

Best of Times



30 days of
GOOD NEWS

ILLUSTRATED
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GOOD NEWS!



As we enter a new decade, my project for January 2020, "Best of Times" aimed to shed light on the great global changes we have made over the last twenty years!

Each page illustrates our progress towards one of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, and the ways we can reach them by 2030!

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Charles Dickens

Best  of Times

WHAT ARE THE SDGs?

The UN Sustainable Development goals



The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** acts as a shared plan for "peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future."

The **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, are actionable goals that provide a unified strategy for meaningful, global change.





To “eliminate gender disparities in education by 2030” (SDG 4):
The greatest education disparity were seen in West and Central Africa, where 83 girls were enrolled in primary education for every 100 boys. Advocating for free primary education and greater access to educational resources globally is fundamental.

4 ...and the number of girls who dropped out of school has decreased 40% globally.



5 Since 2000, there has been a 25% drop in Child Marriage worldwide...

To “eliminate all child marriage by 2030” (SDG 5):
Strengthening advocacy, policies and legal systems, increasing education and shifting cultural expectations is still paramount to improve rates in areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa.

To ensure “universal and affordable access to the internet in the least developed countries by 2020” (Under SDG 9): Increasing investment in infrastructure to improve access to affordable internet, increasing connection and connection speeds globally are important steps in taking on this goal.

9

For the first time, over half of the global population has access to the internet...



7

...and the percentage of people without electricity has fallen under 1 Billion!

Reaching “global access to electricity by 2030” (Under SDG 7): The greatest challenge resides in rural communities and sub-Saharan Africa. Off-grid solutions, such as solar power and increasing mini-grids are some major areas of innovation.



14 There has been a rapid increase in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across the globe!

To ensure “by 2020, the conservation of 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas” (Under SDG 14): Marine Protected Areas have risen from just 0.7% of the ocean in 2000 to 7.63% of the ocean today. Increasing MPAs across the world is a vital step in protecting our marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

To ensure “by 2020, the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems” (Under SDG 15): The amount of key biodiversity area protected from 2000 to 2018 increased by 39% for terrestrial areas, 42% for freshwater areas and 36% for mountain areas. These areas protect against climate change, defend biodiversity and maintain the land of indigenous people.

15 Likewise, the amount of protected key biodiversity areas has risen since 2000.



To ensure “by 2030, universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water” (Under SDG 6): Diseases caused by improper access to clean water remain a leading cause of death in children under five. Managing access to water sustainably can contribute to proper management of food and energy, spur on economic growth and opportunities for work.

6 There has been an increase from 76% to 90% in global access to clean drinking water since 1990.



3 Between 2000 and 2016, tobacco use globally fell 7%!

To “by 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases (including tobacco-related illness)” (Under SDG 3): The amount of fatalities caused by tobacco-related illnesses were proposed to be more than 8.1 million in 2017. Using advertising, increasing tobacco prices and providing support to those quitting tobacco use are keyways to reduce its prevalence.



4 Literacy rates are at their highest in human history!

To “ensure all youth achieve literacy by 2030” (Under SDG 4): When children are given a quality education, they gain better opportunities in their adult life (greater health, employment and political participation)! Improving enrolment as well as retention in school is crucial for maintaining the quality of education.

To “ensure womens’ full participation and equal opportunities for leadership in all levels of decision making.” (Under SDG 5): When women are included in political leadership, they champion the importance of gender equality. Removing systemic obstacles to women’s representation in leadership should be a priority.

5 Since 1995, the percentage of women serving in parliaments internationally has more than doubled - from 11.3% to 24%.



To “support the research and development of vaccines and medication for diseases that primarily affect developing countries” (Under SDG 3): Expanding immunisation coverage against preventable diseases is crucial in saving children’s lives. It is vital to raise awareness and support for the impact of vaccination on global health.

3 Since 2000, vaccines resulted in a 80% decline in measles deaths!



Global HIV infections among adults aged 15 to 49 dropped 22% in the last decade.

To, “by 2030, end the AIDS epidemic” (Under SDG 3): AIDS is the second most common cause of death for young adults worldwide. Increased awareness about safe intercourse, HIV testing and blood supply safety are some of the many ways in which HIV prevention is possible and effective.



3

The child mortality rate under 5 years has decreased from 9.8 million in 2000 to 5.4 million in 2017...

To ensure, "by 2030, the end of preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age" (Under SDG 3): Half of the deaths of children under 5 where in Sub-Saharan Africa where disparities in health care persist. Effective prevention against preventable diseases is one important way to combat child mortality.

To ensure "by 2030, the global maternal mortality ratio reduces to less than 70 per 100,000 births" (Under SDG 3): 94% of maternal deaths happen in low or lower middle-income countries. Skilled care before, during and after childbirth is crucial to protecting the lives of women and newborns.

...and the global maternal mortality rate declined by 37%.



To “expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all”
(Under SDG 8): A transaction account gives people an essential resource to plan and prepare in case of emergencies. Providing citizens with valid identification documents, promoting financial literacy and maintaining consumer protection is essential.

8 Global access to finance has increased, with innovation in technology bringing forward new models of access!



The global gender pay gap reduced by 2.5% since 2006
— it currently sits at 23%.

To, “by 2030, achieve equal pay for all men and women”

(Under SDG 8): It is projected that it will take until 2069 to close the gender pay gap. Disparity in income means more women retire in poverty. Setting minimum wages is seen as one way to offset this disparity as women are over-represented in the low-income workforce.



