

# A Sustainable World that We Build Together



## A Mission for You, the Generation to Lead the World in the Year 2030

Poverty, disparities, conflicts, infectious diseases, climate change, depletion of natural resources.... Humankind living in the world today is faced with unprecedented challenges, more than ever before. If the current trend continues, its negative impact on our planet and its lives will be unfathomable. Reflecting such pressing concerns, world leaders and citizens have come together, and through extensive processes of discussion and consultation, have adopted the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, a set of common and ambitious goals to be achieved by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda is a navigational guide that will steer us towards building a more sustainable world, a world with a brighter prospect for everyone, everywhere. Are we on track? Let us join hands now so that we are.

It is a mission for you, the generation that will lead the world in the year 2030. Let us learn about various challenges around us which are related to the SDGs. Explore the ways through which we can build a more sustainable world, and imagine how you can contribute to achieving the SDGs when you grow up.

*Let's take steps together  
towards creating a sustainable world!*

### What are the SDGs?

- ◆ It is a set of 17 goals to be achieved by 2030, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.
- ◆ It calls for all parties, from UN agencies, governments, business sectors, academic institutions, to civil society and citizens, including children, to take every action.
- ◆ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has at its heart a promise to leave no one behind.



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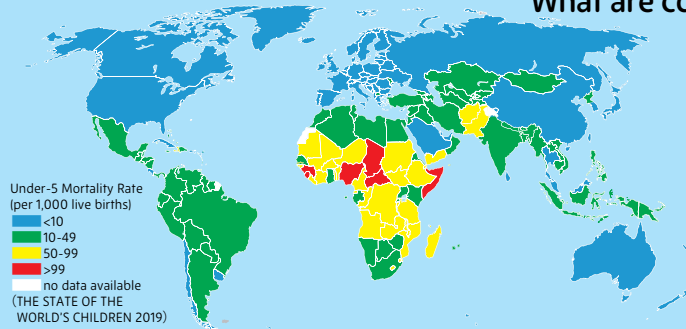
Nobody can choose one's birthplace.

Let us take a look at inequalities that exist in the world today.

Countries with a high ratio of under-five mortality risks are marked in **red** and **yellow**.

What are common to these countries?

Every year, around 5.2 million children die before they celebrate their 5th birthday.\*1 That means, one child under five is dying somewhere in the world every 6 seconds.



2.2 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water. 144 million people live with water directly collected from surface water sources such as ponds and rivers.\*4

▶▶ Goal



59 million primary-school-aged children are out of school\*2, due to poverty, gender discrimination, disabilities, and many other reasons.



Out of 710 million people living in extreme poverty\*, 356 million are children.\*3 The number of people suffering from poverty may increase due to the deteriorating economies resulting from the new coronavirus pandemic.

▶▶ Goal



4.2 billion people do not have access to sanitary toilets, out of which 673 million people worldwide still practice open defecation.\*5

▶▶ Goal



## "Maternal and Child Health Handbook" protects the lives of mothers and children



In Japan, one of the countries with the least child mortality rate, a booklet called "Maternal and Child Health Handbook" has been serving as an effective tool for monitoring and ensuring the healthy growth of children. It is a booklet in which one can keep records of a child's growth, health checks and vaccinations.

Japan has been distributing this booklet in countries in Africa and Asia for the last 20 years, as part of its governmental ODA. The booklet has been contributing to improving the health of mothers and the healthy growth of children in countries and regions where maternal and child mortality rates are still high. It is full of useful health-related information and can also serve as a learning tool for families. Nobody can choose a place to be born. This booklet, however, can help overcome the inequality that a baby is born with.

**Data on problems mothers and children in developing countries face:**

**Lack of pre-natal and post-natal care:** estimated 295,000 women still die every year (808 women per day) due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth.\*6

**Malnutrition:** 21.3% of children under five (144 million) are stunted due to lack of sufficient nutrients. Malnutrition during early childhood can cause life-long negative impact.\*7 Children suffering from stunting may never attain their full physical growth, nor may their brains develop to their full cognitive potential.



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"Maternal and Child Health Handbook" in Palestine, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

## High-income countries, including Japan, also face poverty and disparities



Gender inequality persists worldwide today. In some countries, boys have more access to education than girls.

