



Industrial Development Board

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UNIDO and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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Report by the Director General

The present report provides information on the contribution of UNIDO to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in line with General Conference resolutions GC.15/Res.1 and GC.16/Res.2, and in accordance with Programme and Budget Committee conclusion 2016/6 and Industrial Development Board decision IDB.44/Dec.9(e)(i).

I. Overview

1. Progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development continues to be under pressure from multiples crises, including conflicts and wars, climate change and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, persisting inequalities, particularly in the global economic and financial infrastructure, leave developing countries to face compounding challenges, while international support remains insufficient.
2. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Report 2024 confirms that the world is still significantly off track to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Only 17 per cent of the measurable targets present sufficient progress and nearly half are deviating from the required trajectory. Another 17 per cent are regressing below the 2015 baseline. Progress has either stagnated or reversed on several fronts, despite reaffirmed commitments by the international community.
3. Inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) contributes directly and indirectly to the SDGs. According to UNIDO's Industrial Development Report 2024, cross-country evidence indicates a positive relationship between industrialization and SDG progress, suggesting that SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure is fundamental to achieving the 2030 Agenda. Overall, SDG 9 is the one that most often ranks in the highest correlated SDGs.

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4. For the international community, including UNIDO, the 2030 Agenda will continue to serve as a compass for the remainder of the Decade of Action. While the direction is clear, the Secretary-General calls for a recommitment to the 2030 promise of ending poverty, protecting the planet and leaving no one behind.

II. Follow-up and review at the global level

5. The 2024 session of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF), held in July 2024 and themed “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”, reviewed SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 13 (climate action), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships for the Goals). UNIDO’s contribution focused on the review of SDGs 2 and 13, given the strong linkages between industrialization and food systems transformation and climate action.

6. Leading up to the HLPF 2024, the Industrial Development Board provided its input,¹ emphasizing the urgent need to promote sustainable agrifood systems, eradicate poverty and achieve food security for all; advance industrial decarbonization and climate action in industry; and foster local productive capacities and sustainable and resilient supply chains that include developing countries. The Board also highlighted the need for SDG-oriented industrial policies to support these efforts.

7. The 2024 HLPF Ministerial Declaration sets forth actions and pathways in line with UNIDO’s mandate for achieving the 2030 Agenda. For realizing SDG 1, it emphasizes the need of supporting economic diversification and productive capacities in developing countries, as well as strengthening their micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. To reinforce SDG 2, the Declaration highlights the importance of building more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems and integrating each country into the global agrifood supply chain. It further underscores the significance of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for ensuring ocean health in resilient global food systems. In support of SDG 13, the document stresses the urgency of accelerating climate action in relation to mitigation, adaptation and provision of the means of implementation, especially finance, to developing countries. For SDG 17, the Declaration calls for action in bridging digital divides and including all countries in the digital economy, especially by enhancing developing countries’ digital infrastructure connectivity.

8. Following the established biennial cycle, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution [77/180](#), UNIDO provided the biennial report by the Director General on industrial development cooperation, which was transmitted by the Secretary-General through a note ([A/79/158](#)) to inform the deliberations of the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) of the General Assembly during its seventy-ninth session. Section I of the report summarizes recent trends in industrial development. Section II focuses on the future of industrial development cooperation in accelerating the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication and food systems transformation; sustainable supply chains and jobs; clean energy and climate action; digitalization and artificial intelligence; and industrial policies. The report forms the basis for discussions under agenda item 8 (b) of the Economic and Financial Committee, leading to the negotiations of a resolution on industrial development cooperation.

9. The Summit of the Future took place on 22 and 23 September 2024 as the Secretary-General’s initiative and one of the actions of his *Our Common Agenda* report ([A/75/982](#)). Themed “Multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow”, the Summit focused on closing the global governance gaps and saw the adoption of the Pact for the Future.