3

Since 2000, the global life expectancy at birth grew by 5.5 years, now sitting at 72 years.

This increase is as a result of the many health and well-being factors addressed by Sustainable Development Goal 3: This can be seen in Africa, where life expectancy increased by 10.3 years over 2000-2016. This development was influenced by improvements in child mortality and increased access to antiretrovirals for treatment of HIV.

Suicide Prevention falls under Sustainable Development Goal 3 - Good Health and-Well Being: With support, care and effective evidence-based intervention, suicide is preventable. It is paramount that awareness is raised about suicide as a significant public health problem that deserves attention, support and funding.

The global suicide rate has dropped from 12.9 % per 100,000 in 2000 to 10.6 per 100,000 in 2016.



To, "by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and upgrade slums" (Under SDG 11): Slums negatively affect a country's GDP and life expectancy. By investing in sustainable and well-planned cities, prosperity and social stability is shared with all residents, without damaging the environment.

11

From 1990 to 2016, the percentage of the urban population world wide living in slums dropped from 46% to 23%.



1 The percentage of the global population living in extreme poverty dropped to 10% in 2015, down from 36% in 1990.

To, "by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere" (Under SDG 1): The extreme poverty rate for children is disproportionately high - effecting 1 in 5 children. Increasing the social protection given to children and other at-risk groups is one integral way to prevent extreme poverty.



8 Labour productivity has been rising globally. In 2018, it grew 2.1%, its largest yearly growth since 2010.

To, “achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation”: Building “sustainable” and “people-centred economies”; prioritising youth education, training and employment; and empowering womens’ economic development are a few valuable ways to promote fair employment for all.

To ensure, “women’s equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in economic life” (Under SDG 5): Research shows that businesses which operate with gender diversity see greater profits and overall performance. Increasing access to education is pivotal in expanding women’s opportunities in the labour market.

5 29% of managerial positions are held by women in 2019, the greatest number ever recorded.



To ensure, **“by 2030, universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services” (Under SDG 7):** The indoor air pollution caused by combustible fuels continues to adversely affect the health of 2.6 billion people worldwide. There is a great need to improve availability of clean and efficient cooking methods.

7

Since 2000, the proportion of the population with access to clean cooking fuels rose from 52.2% to 65.1%.



6

The worldwide population with access to safe sanitation services rose from 28% in 2000 to 45% in 2017.

To **“by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all” (Under SDG 6):** Water and sanitation related diseases are found to be a significant cause of illness and death in children under 5. To improve global sanitation, increasing water research and improving water and sanitation globally is a top priority.



8

Since 2000, the number of child labourers dropped by one third, from 246 million to 168 million.

To ensure, "by 2025, the end child labour in all its forms" (Under SDG 8): Providing support for poor families, which prevents the likelihood of them sending their children to work, is one valuable strategy to alleviate financial burdens that influence child labour.

To ensure "by 2030, the end of all forms of malnutrition" (Under SDG 2): Almost half the deaths of children under 5 were influenced or caused by malnutrition. Investing in smallholder farmers is just one critical way to increase food security and nutrition in lower economic areas.

2

Since 2000, the percentage of children who were stunted from malnutrition has declined over 10%.



To, "by 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix" (Under SDG 7): However, a much faster rate of growth is needed to hit climate change goals. Areas with the greatest energy deficits would benefit from innovation in clean and renewable energy sources.

7

The share of renewable energy worldwide reached 17.5% in 2016. Since 2012, the UN stated that "growth of renewables outpaced the growth of total energy consumption."



9

The amount of CO₂ emissions produced by manufacturing has dropped by over 20% between 2000 and 2016.

To, "by 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable" (Under SDG 9): This decline displays a promising disconnect between CO₂ emissions and GDP growth. Advocating for sustainability, clean energy, energy efficiency and recycling are some key ways to decrease CO₂ emissions further.



4 Globally, 91% of school-age children have been enrolled in primary school!

To ensure, "by 2030, all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary education" (under SD Goal 4): 57 Million primary age children are still without school education. Encouraging governments, the private sector and NGOs to fund and prioritise education globally is essential.

The prevention of teenage fertility is seen as a contributing factor to Sustainable Development Goal 3 - Health and Well-Being. The number of teenage births still remains high in sub-Saharan Africa, at 101 births per 1,000 teenage women. Access to effective birth control measures is one important way to reduce adolescent fertility.

3 Teenage pregnancy has dropped from 56 births in 1,000 teenage women in 2000 to 44 births in 10,000 teenage women in 2019.



Great progress
on these Goals!

1 No Poverty

Decrease in
extreme poverty



2 Zero Hunger

Decrease in
stunting in children



3 Good Health + Well-being

increase in
vaccination



decrease in
child + maternal
mortality



decrease
in tobacco
use

rise in
primary
education



increase
in youth
literacy



increase
in life
expectancy

5 Gender Equality



increase of
women in
political
representation
and management

6 Clean Water + Sanitation

Improved
drinking
water +
sanitation



4 Quality Education

7 Affordable + clean energy



increase
in access
to electricity



+ sustainable
energy



increase
in access
to clean
fuels

8 Decent Work + economic growth

access to
finance



gender
pay
gap
reduced



decrease
in child
labour

9 Industry + innovation

increase
in internet
connection



11 Sustainable cities

decrease
in slums



decrease
in emissions
in manufacturing



14 + 15 Life below Water and on Land



increase
in protected
areas



Best of Times



TO SEE MORE ABOUT THE SDGs
(SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS)
visit sustainabledevelopment.un.org