

KEY FINDINGS

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- The lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating conflicts, geopolitical tensions, and growing climate chaos have severely hindered SDG progress.
- The report reveals that only 17 percent of the SDG targets are on track, nearly half show minimal or moderate progress, and over one-third are stalled or regressing.
- Despite these deeply worrying trends, the report highlights opportunities and examples of success and resilience that can be built upon at global and regional levels.

SDGs: a promise unfulfilled

Intensifying, interconnected challenges continue to endanger the realization of the SDGs by the 2030 deadline. Inequalities keep growing. The climate crisis continues to escalate. Biodiversity loss is accelerating. Progress towards gender equality remains disappointing.

- **Rising inequalities (SDGs 1, 2, 10):**
 - An additional 23 million people were pushed into extreme poverty and over 100 million more suffered from hunger in 2022 compared to 2019.
 - For the first time this century, per-capita GDP growth in half of the world's most vulnerable nations is slower than that in advanced economies.
 - 7 in 10 children worldwide still lack social protection coverage (2023).
- **Food crises (SDGs 2, 12):**
 - Nearly 1 in 10 people globally face hunger (2022).
 - Nearly 60 per cent of countries faced moderately to abnormally high food prices in 2022, representing a nearly fourfold increase from the 2015–2019.
 - At current rates, 1 out of 5 children under age 5 will be affected by stunting in 2030.
 - Globally, 1 billion meals of edible food are wasted every day (2022).
- **Health setbacks (SDG 3):**
 - Global health progress has decelerated alarmingly since 2015, with the COVID-19 pandemic undoing nearly a decade of gains in life expectancy.
 - 4.5 billion people worldwide are not covered by essential health services (2021).

SDG successes and opportunities for acceleration

Global figures represent an average across all countries. This can hide pockets of significant progress in some areas, regions or countries. Spotlighting successes made in these areas or regions reveals the pathway to achieving the SDGs.

- **Reducing poverty and inequalities (SDGs 1, 10):**
 - Despite the impact of the pandemic, extreme poverty continued to decline in upper-middle- and high-income countries from 2015 to 2022, attributed to swift fiscal support for the vulnerable.
 - Central and Southern Asia reduced working poverty by 6.9 percentage points between 2015 and 2023.
 - The cost of remittances has fallen significantly over the past decade, decreasing from 7.42 per cent in 2016 to 6.18 per cent in 2023.
- **Improving malnutrition (SDG 2):**
 - In 2022, an estimated 22.3 percent of children under age 5 were affected by stunting, down from 24.6 percent in 2015.
 - Between 2015 and 2022, global government spending on agriculture increased steadily, reaching a record high of \$749 billion in 2022.
- **Healthcare (SDG 3):**
 - Increased access to HIV treatment has averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths in the past three decades.
 - Sub-Saharan Africa, the region most affected by HIV, has more than halved new infections annually since 2010.
 - Globally, skilled birth attendance has improved from 80 per cent of births in 2015 to 86 per cent in 2023.

