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# UNESCO moving forward

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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**UNESCO Task Force on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**  
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## Foreword by the Director-General

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, sets forth a bold new framework for development cooperation over the next 15 years. This agenda aspires to ensure prosperity and well-being for all women and men, while protecting our planet and strengthening the foundations for peace. The Sustainable Development Goals represent the most universal, ambitious and comprehensive agenda ever seen, to leave no one behind.

This is a paradigm shift that requires us all to act in new ways. All 17 Sustainable Development Goals are connected – this places a premium on comprehensive approaches, on partnership, on linking policies and action. Moving forward, the Agenda must build on national ownership and on the mobilization of effective action and resources at the national, regional and global level.

Inclusivity, integration, and universality -- these are the hallmarks of the new agenda. Soft power is essential to taking it forward.

This is the importance of UNESCO's universal mandate to contribute to the "building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information." Human rights and dignity are the starting point of the Organization's action – and the criteria for assessing its results, with a focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded groups, as well as countries and segments of societies furthest behind. UNESCO mainstreams specific interventions for youth, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, and marginalized social and ethnic groups, including indigenous peoples and local communities, while giving global priority to promoting gender equality and to supporting countries in Africa in all of its programmes. The Organization also places emphasis on action with countries in conflict and crisis, or affected by disasters, to build resilience.

UNESCO is bringing all its weight to supporting countries through new, innovative and integrated approaches to reach the goals they set for themselves – from advancing inclusive quality education for

all to promoting integrated water resources management, ocean sustainability and protection of biodiversity, from advancing sustainable cities, deepening social inclusion, mitigating and adapting to climate change, to preventing violent extremism and 'cultural cleansing' and defending freedom of expression and media development.

Data is vital to all this. The Organization is responsible for collecting and disseminating data on the global and thematic indicators needed for the review and follow-up of many of these goals. While focusing on the 9 Sustainable Development Goals that have direct relevance to UNESCO's mandate – the Organization's action will impact across all new goals.

To support countries in embedding the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans and budgets, and support follow up and review, UNESCO is acting across the board. This starts with providing demand-driven, evidence-based normative and policy advice in its areas of competence and delivering capacity building, including on data collection and analysis. It includes also convening multi-stakeholder partnerships, and supporting South-South and North-South-South cooperation. I have created a dedicated Task Force on the 2030 Agenda, to ensure sharp, effective and coordinated action for countries as they take forward, implement and review the new agenda.

Accelerating momentum towards the Sustainable Development Goals is a human rights imperative, a development imperative, and a peace imperative – this is about delivering on the collective promise we made, as the United Nations, as Governments, as the wider public, to build a better future for all. It is our responsibility now to meet expectations, to do everything to translate promises into reality. This is UNESCO's pledge – now, and in the years to come.

**Irina Bokova**  
**Director General of UNESCO**

“UNESCO is bringing all its weight to supporting countries through new, innovative and integrated approaches to reach the goals they set for themselves...”



## Introduction

UNESCO actively contributed to the shaping of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015 – drawing on its humanist mandate, and mobilizing all of its partners and stakeholders. Designed as an agenda of the people, by the people and for the people, it highlights the vital importance of human capacities, skills and knowledge to adapt and respond to the challenges and opportunities of the present and the future, many of which are still unknown. It places national ownership and support at the country level as a cornerstone for its successful implementation. Building upon the achievements and lessons learned of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it seeks to address their unfinished business.

The 2030 Agenda is a universal roadmap that is strategically linked to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All.

The 2030 Agenda gives new impetus to UNESCO's actions at the global, regional and national levels. It gives pride of place to the fundamental contribution of quality, inclusive education at all levels and to the importance of lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG 4).

It breaks new ground in acknowledging the growing importance of science, technology and innovation (STI) for sustainable development (SDG 9). It contains ambitious goals in the areas of freshwater (SDG 6), biodiversity (SDG 15), the ocean (SDG 14), and climate change

(SDG 13), which are major priorities for the Organization. It recognizes the role of public access to information and the safety of journalists in accelerating development opportunities and in promoting good governance and the rule of law (SDG 16). It promotes culture, through heritage and creativity, as a key enabler of sustainable development. It acknowledges the value of creating inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities, and contains targets on the preservation of natural and cultural heritage (SDG 11), as well as on the recovery and return of stolen assets (SDG 16), which also include the illicit trafficking of cultural objects. It upholds a vision of just, peaceful, equitable and inclusive societies recognizing the value of knowledge, heritage and diversity. It promotes human rights and has a strong focus on gender equality (SDG 5).

UNESCO is transforming the way it works to effectively support Member States in the delivery of the 2030 Agenda, including through expanding its multi-stakeholder partnerships; transitioning towards a 'structured financing dialogue' to support comprehensive, integrated participatory planning on financing priorities and needs; working in close partnership with the UN system at large in delivering on the 2030 Agenda; and improving public access to quality data about its work as a key component of its commitment to strengthening transparency and accountability. The Director General's dedicated Task Force on the 2030 Agenda also plays a key role in ensuring UNESCO's sharp, effective and coordinated action to support countries with the implementation and review of the Agenda.

“ UNESCO is actively contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development drawing on its humanist mandate, and mobilizing all of its partners and stakeholders.

# The principles of the 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda provides a new framework for development cooperation over the next 15 years. It is the point of reference for all new national development strategies and plans. It has considerable importance for the entire United Nations system, including for UN specialized agencies like UNESCO. The Organization will continue to actively participate in UN-wide efforts to improve coherence and coordination within the UN system.

