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## **The Sustainable Development Goals have improved millions of lives over the past decade, but progress remains insufficient, UN report finds**

***International cooperation and sustained investment are critical for SDG success in the final five years***

**New York, 14 July 2025** – A decade after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations released today the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of its annual progress report, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025*. The report provides a stark assessment and a strong call for action.

While millions of lives have improved, through gains in health, education, energy, and digital connectivity, the pace of change remains insufficient to meet the Goals by 2030. The latest available data show that only 35 per cent of targets are on track or making moderate progress, while nearly half are moving too slowly and 18 per cent have regressed.

"We are facing a development emergency," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres. "But this report is more than a snapshot of today. It's also a compass pointing the way to progress. This report shows that the Sustainable Development Goals are still within reach. But only if we act – with urgency, unity, and unwavering resolve."

### **Progress amid adversity**

Despite cascading global challenges, the report documents notable global achievements:

- **New HIV infections** have declined by nearly **40 per cent** since 2010.
- **Malaria prevention** has averted **2.2 billion cases** and saved **12.7 million lives** since 2000.
- **Social protection** now reaches over **half the world's population**, up significantly from a decade ago.
- Since 2015, **110 million more children and youth** have entered school.
- **Child marriage is in decline**, with **more girls staying in school** and **women gaining ground in parliaments** around the world.
- In 2023, **92 per cent of the world's population** had access to electricity.

- **Internet use** has surged from **40 per cent in 2015 to 68 per cent in 2024**, unlocking access to education, jobs, and civic participation.
- Conservation efforts have **doubled protection of key ecosystems**, contributing to global biodiversity resilience.

### Hard truths and systemic risks

At the same time, the report calls attention to challenges that continue to hold back sustainable development progress:

- More than **800 million people** still live in extreme poverty.
- **Billions** still lack access to **safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services**.
- **Climate change** pushed 2024 to be the **hottest year on record**, with temperatures **1.55°C** above pre-industrial levels.
- **Conflicts** caused nearly **50,000 deaths** in 2024. By the end of that year, over **120 million people** were forcibly displaced.
- Low- and middle-income countries faced **record-high debt servicing costs of \$1.4 trillion** in 2023.

### A roadmap for acceleration

The report calls for action across six priority areas where intensified effort can generate transformative impact: food systems, energy access, digital transformation, education, jobs and social protection, and climate and biodiversity action.

It also urges governments and partners to implement the **Medellín Framework for Action**, a roadmap adopted at the 2024 UN World Data Forum, to strengthen data systems essential for responsive policymaking.

### Success stories show that the Goals are achievable

Global averages may mask meaningful advances in many countries that have made substantial progress across different Goals. For example, 45 countries have achieved universal electricity access in the past decade and 54 countries had eliminated at least one neglected tropical disease by the end of 2024. These national and local successes, driven by sound policies, strong institutions, and inclusive partnerships, prove that accelerated progress is not only possible, but already happening.

The final five years to 2030 present an opportunity to deliver on the promises of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda is not aspirational; it is non-negotiable.

“This is not a moment for despair, but for determined action,” said Li Junhua, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. “We have the knowledge, tools, and partnerships to drive transformation. What we need now is urgent multilateralism—a recommitment to shared responsibility and sustained investment.”

## Additional key facts and figures:

### Progress

- Between 2012 and 2024, the prevalence of stunting among children under age 5 decreased from 26.4 per cent to 23.2 per cent.
- Healthy life expectancy increased by over five years between 2000 and 2019. However, COVID-19 reversed some of these gains, cutting life expectancy by 1.8 years.
- Global maternal mortality ratio dropped from 228 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015 to 197 in 2023. Under-5 mortality fell to 37 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2023, a 16 per cent reduction from 44 in 2015.
- By the end of 2024, 54 countries had eliminated at least one neglected tropical disease.
- Between 2019 and 2024, 99 positive legal reforms were implemented to remove discriminatory laws and establish gender equality frameworks.
- As of 1 January 2025, women held 27.2 per cent of the seats in national parliaments, up 4.9 percentage points from 2015.
- Renewable energy is the fastest-growing energy source today and is projected to surpass coal as the primary electricity source in 2025.
- 5G mobile broadband now covers 51 per cent of the global population.

### Setbacks

- Without a significant acceleration in efforts, 8.9 per cent of the global population will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030 under the revised international poverty line.
- Nearly 1 in 11 people worldwide faced hunger in 2023.
- In 2023, 272 million children and youth remained out of school.
- Women perform 2.5 times as many unpaid domestic and care work as men.
- In 2024, 2.2 billion people lacked safely managed drinking water, 3.4 billion went without safely managed sanitation, and 1.7 billion lacked basic hygiene services at home.
- The global refugee population has surged to 37.8 million by mid-2024.
- Worldwide, 1.12 billion people live in slums or informal settlements without basic services.
- Official development assistance declined 7.1 per cent in 2024 after five years of growth, with further cuts expected through 2025.

For more information, please visit: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025>

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