



Press Release

With less than one fifth of targets on track, world is failing to deliver on promise of the Sustainable Development Goals, warns new UN report

Achieving the SDGs – the best pathway to tackle global challenges – remains elusive

New York, 28 June – With just six years remaining, current progress falls far short of what is required to meet the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Without massive investment and scaled up action, the achievement of the SDGs — the blueprint for a more resilient and prosperous world and the roadmap out of current global crises — will remain elusive, warns [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024](#), launched today.

A world in great upheaval

The report reveals that only 17 per cent of the SDG targets are currently on track, with nearly half showing minimal or moderate progress, and over one-third stalled or regressing. The lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating conflicts, geopolitical tensions and growing climate chaos have severely hindered progress.

According to the report, an additional 23 million people were pushed into extreme poverty and over 100 million more were suffering from hunger in 2022 compared to 2019. The number of civilian deaths in armed conflict skyrocketed in 2023. That year was also the warmest on record, with global temperatures nearing the critical 1.5°C threshold.

A moment of choice and consequence

“This report highlights the urgent need for stronger and more effective international cooperation to maximize progress starting now,” said UN Secretary-General António Guterres. “With more than six years left, we must not let up on our 2030 promise to end poverty, protect the planet and leave no one behind.”

Urgent priorities:

1. **Financing development:** The SDG investment gap in developing countries now stands at \$4 trillion per year. Developing countries require more financial resources and fiscal space. Reforming the global financial architecture is crucial to unlocking the volume of financing required to spur sustainable development.
2. **Peace and security:** 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 amid escalating violence, highlighting the urgent need for peace. Resolving ongoing conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy is essential.
3. **Implementation surge:** Massive investment and effective partnerships are needed to drive critical transitions in food, energy, social protection, digital connectivity and more.

Success stories and opportunities for action

The report spotlights examples of success and resilience that can be built upon through decisive action.

The remarkable recent strides in deploying renewable energy, for example, highlight a clear pathway to a just energy transition. Girls in most regions have achieved parity and even pulled ahead of boys in completing schooling at all levels. Increasing internet access by about 70 per cent in just eight years also illustrates how rapid transformative change is possible. Similarly, decades of progress against HIV/AIDS provide a template for overcoming other pandemics through global solidarity and funding for scientific breakthroughs.

“Time and again, humanity has demonstrated that when we work together and apply our collective mind, we can forge solutions to seemingly intractable problems,” said Li Junhua, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

Key moments for the SDGs

[The Summit of the Future](#), taking place on 22 to 23 September at UN Headquarters in New York, will be pivotal to getting the world back on track to achieving the SDGs. Deliberations at the Summit will include addressing the debt crisis that is holding so many developing countries back and the urgent need for reform of the international financial architecture.

According to the report, both the Financing for Development Conference and the World Summit for Social Development in 2025 will be key moments to drive SDG momentum. But as Mr. Li stressed: “The time for words has passed – the political declarations must urgently translate into actions. We must act now, and act boldly.”

Key findings:

- For the first time this century, per-capita GDP growth in half of the world’s most vulnerable nations is slower than that of advanced economies.
- Nearly 60 per cent of countries faced moderately to abnormally high food prices in 2022.

- Based on data collected in 2022 in 120 countries, 55 per cent of the countries lacked non-discrimination laws that prohibit direct and indirect discrimination against women.
- Increased access to treatment has averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths in the past three decades.
- Progress on education remains of grave concern, with only 58 per cent of students worldwide achieving minimum proficiency in reading by the end of primary school.
- Global unemployment hit a historic low of 5 per cent in 2023, yet persistent roadblocks remain in achieving decent work.
- Global capacity to generate electricity from renewable energy has begun expanding at an unprecedented rate, growing at 8.1 per cent annually for the past five years.
- Mobile broadband (3G or higher) is accessible to 95 per cent of the world's population, up from 78 per cent in 2015.
- Record high ocean temperatures have triggered a fourth global coral bleaching event.
- External debt stock levels have 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.

For more information, please visit: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/>

Hashtags: #SDGreport #SDGs #GlobalGoals

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