

# 2024 SDG Learning, Training and Practice

## *Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

A special event during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

### Summary

## Background

The SDG Learning, Training and Practice (or **SDGs in Practice** for short) is a series of capacity-building and knowledge-learning training sessions focused on essential topics related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, held annually as a Special Event in the margins of the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The training sessions are facilitated by the New York Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

The SDG in Practice aims to:

- Facilitate the acquisition by a wide range of practitioners of knowledge and skills needed for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Foster networking opportunities, encouraging the sharing of experiences and collaboration among peers.
- Provide insights into practical actions, tools, and innovative solutions for SDG implementation.
- Showcase innovative and actionable solutions for overcoming obstacles to sustainable development by sharing insights from global reports, data, and successful case studies.
- Create a platform for dialogue between experts, policymakers, and practitioners, ensuring that national and local lessons could inform global strategies and vice versa.

## Topics

In 2024, the SDGs in Practice series included nine sessions on topics aligned with and complementing relevant sessions of HLPF, including topics relevant to key transitions outlined by the UN Development Group<sup>1</sup>, and the outcome of the 2023 SDG Summit<sup>2</sup>:

1. **Opening Segment - The Crucial Role of Training and Learning for Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (Organized by UNITAR and UN DESA) – Focused on the importance of capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration for advancing the SDGs, this session emphasized the need for innovative, inclusive educational approaches to make learning more accessible and impactful.
2. **Future of Education and Artificial Intelligence** (Organized by UNESCO-IESALC) – Focused on the transformative role of AI in education, particularly personalized learning,

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<sup>1</sup> Key transitions that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/six-transitions-investment-pathways-deliver-sdgs>

<sup>2</sup> <https://hlpf.un.org/sdg-summit>

this session addressed how AI can improve equity in education while highlighting ethical frameworks for AI use and capacity-building for educators.

3. **Partnership Building and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement** (Organized by UN DESA, The Partnering Initiative, and Partnerships2030) – Emphasized the importance of cross-sector partnerships in addressing complex SDG challenges. Participants learned practical skills in stakeholder mapping and communication, and through collaborative exercises, explored partnership models that leverage the strengths of governments, civil society, and the private sector.
4. **Driving the National Transformations We Need: Lessons from the Global Sustainable Development Report** (Organized by UN DESA, UNDCO, and UNDP) – This session focused on the systemic transformations necessary for achieving the SDGs, highlighting the integration of SDGs into national policies and governance frameworks. Participants explored examples of cross-sector cooperation to foster SDG progress.
5. **Climate Change, Biodiversity Loss, and Pollution** (Organized by UN DESA, UNEP, and UNDRR) – Addressed the triple planetary crisis, focusing on nature-based solutions and sustainable finance mechanisms to combat climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The session emphasized the role of regional and local governments in advancing SDG targets related to environmental sustainability.
6. **Jobs and Social Protection** (Organized by ILO) – Focused on creating decent jobs and expanding social protection systems in the context of economic transitions such as digitalization and just transition. The session introduced the UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection, which provides integrated policies and financing solutions to ensure that no one is left behind during these transitions.
7. **Data Collection and Analysis for SDG Monitoring** (Organized by UN Statistics Division and the Data Diplomacy Academy) – Focused on innovative data systems, emphasizing citizen participation in data collection to bridge gaps in official statistics. The importance of data diplomacy, particularly in the energy sector (SDG 7), was highlighted for fostering international cooperation and transparency in data usage.
8. **Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions** (Organized by UNODC and UNDP) – Centered on SDG 16, this session introduced tools like the **corruption risk management process**, which helps institutions identify and address corruption vulnerabilities. Examples from countries such as Kenya demonstrated how anti-corruption tools have improved institutional transparency and accountability, contributing to stronger, more effective governance.
9. **Harnessing Citizen-Generated Data for SDG and Voluntary National Review (VNR) Monitoring and Evaluation** (Organized by the Collaborative on Citizen Data, co-led by UN Statistics Division, World Bank, and UN Women) – Focused on the Copenhagen Framework on Citizen Data and the role of citizen data in supporting SDG monitoring and public policy. Participants learned about ethical data collection, validation, and tools to engage citizens in the data production process, enhancing decision-making inclusivity and transparency.

## Participation

The SDGs in Practice 2024 sessions attracted a large and diverse audience, both in-person and online, showcasing strong global interest in the topics. Participation numbers were as follows:

- **Opening Segment:** In-person attendees: 135; Online attendees: 864.
- **Session 2 (Future of Education and AI):** 497 attendees.

- **Session 3 (Partnership Building):** 565 attendees.
- **Session 4 (National Transformations):** 240 attendees.
- **Session 5 (Climate Change and Pollution):** 194 attendees.
- **Session 6 (Jobs and Social Protection):** 186 attendees.
- **Session 7 (Data Collection for SDG Monitoring):** 184 attendees.
- **Session 8 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions):** 102 attendees.

The sessions drew a total of **2,967 participants** across all events, reflecting broad interest from various sectors, including government, civil society, academia, and international organizations. These numbers highlight the global reach and impact of the training series, fostering meaningful engagement around the 2030 Agenda.

## **Key Outcomes and Outputs**

### **Enhanced Knowledge and Skills**

Participants gained deep, practical knowledge across a wide array of topics, including:

- **Data Systems:** Learning about innovative data collection tools, citizen-generated data integration, and the use of data diplomacy.
- **AI and Education:** Developing insights into AI's role in education and understanding its ethical implications.
- **Corruption Risk Management:** Acquiring skills to assess and mitigate corruption vulnerabilities within institutions.
- **Social Protection and Jobs:** Understanding inclusive approaches to digital and green transitions, focusing on social protection strategies that support workers during transitions.

### **Insightful Actions and Innovative Solutions**

The sessions showcased several forward-thinking solutions:

- **Citizen-Generated Data:** Leveraging citizens' participation in data production to fill data gaps for marginalized communities.
- **AI-Driven Education:** Exploring personalized learning through AI to enhance inclusivity and efficiency in education.
- **Corruption Prevention:** Implementing corruption risk management processes in institutions, exemplified by successful cases like Kenya's zero poaching results due to anti-corruption policies.
- **Nature-Based Solutions:** Using solutions like mangrove restoration and traditional fire management to address environmental crises.
- **Social Protection:** Developing holistic job creation strategies and formalizing decent work through the UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection.

### **Expanded Network and Collaboration**

The series fostered collaboration by bringing together participants from various sectors:

- **Cross-Sector Engagement:** Facilitating interactions between government officials, civil society organizations, academia, and international organizations.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships:** Encouraging the formation of partnerships to address issues like child nutrition and sustainable transitions in the labor market.
- **Data Sharing and Trust Building:** Promoting collaboration through platforms like the Collaborative on Citizen Data, where participants shared best practices for integrating citizen data into SDG monitoring and policy decisions.
- **International Cooperation:** Supporting global partnerships and knowledge-sharing, particularly in the energy sector, using platforms like the Enetrix for energy diplomacy and transparent data-sharing across countries.

This comprehensive set of learning enabled participants to connect, collaborate, and co-create sustainable development strategies, emphasizing collective responsibility and shared goals in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the "SDGs in Practice" series successfully enhanced participants' capacities, expanded their professional networks, provided them with practical tools and innovative solutions, and created a robust foundation for ongoing learning and collaboration. The outcomes and outputs from these sessions laid the groundwork for sustained action toward achieving the SDGs globally.