DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS UNITED NATIONS





































































The global unemployment rate in 2017 was 5.6%, down from 6.4% in 2000.

Men earn 12.5% more than women in 40 out of 45 countries with data.



The global gender pay gap stands at 23% globally and without decisive action, it will take another 68 years to achieve equal pay. Women's labour force participation rate is 63% while that of men is 94%

Despite their increasing presence in public life, women continue to do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work that men do.

"Our planet is a beautiful place. We can easily forget how much it has to offer because we are constantly being reminded of the challenges we face daily, from inequalities to poverty to climate change. If nothing changes to stop, prevent or reverse these challenges, it will only get worse. That is why the United Nations exists. Everything we stand for is to create a brighter future for every individual, where everyone can thrive and reach their potential. We want to preserve the good that exists in people, places and the planet and put an end to issues that take hope away from us. That is why world leaders came together in 2015 and mobilised the 2030 Agenda: a set of 17 goals for sustainable development." - UN

The aim of the Sustainable Development Goals is to mobilise and steer action to address systemic challenges across social, economic and ecological dimensions of sustainable development. This report covers Goal 8 which concerns and promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth; full and productive employment; and decent work for all. Decent work means dignity, equality, a fair income, safe working conditions and puts people at the centre of development giving them a voice and rights to exploitation protection. It is important to understand that the sustainable development goals are all interconnected and reliant on each other to a certain extent. We cannot separate poverty from hunger, or education from women's empowerment and so on. Poverty is a huge contributing factor to the halted development of economic growth. Poverty is man-made and so it is not inevitable, this shows that economic growth can be stimulated via human investment.

The inequality of wealth, income and power is at historic highs today. It is not getting better, in fact statistics show that inequality figures continue to widen in the modern world. As a consequence, our society may change from a capitalist democracy to a neo-feudalist rentier society (transfer of governmental functions to the private sector for the sake of efficiency such as unequal rights and legal protections for common people) like 18th-century France.

Economic development is sustainable if a society's productive base (its institutions and capital assets - measured by their value) doesn't shrink. According to the UN, real GDP and labour productivity has increased globally and the middle class has grown substantially. However, growth has slowed and there aren't enough jobs to keep up with the growing labour force. Those at the bottom of the pyramid do not have equitable opportunities to get productive work with a fair income, social protection and integrate up the ranks - within the hierarchical society. As a result, they do not enjoy the benefits of economic growth and so it can be concluded that growth is not inclusive.

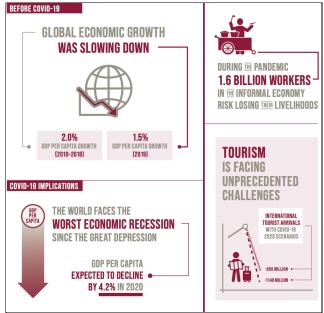
Who/what is impacted by the issue?

Goal 8 targets all economies. In particular, those countries that are most disadvantaged and have the lowest literacy and GDP rates are targeted and hence the biggest impact is created there. In 2020, Burundi reported the lowest per-capita GDP ever, closely-followed by South Sudan and Malawi. All three countries struggle economically, because of poorly developed infrastructure and a low standard of living. On a smaller scale, individuals such as workers in the informal sector, the self-employed, small enterprises, and daily wage earners are also impacted most by this goal as it is their productivity that determines and contributes to the wider economy.

Obama favoured the belief that inequality stimulates, instigates and contributes towards stumped and slowed economic growth. This is illustrated in his speech: "a dangerous and growing inequality and lack of upward mobility that has jeopardised middle-class America's basic bargain - that if you work hard, you have a chance to get ahead. I believe this is the defining challenge of our time: making sure our economy works for every working American." This leads me to believe that inequality is of greater concern than other factors, towards limiting economic growth.

Historically, there has been a pattern of recovery

after any financial crisis: high income groups
recover significantly quicker than lower income groups.