Globally, the percentage of female parliamentary members is still low. (In 2020, the global average was 25% and only 9.9% in Japan.\*8)

It is vital for both men and women to participate equally in politics to reflect diverse views and opinions in governmental policies.

The Government of Japan has set a goal of "creating a society in which everyone can play an active role without gender bias, and promoting gender equality in leadership positions, by the 2030s".



According to an SDG-related survey conducted by UNICEF on the situation of children in high-income countries, Japan was ranked 23rd among 37 countries on its efforts to eliminate poverty, and only 32nd among 41 countries on disparity reduction.\*9

The terms 'relative poverty' and 'absolute poverty' are generally used to measure the poverty rates in developed countries and less developed countries, respectively. Do you know their differences?



## Business sector's roles in resolving social issues:

Inequalities exist even in such essential areas as medical care, nutrition, access to safe water and sanitation, which are all essential for living decent lives.

The business sector, with its expertise and skills, has a potential role to play. Some Japanese companies, for example, are contributing in a variety of areas, such as the development and distribution of sanitary facilities, safe drinking water systems, medicines, mosquito nets and nutrient supplements, all at affordable prices.

Modern technologies like portable phones, drones and satellite systems can also be useful tools to address inequalities.



© UNICEF/UN070530/Brown  
UNICEF, in partnership with private companies, uses drones to speed up HIV diagnosis in Malawi.

\*1 Levels and Trends in Child Mortality 2020, UNICEF \*2 New Methodology Shows 258 million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School, UNESCO, 2019 \*3 Global Estimate of Children in Monetary Poverty: An Update, World Bank Group and UNICEF, 2020 \*4 5 Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: 2020-2017: Special focus on inequalities, WHO, UNICEF \*5 Trends in maternal mortality: 2000 to 2017: estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division, Geneva: World Health Organization, 2019 \*6 UNICEF/WHO/The World Bank Group joint child malnutrition estimates: levels and trends in child malnutrition: key findings of the 2020 edition \*7 Map of women's participation in politics, July 2020, Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office \*8 UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 14 "Building the Future: Children and the Sustainable Development Goals in Rich Countries", 2017

# 12 End Violence and Discrimination!

Goal



The SDGs aim to achieve a world without violence and discrimination.

What are the pressing challenges children are facing today?

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Child labour

An estimated 152 million children are currently exposed to child labor.\*1 Many of them are deprived of educational opportunities. Lack of education keeps them away from a chance to lift themselves out of the poverty cycle.



© UNICEF/UN067752/Sokhin

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY Child marriage

In today's world, around 250 million women get married before they reach 15 years of age.\*2 Early marriage increases risks during pregnancy and delivery. It also prevents girls from access to education, imposing negative impact throughout their lives and even on to the next generation. The spread of new coronavirus may also lead to an increase in child marriage.\*3

## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Violence against children

**Child abuse:** A survey revealed that 3 out of 4 children aged 2 to 4 worldwide experience some sort of violent discipline, physical and psychological, by their caregivers at home.\*4 Japan is no exception, where incidents of child abuse and physical punishment are often reported.

**Online risks and harms:** The internet can be easily used for harassment and slandering. In Japan, some 1,800 children are exposed to sexual exploitation through SNS every year.\*5

**Bullying:** A survey reported that 1 out of 3 children between the ages of 13 and 15 had experienced some sort of bullying.\*6

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Children affected by conflicts

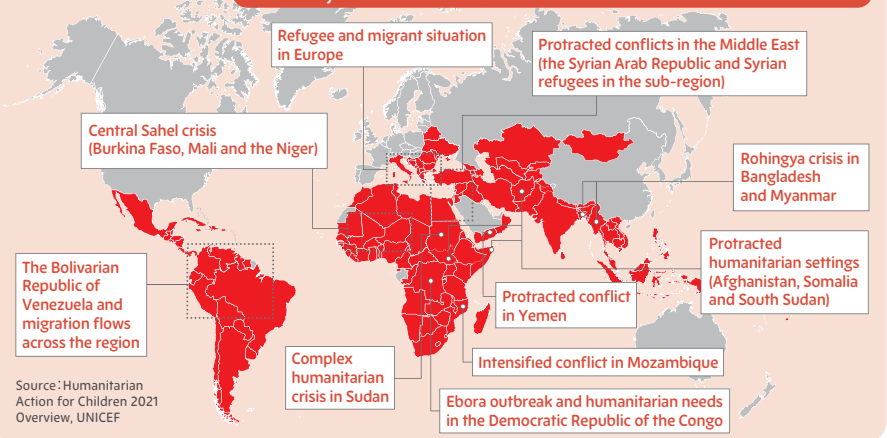
**Living in conflicts:** Children living under armed conflicts are constantly exposed to violence, insecurity and fear. They are deprived of opportunities to grow healthy and access to education. Currently, some 27 million children living in conflict-affected areas are not attending school.\*7

**Children involved in conflicts:** Tens of thousands of children are estimated to be directly involved in armed forces, as child soldiers, cooks, spies and messengers.

