

Forging pathways for sustainable development

Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development

What we do

- Support for global policymaking organs
- International cooperation for development
- Regional cooperation for development
- Gender equality and the empowerment of women

Our team

- Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- Development Coordination Office
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- Regional commissions
- UN-Women
- UN-Habitat
- United Nations Environment Programme

The opening of the Sustainable Development Goals Action Weekend, which helped to maximize the impact of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit.

Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed meets with refugees in east Chad.

(Farchana; July 2023) © Resident Coordinator Office in Chad/Annour Halal



Sustainable Development Goals stocktaking days

110+
senior government officials convened

38
countries and the European Union reported on progress

204
side events

18,900+
media articles

Context

Past the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, **only 17 per cent of Sustainable Development Goal targets are on track**, according to *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024*. Rising interest rates, debt distress and geoeconomic fragmentation are slowing progress. Greenhouse gas emissions are driving climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, which **disproportionately affect the poor**. Women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making and **encounter discrimination that impedes progress towards gender equality**.

Our goals

The United Nations is helping to get the Sustainable Development Goals back on track with the 2030 Agenda. **Guided by the Agenda**, our United Nations country teams, led by resident coordinators, are taking decisive steps to **scale up support to country needs and priorities**.



“We must accelerate our efforts in the next six years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs will champion the 2030 Agenda as the best pathway to a better future.”

Li Junhua,
Under-Secretary-General
for Economic and Social Affairs



Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, speaks during a “fireside chat” at the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit alongside Ajay Banga, President of the World Bank Group, and Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay.

(New York; September 2023) © UN Photo/Cia Pak



“The resident coordinator system is the backbone of integrated and effective United Nations development system solutions to accelerate the implementation of the Goals.”

Oscar Fernández-Taranco,
Assistant Secretary-General for
Development Coordination



The Sing for Hope choir performs at the Sustainable Development Goals pavilion.

(New York; September 2023)
© Partnerships Office/Tyrese Nacho

Our achievements

Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Despite mounting challenges, at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September 2023, Governments reaffirmed their ambition and commitments to implement the 2030 Agenda **in the next six years**. The Secretary-General urged world leaders to deliver a **rescue plan for people and planet**. Governments responded with a political declaration, in which they welcomed his proposals for a **\$500 billion annual Sustainable Development Goal stimulus and for urgent reforms to the international financial architecture**. The Sustainable Development Goals Action Weekend aligned stakeholders on **six key transitions** for the acceleration of Goal achievement: food systems; education; sustainable energy; climate action and biodiversity; jobs and social protection; and digital connectivity.

The Summit also delivered on **12 new high-impact initiatives** to help to get the Sustainable Development Goals back on track. *The Global Sustainable Development Report* provided science-backed insights and encouraged transformative national plans that can generate synergies and manage trade-offs. The high-impact initiative on transforming education was focused on **equipping teachers for success** in a rapidly changing education system, while the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions garnered substantial backing to **advance decent work and social protection** worldwide.

The Local2030 coalition, a high-impact initiative connecting cities, regions and industry, promoted **multi-stakeholder action** to help to advance progress on Sustainable Development Goal achievement on the local level. This was complemented by the launch of the Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments to **amplify local voices** for global impact.

Data for sustainable development

In 2023, we improved public access to authoritative data through the new “UN Data Commons for the SDGs” platform, strengthened data governance and tracked progress made by 166 countries in adopting artificial intelligence and frontier technologies to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Global disaster resilience through space technology

The United Nations helps all countries to gain access to and leverage the benefits of space to accelerate sustainable development. This includes training on space law, the registration of objects launched into space and service provided to multilateral bodies that address urgent problems such as space debris. Through the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), we train country experts, for example in the Dominican Republic, on gaining access to satellite information that helps them to prepare for and respond to disasters.

