

Susan Hopgood
Education International
25/09/2015

My name is Susan Hopgood and I am proud to be representing the world's trade union movement.

The trade union movement's very reason for being is to combat and end poverty, reduce inequalities, achieve decent work and dignity at work, protect public services and infrastructure, champion women's participation and improve fiscal, wage and social protection.

We are leading where too often our governments fall short.

Ambitious. Comprehensive. Unprecedented. Just a few of the words we have heard describing the Sustainable Development Goals. For the very first time the world is going on record calling for quality primary and secondary education for all with qualified teachers in a safe environment. Future generations will thank us for this.

But now comes an even more difficult period – reaching these goals. Where the SDGs are lacking is in the commitments to implement the goals through financing and progressive public policy, as well as a sound accountability framework.

Deeds not words.

It is obvious to us that the current means of implementation fall short. Commitments are not real unless they are binding; public interest isn't protected if the private sector has unconditional access to public resources.

The success of the SDGs will require tax justice, strong public education, health, and water and sanitation systems.

We have goals before us that are designed for consensus. And that is remarkable. Let us move very quickly to add the structures that will show the world these goals are also designed for success. Social dialogue, which brings together social partners, employers' and workers' organizations, is an excellent example of ownership of policy processes at the national level. Freedom of association and right to collective bargaining are key for this partnership to work.

As trade unions, we are committed to play our part.

Are governments willing to step up and fulfil their obligations?

Deeds not words.