

BRIEFING BOOK on HUMAN RIGHTS

SECOND EDITION 2021-2022



HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO ACHIEVING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

INSPIRATION FOR PROGRAM PLANNERS AND
HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES

Prepared by:



The Human Rights Special Interest Group (HR-SIG) is a non-profit, research-based, independent entity. Our mission is to inspire local community efforts to educate, advocate, and implement international human rights policies and goals. Send inquiries to humanrights.sig@gmail.com.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This *Briefing Book* focuses on the **United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** — the UN's blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>).

The blueprint is made up of 17 Goals, known worldwide as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Goals set **targets** for attainment of a sustainable world and list **indicators** that will measure attainment of the Goals. Especially important now, these Goals provide a critical framework for COVID-19 recovery and set the direction for the attainment of equality for all.

We hope to inspire members in our local communities to use a human rights approach to the SDGs and accelerate efforts to attain universal peace, prosperity, and equality. The human rights approach recognizes the dignity of all persons and aims to leave no one behind.

Many of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals resonate with the urgent issues identified by the League of Women Voters, including environmental reform, health care reform, and social justice for all members of society. We review the details of each of the Goals in this *Briefing Book*; and we provide links to relevant UN human rights conventions and activities, references to policies of the League of Women Voters, and additional resources and suggestions. Other groups may choose to adopt this approach to a review of their own policies and activities.

About the Human Rights Special Interest Group (HR-SIG)

OUR MISSION is to inspire local community efforts to educate, advocate, and implement international human rights policies and goals.

Members of the Human Rights Special Interest Group (HR-SIG) served as League of Women Voters delegates to the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women in New York City in March 2019 (CSW63) and in March 2021 (CSW65). HR-SIG members are active in their local and State Leagues, and other groups. Please see our bios at the end of this book.

Our initial project, the *Briefing Book on Human Rights: Synergy Between Policies of the League of Women Voters (LWVUS) and United Nations Human Rights Conventions, 2019-2020*, is available in electronic format upon request.

Program planners and human rights advocates are encouraged to contact the Human Rights Special Interest Group (HR-SIG) for additional information on program ideas and speaker/moderator recommendations at humanrights.sig@gmail.com.



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world;
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

Margaret Mead

Dedicated to Sheila Denn
(1967-2020)

A dignified and inspirational voice for human rights,
a dedicated leader in the League of Women Voters,
and a valued member of the Human Rights Special Interest Group



"Golden Rule"

Murano glass tile mosaic, a representation of the Norman
Rockwell painting by the same name. UN Headquarters,
New York City. Photo by © Jill Follows

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ASPIRATIONAL AND INSPIRATIONAL WORDS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The United Nations celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2020. Following WW II, the United Nations arose out of the determination of our global grandparents and great-grandparents to quash human misery.

Our foremothers and forefathers drafted the United Nations Charter and affirmed our faith in fundamental universal human rights. They wrote aspirational and inspirational words declaring the “dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women.”

Never-ending work continues at international and local levels to assure future generations of their rights to a world where peace, freedom, democracy, opportunity, and wellness reach all people everywhere — a world where no one is left behind.

We must face the human rights challenges of our day. These challenges include rising hate speech, discrimination, loss of civility, degradation of the environment, and rampant impunity for human rights violations. We must leverage technological and economic advances to lift all people out of poverty and into safe, healthy, and prosperous environments.



“Titans” Mural by Lumen Marin Winter
Located inside UN Headquarters, New York City
Photo by © Jill Follows

Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres has spoken eloquently on the foundational role of human rights to a sustainable world:

- On September 15, 2020, to recognize the **75th anniversary of the United Nations**, Secretary General Guterres restated his vow “to promote a human rights vision that is transformative, that provides solutions and that speaks directly to each and every human being.” Secretary General Guterres set out Guiding Principles for Human Rights. Several are highlighted below:

🚩 ***Realizing human rights is intrinsically linked to the Sustainable Development Goals.***

- 🚩 Human diversity is an asset, not a threat. We must appreciate the richness of our differences while never losing sight of our common humanity and dignity.
- 🚩 Human rights and human dignity will never be realized without a special emphasis on the human rights of women.
- 🚩 Climate change is the biggest threat to our survival as a species and is already threatening human rights around the world.
- 🚩 Human rights are the glue that binds us but only if we commit to meaningful dialogue...
- 🚩 Human rights and human dignity are critical to defining governance and ethics for the future....

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-09-15/un-secretary-generals-remarks-the-opening-of-the-75th-session-of-the-un-general-assembly-delivered>

- On February 22, 2021, Secretary General Guterres reiterated his position during his address to the **46th regular session of the Human Rights Council**. He emphasized that “Human rights are our bloodline; they connect us to one another, as equals. Human rights are our lifeline; they are the pathway to resolving tensions and forging lasting peace. Human rights are on the frontline; they are the building blocks of a world of dignity and opportunity for all — and they are under fire every day.”

Secretary General Guterres’ remarks also focused on **the threat of COVID-19 to human rights**: “COVID-19 has deepened pre-existing divides, vulnerabilities and inequalities, as well as opened up new fractures, including fault-lines in human rights. We are seeing a vicious circle of violations.”

He concluded his extensive remarks with a plea to Member States:

Excellencies,

People around the world are relying on us to secure and protect their rights. With the pandemic shining a spotlight on human rights, recovery gives us an opportunity to generate momentum for transformation.

Now is the time to reset. To reshape. To rebuild. To recover better, guided by human rights and human dignity for all.

I am convinced it is possible – if we are determined and if we work together.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-02-22/secretary-generals-message-the-opening-of-the-46th-regular-session-of-the-human-rights-council-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english-and-french>

T. I. P. S. on the UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals are depicted in the colorful icons below.

The T.I.P.S. approach was created by the Human Rights Special Interest Group as a way to streamline the review of a UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG.)

T is for TARGETS: How high is the aim?

I is for INDICATORS: How will progress or regression be assessed?

P is for League POLICY: What is the synergy between League policy and United Nations SDG?

S is for SUGGESTIONS: What are some ways to inform and educate others?



https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202020%20review_Eng.pdf



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #1

NO POVERTY

END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Overview of SDG #1: Sustainable Development Goal #1 (SDG #1) boldly proclaims NO POVERTY as a basic need of humankind. Human rights principles call on all people and all governments to accelerate the pace toward total elimination of extreme poverty. An eye-opening recent global study by the UN University shows that progress has reversed trend. Instead of past indicators of a reduction in worldwide poverty rates, the recent trend shows a worsening of extreme poverty — poverty that has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 is more than just a health crisis. It is projected that the COVID-19 pandemic will increase poverty worldwide by 500 million people (8% of the total human population). <https://unu.edu/news/news/covid-19-could-drive-global-poverty-back-over-one-billion-people.html>

Poverty exists everywhere. The United Nations calls on volunteers and governments to address the scourge of extreme poverty adversely affecting 10% of the world population. One out of five children live in extreme poverty and will suffer consequences that may last a lifetime, no matter how short. The UN calls for heightened support for people living in extreme poverty now and a large increase in social protections and essential services for children and other vulnerable populations.

Over 700 million people live on less than US \$1.90 a day. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/09/19/decline-of-global-extreme-poverty-continues-but-has-slowed-world-bank>



People among us who are poor are not living a sustainable life and lack basic needs like access to food, clean water, sanitation, and preventive health care. Poverty is three times higher among rural populations than among urban populations.

Not even working families escape poverty. In 2018, eight percent of employed workers and their families lived in extreme poverty. Citing facts and figures of numbers of people living in abject poverty has particular value as a way of assessing economic progress or decline of poverty rates. However, this quantitative approach to assessing extreme poverty may overlook the social reality of poverty — an appreciation that politics and social mores prevent children, women, and others from rising out of poverty.

As Nelson Mandela said: “Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”

Statue of Nelson Mandela in the Entrance
Hall of UN Headquarters, New York City
Photo by © Jill Follows

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** amplify the right of all people to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and their family (**Universal Declaration of Human Rights**).

- The States Parties to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) are obligated to ensure everyone's fundamental rights to adequate food, clothing and housing and to the continuous improvement of living conditions and social security protections.
- The States Parties to the human rights **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC) recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.
- The States Parties to the human rights **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (CRPD) recognize the rights of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living without discrimination on the basis of disability.
- The States Parties to the human rights **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (CEDAW) are obligated to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure women and men have equal opportunities in employment, as well as the elimination of socially dictated and politically driven rules preventing their opportunity to lift themselves and their children out of poverty.

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, implement social protection systems that ensure access to basic services and new technology, support investment in poverty eradication efforts that are gender-sensitive, and reduce the exposure of people who are poor to the devastation of social, economic, and environmental shocks and disasters.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #1 is met when certain INDICATORS are met. Statisticians will look at data regarding the proportion of the population living below the international and national poverty lines. The data will be disaggregated according to sex, age, employment status, and geographic location. Additional data will be collected on the proportion of the population covered by social protection systems, holding rights to land, and suffering direct economic loss caused by disasters. Evaluations will be conducted of the proportion of total government spending on essential services.

P. is for League POLICY: The League of Women Voters of the United States adopted its *Meeting Basic Human Needs* position in 1988: "The League of Women Voters believes that one of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty."

<https://my.lwv.org/lwvus/position/meeting-basic-human-needs>

The position continues: "Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and access to health care.

"The federal government should set minimum, uniform standards and guidelines for social welfare programs and should bear primary responsibility for financing programs designed to help meet the basic needs of individuals and families. State and local governments, as well as the private sector, should have a secondary role in financing food, housing, and health care programs. Income assistance programs should

be financed primarily by the federal government with state governments assuming secondary responsibility.”

Preventing and Reducing Poverty: The League has consistently supported federal programs aimed at combatting poverty and discrimination and has worked at the community level for successful implementation (*Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, p. 114, 136-137). The LWVUS supports policies and programs designed to: increase job opportunities; increase access to health insurance; provide support services such as childcare and transportation; provide opportunities and/or incentives for basic or remedial education and job training; decrease teen pregnancy; ensure that noncustodial parents contribute to the support of their children.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

January is “Poverty in America Awareness Month.” Program planners may choose to highlight SDG #1 each January.

Recent local and state League programs and initiatives addressed poverty in their communities, such as:

LWV of Florida’s The Poverty Action Team is committed to helping those in poverty to become self-sufficient. Read more at <https://lwvfl.org/issues/>. Click on the icon for POVERTY.

A detailed report on poverty and addiction in **Manitowoc County WI** may be accessed at [https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/wysiwyg/%5Bcurrent-user%3Aog-user-node%3A1%3Atitle%5D/poverty and addiction in manitowoc county part 1 - may 14.pdf](https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/wysiwyg/%5Bcurrent-user%3Aog-user-node%3A1%3Atitle%5D/poverty%20and%20addiction%20in%20manitowoc%20county%20part%201%20-%20may%2014.pdf)

A study of poverty in **Latah County ID** determined that the extent of poverty has not been fully recognized. The full study may be found at <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomenvoters.org/clearinghouse/social-policy/meeting-basic-human-needs/a-study-of-poverty-in-latah-county-idaho-in-2012>

A thorough study of poverty in **Whitman County WA** addressed the questions: Who are the poor? What services are available to those living in poverty? The report is available at: <http://lwvpullman.org/pdf/PovStudyFinal.pdf>

Sample letter for Organizations/Agencies/Governmental Agencies/Businesses Signing on to Statewide Campaign to End Childhood Poverty (Wisconsin) accessed at <https://www.lwvabcwi.org/local-study>

Questions for discussion at Unit Meetings on the topic of poverty may be found at: <https://lwvtulsa.org/wp-content/uploads/Poverty-Discussion-Questions-March-2013.pdf>

Many local Leagues hosted speakers:

LWV of Northwoods WI invited a demographic specialist from the University of Wisconsin-Madison to speak to its members on the topic of poverty in the community. For more information see: <https://www.tomahawkleader.com/2020/02/04/league-of-women-voters-meeting-to-focus-on-poverty-in-the-northwoods/>

LWV of Wake County NC hosted a distinguished professor at the University of North Carolina. Please see <https://www.lwvwake.org/search?q=gene%20nichol>

LWV of Greater Tuscaloosa AL heard from a founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center. See details at: <https://wvua23.com/southern-poverty-law-center-founder-speaks-to-league-of-women-voters/>

Written testimony by **LWV of MA** in support of H.4622 (MA), An Act to provide short-term relief for families in deep poverty, 2020, found at: <https://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/LWVMA-Testimony-H.4622.pdf>

Additional recommended readings:

VOLUNTEERING

Plan of Action to integrate volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — Report of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres <https://undocs.org/A/73/254>

Global Call to Action: Volunteering in the Decade of Action:
<https://unitednationsvolunteers.swoogo.com/gtm2020/calltoaction>

COVID-19

“UN report finds COVID-19 is reversing decades of progress on poverty, healthcare and education”07/07/20
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/sustainable/sustainable-development-goals-report-2020.html>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #2

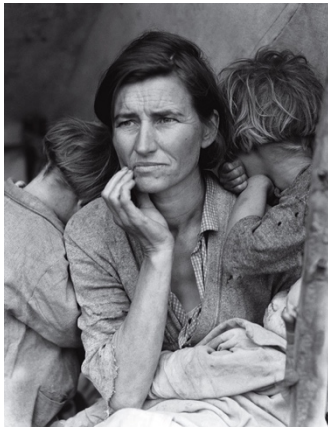
ZERO HUNGER

**END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION
AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

Overview of SDG #2: The human right to adequate food is an inalienable one for all citizens, and the conditions to exercise it must be guaranteed by the state.

<https://www.un.org/zerohunger/content/lessons-zero-hunger-generation>

Yet, after decades of steady decline, world hunger has slowly been on the rise since 2015. An estimated 821 million people in the world suffered from hunger in 2018. <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/en/>



Measures and restrictions put in place to contain the spread of COVID-19 have limited human mobility, including opportunities to work and earn an income, further straining the ability of migrant and displaced people to afford food and other basic needs. According to the head of the UN World Food Programme, “Many people in low- and middle-income countries, who a few months ago were poor but just about getting by, now find their livelihoods have been destroyed.... As a result, hunger rates are sky-rocketing around the world.”

