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**High-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council**

## **Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

#### ***Summary***

In accordance with General Assembly decision 70/1, the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the United Nations system, has the honour to transmit the 2020 report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. This report provides a global overview of the current situation of the Sustainable Development Goals, based on the latest available data for indicators in the global indicator framework.

## Introduction

1. In September 2019, Heads of State and Government came together at the SDG Summit to renew their determination to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In doing so, they recognized that the first four years of implementation had seen some important progress, but that overall, the world was not on track to deliver by 2030. In this context, I launched a Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, urging all actors to dramatically increase the pace and scale of implementation efforts.
2. The 2020 SDG Progress Report underscores the urgency of such an effort. Drawing on the latest data, it illustrates the continued unevenness of progress and the many areas where significant improvement is required.<sup>1</sup> Up to the end of 2019, progress continued to be made in some areas: global poverty continued to decline, albeit at a slower pace; maternal and child mortality rates were reduced; more people gained access to electricity; and countries were developing national policies to support sustainable development and signing international environmental protection agreements. In other areas, however, progress had either stalled or been reversed: the number of people suffering from hunger was on the rise; climate change was occurring much faster than anticipated; and inequality continued to increase within and among countries.
3. Perhaps even more concerning, this report also highlights the impacts and implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on all 17 Goals. What began as a health crisis has quickly become the worst human and economic crisis of our lifetimes. As of end of April, the coronavirus had spread to more than 200 countries and territories, the number of confirmed cases rose to over 3.2 million, and the global death toll passed 230,000. The effects of the pandemic and the measures taken to mitigate its impact have overwhelmed the health systems globally, caused businesses and factories to shut down and severely impacted the livelihoods of half of the global workforce, kept 1.6 billion students out of schools, disrupted global value chains and the supply of products, and is expected to push tens of millions of people back into extreme poverty and hunger.
4. The poorest and the most vulnerable people are affected disproportionately by the pandemic, including women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees and informal sector workers. Similarly, vulnerable countries, including least developed countries (LDCs), land-locked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing States (SIDS), and countries in humanitarian or fragile situations, stand to be hit hardest in the long term due to the fragility of their health systems, limited coverage of their social protection systems, limited financial and other resources, vulnerability to external shocks, and excessive dependence on international trade.

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<sup>1</sup> The information presented in this report is based on the latest available data as of April 2019. This report also highlights the impacts and implications of the pandemic on all 17 Goals. The statistical annex and the Global SDG Indicators Database are available at: <<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>>.

5. The global crisis is also affecting critical operations across the entire global statistical and data system, with delays in planned censuses and surveys and serious disruptions in all statistical operations. National and international statistical organizations will need renewed action and support to ensure the continuity of key statistical compilation activities and availability of data to inform emergency mitigation actions by governments and all sectors of society to respond to the crisis and to continue the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
6. All of this underscores the need for international solidarity and cooperation more than ever before. The United Nations family is responding across all pillars and all aspects of the crisis. I have called for a large-scale, coordinated and comprehensive multilateral response amounting to at least 10% of global GDP and pushed for a series of measures to give developing countries the financial firepower they need to weather this storm. And the UN Sustainable Development Group has agreed a dedicated socio-economic framework and is mobilizing and repurposing resources so as to maximize the UN's collective offer to governments at this critical time.
7. While this crisis is imperiling progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, it also makes their achievement all the more urgent and necessary. Moving forward, it is essential that recent gains are protected as much as possible and a truly transformative recovery from COVID-19 is pursued, one that reduces risk to future crises and bring much closer the inclusive and sustainable development required to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This is the first task of the Decade of Action. It will require leadership, foresight, innovation, finance and collaboration among all governments and all stakeholders. And, as the United Nations marks its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it will require a surge in international cooperation and multilateralism.
8. To ensure that the world emerges from this crisis stronger, the United Nations, all governments and all partners have to stay the course together.

### **Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

9. *Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the pace of global poverty reduction was decelerating and it had been projected that the global target of ending poverty by 2030 would be missed. The COVID-19 pandemic is pushing tens of millions of people back into extreme poverty, putting years of progress at risk. While the pandemic highlighted the need to strengthen social protection and emergency preparedness and response, these are insufficient to safeguard the poor and the vulnerable where they are most needed.*
- After a decline from 15.7% in 2010 to 10.0% in 2015, the pace of reduction of extreme poverty slowed down with a 'nowcast' rate of 8.2% in 2019. The pandemic is reversing the trend of poverty reduction. According to latest estimates, the global extreme poverty rate is projected to

be 8.4-8.8% in 2020, which is close to the level in 2017. This means that an estimated 40-60 million of people will be pushed back into extreme poverty, causing the first increase in global poverty in more than 20 years.

- The share of the world’s workers living in extreme poverty fell from 14.3% in 2010, to 8.3% in 2015, then to 7.1% in 2019. The progress was less encouraging for young workers. In 2019, 12.8% of the world’s young workers lived in extreme poverty compared to only 6.3% of the world’s adult workers. The pandemic is pushing millions of workers into unemployment, underemployment and working poverty.
- Based on 2016 data, 55% of the world’s population—about four billion people—did not benefit from any form of social protection, which is critical to help the poorest and the most vulnerable in this crisis. At least half of the world’s population still lacked full coverage of essential health services and only 22% of unemployed workers were covered by unemployment benefits.
- Hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires and other extreme natural disasters exacerbate poverty. 80 countries reported on disaster-related losses for 2018. These include 23,458 deaths and 2,164 persons missing. Over 39 million people were reported as affected, of whom 29 million saw their livelihoods disrupted or destroyed. In terms of direct economic losses, \$23.6 billion were reported by countries, of which 73% were attributed to the agricultural sector.

