



# SDG Pulse 2021

UNCTAD TAKES THE PULSE OF THE SDGS







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A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined.

The final status of the following territories has not yet been agreed or determined: Abyei area,

Aksai Chin, Arunachal Pradesh, Bi'r Tawil, Hala'ib Triangle, Ilemi Triangle, Jammu and Kashmir, Kuril Islands, Paracel Islands, Scarborough Shoal, Senkaku Islands and Spratly Islands.

This publication has not been formally edited.

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# Foreword

In 2015, the United Nations launched the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and corresponding SDGs. To support this programme a Global Indicator Framework was adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission (2017) and subsequently by the United Nations (2017). That framework comprises 232 statistical indicators designed to measure the 17 goals and their respective 169 targets.

This third edition of the SDG Pulse illustrates in a very concrete way how UNCTAD is contributing to the 2030 Agenda. The report not only presents statistical updates and data-driven analysis for the indicators for which UNCTAD is a custodian or co-custodian, but it also presents a range of other complementary indicators that provide a wider context and more nuance to these complex topics.

This report also presents some case studies from UNCTAD's capacity development programme from a statistical perspective – presenting our activities and successes in hard numbers. These case studies are important as they illustrate the Results Based Management approach adopted by UNCTAD – helping us to improve our responsiveness and accountability to member states.

Finally, this report will every year, highlight a thematic issue of immediate relevance. This year's theme addresses remoteness as a challenge for sustainable development and how to mitigate geographic distance, especially from the perspective of SIDS. Dedicated analysis on SIDS' economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities and strengths is provided in [Development and globalization: Facts and figures 2021](#). We propose a composite index of remoteness (see Cantu-Bazaldua, 2021) to consider more comprehensively the implications of remoteness. The index will help guide policy measures to enhance connectivity through digital, socio-cultural and political means.

**Steve MacFeely**  
Head of Statistics and Information  
UNCTAD

## References

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# Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of UNCTAD's SDG Pulse – UNCTAD's annual statistical publication reporting on developments relating to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The purpose of this report is to: provide an update on the evolution of a selection of official SDG indicators and complementary data and statistics; provide progress reports on the development of new concepts and methodologies for UNCTAD custodian indicators; and to also showcase, beyond the perspective of the formal SDG indicators, how UNCTAD is contributing to the implementation of 2030 Agenda. The report will also investigate thematic issues of relevance to 2030 Agenda – this year, the report discusses remoteness as a challenge for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

The report is organized by four broad categories:

## Theme

The report can be read by theme. Here the indicators are sub-divided across the three themes to which UNCTADs work contributes: [multilateralism for trade & development](#); [productive growth](#); and [structural transformation](#). Through this thematic lens, a wide range of indicators are presented and issues discussed, including: recent trends in trade, including barriers to trade, and policies to promote trade; investment, transport infrastructure, ICT for sustainable development, and debt sustainability; and industry, high value-added and sustainability.

## Goals and indicators

The SDG indicators presented in this report are also categorised by goal. The goals and indicators selected reflect UNCTAD's broad mandate of economic and sustainable development. These indicators are supplemented with other complementary indicators. The SDG indicators presented in this report are:

## GOAL 2

### Goal 2: Zero hunger

- Indicator 2.a.2: Total official international support to agricultural sector
- Indicator 2.b.1: Agricultural export subsidies
- Indicator 2.c.1: Indicator of food price anomalies

## GOAL 8

### Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth

- Indicator 8.9.1: Tourism direct GDP
- Indicator 8.a.1: Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements

## GOAL 9

### Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

- Indicator 9.1.2: Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport
- Indicator 9.2.1: Manufacturing value added
- Indicator 9.2.2: Manufacturing employment
- Indicator 9.4.1: CO<sub>2</sub> emission per unit of value added
- Indicator 9.5.1: Research and development expenditure
- Indicator 9.5.2: Researchers relative to population
- Indicator 9.a.1: Total official international support to infrastructure
- Indicator 9.b.1: Proportion of medium and high-tech industry value added
- Indicator 9.c.1: Proportion of population covered by a mobile network

## GOAL 10

### Goal 10: Reduce inequality

- Indicator 10.a.1: Proportion of tariff lines with zero-tariff\*
- Indicator 10.b.1: Total resource flows for development

## GOAL 12

### Goal 12: Responsible consumption & production

- Indicator 12.6.1: Number of companies publishing sustainability reports\*

## GOAL 16

### Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

- Indicator 16.4.1: Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows\*

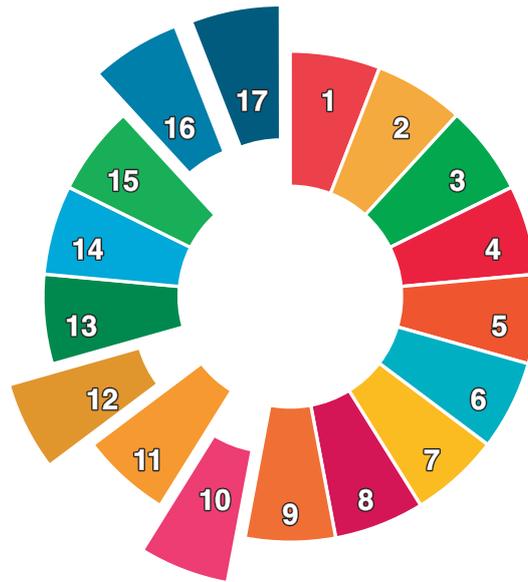
## GOAL 17

### Goal 17: Partnership for the goals

- Indicator 17.2.1: Net official development assistance, total and to LDCs
- Indicator 17.3.1: FDI, ODA and South-South Cooperation\*
- Indicator 17.4.1: Debt service as a share of exports of goods and services
- Indicator 17.5.1: Implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs\*
- Indicator 17.6.2: Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions
- Indicator 17.8.1: Proportion of individuals using the Internet
- Indicator 17.10.1: Worldwide weighted tariff-average\*
- Indicator 17.11.1: Developing countries and LDCs' share of global exports\*
- Indicator 17.12.1: Tariffs faced by developing countries, LDCs and SIDS\*

Custodian agencies are responsible for developing international standards and recommending methodologies for monitoring SDG indicators. They are also tasked with compiling and verifying country data and metadata, and for submitting the data, along with regional and global aggregates, to the global SDG report and database by the United Nations Statistics Division. SDG Pulse covers the following UNCTAD custodian indicators, but also many other SDG indicators to describe sustainable development comprehensively.

UNCTAD is the custodian or co-custodian agency for several SDG indicator falling under goals 10, 12, 16 and 17. To see UNCTAD custodian indicators and find related SDG Pulse sections.



### UNCTAD in Action

UNCTAD runs a wide-ranging capacity development programme to support progress towards the 2030 Agenda. This report presents some case studies from UNCTAD's development programme from a statistical perspective – presenting UNCTAD's activities and successes in hard numbers. These case studies are important as they also illustrate the Results Based Management approach adopted by UNCTAD – helping us to improve our responsiveness and accountability to member states.

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