**Children on the move (refugee and migrant children):** In 2015, around 50 million children were uprooted from their homes, out of which 28 million were due to conflicts, violence, and insecurity.\*8 There is an increasing number of children undertaking journeys on their own. During 2015-16, 300,000 children in 80 countries were detected, unaccompanied by adult guardians.\*9 Unaccompanied children can be particularly vulnerable to danger including exploitation, human trafficking and violence.

CHILDREN IN CRISIS, as of end-2020

Many conflicts exist today around the world, due to various causes. Let us look at some of the current and recent conflicts, and find out what major causes lie behind those confrontations.



Source: Humanitarian Action for Children 2021 Overview, UNICEF

## 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES Discrimination

In the world today, many kinds of discrimination persist due to many factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disabilities and social status. Discrimination can easily lead to violence. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that no child should be discriminated against for any reason, and efforts have been made globally to enhance treaties and laws to ban discrimination.

A soccer team in Japan, whose supporters were once criticized for their discriminatory attitudes towards foreigners, has declared to "eradicate discrimination", and now the team and its supporters are working together to meet their commitments.

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION A story of a refugee girl

It was in 2013 when Muzoon Almellehan fled war-torn Syria for Jordan with her family. "Because I knew that nothing would be more important than education, the only thing I brought with me were textbooks," she says. As she witnessed many girls being forced to work or to marry in a refugee camp, she tirelessly talked to parents, convincing them of the importance of education. Muzoon, then 19 years of age, was appointed as the youngest UNICEF Ambassador in 2017, and continues to advocate for the importance of girls education, especially in war-affected situations.



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## Solutions through innovation

Today, one out of 4 children under 5 years of age are not registered at their birth.\*10 Without a birth certificate, a child may not have access to medical care or education. It can even expose a child to exploitation. (In Japan, various services are available also for stateless children.)

In 2016, UNICEF and the Government of Tanzania jointly began piloting birth registration with the use of smartphones, which resulted in the increase of registration rate from 10.3% to over 95% in two targeted states.\*11



Other countries are also piloting smartphone-based birth registration. (Photo: Uganda)

## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS Peace, security and safety

In its reconstruction and development cooperation, Japan focuses on the following areas which are vital to building a safe and sound society:

1. reconstruction of social infrastructure;
2. recovery of economic activities;
3. restoration of governance;
4. strengthening of security measures.

In the Philippines, for example, Japan has played a leading role in the peace-building process of Mindanao Island where conflicts lasted for 40 years. It continues to assist the establishment of autonomous government and the reconstruction of society in mid-to-long terms.

\*1 Global Estimates of Child Labour - RESULTS AND TRENDS, 2012-2016, ILO, 2017 \*2 Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects, 2014, UNICEF \*3 Covid-19: A threat to progress against child marriage, 2021 \*4 A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, 2017, UNICEF (Data from 94 and 149 countries respectively; Japan is not included.) \*5 Status of juvenile delinquency, child abuse, and child sexual abuse in 2020, National Police Agency \*7 Education Uprooted, 2017, UNICEF \*8 Uprooted: The growing crisis for refugee and migrant children, 2016, UNICEF \*9 A Child is a Child: Protecting children on the move from violence, abuse and exploitation, 2017, UNICEF \*10 The State of the World's Children, UNICEF, 2019 \*11 unicef news vol.254 (summer 2017) p.10

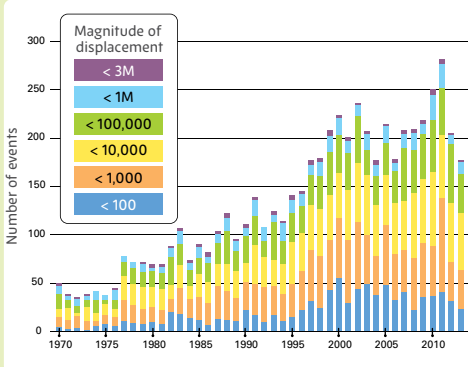
# 03 Preserve the Global Environment!