## **Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**

***10. The total number of people suffering from severe food insecurity is on the rise since 2015 and there are still millions of malnourished children. The economic slowdowns and disruptions in the food value chains caused by the pandemic is exacerbating hunger and food insecurity. In addition, the Desert Locust upsurge remains alarming in East Africa and Yemen where 35 million people already experience acute food insecurity. Due to the pandemic, some 370 million school children are missing the free school meals they rely on. Measures to strengthen food production and distribution systems must be taken immediately to mitigate and minimize the impacts of the pandemic.***

- An estimated 26.4% of the world population—about 2 billion people – were affected by moderate or severe food insecurity in 2018, an increase from 23.2% in 2014, mainly due to increases in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Slightly more than 700 million people—9.2% of the world population—were exposed to severe levels of food insecurity in 2018, implying reductions in the quantity of food consumed to the extent that they have possibly experienced hunger.

- The proportion of children under 5 years suffering from chronic undernutrition, or stunting, decreased from 23.1% in 2015 to 21.3% in 2019. Globally, 144 million children under 5 years were still affected by stunting in 2019. Three quarters of these children lived in Central and Southern Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Globally, 47 million, or 6.9% of children under 5 years were affected by acute undernutrition, or wasting in 2019, a condition generally caused by limited nutrient intake and infection. Over half of the wasted children lived in Central and Southern-Asia. Childhood overweight affected 38 million, or 5.6% of children under 5 years of age worldwide in 2019. Wasting and overweight may co-exist at levels considered medium to high, the so-called double burden of malnutrition. In Northern Africa and South-Eastern Asia, wasting was 7.2% and 8.2%, while overweight was 11.3% and 7.5%, respectively, in 2019.
- The share of government contribution to agriculture compared to the sector's contribution to GDP fell from 0.42 in 2001 to 0.31 in 2015 and 0.28 in 2018 worldwide. Moreover, aid to agriculture in developing countries fell from nearly 25% of all donors' sector-allocable aid in the mid-1980s to only 5% in 2018.
- In 2019, sharp increases in food prices were largely concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, driven by production shocks and macroeconomic difficulties. The lingering impact of prolonged conflict and extreme weather conditions in some areas was an additional factor.

### **Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

***11. Progress in many health areas continues, but the rate of improvement has slowed down and will not be sufficient to meet most of Goal 3 targets. The COVID-19 pandemic is devastating health systems globally and threatens already achieved health outcomes. Most countries, especially poor countries, have insufficient health facilities, medical supplies and health care workers for the surge in demand. Countries need comprehensive health strategies and increased health system spending to meet urgent needs and protect health workers, while a global coordinated effort is needed to support countries in need.***

#### **Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health**

- Globally, an estimated 295,000 maternal deaths occurred in 2017, resulting in an overall maternal mortality ratio of 211 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, a 4% reduction compared to 2015 and a 38% reduction compared to 2000. The majority of these deaths occurred in low and lower middle-income countries, and roughly 66% of those in sub-Saharan Africa. With the current pace of progress, the world will fall short of the SDG target.

- Globally, 81% of births were assisted by skilled health professionals during 2014-2019, up from 64% in 2000-2005, with Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Western Asia, Northern America and Europe almost achieving universal coverage.
- Concerted efforts of the global community continue to reduce preventable child deaths—from an under-5 mortality rate of 76 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 42 in 2015, to 39 in 2018. Despite this progress, some 5.3 million children died before reaching age five in 2018 alone and almost half of those deaths, or 2.5 million, occurred in the first month of life.
- Globally, the proportion of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern contraceptive methods only increased slightly from 75.7% in 2010, to around 77% from 2015 to 2020, reaching only 56% in sub-Saharan Africa and 52% in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand).
- Globally, the adolescent birth rate has fallen steadily from 45 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years in 2015 to 41 per 1,000 in 2020, with the highest rate in sub-Saharan Africa, 101 per 1,000.

### **Infectious diseases**

- In 2018, there were an estimated 1.7 million new HIV infections, an incidence rate of 0.24 per 1,000 uninfected population among the total population, almost unchanged from the level of 0.26 in 2015, putting the world off track in achieving the SDG target. One in three of the new HIV infections globally occurred among women aged 15-49 years in sub-Saharan Africa.
- In 2018, an estimated 10 million people fell ill with Tuberculosis (89% were adults, 63% were male, and 8.6% were people living with HIV). Tuberculosis incidence declined from 141 new and relapse cases per 100,000 population in 2015 to 132 in 2018. The Tuberculosis mortality rate among HIV-negative people fell by 8.3% in the same period. However, large gaps in detection and treatment persist and the current pace of progress is not fast enough to meet the SDG target of ending the epidemic by 2030. Drug-resistant Tuberculosis is also a continuing threat.
- After many years of impressive reductions in the global malaria burden, progress has stalled. Globally, malaria incidence (number of cases per 1,000 population) fell from 81 in 2000 to 57 in 2014 and remained at a similar level through 2018. The world is not on a trajectory to achieve the SDG target of ending malaria.
- The use of hepatitis B vaccine in infants has considerably reduced the incidence of new chronic hepatitis B virus infections. The proportion of children under five years of age who became chronically infected fell from 4.7% in the pre-vaccination era to 0.9% in 2018.
- In 2018, 1.76 billion people were reported to require mass or individual treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), down from 1.80 billion in 2015 and 2.19 billion in 2010. The 530 million people requiring treatment and care in the LDCs represented 52% of those countries’

populations, down from 78% in 2010. Progress has been driven largely by the fact that at least one NTD has been eliminated in 40 countries.

