



Dell and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

The world has made significant progress on key social and environmental issues, but much remains to be done.

- *Dell is encouraged by the progress made on key social and environmental issues over the past two-and-a-half decades, but realizes that progress has been uneven across many fronts and major challenges remain.*

Between 1990 and 2015, the number of people living in extreme poverty decreased from 1.9 billion to 836 million, with most progress occurring between 2000 and 2015. Over the same period, the global under-five mortality rate declined by over 50% and over 2 billion people gained access to improved sanitation. While these are impressive gains, they did not meet the full ambitions of [the Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) introduced by the United Nations in 2000.

On environmental issues, progress has been uneven as well. While ozone-depleting substances have been virtually eliminated since 1990, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have risen from a little over 350 parts per million to over 400 parts per million over the same timeframe.

Part of the United Nation's "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," [the Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) build on the MDGs to bring continued awareness and focus to humanity's most important social and environmental issues. Comprised of 17 separate goals, the SDGs cover a range of topics, from ending poverty and protecting terrestrial eco-systems to improving education and driving inclusive growth.

The Sustainable Development Goals will inspire activity across a wide set of issues.

- *Dell expects the momentum that has built up around the SDGs to continue, and that a wide variety of organizations will leverage the SDG framework.*
- *Dell anticipates that organizations for which the SDGs are particularly relevant will ask their suppliers to report on SDG-related activities and impact.*

By mid-2016, according to a United Nations Development Group (UNDG) [report on early adoption and use of the SDGs](#), sixteen countries had already requested UN assistance in mapping existing goals and efforts to the SDG framework. Such initial steps around the SDGs typically focus on public awareness and building government-led multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop and implement policy.

Governments, however, are not the only active entities. The NGO community has embraced the SDGs since the official announcement of the Agenda 2030 program. The business community, as well, has taken notice. Already, a number of companies in the ICT sector have started demonstrating how their CSR programs are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The more forward-thinking companies in this set of initial adopters have also been exploring how attention to the SDGs can deliver business value back to their organizations.

As both public and private organizations engage with the SDGs, they will expect other organizations with which they work to support their efforts. Organizations whose work intersects with the SDGs through these stakeholders will have to be able to communicate their efforts and describe their work within the SDG framework. In addition, organizations should expect scrutiny if they are perceived as working against the SDGs, particularly with respect to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and goals related to human rights.

Government policies and initiatives will be the primary drivers of the SDGs, but will need significant help and support from the commercial sector.

- *Dell expects major SDG initiatives to be driven primarily at governmental or intergovernmental levels.*
- *Dell believes governmental efforts will frequently need to partner or collaborate with the commercial sector in order to have maximum effect.*
- *Dell believes the commercial sector has an important role to play in showing pathways to, and catalyzing, successful initiatives.*

The issues on which the SDGs are focused are huge. For example, current estimates suggest that more than 2.8 billion people will face water stress or scarcity by 2025 (water and sanitation are part of SDG 6). Because of the massive nature of these issues, reaching the SDGs will require collective action from citizens, governments, entrepreneurs and multinational companies.

In addition, the intent of the Agenda 2030 program is for SDG-related efforts to be driven at the national level. This suggests that most, if not all, significant SDG initiatives will be driven by governmental bodies or intergovernmental organizations. The importance of intergovernmental efforts will be particularly important in the developing world, where national governments may not, by themselves, have the resources or expertise to drive successful efforts.

Despite the importance of governmental and intergovernmental efforts, commercial entities, large and small, will make important contributions. Much of the work, infrastructure, and innovative technologies required for the SDGs will be developed and deployed by the commercial sector. In addition, commercial entities will take an active role in identifying, and advocating for, effective approaches towards the SDGs. Within the commercial sector, these efforts will be present at all scales – from focused solutions by start-ups and small businesses to industry-wide or even cross-industry engagements.

The commercial sector will, in turn, need support from the public sector in order to be successful.

