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hunger
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FACT SHEET

Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations has agreed on a new world future agreement - on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is about nothing less than setting a course for the future sustainability of humankind. The agreement sets out to completely eradicate poverty and hunger and to make education and healthcare accessible to all by 2030. In addition, the inequality within and between countries will also be reduced and consumer habits and production methods shifted towards sustainability. The states also commit to an increased rule of law, the avoidance of violence and to an accountability commitment for state institutions. The United Nations has summarised all of this into 17 goals, which tie in with the Millennium Development Goals from the year 2000.

Development and environmental goals under one roof

The development of new goals had become necessary, as the Millennium Development Goals expired in 2015 and not all of them had been achieved. They served to improve the living conditions of many people in developing countries, to reduce poverty and hunger, decrease mother and child mortality rates and much more. In essence, it was about achieving social goals in poorer countries. The new goals are now significantly more ambitious; they unite environmental, social and economic goals under one roof.

SDGs apply to all

The new, sustainable development goals now apply to all countries, not only to the poor ones. They were developed during a broad two-year consultation process, in which the fields of politics, science, civil society and the private sector

from all UN countries had the opportunity to participate. The wealthier countries are also not currently following a good development path, that is, a path sustainable for the planet and its inhabitants. They are, for example, the main contributors to climate change. But it is the poorer countries that are worst affected by the changed weather conditions and the sea level rise. The hunger for land and raw materials on the part of the industrialised countries has contributed greatly to the global scarcity of resources, their fishing fleets have played a significant part in the overfishing of the seas. Seen in this light, the wealthy countries are now also developing countries. And Germany has an obligation too.

More coherence required

Of course there are some flaws in the almost 30-page goal document. While the goals of the new agenda sound ambitious, determined and strong, it frequently looks quite different when reading the sub-goals. For example, the eradication of hunger is closely tied to an increase in agricultural production. But many people go hungry because they do not have money to buy the food. In this situation, more production is of little help. Even more important are the goals that provide for the eradication of inequality and the creation of humane jobs.

In order to get closer to the 17 goals, we will have to improve our cooperation significantly: National policies must be better coordinated with one other in order to have a coherent effect, otherwise agricultural policy could pursue different goals from development or trade policy. The financing of the fight against hunger and poverty in particular also requires clearer commitments. The necessity for public development financing is stressed in the SDGs and adherence to the so-called 0.7% goal (proportion of gross national income for development assistance) is demanded. However, the attempt

of the United Nations at the Finance Conference in Addis Ababa in July 2015 to agree on a timetable ended in failure. This could have a negative impact on the implementation of the goal to completely eradicate hunger by 2030.

Voluntary but still binding

A further deficiency lies in the voluntary nature of the goals, as according to international law the new agenda is not binding. Each country can set its own focus and is not compelled to report on progress. This has the result that, for example, the goal to completely eradicate hunger might no longer have the same priority as it did in the Millennium Goals. In light of the economic recession, donor countries in particular could reduce their financial commitment to the fight against hunger. Instead, industrial nations could focus on goals through which they make money, for example, through a stronger commitment to the development of energy production plants. But: The Millennium Goals showed that goals in connection with indicators lead to greater transparency. Countries report on progress in the fight against poverty, donors report on their commitment. Civil society can thereby draw specific attention to deficiencies and abuses. As a result, the overall pressure increases on governments and on companies to commit to all goals. Despite the weaknesses and its non-binding nature, the mere fact that 193 countries have agreed on a world future agreement is a glimmer of hope on

the horizon. It remains to be seen, however, whether governments can agree on robust, measurable and realistic indicators as well. These will be prepared in a separate process by a UN technical commission.

Welthungerhilfe and its partners are campaigning for a global implementation

Welthungerhilfe will campaign in Germany and Europe for the implementation of the SDGs - with a particular focus on the fight against hunger. Here, it will not only call for the implementation of the second goal, of eradicating hunger by 2030, but in order that food and nutrition security is permanent, it will also campaign for other important objectives, for example, on climate protection, on elimination of inequality, on the creation of humane jobs, on the avoidance of food waste and for a stronger global partnership. Welthungerhilfe can only do this effectively in cooperation with its partners in the project countries. They must be supported in calling on their governments to observe and implement the SDGs. And Welthungerhilfe will also support its partners to be better represented at international level, as the implementation of the world future agreement will only succeed if the wealthy nations hold back somewhat and open themselves up to the interests of the poorer states. For this, both mutual understanding and consideration are necessary.

17 goals for sustainable development

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
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.
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Source: UN <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>
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More information at <http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/sustainable-development-goals.html>