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/11/1077272>

The world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030.

Pea Pickers in Nipomo, CA. Migrant Mother.
Photo by © Dorothea Lange, 1936

With more than a quarter of a billion people potentially at the brink of starvation, swift action needs to be taken to provide food and humanitarian relief to the most at-risk regions. At the same time, a profound change of the global food and agriculture system is needed if we are to nourish not just the people who are hungry today, but the additional 2 billion people the world will have by 2050. Increasing agricultural productivity and sustainable food production are crucial to help alleviate the perils of hunger. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/>

UN Conventions: Various United Nations human rights conventions amplify the right of all people to zero hunger.

- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 25, states, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food.”

- According to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, Article 11, “The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:

(a) To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources; (b) Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.”

- The **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, Article 1, provides, “In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.”

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #2 aims to eradicate hunger by 2030.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #2 is met when certain INDICATORS are met: prevalence of undernourishment, prevalence of food insecurity, prevalence of childhood stunting, prevalence of childhood malnutrition, production per labor unit, income of small scale food producers, sustainable food production, genetic resources in conservation facilities, local breeds at risk of extinction, agriculture orientation index, official flows to agriculture, agricultural export subsidies, and food price anomalies. <https://sdg-tracker.org/zero-hunger>

P. is for League POLICY: The League has been vocal for years about the need to Meet Basic Human Needs, including reduction in hunger.

- *Statement of Position on Meeting Basic Human Needs*, as revised by the National Board, January 1989, based on positions reached from 1971 through 1988: “The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that one of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty. Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and access to health care.” (*LWVUS Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 136)

- *Statement of Position on Early Intervention for Children at Risk*, as adopted by the 1994 Convention: “The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children. These include ... quality health care, including nutrition and prenatal care.” (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 143)

The League also has been a long-standing supporter of sustainable agriculture policies:

- *Statement of Position on Federal Agriculture Policy*, as announced by the National Board, October 1988: “LWVUS believes that federal agriculture policies should promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers, farms that are economically viable,

farm practices that are environmentally sound, and increased reliance on the free market to determine prices.” (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 109)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: What have Leagues done to address hunger?

In 2020, **LWV of Tennessee** hosted a library presentation featuring a speaker from the World Hunger Team. <https://brentwood-tn.libcal.com/event/7282431>

In 2020, **LWV of Piedmont CA** hosted a discussion on food insecurity. <https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2020/07/22/in-brief-piedmonts-league-of-women-voters-to-present-food-security-event/>

In 2019, **LWV of Clemson Area SC** participated in a study aimed to: 1) Assess state of food insecurity in Pickens County in 2019 and the community assets available to address the issue; 2) Document, through maps and a transportation study, the extent of the needs and gaps in services; and 3) Recommend steps for harnessing community assets to address the needs individuals facing hunger and food insecurity. <https://my.lwv.org/south-carolina/clemson-area>

In 2019, **LWV of Deschutes County OR** hosted a speaker from the Hunger Prevention Coalition. <https://lwvdeschutes.org/event/first-thursday-luncheon-5/>

In 2018, **LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties MI** hosted a talk from a Meals on Wheels representative. <https://www.leaderpub.com/2018/02/05/league-of-women-voters-to-discuss-hunger-in-southwest-michigan/>

In 2017, **LWV of Boulder County CO** partnered with radio station KGNU on a monthly commentary series called Making Democracy Work for All!, including a program on food insecurity. <https://news.kgnu.org/2017/11/making-democracy-work-for-all-food-insecurity/> They also showed the film “A Place at the Table.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Stx5PGsFj20>

In 2016, **LWV of Kern County CA** hosted a talk by leaders of a local food pantry organized by students for students. https://www.tehachapinews.com/lifestyle/league-of-women-voters-to-discuss-hunger-in-kern-county/article_ba773792-a139-11e6-88f1-93e2f356ef06.html

In 1992, **LWV of the Allentown Area PA** worked with McDonald’s and a food bank. <https://www.mcall.com/news/mc-xpm-1992-02-13-2842053-story.html>

Some World Hunger Solutions:

1. *Slow Down World Population Growth:* An overlooked or sometimes contentious contribution to world hunger is obvious: population growth. More humans means fewer resources and greater climate change. https://pai.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/PAI-1293-FOOD_compressed.pdf
2. *Promote Greater Gender Equality:* Women who are unable to plan the number and spacing of their children are less likely able to feed them. <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/nutrition/technical-areas/nutrition-food-security-and-family-planning> Women who are educated are more likely to reduce their family sizes. <https://thp.org/what-we-do/issues/education/>

3. *Shift Toward Plant-Based Diets:* Another solution that is indisputable and significant yet frequently disregarded is a shift to a more plant-based diet. As the global population surges, diets rich in meat and dairy products are unsustainable.
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>
 Animal products are an inefficient source of food. Feeding half the world's grain crop to animals raised for meat, eggs, and milk instead of directly to humans is a significant waste of natural resources, including fossil fuels, water, and land.
<https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/hsus-report-industrialized-animal-agriculture-world-hunger.pdf>
4. *Reduce Food Waste:* About one-third of the food we produce each year is lost or wasted, costing the global economy nearly US\$ 1 trillion annually. In developed countries food is often wasted on the plate, while in developing countries it is lost during production, as crops go unused or unprocessed because of poor storage or because the farmers cannot get their goods to market.
<https://www.wfp.org/zero-hunger>
5. *Improve Food Supply Chains:* Improving the efficiency of the food supply chain could help to bring down the cost of food to the consumer and thus increase access.
<http://www.fao.org/3/mb060e/mb060e01.pdf> One approach is more local food sources, meaning shorter supply chains and fewer points where food loss and food waste could occur.
<https://blogs.thomsonreuters.com/answerson/fight-world-hunger-patch-food-supply-chains/>
6. *Prioritize Nutrition:* Nothing is more important to the development of a child than good health and nutrition, particularly in the first 1000 days (from conception through to the age of two). To prevent stunting and to promote healthy development, we must ensure that children and nursing mothers have access to the required nutritious foods. <https://www.wfp.org/zero-hunger>
7. *Encourage Sustainable Crops:* The world has over-invested in low-nutrition staple crops, driving up the relative price of nutrition rich-foods. Empty calories is the food system of the poor. To overcome malnutrition, we need to increase the dietary diversity of the poor to include many more fruits and vegetables, which means increasing their local production and reducing their price to local consumers. There should be incentives for investing in sustainable practices and crop diversification. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/sustainable-agriculture-end-world-hunger>

Other ideas:

- Host educational programs about plant-based food options.
- Encourage local, sustainable farming.
- Coordinate drives with local food banks.
- Promote locating grocery stores near underserved areas.
- Find out how local university agriculture departments address global hunger-related issues.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

Overview of SDG #3: Sustainable Development Goal #3 aims to ensure healthy lives and well-being for everyone at all ages by addressing major health priorities. Affordable, safe and effective vaccines and medicines, universal health coverage, increased health financing, and reproductive, maternal and child health are among the priorities addressed. More research and development and better health risk reduction and management are ambitions of SDG 3. Addressing communicable, non-communicable and environmental diseases are also ambitions of the goal.

In the midst of a global pandemic, health advocates around the world have turned their attention to SDG #3. According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, healthcare disruptions due to COVID-19 could reverse decades of improvements. Before COVID-19 there was notable progress in many health-related areas, and a need to accelerate the progress was the defining ambition.

Since the pandemic, childhood immunization programs have been interrupted in about seventy countries. Illnesses and deaths are expected to spike due to communicable diseases, including a projected one hundred percent increase in malaria deaths in Sub-Saharan Africa. Three years ago, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs had determined that essential healthcare services cover less than half of the global population.

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal3>



Photo by © S. Mapelli

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** amplify the intersections between the conventions and SDG #3 in these core areas:

Right to Health and Well-being, Mothers and Children, and Scientific Progress.

- **RIGHT TO HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

States Parties have agreed to the **Universal Declaration on Human Rights**, Article 25, which states: (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control and (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

These rights are amplified by Article 12 of the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** to “eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning” and to “ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free

services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation” and by the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC), Article 6, recognizing that every child has the inherent right to life and that states parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

There is an expectation that Member States will determine family planning and abortion issues for themselves. Purposefully, the drafters of the CRC avoided a determination of when childhood or life begins. p. 167, Todres, Wojcik, Revaz, *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: An Analysis of Treaty Provisions and Implications of U.S. Ratification*, 2006

In 2018, the United Nations Human Rights Committee gave new guidance under the ICCPR Right to Life article incorporating Member States’ obligations towards safe and legal abortions.

See Human Rights Committee, paragraph 8

<http://opiniojuris.org/2019/03/06/the-un-human-rights-committees-general-comment-36-on-the-right-to-life-and-the-right-to-abortion/>

- **MOTHERS AND CHILDREN**

The States Parties to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) via article 10 have agreed that there should be special protection provided to mothers. Special measures should be taken on behalf of children, without discrimination.

- **SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS**

The States Parties to the **Universal Declaration on Human Rights** agree as per Article 27(1) that everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community....to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. This principle is duplicated in the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) article 15(1)(b) “the right of everyone ‘to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications.’”

T.I.P.S for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #3 aims to ensure healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages by addressing all major health priorities by 2030. There are **13 defined targets** by the UN for this SDG: *Global Health, Polio, Life Expectancy, Maternal Mortality, Child Mortality, Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Suicide, Burden of Disease, Eradication of Diseases, Causes of Death, Financing Healthcare, Smoking.*

I. is for INDICATORS: Whereas targets specify the goals, whether these targets are achieved are tracked by metrics. <https://sdg-tracker.org/good-health#targets>

The UN has defined **28 Indicators for SDG #3 (subparts listed here)**. They are as follows:

The maternal mortality ratio; the percentage of births attended by skilled personnel;

The under-5 years of age mortality rate; the neonatal mortality rate;

The number of new HIV infections per 1000 uninfected population;

Tuberculosis per 100,000 population; malaria incidence per 1000 population;

Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population; number of people requiring interventions against neglected tropical diseases; mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases; suicide mortality rate;

Coverage of treatment interventions for substance-use disorders; alcohol consumption per capita;
Death rate due to road traffic injuries;
Proportion of women aged 15-49 who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods; adolescent birth rate;
Coverage of essential health services; household expenditures on health;
Mortality rate from air pollution; mortality rate from unsafe water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH);
Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning; prevalence of tobacco use;
Proportion of target population covered by all vaccines included in their national program;
Total net official development assistance (ODA) to medical research and basic health sectors;
Proportion of health facilities that have a core set of relevant essential medicines available and affordable on a sustainable basis; health worker density and distribution;
International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness;
Percentage of bloodstream infections due to selected antimicrobial-resistant organisms

P. is for League POLICY:

On page 129 of *Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, the League stated as follows:

“The League’s Position Statement of Position on Health Care, as announced by the National Board, April 1993 and supplemented by concurrence to add Behavioral Health, June 2016: GOALS: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care.”

In the broad area of health and well-being, access to healthcare is usually the focus of Leagues in their advocacy efforts.

In its 1988 *Meeting Basic Human Needs* policy position, the League of Women Voters stated the following among many other related positions: “Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and access to health care.” (emphasis added)

The National Board of the League announced a *Statement of Position on the United Nations* in June 1977 and updated it in June 2002. Ensuring a basic level of health care for all is identified for an area for emphasis by the League in supporting the central role of the UN in addressing the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people (*Impact on Issues 2018-2020*, p. 40)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

PROMOTE AND OBSERVE

There are many more virtual events due to COVID-19. Track, follow and promote relevant SDG and UN events. <https://sdgs.un.org/events>

VOLUNTEER

Plan of Action to integrate volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — Report of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres <https://undocs.org/A/73/254>

Global Call to Action: Volunteering in the Decade of

Action: <https://unitednationsvolunteers.swoogo.com/gtm2020/calltoaction>

COVID-19. “UN report finds COVID-19 is reversing decades of progress on poverty, healthcare and education” 07/07/20

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/sustainable/sustainable-development-goals-report-2020.html>

RESEARCH & DISCUSSION

Provide members and others with objective information about health care and proposed reforms, including organizing community education and public forums.

https://www.lwv.org/other-issues/health-care-reform?_ga=2.169035493.538721711.1606592106-1499084818.1606592106

Creating toolkits for local Leagues following the example of the League of Women Voters of Arizona <https://my.lwv.org/arizona/league-healthcare-position>

Are We Serious About Achieving the SDGs? A Statistician’s Perspective

<https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/are-we-serious-about-achieving-the-sdgs-a-statisticians-perspective/>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #4

QUALITY EDUCATION

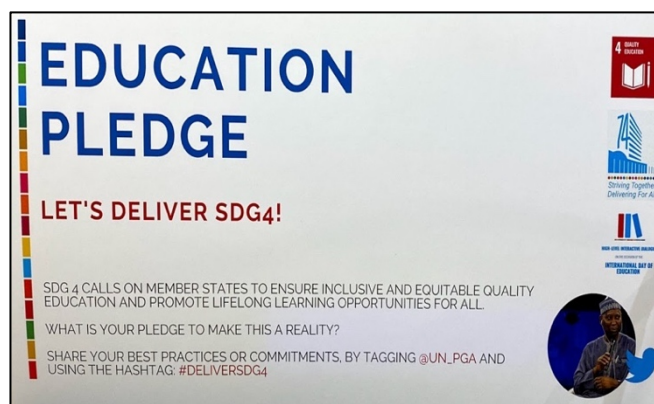
ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Overview of SDG #4: Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. In the last decade, major progress was made toward increasing educational access, but 260 million children were still out of school in 2018, nearly 1/5 of the global population of children. And more than half of all children and adolescents worldwide were not meeting minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics.

In 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread, a majority of countries temporarily closed schools, impacting more than 91% of students worldwide. By April 2020, close to 1.6 billion children and youth were out of school, including nearly 369 million children who relied on school meals for daily nutrition.

