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HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND GUIDE 2017

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2017 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). This year's staff is: Directors Pauline Marcou (Conference A) and Max Jungmann (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Vincent Carrier (Conference A) and Kaylin Miller (Conference B). Pauline completed her M.A. in Global Affairs at Yale University in 2015 and currently works as a client manager for a clean tech start-up. This will be her fifth year on staff. Max has a B.A. of Political Science from Trier University and holds a M.A. from Heidelberg University. Currently, he is a Ph.D. student and works as a researcher and consultant. This will be his fourth year on staff. Vincent graduated with a B.Sc. in Biology and Ecology at the Université du Québec and a M.Sc. in Biology from Université Laval. He is currently enrolled in a Ph.D program in Microbiology at the University of Tromsø. Kaylin studied at Lone Star College. She plans to finish her degree in Political Science with a minor in Education at Hunter College.

The topics under discussion for HLPF are:

I. Youth Leadership and Education for Sustainable Development
II. Ensuring Decent Work for All
III. The Role of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals

HLPF is now a pivotal organization within the United Nations system since it has the primary responsibility to follow-up and review the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provides a forum for global discussions on development, fosters the integration of all dimensions of sustainable development, and constitutes a crucial institution for successful implementation of the SDGs. While other organizations focus on concrete actions to implement the SDGs, HLPF facilitates efforts to monitor progress, identify current challenges, and improve joint efforts for a more sustainable future.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2017 in accordance with the guidelines in the Position Paper Guide and the NMUN•NY Position Papers website.

Two essential resources for your preparation are the Delegate Preparation Guide and the NMUN Rules of Procedure available to download from the NMUN website. The Delegate Preparation Guide explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. The NMUN Rules of Procedure include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. In tandem, these documents thus serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions.

Please take note of information in the Delegate Preparation Guide on plagiarism and the prohibition of pre-written working papers and resolutions. Additionally, please review the NMUN Policies and Codes of Conduct on the NMUN website regarding the Conference dress code; awards philosophy and evaluation method; and codes of conduct for delegates, faculty, and guests regarding diplomacy and professionalism. Importantly, any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. Adherence to these policies is mandatory.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the General Assembly Department, Lauren Shaw (Conference A) and Felipe Ante (Conference B), at usg.ga@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A
Pauline Marcou, *Director*
Vincent Carrier, *Assistant Director*

Conference B
Maximilian Jungmann, *Director*
Kaylin Miller, *Assistant Director*

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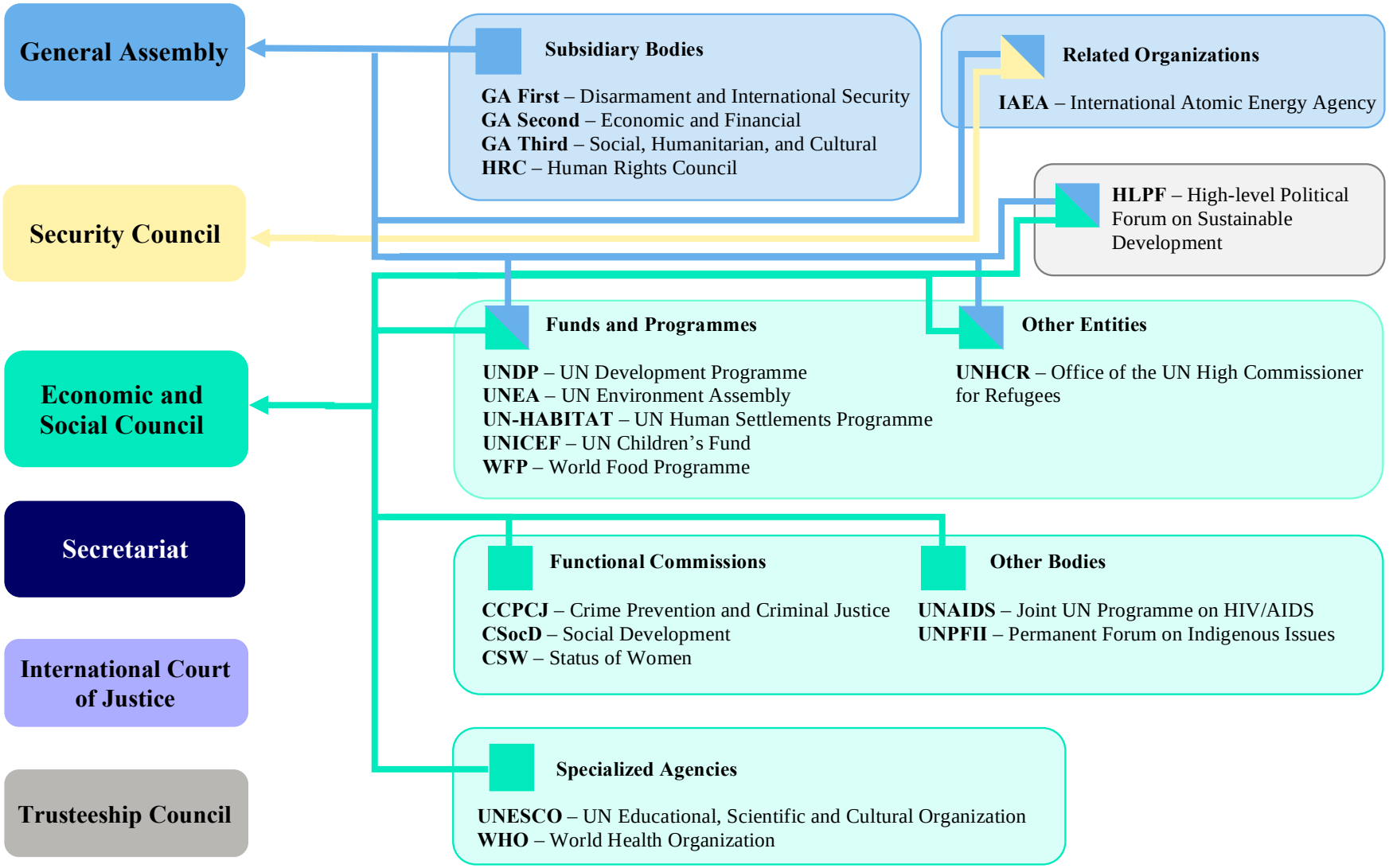
United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Abbreviations

AAAA	*Addis Ababa Action Agenda*
APEID	Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development
AU	African Union
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSTD	Commission on Science and Technology for Development
CTCN	Climate Technology Centre and Network
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DSD	Division for Sustainable Development
DSPD	Division for Social Policy and Development
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EETU	Environmental Education and Training Unit
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GAP	*Global Action Programme*
GCAI	Green Cooling Africa Initiative
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GUPES	Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IATT	Inter-agency Task Team
ICESCR	*International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
ICT	Information and communications technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
JESSICA	Joint European Support for Sustainable Development Investment in City Areas
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MGCY	Major Group for Children and Youth
NDE	National Designated Entities
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOSCI	Out-of-School Children Initiative
OSGEY	Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth
PEACE	Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education
PROSOL	Tunisian Solar Program
SD	Sustainable development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STI	Science, technology, and innovation
TFM	Technology Facilitation Mechanism
TM	Technology Mechanism
UDHR	*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSD	United Nations Office for Sustainable Development
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Committee Overview

"Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[1]

Introduction

Tasked with reviewing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development** (HLPF) reports to both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

With this statement, the World Commission on Environment and Development, in 1987, presented a new concept to frame multiple dimensions of future global development and explained why change was needed and how it could be realized.[2] After the report was published, the international community started working on a compromise on how sustainable development could be implemented across the globe.[3] Therefore, it took several years of debates and multiple conferences, such as the Millennium Summit in 2000, until the outcome document of the United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *The Future We Want* (2012), delineated the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.[4] These steps were milestones on the path towards the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).[5] The following paragraphs will explain the history of the UN and sustainable development, draw on the lessons learned from the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), and expand on the 2030 Agenda. Afterwards, the governance, structure, and membership of HLPF, as well as its mandate, functions, and powers, will be explained, before an analysis of recent meetings and the road ahead.

Before the *Brundtland Report (Our Common Future)* was published in 1987, the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) had paved the way for global debates on protecting the environment and sustainable development.[6] With its definition of sustainable development and its call for the international community to foster this new concept, the *Brundtland Report* was a keystone on the way to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and resulted in *Agenda 21*.[7] In the following year, the UN General Assembly established HLPF's predecessor, the CSD, which was designed to monitor and foster the outputs of UNCED, including *Agenda 21* and the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992).[8] Established by UN General Assembly resolution 47/191 (1992), CSD had the responsibility to follow up on UNCED by reviewing the implementation progress of the conference outcomes as well as the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*.[9] In contrast to HLPF, which includes all Member States, CSD had only 53 members since it was a functional commission under ECOSOC.[10] The current UN Secretary-General, in his report on "Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development*"* (2013), emphasized that CSD was able to keep sustainable development on the agenda and bring major groups together to work on a common solution.[11] However, it lacked the ability to flexibly respond to new challenges because its agenda was planned ahead for years.[12] The participation of civil society worked well for CSD; as a consequence,

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[1] UNECE, *Sustainable development - concept and action*; UN WCED, *Our Common Future*, 1987, p. 24.
[2] UN WCED, *Our Common Future*, 1987, p. 24.
[3] ILO, *Newsletter October 12, No.* 32, 2012; UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*; UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[4] Ibid.
[5] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*.
[6] Ibid.; UNEP, *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, 1972.
[7] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*; UN WCED, *Our Common Future*, 1987.
[8] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform - United Nations System*.
[9] UN DESA, *About the CSD*; UN General Assembly, *Institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/RES/47/191)*, 1993.
[10] UN DESA, *About the CSD*.
[11] UN General Assembly, *Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/757*), 2012, p. 2.
[12] Ibid.

HLPF tries to incorporate institutional aspects of CSD's integration of civil society and other groups, such as by giving them the opportunity to actively participate in its sessions.[13]

In 2000, the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the roots of the SDGs, were adopted by world leaders at the Millennium Summit.[14] In 2002, the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* was adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development to strengthen the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the policies and processes of regional and international institutions.[15] In 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) established HLPF, which held its first meeting in 2013, to build on the experience of CSD and replace it.[16] The purpose of the creation of HLPF was to "follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and […] avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner."[17] In 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda, including the 17 SDGs and 169 associated targets.[18] The 2030 Agenda introduced a new era of international dialogue and partnership for fostering and facilitating all three dimensions of sustainable development.[19]

Governance, Structure, and Membership

HLPF meets in two different formats: once every four years under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, and once every year under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[20] Under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, heads of state and government officials meet for two days.[21] At the end of their meeting, they adopt an international declaration on sustainable development, which is ultimately submitted to the UN General Assembly.[22] Under the auspices of ECOSOC, Member States, UN system entities, civil society representatives, and other stakeholders meet annually to discuss the progress on the 2030 Agenda.[23] This is followed by a three-day meeting at a ministerial level, which is attended by ministers and other government officials who work in different departments, such as environment or foreign affairs.[24] As of 2016, these meetings, chaired by the President of ECOSOC, have replaced the annual ministerial reviews of ECOSOC's high-level segment, which were established to follow up on the MDGs.[25] While the meetings held through the UN General Assembly focus on basic progress with the SDGs, those convened through ECOSOC follow respective themes and concentrate on a set of SDGs.[26] The thematic focus is decided by the UN General Assembly.[27] At the end of each meeting, a ministerial declaration is adopted, which is then integrated into ECOSOC's report to the UN General Assembly.[28] Starting in 2016, the forum

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[13] Strandenaes, The high level political forum: Strong enough to achieve the future we want, or merely as good as it gets for now?, *Sustainable Development 2015*, 2013.
[14] UN DPI, *Millennium Development Goals – Background*; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.
[15] UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, *Draft plan of implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/L.1)*, 2002, p. 69.
[16] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*.
[17] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 16.
[18] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*.
[19] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015.
[20] UN DPI, *New High-level Political Forum Starts Work to Reinvigorate and Accelerate Sustainable Development Action*, 2013.
[21] Ibid.; UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.
[22] UN DPI, *New High-level Political Forum Starts Work to Reinvigorate and Accelerate Sustainable Development Action*, 2013.
[23] Ibid.; UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.
[24] UN DPI, *Adoption of Declaration Commits Ministers to Leaving No One Behind in Implementing Sustainable Development Agenda, as High-Level Political Forum Concludes (ECOSOC/6790)*, 2016; UN DPI, *New High-level Political Forum Starts Work to Reinvigorate and Accelerate Sustainable Development Action*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.
[25] UN ECOSOC, *Annual Ministerial Review – Mandate;* UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.
[26] Martens, *The HLPF 2016: First global meeting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs*, 2016.
[27] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4; UN General Assembly, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level (A/RES/70/299)*, 2016.
[28] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.

will conduct voluntary reviews on the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda in both developing and developed countries.[29]

Like its structure, HLPF's membership is also designed to be very inclusive: all Member States of the UN and specialized agencies take part in HLPF and, according to UN General Assembly resolution 67/290 (2013), all meetings should seek to find a consensus.[30] The Forum's work is funded through a voluntary trust fund, which includes remaining funds from the Trust Fund for Support of the Work of CSD, as well as voluntary contributions from Member States.[31] The Forum's financial resources are oriented to ensure the participation of least-developed countries and representatives of major groups in the Forum's meetings.[32] Also, the budget should ensure that the body has sufficient financial resources to prepare for and conduct its sessions.[33] Inside the UN system, the UN Division for Sustainable Development, which is part of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), provides substantive and administrative support to HLPF.[34]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

HLPF's mandate is set out in *The Future We Want*, as well as in UN General Assembly resolution 67/290 of 2013, which collectively defined HLPF's format and clarified organizational aspects.[35] Furthermore, clauses 47 and 48 of the 2030 Agenda explain HLPF's responsibilities concerning the implementation of the SDGs.[36] In general, the forum is mandated to conduct follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.[37] Therefore, it shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SDGs, ensure that all three dimensions of sustainable development are integrated in all processes and outcomes, and verify that emerging issues in the context of sustainable development will be on the international community's agenda.[38]

