



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





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DEAR  
EDUCATOR,



The purpose of this lesson plan is to provide an introduction and context to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is intended to last approximately 90 mins (in class). The lesson will:

**First** explain what the SDGs are,

**Second** explain their origin, as an extension and enhancement of a previous set of UN goals, the Millennium Development Goals, and as continuing and reinforcing the UN's commitment to universal human rights,

**Third** demonstrate through a case study of SDG 4 what the goal entails by reading about its targets,

**Fourth** SDG 4 will be taken from the conceptual level to the tangible level as the students will familiarize themselves with the story of Malala Yousufzai and the plastic school initiative by UNICEF,

**Fifth** students will be asked to reflect and discuss on both stories, in addition to challenges within their own communities regarding the success of SDG 4,

**Sixth** primary sources will be introduced for this take-home portion of the lesson. Students will focus on the evolution of the international community's dedication to the right of education and respond to a set of critical-thinking questions. Additionally they will draft a short proposal on how to improve the success of SDG 4 within their own community,

**Seventh** the lesson will end with a discussion regarding a set of key questions. Students will also share their proposals on how they can contribute to the success of SDG 4 in their own communities.

The UN Visitors Services Section wants to reach out to both educators and students during this time of disruption in traditional learning, by providing educational material that could ease the transition of an unprecedented school year. This lesson plan comes as second in a series of three provided to accompany the online lecture series created in partnership with *TeachSDGs* organization, entitled *Teach the UN*. We are eager to assist, and eager to hear feedback from all those who use these resources, so that we may improve and better support the global community of students and educators,

Thank you!

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# THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN (GRADES 8-12)

## Overview:

- This lesson plan gives an introduction and historical background to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key questions along with primary sources are provided to facilitate comprehension and engage students critically. Through analysis of the Preamble to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the connection will be made to the Millennium Development Goals and Human Rights, to demonstrate continuity and evolution of certain principle values held by the international community. Focus then shifts to SDG 4, quality education, so that students can more clearly analyze the progress that has been made regarding this topic on a micro level.

## Students will:

- Engage in dialogue
- Engage with primary source documents
- Formulate written and oral responses

## Goals:

- To answer the Key Questions confidently.
- To determine the influence of the *Millennium Declaration*, and by extension the Millennium Development Goals, and the *Declaration of Human Rights*, on the creation of the SDGs.
- To understand the development of the international community's attitude towards the right to education over time, as seen through UN documents.
- To realize everyone is an active participant in his/her community, and thus, by extension, in the success of the SDGs.



KEY  
QUESTIONS

Keep the following questions in mind as you progress with the lesson, read primary sources, engage in dialogue and interpret images and videos.

- What was the historical and ideological basis for the adoption of the SDGs?
- What is the connection between human rights and the SDGs?
- How does the adoption of the SDGs direct the vision, and actions, of the international community? Of your local community?



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Take a moment to observe the image. Then discuss as a class and amongst each other:

- What do you see, on the visual level?
- What is your initial impression?
- Are you already familiar with this image? How familiar? Or, is it entirely new to you?
- What makes sense/ what doesn't make sense?
- Do you think these image are able to resonate universally? Why or why not?

## MAKING SENSE OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs):

### MEANING AND ORIGINS

- What does this introduction say about the relationship between the SDGs?

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

For more information go to: [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: History of the SDGs](#)



MAKING SENSE OF THE  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS (SDGs):

MEANING AND ORIGINS

Please watch the following video on  
the UN Sustainable Development  
Summit, 2015



[UN Sustainable Development Summit](#)

# MAKING SENSE OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs): MEANING AND ORIGINS

Read the Preamble of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

- What sources and ideas does it cite as inspiration for the SDGs?
- What do the SDGs “seek to realize”?

## Preamble

- This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.
- The Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet:

## People

- We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

## Planet

- We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

## Prosperity

- We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

## Peace

- We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

## Partnership

- We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.
- The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realised. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

Read the full document here: [Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

## MAKING SENSE OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs):

### MEANING AND ORIGINS

Read the “Our shared principles and commitments” section from the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

## Our shared principles and commitments

10. The new Agenda is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law. It is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. It is informed by other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Read the full document here: [Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

MDGS  
AND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS

Take a look at the UN Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015). Then read an excerpt from the Preamble of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). On first glance, how do they relate to the SDGs?



"The General Assembly, Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction." *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

FROM  
MDGs TO  
SDGs



[Transition from MDGs to SDGs - United Nations  
Development Programme](#)



FROM  
MDGs TO  
SDGs

Reflect on the MDGs and the SDGs. Discuss these questions as a class and amongst each other.

- The focus of the MDGs was on achieving targets and milestones in developing countries. Progress on the SDGs is tracked everywhere. What do you think is the significance of this change?
- Does the global nature of the SDGs make them easier or more difficult to achieve?
- Reflect on the concept of “sustainability.” What does it mean and why is it important?
- What role did sustainability play in the MDGs, what role does it play in the SDGs?