To protect the well-being of children and ensure that they have access to continued education, in March 2020 UNESCO established the COVID-19 Global Education Coalition in coordination with UN family, civil society organizations, media and IT partners to help countries tackle content and connectivity gaps and facilitate inclusive learning during this sudden and unprecedented educational disruption. The coalition's goals include helping countries mobilize resources and implement solutions to remote education, seeking equitable solutions and universal access, ensuring coordinated responses, and facilitating student return upon reopening to avoid an increase in dropout rates.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>



Pledge card at the seat of each Delegate attending the UN 2020 International Day of Education, January 24, 2020
Photo by © Jill Follows

Many of the **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** specifically address children's rights to **education**, most notably:

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, adopted in 1948, was the first United Nations convention to set forth goals for human rights. It states that everyone has the right to education and that education should be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. (Article 26)
<https://www.humanrights.com/course/lesson/articles-26-30/read-article-26.html#:~:text=Article%206%20of%20The%20Universal%20Declaration%20of%20Human,at%20least%20in%20the%20elementary%20and%20fundamental%20stages>

- **The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966, further reiterates the right to education to strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. (Article 13)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>
- **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** states that all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women be taken to ensure them equal rights in the field of education, providing them with the same conditions for career and vocational guidance as men. (Article 10)
<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf>
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** states that children and young people have the right to education, no matter who they are: regardless of race, gender, or disability; if they're in detention, or if they're a refugee. (Articles 28 and 29)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** recognizes that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, ensured of an inclusive education system at all levels. (Article 24) [Article 24 – Education | United Nations Enable](#)

SDG #4 and COVID-19: The pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closure of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94% of the world's student population, up to 99% in low- and middle-income countries. The crisis is exacerbating pre-existing education disparities by reducing opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults. Learning losses threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of progress.

https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf

The pandemic has re-emphasized the “digital divide” and the right to internet access, particularly for those in rural areas. UNDP estimates that closing the digital divide would reduce by more than two-thirds the number of children not learning because of school closures.

<https://feature.undp.org/covid-19-and-the-sdgs/>

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #4 aims to ensure that by 2030 all children complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. By 2030, SDG #4 also calls for access for all children to quality early childhood development and pre-primary education and access to all people to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university. It calls for elimination of gender disparities in education and equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. This requires building and upgrading education facilities and increasing the supply of qualified teachers.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG # 4 has been reached when certain INDICATORS are met. Documented achievement of SDG #4 will be shown with completion and participation rates: proportion of children in school at different levels, proportion of children achieving minimum proficiency levels,

school completion rates, participation rates, proportion of youth and adults with ICT skills, parity indices, proportion of teachers with minimum required qualifications.

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202020%20review_Eng.pdf

P. is for League POLICY: There is synergy between the policies of the LWVUS and SDG #4. Relevant POLICIES are found in the League of Women Voters' *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*. The League took a position in 1974-76 that was in favor of "equal access to quality education" (p. 121). The League opposed tuition tax credits for families of children attending private elementary and secondary schools, supported federal efforts to deny tax-exempt status to racially discriminatory "segregation academies," and supported and continued to defend Title IX prohibiting sex discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal aid (p. 122). The League supports many federal education programs, particularly those providing equal access to education and support for desegregation as a means of promoting equal access.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: It is suggested that local and state Leagues share this information with community leaders and set the stage for productive discussion and action to address educational deficiencies, facilitate student return, and close the digital divide.

The League's MYLO (My League Online) is a repository for information about local initiatives and activities of Leagues across the country: <https://my.lwv.org/mylo/issues/social-policy/education?page=1>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #5

GENDER EQUALITY

ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Overview of SDG #5: Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. Regrettably, gender inequality persists everywhere, women are underrepresented at all levels of political leadership, and social and economic progress is stagnated for many. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres addressed the UN General Assembly on October 1, 2020 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration/Fourth World Conference on Women, stating:

The systems and structures of our world, based on millennia of male domination, are holding women back in all areas, with serious consequences (for all). COVID-19 demonstrates that we urgently need a strong push to meet the unfulfilled promise of Beijing.

This is fundamentally a question of power, so it starts with the equal representation of women in leadership positions, in governments, boardrooms, in climate negotiations and at the peace table – everywhere decisions are taken that affect people's lives.

This is a human rights issue and a social and economic imperative.



Poster at UN Headquarters, New York City
Photo by © J. Follows

Select **UN Human Rights Conventions** amplify women's universal and fundamental human rights, most notably:

- **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)***, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. CEDAW calls for the end to discrimination in economic and social life, family relations, and in political and public life. This includes preserving and promoting women's right to vote in all elections and public referenda and assuring that women, on equal terms with men, are eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies.

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

- **The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)***, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966. This Covenant calls for women to be guaranteed: conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men; equal pay for equal work; special protection for mothers before and after childbirth, including paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>

*Notably, neither CEDAW nor the ICESCR has been ratified by the US Senate, despite strong support from the League of Women Voters

CODID-19 and the Disproportionate Impact on Women

The coronavirus outbreak exacerbates existing inequalities for women and girls across every sphere — from health and the economy, to security and social protection.

<https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/generation-2030/how-is-covid-19-affecting-progress-on-sdg-5-gender-equality/>

Women play a disproportionate role in responding to the virus, including as frontline healthcare workers and caregivers at home. Women's unpaid care work has increased significantly as a result of school closures and the increased needs of older people. Women are also harder hit by the economic impacts of COVID-19, as they disproportionately work in insecure labor markets. Nearly 60 per cent of women work in the informal economy, which puts them at greater risk of falling into poverty.

The pandemic also has led to a steep increase in violence against women and girls. With lockdown measures in place, many women are trapped at home with their abusers and struggling to access services that are suffering from cuts and restrictions. Emerging data show that, since the outbreak of the pandemic, violence against women and girls — and particularly domestic violence — has intensified.

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #5 aims to empower women and girls and achieve gender equality by 2030. The aim is high, and the challenge is daunting. UN studies report that one woman in three experiences violence during her lifetime; 12 million girls marry before the age of 18 each year; women have only 75 percent of legal rights accorded to men; women are NOT usually represented at peace negotiations, climate talks, and in decision-making roles; and it may take 150 years to achieve economic parity with men in earned income (World Bank).

SDG #5 calls for the: eradication of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls everywhere; valuing unpaid care and domestic work; full participation of women in leadership roles; unbridled access to sexual and reproductive health care; equal access of women to economic resources; and equal and enhanced use of communications and information technology.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #5 has been reached when certain INDICATORS are met. Documented achievement of SDG #5 will be shown with economic and social science data. Evidence will show when legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce, and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. Other statistical INDICATORS include data on: violence against women and girls; child marriages; time spent on unpaid domestic and care work; seats held by women in national and local governments and managerial positions; the proportion of women making informed decisions on their reproductive health; laws guaranteeing women the right to own land; and data on the number of women and girls who own a mobile phone.

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202020%20review_Eng.pdf

P. is for League POLICY: There is synergy between the policies of the LWVUS and SDG #5. By way of example only, relevant POLICIES are found in the League of Women Voters' *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*. The policies include the League's strong position in favor of affirmative action programs for minorities and

women (p. 117) and the League's support for pay equity policies stemming from the concern over feminization of poverty (p. 119).

The League has overwhelmingly approved support of "equal rights for all regardless of sex" as a "necessary extension of the League's strong support for equal opportunity for all" (p. 119). Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment — "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." — remains an urgent priority of the League of Women Voters. As part of the ERA Coalition, the League of Women Voters has pushed for ERA ratification multiple times.

After Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the amendment in January 2020, the next step should have been for the Archivist of the US to certify the amendment. However, the US Attorney General indicated that the Archivist should not do so, arguing that a deadline for ratification had passed. On July 1, 2020, the League of Women Voters of the United States filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the federal lawsuit *Commonwealth of VA, IL, and NV v. Ferriero*.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: It is suggested that local and state Leagues share this information with community leaders and set the stage for productive discussion and action to bring about gender equality and empower all women and girls in the next 10 years.

- In 2020, Local Leagues across the country marked the 100th anniversary of Women's Suffrage with celebrations and parades, reminding citizens of the importance of women's rights and the role played by the League of Women Voters in achieving the fundamental right to vote:
<https://my.lwv.org/district-columbia/national-capital-area/celebrating-centennial>
<https://my.lwv.org/north-carolina/orange-durham-and-chatham-counties-inc/100th-anniversary-womens-suffrage>
<https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/hingham/100-years-lwv-and-womens-suffrage>
<https://www.lwvil.org/100th-anniversary>
- Cities for CEDAW is a grassroots effort that provides tools and leadership to empower local women's organizations, including the League of Women Voters, to initiate CEDAW within their city, county or state. <http://citiesforcedaw.org/about-cedaw/>
- The Human Rights Special Interest Group (HR-SIG) has partnered with **LWV of the Fairfax Area VA** to prepare a *Guidebook for CEDAW*.
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58706fbb29687f06dd219990/t/6076133edc84ef6c6fe66c43/1618350911087/GUIDEBOOK+on+CEDAW+online+April+13+2021+%281%29.pdf>
- In March 2021, **LWV of Orange Coast CA** prepared a letter endorsing a CEDAW resolution under consideration by the Irvine CA City Council, which was subsequently adopted.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #6

CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

ENSURE ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

Overview of SDG #6: Clean water is a basic human need, and there is sufficient fresh water on the planet to make clean water accessible to all. Nevertheless, billions of people — mostly in rural areas — still lack this basic need. It is estimated that one-third of people worldwide do not have access to safe drinking water (2.2 billion people). <https://washdata.org/>

Over half of the global population (4.2 billion people) lacks safe sanitation: 40 percent of people do not have adequate facilities for hand washing with soap and water, and over 675 million people do not have access to appropriate toilet facilities, relying on open defecation. Due to poor infrastructure, investment and planning, every year millions of people — most of them children — die from disease associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene. <https://sdg-tracker.org/water-and-sanitation#targets>

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of hand hygiene for containing the disease. <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-sanitation-and-hygiene/>

For women, the water crisis is personal. Women and children spend a major part of their day in water collection for their families and in search of a safe place to deal with sanitation issues. Without water or toilets at home, women cannot live up to their full potential. <https://water.org/our-impact/water-crisis/womens-crisis/>

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 25 (1948), includes the universal human right of all people to have access to a standard of living adequate for the *health and well-being* of every individual and family. Since then, the United Nations has repeatedly addressed the issue of the human right to clean water and sanitation in several ways:

- The UN declared 1981-1990 as the **International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade**
- The UN declared 2003 the **International Year of Fresh Water**
- The UN proclaimed 2005-2015 the **Water for Life International Decade for Action**
- The UN proclaimed 2008 the **International Year of Sanitation**



Photo by © K. Montgomery

- The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 64/292, “The human right to water and sanitation” in July 2010, calling on States and international organizations to provide financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer...in order to scale up efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all...” https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/292

Despite these ambitious initiatives by the United Nations and Member States, access to clean water and sanitation has remained a critical problem across the globe. In another effort to highlight the pressing need for action, the UN General Assembly declared 2018-2028 the **International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development**, called the **Water Action Decade**.

<https://wateractiondecade.org/about/>

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #6 aims to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030; this would include: investing in adequate infrastructure; providing sanitation facilities that encourage hygiene and ends open defecation; increasing water-use efficiency to reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity; and protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #6 is met when certain INDICATORS are met. These include data on the number of people using safely managed drinking water; drinking water service coverage in urban and rural areas; the proportion of rural and urban populations using safely managed sanitation services and a hand-washing facility with soap and water; the proportion of wastewater safely treated; levels of freshwater stress; change in extent of water-related ecosystems over time; and proportion of local administrative units with established policies for local community involvement in water and sanitation management.

P. is for League POLICY: For decades, the League of Women Voters has been at the forefront of efforts to protect water resources (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 94-96). These efforts have included lobbying for passage of the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1986 and the Clean Water Act of 1987, designed to ensure safe drinking water for all Americans. The League has worked tirelessly to urge federal and state governments to establish and preserve environmental protection regulations, including those that pertain to fossil fuel extraction activities that threaten drinking water.

In 1990, the League of Women Voters Education Fund sponsored the Safe Drinking Water Project, aimed to increase citizen awareness of the importance of protecting groundwater supplies, the source of 50 percent of the nation's drinking water. Local efforts resulted in a citizen handbook: *Protecting Your Groundwater: Educating for Action*. In 1998, LWVEF published *Strategies for Effective Public Involvement in Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection*, a handbook to facilitate public involvement required by the Safe Drinking Water Act amendments of 1996.

In more recent years, the League has been vocal in its opposition to attempts to limit or repeal the jurisdictional focus of the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. In 2019, the LWVUS urged the U.S. Senate to increase funding for the EPA's Nonpoint Source Management Program under the Clean Water Act, designed to clean up waterways and restore formerly impaired streams.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: Protecting the environment is one of the League's key priorities. In 2021 and beyond, the League is likely to remain active in its strong support for environmental protections, including restoring regulations that have been weakened under the previous administration. The League supports vigorous enforcement mechanisms, including sanctions for states and localities that do not comply with federal standards. <https://www.lwv.org/other-issues/environment>

LWV of California is an example of ways that State and local Leagues can remain involved in protecting water resources:

<https://lwvc.org/state-water-management-projects>

LWV of Texas provides extensive information for activities related to water resources conservation

<https://my.lwv.org/texas/texas-water-resources>

The League can act as a watchdog along with its partners like the Faith Alliance for Climate Change to make sure that Virginia and Fairfax County stay on target.

LWV of Montana supports extensive water resource programs and policies, including protection of water quality and supplies against potential depletion and pollution.

<https://my.lwv.org/montana/position/water-resources>

New Caldecott Award-winning children's book ***We Are Water Protectors***, by Carole Lindstrom (author) and Michaela Goade (illustrator), can serve as a resource for helping children to recognize the need to safeguard the earth's water from harm and pollution.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #7

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE, AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

Overview of SDG #7: The world is making progress toward Sustainable Development Goal #7, with encouraging signs that energy is becoming more sustainable and widely available. Access to electricity in poorer countries has begun to accelerate, energy efficiency continues to improve, and renewable energy is making impressive gains in the electricity sector.