Other UN bodies, such as the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC, and a number of programs, organizations, and specialized agencies, play a pivotal role in implementing the SDGs and therefore in HLPF's work.[39] The UN General Assembly and ECOSOC are directly involved in HLPF's working processes since the Forum's meetings take place under their auspices.[40] In its meetings, the UN General Assembly further contributes to HLPF's agenda and decides on the Forum's themes.[41] The President of the UN General Assembly seeks to foster the implementation of the SDGs and therefore provides substantive support to the Forum.[42] ECOSOC has the responsibility to follow up on "all major past international conferences linked to the three pillars of sustainable development" and particularly focuses on the exchange of knowledge and learning.[43] The Council therefore works closely with HLPF and other UN organizations, such as the Development Cooperation Forum.[44]

Additionally, HLPF is part of a broader network of UN entities working on sustainable development issues. The UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), which is part of the Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), supports Member States "in planning and implementing sustainable development strategies, notably through

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[29] Ibid.
[30] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform - States Members of the United Nations and States members of specialized agencies*; UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.
[31] Ibid., p. 6.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] UN DSD, *Division for Sustainable Development*.
[35] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[36] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 11-12.
[37] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] UN General Assembly, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*.
[43] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development.*
[44] Ibid.

knowledge sharing, research, training, and partnerships."[45] While it shares some areas of expertise with HLPF, UNOSD focuses on providing Member States with concrete support, while HLPF monitors the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.[46] UN DESA fosters international cooperation for sustainable development and builds on the 2030 Agenda while providing "analytical products, policy advice and technical assistance" to Member States and the public.[47] As the principal UN body for issues related to the environment, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) also provides the international community with guidance on how it can support sustainable development.[48]

To fulfill its mandate, HLPF provides political leadership and guidance to the international community on how sustainable development can be implemented and monitored.[49] The Forum publishes the *Global Sustainable Development Report* annually, and it seeks to strengthen communication and cooperation between science and policy makers (science policy interface).[50] With the support of ECOSOC, HLPF also promotes technology and knowledge transfer in order to achieve sustainable development and improve cooperation and coordination inside the UN.[51] The Forum works closely with governments and civil society.[52] It cooperates with the Development Cooperation Forum, is involved in regional preparatory processes for the implementation of sustainable development, and facilitates global partnerships for sustainable development.[53] As of 2016, it is to conduct state-led reviews with participants from the ministerial level as well as other relevant actors.[54] Furthermore, NGOs and other organizations shall hold special rights to participate in the dialogue and contribute to HLPF's work, as they are permitted to attend and even intervene in official meetings.[55] They will have access to all information, may submit documents and oral statements, make recommendations, and organize side events during the Forum's meetings.[56]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

HLPF 2016 was the first meeting of the Forum since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. It was held from 11-20 July 2016 under the auspices of ECOSOC as part of ECOSOC's high-level segment.[57] Following the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind," the meeting was complemented by numerous official sessions and side events.[58] In the official meetings, cross-cutting issues were discussed. These included alleviating poverty, combatting climate change, the role of science and technology for sustainable development, and mainstreaming SDGs into national policies.[59] Twenty-two states submitted voluntary reviews on their actions for sustainable development to the Forum in 2016.[60] Voluntary reviews led by Member States are regularly conducted under the auspices of ECOSOC and elaborate on progress on sustainable development objectives.[61] At the end of the 2016 HLPF, the Forum adopted a ministerial declaration in which it pledged that no one will be left behind while implementing the 2030 Agenda.[62]

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[45] UNOSD, *United Nations Office for Sustainable Development*.
[46] Ibid.
[47] UN DESA, *Who we are*.
[48] UNEP Sustainability, *Who We Are.*
[49] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.
[50] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report – 2016 Edition*, 2016; UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform - Global Sustainable Development Report*; Sustainable Development 2015, *The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)*.
[51] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Martens, *The HLPF 2016: First global meeting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs*, 2016.
[61] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 4.
[62] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2016 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results" and Ministerial*

The ministers emphasized important aspects for implementing sustainable development such as peace and security, gender equality, and financing for development.[63] They expressed their belief that, on the path towards a sustainable future, vulnerable people need to be better protected and empowered; they also recognized that peace and security are the pillars of sustainable development, since all other elements of sustainable development are drastically undermined in areas without peace and stability.[64] They further stressed the importance of the end of discrimination in all of its forms, the empowerment of young people, and the establishment of resilient infrastructure to ensure that all people are able to develop sustainably.[65] In the various side events that accompanied the official meetings, a great number of different activities took place.[66] They included sessions on SDG learning and training, panel discussions on sustainable development, and dialogues on cooperation between UN bodies, international organizations, governments, and civil society.[67]

In July 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 70/299, in which the future themes of HLPF were decided.[68] The Assembly stipulated that the themes for the next sessions of the Forum will be "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" in 2017; "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" in 2018; and "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" in 2019.[69] The resolution states that all following sessions of the Forum should be focused on a particular group of SDGs and incorporate all three dimensions of sustainable development.[70] In addition to the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC met in July 2016 in order to discuss how the 2030 Agenda can be achieved.[71] The Council came to the conclusion that a reform of the United Nations Development System is needed to achieve the complex and ambitious challenge of global sustainable development, since the current system is characterized by a number of inefficiencies and overlaps.[72] However, the Council did not agree on how such a reform should be carried out.[73]

Regarding the future of the Forum, HLPF 2017 will convene under the auspices of ECOSOC from 10-19 July 2017.[74] Focusing on poverty reduction and promoting prosperity around the world, the Forum will specifically conduct a review on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14, and 17, with the aim of " [revitalizing] the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development."[75] While Member States agree that HLPF and the 2030 Agenda are important milestones for achieving inclusive and global sustainable development, some argue that many challenges remain and meetings are too short to cover all the issues with which the Forum is confronted.[76]

Conclusion

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, HLPF, as the successor of CSD, has become the primary institution to conduct follow-up and review of the progress made by the UN and Member States to implement all three dimensions of sustainable development.[77] Tremendous challenges, such as combatting climate change, eliminating poverty, and guaranteeing peace and security, are connected to the 2030 Agenda, making HLPF one of the most

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declaration of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind" (E/HLS/2016/1), 2016.

[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., p. 3.
[65] Ibid.
[66] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*.
[67] Ibid.
[68] UN DPI, *General Assembly Adopts Resolution on Follow-up to, Review of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in Consensus Action (GA/11809)*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level (A/RES/70/299)*, 2016.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] UN DPI, *Achieving 2030 Agenda Requires Bold Changes, Speakers Tell Economic and Social Council as Dialogue on Positioning United Nations Development System Concludes (ECOSOC/6779)*, 2016**.**
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform - High-Level Political Forum 2017*.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Strandenaes, The high level political forum: Strong enough to achieve the future we want, or merely as good as it gets for now?, *Sustainable Development 2015*, 2013.
[77] UN DSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – United Nations System*.

important political forums for a better future for the entire planet.[78] Its inclusive membership and openness to civil society participation make HLPF a key forum for building consensus to foster the implementation of the SDGs and raise awareness for sustainable development in general.[79]

Annotated Bibliography

Martens, J. (2016). The HLPF 2016: First global meeting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. *Global Policy Watch*, 11: 1-6. Retrieved 19 August 2016 from: https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/GPW11_2016_08_09.pdf

This recently published article analyzes the structures and processes of HLPF and provides valuable insights into the Forum's challenges and advantages. It comprehensively explains how HLPF works and provides a detailed overview of the Forum's agenda for the next few years. The article further evaluates the role of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *and the SDGs for the Forum's work and the international community in general. It explains what national voluntary reviews are and looks at the road ahead. Accordingly, this article may be used by delegates as understand key resource for understanding what HLPF is, its challenges and opportunities, and where action is needed. It will also help delegates find more resources on this topic and better understand the content provided in official sources.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)* [Website]. Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/csd.html

The website of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs summarizes relevant information on the Commission on Sustainable Development, which was established by the General Assembly in 1992 as an instrument to follow up on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. As the predecessor of HLPF, CSD's experience with fostering sustainable development helps HLPF to define its agenda and shape its strategies and actions to follow up on and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to listing information on all of the Commission's sessions, the website contains explanations of its history, mandate, and governance. Accordingly, this source can serve as a valuable instrument for delegates to explore information about HLPF's predecessor and simultaneously learn about possible future paths for HLPF.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016.* Retrieved 11 August 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2328Global%20Sustainable%20development%20report%202016%20(final).pdf

This comprehensive report summarizes what HLPF wants to achieve under the motto "Ensuring that no one is left behind and the 2030 Agenda," as well as how the goals can be implemented into concrete strategies. For instance, some strategies include strengthening economies and social protection standards. It further addresses key aspects that are on HLPF's agenda, such as the role of science and technology, infrastructure, and emerging issues for sustainable development, and it explains in detail why these aspects are important and how they can contribute to overall sustainable development. Accordingly, this report offers in-depth analysis of current debates and HLPF's agenda, which can help delegates to understand key aspects of HLPF's work and priorities.

United Nations, Division for Sustainable Development. (n.d.). *Division for Sustainable Development* [Website]. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/about

This website summarizes important information on the Division for Sustainable Development (UN DSD), which is a key player on the path to sustainable development. By explaining the Division's mission statement, mandate, governance, and structure, this source will help delegates understand

[78] Ibid.

[79] UNDSD, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – States Members of the United Nations and States members of specialized agencies*; UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.

what the institution does and how it works. Accordingly, it serves as a valuable source to delve into the topic and gather ideas for further research. Furthermore, UN DSD provides HLPF with administrative and substantive support. The website therefore allows delegates to get to know more about one of the Forum's important partners and how HLPF's work is connected to UN DSD's programs and actions.

United Nations, Division for Sustainable Development. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform – High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development* [Website]. Retrieved 18 August 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2016

The Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, which is the official resource on the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, provides specific information on HLPF. By explaining the Forum's history, mandate, structure, and governance, it constitutes a useful resource for delegates to delve into the topic. The website further summarizes information on past and upcoming sessions of HLPF and thus provides an overview of recently discussed issues. It helps delegates to keep track of HLPF's work and agenda and it helps them to understand the mandate, functions, and powers of the committee.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288).* Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288

In this pivotal document on the path towards the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, among other important aspects, the three dimensions of sustainable development are introduced and explained. Accordingly, it can serve as a valuable resource to gain thorough understanding the principles, ideas, and history underlying sustainable development. As a consequence, it can help delegates to learn about past achievements and developments on the road towards future sustainable development. It further helps to understand why the Forum was established and how its mandate is designed.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the First Committee (A/70/460). Retrieved 1 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/290

This UN General Assembly resolution is one of the most important documents in which HLPF's mandate, structure, and governance are defined. All organizational aspects related to HLPF's work are explained in detail, including the difference between meetings conducted under the auspices of the UN General Assembly and those held via ECOSOC. Accordingly, this document serves as a valuable source for delegates in researching what HLPF can and cannot do and how its governance and processes should work. Especially when it comes to writing position papers and working papers, this document helps delegates to understand the purpose of the Forum and what its resolutions can consequently encompass.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/757)*. Retrieved 4 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/67/757

This report from the UN Secretary-General critically analyzes the work of CSD and emphasizes achievements as well as potential for improvement. It helped the UN General Assembly to define the format and organizational aspects of HLPF and is therefore an important foundation for UN General Assembly resolution 67/290 (2013). The document helps delegates to understand what CSD has achieved and which key aspects should be on the agenda for HLPF. It further makes clear how the processes of HLPF need to be designed to assist in effective and efficient implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *and the SDGs.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *and the SDGs are the most frequently discussed and most important elements of the current discourse and actions on sustainable development. They provide Member States with examples and incentives on how they can develop more sustainably and thus combat climate change, decrease poverty, establish peace and security, and deal with many more challenges. The SDGs influence almost every aspect of the international*

development agenda and therefore are of utmost importance for the UN and the international community. This document should be among the first that delegates read since it is one of the key resources HLPF uses in its work. It is a pivotal instrument for monitoring how Member States intend to comply with all three dimensions of sustainable development and how HLPF will continuously evaluate whether the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are being applied.

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I. Youth Leadership and Education for Sustainable Development

Introduction

With a remarkable 1.2 billion youth worldwide in 2015, accounting for one out of six people globally, the importance of youth leadership and education is unprecedented as the world moves forward in the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda).[80] The term "youth" has many definitions; rather than a fixed age group, it is a fluid category that refers to those in the transitional stage from the dependency of childhood to the independence of adulthood.[81] For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations (UN) defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24.[82] Nonetheless, this definition does not negate the definitions used by Member States or regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), which refers to youth as anyone between the ages of 15 and 35.[83]

Literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning and the basis for information sharing.[84] Thanks to better access to education, global literacy rates have risen to 91% since 2000.[85] However, 103 million youth between the ages of 15 and 24 remain illiterate.[86] Likewise, more than 57 million children do not attend school, with half of those children living in sub-Saharan Africa.[87] The 2030 Agenda provides transformative steps necessary to guide the global community toward a path of sustainability for the continued benefit and enjoyment of generations to come.[88]

Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[89] Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 focuses on quality access to education for all and the promotion of lifelong learning.[90] Quality education for sustainable development focuses on skills, knowledge, and values that reflect and produce a sustainable future with the aim of empowering learners to address issues such as poverty, climate change, and biodiversity conservation.[91] The goal of education for sustainable development is to progress awareness raising focused in education that is centered on issues such as gender equality, access to clean water, climate change mitigation, impact reduction, adaptation, and early warning.[92] Furthermore, education will lead to an increase in the number of persons that possess relevant skills for employment while also encouraging learners to become critical thinkers and decision makers in their communities.[93] Access to quality education that is centered on sustainable practices helps enable people to create and nurture sustainable environments for future generations to enjoy.[94]

International and Regional Framework

In November 2014, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development.[95] The conference brought together participants from across the globe to discuss the achievements and challenges of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), as well as opportunities for the future.[96] The conference resulted in the creation of the *Global Action Programme* (GAP) on ESD as well as the adoption of the *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration* (2014).[97]

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[80] UN DESA, *Youth Population trends and Sustainable Development*, 2016, p. 1.
[81] UNESCO, *What do we mean by "youth"?*, 2016.
[82] UN DSPD, *Definition of Youth*, p. 1.
[83] Ibid.
[84] UNESCO, *Literacy*, 2003.
[85] UNESCO, *Literacy Data Release*, 2016.
[86] UN Sustainable Development, *Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning*, 2015.
[87] Ibid.
[88] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[89] UN WCED, *Our Common Future (A/42/427)*, 2015.
[90] UN Sustainable Development, *Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning*, 2015.
[91] UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development*, 2005.
[92] Ibid.
[93] UNESCO, *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, p. 1.
[94] Ibid.
[95] UNESCO, *About the Conference*, 2015.
[96] Ibid.
[97] UNESCO, *UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, pp. 1-3.

