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## **UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**

The United Nations, as a governing body, created the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This paper outlines the 17 goals laid out by this agenda, which focus on “end[ing] poverty, protect[ing] the planet, and improv[ing] the lives of everyone, everywhere.”<sup>1</sup> Achieving these goals includes assuring “gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” and acknowledging “human rights of all.”<sup>2</sup> This agenda will be implemented by 2030 through global partnership, international public finance, individual countries' budgets, and the UN system. This report will discuss the goals and the U.S. international and national efforts to achieve them. We acknowledge that the focus of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is on developed countries providing aid such as reparations for losses and damages to developing countries.

### **The United Nations**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is led by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG), which is based within the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It was signed by all member states of the United Nations (UN) at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September of 2015, officially coming into force on January 1, 2016. Each year following its implementation, the UN Secretary General provides a general updated progress report, along with a more extensive Global Sustainable Development Report written every four years. Currently, there are extensive reports for 2019 and 2023.<sup>3</sup> Member states may also provide their own voluntary national review to show where progress has been made.<sup>4</sup>

state of the UN, the United States participates in the UN's General Assembly. All resolutions and decisions made by the general assembly are recommendations that rely on each member state to implement independently.<sup>6</sup>

## **Goals**

### *Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere<sup>7</sup>*

The UN 2030 Sustainable Agenda aims to cut poverty in half for all people according to individual countries' definitions of poverty. There will be nationally implemented "social protection systems and measures for all."<sup>8</sup> This includes poverty floors and protection for the poor and disadvantaged. The agenda aims to give equal access to economic resources to all and protect the poor from facing the disproportionate effects of climate-related events. Lastly, it will mobilize and reallocate resources from developed countries to developing countries. To achieve these poverty-eradicating goals, countries will need to develop policies that support this accelerated timeline.<sup>9</sup>

Extreme poverty is defined as "people living on less than \$2.15 a day" at 2017 purchasing power parity.<sup>10</sup> The United States helps alleviate individuals and communities living in extreme poverty across the world. The United States pledged \$2.76 billion in 2022 to help the world's most vulnerable populations escape poverty.<sup>11</sup> This will help 47 countries get more U.S. aid. The U.S. also has a Feed the Future initiative, which operates in 20 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

As of 2022, the poverty rate in the United States is 11.5% “with 37.9 million people in poverty.”<sup>14</sup> The United States has programs to eliminate poverty in its boundaries.<sup>15</sup> One of these programs is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.<sup>16</sup> It provides families in the U.S. greater financial support through their own state government.

farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species”<sup>21</sup> through modern and traditional knowledge. This agenda will increase investment in agriculture, correct trade disparities in agricultural markets, and limit food prices’ rapid exacerbation.<sup>22</sup>

The United States helps alleviate food insecurity, alleviate hunger, promote nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture globally. The Feed the Future initiative also helps promote nutrition in countries where the malnutrition rate is high.<sup>23</sup> This focuses on improving health systems so people can have equitable access to safe and affordable food. Feed the Future has helped prevent 3.4 million children<sup>24</sup> from stunted growths because of malnutrition. It has also helped 5.2 million families<sup>25</sup> not go hungry since the start of its work.<sup>26</sup>

The United States helps alleviate food insecurity, hunger, promote nutrition, and sustainable agriculture at home as well. The U.S. provides emergency food assistance for people who urgently need help.<sup>27</sup> Americans can call a hotline through the U.S. Drug Administration or find a local food pantry through the U.S. Housing and Urban Development agency.<sup>28</sup> Americans can apply for food stamps for long-term access to food through a resource called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).<sup>29</sup> Additionally, there are food programs for children at school, including free and reduced-price meals provided through programs such as the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, and the Special Milk Program.<sup>30</sup> These programs help provide greater access to nutritious food during school and summer break to children in low-income families. For senior citizens, there are two larger programs that can help alleviate financial burdens. One is the Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, which provides coupons for fresh vegetables, fruits, and herbs.<sup>31</sup> The other is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which delivers a monthly healthy food box that can be picked up at local agencies.<sup>32</sup> There are eligibility requirements for those two as well. Lastly, if you are a registered member of a Native American tribe, you may be eligible for monthly healthy food



These efforts are in line with goal number three set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

*Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all<sup>41</sup>*

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to provide every child with free primary and secondary education, including access to pre-primary education development. It seeks to have equal access to higher education in v7(1)(e)4 (-)6 5.

