



Students as invaluable participants to achieve the **SDG's**

University Global Coalition
Students Action Toolkit

February, 2021



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Presentation

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), unanimously approved by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, constitute the most ambitious agreement humanity has ever reached to promote sustainable development across the world.

The SDGs are the most comprehensive roadmap for addressing the world's most urgent challenges, such as eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition; the protection of the planet through sustainable production and consumption; the fight against climate change; and the preservation of the biodiversity in marine and terrestrial ecosystems. All of these are based on more just and inclusive societies, with solid institutions, with full equality between men and women, and through local, national, and international alliances.

Persisting in achieving the SDGs requires new and innovative ideas and solutions to the complex problems and challenges posed by their implementation. The SDGs will help to respond to the demands of the future that we are designing today, to future trends that may be an opportunity for change, the way to move towards a new development model.

To achieve this change, collaboration between governments, private sector, civil society organizations and, especially, universities and research centers is essential to carry out the actions that sustainable development demands.

Universities are obliged to produce the necessary human talent and knowledge to find new solutions to local, national, and international challenges that achieving the SDGs means. Universities must create and develop the capacities and competencies that the world and society need and will need in the future. Additionally, universities must establish new models of higher education for a sustainable future; therefore, we, the members of the University Global Coalition, are committed to sustainable development in support of the SDGs, both locally and globally, through our missions of education, research and service.

The University Global Coalition believes that universities have not only the opportunity, but the obligation, to do everything in their power to educate and inspire students to play an active role in addressing the most pressing challenges faced by the world today. Therefore, the 17 SDGs and their 169 targets present an opportunity to generate new ideas that can lead to new solutions and collaborations with other organizations to create awareness, support and even lead local and global efforts.²

² <https://universityglobalcoalition.org/about/>

Without the participation of our students, the efforts and contributions of our institutions in favor of sustainable development will be incomplete.

The sustainable development goals make it clear that global engagement in higher education is not just desirable but necessary.

The world needs new knowledge, new ideas and new approaches to solving complex problems.

(University Global Coalition website).

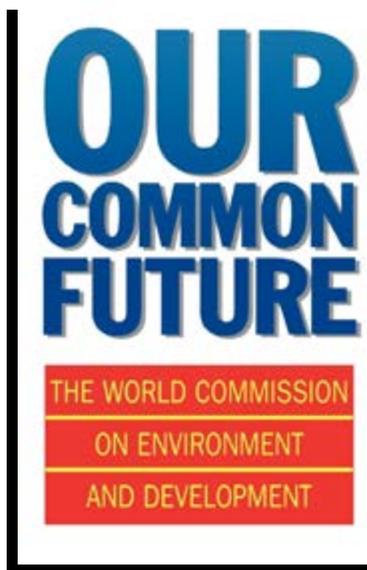
³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=33229>



Chapter 1

“SDGS: TOWARDS A NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA”

In 1987, The World Commission on Environment and Development published its famous report “Our Common Future” where the concept of “sustainable development” was defined for the first time as follows:



“Make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.”

The concept of sustainable development was universally accepted through the Rio Declaration at the Earth Summit that was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. In the Declaration, the concept of each country’s sovereignty over their own natural resources was reaffirmed while guaranteeing, at the same time, their preservation for future generations.

Since then, the notion of sustainable development has been used in numerous international conferences and summits, and was taken up by the international community through the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the Summit held in New York in 2000. The MDGs included only eight specific development goals focused mainly on developing countries.



In 2015, after three years of negotiation among the 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly, the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 specific targets were unanimously approved. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs seek to promote the sustainable development of all countries, not just developing countries. The Agenda aims to achieve sustainable development in all its economic, social and environmental dimensions in favor of all people, leaving no one behind.

Both the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs focus on the well-being of people, the protection of the planet, the search for prosperity for all in an environment of peace, and with alliances between all key actors in the promotion of their implementation: governments, the private sector, community and union organizations, civil society organizations, and universities and research centers.

It is essential to measure the progress made by the international community, regions, countries, states, municipalities, cities and rural communities towards the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Because of this, in 2016, the UN General Assembly approved 231 indicators so that each country can measure their own progress.

Since then, several international and regional organizations, many countries, and many universities have designed indicators to measure their own progress on the implementation of the SDGs and their 169 targets. At the international level, the United Nations established the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) where many countries, on a voluntary basis, annually present reports on their national progress in the implementation of the SDGs. The annual FPAN meetings are open to the participation of international governmental organizations, civil society organizations, representatives of the private sector, as well as universities and research centers.



