



# 2023 SDG SUMMIT - THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

The United Nations (UN) "SDG Summit" in September 2023 marks the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is where heads of state and government will take stock of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome is negative:

828 million people are suffering from chronic hunger. Acute food insecurity affects 258 million people. At the end of 2021, an estimated 659 million people were living below the poverty line of US\$ 2.15 per day. Around two billion people work in precarious, informal jobs. Another 570 million people are smallholder farmers. Their incomes, which are already close to or below the poverty line, are falling significantly due to the high prices of basic foodstuffs and the impact of climate change on their yields. Social security systems cover less than half of the world's population. More than four billion people have no form of social security.

The consequences of the Corona pandemic, the Ukraine war, and climate change have further increased social and economic inequalities worldwide. Progress made on SDG implementation has been stalled or even reversed. The impact is felt particularly by vulnerable groups, women and children, as well as the elderly and people with disabilities.

They often suffer from food insecurity and, when they fall ill, often have to incur health expenses that push them into even more extreme poverty. Gender and intergenerational equality as well as the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups is essential to achieving the global goals.

At the same time, the majority of countries have decreasing financial resources to provide their populations with basic social and health services. Meanwhile, 64 percent, or 136 countries, of the Global South are critically indebted. Countries in the Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa regions are particularly affected.

The inadequate implementation of the 2030 Agenda is not solely due to the consequences of the Corona pandemic or the Ukraine war. Before these events already, implementation of the global goals has been very slow. To even come close to achieving the goals, political will, ambition and adequate financing are needed.

## **SDGs can only be achieved by international solidarity**

National sustainability strategies can support SDG implementation. By using targeted measures, they can support the work toward the SDGs. In order to reach people affected by poverty as well as vulnerable and marginalized groups, indicators have to focus on affected social groups and also be gender-sensitive and rights-based. Reforms in international financial policies are particularly crucial. After all, debt, tax evasion and tax avoidance limit the scope for political action. They (re)produce social inequality.

International solidarity is imperative. Official development assistance (ODA) commitments have to be upheld. This applies in particular to financing of basic social services such as social security and universal health coverage. These have to reach vulnerable and marginalized groups. In addition, the multilateral

system must be reformed in such a way that it supports states to meet the global challenges of achieving the 2030 Agenda.

We therefore urge the German government to commit itself at the SDG Summit and in its follow-up to ensure that the following measures are developed and implemented by 2025:

- A **fundamental reform of the international financial system**, including
  - an **international debt relief mechanism** involving private and institutional creditors, and
  - a **UN tax convention** that establishes global tax justice and ensures that (trans)national corporations pay taxes where they make profits.
- The **strengthening of public development financing** in the areas of food security, social protection and health financing by
  - **providing 0.7 percent of gross national income** for official development assistance, and **0.2 percent of that for the poorest countries**.
  - **ambitious financial commitments** with a signal effect for an **international financing mechanism for social security**.
  - the **recalculation of the requirement basis** for ODA benefits to support inclusive health systems.
- The **development and implementation of holistic and integrated approaches at the intersection of food security, health and climate**. They must improve global food security and health situations and achieve the human rights to food and health. Such approaches must
  - **create sustainable, climate-resilient local or regional food systems** that benefit those most vulnerable to hunger and nutritional deficiency, and
- contribute to **qualitative improvements in nutrition**, especially in the first 1,000 days after birth, and
- take a **holistic view of human, animal and environmental health**, for example with approaches such as "One Health" or "Planetary Health," and
- ensure **greater integration of humanitarian aid and development cooperation**, as is the case in disaster risk reduction or anticipatory humanitarian action.
- In the spirit of feminist foreign and development policy, **gender mainstreaming as well as the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups must be realized in all areas of activities of the German government**. Laws and measures that hinder or prevent legal gender equality, vulnerable and marginalized groups as well as children, youth and the elderly must be abolished and replaced by such that ensure their equality.
- **The development and implementation of national sustainability strategies** by all UN member states. This requires the creation of solid data bases for evidence-based policies, if necessary, with international support, so as to leave no one behind.
- **The strengthening of the multilateral system**, especially the UN. This includes a fundamental reform of the UN in terms of its governance and function, as well as mechanisms for the comprehensive involvement of civil society actors and increased transparency.

## IMPRINT

### Publisher

Association of German Development and Humanitarian Aid  
NGOs (VENRO)

Stresemannstrasse 72, D-10963 Berlin, Germany

Telephone: +49 (30) 2 63 92 99-10

Email: [sekretariat@venro.org](mailto:sekretariat@venro.org)

### Editor

Dr. Sonja Grigat

### Cooperation

AG Globale Nachhaltigkeitspolitik

### Final editing

Lars Hoffmann

Berlin, July 2023

This activity is supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Supported by the