These efforts are in line with goal number four set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S.

*Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*<sup>59</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to achie



improving the rate of energy efficiency by double its current potential.<sup>65</sup> These actions will decrease the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> entering the atmosphere, which is a stressed result the UN agenda. This goal focuses on world cooperation to make access to clean energy possible. It can be achieved through research, technology, and willing governmental bodies. The main change the agenda emphasizes is a reduction in non-renewable energies with more access to energy for developing countries.<sup>66</sup>

The U.S. aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. They have achieved access to energy, clean fuels, and clean cooking technology for the majority of their population.<sup>67</sup> The U.S. has also seen a slight decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> "emissions from fuel combustion per total electricity output."

*Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive,*

enterprises, which could be applicable to Vermont. The UN hopes to upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries through better resource efficiency and more use of clean and environmentally friendly technologies and processes. The agenda recognizes that to achieve this, states need to support and enhance scientific research that deals with upgrading clean technology capabilities. The remaini

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## Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries<sup>84</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to reduce inequality around the world which can be done in various ways, addressed in this goal's targets: helping grow the income of the bottom 40% of each nation's population, promoting inclusion of all identity groups around the globe in all aspects of life and reducing the inequality of outcomes. Even still these targets are broad, so the agenda lays out ways to make this possible. By eliminating or amending discriminatory laws, policies, or practices and adopting ones that enhance equality in all sectors of life. Some of these policies could pertain to migration and creating a safe environment for migrants and migration around the globe. The last few of the targets of this goal aim to help developing countries. An economically advanced country, like the United States, would be expected to provide financial help for example, foreign direct investments, to the least developed countries, to help the global north and global south become economically more equal.<sup>85</sup>

The U.S. saw a steady increase in the GINI index, which measures inequality of wealth in a country, as of 2020, however, most likely due to the pandemic, it would then see a drastic decrease. After 2020, the index began slowly building back upward.<sup>86</sup> As of 2022, women still earned on average less than their male counterparts,<sup>87</sup> as shown by the GINI Index, and the income between classes and races has spread further as of 2022.<sup>88</sup>

Abroad, USAID helped organize the Equality Movement in the Country of Georgia in 2018, which was aimed at countering workplace discrimination, especially against those in the LGBTQ+ community.<sup>89</sup> The U.S. has also worked with multilateral partnerships to increase resources toward women in the business sector.<sup>90</sup>

These efforts are in line with goal number 10 set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

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<sup>84</sup> United Nations, "The Sustainable Development Agenda," accessed October 23, 2023, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

<sup>85</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Resolution/ Adopted by the General Assembly*, October 2015. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

<sup>86</sup> The World Bank, "Gini index - United States," accessed October 20, 2023. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?end=2021&locations=US&start=1990>

<sup>87</sup> United States Census Bureau, "Income in the United States: 2022," figure 4-5. accessed October 20, 2023. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/demo/p60-279.html>

<sup>88</sup> United States Census Bureau, "Income in the United States: 2022," Figure 1-2. accessed October 20, 2023. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/demo/p60-279.html>

<sup>89</sup> U.S. Agency For International Development, "Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities | Basic Page | U.S. Agency for International Development," accessed October 19, 2023, <https://www.usaid.gov/sdgs/sdg10>

<sup>90</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Report to Congress on How the United States Is Contributing to the Achievement of the Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals by 2030."

*Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable*<sup>91</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to increase housing security, provide sustainable and affordable transportation systems, and improve urbanization efforts all outline ways to achieve goal number eleven. Transportation systems can be improved through an increase in public transit and improving road conditions. Urbanization efforts must keep in mind capacity building through planning and management. By strengthening development planning the UN hoped to see positive support for social, economic, and environmental links between different geographic areas. It calls for efforts to increase the protection of culture and heritage around the world. The goal also hopes to reduce the death rate of people affected by decreases in economic loss caused directly by disasters, weighted by GDP. The last few targets of this goal emphasize environmental concerns, such as paying attention to air pollution and waste management. The agenda emphasizes a need for safe public spaces for all people that are green. By 2020 they hoped to increase their outreach in states and cities implementing this goal.<sup>92</sup>ct-2 (ut)-2-6 (.)-2 ( )JTJ0.002 T

*Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*<sup>97</sup>

and hunger by developing agricultural spheres in various states. The initiative highlighted it's work in Rwanda working with iron-rich beans as one success of this program.<sup>105</sup>

These efforts are in line with goal number 12 set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

*Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts<sup>106</sup>*

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to address the overarching goal of fighting climate change by building climate resilience and increasing the strength of domestic environmental policies. There is also a focus on environmental education of the public and institutions to increase mitigation and adaptation in the face of climate change. The UNSDG acknowledges that the leading body on climate change is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and therefore bases goal 13 on their work. This includes the creation of the Green Climate Fund, which aims to provide \$100 billion annually to support developing countries.<sup>107</sup>

The United States has taken actions to support this goal, including Presidential Policy Directive 8, which focuses on increased security and resilience through national preparedness, which includes catastrophic natural disasters.<sup>108</sup> President Obama initiated executive orders in 2015, including Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade and the President's Climate Action Plan, which established the Resilience AmeriCorps program.

Internationally, President Obama also launched the Climate-Resilient International Development,

improved in all areas of goal 13 but the mobilization of money for the Green Climate Fund.<sup>110</sup> Multi-lateral agreements, including the U.S.-EU Global Methane Pledge and the G7 Just Energy Transition Partnerships, have also aligned with goal 13.<sup>111</sup>

These efforts are in line with goal number 13 set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

*Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development*<sup>112</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to achieve the conservation and sustainable use of the world's oceans and its resources in goal 14. This will be achieved in part through improved management and protection of marine ecosystems by 2020 and the prevention and reduction of marine pollutants by 2025. They also aim to increase sustainable fishing practices, which include the regulation of fish harvesting, the end of overfishing and illegal fishing practices, and banning certain fisheries subsidies. In addition, this goal aims to increase the scientific knowledge and technology available to developing countries to improve marine conservation.<sup>113</sup> The SDGs also acknowledge the importance of implementing the framework derived from the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.<sup>114</sup>

The U.S. has made a slight improvement in increasing the percent of the world's marine resources that are sustainably managed.



These efforts are in line with goal number 14 set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

*Goal 15. Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*<sup>117</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to conserve and sustainably use all terrestrial ecosystems, including freshwater, forests, mountains, wetlands, and drylands in goal 15. This goal is also referred to as the “Life on Land” goal, setting out to halt deforestation, desertification, and biodiversity loss. They also aim to end the poaching of protected species and apply improved invasive species management practices. The mobilization of finance and resources should also be utilized domestically and provided to developing countries to support sustainable management efforts.<sup>118</sup>

The U.S. has only reported information on one of these targets, which reports U.S. forested areas as 33.9% of U.S. total land area as of 2015. The available reporting information on U.S. forested areas has not been updated since 2015.<sup>119</sup>

Internationally in line with the fifteenth goal, USAID helped launch the Wildlife Crime Tech Challenge in 2014 in the hope of reducing crime to wildlife and trafficking.<sup>120</sup> The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has collaborated with the UN Environment Programme, and other multilateral agreements have been formed to combat environmental crime.<sup>121</sup>

These efforts are in line with goal number 15 set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goals but are not achieved because of the goal. The U.S. does not specify that these actions are a direct result of the goals, only that they align with the goals.

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<sup>117</sup> United Nations, “The Sustainable Development Agenda.” accessed October 23, 2023.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

<sup>118</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:*

*Resolution/ Adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, during the 70th session, 69th plenary meeting, A/RES/70/1, paras. 17.1-17.3 and 18.1-18.2 (G566 P 21 P.5 P.3 30 TgA1 (T0 -9624 (n) 8*



*Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development*<sup>127</sup>

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda aims to improve sustainable development through global partnership, including “North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.”<sup>128</sup> This is broken into five categories: finance, technology, capacity-building, trade, and systemic issues. Financially, member states have the goal of mobilizing financial resources to support developing countries. This is done through debt relief, investment promotion, and official development assistance of at least 0.20 percent of gross national income. It emphasizes the importance of access to technology among all sectors and the promotion of environmentally sound technologies in least developed and developing countries. Trade goals promote the World Trade Organization and support the Doha Development Agenda, which improves trade between developing countries. This includes an improved multilateral tr

## Conclusion

The 2030 UN Sustainability Agenda, predecessor to the Millennium Development Goals, is a collection of 17 goals and 169 targets, that outline what the UN agreed to be the most pressing issues in our world today and ways to address them as a global community. The UN has seen a large community of states around the world commit to these robust goals, however, they seem to be falling short of their objective of 2030. Since 2015, actions by the United States have allowed the country to fall short of the targets under these goals. However, since the United States is