With a strong focus on reorienting education to focus on sustainable practices, the GAP presented five priority action areas to empower youth and advance policy. These priorities include advancing policy, transforming learning and training environments, building capacities of educators and trainers, empowering and mobilizing youth, and accelerating sustainable solutions at a local level.[98] Likewise, the *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration* calls upon Member States to implement the GAP and emphasizes that ESD must be integrated at every learning level.[99] Both documents articulate that youth participation and education for sustainable development are of utmost importance in both the developing and the developed world.[100]

Youth involvement in political, economic, and community life is important because it gives youth a voice and gets them involved in sustainable development.[101] Guided by this understanding, the *World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement*, prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), discusses youth involvement and civic engagement in political, economic, and community life.[102] By focusing on employment and internship opportunities and encouraging entrepreneurship, the report explains that youth involvement in their economic communities empowers youth.[103] Furthermore, community engagement through cause-oriented political activism has increased through advancements in social media and mobile devices.[104]

As young people transition from living as dependent children to being independent adults, the socioeconomic and political environment in which they live can either aid or inhibit them.[105] The *Gyeongju Youth Declaration* (2016), written by youth participants of the 66th United Nations DPI/NGO Conference, emphasizes the importance of youth involvement in policy making and reiterates the need for youth to be encouraged to become active agents for sustainable development and the promotion of effective change.[106] The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs were created for the sustainment of people, planet, and prosperity.[107] They provide a unified, cohesive set of goals in addition to setting out specific guidelines for how to address and achieve accessible education for sustainable development and how to empower youth leaders.[108] SDG 4 focuses on improving peoples' lives through education and includes multiple Targets to be met by 2030.[109] One of these targets is to ensure that youth acquire skills and the knowledge they need to promote sustainable development.[110] The realization of the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development relies heavily on access to quality education.[111]

In 2015, the World Education Forum, held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, saw the adoption of the *Incheon Declaration for Education 2030* in the hope of transforming lives through sustainable education.[112] Guided by SDG 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," the declaration examined the qualities necessary for sustainable education that empowers youth regardless of gender, nationality, race, or any other circumstance.[113] Quality education offers youth an environment that enables them to become both local and global leaders.[114] Through the World Education Forum, education for sustainable development, as well as the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities and the implementation of a unified global agenda, becomes key to the empowerment of future leaders of the world.[115] Likewise, the needs of youth were

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[98] UNESCO, Priority Action Areas-*Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, p. 3.
[99] UNESCO, *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, pp. 1-2.
[100] UNESCO, *UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, p. 6.
[101] UN DESA, *The World Report on Youth Civic Engagement*, 2016, p. 1.
[102] Ibid., pp. 1-4.
[103] Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[104] Ibid., p. 4.
[105] Ibid.
[106] 66th DPI/NGO Conference "Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together," *Gyeongju Youth Declaration*, 2016, pp. 1-2.
[107] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[108] Ibid.
[109] UN Sustainable Development, *Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning*, 2015.
[110] Ibid.
[111] UNDP, *The important role of Education in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030*, 2015.
[112] World Education Forum, *Incheon Declaration*, 2015, pp. 4, 5, 22.
[113] Ibid.
[114] UNESCO, *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development*, 2014, p. 1.
[115] Ibid.

further discussed at the 2014 World Conference on Youth in Sri Lanka.[116] By highlighting the importance of skills-based training, representatives from over 145 countries affirmed that engaging youth as partners rather than just as beneficiaries would lead to development.[117]

Role of the International System

As the central platform for the review and follow-up of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) has a very important task.[118] At HLPF 2016, the Stakeholder Group for Persons with Disabilities and the Education and Academia Stakeholder Group partnered with the Global Education Monitoring Report to organize an event emphasizing inclusive and equitable education.[119] Keeping the theme "Leaving no one behind" in mind, the event focused on how overcoming challenges and discriminations, whether based on gender, disability, or age, is key to truly equitable education.[120] Furthermore, the panel discussed the need for structural changes in public policy that addresses the challenges women and persons with disabilities face when trying to receive quality education.[121] By monitoring the SDGs, the HLPF is helping to ensure that no one is left behind and that education and youth leadership becomes a priority.[122]

The Global Monitoring Report was commissioned by UNESCO to discuss education as the heart of sustainable development.[123] The report emphasizes the importance of unprecedented progress if SDG 4 is to be implemented.[124] Understanding that different countries and regions face different problems, various solutions to the challenges facing SDG 4 are considered in the report.[125] Likewise, the report explains that certain policy changes may be necessary to make education accessible to all.[126] It further examines progress toward achieving SDG 4, as well as the steps necessary for its full completion.[127]

At the center of the UN development system, ECOSOC works in tandem with other UN bodies for the betterment of the global community with a specific focus on sustainable development.[128] Recent changes to ECOSOC, notably General Assembly resolution 68/1 of 2013, have ensured the strengthening of ECOSOC's mandate to promote sustainable development.[129] The 2016 ECOSOC Youth Forum, entitled "Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda," brought youth leaders from around the world to UN Headquarters in New York to discuss ways that youth can become active agents for change and sustainable development.[130] Youth play a key role in turning a vision and ideals into comprehensive action, and the Youth Forum gave them an opportunity to let their voices be heard as they discussed gender equality, youth entrepreneurship, and education.[131]

The Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES), initiated by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), is focused on engaging with universities internationally.[132] The main goal of GUPES is to promote the inclusion of sustainability and environmental concerns in higher education through teaching, research,

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[116] Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, *World Conference on Youth opens in Sri Lanka, UN Envoy on Youth delivers remarks by the Secretary-General, 2014.*
[117] UNNGLS, *World Conference on Youth 2014 focuses on mainstreaming youth in the post-2015 development agenda*, 2014.
[118] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 3.
[119] ICAE, *Inclusive and Equitable Education at 2016* HLPF, 2016.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] UNESCO, *The Global Monitoring Report*, 2016, p. 2.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid., p. 23.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid., p. 2.
[128] ECOSOC, *About Us.*
[129] UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2013, p. 1.
[130] Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, *2016 ECOSOC Youth Forum: "Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda,"* 2016.
[131] ECOSOC, *Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda*, 2016, pp. 1, 3.
[132] UNEP, *Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability.*

and management of universities.[133] UNEP also discusses education through training initiatives.[134] With specific focus on higher education, the Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU) of UNEP aims at implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development through three pillars: education, training, and networking.[135] The promotion of ESD and peaceful societies is also highlighted in UNESCO's Education Strategy for 2014-2021.[136] By encouraging the development of skills like critical thinking and problem solving, with a focus on sustainable practices, the Education Strategy urges Member States to mainstream sustainable education.[137]

In September 2016, a group of young leaders from around the world were assembled by the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, to advocate for the 2030 Agenda goals in ways that are relatable to youth in the world.[138] The goal of the Envoy is to make the UN more accessible for youth by promoting their involvement.[139] Promoting youth leadership in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is essential to the Envoy.[140] In October 2016, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth participated in the UN Volunteer Programme Forum held in Germany.[141] The keynote address was delivered by Ms. Saskia Schellekens, Special Adviser to the Envoy.[142] Schellekens highlighted the important role young people play in strengthening relationships across various sectors, and how the 2030 Agenda can be achieved only if youth contribute and participate.[143]

Educators play a key role in the development of children and young people, and, as noted during the Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Forum on Earl Childhood Care and Education, must be adequately trained.[144] Likewise, the Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) highlights the importance of teacher training for quality education.[145] The Teacher Education Programme initiated by APEID encourages teachers to incorporate UNESCO principles and ideas into their classrooms and monitors the working conditions of teachers.[146] In addition, through the exchange of teachers and researchers between Palestinian universities, the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education (PEACE) aims to develop staff and enhance their training and qualifications.[147] Educators for sustainable development who are equipped with proper training can help facilitate the critical thinking and skills needed for sustainable development.[148]

For this reason, it is of utmost importance that people be empowered through civil society, beginning with the youth of the world.[149] The role of civil society is pivotal for the enhancement of youth leadership, and partnerships between civil society and UN organizations help proliferate the ideas of sustainable development.[150] Civil society movements, such as The Global Campaign for Education (GCE), aim to ensure the right to education internationally and provide a voice to the world's youth.[151] There are nearly 100 Member States in the GCE, and all are committed to providing education for all.[152] Set up by the GCE in 2009, The Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) works in tandem with its regional partners to support effective participation by civil society in the promotion of education for

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[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] UNEP, *The Environmental Education and Training Unit, 2014.*
[136] UNESCO, *Education Strategy for 2014-2021*, 2014.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, *Envoy's Workplan*, 2015.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Office of the Youth Envoy at 2016 UNV Partnerships Forum in Bonn*, 2016.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] UNESCO, *Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Forum on Early Childhood Care and Education*, 2013.
[145] UNESCO, *Teacher Education: Capacity development through teacher education in the Asia-Pacific region.*
[146] Ibid.
[147] UNESCO, *PEACE Programme: Palestinian European Academic Co-operation in Education*, 2012.
[148] Ibid.
[149] UN DPI, *Secretary-General Urges Youth, Civil Society Leaders to 'Help Open a New Future', Ensure Governments Keep Sustainable Development Promises*, 2016.
[150] UNDP, *Empowering Youth for Sustainable Human Development*, 2013.
[151] Global Campaign for Education, *About Us.*
[152] Global Campaign for Education, *Members.*

all.[153] The GCE also runs multiple campaigns in various nations and regions to encourage civic engagement and youth participation.[154] The involvement and participation of civil society is key to achieving education for all and youth empowerment and leadership.[155]

Youth and Sustainable Development

In observance of World Youth Skills Day on 15 July 2016, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon gave the following statement:

> "Empowering young people through skills development strengthens their capacity to help address the many challenges facing society, including poverty, injustice and violent conflict. There is no better investment than helping a young person to develop their abilities. Successful skills´ programmes link young people with opportunities to gain experience and jobs."[156]

By 2030, the global number of youth is projected to grow 7%, which means it will increase from 1.2 billion to nearly 1.3 billion.[157] Along with adequate and quality education at all levels, employment opportunities and a stable socioeconomic environment can enable youth to become strong leaders.[158] The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY), Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, promotes the participation of youth in the implementation, evaluation, and realization of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the steps necessary for meeting the goals.[159]Because the SDGs are interconnected, their realization can best be achieved through coordinated participation and dialogue between Member States, media, civil society, academic institutions, the private sector, and youth-led organizations within the UN.[160]

The links between the HLPF and youth leadership are also strongly supported through the UN Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY).[161] Guided by a vision of a world that upholds human rights and progresses towards sustainable development, MGCY seeks to reduce youth unemployment by encouraging youth entrepreneurship.[162] Supporting environments conducive to entrepreneurship for youth helps to ensure greater opportunities for this group and helps to enhance and stabilize the economic and social aspects of their communities.[163]

The *Report on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (SWAP) Survey* (2013) analyzed the input of youth and other stakeholders; in doing so, it discovered that a lack of business skills and financial services was a significant challenge for youth entrepreneurship.[164] The survey also found that an important way to combat these challenges is to improve entrepreneurship training, provide entrepreneurship education in schools, and provide more accessible financial services options for youth.[165] By providing employment and promoting economic growth, entrepreneurship fosters sustainable development and improved social conditions, empowering the youth of the world to become global leaders.[166]

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[153] The Global Campaign for Education, *What is the Civil Society Education Fund?*
[154] The Global Campaign for Education, *Our Campaigns.*
[155] The Global Campaign for Education, *What is the Civil Society Education Fund?*
[156] UNESCO, *World Youth Skills Day 2016.*
[157] UN DESA, *Youth Population trends and Sustainable Development*, 2015, p. 1.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, *Envoy's Workplan*, 2015.
[160] Ibid.
[161] UN Major Group for Children and Youth. *An Updated Position Paper for the SD 2015 Programme: "Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement in the Post-Rio+20/Post-2015 Process"*, pp.1, 3.
[162] Ibid.
[163] UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth, *Employment and Entrepreneurship, 2012, p. 1.*
[164] UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth, *Report on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (SWAP) Survey*, 2012.
[165] Ibid.
[166] UN General Assembly, *Entrepreneurship for development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/320)*, 2014.