- In 2022, 43 per cent of the 1.5 million children living with HIV were not receiving treatment.
- Declines in maternal mortality have stalled since 2015, with the maternal mortality ratio in 2020 being over three times higher than the 2030 target.
- In 2022, 20.5 million children missed at least one routine vaccine and 14.3 million received no vaccines at all.
- **Education declines (SDG 4):**
 - Education systems are under threat, with many countries experiencing declines in student math and reading skills.
 - Progress in upper secondary school completion slowed from 1.3 percentage points annually (2010–2015) to 0.9 percentage points annually (2015–2023), with Oceania experiencing negative growth.
 - Globally, over 20 per cent of primary schools have no separate sanitation facilities for girls.
- **Gender advancement (SDG 5):**
 - Data from 69 countries show that 56 per cent of married or in-union women aged 15–49 can decide on their sexual and reproductive health and rights.
 - Some countries have made strides towards ending female genital mutilation, but new estimates show an increase of 30 million cases compared to eight years ago.
 - While women hold 40 per cent of global employment, they only occupied 27.5 per cent of managerial positions in 2022, the same share as in 2016. At current rates, parity will require another 176 years.
- **Access to water, sanitation and energy (SDG 6, 7):**
 - At the current speed, in 2030, 2 billion people will still live without safely managed drinking water, 3 billion without safely managed sanitation and 1.4 billion without basic hygiene services.
 - In 2022, roughly half the world's population experienced severe water scarcity for at least part of the year. One quarter faced “extremely high” levels of water stress.
 - Without a change in course, an estimated 660 million people will still lack electricity access and around 1.8 billion will go without clean cooking fuels and technologies by 2030.
- Global under-5 deaths reached a historic low of 4.9 million in 2022, down from 9.9 million in 2000 and 6.0 million in 2015.
- As of 2022, 134 countries had already met the target of reducing under-5 child mortality. Seven more were on track, but 59 countries will need faster progress to meet the target.
- **Education (SDG 4):**
 - In most regions, girls have achieved or surpassed parity with boys in school completion at all levels.
 - Between 2015 and 2023, the primary school completion rate increased from 85 per cent to 88 per cent, the lower secondary completion rate from 74 per cent to 78 per cent, and the upper secondary completion rate from 53 per cent to 59 per cent.
 - Eastern and South-Eastern Asia saw the fastest growth in the upper secondary completion rate, with the completion rate climbing from 63 per cent in 2015 to 74 per cent in 2023.
- **Gender advancement (SDG 5):**
 - Central and Southern Asia witnessed the largest drop-offs in adolescent birth rates between 2000 and 2023, with a 72 per cent reduction in the 15–19 age group and a 90 per cent decrease in the 10–14 cohort.
 - Gender parity in managerial roles in sub-Saharan Africa has improved 40 per cent since 2000.
 - One in five girls were married before 18 today compared to one in four 25 years ago.
- **Sustainable water and energy (SDG 6, 7):**
 - Global water use efficiency increased 19 per cent, with Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia showing the greatest increase at 44 per cent.
 - The number of people lacking electricity access fell from 958 million in 2015 to 685 million in 2022, with Central and Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa showing a significant drop.
 - Global capacity to generate electricity from renewable energy has begun expanding at an unprecedented rate, growing at 8.1 per cent annually for the past five years.
- **Employment (SDG 8):**
 - Global unemployment hit a historic low of 5 per cent in 2023.
- **Climate and environment (SDG 11, 13):**
 - Improved preparedness, including early warning systems and evacuation measures, have

- **Employment (SDG 8):**
 - Global real GDP per capita grew at an average annual rate of 2.1 per cent from 2010 to 2014, slowing to 1.6 per cent from 2015 to 2022.
 - From 2015 to 2022, the global average level of national compliance with labour rights declined by 7 per cent.
 - **Climate/biodiversity crises (SDG 13, 14, 15):**
 - 2023 was the warmest year on record, with global temperatures nearing the critical 1.5°C threshold. Greenhouse gas emissions and atmospheric CO₂ concentrations continue to reach new highs.
 - Fossil fuel subsidies hit a record high globally in 2022-- exceeding \$1.5 trillion.
 - Species extinction risk continues to worsen, as evidenced by a 12 per cent deterioration in the Red List Index between 2024 and 1993.
 - In LDCs, the disaster-mortality rate is 170 per cent higher than the global average.
 - Record high ocean temperatures have triggered a fourth global coral bleaching event.
 - **Escalating conflicts (SDGs 10, 16):**
 - The number of forcibly displaced people has reached an unprecedented level, nearly 120 million people as of May 2024 and civilian casualties spiked by 72 per cent between 2022 and 2023.
 - 2023 saw the highest number of refugees (37.4 million under UNHCR's mandate)
 - **Financial resources (SDG 17):**
 - Developing countries face a \$4 trillion annual investment gap to achieve the SDGs. The Secretary-General has urged countries to support an SDG Stimulus of at least \$500 billion annually.
 - External debt stock levels have remained unprecedentedly high in developing countries. About 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it.
- significantly reduced disaster mortality in recent years.
- Eastern and South-Eastern Asia markedly improved air quality in 2015–2019, after having the world's second-highest PM_{2.5} concentrations in 2010–2014.
 - The OECD reports that the \$100 billion annual climate finance commitment to developing countries was met for the first time in 2022. Climate finance increased by 30 per cent from 2021 to reach \$115.9 billion in 2022, with 60 per cent of the total allocated to mitigation.
- **Sustainable oceans (SDG 14):**
 - The proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels increased in more than a quarter of major fishing areas between 2004 to 2021, opposite the declining global trend.
 - Marine protected area coverage has increased more than tenfold from 2000 to 2024.
 - Average protected area coverage of marine key biodiversity areas grew 128 per cent in Northern Africa and Western Asia and 86 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa from 2000–2015. Since 2015, sub-Saharan Africa has led with an 18 per cent increase, followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia (10 per cent).
 - Pacific small island developing States increased their contribution of sustainable fisheries to GDP from 1.54 per cent of GDP in 2019 to 1.63 per cent in 2021.
- **Technology and data/monitoring (SDG 17):**
 - Internet access increased by about 70 per cent in just eight years (2015–2023).
 - In 2023, 159 countries and territories reported having statistical legislation compliant with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, up from 132 in 2019, indicating significant progress in modernizing national statistical systems.
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