



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Frequently Asked Questions



What is the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development?

- The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, which takes place from 8 to 17 July 2024 at UN Headquarters in New York, is the central platform for reviewing progress and advancing implementation of [the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), adopted by world leaders in September 2015.
- The Forum is an annual high-level event which provides a unique opportunity for countries to exchange experiences and share plans on the implementation of the Agenda and the SDGs, identifying gaps, lessons learned and providing policy recommendations.
- It aims to rally further action to achieve the Goals by 2030 as the international community rebuilds a more resilient, inclusive and prosperous world in the midst of the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising geopolitical tensions, a weak global economy and a worsening climate crisis.
- It seeks to address, in a cohesive and integrated manner, the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- The Forum also provides a platform to build multi-stakeholder partnerships and promote international cooperation as the world accelerates global efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Why is the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development important?

- The Forum is about follow-up and review of implementation and progress of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It is a crucial time for the international community to assess where the Goals stand and what needs to be done to accelerate action.
- The Forum serves as a global hub for governments, UN system organizations, intergovernmental bodies and the major groups and other stakeholders to share plans, exchange ideas and best practices and review progress.
- By providing political leadership, guidance and recommendations, the Forum enables countries to accelerate progress towards achieving the Goals and targets.



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- A central feature of the Forum is the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) that Member States present. These VNRs showcase the action countries are taking to achieve the SDGs and lessons learned.
- The Forum also provides an opportunity for key stakeholder groups, such as local and regional governments, parliamentarians, science and technology communities, academia, education institutions, the private sector, among others, to highlight the actions they are taking to achieve the SDGs, leave no one behind, and ensure that the SDGs remain relevant and ambitious.

Why is this year's Forum of particular significance?

- The Forum takes place against a background of unprecedented global challenges that imperil the SDGs: ongoing conflicts and geopolitical tensions, the lingering effects of COVID-19 pandemic, an unjust and outdated global financial system and a worsening climate emergency.
- This year's HLPF will be the first HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC to be held after the [2023 SDG Summit](#) - the HLPF convened under the auspices of the General Assembly on 18-19 September 2023. The 2024 HLPF will follow up on the Political Declaration and other outcomes of the SDG Summit. It will also contribute to the preparations for [the Summit of the Future](#), to be held on 22-23 September 2024.
- The Forum sets the stage for [the Summit of the Future](#). The Summit of the Future is an opportunity to revitalize the multilateral system and get the world back on track to achieving the SDGs through unlocking greater volumes of development finance and addressing the debt crisis that is holding so many developing countries back.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

- Nine years ago, when UN Member States adopted the SDGs, countries embarked on a journey to achieve the 2030 Agenda to promote prosperity, address inequalities while protecting the environment.
- The 17 SDGs, the cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda, offer the most practical and effective pathway to tackle the causes of poverty, violent conflict, human rights abuses, climate change and environmental degradation.
- The SDGs reflect an understanding that development everywhere must integrate economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection.
- The list of the 17 SDGs, which contain 169 targets, can be found at:



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<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



How will the SDGs be achieved?

- Governments have the primary responsibility for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The achievement of SDGs is underpinned by the efforts and contributions of all stakeholders in strong partnerships.
- The successful implementation of the SDGs relies on countries' sustainable development policies, plans and programmes. While led by countries, it also needs an enabling environment of international cooperation and solidarity.
- Governments continue to develop national indicators to assist in monitoring progress made on the goals and targets, taking into account the global indicator framework
- The mobilization of resources at both the domestic and international levels is essential to achieve the goals.

In the nine years since the SDGs were adopted, what actions has the international community taken to achieve the Goals?

- Many governments from both developed and developing countries have included the SDGs in their national policies and strategies and development plans. Many have taken concrete actions, measures, and initiatives on advancing various SDGs in line with their national priorities, reaching out to communities and stakeholders. There have been increasing efforts to raise awareness about the SDGs and catalyze action among civil society, businesses, academia, media and other groups.
- Many businesses have also aligned their business strategies and practices with the SDGs; made efforts to better understand and address the full impact on people and the planet along their value chains; and invested in new technologies and build transformation alliances to create practical solutions to promote more sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Examples of concrete actions and initiatives by governments are shared every year through the Voluntary National Reviews.
<https://hlpf.un.org/vnrs>
- Examples of how UN system entities are supporting Member States' efforts to implement the SDGs could be found at:
<https://sdgs.un.org/UNSDGimplementation>



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- Efforts by key stakeholder groups are highlighted through the HLPF Special Events programme (see [2024 HLPF Special Events](#)), as well as online databases such as <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgactions>.