It will also continue to play an active role in the follow-up and review processes at the global levels and, as appropriate, at the regional and national levels.

UNESCO is embedding the principles of the 2030 Agenda into all of its programmes:

› **Sustainable development:** the 2030 Agenda is first and foremost about shifting the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. UNESCO is supporting countries in making this transformative change, through its work to ensure that all learners have the skills and knowledge they need to become responsible, green, global citizens; to advance science, technology and innovation for the development of sustainable solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change and other global challenges; to expand access to ICTs to promote socio-economic development; and to ensure that culture is integrated into sustainable development strategies so that they are relevant, effective and adapted to local contexts.

› **Universality and interdependence:** the 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda, reflecting a changing world and a new appreciation for the growing complexity and interconnectedness of development challenges reaching beyond

borders, which need to be addressed in an integrated, coordinated and coherent manner; it emphasizes that developed countries can no longer achieve sustainable development without commensurate progress in developing countries and vice versa.

› **Inclusivity (“leaving no one behind”):** the new Agenda is deeply committed to inclusivity (“leaving no-one behind”), including ending poverty in all its forms and reducing poverty within and among countries; it requires giving highest priority to support LDCs and those in conflict and other special development situations.

› **Rights-based:** the 2030 Agenda is a rights-based agenda, which commits to realizing the human rights of all and mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across all of the Goals and targets; it places emphasis on the role of support to policy and normative work for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

› **Inequalities:** the 2030 Agenda recognizes the importance of addressing rising inequalities. UNESCO supports countries in addressing inequalities through its work to promote quality, inclusive education for all; narrow the science and knowledge gaps between and within countries; close the digital divide; and develop inclusive public policies that promote social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) also collects and shares disaggregated data related to the Organization’s areas of expertise.

› **National ownership:** the 2030 Agenda is first and foremost about the national ownership of the Sustainable Development

Goals, which are incorporated into national planning processes, policies and strategies. Supporting national ownership of the SDGs will be a fundamental task for UNESCO. In doing so, UNESCO will adapt its support to the specific and diversified needs of its Member States, taking into account the increased diversification of the capacity of Member States, in particular in emerging Middle Income Countries (MICs).

› **Integration and interlinkages:** the 2030 Agenda recognizes that sustainable development strategies should respond in an integrated manner to the complex challenges of today. UNESCO is approaching the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner across all its areas of competence (education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, communication and information), capitalizing on its multidisciplinary expertise and intersectoral mandate. It is also taking an integrated approach across its modalities of work by more closely interlinking its normative and country-level operational work and supporting closer integration across the pillars of the United Nation’s work, including the recent push for stronger humanitarian-development linkages.

› **Peace, intercultural understanding, global citizenship:** Critically for UNESCO, the 2030 Agenda recognizes that “sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and security” and commits to intercultural understanding, mutual respect, and “an ethic of global citizenship and shared responsibility”. Under SDG 16, it commits the international community to preventing all forms of violence and to promoting peaceful, just and inclusive

societies free from fear and violence, with accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

› **Crisis, conflicts and disasters:** the Agenda stresses the need to pay greater attention to the special needs of the countries which are in conflict and crisis situations – 33 of today’s 49 least-developed countries, with a population of almost 900 million – and to address the protracted nature of crises in many humanitarian and conflict-affected settings, as well as building the resilience of the poor and of those in vulnerable situations, by reducing their exposure and liability to climate-related extreme events. It is committed to bridging the humanitarian-development divide.

› **Knowledge, science, technology and innovation (STI):** the new Agenda recognizes the importance of fully harnessing STI and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for sustainable development, as well as the need to build human capacity, skills and knowledge, including through quality education for all throughout life; STI, access to information, and the provision of quality data across all goals.

› **Multi-stakeholder partnerships:** the 2030 Agenda has placed a clear premium on partnerships and on integration and integrated approaches. UNESCO will play a significant role in its domains as the convener, broker, facilitator and implementer of multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of the 2030 Agenda, and it will also support South-South and North-South-South cooperation to implement the SDGs. Similarly, UNESCO is also pursuing the development of a structured financing dialogue, which should also help in designing multi-partner approaches.

# UNESCO's two global priorities

## GENDER EQUALITY



### Contributing to SDG 5 on Gender Equality

UNESCO recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as one of its two global priorities. The Organization is mainstreaming gender equality in all of its programmes to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This includes promoting girls' and women's education;

promoting women in science, especially in decision-making levels and in relation to water management; promoting safe access for girls and women to drinking water and adequate sanitation; promoting women as agents of social transformations; promoting the full participation of women in cultural life, and promoting women in the media and the empowerment of women through ICTs. UNESCO is also combating violence against women in all its forms, including school-related gender-based violence and gender-based violence in emergencies. All these areas contribute to the implementation of SDG 5. UNESCO also supports countries in mainstreaming gender equality across all of the SDGs, including through the collection of sex-disaggregated data. It also provides guidance on advancing gender equality and empowerment of women in all of UNESCO's fields of competence. In this context, UNESCO is strengthening its multi-stakeholder partnerships with other UN entities, as well as national and local partners, including civil society, the private sector and academia to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## AFRICA

UNESCO's Operational Strategy for Priority Africa is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which in turn integrates fully the 2063 Agenda of the African Union. Moreover, UNESCO's Operational Strategy for Priority Africa is in line with Africa's official position for the 2030 Agenda, namely the Common African Position (CAP), which focuses on six pillars: (i) structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; (ii) science, technology and innovation; (iii) people-centered development; (iv) environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management; (v) peace and security; and (vi) finance and partnerships, which are all part of the SDGs.



