

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN PROGRESS



There are **26 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the U.S.**, bringing hundreds of millions of dollars in tourism revenue to economies and thousands of American jobs. Applications for 17 sites in 11 states are pending.

## UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO leads programs focused on education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communications. UNESCO's work includes defending press freedoms, expanding access to primary education, protecting and restoring cultural heritage sites and promoting international Holocaust and genocide education. In fact, UNESCO was a partner in the effort to establish the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Since 2015, the agency has also helped 24 countries develop post-conflict education plans, with 11 countries affected by genocide receiving support for Holocaust education. In recent years, UNESCO has also become an important forum for developing ethical standards for artificial intelligence.

After the U.S. withdrew from UNESCO in 2018, China became the organization's largest funder, using that leverage to urge increased UNESCO-led vocational and job training programs in countries connected to China's Belt and Road Initiative. In 2023, the U.S. reentered the agency because it was manifestly in America's interest to have a seat at the table.

## UN Development Programme (UNDP)

With a project portfolio spanning 170 countries, UNDP is the UN's global development network, focusing on democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, the environment and HIV/AIDS. UNDP is one of the implementing bodies for UN electoral assistance, helping to facilitate elections in around 50 countries each year, including nations undergoing sensitive post-conflict political transitions.

**U.S. Senate Appropriations has repeatedly singled out UNDP for its unique impact in areas of vital U.S. interest.**

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, UN Member States unanimously adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These 17 interrelated objectives identify urgent areas of action to be taken by Member States to achieve increased global peace and prosperity by 2030. Goals include ending hunger, increasing access to education, reducing global inequalities, improving access to clean water, ending poverty and more. The SDGs are built on the Millennium Development Goals and have long had the strong support of U.S. business and civil society.

# EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

## World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency dedicated to eradicating hunger and malnutrition, delivering food assistance in emergencies and building community resilience. The agency has been an exemplar of strong U.S. leadership in the UN system and led by an American since 1992.

Each year, WFP provides food aid, cash assistance and nutrition support to more than **150 million people across 120 countries experiencing conflict**, natural disasters and other disruptions.

Over the past five years, WFP has received more than five million metric tons of food **purchased from American farmers and food producers worth more than \$2.6 billion**.

The U.S. Food for Peace Program is the longest running permanent program for providing international, in-kind food aid and one of the main avenues through which the U.S. supports the work of WFP. Each year, Food for Peace gives tens of millions of pounds of U.S. commodities to WFP – tackling world hunger and benefitting American growers.

## UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

UNHCR protects and safeguards the rights of refugees worldwide and helps facilitate resettlement or return home. For those unable to safely return to their home countries, UNHCR delivers life-saving aid and promotes access to education, healthcare and economic opportunity. **On the ground in 136 countries**, UNHCR is helping tens of millions of people displaced by famine, armed conflict and persecution.

## UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF provides humanitarian and development assistance to children and mothers, working to increase the number of girls enrolled in school and provide clean water, sanitation, educational support and nutritional assistance to children in disaster zones and conflict regions around the world. **Each year, UNICEF procures vaccines that reach 45% of the world's children, saving the lives of 2.5 million children.**

## In 2023



WFP delivered **400 million pounds of food to Sudan**, facing the world's largest internal displacement crisis.



UNICEF provided services to **children in 107 countries** following 400 emergencies.



**32 million refugees** were served by UNHCR personnel, 90% of whom are based in the field.

# GLOBAL HEALTH

## World Health Organization (WHO)

With a presence in 194 countries – including research partnerships with more than 70 U.S. institutions – WHO is the world's only multilateral, international public health agency. WHO coordinates its entire global public health mandate with a budget of \$3.3 billion a year. **For every dollar the U.S. gives WHO, it receives \$0.46 back to the economy in procurement contracts.**

On January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump announced the U.S. would seek withdrawal from WHO. The year-long process of withdrawal is an opportunity for the U.S. to engage with WHO stakeholders. Outside of WHO, the U.S. would lose its influence in the world's largest global health forum and no longer benefit from WHO actions, including combatting dangerous fentanyl or monitoring and responding to deadly outbreaks of avian flu, measles and other infectious diseases.

## WHO Successes

**70+ research institutions in the U.S. work with WHO to advance medical discovery and better health outcomes.**

More than 300 million people died from **smallpox** in the 20th century alone. Thanks to U.S. funding and the success of WHO's global vaccination and disease surveillance programs, smallpox was the first disease to be globally eradicated.

