



AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ
DAYANIQLI İNKİŞAF ÜZRƏ
MİLLİ ƏLAQƏLƏNDİRMƏ SÜRASI



UNITED NATIONS
AZERBAIJAN



AZƏRBAYCAN
RESPUBLİKASININ
İQTİSADİYYAT
NAZİRLİYİ



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS DIALOGUES



Table of Contents

32	Foreword
34	Azerbaijan's National Commitments to Sustainable Development and SDG implementation
38	Objectives and Purpose of the SDG Dialogue Platform
40	First SDG Dialogue on "Green transformation in Azerbaijan"
42	Second SDG Dialogue on "Towards 2030: Social and economic inclusiveness in Azerbaijan"
44	Third SDG Dialogue on "Reflections on the Outcome of the Global SDG Summit 2023 and the role of Supreme Audit Institutions in SDGs implementation"
46	Fourth SDG Dialogue on "Stakeholder consultations on 4 th Voluntary National Review of Azerbaijan and Economic empowerment of Women and progress on SDG 5"
48	The fifth SDG Dialogue titled "Future Echoes: Bridging paths for Climate Action and Global Goals"
50	SDG Dialogue – special edition (6 th SDG Dialogue) on "Lifelong learning and future skills for sustainable development in Azerbaijan"
52	Looking Ahead: The Future of SDG Dialogues



SDG Dialogues in Azerbaijan

"Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2016, we established the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development, whose primary task is to define national priorities and to align different state programs and strategies with the SDGs"³.

*Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

"Our key priorities include building a continuously strengthening competitive economy, an inclusive society based on social justice, transforming our country into a hub of modern innovation driven by competitive human capital, and establishing a 'green growth' nation, as well as resettling liberated territories. These national priorities, when implemented in an interconnected manner, will yield high-impact results"⁴.

*Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

³ Speech by Ilham Aliyev at a meeting of Heads of State and Government on "Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond", 29 September 2020 (<https://president.az/en/articles/view/42271>)

⁴ To the participants of the Forum on "Tax Service – 25: Sustainable Development and Effective Transformation", 13 February 2025 (<https://president.az/en/articles/view/68145>)

Foreword



MIKAYIL JABBAROV

Minister of Economy of the
Republic of Azerbaijan

The United Nations (UN) plays an effective role in promoting global development and enhancing human well-being. The Government of Azerbaijan actively participates in the UN's global initiatives, contributing to these efforts through joint projects. The hosting of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) in Baku, and the outcomes achieved, reaffirmed our country's position as a responsible and reliable partner in addressing global challenges.

The Republic of Azerbaijan was among the first nations to join the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Numerous national programs and strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development in Azerbaijan are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each of the 17 SDGs closely corresponds to the activities implemented in the social, economic, and environmental spheres of the country.

The signing of the peace agenda with Armenia in the United States on 8 August 2025, with Azerbaijan's initiative, has paved the way for lasting peace in the region and opened up broad opportunities for partnerships founded on social and mutual trust. This historic milestone provides a solid foundation for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

In alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, Azerbaijan is undertaking strategic measures to establish an economic model driven by green energy, digital transformation, and innovation. In the liberated territories, innovative infrastructure is being developed under the "smart city", "smart village", and "green energy zone" concepts. The introduction of SDG 18 — Mine Action, initiated by President Ilham Aliyev, carries particular importance for the restoration of the liberated territories, the safe resettlement of their populations, and the creation of new economic opportunities.

Significant reforms are being carried out in Azerbaijan to foster a favorable business environment, support entrepreneurship, and formalize labor relations. These measures are driving the growth of the non-oil sector and promoting the establishment of new production and processing enterprises, thereby creating employment opportunities both in major cities and across the regions.

