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Economic and Social Council Plenary Background Guide 2019

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2019 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to welcome you to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Plenary. This year's staff are: Directors Courtney Indart (Conference A) and Angelina Pienczykowski (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Allison Baker (Conference A) and Cory Gregg (Conference B). Courtney currently lives in Washington, DC and works with international visitor exchange programs while simultaneously finishing an MA in international affairs. Angelina received her MA in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University. She currently works in the field of philanthropy with a focus on Latin America. Allison currently lives in Anchorage and works as a Data Analyst at a telecommunications company while finishing her MBA in Business Analytics. Cory completed a BA in History at the University of Northern Iowa in 2015, and is now pursuing an MA in Political Science at the University of Siegen.

The topics under discussion for Economic and Social Council Plenary are:

1. Public-Private Partnerships for Inclusive Development
2. Harnessing New Technologies to Achieve the SDGs
3. Ensuring Access to Technical, Vocational, and Tertiary Education

As a principal organ of the United Nations (UN), ECOSOC coordinates the activities of 14 specialized agencies, 13 regional and functional commissions, and over 3,900 civil society actors by commissioning studies and reports, monitoring the implementation of activities and initiatives, and encouraging cooperation and coherence among policy actions. In addition, ECOSOC coordinates funding mechanism and takes the lead role in formulating policy goals and frameworks for short and long-term programs, with particular emphasis on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. To accurately simulate the committee, it will be important to focus on ECOSOC's coordination and policy guidance role.

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 2019 in accordance with the guidelines in the [NMUN Position Paper Guide](#).

Two resources, available to download from the [NMUN website](#), that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [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 addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the Economic and Social Council Department, Estefani Morales (Conference A) and Stéphanie Toschi (Conference B), at usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

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

Conference A

Courtney Indart, Director
Allison Baker, Assistant Director

Conference B

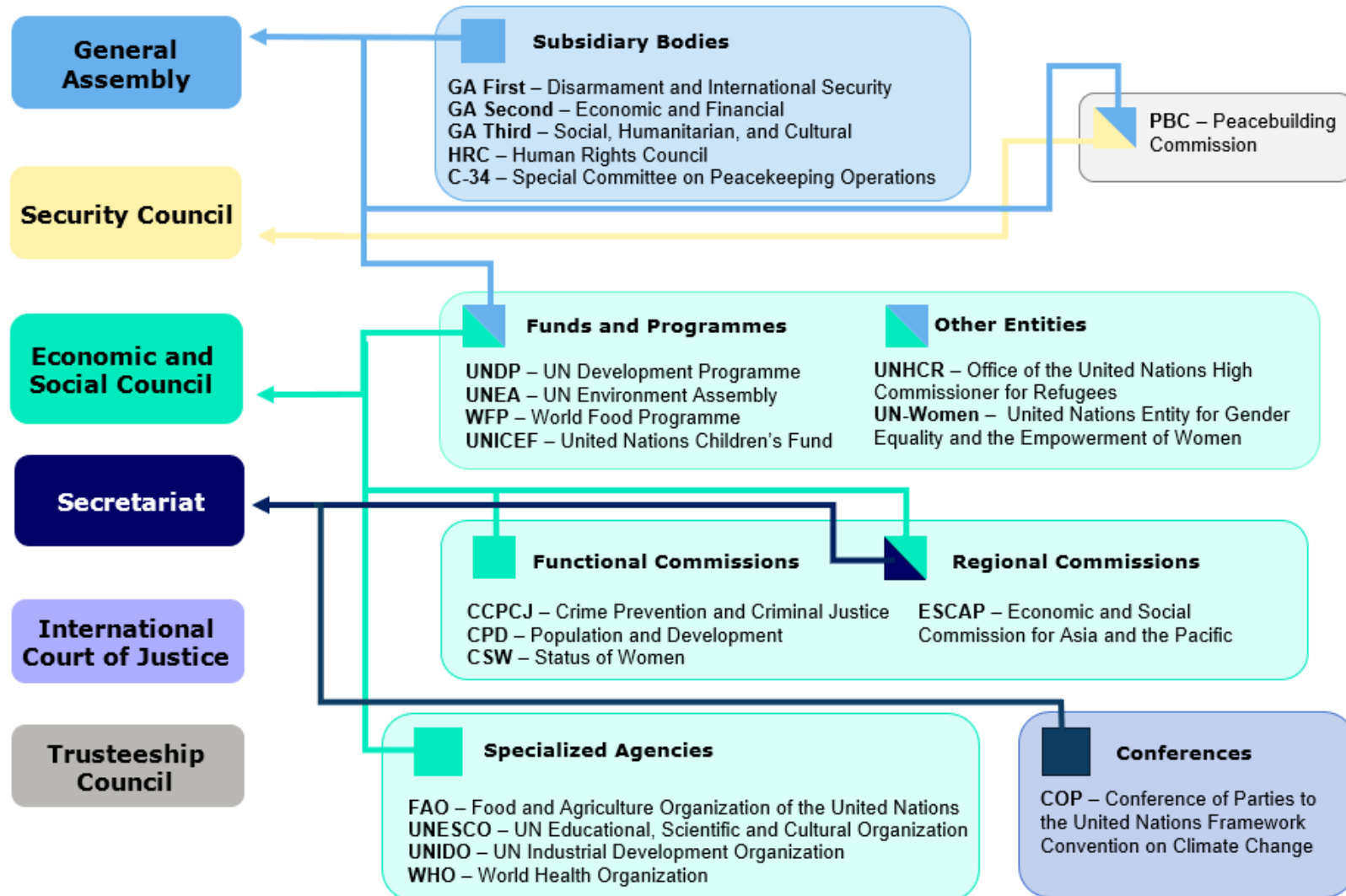
Angelina Pienczykowski, Director
Cory Gregg, Assistant Director