U.S. funding supports the implementation of WHO's global disease monitoring for **polio**. Without these detection capabilities, polio could surge to 200,000 cases annually within a decade – inevitably reaching American communities.

Through WHO and the use of insecticide, drug therapy and environmental planning, **malaria** was nearly eradicated by the 1970s. Today, the mortality rate for the disease has fallen below 50%.

## UN Population Fund (UNFPA)

UNFPA is the largest international source of funding for population and reproductive health programs in the world. UNFPA helps women, men and young people plan their families, including the number, timing and spacing of their children, go through pregnancy and childbirth safely and avoid sexually transmitted infections. UNFPA also combats violence against women and child marriage. *The agency does not provide, support or advocate for abortion, nor does it support, promote or condone coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization.*



From 2022-2023, UNFPA helped **2.4 million babies** safely come into the world.

# CRIME AND MIGRATION

## UN Office on Drugs and Crime

UNODC is a leader in the global fight against illicit drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism. Collaborating closely with the U.S. government on key bipartisan issues, UNODC works to prevent and stop human trafficking and the trafficking of wildlife and other illicit goods, combat illegal fentanyl flows and provide global monitoring and technical assistance to nations strengthening domestic law enforcement capacity. UNODC is also the secretariat for the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Following requests from the U.S., the Commission voted to schedule leading chemicals used to produce fentanyl, adding them to an international control list. Multilateral actions such as these reinforce efforts by American law enforcement to make communities safer and more resilient.

## International Organization for Migration (IOM)

IOM supports migrants worldwide, working with host governments to provide resources to displaced populations and promote safe, legal paths to immigration.

In some politically unstable regions of the Western Hemisphere, UN agencies like IOM are the only operating agencies on the ground, producing political and humanitarian dividends that states cannot achieve on their own. IOM addresses the following issues:

**Legal Pathways:** IOM works with countries in the Western Hemisphere to establish and enhance legal migration options within Latin America.

**Local Integration:** IOM supports government efforts to ensure sustainable, local integration of migrants, reducing the need for onward migration to the U.S. or further away from their country of origin.

**Dangers of Migration:** IOM conducts extensive, targeted public information campaigns in the Western Hemisphere to discourage migrants from pursuing irregular migration journeys.

**Drivers of Migration:** IOM implements programs in the Western Hemisphere aimed at tackling the drivers of irregular migration by improving economic opportunities, thereby enabling individuals to remain in their countries of origin.

**Border Management:** IOM works with governments to enhance their capacity to manage borders effectively and improve immigration and border governance.

## Global Cooperation

In 2023, to combat drug and illicit goods trafficking through Mexican ports, the U.S. Department of State, the Mexican government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched the Container Inspection Programme at the Port of Manzanillo – Mexico's largest. With technical assistance from UNODC and the World Customs Organization, the Mexican Navy and customs officers are conducting more efficient and effective inspections using risk assessments, document analysis and high-tech scanning technology.

# 860

**UNODC** seized 860 tons of drugs and other commodities between 2020 and 2023.

# 4M

**IOM** support has given four million Venezuelans legal immigration status to remain in South America and the Caribbean.

# 1M

**IOM** supports more than one million internally displaced Haitians – the only agency providing emergency relief to returned Haitian migrants.

# CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Unpredictable weather poses a threat to Americans. Whether through safeguarding against harmful chemical pollutants or strengthening the resilience of coastal communities, the UN's work on climate and environmental issues is protecting the U.S. from sea to shining sea.