Azerbaijan, which places particular emphasis on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, is one of only five countries worldwide and the sole country in the region and the CIS to have submitted its Fourth Voluntary National Review. The SDG Dialogues, jointly organized with the United Nations in Azerbaijan, play a vital role in strengthening collaboration among the government, civil society, the private sector, and international partners toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our goal is to build a better future for all by developing a sustainable and diversified economy, nurturing healthy and competitive human capital, and activating new drivers of economic growth.

Foreword



VLADANKA ANDREEVA

United Nations Resident
Coordinator in Azerbaijan

The SDG Dialogues were created as a joint initiative of the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Economy, and the United Nations in Azerbaijan to provide a dedicated multi-stakeholder platform for open and solutions-oriented discussion. Their purpose has been clear from the outset: to bring together government institutions, civil society, the private sector, academia, international partners, and young people to shape policies that advance the national vision for sustainable development.

Since their launch, the Dialogues have grown into one of the country's most dynamic spaces for policy exchange to inspire collective action. They have addressed some of Azerbaijan's most pressing priorities—green transformation, inclusive growth, gender equality, climate action, financing for development, and lifelong learning. Each Dialogue produced a concise policy brief with evidence, global examples, and recommendations tailored to national needs. These briefs have become practical tools for ministries, development partners, and the wider public.

Beyond their technical outputs, the Dialogues have fostered trust and inclusion. They have demonstrated that achieving the SDGs is not the task of government alone but requires a whole-of-society endeavor considering the integrated nature of Goals. By ensuring that diverse voices, including youth, women, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable groups, are heard, the Dialogues have reinforced Azerbaijan's commitment to the principle of leaving no one behind.

I am proud of the contributions this joint initiative has made in fostering stronger partnerships, enhancing policy coherence, and driving progress across key development priorities. As the country advances its Azerbaijan 2030 vision and continues to demonstrate leadership on global and regional fronts, the SDG Dialogues will remain a cornerstone for evidence-based and forward-looking policymaking that reflects shared priorities and collective aspirations.

1

Azerbaijan's National Commitments to Sustainable Development and SDG implementation

Azerbaijan has made strong progress in advancing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), embedding them into its long-term national vision. Two key frameworks guide this work: Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development and the 2022–2026 Socio-Economic Development Strategy, both aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

Azerbaijan 2030 sets five priorities:

- A growing, competitive economy
- An inclusive society based on social justice
- Modern innovation and skilled human capital
- The “Great Return” to liberated territories
- A clean environment and green growth

To translate these into action, a national SDG framework was launched in 2016, with 96 targets and 129 indicators now tailored to national needs. In 2023, Azerbaijan also introduced a new SDG 18 on Mine Action, recognizing it as essential for sustainable development.

The national SDG 18 on mine action adopted by Azerbaijan include corresponding five targets and eleven indicators, which are listed below:

Targets	Indicators
18.1. Clearing the areas of mines and unexploded ordnance, ensuring peace and security;	18.1.1. Neutralized in liberated territories: a) the number of mines (in the division of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines); b) number of other explosives;
	18.1.2. Areas cleared of mines and other unexploded ordnance in liberated territories (by hectares) and their proportion to the total territory of the country (by percentage);
18.2. Allocation of funds to clear areas of landmines and other explosive munitions;	18.2.1. To clear areas of mines and other explosive munitions: a) the amount of funds allocated from the state budget (in national currency and US dollars); b) the ratio of funds allocated from the state budget to budget expenditures (by percentage);
	18.2.2. The total amount of funds raised from donor organizations (in national currency and US dollars) for clearing of mines and other explosive munitions;
18.3. Creation of safe settlement conditions in the liberated territories and reintegration of the population;	18.3.1. The number of rebuilt settlements in the liberated territories;
	18.3.2. The population in the rebuilt settlements in the liberated territories: a) the number (by residential distribution); b) by the proportion to the number of total population of the country (by age, sex);
	18.3.3. The number of employed population in the liberated territories (by age, sex);
	18.3.3.1. the permanent settled Population;
	18.3.3.2. the temporary settled population
	18.3. 4. Number of people covered by Mine and Other Explosive Ordnance Awareness (MED) activities

