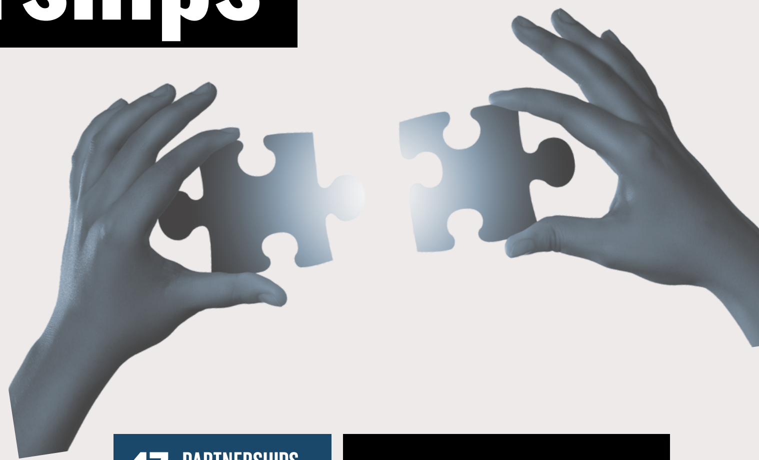
HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2023

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



FACTS AND FIGURES

- Net ODA flows in 2022 were **$206 billion**, up **15.3%** in real terms. This is the highest growth rate in record, but ODA as a percentage of GNI remains below the 0.7% target, reaching **0.37%** in 2022. The increase was primarily due to domestic spending on refugees and aid for Ukraine. Net bilateral ODA to Africa in 2022 was **$34 billion**, down **7.4%** in real terms.
- Official sustainable development grants reached **$118 billion** in 2021, up from $100 billion in 2020. Official concessional loans increased by **37%** to **$55 billion**, while official non-concessional loans increased by **51%** to **$107 billion**.
- Low- and middle-income countries saw a **5.6% rise** in external debt to **$9 trillion** in 2021, mainly due to an increase in short-term debt. By November 2022, **37 out of 69** of the world's poorest nations were at high risk or already in debt distress, and one in four middle-income countries faced a high risk of fiscal crisis.
- In 2022, an estimated **66%** of the world's population (**5.3 billion**) used the Internet, compared with 40% (3 billion) in 2015. Globally, **259 million more men than women** used the Internet in 2022.
- Fixed-broadband subscriptions continue to grow steadily, at an average annual growth rate of **6.7%** over the last **10 years**, reaching **18 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants** in 2022 globally, up from 11 subscriptions in 2015.
- The total trade of tracked Environmentally Sound Technologies (ESTs) in 2020 was **$2,364 billion**, an increase of **5%** since 2015.
- The worldwide weighted tariff average was about **2%** in 2020, a decline from 2.6% in 2015. The latest figures show that agriculture and clothing products continue to face the highest tariff rates at about **6%**, followed by textiles at **4%** and industrial products at **1.4%**.
- The share of exports from LDCs in global merchandise trade was merely **1.1%** in 2022. The target of doubling the share of LDCs' exports by 2020, from its value of 1.02% in 2011, has therefore not been met.
- In 2022, a total of **147 countries and territories** reported having statistical legislation compliant with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Furthermore, **156 countries and territories** reported that 100 of their plans were fully funded compared to 17 in 2016 from 81 countries.
- International funding for data and statistics amounted to only **$541 million** in 2020, a decrease of more than $100 million and $138 million from funding levels in 2019 and 2018, respectively. Between 2018 and 2020, ODA funding for data **dropped by more than 20%**.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

To learn more about global progress on the 17 SDGs, click here to read the latest Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023.

WHERE WE STAND

- Developing countries are grappling with **an unprecedented rise in external debt levels** following the COVID-19 pandemic, compounded by challenges such as record inflation, escalating interest rates, competing priorities and constrained fiscal capacity, underscoring the urgent need for debt relief and financial assistance.