### **Non-communicable diseases, mental health and environmental risks**

- The probability of dying from cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease between ages 30 and 70 decreased from 19% in 2010 to 18% in 2016, a rate of decline insufficient to meet the SDG target.
- Based on 2016 data, close to 800,000 people died due to suicide every year, and 79% of global suicides occurred in low- and middle-income countries.
- The number of people dying from a tobacco-related illness was estimated to be 8.1 million in 2017. The global prevalence of tobacco use among men was 38.6% in 2018, compared to 8.5% among women.
- In 2016, household and ambient air pollution led to some 7 million deaths worldwide. And inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene led to a total of 870,000 deaths in the same year.

### **Health Systems and Funding**

- Immunization is as one of the world's most successful and cost-effective health interventions. While vaccination coverage among infants increased from 72% in 2000 to 85% in 2015 and 86% in 2018, an estimated 19.4 million children did not receive the essential vaccines during the first year of life. In addition, global coverage levels of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine with potential to significantly reduce pneumonia is yet to reach 50% coverage. Measles is a highly contagious disease and the 69% coverage of 2-dose vaccine in 2018 is insufficient to prevent measles outbreaks.
- In 2017, only around one third to half of the global population was covered by essential health services. If current trends continue, only 39% to 63% of the global population will be covered by essential health services by 2030.
- The proportion of the population spending more than 10% of their household budgets to pay out-of-pocket for health services increased continuously from 9.4% to 12.7% (927 million people) between 2000 and 2015 and at current rates, the percentage will reach 12.9 in 2020, equal to 1 billion people. Close to 90 million people were pushed into extreme poverty due to out-of-pocket medical expense.
- Official development assistance (ODA) for basic health from all donors increased by 41% in real terms since 2010 and reached \$10 billion in 2018. In 2018, about \$1.7 billion was spent on malaria control, \$0.8 billion on tuberculosis control and \$1.9 billion on other infectious diseases, excluding HIV/AIDS.

- Based on 2013-2018 data, globally, women comprise over 76% of medical doctors and nursing personnel combined, but only just over 40% among medical doctors and almost 90% among nursing personnel.
- In 2019, 166 countries reported their status of implementation of the International Health Regulations capacities in preparedness for detecting, reporting and responding to health emergencies, like COVID-19. Analysis shows steady progress has been made in almost every Regulations' core capacities, compared with 2018, except in human resources.

#### **Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

***12. At the end of 2019, millions of children and youth were still out of school and more than half of those in school were not meeting minimum proficiency standards in reading and numeracy. School closures to stop the spread of COVID-19 are having an adverse impact on learning outcomes and social and behavioral development of children and youth. They have affected over 90% of the world's student population—1.6 billion children and youth. Even though remote learning is provided to many students, children and youth in vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, such as those living in remote areas, extreme poverty, fragile states and refugee camps, do not have the same access. The digital divide will widen existing education equality gaps.***

- In 74 countries with comparable data for the period 2011-2019, around seven in ten children aged three and four were developmentally on track in at least three of the following domains: literacy-numeracy, physical development, social-emotional development and learning.
- Participation in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age grew steadily from 62% in 2010 to 67% in 2018. However, the variation among countries is still wide with values ranging from 9% to nearly 100%.
- The primary school completion rate reached 84% in 2018, up from 70% in 2000 and under current trends, is expected to reach 89% globally by 2030. In 2018, 258 million children, adolescents, and youth of age 6 to 17 were still out of school, representing 17% of the global population of this age group. Parity between children or adolescents from the richest and poorest quintiles of the population was achieved in 25% of countries for primary education, 21% of countries for lower secondary education, and only 1% of countries for upper secondary education.
- In 2018, some 773 million adults—two-thirds of whom are women—remained illiterate in terms of reading and writing skills. The global adult literacy rate (for the population aged 15 years and older) was 86% in 2018, while the youth literacy rate (for the population aged 15 to 24 years)



was 92%. Southern Asia is home to almost half of the global illiterate population and sub-Saharan is home to one quarter.

- In 2019, less than one-half of primary and lower secondary schools in sub-Saharan Africa had access to electricity, the Internet, computers, and basic handwashing facilities, key basic services and facilities necessary to ensure a safe and effective learning environment for all students.
- ODA for scholarships amounted to \$1.6 billion in 2018, up from \$1.3 billion in 2107.
- Based on data from 129 countries, the percentage of primary school teachers receiving the minimum pedagogical training according to national standards around the world has stagnated at 85% since 2015. The proportion is lowest in sub-Saharan Africa (64%) and Southern Asia (72%).

### **Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

***13. The commitments to advancing gender equality have brought about improvements in some areas, but the promise of a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed, remains unfulfilled. The current pandemic is also hitting women and girls hard. Globally, women make up three quarters of medical doctors and nursing personnel. Women already spend three times as many hours on unpaid care work at home as men. School and daycare closures require parents, especially women, to care more for children and facilitate their learning at home. Reports from several countries suggest that domestic violence against women and children is also rising during the global lockdown.***

- In 2019, one in five young women aged 20 to 24 years around the world were married in childhood, down from one in four in 2004 and the highest value in sub-Saharan Africa, with more than one in three young women.
- At least 200 million girls and women had been subjected to female genital mutilation based on recent data from the 31 countries where the practice is concentrated. This harmful practice is becoming less common, but progress is not fast enough to meet the global target of elimination by 2030.
- As of 1 January 2020, women's representation in national parliaments (lower chamber and unicameral parliaments) reached 24.9%, up slightly from 22.3% in 2015. Women have better access to decision-making positions at local level, holding 36% of elected seats in local deliberative bodies, based on data from 133 countries and areas.