Targets	Indicators
18.4. Involvement of land cleared from mines and other explosives into agricultural circulation;	18.4.1. Areas involved in agricultural circulation in territories cleared of mines and other explosive munitions (hectares);
18.5. Strengthening the medical-social rehabilitation and social protection of the population affected by mines and other explosive munitions;	18.5.1. Damaged by mines and other explosive munitions : a) the military personnel, those involved in demining activities ; b) the number of civilians involved in demining activities (by age and gender) 18.5.1.1. Died people 18.5.1.2. Injured people; 18.5.1.2.1. Disabled people; 18.5.1.3. Others.
	18.5.2. Number of persons affected by landmines and other explosive ordnance covered by social protection programs;
	18.5.3. The amount of social payments (in national currency and US dollars) made in relation to the victims of mines and other explosive munitions;
	18.5.4. Treatment costs of persons injured by mines and other explosive munitions (in national currency and US dollars);
	18.5.5. Medical social rehabilitation cost of persons injured by mines and other explosive munitions (in national currency and US dollars);
	18.5.6. The total amount of funds spent for social protection of the population affected by mines and other explosive munitions (in national currency and US dollars).

Implementation is led by the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development (NCCSD), chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. Azerbaijan has also demonstrated global leadership by submitting four Voluntary National Reviews and engaging consistently with United Nations (UN) human rights principles Leaving No one Behind.

2

Objectives and Purpose of the SDG Dialogue Platform

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs require a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort. To drive this, Azerbaijan launched the SDG Dialogues in 2022, led by the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development, Ministry of Economy of Republic of the Azerbaijan and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office.

The Dialogues bring together government, UN, private sector, civil society, academia, youth, and international partners to share knowledge, showcase best practices, and propose practical solutions that support the Azerbaijan 2030 Strategy.

A flagship product of the Dialogues is the Policy Brief—a concise 5–7 page note with analysis, global examples, and actionable recommendations. Policy Briefs guide government ministries and the NCCSD, while also serving the wider public through UN and government communication platforms.

First SDG Dialogue on “Green transformation in Azerbaijan”

2 November, 2022

Focus:

The first SDG Dialogue focused on **green transformation**, a national priority under Azerbaijan 2030. It also contributed to preparations for COP27. Azerbaijan has pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions by **35% by 2030** and **40% by 2050**, and to create a “Net Zero Emission” zone in the liberated territories.

Key Findings:

- Progress achieved in poverty reduction and service growth, but economic diversification challenges still remain;
- Environmental challenges persist: rising emissions, water stress, and urban air pollution;
- Budget allocations on environmental protection remain low (0.33% of GDP in 2020).

Policy Recommendations:

- Develop a **national decarbonization roadmap** and boost renewable energy, water, and waste management;
- Expand **green finance** and strengthen institutional capacity;
- Improve environmental data, monitoring, and enforcement.

Takeaway:

Azerbaijan has laid strong foundations for green growth, but needs more ambitious, integrated action to ensure a **resilient, low-carbon, and inclusive economy**.





Second SDG Dialogue on “Towards 2030: Social and economic inclusiveness in Azerbaijan”

14 June, 2023



Focus:

This Dialogue addressed inclusive growth and social justice, a priority under Azerbaijan 2030 and the 2022–2026 Development Strategy. It highlighted the importance of ensuring vulnerable groups—youth, IDPs, migrants, rural communities, the elderly, and persons with disabilities can participate fully in socio-economic life.

Key Findings:

- Poverty fell from 49% in 2001 to 5.7% in 2022;
- Secondary education rates are high, tertiary education and health coverage slightly improving;
- Environmental pressures continue, with rising energy intensity and water stress.

