

Advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

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By María Josefina Arce

The world is halfway through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, it is still a long way from the Goals adopted in 2015 by UN member states to achieve peace and prosperity for humanity and the planet, now and in the future.

Climate change, the COVID 19 pandemic, armed conflicts and the current unjust international financial architecture have jeopardized the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, which include eliminating poverty, hunger and inequalities and promoting access for all to health, education and clean water.

"The world is failing developing countries," said UN Secretary General António Guterres, speaking at the Summit of the Group of 77, held in recent days in Havana.

In fact, although a global review by the international body of how progress has been made showed that the lack of progress related to the SDGs is universal, it points out that it is the developing nations and the poorest and most vulnerable people who are bearing the brunt.

The numbers don't lie and paint a complex picture. The world has moved away from its goal of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Today, more than 820 million people suffer from hunger, and an estimated 45 million children under the age of 5 years suffer from wasting, the most severe form of malnutrition, which increases the risk of child mortality by up to 12 times.

The situation in terms of poverty is not encouraging either. The number of people still living in extreme poverty reaches 700 million, which represents 10% of the world's population.

The reality is that there are also millions of people on the planet in the 21st century who cannot read or write and who do not have access to drinking water and sanitation.

Faced with the challenge that this critical panorama represents for the future of humanity, the UN seeks to promote the 2030 Agenda. Hence, at its headquarters in New York City, the Summit dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goals is opening its doors.

The efforts of the international organization have had a strong backing at the Summit in the Cuban capital of the Group of 77, which Guterres described as important to promote the changes to be approved and to carry out reforms and mobilize resources in support of the global South.

And also as a prelude to the meeting, this has been an intense weekend in New York, where women's groups, youth, community activists and business leaders gathered to support the 2030 Agenda.

Advancing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires the commitment of all, of reaching a consensus on positions, of a collective action that, as Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel pointed out, privileges international solidarity and cooperation.

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