Nevertheless, more focused attention is needed to improve access to clean and safe cooking fuels and technologies for 3 billion people, to expand the use of renewable energy beyond the electricity sector, and to increase electrification in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Energy Progress Report provides a global dashboard to register progress on energy access, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. It assesses the progress made by each country on these three pillars and provides a snapshot of how far we are from achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals targets. <https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/>

For example:

- 13 percent of the global population still lacks access to modern electricity.
- 3 billion people rely on wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste for cooking and heating.
- Energy is the dominant contributor to climate change, accounting for around 60 percent of total global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Indoor air pollution from using combustible fuels for household energy caused 4.3 million deaths in 2012, with women and girls accounting for 6 out of every 10 of these.
- In 2016, the share of renewables increased at the fastest rate since 2012, up 0.24 percentage points, and reached almost 17.5 percent, owing to rapid growth in hydropower, wind, and solar.



Photo by © K. Montgomery

The following **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** address human rights with regard to access to renewable energy.

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Session5_OHCHR_SDG_HR_Table.pdf

Right to an adequate standard of living

- Article 25 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) covers a wide range of rights, including access to adequate food, water, sanitation, clothing, housing and medical care, as well as social protection covering situations beyond one's control, such as disability, widowhood, unemployment and old age.
- Article 11 of **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (ICESR) states: 1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and

to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application

- Article 27 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** states that everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- Article 15 of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESR)** states: 1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone: (b) To enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications.

COVID-19 and SDG #7: Lack of access to energy may hamper efforts to contain COVID-19 across many parts of the world. Energy services are key to preventing disease and fighting pandemics — from powering healthcare facilities and supplying clean water for essential hygiene, to enabling communications and IT services that connect people while maintaining social distancing. 789 million people, predominantly in sub-Saharan Africa, are living without access to electricity, and hundreds of millions more only have access to very limited or unreliable energy.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All explained why energy access matters during the pandemic and outlined three ways to respond to the COVID-19 emergency: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

1. Prioritize energy solutions to power health clinics and first responders.
2. Keep vulnerable consumers connected.
3. Increase reliable, uninterrupted, and sufficient energy production in preparation for a more sustainable economic recovery.

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #7 aims to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services by 2030. It also aims to increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix to double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency. Another target for 2030 is to enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy; energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology; and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology. It also has a target to expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States, and land-locked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programs of support.

I.is for INDICATORS: Sustainable Development Goal #7 will reach its target when the following indicators are met: when there is universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services; when a significant proportion of the population has access to electricity (at present, 1 in 4 people in some developing countries do not have access to electricity); the proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology. Other indicators include the substantial increase of the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030; an increase in the renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption; and by 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

P. is for League POLICY: Synergy between Sustainable Development Goal #7 and policies of the League of Women Voters is evident in the *LWVUS Impact on Issues 2020-2022* (p. 98). With its work on energy policy beginning in the late 1970s, the League began a decades-long push for energy conservation and the use of renewable resources. As global climate change emerged as a key environmental and international issue in the late 1990s, energy conservation, renewable resources, and air pollution controls took on new significance, and the League's interrelated approach to natural resource issues proved farsighted. Understanding the need for global solutions to many environmental problems, LWVUS has urged full U.S. participation in international efforts.

The League also supports the predominant reliance on renewable resources and action by appropriate levels of government to encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation through funding for research and development, financial incentives, rate-setting policies, and mandatory standards.

In a 2019 letter to Congress, the LWVUS articulated its support for the following principles:

<https://www.lwv.org/environment/league-joins-over-600-organizations-urging-support-bold-climate-action>

- Halt all fossil fuel leasing, phase out all fossil fuel extraction, and end fossil fuel and other dirty energy subsidies.
- Transition power generation to 100% renewable energy.
- Expand public transportation and phase out fossil fuel vehicles.
- Harness the full power of the Clean Air Act.
- Ensure a Just Transition led by impacted communities and workers.
- Uphold Indigenous Rights

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: The League has a significant voice at the local and state level.

• The leadership of **LWV of Virginia** spoke with the Fairfax County Executive about using solar panels and cited the success of the Bay Area, California, and its use of solar panels on the top of its school parking garage. The League can act as a watchdog along with its partners like the Faith Alliance for Climate Change to make sure that Virginia and Fairfax County stay on target, following Virginia's objectives established in 2019 by Governor Ralph Northam for statewide energy production:

- By 2028, Virginia will achieve 5,500 MW of wind and solar energy. At least 3,000 MW of this target should be under development by 2022.
- By 2030, 30 percent of Virginia's electric system will be powered by renewable energy resources.
- By 2050, 100 percent of Virginia's electricity will be produced from carbon-free sources, such as wind, solar and nuclear.

• **LWV of Coos OR** is working to oppose the Jordan Cove Energy Project & Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline, seen to be in direct conflict with our current Action & Advocacy Positions - Natural Resources, Water Quality & Quantity, Climate Change, Offshore & Coastal Management, Land Use, Energy Conservation, and Seismic Risks. <https://my.lwv.org/oregon/coos-county/current-projects>

• **LWV of Wisconsin** has articulated a detailed Electric Energy Position to reinforce and implement the position on climate change. The position includes a new position on siting of powerplants and transmission lines, restrictions on fossil fuels and natural gas, and on electric energy planning and regulation. <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/position/energy>

- **LWV of Texas** includes a list of coalitions and resources related to energy efficiency. <https://my.lwv.org/texas/energy>
- **LWV of Montana** reports on their State Energy Position, including details related to Transportation, Conservation, and Clean Energy. <https://my.lwv.org/montana/position/energy>
- **LWV of Washington** reports on League-supported State legislation that was recently signed into law, including Zero Emission Vehicles, System Reliability Under the Clean Energy Transformation Act, and Pumped Storage Projects. <https://lwvwa.org/energy2020>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #8

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

Overview of SDG #8: Overall employment figures are encouraging. The unemployment rate is 5 percent worldwide. However, the figures do not tell the whole story. Over 2 billion people (61 percent of the world population) work in the informal economy and at low-wage subsistence jobs. In 2018, 700 million workers earned less than \$3.20 US per day. Moreover, substantial gender inequalities persist, with women earning far less than their male counterparts and less likely than men to be employed at all.

The aims of SDG #8 include encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation, with decent and fulfilling jobs that do not harm the environment. The critical other side of the coin for SDG #8 is protecting labor rights and eliminating forced labor and human trafficking.



Photo by © J. Follows

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** emphasize the centrality of decent work to enable sustainable and satisfying lives for people.

- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 23, covers work-related rights. Everyone has the right: to work; to just and favorable conditions of work; to equal pay for equal work; and to form and join trade unions.
- Signatories to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** recognize the right to work (Article 6); the right to just and favorable conditions of work and to equal remuneration for work of equal value (Article 7).
- The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**, Article 11, contains provisions protecting the rights of women to work without discrimination.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations. The **ILO's Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work** addresses the elimination of discriminatory practices in employment, freedom of association at work, collective bargaining rights and the elimination of forced labor.

Importantly, several UN human rights conventions also contain prohibitions against forced labor, child labor, and human trafficking.

- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 4, states: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
- The **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**, Article 8, declares that no one shall be held in slavery and in servitude and that no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labor.

- The **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, Articles 32-36, protect children from economic exploitation and trafficking for any purpose.

SDG #8 and the Effects of COVID-19: It is estimated that the world is facing the worst economic decline since the Great Depression. As a result of the pandemic, over one billion workers are expected to have lost their livelihoods, with the tourism industry experiencing one of the sharpest declines.

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8>

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-march-2021-briefing-no-147/>

In 2020, the League of Women Voters joined its partners in asking Congress for new pandemic relief legislation that contains protections for a safe return to work.

<https://www.lwv.org/health-care-reform/league-joins-letter-calling-congress-protect-basic-human-needs-pandemic>

Achieving the targets for SDG #8, and other SDGs, by 2030 will be a bigger challenge because of setbacks arising from the pandemic.

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/sustainable-development-outlook-2020-achieving-sdgs-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-scenarios-for-policymakers/>

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: Sustainable Development Goal #8 has 12 targets. The targets focus on job creation and innovation; adequate and equal pay for equal work regardless of gender, age, or disability; universal access to banking and other financial services; generation of sustainable tourism employment and local culture and products; and the end to modern slavery, trafficking, and child labor.

I. is for INDICATORS: Whereas targets specify the goals, the UN has identified 17 indicators to serve as the metrics by which the targets can be assessed. These indicators include:

- GDP per capita growth rate and per capita growth rate by employed person
- Proportion of informal employment in non-agricultural sectors, by sex
- Average hourly earnings, by sex, occupation, age, and persons with disabilities
- Unemployment rate by sex, age, and persons with disabilities
- Youth unemployment: Proportion of people ages 15-24 not in education, employment or training
- Child labor: Proportion and number of children ages 5-17 engaged in child labor, by sex & age
- Proportion of jobs in sustainable tourism industries
- Proportion of adults (15 years or older) with a bank account

P. is for League POLICY: From its inception, the League of Women Voters has worked for equal rights for all regardless of sex (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 114-120). This policy explicitly extends to equality of opportunity for employment and pay equity. Since 1972, the League has been a prominent supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

In 2019, the LWVUS joined more than 50 organizations in filing an amicus brief before the Supreme Court. The Petitioners asked the Court to decide whether employment discrimination based on sexual

orientation and gender identity is covered under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that Gay and Transgender employees are protected under Title VII.

<https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/supreme-court-rules-gay-and-transgender-employees-are-protected-under-title>

In addition, the League of Women Voters of the United States supports policies to increase job opportunities and job training (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 141).

In 2014, the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position opposing all forms of domestic and human trafficking of adults and children, including labor trafficking (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 148).

S is for SUGGESTIONS:

- **LWV of Rivertowns NY** sponsored a talk on Child Trafficking in Westchester County: Taking Action.

<https://my.lwv.org/new-york/rivertowns/article/child-trafficking-westchester-county-taking-action>

- **LWV of Texas** provides resources for families and teachers regarding Human Trafficking Issues and Warning Signs <https://my.lwv.org/texas/position/trafficking-persons>

- In 2016, **LWV of Utah** prepared an Educational Study on Human Trafficking. See the Utah Office of the Attorney General Task Force. <https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/initiatives/human-trafficking/>

- The Justice Committee of **LWV of Marin County CA** focuses on local responses to gun safety, immigration, and human trafficking. LWV Marin County is a member organization of the Marin County Coalition to End Human Trafficking. <https://www.marinlwv.org/justice>

Other resources:

The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST) is a U.S. based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world. <https://endslaveryandtrafficking.org/who-we-are/>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #9

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

Overview: Even before we saw the deadly and otherwise devastating global impact of COVID-19, the United Nations cautioned all of us that global manufacturing growth was on the decline and internet access was dismally low in the world's least developed countries where less than one in five individuals used the internet. Sixteen percent (16%) of the world population lacked access to mobile broadband networks.

Prior to COVID-19 there was some good world news regarding infrastructure and innovation: the amount of new renewable power capacity added was the highest ever and investment in wind energy surpassed investment in solar energy.

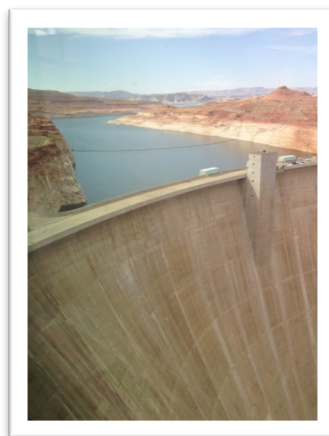
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization/>

COVID-19 struck with economic fury and caused enormous personal and business hardship. Some of the hardship fell on the aviation industry that suffered the steepest decline in passenger numbers in the history of the aviation industry. Other disruptions were seen in regional and global value chains when Chinese manufacturing slowed down during its early attempts to stamp out COVID-19. The ripple effect from the Chinese slowdown was felt immediately in sectors that manufactured precision instruments, machines, automotive parts, and communication equipment. <https://unctad.org/news/coronavirus-outbreak-has-cost-global-value-chains-50-billion-exports>

According to the United Nations, the long climb out of the downward economic slide will require financing of small-scale industries now as well as into the future and accelerated investment in research and development. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9> Care, concern, and economic forces are needed to rebuild infrastructures, especially in nations experiencing disasters resulting from climate change. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization/>

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** speak to the fundamental principle that sustainable growth includes industrialization that creates jobs and income for each and every person. Innovation and basic infrastructure improve the standard of living for most. Failing to improve infrastructure, foster innovation and promote sustainable industrialization may leave many people behind in education, health care and poor sanitation.

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (CEDAW) articles 13(b) and 14 (2) provide for equal rights for women to financial credit and rural infrastructure.
- **International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) article 15 (1)(b) provides for the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress; Article 11 provides for rights to land and resources.



Hoover Dam
Photo by © J. Follows

- **International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** article 19 (2) provides for access to information
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MDGs/Post2015/SDG_HR_Table.pdf

T.I.P.S for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #9 aims to significantly raise industry's share of gross domestic product; increase access of small enterprises to financial services and market; retrofit industries to make them sustainable; substantially increase the number of workers in research and development; and support resilient infrastructure development and technology development, especially information and communication technology, in the least developed nations. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization>.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know we have reached the targets for SDG #9 when global data are collected, evaluated and reliably show, among other indicators: that people living in rural areas live within 2km of an all-season road; employment in manufacturing industries, both large and small, rises as a proportion of overall employment; the proportion of loans to small enterprises rises; increased funds are allotted to research and development as a proportion of a nation's gross domestic product; international development assistance goes toward infrastructure; and the proportion of persons with access to mobile networks increases.