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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.



Committee Overview

Introduction

Chapter X of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a founding body and one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN).¹ ECOSOC indirectly oversees the allocation of 70% of UN resources through its oversight of 14 specialized agencies and 13 functional and regional commissions.² The Council is mandated to serve as the primary body for policy dialogue on economic, social, cultural, educational, and health-related topics; to advise and coordinate the activities of Member States and other UN entities on matters within this mandate; and to lead discussion on the implementation of the international development framework.³

The **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** is one of the six primary organs of the UN. Under the authority of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), ECOSOC is mandated to address economic and social matters. It submits an annual report to the General Assembly.

ECOSOC has undergone several reforms since its inception; in the 1960s and 1970s, developing Member States broadened the agenda of the UN and sought a stronger focus on urgent issues such as the promotion of development and the elimination of poverty.⁴ General Assembly resolution 2847(XXVI) (1971) increased ECOSOC membership from 27 to 54 in order to better reflect the UN's economic and geographic diversity.⁵ The General Assembly then adopted resolution 32/197 in 1977 to address the "Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System" and to improve ECOSOC's effectiveness by increasing coordination with its subsidiary bodies.⁶ To avoid any duplication of work due to broad mandates, General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 1995 clarified that its role is to provide policy guidance while ECOSOC's focus is on coordination of work.⁷ This interpretation was reinforced by General Assembly resolution 57/270 in 2002.⁸

The General Assembly implemented additional reforms over the past several years to strengthen the working methods of ECOSOC through resolution 68/1 of 2013.⁹ These reforms included an expansion of its functions and powers to enable ECOSOC to take the lead on identifying and discussing emerging challenges; to act as a policy forum for global leaders, especially concerning the integration of sustainable development efforts; and to provide a platform of accountability for all levels of monitoring and reporting on universal commitments.¹⁰ In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/305 reiterating that ECOSOC "should be guided by the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and flexibility."¹¹

Governance, Structure, and Membership

ECOSOC is comprised of 54 members, each of which is elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.¹² The members are elected according to the geographical distribution of UN Member States to ensure representation from all regions and levels of development: 14 seats are allocated to

¹ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.

² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. X; Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.

³ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.

⁴ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 20.

⁵ New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2018.

⁶ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 19.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 20.

⁹ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*; 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.

¹⁰ UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

¹¹ UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*, 2018, p. 3.

¹² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. X; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members*.

African States, 11 to Asian States, six to Eastern European States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean States, and 13 to Western European and Other States.¹³ Each member has one representative and one vote in ECOSOC, and all decisions are made by a simple majority of those members present and voting.¹⁴ ECOSOC is governed by a President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur, in tandem with a Bureau consisting of five representatives: the President and four Vice-Presidents.¹⁵ The current Council President is Inga Rhonda King who was elected as the 74th President in July 2018.¹⁶ All of these representatives are elected to one-year terms at the outset of each session.¹⁷ The Bureau is responsible for setting ECOSOC's agenda, devising action plans, and collaborating with the Secretariat on administrative duties.¹⁸ Its presidency rotates equally among regional blocs.¹⁹

ECOSOC meets twice annually for one organizational session and one substantive session.²⁰ Organizational sessions are dedicated to administrative aspects, such as agenda setting and elections to the Bureau take place.²¹ During substantive sessions, meetings are divided into five segments focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council's work.²² The working methods of the Council were further reformed through General Assembly resolution 68/1 in 2013.²³

ECOSOC oversees 14 subsidiary bodies, forums, and meetings that hold their own sessions and provide recommendations, draft resolutions, and annual reports to the Council.²⁴ The two most common types of subsidiary bodies are functional and regional commissions, but other subsidiary bodies include standing, ad hoc, expert, and other related bodies and committees.²⁵ Each subsidiary organ has adopted specific methods of work to align with its mandate, and methods are updated regularly.²⁶ Types of subsidiary bodies include functional commissions, regional commissions, and expert bodies composed of governmental experts.²⁷

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The *Charter of the United Nations* mandates ECOSOC to “make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters” including human rights and freedoms, to the General Assembly and its specialized agencies.²⁸ ECOSOC may also provide information and assist the Security Council when addressing humanitarian crises, such as the Ebola crisis, natural disaster response, and in addressing the situation in Haiti.²⁹ As emphasized by recent reforms accentuating this role, ECOSOC also provides coordination, monitoring, and advice to UN

¹³ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members; Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. X, Art. 61.

¹⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992, p. 22; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. X.

¹⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992.

¹⁶ UN ECOSOC, *President of ECOSOC*, 2018.

¹⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992.

¹⁸ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Bureau*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992, p. 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²³ UN ECOSOC, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2018.

²⁴ UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Functional Commissions*, 2014.

²⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.

²⁶ UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 7.

²⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related field (E/RES/1998/46)*, 1998, p. 76; UN Regional Commissions New York Office, *About*, 2016; New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2018; UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, *Overview*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.

²⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 62.

²⁹ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emergency Situations*, 2016.

programs, agencies, and funds on international development policies and their implementation.³⁰ Examples of this coordination role include facilitating cooperation between economic institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1998 and establishing in 2007 what has become ECOSOC's High-Level Segment.³¹

ECOSOC fulfills its mandate both through its subsidiary bodies and in consultation of a broad range of civil society organizations (CSOs).³² There are more than 3,900 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with consultative status that may attend and participate in various UN meetings, conferences, and special sessions to voice their concerns to the international community.³³ Consultative status is given by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs, which was established in 1946 and is comprised of 19 Member States.³⁴ The Committee on NGOs directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by CSOs.³⁵ ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 of 1996 defines the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations, and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in establishing the consultative relationship.³⁶ In the latest report from June 2018 session, the Committee granted consultative status to 209 NGOs, deferred an additional 223 NGOs for consideration in 2019, and reviewed quadrennial reports.³⁷

