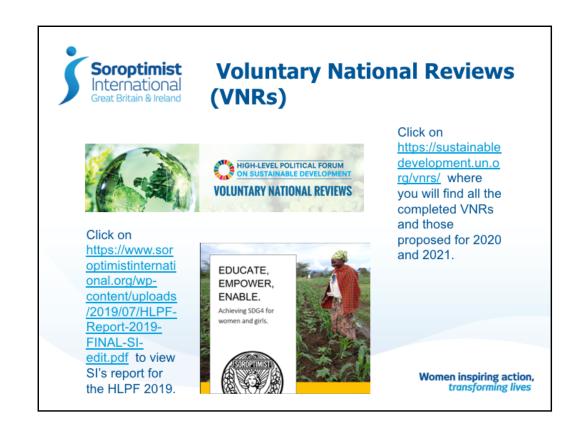
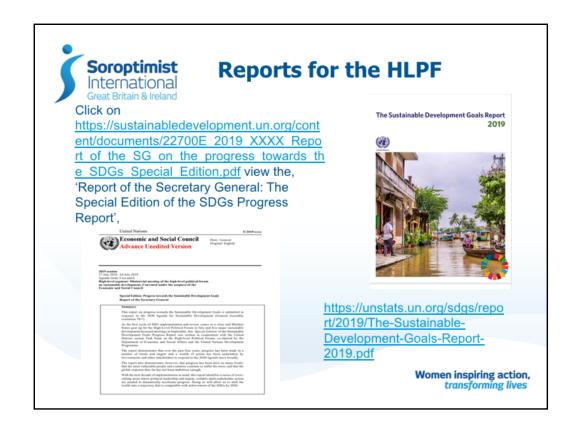


2020 will see the 5th anniversary of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. But how far have we progressed?



The High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in conjunction with the General assembly, Economic and Social Council and other relevant bodies.

A central feature of the HLPF are the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) that are undertaken by both developed and developing countries to report on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Two key reports have been written to shed light on the progress the world is making to achieve the SDGs and to highlight the areas that need our most urgent attention.



Progress to date

- Extreme poverty has declined considerably;
- The under-5 mortality rate fell by 49 per cent between 2000 and 2017; immunizations have saved millions of lives;
- The vast majority of the world's population now has access to electricity;
- Countries are taking concrete actions to protect our planet: marine protected areas have doubled since 2010;
- · Countries are working concertedly to address illegal fishing;
- 186 parties have ratified the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Women inspiring action, transforming lives

The reports demonstrate that progress is being made in some critical areas. However, while advances have been made in some areas, monumental challenges still remain. The most urgent area for action will come as no surprise to most of us, namely, climate change.



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

"The natural environment is deteriorating at an alarming rate: sea levels are rising; ocean acidification is accelerating; the last four years have been the warmest on record; one million plant and animal species are at risk of extinction, and land degradation continues unchecked."

"The coming years will be a vital period to save the planet and to achieve sustainable, inclusive human development."

Women inspiring action, transforming lives

If we do not cut record-high greenhouse gas emissions now, global warming is projected to reach 1.5 degrees in the coming decades. As we are already seeing, the compounded effects will be catastrophic and irreversible; increasing ocean acidification, coastal erosion, extreme weather conditions, the frequency and severity of natural disasters, of vital species and the collapse of the ecosystems.'

These effects, which will render many parts of the globe uninhabitable, will affect the poor the most. They will put food production at risk, leading to widespread food shortages and hunger and will potentially displace up to 140 million people by 2050. The clock for taking decisive actions on climate change is ticking.'



The other defining issue of our time is increasing inequality among and within countries. Poverty, hunger and disease continue to be concentrated in the poorest and most vulnerable groups of people and countries.

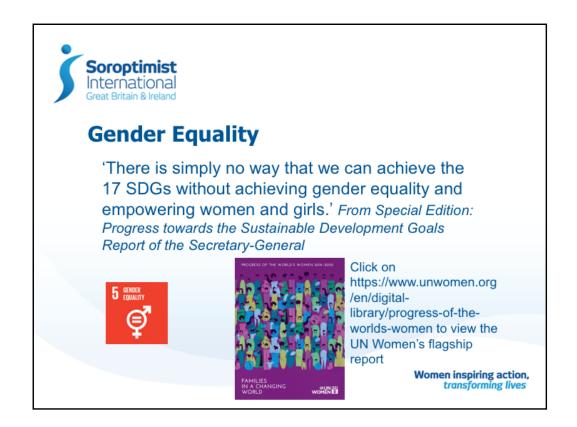


Some facts and figures:

- The world is not on track to end poverty by 2030;
- Millions more are living in hunger: 821 million were undernourished in 2017 up from 784 million in 2015;
- 617 million children and adolescents lack minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics;
- 750 million adults still remain illiterate; two thirds of them are women;
- At least 200 million girls and women have been subjected to Female Genital Mutilation;
- 785 million people remain without even basic drinking water services.

Women inspiring action, transforming lives

Over 90 per cent of maternal deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. People living in fragile States are twice as likely to lack basic sanitation, and about four times as likely to lack basic drinking water services. Women and girls perform a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic work and lack autonomy in decision-making.



In addition to these two reports on the SDGs, UN Women has recently produced its flagship report, which demonstrates how women and girls are faring across the world, and what it will take to achieve the SDGs.

As we know, gender equality is a right. Fulfilling this right is the best chance we have in meeting some of the most pressing challenges of our time.

Women are not only more affected by these problems, but also possess ideas and leadership to solve them.



Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals. In order to deliver on SDG 5 (gender equality), work needs to be carried out across all 17 SDGs.

However, we are one organisation covering many different areas each with their own issues. Perhaps we need to focus on the SDGs relevant to our own areas in order to deliver on SDG 5 thus ensuring no-one is left behind.