- In 2019, 28% of managerial positions in the world were occupied by women (a small increase from 25% in 2000), while women represented 39% of the world's workers and half of the world's working-age population.
- Based on 2007-2018 data from 57 countries, only 55% of married or in-union women aged 15 to 49 make their own decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights, ranging from less than 40% in Central and Western Africa to nearly 80% in some countries in Europe, South-eastern Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- In 2019, among the 75 countries with data, countries have in place, on average, 73% of the laws and regulations needed to guarantee full and equal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The findings are particularly encouraging when it comes to HIV: on average, countries achieved 87% of enabling laws and regulations for HIV counselling and test services; 91% for HIV treatment and care services; and 96% for HIV confidentiality.
- Empowering more women with mobile phones has been shown to accelerate social and economic development. However, in the 66 countries with data for the period 2016 to 2018, mobile phone ownership among men was on average 6.8 percentage point higher than for women.

## **Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

### ***14. Billions of people around the world still lack access to safely managed water and sanitation services and to basic handwashing facilities (WASH) at home, critical to prevent COVID-19 spreading. Immediate action to improve WASH services is critical for preventing infection and containing the spread of the coronavirus.***

- In 2017, only 71% of the global population used safely managed drinking water and just 45% used safely managed sanitation services, leaving 2.2 billion people without safely managed drinking water, including 785 million without even basic drinking water; and 4.2 billion without safely managed sanitation. Of these, 673 million people still practiced open defecation.
- In 2016, one in four health care facilities around the world lacked basic water services, and one in five had no sanitation services.
- In 2017, three billion people lacked soap and water at home. In 2016, 47% of schools worldwide lacked handwashing facilities with soap and water available and 40% of health care facilities were not equipped to practice hand hygiene at points of care.
- Preliminary estimates from 79 mostly high- and high-middle-income countries in 2019 suggest that, in about one quarter of the countries, less than half of all household wastewater flows are safely treated.

- In 2017, Central and Southern Asia and Northern Africa registered very high water stress of over 70%, followed by Western Asia and Eastern Asia with high water stress of 54% and 46%, respectively.
- In 2018, 60% of 172 countries reported ‘very low’, ‘low’ and ‘medium-low’ levels of integrated water resources management implementation and are unlikely to meet the target of implementation by 2030.
- According to data from 67 countries, the average percentage of national transboundary basins covered by an operational arrangement was 59% in the period 2017–2018. Only 17 countries reported that all their transboundary basins were covered by such arrangements.
- Globally, in 2018, slightly more than 2.1% of land was covered by freshwater bodies, although unevenly distributed—ranging from 3.5% in developed countries to only 1.4% in developing countries and 1.2% and 1% in LDCs and SIDS, respectively. The adverse effects of climate change can further decrease freshwater body extent and hence, worsen our ecosystems and livelihoods.
- ODA disbursements to the water sector increased by 6% to \$9 billion in 2018, after a decrease in disbursements in 2017. However, ODA commitments dropped by 9% in 2018. A large funding gap of 61% exists in order to achieve national drinking-water and sanitation targets.

## **Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**

***15. The world is making good progress on increasing access to electricity and improving energy efficiency. However, still millions of people around the world lack access to electricity and progress on access to clean cooking fuels and technologies is too slow. The COVID-19 pandemic spotlights the need for reliable and affordable electricity to health centres. However, a survey conducted in selected developing countries showed that one quarter of the health facilities surveyed were not electrified and another quarter reported unscheduled outages affecting their capacity to deliver essential health services. All these facts further weaken the health system response to the current health crisis.***

- The global electrification rate rose from 83% in 2010 to 90% by 2018. Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia maintained strong progress, exceeding 98% access by 2018. Conversely, the world’s deficit is increasingly concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa where around 548 million, or 53% of its population, lack access to electricity.
- Access to clean cooking fuels and technologies increased to 63% in 2018, from 60% in 2015 and 56% in 2010. Still, 2.8 billion people lack such access and rely primarily on inefficient and

polluting cooking systems. Because of a stagnant rate and fast population growth, in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people without access to clean fuels for cooking increased.

- The renewable energy share of total final energy consumption gradually increased from 16.3% in 2010 to 17.0% in 2015 and 17.3% in 2017. Much faster growth is required to meet long-term climate goals.
- Global primary energy intensity (energy used per unit of GDP) improved by 2.2% annually, from 5.2 in 2015 to 5.0 in 2017, a rate still short of the 2.7% annual rate needed to reach SDG target 7.3.
- International financial flows to developing countries in support of clean and renewable energy reached \$21.4 billion in 2017, 13% more than in 2016, and a two-fold increase from flows committed in 2010. Hydropower projects received 46% of 2017 flows, while solar projects received 19%, wind 7% and geothermal 6%.