The Covid-19 pandemic is expected to have a devastating impact on global unemployment in both long and short term. According to estimates from the International Labour Organization, global working hours could have dropped by 14% in the second quarter of 2020. This is equivalent to approximately 400 million full-time workers doing a 48-hour work week. The eventual increase in global unemployment over 2020 depended on how effectively the policy measures preserved existing jobs and boosted labour demand when the recovery phase began. More than one in six young people have stopped working since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic while those who remain employed have seen their working hours cut by 23 per cent. Tourism is one of the economic

sectors most affected due to the closure of borders, travel bans and lockdown measures.

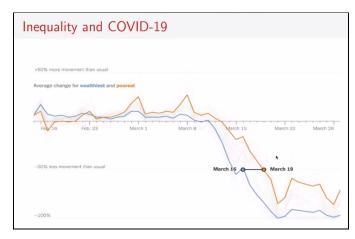
International travel arrivals in 2020 were estimated to decrease by 60% to 80% compared with 2019.

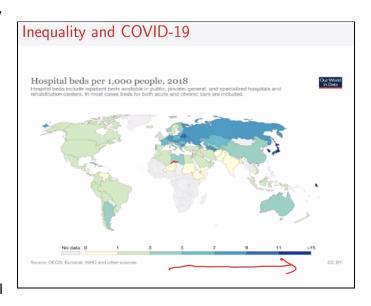
The International Monetary Fund expects a global recession as bad as or worse than in 2009. Even before the outbreak, one in five countries – home to billions of people living in poverty – were likely to see per capita incomes stagnate or decline in 2020. Now, the economic and financial shocks associated with Covid-19 - such as disruptions to industrial production, falling commodity prices, financial market volatility, and rising insecurity—are derailing the already slowed economic growth and compounding heightened risks from other factors.

Taken from: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/

Figure 1 shows that the poorer groups stopped moving later than the high income perhaps because higher income workers could work from home; lower income groups had less resources; more chances of being unemployed as they are more vulnerable; and there was less trust in the government. In other words inequality exasperated the spread.

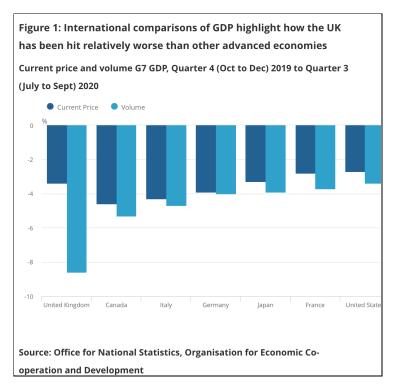
Figure 2 highlights that there were particularly less beds in highly populated and low income areas. These statistics demonstrate that the poorest were worst off and there was major inequality in terms of dealing with the pandemic. Countries' ability to respond and take action to overcome the spread of the pandemic affected us in the UK (that was generally doing better than many of the developing countries) because of the large amounts of globalisation and import/export exchange at borders. Economically, we are all

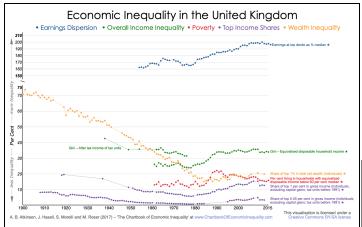


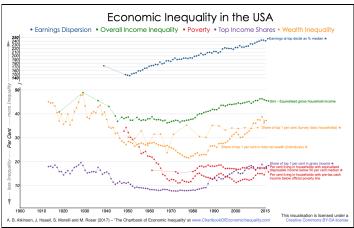


interdependent hence the hurdling of one economy had consequences worldwide.

The United States can be said to have a K-shaped economical recovery where the lower income population suffered the most because of the lower valued types of jobs they held and they are recovering at a much slower pace than the higher income population. Comparing the GDP internationally, between richer countries, on the graph to the right, highlights how surprisingly worse the United Kingdom suffered than other countries. In my opinion this is noticeably significant because this is unexpected because both the US and UK are mature economies. The US had most cases with under -4% GDP change yet the UK economy had over -8% GDP change.







