having none".

Nonetheless, given the sometimes toxic South-North politics of UN deliberations, there was considerable relief that an agreement, however vague, had resulted. While the SDGs were not "action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, and limited in number" as Rio+20 had exhorted, they were universal. They engaged all Member States, not just those from the Global South. Unfortunately, several critical development concerns – including human rights abuses, ethnic discrimination, religious intolerance, chronic humanitarian crises, and forced migration – were almost absent from an agenda that promised to "leave no one behind".

What we call the 'first' UN – that of Member States – now has a mammoth and complex agenda, albeit only a partial one. The proof of this pudding will be in its implementation, supported by the 'second' UN of professionals from across the system.

Here, the UN has at least five responsibilities that will challenge its analytical and political competence: refining and interpreting the agenda; helping countries to align the agenda with their own priorities; raising awareness; helping to marshal the resources and the partnerships to assist; and establishing effective monitoring mechanisms.

> **The UN now should provide guidance on how to incorporate the SDGs into development planning**

As soon as the champagne flutes had been stored after September 2015, the SDGs and the targets desperately needed rigorous quantification and measurable indicators. The UN Statistics Division – which should, in the interests of practicality, have been far more intimately involved at an earlier stage – eventually identified a 'definitive set' of 232 separate indicators. This essential step began to give concrete meaning to the goals. But with so many indicators, no country can be expected to achieve more than a minor proportion, even of those that can be measured accurately. So the UN needs to rev up its assistance to national data-gathering capacities.

Second, the UN now should provide guidance to countries about how to incorporate the SDGs into development planning. The UN Development Programme (UNDP), with support from the UN Development Group (UNDG) representing the UN's operational family, is leading the way. It has produced a guide to "facilitate mainstreaming of SDGs into national and local plans".

The guide lists the planning cycles in every country and the main ministries responsible for each goal and indicator. Getting countries to embed the SDGs into their own development programmes will mean superimposing a 15-year agenda onto national plans of far shorter durations. This point of departure will require all UN organisations to work closely together in each country if 'mainstreaming' is to have any significance. A measure of the challenge is suggested by the fact that all UN organisations have identified several different goals as part of their own responsibilities.

Third, the activities of the UN must help sustain the focus on achieving the SDGs among governments and other actors. Compared with the MDGs, the UN has been more effective about raising awareness among non-state actors, mainly by including something for everyone on the agenda. Apart from many international and local NGOs, the for-profit sector's concerns have been incorporated in this UN campaign more than in earlier ones. A concern for sustainability clearly has contemporary relevance for many enterprises, multinational and domestic.

Fourth, resource mobilisation has been linked to awareness and partnerships. The Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July 2015 was helpful in highlighting the importance of mobilising

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▲ Secretary-General António Guterres listens to a resident at a camp for internally displaced persons in Bangassou, Central African Republic

domestic resources in support of the SDGs. Private capital will be essential and can be encouraged through closer partnerships between the UN and the private sector.

The UN development system (UNDS) should follow through on the proposals for 'blended finance' (combining public with private and philanthropic sources) put forward by the Business and Sustainable Development Commission in its final report to Davos in January this year.

Finally, goal-setting has no meaning unless accompanied by rigorous and reliable monitoring. The 2015 meeting confirmed the proposal from the Rio+20 summit to establish a High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) under the Economic and Social Council. The HLPF has a "central role in overseeing follow-up and review at the global level". By July 2018, it will have seen more than 110 national reviews, which all countries are expected to prepare.

But how objective will they be? Described as "voluntary", in which non-governmental stakeholders are "encouraged" to participate, will governments' feet be held to the fire for success or failure? The UN Secretariat will produce synthetic and thematic reports. But there should also be comprehensive tallies to determine precisely which countries are succeeding on which goals, and which are failing. The Universal Periodic Review conducted by the UN Human Rights Council provides a model. But this kind of mechanism – calling a spade at least a shovel – is not an intergovernmental favourite.

Essential reform

Is the current UN up to these five challenges? It is hard to be sanguine if we take into account the modest levels of technical competence and the absence of coordination of country-based teams. In the future, much will therefore depend on the proposed reforms put forward by Secretary-General António Guterres in December 2017.

Intended to align the system with the SDGs at the field level, his reforms seek to separate the heads of the UN country teams (resident coordinators) from the UNDP (which has attempted for years to be both coordinator and competitor), and to provide more resources and staff. The UN's country presence is supposed to be rationalised and harmonised around teams with 'enhanced skillsets'. At the global level, the UNDG is supposed to be a more effective overseer of field coordination. Meanwhile, donors are called upon to provide more core funding to UN organisations and to expand pooled resources to encourage more joint programming.

It must not be underestimated how challenging it will be to put into effect these changes, without which the UNDS will remain a feeble partner. The proposals echo those of Kofi Annan in 2006, which remain only partially implemented. Their success, therefore, depends on Member States' commitment to the SDGs and their willingness to support Guterres in this task.

Reform of the UNDS is not just essential for it to be capable of playing its part in the SDGs. It is also needed for its vital role in those equally critical areas which fall outside the SDGs: promoting human rights, supporting governance and preventing conflict. ●

A new development approach in action

The interconnectedness of the 17 SDGs mean development projects can no longer be designed or judged with a single benefit in mind. This is how Inter-American Development Bank is responding in Latin America and the Caribbean

By **Luis Miguel Castilla Rubio**,
General Manager, Office of Strategic Planning and Development Effectiveness, Inter-American Development Bank

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that underpin it, together with the Paris Agreement, represent the most ambitious development endeavour ever undertaken by the international community. In aiming to improve lives and protect the planet at the same time, the 2030 Agenda moves beyond pursuing individual goals and targets to recognising that development requires a multidimensional approach.

Challenges such as civil conflict, forced displacement, environmental degradation, poverty and inequality are almost always mutually reinforcing. So are their solutions, which require a holistic approach to be effective, embracing economic, social and environmental dimensions. In this sense, all 17 SDGs are interconnected. For instance, maternal mortality has an impact on children's education and health, which in turn impacts productivity and thus poverty reduction and the environment.

Sustainability in Colombia

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group has stepped up its efforts to contribute to this ambitious agenda, both individually and with partners. One project that highlights how the IDB Group is applying a multidimensional and interconnected approach to supporting the SDGs in the region is a $100 million loan to support the Sustainable Colombia Program (SCP). Approved in 2017, the SCP targets 170 municipalities affected by the country's long-running civil conflict, which came to an end in 2016.

Colombia's post-conflict zones have experienced disproportionate environmental destruction and poverty. In 2014, they had a multidimensional poverty index of 54.7 per cent, compared with the country's average of 45.6 per cent. In 2015, 89 per cent of the country's deforestation took place in these zones. The IDB Group's loan contributes directly to a range of goals including economic development (SDG 8: decent work and economic growth), climate change (SDG 13: climate action), and social equality (SDG 10: reduced inequalities). Furthermore, as part of the SCP, the loan contributes to a

systemic approach to addressing the SDGs including restoration of natural resources (SDG 15: life on land) and development of sustainable sources of income for residents (SDG 12: responsible production and consumption).

The recognition in the SDG framework of the interconnectedness of development challenges is relevant to interventions such as the SCP, which strive to address this interconnectedness through multi-sectoral solutions.

Through the SCP, Colombia and the IDB Group are not only combating hunger, but are also striving to achieve food security and improved nutrition through sustainable agriculture. Likewise, the SCP seeks to reduce inequality while promoting peaceful and inclusive communities and institutions.

Strategic alignment with the SDGs

Since the discussions leading up to the 2030 Agenda, the IDB Group has underscored the critical importance of ensuring that developing countries play the leading role in shaping and delivering the SDGs. Countries must first translate the goals into meaningful country-specific indicators and targets, and then design and implement the policies and programmes needed to reach them. As both a proactive and demand-driven institution, the IDB Group is well positioned to support its clients in this process. This is down in large part to its strategic framework, which was updated when the 2030 Agenda was being discussed and initiated.

The latest Update to the Institutional Strategy identifies three key development challenges that need to be addressed to preserve and continue to advance development gains in the region: i) social

▼ Residents of Briceño municipality, Colombia. The region typifies the country's post-conflict areas, which suffer higher rates of poverty and environmental damage


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Also in this section

inclusion and equality; ii) productivity and innovation; and iii) economic integration. At the same time, the Strategy cites three cross-cutting issues that must be addressed when working on these challenges: i) gender equality and diversity; ii) climate change and environmental sustainability; and iii) institutional capacity and the rule of law. As shown in Figure 1, each of these challenges and cross-cutting issues is aligned with at least one of the 17 SDGs.

Strategic monitoring of contributions to the SDGs

The relationship between the SDGs and the Update to the Institutional Strategy is depicted in greater detail in the IDB Group's Corporate Results Framework (CRF). This specifically looks at how the organisation's projects are contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, by examining the results of projects in execution and by reviewing the areas targeted by new projects as they are approved.

The updated CRF draws on the draft indicator framework for the SDGs released by the 2015 UN Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators. The CRF identifies the SDGs that are most closely aligned with each of its Regional Context Indicators, which highlight the region's long-term development progress; and Country Development Results Indicators, which report on outputs and outcomes supported by IDB Group-financed projects. IDB Group's reporting on the results of the operations it supports also sheds light on IDB Group's contribution to the SDGs.

However, identifying the specific SDGs to which a project contributes is not as simple as it sounds. It goes far beyond just looking at the sector in which a given project is working. Instead, it demands an individual assessment of each project based on its unique objectives and target population. In fact, a single project often contributes to several SDGs, as in the case of the SCP.

To share the results of this analysis, the IDB Group has recently launched a dedicated 2030 Agenda webpage: crf.iadb.org/sdgs. Users can now see how IDB Group interventions contribute to the different SDGs.

Identifying the specific SDGs to which a project contributes is not as simple as it sounds. It goes far beyond just looking at the sector in which a given project is working. Instead, it demands an individual assessment

Coordinating stakeholders for Costa Rica

The holistic nature of the 2030 Agenda implies a vision of regional and global public goods that requires coordination among multilateral development banks (MDBs) and stakeholders, especially the private sector. Multilateral organisations such as the IDB Group are well positioned to facilitate this process. MDBs are viewed as trusted brokers, with the credibility to bring together diverse stakeholders from government, the private sector and civil society.

A good example of systemic, multi-stakeholder collaboration at the project level is the recently completed Reventazón Hydroelectric Project in Costa Rica. This is an IDB Group-led initiative worth $1.345 billion that benefited from a $250 million IDB Group sovereign-guaranteed loan; an A/B loan package (in other words, a loan offered in partnership with another financial institution) valued at $335 million from IDB Invest (the Group's private sector lending window); and an additional $579 million from other MDBs and investors, including the International Finance Corporation.

Given the level of resources required for Reventazón, securing the involvement of a wide range of parties was critical to the project's successful financing and execution. The hydroelectric plant now supplies 10 per cent of Costa Rica's electric generation capacity (SDG 7: affordable and clean energy). It is also a major step towards that country's goal of carbon neutrality (SDG 13: climate action), and includes a jaguar corridor to protect critical habitats adjacent to the project site (SDG 15: life on land).

Joint reporting

In addition to project-level cooperation, MDBs have taken steps to work together by cooperating on joint measurement and reporting of critical components of international development.

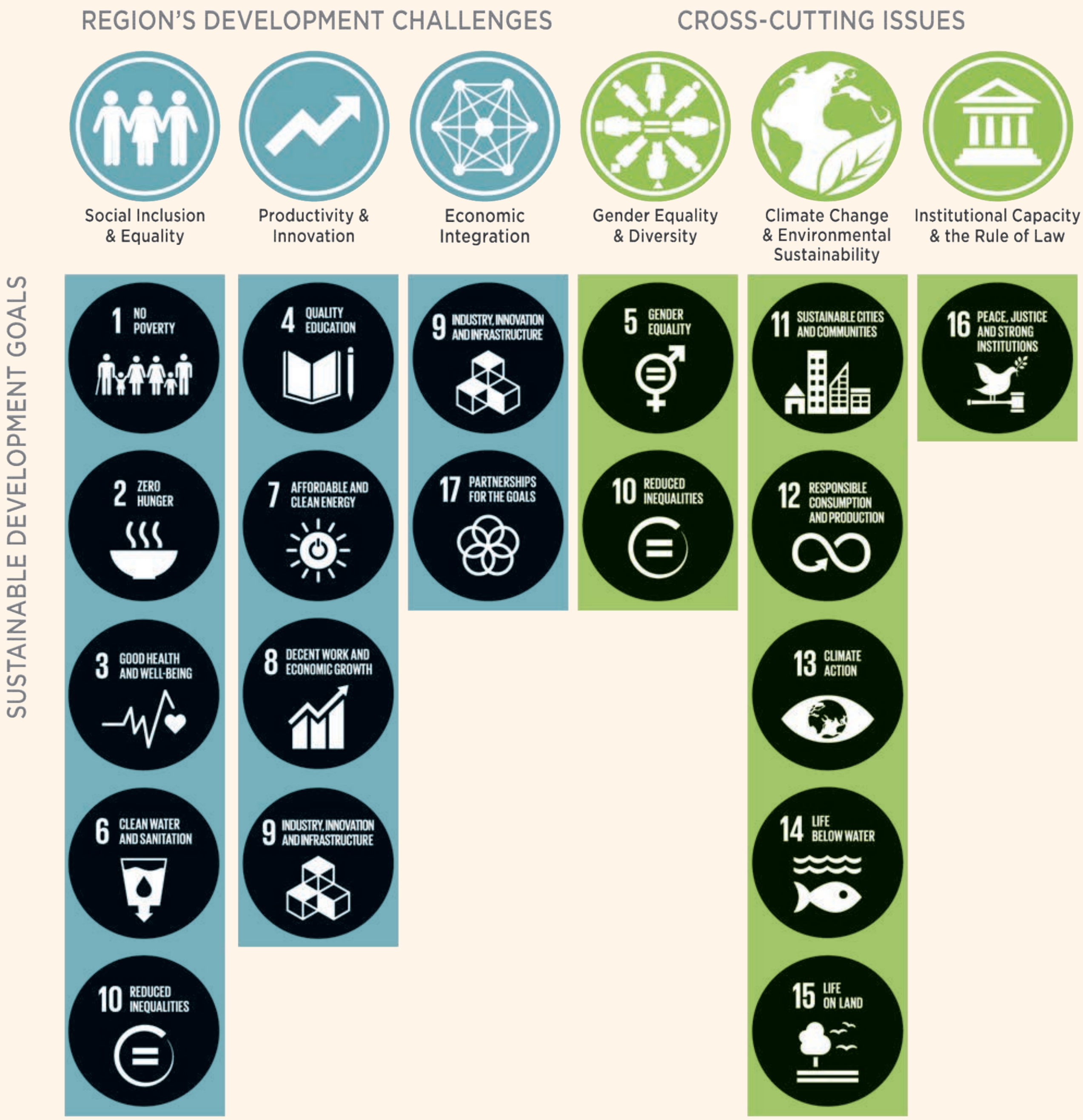
For example, the IDB Group has been collaborating with other multilaterals on harmonising methodologies to track the climate finance and private investment they mobilise, and on improving and refining tools, operational policies and business processes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions (see the SDG webpage mentioned above for more details).

In addition, the IDB Group has set up a public–private coordination team that is looking to identify synergies and business opportunities to enhance its engagement with the private sector and catalyse more private sector finance.

The IDB Group's framework for collaboration with the private sector around the SDGs has also been revamped on several fronts. All non-sovereign guaranteed windows have been consolidated into IDB Invest and capitalised with $2.03 billion, with the aim of mobilising over $10 billion in the next 10 years. In addition, the IDB Group established the NDC Invest platform. This provides a one-stop shop to help countries access the resources needed to translate national climate commitments under the Paris Agreement into concrete investment plans and bankable projects.

With more than five decades of hands-on experience in Latin America and the Caribbean, the IDB Group has acquired unique technical and operational expertise about the development challenges and priorities of each of its borrowing member countries. The IDB Group stands ready to leverage its financial resources, technical expertise and multilateral coordination in support of its public and private sector clients to achieve the SDGs and implement the 2030 Agenda in the region. ●

Figure 1. Alignment of the SDGs and the IDB Group's Update to the Institutional Strategy



Source: Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Investment Corporation, Multilateral Investment Fund (2016). Development Effectiveness Overview 2016. Washington, DC.

Cities as a means to the SDGs: London case study

Cities have a stake in virtually every aspect of the SDGs and they have been quick to embrace them. Their progress will hold lessons for all levels of government

By **Paul Toyne**, Commissioner, London Sustainable Development Commission

Cities manage civic functions on a scale that makes them uniquely well placed to further the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The dynamics between the various Global Goals are visible at a city level. The levers to address them are frequently within the remit of coordinated city authorities. And the quality of a city's performance and the reasons behind it tend to be more exposed to public scrutiny.

In terms of population alone – home to nearly four billion people, over half the world's population – cities merit particular attention. Their importance to the SDGs will only increase: by 2030, city inhabitants worldwide are projected to rise to five billion.

As one of the world's largest, most diverse and successful cities, the experience of London should yield constructive lessons for others. The city, ranked as having the fifth largest economy of any city in the world, accounts for 22.7 per cent of the UK's economic output. And according to the 2011 census, 37 per cent of its just over 8 million population had been born outside the UK.

London has its own independent body to guide sustainability: the London Sustainable Development Commission (LSDC). This promotes sustainable development in London and provides independent advice on the sustainable nature of London-wide strategies, including those produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA), the capital's top-tier administrative body.

First established by the Mayor of London in 2002, the LSDC comprises key representatives from London's economic, social, environmental and governance sectors, who give their time voluntarily. The LSDC is supported in its work by a secretariat provided by the GLA. It undertakes strategic work – at present specifically on clean tech and green finance – and continues to measure London's performance on quality of life.

As a Commissioner, I have overseen the publication of two *Quality of Life* reports in 2012 and December 2017. The reports started back in 2004 and give a picture of London's journey in becoming a more sustainable city.

The analysis in each report draws on existing data sets to examine key indicators to gauge progress for people living and working in the capital, and sets out progress since the previous report. The metrics provide evidence to help guide decision-makers in taking the actions needed to improve the quality of life of all Londoners – present and future – and to help London play its full role in meeting global sustainability goals.

For the first time, the indicator set is now held on the London Datastore, a free and open data-sharing portal where anyone can access data relating to the capital. The indicators used are the responsibility of a range of organisations and bodies across London, including the Mayor, London boroughs, businesses, central government and other stakeholders in the private and public sectors.

The report collates existing data of indicators across the three interrelated areas of sustainability: environment, social and economic. In doing so, it provides a more holistic snapshot of London's quality of life and how sustainably the city is developing.

Many of the indicators are, as you might expect, relevant to the SDGs, covering (for example) water, waste, carbon,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▲ The view over London from the Olympic Park towards the City. The Olympic Park was built on a brownfield site and its development involved decontamination and the creation of more than 45 hectares of wildlife habitat. The site now provides housing, offices and recreation

education and security. In fact, the report identifies the relevant SDGs against each of its own indicators, although they are not a perfect match.

How does London measure up?

The latest report examined 32 key indicators and compared performance with earlier analysis published in previous reports. The good news is that London is making progress, with many indicators heading in the right direction. For instance, the percentage of journey stages made in London by public transport has increased from one of the lowest in comparable European cities in 1995 to higher than Stockholm, Paris, Brussels and Berlin in 2012.

London continues to be an economic powerhouse: gross value added per head in 2015 was more than 70 per cent higher than for the UK as a whole, or any other UK region. And more than a quarter of Londoners volunteer, giving back time, skills and energy to their communities.

However, we need to do more in key areas, and step up the pace of activity, to ensure that London becomes a truly sustainable megacity fit for the challenges of the 21st century. For example, the report also highlights an increase in social inequalities in London, with a widening of gaps in, for instance, access to affordable housing.

This is backed up by data for the lower quartile: between 2011 and 2016, the cost of house prices rose from nearly 10 times earnings to almost 14. Essentially, buying a house in London became 40 per cent more unaffordable over that period. Economic fairness also comes under the spotlight: Londoners' disposable income varies widely by borough, and the most recent data reveal that nearly two in five children live in poverty.

The report also highlights areas in which the LSDC believes progress is being made, but where concerns remain about the level of transformation required. Among these is climate change. London's direct carbon emissions are reducing but will need to continue to do so at scale to keep track with targets set out in the Paris Agreement.

The Mayor has recently published numerous draft strategies with proposals to address these challenges, including on housing, environment, transport, London's economy and the London Plan (a strategic development plan for London). The LSDC welcomes and is commenting on several of these.

How does London compare with other cities?

It is very difficult to assess London's performance against other comparable cities, as different indicators are used. This is a pity, as it means cities lose out on the opportunity to share different approaches to policy and activities, or evaluate where they can learn from each other and drive improvement.

However, common reporting against progress in meeting the SDGs could help enormously, by providing a shared framework. The LSDC is encouraging London to consider how best to do this, and will be exploring how the GLA can best help deliver against the SDGs.

Elsewhere, there appears to be an appetite to report at a city level, for example in Liverpool and Bristol.

Integrating the SDGs into quality of life reporting

The LSDC wants London to compare its performance against the relevant SDGs. We will be working to revise the *Quality of Life* indicator set so that future reports allow us to do that.

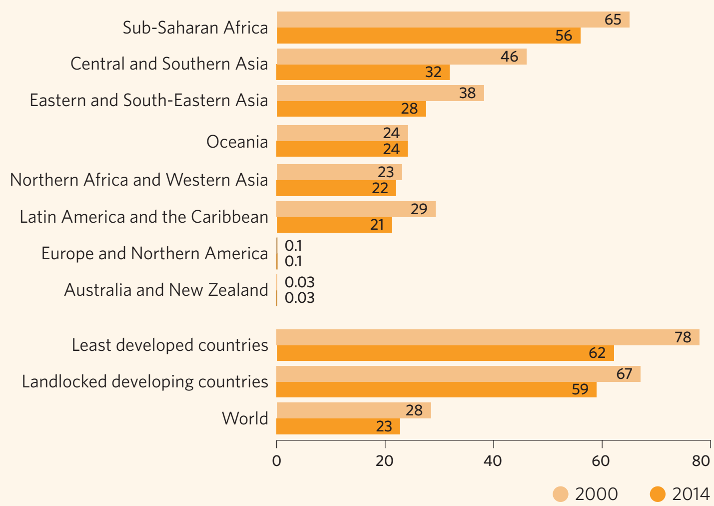
We have already started the initial work, with a networking event in partnership with UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development and CAG Consultants to establish which businesses and organisations are working in this area, to see how we can collaborate.

During the summer, a more detailed review will start with the aim of advising the Mayor in early 2019 about the best way to revise our city-level indicators. ●

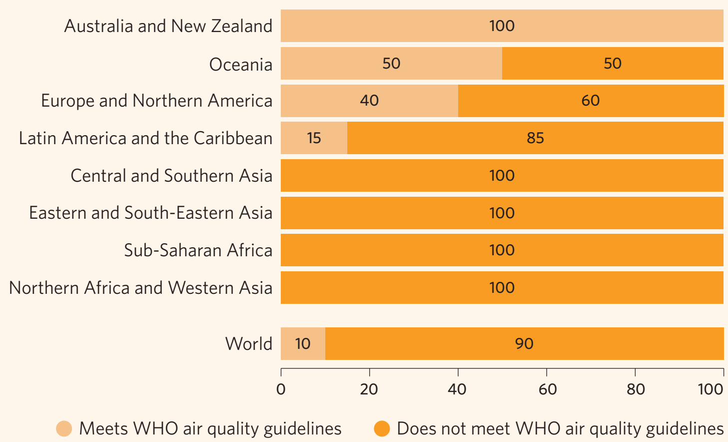
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Proportion of urban population living in slums, 2000 and 2014 (percentage)



Proportion of the urban population living in areas that meet the annual WHO air quality guideline value for particulate matter of a diameter < 2.5 microns (percentage)



Rapid urbanisation brings enormous challenges, including growing numbers of slum dwellers, increased air pollution, inadequate basic services and infrastructure, and unplanned urban sprawl – which also make cities more vulnerable to disasters

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

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How to reduce inequality?

Despite policy commitments to reduce poverty, the gap between the world's richest and poorest grows ever wider. How can we shift the way economies work to reward people for the work they do, not the wealth they own?

By **Max Lawson**, Head of Inequality Policy, Oxfam International

Billionaire fortunes are rising almost six times faster than the wages of ordinary workers, as outlined in Oxfam's recent report, *Reward Work, Not Wealth*. According to Credit Suisse, last year 82 per cent of all new wealth created went to the top one per cent of the world's population, and no new wealth went to the bottom half of humanity. Oxfam has calculated that one new billionaire was created every two days.

All over the world, our economy is set up in a way that disproportionately benefits the top one per cent, and is built on the backs of low-paid workers, often women, who are repeatedly denied basic rights. Women like Fatima in Bangladesh, who sews clothes for export. She is regularly abused if she fails to meet production targets and suffers urinary tract infections because she is not allowed toilet breaks. Workers like Dolores in chicken factories in the US, whose repetitive work and long shifts have left her suffering permanent disability and unable to hold her children's hands.

The evidence is clear that the gulf between the extremely rich and the rest continues to grow. This profoundly undermines progress to end global poverty and the chances of achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Take SDG 1, the goal to eliminate the number of people living in extreme poverty – on less than $1.90 a day – by 2030. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of people living in extreme poverty halved.

◀ **The basic accommodation of Worli fishing village seen against the modern metropolitan backdrop of Mumbai, highlights the wealth divide in India**

This is a huge achievement, of which the world should be proud. But we could have done better. If economic growth had benefited the poorest more than the richest during that period, extreme poverty could almost have been eliminated. A staggering 700 million additional people, twice the population of the United States, would no longer be in poverty. Looking to the future, the World Bank has shown that unless we close the gap between rich and poor, SDG 1 will be missed by a wide margin.

Closing the gap

The impacts of inequality go far beyond the goal of ending poverty. Goals to deliver universal healthcare, education for all, water and sanitation – all these require significant increases in spending by governments. Yet their ability to spend can be undermined by laws and policies that favour those at the top. Rich individuals in Africa alone avoid paying an estimated $14 billion a year in taxes. The Africa Progress Panel has demonstrated that despite Nigeria's positive economic growth for many years, poverty has increased, and the proceeds of growth have gone almost entirely to the top 10 per cent of the population. Spending on health, education and social protection is shamefully low, which is reflected in the very poor outcomes for Nigerians. One in 10 children in Nigeria do not reach their fifth birthday and more than 10 million children do not attend school.

Economic inequality also undermines the fight for gender equality. Our economies have been largely shaped by rich and powerful men. Women predominate in the worst paid, least secure forms of work. Cuts to public services hit women hardest, and tax cuts for the rich benefit men most. Women's huge contribution through unpaid care goes ignored and further facilitates the transfer of wealth upwards.

One of the breakthroughs in the SDGs was agreement on SDG 10 – the goal to reduce inequality both between and within countries. This is the first time in history that governments have set themselves a target to reduce the gap between rich and poor. The main indicator for progress is that the incomes of the bottom 40 per cent grow faster than the average. This is weak. Instead, the indicator should also measure the level of income going to the top 10 per cent and the top one per cent. Nevertheless, SDG 10 is a huge step forward.

It is hard to find a political or business leader these days who is not saying they are worried about inequality. Yet it is harder still to find one that is actually doing anything of substance to reduce the gap. SDG 10 is the most neglected of the SDGs, and there is minimal effort to follow it up so far. This must change.

Drivers of inequality

The inequality crisis has two underlying drivers. One is the broken neoliberal economic model pursued strongly for the last 40 years. Business has a really important role to play in poverty reduction, alongside other factors such as support for public services. But the current economic model disproportionally rewards wealth rather than hard work.

Over the last quarter of a century, the top one per cent have captured more than a quarter of all global income growth. The bottom 10 per cent of the world's population have seen their annual income rise $3 in 25 years. This is a deeply inefficient way to eliminate poverty. Assuming today's level of inequality continues, the global economy would have to be 175 times bigger just to get everyone above $5 a day, which would be environmentally catastrophic.

The second is a broken democratic model. Former US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said: "We can have democracy in this country, or we can have extreme wealth concentrated in the hands of the few, but we can't have both." In country after country, the influence of rich elites over policymaking is skewing economies in favour of those at the top, at the expense of economic progress for all.

It doesn't have to be this way. Governments can choose to act to build more equal societies. Many of the solutions are not complex: for example, acting to ensure workers are guaranteed a living wage, bargaining power and decent conditions, and ending discrimination against women. Brazil's big decrease in inequality in recent years involved an 80 per cent real increase of the minimum wage.

More progressive taxation is also critical, including a crackdown on widespread tax avoidance by rich individuals and corporations, and ensuring the richest pay their fair share. Countries like South Africa and Chile have increased taxes on the wealthy.