Education and Sustainable Development

Lifelong education is an ongoing process. Nevertheless, lack of accessibility and inadequate infrastructure lead many children to drop out of school during or before their secondary schooling.[167] Poor-quality education that is irrelevant or that reinforces inequalities is another widespread challenge, especially in least-developed countries.[168] To ensure that education at all levels prepares children and youth for social and professional economic life, increased efforts are needed.[169]

Many challenges, including with regard to financing, teacher qualifications, and gender-based discrimination, present themselves when quality education for sustainable development on a global scale becomes a target. While the 2030 Agenda states that education is a priority, it does not include details about financing.[170] These are provided in the *Framework for Action Education 2030*, which outlines the necessary financial pledges and steps to make education more accessible.[171] The economic situation of a country can inhibit the ability of Member States to fund these new education proposals, so the education system relies partially on donors, which constitutes a limitation to this approach.[172] Another challenge regarding access to quality education is the number and distribution of qualified teachers compared with the number that students need.[173] For example, most of sub-Saharan Africa is facing severe teacher shortages.[174] Likewise, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), in tandem with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), launched the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) to help countries reduce the number of children not attending school using an evidence-based approach.[175]

Furthermore, lack of access to materials and training programs lead to gender inequalities in the field of education.[176] Likewise, a high dropout rate among girls in secondary school is a continuing problem.[177] Empowering women and girls through education will contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda.[178] In all intervention areas, from planning infrastructure to training teachers, mainstreaming gender equality can encourage sustainable development.[179] Gender approaches within the education system can only be achieved through the combined work of civil society, development agencies, government, and the private sector.[180] In 2015, the heads of UNESCO, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and UN-Women sealed a partnership to empower young women and girls through education in line with SDG 4.[181] The 2030 Agenda cannot be accomplished if half of the population does not have access to equal, quality education.[182] The combined work of civil society and the UN can help to achieve gender-sensitive education for sustainable development.[183]

Conclusion

By mainstreaming sustainable development practices into curriculum, schools equip their students with critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.[184] Developing skills among youth and enhancing education that focuses on sustainable development helps to ensure the realization of the 2030 Agenda.[185] Significantly lowering illiteracy rates by engaging youth as partners is necessary for enabling better communication, knowledge sharing, and lifelong

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[167] UN DSPD, *Youth and Education*, p. 1.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] UNESCO, *National education accounts A comprehensive framework to improve education finance statistics*, p. 1.
[171] World Education Forum, *Incheon Declaration*, 2015, pp. 6, 12, 16.
[172] Ibid.
[173] UNESCO, *Pupil-teacher ratio by level of education (headcount basis).*
[174] UNESCO, *Teacher training graduates to teachers in service*.
[175] UNESCO, *Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All*, pp. 8, 10, 15.
[176] UN DSPD, *Youth and Education*, p. 1.
[177] Ibid.
[178] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[179] Ibid.
[180] UNESCO, *Education for All Movement.*
[181] UNESCO, *Three UN agencies join forces to boost education for girls and young women.*
[182] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[183] UN-Women, *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development.* pp. 7, 14, 15, 19.
[184] UNESCO, *Education Strategy for 2014-2021*.
[185] UNDP, *High-Level Event on the Role of Youth in the Implementation and Monitoring of the SDGs*.

learning.[186] Furthermore, to ensure SDG 4 is fully achieved, education must be made available to all girls and women.[187] The 2030 Agenda can be accomplished only if accompanied by review and follow-up carried out by the HLPF.[188] Together with civil society, youth leaders committed to sustainable development can help shape the world.[189]

Further Research

As delegates pursue further research, they should consider the following questions: What are the challenges their country faces in terms of education for sustainable development? How can education promote youth leadership? What are ways that regional and international actors can enable the youth of the world and bring them into the discussion of sustainable development? What can the HLPF do to implement SDG 4? How can the HLPF work with other UN bodies towards access to quality education for sustainable development and youth leadership? What are some of the challenges facing the HLPF in the context of ESD and youth leadership and how can they be addressed?

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66th DPI/NGO Conference "Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together." (2016). *Gyeongju Youth Declaration*. Retrieved 17 August 2016 from: http://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/files/2016/06/Youth-Declaration.pdf

> *As a result of the 66th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference held in South Korea in June of 2016, the Gyeongju Declaration was written and adopted by youth representatives. It provides clear commitments to the completion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This source urges Member States to make their education systems a top priority and discusses the importance of education for sustainable development. Furthermore, this document expresses the need for diverse representation in Youth Delegate positions in the United Nations. Delegates should read this document to gain insight into the impact of youth initiatives.*

European Commission. (2015). *Empowering Young People to Participate in Society*. Retrieved 17 August 2016 from: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/events/documents/youthweek_brochure_en.pdf

> *This document provides many examples of the work that the European Union and other regional actors have done with regard to empowering youth through initiatives that involve them and grant them leadership positions. Delegates will find this extremely helpful because it explains what programs include youth and the importance of empowering young people. Furthermore, because this is a region-specific document, delegates can see how regional action can benefit the global community. Delegates should use this document as inspiration for their working papers and any action plans they may develop.*

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *The United Nations World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement* [Report]. Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: http://www.unworldyouthreport.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=120&Itemid=268

> *The United Nations World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement was initiated and written by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It explores the civil, political, and economic life of youth around the world, as well as their civic engagement. In addition, it provides detailed descriptions and reports on the status of youth civic engagement. This can provide delegates with insight on what needs to be done in the future and how sustainable development will be affected by youth engagement.*

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *The World Report on Youth Civic Engagement.* Retrieved 24 August 2016 from: http://www.unworldyouthreport.org/images/docs/un_world_youth_report_youth_civic_engagement.pdf

[186] UNESCO, *Literacy*.
[187] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[188] UN General Assembly, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level*, 2016, p. 2.
[189] Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, *Envoy's Workplan*.

This report provides a comprehensive look at three areas where youth participate in government: economic, political, and community engagement. With a focus on youth civic engagement, it provides innovative ideas on the participation of youth. Delegates could benefit from reading this report to get a better understanding of youth leadership in multiple contexts. Delegates can consider this report in the context of their own countries for comparison and to see where their countries can improve. Additionally, delegates may find it helpful for determining the focus of their working papers.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2014). *Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development.* Retrieved 24 August 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5859Aichi-Nagoya_Declaration_EN.pdf

Initiated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), this declaration was adopted at the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Aichi Nagoya, Japan, in 2014. It highlights the importance of education for sustainable development and invites Member States to translate education policies into comprehensive action that stresses the importance of education as a means of generating peace, respecting human rights, and upholding social justice. Furthermore, the declaration notes the interconnectivity of the Global Action Programme, UNESCO, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This declaration will give delegates an idea of how sustainable development can be taught in school and the ways in which UN entities work together to achieve this.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2016). *The Global Monitoring Report.* Retrieved 22 October 2016 from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002457/245752e.pdf

This report is focused on three distinct points in the context of education for sustainable development: first, the need for new approaches; second, the importance of urgency and a long-term commitment to the issues at hand; and third, the importance of thinking about education in terms of developing skills and fostering sustainable practices. The report goes into detail about the progress that has been made towards the implementation of SDG 4, as well as regarding the steps necessary for making education accessible for all. This document will be essential to delegates in their research because it highlights the challenges within the topic of education while also providing various solutions. Delegates can use this document as a guideline for their working papers and to get a better understanding of why education is crucial for sustainable development.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2016). *Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability.* Retrieved 6 July 2016 from: http://www.unep.org/training/programmes/gupes.asp

By promoting student involvement in sustainability activities, this partnership, which was created by the Environmental Education and Training Unit, is taking active steps towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its objectives include creating prevention approaches in teaching and learning for issues such as climate change, disasters, and conflicts. Furthermore, there are regional chapters that will be very helpful to delegates as they research their respective nations and regions. Delegates will benefit from taking the program's specific objectives into consideration, analyzing the regional needs it outlines, and examining the previous work it has achieved.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *is a collaborative plan of action to foster a continual, renewable global community, as well as to eradicate the issues holding the world back from development. The goals that will be particularly crucial within the context of this topic are Goal 4, Quality Education; Goal 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth; and Goal 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities. The connection between these goals and the topic at hand is crucial for delegates to understand. This will be a pivotal document for delegates because it provides clear goals and a direction in which they should proceed.*

United Nations, Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. (n.d.). *Five-Year Action Plan.* Retrieved 6 July 2016 from: http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/five-year-action-agenda/

One of the main focal points in UN Secretary- General Ban Ki-moon's Five-Year Action Plan is "working with and for women and young people." This focus on women and young people is within the context of sustainable development. This document will be very useful to delegates as they write their position papers and working papers, because it addresses the need to focus on youth and women of the global community, including the issues of gender equality and access to education for all. Furthermore, it suggests solutions that delegates can expand upon.

World Education Forum. (2015). *Incheon Declaration*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: https://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/incheon-declaration

In the Incheon Declaration, the importance of enhanced and accessible education is highlighted through a series of steps and commitments. The promotion of lifelong learning is discussed as a way to ensure the continued sustainable development and betterment of communities. In addition, cooperation between the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *is highlighted. Gender equality, inclusion, and accessibility to education, regardless of gender, race, nationality, or religion, are amongst other points that the Incheon Declaration discusses. This document will be extremely useful to delegates because it addresses the direct correlation between education and sustainable development, as well as the subsequent steps necessary to foster a global community of educated youth.*

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II. Ensuring Decent Work for All

Introduction

The World Bank estimates that the global labor force accounted for 3.4 billion people in 2014, representing 46% of the total world population.[190] A worker's situation is highly dependent on economic prospects, which have been particularly difficult since the start of the economic crisis in 2008.[191] After 2007, global employment growth slowed down to 1.2% per year, compared to 1.7% between 1991 and 2007.[192] Almost 200 million people were unemployed around the world in 2015, an increase of over 27 million from 2007.[193] This means that more than 280 million jobs need to be created by 2019 in order to provide employment to current job seekers and to accommodate new market entrants.[194] At the same time, income inequalities have increased, and vulnerable employment, as in self-employed individuals or contributing family members, accounted for 46% of total employment in 2015.[195] Working poverty and the quality of jobs remain very problematic.[196]

Decent work is defined in *General comment No. 18* (2005) of the Commission on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as "work that respects the fundamental rights of the human person as well as the rights of workers in terms of conditions of work safety and remuneration [and which] also provides an income allowing workers to support themselves and their families […]. These fundamental rights also include respect for the physical and mental integrity of the worker in the exercise of his/her employment."[197] Sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," across three dimensions: economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental protection.[198] Promoting and developing conditions of decent work for all will contribute significantly to achieving sustainable development at the international level.[199] It is not only a factor of more robust and inclusive economic growth; it can also reduce inequalities between social groups.[200] Decent jobs are also green jobs, and they help populations reduce their impact on the environment and mitigate the effects of climate change.[201] Finally, decent work will put an end to forced labor and modern slavery, as well as bring a sense of dignity and justice that can maintain social peace.[202] In this context, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) can lead global efforts to facilitate and support a structured and effective global framework for the implementation of decent work policies, while also tracking the progress made in achieving all related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This guide will provide an overview of the international and regional framework for action, as well as the current role of the international system. It will then present crosscutting examples of what decent work means for sustainable development: women's economic empowerment, youth employment, and the green economy. The guide will conclude with remarks and questions to guide delegates in their research.

International and Regional Framework

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The post-2015 development agenda now provides the central framework for action to promote and guarantee decent work for all across the world.[203] The outcome document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *The Future We Want*, recognized the right to decent work as an integral part to the 2030 Agenda's

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[190] World Bank, *Labor force, total*, 2016; World Bank, *Population, total*, 2016.
[191] ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2015*, 2015.
[192] Ibid.
[193] ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2016*, 2016.
[194] ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2015*, 2015.
[195] ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2016*, 2016.
[196] Ibid.
[197] UN CESCR, *General Comment No. 18: The Right to Work (Art. 6 of the Covenant) (E/C.12/GC/18)*, 2006.
[198] UN World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future (Brundtland Report)*, 1987; UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[199] UN DESA, *Employment, decent work for all and social protection*, 2016.
[200] ILO, *Decent work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

framework for action.[204] Paragraphs 147 to 157 of *The Future We Want* highlight the current challenges populations have to face in terms of unemployment and lack of work opportunities, and recognize the need to promote job creation and income opportunities for all.[205] Implementation of the 2030 Agenda officially started in January 2016, and the first review report provides data on key elements and trends within each SDG, emphasizing the need for better data quality and availability in order for all actors to make informed decisions and to effectively track the progress made towards achieving the agenda – and ensuring decent work for all.[206]

SDG 8 aims to promote "sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all," and within that goal, targets 8.3 and 8.5 to 8.8 are of particular importance.[207] They intend to support decent job creation through development policies, protect labor rights and ensure safe working environments for all, increase youth employment, education and training opportunities, and eradicate forced and child labor.[208] This is central to the achievement of other SDGs and the advancement of sustainable development; sustainable economic growth can directly contribute to reducing poverty and hunger by increasing equal and sustained employment opportunities as well as incomes.[209] It can also contribute to promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization through the increase of industry's share of employment and gross domestic product.[210] Full and productive employment and decent work for all can directly foster gender equality, increase good health and well-being, and reduce inequalities.[211] For this reason, SDG 10 is also important, as it aims to "reduce inequality within and among countries" through sustained income growth of the bottom 40% of the population (target 10.1) and to eliminate "discriminatory laws, policies and practices" to ensure equal opportunities for all (target 10.3).[212]

International Bill of Human Rights

The right to decent work is recognized as a universal human right throughout the *International Bill of Human Rights*, a series of foundational international legal documents for the promotion and defense of human rights.[213] It is comprised of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966), among others.[214] Labor rights, including the right to just and favorable conditions of work, the right to equal pay and to just and favorable remuneration, and the right to form and join trade unions, are expressly protected by article 23 of the UDHR and articles 6 and 10 of the ICESCR.[215] As a General Assembly resolution, the UDHR remains a non-binding agreement but is considered the foundation of international human rights law, and the ICESCR has been ratified by 63 Member States as of 2016.[216]

Resolutions

The right to decent work has been recognized on multiple occasions since the late 1990s by the primary organs of the United Nations (UN). The General Assembly endorsed in its resolution 50/161 (1995) the outcome documents of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, including the *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*.[217] Commitment 3 of the Declaration entirely focused on promoting full and "freely chosen productive" employment as well as quality jobs for all men and women.[218] Ten years later, during the 2005 World Summit, Member States committed themselves to "make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our relevant national and international policies as well as our