#### **Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

*16. Even before the current crisis, the global economy was growing at a slower rate than in previous years, despite improvements in labour productivity and unemployment. The COVID-19 pandemic has abruptly and profoundly disrupted the global economy, pushing the world into a recession. The unprecedented shock to the world's labour markets is expected to result in a drop of around 10.5% in aggregate working hours in the second quarter of 2020, equivalent to 305 million full-time workers. Small and medium enterprises, workers in informal employment, the self-employed, daily wage earners, and workers in sectors at highest risk of disruption are hit the hardest.*

- In 2018, the global real GDP per capita growth rate was 2%. In addition, real GDP growth rate for LDCs was 4.5% in 2018, less than the 7% growth rate targeted by the 2030 Agenda. The pandemic is pushing the world into the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression.
- After a brief interruption during the global economic downturn of 2009, labour productivity has continued to grow—in 2019, it increased by 1.4% from the previous year.
- Globally, 61% of workers were in informal employment in 2016. The need to rely on informal employment was more prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia, where 89% and 86%, respectively, of workers were in informal employment. Due to unemployment and underemployment caused by the current crisis, some 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy—half of the global workforce—are significantly impacted. Globally, the income of informal workers is estimated to drop by 60% in the first months of the crisis.

- Data on average hourly earnings cast light on income inequality. A global study by the ILO found a factor-weighted gender pay gap of 19% in 2017.
- In 2019, the global unemployment rate stood at 5%, with the highest rate, at 11%, in Northern Africa and Western Asia. The unemployment rate was considerably higher among young workers than among adults in all regions in 2019, with the difference reaching 18 percentage points in Northern Africa and Western Asia, 15 percentage points in Central and Southern Asia, and 12 percentage points in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- In 2019, 22% of the world's youth were not in employment, education or training, almost unchanged since 2005.
- In 2018, aid for trade commitments remained stable at \$58 billion (based on current prices). South and Central Asia received the highest share (31.4%), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (29.2%). Lower-middle income countries received 37.5% of aid for trade, followed by LDCs (36.8%).
- According to 2019 data from 102 countries, 98% of them had a youth employment strategy or plan to develop one in the near future.

**Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**

*17. The global manufacturing growth had already steadily declined even before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is hitting manufacturing industries hard and causing disruptions in global value chains and the supply of products.*

- The air transport sector is hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is forecasted that airlines will have 1.5 billion fewer international air travelers in 2020 and the international seat capacity could drop by almost three-quarters, resulting in a \$273 billion loss compared to previously expected gross operating revenues.
- In 2019, manufacturing value added (MVA) grew only 1.5% from 2018, the slowest year-on-year growth rate since 2012, primarily influenced by tariff and trade tensions affecting all regions. Manufacturing activities are at high risk of disruption during the current crisis, which will impact the sector's employment levels.
- Share of manufacturing in GDP in LDCs increased from 10% in 2010 to 12.4% in 2019, but the growth rate is too slow to reach the target of doubling the industry's share in GDP by 2030.

- In 2019, 14% of the world’s workers were employed in manufacturing activities—a figure that has not changed much since 2000. The share of manufacturing employment was the largest in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (18%) and the smallest in sub-Saharan Africa (6%).
- According to surveys covering a period from 2010 to the present, in developing countries, 34% of small-scale industries benefit from loans or lines of credit, which enables them to integrate into local and global value chains. However, only 22% of small-scale industries in sub-Saharan Africa received loans or lines of credit, compared to 48% in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- After three years of stability, global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from fuel combustion started rising again in 2017, reaching 32.8 billion tons, underpinned by the economic growth and a slowdown in efficiency improvements. However, global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions intensity declined by almost one quarter since 2000, showing a general decoupling between CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and GDP growth. The same trend was visible also for manufacturing industries after 2010, with global manufacturing intensity dropping at the average annual rate of 3% until 2017.
- Globally, investment in research and development (R&D) as a proportion of GDP increased from 1.5% in 2000 to 1.7% in 2015 and remained almost unchanged in 2017, but was only less than 1% in developing regions.
- The number of researchers per million inhabitants increased from 1,018 in 2010 to 1,198 in 2017, ranging widely from 3,707 in Europe and Northern America, to only 99 in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, women represented only 30% of global researchers.
- Total official flows for economic infrastructure in developing countries reached \$61 billion in 2018, an increase 32.6% in real terms from 2010. Of the \$61 billion, the main sectors assisted were transport (\$22.8 billion) and the energy sector (\$20.3 billion).
- The share of medium-high- and high-technology goods in world manufacturing production reached almost 45% in 2017. Medium-high and high-tech products continued to dominate manufacturing production in developed regions, reaching 49% in 2017 compared to 9% in the LDCs.
- Almost the entire world population lives in an area covered by a mobile network. It is estimated that in 2019, 96.5% are covered by at least a 2G network with 81.8% covered by at least a Long-Term Evolution network.

## **Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries**

***18. Despite some positive signs toward reducing inequality in some dimensions, such as reducing relative income inequality in some countries and preferential trade status benefiting lower***

*income countries, inequality still persists in all forms. The COVID-19 crisis is hitting the poorest and most vulnerable people hardest and threatens to have a particularly damaging impact on the poorest countries. It is laying bare the profound inequalities that exist within and among countries and is exacerbating these inequalities.*

- In 73 of the 90 countries with comparable data during the period 2012 to 2017, the bottom 40% of the population saw their incomes grow. Moreover, in slightly more than half of those countries, the bottom 40% experienced a growth rate of income that was higher than the overall national average. Still, in all countries with data, the bottom 40% of the population received less than 25% of the overall income or consumption, while the top 10% of the population received at least 20% of the income.
- Data from 31 countries over the period 2014-2019 show that one in five persons reported having personally experienced discrimination on at least one ground of discrimination prohibited by international human rights law. The COVID-19 pandemic risks exacerbating these patterns.
- Of the 111 countries with available data as of September 2019, 54% reported having a wide range of policy measures to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people. Central and Southern Asia (80%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (79%) reported having the highest share of countries with such policies, compared to only 33% of the countries in Oceania and Northern Africa and Western Asia.
- The proportion of products exported by LDCs, developing region and SIDS that can enter international markets free of duty increased from 66% to 67.4%, 51.1% to 52.1% and 65.4% to 66.5%, respectively, between 2017 to 2018.
- In 2018, total resource flows for development to developing countries from DAC donors, multilateral agencies and other key providers were \$271 billion, of which \$166 billion were ODA.