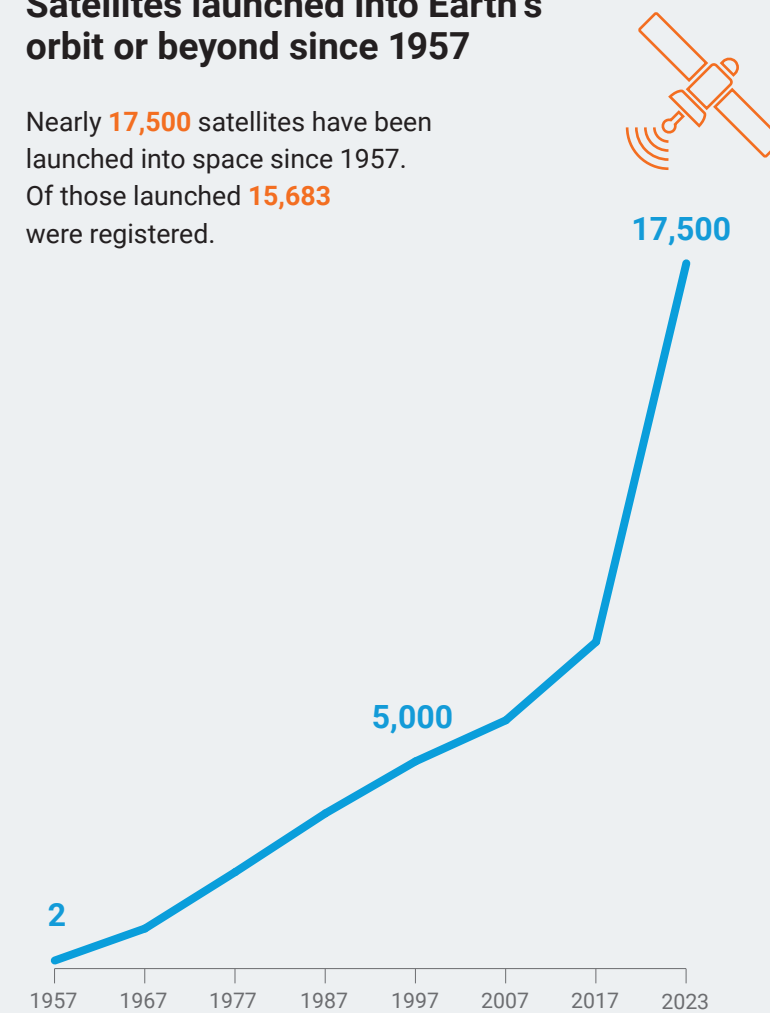


“Weak growth, eroding trust and fading hope jeopardize global stability. We urgently need an updated governance system for a united global response, leaving no one behind.”

Rebecca Grynspan,
Secretary-General,
United Nations Conference on
Trade and Development

Satellites launched into Earth’s orbit or beyond since 1957

Nearly **17,500** satellites have been launched into space since 1957. Of those launched **15,683** were registered.



Figures are cumulative



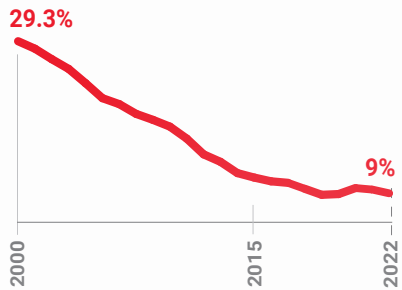
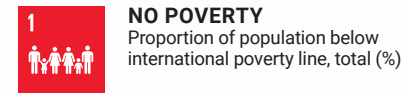
“Against increasing natural disasters the world over, UN-SPIDER drives resilience at the local level, ensuring the preservation of human life.”

Aarti Holla-Maini,
Director, United Nations Office for
Outer Space Affairs

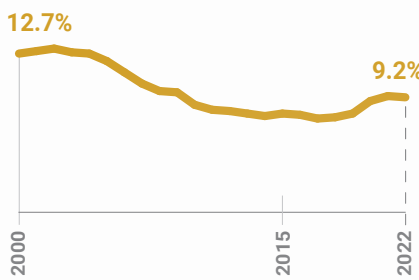
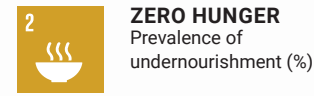
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: an overview of progress

Variations in the frequency of data collection across the Goals contribute to variations in cut-off dates in the charts below.

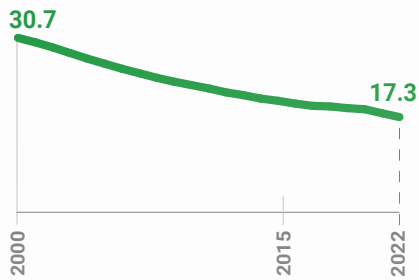
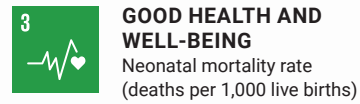
Note: Each line graph presented below shows progress over time for a particular target out of several targets for each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



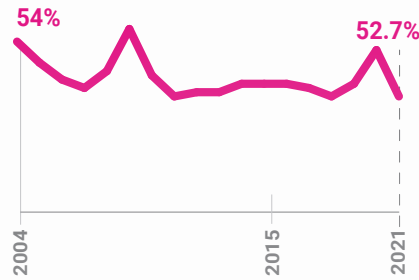
The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has created major setbacks in the reduction of poverty.



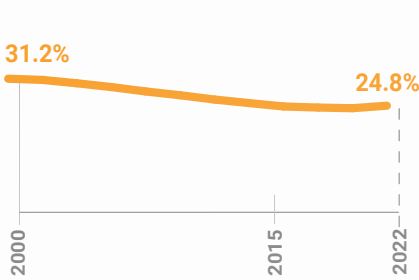
Global undernourishment has decreased since 2000.



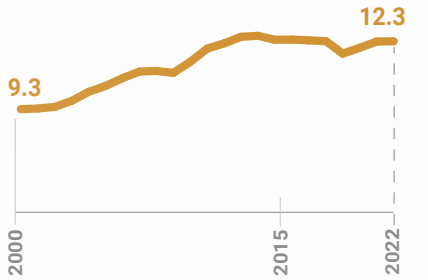
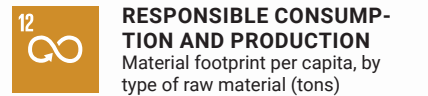
The neonatal mortality rate has consistently declined.



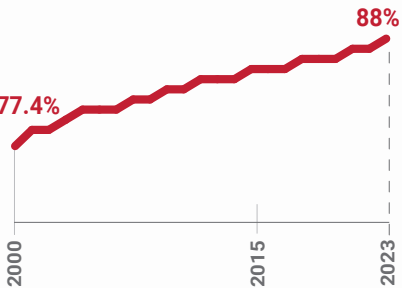
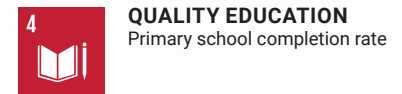
The share of national income going to labour has shown a downward trend.



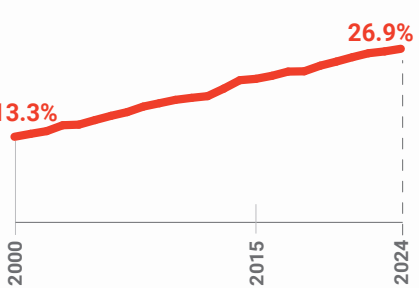
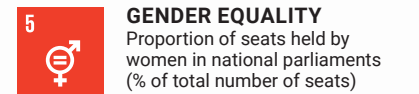
The number of people living in informal urban settlements has declined since 2000.



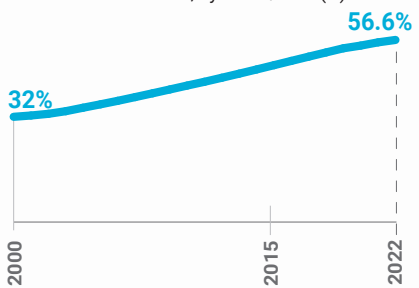
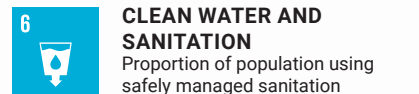
The global material footprint per capita has increased.



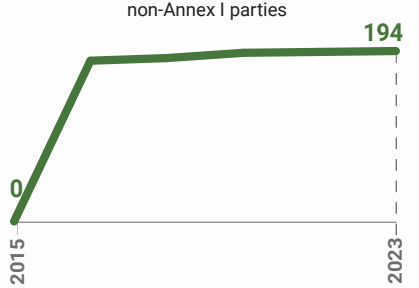
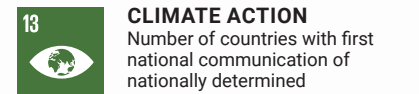
Universal and equitable access to primary education is yet to be achieved.



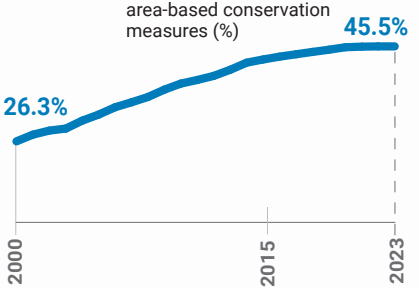
Major progress has been made towards addressing female underrepresentation in national parliaments.



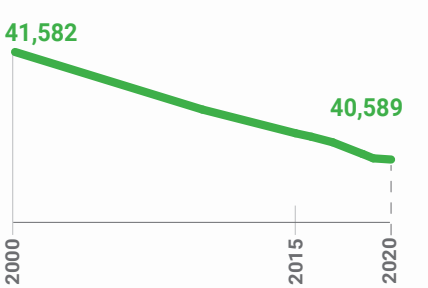
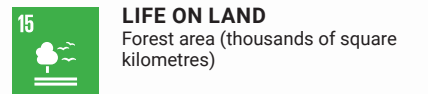
More people have access to safely managed sanitation services today than in 2000.



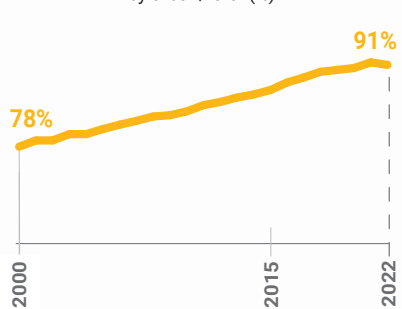
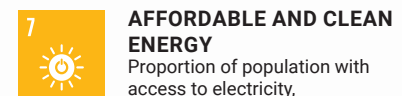
All 191 parties to the Paris Agreement, and Eritrea, have communicated their first NDCs.



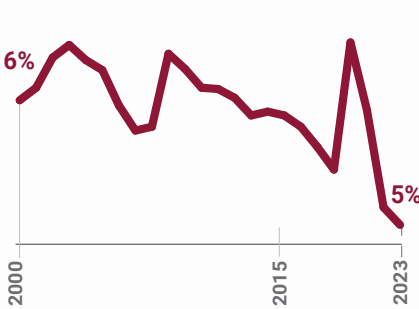
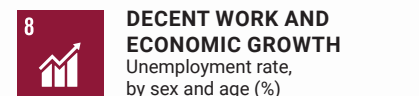
The proportion of key areas placed under conservation designation has increased since 2000.



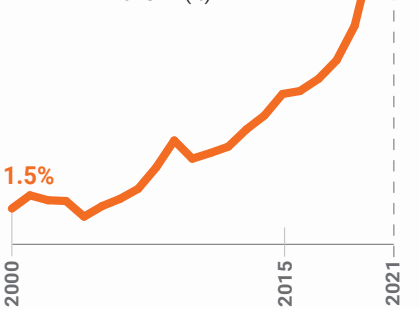
More efforts are needed to conserve and restore forests around the world.



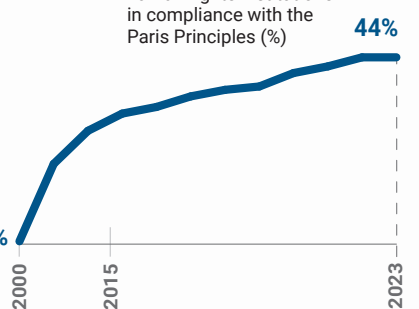
The vast majority of the world's population now has access to electricity.



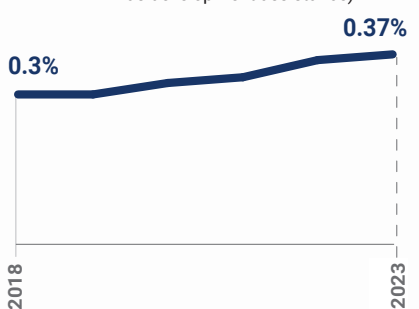
Global unemployment has increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic erasing progress made over the past two decades.



Research and development is increasingly prioritized across the globe.



Less than 50% of countries have human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles.



Though the 0.7% aid/GNI target for international aid has yet to be collectively achieved, progress is being made.
Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Accelerating progress

The Goals are not on track to be achieved by 2030, despite progress in some areas.

Furthermore, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, progress has slowed and in some cases been reversed across the 17 Goals. This makes the decade of action all the more urgent, requiring the support of Member States and other partners.





Students attend an e-learning session in Port Sudan, Sudan. Conflict has disrupted formal education for nearly all of the country's 24 million children.

(Port Sudan; June 2024)
© UNICEF/Ahmed Mohamdeen Elfatih



"In the world of global challenges, cities and multilateral collaboration are beacons of hope. Let's empower cities to create a future where nature and people thrive."

Michal Mlynár, Assistant Secretary-General and Acting Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Scaling up financing for development

The Secretary-General made reforming the international financial architecture a key priority. In May 2023, he published a policy brief, in which he advocated changes in global economic governance, financial safety nets and international tax cooperation to support the acceleration of Sustainable Development Goal achievement. In his stimulus proposal, he also emphasized the need to **reform multilateral development banks and address sovereign debt distress**.

In partnership with Member States, we advanced proposals from the 2022 Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture at the high-level retreat on a global financial architecture for a world facing global shocks, culminating in the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, held in Paris in 2023. To unlock national investment, Summit participants supported the General Assembly resolution on developing a new framework convention on international tax cooperation to advance fair and universally applicable rules.

New **public-private partnerships** were promoted through the United Nations Global Compact and the Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance, **focused on blended finance, de-risking, transparency and increasing private finance** for sustainable development.

Leaving no one behind

We kept our commitment to equitable sustainable development, in particular for marginalized groups and people in vulnerable situations.

We collaborated with **45 least developed countries** to implement the commitments of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. At the fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, we helped to launch **15 new multi-stakeholder partnerships** to promote sustainable energy, digital connectivity and sustainable tourism, and **five transformative deliverables**, on food stockholding, resilience-building, investment promotion, an online university and graduation support.

We published new progress reports on the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, ahead of the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in 2024, providing insights on the **unique challenges faced by those countries**, such as high transportation and transit costs and limited global market access. We supported negotiations for a new programme of action for the next decade, establishing a **network of national focal points** to drive implementation and follow-up.

We convened the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States and adopted the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States. We also supported the work of a new high-level panel on the development of a **multidimensional vulnerability index** for all vulnerable countries and the **subsequent intergovernmental process**.



"Together, we can create pathways to prosperity for the most vulnerable among us and ensure that they are not left behind in our shared journey towards sustainable development."

Rabab Fatima, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States



United Nations development staff support communities affected by the earthquake in Herat on 8 October 2023, which killed over 1,500 people and displaced 43,000 in Afghanistan.

(Herat; October 2023) © UNDP Afghanistan/Haroon Hamdard



"As the impacts of the triple planetary crisis continue, we need inclusive, ambitious environmental multilateralism to deliver the solutions needed to realize our global goals."

Inger Andersen, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme



Delegates from Brazil at an Indigenous event during the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28).

(Dubai, United Arab Emirates; December 2023) © COP28/Mahmoud Khaled

Local climate action

Cities are key for delivering climate solutions and halting the destruction and degradation of natural habitats. Although cities are significant drivers of planet-warming emissions, they are also engines of climate action and at the forefront of delivering solutions. At the first Local Climate Action Summit, held during the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, 72 Governments signed the Coalition for High-Ambition Multilevel Partnerships for Climate Action pledge, committing themselves to collaborating with subnational authorities in planning, financing, implementing and monitoring climate strategies.

In addition to Member States, we supported young people, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and older persons. This included establishing a **new United Nations Youth Office** and appointing the **first-ever Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs** to amplify young voices in global decision-making.

At the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we supported progress in addressing **equal access to sexual and reproductive health care for persons with disabilities**, including women and girls.

In support of Indigenous Peoples, we promoted their inclusion and rights in **over 20 countries** globally, including by working with over **8,000 Indigenous women in Latin America** to develop business and digital skills.

In support of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030), we worked with Member States to achieve a **22 per cent increase in national policies** on health and social care needs for older persons in **136 countries**.

Climate action

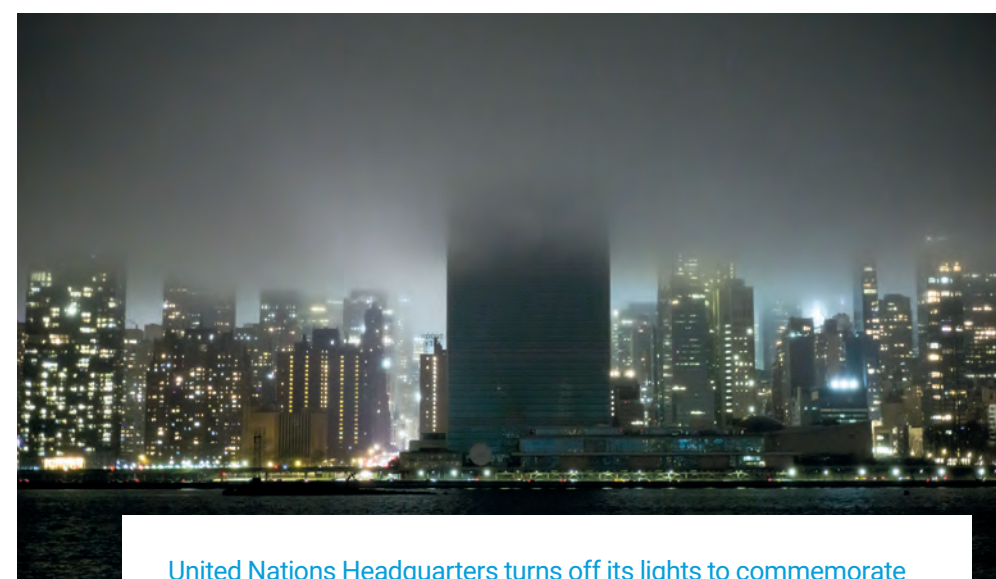
In 2023, we advocated transformative global climate action. At the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a **new loss and damage fund** was operationalized, and commitments were made on sustainable cooling,

on methane reduction and on halting deforestation by 2030. The **Africa Carbon Markets Initiative** was also operationalized in 2023, with the aim of dramatically boosting carbon credit production across the continent. Through the exchange of carbon credits, these markets offer a unique pathway to **improve energy access, create new green jobs and preserve biodiversity**.

We underscored the urgency of more climate action through new reports on the emissions gap, the production gap and the adaptation gap. According to those reports, **if current trends continue, the Earth will warm by 2.5°C to 2.9°C during the twenty-first century**, far exceeding the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5°C.

Our Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants advanced national plans to reduce short-lived pollutants in 50 countries, with 5 more joining the **Global Methane Pledge to cut emissions by 30 per cent by 2030**. Over 250 mayors and governors attended the first Local Climate Action Summit, resulting in a new pledge signed by 72 Governments for more local and multilevel climate action.

We launched initiatives on zero waste, water resources and food systems in support of climate action. The first International Day of Zero Waste showcased the **potential of zero-waste initiatives** for global sustainable development. The 2023 United Nations Water Conference, **the first in nearly 50 years**, highlighted the importance of freshwater resources. **The world agreed to the new Global Framework on Chemicals and a dedicated fund for follow-up**. In his call to action for human rights, the Secretary-General promoted climate-friendly food system transitions, reinforced by momentum from the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and recent General Assembly resolutions.



United Nations Headquarters turns off its lights to commemorate Earth Hour.

(New York; March 2023) © UN Photo/Manuel Elías

Cooling pledge organized by the Cool Coalition

More than 60 countries joined the Global Cooling Pledge, organized by the Cool Coalition and supported by the United Nations. The agreement is aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions linked to the cooling sector by at least 68 per cent globally by 2050.



“The decisions made and actions taken by leaders today will determine the world of tomorrow. The battle to keep 1.5 degrees within reach will be won or lost under their watch, but it is a fight that can be won. We have never had this much clarity on what needs to be done, by whom and over what timeframe. And we have the technologies, solutions and know-how to phase out fossil fuels and protect people and livelihoods from the climate crisis.”

Selwin Hart, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Climate Action and Just Transition

Spotlight initiative

384M

people reached through campaigns

8M

young people engaged in programmes

3M

people accessed gender-based violence services

548

laws or policies signed or strengthened



“At a time of heightened conflict and unprecedented divisions for our planet, investing in women and women’s organizations is vital to achieving a sustainable, equitable and rights-based future.”

Sima Bahous, Executive Director, UN-Women

Gender equality

Our gender snapshot report for 2023 revealed an **annual funding shortfall of about \$360 billion** to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by 2030. On the basis of current trends, **over 340 million women and girls will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030**.

We are bringing partners together to address some of the most glaring gender gaps through initiatives like our **United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women, which helped grantees to reach over 15 million individuals** with resources and services. Our **Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund mobilized about \$50 million** to empower grass-roots efforts by women human rights defenders and civil society organizations. Our Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women **reached nearly 50,000 women in six countries**, to support their livelihoods, rights, food security, nutrition and resilience.

Under the **\$545 million Spotlight Initiative**, progress was made in addressing gender-based violence in **30 countries**, through significant increases in perpetrator conviction rates and support for dedicated national budgets to address the scourge. Also through the Initiative, **women and girls gained greater access to relevant services and national action plans to eliminate gender-based violence** were strengthened. The initiative was translated into a United Nations high-impact initiative for the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit.

Through the Women Count programme, we provided technical support and quality assurance for projects in six regions and more than 25 countries to shift how gender statistics are used, created, shared and accessed. In a publication entitled *Feminist Climate Justice: A Framework for Action* we highlighted ways to address environmental challenges while promoting women’s rights. Recognizing the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls, we supported 50 countries in integrating or strengthening gender equality in national HIV strategies, in line with global efforts to end AIDS by 2030.

The culmination of our work resulted in the United Nations **system-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan**, which was launched on International Women’s Day 2024. The launch followed an extensive review by a task team and **advisory board, comprising representatives of 12 United Nations entities**, assessing the successes and shortcomings of the United Nations in advancing and protecting gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s and girls’ rights globally.



Palestine refugee students in Jordan participate in a science class at a United Nations school.

(Amman; March 2024) © UN Photo/Mark Garten

Regional support

The **regional collaborative platforms**, a key outcome of the United Nations development system reform, are now firmly established and **provide inter-agency analysis and expertise** in support of our resident coordinators and country teams.

Our five regional commissions convened annual forums on sustainable development, serving as regional intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platforms to **enable policy dialogues and assess progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**. They also provided regional input for the high-level political forum on sustainable development and peer learning on the voluntary national reviews. The 2024 forums also **helped to shape regional perspectives** on the Summit of the Future and its anticipated outcome document entitled, “A Pact for the Future”.



“We need more integrated approaches and innovative policy interventions to address the development challenges of poverty, inequalities, vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental degradation.”

Armida Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific



“ECLAC promotes a growth strategy involving industry, services and a critical mass of green growth sectors for higher and sustained economic growth and Sustainable Development Goal acceleration.”

José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Resident coordinator system

Resident coordinators, as the highest-ranking representatives of our development system at the country level, helped to bring together the full breadth of United Nations resources and expertise to support action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They convened partners to **unlock financing** and other means of implementation for sustainable development. Resident coordinators also enabled effective United Nations support for disaster preparedness and response, ensuring **immediate and coherent crisis response** across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions in complex settings, so as to lead response activities along sustainable development trajectories. The efforts of the resident coordinators have led to significantly **reduced duplications and optimized resources** to maximize impact.

Of the host Governments surveyed, 92 per cent viewed resident coordinators as **effective leaders** in delivering strategic support for national development priorities. Two thirds of resident coordinators are new appointees, selected through a revamped process to ensure diverse and skilled leadership with an impact tailored to specific country contexts, while **achieving gender parity and geographical balance**.



“We need to recognize the connection between peace and sustainable development and commit to peace as the foundation for the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab region.”

Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia



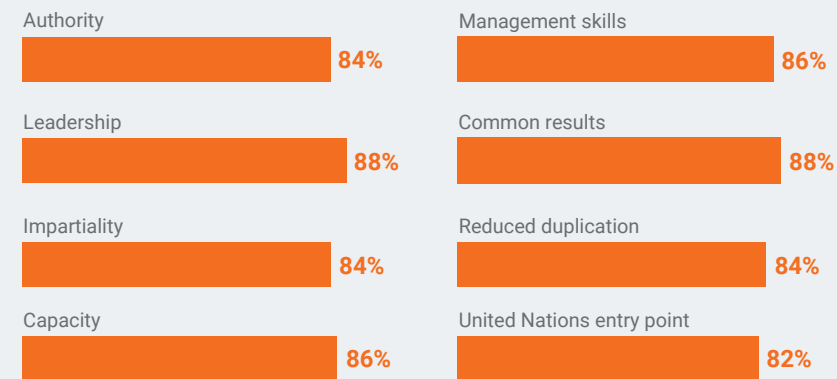
The Secretary-General hosts a dialogue with United Nations resident coordinators.

(New York; November 2023)
© UN Photo/Mark Garten

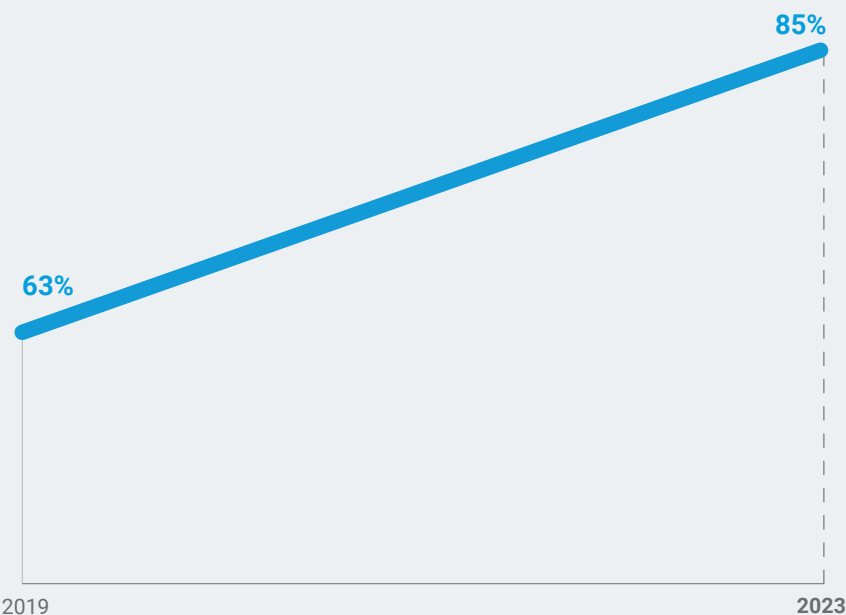
In focus: resident coordinator system

Under strengthened resident coordinator leadership, the United Nations development system continued to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in countries. Efforts to strengthen the leadership, impartiality, accountability and effectiveness of the resident coordinator system are yielding clear returns.

In 2023, the average percentage of host Governments reporting improved outcomes by resident coordinators reached **85** per cent.



The percentage of host Governments reporting that resident coordinators have strengthened each area increased by an average of **22** percentage points between 2019 and 2023.



Host perceptions of resident coordinators

92% said that resident coordinators provide strategic support to national plans

91% said that resident coordinators effectively support country development

88% said that resident coordinators provided strengthened leadership



“In times of multiple crises, it is more urgent than ever to implement innovative solutions to get sustainable development back on track in the pan-European region.”

Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe