

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS

KEY ASKS

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SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Partnerships are the glue for SDG implementation and are essential to make the agenda a reality. In 2020, UN Member States and the Secretary General called for a “Decade of Action and Delivery” to accelerate progress on the SDGs from now until the year 2030 and in 2021 this was followed by an important Secretary-General’s report entitled [Our Common Agenda](#) which, among other elements, “reinvigorated multilateralism” and a “renewed social contract” between governments and people. Two of the key commitments “Boosting Partnerships” and “Listen to and Work with Youth,” lay out a clear case in building partnerships with and for children, youth and in support of future generations.

SDG 17 calls to strengthen the means of implementation and to build and enhance partnerships with diverse stakeholders. The Goal comprises 19 targets (the most of any SDG), and covers **multi-stakeholder partnerships** (17.16 and 17.17), **financing** (17.1 - 17.5), **technology** (17.6 – 17.8), **capacity-building** (17.9), as well as **data, monitoring and accountability** (17.18 and 17.19).

The targets of Goal 17 are among the primary tools for the advancement of child rights and well-being around the world. They define, for instance, whether or not there is enough data available to identify those children most at risk of being left behind; or whether enough funds are available to invest in the social infrastructure necessary for every child to thrive. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are crucial to holistically address the interrelated and multifaceted challenges children and young people face today. A few examples of cross-sectoral partnerships that will be critical for achieving results on multiple SDGs for children and young people include the [Early Childhood Development Action Network \(ECDAN\)](#) -- focused on young girls and boys getting nurturing care, access to basic services and pre-primary education; [GIGA](#) which aims to connect every young person and every school to the internet, thus enhancing access to education and opportunities; and [Generation Unlimited](#), a global partnership to engage young people, rally resources and coordinate efforts so every young person will be in learning, training or employment by 2030. Enhancing partnerships with children and young people as powerful agents of change is key. The children and young people of today are demanding urgent action and have proven that their creativity, energy, and skills are necessary to achieve the SDGs.

However, much more needs to be done to accelerate progress on SDG 17. The Secretary-General’s 2019 Progress Report shows that in 2018, 51 of 114 countries reported overall progress towards strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships and the means of implementation. However, the report also shows a decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the need for a more inclusive dialogue between the public and private sectors, as well as increased space for civil society contribution to sustainable development. Significant progress on SDG 17, through enhanced partnerships and sufficient means of implementation in the form of finance, data, and technology, will be crucial to achieve all other 16 SDGs for children.

In addition, the ongoing crisis of the global COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the situation, especially for the most vulnerable children. Urgent action is needed by governments and partners around the world to contain and mitigate the pandemic including among others, a roll-out and expansion of social assistance to families; ending further disruption to education, including to prioritize the re-opening of schools; securing food supply chains; and putting in place specific protections for vulnerable children.



KEY ASKS

The SDGs can only be realized with strong and inclusive partnerships, as well as significant investment in the means of implementation with children at the centre. UNICEF both encourages and can support governments to:

1. **Build, strengthen and expand partnerships** in a whole-of-society approach with civil society, the private sector, philanthropists, academia and science, local communities, traditionally marginalized groups, as well as children and young people themselves across various sectors, locations, borders and levels to drive progress for children, youth and adolescents;

2. **Broker meaningful multi-stakeholder coalitions and alliances** by convening diverse stakeholders around common results for children;
3. **Engage with the UN System as a key partner** for SDG implementation through technical and data support, capacity-building and knowledge exchange;
4. **Enhance North-South, South-South, horizontal and triangular cooperation** to stimulate technical dialogue and the exchange of knowledge, technology and resources to develop adaptable and sustainable solutions for children. Utilize the know-how and experiences of countries with proven achievements in advancing child rights and welfare by forming horizontal alliances and partnerships;
5. **Leverage and pool resources, capacities, technology, and data** in an integrated manner to deliver results for children, youth, and adolescents.



MONITOR -- THE IMPORTANCE OF DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE

Goal 17 calls on Member States to significantly enhance the availability of reliable, high-quality, and timely disaggregated data (target 17.18), as well as to further develop measurements of progress and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries (target 17.19). [While there has been an increase in countries who had implemented a national statistical plan, many countries lacked the necessary funding to do so; for example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, only 23% of plans were fully funded.](#) To meet statistical capacity-building objectives by 2030, current financial commitments to data and statistics—0.34% of total ODA—will need to double.¹ While sufficient data on all SDGs is relevant to the fulfilment of child rights, [UNICEF has identified 35 indicators](#) that most directly concern children, out of a total of 231 in the [global SDG monitoring framework](#). On the positive, there has been a notable increase in data coverage on these indicators between 2018 and 2019.² However, many children remain uncoun­ted. On average, 75% of child-related SDG indicators in every country either have insufficient data or show insufficient progress to meet global SDG targets by 2030. Sufficient funding and partnerships for comprehensive data collection, analysis and use is especially critical within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, where data is already showing the impacts of the pandemic including to interruptions to routine vaccination campaigns, education disrupted and increased calls to child help lines to report domestic violence. In the face of COVID-19, it is essential for governments to understand who are the most vulnerable and the issues they are facing. UNICEF, therefore, encourages Governments to:

- **Ensuring that national SDG monitoring framework includes child-focused indicators.** This may require the review and updating of national development strategies and plans to ensure that the policy goals and targets are specific about children and their issues. In addition, it is important the goals and targets are also specific about child population groups and issues for policy interventions for governments to fulfil their commitment to “leave no one behind.” As a starting point, the 35 child-focused indicators in the global monitoring framework can be used to guide the review and possible updating of both the national SDG monitoring framework and/or national development strategy/plan.
- **Leave no data source behind. Highlighting use of statistical data from a variety of sources in assessing SDG progress.** While there are enormous gaps in the availability and quality of official statistics to meet the demands for SDG progress assessments at sub-national, national, regional and global levels, at the same time there are large amounts of existing data yet to be accessed and used for evidence-based policy advocacy and analysis. Only when existing data are used can their value be recognized, which in turn strengthens the case for boosting investment in further data improvements.