CASE  
STUDY:  
SDG 4

is officially defined by the United Nations as a global effort to:

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all”

4 QUALITY  
EDUCATION



CASE  
STUDY:  
SDG 4  
TARGETS

[UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: History of the SDGs](#)

4  
QUALITY  
EDUCATION



Explore the above UN websites and specifically look at the targets for SDG 4. Read, and become acquainted with the targets.

- Do they seem reasonable? Why or why not?
- How could some of these targets become a reality in your community, are they already?
- How do these targets connect to ensuring quality education?
- How do these targets relate to some of the other goals?

Have a discussion with your peers about these questions, or anything else that sparks interest.



## CASE STUDY: SDG 4



Please watch the following videos and consider the questions:

- Are you familiar with Malala Yousafzai and her story? Why do you believe it resonates so powerfully, on the global level?
- Can you relate to her message? How so?
- Do these videos change your perspective of the SDGs? Specifically SDG 4?

[Financing the Future:  
Education 2030](#)

[UN Messenger of  
Peace: Girl's  
Education](#)

## About

Malala Yousafzai became an international symbol of the fight for girls' education after she was shot in 2012 for opposing Taliban restrictions on female education in her home country of Pakistan. In 2009, Malala had begun writing a blog under a pseudonym about the increasing military activity in her hometown and about fears that her school would be attacked. After her identity was revealed, Malala and her father Ziauddin continued to speak out for the right to education.

The Taliban's attack on Malala on 9 October 2012 as she was returning home from school with her friends received worldwide condemnation. In Pakistan, over 2 million people signed a right to education petition, and the National Assembly ratified Pakistan's first Right to Free and Compulsory Education Bill.

In 2013, Malala and her father co-founded the Malala Fund to bring awareness to the social and economic impact of girls' education and to empower girls to demand change. In December 2014, she became the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Secretary-General António Guterres designated Malala as a United Nations Messenger of Peace in 2017 to help raise awareness of the importance of girl's education.

## FOCUS AREA: GIRLS' EDUCATION

Quality education is the foundation for improving people's lives and for sustainable development. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrolment rates in schools, particularly for women and girls. The world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys. However, few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education. Moreover, 57 million children still remain out of school. Bolder efforts are needed to achieve universal education goals. In September 2015, at an historic UN Summit, world leaders adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals intended to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change. Goal 4 is aimed at ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning. The targets for Goal 4 include eliminating gender disparities in education by 2030.

For more information go to: [UN Messengers of Peace - Malala Yousafzai](#)

CASE  
STUDY:  
SDG 4



Please watch the following video on a UNICEF initiative in Côte d'Ivoire through partnership with Conceptos Plasticos, a Colombian start-up company.

[Building Schools with Plastic Bricks](#)