Goal



## Climate change and environmental issues are threatening the sustainability of our planet. What are their causes and challenges?

### Annual numbers of disaster-related displacements 1970–2013



Natural disasters – droughts, desertification, typhoons, and heavy rains – are increasing both in number and magnitude, forcing more people to flee and causing food crisis.

Source: Unless we act now: The impact of climate change on children, UNICEF, The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Disaster-related displacement risk: measuring the risk and addressing its drivers, 2015

The population growth, industry, use of hydroelectric power, increasing demand for water, and climate change all contribute to the **excessive use of water**, and can even trigger conflicts over water resources.

Big cities, especially in developing countries, are facing severe **air pollution**.

We continue to produce **greenhouse gases**, and the rise in sea level caused by global warming is severely affecting island countries and coastal regions. Infectious diseases, such as **malaria, zika, and dengue fever**, can get widespread, as mosquitoes carrying those viruses expand their habitats with global warming.

While **nuclear** power generation can be CO<sub>2</sub>-emission free and eco-friendly, a big challenge lies in the **safe handling of its radioactive wastes**.

Widespread **deforestation** for plantation and land development is **exposing wild fauna and flora to extinction** and putting biodiversity at risk.

### 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities Japan's ability in disaster prevention, swift recovery and reconstruction

With its long history and vast experience of combatting natural disasters, Japan has an important role to play and has been actively participating in global efforts on the prevention, preparedness, and reduction of natural disasters. As part of such endeavor, it has hosted three World Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Yokohama, Kobe, and Sendai.

In Soma City of Fukushima Prefecture, a city severely affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, a reconstruction conference was held among children to learn about their home city Soma, its natural disaster risks and preparedness. The participating children then presented their findings and recommendations in one of the public forums held at the World Conference in Sendai.



### 14 Life Below Water Gifts from the ocean

The ocean occupies 70% of our planet surface. While it at times causes devastating harm like typhoons and tsunamis, the healthy marine ecosystem with rich marine products is essential to sustaining the global climate.

In recent years, however, the increasing outflow of trash and polluted products into the sea, overuse of marine resources, ocean acidification, the decrease of coral reefs and mangrove forests, and the rise of sea temperature, are all seriously affecting the marine ecosystem.

Let us see which of the SDG goals are related to the preservation of a sound marine ecosystem.

### Public—private partnership for building eco-friendly and sustainable society

The Paris Agreement is an international framework through which we strive to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission and greenhouse gases. Japan, a member of this agreement, is promoting public-private partnerships for building a more sustainable society, through the promotion of renewable energy such as solar power and the development of energy-saving, eco-friendly technologies.

An increasing number of companies are joining efforts to reduce wastes and CO<sub>2</sub> as well as to save energy and resources, in order to minimize the harmful impacts of industry on the environment.

Let us look at some companies' websites and find out what kinds of efforts and projects are being undertaken by the private sector to achieve the SDGs.

### 12 Responsible Consumption and Production Do you know these logos?

Have you ever seen any merchandise with such logos? Let us check and find out what they represent.



### 12 Responsible Consumption and Production 15 Life on Land A story of palm oil

Palm oil is widely used in snacks, processed foods and detergents. It is little known, however, that the palm oil production is threatening tropical rainforests and their inhabitants.

Tropical rainforests in Malaysia and Indonesia, for example, are precious habitats for diverse animals, such as elephants and orangutans, and plants. Those forests, however, are increasingly replaced by palm oil plantations, putting their inhabitants and ecological diversity in danger of extinction.

Increasing efforts have therefore been made since the 2000s among palm oil producers, buyers and sellers, together with NGOs, to explore ways to consume palm oil more sustainably.

Let us take a moment to see what kinds of products we are consuming in our daily lives.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## Your mission!

Now it is the time for you to act.  
What can you do to build a more sustainable world?

Let us work on Stages **1** to **4**

STAGE  
**1**

Here is the list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. From what you have learned so far, prioritize three goals that you think are most important and wish to work on. Also, write the reasons.