A positive development over the last several cycles of VNRs is that an increasing number of national reports use indicators to highlight patterns of development by citing data coming from a variety of sources, including censuses, sample surveys (including sample household surveys) and administrative records. There are also ongoing explorations to use such emerging big data sources as geospatial information to gain insights in SDG implementation. Governments are encouraged to cite the use of data from a variety of sources to inform SDG implementation.

- **Showcasing concrete actions by governments to strengthen national capacity to improve the availability and quality of disaggregated data, including investments as part of ODA commitments.** The need for investing in and strengthening the capacity of national statistical systems has been a recurring theme during the last rounds of the VNRs, highlighting the gap between demand for and the provision of high quality and disaggregated data for monitoring the SDGs. Some countries have formulated plans to improve the statistics and data underlying their national SDG monitoring and indicator frameworks.



INVEST -- SOCIAL SPENDING AND PROGRESS ON RESULTS FOR CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26158Final_SG_SDG_Progress_Report_14052020.pdf

² <https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/>

Prioritizing the education, protection, health, and well-being of children constitutes the best and most robust investment we can make to fulfil the promise of Agenda 2030 and ensure an equitable and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the [Our Common Agenda](#) Report, the UN Secretary-General has called for a biennial Summit between the G20, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General and the heads of international financial institutions for a sustainable, inclusive and resilient global economy by supporting a SDG investment boost, including through a last-mile alliance to reach those furthest behind. UNICEF encourages Governments to:

- **Strengthen resource mobilization, both domestically and through international support to developing countries, and increase investments on child- and adolescent-focused SDG priorities.** As part of such efforts, adopt child-sensitive budgeting to realize commitments to children's rights and enhance investments in economic or infrastructure development towards initiatives on child survival, education, and protection.
- **Increase public-private partnerships to leverage resources and deliver impact for children.** Build alliances with the private sector and help create an enabling environment supportive of business respecting the rights of children. The [Child Rights and Business Principles](#) and the [Tool for Investors on Integrating Child Rights into ESG Analysis](#) can help guide businesses to take sustainable action to respect and promote children's rights in all business activities and relationships.
- **Improve reporting and efficiency on expenditures and programmes that have direct and indirect impacts on child and adolescent well-being.** Relevant approaches include Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs) with a focus on children and child-focused areas, child-spending markers and taxonomies, as well as established reporting practices on child-focused allocations under the CRC (For example the Financial Benchmark for Child Protection (FBCP) in Nigeria).



ACTIVATE -- AWARENESS BUILDING & MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Partnerships with children, youth and adolescents are key for the success of the 2030 Agenda. Creating awareness about the SDGs and engaging you people as true partners for sustainable development is essential to mobilize creative and transformative action. Awareness-raising and participation should be seen as part of a continuum to regularly, meaningfully and consistently engage children, adolescents and young people as agents of change to influence behaviours and social norms amongst themselves, their households and their communities. This goes beyond engagement just for the purposes of reporting periods, but rather creating standing mechanisms and spaces for young people to engage and have their perspectives heard in decision and policy-making processes. UNICEF encourages Governments to:

- **Build true partnerships with young people** and enhance the meaningful participation of children and young people. The establishment of country level processes that will enhance child, adolescent and youth awareness, participation and engagement can provide a foundation for and long-term investment in the sustainability of behaviour change and social norm shifts.
- **Strengthen partnerships and platforms that are child, adolescent and youth-centred at national and sub-national levels,** in formal governance structures as well as within civil society organizations, to ensure their: 1) positive contribution to dialogue and decision-making processes on SDG-relevant programmes; 2) enhanced demand generation within their communities; and 3) mobilization and action in promoting social accountability within and among their peer groups and other influencers.
- **Involve children and adolescents in learning about their rights and the SDGs through participatory means,** utilizing SDG-focused education and awareness building content. UNICEF can support this effort due to our existing work in this space and creating child-friendly education and entertainment materials through our foundational partnerships such as the [World's Largest Lesson](#). [UNICEF's Youth Activate Talk Methodology](#) is also a platform from children to express their ideas on the SDGs through a variety of mediums.
- **Enhance young people's access to technology and the internet** (target 17.8). The Internet can be a gateway to development, and a means of implementation for many of the SDGs. Access to technology can be a tool of empowerment for children and young people and boost their sustainable development efforts. As the world continues to face lockdown measures, partial/full school closures and shifts to online learning and work, it is essential for every child to have access to both the proper equipment and digital connectivity for remote learning, so that they are not left behind. [GIGA](#), an initiative co-launched by UNICEF and ITU is a growing alliance that includes multiple public and private sector partners and is importantly focused on ensuring that all have access to the internet and are not left behind.



For more information, visit: <https://www.unicef.org/sdgs>