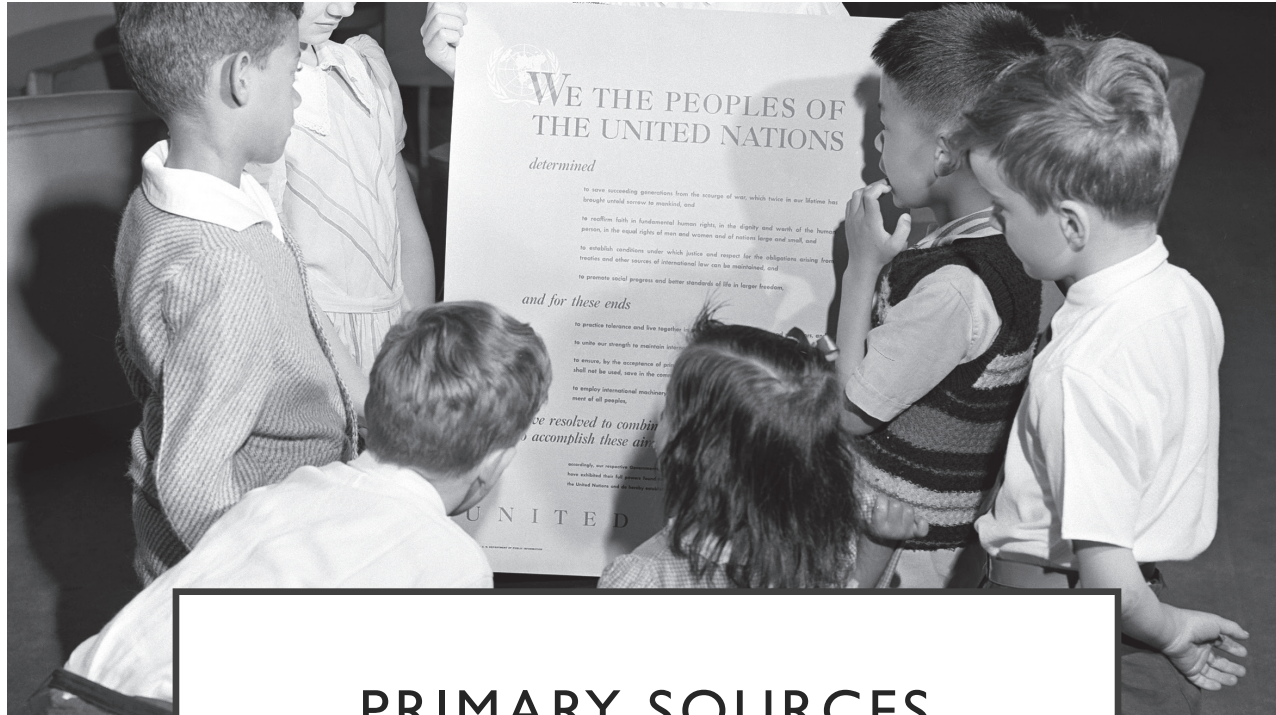


# DISCUSSION

You were able to hear Malala's story and the struggle of access to quality education in Pakistan.

You were able to see UNICEF's innovative solution to lack of classroom infrastructure in Côte d'Ivoire.

- Discuss as a class and amongst each other, what are your thoughts, questions, and/or comments? What goals does each story address, what messages regarding sustainable development can you take-away?
- What obstacles do you or members of your community face regarding access to education? What ideas do you have to solve these issues?



## PRIMARY SOURCES

Case Study:  
SDG 4



Let us see how the UN has focused on education through these primary source documents.

Please read the following:

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
  - please read the Preamble and Article 26
  
- [Millennium Declaration](#)
  - please read Section III, number 19 (page 5)
  
- [Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)
  - please re-read the Preamble, then read: the Declaration (Introduction, Vision, Our World Today) and Goal 4 (pages 1-4, 5-6 and 17)



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

**Reflection Questions:** Please answer 2 of the following 4 questions in 1-2 paragraphs (5-10 sentences) according to the information found in the primary sources. When possible, incorporate quotations from these sources to support your answers.

- How has the vision of education changed over time according to the UN and the international community? What has remained the same?
- How does education contribute to sustainable development, on the social, economic and environmental level?
- What role does sustainability play in a globalized world?
- Does universal quality education relate to all three UN pillars? If so, how? The three pillars are: Peace and Security, Human Rights, and Development.



## INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

The SDGs are a road map for every individual, not only governments and institutions. What initiatives can you take to improve the success of SDG 4 within your community? Be creative. Think about possible problems that may exist and ways to alleviate those problems.

Draft a proposal (1-2 paragraphs) and be willing to discuss and support your ideas in class.



# INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

**4 QUALITY EDUCATION**  
ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

**BEFORE COVID-19**

PROGRESS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION WAS **TOO SLOW**

**OVER 200 MILLION CHILDREN WILL STILL BE OUT OF SCHOOL IN 2030**

**INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION ARE EXACERBATED BY COVID-19**

IN LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES, CHILDREN'S SCHOOL COMPLETION RATE IS

**79% IN RICHEST 20% OF HOUSEHOLDS**    **34% IN POOREST 20% OF HOUSEHOLDS**

**COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS**

SCHOOL CLOSURES KEPT **90% OF ALL STUDENTS OUT OF SCHOOL** REVERSING YEARS OF PROGRESS ON EDUCATION

REMOTE LEARNING REMAINS **OUT OF REACH FOR AT LEAST 500 MILLION STUDENTS**

**ONLY 65% OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS HAVE BASIC HANDWASHING FACILITIES CRITICAL FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION**

Idea: How could you and/or your local community work to alleviate these Covid-19 related education issues?





**Full Circle.** Congrats! You have reached the end of the lesson on SDGs. Please attempt to answer the Key Questions:

- What was the historical and ideological basis for the adoption of the SDGs?
- What is the connection between human rights and the SDGs?
- How does the adoption of these goals direct the vision, and actions, of the international community? Of your local community?



## SDGS

### Additional Resources (Including those found in previous slides):

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

[UNICEF Plastic Schools Initiative](#)

[Globalgoals.org](#)

[The World's Largest Lesson](#)

[UN YouTube Channel](#)

[UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs: History of the SDGs](#)

[UN Messengers of Peace - Malala Yousafzai](#)

### Excellent for Primary Sources:

[UN Photo Archive](#)

[UN Audiovisual Library](#)

[Live Webcast](#)

[Dag Hammarskjöld Library. UN 75 - 75 Documents for 75 Years.](#)



To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library is presenting an exploration of 75 key documents that have shaped the United Nations and our world.

The documents selected honor the historic breadth of the Organization's work in the areas of peace and security, humanitarian assistance, development and human rights.