- *Dell believes that one of the key success factors for many SDG-inspired initiatives will be the availability of consistent, comprehensive and high-quality national-level data on SDG targets and indicators.*
- *Dell believes that clear indications of long-term governmental and inter-governmental support and investment will accelerate commercial engagement.*

Each of the Sustainable Development Goals is supported by a number of more specific targets (169 in total), with each target being further represented by one or more indicators. While the scope of the Agenda 2030 program is comprehensive, data availability on the individual targets and indicators is uneven.

As a result, Dell expects that many of the SDGs will benefit from additional development work and infrastructure focusing on data identification, collection and analysis. This may also include additional work on identifying change mechanisms linking targets and indicators with goal progress, in the context of specific activities or initiatives. As data availability and quality improve, opportunities to have a positive effect on the SDGs should become more visible and more effective.

For many organizations, the first step will be to describe current work, either for-profit or philanthropic, within the framework provided by the SDGs. Additional engagement from commercial organizations will arise as these organizations are able to assess business relevance and quantify business cases for involvement. Governmental and intergovernmental bodies can accelerate these engagements by providing clear market signals through policy or investment.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) will play key roles in progress across all of the SDGs.

- *Dell believes ICT will enable positive outcomes across all of the 17 SDGs.*
- *Dell believes individual ICT providers will be important enablers of success, and coordinated action across the ICT industry will be necessary to accelerate progress.*

Driven by Information and Communications Technologies, the age of Digital Transformation has already begun. In the next few years, we will see a wide variety of changes to how we live and work - affecting all aspects of our lives. As significant as these changes will be to the developed world, however, they will be even more transformative for developing economies. Nations and populations will quickly build new capabilities and skip historic technology transitions, rapidly moving from where they are today to where all of us will be tomorrow.

ICT will have a role to play in each of the Sustainable Development Goals. In some cases, ICT's role will be supportive. In others, however, that role will be primary and critical. And the SDGs will affect ICT in

turn. SDG-related initiatives will require and inspire innovation within the ICT sector, as well as within other sectors in which ICT plays a role.

While transformation will happen, it will take work. The scale of these issues is global. The solutions addressing them will have to work at that scale, as well. No single government or company has the resources to tackle these issues by themselves. They'll need help from all directions - not only policy bodies and civil society organizations, but within their own industry and adjacent industries as well.

The SDGs are well-aligned with Dell's business goals and its strategic CSR initiatives.

- *Dell's technologies will play a significant role in SDG-inspired initiatives and solutions.*
- *Dell's Legacy of Good goals are well-aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.*

Due to the wide variety of roles that ICT will play in SDG initiatives and solutions, Dell's engagement will be both broad and deep. Technologies such as virtualization, the Internet of Things, Big Data analytics, cloud computing and high performance computing will be directly relevant across a wide spectrum of the Agenda 2030 program. Indirectly, Dell's technology will help accelerate the adoption of a wide variety of other technologies in other industries.

While the SDGs are certainly relevant to Dell's business, they are also relevant to Dell's own aspirations as a responsible corporate citizen. Dell's long-term sustainability goals cover similar topics, ranging from the role of renewable energy in our operations and recovery of electronics at end of use, to sustainable packaging and the energy intensity of our products. And Dell's philanthropic efforts focus on issues such as youth education and pediatric cancer research. Therefore, to support the SDGs, Dell will take the following actions in 2017:

- Assess the relationship between Dell initiatives and the SDG framework, as well as the role that the SDGs should play as Dell makes key philanthropic funding and engagement decisions.
- Assess the role of the SDGs in helping Dell meet its top-level [Legacy of Good](#) Goal, as well as support Dell's aspirations with respect to Net Positive.
- Start an assessment of the business case for engagement with the SDGs through the timeframe of the Agenda 2030 program.
- Develop action plans for working with specific customers on SDG progress.

We have much work to do to fully explore the relationship between Dell, our technologies and the Sustainable Development goals. We look forward to this work and the efforts we can bring to the SDGs, all consistent with Dell's top-level Legacy of Good goal - to show that the good that comes from Dell's products and services is ten times what it takes to create and operate them.