

Staff outside the SDG Action Zone at United Nations Headquarters. The Zone is a new opportunity to reshape multilateral engagement during the General Assembly high-level week (New York, 20 September 2019)



# Promotion of Sustained Economic Growth and Sustainable Development



## KEY PROGRAMMES

- Support to global policymaking organs
- International cooperation for development
- Regional cooperation for development



## INDICATIVE RESOURCES

**\$1.6B**  
\$483M regular assessed and  
\$1.1B voluntary contributions



## SELECT MANDATES

- Political Declaration of the High-level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, General Assembly resolution 74/15
- Political declaration of the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States through the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, General Assembly resolution 74/3
- Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy, General Assembly resolution 74/217
- Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, General Assembly resolution 72/279
- Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, General Assembly resolution 74/4
- Victoria Falls Declaration on the United Nations Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development in Africa, ECA/RFSD/2020/16



## SELECT ENTITIES

- Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
- Regional Commissions
- UN-Habitat
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)





Secretary-General António Guterres speaks at the opening of the United Nations Climate Action Summit, which aimed to boost ambition and accelerate action to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement (New York, 23 September 2019)



ALIGNMENT WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## CONTEXT

Now in its fifth year of implementation, work on the 2030 Agenda is accelerating, guided by the pledge of leaving no one behind.

In 2019, Member States reaffirmed their shared commitment to the 2030 Agenda, with leaders calling for a decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of accelerating progress in eradicating fundamental deprivations, reducing inequalities and reversing course on climate change and biodiversity loss, all central aspirations in the Agenda.



“Recovering better means creating more sustainable economies and resilient societies to preserve our environment and leave no one behind.”

Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs



Billboards showcasing the Sustainable Development Goals in Times Square, New York City, displayed in advance of the General Assembly high-level week (New York, 19 September 2019)



KEY OBJECTIVES

The Organization provides solutions to foster international cooperation and partnerships in the follow-up to transformative global agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2011–2020. Regional support is spearheaded by the regional commissions and regional offices of entities of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Western Asia. On the ground across 162 countries and territories, the resident coordinators help to join up the expertise of all resident and non-resident entities in the United Nations development system in support of national efforts.

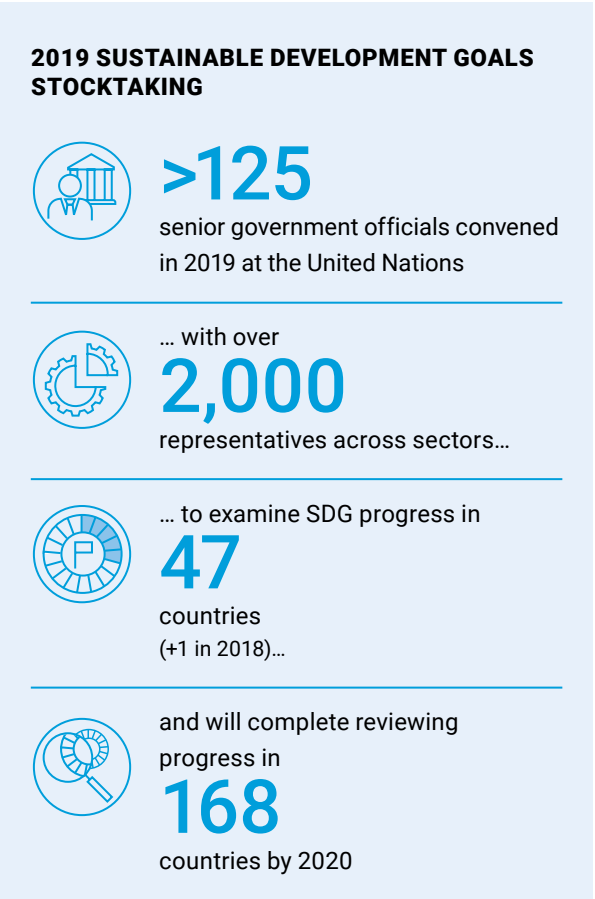
KEY OUTCOMES

Stocktaking and acceleration of the Sustainable Development Goals

Five years after their creation, the Sustainable Development Goals represent the collective desire to build a better world for people and the planet. The United Nations plays a key role in supporting Member State implementation. Since 2016, 168 countries have developed plans for the Goals and presented voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, demonstrating their commitment to adapting policies and institutions.