Targets Of Goal 8:

- 1. Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7% gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
- 2. Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
- 3. Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
- 4. Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead
- 5. By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- 6. By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 7. Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
- 8. By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.
- 9. Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.
- 10. Increase aid for trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the enhanced integrated framework for trade related technical assistance to least developed countries
- 11. Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

What barriers stand in the way of economic growth?

Economic growth can result in disadvantageous consequences. For example the implementation of an expansionary monetary policy can boost aggregate demand but inflation may rise as a result. In addition, an increase in infrastructure such as factories would create jobs and increase GDP but come with an environmental cost. An increase in



the output of pollution would conflict with sustainable development goals 7, 11, 12 and 13. A balance of

payments problem could occur if there is increased consumer spending on imports. Moreover, if imports rise faster than exports, there will be a deficit. If society is geared towards economic growth and maximising consumption, it could lead to a decline in quality of life. Increasing working hours decreases leisure time; and income and wealth would be prioritised over promoting the public good.

What has been done already?

Many campaigns and investments have been orchestrated to stimulate greater economic growth. The most significant response, in my opinion, is the work done by the Iberdrola group. They act as a motor for economic and social development by creating stable and quality employment. In this sense, it has committed to investing €75 billion until 2025, which will increase to €150 billion in 2030, to boost the industrial fabric and employment in the countries in which it operates. (On the right)

The value created at the global level by Iberdrola's strategy and business model over time translates into economic and social development:

lberdrola has announced a historic investment plan worth €75bn for the period 2020-2025, that will increase to €150 billion in 2030, as a decisive contribution to post-COVID economic recovery. In keeping with the axes of the social market economy and the United Nations 2030 Agenda, the planned investments and purchases of goods and services will make it possible to sustain around 500,000 jobs worldwide in 2025. At the close of the First Quarter 2021, the acceleration of investments has already been a source of new opportunities for Iberdrola's suppliers, creating 30.000 jobs in Spain alone.

An impact of over €34 billion on the GDP in the countries where it operates and €7,475 million euros in tax contributions in 2020¹.

€14 bn in purchasing volume in 2020. The group has more than 22,000 suppliers throughout the world and has agreements in place until 2023 worth more than €20 bn.

More tan 38,000 jobs 🖾, out of a total of 400,000 posts² globally (including direct, indirect and induced).

6,000 new recruits in the last 12 months, of which 2,500 were hired in the First Quarter 2021. In addition, the company continues towards its target of hiring 20,000 new staff between 2020 and 2025.

99 % of the workforce have fixed contracts¹

We encourage a good work/family life balance for our employees and implement a number of measures to support their quality of life.

We promote diversity and inclusion at work. By 2025, the company has set a target of 30 % of managerial staff being women — compared to 22 % today — and to bring the pay gap below 2 %.

We back training and the development of talent: in 2020, the group achieved 53 training hours per employee¹, four times more than the European average.

We offer a safe and healthy working environment, with continuous improvements in all areas related to the management of occupational risk prevention.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, Iberdrola activated a global action plan against the pandemic, focused on the health and safety of its workers and all its Stakeholders (SDG 3), guaranteeing the electricity supply and maintaining its commitment to the creation of value for society.

lberdrola's international Startup Programme, PERSEO, financed with €110 million, facilitates the company's access to the technologies of the future. In addition, it supports the creation of a global and dynamic ecosystem of technology companies and entrepreneurs in the electricity sector.

How would we attempt to resolve the issue?

Henry Ford intuited that an economy is best understood as an ecosystem, which is characterized by feedback loops between customers and businesses: raising wages increases demand, which increases hiring, which increases wages and demand and profits, and that virtuous cycle of increasing prosperity is a huge factor contributing to what is missing from today's economic recovery. Ecologists and environmental scientists Paul Ehrlich, Peter Rave, Pamela Matson and others have taught us the economic significance of ecosystems. Interpreting natural capital in an inclusive way allows the allocation of ecosystems under the title of capital assets. An abrupt ecological collapse - such as the one that has been experienced in the Horn of Africa and the Darfur region of Sudan - can trigger a rapid socio-economic decline. The Covid-19 pandemic plays a huge role currently because economies are still in the process of recovery and rising above GDP levels prior to 2019 is not obtainable in the short run. Simply by increasing wages, an opportunity is given to those who have been stuck in a vicious cycle of poverty through many generations.