This strategic alignment will enable UNESCO to increase the scope of its action in and for Africa, and to improve the commitment of its sectors, institutes and specialized networks, as well as the mobilization of external actors, including strategic and financial partners. Africa being a Global Priority for UNESCO, the programme related to education, the sciences, culture, communication and information, further detailed in the brochure, will be implemented with a special focus on African countries. The ability of UNESCO to work with a wide array of stakeholders in Africa will be an important comparative advantage for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which promotes South-South and North-South-South cooperation, both regionally and internationally.

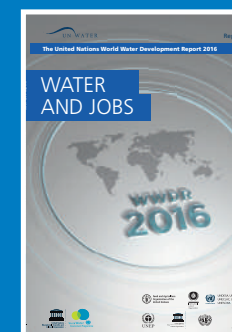
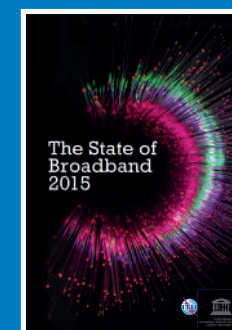
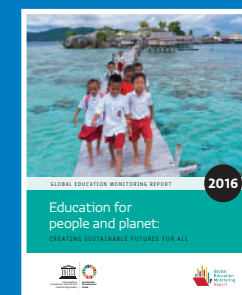
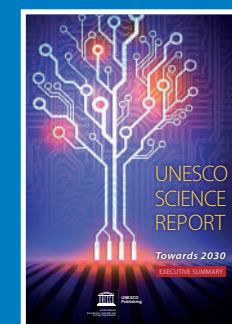
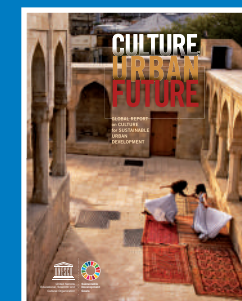
# UNESCO supports the data revolution across the SDGs

To support the data revolution called for by the 2030 Agenda and to ensure that sustainable development plans and policies reach those most in need, UNESCO has geared up its efforts, both through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and through its programme sectors, involving conceptual work as well as capacity-building efforts. UIS is contributing to the development of the SDG global indicator framework through its participation in the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and the UN Statistical Commission on indicators related to targets for SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17. It is also contributing to building consensus, developing and implementing thematic indicators with a focus on maintaining the standards to ensure international comparability. To date, UIS has led the thematic indicators for internationally-comparable sectoral reviews for education (through the Technical Cooperation Group and the Global Alliance for Learning) and ICTs for development (through the Partnership on Measuring for Development), as well as public access to information, and is also developing thematic indicator sets for STI, cultural heritage and for measuring gender equality in education and in STEM. A special focus has been placed on measures of equity and equality in order to support the development, implementation and monitoring of policies aimed at reducing inequalities and overcoming all forms of discrimination.

Going forward, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) will continue to collect disaggregated data related to the Organization's areas of expertise and provide institutional expertise in the development, collection, and analysis of internationally comparable statistics and related capacity-development and policy. UNESCO's global monitoring reports, such as the Global

Education Monitoring Report, the UNESCO Science Report, the World Water Development Report, the Global Ocean Science Report of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Global Report on Culture for Sustainable Urban Development, the Global Report on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the Broadband Report and the World Social Science Report will continue to report disaggregated data, as well as analyze progress in achieving the SDG targets.

UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) has developed the methodology for the monitoring of transboundary cooperation to achieve target 6.5 of SDG 6 on water (indicator 6.5.2) and is supporting Member States in a pilot implementation within the UN-Water Global Expanded Water Monitoring Initiative (GEMI); decisions at local and transboundary level will be supported by the IHP Water Information Networking System (WINS). Furthermore, the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) of UNESCO coordinates a UN-Water Task Force to produce the SDG 6 Synthesis Report, which will summarize the results of all related monitoring efforts and offer Member States policy recommendations to accelerate achieving SDG 6 in the wider context of the 2030 Agenda.





## UNESCO's direct contribution to nine SDGs

Based on a global mapping, UNESCO contributes significantly to nine SDGs where the Organization has the following key roles: internationally recognized global or shared leadership and coordination; monitoring and benchmarking; global advocacy to sustain political commitment; leading or co-leading global multi-stakeholder coalitions; normative mandate and provider of upstream policy support and capacity development. These roles are played in close partnership with UN entities and partners from the public and private sector.

As stated in UNESCO's mission statement, the Organization also contributes to SDG 1 on eradicating poverty through its work to promote quality education and skills development to help people obtain decent work; harness science, technology for poverty reduction and sustainable development; promote culture as an enabler for sustainable development; support media development and access to information; and build resilience to the effects of climate change, natural disasters and conflicts.