While there is progress on some of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including for indicators on poverty, hunger, youth employment, biodiversity, climate change and access to justice, the world is not on track to achieve them by 2030. Consequently, global leaders gathered in September 2019 for the first United Nations summit on the 2030 Agenda since its adoption. As a result, Member States adopted a commitment to accelerate implementation through a decade of action. Since then, I have called for greater mobilization, ambition, financing and solutions, particularly on poverty, climate and gender equality.

Accelerated action for the 2030 Agenda depends on high-quality, disaggregated data and statistics. The Data for Now initiative is aimed at accelerating the sustainable use of geospatial information, big data and other non traditional sources. Through the Global Land Indicators Initiative, for example, over 200 experts have been trained on data collection and reporting.



Participants at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held under the auspices of the General Assembly (New York, 24 September 2019)



“A reformed UN development system – built around a new generation of UN resident coordinators, who lead UN teams in the field – is essential for the UN to meet its responsibilities to support Member States achieve the SDGs.”

Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General for Development Coordination

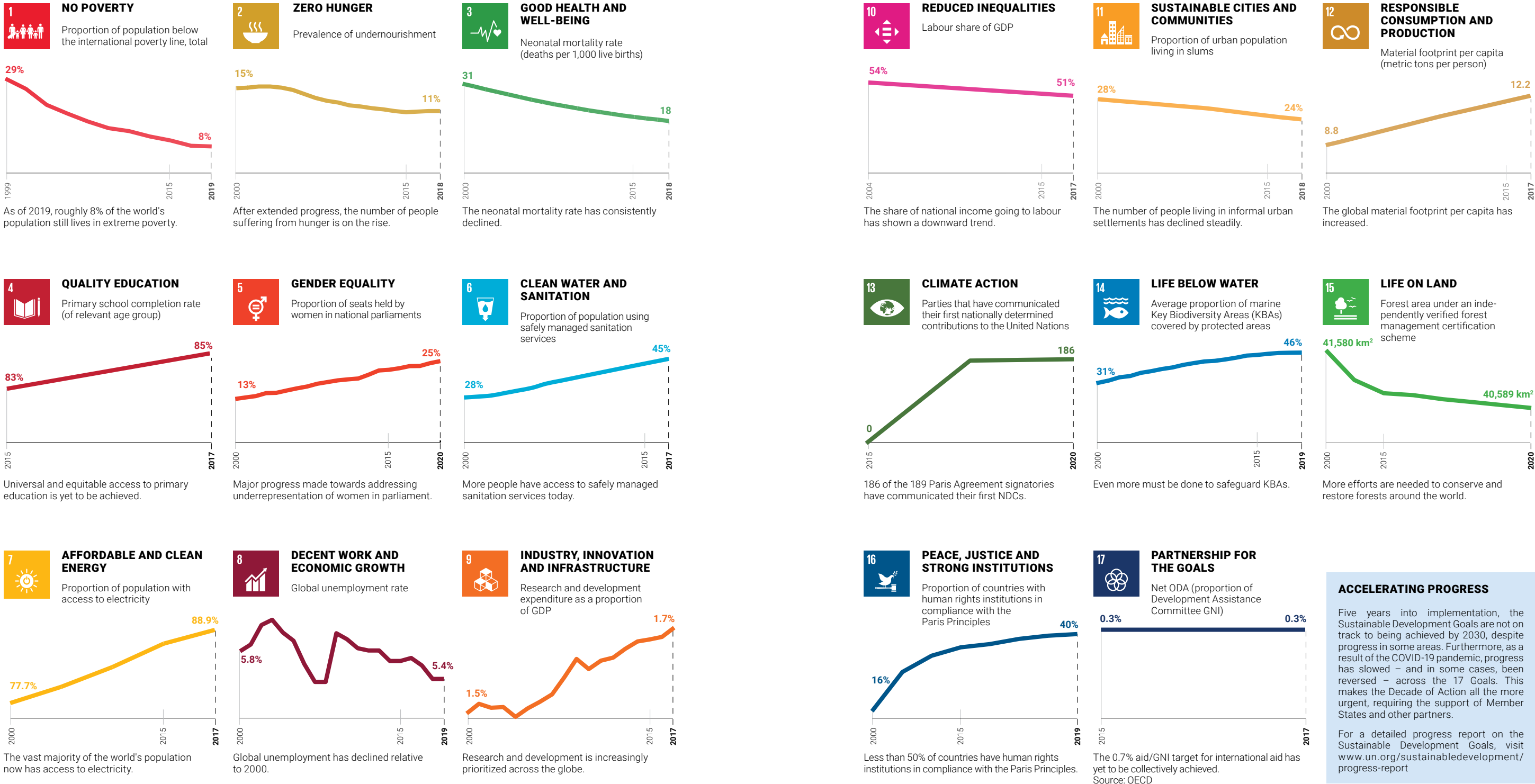


“The regional dimension of development goes beyond the sum of actions at the national level; development issues require a transboundary approach.”

Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

# THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## AN OVERVIEW





LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities is at the very core of the 2030 Agenda. Today, 1.3 billion people remain at risk of being excluded from realizing the Sustainable Development Goals as a result of multidimensional poverty. The United Nations therefore supports initiatives for vulnerable countries and populations, based on the principle of “leaving no one behind”. For example, we jointly organized the Global Conference on Scaling Up Energy Access and Finance in Least Developed Countries in 2019, as access to sustainable energy is a key enabler of the Goals’ implementation. In addition, we helped to launch the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access at the 2019 Climate Action Summit to accelerate universal access in rural and vulnerable areas. The midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway

also witnessed Member States advancing their commitment to the needs of small island developing States.

As part of United Nations support for sustainable urbanization, I released my guidance note on land and conflict, the United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements and the Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles and Framework for Action to Advance Integrated Territorial Development, improving tenure security and the resolution of land disputes, focused on 1.2 million vulnerable people in 13 countries.