¹ <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2024/Inputs%20UNIDO%202024.pdf>.

10. The Pact for the Future advances a set of actions for the transformation of multilateralism towards a better future for people and planet, many of which coincide with UNIDO's mandate. For example, it highlights the necessity of closing the SDGs financing gap globally, in particular by scaling up international support for investment in increased productive capacities, sustainable industrialization, infrastructure and structural economic transformation in developing countries. The Pact includes two annexes: the Global Digital Compact (GDC) and the Declaration on Future Generations.

11. UNIDO effectively contributed to the preparatory process of the GDC by hosting a Development Dialogue on 26 January 2023, in Vienna, to engage with its Member States on this matter, and by providing input to the Secretary-General's initial Policy Brief on the GDC. Most importantly, UNIDO has been an active member of the United Nations core group on the GDC and proposed many elements now included under objective 2 of the Compact, "Expanding inclusion in and benefits from the digital economy for all". The GDC puts forward commitments that correspond to the economic development dimension of UNIDO's mandate, including building productive capacities and promoting industrialization and digitalization to close divides between and within countries.

12. In the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States which was adopted during the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in May 2024 in Antigua and Barbuda, and in the outcome document to be adopted during the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in December 2024 in Botswana, the international community emphasizes the importance of building local productive capacities and diversifying economies for resilience, reaffirming the importance of UNIDO's work.

13. At the invitation of the President of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, UNIDO became a member of the Board of Advisors on Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, which amplified the Organization's voice in discussions and recommendations on how to accelerate the sustainable development of these groups of vulnerable countries.

14. UNIDO continued to lead the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa with a solution-oriented approach, which was displayed during a high-level event on the margins of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly. During the event, the Organization highlighted concrete actions and implementation opportunities for Africa stemming from the Pact for the Future, with a focus on innovations and investments needed.

III. Supporting progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

15. UNIDO's Industrial Development Report 2024, entitled "Turning challenges into sustainable solutions: The new era of industrial policy", emphasizes the critical role of industry in driving economic growth, innovation and job creation, and advocates for a new era of SDG-oriented industrial policies.

16. As part of its engagement within and outside of the United Nations system, and in line with its thematic priorities, UNIDO is supporting the creation of the Group of 20's Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, under the 2024 Presidency of Brazil. As a founding member of the Global Alliance, UNIDO has, in partnership with other United Nations agencies and international organizations, contributed to the development and approval of the foundational documents for its implementation. In connection with this effort and its thematic priorities, UNIDO is co-organizing the World Without Hunger Conference, to be held from 5 to 7 November 2024, in Addis Ababa.

17. UNIDO continues to address emerging issues such as critical minerals, artificial intelligence and green hydrogen, as well as to strengthen its programme delivery across its priorities, including at the normative level. For example, the Council of Engineers for the Energy Transition, co-chaired by UNIDO and established as an independent advisory board to the Secretary-General, delivers expert engineering advice to facilitate the global energy transition, in alignment with the Paris Agreement and universal energy access goals.

18. The Secretary-General's UN 2.0 vision of a modernized United Nations system with the aim of accelerating progress on the SDGs, is articulated around a quintet of change for capacity-building in behavioural science, data, digital expertise, strategic foresight and innovation. UNIDO aims to drive the implementation of this vision through its Innovation Lab, which operates at the intersection of data analytics, design, technology, entrepreneurship and social impact.

19. UNIDO is actively engaged in the preparations of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Seville, Spain, from 30 June to 3 July 2025, highlighting inclusive and sustainable industrialization as a critical driver of economic diversification, value addition and job creation, as firmly anchored in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and in line with the recent outcomes of the Economic and Social Council Forum on Financing for Development.

IV. Action required of the Board

20. The Board may wish to take note of the information contained in the present document.

21. The Board may also wish to consider adopting a resolution at the twenty-first session of the General Conference to prioritize actions towards ISID in the final years of the 2030 Agenda.
