



SEPTEMBER 2023

HALFWAY TO 2030

SDG Action Weekend and its links to High-level Week



OVERVIEW

The SDGs are essential but we are off track

World leaders made a historic global promise to secure the rights and well-being of all peoples when they adopted the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. This Agenda recognizes that collectively, we can deliver a better future for all.

However, the Agenda is a promise, not a guarantee.

Over the past eight years, the world has seen unprecedented mobilization around the SDGs and we have made significant progress on some fronts, laying the critical foundations for our future success. However, strong headwinds – climate, conflict, COVID-19 and their related impacts – coupled with an insufficient sense of urgency, leadership, solidarity, and investment have hindered progress.

Now, halfway to the 2030 deadline, we are not halfway there – in fact, we are only 15% of the way. Under current trends, 575 million people will still be living under extreme poverty in 2030; three hundred million young people who attend school will leave unable to read and write; some 600 million people will remain without electricity and the goal of cutting emissions by half by 2030 will have been missed, and dramatically so.

To keep the promise, we need a fundamental pivot

It will take more than rhetoric or increased attention to deliver the promise. We cannot stay wedded to current ways of working. Everything we do, in every corner of our world, will need to evolve for us to advance.

The fundamental pivot we need at the core of the 2030 Agenda demands that countries reorient economies, ways of working and mind-sets to ensure the rights and aspirations of all can be achieved while preserving our climate and natural environment. This will mean transforming major sectors that underpin our economies, re-tooling our people to ensure sustainable livelihoods, and tackling deeply rooted inequalities to ensure an inclusive future. It also means fully leveraging new technologies, digitalization and trade, while innovating our institutional capabilities, strengthening data systems and maximizing local delivery.

Meaningful investment in our core assets will ensure greater capacities, inclusion and integration. The 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals are indivisible - we need to approach these as such - with a shift from individual initiatives to holistic, integrated solutions.

This change will take everyone

In many ways the foundations for transformation are right in front of us - the technical know-how, institutional infrastructure, global financial resources and proven programmes – but to channel these resources more effectively, we must seize this moment in three ways.

First, this is the critical moment for political leadership. It will require bold action from national governments that navigates challenging tradeoffs and ensures these transitions are just and inclusive.

Second, this is the moment for the international community to come together in common purpose, through the United Nations. We must deliver the SDG Stimulus and reform the international financial architecture to unlock the investments needed, especially in developing countries.

Third, this is the moment for all partners on the SDG journey to take their contribution to the next level. This will necessitate empowered, resourced and capable local and regional authorities, credible plans and action from the private sector, innovation and insights of academia and even stronger contributions from civil society, youth, and women's groups. Action and accountability will be our by-words.



We start tomorrow, by accelerating what works today

Collectively, we've tried many approaches to advance the SDGs. We must learn and take stock of what's worked and what hasn't and build from the base of proven programmes and partnerships. As we move ahead, we need to prioritize integrated, innovative, holistic solutions to address the compounding challenges of today.

At this year's UNGA, we come together to scale our efforts and evolve to ensure our collective success by 2030

As we move into the second half, we must focus on ensuring governments have the right support to drive integrated, innovative responses to national plans and pathways. The United Nations development system will leverage its convening power, comprehensive capacities and global footprint to maximize the support and partnerships available to accelerate progress. In the context of this global effort to rescue the SDGs, the events of the High-level Week of the 78th session of the General Assembly will prepare us to meet this moment head-on and set us on a strong path for 2030.



SDG ACTION WEEKEND: BUILDING MOMENTUM TO KEEP THE PROMISE

SATURDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER: SDG MOBILIZATION DAY

To keep the promise, it is more critical than ever that no one be left behind or left out. Civil society, the private sector, youth, scientists, academics, local and regional governments and other stakeholders all have critical roles to play in the transformative change required to achieve the SDGs. Their participation, contributions and catalytic mobilization will be essential to implement our ambitious vision. Each stakeholder must act on their own and as a collective.

In support of this, the SDG Mobilization Day is designed to create opportunities for all stakeholders to rally together around the SDGs, discuss successes that can be scaled up and reflect on challenges, identify innovative and new actions to be taken, and announce multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments.

We all have a role to play in ushering in a new era of progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs – Mobilization Day will serve as a powerful convening moment for the full international community, setting the stage for the SDG Summit and the work to follow.

SUNDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER: SDG ACCELERATION DAY

As we look to the future, our goal is simple: to generate renewed momentum, strengthen political leadership and channel tangible, integrated and coordinated support behind national plans and priorities. As part of the global effort to meet this challenge, the United Nations development system is mobilizing behind 12 high-impact initiatives which provide a platform to help take SDG progress to scale. This platform will enable us to learn, evolve and scale what works with greater coordination and collaboration. The platform cuts across three major areas: economic and social transitions, means of implementation, and a core aspect of the cross-cutting issue of gender equality.

- **Energy** Compacts: Scaling up ambition to deliver on SDG7
- Nature Driving Economic Transformation: Leveraging the power of **biodiversity and nature** to drive equitable economic progress
- **Food Systems** Transformation: Transforming food systems for a sustainable world without hunger
- Transforming **Education**: Learning to build a better future for all
- Global Accelerator: The Global Accelerator on **jobs and social protection** for just transitions
- **Digital** Public Infrastructure: Scaling inclusive and open digital ecosystems for the SDGs
- The SDG Stimulus: Scaling up long-term affordable **financing** for the SDGs
- Transforming **Trade**: Paradigm shift to boost economic development
- **Local2030** Coalition: Pushing key transitions and achieving the SDGs by 2030
- FutureGov: Building **public sector capabilities** for the future
- Power of **Data**: Unlocking the data dividend for the SDGs
- Spotlight Initiative: To eliminate **violence against women and girls**

SDG Acceleration Day will also feature special sessions on critical accelerators of our success – gender equality, digitalization and ensuring development in complex settings. Attendees will walk away with clarity of purpose overall and on each component, hear commitments from world leaders and discuss how we overcome core barriers together.