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[204] UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[205] Ibid.
[206] UNSD, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016*, 2016.
[207] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[208] Ibid.
[209] ILO, *Decent work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.
[212] UN DESA, *Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries*, 2016.
[213] OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No.2 (Rev.1), The International Bill of Human Rights*.
[214] Ibid.
[215] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.
[216] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948; United Nations, *Human Rights Law*; UN OLA, Treaty Collection, *Status of Treaties, Chapter IV Human Rights, 3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 2016.
[217] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948; UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (A/RES/50/161)*, 1996.
[218] UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995.

national development strategies."[219] Against this context, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) moved to dedicate its 2006 High-Level Segment to employment and decent work for all and to recognize the key role that these issues play in sustainable development policies and strategies.[220] In 2007, General Assembly resolution 62/205 proclaimed 2008-2017 the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, of which a theme was later on considered to be "Full employment and decent work for all."[221] In the same year, ECOSOC directly requested the UN system and related agencies to coordinate and strengthen efforts to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, and to mainstream them in their programs and activities.[222] Support by the Council for employment and decent work policies and strategies culminated the following year in the adoption of resolution 2008/18, a comprehensive document covering aspects ranging from the right to self-determination and social integration, to the role of the private sector.[223]

ILO standards and declarations

The International Labour Organization (ILO) uses various tools such as Conventions, Protocols, Recommendations and Declarations to develop and promote an extensive system of labor standards.[224] The 1958 ILO *Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation* (C111) pressures members of the Organization to eliminate any discrimination "on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin."[225] More than 170 Member States have ratified Convention C111 as of 2016.[226] The *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* (1998) also establishes members' responsibility to respect and promote four identified fundamental rights: association and collective bargaining, the elimination of forced labor, the abolition of child labor, and non-discrimination.[227] Finally, the *Recommendation concerning National Floors of Social Protection* (No. 202) adopted in 2012 provides guidance to the Organization's members to establish and implement "social protection floors" for all those in need, through "sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion."[228]

Role of the International System

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Since 2013, HLPF has replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development as the central body for sustainable development within the UN system.[229] It plays a coordinating role, rather than a decision-making role, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs.[230] As defined in Rio+20's *The Future We Want*, the forum is mandated to provide direction and recommendations on sustainable development, to foster cooperation and the sharing of experiences, and to promote coherent, evidence-based sustainable development policies.[231] The forum is also responsible for following-up and reviewing the progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda commitments.[232] The theme of the 2016 edition of HLPF was "Ensuring that no one is left

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[219] UN General Assembly, *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*, 2005.
[220] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC High-Level Segment 2006*; UN ECOSOC, *Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development*, 2006.
[221] UN General Assembly, *Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017) (A/RES/62/205)*, 2008; UN General Assembly, *Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017) (A/RES/63/230)*, 2009.
[222] UN ECOSOC, *The role of the United Nations system in providing full and productive employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2007/2)*, 2007.
[223] UN ECOSOC, *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/18)*, 2008.
[224] ILO, *Labour standards*, 2016.
[225] ILO, *Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation*, 1958.
[226] ILO, *Ratifications of C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)*, 2016.
[227] ILO, *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*, 1998.
[228] ILO, *Recommendation concerning National Floors of Social Protection (No. 202)*, 2012.
[229] Martens, *The HLPF 2016: First global meeting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs*, 2016.
[230] Ibid.
[231] UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[232] Ibid.

behind," within which the concept of decent work for all plays a key role.[233] Through the Ministerial Declaration they adopted in conclusion of the forum, Member States committed themselves to "promote an equitable global economic system in which no country, people or person is left behind, enabling decent work and productive livelihoods for all."[234] Decent work for all was a recurring theme throughout the program and side events of the 2016 HLPF, including in official meetings on "Fostering economic growth, prosperity, and sustainability" and "Lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic needs."[235] In practice, the forum has an opportunity to participate in global efforts to ensure decent work for all by promoting and supporting collaborative and knowledge-sharing initiatives, especially between Member States.[236] The forum will also directly receive and consider annual reports on the SDG indicators, which are "the backbone of monitoring progress towards the SDGs at the local, national, regional, and global levels."[237] Indicators to measure progress in achieving SDG 8 include: "Share of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex," "Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age group and persons with disabilities," and "Percentage and number of children aged 5-17 engaged in child labor, by sex and age group."[238]

ILO Decent Work Agenda

The ILO was created in 1919 with the intention to improve labor conditions worldwide through the regulation of work conditions, policies to prevent unemployment and guarantee adequate and equal living wages, as well as the protection of workers and vulnerable populations such as children, women, and migrant workers.[239] As a specialized agency of the UN, the ILO is an autonomous organization working with the UN under a negotiated agreement.[240] Recently, it has centered its efforts on implementing a Decent Work Agenda, which was instituted in 1999 by a report of its Secretary-General.[241] Acknowledging the need to align the ILO's priorities with "the transformation of the economic and social environment brought about by the emerging global economy," the report proclaims: "The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity."[242] Such an agenda would be implemented through four strategic priorities: "fundamental principles and rights at work […] employment and income opportunities for women and men […] social protection [and] social dialogue and tripartism."[243] In order to measure the progress made in implementing decent work, the Organization has developed several assessment and monitoring tools to support Member States, including guiding documents and a framework of statistical and legal indicators, which are now compiled in a Manual.[244]

The UN system and other intergovernmental organizations

As the development arm of the UN, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) plays a key role in implementing sustainable development strategies, including ensuring decent work for all.[245] Every year, UNDP publishes its *Human Development Report*, a milestone assessment of the progress made in human development worldwide.[246] In 2015, the Report exclusively focused on the potential for work to enhance human development.[247] It highlighted three clusters of policy options for implementation: "creating more work opportunities to expand work choices,

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[233] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind" (E/HLS/2016/1)*, 2016.
[234] Ibid.
[235] UN DESA, *Ensuring that no one is left behind - Fostering economic growth, prosperity, and sustainability*, 2016; UN DESA, *Ensuring that no one is left behind – Lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic needs*, 2016.
[236] IISD, *HLPF 2016 Highlights*, 2016.
[237] SDSN, Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, 2015; UN ECOSOC, Report of the *Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1)*, 2016.
[238] Ibid., pp. 23-24.
[239] ILO, *ILO Constitution*, 1919.
[240] UN DPI, *Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others*, 2016.
[241] ILO, *Report of the Director-General: Decent Work*, 1999.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.
[244] ILO, *Measuring decent work*, 2016; ILO, *Decent work indicators*, 2016; ILO, *Decent work indicators: concepts and definitions: ILO manual*. 1st ed., 2012.
[245] UNDP, *UNDP Support to the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 8*, 2016.
[246] UNDP, *Human Development Reports*.
[247] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2015*, 2015.

ensuring workers' well-being to reinforce a positive link between work and human development and targeted actions to address the challenges of specific groups and contexts."[248] On the ground, UNDP is involved in different sectors of a given national society, whether it works with governments to design policies and institutional frameworks or whether it collaborates with the private sector, including small and medium businesses.[249] In Colombia for example, UNDP has worked with the Ministry of Employment in eliminating gender inequalities in both the public and private sectors, in order to reduce recruitment and salary gaps and promote career developments for women.[250] In Uruguay, the agency is supporting a governmental "Justice and Inclusion Programme" for prison detainees, which aims at integrating them socially and at decreasing recidivism rates.[251] Overall, UNDP was able to support the creation of almost one million new jobs across 125 program countries in 2014.[252]

Outside of the UN system, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) works to promote socioeconomic policies based on data and indicators with the objective to improve the quality of life of populations around the world.[253] The OECD is thus assessing and measuring many employment-related aspects, and tracks the progress that countries make in reducing unemployment across all socioeconomic and age groups, providing decent wages, reducing income inequality, and promoting good mental health at work.[254] In June 2016, the OECD published its second international *Survey of Adult Skills*, which assesses the level of proficiency in a set of information processing skills at the international level, and provides data on issues such as the links between work and education, or skills and inequality.[255]

Civil society and private sector

The ILO, with its tri-partite representation system that includes governments, employers, and workers' organizations, has recognized early on the role that non-governmental actors play in designing, developing, and implementing efforts that help ensure decent work for all.[256] Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also actively engaged with ILO programs and initiatives, such as the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, and they are crucial partners on the ground.[257] At the global level, some NGOs were active in the past in promoting productive employment and decent work through a Decent Work, Decent Life campaign launched in 2007.[258] Solidar, the International Trade Union Confederation, the European Trade Union Confederation, World Solidarity, and the Global Progressive Forum supported, through their Call to Action, greater investments in public services, the reform of the financial sector, and the development of "green jobs" to address climate change and provide decent work.[259]

As a major employer of the world's workforce, the private sector has a significant influence on global progress made towards decent work for all and its role is not limited to job creation but extends to other aspects of topic, including fair wages, social protection, and inclusion.[260] The SDG Compass is an interesting example of existing efforts to mobilize the private sector in realizing the SDGs.[261] Defined as a guide to assist private businesses in integrating the SDGs in their strategies and maximizing their contributions, the Compass directly provides companies with business indicators against the individual targets within each Goal.[262] In order to achieve Target 8.5 for example, companies

[248] Ibid.
[249] UNDP, *UNDP Support to the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 8*, 2016.
[250] Ibid.
[251] UNDP, *Developing new chances beyond bars in Uruguay*, 2016.
[252] UNDP, *UNDP Support to the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 8*, 2016.
[253] OECD, *About the OECD*, 2016.
[254] OECD, *Employment*, 2016.
[255] OECD, *Skills Matter: Further Results from the Survey of Adult Skills*, 2016.
[256] ILO, *How the ILO works*, 2016.
[257] ILO, *International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour: NGOs*, 2016.
[258] ITUC, *Decent Work Decent Life Campaign Statement for G20 Meeting in London*.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, *Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016*, 2016, pp. 68-72; Business for 2030, *Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive & sustainable economic growth, full & productive employment & decent work for all*.
[261] GRI et al., *SDG Compass: The guide for business action on the SDGs*, 2015.
[262] GRI et al., *SDG Compass: Inventory of Business Indicators*, 2015.

can measure and report on the training and education opportunities of their workforce, on the ratios by gender, on the average working hours and overtime of their employees, and on the benefits policies in place.[263]

Ensuring Decent Work for All Women

As of 2014, women represented almost 40% of the total global labor force.[264] However, only half of the working age women population is in wage and salaried employment, compared to more than 75% of working age men.[265] On average, women around the world earn 24% less than men for the same job.[266] At the same time, women account for more than half of informally employed workers and for 58% of unpaid work.[267] The World Bank also notes that out of 173 economies measured, 90% of them have at least one statutory gender-based restriction to employment.[268] National efforts to improve women's economic opportunities have nevertheless been constant or even increased in the last few years, with reforms to facilitate women's access to paid jobs, to protect them from violence, and to allow them to access and build financial credit, among others.[269]

Ensuring decent work for women has strong benefits for the economy, as it can help reduce poverty and foster social progress.[270] Societies that guarantee women their right to work and equal income opportunities thrive from women's economic empowerment in the household and the community.[271] Women can gain improved health conditions as well as educational achievement, thus strengthening the sustainability of their development.[272] In the workplace, it is also known that "diversity of employees […] contributes to better performance."[273] Many programs and UN entities are involved in those issues, and each has a different role to play. For example, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supports Member States in promoting income generation and improving women's participation in the labor force through its Income Generation and Security through Decent Work and Social Protection for Women Flagship Programming Initiative.[274] This Initiative focuses on four areas of action on the ground: macroeconomic policies for job creation for women, collective action and public policy, unpaid care work, and social protection.[275] HLPF could play a leading role in establishing a framework for gender equality in the labor force through the promotion of targeted and efficient policies, the monitoring of progress towards the relevant SDG indicators, and the support of effort coordination between all actors involved.[276]

Women migrants

Women today comprise 48% of all international migrants.[277] As a particularly vulnerable group in their host society, migrants often suffer from discrimination, underpay, and violations of their basic rights.[278] Women are also more vulnerable to human trafficking and forced labor in sectors such as domestic work and textiles.[279] Women migrants are also victims of a "double wage penalization" compared to both nationals and migrant men.[280] Socioeconomic contexts play a key role in solving migration-related issues, for example the reasons why migrant workers decide to leave their country in the first place.[281] Migration for development is still a source of opportunities for both the

[263] Ibid.
[264] World Bank, *Labor force, female (% of total labor force)*, 2016.
[265] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016*, 2016.
[266] Ibid.
[267] UN-Women, *Policy Brief. Decent Work and Women's Economic Empowerment: Good Policy and Practice*, 2012.
[268] World Bank, *Women, Business and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal*, 2015.
[269] Ibid.
[270] ILO, *Resource guide on gender issues in employment and labour market policies*, 2014.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid.
[274] UN-Women, *Income Generation for Women: Decent Work and Social Protection*, 2016.
[275] Ibid.
[276] UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[277] UN DESA, *International Migration Report 2015 – Highlights*, 2016.
[278] Ibid.
[279] ILO, *Work in Freedom: Preventing trafficking of women and girls in South Asia and the Middle East. Promoting education, fair recruitment, safe migration and decent work.*
[280] ILO, *Promoting decent work for migrant workers*, 2015.
[281] UN Development Fund for Women, *A needs assessment of women migrant workers – Central Asia and Russia*, 2009.

countries of origin and of destination.[282] Women migrants can support their families and communities at home through monetary remittances and investments, and they have an economic and social value for the society in which they work.[283] Protecting and empowering women migrants can contribute to sustainable development and allow greater "poverty alleviation and inclusive, balanced and sustainable growth."[284]