Policy Recommendations:

- Launch a **national productivity and innovation initiative** and diversify exports;
- Expand **social protection**, including child benefits and shock-responsive systems;
- Close the **gender wage gap**, increase women's leadership, and strengthen legal protections;
- Improve **digital and health access**, especially in the regions;
- Prioritize **green policies and infrastructure** to decouple growth from emissions.

Takeaway:

Azerbaijan has achieved impressive poverty reduction and social progress, but reforms are needed to make growth more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.



Third SDG Dialogue on “Reflections on the Outcome of the Global SDG Summit 2023 and the role of Supreme Audit Institutions in SDGs implementation”

24 October, 2023

Focus:

This Dialogue reviewed the outcomes of the **Global SDG Summit 2023** and the **High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development**, while examining how Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) can strengthen SDG implementation and public spending efficiency. Azerbaijan’s National Commitment to SDG Transformation, submitted at the Summit, built on its 2022–2026 Development Strategy, the “Great Return” programme, Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs), and Sustainable Finance Roadmap.

Key Findings:

- Public spending is central to financing SDGs; effective auditing ensures accountability and results;
- SAIs play a vital role in monitoring national SDG performance, recognized by UN General Assembly resolutions;
- Azerbaijan’s SAI shared findings from audits of SDGs on **health** (chronic kidney disease programme), **forests**, and **cultural heritage**:
 - **Health:** Chronic kidney disease programme lacked indicators, legal frameworks, and equitable service delivery.

- **Forests:** Outdated laws, weak institutional capacity, and poor monitoring undermined sustainable forest management.
- **Cultural heritage:** Poor planning, weak protection systems, and low investment limited preservation and tourism potential.

Policy Recommendations:

- Strengthen audit systems and data transparency for SDG-related spending;
- Update legal frameworks and institutional mandates for forests, heritage, and health;
- Improve capacity, funding, and technology use in national programs;
- Foster public engagement and accountability through inclusive reporting.

Takeaway:

The Dialogue underscored that effective public spending and independent audits are critical to accelerating SDG progress. Strengthening SAIs will help Azerbaijan ensure **transparent, accountable, and impactful** implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Fourth SDG Dialogue on “Stakeholder consultations on 4th Voluntary National Review of Azerbaijan and Economic empowerment of Women and progress on SDG 5”

7 May, 2024

Focus:

This Dialogue combined two themes: stakeholder consultations on Azerbaijan’s **4th Voluntary National Review (VNR)** and the acceleration of **SDG 5 on gender equality**, with a spotlight on women’s economic empowerment. It also featured findings from the ILO study “Care at Work in Azerbaijan: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender-equal world of work.”

The event also included a **South-South exchange** with Lao P.D.R under the VNR twinning initiative.

Key Findings:

- **VNR Review:** Provided a platform for inclusive consultations, shaping national priorities and commitments;
- **Economic Diversification:** Recognized as essential for sustainable and inclusive growth through innovation, entrepreneurship, and trade expansion;
- **Climate Action:** Emphasized energy transition, circular economy, and addressing gender dimensions of climate change;
- **Data & Financing:** Strengthening SDG data systems and aligning financing with the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) and SDG Investor Map were seen as critical;
- **Gender Equality:** Persistent barriers remain in workplace equality, leadership, access to finance;

- **Care Economy:** Identified as a transformative driver, requiring new policies, ILO convention ratification, and improved working conditions.

Policy Recommendations:

- Diversify the economy and scale up **human capital investment** to foster innovation and resilience;
- Accelerate **climate action and green financing** while ensuring a just transition;
- Expand **social protection and care economy policies**, promoting decent work and equal pay;
- Strengthen **women’s leadership, entrepreneurship, and access to resources** through public-private partnerships;
- Improve **data systems, gender budgeting, and monitoring** for evidence-based policy-making.

