



# Sustainable Development Goals

## What are the SDGs?

These are 17 steps to change the world by 2030. They are a set of global goals to end poverty and protect the planet, adopted in 2015 by all 193 countries of the United Nations. They replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). All of us need to know about them.

## A better world by 2030

The 17 goals are a global plan for how to protect people and the planet. World leaders have promised to:

- > wipe out extreme poverty
- > fight inequality
- > tackle climate change, and
- > achieve lasting development for everyone.

### From MDGs to SDGs – what’s new?

The last goals – the MDGs – set in 2000, saw many successes. Fewer people now live in extreme poverty, more girls and boys than ever before are in primary school and far more people have access to clean water, better food and essential medicines.

#### FACT

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO DIE BEFORE THEIR 5TH BIRTHDAY IS DOWN BY MORE THAN HALF SINCE THE MDGs WERE INTRODUCED.

However, progress has been mixed. Many hard-to-reach people have not felt the benefits; they may be disabled, indigenous, living in a remote place – or they are young, or women. They were simply left out.

The SDGs are designed to leave no-one behind. Underlying them are **four key principles**:

#### 1. UNIVERSALITY: We’re in this together

Most of the MDG targets were set for action in low-income countries. These new goals are for all countries and include challenging targets – like not pumping too much CO<sub>2</sub> into our atmosphere.

#### 2. SUSTAINABILITY: We need an all-round approach

It’s no good helping a sick person get better, if they are still too poor to eat. Solving the world’s problems in a lasting way requires an all-round approach. The SDGs aim not just at social needs like health and education, but also economic issues and, vitally, the environment.

#### 3. LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND

World leaders cannot claim to have met a goal unless it is met for everyone.

#### 4. PARTICIPATION: Everyone is involved

Most governments barely got a look-in when the MDGs were decided, let alone normal citizens. CAFOD helped ensure that people in poor countries had a say in fixing the new goals.



Veronica, 16, studies by the light of her solar lamp in Kenya.

## What happens now?

The world’s leaders have made 17 big promises. Now they have to keep them. So we must make sure our governments are taking the right steps to reach the goals. They need to:

- > Set out a national strategy to meet the goals.
- > Get the right ministries onto the job, make sure they’re talking to each other, and give them the resources they need.
- > Address the goals together, don’t pick them off one by one.
- > Work together with civil society groups like charities.
- > Set up ways of monitoring how it’s going.
- > Contribute fairly to global efforts to achieve the goals.

#### TRY THIS

**Group activity:** Choose one goal and find the list of targets set to reach it. Pick out one that you think is especially important and present it to the rest of the class. Write a tweet that sums it up.



# The 17 global goals

1. No poverty 
2. Zero hunger 
3. Good health and well-being 
4. Quality education 
5. Gender equality 
6. Clean water and sanitation 
7. Affordable and clean energy 
8. Decent work and economic growth 
9. Industry, innovation, infrastructure 
10. Reduced inequalities 
11. Sustainable cities and communities 
12. Responsible consumption, production 
13. Climate action 
14. Life below water 
15. Life on land 
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions 
17. Partnerships for the goals 

“What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?” **DISCUSS** Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 160.

## Can I help?

- > Find out all about the goals.
- > Spread the word: tell your friends and family about them.
- > Find your own ways of meeting the goals: stick up for people who aren't treated fairly; don't waste food or water; look after the world around you (use your ideas from the next activity, top right).
- > Let your MP know you care. Ask them if the government is taking the steps listed overleaf.

TRY THIS

Pope Francis issued his letter *Laudato Si'* just before the SDGs were signed. He too asks the whole human family to change the world and protect the planet. Watch CAFOD's *Laudato Si'* animation for young people online. Then split into groups, take 3-4 goals and think of ways that our own actions can help meet them.



## FACT

NEVER BEFORE HAVE WORLD LEADERS PLEDGED TO ACT TOGETHER TOWARDS SUCH A BROAD AND UNIVERSAL HUMAN ENDEAVOUR.

## What is CAFOD doing?

- > In the field, CAFOD is funding projects across many of the goals. Better nutrition, access to health services, support for people with HIV, clean water supplies: these are our day-to-day business.
- > In the UK and through partners overseas, CAFOD helped influence the SDGs during their formation. We will continue to seek to influence governments to ensure they are fully implemented.
- > CAFOD is supporting communities around the world to use our faith and the teaching of *Laudato Si'* to ensure that the SDGs are met for all of us.

“The new agenda is a promise by leaders to all people everywhere... Above all, it pledges to leave no-one behind.” Ban Ki-moon, former UN Secretary-General

## Useful resources

[cafod.org.uk/secondary/sdgs](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary/sdgs) for SDGs animation and poster

[cafod.org.uk/secondary/videos](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary/videos) for *Laudato Si'* animation

[sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)

[globalgoals.org](http://globalgoals.org)

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