Ensuring Decent Work for All Youths

Young people represent another particularly vulnerable segment of the world population in regards to employment.[285] The economic crisis that started in 2007 saw a rapid increase in unemployment rates for young people worldwide between 2007 and 2010.[286] As of 2014, a total of 73.3 million youth were unemployed, representing 36.7% of the global unemployed population.[287] As a comparison, youth represented only 16% of the global population in the same year.[288] Recent trends in employment rates appear promising, but the impact of the recent economic crisis on young people remains evident in job search difficulties, financial insecurity due to work irregularity, and lack of formal employment.[289]

Youth unemployment is an obstacle to sustainable development, as it places significant economic and social costs on the concerned societies.[290] National governments endure lower tax revenues and lost productive output, as well as higher social security costs.[291] As youth are left idle and with no social and economic prospects, this contributes to inequality, can undermine political stability, and can prompt social tensions.[292] According to the World Bank and the ILO, ensuring decent work for youth will help reduce poverty and sustain economic growth.[293] Successfully transitioning into the workforce allows young people to earn income and develop skills, promotes their good mental and physical health, and reduces the likelihood of later joblessness.[294]

Youth employment has become a top priority in the international development agenda.[295] In 2012, the International Labour Conference adopted a "call for action" for the international community to tackle the youth employment crisis through better employability and school-to-work transition, pro-employment policies, support for youth in active work searches, and the promotion of youth entrepreneurship.[296] In 2015, the UN High-Level Committee on Programmes initiated an inter-agency effort to ensure decent work for youth and promote the achievement of SDG 8.[297] The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth brings together 19 UN programs and entities under the leadership of ILO to form a multi-stakeholder alliance in support of youth employment.[298] Launched in February 2016, the Initiative is being progressively implemented through several strategic elements: regional partnerships, guidance and scale up of country-level action, a knowledge facility to share lessons learned and experience, and a resource mobilization strategy to financially support innovative interventions.[299]

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[282] ILO, *Women and men migrant workers: Moving towards equal rights and opportunities*.
[283] Ibid.; UN-Women, *Contributions of Migrant Domestic Workers to Sustainable Development*, 2013.
[284] UN-Women, *Contributions of Migrant Domestic Workers to Sustainable Development*, 2013.
[285] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth*, 2015.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.
[288] Ibid.
[289] Ibid.
[290] Plan International, *Towards Solutions for Youth Employment: A 2015 Baseline Report*, 2015.
[291] Caribbean Development Bank, *Youth are the Future: The Imperative of Youth Employment for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean*, 2015.
[292] Plan International, *Towards Solutions for Youth Employment: A 2015 Baseline Report*, 2015.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Ibid.; Caribbean Development Bank, *Youth are the Future: The Imperative of Youth Employment for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean*, 2015.
[295] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth*, 2015.
[296] ILO, *The youth employment crisis: A call for action*, 2012.
[297] ILO, *The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth*.
[298] FAO, *UN initiative targets job creation and decent work conditions for young people*, 2016.
[299] ILO, *The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth*.

Ensuring Decent Work in a Green Economy

It is acknowledged that climate change and environmental constraints are already impacting labor markets, and worsening effects of climate change are set to increasingly disrupt employment worldwide.[300] According to ILO, "droughts, heat waves, heavy rains, tropical cyclones, sea level rise, rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns have displaced workers, disrupted business operations, damaged business assets and infrastructure, and negatively impacted working conditions, occupational health and safety and labor productivity."[301] At the same time, the transition to a more sustainable and low-carbon economy is changing production and consumption patterns, displacing the labor demand from energy and resource-intensive sectors to industries and services that "build on and enhance the earth's natural capital or reduce ecological scarcities and environmental risks."[302] ILO estimates that half of the global workforce is affected by the transition to what is known as the green economy.[303]

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines a green economy as "one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities."[304] This transition is creating employment opportunities in new sectors such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and low-carbon transportation, which could translate to 15 to 60 million additional jobs globally.[305] This new category of "green jobs," defined as employment that is respectful and protective of the environment, was first introduced by the ILO's Director General in a 2007 report to the International Labour Conference.[306] A green economy is also related to higher individual and community well-being and quality of life, since it promotes "a clean, healthy and productive environment."[307]

Green jobs can constitute both "a challenge and an opportunity for the labor market."[308] For example, the transition to green jobs can be socially unjust when some workers, communities, and enterprises are negatively affected by economic changes.[309] The promotion of decent work in a green economy is about both encouraging the greening of the economy in question and ensuring that the rights of all workers are respected, that wages are fairly distributed, opportunities are promoted, and social dialogue is facilitated.[310] Nevertheless, the green economy offers opportunities to improve incomes and reduce poverty, to improve social inclusion of vulnerable populations, and even to improve gender equality.[311] Young people can also benefit from that "green" source of jobs, since they are "the group most adaptable to the new, able to change, willing to experiment and learn, and to accept jobs in new areas."[312]

Conclusion

Ensuring decent work for all requires comprehensive policy, legal, and economic efforts in order to make sure no one involved in labor markets is left behind. Work can be qualified as decent only if all basic rights of a person as a human and a worker are respected; working conditions are safe; remuneration is sufficient for the workers and their

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[300] ILO, *Green Jobs: Progress Report 2014-2015*, 2016.
[301] Ibid.
[302] ILO, *Decent Work, Green Jobs and the Sustainable Economy*, 2015, pp. 1-8; UNEP, *Green Economy: Developing Countries Success Stories*, 2010.
[303] ILO, *Working towards sustainable development – Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy*, 2012.
[304] UNEP, *Green Economy: Developing Countries Success Stories*, 2010
[305] ILO, *Working towards sustainable development – Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy*, 2012.
[306] ILO, *Director-General's introduction to the International Labour Conference: Decent work for sustainable development (ILC 96-2007/Report I (A))*, 2007.
[307] Aceleanu et al., *"Greening" the Youth Employment—A Chance for Sustainable Development*, 2015, pp. 2623-2643.
[308] Ibid.
[309] ILO, *Director-General's introduction to the International Labour Conference: Decent work for sustainable development (ILC 96-2007/Report I (A))*, 2007.
[310] ILO, *Working towards sustainable development – Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy*, 2012.
[311] Ibid.
[312] Aceleanu et al., *"Greening" the Youth Employment—A Chance for Sustainable Development*, 2015, pp. 2623-2643.

families; and their physical and mental health is guaranteed.[313] This provides a common baseline for all Member States to plan and assess their policies concerning work and employment, and to measure their progress towards achieving the SDGs, and specifically Goal 8.[314] HLPF can play a key role in this context, as a guide for the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and an auditor of the international community's progress towards ensuring decent work for all.[315] It is worth noting that if Member States all share a certain number of common issues, such as gender inequality in access to economic opportunities and remuneration, or youth unemployment, those are all determined and influenced by national and regional contexts.[316] The global workforce is further comprised of very diverse socioeconomic groups with very different needs, and labor strategies have to address different challenges whether they intend to promote decent work for all women or for all youth.[317] It is important for delegates to understand the complexity of the topic at hand in order to propose a valuable framework for the follow-up and review of the SDGs.

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: what existing tools and mechanisms could be used to promote and support decent work efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels? What indicators could be used to measure the different aspects of decent work and to track progress made on the ground? What existing monitoring processes could be used and how could they be improved? What role should civil society representatives and workers' organizations play in both the implementation and reporting processes? What role should the private sector play in those same processes? As the body mandated to conduct follow-up and review of the SDGs, what could HLPF contribute to current and future efforts to implement SDG 8? What kind of guidance would they envision HLPF to provide to the stakeholders involved in the decent work agenda? What recommendations would they suggest in order to foster decent work policies around the world?

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International Labour Organization. (2012). *Decent work indicators: concepts and definitions: ILO manual*. 1st ed. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_229374.pdf

ILO is mandated to develop labor standards as well as policies and programs that promote decent work for all. The Manual on Concepts and Definitions of Decent Work Indicators is the result of tri-partite negotiation efforts to establish a framework to measure the substantive elements of decent work. It provides delegates with concrete examples of statistical and legal framework indicators that they can use to develop and evaluate policies, whether at the local, national or international level.

International Labour Organization. (2016). *Green Jobs: Progress Report 2014-2015*. Retrieved 27 August 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_502730.pdf

The International Labour Organization has an extensive library of publications on various themes related to employment and decent work. This includes its Progress Report *on employment in a green economy. This document presents an interesting overview of the current activities in place to support the development of green jobs, including through their Green Jobs Programme. It allows delegates to understand the link between decent jobs and climate change, and provides concrete examples of what promoting "green" decent work could look like on the ground. It is a useful resource for delegates in understanding how can decent work policies help achieve sustainable development, and more specifically its environmental dimension.*

[313] UN CESCR, *General Comment No. 18: The Right to Work (Art. 6 of the Covenant) (E/C.12/GC/18)*, 2006.
[314] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[315] UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[316] ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2016*, 2016.
[317] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016*, 2016; ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth*, 2015.

International Labour Organization. (2016). *World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2016*. Retrieved 27 August 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_443480.pdf

ILO publishes on a yearly basis a report of employment trends at the international level. The document provides a detailed overview of the conditions of the global and regional labor markets, along with forecasts of unemployment rates and other measures. The report intends to educate and inform on the key challenges faced by workers worldwide, in order for governments and other stakeholders to then develop and implement adapted policies. It also offers some recommendations for the promotion of quality employment and the eradication of poverty. Delegates should be familiar with the data presented in this report, as it will help them define efficient and targeted solutions.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Employment, decent work for all and social protection* [Website]. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/employment

The Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform is the central UN platform for sustainable development resources. The topic of decent work for all directly falls under Sustainable Development Goal 8, which aims to promote "inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all." Delegates will find detailed information on this goal on this website, including documents and events. SDG 8 is also broken down by related topics, which allow delegates to gain more in-depth understanding of the context and framework around their topic.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2008). *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/18)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/RES/2008/18

The Economic and Social Council, a primary organ of the United Nations, is mandated to address economic and social matters and plays a key role in defining the sustainable development framework at the international level. Among the few resolutions the Council has adopted on the topic of decent work for all, resolution 2008/18 provides a particularly extensive overview of the issues at play. It is a valuable resource for delegates to understand the various underlying themes, including urbanization, education, migration, and social inclusion.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Ministerial declaration of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind" (E/HLS/2016/1)*. Retrieved 21 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/HLS/2016/1

HLPF was first organized in 2013, in preparation of the post-2015 development agenda. The 2016 edition of the forum was the first one since the adoption by the General Assembly of the SDGs, and it thus set the tone for the years to come. The outcome document and the program of HLPF 2016 all highlighted the key role of decent work for all in "ensuring that no one is left behind". Delegates should be familiar with their Committee's work, which includes this ministerial declaration in particular.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2016). *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016* [Website]. Retrieved 27 August 2016 from: http://progress.unwomen.org/en/2015/

UN-Women is the dedicated agency for the promotion of women rights and gender equality at the international level. Its work touches on a very large range of crosscutting issues, including work and employment. The last edition of its flagship report on Progress of the World's Women *focuses on the economic and social aspects of gender equality, and relates to the topic at hand. Delegates will find it a useful resource to understand the gender dimensions of decent work for all and can there find inspiration for their own solutions to the problems at hand.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Third session. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. Retrieved 20 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights *establishes the foundational elements of decent work as universal human rights. The UDHR and its succeeding* International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights *both provide the international legal framework for employment and work policies, including the right to work, to social protection and to equal pay for equal work.*

They are key documents to consider when addressing the topic at hand and delegates should be familiar with their provisions.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixtieth session. (2005). *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/60/1

In order to mark the 60th anniversary of the Organization of the United Nations, the General Assembly held a World Summit at the opening of its 2005 session. It was an opportunity for all Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the principles and objectives of the United Nations, but also to take new decisions to solve the most pressing issues the international community has to face. Among others, commitment was made to promote "full and productive employment and decent work for all". Successive efforts by UN entities to promote decent work followed this resolution from the General Assembly, which makes this historic outcome document an important for delegates to consider in their research.

United Nations Statistics Division. (2016). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016*. Retrieved 25 September 2016 from: http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2016/The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20Report%202016.pdf

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *started on 1 January 2016, and the 2016 edition of the* Sustainable Development Goals Report *is the first of its kind. The HLPF is responsible for following-up and reviewing the progress made on achieving the 17 Goals, and this document directly relates to the mandate and function of the Committee. For this reason delegates should pay close attention to the data and trends presented in that report and should consider it a key resource for their research and collaborative work.*

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III. The Role of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals

"There is a need to rethink how best to disseminate existing technologies as well as promote access to new technologies for all. Whether embodied as products or processes or in the form of knowledge transfers, such exchanges hold the key for a sustainable and prosperous future for all."[318]

Introduction

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a worldwide call for action to foster sustainable development (SD): where the basic needs of all are met without jeopardizing the future generations and harming the planet.[319] These goals aim, among other objectives, to eradicate hunger and poverty, to build resilient cities, and to empower vulnerable groups.[320] The central role of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is to engage all stakeholders in the overseeing of the progress and to bring in forums of discussion linked to the implementation of these SDGs in policies at all levels.[321] In recent years, rapid improvements in science, technology, and innovation (STI), especially in the digital era, have provided relevant tools to tackle these challenges and to drive SD.[322] However, knowledge and technology gaps between Member States of the United Nations (UN) have increased drastically.[323] Under the 2016 theme of HLPF, "ensuring that no one is left behind," it becomes particularly appropriate to discuss the equal accessibility to mechanisms promoting STI-sharing for all stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the scientific community.[324] Through this document, science refers to the expansion of the current knowledge while technology is the application of science to create new tools.[325] Innovation is the implementation of the technology in the public sphere.[326]

Emphasizing the use of STI in sustainable development policies and frameworks has been the core of several agreements and led to the establishment of systems enabling the use of STI to encourage SD, further described below. Additionally, three processes in this topic are presented: the assessment of technological needs; the transfer and the sharing of STI, particularly to least developed countries (LDCs); and the dissemination of knowledge and technologies to the civil society. Finally, open questions are given to guide the delegates through their research.