Nick Hanauer suggests embracing middle-out economics. Middle-out economics rejects the neoclassical economic idea that economies are efficient, linear, mechanical, that they tend towards equilibrium and fairness, and instead embraces the 21st-century idea that economies are complex, adaptive and that they tend to move away from equilibrium and toward inequality, that they're not efficient at all but are effective if well managed. This 21st-century perspective allows you to clearly see that capitalism does not work by efficiently allocating existing resources. It works by efficiently creating new solutions to human problems. This perspective also proposes that some inequality is perfectly normal.

"Capitalism is an evolutionary solution-finding system - it rewards people for solving other people's problems. The difference between a poor society and a rich society is the degree to which that society has generated solutions in the form of products for its citizens. The sum of the solutions that we have in our society is our prosperity, and this explains why companies like Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Apple and the entrepreneurs who created those companies have contributed so much to the USA's prosperity." - Nick Hanauer. Hanauer stresses the importance of the considerable participation required to boost economic growth because it does not happen by itself.

So what next steps does Nick Hanauer suggest to take? Investment in our middle-class to make our economy more fair, more inclusive, and more able to generate solutions. This can be done through establishing a reasonable minimum wage; investing in education and training of the highest possible

quality thus providing youth with skills that match labour market demands; giving access to social protection, affordable health care, paid sick leave, as well as making opportunities equal by eliminating discriminatory outlooks so that all aspiring youth can attain productive employment regardless of their gender, income level or socio-economic background. Governments can work to build dynamic, sustainable, innovative and people-centred economies, promoting youth employment and women's economic empowerment, and decent work for all. Implementing adequate health and safety measures and promoting supportive working environments are fundamental to protecting the safety of workers, especially relevant for health workers and those providing essential services. Reducing risks at work acts as an incentive and encourages people to work. Another method to make the economy more fair is to institute a progressive taxation system to fund the resources and infrastructure made available for the growing middle class.

The Obama Administration plan for supporting long-term, sustainable economic growth calls for significant investments and government expenditure in key industries such as infrastructure, renewable energies and health care. Vast evidence researched by economic institutes demonstrates that achieving a return on these investments requires a matching workforce-development and workplace-innovation strategy. Strategies to foster skills development must include improved job-related training and education for the low skilled over their whole working lives.

Sustained and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs for all and improve living standards. Encouraging entrepreneurship, innovation, increased resource efficiency and job creation are key to this, as they are effective measures to eradicate forced labour, slavery and human trafficking. Implementation of sustainable and safe supply chains should be taken to eradicate slavery, trafficking and child labour. With these targets in mind, the goal is to achieve full and productive employment, and decent work, for everyone in the working age by 2030. It is estimated that over 600 million new jobs need to be created by 2030, just to keep pace with the growth of the global working age population. To put it into perspective, that's around 40 million per year. Conditions need to be improved for the 780 million workers globally who are working but not earning enough to lift themselves and their families out of USD \$2 a day poverty. A method to encourage entrepreneurship is to provide microfinance schemes to small businesses, supporting job creation.

In addition to its direct economic contribution, mobile technology contributes to SDG 8 by allowing firms, especially smaller enterprises, to become more efficient, access more customers and sell more in non-local markets, which creates jobs for local communities. Mobile use improves the utilisation of labour and capital, and as a result increases productivity. Mobile financial services can

facilitate more effective monetary policy by shifting currency and assets into the formal financial system and so this is an effective method of resolving the issue and encouraging economic growth. The use of mobile banking leasing to a shift to a formal financial system discourages black money and hiding of money, benefiting the wider society and national governments.

Tourism is an export of service with a high income elasticity of demand. Tourism has a number of advantages for developing countries and so it is a key sector which should be focused upon in order to increase and develop sustainable economic growth. Firstly, it makes use of natural assets such as climate and landscape. Secondly, it is labour intensive and therefore creates a large number of employment opportunities. These jobs tend to be accessible to the poor because they do not require much training or education and facilitate opportunities for all genders. Finally, there can be a significant multiplier effect if the local tourist industry sells locally-made products to tourists.

Other Methods:

- Promotion of foreign direct investment
- Fair trade schemes
- Trade protection laws
- Managed exchange rates
- Encourage Bring-Your-child-to-work Day for youth to see what a healthy work environment looks like.
- Become a micro-lender and empower young people to become entrepreneurs.
- Provide stability. Empower young professionals to grow into their positions.
- Provide food for low-earning workers.
- Pass equal pay legislations in order to reduce discrimination and inequality.
- Provide incentives for hard work. People respond to a reward system.
- Provide reduced rates on quality health systems and facilities for employees.
- Encourage more job opportunities for youth.
- Pass trade union-friendly legislations in order to be able to raise wages.
- Financially assist training and development programs for an enhanced skillset.
- Encourage infrastructure with efficient resources: increasing GDP
- Look for synergies and build stronger multi-stakeholder Partnerships. Share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources.

Work Safety and Eradicating ALL Forms of Exploitation

Child Labour is defined as work that: is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. The worst forms of child labour are all forms of slavery including the sale and trafficking of children; forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities or prostitution, in particular for the production of pornographic performances and trafficking of drugs, and lastly anything that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

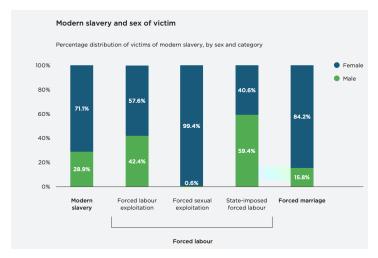
There is substantial cause for concern on the effects of Covid-19 on child labour statistics - the pandemic increased the number of children in poor income households by an estimated 142 million, adding to the 582 million children in 2019. The personal developmental consequences of child labour fall under a large umbrella and it is almost impossible to list all effects. I have listed and summed up some of the most pivotal consequences that I believe need to be addressed: experiencing isolation and depression; physical health implications in hazardous work environments; malnutrition leading to long-term internal harm; developed drug-dependence; abductions and sexual exploitation; remaining in the cycle of poverty; death.

The road forward is threatened to further erode past gains due to the pandemic. The pandemic has increased the threat of child labour since there has been a sharp rise in poverty and school closures. Methods to overcome child labour include providing income support measures for families with

children and those in situations of vulnerability; making students return to classroom to make up for learning time lost; reconsidering responsive policies to address child labour and related challenges; adequate social protection; end gender norms; register every child at birth giving them an identity and thus giving them basic rights; investments in labour-saving machinery; and cash benefits are beneficial resources however there is a risk that providing cash would increase demand for child labour as a result of families wanting more cash to increase business supplies for a greater revenue.



Figure 5. A safe and just space for humanity - the sustainable and desirable doughnut [35]



In 2016, an estimated 15.4 million people were living in a forced marriage. While men are also victims of forced marriage, 84.2% were females. The graph on the left validates this argument and so we can conclude that females are more at risk of not only forced marriage but also forced sexual exploitation, modern slavery and forced labour exploitation.



Alliance 8.7 is an inclusive global partnership committed to fulfilling goal 8.7 by putting an end to modern slavery and child labour, which they rightfully quote to be "unacceptable violations of human rights" in order to create a more fair and prosperous world. In their aim to achieve goal 8, they also interlink with goals 5.2, 16.2 and 16.3. I attended the webinar on the left (recorded on May 25th) which discussed how

business organisations can reduce children's vulnerability by providing safe environments and opportunities as well as 'Build Back Better' (an approach to integrate concerns in Covid-19 recovery.)

The IPEC+ Flagship Programme is another scheme made in response to the issues outlined. It consists of the 'International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour' and the 'Special Action Programme to combat Forced Labour' and is established to create a new force in the fight against forced (and child) labour and human trafficking. It recognizes that these issues share root causes of poor governance, discrimination and social exclusion, family and community poverty and lack of access to decent work. The objective of the IPEC+ Flagship Programme is to eradicate all forms of child labour by 2025 (as per SDG target) and all forms of contemporary slavery and human trafficking by 2030. The organisation has chosen to initially have a main focus on the rural and informal economies; enterprises and global supply chains; and countries in crisis and fragile situations.



GORDON'S - WHAT WE CAN DO!

Gordon's has a committed eco society, which already contributes towards sustainable growth. In the future, we could educate students about the SDG goals and get them to share their new knowledge with pupils in neighbouring schools, and research further using technology. For older

pupils, I recommend the videos linked at the bottom of this page because they are mind-provoking issues that can be discussed at a classroom level with peers. By educating students on the economic issues prevalent and emphasising the importance of getting citizens out of poverty, I hope to encourage pupils to get involved with local charities and support international campaigns to end modern slavery, forced labour, forced marriages and human trafficking. Within the working environment, we can check and ensure that there are safe working conditions for all faculty. Additionally, we could implement environmentally-friendly infrastructure and low-carbon technologies, which promote sustainable economic growth as there is an increase in GDP but with less of a cost.

The overall impact of education that schools provide is greatly advantageous. Schools are healthy environments that promote and incentivise hard-work and resilient attitudes, which increases the literacy rate and thus encourages the employment rates of the future working force. The curriculum also endorses resources that advance well-being. To conclude, after considerable research I have gathered a well-rounded understanding of Sustainable Development Goal 8 as well as methods to fulfill this goal's targets. In my reading, I gained a different perspective to economics which focuses on how fragile the consumer markets and resources are. As Partha Dasgupta said "economics increasingly drives my ethics and in turn informs my politics," which leads me to acknowledge that the obtainability of Goal 8 requires a global effort from all people - from politicians to the workers at the bottom of the hierarchy chain.

Financial Inclusions and the SDGs - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qh_DFEUY9Io&t=169s
Addressing Equality through Health - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pkfs44I7-CA&t=80s

References used and sites I highly recommend in order to read further as well as discover simple ways and daily lifestyle changes that can contribute towards fulfilling the United Nations' goals!



https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/

UN Capital Development Fund: http://www.uncdf.org/

Asian Development Bank: http://www.adb.org/

UN Global Compact: http://www.unglobalcompact.org/

Economic and Social Commission for Africa: http://www.uneca.org/

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iMdE6DLLuCqwq3K9U-DaTUWB6KyMa8QG/view

UN Development Programme: http://www.undp.org/

Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System: Policy Innovations for a Green Economy: http://www.unep.org/inquiry/

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/E Infographic 08.pdf

Economic and Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific: http://www.unescap.org/

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia: http://www.unescwa.org/

Economic and Social Commission for Europe: https://www.unece.org/info/ece-homepage.html

Economic and Social Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean: http://www.cepal.org/en

<u>IMF – World Economic Outlook: http://www.imf.org/external/ns/cs.aspx?id=28</u>

TED TALK - https://www.voutube.com/watch?v=gaWbx0VvKOY

Here is the link to the 2010 Sustainable Development Innovation Brief published by the United Nations. It is a good (although heavy) read for those interested in the economic side of building and covers content from sustainable building construction to energy consumption: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/no9.pdf





7 GOAL 8: **DECENT WORK** AND **ECONOMIC GROWTH**



BY: MARGREET DE HEER





IT MEANS WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE...



1. EVERYONE CAN FREELY CHOOSE A SAFE, FAIRLY PAID, SECURE AND FULFILLING JOB



2. BUSINESSES USE NATURAL **RESOURCES WISELY**



3. NO ONE IS EXCLUDED FROM WORK OPPORTUNITIES



4. UNEMPLOYMENT IS REDUCED BY PROVIDING TRAINING



5. TO END AND PREVENT CHILD LABOR, FORCED LABOR AND MODERN SLAVERY



EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM A GROWING ECONOMY FUTURE