## UN Environmental Programme (UNEP)

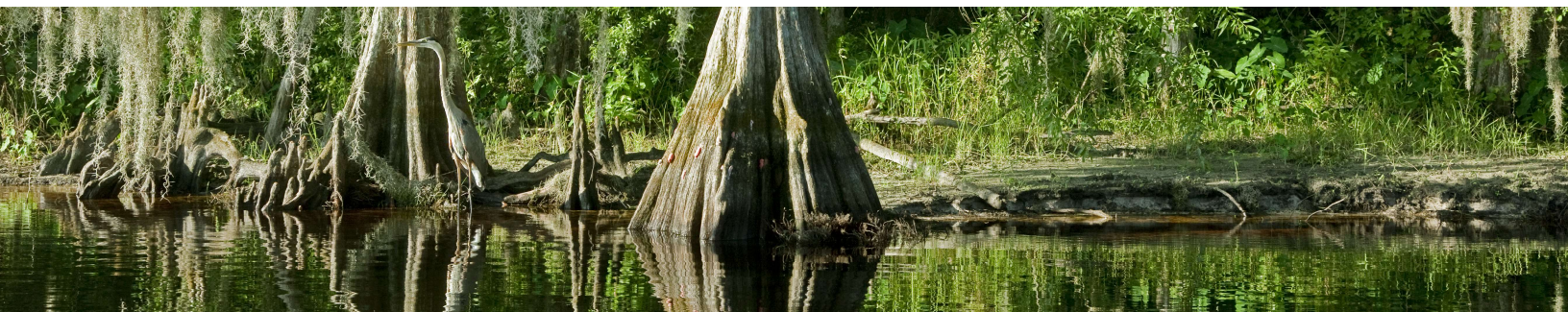
UNEP coordinates environmental activities, developing international environmental conventions, assessing global trends, encouraging civil sector partnerships and strengthening institutions. UNEP covers issues like plastic pollution in the ocean, the transboundary movement of toxic chemicals and environmental conservation guidance.

## UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

In 1992, the United Nations Earth Summit led to the creation of UNFCCC to reduce emissions and tackle the climate crisis. All signatories meet annually at the Conference of Parties (COP) for a status update. U.S. President George H.W. Bush signed the treaty in 1992, which the Senate unanimously ratified. Today, UNFCCC has universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and 2015 Paris Agreement.

## UN Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat)

UN Habitat was established by the General Assembly in 1975 as the first agency focused on urbanization and "local action in times of crisis." The agency works across 90 countries to build safe, inclusive and sustainable towns and cities as a mechanism to reduce inequality, alleviate poverty and positively transform communities.



## Did you know?

- In 2023, the UN Environment Programme supported communities across 50 countries adapting to drought and other climate impacts. These efforts are expected to **help 3.5 million people and restore 241,000 hectares of land**.
- U.S. leadership was instrumental in securing the passage of the Montreal Protocol in 1987. Since its ratification by Congress in 1988, **an estimated 2 million cases of skin cancer have been prevented each year, saving roughly \$1.8 trillion in medical expenses** like skin cancer treatment.
- Through UN Habitat's work in 2023, **more than 280,000 people gained access to basic services and mobility**.

# TECHNICAL AGENCIES

## International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

ITU is the UN agency responsible for managing equal access to the spectrum networks that allow data to travel across 192 Member States, including the U.S. Working to develop and encourage widespread use of common technical standards for telecommunications increases global interconnectivity, enabling American technology to seamlessly integrate with the rest of the world.

## UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

UNOOSA promotes international cooperation in space exploration and technological development. Maintaining a central register of objects launched into outer space, the agency helps states prevent and manage disasters and supports policies that ensure the sustainable and peaceful use of the skies. Ensuring international cooperation in space is critical for American national security and economic interests.

## International Maritime Organization (IMO)

IMO is dedicated to developing and maintaining comprehensive international shipping regulations and maritime security, working closely with the U.S. Coast Guard and agencies like the EPA, State Department and NOAA. Maritime transport supports over 30 million American jobs and accounts for 95% of cargo entering the U.S., making IMO an essential partner.

## International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

IAEA helps verify Member State compliance with multilateral nuclear non-proliferation treaties and conducts nuclear safety and research activities. In recent years, the agency has played a critical role in monitoring Iran's nuclear program and maintaining security at Ukraine's nuclear facilities.

## Universal Postal Union (UPU)

UPU is the principal forum for cooperation regarding postal services, keeping Americans in touch from Boise to Bali. By setting postal standards and promoting affordable services worldwide, the agency facilitates truly global trade and communication.

## American Leadership

In 2022, American Doreen Bogdan-Martin was elected Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), becoming the first woman to lead the UN specialized agency in its 157-year history. Bogdan-Martin, a former U.S. Commerce Department official, defeated a Russian candidate by a vote of 139-25 and replaced a Chinese national who previously headed the agency.

**U.S. engagement ensured ITU - responsible for global telecommunications standards - had an advocate of free and fair access to the internet at the helm.**

# 100

ITU has published 100+ standards for the responsible use of AI.

# 3K

IAEA conducts 3,000+ verification visits at 1,300 nuclear facilities each year.

# 193

UPU negotiates post codes for 193 countries.

# 8.5K

UNOOSA helped protect 8,500 U.S. satellites orbiting Earth in 2024.