#### **Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

***19. Rapid urbanization is resulting in a growing number of slum dwellers, inadequate and overburdened infrastructure and services, and worsening air pollution. The COVID-19 pandemic will hit hardest the more than one billion slum dwellers worldwide, who suffer from a lack of adequate housing, no running water at home, shared toilets, little or no waste management systems, overcrowded public transport and limited access to formal health care facilities. Many of these populations work in the informal sector and are at high risk of losing their livelihoods as cities shut down. Urgent response plans are needed to prepare for and respond to outbreaks in informal settlements and slums.***

- The number of slum dwellers reached over 1 billion in 2018, which represents 24% of the urban population, up slightly from 23% in 2014. Numbers of people living in urban slums are highest in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (370 million), sub-Saharan Africa (238 million) and Central and Southern Asia (226 million).
- Access to adequate, reliable and safe public transport is an urban basic need. Per 2019 data from 610 cities from 95 countries, only half of the world’s urban population had convenient access to public transport, defined as living within 500 meters walking distance of a low-capacity transport system (like a bus stop) and within 1,000 meters of a high-capacity transport system (like railway and/or ferry terminal).
- 2019 data collected from a sample of 755 cities from 95 countries show that, through the 1990-2015 period, most urban areas recorded a general increase in the extent of built-up area (defined as the presence of buildings) per person. On average, all regions except sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia recorded a consistent increase in the built-up area per capita, with Australia and New Zealand recording the highest values.
- Based on 2019 data from 610 cities in 95 countries, the share of land allocated to streets and open spaces—critical to cities’ productivity and social and health dimensions of their populations—averaged only about 16% globally. Of these, streets accounted for about three times as much urban land as open public spaces (e.g. parks, river-fronts). The share of population who could access open public spaces within 400 meters walking distance along a street network averaged 46.7%.

## **Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**

***20. Worldwide consumption and production—a driving force of the global economy—rest on the use of the natural environment and resources in a model that continues to lead to destructive impacts on the planet. The COVID-19 pandemic offers countries an opportunity to build a recovery plan that will reverse current trends and change our consumption and production patterns towards a sustainable future.***

- As of 2019, 79 countries and the European Union reported on at least one national policy instrument that contributes to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in their efforts in the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP.
- Global domestic material consumption (DMC) per capita rose by 7% from 10.8 metric tons per capita in 2010 to 11.7 metric tons in 2017, with increases in all regions, except North America and Africa. However, the DMC per capita in Europe and North America is still 40% higher than the global average, indicating the need to enhance resource efficiency and practices to reduce consumption in the future.



- The global material footprint rose from 73.2 billion metric tons in 2010 to 85.9 billion metric tons in 2017, a 17.4% increase since 2010 and a 66.5% increase from 2000. The world's reliance on natural resources continued to accelerate in the last two decades.
- The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer has been universally ratified by 198 parties and as a result of its implementation, the overall abundance of ozone-depleting substances in the atmosphere has decreased over the past two decades, with projections to return to 1980 values in the 2030s for Northern hemisphere mid-latitude ozone.
- Between 2010 and 2019, global e-waste generation grew continuously, from 5.3 kg per capita to 7.3 kg per capita, while the environmentally sound recycling of e-waste increased at a slower pace, from 0.8 kg per capita to 1.3 kg per capita.
- The global fossil fuel subsidies amounted to more than \$400 billion in 2018. The continued prevalence of these subsidies, more than double the estimated subsidies to renewables, adversely affects the task of achieving an early peak in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### **Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**

***21. The year 2019 was the second warmest on record and the end of the warmest decade (2010-2019). In addition, with a global average temperature of 1.1°C above estimated pre-industrial levels, the global community is way off track to meeting either the 1.5°C or 2°C targets called for in the Paris Agreement. Although greenhouse gas emissions are projected to drop 6% in 2020 and air quality has improved due to travel bans and economic slowdown resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, this improvement is only temporary. Governments and businesses should utilize the lessons learnt to accelerate transitions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement, re-define the relationship with the environment, and make systemic shifts and transformational changes to low-GHG emission and climate-resilient economies and societies.***

- A total of 85 countries have reported having a national disaster risk reduction strategy (DRR) aligned to the Sendai Framework to some extent, since its adoption in 2015. In 2018, 55 countries reported that at least some of their local governments have a local DRR, which aims to contribute to sustainable development and strengthen socio-economic health and environmental resilience by focusing on poverty eradication, urban resilience, and climate change adaptation.
- As of 31 March 2020, 186 Parties (185 countries plus the European Union) had communicated their first nationally determined contribution (NDC) and several Parties had communicated their second or updated NDC to the UNFCCC. Parties have been requested to update existing NDCs

or communicate new ones by 2020, providing a valuable opportunity for Parties' to increase their level of ambition in climate action.