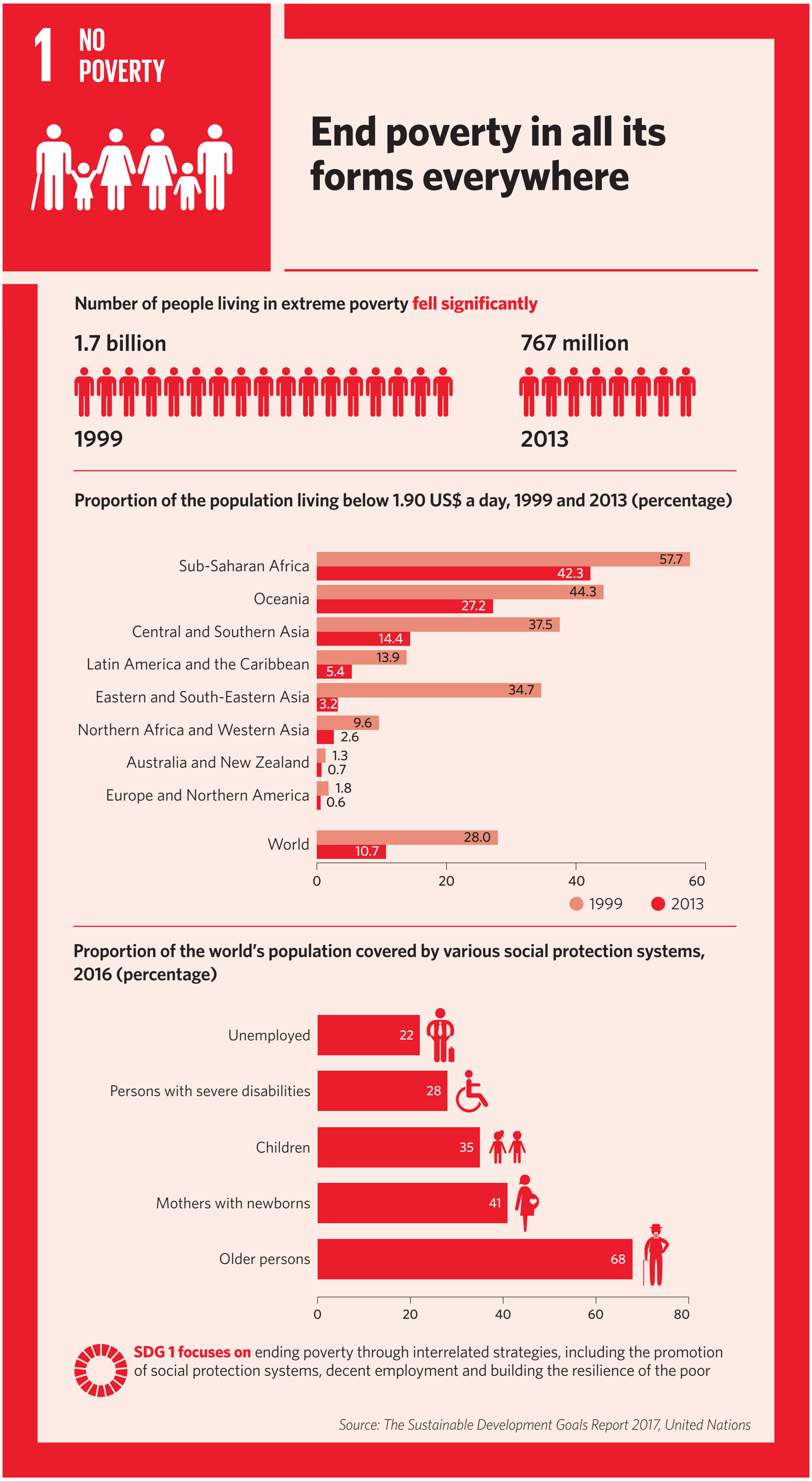
Another key factor is spending on education and health. Namibia has the world's second-highest percentage of overall budget spent on education, enabling it to provide free secondary school places to all students. It also spends a greater proportion of its budget on health than Finland and has reduced annual malaria cases by 97 per cent in a decade.

People power

Last year Oxfam ranked 152 governments on their labour, tax and social policies to address inequality, in a Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index. This will be updated annually and over time will show which governments are truly committed to reducing inequality, and in doing so making progress to achieve the SDGs.

Underpinning all these policy choices is people power. The only way we will reduce extreme inequality is for political leaders to listen to the needs of the ordinary majority, instead of the privileged few. That is why Oxfam International is a proud member of the Fight Inequality Alliance, which brings together people across the world who are determined to put an end to inequality.

The inequality crisis threatens all our efforts to achieve progress for the world's poorest people. But it is not inevitable, and it can be beaten.



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Ensuring food for all

Conflict all too often exposes the fragility of food production and infrastructure, with devastating consequences for populations. WFP is working to strengthen food systems against such shocks

By **David Beasley**, Executive Director, UN World Food Programme (WFP)

I noticed the list first. The woman in the refugee camp in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) stood in front of me, her steady hands holding two pieces of paper stapled together. She had a list written down, and she wanted to speak with me.

Men gathered around her, standing in support. She took the lead. And then, in French, she began to read from her list.

Nothing on it was about food, though food insecurity in the area was, and is still, high. Instead, her list was filled with requests for help with bringing peace – pleas to end the fighting so she and her fellow refugees could get back to their villages and small farms.

I wish this anecdote were an uncommon occurrence. But it's not. I've heard it in Yemen from those trapped by the conflict that has raged there for more than two years. I've heard it from elsewhere in the DRC and in the Central African Republic. And I've heard it from Rohingya Muslims who fled from their homes in Myanmar to safety in Bangladesh.

These pleas illustrate the heart-breaking data on why hunger is on the rise around the world. Despite booming stock markets and advances in technology and health, the number of hungry people went from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016. Much of the increase is driven by conflict – 60 per cent of food-insecure people and, shockingly, 75 per cent of stunted children live in countries with conflicts.

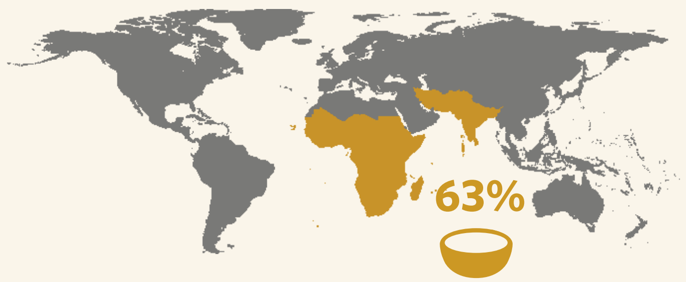
Conflict can result from, and worsen, political and economic instability. It also leads to broken, disrupted and flawed food

▲ A makeshift settlement for people internally displaced by drought in Dollow, Somalia. Like most regions suffering from hunger, the country is riven by conflict

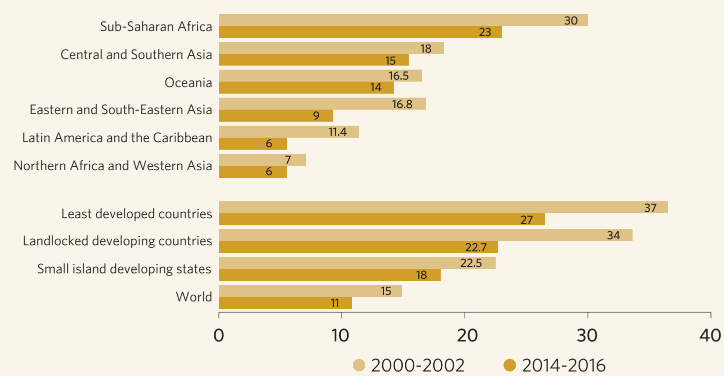
2 ZERO HUNGER

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

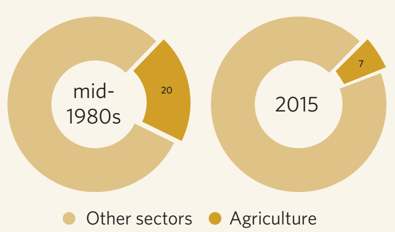
Almost two thirds suffering from hunger live in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia



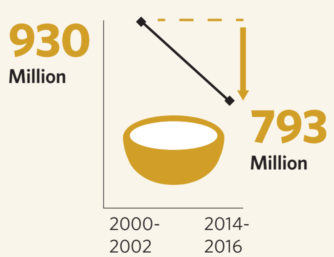
Proportion of undernourished people, 2000-2002 and 2014-2016 (percentage)



Share of aid to agriculture in total sector-allocable aid from OECD-DAC, mid-1980s and 2015 (percentage)



Globally, about 793 million people were undernourished in 2014-2016, down from 930 million in 2000-2002



Well-functioning markets, increased incomes for smallholder farmers, equal access to technology and land, and additional investments all play a role in creating a vibrant and productive agricultural sector that builds food security

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

systems that fuel hunger, limit people's livelihoods and make daily life incredibly difficult for everyone in the region. In many cases, they force people to migrate.

When food systems break down

WFP delivers food assistance to some 80 million people in 80 countries worldwide. Our work spans all sorts of food systems, and we see what happens when they break down. In war-torn countries, where agriculture and trade is disrupted and the economy collapses, the cost of a simple, nutritious plate of food can be more than a day's wages. In South Sudan, for example, it can be as high as 155 per cent. A New Yorker might spend just 0.6 per cent of his or her daily income on that lunch. Imagine if a New Yorker had to pay $321 for a modest lunch – say a plate of bean stew – cooked at home!

The cost of conflict

Humanitarian organisations pay the price for conflict too. About 80 per cent of WFP's operational spending occurs in conflict zones. Right now 19 of the 80 countries in which we work are experiencing protracted conflict. When we're working in a conflict zone like Syria, it can cost 50 cents a day to feed someone, 20 cents a day higher than in more peaceful areas.

Overall, in 2016 half of the entire $27 billion global humanitarian budget went to help people in just five countries: Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan and Ethiopia. Of these, only Ethiopia enjoys a stable peace.

Some 42 other countries divided up the other half of the spending – budgets that in some cases covered as little as five per cent of the humanitarian needs identified. What does this tell us? That peaceful countries are being penalised because nations torn apart by conflict are sucking up the majority of precious humanitarian resources.

Fostering resilience in Kyrgyzstan

As we continue to look for peace, we have also got to look at long-term solutions that improve stability, reduce conflict and increase the resilience of food systems. In Kyrgyzstan, following a rise in ethnic conflict in 2010, WFP designed a food-for-work activity bringing together multi-ethnic residents. This activity increased small-farm production, generated employment opportunities and addressed food shortages, thereby contributing to the alleviation of the root causes of conflict. The process of working together made a crucial social impact by diffusing ethnic tension and creating community goodwill.

WFP also helps vulnerable smallholders and their communities with Food Assistance for Assets, which not only delivers food but also support the building of roads, irrigation systems or other assets. I've been to dozens of WFP operations in the field, and I've yet to meet a beneficiary who wasn't eager to take part in a project.

Once a smallholder farmer's livelihood is stronger, he or she can benefit from market access programmes like Purchase for Progress (P4P). R4 Rural Resilience, a joint project with Oxfam, helps farmers pay for weather-based crop insurance with labour or cash.

Humanitarian organisations pay the price for conflict too. About 80 per cent of WFP's operational spending occurs in conflict zones. Right now 19 of the 80 countries in which we work are experiencing protracted conflict

For children, we need to link food aid with education. School-age children who receive rations should also be in a school meals programme. Research by the United States Department of Agriculture shows, for example, that school enrolment in Laos and Nepal went up because of school meals.

And I believe that a school meal might provide something more than just sustenance and an incentive to stay in school. Two school mates, sitting on a bench, eating lunch together every day might create bonds that are harder to break later – even if they come from different tribes, or hold different faiths, or have different colour skin. And that means that something as small as one meal just might be one step towards something on that Congolese woman's list: peace. ●

▼ Mealtime at Debaya M'Bekira primary school in Mauritania. School meals can improve school enrolment and health, and help form bonds between different groups within society

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At the centre: women, girls and the SDGs

No country or society can develop and prosper if its women and girls are denied basic human rights

By **Natalia Kanem**, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

When a girl is denied the right to education due to poverty or social norms, her prospects for employment and self-sufficiency are undermined. So is her ability to contribute fully to the social and economic development of her family and community. When she is married as a child, when she lacks access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, and therefore cannot decide whether or when to get married or become pregnant, her rights are violated. Her potential is squandered and her country's development suffers.

Millions of girls are forced to drop out of school due to early and forced marriage and teen pregnancy because they lack

▲ **Girls sing and dance at a school in El Sereif, North Darfur. Tribal conflict over goldmines displaced more than 100,000 people to El Sereif and its neighbouring village. The culture of impunity that pervades most conflicts exposes girls to extreme risk of sexual violence**

awareness of, or access to, family planning methods. Millions of adolescent girls and young women are also exposed to HIV, other sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancies. Why? Because they cannot access the information they need to protect themselves through comprehensive sexuality education, or because they have no access to condoms or contraception, or because they are sexually exploited. An estimated 3.9 million girls were subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) in 2015. Because of high fertility rates in populations practising FGM, the UNFPA estimates that the number of girls at risk may rise to 4.6 million girls a year by 2030.

These violations of the human rights and dignity of women and girls threaten their lives, health and wellbeing. Complications in pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 globally. According to the World Health Organization, adolescent mothers face higher risks of eclampsia, puerperal endometritis and systemic infections than women aged 20 to 24.

None of this is acceptable. And none of it is good for development.

In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, delegates from all regions and cultures recognised the centrality of sexual and reproductive health and rights to individual wellbeing and sustainable development.

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the ICPD and 50 years of UNFPA operations, nations have made significant progress towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. This includes gains made as a result of the Millennium Development Goals.

Between 1990 and 2015, maternal deaths fell by 44 per cent. Yet, roughly 303,000 women continue to die during pregnancy and childbirth each year, mostly due to preventable causes. An additional six to nine million women suffer debilitating childbirth injuries, such as obstetric fistula. And, while death rates of children under age five declined by 53 per cent during that 25-year period, an estimated 5.9 million children under the age of five died in 2015. Most died of avoidable causes, nearly half within 28 days of birth.

Stillbirth also remains a major neglected problem, with 2.6 million stillbirths estimated in 2015. And in developing regions some 214 million women who want to avoid pregnancy are not using safe and effective family planning methods.

These figures show that ending preventable maternal mortality, newborn and child deaths, and ensuring reproductive rights for all remain an unfinished agenda. These issues are among the world's most critical challenges. This is why they figure prominently among the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that the global community has pledged to achieve by 2030.

Reaching those furthest behind

© UN Photo/Kibae Park

◄ **A H'mong woman and her baby in Sin Chai hill tribe village, Vietnam. Indigenous women are less likely to benefit from healthcare and hence suffer higher rates of birth complications and maternal and newborn mortality**

The 2030 Agenda is challenging and complex, but vital for saving lives and promoting health and wellbeing. A culturally sensitive, human rights-based approach is essential, as is ensuring accountability in access to, and availability of, quality services for all. We must focus our attention on those groups of women and young people at risk of being left behind: indigenous people, rural women, people with disabilities, sex workers, people using drugs, prisoners and other marginalised groups.

Indigenous women and adolescent girls, for example, are significantly less likely to benefit from healthcare services. They also have worse maternal health outcomes. In Guyana, for example, the birth rate for Amerindian adolescent girls is twice that of the general population. Maasai women in Kenya are twice as likely to have had no antenatal care, while San women in Namibia are 10 times more likely to give birth without skilled attendance.

To reach marginalised groups of people and make them and their sexual and reproductive health needs more visible, we need improved disaggregated data on ethnicity and other characteristics. We also need to take positive action to address the socio-cultural and other barriers that prevent these women and girls from accessing quality care.

Ending preventable maternal mortality, newborn and child deaths, and ensuring reproductive rights for all remain an unfinished agenda. These issues are among the world's most critical challenges

The 2030 Agenda presents a comprehensive, integrated, universal, rights-based and transformative vision for a better world, shared prosperity and peace. It is rooted in gender equality and respect for the rights of all. Above all, it pledges to leave no one behind and to mobilise efforts to that end.

SDG 3 – to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all – includes targets on the elimination of maternal and newborn mortality. Achieving it will require strong global and national commitments and scaled-up efforts through a multi-sectoral approach.

First and foremost, women and girls must be at the centre of all development initiatives aimed at their welfare. This begins with empowering girls and young women.

An integrated health approach is also key. We must create links between initiatives that promote maternal and newborn health and survival, and the broader sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda.

Some of the main causes of newborn death – such as pre-term birth, birth asphyxia, birth complications, neonatal infection and low birth weight – are directly linked to the healthcare a woman receives during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period.

Similarly, transmission of HIV from mother to child can be prevented with appropriate care during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. For example, Armenia has eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and the Republic of Moldova has eliminated mother-to-child transmission of syphilis. Thailand, Belarus and Cuba, meanwhile, have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of both these infections.

The UNFPA is the lead UN agency promoting universal access to sexual and reproductive health. In line with the SDGs and the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030), UNFPA pledged in its new strategic plan to help countries achieve three key transformative results by 2030:

- zero preventable maternal deaths;
- zero unmet need for family planning;
- zero gender-based violence and harmful practices, such as child marriage and FGM.

These three results will be predicated on our work in collecting and analysing population data. This will ensure everyone is accounted for and reached in the pursuit of these ambitious aims.

Achieving these results will require that global investments made to date are sustained and significantly scaled up. Investment must ensure:

- access to skilled midwifery care and services, along with a supportive healthcare system;
- availability and accessibility of 24/7 quality emergency obstetric care services;
- availability of family planning commodities and maternal and newborn health supplies;
- provision of adequate health financing and governance; availability of HIV prevention and testing.

In addition to these critical investments, it is also vital that we promote gender equality and women's empowerment by:

- upholding the rights of young girls and adolescents;
- investing in their access to comprehensive sexuality education, in and out of school;
- accelerating the abandonment of FGM;
- stepping up our efforts to address violence against women – this includes looking at policy frameworks that advance women's empowerment, as well as programmes and legislation to end FGM and child marriage.

The way forward

National ownership, leadership and sustainable financing are essential to meet the Global Goals. These can only be brought about by evidence-informed advocacy and approaches that are appropriate for low-resource settings and that foster quality and process improvements.

Success will depend on strong partnerships at all levels – among development actors, governments, the private sector, faith-based and civil-society organisations and academia. Only strong joint commitments and efforts will enable us to tackle the huge remaining challenges in the broad and multi-sectoral way envisioned in the 2030 Agenda.

Our success will be measured by whether we are able to reach the last mile, particularly the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups, including those in humanitarian settings.

In 2017, UNFPA humanitarian assistance reached roughly 11 million people with sexual and reproductive health services in more than 50 countries. It provided an estimated 3.9 million women and girls with protection and services to address gender-based violence in places ravaged by disaster, conflict or crisis.

Yet there is still much to be done. We cannot claim success until the preventable is prevented for all women, girls and newborns – everywhere.

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Using all avenues to eradicate infectious disease

Communicable diseases remain one of the biggest killers worldwide. Eliminating them will require innovation beyond the laboratory

By **Ara Darzi**, Director, Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College London

We have achieved unprecedented progress in controlling communicable diseases since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. We have almost halved the global incidence of HIV, reduced tuberculosis (TB) cases by 17 per cent and cut global malaria incidence by 41 per cent. Today, 21 per cent fewer people require treatment for neglected tropical diseases than at the turn of the millennium.

Much of our progress is the result of innovation: not only technological, but also in governance, organisational structures and financing. The MDGs themselves were an example of an innovative approach to global convening and goal-setting that focused the political consensus on the needs of the poorest. They also prompted changes in official development assistance commitments. Countries aligned their institutional commitments and targets to MDG strategies and established relevant organisations and institutions that made them more likely to deliver on them.

The Global Fund – an innovative funding mechanism that pools resources from governments, private sector and civil society – has disbursed more than $50 billion in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria, saving more than 22 million lives as of 2016.

◀ **Vaccinators give the oral cholera vaccine to Rohingya in Thainkhali refugee camp Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. To maintain the progress made against communicable diseases, all parties and all stages of health provision will need to be adaptable and innovative**

While gains since the turn of the century have been remarkable, inequalities persist. Our celebrated progress against communicable diseases hangs in the balance.

More people are living with HIV than ever before. Most of these individuals are in sub-Saharan Africa, and require complex care from fragile health systems. A youth population bulge on the African continent will require sustained HIV prevention and education measures. Progress on TB is similarly touch-and-go. Under-diagnosis, lack of adherence to medication regimens and the growing burden of multidrug-resistant TB all threaten to throw progress off track. Hopes of eradicating malaria also seem distant at times as waning political commitment and decreasing health budgets – historically associated with massive malaria resurgences – are compounded by climate change. Ongoing variations in temperature and rainfall threaten to expand malaria zones and reverse hard-won gains.

Innovation is therefore required not only for us to take further steps towards eradicating communicable diseases. It will also be essential for us to prevent slippage.

At the Institute of Global Health Innovation, we have been researching, documenting and advising on innovative evidence-based practices and policies that achieve the best health outcomes, both at national and international levels. We have learned that we do not lack the ingenuity to solve stubborn problems. What is lacking, rather, is the recognition of innovative solutions' systemic value, and to scale and integrate them into everyday practice.

We recently faced institutional reluctance in the UK when we suggested that sterilised mosquito netting could provide a cost-effective and safe option for hernia repair that would save the NHS millions of pounds. Both the public and the medical establishment were confused by the proposition that this frugally designed innovation, pioneered in low-resource settings, could offer an effective solution. Uptake was hampered by preconceived notions about the research process, safety, procurement and quality assurance.

Innovation is required not only for us to take further steps towards eradicating communicable diseases. It will also be essential for us to prevent slippage

While the principle of technology transfer is well established in international development, it is still too often envisaged as a one-way street: from rich to developing countries, not vice versa. To overcome such inertia, medical systems themselves will need to become more open to experimentation and change.

This is especially important as many of the most promising innovations now come from non-traditional sources, and progress is slow in recognising their value. Online gamers have collaborated with researchers to provide new insights for the design of antiretroviral drugs. They are providing a case for encouraging and scaling up such crowd-sourced, multidisciplinary research practices. National surveillance data, which enable machine-learning simulation algorithms to forecast malaria epidemics and calculate the resources required to stop them, have yet to be fully utilised. Prominent scientists who worked on the Ebola outbreak have called for rapid and responsible data-sharing between governments, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions, which could allow faster responses. The use of similar models could be employed for other epidemics.

Innovative solutions

A pipeline of innovative technologies – such as a new vaccine for malaria, new biomarkers for diagnosing tuberculosis in low-resource settings, and a new subdermal implant that provides sustained antiretroviral drug delivery – will be essential to combating communicable diseases. But focused effort will also be required to ensure that innovative solutions are safe, accessible and acceptable to local communities and patients. Innovative research and engagement models with communities, providers and governments will ensure effective, safe and patient-centred delivery of such technologies.

UN Member States will be expected to use the MDGs' successors, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets and indicators, to frame their agendas and political policies from now to 2030. The SDGs ambitiously mix quantitative and qualitative measures of progress, encouraging innovative and systemic problem-solving. They recognise the interconnectedness of health, economic and social inequalities; the consequences of disruptions in peace, development and the environment; and they advocate for a cross-sectoral collaborative approach to prosperity that leaves no one behind. The complexity of delivering on these 17 goals represents the challenge for our generation. Innovative thinking will be a central part of the solution.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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

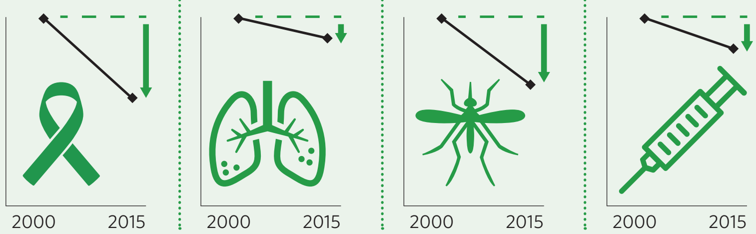
The period between 2000 and 2015 saw a:

46% reduction in HIV incidence

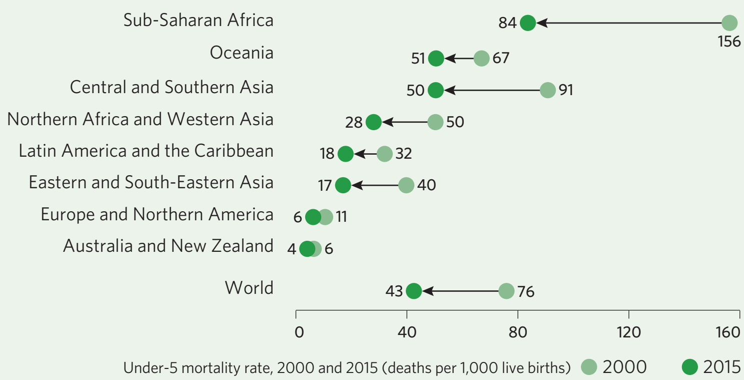
17% decline in the incidence of tuberculosis

41% decrease in the incidence of malaria

21% drop in people requiring mass or individual treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases



Child mortality has declined rapidly since 2000, but reductions in neonatal mortality need to accelerate



3 million deaths due to ambient air pollution from traffic, industrial sources, waste burning and residential fuel combustion in 2012

4.3 million deaths due to household air pollution from cooking with unclean fuels and inefficient technologies in 2012

In order to achieve SDG 3 it is estimated that an additional 18 million health workers will be needed by 2030. Over 40 per cent of all countries have less than one doctor per 1,000 people, and around half have fewer than three nurses or midwives per 1,000 people

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

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How to work together

The partnerships driving success in the health sector, such as Gavi and the Global Fund, hold lessons for achieving Agenda 2030

By **Guido Schmidt-Traub**,
Executive Director, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent highly complex investment and policy challenges. Achieving them will require the transformation of countries' energy systems, profound changes to land use and food systems, sustainable cities, and massive increases in access to high-quality education and health services.

In addition, policies must be improved to reduce inequalities and promote decent work. These transformations are highly interconnected, and they can only be met through public-private co-financing, unprecedented problem-solving, and the mobilisation of different groups of stakeholders. This is why partnerships are critical for the SDGs.

The need for new forms of organisation and mobilisation in support of the SDGs is obvious. What is less clear is what types of partnerships can best translate good intentions into tangible progress towards achieving the goals.

The SDGs map out time-bound quantitative goals that require commensurate strategies. For example, achieving SDG 4 on education requires the construction of many new schools in

◀ **Children at a school AIDS club in Lilongwe, Malawi. The conspicuous progress made against HIV/AIDS under the MDGs derived a large part of its success from global partnerships such as the Global Fund**

developing countries. But focusing on building new schools may divert attention from other pressing education challenges that must be met to allow every child to complete secondary schooling by 2030.

Four criteria for success

Well-intentioned, small-scale initiatives that are not part of an overall strategy to meet the education goal will not be successful in meeting the SDGs. A large number of partnerships of modest scale may fragment sustainable development efforts and undermine results. To avoid these pitfalls, partnerships should meet four simple criteria.

The need for new forms of organisation and mobilisation in support of the SDGs is obvious. What is less clear is what types of partnerships can best translate good intentions into tangible progress towards achieving them

First, they need to be aligned with achieving the SDGs at scale to ensure that a partnership's efforts complement other initiatives in pursuit of the goals.

Second, by bringing together groups of actors, successful partnerships will promote innovation in delivery models and/or new technologies, so that the SDGs can be met more easily and at lower cost.

Third, they need to be organisationally efficient at delivering the intended results to justify the creation of new organisations.

Fourth, successful partnerships must be able to secure the requisite financial resources, through concessional or commercial terms, that are consistent with achieving the corresponding SDG.

Under the Millennium Development Goals, the health sector experienced the fastest acceleration of progress, particularly in some of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This progress was achieved through a series of partnerships, particularly in the areas of increasing access to vaccines under Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance) and the Global Fund's fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

These partnerships illustrate the four criteria for success. They also hold important lessons for education, access to basic infrastructure services, smallholder agriculture, and the many other SDG priorities where faster progress has proved elusive – not only in the poorest countries, but also in middle-income countries where major implementation gaps remain.

Effective strategies

Take the example of the fight against HIV/AIDS. Following the publication of a landmark report by the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, the HIV/AIDS team at the World Health Organization (WHO) – led by Jim Yong Kim with strong support from the Gates Foundation – drew up plans for a comprehensive response to the pandemic. Based on a growing scientific consensus, the team developed a fully costed strategy to combat the disease. This included the objective of increasing coverage of antiretroviral therapy from close to zero to three million by 2005.

Such a strategy empowered governments to draw up comprehensive national disease control programmes calling for far greater investments in controlling and treating the disease. In turn, national strategies galvanised governments, civil society, international organisations and business to work on individual components of combating the disease. These included treatment, voluntary testing, counselling and prevention of mother-to-child transmission. But there was also a clear sense of how these components came

Also in this section

together in the form of an integrated programme – the first criterion for successful partnerships.

Scaling up the response required massive innovation, which was pursued by many different actors operating with a common vision. For example, President Clinton and his foundation secured a breakthrough deal with the pharma industry to drastically lower the cost of antiretroviral treatment, and the industry improved the performance of its drugs. Countless civil-society organisations (CSOs) innovated new ways of reaching marginalised populations that were infected with, or vulnerable to, the disease. The Global Fund's ability to disperse funds to national and local governments, CSOs, international organisations and businesses created a healthy sense of competition and encouraged innovation in delivery models.

National treatment programmes were rigorously evaluated. Implementation lessons – for example, changes in the CD4 count (an indicator of immune system functionality) threshold at which antiretroviral treatment was recommended – were published in peer-reviewed literature and taken up in improved treatment guidelines adopted by the World Health Assembly. The interdisciplinary Lancet Commissions established by the editor Richard Horton deserve recognition for promoting and evaluating innovation in delivery models for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention measures.

In line with the third criterion, the global partnership to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic had clearly delineated roles for organisations, and minimised transaction costs by avoiding complex coordination mechanisms. The Global Fund focused solely on providing funding and monitoring grant agreements. Technical partners like WHO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS provided technical assistance to countries as they prepared and implemented programmes funded by the Global Fund.

