



International Organisation of Employers
Organisation Internationale des Employeurs
Organización Internacional de Empleadores
The Global Voice of Business

GUIDANCE PAPER

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS



THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND
ITS IMPACT ON BUSINESS



Background: from MDGs to SDGs

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) PROVIDED A FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL ACTION ON DEVELOPMENT FROM 2000 TO 2015

During the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, governments agreed to launch a UN-led process to create a set of universal goals that will enable countries to better target and monitor progress across all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental, and economic). Ahead of the MDG deadline, the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals has agreed a proposed set of **17 Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 era, the so called “SDGs”**. **The UN General Assembly will aim to adopt the post-2015 development agenda at its 70th session on 22-25 September 2015.**

As the final phase is approaching, there is an ongoing intergovernmental process to negotiate a final agreement on the SDGs and its **169 associated targets**. While there might be some last-minute revisions, no major changes are expected as the draft outcome represents a hard-won agreement of the UN member states and is a result of an unprecedented multi-stakeholder global dialogue that included the IOE. **This document will shape the “what” and the “how” the Development world will move into the future.**

The draft outcome is very different from the MDGs as, together with the traditional development issues of poverty, governance, peace and stability, it also recognizes the **goals of economic growth, employment, industrialization, innovation, sustainable consumption and production patterns** etc.

The recognition of economic growth and elements of an enabling business environment as goals is a big step forward as Development needs to be looked at in an integrated and holistic manner. If we keep out of poverty, create and sustain jobs, provide health and education, the resources need to be generated through public and private channels. Only successful and sustainable businesses can contribute to the development and prosperity of their nations and the global community.

Another difference between the SDGs and the MDGs is that **key issues of the ILO agenda have become integrated into the goal setting, especially in goal 8**. This will require the ILO Office to step up its services such as expert advice, policy solutions, knowledge, tools and resources to the ILO constituents to help them achieve the goals.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals:

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| Goal 1 | End poverty in all its forms everywhere |
| Goal 2 | End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture |
| Goal 3 | Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages |
| Goal 4 | Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all |
| Goal 5 | Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls |
| Goal 6 | Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all |
| Goal 7 | Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all |
| Goal 8 | Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all |
| Goal 9 | Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation |
| Goal 10 | Reduce inequality within and among countries |
| Goal 11 | Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable |
| Goal 12 | Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns |
| Goal 13 | Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts |
| Goal 14 | Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development |
| Goal 15 | Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss |
| Goal 16 | Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |
| Goal 17 | Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development |

The most relevant SDG targets for Business are:

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

4.4: By 2030, ensure that all youth and adults have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.2: Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors

8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises including through access to financial services

8.6: By 2020 substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment

8.b: By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

9.3: Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular

in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chain and markets

9.4: By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.6: Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

17.9: Enhance international support for implementing effective and target capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation

It is expected from all stakeholders, including business, to look into all goals and targets but after a first initial review, focus should be on those most relevant for the specific business and jurisdiction.

Business should bear in mind when identifying priorities and developing an action plan that transparency on steps and progress made in reporting

is expected. Business has now the opportunity to influence the national debate to ensure a “fit for purpose” implementation.

Where do we stand and what are the upcoming milestones in the post-2015 process?

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT HELD ON 13-16 JULY 2015 IN ADDIS ABABA WAS CRITICAL IN CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR FINANCING THE POST-2015 AGENDA. PARAGRAPH 16 IN THE **ACCORD** WHICH IS LINKED TO PROPOSED GOAL 8 IS THE MOST RELEVANT FOR BUSINESS.

The existing **draft** for the post-2015 agenda was discussed at the negotiating session at the end of July. The United Nations General Assembly will adopt the post-2015 development agenda on 22-25 September 2015.

The new goals and targets will come into effect on 1 January 2016 and will guide the decisions taken over the next fifteen years. All stakeholders will work to implement the Agenda within their own country and at the regional and global level.

Targets are defined as aspirational and global, with each government setting its own targets, guided by the level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators. The ILO is likely to support the integration of “decent work” into the final package of SDG indicators. The global indicator framework will be finalised by March 2016. An overview of the post-2015 process can be found [here](#).

Key messages for a better implementation of the SDGs

THE IOE HAS BEEN INFLUENCING THE DEBATES VIA THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT AND THROUGH THE GLOBAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE.

While supporting the development of the SDGs as they promote important objectives to eradicate poverty, improve quality of life and advance sustainability, the IOE participated in the process with the following key messages:

- New businesses opportunities and economic growth will be created by private enterprises. They will provide the jobs, incomes, purchasing power and livelihoods, allowing community integration and facilitating greater economic and social equity, and political stability.
- To tackle both poverty and human development, priority has to be given to providing the conditions for enterprises to make the investments and initiatives that will create innovative solutions and employment-enhanced, wealth creation.

- Development aid should also be used in a sustainable way to finance Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs). This will lead to both increasing the productive capacities of countries and alleviating poverty.
- Whilst there will be some common factors that stimulate growth, such as good governance, appropriate investment and robust infrastructure, the ingredients and pace for sustainable development will not be the same for all. Each country will chart its own path to contribute to sustainability and will be responsible for taking its own action to achieve it.

International organisations, national governments and businesses themselves must deliver a better and more reliable environment for doing business worldwide, which will build on business priorities of:

- Creating a stable regulatory environment, supported by sound fiscal and economic policies;
- Reviewing regulation affecting business to ensure it creates an enabling environment for doing business and has a pro-employment impact whilst also meeting its regulatory purpose;
- Reforming regulations to redress legal and administrative barriers to formalisation;
- Providing sound, open and transparent government, free from corruption and inefficiency, which strives to make investment and partnership opportunities accessible to all;
- Protecting property rights and the rule of law, ensuring efficient law enforcement systems;
- Embracing an inclusive and open society, with equal opportunities for all.

Importance of Employers' Organisations in the global partnership

GOVERNMENTS MUST WORK TOGETHER WITH BUSINESS, THROUGH THEIR REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS, AS FUNDAMENTAL PARTNERS IN ADDRESSING THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITY SOLUTIONS REQUIRED FOR ECONOMIES TO GROW.

Business must work closely with governments and financial institutions, through mechanisms including public-private partnerships, to secure the finance, investment know-how and resources essential to expand, create jobs and contribute to the growth of their economies.

While the goals are global, the targets will be set locally to allow countries to move forward. This

means that the policy dialogue at the national level will be intensified and representative organisations of business and employers need to be prepared to contribute and moreover, be a part of the accountability mechanism. This highlights the importance of reinforcing tailored technical cooperation for Employers' Organisations to strengthen their capacity and allow them to better engage.

How to best achieve the SDGs

IOE SUPPORTS THE AMBITIOUS APPROACH PRESENTED IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.



IOE strongly hopes that the final agenda approved in September will be realistic in terms of the implementation process. All the UN agencies need to be on the same page in order to intensify effective partnerships with the private sector as this will release tremendous potential which could be properly exploited to achieve the goals. Employers' Organisations must be involved upstream in the implementation of SDGs, as they are best placed to provide inputs based on labour market needs.

For further information on the IOE's work on the post-2015 Development Agenda, please contact Mr Pierre Vincensini, Adviser, at vincensini@ioe-emp.org

The IOE is the largest network of the private sector in the world.
With more than 150 members, it is the global voice of business for
labour and social policy matters at the international level.



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