

# Director General



## **Gerd Müller, Director General, UNIDO**

Gerd Müller, **Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization** (UNIDO) as of 10 December **2021**, has had various leadership positions from an early stage in his career with many years of experience in the fields of development cooperation, sustainability, multilateral institutions and public-private partnerships. Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Beijing Declaration on Gender Equality have been key areas of his work throughout his career.

As Director General of UNIDO, he has implemented important reforms guided by the motto “Progress by Innovation” to strengthen UNIDO’s work for more efficiency and higher impact. As a result, UNIDO has welcomed three new Member States within the last two years, mobilized new funds thereby reaching a new record in 2023 and notably increased the implementation and delivery of technical cooperation by 25%. Moreover, he strengthened the cooperation with the private sector, resulting in 29 new strategic public-private partnerships in 2023 alone.

Under Müller’s leadership, UNIDO has also sharpened its focus areas:

**Ending hunger** by supporting sustainable food systems, modern agri-tech and agribusiness, post-harvest loss management, regenerative climate-smart agriculture, as well as increasing productivity and generating income through local value addition and job creation.

**Tackling climate change** by fostering clean energy, decarbonization of industries, climate-resilient and energy efficiency technologies to drive low-emission economic and industrial development.

Supporting **fair and sustainable supply chains** so that producers in developing countries receive a fair deal, scarce natural resources are preserved, and more value is added locally through manufacturing.

His vision for the **Future of Industry for Development** is that of a renewed and ever stronger partnership between developing, emerging and industrialized countries.

Above all achieve a fair globalization where modern, sustainable industry creates high-value goods locally, decent jobs, economic and social well-being, while cutting emissions and preserving the environment.

In 2013, he was appointed German **Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development**, a position he held until December 2021. As Development Minister, he markedly positioned Germany as a strong and reliable partner for developing countries.

During his ministerial tenure, German Official Development Assistance (ODA) increased significantly to 0.7% of GNI for the first time, also based on the mobilization of private investments through new financing models. He doubled the amount dedicated to international programmes for climate action and developed new instruments for climate risk insurance and a foundation for voluntary private climate action. As a strong advocate of fair trade and cooperation with the private sector, he established the first government-run certification label for sustainable textiles and initiated legislation in Germany and the European Union on corporate due diligence for social and environmental standards along global supply chains.

Previously he served as **Deputy Minister at the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection**, in charge of international relations, development projects and world food affairs.

Between 1994 and 2021, he was a **Member of the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany**, including serving on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and on the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development.

From 1989 to 1994, he was as a Member of the **European Parliament**, during which he was a member of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

Between 1980 and 1989, he was a **teacher in vocational schools** and a civil servant at the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs.