



Sustainable Development Goals: Changing our future

The final steps towards signing off on universal goals to replace the MDGs

Introduction

The clock is now ticking on the shape of the global development agenda—the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In September this year the UN will sign off on the 17 goals binding governments worldwide to a new way of looking at the world.

This is not some aspirational set of targets but a commitment by all states to work towards a more sustainable and equal world. New Zealand's UN representatives are now working on the intergovernmental negotiations to decide on the Declaration of the post-2015 agenda. The call from co-facilitators of the process is that it is ambitious and visionary - that it overcomes challenges to make a collective vision for 2030 a reality.

The consultation process

One of the key differences between the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the SDGs is the unprecedented consultation in the content and design this time around.

What has happened?

The UN conducted “global conversations” to tease out a wide and intelligent blueprint for the SDGs. This conversation included 11 thematic and 83 national consultations and door-to-door surveys. Online, seven million people expressed their opinions about the components of the SDGs and their targets. The results of both of these processes fed into the Open Working Group (OWG). Established following the Rio+20 summit, the OWG featured representatives from 70 countries and met 13 times to create the proposed 17 goals and 169 targets that are the foundation for the intergovernmental negotiations this year.

What is still to come?

The intergovernmental negotiations. These negotiations between January and September this year are where states will write the declaration and decide on the final wording of the goals and targets. They will also look at the measuring mechanisms that will be used.

Remembering these are universal goals which means the SDGs will apply to **all governments** not just developing countries.

As with many UN meetings, parallel **civil society** conferences will be held. For more information check out the [Inter-governmental page](#) on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform website. Globally there is a huge push by civil society both in developing and developed countries to see an ambitious and transformative set of goals.

Action/2015 has a membership of over 1,000 organisations (including CID) and people from over 125 countries. This movement “to end poverty, inequality and dangerous climate change” is engaging individuals and organisations with the common belief that the decisions taken in 2015 are critical to the future. Their focus is on both the SDGs conference and the Paris UN Climate Change Conference. Action/2015 encourages people to exert their influence over governments both online with the hashtag #Action2015 and offline with a range of events.

Beyond 2015 (CID is also a member) is a global civil society campaign sporting more than 1000 NGOs. Beyond 2015 maintains that tackling inequalities and addressing environmental sustainability must be a fundamental part of a new global framework.

Although there has been concern from some governments that 17 goals is too many, it is clear they will remain as the G77 refuses to drop hard-earned goals from the agenda. The argument now is over how many of the proposed 169 targets are measurable. New Zealand's Chief Statistician will join colleagues working on indicators over the next few months. There will be key discussions around the SDGs indicators at the annual session of the Statistical Commission in early March in New York.

Narrowing down the numbers

Alongside the intergovernmental negotiations this year will be the Financing for Development (FfD) meetings, concluding with the Third Conference on financing for development 13-16 July, Addis Ababa.

The draft SDGs

- 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- 6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
- 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation
- 10) Reduce inequality within and among countries
- 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- 13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (taking note of agreements made by the UNFCCC forum)
- 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- 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
- 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
- 17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

This process is equally (if not more critical) than the intergovernmental meetings in defining the SDGs. The outcome document from the FfD Conference will constitute an important contribution to, and support for, the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

The bill for monitoring the draft 169 targets has been estimated to be as high as \$250 billion for 2030 although the [World Bank has disputed](#) this sum.

[A Rough Road Map: Financing the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals](#) (ODI) suggests “costing and financing

plans for the new SDGs should be developed at the country level rather than globally, so that the trade-offs across objectives and funding types can be fully explored.”

Tracking the technology

One of the largest challenges to the success of the SDGs is how data is collected and analysed. The Secretary-General’s Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (IEAG) produced the report: [A world that counts: Mobilising the data revolution for Sustainable Development](#).

The report features five key principles and standards with the creation of an SDG data lab. “Never again should it be possible to say we don’t know. No one should be invisible.” The UN Statistics Commission has indicated that it will be launching a website for activities related to the post-2015 indicator framework within the next few weeks.

Dates to remember

- 17th-20th Feb: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda – Declaration
- 23rd-27th March: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda - SDGs and Targets
- 13th-17th April: Financing for Development: 2nd drafting session
- 20th-24th April: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda - Framework for monitoring and review of implementation
- 18th-22nd May: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda - Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
- 15th-19th June: Financing for Development: 3rd drafting session
- 22nd-25th June: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda- Finalisation of the Outcome Document
- 13-16th July: Third International Conference on Financing for Development
- 20-24th July: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda- Finalisation of the Outcome Document
- 27-31th July: Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda- Finalisation of the Outcome Document
- 25 - 27 Sep UN Summit for Adoption of the Post 2015 Development Agenda

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