In addition to countries, their states or provinces, their cities and municipalities, private sector organizations, civil society organizations and universities can make their own plans and programs to advance the implementation of the SDGs in their own activities. They can also measure their own progress and associate with other actors to move forward collectively in an endeavor that concerns all of us and not just our governments.

To promote the fastest possible progress in the implementation of the SDGs by 2030, in September 2019, the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, urged all countries to redouble their efforts to achieve the SDGs and their Targets by 2030.



"we can only get there together"

"The Sustainable Development Goals are the world's action plan for a fair globalization and a better future for all. We have ten years to bring that vision to life, and we can only get there together. That is why we have launched a Decade of action to deliver the Goals. To overcome poverty and inequality. To combat the climate crisis and advance gender equality. To build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, free of discrimination and hate, in harmony with nature. Join us. Step up. Seize the moment. And let's work together to meet the Goals, move our world forward and leave no one behind".

⁴ Secretary General of the United Nations, António Guterres, on the Decade of Action to deliver the Global Goals. <https://youtu.be/vc8-7VncIbA>



Chapter 2

UGC COMMITMENTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SDGS

Achieving the implementation of the SDGs by 2030 requires an effort by all governments and societies' stakeholders, including schools at all levels, universities, and research and professional training centers. All these institutions have a key role in **SDG 4 Quality Education**, which refers to the importance of ensuring inclusive and high-quality education while promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Of particular interest, **target 4.7** emphasizes that by 2030, “ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”.

To contribute to the achievement of SDG 4, universities are obliged to make explicit their commitment to sustainable development as higher education institutions, and to mobilize their resources, especially the talent of their professors and researchers, and inspire their students to develop viable and sustainable solutions to achieve the implementation of the SDGs at local, state, national, regional, and international levels.

In May 2019, a group of universities and research centers met in Bellagio, Italy, to discuss how universities can strengthen their individual commitments with a global commitment in support of the SDGs. As a result, they agreed that universities have an obligation to educate and inspire their students to understand the most urgent problems faced by the world; produce new ideas that can lead to new and innovative solutions; collaborate with other organizations to raise awareness on those issues; and to support, and lead, local and global efforts on this matter.

They defined the Mission of the **University Global Coalition** as *“A collaborative platform of globally engaged universities and higher education associations working in partnership with the United Nations and others to build a more sustainable future for all.”*

The participating universities adopted the **Declaration on University Global Engagement**, where they committed to fulfill six concrete commitments that highlight the fundamental role of students in the successful implementation of the SDGs in their operation:

- 1. Increase students' understanding** of the most pressing challenges facing the world today as articulated in the SDGs and inspire students to play an active role in driving change and finding new solutions.
- 2. Develop the global competence and leadership skills students** need to effectively collaborate across cultural and national boundaries and across disciplines and sectors in creating a more sustainable future.
- 3. Engage in actionable research, knowledge sharing and innovation** in collaboration with other local and international organizations in pursuit of novel approaches to achieving the SDGs.
- 4. Engage with private and public actors.**
- 5. Recognize the impact** that our own operations have on important sustainable development issues.
- 6. Publicly communicate our progress** and be accountable for our outcomes.

The University Global Coalition currently has 137 members, drawn from all geographic regions of the world. Our commitment to the SDGs is **permanent** and we will continue to carry out all the activities in their power to promote the achievement of the SDGs around the world, **leaving no one behind**, and educating our students to become leaders in the identification of solutions to the challenges posed by sustainable development.

Chapter 3

SHARE YOUR CONCERNS

Today, more than half of the world's population is under 30 years old. Young people are more connected with each other, many of them are experts in technology and have a sense of community that makes them contribute to the development of their communities by proposing innovative solutions. They are also agents of change, as they mobilize for the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to improve the lives of people and the health of the planet (UN).

Youth as invaluable participants of our future

Young people, especially students, play a fundamental role in the implementation of the SDGs. According to the UN website “Youth and the SDGs”, they have the following characteristics:

- **Critical thinkers:** Young people have the ability to identify and challenge existing power structures and obstacles to change, and to expose contradictions and prejudices.
- **Agents of change:** Young people also have the power to act and mobilize communities, supported by social networks and access to information.
- **Innovators:** Young people have the ability to develop new perspectives and, if they have more access to information and knowledge, they develop competencies that help them better understand the problems facing the world and the challenges they face, so they can provide new ideas and alternative solutions.
- **Communicators:** Thanks to the connectivity that gives them access to social networks, they have developed networks to disseminate information and communicate it to their peers and communities locally, as well as across countries and regions.
- **Leaders:** When young people are empowered with the knowledge of their rights, and equipped with leadership skills, they can manage change in their communities and in their countries. More and more young leaders address the issues of the twenty-first century.

“Investing in youth is also an investment in our future. Youth can be a positive force for development when the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive are given. Likewise, young people can create a dynamic force of political change and social transformation when they are included in decision-making processes.”

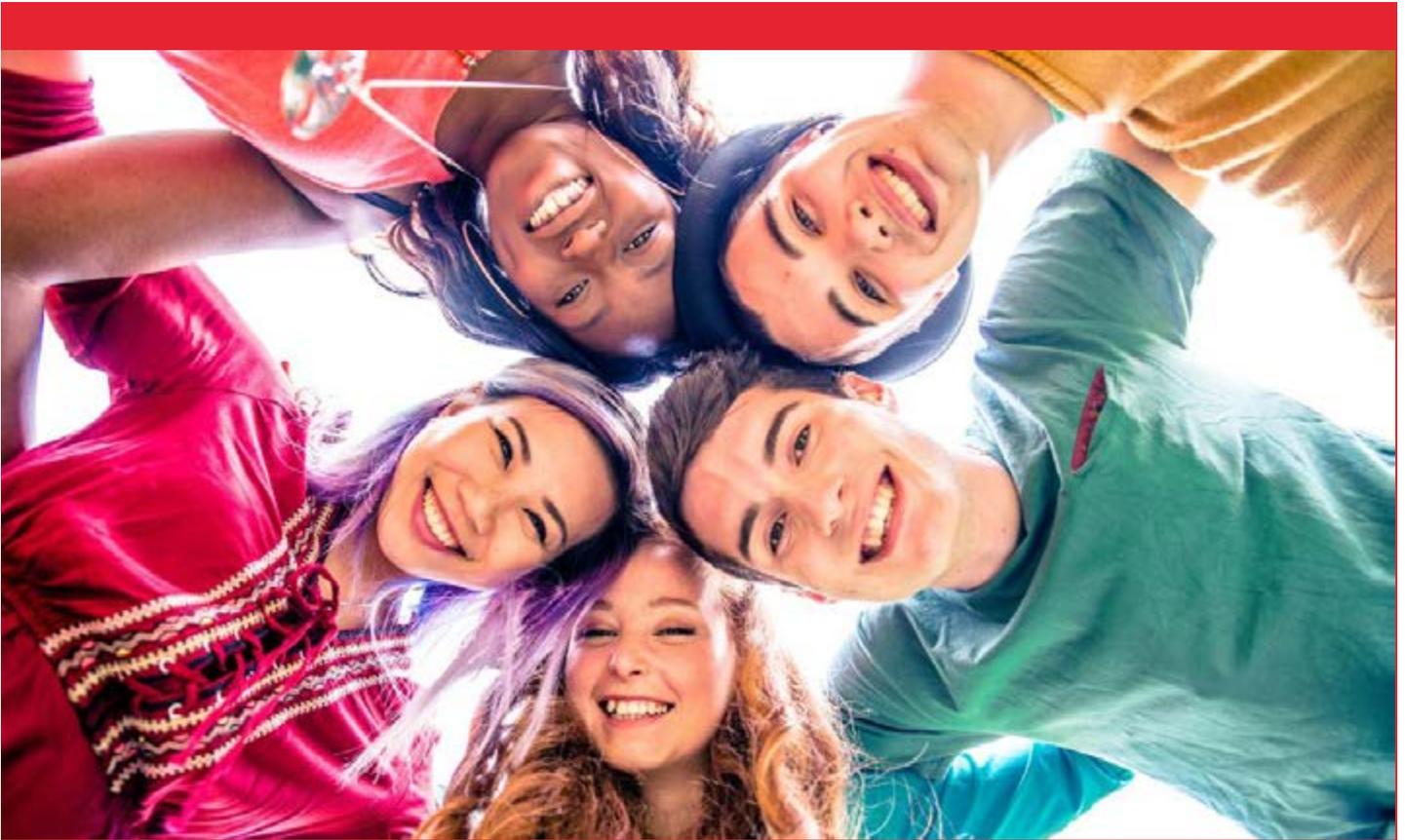
I am a young person. I face different kinds of issues

In each era there are different social needs and problems to be solved that depend on the global and local situation in different areas, such as social, cultural, economic and environmental issues. Nearly ten years before we reach the date of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, there are still many challenges to be solved, many of them impact and concern this generation that is and will be the largest on the planet.