International and Regional Framework

During the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (2012), a new Open Working Group was established to elaborate an inclusive and interconnected set of targets to replace the Millennium Development Goals.[327] At the UN Sustainable Development Summit (2015), Member States adopted the new set of goals, presented as the new 17 SDGs in the outcome document *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[328] Among the 169 targets of the document, 48 require significant inputs of knowledge and technologies, underlining the major importance of STI in

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[318] UN DESA, *E-Participation: Empowering People through Information Communication Technologies (ICTs)*, 2013, p. 4.
[319] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.
[320] Ibid.
[321] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2016 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results" (E/HLS/2016/1)*, 2016, p.2.
[322] UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, *Science, technology, and innovation for sustainable development in global partnership for development beyond 2015*.
[323] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013; UNFCCC, *Technology and the UNFCCC. Building the foundation for sustainable development*, 2010.
[324] UN ECOSOC, *Theme of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (E/2016/L.11)*, 2016, p.1.
[325] UN ECOSOC, *Science, technology, and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (E/2013/54)*, 2013.
[326] Ibid.
[327] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970)*, 2014.
[328] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[329] For example, the agenda promotes technology development in LDCs to increase agricultural productivity and end hunger.[330] SDGs 9 and 17 particularly emphasize the role of the STI in SD.[331] They address mechanisms to strengthen the capacity of Member States to implement the SDGs in their national policies, such as international cooperation for an improved accessibility to science, technology, and innovation and the Technology Transfer Mechanism.[332] Prior to the adoption of the Agenda 2030, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) resulted from the efforts of Member States in 2015 to provide a further detailed holistic framework to implement the new SDGs through 100 concrete measures for inclusive STI initiatives and financial incentives for all Member States, particularly the LDCs.[333] These measures aim, for instance, for a greater transparency from all stakeholders and the establishment of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.[334]

Earlier, in 1992, participants at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) were already redesigning worldwide development toward sustainability and inclusiveness, and the event generated several outcome documents and systems.[335] Among these are the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the *Agenda 21*.[336] The UNFCCC aims to mitigate anthropogenic impact on the climate system.[337] The Convention also encouraged strong cooperation between the States parties, such as through financial and human assistance, to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer.[338] Efforts from the States parties led, as an example, to the establishment of the Technology Mechanism in 2010.[339] To assess the progress on the implementation of the Convention, representatives from the States parties merge each year during the Conference of the Parties (COP).[340] *Agenda 21* is a document sanctioned by the international community that has an impact on all succeeding decision-making.[341] Within *Agenda 21*, the necessity to strengthen the role of STI in decision-making for the implementation of SD is stressed.[342] Among the several chapters underlining the benefits of STI in the implementation of SD, Chapter 31, "Scientific and Technological Community," promotes the enhancement of communication between the STI community and the other stakeholders.[343] It also underlines the need to develop frameworks to improve capacity building in STI and cooperation, especially with developing Member States.[344] In 2012, the outcome document *The Future We Want* of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio +20, brought in considerations for a facilitation mechanism of knowledge and technology sharing that would include the assessment of technology needs of developing Member States.[345]

Role of the International System

In 2013, the General Assembly adopted the resolution *The Future We Want* that led to the establishment of HLPF to follow up the implementation of the SDGs.[346] HLPF benefitted from the lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), particularly shown by its emphasis on a cross-sectoral integration of the three dimensions of SD in a dynamic platform of discussion that encourages coordination, cooperation and experience sharing.[347] HLPF must enhance cooperation between all stakeholders, including the scientific community, to

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[329] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 15.
[330] Ibid.
[331] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.
[332] Ibid., p. 26.
[333] UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015.
[334] Ibid., p. 55.
[335] UNFCCC, *What is the COP?*, 2014.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Ibid.
[338] UNCED, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.
[339] UNFCCC, *Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention* (-/CP.17), 2010.
[340] UNFCCC, *First steps to a safer future: Introducing The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 2014.
[341] UN DPI, *UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992)*, 1997.
[342] UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992, p. 293.
[343] Ibid.
[344] Ibid.
[345] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[346] Ibid.
[347] UN DESA, *Multi-stakeholder Forum on science, technology, and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals: summary by the Co-Chairs (E/HLPF/2016/6)*, 2016.

promote experience, knowledge, and technology sharing.[348] In 2016, the General Assembly supported, through the resolution 70/299, an annual set of SDGs review in depth and a theme to follow the progress on the overall technology performance and on the implementation of the 17 SDGs as a framework.[349]

SDG 17 targets the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) to be in operation by 2017.[350] In 2015, through the AAAA, Member States defined the TFM as a gateway for STI to assist all stakeholders in the achievement of the SDGs.[351] The TFM includes three components: a UN inter-agency task team (IATT), a multi-stakeholder Forum on Science Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum), and an online platform.[352] The IATT, composed of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Industrial Development Organization, the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Bank, ensures coordination, coherence and cooperation within the TFM.[353] The online platform will be used to share policies, actions, and partnerships on STI among Member States, and will be coordinated by the STI Forum, with the IATT providing inputs to HLPF through a summary note of the President of UN DESA.[354] In perspective of the 2016 session of HLPF, UN DESA drew a special attention to science, technology, and innovation through its *Global Sustainable Development Report* to provide specific suggestions to support interactions between science and policy.[355] Chapter 3 presents different aspects of the role of the scientific community in the achievement of the SDGs.[356] Groups of scientists have elaborated policy and action proposals to leverage STI for the implementation of the SDGs related to the acceleration of technology progress, the improvement of STI needs assessments and roadmaps for developing Member States and vulnerable groups, and the establishment of institutions supporting SD such as research facilities.[357] Scientists also identified highly relevant technologies, such as in biotechnology, and presented their potential to contribute to the different SDGs.[358]

Other international organizations also focus on providing high-level recommendations on STI-related issues.[359] The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) meets annually and brings in considerations and advice on STI for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly.[360] In 2006, the mandate of CSTD was enlarged to closely follow-up the progress in the implementation of the outcome targets of the World Summit on Information Society.[361] Global partnerships are also enhanced by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) not related to the UN.[362] For instance, the multi-donor and multilateral program Agresults, an initiative established by a group of G20 leaders including Australia, Canada, and the United States, supports high-impact agricultural innovations that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.[363] For example, Agresults is supporting a pilot project in Africa to counter vitamin A deficiencies among children that cause 250,000 child deaths annually in Africa.[364] In Zambia, it is actively contributing to the introduction of biofortified provitamin A maize into the

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[348] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013.
[349] UN General Assembly, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level (A/RES/70/299)*, 2016.
[350] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2016.
[351] UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Ibid.
[355] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 41.
[356] Ibid., p. 42.
[357] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 52; UNFCCC, *Technology and the UNFCCC. Building the foundation for sustainable development*, 2010.
[358] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 53.
[359] UN DESA, *Multi-stakeholder Forum on science, technology, and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals: summary by the Co-Chairs (E/HLPF/2016/6)*, 2016.
[360] UN General Assembly, *Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields (A/RES/46/235)*, 1992.
[361] UN ECOSOC, *Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science, and Technology for Development (E/2006/46)*, 2006.
[362] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016.
[363] Agresults, *Why was Agresults created?*.
[364] Agresults, *Zambia Biofortified Maize Pilot*.

markets, which is expected to improve health outcomes.[365] The World Bank, an international financial institution, also actively supports SD projects in cooperation with national governments.[366] Since 1947 the World Bank has contributed to 12,678 projects in 173 countries; an additional $45.9 billion is committed for 2017.[367] The World Bank recently committed to provide a $45 million loan to the Argentina Unleashing Productive Innovation Project to increase productive innovation within knowledge-based areas, such as information and communications technology (ICT), and to support projects within small and medium enterprises in Argentina.[368]

Finally, within the 2030 Agenda, numerous references underline the role of the civil society and the private sector in the global efforts to support the adoption of new sustainable technologies and to achieve the SDGs.[369] HLPF encourages these stakeholders to participate in the review of the SDGs' progress and to report their initiatives on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.[370] Within civil society, non-governmental organizations actively support populations and businesses to adopt new technologies to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.[371] As an example, the African Agricultural Technology Foundation is a non-profit organization that eases the accessibility to appropriate agricultural technologies, such as the use of aflatoxin to prevent mycotoxin contaminating agricultural tools and increase agricultural productivity, for smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa.[372] In another way, the Save the Children Fund contributes to the protection children's rights and the improvement of their lives.[373] The private sector is also a major collaborator to SD.[374] The International Chamber of Commerce and the UN Global Compact organized in 2016 a SDG Business Forum, Business for 2030, as a side event of the HLPF to share underway projects involving businesses.[375] As an example to illustrate the major role of the private sector in SD, Johnson & Johnson presented their programs orientation toward SDGs 5 and 6 through their participation in over 500 partnerships.[376] They contributed to the training of 300,000 health workers from 2011 to 2016.[377]

Science, Technology, and Innovation Needs Assessments

To tackle the 17 SDGs, several UN entities, including the SP7 Emerging Issues Project within UNEP, have defined technology needs assessments (TNAs) as one of their main priorities.[378] To identify and assess the STI needs for the implementation of the SDGs, Member States are encouraged by UN DESA to establish working groups, involving all stakeholders, with defined roles and responsibilities in the coordination of the assessments.[379] International collaboration to support such efforts is particularly needed in LDCs and in Small Island Developing States, where governments have limited human and financial resources for research and development.[380] Assessing STI needs also requires an updated understanding of the causes and consequences of emerging issues, such as the lack of water treatment facilities allowing the proliferation of bacteria and favoring the dispersal of illnesses.[381] The identification of emerging issues relies on their potential damage on society, the economy and the environment, their persistence effect, and their ubiquity.[382] Thereafter, these inputs assist all stakeholders in the decision-making and development of a working plan that includes objectives and a strategy for progress follow-up.[383]

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[365] Ibid.
[366] The World Bank, *Projects & Operations*.
[367] Ibid.
[368] The World Bank, *Argentina-Unleashing Productive Innovation Project*, 2016.
[369] UN ECOSOC, *Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system (A/70/75-E/2015/55)*, 2016.
[370] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.
[371] UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992.
[372] African Agricultural Technology Foundation, *Mission and Strategy*, 2012.
[373] Save the Children, *About us.*
[374] UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015.
[375] Business for 2030, *The 2016 SDG Business Forum – a recap*, 2016.
[376] Ibid.
[377] Ibid.
[378] UNDP, *Handbook for conduction Technology Needs Assessment for Climate Change*, 2010.
[379] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016.
[380] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013.
[381] UNDP, *Handbook for conduction Technology Needs Assessment for Climate Change*, 2010.
[382] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016.
[383] UNDP, *Handbook for conduction Technology Needs Assessment for Climate Change*, 2010.

During the COP 16 (2010) in Mexico, the Technology Mechanism (TM), different from the TFM, was created to facilitate TNAs and the implementation of environmentally sound technologies to address climate change.[384] The TM consists of the Technology Executive Committee, responsible for the implementation of a transfer framework, and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN).[385] The CTCN was mandated to facilitate networking at all levels and to strengthen collaboration with public agencies, research institutions, the private sector, and the civil society.[386] It supports Member States, upon request, to design action plans through the transfer of knowledge and environmentally-sound technologies to achieve the SDGs.[387] Support includes specific expertise related to emerging issues and the identification of STI needs.[388] It is a service offered to developing Member States, at local, regional and, national levels, to public institutions, the civil society, and the private sector.[389] As of September 2016, 141 requests were submitted to the CTCN and 24% concerned the identification of STI needs.[390]

Case study: Development of low global-warming potential refrigerants in Africa
In 2014, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, and Namibia requested technological assistance from the CTCN to support the Green Cooling Africa Initiative (GCAI).[391] Refrigeration and air conditioning are spreading across Africa, increasing the energy demand that still relies on burning fossil fuels.[392] Therefore, African Member States faced an increase in greenhouse gas emissions as an emerging issue.[393] CTCN supported the initiative through the analysis of globally available green cooling technologies, the development of regional and national recommendations, and the search for funding.[394] Today, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), a company specialized in international development in Germany, and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in South Africa are implementing the initiative[395].

Transfer and Sharing of Science, Technology, and Innovation

UN DESA reiterated that the introduction of new sustainable technologies foster, among other benefits, economic growth for Member States, especially LDCs.[396] In that regard, SDG 17 highlights the need to develop expertise and knowledge exchange mechanisms, such as forums.[397] Those are key elements to enhance partnership building between stakeholders and are provided by several international organizations including UNCTAD and the WTO Working Group on Trade and Technology Transfer.[398] In addition to knowledge sharing, financial resources are also necessary for technology transfer channels.[399] Several IGOs, such as regional development banks, play a critical role in establishing various partnerships to meet the different targets of the SDGs.[400] Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are one of the most promoted mechanisms as they combine efforts from the public sector, such as governments and research facilities, and the private sectors, to provide financial, knowledge, human, and material resources for innovative projects.[401] IGOs can contribute to these partnerships by providing appropriate legal framework and by sharing financial risks.[402] As an example, the Joint European Support for Sustainable Development Investment in

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[384] UNFCCC, *Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention* (-/CP.17), 2010.
[385] UNFCCC, *Report of the Conference of the Parties on its seventeenth session, held in Durban from 28 November to 11 December 2011 (FCCC/CP/2011/Add.1)*, 2011.
[386] Ibid., p. 24.
[387] Ibid.
[388] UNFCCC CTCN, *CTCN Operating Manual for National Designated Entities (NDEs)*, 2015.
[389] Ibid.
[390] UNFCCC CTCN, *Request visualizations of technical assistance*, 2016.
[391] UNFCCC CTCN, *Green Cooling Africa Initiative*, 2016.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Ibid.
[394] GIZ, *German Green Cooling Initiative*.
[395] UNFCCC CTCN, *Green Cooling Africa Initiative*, 2016.
[396] Hoekman et al., *Transfer of Technology to Developing Countries: Unilateral and Multilateral Policy Options*, 2005.
[397] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.
[398] Hoekman et al., *Transfer of Technology to Developing Countries: Unilateral and Multilateral Policy Options*, 2005.
[399] UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015; UNFCCC, *Technology and the UNFCCC. Building the foundation for sustainable development*, 2010.
[400] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016.
[401] OECD, *Introduction: STI Review No. 23, Public/Private Partnerships in Science and Technology.*
[402] The World Bank, *The World Bank Group's Global Environment Facility Program*, 2014.