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/#:~:text=The%20global%20indicator%20framework%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals,pertaining%20to%20the%202030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20>

P. is for League POLICY: The League "believes that energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs and will continue to examine transportation policies in light of these goals." (Page 137 *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: Local and state League activities support SDG #9:

LWV of Norman OK supports the creation of a storm water utility to repair and expand the sewer system.
<https://my.lwv.org/oklahoma/norman/position/infrastructure>

LWV of Wisconsin and the American Society of Civil Engineers-Wisconsin- joint infrastructure program
<https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/event/invest-wisconsins-infrastructure-northeast-quadrant>

LWV of Washington booklet titled "Washington State Public Port Districts" available at:
<https://lwvwa.org/resources/Pictures/WashingtonStatePublicPortDistrictsBooklet.pdf>

LWV of Duluth MN supports development of a plan for reinvestment in Comfort Station infrastructure.
<https://www.lwvduluth.org/duluth-infrastructure.html>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #10

REDUCED INEQUALITIES

REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES

Overview of SDG #10: Reducing inequalities and ensuring that no one is left behind are integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the focus of SDG #10. Yet, income inequality persists, and in fact has increased worldwide in recent decades. Inequalities are further deepening for vulnerable populations in countries with weaker health systems and those facing humanitarian crises. Refugees and migrants, as well as indigenous peoples, older persons, people with disabilities, and children are particularly at risk of being left behind.

Inequalities not only are driven and measured by income, but are determined by other factors including gender, age, origin, disability, sexual orientation, class, and religion. Meanwhile, gaps in newer areas, such as access to online and mobile technologies, are emerging.

Inequality and Human Rights:

While economic inequality has become a prominent issue on the international development agenda and in national political debates, the implications for human rights have received less attention. Nevertheless, several United Nations human rights conventions contain provisions relating to income inequality and other forms of inequality.

- **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the first United Nations convention to set forth aspirational goals, contains several articles emphasizing equality, includes the following Articles:

Article 25 states that, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”



Photo by © K. Montgomery

Article 23 states that, “Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.” <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

- **The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, Article 3, affirms the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of human rights. Article 7 affirms the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favorable conditions of work which ensure, in particular:

(a) Remuneration which provides all workers, as a minimum, with:

- (i) Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work;

- (ii) A decent living for themselves and their families in accordance with the provisions of the present Covenant;
- (b) Safe and healthy working conditions
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>

- Other UN human rights conventions address inequalities for specific groups, including women, persons with disabilities, migrants, and racial groups. Some examples are
 - Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of- persons-with-disabilities.html>
 - International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPMW) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cmw.aspx>
 - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cerd.aspx>

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic:

COVID-19 deepened existing inequalities, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable communities the hardest, shattering already fragile safety nets, increasing global unemployment, and slashing workers' incomes. COVID-19 also put at risk the limited progress that has been made on gender equality and women's rights over the past decades. Across every sphere, from health care to the economy, and from security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls, simply by virtue of their sex.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for an extraordinary scale-up of international support and political commitment, including funding through the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, which aims to support low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable groups who are disproportionately bearing the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. "Now is the time to stand by our commitment to leave no one behind," the Secretary-General said. He continued that the virus "does not discriminate, but its impacts do — exposing deep weaknesses in the delivery of public services and structural inequalities..." For more information, see the SDG-10 Goal of the Month package: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/goal-of-the-month-may-2020>

T.I.P.S for LEAGUES

T is for TARGETS: SDG #10 sets targets to reduce inequalities by 2030, including:

- Progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average
- Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
- Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

- Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations
- Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions
- Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
- Encourage official development assistance and financial flows

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202021%20refinement_Eng.pdf

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #10 has been attained when certain indicators are met. Some of these indicators will be measured by the growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population, as well as the proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities.

Other indicators measure: the proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the grounds of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law; the labor share of GDP; the proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations.

Other indicators are recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of monthly income earned in country of destination, the number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, the number of people who died or disappeared in the process of migration towards an international destination, the proportion of the population who are refugees, by country of origin.

Other indicators are the proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff and the total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202021%20refinement_Eng.pdf

P. is for League POLICY: There is synergy between the policies of the LWVUS and SDG #10. For example, the League's work on pay equity stemmed from member concern over the feminization of poverty. The League played a key role at the national level through its work with the broad-based National Committee on Pay Equity in the 1980s. In 1986, LWV Education Fund participated in an *amicus brief* before the U.S. Supreme Court in the pay equity case, *Bazemore v. Friday*. The Court ruled a state agency may be held liable for disparities in salaries between black and white employees, even if the disparities were caused by racial discrimination that occurred before the 1964 Civil Rights Act. (See the League's *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p. 119)

State and local Leagues also have endorsed legislative efforts to undertake job evaluation studies, to implement pay equity for both public and private employees and prohibit questions about salary history.

In February 2021, LWV of the US signed onto a letter to Members of Congress advocating swift passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. <https://www.lwv.org/lwv-signs-letter-advocating-paycheck-fairness-act-passage>

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: Local and State Leagues have been active in promoting pay equity as an essential component of reduced inequalities.

- **LWV of Charlotte Mecklenburg NC** Women's Issues Action Team is working with the Coalition for Pay Equity to advance awareness of gender pay gap and other gender-based inequities. <https://my.lwv.org/north-carolina-state/charlotte-mecklenburg/action-teams/womens-issues-action-team>
- On Women's Equality Day 2020, **LWV of Charlotte Mecklenburg NC** co-sponsored a forum on Pay Equity with coalition partners <https://my.lwv.org/north-carolina-state/charlotte-mecklenburg/event/pay-equity-how-do-we-get-there>
- **LWV of Copper Country MI** work with local universities to raise awareness of gender inequalities. <https://www.uppermichiganssource.com/content/news/League-of-Women-Voters-raising-awareness-about-gender-pay-gap-479316283.html>
- In January 2021, **LWV of Greater Cleveland OH** sponsored a talk by Professor Diane Bilimoria about how to have a more equitable workplace post-COVID.
- **LWV of Georgia** sponsors regular events, film screenings, and talks focused on gender equality. <https://my.lwv.org/georgia/event/equality-week-2020>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

MAKE CITIES INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

Overview of SDG #11: SDG #11 relates to several fundamental and universal human rights, such as the human right to adequate housing, including land and resources; the right to participate in cultural life; the right to accessibility of transportation, facilities and services, particularly of persons with disabilities; and the right to protection from natural disasters.

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MDGs/Post2015/SDG_HR_Table.pdf

The Trend and the Problem: The world is becoming increasingly urbanized. Since 2007, more than half the world's population has been living in cities, and that share is projected to rise to 60 per cent by 2030. While cities and metropolitan areas contribute about 60 per cent of global GDP, they also contribute about 70 per cent of global carbon emissions and over 60 per cent of resource use. Moreover, rapid urbanization results in a growing number of slum dwellers, inadequate and overburdened infrastructure and services (such as waste collection and water and sanitation systems, roads and transport), worsening air pollution, and unplanned urban sprawl.



Photo by © K. Montgomery

The UN food agency, FAO, has warned that hunger and fatalities could rise significantly in urban areas, without measures to ensure that poor and vulnerable residents have access to food.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

COVID-19 Impacts Cities and Communities: The impact of COVID-19 will be most devastating in poor and densely populated urban areas, especially for the one billion people living in informal settlements and slums worldwide, where overcrowding also makes it difficult to follow recommended measures such as social distancing and self-isolation. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

Several **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** relate to SDG #11, including:

- The **Universal Declaration on Human Rights**, Article 25, provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- The **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, Article 11, recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. Article 15 recognizes the right of everyone to take part in cultural life. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cescr.pdf>

- The **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**, Article 5, recognizes the right to housing. Article 7 requires that parties adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx>

- The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** contains several provisions calling for States Parties to provide accessibility to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, including access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx>

Some Sustainable Cities and Communities Solutions:

1. *Build More Affordable Housing:* Over one billion people live in slums or informal settlements due to urbanization and population growth that outpaces the construction of affordable housing. Increased investments are needed to ensure affordable and adequate housing for all by 2030. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>
2. *Improve Public Transport:* Good public transport options are necessary to reduce air pollution and climate change. Transport accessibility is especially important for vulnerable populations, such as women, children, seniors and persons with disabilities. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>
3. *Build Adequate Waste Disposal Infrastructure:* Globally, 2 billion people were without waste collection services and 3 billion lacked access to waste disposal facilities. Many municipal solid waste disposal facilities in low- and middle-income countries are open dumpsites, contributing to air, water and soil pollution. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>
4. *Address Air Pollution Through Appropriate Regulations:* Nine out of ten urban residents in 2016 were breathing polluted air. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>
5. *Provide More Open Public Spaces:* Where public space is inadequate, poorly designed or privatized, cities become segregated. More open spaces improve urban productivity and increase access to markets, jobs and public services. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #11 aims to make cities and communities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by setting achievable targets by 2030. These include: building safe and affordable housing with basic services; providing safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations; strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage; reducing the adverse environmental impact of cities, paying special attention to air quality and waste management; providing safe and inclusive green and public spaces; implementing policies for disaster risk reduction; supporting national and regional development planning; and supporting least developed countries with financial and technical assistance.

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

I. is for INDICATORS: SDG #11 will reach its targets when the following indicators are addressed and met:
<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

- the proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing.
- the proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities.
- the ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate.
- the proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically.
- the total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage.
- the number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.
- the direct economic loss in relation to global GDP, damage to critical infrastructure and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters.
- the proportion of urban solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge out of total urban solid waste generated, by cities.
- the annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted).
- the average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities.
- the proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months.
- the proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city.
- the number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.
- the proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies.
- the proportion of financial support to the least developed countries that is allocated to the construction and retrofitting of sustainable, resilient and resource-efficient buildings utilizing local materials.

P. is for League POLICY:

The League of Women Voters' *Impact on Issues 2020-2022* (p. 146) states the League's position on Urban Policy:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that it is in the national interest to promote the well-being of America's cities.

The League is committed to an urban environment beneficial to life and resource management in the public interest.

Additional details about the League's positions as they relate to SDG #11 are contained throughout the *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*. For example, the League has an extensive set of positions on Meeting Basic Human Needs, that align with targets contained in SDG #11. These include Preventing and Reducing Poverty, Access to Health Care, Access to Housing and Access to Transportation. (pp. 136-142.)

Impact on Issues 2020-2022 also contains an extensive set of policy statements pertaining to resource management, environmental protection and pollution control, air quality, land use, energy, water resources, and waste management. (See pp. 86-112). The League's overarching position is to "Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest." (*Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, p, 86). More details about these positions are contained in reviews of other SDGs in this Briefing Book.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

Leagues have taken the following actions to promote inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities:

In 2021, **LWV of Door County WI** hosted a presentation on sustainable infrastructure.

<http://www.leagueofwomenvotersdoorcounty.org/citizen-education--studies.html>

In 2021, **LWV of Long Beach CA** hosted a presentation and discussion on sustainability.

<https://my.lwv.org/california/long-beach-area/event/sustainable-city-community-event-video-available-viewing>

In 2021, **LWV of Glenview/Glencoe IL** hosted a Housing 101 workshop. <https://lwvglens.org/housing-affordability/>

Since 2016, **LWV of Wilmette IL** has advocated for local affordable housing.

<https://www.lwvwilmette.org/affordable-housing-qa.html>

In 2015, **LWV of Arlington VA** supported an affordable housing master plan.

<https://my.lwv.org/virginia/arlington/position/affordable-housing>

In 2014, **LWV of Benton and Franklin Counties WA** prepared a Sustainable Communities report.

https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/sustainable_communities.pdf

In 2006, **LWV of Hingham MA** adopted a sustainability position.

<https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/hingham/position/sustainability>

Since 1999, **LWV of California** has had a Sustainable Communities Action Policy. They have created a toolkit. <https://lwvc.org/issues/sustainable-communities>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

Overview of SDG #12: Sustainable Development Goal 12 seeks to decouple economic growth from degradation of the environment, promoting sustainable lifestyles and increasing resource efficiency. A driving force of economies, worldwide consumption and production must not use the natural environment and resources to have destructive impacts.

SDG 12 is meant to promote energy efficiency; sustainable infrastructure; access to basic services and green and decent jobs; ensuring a better quality of life for everyone; and ensuring of a good use of resources.

COVID has offered an opportunity for countries to develop recovery plans that build a more sustainable future. Only 20 percent of electronic waste is recycled, for example, and fossil fuel subsidies continue to rise. Almost 14 percent of food waste is in food supply chains. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal12>



Photo by © S. Mapelli

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** amplify the intersections between the conventions and SDG #12.

The States Parties to the **Universal Declaration on Human Rights** as per Article 25(1) and to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** via article 12 have agreed to the right to health, including the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

The States Parties to the **Universal Declaration on Human Rights** as per Article 25(1) and to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** via article 11 have agreed to the right to adequate food and right to safe drinking water.

The States Parties to the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** via article 1(2) have agreed to the right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural resources.

T.I.P.S for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: The UN has defined 11 *Targets* for SDG 12. Among the eleven targets are: implementing the 10-year sustainable consumption and production framework, sustainable management and use of natural resources, reducing global food waste and waste generation, and responsible management of chemicals and waste, encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices and sustainability reporting, and promote sustainable public procurement practices.

