



# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals

## Overcoming the crises, driving transformation for the SDGs, and leaving no one behind

*Monday, 10 July 2023, 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M., General Assembly Hall*

### Secretariat Background Note

#### Executive summary

The COVID-19 pandemic and the multiple crises continue to threaten decades of progress made in development around the world. Three decades of steady progress in poverty reduction was reversed for the first time and hunger is rising. For the first time on record, the global Human Development Index declined two years in a row. The COVID-19 pandemic and the triple crises of climate, biodiversity and pollution are having a devastating impact, amplified by protracted conflicts around the world and the war in Ukraine. The latest, special edition of the Secretary-General's [SDG progress report](#) finds that for close to half of the SDG targets that can be assessed, progress is moderately or severely off track, and that for some 30% of targets assessed, progress has stalled or has been regressed below the 2015 baseline.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains the guiding framework to overcome the multiple, interlinked crises the world is facing today and to achieve an inclusive, sustainable, prosperous and resilient future for people and planet. However, decisive action is urgently required, both nationally and internationally, to generate the transformations needed to realize it.

There is a need for all countries to recommit to action to achieve the SDGs between now and 2030, by addressing the root causes of injustice and reorienting their economies towards low-carbon, resilient pathways aligned with the Paris Agreement and the new





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Global Biodiversity Framework. The conclusions of the [synthesis report](#) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change should be used as an evidence-based guide for action by policymakers and citizens. Strengthened national institutions and accountability, new fiscal and debt sustainability frameworks, universal social protection, and greater investments in sustainable development overall, including in sustainable public digital and analogue infrastructure and data capacity, need to be considered. Well-designed and implemented social protection systems are particularly powerful as they reduce inequalities, build resilience and end the inter-generational cycle of poverty, enabling people living in poverty to move out of poverty to ensure no one is left behind. Furthermore, disaster risk reduction must be at the core of policies to overcome the crises and should build resilience to current and future shocks. Concrete actions are also needed to realize the gains from mainstreaming a gender perspective in accelerating the implementation of the SDGs.

At the international level, it is fundamental to make concrete steps to reform global institutions that contribute to the persistence of inequality gaps with far-reaching impacts at national and local levels. This includes the need to reform the current international financial architecture, as well as assessing the roles of private banks and credit ratings agencies. It also includes reforming institutions to face current and emerging challenges, including the United Nations.

The Secretary-General's call for an SDG Stimulus recognizes the limitations and biases of the current global financial architecture and responds to the urgency to scale up affordable, long-term financing for all countries in need, by at least 500 billion dollars a year.

Along with the July HLPF and the SDG Summit, other high-level meetings taking place in 2023, including the UN 2023 Water Conference, Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai



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Framework, High-level meetings on health, Climate Ambition and the Food Systems Summit Stocktaking Moment, are offering additional opportunities to focus on key interlinkages among the SDGs to give a boost to their progress.

### Objectives

The session will focus on the theme *“Overcoming the crises, driving transformation for the SDGs, and leaving no one behind.”* The session is envisioned to advance discussions on transformative policies and actions needed for the Sustainable Development Goals, ahead of the 2023 SDG Summit in September. The discussions could provide insights into developing long-term, risk-informed, inclusive and prevention-oriented strategies to improve people’s capacities and well-being, through greater investments in health, education, social services, infrastructure, jobs, technologies and social protection, with a view to leaving no one behind.

### Proposed questions for discussion

- What in your view, are the main challenges in assessing SDG progress and how can data capacity be improved to promote evidence-based decision making around the SDGs?
- Are the responses to COVID-19, the food and other crises helping to realize the 2030 Agenda and ensure that no one is left behind? How can recovery measures be more age, disability- and gender-responsive?
- What are transformative policies and initiatives that can accelerate recovery from the pandemic, advance accelerated actions to achieve the SDGs, step up climate action and leave no



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one behind? How can synergies be best maximized, and trade-offs minimized?

- How can governments, UN entities, civil society, private sector, academia and other stakeholders address the impact of disjointed policies accumulated over a life-course, and reset the trajectory towards equitable, inclusive and sustainable societies?
- How can we address the food security situation, including by building on the outcomes of the Secretary-General's Food Systems Summit, particularly in countries in special situations?