Goal	Rank	Reason
<b>1</b> NO POVERTY  End <b>poverty</b> in all its forms, everywhere		
<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER  End <b>hunger</b> , achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture		
<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  Ensure <b>healthy</b> lives and promote <b>well-being</b> for all at all ages		
<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION  Ensure inclusive and equitable <b>quality education</b> and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all		
<b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY  Achieve <b>gender equality</b> and empower all women and girls		
<b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION  Ensure availability and sustainable management of <b>water and sanitation</b> for all		
<b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern <b>energy</b> for all		
<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  Promote inclusive and sustainable <b>economic growth</b> , full and productive employment, and <b>decent work</b> for all		
<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  Build <b>resilient infrastructure</b> , promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster <b>innovation</b>		
<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES  Reduce inequality within and among countries		
<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  Make <b>cities</b> and <b>human settlements</b> inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable		
<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  Ensure sustainable <b>consumption</b> and <b>production</b> patterns		
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION  Take urgent action to combat <b>climate change</b> and its impacts		
<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER  Conserve and sustainably use the <b>oceans, seas and marine resources</b> for sustainable development		
<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND  Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of <b>terrestrial ecosystems</b> ; sustainably manage forests; combat desertification; halt and reverse land degradation; and halt biodiversity loss		
<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  Promote <b>peaceful</b> and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to <b>justice</b> for all; and build effective, accountable and inclusive <b>institutions</b> at all levels		
<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the <b>global partnership</b> for sustainable development		

STAGE  
**2**

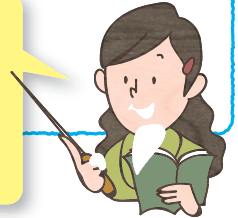
Share your thoughts on the goals you have selected, and discuss with your classmates.

# What can we do to build a more sustainable society? Based on discussions with your classmates, list some challenges for which you wish to find solutions.

The goals and challenges that you wish to work on.

## Write a report on the goals and challenges that you wish to work on.

Research topics which interest you most and write a report, attaching your Plan of Action at its end. Look at the challenges and solutions from wide angles. For example, when listing the challenges, think about which problems you can solve by yourself, and which require the efforts of society as a whole. When reflecting on the solutions, imagine what you can do now, and what you need to work on in the future. Then share your thoughts also with your peers through presentation and discussion.



Elif Bilgin is a 16-year-old girl from Turkey with great curiosity for environmental issues, especially petroleum-based plastic. After spending two years researching and testing, she succeeded in making the first sample of bio-plastic made from banana peels.

"After finishing studies, I want to move on to work with technology that benefits humankind," she says.



High school students in Hokkaido, Japan, have introduced **recyclable agriculture and cattle-feeding structure to the region, which is both eco-friendly and cost-effective.**

They first worked on producing cattle-feed for pigs from locally harvested, however imperfect, vegetables which otherwise are thrown away as wastes. The students then developed a recyclable pig-farming system by producing compost from pig excrement.



Anang, a secondary school student in India, has invented goggles for the blind, "G4B". The G4B, made solely from discarded materials, enables blind people to navigate entirely independently and hands-free, by using ultrasound sensors on eyeglasses. "Blind people wear goggles, but unfortunately they wear them to hide their eyes. Now I have created something to make the goggles more useful," Anang explains. He continues to work with university professors to improve the G4B quality.



Ingrid Soto, a 14-year-old girl from Brazil, runs campaigns every year that bring young people together to donate toys and books for refugee children arriving in Brazil, to help them realize their rights to life and play. **Her passion is to build the world into a better place for children.** She uses social media to promote her work and to connect with other young people who want to make a change.



Melati and Isabel Wijsen, then 10 and 12, living in Bali, took on a mission to stop plastic bags from suffocating their beautiful island. They galvanized support from their classmates, and their courageous actions, including petitions, beach cleanups, and even a hunger strike, paid off when they convinced their governor to commit to a plastic bag-free Bali by 2018. **"Don't ever let anyone tell you that you're too young"** – an inspiring message from the Wijsen sisters.



Many children and youth are already taking action and making changes around the world. Here are some examples:



# Your Plan of Action: What I can do toward 2030

## Action Plan

Circle the icons which are related to your Action Plan.



## Further More

Share and discuss your Action Plan with your classmates.

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