See https://www.researchgate.net/figure/SDG-12-targets-and-indicators_tbl1_330677667

I. is for INDICATORS: Whereas SDG Targets specify the goals, whether these targets are achieved is tracked by metrics. The UN's main Indicators for SDG #12 targets include the following:

- the number of countries with policies supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production
- domestic material consumption, per capita and per GDP
- food loss index and food waste index
- hazardous waste generated per capita; proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment; national recycling rates; tons of material recycled
- number of companies publishing sustainability reports
- the extent to which global citizenship education and education for sustainable development are mainstreamed; teacher education
- amount of fossil-fuel subsidies per unit of GDP

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/goal-12/>

P. is for League POLICY: The League of Women Voters has adopted several policies related to SDG #12. These stem from the Principle articulated in the League's *Impact on Issues 2020-2022* that "responsible government should...promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest" (p.10). Within this broad principle, League policies include:

Resource Management & Protection: Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Promote resource conservation, stewardship, and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government. Preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the ecosystem with maximum protection of public health and the environment. (*Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, p.13)

Agricultural Policy: Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices, and increased reliance on the free market. (*Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, p.14)

Sustainable Agriculture: Federal policy should encourage a system of sustainable, regenerative agricultural production that moves toward an environmentally sound agriculture sector. This includes promoting stewardship to preserve and protect the country's human and natural agricultural resources. (*Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, p.109)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

PROMOTE AND OBSERVE

There are many virtual events due to COVID-19. Track, follow and promote relevant SDG and UN events. <https://sdgs.un.org/events>

Follow the example of the Pennsylvania LWV in publishing a guide to Shale Gas Extraction and Public Health.

https://www.shalepalwv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019-Shale-Resource-Guide.pdf?_ga=2.190267560.2006410166.1617716685-1436309247.1617716684

Co-organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DESA/DSDG) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR,) New York Office, is a Special Event of the 2021 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of ECOSOC.

<https://sdgs.un.org/events/2021-sdgs-learning-training-and-practice>

VOLUNTEER

Plan of Action to integrate volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — Report of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres <https://undocs.org/A/73/254>

Global Call to Action: Volunteering in the Decade of

Action: <https://unitednationsvolunteers.swoogo.com/gtm2020/calltoaction>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #13

CLIMATE ACTION

TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

Overview of SDG #13: Climate change affects every country on every continent. It disrupts national economies and affects lives. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, and weather events are becoming more extreme. 2019 was the second warmest year on record and the end of the warmest decade (2010-2019) ever recorded. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere rose to new records in 2019.

Although greenhouse gas emissions are projected to drop about 6 percent in 2020 due to travel bans and economic slowdowns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, this improvement is only temporary:

Climate change is not on pause. Once the global economy begins to recover from the pandemic, emissions are expected to return to higher levels. Saving lives and livelihoods requires urgent action to address both the pandemic and the climate emergency.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1062332>



Photo by © K. Montgomery

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, through appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework, and an enhanced capacity building framework.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change/>

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Session5_OHCHR_SDG_HR_Table.pdf

How Climate Change Infringes on Human Rights

In her Opening Statement to the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council on September 9, 2019, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet put it starkly: “Climate Change is a reality that now affects every region of the world. The human implications of the currently projected levels of global heating are catastrophic. Storms are rising and tides could potentially submerge entire island nations and coastal cities. Fires rage through forests and the ice is melting. We are burning up our future, literally.”

Climate change threatens the effective enjoyment of a range of human rights, including those to life, water and sanitation, food, health, housing, self-determination, culture and development. Member States have a human rights obligation to prevent the foreseeable adverse effects of climate change and ensure that those affected by it, particularly those in vulnerable situations, have access to effective remedies and means of adaptation to enjoy lives of human dignity. The right to life is universally recognized as a fundamental human right, yet, every year, 150,000 premature deaths are being linked to the climate crisis—a number set to increase with rising temperatures.

<https://daraint.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CVM2ndEd-FrontMatter.pdf>

Many **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** address human rights that are negatively impacted by Climate Change. Here are a few:

- **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights** [UDHR article 25(1)] states that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR, article 12) states that the States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The ICESCR also includes steps to be taken by the States Parties to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for (b) The improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC, article 24) states that States Parties shall recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services. CRC further states that States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures: (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, *inter alia*, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution.
- **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (CEDAW). In 2018, the Committee on CEDAW enacted its first general recommendation focusing on climate change and the gendered impact of disasters (GR No.37). This marks the first time a treaty body sets out how climate change is a women's human rights issue and makes clear that States Parties should be held accountable for the impact that climate change has on women and girls.
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_37_8642_E.pdf

COVID-19 and Climate Change

In his remarks on International Mother Earth Day, April 22, 2020, the UN Secretary-General announced, "The current [COVID-19] crisis is an unprecedented wake-up call. We need to turn the recovery into a real opportunity to do things right for the future." He added that human rights can and must guide COVID-19 response and recovery: "We will need to 'build back better' and maintain the momentum of international cooperation, with human rights at the centre." He proposed six climate-related actions to shape the recovery:

- First: we must deliver new jobs and businesses through a clean, green transition.
- Second: where taxpayers' money is used to rescue businesses, it needs to be tied to achieving green jobs and sustainable growth.
- Third: fiscal firepower must drive a shift from the grey to green economy, and make societies and people more resilient.

- Fourth: public funds should be used to invest in the future, not the past, and flow to sustainable sectors and projects that help the environment and the climate. Fossil fuel subsidies must end, and polluters must start paying for their pollution.
- Fifth: climate risks and opportunities must be incorporated into the financial system as well as all aspects of public policy making and infrastructure.
- Sixth: we need to work together as an international community.

<https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/un-urges-countries-%E2%80%98build-back-better%E2%80%99>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/earth-day/message>

T.I.P.S. FOR LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #13 aims to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; to integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning; to improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. SDG #13 also aims to implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-convention/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change>

The UNFCCC, the primary international, intergovernmental forum, for negotiating global response to climate change, articulates a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible. Additionally, it aims to promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least-developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG # 13 has been reached when certain INDICATORS are met. Documented achievement of SDG #13 will be shown with completion and participation rates: like number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons per 100,000; total greenhouse gas emissions per year; the number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies; amounts provided and mobilized in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilization goal of the \$100 billion commitment through to 2025, to name a few.

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

P. is for League POLICY: There is synergy between the policies of the LWVUS and SDG #13 Relevant POLICIES are found in the League of Women Voters' *Impact on Issues 2020-2022* (p. 105). Climate Change: The League's Position Statement of Position on Climate Change Policy, as announced by the National Board, January 2019:

The League believes that climate change is a serious threat facing our nation and our planet. The League believes that an interrelated approach to combating climate change—including through energy conservation, air pollution controls, building resilience, and promotion of renewable resources — is necessary to protect public health and defend the overall integrity of the global ecosystem. The League supports climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations.

Individuals, communities, and governments must continue to address this issue, while considering the ramifications of their decision, at all levels — local, state, regional, national, and global.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS: The League has a unique role to play in achieving the goal of slowing climate change, as a voice to be reckoned with at the local and state level. Some examples of State League activities:

- **LWV of Virginia** is supporting several bills that relate to climate change, including HB 672, which establishes a policy of the Commonwealth to prevent and to minimize actions that contribute to the detrimental effects of climate change in the Commonwealth. The bill requires any state agency to examine any new regulation in furtherance of this policy. The bill requires local and regional planning commissions to consider the impacts from and causes of climate change in adopting a comprehensive plan, regional strategic plan, or zoning ordinance. LWV VA also maintains a Climate Change Group on Facebook <https://lwv-va.org/members-corner/facebook-working-groups/>
- **LWV of California** has established a Climate Change Task Force, with participation from Leagues across the state. Local Leagues are working on activities related to Green Infrastructure, Energy Efficiency, Building Electrification, Sea-Level Rise, and Climate Change Education. <https://lwvc.org/climate-change-task-force>
- **LWV of Illinois** provides thorough information and a speakers' bureau on climate issues in the state <https://www.lwvil.org/action-foci-1/environment-climate-change>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #14

LIFE BELOW WATER

CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEA AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Overview of SDG #14: Sustainable Development Goal #14 aims to ensure conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, sea and marine resources. Coastal areas, seas and oceans naturally provide numerous goods necessary to global food security and well-being. There is a reduction in hunger and improvement in nutrition, generation of economic growth and contribution toward alleviating poverty by better use of fisheries and aquaculture. Unfortunately, current efforts are not protecting oceans, small-scale fishers and marine environments according to an April 2020 UN Economic and Social Council forum on sustainable development. <https://undocs.org/en/E/2020/57>

However, in a bit of good news, COVID-19 may be allowing oceans to recuperate due to the drastic reduction in human activity. Before COVID-19, ocean acidification was projected to affect half of all marine life by 2100. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal14>

The United Nations estimates that pollution and depleted fisheries and loss of coastal habitats and other human activities affects forty percent of the oceans. The UN estimates that the livelihoods of three billion people rely on marine and coastal biodiversity, with the marine resources comprising five percent of the global GDP. Thus, the livelihoods of a large percentage of the world population are affected by pollution and the loss of coastal habitats.

<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-14-life-below-water.html>



Photo by © S. Mapelli

The first binding international agreement on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing was adopted in 2009 by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and signed by 97 countries. It is the **Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA)**, formally known as The Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Under the agreement, parties must harmonize port controls for foreign-flagged vessels and therefore prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fish out of the market. Basically, foreign-flagged vessels known to have engaged in IUU fishing are refused port entry and shipment of fish, which adds up to one in every five wild-caught fish.

“The Constitution for the Oceans” is the 1982 **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**. Its goal is to establish a legal order to facilitate international communication and peaceful uses of the oceans, as well as equitable utilization and conservation of their resources. Finally, it seeks to study, protect and preserve the marine environment. It recognizes the balance between economic use of the oceans and the need to conserve those resources sustainably. There is also the aim of balancing rights and obligations of land States with coastal States. <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/achieving-sdg-14-role-united-nations-convention-law-sea>

Many **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** support human rights for all people who are negatively impacted by failures to conserve and use oceans, seas and marine resources. Here are a few:

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR Article 25 (1) upholds individuals' human rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the right to safe drinking water.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (CEDAW Article 12) also upholds the rights of all persons to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- **International Convention on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR, Art. 12 and 11) mirrors the language of the UDHR.
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC Art. 24) uphold children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #14 consists of ten targets to conserve and sustainably use the oceans and marine life. They are as follows:

14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration, to achieve healthy and productive oceans

14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels

14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting, and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information

14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation

14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing states (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacities and transfer marine technology taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries

14.b Provide access of small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

14.c: "recognizes the critical importance of implementing existing international and regional law (UNCLOS, Regional Seas Conventions, CBD, Stockholm Convention, IMO & ILO Conventions, etc.) as part of the means of implementation of SDG14."

<https://www.oceanactionhub.org/sdg-14-targets-context-and-indicators>
<https://sdgcompass.org/sdgs/sdg-14/>

I. is for INDICATORS: The SDGs and related targets have been designed to be monitored through a set of global indicators adopted together with the 2030 Agenda. Whereas targets specify the goals, whether these targets are achieved can be tracked by metrics. The full list of indicators is available here: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

The list of indicators includes:

- number of countries using ecosystem-based approaches to managing marine areas
- proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
- degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
- sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries, and all countries
- number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting, and implementing ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Convention of the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources

Note, that for some SDGs, including #14, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the “custodian” agency for certain indicators.

<https://www.oceanactionhub.org/sdg-14-targets-context-and-indicators>

P. is for POLICY:

On page 99 of the *LWV’s Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, the League clearly set forth:

The League supports: • Water resource programs and policies that reflect the interrelationships of water quality, water quantity, ground-water, and surface water and that address the potential depletion or pollution of water supplies; • Measures to reduce water pollution from direct point-source discharges and from indirect nonpoint sources; • Policies to achieve water quality essential for maintaining species populations and diversity, including measures to protect lakes, estuaries, wetlands, and in-stream flows; and • Stringent controls to protect the quality of current and potential drinking-water supplies, including protection of watersheds for surface supplies and of recharge areas for groundwater.

Many other provisions for ecological protection are found in the comprehensive section on Natural Resources on pages 85-112 of *Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*.

The League’s Position Statement of Position on Natural Resources, as affirmed by the 1986 Convention, based on positions reached from 1958 through 1986 is as follows:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health. (*Impact on Issues, 2020-2022*, p.86)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

Here are some local and State League initiatives:

- **LWV of Texas:** Support funding for safe/adequate water, including conservation measures <https://my.lwv.org/texas/position/water>
- **LWV of Florida:** Spotlight on Natural Resources; spotlight on resource conservation <https://www.lwvfl.org/issue/natural-resources/>
- **LWV of Oregon:** Part I and Part II of "Water in Oregon: Not a Drop to Waste" <https://www.lwvor.org/study-archive/water-in-oregonpt1> <https://www.lwvor.org/study-archive/water-in-oregonpt2>

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

Are We Serious About Achieving the SDGs? A Statistician's Perspective

<https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/are-we-serious-about-achieving-the-sdgs-a-statisticians-perspective/>

EDUCATE

SDG Resources for Educators – Life Below Water

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/sdgs/material/14>

INVESTIGATE AND THEN VOLUNTEER with nonprofit organizations supporting SDG #14

Explore Goal 14 in Action

<https://www.globalgoals.org/14-life-below-water>

CONSUME

Use fewer single use plastics

<http://www.marinesafe.org/the-problem/single-use-plastic/>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #15

LIFE ON LAND

PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

Overview of SDG #15. SDG #15 relates to several human rights. The human right to health includes the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Human rights include adequate food and safe drinking water. There is a human right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources, meaning a right to self-determination and sovereignty.

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MDGs/Post2015/SDG_HR_Table.pdf

The Problem: Human life depends on the earth as much as on the ocean for our sustenance and livelihoods: “Plant life provides 80 percent of the human diet, and we rely on agriculture as an important economic resource. Forests cover 30 percent of the Earth’s surface, provide vital habitats for millions of species, and important sources for clean air and water, as well as being crucial for combating climate change. Every year, 13 million hectares of forests are lost, while the persistent degradation of drylands has led to the desertification of 3.6 billion hectares, disproportionately affecting poor communities. While 15 percent of land is protected, biodiversity is still at risk. Nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants have been illegally traded. Wildlife trafficking not only erodes biodiversity, but creates insecurity, fuels conflict, and feeds corruption. Urgent action must be taken to reduce the loss of natural habitats and biodiversity which are part of our common heritage and support global food and water security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and peace and security.”