- While official development assistance (ODA) flows continue to reach record peaks, the increase in 2022 is **primarily attributed to spending on refugees in donor countries and aid to Ukraine**.

- **Geopolitical tensions and the resurgence of nationalism** hinder international cooperation and coordination, highlighting the importance of **a collective surge in action** to provide developing countries with the necessary financing and technologies to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

SPOTLIGHT

SDG STIMULUS

Halfway to the 2030 Agenda deadline, progress on the SDGs is not where it needs to be. In February 2023, the Secretary-General of United Nations launched **the SDG Stimulus**, calling for radical transformation of global financial system to tackle pressing global challenges, while achieving sustainable development.

The SDG Stimulus aims to offset challenging market conditions faced by developing countries and accelerate progress towards the SDGs, including through investments in renewable energy, universal social protection, decent job creation, healthcare, quality education, sustainable food systems, urban infrastructure, and the digital transformation. **The SDG Stimulus** addresses both short-term urgencies and the need for longterm sustainable development finance. It calls for a significant increase in financing for sustainable development, to the tune of at least $500 billion per year, to be delivered through a combination of concessional and non-concessional finance in a mutually reinforcing way. Reforms to the international financial architecture are integral to the SDG Stimulus. As highlighted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, financing sustainable development is about more than the availability of financial resources. National and global policy frameworks influence risks, shape incentives, impact financing needs, and help determine the cost of financing.

The SDG Stimulus puts forward three areas for immediate action: 1) Tackle the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress, including by converting short-term high interest borrowing into long-term (more than 30 year) debt at lower interest rates. 2) Massively scale up affordable long-term financing for development, especially through public development banks (PDBs), including multilateral development banks (MDBs), and by aligning all financing flows with the SDGs. 3) Expand contingency financing to countries in need.

The international community must collectively implement these needed changes, while countries should put in place national policies to better align all financing flows with the SDGs, such as through Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs).

The SDG Stimulus, while ambitious, is achievable. Investing in the SDGs is both sensible and feasible: it is a win-win for the world, as the social and economic rates of return on sustainable development in developing countries is very high. All the items in the SDG Stimulus are already under discussion at the United Nations, other multilateral forums including the Group of Twenty (G-20), at the governing bodies of international financial institutions, and in calls to action such as the Bridgetown Agenda. To make this ambition a reality, urgent political will to take concerted and coordinated steps to implement this package of interconnected proposals in a timely manner is needed.

UN SYSTEM IN ACTION

- The **Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability (CODES)** is a multi-stakeholder initiative to harness data and digital tools for accelerating environmental sustainability coordinated by seven co-champions: **UNEP, UNDP, Future Earth, Sustainability in the Digital Age, the International Science Council, the German Environment Agency, the Kenyan Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the UN Tech Envoy.** CODES launched an Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age. Materials from the Action Plan served as the foundation for an e-learning course by **UNEP and the UN System Staff College** on Digital4Sustainability launched during COP27.

- Under the leadership of **the High-Level Climate Champions**, the **Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action** supports implementation of the Paris Agreement by enabling collaboration between governments and cities, regions, businesses and investors that must act on climate change.

- Supported by **WMO, MDBs, UNDP, UNEP and WFP**, **the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF)** is a key building block for a **new initiative** spearheaded by the UN Secretary-General to ensure that early warming services reach everyone in the next five years.

- **WIPO GREEN** is an online platform for technology exchange. It supports global efforts to address climate change by connecting providers and seekers of environmentally friendly technologies.

- **UN Global Compact** in partnership with the African Union, **UNDP Africa, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the UN Office of the Special Advisor on Africa,** launched the **Global Africa Business Initiative (GABI)** aiming to chart path forward for equitable growth of the $2.5 trillion market.

This is not an exhaustive list of UN system actions for the SDGs. For more information about UN system actions to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, please visit

UN SYSTEM SDG IMPLEMENTATION DATABASE