

DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH MULTILATERAL ACTION

With just five years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the work of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs has never been more critical. The period from 2024 to 2025 has been marked by unprecedented global challenges—converging crises and heightened geopolitical tensions that have tested our collective resolve and threatened progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Yet, as this report demonstrates, it has also been a time of bold innovation, strengthened partnerships, and renewed momentum for multilateral cooperation. Through the landmark Pact for the Future, the historic Sevilla Commitment, and other groundbreaking initiatives detailed in these pages, UN DESA has continued to serve as the heart of the UN system's development pillar—delivering evidence-based solutions and cultivating the partnerships essential for transformative change.

This report captures the breadth, depth, and strategic impact of UN DESA's contributions across seven critical areas of sustainable development, each representing a cornerstone of our shared mission to build a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous world for all. It also reflects our commitment to deploying the UN 2.0 principles and the associated "Quintet of Change" to drive innovation and transformation across the Department.

In Chapter 1, we showcase the Department's role as the intergovernmental nexus of the UN development pillar, supporting Member States through pivotal moments, including the Summit of the Future and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The Pact for the Future, adopted by consensus in September 2024, marked a watershed moment in revitalizing global cooperation. The 2025 HLPF, which welcomed over 6,000 participants, showcased accelerated efforts in SDG localization, science and technology innovation, and multistakeholder partnerships.

Chapter 2 demonstrates our continued efforts to tackle deep-rooted inequalities. This includes the bold call for a new global policy consensus centred on equity, economic security and solidarity in our *World Social Report 2025*. The chapter also highlights our support for the Commission for Social Development, the advancement of disability inclusion through the Conference of States Parties, and initiatives to empower marginalized communities through inclusive economic models.

In Chapter 3, we highlight UN DESA's pivotal role in reshaping the SDG financing landscape. This includes the historic Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Sevilla, Spain, where over 15,000 participants—including nearly 50 Heads of

State and Government—adopted the landmark Sevilla Commitment by consensus. The chapter also shows breakthrough achievements in international tax cooperation and our tailored assistance to small island developing States through the Financing for SIDS (FINS) initiative.

Chapter 4 presents the Department's crucial work in advancing robust data systems for evidence-based policymaking, anchored by our flagship *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025*. The report reveals that while nearly one in five SDG targets have been met or are on track, an equal number have regressed. The chapter also presents major statistical milestones, including the endorsement of the new 2025 System of National Accounts, the launch of the 2030 World Population and Housing Census Programme, and groundbreaking work to mainstream gender perspectives in official statistics.

Chapter 5 highlights UN DESA's support for building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions. The chapter highlights the 2025 United Nations Public Service Forum in Uzbekistan, the launch of the E-Government toolkit to provide guidance and best practices to policymakers, and our leadership of the Internet Governance Forum, which drew a record 11,000 participants in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

In Chapter 6, we demonstrate the Department's integrated approach to addressing the triple planetary crisis through transformative environmental action. This includes the third United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, where over 170 countries adopted the ambitious "Our ocean, our future" declaration, mobilization of over US\$1.4 trillion in Energy Compact commitments, climate leadership through Global Conferences on Climate and SDG Synergies, forest conservation efforts including UNFF20, and recognition of Indigenous stewardship through the *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* report.

In Chapter 7, we highlight UN DESA's commitment to strategic foresight and anticipatory action in navigating global uncertainty. The chapter showcases our flagship *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025* report, the UN Economist Network's "Futures and Foresight" series, innovative AI-powered tools for transforming foresight across the UN system, macroeconomic



modeling support for Member States, youth engagement initiatives, and the piloting of an "SDG Chat" AI solution for enhanced stakeholder engagement.

Together, these seven chapters illustrate the interconnected nature of sustainable development challenges and the comprehensive, forward-looking approach required to address them. From accelerating SDG implementation and reducing inequalities to ensuring sustainable financing, strengthening data systems, building effective governance, protecting our planet, and preparing for the future, UN DESA's work lays the foundation for transformative global action.

As we enter the final five years of the 2030 Agenda, the message is clear: progress remains possible when we act with shared purpose, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to multilateralism. UN DESA will continue to support Member States and all stakeholders on this transformative journey.

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and Social Affairs and Head of UN DESA