Takeaway:

The Dialogue reinforced Azerbaijan’s commitment to leaving no one behind. By linking the 4th VNR process with gender equality, it underscored that inclusive, climate-smart, and gender-responsive policies are central to achieving the SDGs by 2030.



The fifth SDG Dialogue titled “Future Echoes: Bridging paths for Climate Action and Global Goals”

31 October, 2024

Focus:

Held as a national consultation ahead of COP29, this Dialogue explored how Azerbaijan can align its climate commitments and NDC investment needs with overall SDG financing. It emphasized climate action as central to the country's development and its role as COP29 host.

Participants:

Over 120 representatives from government, UN agencies, private sector, civil society, academia, and international partners.

Key Findings:

- Azerbaijan's hosting of **COP29** reflects international confidence in its climate leadership;
- Strong commitment to a **green transition** and integration of climate action into socio-economic planning;
- **Multilateral cooperation** and UN support remain critical for effective climate governance;
- Draft **NDC 3.0** outlines long-term climate strategy with co-benefits for inclusive development;

- Stakeholders stressed the importance of **resilience, partnerships, and evidence-based policy**.

Policy Recommendations:

- Align **NDC investment needs** with broader SDG financing strategies;
- Scale up **renewable energy, energy efficiency, and green technologies**;
- Strengthen **multilateral partnerships** to support adaptation and resilience;
- Ensure **inclusive participation** of civil society, youth, and private sector in climate policy-making.

Takeaway:

The Dialogue reaffirmed Azerbaijan's climate leadership and commitment to the SDGs. As COP29 host, the country has a unique opportunity to advance both national and global climate action through **inclusive, well-financed, and partnership-driven solutions**.



SDG Dialogue – special edition (6th SDG Dialogue) on “Lifelong learning and future skills for sustainable development in Azerbaijan”

21 June, 2025

Focus:

This Dialogue explored how **lifelong learning and future-ready skills** can drive sustainable development and support Azerbaijan’s national priorities. It highlighted the need for education systems to adapt to global challenges such as climate change and digital transformation.

Participants:

Organized by the Ministry of Economy, NCCSD Secretariat, and UN Resident Coordinator’s Office, the session brought together government, UN, academia, private sector, and international experts.

Key Findings:

- Future skills – **critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, and problem-solving** – are increasingly vital alongside technical training;
- National initiatives such as the **4 Industrial Revolution Academy** and the “National Program” (free access to 8,000+ global courses) are building a skilled workforce for a digital economy;

- Azerbaijan is the only CIS country to have submitted **four VNRs**, reflecting strong UN partnership and global leadership;
- The country’s innovative **SDG financing approaches** have been recognized internationally as good practice.

Policy Recommendations:

- Modernize **education systems** to integrate digital and green skills;
- Expand **lifelong learning opportunities** to reach rural and vulnerable populations;
- Strengthen **public-private partnerships** to align training with future labor market needs;
- Invest in **inclusive employment policies** to ensure equitable access to new opportunities.

Takeaway:

Lifelong learning is a transformative tool for economic resilience and competitiveness. By equipping citizens with future-ready skills, Azerbaijan can sustain inclusive growth and remain at the forefront of SDG progress.



Looking Ahead: The Future of SDG Dialogues

The SDG Dialogues have proven to be a powerful multi-stakeholder platform, uniting government institutions, the UN, private sector, civil society, academia, international financial institutions, and development partners. Together, they exchange knowledge, share global best practices, and co-create innovative solutions to advance the Azerbaijan 2030 Strategy in line with the global 2030 Agenda.

So far, the Dialogues have addressed key themes:

- **Environmental sustainability and climate action**
(SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15)
- **Inclusive economic growth and social wellbeing**
(SDGs 1, 2, 8, 9, 10)
- **Gender equality and women's economic empowerment**
(SDGs 5, 8, 10)

Building on this success, the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Economy, in partnership with the United Nations in Azerbaijan, remain committed to sustaining and expanding the Dialogues.

