

Did you know...

The 2030 Agenda consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 169 targets and many more indicators to measure progress?

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global and universal agenda for both developed and developing countries, and it includes specific goals to promote decent work for all?

Trade unions have been instrumental in shaping the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, to include priorities such as decent work, fight against inequalities, just transition and civil society participation?

Implementing the 2030 Agenda is primarily a national effort, but monitoring and follow-up is also performed at regional and global level?

Trade unions were involved in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, from 2000-2015), the precursor of the SDGs?

The fate and success of the 2030 Agenda depends on other global processes such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Financing for Development process and the development effectiveness agenda?

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the trade union partner for the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal related to the Decent Work Agenda?

Trade unions are regularly consulted by the UN and other international organisations to shape global development frameworks?



The **Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN)** is an initiative of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), bringing together affiliated trade union organisations, solidarity support organisations, regional ITUC organisations, the Global Union Federations (GUFs), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC). TUDCN's objective is to bring the trade union perspective into the international development policy debates and improve the coordination and effectiveness of trade union development cooperation activities.



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THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A trade union issue!



What is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is the reference document on development priorities at the international level. It was adopted at the United Nations in September 2015 by 193 countries. It builds on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000-2015), whose main objective was to reduce extreme poverty.

The 2030 Agenda contains a set of objectives, known as the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to which all countries have committed. They cover issues highly relevant to the work of trade unions including the promotion of decent work, the fight against inequalities and climate change; and recognise the need for greater gender equality, better quality education and stronger institutions. They are set out as follows:

 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 quality education for all and promote lifelong learning
 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	 6 Ensure access to water and sanitation for all
 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	 8 Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries
 11 Make cities 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
 15 Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss	 16 Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies
 17 Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	

While these cover a very broad range of issues, there are strong connections between each SDG: progress on one often benefits another. Trade unions are among the actors that impact this progress. By promoting social dialogue and decent work, they help to implement the SDGs and boost the accountability of other actors, such as the private sector. Countries report on their progress at the UN High-Level Political Forum.

The success of the 2030 Agenda further depends on other global processes such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Financing for Development process and the development effectiveness agenda.

What do trade unions have to do with all of this?

What are the trade union priorities in the SDGs?

Through their work in upholding freedom of association, collective bargaining rights and in promoting decent work and worker rights, trade unions are essential to achieving these development objectives. Making sure that the overlap between the SDGs and trade unions is **mutually reinforcing** is vital to improving the lives for working people.

In order to do so, trade unions have identified six key areas on which to focus their efforts:



Protecting people's rights can ensure they are sustainably lifted out of poverty. Having a job is no guarantee of a dignified livelihood. **Social protection floors** must be put in place to ensure that people, including the 'working poor' do not fall further into poverty. Addressing the informal economy can help lift huge numbers of people out of poverty.



Imbalanced labour access and conditions are a major component of gender inequality. Addressing this requires policies and laws to protect both formal and informal economy workers, to ensure compliance with **anti-discrimination, minimum wage legislation and core labour standards**, and to secure effective and universal access to social protection.



Trade unions play a fundamental role in ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are shared fairly among those that create it. **Employment creation, workers' rights, social dialogue and social protection are the pillars of the Decent Work Agenda** and ensure that "no one is left behind". SDG8 is the hub for trade union action on SDGs.



High and rising inequality among and within countries has a major social and economic cost. The SDGs recognise that the current rise in inequality is at odds with sustainable development. Strengthening the voice of working people is a proven way of curbing this trend. Trade unions promote the adoption of **fiscal, wage and social protection policies** that reduce inequalities and promote decent work in global supply chains..



Climate change and the need to shift to low carbon societies require a massive transformation in how economies and industries work. To avoid hiding the social costs of this transformation, change must start on the work floor: national **Just Transition plans** are needed to appropriately reorient workers in high-emission industries and provided appropriate adaptation measures to workers impacted by climate change.



Social dialogue contributes to institutional stability by promoting consensus among social partners on socio-economic policies. Trade unions promote **freedom of association and collective bargaining, fighting modern slavery** and contributing to the rule of law and democracy. Only democratic societies and institutions can create an enabling environment for decent work to flourish.

How can the SDGs work for your trade union?

Ensuring that the contribution to the SDGs provided by the work of trade unions is **fully recognised** is the first step. As the implementation of the SDGs is done at national level, national trade unions play a vital role in highlighting the contribution they make in their everyday work. Advocating for **policies that enhance this contribution** is the next step.

With this in mind, the following actions can be undertaken:

At national level

- Ask national government to consult trade unions in 2030 Agenda implementation planning
- Raise awareness among workers about 2030 Agenda
- Address the SDGs through social dialogue with employers and government
- Engage with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and with other international agencies in your country
- Participate in multi-stakeholder platforms and alliances for 2030 Agenda implementation
- Undertake evidence-based research highlighting the link between trade union work and development priorities

At regional level

- Ask national governments to bring trade union priorities to regional bodies dealing with 2030 agenda (ECLAC, UNECA, ESCAP, UNECE)
- Participate in UN regional mechanisms for 2030 Agenda monitoring, review and follow-up
- Take part in regional Civil Society initiatives for 2030 Agenda implementation

At global level

- Ask national governments to bring trade union priorities to the annual UN High-Level Political Forum, which reviews and monitors the 2030 Agenda implementation
- Provide trade union monitoring reports on the 2030 Agenda

Want to know more about the 2030 Agenda?

- **Trade unions and 2030 Agenda:** www.ituc-csi.org/2030Agenda
- **The International Labour Organization and 2030 Agenda:** www.ilo.org/global/topics/sdg-2030/lang--en/index.htm
- **The United Nations and sustainable development:** www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/