



We are about to set ourselves ambitious sustainable goals and targets. Achieving them will require an unprecedented mobilization of resources. An enabling environment, including the rule of law and effective institutions, and including the massive potential of business will be essential for success.

In leveraging the resources available, including ODA and domestic private and public resources, we must not lose sight of where resources can most effectively be targeted. Much can be gained through the careful cultivation of what is already there. Along with others, Iceland fought to include a strong focus on sustainable land management, investment in sustainable energy systems, and sustainable fisheries. Furthermore, Iceland has underlined the importance of investing in health, including the treatment of neurological disorders that affect hundreds of millions of people in developed and developing countries alike. Last but not least, gender equality and women and girls empowerment are an essential element in a transformative agenda.

Nothing will yield as much gains as legally and economically empowering women to become active participants in all societies. I speak from experience. Iceland has invested in soci new

Iceland's perspective is different from many other developed countries: we share the history of the developing countries with our centuries-long experience as a colony and deep poverty until the middle of last century. This is why our development cooperation is focused on sharing our experience. In recent decades we have used the medium of the four UN University Programmes established in Iceland to achieve this objective.

Iceland has systematically been working on restoring and rehabilitating its degraded lands for over 100 years. Through persistence and much effort we have succeeded in halting degradation in many areas and in reversing desertification. And indeed, restoring and rehabilitating land will be among the most effective actions we can take to achieve many of our other goals and targets.

Every year, over 10 million hectares of arable land are degraded. Over 40% of the world's poor depend on degraded lands for essential services, such as food, fuel, raw material, and water purification. Restoring the productive capacity of the land will decrease economic vulnerability, promote long-term development and allow us to feed the growing population of the world. The outcome document of this conference emphasizes the necessity to invest in land-degradation neutrality. This will have far-reaching positive impacts, including for food security, poverty eradication, women's empowerment and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In recent decades, Iceland has invested heavily in technology for the harnessing of our vast sustainable energy sources to the point where Icelanders mainly use geothermal and hydro-based energy for their heating and electricity needs. I am confident that harnessing sustainable energy in developing countries, many of which have geothermal potential will be

transformative for their future development and prosperity, as it has been for us.

Sustainable management of resources is the leitmotif of Icelandic foreign and domestic policy – it is how we have survived and prospered – it is the only way our world will survive and prosper. For over three decades, Iceland has implemented a sustainable, scientifically base