Today the main problems faced by young people are:

- **Environment:** They consider that climate change is the main problem affecting the world right now. They worry about being vulnerable to natural disasters.
- **Conflicts, wars, and violence:** They are alarmed by living in a constant state of insecurity and violence.
- **Inequality:** They are affected by inequality within and between countries, as well as between people and their rights, or lack thereof.
- **Poverty:** They face living in extreme poverty and not having access to social protection.
- **Corruption:** They consider that insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice continue to pose a serious threat to sustainable development.
- **Food security:** They are concerned that they are at constant risk of severe hunger or no access to food.
- **Lack of access to education:** They are affected by not having basic knowledge, access to university, or formal education that allows them to develop the necessary skills, particularly technical and professional ones, to access employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.
- **Lack of transparency and political freedom:** They consider that not having strong institutions limits public access to information and the protection of fundamental freedoms.
- **Lack of access to a decent job:** They live a very competitive and limited job reality. They believe that forced labor, exploitation and slavery must be eradicated.

To understand what affects young people today, it is necessary to consider the values, cultural practices, interests, needs, as well as their way of socializing, their relationships, and their vision regarding the present and future. **Young people must participate in the political decisions of their countries and propose solutions to current problems, as well as envision the possible challenges that they will face in a few years.**



*Investing in youth
is also an investment
in our future...*

*Learn, commit,
sign and act..*



Chapter 4

“STUDENT ACTION TOOLKIT”: STUDENTS’ ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE SDGs

a) Learn, commit, sign and act!

- **Learn.** Get to know in detail the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets.
- **Commit with the SDGs, sign a Commitment letter.** Sign the commitment with the SDGs and become an agent of change in your community. You can sign this commitment individually or with a group of friends, classmates, student group/association and make sure that everyone signs the commitment. Everybody should get involved! Share your commitment in social media and don't forget to register it on the UGC's website.
- **Take action.** Make sure that all your activities and actions in your house, university and community are aligned with the SDGs and put them into action. Follow the suggested actions in this **Student Action Toolkit**, which include some recommendations that you can do from your house or that you can do with your classmates at your university. With these actions, you are contributing to the realization of the SDGs by 2030.

b) Suggested actions

Perhaps, you can think that complying with the SDGs during this Decade of Action is very complicated and that it is an exclusive task of governments; the reality is that we can all carry out concrete actions that add to the 17 objectives and their goals. In particular, young people and students have a wide range of possibilities to contribute to the SDGs.

Because of this, we've compiled a few of the many things you can do to make an impact in your home or community. As a student committed to the SDGs, you can invite your classmates, and encourage your university to become an institution highly committed to the SDGs. All these actions are based on several UN documents, which are listed at the Reference section of this Toolkit.

The actions listed here are very general in nature, bearing in mind the different social and economic contexts of universities that belong to the UGC. You can identify additional specific actions that better apply to your university and address your community's needs.

Before you take action, we encourage you to think intentionally about the potential impacts and consequences of the action(s) you're considering, especially given the unique circumstances of the physical and digital environments you're a part of. And we remind you to always prioritize your safety and well-being.

Make sure that all your activities and actions at your home, university and community have a sustainable focus. Follow the action guide in this Student Action Toolkit, which includes some recommendations that you can do from the comfort of your home or you can do with your classmates at school. With these actions, you do your part to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

• **How can I change my individual actions in my everyday life, home, and community?**

- 1.** At birthday parties or other celebrations, offer the possibility of substituting gifts for donations to a charity organization or one that directly works with one/several SDGs: reduction of poverty and hunger, fight against climate change, gender equality, conservation of ecosystems, etc. Support certified local organizations.
- 2.** Buy local products. These products support the sustainable trade system that provides workers with a fair pay, support local businesses, create local jobs, help prevent trucks from traveling long distances, help mitigate climate change, among other actions.
- 3.** Donate non-perishable food to charity organizations. Support local food assistance associations, food assistance programs provide more than 20 times more food than food banks, food pantries and community kitchens.
- 4.** Help stock your local food pantry. Fill a box with non-perishable foods and donate it to a local food bank.
- 5.** Sponsor a child so they can have access to food, education and healthcare.
- 6.** Provide food to schools in your country and / or community. When lunch is provided, students are more likely to come to and stay in school.
- 7.** Donate the clothes that you no longer use and are in good condition to collection centers.

8. Find out about common illnesses in your community and what you can do to help.
9. HIV / AIDS has not disappeared. Protect yourself, get tested.
10. Don't smoke.
11. Sleep enough.
12. Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of water. This helps to improve your health and your academic performance.
13. Make time to engage in activities that are meaningful for yourself and your friends, such as hobbies, extracurricular activities, learn another language, organize book clubs, play a sport, keep your mind active.
14. Share with your family and friends educational and / or cultural programs on the SDGs such as documentaries, news articles, and more.
15. In many countries, girls are taken out of school for early marriages, teen pregnancy and / or to care for family members. Start conversations that allow you to openly discuss these situations and how you could support girls' education.
16. If you are a woman, be aware of your rights and defend them. Motivate other women to work for these rights.
17. Be aware of the damaging impact of gender stereotyping and portraying women as inferior, less intelligent, or less competent compared to male counterparts. Find a way to address this when you see it happening.
18. Gender equality starts at home, promote it with your family, friends, and university.
19. Express your support for the principle of equal pay for equal work.
20. Support organizations that bring water to areas in need.



- 21.** Donate and support organizations whose activities have a direct impact on any SDG and their goals.
- 22.** Close the tap when you brush your teeth, and in the shower while soaping yourself. Make efficient use of water.
- 23.** Fix any household leaks. A tap leak can waste more than 11,000 liters a year. Share information with the people you live with about the impacts of not taking care of water.
- 24.** Never flush paints, chemicals, medicines, and other toxic substances down the toilet. They pollute lakes and rivers, and cause health problems for marine and human beings.
- 25.** Preserve, preserve, preserve. Do not throw away the leftover ice cubes from a drink or water that you no longer drank. Instead, place them on your houseplants.
- 26.** Take your car to washing centers that recycle water.
- 27.** Take short showers. Bathtubs need more liters of water than a 5-10-minute shower. Challenge yourself to shower with two songs that are each 3-4 minutes long.
- 28.** Turn off the lights in empty rooms. By turning off the lights, even a few seconds, you save more energy.
- 29.** Turn off and unplug the TV, computer and other devices when you are not using them and especially when you go on vacation. It's easiest to do this if you plug devices into a single surge protector, that way you can just unplug the surge protector!
- 30.** Support the efficient design of homes that encompass energy-efficient lighting, appliances, and construction. Use energy-efficient-lights and electrical products and learn about green programs.
- 31.** Support international campaigns to end modern slavery, forced labor, human-trafficking, and forced marriages.
- 32.** Encourage healthier cities. Promote the use of green infrastructure in your home, community and university. These help to mitigate climate change, improve air quality and visually lift spaces.
- 33.** Learn to respect all people, even if they think or act differently than you. people Stop discrimination and stereotypes. Get informed.



- 34.** Become aware of and value different ethnicities, cultures, and beliefs in your country to achieve an inclusive society. Once a month, spend some time with a person different from you or do an activity that expands your knowledge such as watching a documentary, reading a book, engaging with artwork, etc. about cultures, beliefs, and practices you're not familiar with.
- 35.** Defend and support the development of sports and recreational spaces. Participate in activities or neighborhood meetings and comment on the importance of having sustainable spaces, neighborhoods, and communities.
- 36.** Raise awareness on the carbon footprint of your city and the ways to improve it.
- 37.** Promote a responsible and conscious consumption in all your purchases and actions. Avoid consumerism, buy what you need only when you need it.
- 38.** Learn what to do in case of the most common natural disaster in your area. Be prepared.
- 39.** Become aware of the ways to stop global warming and contribute by taking action in your home, school, locality.
- 40.** Prevent and reduce pollution:
 - a)** Reduce the consumption of single-use plastics.
 - b)** Bring your own bag to the supermarket. Avoid plastic bags and carry your own reusable bags.
 - c)** Buy products that have no or minimal plastic packaging.
 - d)** Use a reusable water bottle and coffee cup.
- 41.** Do not buy wild, exotic and / or endangered species.
- 42.** Inform about and limit your carbon footprint to reduce global warming, which affects ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 43.** Practice responsible and non-polluting recreational activities. When you go on a vacation, choose destinations that promote sustainable tourism.
- 44.** Work regularly as a volunteer with community groups to remove trash from beaches, forests, parks, and any ecosystem near your community.