- In 2019, at least 120 of 153 developing countries had undertaken activities to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs), an increase of 29 countries compared to 2018. The plans will help countries achieve the global goal on adaptation under the Paris Agreement.
- Global climate finance saw a 17% increase from 2013–2014 (\$584 billion) to 2015–2016 (\$681 billion). High levels of new private investment in renewable energy account for the spurt in growth and represent the largest segment of the global total. While these financial flows are considerable, they are relatively small in relation to the scale of annual investment needed for a low-carbon climate-resilient transition. Moreover, investments in climate activities tracked across sectors were still surpassed by those related to fossil fuels in the energy sector alone (\$781 billion in 2016).

#### **Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**

***22. Oceans and fisheries continue to support the global population's economic, social and environmental needs, while suffering unsustainable depletion, environmental deterioration and CO<sub>2</sub> saturation and acidification. Current efforts to protect key marine environments, small-scale fishers and invest in ocean science are not yet meeting the urgent needs to protect this vast, fragile resource.***

- The ocean absorbs around 23% of the annual emissions of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere, helping to alleviate the impacts of climate change on the planet, however, resulting in a decreasing pH and acidification of the ocean. A new ocean acidification data portal shows an increase of variability in pH and the acidity of the oceans by 10-30% over 2015-2019.
- The sustainability of global fishery resources continues to decline, though at a reduced rate, with the fraction of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels at 65.8% in 2017, down from 90% in 1974 and 0.8 percentage point lower than 2015 levels.
- As of December 2019, over 24 million km<sup>2</sup> or 17% of waters under national jurisdiction (up to 200 nautical miles) were covered by protected areas, representing more than a doubling in extent since 2010. Much of this coverage is concentrated in Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- As of February 2020, the number of parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures – the first binding international agreement that specifically targets illegal, unreported and unregulated

fishing –increased to 66 (including the European Union) from 58 in the previous year, and close to 70% of countries reported scoring highly in the implementation.

- The contribution of sustainable marine capture fisheries remains stable at global level, with regional variation and the largest contribution to the GDP in Pacific SIDS and LDCs, averaging 1.55% and 1.15%, respectively, in 2011-2017.

**Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

*23. Forest areas continue to decline, protected areas are not concentrated in areas of key biodiversity and species remain threatened with extinction. However, there are efforts gaining traction and having positive effects that can help to reverse these outcomes, such as increased progress towards sustainable forest management, gains in protected area coverage for terrestrial, freshwater and mountain areas, as well as progress in implementing programs, legislation and accounting principles to protect biodiversity and ecosystems.*

- The proportion of forest area fell from 31.9% of total land area in 2000 to 31.2% in 2020, representing a net loss of almost 100 million hectares of the world’s forests. From 2000 to 2020, forest area increased in Asia, Europe and North America, while significantly decreased in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and South-Eastern Asia, driven by land conversion to agriculture. Despite the overall loss, 2017 data show the proportion of forests in protected areas and under long-term management plans, as well as certified forest area increased or remained stable at the global level and in most regions of the world.
- In 2020, on average, 44% of each terrestrial, 41% of each freshwater, and 41% of each mountain Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) were within protected areas, an increase of around 12-13 percentage points since 2000. However, the majority of KBAs still have incomplete or no coverage by protected areas.
- As of 2019, 123 countries had committed to set their voluntary targets for achieving Land Degradation Neutrality and in 60 countries, governments had already officially endorsed these targets.
- Species extinction threatens sustainable development and compromises our global heritage, driven primarily through habitat loss from unsustainable agriculture and harvest and trade, deforestation, and invasive alien species. Globally, species extinction risk has worsened by about 10% over the last three decades, with the Red List Index (from a value of 1 indicating no threat

to extinction to a value of 0 indicating all species are extinct) declining from 0.82 in 1990 to 0.75 in 2015, and to 0.73 in 2020.

- As of 1 February 2020, 122 countries and the European Union had ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) (an increase of 53 from 2019) and 63 countries and the European Union had shared information on their ABS frameworks. Regarding the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, there are now 146 Contracting Parties, and 56 countries have provided information about their ABS measures.
- Only about a third of reporting Parties are on track to achieving their national biodiversity targets as reported in national reports under the Convention on Biological Diversity. As of January 2020, 129 Parties including the European Union had reported their sixth national report and 113 Parties have assessed progress towards their national targets related to Aichi Biodiversity Target 2. About half of Parties made progress towards their targets, but not at a rate that will allow them to meet their goals.

**Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

***24. Conflict, insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice remain a great threat to sustainable development. Millions of people have been deprived of their security, human rights and access to justice. In 2018, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million, the highest level recorded by UNHCR in almost 70 years. The COVID-19 pandemic is potentially leading to an increase in social unrest and violence that would greatly undermine our ability to meet the targets of SDG 16.***

- The global rate of homicide per 100,000 population slowly declined from 6.8 in 2000 to 5.9 in 2015 and 5.8 in 2018, corresponding to approximately 440,000 victims of homicide, of which 81% male and 19% female. Latin America and the Caribbean (33%) and sub-Saharan Africa (36%) accounted for over two thirds of homicide victims globally.
- Violent forms of discipline against children are widespread. In 69 countries (mostly low and middle-income countries) with data from 2012 to 2019, nearly eight in ten children aged one to 14 were subjected to some form of psychological aggression and/or physical punishment at home in the previous month.
- Sexual violence is one of the most unsettling of children's rights violations. In slightly more than one in four countries with comparable data from 2012 to 2019 (45 countries), at least 5% of women between 18 and 29 years of age reported experiencing sexual violence in childhood.