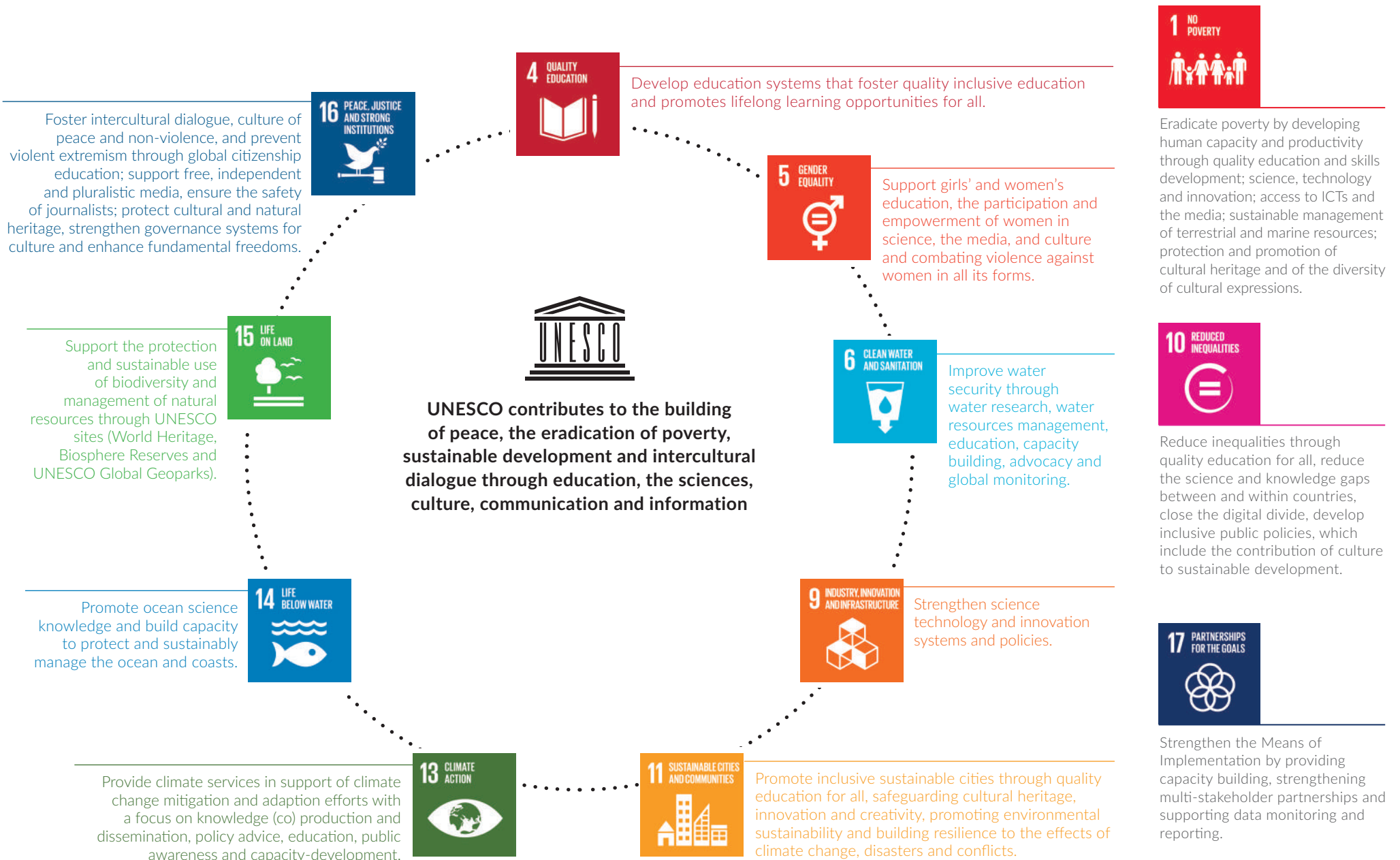
UNESCO also aims to reduce inequalities (SDG 10) through its work to ensure that all learners have access to quality education at all levels; reduce the science and knowledge gaps between and within countries; close the digital divide and ensure that all development policies are inclusive and respect cultural diversity.

UNESCO promotes an integrated approach to achieving these 9 SDGs and focuses on the following Means of Implementation as described in SDG 17: mobilizing additional financial resources for developing countries; supporting South-South and North-South-South Cooperation in all of its areas of competence; promoting international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation, including through its support to the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Technology Bank for the LDCs; providing effective, targeted capacity building, including on data collection and monitoring; promoting policy and institutional coherence; and convening multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Recognizing the interrelated nature of the SDGs, UNESCO's action will also contribute to a number of the other SDGs, as described in this publication.

“ UNESCO contributes significantly to nine SDGs through an integrated approach, drawing on all of its areas of specialized expertise and in close partnership with UN entities and partners from the public and private sector.





# Inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all



UNESCO is supporting countries in implementing the SDG 4-Education 2030 Agenda through convening the multistakeholder SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee, providing strategic guidance, policy advice and capacity development to Member States, making recommendations for catalytic action, advocating for adequate financing, and monitoring progress toward Education 2030 targets through the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report.

UNESCO was decisive in the formulation of the Education 2030 agenda, encapsulated in the stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). The Organization was mandated to lead and coordinate the implementation of the SDG4 – Education 2030 agenda, through the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FfA),<sup>1</sup> as decided by the World Education Forum (Incheon, Republic of Korea, May 2015).

UNESCO's education programme will be aligned with SDG 4 and its targets. The focus will be on: a) supporting the implementation of SDG 4–Education 2030 at country level; and b) leading the coordination and monitoring of SDG 4-Education 2030 at global and regional levels.

Support for the advancement of SDG-Education 2030 will be guided by the principles of equity, quality, inclusion and gender equality whilst promoting creativity and critical thinking. UNESCO will continue to foster Member States' commitment to the right to education and the concept of lifelong learning, as a key principle for holistic and sector-wide educational reform and a response to emerging socio-economic challenges. This work will be demand- driven and results-oriented, contributing directly to supporting Member States in advancing SDG 4 and other education-related SDG targets. UNESCO will focus on those areas where it has a clear demonstrated comparative advantage and a unique role as a specialized agency.

<sup>1</sup> The FfA, adopted by the global education community during UNESCO's General Conference in November 2015, is the result of an unprecedented consultative process led by UNESCO. It provides guidance to countries on how to implement SDG 4 on education and its related targets, and proposes ways of implementing, coordinating, financing and monitoring Education 2030 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. It can be accessed at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002456/245656E.pdf>

Capitalizing on its convening power, UNESCO will bring together global, regional and national stakeholders to guide the implementation of the Education 2030 agenda. It functions as a focal point for education within the overall Education 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development coordination structure. It convenes the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee - a multi-stakeholder partnership acting as a key structure for coordinating global education efforts. The mandate of the Steering Committee is to provide strategic guidance, policy advice and capacity development to Member States, make recommendations for catalytic action, advocate for adequate financing, and monitor progress toward Education 2030 targets through the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report. This includes supporting Member States in implementing the agenda, leading global advocacy on SDG 4, reviewing and monitoring progress, facilitating South-South and North-South-South cooperation, and convening high-level global and regional meetings to take forward the 2030 agenda. Global monitoring on SDG 4 and its related targets will be provided through the Global Education Monitoring Report, drawing on data collected and disseminated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Recognizing that all 17 SDGs are interrelated and that education underpins all SDGs, UNESCO's work in the area of education will also contribute to the achievement of other SDGs, more particularly those related to: Ending poverty (SDG 1); Health and well-being (SDG 3); Gender equality (SDG 5); Decent work (SDG 8); Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10), Sustainable Cities (SDG 11) Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12); Climate action (SDG 13); Peace (SDG 16) and Partnerships (SDG 17).

# Harness science, technology, innovation and knowledge



Although there is ample empirical evidence to demonstrate that ethically managed STI are pivotal for development, it is in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that for the first time STI are explicitly, and universally, recognized by the global community as key drivers for sustainable development. This is true for all the SDGs in a cross-cutting fashion.

UNESCO's work in this area contributes to reducing inequalities (SDG 10) by narrowing the STI gap between Member States to ensure that all countries benefit from scientific and technological progress and innovation across the SDGs. The Organization's engagement in both the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) and in the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries also aims to bridge the STI gap to improve knowledge sharing, and to develop the scientific knowledge base required to access and utilize critical technologies (SDG 9).

UNESCO's Science Report and GO-SPIN country reports monitor and assess trends in STI and engineering throughout the world, in particular for developing countries, drawing on data collected and disseminated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The Institute is the custodian agency for the indicators related to Target 9.5, and is developing a thematic set of indicators to cover the contribution of STI to achieving the SDGs.

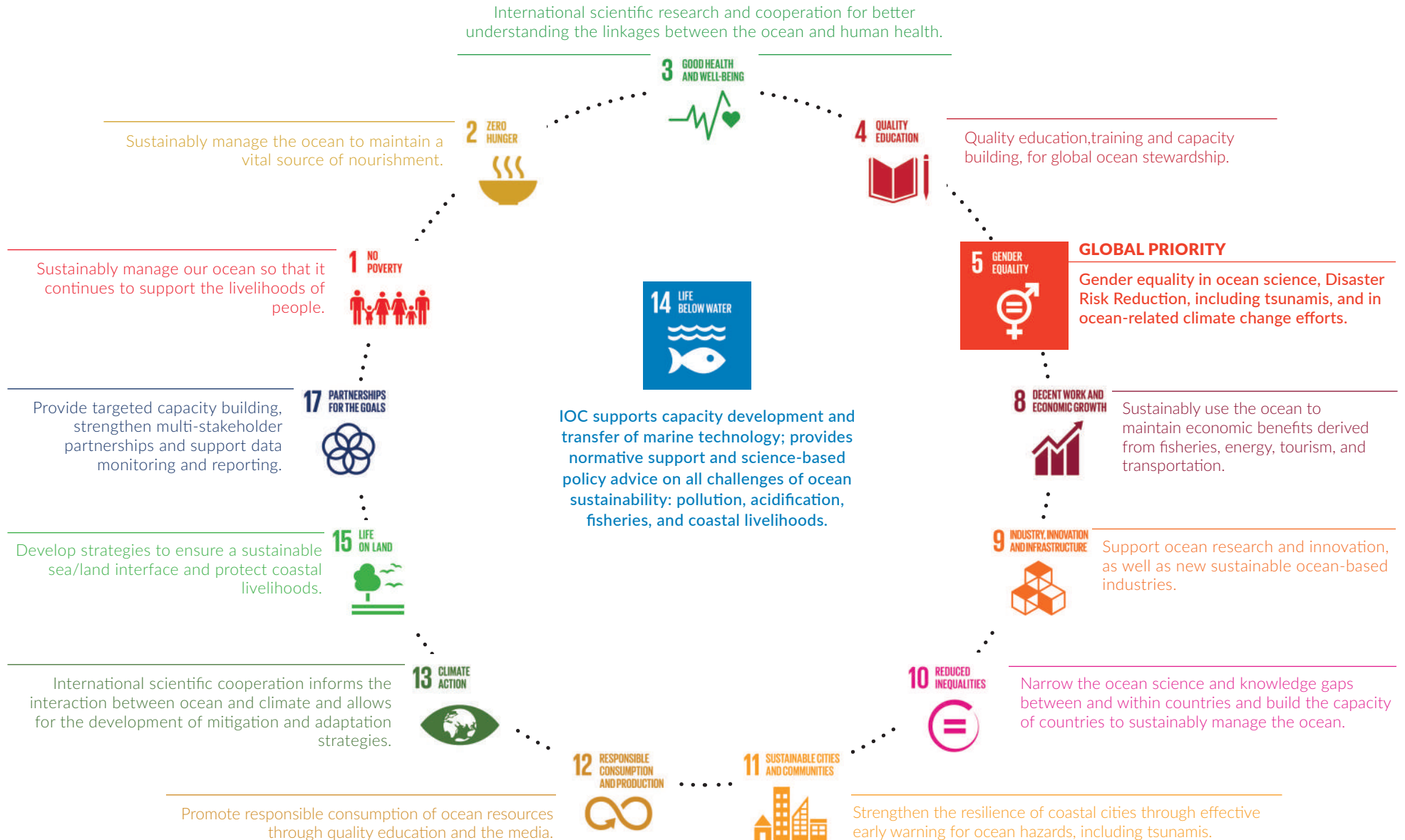
With a focus on SDGs 4, 5, 9 and 17, UNESCO supports Member States in creating the enabling environment for comprehensive STI systems, policies, as well as institutional and human capacity development to promote sustainable economic development, entrepreneurship and youth employability.

At the same time, STI will have to address specific challenges, such as the impact of climate change and natural hazards, the management of limited freshwater and mineral resources, loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The specific application of STI for SDGs 6, 11, 13 and 15 will be the focus of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) in the fields of freshwater, the ecological and earth sciences, as well as science for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change action. The UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) measures progress in achieving SDG 6 and its interlinkages with other SDGs through the publication of the World Water Development Report (WWDR).

The unique global networks of sites dedicated to sustainable development, such as the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and Global Geoparks, will support Member States to develop resilient societies and to manage sustainably their natural resources. International scientific cooperation focusing on the management of transboundary aspects of water resources or UNESCO designated sites contribute to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16).

# Protect and sustainably manage the ocean



The stand-alone Ocean SDG 14 recognizes the role of ocean science and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's (IOC) standard-setting role as essential to addressing all of the challenges or dimensions of ocean sustainability.

The stand-alone Ocean SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) recognizes the role of ocean science and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's (IOC) standard-setting role as essential to addressing all of the challenges or dimensions of ocean sustainability (e.g. pollution, ocean acidification, fisheries, coastal livelihoods). The Commission will build on this recognition to fulfill its mandate as the leading UN mechanism for global cooperation on ocean science. Beyond SDG 14, many of the Goals depend on the ocean, especially SDG 1 on poverty eradication, SDG 2 on food security and improved nutrition, SDG 3 on human health, SDG 8 on economic growth and productive employment, SDG 9 on sustainable industries and innovation, SDG 11 on resilient and sustainable cities, SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate change, SDG 15 on biodiversity and SDG 17 on partnerships. Ocean sustainability itself requires expertise and ocean literacy and is therefore dependent on SDG 4 on quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. Societal aspects of SDG 14 activities have a strong bearing on gender equality, hence SDG 5. UNESCO-IOC's work on ocean research capacity development will also contribute to addressing SDG 10 on inequalities, as it will help to reduce knowledge gaps between and within countries.

IOC will focus its contribution to SDG 14 in three areas:

- ▶ capacity development, especially in marine research and transfer of marine technology;
- ▶ normative and science-based policy advice and support to countries on implementing the Ocean SDG and monitoring and reporting progress, in accordance with IOC's role as custodian agency for targets 14.3 and 14.a on ocean acidification and capacity development, respectively, and as contributing agency to targets 14.1 and 14.2;
- ▶ and leveraging ocean observations, science and services for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean.

IOC will use its convening power to strengthen support for the new 2030 ocean development agenda, reinforcing and widening its association with NGOs, regional science organizations, practitioners and the public through its regional and other subsidiary bodies. In the framework of the 2017 UN Conference on the implementation of SDG 14, IOC will work through UN inter-agency mechanisms on ocean matters to develop 'SDG enabling activities' with a view to providing technical resources to Member States, including on capacity development and on facilitating approaches to access funding agencies.

In the context of SDG 13, IOC will coordinate international scientific cooperation to ensure that the best scientific knowledge leads to appropriate understanding of climate change and enables ocean-based adaptation and mitigation strategies to address its negative impacts. Through its regional networks, IOC will coordinate early warning and sustained ocean services to protect life, health and property on the coast and at sea; will strengthen disaster risk education and preparedness programmes for coastal communities, and the provision of scientific assessments to inform environmental and climate policy and action.

IOC's work will aim at achieving the following result: 'Science-informed policies for reduced vulnerability to ocean hazards, for the global conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, seas and marine resources, and increased resilience and adaptation to climate change, developed and implemented by Member States, towards the realization of Agenda 2030, with particular attention to ensuring that all of its Member States have the capacity to meet their objectives.'

# Understand social transformations for peaceful, inclusive and right-based societies





**The social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and the SDG targets on social inclusion, the eradication of extreme poverty, the reduction of inequalities, inclusive policies for cities, as well as inclusive and participatory decision-making are directly related to UNESCO's mandate to support Member States in managing contemporary social transformations.**

Intercultural dialogue is essential to understanding contemporary social transformations, new levels and forms of human interaction and interdependence, and to ensuring peaceful societies.

The achievement of the SDGs will depend on researchers and policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders having access to and being able to share pertinent and accurate information about the societies and communities targeted by their actions, as well as a coherent intellectual framework in which to proceed.

Alongside Member States' engagement in the production of knowledge, the effective use of research through a strengthened research-policy nexus can improve evidence-informed public policy, guided by universal values and principles, based on human rights and ethical principles; enhance public services and raise the level of public debates. The integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs requires greater policy coherence at the national, regional and international levels that can be obtained through stronger links between social science research and public policy-making, including globally-comparable data for trend monitoring, priority-setting and the assessment of programmes and policies.

The work of UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Programme, focusing on policy advice and capacity-building, makes a direct contribution to supporting Member States in the achievement of three Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 16 (targets 16.6 and 16.7) and SDG 11 (target 11.3).

It also provides contributions to supporting Member States in the implementation of other SDGs and a number of associated targets: SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13 and SDG 17.

The six thematic areas on which UNESCO's Sector for Social and Human Sciences will focus its efforts are included in the graphic.

# Culture as a driver and enabler for sustainable development



Culture is a driver and enabler of sustainable development and essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda as it contributes to human and socio-economic development, quality education, social inclusion, sustainable cities, environmental sustainability, and peaceful societies.

Based on a strong appeal from national and local stakeholders, the 2030 Agenda integrates, for the first time, the role of culture, through cultural heritage and creativity, as an enabler of sustainable development across the SDGs.

UNESCO's Culture programme directly contributes to implementing SDG 11 on making cities sustainable, particularly Target 11.4 on protecting natural and cultural heritage, for which the UNESCO Institute for Statistics will also support the development of indicators. In addition, UNESCO's transversal efforts involving all its normative instruments, namely its six Culture Conventions on cultural heritage and creativity, also support the implementation of several other SDGs including 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Safeguarding cultural heritage and encouraging creativity is essential for communities around the globe to be actively involved in attaining the goals. UNESCO's work to protect culture in emergency situations, including in conflict and disaster situations, also contributes to the implementation of the SDGs, in particular SDG 16, aiming to strengthen resilience and promote peaceful and inclusive societies.

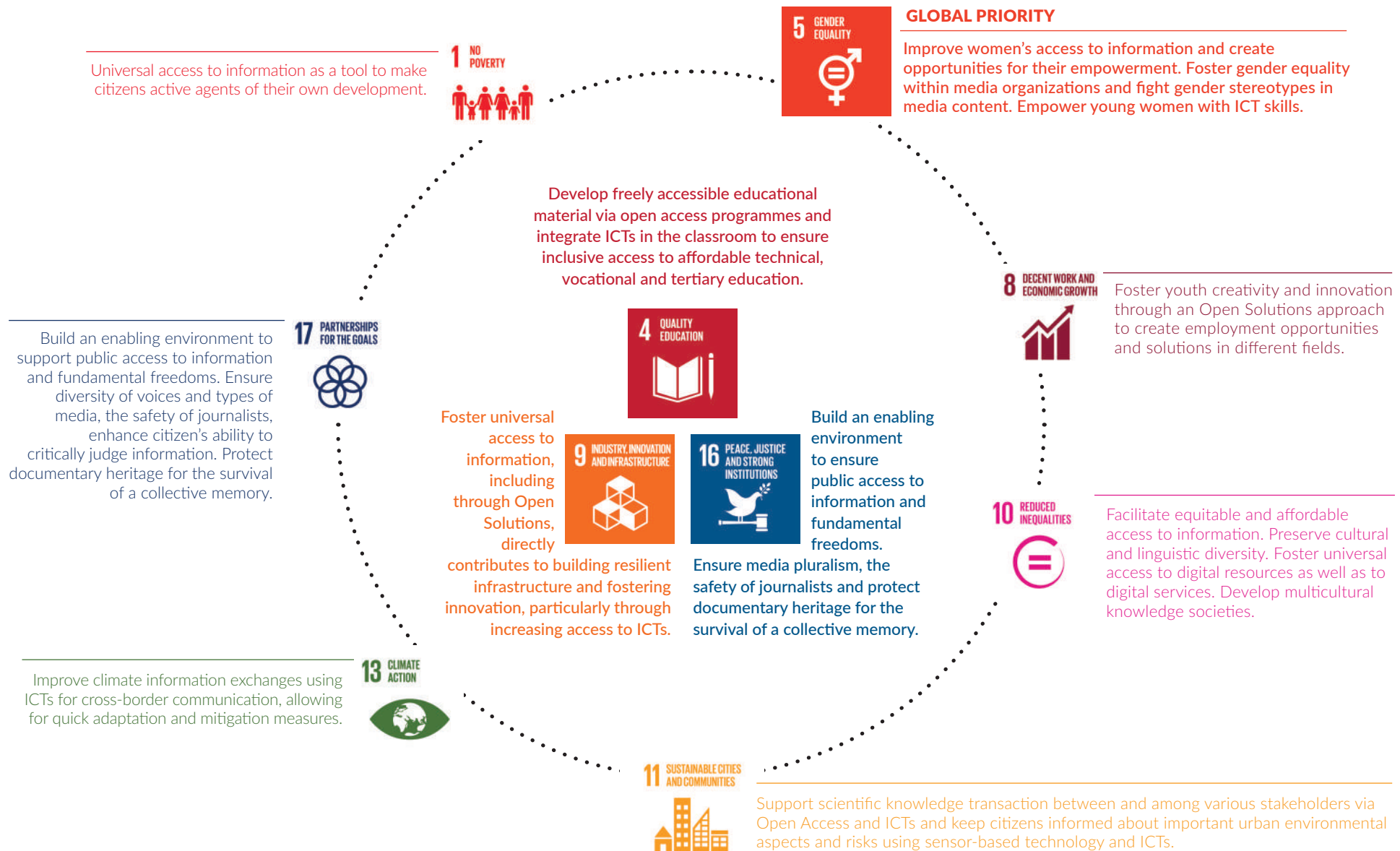
Flagship operational initiatives and programmes, such as the Culture and Sustainable Urban Development Initiative, the World Heritage Education Programme, the UNESCO Heritage Routes projects, and the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism and Marine Programmes, provide frameworks and key recommendations to support Member States in integrating culture into strategies and policies for implementing the SDGs. The global reports, notably the Global Report on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, provide key information and data to monitor the impact of such strategies and provide evidence of culture's contribution to achieving the SDGs through investment in creativity and innovation and engagement of civil society. The UNESCO Culture Conventions also offer guidelines to States Parties on how their implementation can benefit sustainable development – notably the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage and the 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