45. Do not buy jewelry and other items made of coral, turtle shells or other marine living things, as well as other animal products. Never buy products derived from threatened or endangered species.
46. Use fewer napkins. Take only the ones you need. Another way to contribute is to bring your own reusable cloth napkins and/nor make one from an old t-shirt or any other cloth items that you no longer use.
47. Reduce your meat consumption. The production and distribution of meat has a great impact on greenhouse gas emissions.
48. Consume seasonal products. They taste better and are cheaper and more environmentally friendly.
49. Stop violence against women. If you witness any type of violence against women, report it.
50. Volunteer in outreach programs and local organizations against violence.
51. Do not bribe for any reason. Do not encourage corruption.
52. Participate in the decision-making processes of your country in an informed manner, such as participating in elections, local/community governance, etc.
53. Include foreign and exchange students. Invite them to activities at your university and in your community. Help them have a good experience in your community.
54. Encourage social responsibility of companies and enterprises in projects related to the sustainable development of your locality and of all countries.
55. Put the SDGs into action! Use the [SDGs in Action app](#) to gather news about your favorite goals, learn about actions you can take to make an impact, and create/share your own events with your friends!
56. 'ActNow' with the United Nations' Campaign. Engage in 10 simple actions to make a sustainable impact with the [ActNow app](#)! Track your daily habits and impact with the ActNow app and invite your friends to #ActNow.
57. Participate in the conversation and attend a program/event! Follow us at <https://universityglobalcoalition.org/events-and-media/> and engage with us by using the corresponding hashtags. Join us for exciting programs and events! Engage with us during programs and events hosted by institutions all around the world regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

• What can I do as a student and to engage other classmates and students?

- 58. Organize with other classmates/students and form a student group to teach skills or specialized courses in your local community center (IT, writing resumes, preparing for job interviews, etc.) or in elementary schools.
- 59. Promote discussions regarding any of the SDGs and start the conversation in your career or with faculty about their importance in our everyday life.
- 60. Organize sessions with students from different careers to disseminate how they can, from different faculties and with different profiles, implement the SDGs.
- 61. Use non-polluting transport: use your bicycle, roller-skates, skateboard/long-board, public-transit, or walk. Promote non-polluting and sustainable mobility.
- 62. Donate books to libraries or public schools that need them.
- 63. Support charities and other organizations that work to bring education programs to the poorest areas around the world. Organize with other students as a team to have a broader positive impact.
- 64. Increase gender representation among student and leadership groups.
- 65. Support your female classmates and teachers to strengthen their confidence and develop their personal and professional careers.
- 66. Support gender equality, individually or with the help of peers. Join groups/ student associations that support the education of girls, especially those who live in vulnerable conditions. It is important to empower women and girls.
- 67. Join a student group, club, or organization that works with the SDGs. Connect with fellow students to engage in collective action. Share the SDGs with your friends, use them as a resource to develop solutions to pressing challenges at your institution, and use the SDGs as a way to identify complex challenges.
- 68. Speak up against any type of discrimination in your university. All people are equal regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation, social origin, and/or physical ability. If you see or know something related, share what occurred with a trusted faculty or staff member.
- 69. Report any form of harassment or discrimination. If you see harassment, bullying messages, videos or images that assault and affect someone, report those involved to the competent authorities of your university. Be an active witness.

- 70.** Visit neighborhoods, suburbs, and any other area in need around your community. Become aware and see how, from your university, you can support them through school projects to find sustainable local solutions. Speak with the office, department or students' association at your institution that focuses on community relationships and local engagement.
- 71.** Organize campaigns within your university to collect electronic devices, books and other school supplies. Do not throw them away, donate them, or ensure they're appropriately recycled or disposed of as electronic waste. It is inevitable for electronic devices to be replaced at some point, but many times they are in good condition and can be reused.
- 72.** Recycle used paper and avoid using paper as much as possible. Take advantage of this digital era; Consult e-books, use the databases or digital libraries of your university. Avoid printing what you don't need.
- 73.** Create your own compost and promote it at your university. It favors biodiversity, enriches the soil, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers. Contact the sustainability specialized area at your university and make this proposal.
- 74.** Organize with your classmates the challenge of #OneDayWithoutMeat.
- 75.** It doesn't matter your degree or area of study. Become a conscientious and informed citizen. Defend your convictions peacefully and promote the SDGs in your daily activities.
- 76.** Participate in the election processes in your country and invite your colleagues to participate. Be a responsible citizen and exercise an informed vote. If you need more information, ask your teachers about the processes.
- 77.** Countries need technological experts: participate in projects that require technological skills in your country and community, such as hackathons, projects, and research, etc. Look for local proposals and / or support global initiatives, for example <https://unstats.un.org/bigdata/events/2020/ais-hackathon>.
- 78.** If you have to do a homework assignment or assessment, or to write a research project or thesis for any of your subjects, integrate the SDGs into its development. Know the SDGs carefully and consider their specific targets.
- 79.** Become a citizen scientist. Download the Earth Challenge app and contribute data points that assess air quality, train artificial intelligence to identify insects, track plastic pollution, and evaluate food security globally. Citizen Science is an incredible way to scale individual behavior for collective impact. Consult the Earth Challenge Higher Education Toolkit for more ideas to make an impact.