Moreover, all programmes were rigorously audited and evaluated, including through the Global Fund's independent Office of the Inspector General.

Finally, the partnership was built around the Global Fund as well as the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which together mobilised large increases in financing for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The prospect of macro-economically significant volumes of funding helped support bold multi-stakeholder coalitions in countries to take

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▼ **A smallholding in marginal drylands in Tunisia. Low and unreliable rainfall, and encroaching desert, create a precarious existence. Smallholder agriculture is an area where SDG progress has so far proved elusive** on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Funds were exclusively provided as grants, since poor countries would have been unable to pay back loans.

To ensure effective use of resources, countries graduated from Global Fund support once their per capita income or disease prevalence had reached certain thresholds.

The global partnership built, largely informally, around the Global Fund has made impressive gains, particularly in some of the poorest countries. These breakthroughs were achieved against widespread scepticism that the HIV/AIDS pandemic could be controlled or that an international partnership around an increase in official development assistance could achieve positive results.

They have shifted the international debate on HIV/AIDS from emergency response to ending the disease. The success

Implementing the SDGs will require new, creative partnerships that can innovate, mobilise funding, and support service delivery or investments

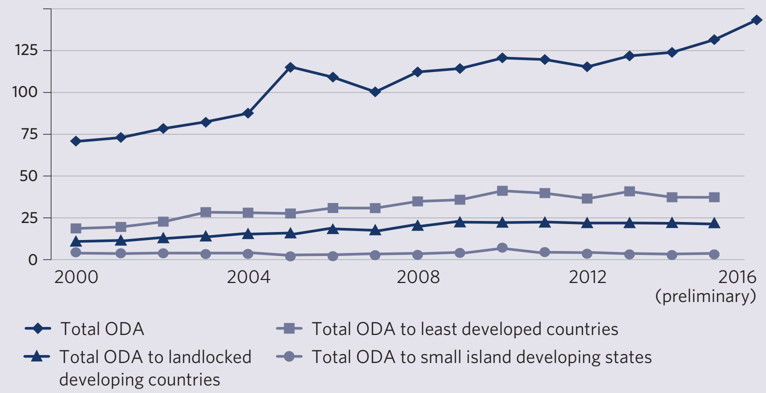
underscores the fact that new forms of organisation across a broad coalition can generate impressive results if they meet the four criteria for successful partnerships.

Implementing the SDGs will require new, creative partnerships that can innovate, mobilise funding, and support service delivery or investments. Practitioners will benefit from studying the lessons from the fight against HIV/AIDS. Many of these lessons will be applicable to the various challenges we face: ensuring universal completion of secondary education, achieving universal health coverage, moving towards sustainable food and land-use systems, decarbonising energy systems – and many more. ●

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

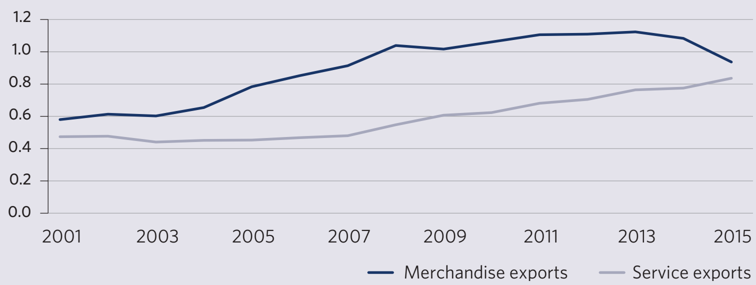
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

Net official development assistance from OECD-DAC countries (US$ billions)



Official development assistance reaches a new high, but aid to the poorest countries stalls

Share of global merchandise and service exports from LDCs (percentage)



Least developed countries' share of global exports is increasing in services but declining in merchandise trade due to the fall in primary commodity prices on which much of their exports are based

Debt service as a proportion of total exports of goods and services (percentage)

The debt service burden is on the rise again for low- and lower-middle-income countries

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

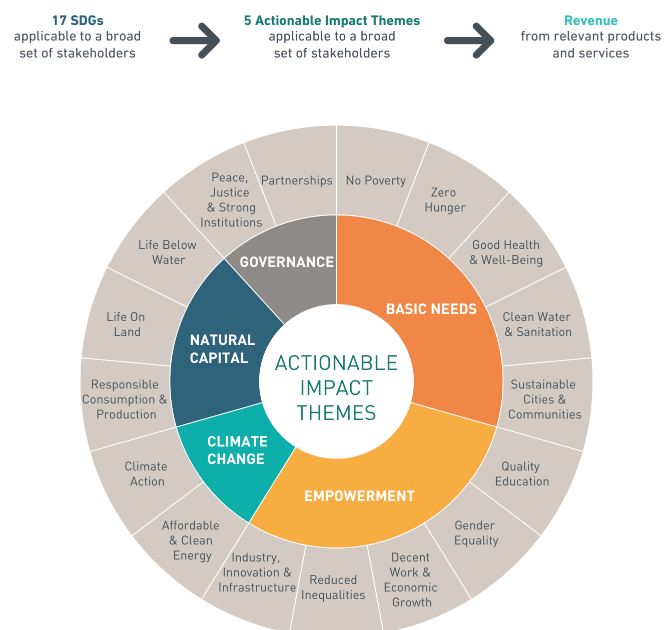
Investors focus on SDGs

The SDGs have provided an ideal framework for the growing number of investors looking to 'do the right thing'. But how can investors gauge the SDG impact of investments?

The launch of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 provided a framework that has been embraced by institutional investors whose objectives include positive social or environmental outcomes as well as financial returns.

In 2016, MSCI ESG Research adopted the SDG framework designed to help institutional investors align their investments to the SDGs, offering data on companies' revenue from relevant products and services. In the intervening year, we have observed a substantial uptick in interest in this area. Interest in investing for impact in public equities is illustrated by high-profile commitments from mostly European institutions such as APG and PGGM.[1] We have also observed growing interest in the US, including from retail brokerage providers and wealth management, and nascent interest in Japan.

In our 2017 client consultation, *The State of Investing for SDG Impact Through Public Equities*, global investors we consulted said they were looking at impact and the SDGs because of both intrinsic beliefs ("it's the right thing to do") and external pressure ("stakeholders are asking about it").[2] For many investors, the first step is portfolio measurement and reporting: investors are increasingly seeking ways to measure portfolio alignment with the SDGs. Key challenges include lack of

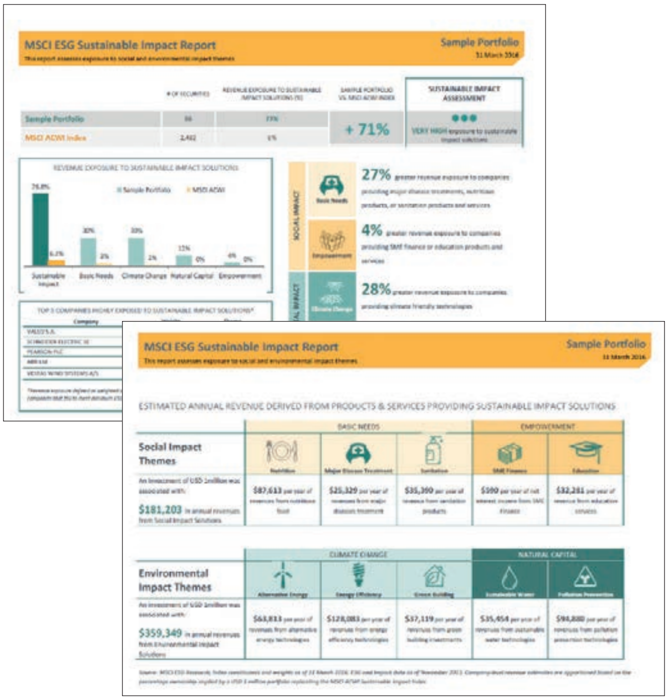


standard definitions, insufficient data, and measurability of outcomes. Some investors are also bringing impact objectives into their investment strategies, usually with a focus on companies' products and services as a vector for impact. Many impact funds are thematic, focusing on a single theme rather than SDGs overall.

In our 2017 client consultation, 91% of consultees were trying to measure portfolio exposure to SDG themes, to compare overall exposure to a benchmark, identify areas of highest or lowest exposure and communicate with clients, prospects and stakeholders.[3] 81% of consultees were bringing impact considerations into the portfolio construction process to identify an initial eligible universe of stocks for investment for impact (subject to additional ESG and/or financial criteria), pick stocks for an SDG- or impact-focused allocation or mandate, and create products for institutional and retail/wealth markets (38% of consultees).[4]

How MSCI can help

In 2016, MSCI ESG Research launched MSCI ESG Sustainable Impact Metrics to help institutional investors align their investments to the SDGs.



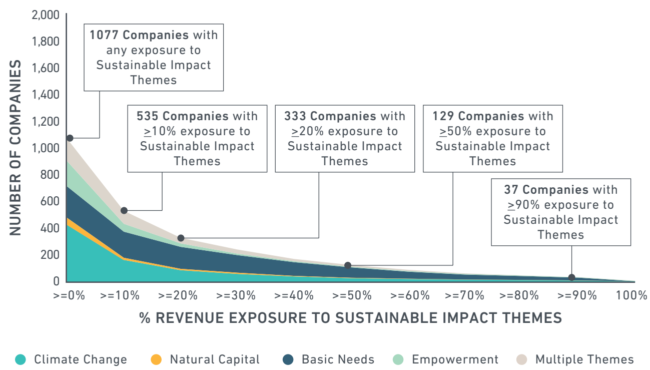
Product features:

- A tool to measure revenue exposure of a portfolio (per $M invested) to sustainable impact themes and compare it to a benchmark.
- Screens to identify sustainable impact companies that also meet minimum ESG standards.
- Granular data to measure revenue exposure to sustainable impact solutions on thousands of companies, and support actionable thematic allocations in line with the SDGs.

We used the Sustainable Impact Metrics tool to conduct research on approximately 2,500 companies (using MSCI ACWI Index as the reference universe):

- As of August 1, 2017, about 44% of the universe (1,077 companies) had some estimated revenue from SDG solutions as defined by MSCI Sustainable Impact Metrics methodology, though only about half of those (535 companies) derived at least 10% of revenue from solutions.
- At the 50% threshold, only about 5% of the universe (129 companies) qualified.
- About 22% of the universe had at least 10% of revenue from social or environmental solutions such as major disease treatments, affordable housing, alternative energy, or sustainable water solutions.
- Similarly, about 5% of companies derived 50% or more of revenue from SDG-aligned products or services. We consider these companies 'pure-play' solution providers from a public market impact perspective. ■

BREAKDOWN OF ESTIMATED SUSTAINABLE IMPACT REVENUES AS OF AUGUST 1, 2017



Reference universe: MSCI ACWI index

1, 2, 3, 4 The State of Investing for SDG Impact Through Public Equities, January 2018 MSCI ESG Research

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For more than 40 years, MSCI's research-based indexes and analytics have helped the world's leading investors build and manage better portfolios. Clients rely on our offerings for deeper insights into the drivers of performance and risk in their portfolios, broad asset class coverage and innovative research. Our line of products and services includes indexes, analytical models, data, real estate benchmarks and ESG research. MSCI serves 99 of the top 100 largest money managers, according to the most recent P&I ranking.

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The need for better data

The people who need the most help are often those we know least about. New approaches and new technology for data collection can make the 'left behind' visible and the focus for assistance

By **Claire Melamed**, Chief Executive Officer, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

A 'lack of good data' is a common barrier to solving policy problems around the world. It is now widely recognised that far too often, policy and programming has traditionally been based on poor or incomplete information. The desire to fix this issue with new tools and technologies is hugely laudable. This is what the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data was created to do.

A huge amount of effort has focused on data that relates to the very poorest people. There are two obvious reasons for this. First, the commitment in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to 'leave no one behind' has placed a premium on global collaboration to address the pressing needs of the most vulnerable. Second, within the world of data and statistics, these groups are the most under-represented – and where the gap between data and reality remains stubbornly wide.

Progress for some groups remains hampered by their absence from official statistical records used to define problems and design solutions. Nowhere is this truer than in the field of HIV and AIDS, the subject of a recent article by Dr Sara Davis, anthropologist and former adviser to the Global Fund.

Davis points out that knowing who is at risk is vital for mobilising resources to ensure appropriate policy responses in different countries. As UNAIDS notes: "It is easier for potential funders to neglect the at-risk population if data are unavailable." But in many countries, the numbers at risk remain unknown – information is simply not collected. The result? One activist in Kenya, quoted by Davis, describes the consequence for consultations with donors regarding funding for groups affected by HIV: "I go to these meetings and I ask, 'where are the interventions for trans people?' They say, 'we don't have the data, there's nothing we can do'."

More data is a key part of improving policy to allocate the right resources for the most excluded groups. Even if services are universal, it's critical to know if all people

◀ **Defendants held in a cell awaiting trial for having relations "against the order of nature" in Kapiri Mposhi, Zambia. The absence of data due to stigma, exclusion or persecution is preventing effective support for the most vulnerable parts of society**

are accessing them equally, and to improve the delivery if not. Data on the experience of particular groups is essential for this.

But it's not simple. There are sometimes good reasons why the data are absent. Visibility carries great risks for some people. Men who have sex with men, illegal drug users or sex workers may face prosecution and persecution if they become visible within their community. They may not wish for one aspect of their life to define their identity. Governments often want to downplay the existence of some people and behaviour of which their society disapproves. Governments may also have an incentive to exclude some categories from the data, thus ignoring particular groups when creating or monitoring policies or programmes.

Data paradox

Activists and academics are left with what researcher Matthew Greenall calls a 'data paradox'. UNAIDS estimates (and it can only estimate, because of a lack of data) that one in five transgender people around the world has HIV. But woefully few countries have any robust data on the size of their transgender population. Transgender people are stuck in an impossible position: while social stigma and fear of violence keeps them hidden, their invisibility risks their lives. Why? Because their HIV status is not known and their treatment is not funded by major donors driving HIV policy initiatives.

The data paradox is not unique to HIV. Ethnic groups facing discrimination might find it wisest to hide themselves behind another identity in the data, but in doing so they lose the opportunity to draw attention and resources to their plight. Workers in illegal or informal jobs want to stay hidden for good reason, but then lose any protection the state may offer.

Efforts to make the 'left behind' visible take place in the context of the same systems and structures that caused the deep inequalities in society in the first place. Nothing is ever a panacea for wider social change, and data is no different. To examine the technical but not the social context is to miss the wood for the trees.

None of this is to question the premise that more information is better than less. Data cannot magically unlock change, but it is one of many things that can help deliver the SDGs. It can inform policy at national level, and help to improve the design and delivery of specific projects and programmes on the ground.

The task for those focused on how data can help achieve the SDGs and fulfil the promise to leave no one behind is to solve the data paradox. We need to:

- make people visible in data without putting them at risk, and challenge rather than reinforce the inequalities they face;
- put data in the hands of those who seek to challenge stigma and discrimination, rather than those who use it as a weapon against excluded groups;
- build trust in data among those left behind and ensure they have the skills, capacity and resources to use it to deliver real change.

Here, the explosion of interest in the 'data revolution' offers hope and practical solutions. Delivering both of these is the mission of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

Hope, because as the collection and use of data becomes part of the story of the SDGs, so more activist groups become focused on the need to collect data. It tells their story as they define it, and as they want it told to the wider world.

There were 10 million responses to the UN's MY World survey, asking people for their priorities for change as an input into creating the SDGs. The responses showed that humanity can and wants to be involved in collecting data that communicates their needs and aspirations to those in power.

Practical solutions, because technology can help. The focus on technology is making questions of privacy and protection in the collection and use of data the business of everyone, not just the most at-risk groups. This is an opportunity to make new data systems and regulations fix some of the old problems in data collection – and start to break out of the data paradox.

> ***Solutions to the problems of data visibility happen in the same context as solutions to all other problems, and have to be tackled in the same way: with humility, openness and accountability to those they are intended to benefit***

Technology can help in seemingly trivial ways. Using mobile phones to capture survey results makes it less obvious to passers-by that a survey is happening in the first place, calling less attention to surveyors and respondents, and reducing possible dangers to both.

At the opposite end of the scale, data from satellites or mobile phones make it possible to know and understand human behaviour at scale. This can reduce the risk of identifying particular groups, offering anonymised systems of digital ID and record-keeping that can protect identities.

Solutions to the problems of data visibility happen in the same context as solutions to all other problems, and have to be tackled in the same way: with humility, openness and accountability to those they are intended to benefit. Acknowledging these caveats does not downplay the importance of efforts to improve data to achieve the SDGs. It only increases the likelihood of successfully achieving it.

The DNA of the Global Partnership bonds together public sector, private sector and civil-society groups, which each hold part of the solution to better data and to better rules governing data. Together, they can create the changes needed to deliver the data that can help to meet the promise made in 2015: to leave no one behind. ●

Development at what cost?

What if the pledge to 'leave no one behind' were interpreted as a radical re-vindication – not just of equality, but also of individual human rights?

By **Jonathan Glennie**, Director, Sustainable Development Research Centre, Ipsos

In the run up to 2015, while many campaigned on which critical issues would become 'goals' and 'targets', and as a particularly tense debate continued about the overall number of goals, a parallel piece of advocacy was underway. A group of organisations and governments were pushing for the preamble to the goals to include a particular idea: this time, let no one be left behind.

Analyses of progress during the era of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had unearthed an important reality, which coincided with a more general tendency in economics and politics. While much progress had been made on a range of indicators, some facets of inequality were also increasing. To reduce inequality, poor people need to get richer faster than rich people get even richer. The same principle applies to health, nutrition, education, housing and other measures of development.

But in many countries, while progress could be noted on average, it was not 'pro-poor' progress, because the poor were not catching up with their wealthier compatriots. And even where progress was pro-poor, it was usually not pro-poorest. That is to say, there are many levels of poverty and deprivation, and different policies are required to reach the very poorest compared with the not quite so poor.

Going a step further, it became increasingly clear that along with traditional inequality measures between households and individuals (known as 'vertical' inequality) there is also persistent inequality between groups (known as 'horizontal' inequality). The most marginalised groups fall further behind other groups that have traditionally had more opportunities. Put another way, it is still very easy to predict who will be the poorest people in any given country. Just look at someone's ethnicity, gender, disability and where they live, and you will be able to make a depressingly accurate guess about their economic and social reality.

That's why a concerted effort was made in the run-up to the launch of the new Global Goals to ensure that this time progress must be equitable as well as rapid.

In a policy paper published in 2014, Save the Children argued that: "The blind spot of the Millennium Development Goals to inequalities must be corrected… Inequalities are not an inevitable outcome of development progress… The process to define a post-2015 sustainable development framework offers an opportunity to change the course of human history. The new framework must include concrete mechanisms to ensure no one is left behind under any goal."

> ***Development is essentially amoral. This may come as a surprise to some people who think the concept implies a moral cause***

Save the Children, joined by many other organisations, called for "an explicit commitment that, in 2030, no target will be considered met unless met for all groups". They suggested "stepping-stone equity targets" to ensure disadvantaged groups really are catching up.

It was a successful campaign. Article 4 of Agenda 2030 states: "Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, we wish to see the goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. And we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first."

Not only that, but this pledge that "no one will be left behind" has been perhaps the most successful and memorable aspect of Agenda 2030. Clauses in UN documents can be easily forgotten (deliberately or otherwise). But while few people will be able to reel off the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – or even the first five – most people in the world of international development know that 'leave no one behind' is the key principle on which the ambitious agenda hangs – now with its own acronym (LNB).

Having said all that, no progressive statement is ever made without the forces of inertia and privilege combining to interpret it as conservatively as possible. In this article I will first insist on the ground-breaking nature of this pledge as regards addressing inequality rather than just poverty. And, second, I will suggest a yet more radical reading of it: that it speaks not just to collective rights (i.e. for marginalised groups to be accorded special support) but to individual rights as well (i.e. it implies an approach to development that sacrifices no one on the altar of growth and progress).

Inequality, not just poverty

Some of us were pleasantly amazed when Agenda 2030 stated so clearly its determination to address inequalities (plural) "within and among countries", even

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giving the issue its own goal (SDG 10). But the inequality battle is still very much on, with many countries keen to shelve the issue, to remove from the LNB principle its intentions regarding equity, and to imply that it is just another inspiring promise that, finally, everyone should be lifted out of extreme poverty.

While tackling extreme poverty remains the first and most urgent goal of national policy-making and international cooperation, the SDGs promise much more than that. They seek to transform our world, such that all people can expect high standards of living, not just the few who happen to be born in rich countries or to wealthy families. If the LNB pledge had nothing to say about rising inequality, it was hardly worth saying at all.

Tackling poverty is not the same as tackling inequality. For the former, policymakers can be relatively relaxed about rising inequality as long as the poorest are scraping over an agreed poverty line. But for the latter, policies may need to address the top of the widening gap between rich and poor, not just the bottom.

Imagine two cars racing, one substantially ahead of the other. Now imagine the slower car speeding up – that's poverty reduction. But what if the car in front speeds up even faster – that's widening inequality. And the space between the cars continues to grow – that's being left behind.

The world could have signed up to 'no one left in poverty' – the MDG vision. But it said 'no one left behind'. Campaigners should be careful not to allow that bold sentiment to be diluted. The gap matters. We need policies and action to counter inequality, not just poverty.

Human rights, dignity and LNB

That would be radical enough. But what if this omnipresent phrase were to mean something more radical still? Looking again at the first clause of the Article 4 quote above, it is not obvious what "the dignity of the human person" alludes to. Perhaps it is just one of those general mentions of human dignity with which UN drafters tend to sprinkle their output. But perhaps it is getting at a different meaning for LNB, beyond the general admonition to reduce both vertical and horizontal inequalities.

Development is essentially amoral. This may come as a surprise to some people who think the concept implies a moral cause. But I have spoken to people in poor communities who say development is a threat to their families and way of life.

Why? Because although development can mean jobs, poverty reduction, greater respect for human rights, better access to basic services, and greater land sovereignty, it doesn't necessarily. Believe it or not, it

▲ Delhi, India. Former residents in the ruins of their homes, demolished by local authorities in a bid to relocate them. Development under the SDGs must mean that no one is forced to suffer in its name

will be possible to meet many of the SDGs while simultaneously committing grave human rights abuses.

Take a situation in which people are displaced from their land by violence (or the threat of violence). That land is then used to develop mega plantations to produce bananas or palm oil, or to mine for copper or coal, or to rear cattle. Private investment flows in, which some analysts think is vital for development. Exports lead to economic growth, which many commentators seem to think is synonymous with development. Meanwhile, human rights are ignored, and resistance crushed. Individuals who stand up and denounce the situation are disappeared. This is not hypothetical. *The Guardian* described 2017 as "the deadliest year on record" for land defenders.

Or take a situation where there is general progress on development indicators in a country. Meanwhile, human rights activists (feminists, trade unionists, politicians, journalists) are systematically removed from the story using the variety of means many governments have proven adept at employing. The excuses given are that these activists are enemies of progress, and that their insistence on the rule of law and individual freedoms puts such progress in jeopardy.

There are many countries in the world where the scenarios I have sketched are no caricature but a daily lived reality. While SDG 16 certainly begins to respond to some of these issues, what if the call to leave no one behind began to be applied to these people as well? Not groups or communities or clusters on a graph, but real, living people? Such people are being sacrificed on the altar of an unethical kind of development, which pits progress for many against erasure of a few.

As history will show, millions have been displaced, thousands killed, tribes wiped out, and individuals imprisoned – all in the name of development. Development can be carried out with justice, respect and dignity. Or it can be carried out with violence, displacement and the suppression of human rights.

Some talk of a trade-off between human rights and development. But, in reality, the development strategy pursued by a particular government is a matter of moral and political choice.

While the world has devised development targets to chart progress, it has not yet built a database to measure the costs. The idea of the costs of development sounds like an oxymoron but is the fundamental concept we need to place at the heart of development theory and practice in the 21st century. We need ethical, not just sustainable, development. And the LNB principle could be a platform upon which such data and evidence is built. ●

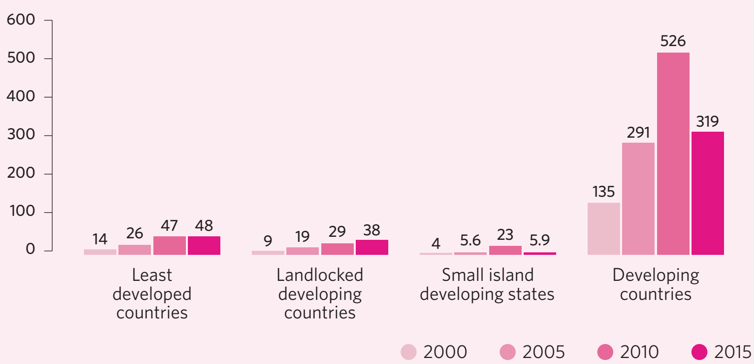
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries

Average annual growth rate of real per capita consumption or income of the bottom 40 per cent of the population and total population, 2011-2015 (latest available) (percentage)

Between 2011 and 2015, the income and/or consumption of the bottom 40 per cent of the population grew faster than the national average in 49 of the 83 countries with data (accounting for three quarters of the world's population)

Total resource flows (net disbursements) for development, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015 (billions of current US$)



In 2015, global total resource flows for development to developing countries declined to just over US$319 billion, largely due to a steep decline in private resource flows

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

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Women and the economy

Economic disempowerment is just one of the many inequalities women face around the world. Addressing it will boost many of the Global Goals

By **Paola Subacchi**, Senior Research Fellow, Global Economy and Finance, Chatham House

The relatively brief period since the adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015 has been extremely significant for the advancement of women's rights. Gender equality and women's empowerment – SDG 5 – is now a major issue on the global economic agenda. It features on the whole spectrum of global economic governance, from the UN to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The issue has also influenced multilateral forums such as the G20 and G7, which, since 2015, have recognised the need to promote gender equality, and have committed to reduce the gender gap in workforce participation.

Focusing on empowering women and eliminating gender disparities is critical for achieving the SDGs and making the world a better and more prosperous place for all. Indeed, it contributes to the independence of many women and girls, their educational attainment, health, community engagement and security, and reduces their risk of being victims of violence.

Yet, despite significant improvements in the economic empowerment of many women, there are still more women than men in poverty in both developing and developed countries. According to the International Labour Organization, women are paid less than men and work longer hours (as they take care of family members). Often, they are excluded from the labour market; do not have access to finance; and are denied property rights. Furthermore, many women are still prevented from taking part in economic decision-making within their own household, and their participation in public life remains patchy.

Gender equality is a global issue that affects rich and poor countries. Overall, about 1.27 billion women are in paid employment, compared with two billion men. Or, one in two women aged 15 and over are in paid work, compared with about three in four men. Women are more likely than men not to be remunerated for their work: they undertake about three times more unpaid work than men. And even when they are paid, they earn less than men. This is either because they are in part-time jobs – often because of family commitments – or because they are employed in low-paid jobs, in industries such as personal care, hospitality and retail. Or it may be because of sheer pay discrimination – being paid less than men for doing the same job with the same hours. Additionally, women often experience poor working conditions and constraints in career progression.

Women's participation in the labour market is consistently lower than that of men

In both developed and developing countries, women's participation in the labour market is consistently lower than that of men. In 2016, in the OECD countries, on average 64 per cent of women aged 15 to 64 were working or actively looking for work. This compares with 80 per cent of men.

The exclusion of women from the labour market – and discrimination towards women in that market – are the main causes of poverty, especially for older women. Again, we see this happening in both advanced and developing economies, even where the welfare state in the former tends to contain cases of extreme poverty. Within the EU, for example, the share of women

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▲ Woman repair storm-damaged roads while their children look on in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand, India. In addition to lower participation in the labour market, women are more likely to be in part-time and low-paid jobs, and paid less than their male counterparts

who were poor in 2015 was 1.4 percentage points higher than the share of men.

Action is needed

The turning point towards a gender-sensitive multilateral economic agenda has been the recognition that investing in women's and girls' economic empowerment is not only a fundamental human right: it is also smart economics.

Women in poverty often lack access to healthcare, education and skills training, basic infrastructure and transport, and childcare. They tend to have malnourished children, poor health, and be exposed to sexual harassment and violence. Bringing more women into the labour market, with decent employment conditions and no pay discrimination, will lead to less poverty (SDG 1), less hunger (SDG 2) and better health and wellbeing (SDG 3).

Active policies to promote gender inclusiveness are therefore critical to building more robust, sustainable, resilient and inclusive economies around the world. If women – who account for half the world's working-age population – do not achieve their full economic potential, the global economy will suffer. According to a report published by McKinsey in 2015, increasing female participation in the labour market to full parity with men could add about $28 trillion, or 26 per cent, to global GDP by 2025. In developed countries, banking group Citi estimates that measures to narrow the gender gap would add approximately six per cent to GDP over 10 to 20 years (all other things being equal). It would also help to address the demographic challenge faced by many advanced economies and developing countries, namely the rapidly increasing share of elderly people. Bringing more women to the formal labour market – increasing their average hours worked and average labour productivity – will make a significant contribution to economic activity and to supporting ageing populations.

Seven drivers of change

The UN High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment was established in January 2016 to support gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of achieving the SDGs. It has identified seven drivers of change to inform effective policy action that, in turn, can result in fast and effective transformation.

The seven drivers are: tackling current adverse norms; reforming discriminatory laws; recognising and reducing unpaid work; building financial assets for women; changing business culture and practice; improving public sector practices in employment and public procurement; and strengthening visibility and collective voice. These drivers respond to and address the current systemic constraints that limit the economic empowerment of women.