City Areas (JESSICA) is a European Commission initiative that supports sustainable urban development by providing financial incentives to PPPs in order to reduce market failures of businesses while adopting new sustainable technologies.[403] In Romania, JESSICA supported private local ICT operators to reduce STI gaps between rural and urban areas and to boost the economy by extending broadband internet access to 400,000 residents, 8,500 businesses, and 2,800 public institutions.[404] Such partnerships can also be encouraged through several multi-stakeholder forums and organizations, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization's initiative WIPO Green, an interactive marketplace of green technologies for the civil society and the private sector.[405] HLPF also guides global efforts to strengthen international co-operation on STI through recommendations for the major groups.[406] For example, as a special event on the occasion of the HLPF 2016, UN DESA organized the 2016 Partnership Exchange to enhance global partnerships between SD stakeholders.[407] A major outcome of the event was an innovative online platform, already available, that compiles the different initiatives that directly address the SDGs and their follow-up.[408] This way, stakeholders are able to search for projects that specifically correspond to certain targets of the SDGs.[409]

Case Study: Improvement of the Health Sector in Kazakhstan
The World Bank has supported technology transfer to LDCs through several projects to improve the life standards of vulnerable groups, and represents a rich source of experiences in the establishment of policies and programs to achieve an inclusive SD.[410] For example, the Republic of Kazakhstan faced high adult and child mortality in addition to tobacco- and alcohol-related diseases.[411] Therefore, following its economic growth from natural resources income, Kazakhstan aimed to modernize and improve its health-care system.[412] This objective required more than building facilities and acquiring equipment.[413] In 2008 the World Bank accepted to establish the "Health Sector Institutional Reform and Technology Transfer Project" to improve the abilities of Kazakhstani specialists in administration, quality of health care, ICT, and public health.[414] The partnership led to the annual training of 93,916 health personnel in 2016, from a total of 10,720 in 2011.[415]

Dissemination of Science, Technology, and Innovation to the Civil Society

Once technologies become available, it can still remain challenging to disseminate those technologies to the populations and the private sector.[416] *The Future We Want* underlined the necessity to engage all stakeholders in SD and that actions improving access to STI, especially by bridging the digital divide, are crucial.[417] It has been observed that women are also excluded from decision-making in various sectors, such as in politics and in the private sector, and have also limited access to new technology, education, and economic resources.[418] Therefore, dissemination mechanisms should make sure that populations, especially vulnerable groups, such as women, indigenous peoples, and youth, have an equal access to knowledge, financial services and the technologies related to the SDGs, such as the dissemination of clean energy and the improvement of quality education.[419] In Bangladesh, the National Agricultural Technology Project is an example of dissemination mechanisms that allowed farmers, representing a large percentage (90%) of the rural population, to gain financial benefits from the adoption of new

[403] European Commission, *JESSICA: Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas*, 2014.
[404] European Commission, *RO-NET: Building broadband internet access to boost the economy*, 2015.
[405] WIPO, *WIPO GREEN – The Marketplace for Sustainable Technology*.
[406] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES//70/1)*, 2015.
[407] UN DESA, *Partnership Exchange*, 2016.
[408] UN DESA, *Global Partnership engagement in support of the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.
[409] Ibid.
[410] The World Bank, *Projects & Operations*.
[411] The World Bank, *Kazakhstan – Health Sector Technology Transfer and Institutional Reform Project*, 2006.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid.
[416] UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016; UNFCCC, *Technology and the UNFCCC. Building the foundation for sustainable development*, 2010.
[417] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[418] Chronic Poverty Research Centre, *The Chronic Poverty report 2008-09*, 2009.
[419] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2016.

technologies and management practices.[420] Lack of financial resources, cultural practices, and education barriers are examples of obstacles that can prevent effectively disseminating STI to vulnerable groups.[421] Being the most participatory forum of the UN through its mandate to gather inputs from all SD stakeholders, HLPF participants can therefore elaborate inclusive recommendations to optimize mechanisms and improve the dissemination of knowledge and technologies to all.[422]

Case study: Civil society access to solar panels in Tunisia
In 2005, the Tunisian Solar Programme (PROSOL) was established with the collaboration of UNEP, the Tunisian National Agency for Energy Conservation, the Societé Tunisienne de l'Électricité et de Gaz (STEG), a public company responsible of the production of electricity and natural gas in Tunisia, and the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea.[423] This program represents an example of the role of multi-stakeholder collaborations tackling the SDGs that can contribute to local public support.[424] The program was mandated to provide loans to the civil society and the private sector to have access to solar water heaters and reduce their consumption of fossil fuels.[425] Already in 2006, loans allowed over 50,000 Tunisian families to purchase solar water heaters.[426] In 2002, 119,000 solar water heaters had been installed and it allowed households to save between $605-$1325 per heater in energy bills over the expected life of the heater (15 years).[427]

Conclusion

Since 1992, decisions and actions have been taken to facilitate the implementation of STI in SD strategies and actions.[428] UN entities, programs and funds were established and the lessons learned from these initiatives shaped the current global framework related to STI as presented in the AAAA.[429] However, gaps in financing support, capacity building and accessibility to knowledge and new technologies, between Member States as well as between social groups, are limiting the contribution of STI to the achievement of the SDGs.[430] As HLPF has the mandate to overview and provide recommendations for the implementation of the SDGs in policies at all levels, addressing the role of STI is particularly relevant at the early stage of the Agenda 2030.[431] In this guide, attention is given to three major mechanisms that ensure that no one is left behind regarding the accessibility to STI: STI needs assessments, the facilitation mechanisms for the transfer of technologies, and the solutions to disseminate the recently developed technologies to vulnerable populations. By assessing the input from different stakeholders, such as the Forum on STI, members of HLPF are invited to monitor the progress in achieving the SDGs using STI to present inclusive recommendations to governments, public institutions, the private sector, NGOs, the scientific community, and the civil society.[432]

Further Research

Delegates should look for means to improve the potential benefits from STI in the implementation of the SDGs in policies at all levels. As underlined by the theme selected for the 2016 *Global Sustainable Development Report* and the 2016 High-Level Political Forum, delegates should seek means to improve the inclusiveness of STI. How can low-income Member States take advantage of big data technologies, such as biotechnology and satellite data, to assess new emerging issues? How can the HLPF, considering the challenges raising from high population growth

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[420] The World Bank, *National Agricultural Technology Project*, 2008.
[421] UN DESA, *Ensuring that No One is Left Behind: Reaching the most vulnerable*, 2016.
[422] Ibid.
[423] Trabacchi et al., *San Giorgio Group Case Study: Prosol Tunisia*, 2012.
[424] UNEP, *Solar Heating Loan Facility in Tunisia (MEDREP Finance PROSOL)*.
[425] UN DESA, *PROSOL – Solar Programme*, 2005.
[426] Epp, *Tunisia: Ups and Downs of Prosol Subsidy Scheme*, 2014.
[427] Trabacchi et al., *San Giorgio Group Case Study: Prosol Tunisia*, 2012.
[428] UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015.
[429] Ibid.
[430] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013.
[431] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2016 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results" (E/HLS/2016/1)*, 2016.
[432] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.

rates in some regions including Africa, disseminate knowledge and technologies to achieve the eradication of poverty and hunger? Which reporting mechanisms can be used to ensure the proper and efficient use of STI in the achievement of all individual Goals? Which existing tools can the HLPF use to foster science-based monitoring processes? How could they be further optimized to respond adequately to the needs of Member States?

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Ensuring that No One is Left Behind: Reaching the most vulnerable* [Website]. Retrieved 26 October 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=20000&nr=348&menu=2993

The document presents the schedule and background information for a 2016 HLPF side event that aimed at entertaining discussions on mechanisms to reach the most vulnerable groups. Through this page and the attached documents, pertinent aspects of the challenges to effectively reach everyone are illustrated. Delegates will be able to overview the main obstacles, such as distance and education barriers. There are also open questions to help delegates on the orientation of their research and position.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016.* Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/105902%20pager%20Chapter%203%20final.pdf

The Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, particularly the third chapter, addresses the role of science in the implementation of sustainable development policies. The report underlines that among the 169 SDG targets, 48 of these are related to the development of science, technology, and innovation. This document is particularly relevant as it combines recommendations from the scientific community to leverage technology for the SDGs under four main themes: the acceleration of the STI progress, the elaboration of technology roadmaps, the establishment of institutions dedicated to sustainable development and the inclusiveness of STI. Scientists elaborated on the benefits of innovations in different SDG topics, but also on the risks those same innovations may represent if they are not adequately used.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Multi-stakeholder Forum on science, technology, and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals: summary by the Co-Chairs (E/HLPF/2016/6).* Retrieved 27 September 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/HLPF/2016/6

The first forum on STI, a component of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, occurred in June 2016 and the outcome of the discussions is summarized in that document. Delegates will be able through the document to learn about the main recommendations submitted to the High-Level Political Forum in 2016 concerning the role of the STI in the implementation of the SDGs. Participants addressed, among other topics, the mobilization of STI for the SDGs, the inclusiveness of technology so that no one is left behind, and the enhancement of research and development efforts in vulnerable Member States.

United Nations Development Programme. (2010). *Handbook for conduction Technology Needs Assessment for Climate Change.* Retrieved 27 September 2016 from: http://unfccc.int/ttclear/misc_/StaticFiles/gnwoerk_static/TNA_HAB_infobox_1/3a34f12bf10d4b7bae791d0d7ad572eb/c29096556b034760b94273b0124039ac.pdf

How do Member States assess their needs in regards to climate change mitigation and adaptation? How do developing Member States get support from the international community to access knowledge and technologies to mitigate or to adapt to climate change? These relevant questions can be answered in this document. Particularly adapted for the Technology Mechanism of the UNFCCC, this handbook will provide detailed information to delegates on existing mechanisms in certain bodies to achieve environmentally sound technology development. Ideas and solutions can therefore be adapted by delegates to the emerging challenges that face members of HLPF in the implementation of the SDGs.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2015). *Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels: Report of the Secretary General (A/71/67-E/2016/51).* Retrieved 22 September 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/71/67-E/2016/51

The CSTD provides the General Assembly and ECOSOC with recommendations on STI issues as well as follow up on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society since 2006. This document gives the delegates a clear example of progress follow-up on STI for policy making, in addition to addressing emerging issues such as cybersecurity and the implications of emerging technologies on human rights and cultural diversity. This report also particularly addresses the post-2015 development agenda: how information and communication tools can be efficiently used for the implementation of the SDGs.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2010). *Technology and the UNFCCC. Building the foundation for sustainable development* [Brief]. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: http://unfccc.int/ttclear/misc_/StaticFiles/gnwoerk_static/NAD_EBG/54b3b39e25b84f96aeada52180215ade/b8ce50e79b574690886602169f4f479b.pdf

This document provides a great overview of the challenges vulnerable Member States face regarding the accessibility to science, technology, and innovation. It outlines the historical progress that led to the creation of the Technology Transfer Framework and the establishment of the expert group on technology transfers. The Technology Transfer Framework is based on five subtopics, including mechanisms for technology transfer. In addition, it addresses the financing and the implementation of different projects within the framework. This detailed document will provide further detailed insights to delegates on the functioning of transfer frameworks.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Secretary General (A/67/757). Retrieved 28 September 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/290

HLPF is the entity that replaced the CSD, responsible to monitor progress in the implementation of previous agreements, especially the Agenda 21. *As specifically underlined in the General Assembly resolution 67/290 that established the HLPF, the new entity should inherit from the lessons learned from the CSD. In this document, delegates can review the significant achievements of the CSD, especially in keeping sustainable development as a main priority throughout the international dialogues, and the drawbacks of the body. The drawbacks include an unequal emphasis on some dimensions of sustainable development and the insufficient means to include all stakeholders. Therefore, delegates who read this document will be able to solidify their positions based on previous experiences.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 26 September 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gathers the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs. Although STI plays a role in the implementation of all Goals, Goal 17 is particularly relevant for the delegates as it invokes capacity building and partnerships related to STI and particularly the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. Science, technology, and innovation are also directly mentioned in 14 targets of the SDGs under the Goals 1,2,4,5,7,9,14, and 17. This document provides an excellent starting point to understand how STI are needed to implement the SDGs.

United Nations, Third International Conference on Financing for Development (2015). *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

This work is the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. It describes an elaborated action plan to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. It includes a section on science, technology, innovation, and capacity building. This section promotes among others the diffusion of innovations, an international support to develop capacity building, and the promotion of knowledge sharing between stakeholders. This document is particularly relevant for the delegates as it is the plan of implementation of the SDGs regarding science, technology, and innovation.

The World Bank. (2006). *Kazakhstan – Health Sector Technology Transfer and Institutional Reform Project.* Retrieved 28 August 2016 from: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/171131468292845249/pdf/Project0Inform1cument1Concept0Stage.pdf

HLPF stands out from most of sustainable development forums by its inclusiveness. It enhances discussions between all stakeholders: international organizations, public institutions, private sector, and the civil society. Through this document, delegates will be able to visualize a financial support mechanism from The World Bank to improve knowledge and technologies for sustainable development in developing Member States. Where does the funds come from? How are the objectives established? How monitor the progress? Delegates are also invited to read the other project documents to have a follow up of the progress that has been done.

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