Has there been progress in achieving the SDGs?

- In most regions of the world, girls have achieved parity and even pulled ahead of boys in completing schooling at all levels.
- Increased access to treatment has averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths in the past three decades.
- Two thirds of the world's population – 5.4 billion people – now have access to the Internet, just as work and employment opportunities are profounding transformed by technological innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI).
- As of 1 January 2024, women's representation in national parliaments (lower chamber and unicameral parliaments) reached 26.9%, up slightly from 22.3% in 2015.
- Access to clean cooking fuels and technologies increased to 74% in 2022, from 64% in 2015.
- Climate finance increased by 30 per cent from 2021 to reach \$115.9 billion in 2022, with 60 per cent of the total allocated to mitigation.



Where have there been setbacks?

- As we begin the second half of our journey to 2030, the world is not on track to meet most of the Goals by 2030. There has been progress in some areas (highlighted above), however, progress against a very worrying proportion of targets is either moving much too slowly or has regressed.
- Out of 135 targets with data, only 17% are on track, nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress, and progress on over one third has stalled or even regressed.
- External debt stock levels remained unprecedentedly high in developing countries. About 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it.
- An additional 23 million people were pushed into extreme poverty and over 100 million more were suffering from hunger in 2022 compared to 2019.
- 2023 was the warmest on record, with global temperatures nearing the critical 1.5° C threshold.



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- The number of forcibly displaced people has reached an unprecedented level, nearly 120 million by May 2024. Civilian casualties spiked by 72 per cent between 2022 and 2023.

How does the Forum guide progress on the SDGs?

- During the Forum, countries will share the lessons they have learnt in the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Participants will discuss policies and transformations needed to overcome the crises, make up the lost ground on the SDGs and shift the world on to a path to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The discussions will be guided by the continuing strong commitment to realizing the 2030 Agenda and reinforcing international solidarity.

What will be the focus and format of the Forum this year?

- This year's Forum will focus on the theme, *“Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”*.
- 37 countries will present their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)—the actions they have taken to achieve the SDGs. Regular reviews by the HLPF are voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.
- The Forum will review in-depth Goal 1: End Poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2: Zero Hunger; Goal 13: Climate Action; Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions; and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals. %

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Who will be attending the HLPF?

- Ministers and other high-level participants will focus on follow-up to the Political Declaration and other outcomes of the SDG Summit, for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- At the Forum, world leading experts and voices, including economists, environment scientists, and social activists, will present their visions and their experiences in the face of the impacts inflicted by the multiple crises.
- UN system organizations, intergovernmental organizations at the international and regional levels, civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders will also participate and provide major inputs.



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Which countries are presenting their Voluntary National Reviews this year?

- This year, 37 presenters will carry out their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). They are: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belize, Brazil, Chad, Colombia, Congo (Republic of the), Costa Rica, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Palau, Peru, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, Vanuatu, Yemen and Zimbabwe.
- In an effort to maximize the value of the VNR process and allow for more time for meaningful and interactive discussions with the presenting countries, additional time has been allocated for Q&A. First time presenters will have 15 minutes for their presentation and the second and third timers will have 10 minutes for their presentation. Their reviews may be found at: <https://hlpf.un.org/2024/vnrs>

How many countries have presented VNRs to date?

- The VNRs kicked-off in 2016, which marked the first-time countries presented their plans to achieve the SDGs. With the 2024 HLPF, 381 VNRs have been carried out by 190 countries and the European Union.

Why are the VNRs significant?

- The VNRs are voluntary and demonstrate the commitment of the individual countries and the international community to mobilize efforts towards achieving the Goals.
- Reviews by countries at the Forum provide the opportunity to mobilize support and advice to overcome shared challenges, identify new and emerging issues and provide recommendations for implementing the Goals.
- The presentation of VNRs is a peer learning experience and can spur further action to implement the SDGs.
- Success in achieving the SDGs will help to address some of the most pressing global challenges, such as climate change, providing a better life for all people and building a firm foundation for peace and stability in all societies, everywhere.



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What is sustainable development?

- Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet.
- Ending poverty, reducing inequalities and combatting climate change are indispensable requirements for the achievement of sustainable development.
- The 2030 Agenda addresses the interlinkages between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, since a holistic approach that incorporates these three elements is essential if we are to achieve sustainable development.