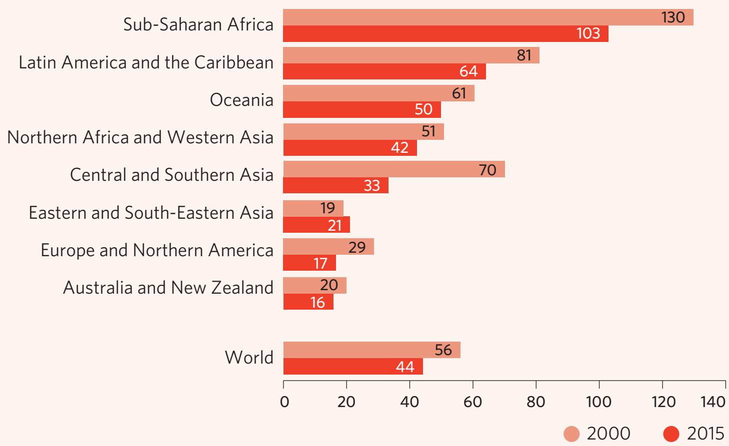
There are concrete policy actions that individual UN Member States, as well as forums such as the G20 and G7, can embrace to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. For instance, to improve female participation in the labour market, countries should implement tax incentives and other measures to promote investments in social infrastructure. Other interventions should include policies to support work–life balance, and initiatives to foster women's leadership in business and in politics.

Women's economic empowerment is both a human right and human development concern. But today, gender inequalities remain too many, too persistent and too entrenched, especially in areas such as political representation. The pace of progress has been far too slow. We need concrete action now. ●

5 GENDER EQUALITY

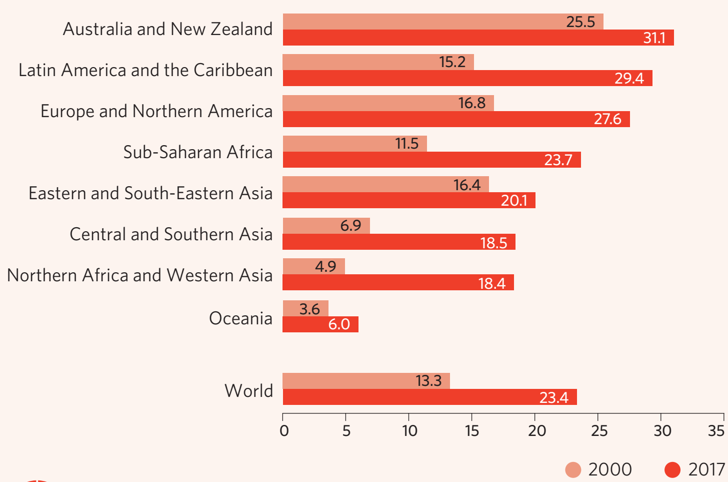
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Adolescent birth rate (number of live births per 1,000 adolescent women aged 15 to 19 years)



Despite progress, childbearing among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa remains high

Proportion of seats held by women in single or lower houses of national parliament (percentage)



The corridors of political and economic power continue to be dominated by men

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

Adopting the right philosophy

The University of Brescia has a comprehensive programme supporting Agenda 2030 and the SDGs

The generation and dissemination of knowledge aimed at the wellbeing of mankind is one, among many, of the goals of any university. Research and teaching in all disciplinary fields integrate an implicit yearning for a long-lasting positive impact on society in its broader sense.

That is why the philosophy underlying the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations, drafted in 2015 as an evolution of the Millennium Development Goals (SDGs), is that of facilitating "Prosperity and Peace for the People and the Planet through a global Partnership" (the five "Ps"). This philosophy has naturally been adopted with enthusiasm by universities all over the world.

Brescia is a middle-sized industrialised town located in the north of Italy that seeks an eco-friendly way to implement industrial development while facing a high immigration rate due to its relatively good living standards.

"The University of Brescia," says Professor Maurizio Tira, Rector, "is a young and dynamic university that immediately understood the inclusive and cohesive value of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for both the academic community and the civil society".

A comprehensive programme to ensure energy, waste management and structural sustainability is underway in the university campus. Moreover, the university is acting as a key partner of local cutting-edge research and teaching institutions, as well as NGOs, in several development projects in economical resource-limited countries to identify sustainable solutions to nutritional, environmental, energetic, educational and health needs.

"The positive message concerning the need to act immediately to save our planet has been well received"

University of Brescia Rector, Professor Maurizio Tira, (right) with Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs

The presence of the UNESCO 'Training and empowering human resources for health development in resource-limited countries' Chair and of the WHO Collaborating Centre for TB/HIV co-infection at the University of Brescia has provided additional technical expertise for such activities.

"The participation of the citizens of Brescia in the ongoing cycle of interactive workshops dedicated to each of the 17 SDGs," says Professor Tira, "has been more enthusiastic than expected and we are planning to move into a new meeting hall in the city centre to accommodate all potential users. That means that the positive message concerning the need to act immediately to save our planet has been well received and agreed upon."

It will be of the utmost importance that the goals become implicit in didactic programmes at the University of Brescia, as a tangible sign of the adoption of the philosophy of Agenda 2030 by the university as a whole.

As a sign of commitment, the University Senate has decided to award the Honorary Masters degree (Laurea honoris causae) to Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs of Columbia University (New York), as one of the inspiring advisors to the UN Secretary General for sustainable development. The solemn award ceremony took place on 12 February 2018, in the Teatro Grande in Brescia historical centre.

The University of Brescia is also part of the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS) and is planning to create a specific University Research and Documentation Centre for Agenda 2030. The centre will facilitate a wide range of training and research activities, with the aim of achieving the 17 SDGs. ■

UNA-UK thanks University of Brescia for sponsoring this publication

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BRESCIA

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Trade: a more nuanced approach

International trade has brought great benefits, but also inequities. By incorporating the philosophy of the SDGs into trade agreements, trade has the potential to benefit all

By **Mukhisa Kituyi**, Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

The value of world trade has nearly quintupled over the past 20 years from $5 trillion to about $24 trillion. Over the same period, trade has proved to be an excellent medium to leverage and promote economic growth, helping lift a billion people around the globe out of extreme and abject poverty. But in the last 10 years there has been a significant change in how international integration is perceived by the public and pursued in policymaking. As new middle classes have emerged in developing countries, middle-class prosperity in developed countries has found itself wavering.

After the financial crisis of 2008, and especially in the last few years, the debate around the benefits of international trade has become much more fractious. One particularly contentious point is whether trade integration – establishing freer trade between countries – has resulted in inequitable economic growth, with some people and nations benefiting at the expense of others.

Even the simplest classroom trade models acknowledge that trade benefits accrue unevenly. Trade integration can polarise the gap between the low and high

◀ **Shanghai, China. Under the MDGs, the country's economic growth, based on trade, made the greatest contribution to tackling extreme poverty globally. The period also witnessed a persistent increase in income inequality**

skilled, suppress wage growth for workers facing overseas competition and create hardship and displacement for those who lose their jobs.

As it happens, trade agreements are generally devised to reduce trade frictions across borders, while paying little attention to the distribution of the costs and benefits of trade within countries. Other forces – such as financial markets, information and communications technologies, automation and movement of people – also contribute to how the benefits of globalisation are distributed.

As globalisation has expanded in recent decades, national and international policies have not kept up with the need to address these spillover effects. In fact, in many cases, states have retreated too hastily from their responsibility to regulate and redistribute.

Workers and families who are left behind by globalisation have not been abandoned by trade. Rather, they are victims of a lack of economic opportunity, social security and mobility engendered by an absence of the right set of policies. As trade integration has deepened over the past decades, the countries that maintained the smartest protections saw their populations suffer the least.

So we can see how economic globalisation, including through the expansion of free trade policies, has been changing the structure of many societies at unprecedented speed. It both creates new opportunities for some and brings dislocations for others. At the same time it raises new risks for booms and busts, intensifies the problem of greater efficiency co-existing with greater inequality, and calls for careful attention to policy.

Consequently, singling out trade as the main culprit behind globalisation's discontents runs the risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater, potentially cutting off the benefits of trade without addressing the full spectrum of reasons for growth in unemployment. To avoid this mistake, we need to adopt a more nuanced approach to trade.

Better trade: beyond the rules

At UNCTAD, we believe that the solution is not less trade – characterised by unilateralism and isolationism – but better trade, fashioned by the principles of inclusivity and equity.

As globalisation has expanded, national and international policies have not kept up with the need to address the spillover effects. In many cases, states have retreated too hastily from their responsibility to regulate and redistribute

Trade alone is not enough to reach economic and social objectives. It must be accompanied by a set of macroeconomic and sectorial policies that are inclusive and sustainable – and by social programmes designed to bring fairness to those who risk being left behind.

This makes it even more important for governments to more thoroughly assess the implications of trade integration strategies on their citizens. They must design appropriate complementary policies to smooth the localised negative effects of economic integration while helping their constituents to benefit from it. This calls for a more attentive assessment based on research and analysis, both in relation to national policies and international commitments.

Multilateral rule-making on trade has paid the price for this lack of strategy. The soul searching within the trade community has been intense – ranging from whether the multilateral trading system serves global development to whether it is obsolete or even unfair. The failure to reach a meaningful outcome at the ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Buenos Aires in December 2017 indicates the difficulty of finding common ground through compromise. This is the main reason why trade negotiations are increasingly conducted on a bilateral or, at best, a plurilateral scale.

Even within the WTO, negotiations are now advancing in a manner that will allow 'willing countries' to move forward on specific issues (such as e-commerce, investment facilitations, and issues related to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises) without commitments from non-participating members.

Whether this approach would result in a fair and equitable development remains to be seen.

The outcome of the WTO's ministerial conference fell far short of expectations. In particular, it demonstrates that we are even further away from reaching Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 on revitalising a global partnership for sustainable development than many of us had feared.

Encouraging signs?

Importantly, most of the criticism aimed at international trade today has been limited (for the moment) to developed countries. Many developing countries remain supportive of international trade.

In addition, China's One Belt One Road Initiative, the continued interest in many countries to finalise a Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the efforts of African countries to launch a Continental Free Trade Area in 2018 are just some examples that show that trade remains at the core of many development strategies.

There also remains large potential for deeper economic integration within South Asia, Latin America and especially within sub-Saharan Africa.

One important question is not whether these initiatives will deliver benefits, as they surely will, but to what extent the benefits will be shared.

The SDGs provide a valuable benchmark against which we should weigh these trade integration efforts. Global efforts to achieve the goals are driving a shift from a mindset based on competition to one more focused on solidarity and sustainability.

It is promising and encouraging that a growing number of recent economic partnership agreements between countries include provisions with important implications for the SDGs, including labour and environmental standards.

Such provisions are also not limited to North-North agreements but also are increasingly part of South-South and North-South agreements – regional, interregional and plurilateral. This broad willingness by a wide range of countries to consider sustainable development issues in the context of trade agreements is a promising precedent for multilateral negotiations. By adopting this mindset, nations can move towards making trade agreements more socially and environmentally responsible.

If trade, international cooperation and solidarity are to support global development, governments need to advance an economic agenda that is not only outward looking but also equitable and compatible with interrelated challenges in other policy domains.

For proof of this, look no further than the degradation of our oceans, or the causes and consequences of climate change that threaten the ability of large numbers of people to lead dignified lives. Such phenomena cannot be addressed by anything but world consensus. The issues require concerted and collective actions, and global implementation. ●

Multilateral future: the example of fishery subsidies

Experience, not to mention logic, tells us that multilateralism – where all parties agree in mutually beneficial arrangements – is the best option for an international trading system. To pursue a nuanced approach, countries can seek multilateral cooperation on trade (and its development dimension) through all possible avenues open to the international community.

Consider the ministerial decision made at the Buenos Aires conference to continue constructive engagement on fisheries subsidies negotiations, with a view to adopting an agreement by 2019. This WTO ministerial decision was copied almost verbatim from the text of target 4 of SDG 14: to effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing and destructive fishing practices by 2020. With time – and fish – running out, we now have several means at hand to move beyond the Buenos Aires stalemate.

These include a binding multilateral agreement by or before 2019, or a fast-tracked plurilateral agreement inside or outside the WTO. A third possibility looks more broadly beyond the trade rules toward the negotiation of a treaty to end fish subsidies. Such a treaty would be under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea with the support of UNCTAD, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UN Environment.

To preserve multilateralism at this tender moment, rather than simply resign ourselves to unpredictable plurilateralism, we should look at all the possibilities open to us. We should acknowledge that what cannot be channelled into hard rules for the moment can instead become the focus of a more dynamic soft-rule making process.

This argues for a greater role for more inclusive global platforms like the UN. It also should motivate a wider set of discussions on how trade can be made more compatible with the broader pillars of economic, social and environment sustainability.

To harness, rather than be hindered by, the interdependence of the challenges we face, we must find innovative ways to stitch together the constellation of our collective promises to arrive at global solutions that work.

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Decent employment in the fourth industrial revolution

Industry 4.0 promises great advancements for humankind, but also massive upheaval in labour markets. Policymakers must put in place plans for job creation, equitable distribution of gains and wider social protections

By **Azita Berar Awad**,
Director, Employment Policy Department, International Labour Organization (ILO)

Global economic growth picked up in 2017 and is expected to stabilise at a low level in the near future. At the same time, the latest ILO data show that 'decent employment deficits' remain high and multifaceted: globally, 192 million people are unemployed. Of these, over 70 million are young people, with youth unemployment now three times higher than adult unemployment.

In addition to those people without a job, many of those with one often work under insecure conditions. In 2017 about 1.4 billion people were in vulnerable forms of employment (such as own-account workers and contributing family workers), and this number is on the rise. Informality is widespread, particularly in developing and emerging countries where it reaches more than 90 per cent and 67 per cent of total employment, respectively. Significantly, the pace of reduction of 'working poverty' – those who work but are trapped in extreme or moderate poverty – has slowed down, after decades of remarkable progress.

Deficits in decent employment opportunities, and the quantity and quality of jobs available to people who aspire to work, affects nearly all regions. Yet there are also significant variations across countries and among different segments of the population. Women, youth and the low skilled often find themselves in particularly challenging situations.

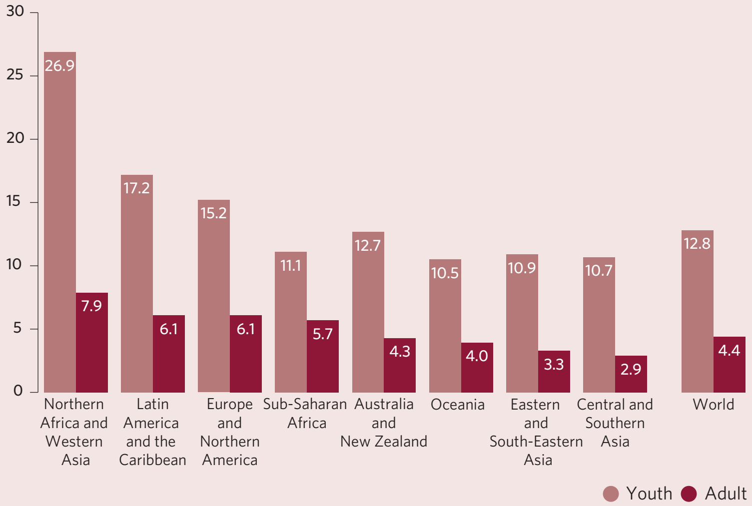
New technological developments – labelled as the fourth industrial revolution or 'industry 4.0' – have added another layer of uncertainty and anxiety to the global concern for jobs. In particular, people are worried about increasing automation and the use of robots displacing demand for human labour.

▲ Job applicants queue at the University of Valencia, Spain to take an exam for health orderly jobs: 34,797 people applied for 200 positions. The sustainability of the global economy will depend on addressing rising unemployment and job insecurity

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

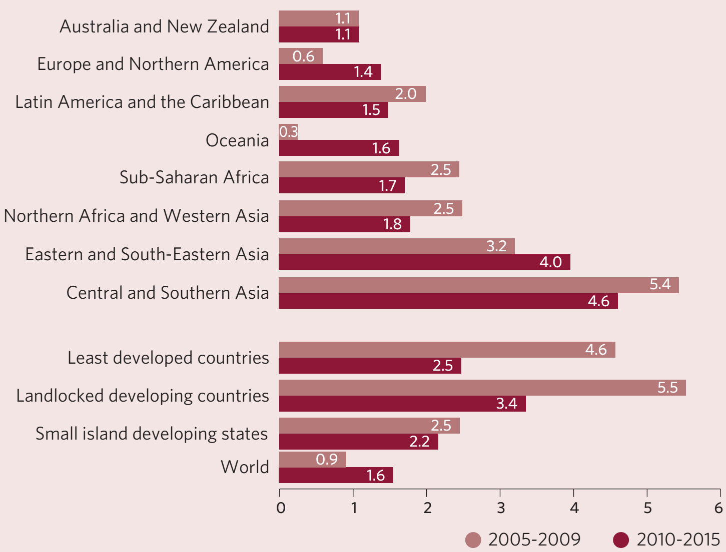
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Unemployment rates, youth and adult, 2016 (percentage)



Women are more likely to be unemployed than men, and in 2016, youth (aged 15 to 24 years) were nearly three times as likely as adults to be unemployed – youth unemployment is a worldwide problem

Average annual growth rate of real GDP per capita, 2005-2009 and 2010-2015 (percentage)



Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

The fourth industrial revolution has become a way of describing a set of ongoing and impending transformations, which rapidly emerging technologies are bringing or will bring to systems surrounding us. These will affect many aspects of life – work included. The technologies range from artificial intelligence, robotics and virtual and augmented realities to developments in neuroscience, biology and new materials.

Previous industrial revolutions also witnessed widespread legitimate concerns about the destruction of jobs and distribution of wealth and wellbeing induced by new technologies. Then, as now, there was a sharp divide between optimists and pessimists. The first industrial revolution in the mid-18th century was sparked by the mechanisation of spinning and weaving in Britain's textile industry.

The second industrial revolution, spanning the next 100 years, saw a wave of massive transformations and technological developments: the steam engine, electricity, internal combustion engines, machine tools and transport. The digitalisation of economies, sparked by the information and computation technology in the 1950s (and now referred to as the third industrial revolution), laid the foundation for all of today's new, emerging technologies.

Throughout all these waves of technological invention – which resulted in immense overall gains of productivity and wellbeing – reality overtook all projected scenarios, sometimes in unpredictable ways. It is certainly true that there has been massive destruction of occupations. Yet rising demand for new jobs and skills has outpaced it on a scale and in areas that had not been – and could not have been – predicted by any of the above scenarios.

Will it be different this time? There are at least three issues that we need to consider:

Job destruction and creation

The pace of current technological developments in industry 4.0, often characterised as exponential, is distinct from the pace of their adoption. ILO research shows that in assessing the impact of automation technologies on jobs, it is important to distinguish between the availability of technology that could replace or displace a certain job and the probability that the technology will be adopted on a large scale, replacing all such jobs.

While attention is narrowly focused on the rapid pace of automation and robotics in the manufacturing sector (in advanced economies and some emerging countries), there are broader factors that need to be taken into account beyond a simple cost comparison. And the gaps between the probability that such technology could replace jobs and will replace jobs are larger in and among developing countries.

There are also wide sectoral variations. On the other hand, the job creation impact induced by new technologies is usually underestimated. The net overall impact on jobs but also on productivity gains can only be assessed in the mid to long term, and by looking more holistically at different levels of enterprise, industry and economies as a whole.

Equitable distribution of productivity gains

As for all important technological innovations that affect the availability and nature of jobs, the main issue is how the productivity gains will be distributed, and through which mechanisms and institutions.

In the last two decades, all regions with the exception of Latin America have experienced an increase in income inequality, along with a decline in the share of income that goes to labour relative to capital. And this pattern has persisted while labour productivity has increased. In the present context of high levels of inequalities among and within countries, and already strained labour markets, there is legitimate fear of further marginalisation of disadvantaged groups, including the low skilled. The risk is that societies in both developed and developing countries will become more polarised.

Proactive policies for shaping the future

All previous industrial revolutions have resulted in new and evolving social institutions that aimed at creating a level playing field and more socially equitable outcomes of the massive transformations induced by technology. These institutions have often been established through hard-fought social struggles as much as cooperative negotiations.

This time it is no different, except that the world economy has become more interdependent and the time span for action is limited. Realising Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 – decent work and economic growth – by 2030 in the context of the fourth industrial revolution calls for a strong, urgent and proactive policy agenda. It must be an agenda with new policy tools and mechanisms that fulfil the universal values of social justice and inclusive development, while addressing the new challenges that industry 4.0 brings for the world of work.

Realising SDG 8 – decent work and economic growth – by 2030 in the context of the fourth industrial revolution calls for a strong, urgent and proactive policy agenda

What should such a policy agenda include?

First, it must promote new, quality job opportunities through investment in infrastructure, education and health, as well as in the care and green economies. This will not only boost employment growth but also contribute to and accelerate the realisation of several other SDGs.

Second, it must protect the rights of disadvantaged groups and those populations that are made vulnerable by technological transformations. Facilitating people's transition to new jobs needs to be one of the central pillars of industrial restructuring and employment policies.

Third, it needs to use fiscal policy and bespoke labour market policies to support young women and men's transition from school to work. These policies have proven effective when implemented under appropriate conditions. Today, it is estimated that 22 per cent of young people are neither in employment nor in education or training. These are the so-called NEETs, who are reflected in an indicator of SDG 8. More than three quarters of NEETs are female.

Fourth, it must focus on the crucial need to redesign education systems to make them more inclusive and relevant.

The policy agenda also needs a new perspective on lifelong learning systems that can enable continuous up-skilling, reskilling and multi-skilling. New jobs and new industries demand higher and different types of skills. The digitalisation of the economy in all sectors means that investment in digital skills is essential. Distributing training and offering up-skilling opportunities to those who need them most can be a powerful means to reduce inequalities. They can also mitigate the risks of polarisation in the labour markets.

Fifth, it must rethink and reinvigorate institutions of dialogue, cooperation and bargaining for promoting equitable outcomes.

Lastly, it must devise social protection systems. These include systems for non-standard and new diverse forms of employment, such as part-time work, teleworking, work through the sharing or platform economy, work on demand, or self-employment contracts. These areas of work are expanding, and too often do not benefit from the regulatory frameworks and protections afforded to regular full-time employment.

This is an ambitious agenda. We all know the significance of decent employment for social cohesion and to achieve all the goals of the 2030 Agenda – including eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, reducing inequalities and promoting peace and resilience. We also know what unmet aspirations for decent work can breed in terms of social unrest, conflict, violence and massive displacements.

Making good on the promise of the 2030 Agenda and SDG 8 in an era of rapid technological transformation needs full mobilisation and partnerships of governments, the corporate sector, social partners and institutions of labour market governance. ●

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An agenda for learning

Realising the SDGs will require an emphasis on critical thinking in formal education, as well as continuous learning in day-to-day activities

By **William Scott**, Professor Emeritus of Education, University of Bath

You'd have to be an incurable optimist to think that all the targets embodied within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be fully met by 2030. Yet it would be morally reprehensible not to take the goals seriously. Happily, there is growing evidence that this is already taking place, with some countries at least putting monitoring mechanisms in place to gauge progress and stimulate further development.

Whether sufficient progress is being made quickly enough is another matter – as is the question of whether the role of education and learning is sufficiently understood. The work of Green Alliance in the UK illustrates the issues. A 2013 joint paper with Christian Aid, Greenpeace, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and WWF, under Green Alliance's non-governmental organisation (NGO) engagement theme, sets out four tests (policy emphases, really) for environmental resilience. The authors describe how these are essential for the post-2015 development framework to eradicate poverty and deliver long-term sustainable development. The four tests are to:

- support environmentally resilient poverty reduction, by building national and community capacity to respond to climate impacts and natural resource constraints;
- deliver resource efficiency and security, by building good resource management and sustainable resource use into national growth models, as well as increased transparency, access and rights for local communities;
- enable access to sustainable, secure, clean energy for all through economic growth models built on low-carbon, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency;
- reduce vulnerability to, and the impact of, disasters – and, in turn, reduce the need for humanitarian aid, while protecting lives, livelihoods and economic investments.

◀ **Children being taught at an open-air school at the Gambiri Refugee Camp, Afghanistan. In 2014, 263 million children, adolescents and youth were out of school, the majority of whom resided in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia**

The paper argues, plausibly, that this framework should apply to economically developed and developing countries. This would enable all nations to live within the planetary and social boundaries that are essential to long-term global sustainability.

While it has less to say about education, it seems hard to believe that the four tests will be effective without considerable education and learning. For example, if we are to build "national and community capacity to climate impacts and natural resource constraints" (as point one contends), this suggests we'll need education of one sort or another. The word 'build' implies learning, and also features in points two and three (and is implicit in four). Thus, Green Alliance seems to be willing the end without thinking too much about the means. It is not alone in this.

Informal learning

The sort of learning that will be required if the SDGs are to be realised (and those four tests met) won't just be what goes on in schools, colleges and universities – important though that is as a foundation for employment, further study and life. It will be the sort of learning that goes on day in, day out in the community, in government, in business and in NGOs – in fact in every place where initiatives related to the Global Goals are planned, developed, monitored and evaluated.

This is the sort of informal learning that is usually not considered learning at all, although it is. And, helpfully, it's the kind of activity that isn't hampered by top-down, expert-driven sets of pedagogical instruction or learning outcomes (such as UNESCO's 255 learning outcomes for the SDGs) or by large educational bureaucracies.

It is not just NGOs such as Green Alliance that are taking the SDGs seriously; companies are too. This is, in part at least, because they know that working towards the goals can be good for business, just as business can be good for development. A recent report from the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership called *Towards a sustainable economy: The commercial imperative for business to deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals* illustrates the issues.

The report makes the case that taking the SDGs seriously constitutes the equivalent of a licence to operate in the 21st century. It argues that there are robust commercial incentives to see the goals succeed and for business to help deliver them. It advocates a holistic approach, whereby the SDGs are presented as a vision for the future of business in society. This vision would be capable of inspiring interest and creativity, identifying opportunities for future growth, and framing strategies for difficult trade-offs and problem-solving.

Just like the Green Alliance report, however, this document also has little to say about education. It does acknowledge the need for learning, although it spends little time exploring the implications of this for business practice. There is also much that is implicit at best and subliminal at worst.

That said, it is a rich document for anyone thinking about the Global Goals in a real-world context. Section 2.1, for example, sets out a 10-year plan to lay the foundations of a sustainable economy that is capable of delivering the SDGs. It outlines 10 interconnected tasks that target the systemic changes required across government, finance and business, including businesses' role in enabling the structural and cultural transformations needed. There are ideas here that anyone wishing to focus on the goals will surely find of interest, especially if they compare them with Kate Raworth's *Doughnut Economics*, and the recent 'wedding cake model' of the SDGs from the Stockholm Resilience Centre.

Of course, the reason why NGOs and businesses find it hard to think and talk about learning is that it's not always easy to do. Conversations also tend to default to the assumption that teaching of some sort always precedes learning. But this is not a helpful calculus. Learning accrues from all kinds of experiences and activities, and can go on all the time. That said, it would be unhelpful to end this article without some consideration of the more formal foundational learning referred to above.

Schools are charged with the initial education of the young. They have a particular responsibility in nurturing thinking and learning about what might constitute appropriate futures, and in helping students begin to develop skills and competences by doing so. It's no surprise, then, that international testing focuses on science, maths and reading, not on sustainability skills or competence. But Andrew Stables, a professor of education and philosophy at the University of Roehampton, argues that school students are only ever likely to pick up a general and diffuse sense of concern about the world's problems. He says that such skills can only really be fully developed through practice in realistic contexts. So it's unhelpful to think of skills and competences ever being fully developed by a particular stage (although we do find endless lists of such skills and competences for school and higher education students to develop).

> ***The sort of learning that will be required if the SDGs are to be realised... goes on day in, day out in the community, in government, in business and in NGOs***

Because of all this, Stables says, the school curriculum should focus on the development of skills of critical thinking, dialogue and discussion/debate. These might be critical questions about society (easy), their own learning (harder), or their school (risky). Through this, young people would be enabled, should they choose, to play an increasing role in society and in transformative social change of all kinds.

In emphasising this role for the school, Stables privileges the development of skills above content. He also stresses the iterative nature of learning, participation and decision-making. But schools are most successful, perhaps, when they combine these elements. Paul Vare and I have argued that it's helpful to think of two complementary approaches:

1. Building students' capacity to think critically and develop abilities to make sound choices in the face of the inherent complexity and uncertainty. This will tend to be dialogue and debate oriented, and focused on controversial issues.

2. Providing guidance about behaviours, shifts in habit, and ways of thinking about how we live. This will tend to be content focused, data based, and grounded in everyday practice.

Schools seem to find it easier to do the second than the first, but both are important.

Finally, in relation to the SDGs, it seems persuasive that schools should:

- help learners understand why the goals ought to be of concern to them;
- enable learners to gain plural perspectives from a range of viewpoints;
- provide opportunities for an active, critical exploration of issues;
- encourage learners to come to their own views, and to get involved.

Doing less than this seems neglectful, but doing much more always runs the risk of indoctrination.

This is, of course, a liberal educational view that prioritises student learning over institutional, behaviour or social change, while making use of any change that's happening to support and broaden that learning. In this sense, it's fine for a school to encourage its students to explore the SDGs and get involved. If this enhances social justice, saves energy, creates less waste, promotes biodiversity, and so on, that's all to the good. But it can't be the purpose of a school to solve the problems of society or to improve the world through students' activities.

