

THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS [SDGs]

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) are a new, universal set of goals, targets and indicators that UN member states will be expected to use to guide their socioeconomic development and reform agenda over the next 15 years - that is up to 2030. They represent a follow-up and an expansion of the MDGs due to expire at the end of this year. Effectively, the SDGs replaces the MDGs as a global agenda for human development.

The SDGs consist of 17 goals which the UN believes have the capacity to transform the world by 2030. This is based on the broad understanding that while the MDGs provided a focal point for governments on which to hinge their policies to promote human development, they have been criticized for being too narrow. Also, even as the deadline for the MDGs approaches, data has shown that worldwide, poverty and inequality are still high for most countries in the world, human development indicators such as access to health and education are still very grim while life expectancy is still low. Consequently, a more robust development agenda is required to be globally pursued as a follow up to the MDGs. Furthermore, while the MDGs were seen as an agenda for poor countries to achieve, every country will be expected to work towards achieving the SDGs. The 17 SDGs as conceived by the UN include:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;
 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages;
 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;
 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all;
 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation;
 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries;
 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its negative impacts;
 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss ;
 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and
 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
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