- The 2016-2018 data show that the proportion of prisoners held in detention without being sentenced for a crime is 31%, the same level as in 2005. Significant increases over the past three years were recorded in Asia and Oceania.
- Data from 38 countries over the past decade suggests that high income countries have the lowest prevalence of bribery (average of 3.7%), while lower income countries bear the heaviest bribery burden when accessing public services (at 22.3%).
- By implementing birth registration with proof of legal identity, children's rights can be protected and universal access to justice and social services can be enabled. Yet, based on data from 2010-2019, the births of around one in four children under age 5 worldwide had never been officially recorded. Fewer than half (44%) of all children under five in sub-Saharan Africa had their births registered.
- In 2019, the United Nations tracked 357 killings (decreased from 476 in 2018) and 30 enforced disappearances of human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists in 47 countries.
- The number of countries with binding laws and policies giving individuals a right to access information held by public authorities (right to information) has continued to climb, reaching 127 as of 2019. At least 43 countries adopted such guarantees in the past ten years, 40% of them in Africa.
- In 2019, 40% of countries had successfully achieved compliance of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) with the Paris Principle. Peoples' access to internationally recognized NHRIs, however, remains overdue in 78 countries, particularly in Eastern and South Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, and sub-Saharan Africa.

## **Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**

**25. *Strengthening global partnerships and enhancing the means of implementation for the SDGs has remained challenging due to scarce financial resources, trade tensions, technological obstacles, and lack of data. The pandemic is adding more hardships in the implementation of the SDGs. As COVID-19 continues to spread, global financial markets have experienced great losses and intense volatility, as over \$100 billion in capital has flowed out of emerging markets since the outbreak, the largest outflow ever recorded. World trade is expected to plunge between 13% and 32% in 2020. Strengthening multilateralism and global partnership are more important than ever before. The global nature of the pandemic requires the participation of all government, the private sector, civil society organizations and people around the world.***

## **Finance**

- Net ODA flows totaled \$147 billion in 2019, almost the same level as in 2018, but with an increased share going to the neediest countries. Bilateral ODA to LDCs rose by 3% in real terms from 2018, aid to Africa rose by 1%, but humanitarian aid fell by 3%.
- Global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows continued their slide in 2018, falling by 13% to \$1.3 trillion from a revised \$1.5 trillion in 2017. The decline—the third consecutive annual fall in FDI—was mainly due to large repatriations of accumulated foreign earnings by multinational enterprises, following tax reforms introduced at the end of 2017. It is projected that the pandemic may cause global FDI to shrink by 30% to 40% during 2020-2022.
- Remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are estimated to have reached \$554 billion in 2019, exceeding official aid by a factor of three since the mid-1990s. In 2019, remittances overtook FDI flows to LMICs, according to estimates. But growth of remittance flows slowed to 4.7% in 2019 compared to a robust 8.6% in 2018. Global remittances are projected to fall by 20% in 2020 to \$445 billion, due to the pandemic.
- Globally, government revenue accounted for approximately 30% of GDP in 2018, remaining stable compared to previous years, but with wide variation among countries. The average overall “tax burden” (revenue in the form of taxes) was 25% of GDP amongst advanced economies and 17% of GDP amongst emerging market and developing economies. The overall average of the proportion government expenditure funded by taxes was about 65% amongst advanced economies and 60% amongst emerging market economies.

## **Information and communications technology**

- More than half of the world’s population is now online. At the end of 2019, 53.6% of individuals, or 4.1 billion people, were using the Internet, ranging from only 20% in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) and 26% in sub-Saharan Africa to 84% in Europe and Northern America and 87% in Australia and New Zealand.
- Fixed-broadband subscriptions are continuously increasing. Globally, there were almost 15 fixed-broadband subscriptions for every 100 inhabitants in 2019, ranging from 33.6 in developed countries to only 11.2 in developing countries. In LDCs, due to the high cost and lacking infrastructure, there were almost no fixed-broadband connections. During COVID-19, this digital divide is costing developing countries and their people dearly – from health, economic and social perspectives.

## **Capacity-building**

- Total ODA for capacity-building and national planning stood at \$33.5 billion in 2017 and represented 14% of total sector allocable aid, stable since 2010. The main sectors assisted were public administration, energy and the financial sector, which received a total of \$13.0 billion.

## **Trade**

- Trade-weighted tariffs declined from 2.2% in 2017 to an average of 2.1% in 2018 worldwide.
- The share of LDC exports in global merchandise trade remained marginal at just above 1% in 2018. Growth in global exports of LDCs stagnated over the last decade, missing the target of doubling the share of global LDC exports by 2020 from 2011. In 2018, LDCs recorded significant year-on-year growth in services exports reaching a global share of 0.8%. Developing regions' share of global services exports has flattened over the last years, with a share of 30% at the end of 2018.

## **Data, monitoring and accountability**

- In 2019, 132 countries reported to have national statistical legislation that was compliant with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, up from 111 countries in 2018.
- In 2019, 141 countries reported implementing a national statistical plan, up from 129 countries in 2018. Despite having the second highest number of countries (36) implementing national statistical plans, sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest percentage of fully funded plans with only 25% of plans fully funded, compared to 95% in North America and Europe.
- In 2017, countries received \$689 million in support from multilateral and bilateral donors for all areas of statistics, up from \$623 million in 2016. However, this amount accounts for only 0.34% of total ODA. International funding for data and statistics is only around half the level that it needs to be.
- For the period 2014–2018, 147 countries have birth registration data that are at least 90% complete and 153 countries have death registration data that are at least 75% complete. In sub-Saharan Africa, 28 out of 53 countries have birth registration data and only 23 out of 53 countries have death registration data.