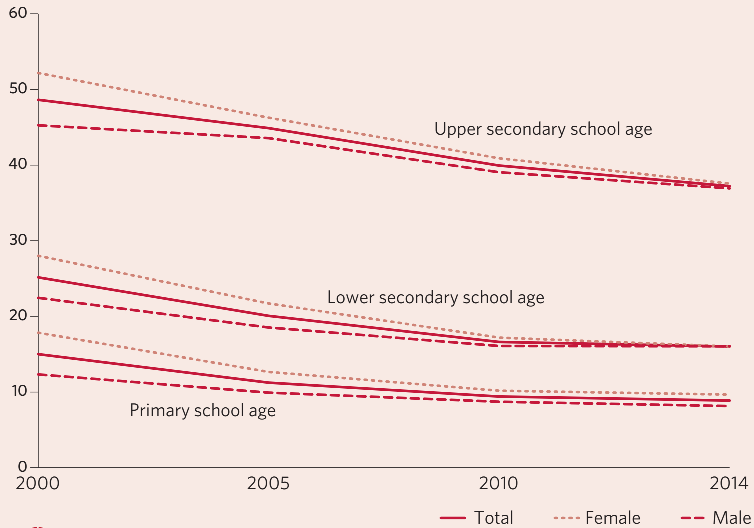
The crucial factor must always be what students learn by participating in such activities; because learners never learn what teachers teach, this will not necessarily be what those in authority desire.

So is education the key to everything? Probably not. But learning certainly is.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

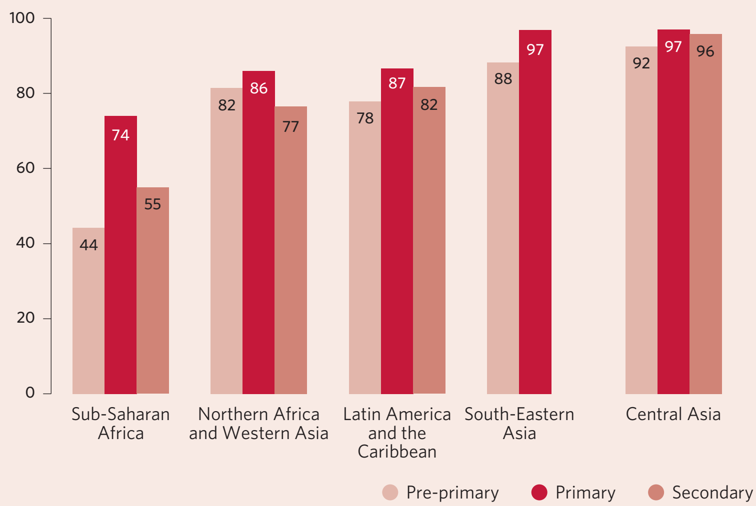
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Proportion of school-aged children out of school worldwide, by level of education and sex, 2000-2014 (percentage)



Despite progress in enrolment, more than a quarter of a billion school-aged children, adolescents and youth are not in school

Proportion of trained teachers at each education level, 2011 or latest available data (percentage)



Lack of trained teachers and adequate facilities threatens quality education for all, especially in sub-Saharan Africa

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

© Dimas Ardian/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Design for sustainability

Current economic models rely on a level of resource consumption that will rapidly destroy the ecosystems on which we depend. We must now design circularity into all that we do

By **Christa Liedtke**, Director, Sustainable Production and Consumption, Wuppertal Institute/Folkwang University of Arts, Industrial Design

Since the Industrial Revolution, global resource consumption has been on the rise. It is not possible to predict an end to this growth. More than seven billion people today wish for a good and safe life – for themselves, their children and their children's children. This involves consuming products and services.

Only a fraction of the resources we use 'circulate' within the global economy – for reuse or recycling. Instead, humans have created 'dumping grounds' for spent resources: the oceans for plastic, the atmosphere for greenhouse gases and the soil for fertiliser or municipal waste.

Another facet of the current economic structure is that access to resources, and therefore access to prosperity, is unequally distributed. This results in uneven development opportunities and disparate social participation.

The consequences are destructive: global warming, and the depletion of biodiversity and ecosystem 'services' that people draw upon for relaxation and wealth. In many regions, this leads to social dislocation, poverty, hunger and conflict. In its report *Assessing Global Resource Use*, the UN International Resource Panel proceeded on the assumption that the world consumed

▲ **As cows scavenge for food, waste pickers look for recyclable material at a landfill site in Makassar, Indonesia**

Closing the circle: new challenges

By **Elisabetta Perrotta**,
Director, FISE Assoambiente

According to recent statistics, the world's population is growing at the rate of 80 million a year and is expected to reach 11 billion by the end of this century: from now to 2030, three billion new consumers will enter the middle class and push demand for goods and services to unprecedented levels.

The circular economy is one way to slow down the excessive depletion of the planet's resources: waste is a resource that must be given value and must feed the production and consumption system. In this way it will contribute to reducing demand for additional raw materials.

In Italy, since the 1990s, the materials recovery sector has experienced strong growth and diversification. From a sector mainly focused on the scrapping of ferrous metals, recycling has strongly diversified. Now, it encompasses a growing volume of paper, plastics and waste electrical and electronic equipment recycling, as well as the recovery of aggregates and biomass.

It is now two years since the EU adopted the Circular Economy Action Plan. This year, the European Commission has adopted a new set of measures - the 2018 Circular Economy Package - as part of its continued efforts to make the action plan a reality. However, there are several challenges that pose a threat to the EU's latest commitment. Since last year, many recycling companies have struggled to place large quantities of secondary raw materials of average quality on the market. As a result, these companies are now left holding excess stock.

Countries must now wait and see what Europe decides for the new design and recycling standard to help the disassembling of products and support the circular economy market. Yet, no matter how strict the new requirements, the materials recovery process is still likely to produce waste - no matter how small a quantity - for many years to come. That waste could be recovered for its energy content or (the worst-case scenario) would need to be disposed of.

The sustainability of a circular economy system depends also on the availability of those plants that can close the waste management cycle. Without that, the costs of disposing of waste coming from recycling processes will rise. The result could be that in an attempt to reduce a country's dependency on raw material imports, it could instead become reliant on other countries that are better equipped with waste management plants.

FISE Assoambiente is the Italian Association representing companies involved in municipal hygiene services, waste management and soil remediation. It is concerned with regulations and technical aspects to develop the necessary conditions that allow fair competition in the market and the industrialisation of the waste sector.

www.assoambiente.org

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88.6 billion tonnes of resources in 2017 – triple the amount of consumption in 1970. Low-income countries consume ten times less per person than high-income countries but as they develop, according to current economic patterns, that gap will diminish and the global rate of consumption will continue its growth trend.

It is estimated that the growth of a new consumer class in emerging countries will comprise three billion people by 2050. As their societies develop, considerably more people than before will have a share in prosperity – a very positive development but ultimately unsustainable if it is based on the resource-heavy lifestyles of today's wealthy economies.

The UN's statistics on the 12th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) show that annually about 1.3 billion tonnes of food gets turned into waste. Between 2002 and 2020 they predict a 30 per cent increase in cars, 40 per cent rise of private motor traffic and a tripling of global air travel. Associated with these trends is an increasing amount of waste and material loss into the environment. The UN predicts that if the global population reaches 9.6 billion by 2050, people will need the equivalent of almost three planets to satisfy their consumption demand.

It is abundantly clear that we need to decouple resource consumption from prosperity. This is the aim of the SDGs, which has generated a call to 'design for a better world'.

To maintain ecosystems, stop global warming and have as many people as possible share in prosperity, we must change the way we design products and services. We need to:

- design for resource efficiency, creating more with fewer resources
- design for circularity, encouraging multiple uses of high-quality items
- design for social change and equality, encouraging consumption that is eco-intelligent, fair and moderate

Only by combining all three strategies will we achieve success – the realisation of the SDGs. We need to consider all the processes in the lifecycle of a product:

extraction, logistics, production, trading, use and recycling. While 100 per cent circularity might not be possible, we should still aim for it. We need to develop and design products and services that require far fewer resources (raw materials, water, surface area) across their entire lifespans. We need to minimise dangerous substances and waste. And we need to satisfy human needs associated with 21st century lifestyles.

Design for a better world

Designers and developers have a particular responsibility in delivering the SDGs because they turn people's visions and attitudes into tangible products and services, and because there is no product or service that does not require material input or does not produce waste.

Designing for a better world is the translation of the SDGs into a world of sustainable products, infrastructures and services – that encode sustainability in conduct, form and function and that put humans at the centre.

Design for a dematerialised circular society

Goods and services are only sustainable if they are as dematerialised as possible and allow for continued use or re-use, or recycling with minimal material loss. They should be easy to disassemble and reuse, through a modular design, for example. They should have a long lifespan and be comprised of few, mostly secondary, materials; only have a small amount of material loss during their lifecycle; and be suitable for renting, sharing and swapping.

Everything contributing to a smaller 'ecological backpack' (the weight of all natural raw materials that are needed for our private consumption) counts as a successful design. Here, production, business and consumption models intertwine – they focus on a different attitude towards the material, the natural world, and its value for individuals and economies.

Design for a dematerialised circular society requires a completely different composition and interaction of research and development, production, trading, consumption and recycling compared to business models practised thus far. It would significantly change the world of products and waste as we know it.

In 2017 Fairphone published a study containing possible recycling routes on its homepage. It considers a recycling rate of at least 30 to 40 per cent to be possible. This poses an immense challenge for the modification of the 'end of life' route.

Design for social change and equality – user perspectives

If design is able to impart attitude and values, it is also able to translate the SDGs into the language and codes of products, business models and infrastructures.

The aim is to accomplish more global resource equity, end resource poverty, develop resource wealth on a sustainable level, and allow for participation. According to research by D-mat, Faktor 10 Institut and the Wuppertal Institute, a resource consumption of eight tonnes per person per year is considered a sustainable lifestyle on a global level. But how far away from that goal are prosperous societies?

The research shows that households in Germany and Finland have an ecological backpack of 14 to 120 tonnes or more per capita per year. Everyone can calculate their own backpack on www.resource-calculator.de. Backpacks in similar income brackets show differences up to a factor of four or five.

Yet life satisfaction in these 'materially fulfilled' regions does not go up with increasing consumption. Social activities and being 'time-rich' become more important – these activities, in turn, are mostly resource efficient and create low waste. A challenge for designers is to bring resource-intensive lifestyles down to a sustainable level without causing social conflict and a fear of loss.

Sustainable Living Labs – open innovation ecosystems where designers co-create things with users – show that there is considerable potential for sustainability in the correlation of social and technical innovations.

To change consumption patterns, we need to start by enabling people to change their routines: using instead of owning, being time-rich over being time-poor, and choosing made-to-measure products instead of mass-produced goods as status symbols. If the growing global consumer class are to live resource efficiently, we urgently need new design concepts around status, security and identity.

In the world's poor regions, by contrast, the focus is to survive, reduce poverty and child mortality, improve living standards and for people to fulfil their potential. This also means designing products that enable greater participation. Products and services have to be able to help decrease resource poverty and enable sustainable consumption and development opportunities.

In his TED talk 'Design for people, not awards', Timothy Prestero called this design approach 'design for outcome'. After designing products to decrease infant mortality in Asia that were awarded prizes but were not used, he made radical changes to his design process. He asked about the most pressing problems in Asian hospitals and learned that two thirds of infants suffer from jaundice and lack of space. A simple phototherapy with blue light can help.

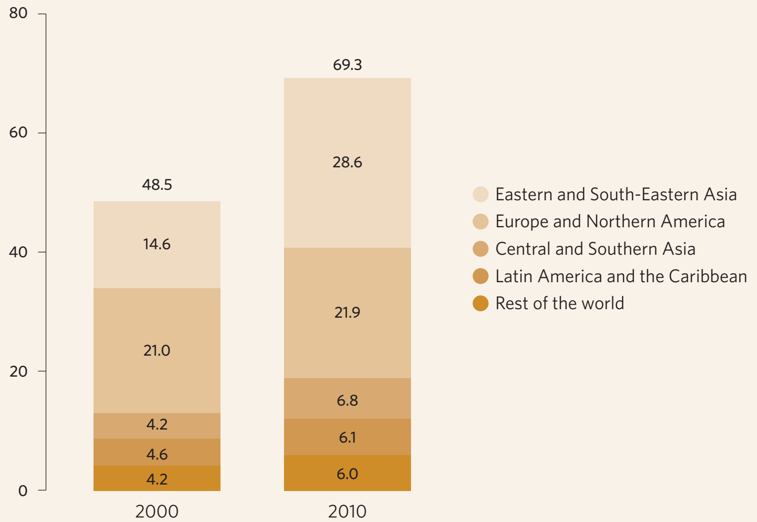
He took the needs of parents, doctors, nurses and technicians (for repairs and maintenance), as well as those of manufacturers and distributors into account in the in-situ development (similar to a Living Lab approach). He then redesigned the product so that it had a high utilisation ratio and low material complexity, and could

If design is able to impart attitude and values, it is also able to translate the SDGs into the language and codes of products, business models and infrastructures

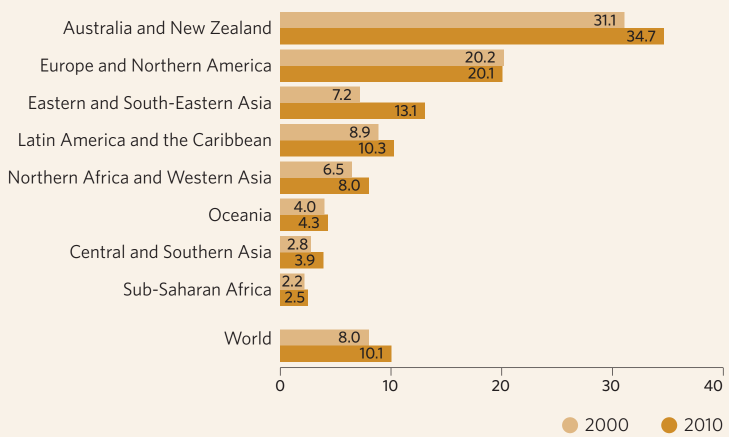
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Material footprint, 2000 and 2010 (billion metric tons)



Material footprint per capita, 2000 and 2010 (metric tons)



Goal 12 focuses on decoupling economic growth from resource use, and ensuring that hazardous chemicals and wastes are managed in a way that minimises their impact on human lives and the environment

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

be locally financed, produced, operated, repaired and maintained.

This is a clear example of designing for actual use and needs, for appearance and trust, for manufacturing and distribution in a modern way. Products like this change the world, creating participation and equal opportunities. Moreover, we can evaluate their contribution to the SDGs.

Who can contribute and in what way?

The charge to design for a better world cannot be led by designers alone. They will need support from a broad coalition of actors:

- **Companies:** they must develop and market products and services that make an evident and transparent contribution to the SDGs, and provide information on a certified system for sustainability management.
- **Policymakers:** they must set a reliable framework and incentives for sustainable actions in production and consumption; reward sustainable and resource-efficient activities and product developments; impose taxes on or remove non-sustainable products from the market; and provide information on the sustainability of products. Policies must promote consumer protection, research, design and education for sustainability, create actor and user-integrated innovation spaces for the development of sustainable business models (Living Labs) – and evidently be sustainable themselves.
- **Consumers:** they must buy and use more sustainable products. They should actively ask for education on sustainability and product information systems. They can actively co-develop resource-efficient products and living environments in Living Labs. They must exercise their responsibilities as consumers and participate locally in the implementation of the SDGs.
- **Science:** this must generate the fundamental knowledge and research that can transform societies to be more sustainable and culturally diverse. In particular, science must pursue a valid technological assessment and communicate its results to society and politics. ●

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The price of nature

By acknowledging the true value of our natural resources, we will be able to direct development so that it supports economy and environment

By **Erik Solheim**, Executive Director, UN Environment

Over the past 20 years, gross domestic product (GDP) has risen 50 per cent in most parts of the world. Millions have been lifted out of poverty, and we live better and longer lives than ever before. Much of this can be attributed to spectacular human ingenuity, innovation and technology in almost every part of the world.

The bad news, however, is that it has come at a cost we haven't accounted for: the contribution of nature. Simply put, the value of our natural environment is not factored into the number-crunching when we calculate economic performance. Our economic model has depended and indeed thrived on the 'gift of nature' – and we see it as a gift that keeps on giving, and will keep on giving. This is a grave mistake, and it needs to change.

One example is topsoil, which makes it possible for us to grow food. It's fast depleting. By 2050, 42 per cent of land will be useless if today's techniques continue. Every minute, we lose land the size of 26 football fields. Water bodies are drying up too, and four out of every ten people don't have enough water to drink. We also have to count the cost of environmental damage and pollution here and now: only 12 per cent of cities in the world have acceptable air quality. In many cities, a day out can mean the equivalent of smoking 40 cigarettes.

Our estimates of GDP growth are therefore flawed, masking losses we cannot begin to put a cost on. Over the last four decades, the gap between rich and poor has increased in almost every region of the world. Almost 800 million people live in extreme poverty, relying on common water bodies, land, biodiversity and ecosystems to survive. If these assets worldwide are under grave threat, then the ambition of the global development agenda, "to end poverty in all forms, everywhere", is also under threat.

Much of the value that economies create is built upon a natural foundation – the air, water, food, energy and raw materials that the planet provides. Too much economic growth has come at the cost of the environment. We cannot afford to ignore the value and impact of nature if we want to end poverty and build a more sustainable and prosperous future.

▲ **Sowing seed in hay grids to combat the spread of the Maowusu Desert near Lingwu, China**

So how exactly do we arrive at an understanding of economic growth and the role natural capital plays in propelling our progress? UN Environment's Inclusive Wealth Index 2018 measures a nation's wealth in terms of progress, wellbeing and long-term sustainability. Computed for 140 countries in the world, the index is a comprehensive analysis of each country's productive base and the assets that determine human wellbeing – including produced, human and natural capital.

It reveals that while produced capital, health and education-induced capital have risen over time, the value of natural capital has diminished, indicating that we have grown at the cost of nature. Changes in inclusive wealth can guide our understanding on whether countries are on a path of sustainable development – or not.

Yet even as our statistics ignore natural capital, the economic case for investing in natural capital remains huge. Take the case of land degradation in Asia. If we take no action, Asia could lose more than 53 per cent of annual total crop production due to the loss of topsoil. But taking action, and implementing sustainable land management practices by 2030, could create benefits of more than four times the investment. In 2017, BNP Paribas and UN Environment signed an agreement to establish partnerships that would improve the productivity of smallholder farmers and restore and protect forests through channelling $10 billion by 2025. This initiative shows that development capital can drive sustainable economic growth in emerging countries.

Technically and commercially viable solutions can improve water and energy efficiency by 60 to 80 per cent in construction, agriculture, transport and other key sectors, while saving between $2.9 and $3.7 trillion a year by 2030. Of all the environmental battles we are fighting at present, the one we run the biggest risk of losing is biodiversity and extinction loss.

Billions of populations of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians have been eradicated all over the planet. In 2015 alone the world lost tree coverage roughly equal to the size of Uganda. Addressing this loss will depend on our ability to demonstrate real value.

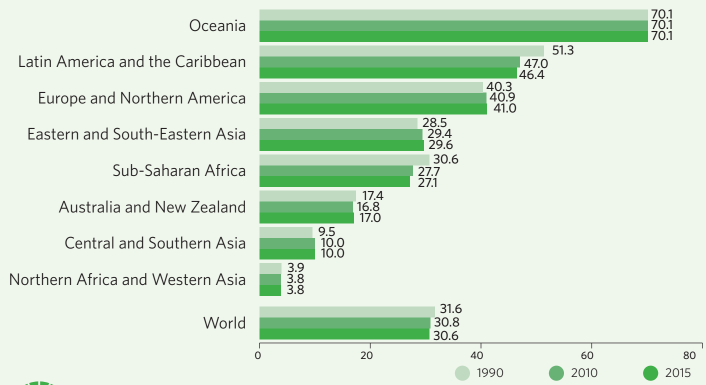
For example, in Bhutan, UN Environment is helping the government to integrate this approach in new hydropower installations, looking at a 'payments for ecosystem services' scheme, potentially funded through royalties. In the Congo basin, we are mapping vast peatland reserves, which are valuable carbon sinks – like those found in Europe, Russia, Canada and over 180 other countries. And our World Conservation Monitoring Centre draws on over 17 million trade records and the latest scientific data to help UN Member States make decisions on wildlife, endangered species and protected areas, including some 2,000 decisions by the European Union.

Our development model for the future must be inclusive and sustainable, and account for the costs that growth places on our environment. It must build equally on economic, human and natural capital, instead of depleting it. We no longer have the luxury of choice. ●

15 LIFE ON LAND

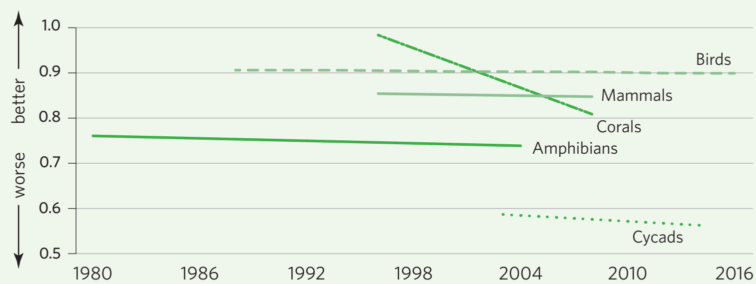
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Forest area as a proportion of total land area, 1990, 2010 and 2015 (percentage)



The world's forest area continues to shrink, but the rate of loss is slowing

Red List Index of species survival, 1980-2016



Protected and restored ecosystems and the biodiversity they support can help mitigate climate change and provide increased resilience in the face of mounting human pressures and natural disasters

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

Litter, the great enemy of nature

Ecoembes and SEO/BirdLife have come together to combat the growing threat of rubbish accumulation

Our ecosystems are suffering the consequences of rubbish accumulation. It is a problem caused by humanity; it threatens biodiversity and we cannot turn a blind eye to it. And it is this problem that requires society to speak out so we can stop a monster that is taking its toll on our planet.

LIBERA has come about to combat this growing and alarming phenomenon. This is a project created by SEO/BirdLife, the oldest environmental NGO in Spain, together with Ecoembes, the environmental organisation that promotes the circular economy through the recycling of packaging material with the aim of freeing nature from rubbish and halting the disastrous consequences of littering.

This project bases its three lines of work on knowledge, prevention and participation. We need to know more about littering so we can offer real solutions. In turn, we have to educate and raise awareness to prevent citizens from contaminating our environments and, of course, we need to mobilise the population so that all of us can fight to save our planet together.

The project commenced on 17 June last year with the launch of the campaign '1 sq.m. for nature', in which 5,000 volunteers from all around the country removed the waste from 175 points of great ecological value. Thanks to them all, over 30 tons of rubbish was collected from natural, land, river and marine spaces in 48 Spanish provinces.

However, we are aware that there are no magic solutions to tackling this problem at its roots. This is why our aim is not only to clean ecosystems of rubbish; we are also promoting citizen science. This involves analysing the waste we encounter in order to extract scientific data that can serve to discover the environmental impact caused by littering and therefore apply specific solutions.

To do this, we organise data collections so that the various groups can identify the rubbish they find. Accordingly, over the past year we have embarked on two campaigns of this type. The first action took place in the first week of October with the campaign '1 sq.m. for the beaches and the seas'. This initiative involved 54 collectives travelling to 70 coastal points in Spain to provide information on the waste that is left on our beaches. The results led to the identification of 15,000 objects in which cigarette ends, industrial packaging and plastic sheeting were the objects collected the most.

In the same vein, the week of 11-17 December saw the holding of '1 sq.m. for the countryside, forests and scrubland', where 64 groups collected information about the rubbish left at 80 inland points. In total, it was possible to identify around 12,000 objects, from cigarette ends to hygiene products. Once again, cigarette ends were the objects collected the most, followed by wet towels.

The aim of all this is to bring about a change in public behaviour on the understanding that education and prevention form the key to generating individual responsibility towards our natural spaces.

Ultimately, we at LIBERA would like to replace the universal paradigm of "don't touch it, it's rubbish" with "don't throw it away, it's rubbish". Apart from highlighting that we have a problem, we want to show that the solution is in everyone's hands. Because, although it's not our rubbish, it is our problem. And now is the time to act. ■

UNA-UK thanks Ecoembes for its generous support for this publication

LIBERA
NATURALEZA SIN BASURA

SEO BirdLife

ecoembes
El poder de la colaboración

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Ending energy poverty

The SEforAll initiative showed that decentralised solutions are critical to ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy by 2030

By **Sarah Wykes**, Lead Analyst, Climate & Energy, CAFOD

Billions of people live in energy poverty. This does not mean they have no energy – they may use kerosene lamps or candles for lighting, for instance. But it does mean that the energy they have is not sufficient, reliable, affordable or safe enough to meet their basic needs for lighting, heating and cooking, or to support a decent life.

Around the world, 3.8 billion people still cook with solid fuels, such as wood, charcoal or other forms of biomass, on traditional open stoves. Of these people, 1.9 billion live in Asia, making up around half the region's population. Preparing food this way can have serious health impacts – mainly on women, who tend to do the cooking, and on children under five.

According to the World Health Organization, indoor air pollution from cooking kills over four million people each year, making it a bigger killer than unsafe water, poor sanitation and diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria. This is nothing short of a global public health crisis. In addition, women spend hours cooking and collecting fuel, often with children. Access to cleaner cooking fuels, such as liquid petroleum gas, and more efficient stoves could free up time for other activities like education – or even leisure!

◀ **Collecting sugar cane husks for cooking and heating fuel in Charsadda, Pakistan. Indoor air pollution, caused by cooking with solid fuels, is responsible for more than four million deaths annually**

Worldwide, more than one billion people have no electricity. That is one in five people, rising to two out of three in sub-Saharan Africa. Some 87 per cent of these one billion people live in remote, rural areas far from electricity grids, in what is often called 'the last mile'. They are not only marginalised geographically but often disconnected from other services and social and economic opportunities. These multiple forms of marginalisation also apply where poor people live in urban informal settlements.

Increased access

The Millennium Development Goals, the UN's previous development framework, did not include a target on ending energy poverty. But growing recognition among governments and other development actors of energy poverty and its links to other challenges, including gender equality, health and education, led to the adoption of a new Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on this critical issue.

SDG 7 aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. It integrates ending energy poverty with action on climate change through targets on increasing renewable and efficient energy use globally.

Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll) is a precursor initiative to SDG 7, launched by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In 2017, SEforAll quantified the potentially transformative benefits of the 'energy access dividend' across a range of SDGs.

The goals included ending poverty, reducing inequality, ending hunger, ensuring healthy lives, and inclusive and equitable education. The International Energy Agency (IEA) also made the case for increasing energy services for small and micro businesses, including smallholder agriculture, to boost inclusive economic development and lift people out of poverty.

For instance, in India, food production has increased by around 35 per cent since 2000. This is in part because of more modern farming techniques, including electric-powered irrigation.

There has been some good progress on access to electricity, particularly in Asia. But in sub-Saharan Africa, it is not keeping pace with population growth. For cost and political reasons, centralised grids are unlikely to reach the vast majority of the energy poor – those who live in 'the last mile' – by 2030.

Electricity utilities and governments are reluctant to connect new villages where people consume relatively little electricity, and whose political influence is limited. Even once a community has electricity, poor households often face unaffordable connection costs (in some African countries the fees are more than the average monthly income).

> *The development case for ending energy poverty is clear. But a 'business as usual' approach to energy planning and investing by governments, donors and others is a barrier to achieving SDG 7*

Global energy demand

According to SEforAll, the development benefits of energy access could be delivered faster and more cheaply through decentralised electricity systems. These are standalone systems either for individual households (for example, solar lamps or bigger solar home systems and generators) or larger mini-grids for communities.

More often than not, these are powered by renewable energy such as solar, wind or micro-hydro, and can be coupled with innovative payment schemes using mobile banking. The IEA estimates that these are the best option for connecting 70 per cent of people living in rural areas.

This raises the larger question of whether providing everyone with modern energy would exacerbate climate change. The good news is that, according to the IEA, reaching SDG 7 would have minimal impact on global energy demand (a 0.2 per cent increase) in 2030. In addition, this would be more than offset by the reduction in biomass use for cooking, leading to a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. There are also considerable co-benefits for local environmental protection: for example, access to clean cooking solutions can reduce deforestation.

Holistic approach

Thus the development case for ending energy poverty is clear. New decentralised renewable energy (DRE) solutions are available in many places. But a 'business as usual' approach in energy planning and investing by governments, donors and others is a barrier to achieving SDG 7.

If nothing changes, the IEA predicts that there will still be 674 million people without electricity in 2030. Roughly 600 million of these will be in sub-Saharan Africa, mostly in rural areas. On clean cooking, there has been minimal progress and the future is "gloomy", according to the IEA. One reason could be the low political priority given to ending cooking poverty because it mainly impacts women – further highlighting the gender inequalities involved.

So what can be done?

Firstly, we need to address the 'investment gap' for energy access. Globally, finance for energy access is substantially lower than needed. In 2013–14, public and private, international and domestic finance was under half the estimated $45 billion per year needed for universal electrification by 2030. A paltry one per cent went to DRE – the optimal solution for most people living in the last mile.

But this is not only – or even mainly – about more money. Evidence and experience shows that reaching the last mile is particularly challenging because energy poverty is a symptom of a much wider and more complex set of deprivations. Governments and donors need to adopt what is often called a holistic or 'ecosystems' approach to connecting last-mile communities, sometimes referred to as the 'end users' of a service.

Financing and collaboration

In addition to adopting the right polices and regulations, which should include encouraging businesses to deliver DRE products to last-mile communities, more appropriate and flexible use of public and private finance is needed.