UNESCO works to foster South-South and North-South-South cooperation, promote the introduction of preferential treatment measures for developing countries and strengthen national and local capacities, providing policy advice at global, national and local levels and fostering innovation and exchange by means of its extensive global networks to support Member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda. In particular, UNESCO's networks for sustainable urban development, including World Heritage and Cities, and the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), provide a comprehensive platform to advance the implementation of the SDGs, especially SDG 11.

As pictured in the graphic below, the UNESCO Culture Conventions and their operational activities demonstrate how culture can help achieve the 2030 Agenda by promoting:

- **human and socio-economic development**, as a source of identity, creativity and innovation;
- **quality education**, by ensuring that education systems are adapted to local needs drawing on the cultural heritage of communities, building relevant skills needed for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship;
- **sustainable cities**, by strengthening the link between communities and their built environment and sustaining vibrant cultural lives and quality urban environments;
- **environmental sustainability**, as an inherent element of the natural environment and contributing to the preservation of biodiversity and ecologically sound development;
- **peaceful societies and inclusion**, through the enhancement of fundamental freedoms and the strengthening of participatory systems of governance for culture, the respect for cultural diversity and the promotion of gender equality.

# Freedom of expression and universal access to information and knowledge



**Communication and media are central to promoting sustainable development and democracy. The right to freedom of expression underpins a free, pluralistic, inclusive and independent media environment as well as freedom of information.**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states that the 'spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies.'

UNESCO, through its Communication and Information (CI) Programme, is contributing to building these inclusive knowledge societies, by addressing current and emerging global challenges in the area of communication and information. UNESCO supports Member States in building peace and promoting fundamental rights and freedoms, by strengthening freedom of expression, media development and access to information and knowledge through ICTs, directly contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 17.

Communication and media are central to fostering sustainable development and democracy. The right to freedom of expression and freedom of information are the basis for a free and pluralistic media environment. This supports democracy and good governance. On this basis, public access to information, the safety of journalists, youth empowerment, gender equality in and through media, media and information literacy, media pluralism and diversity, access to information and knowledge and professional journalist standards are advanced. This enables journalists to make independent contributions to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Through its lead role as coordinator of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, UNESCO works with a wide range of partners to help ensure adequate responses to the protection of journalists and the fight against impunity. Special attention is given to supporting safety for women journalists. UNESCO also contributes with regular global monitoring of indicators approved by the UN Statistical Commission, as a contributing agency for tracking global progress on indicator 16.10.1 and as custodian agency for global reporting on indicator 16.10.2. UNESCO will be enhancing universal and affordable access to the Internet (SDG 9, target c), including through its active contribution to the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development and the promotion of policy development and capacity building.

UNESCO also promotes the conceptual framework of Internet Universality through the implementation of the ROAM principles, which supports Internet Governance activities that are human Rights-based, Open, Accessible to all, and nurtured by Multi-stakeholder participation. Knowledge remains a crucial asset for human development. Innovation in ICTs for learning and equal participation in societal development are essential for the achievement of SDG 4, which calls for equitable and inclusive access to quality education for lifelong learning, including the most marginalized social groups.

Advances in ICTs and increasingly inter-connected Knowledge Societies underscore the importance of ensuring creativity and innovation - through an "Open Solutions" approach - to empower and promote the social and economic inclusion of all. To further foster social and economic inclusion of young people in their societies, the CI Programme will empower young people worldwide, particularly young women, by providing them with the high-level skills and the confidence to develop, promote, and sell mobile applications (apps) that solve local issues of sustainable development, and provide self-generated, viable employment opportunities in the mobile/ICT industry (SDG 10, target 2).

This approach allows UNESCO to support Member States in reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (SDG 8, target 6).

UNESCO also reinforces awareness raising and knowledge management activities to ensure transparency and accountability in decision-making for climate change mitigation (SDG 13, target 3 and Paris Agreement). This work is supported by activities for free, independent, pluralistic and diverse media, reporting on climate change and environmental protection as well as through participatory citizen science applications.

Finally, UNESCO's CI Sector supports Member States in safeguarding the world's cultural heritage (SDG 11, target 4), with a focus on documentary heritage through the Memory of the World Programme. CI raises awareness about the importance of preservation, dissemination and accessibility to documentary heritage, including in digital form, as an invaluable asset of humanity and an expression of the richness and the diversity of peoples and cultures.



*Our collective commitment to the 17 Global Goals is our most important defense in ensuring that the benefits of our modernizing world are shared among all nations and people and not just by the privileged few. These goals are intended to serve the interest of every woman, man, and child on our planet. And that means that achieving these goals is up to all of us. This has to be an international movement—a coming together of people and a rallying around a common cause on a global scale. I believe that UNESCO, through its specialized expertise in education, the sciences, culture, communication and information, is very well positioned to support countries in making these Global Goals a reality for all.*

**Forest Whitaker**

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

UNESCO Task Force on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development  
<http://en.unesco.org/sdgs>



**Sustainable  
Development  
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