

How's it going with the Global Goals?

Help ensure the UK is serious about its review of the Global Goals in 2019.

The Global Goals, or Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed in 2015 by all 194 United Nations Member States. They provide a powerful statement of intent about the world we want to see by 2030: a world free of extreme poverty, and with a sustainable approach to the environment and natural resources. The UK played a leading role in the creation of the Global Goals, and since 2015, the Government has made numerous statements of its commitment to the Goals, to reaching the most marginalised, and to leaving no one behind. 2019 is an important year to demonstrate the reality behind these aspirations. In July, a UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) will be the perfect moment for the UK to do just that. The UK is one of 51 countries conducting a 'Voluntary National Review' of its implementation of the Goals so far. It will be important that the UK's report to the UN is an open, thoughtful and transparent analysis of its international development programmes against the targets contained in the SDGs, and that it publicly renews its commitment to the Goals. At a time of political turbulence and uncertainty about the role of 'Global Britain', RESULTS is calling for Ministerial-level attendance at the HLPF, to help spur on greater action to deliver the Goals by 2030 and renew the UK's commitment to delivery of the Goals.



THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development

What are the Global Goals and why do they matter?

The [Global Goals](#), or Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed in 2015 by all 194 UN Member States, as a set of aspirations that all countries aim to achieve by 2030 – now just 11 years away. Covering a wide range of concerns about global poverty and the environment, they replace the previous Millennium Development Goals, set in 2000, under which absolute poverty more than halved. The Global Goals set out to make big improvements in the lives of poor people and to tackle inequality. But while [significant progress in the fight against poverty has been achieved](#), millions of people still live in extreme poverty, with progress against some of the Goals stalling or even reversing.

The 17 Goals, with 169 individual targets, set out a comprehensive set of measures which, if implemented properly by countries and institutions around the world, will achieve the aims of ending extreme poverty and ensuring environmental sustainability. It's a big ambition, and to ensure it becomes a reality, countries must regularly review progress to ensure their efforts are up to the task.

The UK's track-record on the Global Goals

The UK played a leading role in the development of the Global Goals in 2015, and has since championed them, promoting the principle of universality that lies behind them – that we must "leave no one behind". Reaching the poorest, remotest and most marginalised communities with access to health, education and economic opportunities will be essential if this aim is to be realised. Successive Government statements have given good cause to believe that there is a strong political commitment to the Goals. For example, [in November](#), Secretary of State Penny Mordaunt said:

"I recognise that we're coming up to the last decade of delivering these goals. We're 80 years adrift on nutrition, 100 years on education, 200 years on poverty. So, if we carry on as we are, we're not going to meet them. What we need to do is get people to really lean in and to do that you have to capture the public imagination, you have to get business to think about things differently."

And [she has started the New Year](#) by saying: "In 2019 I want to create ways by which everyone who wants to

help deliver the global goals in the UK and around the world is able to." In addition to political support, evidence is needed of how far Government policies are succeeding in achieving these commitments. RESULTS was pleased when, in 2018, the UK agreed to conduct a 'Voluntary National Review' (VNR) of its commitments under the Global Goals on the world stage.

What is a Voluntary National Review?

As a part of ensuring that progress against the Goals is monitored and discussed, the UN has developed a process for countries to voluntarily report their progress – both domestically, and, in the case of rich donor nations, their support for global development efforts. These [Voluntary National Reviews](#) occur annually at a [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (HLPF), providing an opportunity to highlight challenges and achievements. The HLPF focuses on different Goals each year, and this year, Goals 4 (education), 8 (work and economic growth), 10 (equality), 13 (climate action), 16 (peace, justice and security) and 17 (partnerships) are in the spotlight.

Countries conducting Voluntary National Reviews have taken different approaches, and it is important that processes be transparent, reflective, and open about challenges as well as talking up successes, if they are to be meaningful assessments of progress. In addition, Governments are encouraged to involve civil society in the reviews, so that other voices are included, and those most affected by the issues can be heard.

Following a Ministerial meeting at the HLPF in July, the findings will be used to inform a Heads of Government level meeting at the UN General Assembly in September, which will give world leaders the chance to prioritise action on the basis of the latest information on the implementation of the Goals.

So far, there have been 89 VNRs since 2015, some countries reporting more than once. The UK has not

taken part before, and last year agreed to do so for the first time in July 2019, when 51 countries will be reporting. Since autumn 2018, [a cross-Government process](#) to report back on the UK's progress against all 17 Goals has been coordinated by the Department for International Development (DFID).

What needs to happen now and why?

In 2019, it is important that the UK government work with civil society to create and implement a strategy for delivering the Global Goals internationally. Following a transparent and inclusive VNR in July, the implementation plan should include a timeline, a budget and concrete actions to ensure the economic, social and environmental changes necessary to achieve the Goals by 2030.

To ensure that the Government's repeated political commitment to implementing the Global Goals is made a reality over the next decade, the opportunity provided by the VNR to gain a real insight into our achievements and successes must be grasped. It will be important that the UK's report to the UN is an in-depth, thoughtful and transparent analysis of its international development programmes against the targets contained in the SDGs, and that at the HLPF, the UK publicly renews its commitment to the Goals.

We mustn't take our foot off the pedal! At a time of political turbulence, with the current Brexit negotiations and uncertainty about the role of 'Global Britain', RESULTS is calling for senior Ministerial-level attendance at the HLPF, to help spur on greater action to deliver the Goals by 2030 and to renew the UK's commitment to delivery of the Goals.

Please write to Secretary of State for International Development Penny Mordaunt MP, thanking her for her support for the Global Goals, and asking her to attend the HLPF in person.

Take action

1. Please write to Secretary of State Penny Mordaunt, urging her to attend the HLPF in person to ensure senior Ministerial-level attendance. Say why you support her efforts to deliver the Global Goals, and why the UK's Voluntary National Review must be a transparent and reflective attempt to assess progress and challenges.

Address: Rt. Hon. Penny Mordaunt MP, Secretary of State for International Development, 22 Whitehall, London SW1A 2EG, or email DFIDCorrespondence@dfid.gov.uk

2. Why not encourage others to show their personal support for the Global Goals? A short video or message on social media such as: "This year, one of my #NewYearsResolutions is to ... [state a personal contribution to your favourite Global Goal]. What's yours? #MyGlobalGoal"

3. Achieving the Goals requires effective, targeted and transparent UK aid. Why not share ONE's "[Campaign for Real Aid](#)", directing UK aid towards the poorest people?