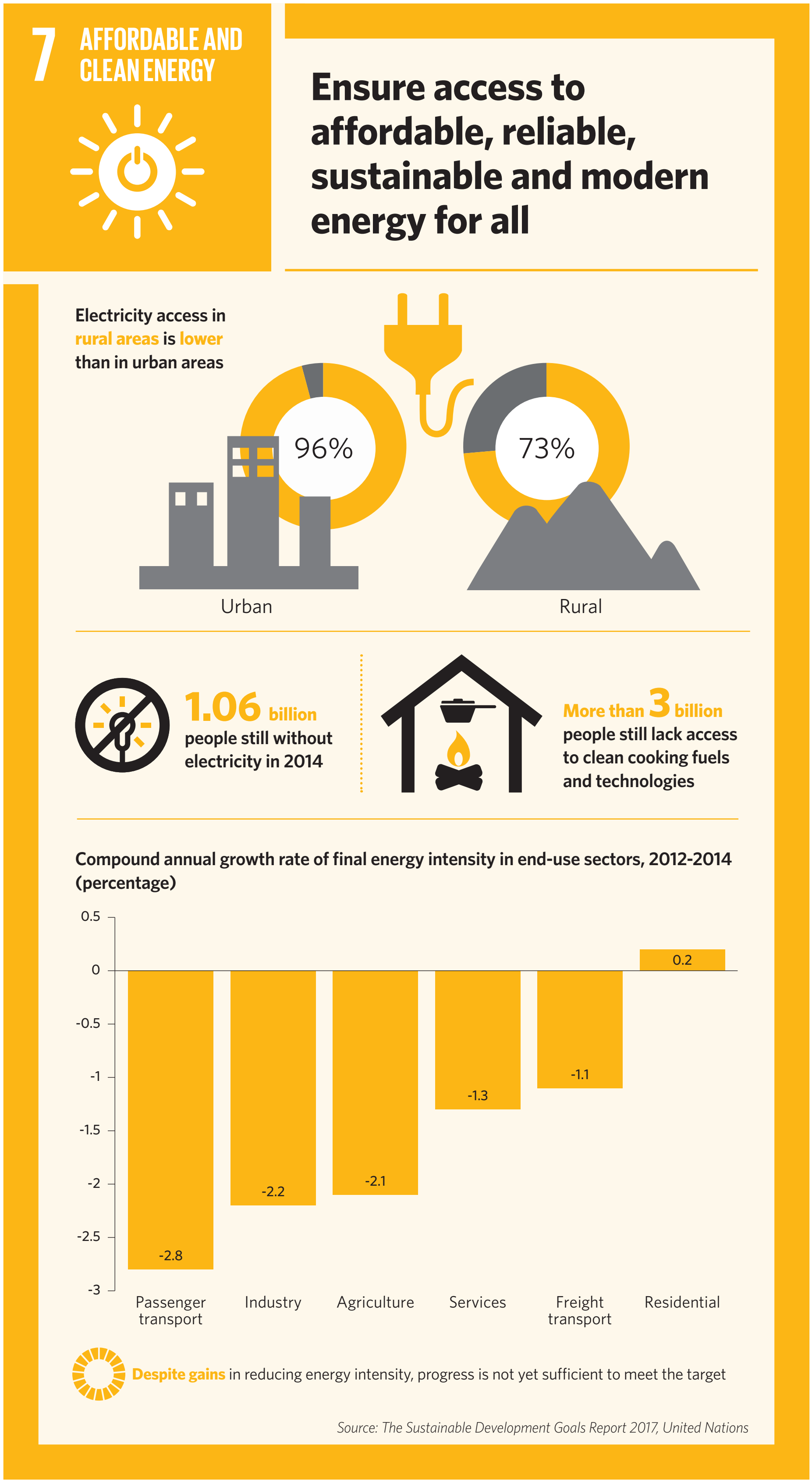
Last-mile end users are not a homogenous group but have differing needs and contexts, and a 'one size fits all' approach will not work. Affordability is crucial. More research is needed on how subsidies could be used to connect the very poorest, or in locations where energy markets are under- or undeveloped.

More joined-up decision-making at the central and local government level is also crucial, working across line ministries (energy, health, agriculture) as well as more coherent donor support.

Greater collaboration with a range of different stakeholders supporting the development of last-mile communities, including civil-society and community-based organisations, can also help. As trusted partners, these can help build community understanding of new energy technologies and products and communicate their development needs.

Finally, energy services must be designed to meet the wider socio-economic needs of end users. They must pay more attention to socio-cultural factors – the habits, attitudes and customs of end users, including gender issues – which can make or break an energy service.

For example, while end users may be able to pay for a solar lighting service, for instance through saving on buying kerosene, this does not mean they necessarily understand its benefits or are willing to pay for it. A less top-down approach and more inclusive planning and delivery is essential if we are to make energy services sustainable – socially and environmentally, as well as financially – and to maximise their development impact. ●



MISSION JUSTICE

UN peacekeepers operate in some of the most fraught regions across the globe. They stand between civilians and the forces of violence, between crisis and peace.

But peacekeeping has a problem.

Sexual violence by UN peacekeepers ruins lives and undermines the trust peacekeeping requires to work effectively. The UN has done commendable work to address the problem, and tackle wider issues of sexual exploitation and abuse. But the impact of these reforms will be limited because of the culture of impunity that pervades peacekeeping.

We believe that sexual violence by UN peacekeepers is a crime that requires a criminal justice response.

We believe it is down to UN Member States to pass resolutions and provide the troops and legal frameworks to enable the UN to turn down contingents that are not willing or able to prosecute peacekeepers for acts of sexual violence.

We believe in Mission Justice.

Take the pledge at ***www.mission-justice.org***

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▲ Children dance at an event organised by the UN's Conduct and Discipline team in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This performance, and the brightly coloured uniforms, are used to raise awareness of how to make a complaint regarding sexual abuse by UN personnel. This kind of innovation is a vital part of bringing the problem under control, but will not be sufficient unless backed up by action from states on accountability

© Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Whose rules?

Does our global system of rules help or hinder global progress, as measured by the implementation of the SDGs?

By **Fred Carver**, Head of Policy, United Nations Association – UK

The problem was neatly summed up by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in a speech at a UNA-UK event in London in May 2017:

"Many people doubt that multilateralism is the solution for the global problems at this time. It is clear that globalisation has

◀ Demonstrators outside a courthouse in New York, protesting against Chevron's attempt to overturn an $18 billion judgment made against it in Ecuador. The case revolved around who bore responsibility for cleaning up contamination created by an oil field in northeastern Ecuador. The long-running case was adopted by many as a symbol of how rules supported exploitation by rich corporations

had a very positive impact on the wellbeing of the overwhelming majority of population of the world.

"But at the same time it is also true that globalisation and technological progress have contributed to increased inequality. People feel abandoned and feel not only that globalisation has worked against them, but that the political establishment – international organisations – have not been able to address their plight or solve their problems."

The idea that our global system of rules and standards is a good thing, that it helps make the world a better place, used to be widely accepted by governments the world over. There has always been an anti-globalisation movement. Parts of that movement have always taken aim at the global system, and since the Berlin demonstrations of 1988 that movement has grown in strength. But the movement was, almost by definition, anti-establishment. This is no longer the case.

True, some governments – the UK in particular – still express public support for the rules-based global system. However, at times, as UNA-UK's 'Global Britain Scorecard' (see overleaf) has shown, the support goes no further than rhetoric. In some cases (such as arms exports to Saudi Arabia in contravention of the spirit of the Arms Trade Treaty, or rhetoric around human rights) the UK's actions have even damaged the system.

But anti-internationalist sentiment, raised high by the tide of populist nationalism, means that this approach is no longer universal.

> *The idea that our global system of rules and standards is a good thing, that it helps make the world a better place, used to be widely accepted*

Also in this section

The United States under President Trump has taken American exceptionalism to new heights. Populist strongmen in India, the Philippines, Turkey and Hungary are more willing than ever to confront and refute global standards and norms. The governments of Sri Lanka and Myanmar have demonstrated that one can commit atrocity crimes and yet not become a pariah state. China has demonstrated ambivalence.

In Russia too the situation is complicated. Russia needs the international system: in particular, it needs its privileged position as a veto-wielding Security Council member to demonstrate to its allies and constituents that it is still a global power – at a time when there is greater cause to doubt that.

As a consequence, there are few nations that are such sticklers for procedure and protocol at the UN as Russia. Nevertheless, there are few nations that have shown such disregard for global standards and norms in the past few years, particularly with respect to Syria.

And so, as the Secretary-General said, our global system is under attack. As he went on to say, if it is to survive then its friends and allies must robustly defend it. But for such a defence to be effective, there is also a need to listen to those who are losing out under the current global system. We need to understand their concerns, and to reform the system to make it work for them.

Lawful good, chaotic evil?

Let's start by asking a question: whose interests does our global system of rules serve? To what extent do rules protect the weak and to what extent do they protect the strong?

While the question might seem simple, the answer is not. It is one historians and philosophers have struggled with for decades. There is no consensus, and that alone should suggest that the answer is somewhere in the middle: not favouring exclusively the weak or the strong, but a bit of both.

On the one hand, one of the primary effects of rules is to limit change and so maintain stability. This is in the interests of the strong. The status quo favours certain groups and so it is in the interest of those groups to maintain that status quo. Rules, standards and norms are helpful in doing so as they limit dynamic forces.

This is why so many of the left behind have turned against the very idea of a global system. It limits the change that would be needed to "solve their problems" in the Secretary-General's phrase.

On the other hand, without rules what remains is too often the idea of 'might makes right'. In a world without limits there are no limits on the ability of the strong to oppress the weak.

As we have seen most explicitly in the development of global human rights standards, rules – and a global system to back them up – can protect the weak against the strong. Indeed, in that sense they're the only thing that can.

This isn't quite a dichotomy. What we see is that rules quite often protect strong institutions and weak people. Our global system is self-supporting, and doesn't willingly or easily give up power to new forces or institutions. Rules prevent and limit their emergence. But equally, rules provide a mechanism for individual protection and restitution. Rules are inflexible, and so they can limit power and protect those without it.

An agenda for all

For most, however, the question is not if a global system of rules has the ability to serve their interests but which rules would do so. A global system that better addressed the needs of those Guterres identified as the losers of globalisation would not have to answer so many existential questions.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have the ability to provide the solution here. They outline an agenda for the kind of world we want come 2030, and in many ways they answer the Secretary-General's challenge.

SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) is specifically about reducing the gap between the haves and the have-nots, while SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) could have transformational effects in what Guterres describes as the "rust belts of the world".

> ***As we have seen most explicitly in the development of global human rights standards, rules – and a global system to back them up – can protect the weak against the strong. In that sense they're the only thing that can***

The question that remains is: can and should the losers of globalisation trust the current system to deliver the SDGs? Let's look at the question in two parts: the UN itself and the partners the UN works with.

The UN

The UN was not founded by the have-nots. Coming out of the Second World War and the 'united nations' of forces opposed to Germany, the organisation and its charter were largely the products of the civil servants of major powers and their allies.

However, the UN almost immediately demonstrated itself to be a natural home for surprisingly subaltern forces. The General Assembly's advocacy on racism and apartheid, and on decolonisation, would prove a thorn in the side of the major powers for at least the next half century.

In part this is a consequence of the UN's nature. The geopolitical situation of 1945 was hardwired into parts of the UN's architecture, most fundamentally in the form of the five permanent seats on the UN Security Council. Yet the very fact that the UN provides a forum where states can meet and talk on terms closer to equality is inevitably going to have the effect of levelling the playing field between states.

The creation of a UN bureaucracy has also amplified the voices of the weak and limited the powers of the strong. The

UNA-UK's Global Britain scorecard

THE UK'S RECORD	SCORE	EVALUATION
RESPONSIBLE ARMS TRADING	RED	The UK's practice of selling weapons to regimes with bad human rights records is undermining the Arms Trade Treaty. Civilians are paying the cost.
EFFECTIVE UN PEACEKEEPING	GREEN	The UK has made a significant contribution to UN peace-keeping. It must now encourage others to follow suit and support effective reforms.
PREVENTING ATROCITIES	AMBER	The UK's record is mixed – as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it bears particular responsibility for preventing genocide, ethnic cleansing and other atrocities.
MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT	RED	The UK is failing in its commitment to work for multilateral disarmament at a time of increasing nuclear threats.
RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS	AMBER	The UK has largely been a positive force on the UN Human Rights Council. But inflammatory rhetoric and disdain for human rights by some politicians have marred its record.
SUPPORT FOR OVERSEAS AID	GREEN	The UK is a generous aid donor. Care must be taken to ensure aid goes where it is most needed – including underfunded UN humanitarian programmes.
TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE	AMBER	The UK has ratified the Paris Climate Agreement but concerns are growing that the UK has de-prioritised climate action and is not on course to meet emissions targets.

bureaucracy maintains standards and fights against selectivity. It has also evolved its own personality, due in no small part to the kind of people it has attracted: internationalists, idealists, misfits.

This should suggest that the UN is more than the servant of globalisation's winners, and is capable of delivering for the losers and have-nots. Whether it will or not will most likely come down to whether it is allowed to by those it works with – and for.

The UN's partners

If states, the private sector and civil society value the rules-based international system, then they must allow it to succeed for all.

The conventional argument is that these various players should each value the system due to self-interest. Our system of rules keeps the peace, improves communication, and ensures a level of reliability and predictability. This all has benefits for trade and for our global prosperity.

Unfortunately, it is not so simple. There is money to be made and power to be gained from war and chaos. While very few people would truly benefit from a complete collapse of the global order, flaunting the rules does pay for some. UK companies receive more than a billion pounds a year from arms sales to Saudi Arabia. For too many actors, viewed purely through the lens of game theory, there is more to be gained from chaotic equilibrium than from order.

But that is not a strategy for the long term. It is no longer possible for states or companies to cherry-pick the parts of the global system they like and ignore the rest. The Secretary-General's point was that our global order has become too fragile to allow that. Under pressure like never before it cannot bear the burden of many more challenges to global standards or many more populations without a stake in the system.

In our interconnected world, our every action has knock-on effects for other sectors, industries, stakeholders and people. It was for this reason that the SDGs were designed to cover such a broad and interlocking agenda. Virtually all of Agenda 2030 needs to succeed if any of it is to succeed. And it needs to work for virtually all if it is to work for anyone. ●

Peace is at the heart of sustainable development

Of all the threats to sustainable development, conflict is one of the most intractable and damaging. Local partners and detailed understanding of root causes are key to constructive intervention

© UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

By **Summer Brown**,
Director – Peacebuilding Advisory Unit,
International Alert

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provide a comprehensive and holistic framework for addressing global challenges. SDG 16 seeks to promote 'peaceful and inclusive societies'. In places of conflict and fragility, peace and (SDG 16) must be integrated into the approaches that we use to implement all the other Global Goals, if they are to be effective and sustainable.

The recent UN and World Bank Group report *Pathways for Peace* noted that by 2030 more than half the world's poor will be living in countries affected by high levels of violence. It also dispelled the myth that development in and of itself leads to more peaceful societies. In fact, there is often no linear relationship between the two.

Fragility and conflict plagues us across the world, from the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar to war in Yemen. Fragility and poverty are on the rise, even in more stable nations such as the UK.

A 2017 report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that more than one in five of the UK population are currently living in poverty. We have an important challenge on our hands – one that is for all of us to address if we want to progress the SDGs. So the real challenge for us is to create a symbiotic relationship between SDG 16 and the others, so that we can ensure the sustainability of our development investments.

In its 2015 *States of Fragility* report, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stated that we are unlikely to eliminate extreme poverty (SDG 1) unless we address conflict. One could conclude that any funding that goes towards development without an integrated approach that also addresses the drivers of conflict is a poor investment.

On the more positive side, a more integrated approach could indeed lead to more peaceful and stable societies.

Understanding the context

From local to national to regional to global, context matters for an integrated approach. International Alert's research on violent extremism in Syria, for example, shows that this involves a complex interplay of psychological, social, political and ideological factors, as well as cultural and identity issues.

A failure to appreciate this complexity could mean that we ask the wrong questions and consequently take the wrong approaches and implement the wrong activities. It is therefore critical to listen and understand before we act.

And this should go even further, to include the full duration of our engagement. The complexity of issues, from the communities where we intervene to the funding structures of procurement, needs to be fully appreciated before intervening. Equally important is the ability to adapt programming, adjusting to contextual changes as one implements, to ensure that interventions continue to deliver results.

So yes – it is useful to have goals and targets as agreed upon through an arduous and important process of political negotiation. But our interventions must flow first and foremost from understanding the context before choosing a goal or goals to work on in an integrated manner.

> ***It is useful to have goals and targets... but our interventions must flow first and foremost from understanding the context before choosing a goal or goals to work on in an integrated manner***

Know what you do well – and do it

Every SDG is important. To achieve one, we must also move forward on the others. However, we all have different roles to play – from donor, to international non-governmental organisation (INGO), national government and local civil society. If an organisation knows what it does well, does it and pushes itself to innovate, it will most likely advance in its vision.

But each of us must invest in measuring what we do well and how we improve upon it. With the breadth of potential work that one could do, we as organisations suffer from being drawn in too many directions and diluting our impact by trying to do too much with too little. We often oversell to donors at the proposal stage and under-deliver in the implementation stage.

For this to change, we need to be clearer on what is actually feasible and the time that it takes to achieve results. Donors, too, must be ready to back proposals and interventions that are realistic over ones that overpromise sweeping changes in what are often, at most, five-year interventions.

Clarity of mandate and understanding of one's competitive advantage is important – as is innovation that may fail but that may also be successful. Donors can and should in many cases drive agendas. In that same vein, when INGOs and local partners coordinate, they can drive impact and add up to more than the sum of their parts.

Know what you don't do well – and partner up

Partnerships matter perhaps more than ever because of the complexities of the issues in fragile contexts. The trend is for there to be many areas where there are humanitarian, development and peacebuilding needs in one context.

In a recent address, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed listed the myriad issues in the Sahel region – from violent terrorism to extreme poverty, climate

◀ A Rwandan peacekeeper serving with the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) on patrol in the Muslim enclave of PK5 in Bangui

change, displacement, human trafficking and drugs. "Peace, security, development and human rights are intertwined and mutually reinforcing in the Sahel, as everywhere," she said. "Unless we address the root causes of these interconnected challenges, their impact will continue to increase and the repercussions will spread."

These intertwined issues are unfortunately plaguing not only the Sahel, but also numerous places where International Alert and many others work. These issues are stacked one on top of the other, creating a Venn diagram of such complexity that to untwine it would take decades when what is needed is immediate action.

> ***Without understanding the root causes at the same time as the most immediate needs, interventions will be short-lived and short-sighted***

This is often the clash between humanitarian actors and development and peacebuilding actors. We all recognise a great need to act, but without understanding the root causes at the same time as the most immediate needs, interventions will be short-lived and short-sighted. But being in such close proximity to one another is an opportunity for holistic approaches – if we understand that we need one another to be successful.

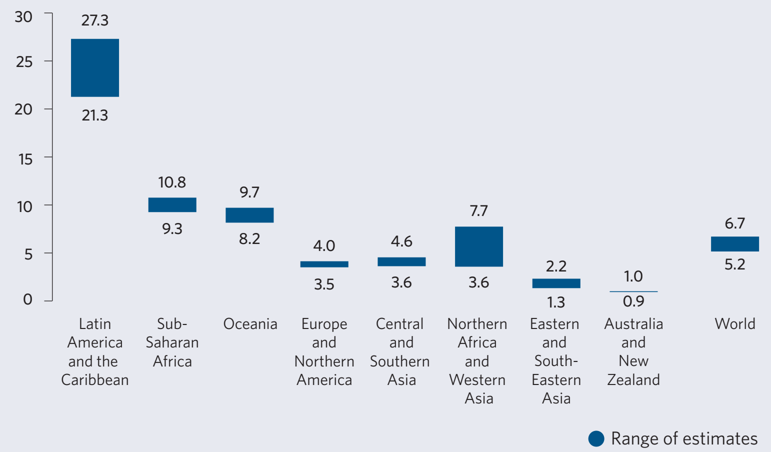
Local partners are key to short-term access and long-term change because they are most likely to remain in the places that are their homes, countries and regions. So, if done well, an investment with or in a local partner is a wiser one. In understanding who they are as organisations and change-makers, we can find ways to complement one another. After all, we all want a better, more equitable world.

The paths to peace are numerous. With a lot of realism, and a dash of optimism, we must work together in an integrated manner to achieve them. ●

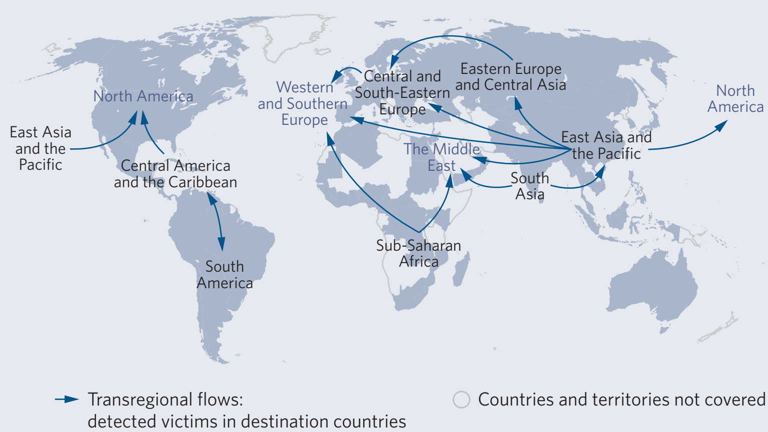
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, 2015 or latest year



Main destinations of transregional trafficking flows and their significant origins, 2012-2014



While trafficking affects all regions, many transnational flows involve the movement of victims from lower- to higher-income countries. More than a quarter of all trafficking victims detected in 2014 were children. In sub-Saharan Africa and Central America and the Caribbean, the majority of detected victims were children

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

© Taha Jawashi/AFP/Getty Images

Harnessing migration

Discussions on a global migration compact provide an opportunity to integrate this important poverty reduction tool into development policy and practice

By **Marta Foresti**, Managing Director, and **Jessica Hagen-Zanker**, Migration Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Migration is one of the defining features of the 21st century. It contributes significantly to all aspects of economic and social development everywhere, and as such will be key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Different levels and opportunities of development can be a driver of migration. At the same time, migration can increase development and investment for those who stay, fill labour gaps in host countries and contribute to development in so-called 'transit' countries.

It is a strong poverty reduction tool – not just for migrants themselves, but also for their families and their wider communities. As such, it has an important role to play in realising the Global Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

But migration can also have negative impacts on development, and though the relationship between the two is increasingly recognised, it remains under-explored. It is essential to understand the impacts of migration on the achievement of all SDGs, and – equally – the impact this achievement

▲ **A detention centre on the outskirts of Tripoli, Libya, which holds migrants who were attempting to cross to Europe. In addition to the dangers of the journey itself, migrants face the risk of exploitation or even slavery if they reach their destination**

© Darren Ornitz/Reuters

▲ **A protest outside Trump Tower in New York. US politics has been polarised by President Donald Trump's phase-out of his predecessor's policy to allow illegal immigrants, who arrived as minors, to apply for work permits and defer deportation**

will have on future migration patterns. As the global compact for migration (GCM) is being negotiated at the UN, it is more important than ever to understand these relationships and their implications for policy.

The 2030 Agenda is well placed to reflect and exploit the links between migration and development. For migration, the SDGs represent an incredibly important step in development policymaking. The global targets are the first to recognise migration formally in international development frameworks and processes. This highlights the importance of migration as an issue, and cements it as a factor that can contribute to development and poverty reduction.

Crucially, the 2030 Agenda has the necessary political 'traction' – in many UN Member States and within the multilateral system. The impacts of migration can be felt at all stages of a migrant's journey: in origin, transit and destination countries. As such, migration requires coordination between different sectors and multiple actors, as well as enhanced coherence across policies. This kind of coordination is only possible with high-level buy-in, something the SDGs have already secured.

By explicitly referring to migration, the 2030 Agenda recognises the economic value of migrants and the challenges they face. But the myriad ways in which migration interacts with development are not captured in the goals. While migration and remittances are covered by several targets, the SDGs are otherwise silent on this critical issue.

Yet migration is relevant to many of the other SDGs. If countries are to achieve them, they need to consider the impact of migration at all levels and on all outcomes, beyond the migration-specific targets. Efforts have been made to fill this gap. Recent research at ODI shows that migration is not a development 'problem' to be solved, but a mechanism that can contribute to the achievement of many of the goals.

Linking migration, development and the 2030 Agenda

Based on this recent research, four conclusions emerge on the relationship between migration, development and the SDGs:

1. Migration is a powerful poverty reduction tool, which can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs

Labour migration can reduce poverty for migrants themselves, their families, and their origin and host countries. Migrants and their families benefit from increased income and knowledge, which allows them to spend more on basic needs, access education and health services, and make investments. For female migrants, increased economic resources can improve their autonomy and socio-economic status.

In origin countries, migration can lead to increased wages and greater economic growth through higher incomes, spending and investment of migrant households. In host countries, migrants can fill labour gaps and contribute to services and the fiscal balance.

However, migration does not always achieve its full potential: poor urban migrants often work in the informal sector where the rewards of migration are lower. The high costs involved in different stages of the migration process reduce financial payoffs, and restrictions on mobility prevent those who would benefit the most from migrating in a regular and orderly way. Large and unexpected migration flows can also disrupt education systems, disadvantage migrant and refugee children, and create tensions in host communities.

2. The specific risks and vulnerabilities of migrants are often overlooked

The risks and vulnerabilities of migrants throughout the migration process are often overlooked in development processes. Migrants experience both migration-specific vulnerabilities – that is, those experienced by migrants only – and migration-intensified vulnerabilities, when migration exacerbates a disadvantage that can be experienced by all. An example of the former is female migrants working in less regulated and less visible sectors being at greater risk of exploitation and abuse, including trafficking. An example of the latter is that migrants are more likely to live in informal settlements, lacking access to health, education, water and social protection services.

3. The implementation of existing programmes is often weak for migrants

Access to basic services, such as health education and social protection, is key for migrants' livelihoods and development prospects. While in some cases migrants are able to access these services through existing or specifically designed programmes, their implementation is often weak and levels of uptake are low. A number of factors contribute to this: limited capacity in implementing institutions; funding gaps; a lack of political support; and reluctance among migrants to participate.

For instance, while migrants in Thailand are covered by the country's universal healthcare scheme, relatively few migrants take advantage of it. This is due to language and cultural barriers, fear of discrimination, fear of losing employment due to absence, and poor employer compliance with the scheme.

In principle, three quarters of the world's migrants are entitled to some form of social protection through a multilateral, bilateral or unilateral agreement. But in practice, enforcement of these agreements is poor, implementation weak and take-up by migrants low. Likewise, while often eligible for education, immigrant students tend to face greater difficulties than their host-country peers in accessing education and achieving good learning outcomes.

4. There are major data gaps

Finally, there are significant data gaps. Data are often not disaggregated by migrant status or comparable across different groups and countries. As a result, we do not know the share of migrants actually able to participate in social protection programmes, access health services or attend school.

The collection and monitoring of this disaggregated data, accompanied by migrant-specific indicators, is vital to understand the vulnerabilities and needs of migrants. Only then can governments and non-governmental organisations design migrant-specific and sensitive support.

Unfortunately, there are no internationally standardised approaches for collecting this data, and only limited coordination of the data that different actors have already collected. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the agreement of a new GCM offer opportunities to address this important gap.

Implications for migration and development policies

Development policies and programmes can be part of a comprehensive strategy to better manage migration and make the most of its economic and social benefits. To do this, migration must be 'mainstreamed' in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We need to identify and highlight the links, opportunities and challenges related to migration under specific goals and targets. Policymakers need to consider, measure and take account of migration to harness its positive benefits and reduce potential challenges.

The multiple facets of the relationship between migration and development offer concrete policy entry points to help achieve the SDGs – including in specific sectors, such as health and education. For instance, the International Labour Organization's decent work agenda is highly relevant to migration. Any programming as part of this agenda should consider the specific vulnerabilities of migrants in the workplace and the specific barriers migrants face in accessing workplace social protection schemes.

The links between migration and development also have implications for migration policy and practice – particularly the GCM, which will be agreed by the UN Member States at the end of 2018. After years of debate that saw limited contact and collaboration between those working on migration and those working on development, we are now at an important crossroads.

The GCM represents a unique moment of opportunity to put the nexus between migration and development on the global policy agenda. The SDGs, meanwhile, provide a holistic and comprehensive framework to support this nexus. It will be important not to limit the focus to specific targets on migration and remittances, but rather to consider the role of human mobility in achieving all the goals. And, while the GCM framework and aspirations are global and grounded in international cooperation, actions need to be led locally and rooted in the specific contexts, countries, regions and markets where particular development opportunities and challenges exist. ●

An extended version of this text was published in September 2017 as part of ODI's work on Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Anticipating disasters

To create better resilience and response to disasters, international organisations must ensure their efforts are designed around and work with local communities

By **Walter Cotte,** Regional Director, Americas, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

In 2017, major disasters were seldom out of the headlines. The US experienced as many billion-dollar disasters as in any other year, tying with 2011 for the most ever. When we think about how we might anticipate disasters in the Americas (including the Caribbean), we need to think about three distinct types:

1. Permanent/chronic disasters

These disasters correlate to high levels of vulnerability in particular countries. This can be due to a variety of interrelated factors, such as inequitable distribution of resources, lack of (or weak) social welfare at community level, or drug and gang-related violence.