<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-15-life-on-land.html>



Photo by © J. Follows

“The loss of biodiversity in the ecosystems has created the general conditions that have favored and, in fact, made possible, the insurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic. A lot of factors have contributed to it: deforestation, changes in forest habitats, poorly regulated agricultural surfaces, mismanaged urban growth.” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7566801/>

Wildlife crime endangers both animal species and human health, including through new deadly diseases. Seventy-five percent of emerging infectious diseases, such as bird flu, Ebola and COVID-19, are zoonotic – they are transmitted from wildlife to people. Transmission occurs through human contact with affected wild animals and tends to happen when populations encroach on natural habitats and engage in activities that disrupt ecosystems, such as wildlife trafficking. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/goal-15/>; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7086482/>

Land degradation affects billions of people, drives species to extinction and intensifies climate change.

Globally, one fifth of the Earth's land area (more than 2 billion hectares), an area nearly the size of India and the Russian Federation combined, is degraded. By early 2020, 123 countries had committed to setting voluntary targets to achieve "land degradation neutrality," a global target adopted in the 2030 Agenda, and 60 countries had officially endorsed those targets. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/goal-15/>

The world is falling short on 2020 targets to halt biodiversity loss. Forest loss remains high, despite growing efforts to manage them sustainably. Less than half of key biodiversity areas are under protection, while progress has slowed considerably. Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate. Only one third of countries are on track to achieve their national biodiversity targets. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/goal-15/>

Various **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** relate to SDG 15, including:

- The **UN Convention to Combat Desertification** is a convention to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought through national action programs that incorporate long-term strategies supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements.
- The **UN Convention on Biological Diversity** is intended to develop national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and is a key document regarding sustainable development.
- The **Ramsar Convention** is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
- The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species** is a multilateral treaty to protect endangered plants and animals.

Some biodiversity loss solutions:

- *Slow Down World Population Growth:* Some consider humans an invasive species, since we have spread to every continent, our population has exploded, we have few natural predators and we have had adverse effects on habitat.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/are-humans-an-invasive-species-42999965/>

The majority of the world's land is under our control and has been tailored to our use.

<https://ourworldindata.org/land-use>

Human activity has substantially changed one-third to one-half of the world's surface. In the next 50 years it is expected that humans will seriously impact 50-90 percent of land in developing countries. This is a result of growth in population and in over consumption of natural resources.

- *Shift Toward Plant-Based Diets:* Animal products are an inefficient source of food. Feeding half the world's grain crop to animals raised for meat, eggs, and milk instead of directly to humans is a significant waste of natural resources, including fossil fuels, water, and land.

<https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/hsus-report-industrialized-animal-agriculture-world-hunger.pdf>

Switching the global population's diet to plant-based foods, for example, would free up 75% of the world's cropland for other uses.

<https://www.ecowatch.com/plant-based-diets-sustainability-2650610434.html>

Animal agriculture replaces diversity with monocultures because crops grown to feed livestock are pushing other species out of their natural habitats and are a primary reason for deforestation. <https://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/how-animal-agriculture-is-draining-the-world-of-biodiversity/>

- *Protect, Preserve and Restore Natural Lands:* Establishment of wildlife and ecosystem preserves is a key tool in conservation efforts. A preserve is an area of land set aside with varying degrees of protection for the organisms that exist within the boundaries of the preserve. Preserves can be effective for protecting both species and ecosystems. Biodiversity hotspots - geographical areas that contain high numbers of endemic species - are especially important for conservation efforts. <https://opentextbc.ca/conceptsofbiologyopenstax/chapter/preserving-biodiversity/>

- *Protect, Preserve and Restore Endangered Species:* Losing even a single species can have disastrous impacts on the rest of the ecosystem, because the effects will be felt throughout the food chain. From providing cures to deadly diseases to maintaining natural ecosystems and improving overall quality of life, the benefits of preserving threatened and endangered species are invaluable. <https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Understanding-Conservation/Endangered-Species>

- *Protect Against Overexploitation of Animals:* In order to remediate the effects of this sixth wave of extinction, we must prevent overexploitation. Overexploitation or non-sustainable use of wildlife is closely linked and plays an increasing role in the loss of biodiversity. Over-harvesting, non-sustainable use, and the illegal trade in some species are threatening not only their continued survival but also that of ecosystems and the livelihoods of communities and local economics that depend upon them. Excess direct and indirect commercial exploitation of animals, wildlife trade and sport hunting all reduce wild populations. <https://www.ecologycenter.us/natural-history-2/overexploitation.html>

- *Limit the Use of Pesticides:* Pesticide use has a harmful impact on biological diversity: they can have short-term toxic effects on directly-exposed organisms, and long-term effects can result from changes to habitats and the food chain. https://www.pan-europe.info/old/Resources/Briefings/Biodiversity_and_pesticides_leaflet.pdf

T.I.P.S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #15 has a number of goals with targets of 2020 and 2030:

15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.

15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.

15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.

15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.

15.A Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.

15.B Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation.

15.C Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/>

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #15 is met when certain INDICATORS are met, including: forest area as a proportion of total land area, proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type, progress towards sustainable forest management, proportion of land that is degraded over total land area, coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity, conservation status of major species groups, number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits, proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked, proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species, and official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems.

P. is for League POLICY: The League of Women Voters' *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*, (p. 86-112) sets forth an extensive set of positions and policies relevant to SDG #15, including those pertaining to natural resource management, environmental protection and pollution control, use of public lands, climate change, preservation of natural resources, climate change, and agricultural policies.

These are encapsulated in the League's Position, as affirmed by the 1986 Convention that:

"...natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future sustainability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health." (Impact on Issues 2022-2022, p. 86).

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

What have leagues done to address biodiversity loss?

- **LWV of Dane County WI** has a Climate Team that maintains a Climate Crisis blog, including discussion of protecting biodiversity. <https://www.lwvdanecounty.org/climate-corner>
- **LWV of Albany County NY** provides information on climate change and the costs of animal agriculture. <http://lwvalbany.org/climate-change.html>
- **LWV of Connecticut** has a policy on land use. <https://my.lwv.org/connecticut/position/land-use>
- **LWV of Florida** has conservation policies. <https://lwvfl.org/issues/natural-resources/>
- **LWV of St Petersburg Area FL** has a Food Politics team that, among other things, encourages putting more plants and less meat on plates. <https://lwvspa.org/food-politics/>
- In 2021, **LWV of Ashland & Bayfield Counties WI** provided comments on a proposed project to fill an area of floodplain forested wetland. <https://www.lwvabcwi.org/latest-news/2021/3/28/lwvabc-comments-on-the-impacts-of-enbridges-proposed-project-to-armor-a-channel-with-filter-aggregate-and-riprap-and-to-permanently-fill-an-area-of-floodplain-forested-wetland>
- In 2020, **LWV of California** hosted a talk on Biodiversity and Carbon Sequestration. <https://lwc.org/events/biodiversity-and-carbon-sequestration>

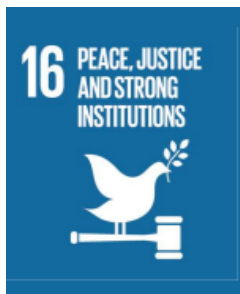
Other ideas:

Conduct studies of local land use, protections, pesticides, pollution.

Adopt a nature preserve.

Advocate against overdevelopment.

Host educational programs about plant-based food options.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

Overview of SDG #16: SDG 16 aims to strengthen people's capacities to withstand shocks and long-term stressors through the development of inclusive, accountable and peaceful societies and institutions. People suffer from many shocks, not the least of which is extreme hunger. The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) is one way to build sustainable and multilateral co-operation in making food security an instrument of peace. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-54476569> The WFP was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize 2020 for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon on war and conflict.

The extent of the problem that SDG #16 seeks to address is shown in mind-boggling statistics that reveal particularly serious challenges for vulnerable populations. For example,



Wall canvas at UN Headquarters, New York City
Photo by © J. Follows

- The number of people fleeing persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations in 2019 exceeded 79.5 million, the highest level ever seen.

<https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/statistics/>

- There have been millions of deaths from COVID-19, exacerbating the dire situation for displaced persons. In March 2020 United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres called for an immediate worldwide ceasefire and the establishment of open channels for diplomacy in a concerted effort to deliver humanitarian aid to those people most vulnerable to COVID-19 — people forced to live in overcrowded conditions, without health systems and no access to basic services.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059972>

- Human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists, and women are particular targets of violent acts and enforced disappearances. Statistics show an increase in hostile rhetoric online directed at the media and other institutions defending fundamental freedoms of all people.

<https://www.solidaritycenter.org/report-unionists-face-death-attacks-in-central-america/>;

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371343>

- Violence against children has also risen in recent years, which can take the form of physical, sexual, or emotional violence or neglect and can carry devastating lifelong consequences. The World Health Organization estimates that up to 1 billion children ages 2-17 have experienced violence or neglect in the past year. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-children> Lockdowns and school closures occasioned by COVID-19 have led to a surge in reports of violence against children at home and in cyberbullying and in online predators.

Access to justice is one of the primary objectives of SDG #16. This is of particular importance for vulnerable people, including children and incarcerated persons. In many parts of the world, **children** are deprived of legal identity; their births are not registered, and they are invisible to their country of birth, and many die without notice. They are not afforded social protections, and public health professionals are unable to gather statistics on their well-being or need for services.

Similarly, access to justice, while a fundamental human right, is often denied to **incarcerated** persons. Amnesty International estimates that 3.2 million people are being held in prison without trial. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/detention/>

Overcrowding in jails causes inhumane conditions and increased violence. These conditions worsened with the onset of COVID-19. <https://www.penalreform.org/resource/global-prison-trends-2020/>

Select **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** amplify the human right to a life of liberty, security of person, and access to justice and institutions to support these rights, for example:

- *Right to life, liberty and security of person* stated in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) Article 3 and **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR), Article 6 and 9.
- *Freedom from torture* stated in **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 5; the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR), Article 7; the **Convention Against Torture**, Article 2; and the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC), Article 37.
- *Protection of children from all forms of violence, abuse or exploitation*, stated in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC), Articles 19, 37, including trafficking and Articles 34-36 and Optional Protocol 1
- *Right to justice and due process*, stated in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** at Articles 8 and 10; the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, Articles 2, 14-15; and the **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women**, Article 2.
- *Right to legal personality* stated in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 6; the **International Convention on Civil and Political Rights**, Article 16; and the **Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities**, Article 12.
- *Right to participate in public affairs*, stated in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 21, and the **International Convention on Civil and Political Rights**, Article 25.

- *Right to access to information*, stated in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, Article 19, and the **International Convention on Civil and Political Rights**, Article 19.

The above conventions pertain to protections for individuals' human rights. In addition, the **United Nations Paris Principles**, adopted in 1993, set forth benchmarks for accreditation of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). The overarching benchmarks require institutions to protect and promote human rights. <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/PRINCI~5.PDF>

T. I. P. S. for LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #16 sets 2030 as the deadline to reduce all forms of violence, including violence against and trafficking of children, reducing illicit arms and financial flows, establishing legal identity for every individual, increasing participation in decision-making at all levels, and promoting the rule of law and justice for all.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG # 16 has been achieved when certain INDICATORS are met. Statistical analysis will show evidence of: number of victims of homicide disaggregated by sex and age; conflict-related deaths disaggregated by sex, age, and conflict; proportion of population (subset children) subjected to physical violence, psychological violence, and sexual violence over the prior year; number of victims of human trafficking disaggregated by sex, age, and form of exploitation; unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population; proportion of population who accessed a dispute resolution mechanism over the prior year; total value of illicit financial flows; proportion of illicit arms; proportion of people and businesses who paid bribes to public officials; diversity by sex, age, population groups, and disability in public service roles; proportion of voting rights of developing countries in international organizations; proportion of children under five years with registered births; number of countries adopting freedom of information laws; existence of independent human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles; proportion of the population reporting having felt harassed or discriminated against within the prior year.

P. is for League POLICY: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records available (*Impact on Issues 2018-2020*, p.6).

The *Impact on Issues 2020-2022* (p.12) also articulates the League's position to "Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations" and the position to "Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic, and humanitarian needs of all people."

The League's positions include statements on Violence Prevention, Arms Control, Trafficking in Persons, and Sentencing Policy. These specific positions and others may be found in *Impact on Issues 2020-2022*.

S. is for SUGGESTIONS:

Here are some local and State League Initiatives:

- California Criminal Justice Reform: <https://lwvc.org/our-work/issues/social-policy/criminal-justice-reform>

- Massachusetts Initiatives on Racial Justice: <https://lwnnewton.org/lets-push-for-racial-justice/> <https://lwmma.org/addressing-income-inequality/>

Other Resources:

- NYU Center on International Cooperation at <https://cic.nyu.edu/programs/sdg16plus>

- Overview of SDG 16 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/goal-16/>

- Take Action for the Sustainable Development Goals
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

- Accreditation of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) – Paris Principles
<https://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/ParisPrinciples.aspx>

- Jweied, Maha "From the Global to the Local: Leveraging International Engagement to Advance Justice at Home", NYU Center on International Cooperation, December 18, 2020
<https://cic.nyu.edu/publications/global-local-leveraging-international-engagement-advance-justice-home>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Overview of SDG #17: Many consider SDG #17 to be the most important of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, because it calls for revitalizing global partnerships to implement the other Sustainable Development Goals. It addresses the crucial international partnership components: financial inclusion, capacity building, technology, and trade.

<https://www.mdgmonitor.org/sdg17-sustainable-development-through-global-partnerships/>

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal17>

Sustainable Development Goal 17 *“recognizes multi-stakeholder partnerships as important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries. Goal 17 further seek(s) to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.”*

<https://sdgs.un.org/topics/multi-stakeholder-partnerships-and-voluntary-commitments>

Indeed, few individual countries can make progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on their own, and many less developed countries depend heavily on international aid to address the targets laid out in the 17 Goals.

<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-17-partnerships-for-the-goals.html>

The world is more interconnected than ever, and improved access to technology and knowledge fosters global partnerships and innovation. Moreover, coordinated global policies are essential to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/sdg-no-17-coronavirus-and-battle-collaborative-future>



Photo by © J. Follows

Several **United Nations Human Rights Conventions** relate to the priorities in Sustainable Development Goal #17.