In the area of trade, we supported policies that allow women to benefit from opportunities in international exchange, for example through the Borderline initiative in six border districts of Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, which trains women informal traders on how to formalize their businesses.



Yetnebersh Nigussie, disability rights activist and lawyer, and 2017 Alternative Nobel Prize Recipient, briefs press on the issue of women with disabilities, during the twelfth session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (New York, 12 June 2019)

DISABILITIES

The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy is a key component of leaving no one behind. It represents the first ever United Nations system-wide strategy for 1 billion individuals with

disabilities. Launched in 2019, the Strategy is aimed at mainstreaming disability inclusion across the United Nations system.



Students at the National Education Centre in St. Esprit de Grand Chemin photographed during the United Nations Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group’s mission to Haiti (Grand Chemin, Haiti, 23 May 2019)



“Urbanization is a truly transformative force: we now have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get things right. Our future depends on making our cities more equitable, climate resilient, and a place for all.”

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat



“We must ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable countries – the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS – are heard loud and clear, and that their sustainable development agendas are advanced.”

Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS



CLIMATE ACTION

With global emissions reaching record levels, I called leaders to the Climate Action Summit in September 2019, which resulted in 70 countries committing to more ambitious national plans. Business leaders also responded, with some of the world’s largest asset managers – responsible for directing more than \$2 trillion in investments – committing to moving to carbon-neutral portfolios by 2050. In 2020, we also wrap up the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, during which 63 Governments made commitments under the Clean Seas campaign.

The scientific community has repeatedly sounded the alarm on the climate emergency, including biodiversity breakdown, marking 2020 as a “super year” for action. While several events scheduled for 2020 were postponed owing to the pandemic, climate change remains the biggest threat facing humanity in the long term. We therefore need to increase ambition and action on climate change, as the virus only heightens our vulnerability to global threats.



“The environmental challenge has the ability to change the course of history. Whether we change track in the right direction or not is entirely up to us.”