The Americas region receives almost a third of the world's migrants – including people from Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This puts enormous pressure on both local and national systems across the Americas, in countries that are often not equipped to deal with their own internal pressures. To compound this, migrants and internally displaced people often face exclusion or stigma – a fact that is often conveniently ignored by the rest of the world.

2. Recurrent/seasonal disasters

These disasters are caused by extremes of climate – both hot and cold. We are seeing more intense floods during normal rainy seasons, such as those experienced in Peru in March 2017. At the other extreme, unusually long dry seasons in Central America are provoking serious droughts, while the risk of forest fires in North America is on the rise. Meanwhile, the Caribbean cyclone season is generating a far greater than typical number of storms. In just a one month period in August–September 2017, seven named storms were registered – five of them at category three or above.

3. Emerging/surging disasters

These disasters relate to sudden emergencies such as earthquakes (there were six measuring 6.0 or more on the Richter scale in the Americas during 2017, three of them in Mexico in September) and outbreaks of disease (such as Zika and yellow fever in 2017). These are the disasters for which we focus our disaster preparedness and mitigation, through the establishment of early-warning systems and contingency plans. But the level of anticipation will always be limited.

Resources for providing help when disasters occur are often available at the global level... Yet these global systems often run counter to the local programmes working at the 'coal face' of disaster recovery

Given the increasing frequency of these destructive phenomena, what are the implications for disaster risk reduction?

First, there is the issue of how to meet short- and medium-term needs, using vertical or horizontal intervention approaches. The vertical approach is linked to meeting the interests of donors and the foreign policy objectives of governments, with a strategic focus on creating new opportunities for business or enhancing services and/or products provision. This approach is very rigid and strict.

The horizontal approach – applied by humanitarian actors such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and development agencies – seeks to empower local networks and systems through a community-based resilience model. Both humanitarian actors and development agencies work as partners with communities, strengthening existing local capacities or building new ones.

Finding a way to successfully combine these two approaches is the permanent dilemma of development actors. A strategy adopted by the Red Cross is its 'One Billion Coalition for Resilience'. This initiative, designed to scale up community and civic action on building resilience, will help to streamline community-based programmes, developing feasible and flexible solutions.

The interplay between global and local action within disaster management and response strategies also generates much debate. Resources for providing help when disasters occur are often available at the global level, and are generated and distributed through complex international structures. Yet these global systems often run counter to the local programmes working at the 'coal face' of disaster recovery.

The IFRC is therefore developing and strengthening the leadership of our national societies – the Red Cross members in each country – both locally and nationally. We are focusing on: risk management and governance; good administration and finance; creation of sufficient voluntary

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▲ **Havana, Cuba in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, which left a trail of devastation through the Caribbean to Florida**

networks at the local, national and regional levels; and stronger inclusion of communities and community leaders. An open, gender-based approach provides empowerment in all the activities we implement.

We will use an information management system to identify the needs and capacities of each territory, when it comes to social, health, food security, shelter and, above all, generating subsistence. The Red Cross offers many tools that can be used in conjunction with local systems in support of this agenda: our aim is to be an institution that plays a neutral but unifying role.

Finally, it is important to create a much stronger way of managing resources that would allows us to create affordable, practical and expandable solutions in the region. We strongly believe that the integration of international actors such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent – an international movement with a presence in 190 countries, 85 million followers and 17 million volunteers – will help to generate waves of positive influence. We want to see good practice replicated throughout the world, adapted to each of the contexts of the regions and territories.

If we want to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we must concentrate our efforts on addressing institutional and thematic gaps. IFRC is committed – in both the Americas and the wider world – to:

- Increase and promote the auxiliary role of the Red Cross and other organisations to support states in fulfilling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the first attempt to relate state action on disasters to the SDGs.
- Promote disaster response that focuses on meeting local needs through local intervention. Where we have resources, intention, training and equipment, we will integrate with a country's own response processes so that they can perform their first response more efficiently.
- Promote community-based resilience through integrated programmes. Resilience fundamentally requires that communities are the owners of their destiny and that they develop their own capacities and their own solutions that can be sustainable in the long term.
- Generate systematised networks and rosters of capacities, and provide peer-to-peer support mechanisms between different countries. We want to promote this interaction between countries through innovation and social media. We want to generate positive activities that in turn will suggest solutions to the problems of disaster risk management, health provision, social exclusion, discrimination and human trafficking prevention.
- A model of transparency and accountability. We want to emphasise the collective responsibility of the community, including our volunteers, but also the specific responsibilities of the governance and administration networks of the Red Cross. The model must combat – with zero tolerance – issues related to mismanagement of resources, people, corruption and, above all, abuse of human beings who work with us or those we intend to serve.

Red Cross interventions are based on positive, concrete actions that generate a real impact in the community. This is how we want to prepare for the worst: knowing what might happen, preventing disasters, dealing with them effectively and generating innovative processes to improve future recovery work. Ultimately, preparing for disasters requires simple and practical knowledge at the community level and systems that are inclusive. ●

How to combat the NCD epidemic

Despite long-standing international commitments, progress to reduce noncommunicable diseases has been frustratingly slow. With governments due to meet again about NCDs in 2018, how can they tackle this growing global problem?

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By **Ala Alwan**, Regional Director Emeritus, Eastern Mediterranean Region, World Health Organization (WHO)

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) – like heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes – are now the leading causes of mortality worldwide. They are responsible for around 40 million deaths every year – about 70 per cent of global mortality.

Often, NCDs affect people during the most productive period of their life. WHO estimates that about 17 million people die from NCDs each year before the age of 70. Of those, more than nine million people die before they reach 60.

More than 40 per cent of deaths due to NCDs are caused by cardiovascular diseases, and more than 20 per cent by cancers. Meanwhile, the incidence of diabetes is increasing worldwide, affecting more than 425 million adults. In many countries, half of people remain undiagnosed and untreated until their condition progresses and they develop complications like cardiovascular diseases. Diabetes and high blood pressure are in turn the main causes of end-stage kidney disease. Left undiagnosed and untreated, diabetes is also a leading cause of vascular disease, lower extremity amputation and visual impairment and blindness.

NCDs particularly affect people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). About 80 per cent of deaths due to NCDs occur in LMICs. In some countries, up to 50 per cent of these deaths occur prematurely. Chronic lung disease, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma, are an increasing problem in LMICs. Asthma is the most common chronic condition in children, affecting millions worldwide.

NCDs cause poverty, and poverty contributes to NCDs. The loss of productivity and family income due to premature death, disability and morbidity has a negative impact on socio-economic development, and it impedes poverty-reduction initiatives.

The socio-economic consequences of NCDs are compounded by the high costs of treatment, which represent a serious financial risk to people with NCDs, and their families. It is estimated that every year more than 100 million people are driven below the poverty line because of catastrophic health expenditures. Health systems in low-income countries and many middle-income countries are overwhelmed by the increasing healthcare costs of these conditions.

NCDs share common preventable risk factors related to lifestyle, such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, and air pollution. Tobacco use causes cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and many cancers, and is estimated to kill around seven million people every year. Based on current trends, that number will rise to eight million by 2030.

Unhealthy dietary trends are a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and many common cancers. Obesity is increasing in all countries. Most adolescents and a substantial proportion of adults, particularly in high-income countries, are insufficiently physically active. This puts them at increased risk of NCDs, and of overall mortality.

Alcohol-related harm, which can result from increased alcohol consumption and certain drinking patterns, is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease and several cancers. Meanwhile, air pollution is emerging as an important public health problem and an underlying cause for more than five million deaths a year. Air pollution causes a variety of health problems, particularly heart disease, chronic lung disease and cancers.

Global initiatives to combat NCDs

In May 2000, the World Health Assembly (WHA) endorsed a global strategy for the prevention and control of NCDs. The strategy noted that the rapid rise of NCDs represents one of the major challenges to global development in the 21st century. The strategy predicted that by the year 2020, NCDs are expected to account for 73 per cent of deaths, compared with 60 per cent in 1998.

WHA's strategy was based on an extensive review of evidence and international experience conducted between 1998 and 2000. The strategic directions adopted were guided by the lessons learned from existing knowledge. The strategy focused on the four most prominent groups of NCDs (mentioned above) that were responsible for about 80 per cent of premature NCD deaths. Action to prevent the vast majority of these deaths and the overall disease burden of NCDs should therefore focus on controlling the risk factors in an integrated manner, and providing better healthcare for those with already established conditions.

It is estimated that every year more than 100 million people are driven below the poverty line because of catastrophic health expenditures

The strategy had three components:

- a surveillance component to map NCDs and to track and analyse their behavioural risk factors, as well as their social, economic and political determinants, with particular reference to poor and disadvantaged populations;
- a prevention component to reduce the level of exposure to the common risk factors and their determinants;
- a management component to strengthen healthcare for people with NCDs and reinforce the capacity of health systems to respond to the increasing needs.

The strategy also emphasised the critical importance of other arms of government. It stated that more health gains in terms of prevention are achieved by influencing

◀ A child smokes after primary school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Smoking among Indonesian children has been rising, with an estimated 20 million child smokers under the age of 10. Globally, tobacco is estimated to kill seven million people prematurely each year

public health policies in domains like trade, finance, agriculture, food and urban development than by changing health policy alone. Tackling issues outside the health sector and placing prevention and health promotion high on the public agenda was a major strategic direction.

In 2003, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was endorsed by Member States and became the first international treaty negotiated under WHO's umbrella. It was also one of the most widely and rapidly ratified treaties in the history of the UN.

Work on developing technical guidance to reduce the key risk factors continued. In 2004, the WHA endorsed the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. Then, in 2010, the WHA adopted the strategy on the harmful use of alcohol, following extensive consultation with Member States and other stakeholders.

The work done in implementing the global strategy, coupled with mounting evidence of the socio-economic consequences of NCDs, and increasing recognition of the critical role of governments in addressing the epidemic, led the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to host the first high-level meeting on NCDs in September 2011. It was a major breakthrough. Attended by 34 heads of state and government, it was only the second time the UNGA had met on a health issue. World leaders adopted a political declaration that outlined the actions to be taken to tackle NCDs at international and national levels.

The political leaders acknowledged that the global burden of NCDs constitutes one of the major challenges to socio-economic development and threatens the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. The declaration considered that responding to the challenge is a whole-of-government and whole-of-society responsibility. It adopted a comprehensive list of recommendations and measures that countries committed to take to respond to the global challenge. The commitments covered four broad areas of action: governance; surveillance and monitoring; reducing risk factors; and healthcare.

To realise the commitments made in 2011, the WHA endorsed a plan with nine voluntary targets for achievement in 2025. Countries were urged to develop their own national targets for 2025 based on the nine global targets, while taking into account their own circumstances and needs.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent another important milestone in the global struggle against NCDs, as they include a specific target (3.4) on NCDs. All countries are expected to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by a third by 2030.

The menu of policy options recommended in the global strategy plan and the UNGA political declaration represents a comprehensive roadmap for action. It consists of a set of prioritised interventions that are evidence based, cost effective, high impact and affordable in all countries, irrespective of income. The interventions, sometimes called 'public health best buys' include: implementing tobacco control measures like taxation, health warnings, bans on advertising and smoking in public places; increasing excise taxes on alcoholic drinks, and restricting advertising and the physical availability of alcohol in retail stores; reducing salt intake through reformulation of food products, awareness, public education, and front-of-pack labelling; treatment of high blood pressure and diabetes, drug therapy and counselling to people who have had a heart attack or stroke or with a high risk of cardiovascular disease; and early detection of common curable cancers.

In July 2014, the UNGA convened the second high-level meeting on NCDs in New York. The objective was to assess the progress made by countries in implementing the recommendations of the 2011 political declaration and the best buys. The meeting concluded that progress made by countries and other stakeholders in implementing the roadmap was insufficient and highly uneven. This slow progress is confirmed by the ongoing assessment conducted by WHO in collaboration with countries.

The lack of adequate funding is particularly serious in low and lower-middle-income countries where the needs are greatest and the NCD burden is progressively accelerating

Why such slow progress?

Several factors impede countries from scaling up actions to make real investments in the most promising and proven interventions. First, there is weak political will in translating the declared commitments into sustained investments, and in financing NCD programmes.

This is despite the increased awareness generated by the 2011 UNGA meeting and its declaration. The lack of adequate action is seen across the board: in countries, international agencies (including UN agencies) and civil-society networks, as well as funding agencies and philanthropic organisations. The lack of adequate funding is particularly serious in low and lower-middle-income countries where the needs are greatest and the NCD burden is progressively accelerating. NCDs unfortunately remain a low priority for donors, and in development assistance for health.

Second, despite the clear vision and sound roadmap, many countries lack the technical know-how, experience and capacity to turn commitments into action. These countries need substantial technical support from specialised UN agencies and global health institutions. Yet, support is often fragmented and grossly insufficient. Training and other forms of capacity-building initiatives for LMICs remain limited.

Third is the fact that low-income and many middle-income countries have serious weaknesses in their health systems and their ability to respond to the NCD challenge. Universal health coverage (UHC) – another

▶ A patient's tongue is photographed during a visit to a diabetes specialist in Beijing, China. Over the last 30 years, the trend to more unhealthy diets has led to an upsurge in the number of diabetes sufferers in China

© David Gray/Reuters

SDG target that countries are expected to reach by 2030 – will hopefully help to address this gap, but only if countries make the right investments to achieve it. People with NCDs should have access to essential preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative services without being subjected to financial hardship.

Strengthening health systems is a challenge that countries and the international community need to tackle. The UN SDG monitoring scheme includes specific indicators for UHC that should provide an objective assessment of countries' progress. Every country can make a difference in addressing gaps in areas like the health workforce, access to technologies and medicines, health information systems and financing. But low-income countries in particular will need support from technical agencies and the international community.

Intersectoral action is essential. Engagement of non-health sectors is often weak. Unless countries acknowledge NCDs as a threat to sustainable development, and until they seriously consider prevention measures as a whole-government obligation, many of the high-impact measures will not be adequately implemented. The tension that often exists between health policies and the policies of other sectors like trade, agriculture and industry is difficult to reconcile without high-level, cross-government engagement.

Finally, there are some opposing forces. The commercial determinants of health can impede action. The business community is an important stakeholder, and the private sector can make a decisive role in investing in health and in supporting preventive initiatives. However, certain industries (particularly tobacco) clearly damage health and oppose healthy lifestyle options. Other industries do not meet their commitments; some impede preventive action through their marketing and other practices. The corporate sector must do more to align its practices with public health policies. It should be accountable for meeting its commitments as a stakeholder in reducing the NCD burden. At the same time, governments should monitor the commercial determinants and take appropriate actions when necessary – like regulatory or fiscal measures to protect their populations' health.

Hopes for the third high-level meeting?

The UNGA will hold its third high-level meeting in 2018. The world expects this meeting to provide an opportunity and recipe to scale up action against NCDs. There is no need for a new vision or a new roadmap. What is needed is a compact of countries and other stakeholders to reinvigorate consensus on more effective actions to remove the existing barriers and constraints.

UN Member States will begin negotiating the outcome document soon – in New York in June of this year. When they do, they will need to consider innovative options to tackle existing obstacles based on evidence and on concrete, transparent and objective analysis. They will also need to discuss a robust, transparent and realistic accountability mechanism to monitor progress beyond 2018.

The problems impeding action are complicated and thorny, and the potential differences and interests between countries can be extremely challenging. Reconciling and resolving differences will require talented negotiation skills. But much can be achieved, and effective solutions reached, with the strong commitment of countries, support of technical agencies, and by focusing on priorities during this important negotiation phase. ●

1 WHO (2015), "How WHO will report in 2017 to the United Nations General Assembly on the progress achieved in the implementation of commitments included in the 2011 UN Political Declaration and 2014 UN Outcome Document on NCDs" (technical note), www.who.int/nmh/events/2015/technical-note-en.pdf?ua=1

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Managing water for a secure future

Fresh water is at the core of the global development agenda. We need to understand and accept the true value of water if we are to achieve long-term security and human wellbeing

By **Maggie White**, Manager, International Policy, Stockholm International Water Institute

The ability to cope with current and future stresses on freshwater resources is a core challenge to achieving sustainable development.

The stresses are many and varied: accelerating urbanisation; growing demand from industry, energy and agriculture; climate change; and current and emerging pollutants, to name just some. Our continuing inefficient use of fresh water, degradation of aquatic ecosystems and disruption of critical freshwater services intensify this challenge.

Fresh water connects economies, ecosystems and social systems at local, national, regional and global levels. Hydrological resources and risks determine the feasibility of environmental, social and economic goals at these different scales.

Having a clear strategy and commitment on water is essential to deliver not only the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but also the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the New Urban Agenda. Water connects these agendas by interlinking targets and enabling an integrated and efficient approach to implementation.

◀ **Children carrying clean water from a source built by UNICEF in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Water underpins success on arguably all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Achieving SDG 6, and the other water-related targets in the 2030 Agenda, would provide enormous co-benefits across the human development endeavour: transportation, industry, agriculture, health, education, energy, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and gender equality.

For the Paris Agreement, most of the countries that submitted their national plans, known as nationally determined contributions, highlighted the importance of water as their foremost adaptation priority. Ninety per cent of disasters or manifestations of climate change are related to water, such as floods, storms and droughts. Water is an imperative for disaster risk reduction, resilience-building and risk management, and has been recognised as such in the World Economic Forum's annual *Global Risk Report* for several years.

Water security

Many human activities put stress on water security. These include: imbalances in urban planning; the use of watershed and catchment areas; the non-recognition of ecosystems' values; and inefficient supply of water-related services, compounded by increasing populations and demand in cities with high rates of growth and informal settlements. How cities are able to cope with these stresses depends on the resilience of their approach to water management.

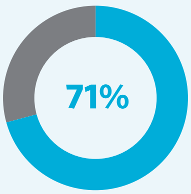
This is illustrated in the present water crisis in Cape Town, and the city's coordinated response (see box overleaf). The New Urban Agenda recognises that sustainable, resilient cities depend upon resilient freshwater systems. It also acknowledges that the interdependencies between rural, urban and coastal areas require an integrated, basin-scale approach to freshwater management.

The measures put in place today to manage current and future stresses will determine the level of resilience and wellbeing of the citizens of every single country in the medium and long term.

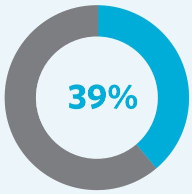
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

5.2 billion people used a "safely managed" drinking water service in 2015



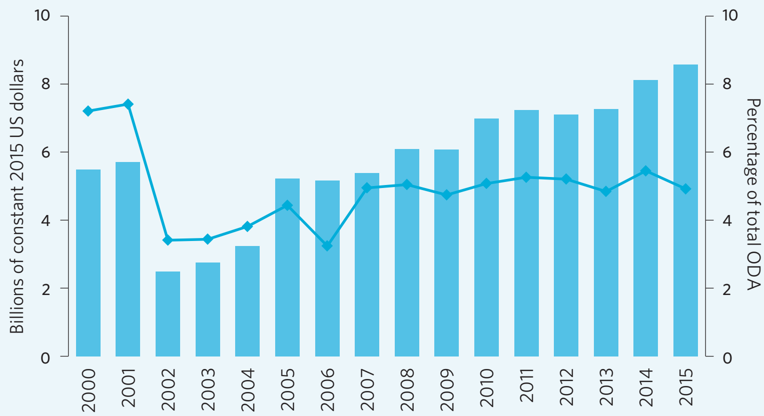
2.9 billion people used a "safely managed" sanitation service in 2015



More than 2 billion people are affected by water stress

892 million people still practised open defecation in 2015

Annual water sector ODA disbursements, 2000-2015 (billions of constant 2015 US dollars) and water sector ODA as a percentage of total ODA disbursements, 2000-2015 (percentage)



Annual water- and sanitation-related ODA disbursements (left axis)

Water- and sanitation-related ODA as a percentage of total ODA disbursements (right axis)

Obtaining financial resources will be critical to achieving progress in the water sector. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 31 per cent of global water- and sanitation-related ODA disbursements in 2015, more than doubling in the past 10 years

Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

To implement these measures, decision-makers need to:

- develop strategies, knowledge and capabilities to better manage existing challenges (overconsumption, scarcity and flood risks) while incorporating future or emerging stresses from changes in the global hydrological cycle and rainfall patterns;
- address governance and market failures to adequately value water, incentivise efficient and prudent use, stimulate innovation to resolve stresses and scarcity, and provide for socially optimal water allocation and use;
- establish inter-sectorial, multi-stakeholder decision-making platforms to address interdependencies, and design integrated policies and plans, data disclosure and monitoring while ensuring full inclusion of women, youth and disadvantaged communities.

Valuing water

Effective delivery of the targets set for Agenda 2030 depends on effective and responsible management of fresh water. A value-driven, resilient approach will help to build resilient societies and ecosystems.

Responsible, sustainable management of freshwater resources is hindered by complex webs of interdependency and substitutability where value and price are often confused. The absence of adequate pricing for energy generation, industrial and agricultural activities (abstraction and discharge) has led to inefficient water use and high discharges of pollutants. Similarly, users often underpay for subsidised piped water services. Undervaluing fresh water means that disadvantaged communities pay disproportionately more for vendor-supplied water.

A deeper understanding and acceptance of the value of water would enable us to use water more responsibly and to balance different needs. It can also provide mechanisms to design and institutionalise values relative to social and environmental costs and benefits that are commonly external to pricing and decision-making.

Countries and cities preparing for the necessary transition to a water-secure world for all must:

- reduce, reuse and recycle water within a circular economy and build innovative business and governance models;
- explore mechanisms to better balance water needs between competing uses. Such mechanisms may include capping and pricing freshwater abstraction, discharges and pollutants, especially when it comes to industrial, agricultural and energy needs, to incentivise efficient use and promote innovation;
- include marginalised communities in decision-making, ensuring they are not disadvantaged and receive quality services at an appropriate price;
- analyse the demand and supply chain, trade and the consumption of resources and goods to reveal and better manage critical interdependencies and effects of globalisation and global change.

To avoid water stresses and security issues there needs to be a greater recognition of the central role of water in achieving our shared global ambitions. Understanding fresh water's multiple uses, values, risks and interconnectivity is one way to fulfil these aims.

Water is a connector across sectors and stakeholders. It is both a means and a solution. Wise water management must extend beyond political and geographical boundaries for any hope of success and sustainability of human development efforts. ●

Focus on Cape Town

Cape Town has shown that it is possible to decouple economic growth and water consumption. For cities in water-insecure situations, this must become the answer to the new normal: a mentality where water is seen as a precious and scarce resource. That doesn't mean that cities can't grow, but the growth must happen in water-conserving ways. The new normal can become an opportunity for developing sustainable, resilient cities.

Cape Town has, for the past decade, been implementing an intensive water conservation plan. In 2015 its Water Conservation and Water Demand Management Programme was awarded first prize in the 'adaptation implementation' category of the C40 Cities Awards.

"Cities can learn from each other, so we can act faster and draw on technical expertise from around the world," explains Cape Town's Mayor, Patricia de Lille. "For water management, we've learnt from cities such as Melbourne and Perth, Copenhagen and Oslo.

"What the Cape Town experience shows is that while our water supplies were secure only three years ago, the realities of climate change can alter all that in a short space of time. We cannot see drought as something that may or may not happen. It has to be seen as the new normal so that we are prepared and more resilient in the future.

"Our water conservation programme has been working well, limiting water consumption growth to less than two per cent per annum and achieving water savings at approximately 30 per cent, despite rapid economic and population growth. But we are simply not getting enough rain, so we need to improve our water resilience plan."

This means diversifying the water mix and finding alternative sources of water, such as: drawing water from the Table Mountain group aquifer and the Cape Flats aquifer; establishing a small-scale desalination plant for an emergency supply scheme; increasing the use of reused waste; and reducing the city's water waste by reducing water leaks.

There is also an ongoing door-to-door awareness campaign. A thousand community plumbers have been trained and employed by the city, while a 24-hour call centre gets some 500 water-related and 300 sewerage-related complaints a day. A water inspection team advises property owners on how to detect leaks at an early stage, and free plumbing is offered to poorer households that can't afford to repair leaks.

The water commitment: from the UAE to the world

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Water Aid Foundation, Suqia, plays a leading role in the UAE's support for the SDGs

Water is a fundamental human need and a driver for sustainable growth, yet water scarcity affects more than 40% of the global population and is projected to rise. While 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water sources since 1990, some 663 million people are still struggling with water sources.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) define global development priorities and aspirations for 2030 and present a unique opportunity to address the world's biggest development challenges. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has established a global role in international efforts to combat humanitarian challenges, among which is access to clean drinking water.

The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives Foundation, through the UAE Water Aid Foundation (Suqia), a non-profit organisation, provides humanitarian aid and helps communities that suffer from water scarcity by providing them with potable water around the world. Suqia is concentrating its efforts to support SDG 6: "Ensure access to water and sanitation for all" and achieving this goal relies heavily on joint action and collaboration by all sectors.

In three years, Suqia has positively influenced the lives of more than 8 million people in 25 countries by providing access to clean water. Clean and accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. Access to safe water can quickly turn problems into potential: unlocking education, improving health and creating work opportunities. Suqia's commitment to reach out and aid underprivileged communities that suffer from access to clean water remains strong, and SDG 6 has become a valuable guide on how best to achieve that.

Suqia's goals are not only confined to the provision of potable water to those in need, but it also identifies how innovative and sustainable technologies can also be part of the solution to the global water crisis. The scale of the water crisis demands different approaches that extend beyond giving water.

Winners from the first cycle of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award, 2017

Suqia has provided access to clean water for more than 8 million people in 25 countries

Hence, in line with the UAE's goal to become a knowledge-based economy with a strong focus on technology, R&D and innovation, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched a $1 million global award to find sustainable solutions to water scarcity.

Suqia supervises the 'Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award', which encourages leading corporations, research centres, institutions and innovators from across the world to compete in finding sustainable and innovative solar-energy solutions to the problem of water scarcity.

The water challenge continues to persist. In 2018, Suqia will continue its search for innovative, sustainable solutions and technologies for water purification and management, opening the door for young innovators, companies and research institutions worldwide to compete in the upcoming 2018 cycle of the 'Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award'.

Together, we can overcome the challenge and carry forward the philanthropic legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founder of the UAE, during the 'Year of Zayed 2018' – and take a step closer to achieving a water-secure world for all.

مبادرات محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم العالمية
Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives

سقيا الإمارات
UAE WATER AID

UNA-UK thanks Suqia for its generous support for this publication

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What decarbonisation really means

There is a yawning gap between decarbonisation commitments and the cuts required to achieve the Paris Agreement. Science-based emissions reduction targets can map the route for companies

By **Romain Poivet**, Climate Program Officer, French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME)

Since the Paris Agreement, corporate leaders and investors have talked much about the importance of transitioning to a decarbonised economy. Irrespective of what some politicians may think about climate change, corporations around the world are already taking steps to make fundamental changes to the way they do business. But what do these commitments mean?

According to Article 2.1 (a) of the Paris Agreement, "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" is critical. Global atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO_2) needs to remain below 450 parts per million (ppm). Recently, we have exceeded 400ppm. Or, to put it another way: by 2050, world greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will need to be half what they were in 1990, and will need to fall to zero net emissions by the end of the century (see Figure 1, overleaf).

Since the mid-18th century, wealth has been created from activity that generates high GHG emissions. As 'addicted' to GHGs as we have become, we now face a huge challenge in continuing to create wealth in ways that do not produce this catastrophic side effect. Many private actors now see opportunities in this challenge, to reposition their activities and avoid exposure to climate risks. As living beings, they are trying to adapt to survive in a future world that must be decarbonised – if it is to support life as we know it.

So: we know the global economy needs to be decarbonised. We know that this will have big impacts on how we do business. So let's see, using a simple and practical example, what this actually means. The electricity generation sector needs to switch from a current average of 500g of CO_2 equivalent per kilowatt hour (CO_2e/kWh) to less than 50g CO_2e/kWh by 2050. This means that, from a technological perspective, it needs to build low (or even zero) carbon-emitting power plants as soon as possible.

It also means that investment in technologies that lock us into high-carbon pathways for decades – such as coal or fuel-oil – must absolutely be avoided. Bear in mind, this is what needs to happen just on the supply side – it says nothing about by how much we will need to reduce the amount of energy we demand.

Science Based Targets

One initiative designed to help businesses focus on preparing for this changing world is Science Based Targets (www.sciencebasedtargets.org). Launched in 2015, it is co-led by the UN Global Compact, WWF, the World Resources Institute and environmental impact charity CDP.

The initiative helps companies set GHG reduction targets that are consistent with the levels of decarbonisation required to achieve the Paris goals. It translates sector-wide decarbonisation pathways (looking at different scenarios: 2°C or well below 2°C) into company-specific pathways. It checks whether the company's target is aligned.

To date, more than 300 big companies have committed to set science-based GHG reduction targets through this initiative. And, so far, the initiative has 'approved' about a quarter of them.