- 80.** Take a class. Ask your academic advisor or a professor if there are classes or academic programs that explore the SDGs. Ask if it's possible for SDG-focused courses to count as electives for your program(s) of study if they're not part of your required courses.
- 81.** Attend a SDG's program or event. Explore your institution's activities/events calendar, follow institution accounts on social media, and get connected to new opportunities for engagement.
- 82.** Contact the student government. Engage with your elected student body leaders. Ask them how they're incorporating the UN's SDGs into their operation and how the SDGs are influencing the actions they're taking on behalf of the student body. Ask if there are opportunities for you to share your ideas and to get involved in helping make your ideas reality.
- 83.** Bring the SDGs to your classes. Incorporate the UN's SDGs into the classes you're already taking by using them as a tool to frame and enhance dialogue during conversations, include them in class projects/assignments, and use them as a guide to help understand global challenges.
- 84.** Watch a film or documentary. Many institutions have contracts with streaming services like Kanopy that allow students to watch films and documentaries for free. Contact your institution's library and ask about streaming services and resources for digital learning.
- 85.** Engage your sustainability office. Contact your office of sustainability or facilities department and ask them how they're incorporating the UN's SDGs into campus operations. Ask them about opportunities for additional engagement and involvement campus groups, clubs, organizations, programs, events, internships, jobs/work study opportunities, and initiatives that you could get involved in.



- 86.** Engage faculty & staff. Chat with your professors and ask them how they're incorporating the UN's SDGs into their classes and research. Ask them if they would be willing to talk to their dean, provost, or Faculty Senate about the importance of incorporating the SDGs into academics. Chat with staff members and ask them how they're incorporating the UN's SDGs into their day-to-day operations. Ask them if they would be willing to talk to their supervisor or Staff Senate about the importance of incorporating the SDGs into the operation of the institution.
- 87.** Engage alumni. Contact your institution's alumni association and ask them how they're involving alumni in the actualization of the UN SDGs at your institution. For example, has your institution divested its endowment from direct and indirect exposure to fossil fuels?

• **What should I request and expect from my university?**

- 88.** Request that the university organize events and activities such as seminars, congresses, debates, whose central themes are the SDGs. Publicize the events and participate in them. Invite other students. Express yourself if there is no gender parity in the speakers or experts. Begins in your classes and tries to implement it in all areas and activities of your university; Speak with the relevant offices/ departments.
- 89.** Apply for, support and promote gender equality at your university. There are several ways to do it:
- a)** Request discussions regarding gender equality. Ask that your university's courses and activities have a gender perspective;
 - b)** Ask that your university have gender equality in management positions;
 - c)** Promote your school granting more scholarships to women and girls;
 - d)** Demand that gender equality be integrated into training and education in order to support young people in choosing a job that allows them to advance in their future, regardless of their gender.
- 90.** Check your university's sustainability report and, if there is none, request its preparation. Investigate which area is responsible for carrying it out.
- 91.** Request that the job boards of your university be linked to companies that promote fair and sustainable labor and environmental practices.
- 92.** Request that your university sign the Declaration of Climate Emergency and commit to being carbon neutral.

- 93.** Encouraging the institution to join the UGC, the UN Global Compact, and to make public commitments to the SDGs. <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/>
- 94.** Ask that your university include a vegetarian & vegan menu in the dining rooms and that they do not use disposable plates, glasses, cutlery or packaging.
- 95.** Request that your university's plan to substantially reduce the generation of waste through source prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse. If there is no plan, find out who to talk with to get one developed.
- 96.** Ask your university to include courses focused on:
- a)** global citizenship education;
 - b)** education for sustainable development (including education on climate change), and
 - c)** education with a gender perspective.
- 97.** Have your school or community plant trees every year. Trees generate oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide. Talk to students, join teams and talk with the authorities of your institution to have a green campus.
- 98.** Encourage schools to apply teamwork outside the classroom, in local businesses and communities. It generates a positive local impact. This can be done through academic activities, social service, student groups, or through the office dedicated to community and local government relations.
- 99.** Demand that the events organized by your university be zero emissions and zero waste. Work on making your institution more sustainable every day.
- 100.** Request that your school have free drinking water for everyone.
- 101.** Ask senior leaders to act. Contact your President, Provost, Board of Trustees, Board of Visitors and ask them how they're incorporating the UN's SDGs as part of the strategic operation of your institution. Ask them if they're using the UN's SDGs as part of strategic and master planning for the institution and if the SDGs are used in evaluating the use of your institution's resources like research and investments.
- 102.** "Take over" your institution's social media. Work with the staff who manage your institution's social media content to create UN SDG-focused social media posts that highlight and explain the SDGs, showcase your institution's achievements related to the SDGs, and encourage the campus community to get involved.