Inger Andersen, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme



United Nations staff and their family members gather in support of the Global Climate Strike at the Visitors' Plaza, United Nations Headquarters, just days before the United Nations Climate Action Summit (New York, 23 September 2019)



Greta Thunberg (second from right), climate activist, at the opening of the United Nations Youth Climate Summit. From left to right: Wanjūhī Njoroge, climate activist; Secretary-General António Guterres; Ms. Thunberg; and Bruno Rodríguez, climate activist (New York, 21 September 2019)

YOUTH

The *World Youth Report* highlighted the essential role that young people play in advancing the 2030 Agenda. To mobilize youth for climate

action, the 2019 Youth Climate Summit provided a platform for young leaders from 140 countries and territories.





After two weeks of dialogue, the sixty-third session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women concluded with a strong commitment by Member States to safeguard and improve women's and girls' access to social protection systems, public services and sustainable infrastructure (New York, 22 March 2019)

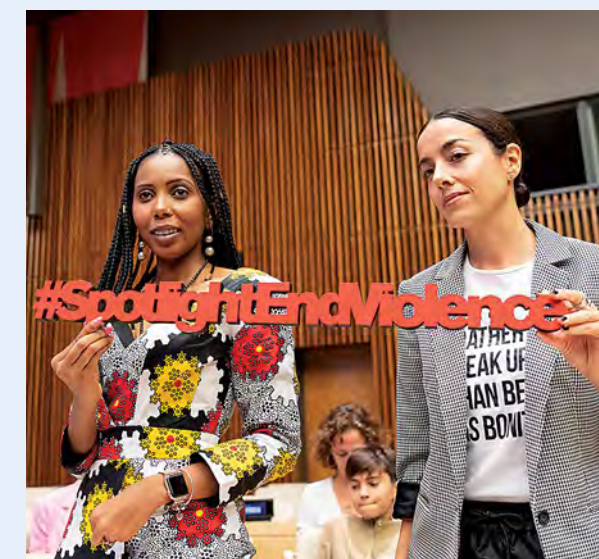
## GENDER EQUALITY

The year 2020 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In the lead-up to the 2020 session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Member States conducted national reviews of progress and challenges related to the Platform of Action. To date,

more than 160 States have completed their reviews, which served as the basis for the political declaration adopted during the session of the Commission. While progress has been made, major gaps remain, including the fact that, 25 years on, no country has fully achieved gender equality, which is now a priority during the decade of action.

## SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

The Spotlight Initiative is a multi-year programme, supported by the European Union, to end violence against women and girls globally by 2030. Through comprehensive, rights-based programming, the Initiative is strengthening agency collaboration under the leadership of resident coordinators, in partnership with civil society, to support government efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



UN-Women Regional Goodwill Ambassador, Jaha Dukureh (left), and Spotlight Champion, actress Cecilia Suárez (right), hold up a sign during the Spotlight event "Progress and perspectives on eliminating violence against women and girls" (New York, 26 September 2019)

### 42 MILLION

people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotypes



### 41

laws signed or strengthened in 15 countries

### 50%

\$124 million of programme funds have been budgeted for civil society organizations



### 38%

of targeted countries disaggregate national statistics to better reflect multiple forms of discrimination



Approximately

### 15%

increase in survivors of violence seeking help from support services



### 10%

increase in the number of cases reported to the police, compared to last year



Nearly

### 350,000

adolescents reached through education programmes



### 77



women's rights groups increased the use of citizen audits, shadow reports and other accountability mechanisms

More than

### 500,000

people regularly involved in community mobilization activities





SCALING UP FINANCING  
FOR DEVELOPMENT

To achieve the 2030 Agenda, developing countries face a financing gap of at least \$2.5 trillion per year – not considering the impact of COVID-19. In September 2019, the General Assembly convened the first High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development since the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which resulted in over 20 new initiatives and commitments by Governments and stakeholders to help to fill the gap.

In October 2019, I also launched the Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance with leaders of 30 financial institutions and corporations. Collectively, the Alliance manages some \$16 trillion dollars of assets and serves 700 million clients in over 160 countries. Over the next two years, the group will reshape investment solutions to unlock more finance for sustainable development, especially for countries most in need, and align its business practices with the 2030 Agenda.



“We must confront challenges to inclusive trade and investment as growth engines and reignite the spirit of multilateralism.”

*Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*

REGIONAL SUPPORT

More than ever, our greatest challenges transcend borders. The regional commissions therefore help Governments to formulate and implement policies for sustainable development across the five regions. For example, the Economic Commission for Africa developed a regional strategy for the decade of action and launched the Sustainable Development Goal 7 initiative for Africa to steer private sector finance into African sustainable energy projects.

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, together with the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, helped to organize high-level political regional forums on the 2030 Agenda and issued policy advice on how to accelerate regional progress, within the framework of empowerment and inclusion.



“We need to reimagine strengthened cooperation to secure sustainable development and connectivity in the region.”

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



Aligning economic policies, financial and tax systems, and financing flows with the 2030 Agenda



Enhancing sustainable financing strategies and investments at the regional and country levels



Seizing the potential of financial innovations, new technologies and digitalization to provide equitable access to finance



Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (third from left) meets with (left to right): Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); and Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (New York, 21 February 2019)





“We envision an integrated, stable and peaceful region, where all individuals enjoy a dignified life in just, diverse and flourishing societies.”

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



“With only ten years left to reach the SDGs, we must recognize the role cities and local leaders play in driving sustainable transformation.”

*Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary,  
Economic Commission for Europe*

The debt for climate adaptation swap initiative advocated by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean gained momentum and now incorporates a stronger Caribbean Resilience Fund. It addresses the two most urgent development needs facing the Caribbean: debt and vulnerability to climate change.

Collectively, the regional commissions for Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Western Asia pioneered regional “SDG Gateways”, which are a window to data across regions, subregions and countries. For the first time, the Gateways help Member States to assess where we are on track for the Sustainable Development Goals and what new investments are needed. In addition, they offer best practices, lessons and tools for policy.



A community member utilizes a United Nations-supported water station in Mathare informal settlement (Nairobi, Kenya, May 2020)



# United Nations development system reform

The year 2019 was a defining year for the entities in the United Nations development system as it repositioned its support for the 2030 Agenda with programmes and projects of about \$36 billion annually. The reform of the United Nations development system has resulted in a better-coordinated use of our global and regional capacities and refocused our on-the-ground support for countries at the start of the decade of action.

At the heart of the reform is the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, in which resident coordinators have greater authority, capacities and tools. Resident coordinators are leading 131 United Nations country teams in 162 countries and territories. With their support, country teams undertake more integrated planning and tailor responses to country priorities and needs in their pathway towards the achievement of the

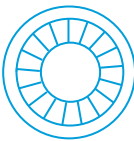
Sustainable Development Goals, centred on the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. The Development Coordination Office was also set up to support the resident coordinator system, and a funding compact was agreed with Member States to transform how the system is financed and managed.

The shift to better coordination is demonstrating results: 95 per cent of all United Nations country teams report that the joined-up approach has strengthened relationships with Governments, two thirds of partner Governments already indicate that resident coordinators deliver increased capacity on national development priorities, and almost 80 per cent of host Governments identified the newly reformed United Nations development system as more relevant to their country’s development needs. We are on the right track and will continue to rigorously monitor the implementation of these reforms. While consolidating the new development coordination system that we have built together, I am determined to forge ahead on the remaining mandates of the repositioning process, notably for multi-country offices, the regional review and system-wide evaluation.

### KEY OUTCOMES



We work with Governments and partners in **162** countries and territories for the 2030 Agenda



**2/3** of programme country Governments indicate that resident coordinators have shown increased capacity to support national development priorities



**72%** of cooperation frameworks in 2019 featured gender results as an outcome



### STRENGTHENING COUNTRY-LEVEL SUPPORT



In **Uganda**, after a first-of-its-kind dialogue between the United Nations country team and the President of Uganda, the Government appointed a new national Sustainable Development Goals focal point to interact with the country team

In **Guatemala**, the United Nations country team and the European Union undertook a major exercise to align their respective planning tools; Sweden bilaterally committed to align to the cooperation framework

In **Bangladesh**, United Nations country team commitments in the Scorecard for the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality translated into a gender responsive cooperation framework, grounded in gender analysis in the Common Country Analysis for the first time