- Article 27 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) states: *Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.*
- Article 28 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) states: *Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.*

- Article 2 of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) calls on all Member Parties to *take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means....*
- Article 32 of the UN **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (CRPD): *States parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the ... objectives of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities...*
- Article 4 of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC): *With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.*

T.I.P.S. FOR LEAGUES

T. is for TARGETS: SDG #17 contains 19 targets to create action toward partnerships for the goals. These targets include mobilizing resources to invest in least developed countries; sharing knowledge for access to science, technology, and innovation and strengthening capacity in least developed countries; increasing exports of developing countries; removing trade barriers and promoting a universal trading system under the World Trade Organization; and enhancing reliability of data.

I. is for INDICATORS: We will know that SDG #17 has been reached when certain INDICATORS are met. Some of the indicators include:

Net official development assistance as a proportion of donors' gross national income;
 Foreign direct investment;
 Fixed internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants;
 Proportion of individuals using the internet;
 Total amount of funding for developing countries to promote the development, transfer, dissemination, and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies;
 Developing countries' and least developed countries' share of global exports;
 Statistical capacity;
 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries.

P. is for League POLICY: A commitment to international cooperation is deeply rooted in the history of the League of Women Voters and embodied in League policies.

The League supports efforts to strengthen the development and humanitarian work of the United Nations through greater coordination among agencies, more efficient use of resources, additional funding as required, and more partnerships with NGOs and other non-state actors. (Impact on Issues, 2020-2022 at page 69)

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports a liberal US trade policy aimed at reducing trade barriers and expanding international trade. Such a policy helps foster international cooperation, democratic values, and economic prosperity at home and abroad. (Impact on Issues, 2020-2022 at page 72-73)

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that US interests in developing countries should reflect the reality of global interdependence....LWVUS strongly believes that development assistance, which is designed to meet the long-term social and economic needs of developing countries, is the most effective means of promoting legitimate US interests. (Impact on Issues, 2020-2022 at page 75)

S. is for SUGGESTIONS

Share your best practices that highlight the League's strength working with other groups to minimize the negative impact of environmental devastation and current economic and social challenges.

Offer workshops that support and develop partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including support for strengthening technical and scientific cooperation.

Find inspiration for collaborative programs on the UN's online platform for Partnerships for SDSs at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/>

PROGRAM PLANNING TOOLS: ENGAGING MEMBERS

References: In the preceding reviews, we have included links that will guide readers to online references for additional information related to each Goal. For more general information about the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals, please see:

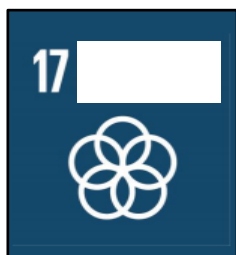
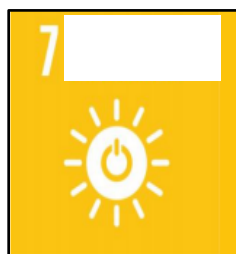
- Report of the UN Secretary General: Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development <https://undocs.org/A/73/254>
- Report to the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies: Training Guide, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/PTS20_HRTB_Training_Guide_PartI.pdf
See Annex I: Summary Table on Linkages Between the Sustainable Development Goals and Relevant International Human Rights Instruments.
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MDGs/Post2015/SDG_HR_Table.pdf
- UN Human Rights Council (43rd session, Feb-March 2020): The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is guided by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international human rights treaties. International law promoting and protecting human rights is consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights will convene intersessional meetings to hold dialogue on human rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Summary reports of the discussions, as well as a report on best practices, shall be delivered to the UN high-level political forum on sustainable development. <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/L.27>
- UN Human Rights Council and COVID-19: The response of Member States to COVID-19 must be in accordance with applicable international human rights laws. The UN Human Rights Council (Resolution 44/2 July 2020) directed the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights to conduct a needs assessment across countries that will inform its efforts to promote human rights and attainment of the sustainable development goals in its response to COVID-19. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10IRvIbDrovggJ1BrBP1soBug-ewdhiiX/view>

Activities: Help members of the community become familiar with the SDGs!

- Match Game: Match the SDG Goal with the Icon (see next page)
- SDG Video Script: Engage members by creating a video, using the script (below, developed by Jill Follows) that highlights priorities for each goal. The script was initially prepared for taping by League of Women Voters delegates to the 2019 UN Commission on the Status of Women.

MATCH THE SDG (GOAL) WITH ITS ICON

Use this tool to engage your League members in discussion about the SDGs



- a. Life below water
- b. Gender equality
- c. Life on land
- d. Good health and well being
- e. Peace, justice and strong institutions
- f. Affordable and clean energy
- g. Climate action
- h. Quality education
- i. Reduced inequalities
- j. No poverty
- k. Zero hunger
- l. Partnerships for the goals
- m. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- n. Responsible consumption and production
- o. Clean water and sanitation
- p. Decent work and economic growth
- q. Sustainable cities and communities

KEY: 1-j; 2-k; 3-d; 4-h; 5-b;
6-o; 7-f; 8-p; 9-m; 10-i; 11-
q; 12-n; 13-g; 14-a; 15-c;
16-e; 17-l

VIDEO SCRIPT:

LEARN ABOUT THE SDGs AND WOMEN'S PRIORITIES

INTRODUCTION

Speaker 1: The Member States came together at the United Nations in 2015 and adopted 17 ambitious strategic goals aimed at tackling global challenges.

Speaker 2: These 17 goals, known throughout the world as the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, are like blueprints. They guide governments toward achieving sustainable development by 2030. The attainment of the sustainable development goals is tied intrinsically to the realization of human rights.

Speaker 1: Women's organizations worldwide are essential to holding governments accountable for attaining these sustainable development goals

Speaker 2: The SDGs include a stand-alone Goal on gender equality, SDG #5, as well as commitments throughout the other goals to empower all women and girls.

Speaker 1: Each SDG will be announced by one of our members. Whenever possible we will highlight sections where women's priorities are reflected in the SDG's.

REVIEW OF GOALS

SDG #1: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Globally, there are 122 women aged 25 to 34 living in extreme poverty for every 100 men of the same age group. SDG #1 specifically targets the protection of women's rights to economic resources, including ownership and control over land and other forms of property and inheritance.

SDG #2: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

If women farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million. Globally, women are just 13% of agricultural land holders. SDG #2 specifically seeks to double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, through improving women's access to resources, knowledge, financial services and markets.

SDG #3: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

Maternal mortality has fallen by 37% since 2000 and the need for family planning services is slowly being met for more women, but the demand for these same services is increasing at a rapid pace. Only 52% of women who are married, or in a union, freely make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and health care. SDG #3 specifically plans to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, reduce maternal mortality, end HIV/AIDS and achieve universal health coverage.

SDG #4: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE & QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

About 1/3 of countries in developing regions have not achieved parity in primary education. Barriers to education translate into lack of access to skills and limited opportunity in the labor market for young women. SDG #4 seeks to ensure that all girls complete both primary and secondary education and then have equal access to tertiary and vocational education.

SDG #5: GENDER EQUALITY IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT AND A NECESSARY FOUNDATION FOR A PEACEFUL, PROSPEROUS AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Women's representation in parliaments around the globe is approximately 24% - still far from parity. 1 in 5 women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within the past year but there are no laws to specifically protect women from such violence in 49 countries. The number of girls married before age 18, as high as 750 million girls worldwide, has been decreasing in southern Asia. SDG #5 targets the end of all forms of discrimination against women and girls and aims to eliminate laws, policies and practices that stand in the way of gender parity. SDG #5 specifically supports laws that ensure women's full and effective participation and equal

opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and social life, including laws that value unpaid care work performed by women, provide social protection services that reduce their burden of work and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

SDG #6: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL
Women and girls are responsible for collecting water in 80% of households without access to water on the premises. In 2019, at CSW63, a draft proposal for a new target in SDG #6 was raised by a women's NGO. The proposed target would guarantee the availability of clean water and safe sanitation for women and girls, including for menstrual hygiene management in homes, schools, health clinics, transportation hubs, refugee camps, government offices, work sites and other public places.

SDG #7: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN CLEAN ENERGY FOR ALL
The health and well-being of some 3 billion people are adversely impacted by the lack of clean cooking fuels which causes indoor air pollution. Without electricity, women and girls have to spend hours fetching water, clinics cannot store vaccines for children and many school children cannot do homework at night and women cannot run competitive businesses. SDG #7 sets an ambitious goal to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services as well as setting a target to substantially increase the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

SDG #8: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE GOOD JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
It will take another 68 years to achieve equal pay globally unless decisive action is taken to eliminate the pay gap between men and women. Despite the increasing presence of women in public life, women continue to do 2.6 times more unpaid care and domestic work than men. SDG #8 targets equal pay for work of equal value, promotes safe working environments of all workers, including that for migrant women and seeks full, productive and decent work for all

SDG #9: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

In 2019, at CSW63, a draft proposal for a new target in SDG #9 was raised by a women's NGO. The proposed new target adopts a human-rights based and gender responsive approach to the design, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection and public services.

SDG #10: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF DISADVANTAGED AND MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Rural women are still up to three times more likely than their urban counterparts to die in childbirth. Women are also more likely than men to live below 50% of the median income. SDG #10 sets targets to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people. SDG #10 also seeks to empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all people, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic status.

SDG #11: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE
SDG #11 sets ambitious targets to: ensure safe and affordable housing in urban centers; create sustainable transport systems with special attention to the needs of women, children, persons with disabilities and old persons; strengthen efforts to safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage; significantly reduce the number of deaths and resulting economic losses from disasters; and provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

SDG #12: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS
Households consume 29% of global energy and contribute 21% of resultant CO2 emissions. If people worldwide switched to energy efficient lightbulbs the world would save \$120 billion (US dollars) annually. SDG #12 calls on Member States to implement the 10-year framework of programs of sustainable consumption and production; cut food waste in half; achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources; and achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes to significantly reduce their release into the air, water, and soil.

SDG #13: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT

Climate change affects everyone, especially the poor and vulnerable, as well as marginalized groups like women, children and the elderly. We already see how climate change exacerbates storms and disasters and resultant food and water scarcity that can lead to conflict. SDG #13 implements the commitment undertaken by developed countries who are parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

SDG #14: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Maintaining healthy oceans supports climate change mitigation and provides food, medicines, biofuels and other products essential to our lives. SDG #14 targets the reduction of marine pollution, the minimization of ocean acidification, the regulation of over-fishing and the conservation of at least 10% of coastal and marine areas.

SDG #15: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

In the five-year period between 2010 and 2015, the world lost 8 million acres of forest area. Poor rural women are especially affected by their depletion. SDG #15 targets the prevention of invasive alien species of plants on land and in water ecosystems, promotes urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity of species and seeks to prevent the extinction of threatened species.

SDG #16: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS.

Although more than half of the Member States at the United Nations established some form of human rights institution within their borders since 1998, institutional compliance is abysmally lacking in 75% of the countries. SDG #16 advances gender equality by: promoting the rule of law at national and international levels that ensures equal justice for all; enforcing non-discriminatory laws; targeting the end of trafficking in persons; and ensuring representative decision-making at all levels.

SDG #17: IT IS ESSENTIAL TO STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SDG #17 plans to help nations: improve their domestic capacity to tax and collect revenue; enhance the use of information and communication technology in developing countries; promote a non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization; promote civil society partnerships; and increase the availability of data disaggregated by income, gender, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographical location.

CONCLUSION: Thank you for taking the time to hear about the United Nations' SDGs. These goals aim to leave no one behind, and depend, in large part, on holding our elected officials accountable for expediting progress toward the realization of these goals.

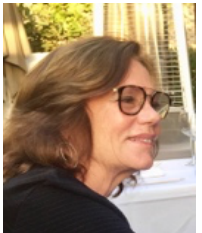
THE HUMAN RIGHTS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP: BIOS



Jill Follows (VA) served the national League as one of its UN Observers between 2017 and 2020. Her portfolio included the monitoring of United Nations human rights laws, bodies, and committees. She coordinated the HR-SIG initiative to document the synergy between the League's policy positions and the UN human rights conventions. She is both an attorney and RN. She is Co-Chair of Action and Advocacy for the LWV Fairfax Area 2020-2022 and Representative to the Fairfax County Commission for Women (Northern Virginia). She was a LWVFA delegate to the LWVUS 2020 Convention and 2019 Virginia LWV Convention.



Savanna Mapelli (PA), a member of the Pennsylvania League, was the prior chair of Voter Registration for the Bucks County LWV. She served as a LWVPA delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women 2017 - 2019. She is a licensed attorney in New Jersey and teaches international humanitarian law for the American Red Cross-both for Service to Armed Forces and Youth Action Campaigns.



Kathleen Montgomery (CA) serves on the board of her local League, Orange Coast, as Director of International Relations. She is a sociologist whose interests in human rights have permeated her research on women's experiences of incivility and disempowerment in the workplace, as well as conflicts of interest and patients' informed consent in the health care sector. She was a moderator on behalf of LWVFA and LWVOR at the LWVUS 2020 Convention; she served as a delegate to the 2021 LWV California Convention and as a LWVUS delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2019 and 2021.



Michele Thorne (IL) is an attorney and serves as the Equal Rights director on the board of the League of Women Voters of Wilmette. She was a delegate to the 2018 and 2020 LWVUS Conventions and served as a LWVUS delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2019 and 2021. Michele is an active member of groups advocating for certification of the Equal Rights Amendment, abolition of the Electoral College, adoption of the CEDAW treaty on women's rights, protection of the environment and the humane treatment of animals.



Anu Sahai (VA) has been a member of the League for seven years. She is the Co-President of the Fairfax Area League. A lawyer by profession, Anu worked in legal aid in India before moving to the United States in 1991. She commits time and energy to League initiatives, especially to those concerning ERA ratification, redistricting, and census. She was a LWVFA delegate to the 2020 LWVUS Convention and served as a LWVUS delegate to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2019 and 2021.