103. Encourage your institution to become an Ecosia Campus. Ecosia is the search engine that plants trees. By using Ecosia, your institution can plant trees and help offset its carbon emissions, all for free.

104. Encourage your institution to become a UCapture campus. UCapture helps you offset your carbon impact. By using UCapture, your institution can contribute carbon offsets to impactful projects across the globe while helping to offset its carbon emissions, all for free.



e) #SustainableDevelopment Commitment

Commitment Letter

As a student, I am committed to working for the implementation of the SDGs through individual or group actions that I can carry out in my home, community or at my university.

I am aware that local actions can have a global impact and for this reason:

- I recognize the importance of knowing each of the 17 SDGs and their targets.
- I consider it important that my university integrates the SDGs in its academic plans and in all curricular and extracurricular activities.
- I am aware of the importance of supporting work in favor of gender equality. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets.

My personal commitment(s) to the SDGs is(are): (Write specific actions)



I reaffirm my unwavering commitment to achieving this Agenda and utilizing it to the full to transform our world for the better by 2030.

Name: _____

University: _____

Please take a photo of your completed and signed **#CommitmentLetter** and share it in the UGC Profile with **#SustainableDevelopmentCommitment #UGC**

Chapter 5

REFERENCES

There are many more useful ideas and resources than the ones contained in this guide. You can learn more about these topics in the following United Nations and other international agencies websites:

On Young issues:

- Hwang, S., & Kim, J. (n.d.). A Handbook for Youth. United Nations and Sustainable Development Goals. ESCAP.
- UN. (n.d.). La juventud y los ODS. Retrieved from Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/la-juventud/>
- World Economic Forum (2019). Global Shapers Community Annual Report 2018-2019. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Shapers_Annual_Report_2018_2019.pdf

On health issues:

- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS: <https://www.unaids.org/en>
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Sport for Development and Peace. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/sport-development-peace.html>

On gender issues:

- UN Women website: <https://www.unwomen.org/en>
- UN Women report “Marrying too young: End child marriage”. (2012): <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2012/1/marrying-too-young-end-child-marriage>
- UN Women on Equal pay. (2020): <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/9/explainer-everything-you-need-to-know-about-equal-pay>
- UN Women. Asia and the Pacific: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/about-us>
- UN Women. Facts and figures: Ending violence against women
- <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

On water and climate issues:

- United Nations on global issues: Water.
<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/water/>
- UN Environment Programme, topics: Water:
<https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/water>
- Global Climate Letter for Universities and Colleges:
<https://www.sdgaccord.org/climateletter>
- United Nations on global issues: climate change:
<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/climate-change/>

On modern slavery issues:

- International Organization for Migration. Ending modern slavery (2017).
<https://www.iom.int/news/ending-modern-slavery>
- United Nations. UN News tags: Modern slavery:
<https://news.un.org/en/tags/modern-slavery>

On discrimination and racism issues:

- United Nations global campaign “Let’s fight racism!”:
<https://www.un.org/en/letsfightracism/>

On disasters risks issues:

- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction: <https://www.undrr.org/>

On sustainable tourism issues:

- UN Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform. Sustainable Tourism.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabletourism>

On Corporate Social Responsibility issues:

- United Nations Industrial Development Organization. UN on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): <https://www.unido.org/our-focus/advancing-economic-competitiveness/competitive-trade-capacities-and-corporate-responsibility/corporate-social-responsibility-market-integration/what-csr>

United Nations:

An intergovernmental organization comprised of 193 Member States that takes action to address challenges that transcend borders such as peace and security, poverty, terrorism, disarmament, human rights, climate change, gender equality, and many others. The UN provides all Member States with the opportunity to express their views in the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other bodies and committees. The United Nations was founded in 1945. <https://www.un.org/en>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

A set of 17 goals that serve as an “urgent call to action” for all countries operating in global partnership to address global challenges that include poverty, hunger, education, and many others. The SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

University Global Coalition (UGC):

The University Global Coalition (UGC) is a group of participating colleges and universities from all over the world who view the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an urgent call to action. UGC seeks to mobilize participating members for engagement, leadership, and collaboration on actions that address the SDGs and works to amplify the voice of higher education in pursuit of global goals. The University Global Coalition was formed in 2019. <https://universityglobalcoalition.org/>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Action & Awareness Week:

This initiative focuses on the promotion of awareness and knowledge of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for students in higher education and encourages students to take action in support of the goals at their lives, at their campuses (virtual and physical), and in the communities in which they’re a part. This initiative is hosted by the University Global Coalition and participating member institutions. <https://universityglobalcoalition.org/sdgactionweek/>



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