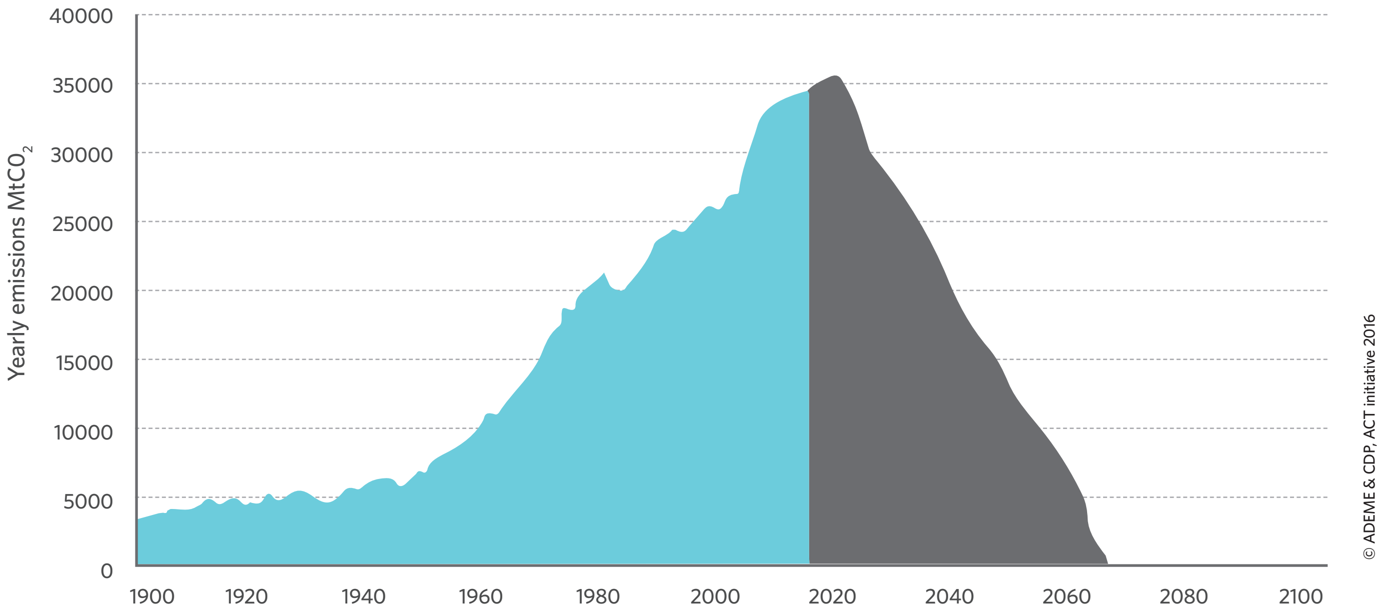
This might naturally prompt some questions:

- How can we encourage this exercise across all sectors?
- How can we be sure that companies' commitments are consistent with their actions?
- Knowing that transitioning to a low/no-carbon economy will affect more than just big business, how can we promote this science-based approach to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)?

Corporations around the world are already taking steps to make fundamental changes to the way they do business. But what do these commitments mean?

◀ **Assembling Renault's electric cars in Dieppe, France. According to ACT's research, car manufacturers do not have transition plans beyond a five-year horizon**

Figure 1: World CO_2 emissions under a 2°C mitigation scenario



There are a variety of levers to support science-based target setting. First, there is pressure to act voluntarily. Professional bodies could develop ambitious decarbonisation pathways for their sector and recommend that companies set targets aligned with them.

For the first time, the limits of what the planet can accept without irreversible and hazardous change for humankind is the main driver for sustainable development

The Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action platform (the Global Climate Action platform powered by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) is a good place to start. Other investor-led voluntary initiatives like Climate Action 100+ or The Portfolio Decarbonization Coalition (supported by the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative) can use their power to change companies' strategies.

They can ask firms to set science-based GHG reduction targets and to implement consistent means to achieve them. One can also imagine that Global Climate Action, while still exerting voluntary pressure, could be more prescriptive for those companies that talk openly about their consistency with meeting the Paris goals. And, of course, there are mandatory levers. In France, for instance, companies with more than 500 employees must disclose their GHG emissions every four years and implement reduction action plans. Wouldn't it be smart to take this a step further, and ask companies to set science-based targets and implement a relevant and consistent action plan to achieve them? And what about aligning EU Emissions Trading System quotas with science-based targets?

One could also imagine tax allowances or other fiscal incentives for companies that adopt science-based targets – or restricting access to government contracts for those that don't.

As demonstrated by the international pilot phase of the Assessing low-Carbon Transition (ACT) Initiative (www.actproject.net), co-developed by the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) and CDP, setting targets is only a first step. Anyone can claim to have long-, medium- or short-term science-based targets, without providing any evidence about how they expect to meet them.

Beyond assessment

That is why ACT goes beyond assessing targets, to look also at how a company is setting its strategy to fully decarbonise in line with keeping global temperature rise to well below 2°C.

At ACT, we define our framework by asking five simple questions:

- What does the company plan to do?
- How does the company plan to get there?
- What is the company doing at present?
- What has the company done in the recent past?
- How do these plans and actions fit together?

ACT then looks at nine sets of indicators, depending on the relevance of each one for the sector concerned. These indicators are based on verifiable quantitative and qualitative data: targets; material investments; intangible investments (such as research and development); management; sold products' performance; policy engagement; supplier engagement; client engagement; and business model.

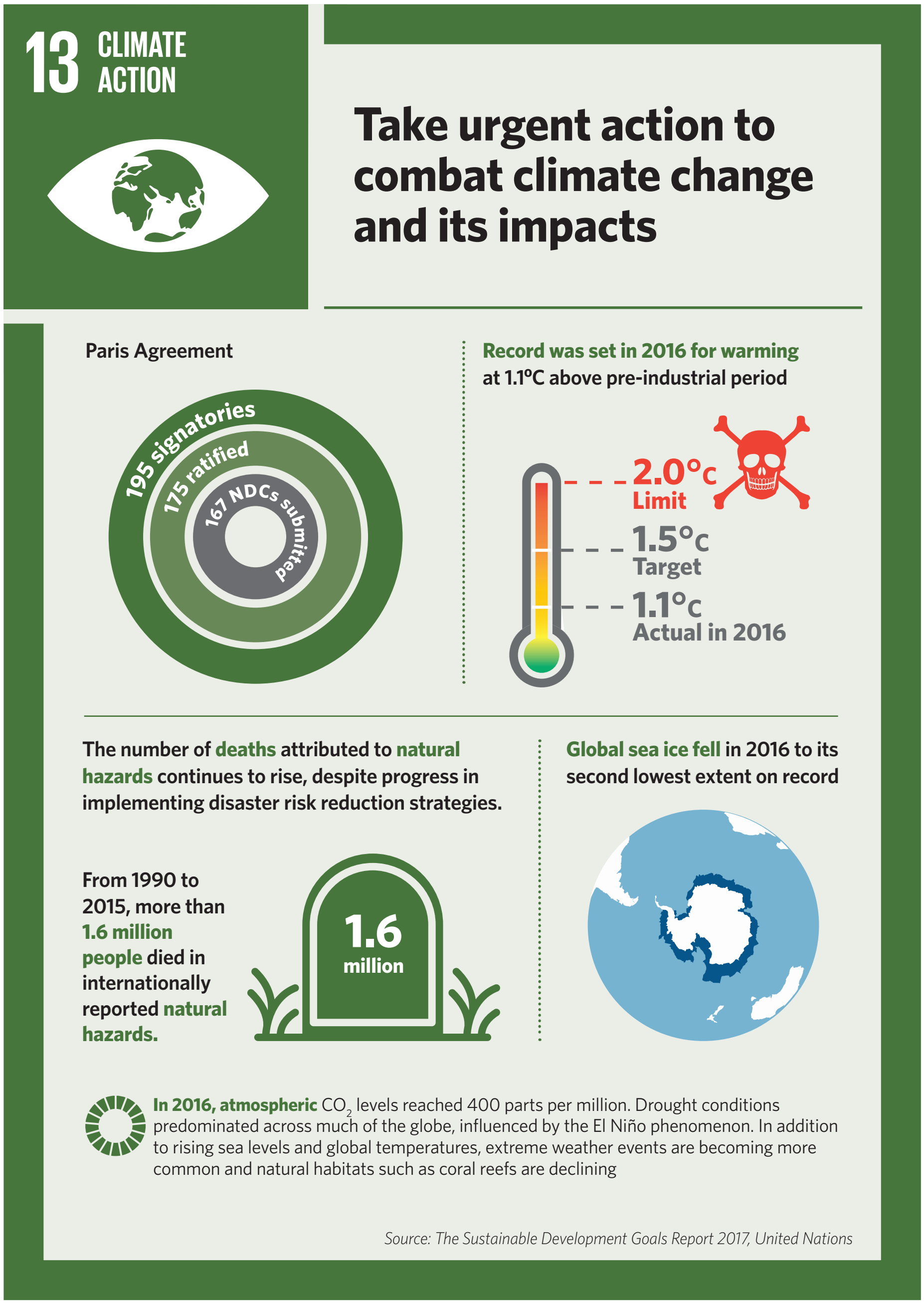
Some things we have learnt from the assessments done in ACT's pilot phase are:

- within five to 15 years, electric producers will burn all their carbon budget to 2050;
- car manufacturers do not really have transition plans that go beyond five years; and
- retailers are still not playing their vital role in supporting the low-carbon circular economy.

The good news, though, is that many leading large companies are ready to be benchmarked with these innovative assessment methodologies. But what about SMEs and mid-cap companies?

During 2017, ADEME tested ACT methodologies with 30 SMEs and mid-cap companies in France with national decarbonisation pathways. The results are illuminating. ACT methodologies can be easily adapted to these smaller companies without compromising the quality of the assessment. The companies sampled by ADEME appreciated being 'equipped' with these new tools, as many felt unsure about what the decarbonisation challenge meant for them.

When setting pathways, small companies say it is more meaningful to reduce the target year to 2030, as 2050 is too theoretical. This is often an issue for large companies, too. Sometimes it is hard to shape a relevant decarbonisation pathway for a particular sector, because existing macro-level exercises – like national low-carbon transition strategies – might be not specific enough. Smaller companies expect to be guided through decarbonisation pathways, and so wait for more advice and support before taking action.



Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

Avenues of opportunity

For the first time, the limits of what the planet can accept without irreversible and hazardous change for humankind is the main driver for sustainable development. This challenge is opening avenues of opportunity and innovation for many corporate actors, while signalling oblivion for others.

Efforts to mitigate climate change will transform the entire global economy, generating winners and losers both in terms of companies and investors.

So, calling all company bosses: the good news is that tools and methodologies exist right now to help you outline your firm's pathway to a decarbonised economy. Why not start by setting science-based GHG reduction targets now, coupled with the relevant plan and means to achieve them? Do that, and you can be ready for the low-carbon world that is coming. ●

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Ocean: avoiding catastrophe

After years of mismanagement, the ocean is in a perilous state. But new tools, regulations and approaches – such as marine spatial planning – could make the 'sustainable blue economy' a reality

By **Louise Heaps**,
Marine Chief Adviser, WWF-UK

Occupying over two thirds of our planet, and plunging to depths of over 11 kilometres, the sheer scale and intrinsic value of our ocean is difficult to comprehend. The ocean regulates our climate, provides half of the oxygen we breathe and feeds well over a billion people. Its economic value has been conservatively estimated at $24 trillion, providing annual benefits of at least $2.5 trillion to our global economy, according to WWF research. Ranked with national economies, it would be the world's seventh biggest. For coastal communities in least developed countries and small island developing states (SIDS), the ocean is the mainstay of the economy and human wellbeing. There, it underpins the livelihoods and food supply of millions of people, many of whom have little opportunity for alternative sources of income or protein.

But we are now seeing a system in extreme stress, with many indicators of ocean health trending in the wrong direction. The question is: do we have the knowledge, tools and political will to reap the substantial benefits the ocean offers, while achieving diverse, productive and resilient marine ecosystems?

As we exhaust our land-based resources, we are looking to the ocean for economic growth. According to OECD projections, by 2030 the ocean economy (including all economic sectors that have a direct or indirect link to the ocean) could outperform the growth of the global economy as a whole, both in terms of added value and employment. Coastal tourism alone is one of the fastest-growing industries, providing

◀ **A dead whale washed ashore in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Human activity is undermining the ocean's ability to support life in countless ways**

estimated economic benefits of more than $9 billion to coral reef nations. In many ways, the ocean is seen as the last frontier for new business opportunities, with technology opening up access to remoter environments. Over the next 12 years we are likely to see unprecedented development in maritime infrastructure, energy, biotechnology, transport and food production.

While the ocean is critical to our very existence, it has been largely out of sight and out of mind. For many years, people have viewed it as an endless source of fish and an infinite sink for pollutants such as plastics and agricultural pesticides, nitrates and phosphates. But overuse and poor management are now taking their toll. There is increasing evidence that degradation of the ocean's natural capital is rapidly eroding the resource base on which economic growth expectations depend.

A number of threats

The impacts from unsustainable fishing, poor coastal development, increased shipping and so on are manifold – but one of the most pervasive threats to our ocean today is climate change. Increasing ocean temperatures in particular have played out in the most dramatic way over the last few years. We have seen increasingly violent storms across the Caribbean and Pacific Island regions, and the loss of large tracts of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, one of the most iconic natural wonders of our world.

Over the last 30 years, we have lost around half of our coral reefs globally due to a range of pressures. And on the current trajectory, we may lose nearly all of our reefs from most sites in the next 30 years. This loss is not only bad news for marine species – it's bad news for all of us. While coral reefs may only occupy a tiny proportion of the ocean floor, they are home to a quarter of all marine fish species. I have seen how these fisheries power the local economies of many tropical coastal communities, offering a way out of poverty by supporting six million jobs (according to research by Teh, Teh and Sumaila).[1] Reefs also provide an essential food supply, as well as products for global markets. Over 60 million people depend directly on coral reefs for physical protection from storm surges. Without this, governments could face the heavy costs associated with maintaining artificial coastal protection.

The situation is perverse, especially when we consider that overfishing alone is estimated by the World Bank to be costing fisheries $83 billion a year in lost revenue. The global marine harvest could be 13 per cent higher if fisheries were managed more sustainably. Put simply, the current level of unsustainable economic activity in the ocean, and the projected growth of this activity, will likely increase social and economic risks and costs – not least in terms of people's livelihoods and food security. It's a lose-lose scenario for all.

> ***Getting the political traction and investment to implement each of the targets is challenging***

This, of course, runs counter to the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, if we start to value and restore our ocean's natural capital, significant opportunities could be realised.

The SDGs – in particular the ocean goal (SDG 14) – offer a clear framework and a significant opportunity to address some of the biggest threats facing our ocean today. Getting the political traction and investment needed to implement each of the targets is challenging.

But at the SDG 14 meeting in New York in June 2017, there was real optimism for a sustainable economic growth agenda, with the SIDS acting as strong vanguards. Government and business leaders also made impressive commitments to ocean protection and sustainability at the 'Our Ocean' conference in Malta last October, motivated in part by the spotlight that ocean plastics have put on the state of our ocean's health.

But before looking forwards to economic growth, we first must consider how to restore our ocean ecosystems. Emerging governance tools, regulations and approaches, if established and implemented effectively, could build ocean resilience and improve long-term investment opportunities. Marine protected areas (MPAs), for example, aim to protect fragile and representative habitats and species so that marine life is able to breed and mature. This allows the system to recover and become more resilient to human pressures.

Not only have MPAs been shown to increase fish biomass, they make economic sense if effectively managed, potentially creating billions of dollars of benefits, according to WWF-commissioned research. Yet despite a global agreement to protect 10 per cent of the ocean by 2020, only about seven per cent is currently under some form of protection. Significantly less is under effective management.

Restricting the exploitation of areas spatially can be challenging. However, many communities in the developing world are already embracing strong co-management, supported by tools such as fishing-free areas as part of an overall coastal management plan. Tanzania's beach management units, for example, have led to sharp declines in blast fishing and improved octopus catches. Locally managed marine areas across the Pacific islands have also shown improved community benefits. There are certainly many lessons we can learn from these regions even though they face resource and capacity constraints.

At larger scales, marine spatial planning (MSP) is an emerging ocean governance tool fundamental to the delivery of the growth ambitions of many coastal states. It looks holistically across seascapes and takes into consideration competing interests and the cumulative impact of all the activities taking place in that area. In doing so, it aims to reduce potential conflict and ensure that there is space for nature. This means the ecosystem's resilience is not compromised and the replenishment of natural resources is supported. MSP is already underway at scale in several countries, including the UK. It requires multi-sector collaboration and concerted action in ways that haven't been attempted before. But that's what is required if our ambitions for sustainable development in our ocean are to be delivered.

During the last few years, the term 'sustainable blue economy' has come into common policy parlance. In short, it means the use of the sea and its resources for sustainable economic development without compromising the integrity and health of the ocean. As the primary user of the blue economy, the private sector is critical to turning this vision into reality.

Maritime business leaders are increasingly aware of the long-term risks of continuing with business as usual. In an environment that already carries significant business risk – as a result of the complexity and inconsistency of the regulatory environment, information challenges, and the cumulative nature of impacts – there is limited available guidance on how to act. WWF's principles for a sustainable blue economy aim to provide a framework for the private sector. However, there is an urgent need for industry-specific targets, measures and guidelines, for better-integrated regulation and stronger incentives.

The finance and investment sector will need to play a pivotal role in driving this transition. With this in mind, WWF, the Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit, the European Commission and the European Investment Bank are developing a new set of voluntary finance principles specific to the sustainable blue economy. These will act as a framework for sustainable mainstream investment and development policy decisions, underpinning the delivery of the SDGs.

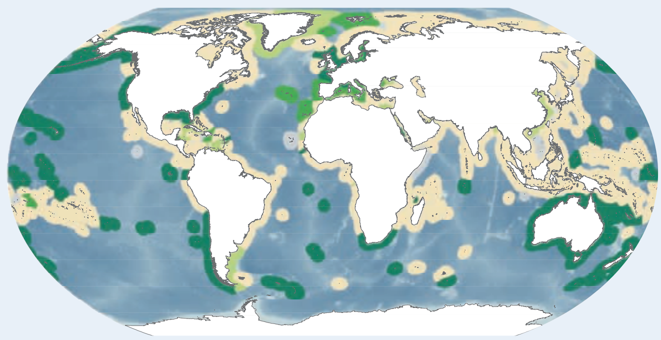
Changing tide

Given the perilous state of our ocean today, it's understandable to feel a sense of hopelessness. We should certainly be deeply concerned and motivated to act. But in recent years, I have also seen a changing tide in the way that our ocean is perceived by those who have a stake in its future. The international community has reaffirmed its strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use the oceans through SDG 14. Maritime businesses are starting to recognise the risks and costs associated with business as usual.

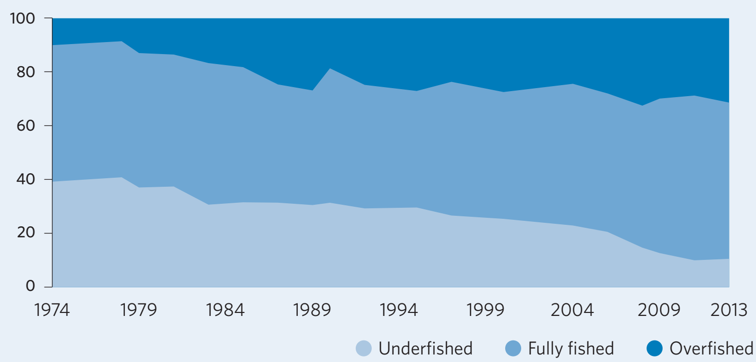
14 LIFE BELOW WATER

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Proportion of marine areas within national jurisdiction (0-200 nautical miles) covered by protected areas, 2017 (percentage)



Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable and biologically unsustainable levels, 1974-2013 (percentage)



Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, United Nations

Inspiring conservation and co-management efforts are happening in some of the least developed coastal communities. With the right kind of investment; a supporting, enabling environment; and technological innovations, there is a momentous opportunity now to create a sustainable blue economy future. It is a future that can support all of our needs – in particular of those people fully dependent on the ocean for their wellbeing – long into the future. ●

1 Teh LSL, Teh LCL, Sumaila UR (2013). A Global Estimate of the Number of Coral Reef Fishers. PLoS ONE 8(6): e65397. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.006539

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Goals beyond Westphalia

The SDGs provide a development agenda to 2030, but will also set the direction of travel for many decades. Might the goals outlive the institutions tasked with delivering them?

By **Fred Carver**, Head of Policy, United Nations Association – UK

The SDGs are global goals. As the custodian of our global system, the UN has been tasked with enabling their implementation. As acknowledged in SDG 17, the UN's only hope of achieving this is in partnership with a wide variety of actors, not just state actors. But can such a – by design – state-centric institution as the UN think effectively beyond the state? Can anyone?

Let's start at the very beginning: what makes a nation a nation? Benedict Anderson gave perhaps the best answer in his 1983 book *Imagined Communities*. A nation consists of a census, a map and a museum. In other words, it is the association of an idea with a group of people and a defined geography.

There are two important consequences of this theory. One is that there is nothing innate about the idea of a nation. Indeed, it is surprisingly modern. Anderson argues that the term had little meaning before the 1648 peace of Westphalia.

He goes on to show that it didn't really take off until the mid-18th century when 'print capitalism' allowed a coherent and shared sense of identity to last and spread over distances greater than a day's travel. That is not to say that there were no nation states before then – but it was a concept that would have meant little to nothing to anyone beyond a tiny urban elite.

The other consequence is that nationhood is not the binary criterion that it appears to be at this moment in history. The state used to be a much more fluid

▲ Erbil, Iraq: waiting to vote in the referendum on whether the Kurdistan Region should become an independent nation. The referendum and the vote to secede met with a fierce backlash from the national government and neighbouring countries

concept. The firming up of the idea of the nation is partly a legacy of empire. It would be incredibly naïve not to recognise that at a different moment in history the idea might not soften, or even vanish entirely, once again.

Twilight of the nation

If you wanted to, you could make the case that this is happening already – the recent Catalan independence movement, the near success of the referendums in Scotland – to show that now even prosperous, peaceful countries are seriously considering fragmenting. New states are born at an increased rate, most recently South Sudan.

This could be a cause for hand wringing. You could make the case that when the UN General Assembly declared in 1960 that all people have the right to self-determination it should have placed limits on the principle. It did not safeguard determination at the level of the sovereign nation, and so it set in motion an inevitable cascade of Balkanisation that shows no sign of ending, and may eventually sound the death knell of sovereign nationhood.

To which one might respond, so what? Perhaps the idea of a nation has outlived its usefulness. Perhaps it was only ever a product of convenience, and – as it becomes inconvenient – should rightly shuffle off into the dustbin of history.

Or one might respond by refuting the idea: pointing in particular to the recent rise of populist nationalism to demonstrate that the nation state has never been more popular. Clearly the idea does work for some, but for whom? Populist nationalists have been effective in selling nationalism as a remedy for the ailments of the losers under the current global system. But given nationalism is the defining feature of the current system, is that line of argument credible? Can nationalism offer anything other than an 'other' to scapegoat? There is little evidence to suggest so.

But the counterargument is hamstrung by the fact that few people in a position of authority would be interested in making it too strongly, given they depend upon the status quo for their authority. Our political leaders attempt to persuade us that the idea of nationhood is innate and permanent. But they would, wouldn't they?

A national climate

Whether you view nationalism as a solid idea with stable foundations, or a creaking edifice that is starting to teeter, it may not matter very much in light of the size of the deluge heading its way.

The concentration of CO_2 in the Earth's atmosphere is now above 400 parts per million and it is likely that no one currently alive will ever see it dip below that level. Global warming of at least 1.5°C is probably now inevitable. The only questions are how much warmer the world will get, and what a warmer world will look like.

One thing we do know is that large parts of the planet will become less habitable, meaning many of their inhabitants will have to move. The International Organization for Migration says that "future forecasts vary from 25 million to 1 billion environmental migrants by 2050, moving either within their countries or across borders, on a permanent or temporary basis, with 200 million being the most widely cited estimate."

> ***Perhaps a more likely direction for the global system is to go down instead of up***

It is harder to imagine fewer environmental migrants by 2100. Nor will these migrants be evenly spread – whole regions may end up on the move.

What does nationhood mean in a context where up to one person in ten – and some entire societies – are on the move? The idea will adapt or it will perish. If we cling to the world of borders and barbed wire then the only thing we can say about the 21st century with confidence is that there will be blood.

What if instead we develop a new, more adaptable and inclusive definition of nationhood, one that might have the flexibility to bend but not break in the more fluid decades to come?

Nationhood 2.0

Anderson linked the idea of the nation to the force of print capitalism. Perhaps what replaces it will come – whether we want it to or not – from digital capitalism. Daily newspapers gave the residents of Aberdeen and Abergavenny a sense that they were part of the same polity. Now Twitter performs that role, but also links Aberdonians with Anaheimers and Adelaideans.

Horizontal linkages around values, purchasing choices and other forms of identity become as important as a vertical, geographic sense of place. The internationalisation of capitalism and the rise of global brands and media exacerbate the trend. The census is replaced with a network of followers, the map disappears, and a trending topic or viral video replaces the museum.

United supernations or subnations?

As the idea of the nation changes, does our global system also change? And where does this leave the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Some have suggested that the global system will itself replace the nation. This is certainly a driving force behind populist nationalism. From the fevered conspiracy theories on the American right about Agenda 21 (in reality an entirely mundane outcome document from the 1992 Rio Summit subsequently superseded by the Millennium Development Goals and then the SDGs); to the entirely understandable feeling of lost control when (as has happened from Port Talbot to Detroit) government appears incapable of protecting its citizens from global economic forces – nationalism presents itself as a bulwark against the threat of a globalist 'empire'.

But what this analysis misses is that the forces of globalism are also the forces of deregulation. Having internationalised to avoid control by the state, global corporations are unlikely to want to create new structures to limit themselves. As for the global system we have, it is the child of sovereign nation states. They are unlikely to wilfully declare themselves vassals of the Supernation.

Perhaps a more likely direction for the global system – and a more compelling

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▲ The daily ceremony at the India-Pakistan Wagah Border Post. The Partition of India in 1947 set the border between India and Pakistan, causing an immediate refugee crisis and deadly religious violence. The countries have fought four wars and had numerous border skirmishes since

response to both nationalism and the threats nationalism would oppose – is to go down instead of up. Devolution instead of empire.

We will always have Paris

This happened in the United States when President Trump pulled out of the Paris Climate Treaty (as covered extensively in the most recent edition of our sister publication *Climate 2020*).

What was established as a treaty mechanism for sovereign nations demonstrated its ability to become an agenda for federal states, networks of mayors, civil society, the private sector and a whole host of non-government actors who rapidly rendered the President's decision scarcely relevant.

The SDGs are also showing signs of this increased localism and regionalism. Aside from the formal notions of local partnership embedded in SDG 17 (partnership for the goals) and implicit in SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), we have seen multiple attempts to localise the goals. A Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments and a Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development have been established. Further, the Secretary-General's proposals for development reform contain no fewer than six new parallel initiatives for deepening non-state partnership.

UN frameworks have also occasionally loosened rules about non-state actors attaining parity with states: UNESCO accepted Palestine as a full member long before the UN gave it even observer status. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change accepts the non-states Niue and the Cook Islands as full members.

But by and large the fundamental architecture of the UN and of our global system, and thus of the SDGs, is one of Member States. For 2030 this may not matter, but in the long term global frameworks may need to shift if power dissipates away from the state level.

Local and regional partnerships may help square the circle for a while longer, but in the long run more fundamental shifts may be needed. Perhaps parts of our global system will have to move from the constitutive model of statehood to the declarative model (broadly speaking, this means moving from "you are a state if we all think you are" to "you are a state if anyone thinks you are") in order to ensure places such as Taiwan, Western Sahara and Puntland are not left behind by the SDGs.

It would be foolhardy to speculate as to what the future holds, but it would be even more foolhardy to assume that it will look just like the present. The meaning and importance of the nation state has waxed and waned (mostly waxed) throughout history and will no doubt continue to do so (and, I expect, wane).

But people will still need to find ways to talk to each other without killing each other, and will still need to work together to build themselves out of poverty. So if we are serious about planning for the long term, then our global institutions, and global agendas such as the SDGs, need to look beyond states and nationhood. ●

Editors	Natalie Samarasinghe
	Fred Carver
Sub-editor	Howard Gossington
Design	James White
Sales	Valentina Ortis
	Cecily Robinson
Operations	Sara Aru
	Geraldine Brennan
Financial controller	Ricky Harwood
Editorial director	Claire Manuel
Publisher	Hugh Robinson

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Leroy House
Essex Road
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www.witanmedia.com

WITAN MEDIA

On behalf of United Nations
Association – UK
3 Whitehall Court
London SW1A 2EL, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 7766 3454
www.una.org.uk

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SDGs 2018: sustainability

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In 1945, the creation of the UN reflected the hope for a better future. Since then, UNA-UK has enabled ordinary people to engage with that promise, by connecting people from all walks of life to the UN and influencing decision-makers to support its goals.

Today, the need for the UN has never been greater. Thanks to the organisation, millions of people now live longer, safer and healthier lives. But far too many people still die each year from violence, disasters and deprivation. The death toll from conflicts and emergencies is rising. More people have been forced to flee their homes than at any other time since records began. And across the world, our fundamental values are increasingly under attack.

These problems cannot be tackled in isolation. The UN is the only organisation with the reach, remit and legitimacy to address the challenges we face. The 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement demonstrate the UN's ability to forge solutions. But making these commitments a reality for all the world's people will require global cooperation and public buy-in on a scale never seen before.

Please support us

UNA-UK is ready to play its part. We serve as a bridge between governments, the UN and the public. We lobby for joined-up thinking on peace, development and human rights. We work with experts and practitioners to find new ways to tackle the challenges we face. Through education and training, we equip young people to play a role in international affairs. And by demonstrating why the UN matters, we encourage people to act on their responsibilities as global citizens.

But we have a tiny budget and just six members of staff. With donors focusing on immediate demands, grants for vital long-term work are dwindling.

We are now facing a serious funding shortfall and need to raise £600,000 by 2020 – the UN's 75th anniversary – if we are to secure our future. ●

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