

Operationalizing the

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)



The COVID-19 pandemic and overlapping global crises, including geopolitical conflict and climate change, have made achievement of the SDGs more challenging.

While the scope of the challenges and opportunities to achieving the SDGs are global, U.S. stakeholders have many opportunities to take action to operationalize sustainable development:

The Role of U.S. Stakeholders



Localization of the SDGs and Indigenous Knowledge

The SDGs must be rooted in local buy-in and implementation

The **U.S. government** could create a Voluntary National Review (VNR) by encouraging more states and cities to conduct Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and synthesize already good work at the local level to scale to a VNR roll-up

Local officials could commit their support to the SDGs and use the framework to align local policies and initiatives



Education and Capacity Building

Educational institutions are powerfully positioned to operationalize sustainable development across society

Universities could develop Voluntary University Reviews (VURs), partner with governments and NGOs to advance the SDGs, and ensure that every student regardless of major is exposed to the challenges and opportunities in sustainable development

Governments and **education leaders** could engage the public to raise awareness of the SDGs, and **cities and school districts** could initiate and support locally relevant K-12 learning on the SDGs



Decarbonization

Decarbonization of energy systems is central to achievement of all SDGs

The **U.S. government** could identify strategies for carbon dioxide removal (CDR) that are place-based, community embraced, and environmentally and intergenerationally just; ramp up research, development, demonstration, and deployment for all forms of CDR; and enhance federal coordination relating to monitoring, reporting, and verification



Food Systems

Achieving the SDGs will be impossible without a holistic reform of the food system

Universities and the **private sector** could support training and workforce development at universities, community colleges, and tribal colleges to promote sustainable and equitable food systems



Science and Peace

Conflict undermines achievement of all SDGs

Governments, academia, NGOs, and international organizations could create peer groups for implementing and monitoring the SDGs, dealing with crisis situations, and facilitating exchange among justice actors, peace builders, and inequality experts



Financing to Achieve the SDGs

Realize tangible and intangible benefits from SDG-related investing

Public, private, and other organizations could create more blended finance options given the growing demand for positive ESG (environmental, social, and governance) investments where social benefits are significant and measurable

READ THE FULL REPORT

including chapters on Science, Technology, and Innovation for the SDGs and Urbanization

www.nationalacademies.org/operationalizing-SDGS

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