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

Beginning with the operational activities for the development segment, from 27 February to 1 March, several 2018 ECOSOC sessions have reflected the Council's priorities of repositioning the UN development system and strategies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.³⁸ The 2018 Partnerships Forum further established ECOSOC's interest in improving coordination with private organizations to better support the development community.³⁹ From 23-26 April 2018, the Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) met to review the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015) on financing sustainable development.⁴⁰ The resulting report of FfD is committed to taking three actions: facilitate the use of all financial resources including innovative options at all levels, improve and align incentives for public and private actors with sustainable development, and operationalize financial frameworks.⁴¹ Following the most recent Humanitarian Affairs Segment, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2018/11 on "Strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations," which calls for governmental and NGO humanitarian agencies to renew their efforts toward coordination by using initial rapid assessment tools that help reach communities that are difficult to access with medical care, clean water, and food supplies.⁴²

³⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (E/RES/2013/5)*, 2013, p. 1.

³⁰ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*; UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

³¹ UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/61/16)*, 2006, p. 2.

³² UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ UN DESA, *Committee on NGOs convenes for first session of 2014*, 2014; UN DESA NGO Branch, *The Committee on NGOs*.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ UN DESA, *Committee on NGOs convenes for first session of 2014*, 2014; UN DESA NGO Branch, *The Committee on NGOs*; UN ECOSOC, *Consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (E/RES/1996/31)*, 1996, pp. 53-61.

³⁷ UN DPI, *Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Adopts Report of Resumed Session, Meeting Dates for 2019, Status to 209 Entities among Recommendations*, 2018.

³⁸ UN ECOSOC, *2018 Operational Activities for Development Segment*, 2018.

³⁹ UN ECOSOC, *2018 Partnerships Forum*, 2018.

⁴⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/FFDF/2018/L.2)*, 2018.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² UN ECOSOC, *2018 Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2018.

From 21-22 May 2018, ECOSOC held the 6th meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which underlined the UN desire to improve coordination among international agencies.⁴³ Particularly, the DCF emphasized the need to ensure policy and action focus on those left further behind economically and socially, due to physical and legal barriers.⁴⁴ Following the DCF, ECOSOC held its 2018 special meeting on “Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all,” which emphasized the importance of connectivity, government engagement, and civic responsibility.⁴⁵ From 9-18 July 2018 ECOSOC held the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) on “Transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies.”⁴⁶ The HLPF serves as a space in which the international system can review the *2030 Sustainable Development Agenda* and provides governments opportunities to discuss their current progress.⁴⁷ This iteration of HLPF reviewed and called for the revitalization of actions toward meeting SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, and 17.⁴⁸ President King emphasized the importance of the HLPF during her opening speech, and particularly highlighted that it is a forum for innovation and encouragement.⁴⁹ Additionally, the UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake, underscored the world’s growing youth population and the reality that youth are imperative in addressing the most pressing issues.⁵⁰ Building upon themes of the HLPF, HLS segment from 16-19 July 2018 was “From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities,” affirming the need for sustainable solutions and reducing risks in the face of economic, environmental, or social crises to facilitate continued development in communities.⁵¹

Conclusion

ECOSOC plays a key role in coordinating activities and programs through the expansive UN system for humanitarian, development, and various other issues.⁵² The Council has demonstrated a commitment to mobilizing resources and building efforts to tackle key priority issues, including the promotion of development and the formation and maintenance of international partnerships.⁵³ It has also initiated collaboration across UN entities to ensure political commitment toward a new development framework and the SDGs, which the Secretary-General has called a “paradigm shift” for operations across the UN.⁵⁴ The contributions of the Council, both as a forum for discussion and in providing policy guidance, are significant, and its role will continue to grow in the “post-2015 development agenda.” As President King highlighted as her priorities, clear organizational leadership, strong monitoring mechanisms, and a revitalized ECOSOC are necessary to address the challenges to achieving the SDGs by 2030.⁵⁵

Annotated Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945). Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.shtml>

The Charter of the United Nations is the foundational document of the UN. It lays out the mandate and structure of not only ECOSOC, but also the remaining five principal organs.

⁴³ UN ECOSOC, *6th Biennial High-level Meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)*, 2018.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Special Meeting “Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all”*, 2018.

⁴⁶ UN ECOSOC, *High-level Political Forum organized under the auspices of ECOSOC*, 2018.

⁴⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Compilation of main messages for the 2018 voluntary national reviews (E/HLFP/2018/5)*, 2018.

⁴⁸ UN ECOSOC, *High-level Political Forum organized under the auspices of ECOSOC*, 2018.

⁴⁹ UN ECOSOC, *President of ECOSOC*, 2018.

⁵⁰ UN DPI, *Progress has been made, but ‘not at a sufficient speed to realize the SDGs’: UN ECOSOC President*, 2018.

⁵¹ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC High-level Segment: “From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities”*, 2018.

⁵² Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.

⁵³ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.

⁵⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2016/8)*, 2016, p. 6.

⁵⁵ UN ECOSOC, *President of ECOSOC*, 2018.

Member States are obliged to uphold the Charter's articles above all other treaties. It is an essential starting point in researching the UN. Chapter X, Articles 61-72 of the Charter describes ECOSOC's composition, functions and powers, voting, and rules of procedure.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Development Cooperation Forum* [Website]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/development-cooperation-forum>

The Council's website dedicated to the Development Cooperation Fund contains pertinent information on the research process for topics under consideration by ECOSOC. Delegates will find information about explaining the most recent Development Cooperation Fund outcomes under the purview of the expert body. There are also publications that detail findings and participation outcomes from partners in the global community. The Development Cooperation Fund policy briefs will be invaluable to delegates for preparing their research about partnership across and within the UN system.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *The New ECOSOC – Overview of functions and working methods* [Report]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from:

http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunc/pdf14/the_new_ecosoc_31_march_2014.pdf

In 2013 the General Assembly adopted vast reforms for the work of ECOSOC. Particularly, these reforms enhanced the role of the Council as a leader in policy dialogues and recommendations; introduced the high-level political forum on sustainable development; created a platform for accountability for universal commitments, monitoring and reporting on progress; and emphasized the need for greater cooperation among development agencies. This source will be helpful for delegates as this report easily summarizes the ways ECOSOC planned to implement reforms and follow through on creating a more accountable international system.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018, May 23). *ECOSOC Special Meeting "Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all"* [Press Release]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2018doc/2018-ecosoc-special-meeting-summary.pdf>

ECOSOC holds special meetings for the purpose of addressing specific topics and energizing stakeholders to innovate when implementing policies. The six main themes of this meeting emphasized global responsibility, government accountability and action, and aligning incentives for public-private partnerships. Specifically, the statement emphasizes that the international community needs to address structural barriers within legal frameworks. Delegates can use this document to better understand how ECOSOC fulfills its mandate by holding forums and meetings to address sustainable development topics.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Compilation of main messages for the 2018 voluntary national reviews (E/HLFP/2018/5)* [Report]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from:

<https://www.undocs.org/e/hlpf/2018/5>

As part of the SDGs, Member States have the opportunity to self-report national progress at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Member States report on a number of topics such as specific goals or targets and more broadly on national strategy, coordination structures, and partnerships. Delegates will find this document useful to better understand individual Member State positions and one way the United Nations measures SDG progress.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/FFDF/2018/L.2)* [Report]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from:

<https://undocs.org/E/FFDF/2018/L.2>

This document as well as previous ones on the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, are imperative for delegates to understand how ECOSOC promotes coordination to advance policies and agenda items. This review provides highlights on

the current state of international development cooperation, debt sustainability, domestic financial resources, and systemic financial issues. In regards to financing development, this document highlights how the UN system is working to address technological changes and encourage streamlined financial systems to help those in need of financial assistance. Delegates would benefit from taking note of action items that came from this review to guide how they address any discussion on financing development.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme “From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities” (E/HLS/2018/1)*. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: <https://www.undocs.org/e/hls/2018/1>

Emphasizing the discussions and outcomes of the most recent high-level segments, the Ministerial declaration provides a brief summation of current and future work. Specific items that have been highlighted are the International Decade for Action: “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028, the New Urban Agenda, and the review of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. Additionally, the declaration states formal commitments by leaders and attendees of the segment to achieving sustainable development. This document can be of particular use to delegates when researching the topics before ECOSOC.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2013). *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/1>

This resolution presents the most recent ECOSOC reforms undertaken to strengthen its program of work and its leading role in tackling challenges to sustainable development. It provides detailed recommendations of how ECOSOC will reshape its operating procedures and working methods to support sustainable development, and it outlines the main priorities for the Council’s operational activities. Delegates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the suggested changes in the resolutions and should also consider how ECOSOC can maintain its leadership capacity to monitor the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

United Nations, General Assembly & Economic and Social Council. (2017). *Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/124-E/2018/3)*. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/72/124>

This report by the Secretary-General was prepared in response to the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) as outlined in General Assembly resolution 71/243 (2016). It contains the Secretary-General’s vision for the repositioning of the UN development system and was presented to the Economic and Social Council on 5 July 2017 for consideration. As the main body reviewing the implementation of the QCPR mandate, ECOSOC was highly involved in the drafting of the report through the ECOSOC Dialogue and will be influential in the finalization of the report through its Operational Activities Segment. Delegates should refer to this report to gain an understanding of ECOSOC’s long-term aims and consider what short-term policies and coordinating efforts will help ECOSOC achieve these goals.

United Nations General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2018). *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/72/305>

The review of resolution 68/1 served as a revitalization of ECOSOC’s commitment to reform and enhance coordination across UN agencies. Particularly, this resolution can help delegates understand how ECOSOC and the UN-at-large administratively manages their scope of work for each year. Delegates should take note of any action points related to topics before the committee to help guide their debates and proposals for solutions.

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I. Public-Private Partnerships for Inclusive Development

“The success of this global transformation hinges on our ability to work toward new partnerships based on - as the 2030 Agenda states – ‘a spirit of global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.’”⁵⁶

Introduction

The universal adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) brought forth the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that the international system seeks to achieve by 2030.⁵⁷ According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), approximately \$4 trillion will be needed each year to support the 2030 Agenda for developing countries alone.⁵⁸ Currently, there is still a significant gap of approximately \$2.5 trillion per year to meet this need.⁵⁹ Financing for the SDGs is a crucial aspect of the 2030 Agenda in order for it to be actually realized, and building partnerships is key for this to be realized.⁶⁰ As many look toward building partnerships for the 2030 Agenda in relation to SDG 17 on global partnerships for sustainable development, it is also important that any partnership must be transparent, inclusive and participatory.⁶¹ To be inclusive in this spirit is to leave no one behind while examining the growing inequalities in all sectors such as employment and health that exclude people from society.⁶²

One example is public-private partnerships (PPP), which have been revitalized within the 2030 Agenda.⁶³ PPPs have been present for over 30 years and have been most prominently promoted by the World Bank in their efforts to help governments build their infrastructure.⁶⁴ A PPP is a contractual collaboration between public and private actors that traditionally provide services, considered public-sector services, such as projects involving water management, transportation, building of schools, and hospitals.⁶⁵ PPPs are seen as ways to increase the responsiveness of governments to business needs and strategies to promote innovation especially around technology-related policies.⁶⁶ However, these partnerships often focus on delivering projects in cost-efficient ways which run counter to the 2030 Agenda that emphasizes effectiveness and inclusiveness not just simply aiming to finish a project on a low cost budget.⁶⁷ Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) are a different form of partnerships from PPPs and often get confused as partnerships come in many forms.⁶⁸ While PPPs are contracts between a government and a company, MSPs are voluntary agreements among a wider variety of stakeholders such as civil society, businesses, and governments.⁶⁹ SDG 17 also highlights the need for strengthening the role MSPs play while promoting effective partnerships to advance the SDGs and their implementation.⁷⁰ As these partnerships are being developed to advance the SDGs, it is key that they are inclusive with a focus on vulnerable

⁵⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 1*, 2018.

⁵⁷ UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.

⁵⁸ Saner, *Financing SDGs through PPPs: Need for Standards, Institutions, and Capacity Building*, 2017.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Sustainable Development Goals Fund, *Who We Are*, 2018.

⁶¹ UN ECOSOC, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*, 2018.

⁶² UN ECOSOC, *Report on the World Social Situation 2016*, 2016.

⁶³ UN DPI, *Done Right, Expanded Partnerships Can Deliver More Sustainable Results – Deputy UN Chief*, 2018; Business for 2030, *Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Needed Clarifications*, 2018.

⁶⁴ Meuleman et al., *From PPP to ABC: A New Partnership Approach for the SDGs*, 2016.

⁶⁵ Overseas Development Institute, *Public-Private Partnerships*, 2003; Business for 2030, *Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Needed Clarifications*, 2018.

⁶⁶ Kelej et al., *A Reflection on Public-Private Partnerships’ Contribution to the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.

⁶⁷ Meuleman et al., *From PPP to ABC: A New Partnership Approach for the SDGs*, 2016.

⁶⁸ UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Harnessing the Means of Implementation through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships*, 2018.

⁶⁹ Meuleman et al., *From PPP to ABC: A New Partnership Approach for the SDGs*, 2016.

⁷⁰ UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals Through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships – Ensuring That No One is Left Behind*, 2016.

groups such as women, youth, people with disabilities, refugees, and migrants which is important to ensure that no one is left behind.⁷¹

International and Regional Framework

The universal adoption of the SDGs contained in paragraph 54 of General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015 builds upon the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).⁷² Former MDG 8 was referred to as the goal for global partnerships for development.⁷³ SDG 17 currently covers strengthening the means of implementation of Global Partnerships, which includes various forms of partnerships between the public and private sector, civil society actors, business leaders, and others.⁷⁴ With financing for development becoming a priority for the United Nations (UN), a focus on how to engage the private sector is also gaining momentum especially on how to effectively leverage their investments in a way that is inclusive to all.⁷⁵

Global partnerships were first addressed at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 which was further developed in the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.⁷⁶ In 2000, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan issued the Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Community to facilitate partnerships between the UN and the Business Sector that would preserve the integrity of the UN.⁷⁷ These Guidelines are still in use today and were revised in 2015, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/234 on “Guidelines on a Principle based Approach to the Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector.”⁷⁸ One important feature of these guidelines is the need for accountability between both the UN and the private sector in carrying out a specific project together.⁷⁹

General Assembly resolution 60/215 of 2006 entitled “Towards Global Partnerships” called for increased partnerships with the private sector and highlighted the importance of these partnerships in achieving the agreed upon goals that were also affirmed in the report of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence.⁸⁰ The outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *The Future We Want*, created the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).⁸¹ The 2030 Agenda highlights the important role of the private sector for financing the SDGs and civil society for accountability in participating in the HLPF.⁸²

At the third International Conference on Financing for Development that took place in Addis Ababa in July 2015, leaders made a commitment to hold “inclusive, open and transparent discussion when developing and adopting guidelines and documentation for the use of PPPs, and to build a knowledge base and

⁷¹ Overseas Development Institute, *Leaving No One Behind: A Critical Path for the First 1,000 Days of the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*, 2018.

⁷² UNECE, *UNECE Launches a New Programme to Develop International PPP Standards*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁷³ Working Group on Global Partnerships, *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development*, 2014.

⁷⁴ Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, *Sustainable Development Goal 17*, 2018.

⁷⁵ UN DPI, *Done Right, Expanded Partnerships Can Deliver More Sustainable Results – Deputy UN Chief*, 2018; UN ECOSOC, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*, 2018.

⁷⁶ Working Group on Global Partnerships, *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development*, 2014.

⁷⁷ ILO, *Public-Private Partnerships*, 2008; World Bank, *Overview*, 2018.

⁷⁸ Joint Inspection Unit, *The United Nations System – Private Sector Partnerships Arrangements in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017.

⁷⁹ World Bank, *Overview*, 2018.

⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Towards Global Partnerships (A/RES/60/215)*, 2006; Working Group on Global Partnerships, *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development*, 2014; ILO, *Public-Private Partnerships*, 2008.

⁸¹ Working Group on Global Partnerships, *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development*, 2014.

⁸² UN Division of Sustainable Development, *Enhancing MGoS Engagement in National Level Reviews*, 2014.

share lessons learned through regional and global forums.”⁸³ The importance of the contributions by private sector actors toward making their businesses more sustainable with a lens of social impact is also underlined in the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda).⁸⁴ Lastly, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda highlighted the role of the private sector in contributing toward the advancement of gender equality through ensuring women’s full participation, equal pay, and protecting them from discrimination in the workplace.⁸⁵

As there is no international agreement or framework that guides PPPs, there are many guides that different actors have created such as the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law’s Legislative Guide on Privately Funded Infrastructure Projects in 2000.⁸⁶ The Guide assists in providing legal frameworks for countries interested in bringing in private investment into the public sphere.⁸⁷ The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have also developed sets of core principles around PPPs.⁸⁸ The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) partnerships are guided by the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established its own policy called ‘Due Diligence and Partnerships with the Private Sector.’⁸⁹ However, a report of the 6th session of the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe (UNECE) Team of Specialists on public-private partnerships held in Geneva in June 2014 endorsed developing international PPP standards.⁹⁰

Role of the International System

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) convened the 11th Partnership Forum on the theme of “Partnering for resilient and inclusive societies: contributions of the private sector” on 4 April 2018 which discussed the critical role of the private sector in being more inclusive of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations.⁹¹ Following the Partnership Forum, the ECOSOC Special Meeting “Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all” on 23 May 2018, highlighted women and other groups as underrepresented in leadership positions in which the private sector can help alleviate when building partnerships.⁹²

The World Bank has been a permanent advocate for PPPs in that it has created its own resource hub of information including reference guides, online training programs, and knowledge labs.⁹³ It has supported PPPs through loans and investments totaling up to \$2.8 billion between 2002 and 2016.⁹⁴ The World Bank has also worked with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to establish a Public Fiscal Risk Assessment Model to collect information and identify the main fiscal risks with a PPP contract.⁹⁵ It has

⁸³ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313), 2015.

⁸⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 1*, 2018.

⁸⁵ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Private Sector*, 2018.

⁸⁶ World Bank, *Public-Private Partnership Laws/Concession Laws*, 2018.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Joint Inspection Unit, *The United Nations System – Private Sector Partnerships Arrangements in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017.

⁹⁰ UNECE, *UNECE Launches a New Programme to Develop International PPP Standards*, 2018.

⁹¹ UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 1*, 2018; UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector*, 2018.

⁹² UN ECOSOC, *Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All*, 2018.

⁹³ Powell, *PPPs and the SDGs: Don’t Believe the Hype*, 2016.

⁹⁴ Powell, *PPPs and the SDGs: Don’t Believe the Hype*, 2016; World Bank, *Overview*, 2018.

⁹⁵ UN IATF on Financing for Development, *Summary of the Inter-Agency Taskforce Meeting on Public Private Partnerships*, 2016.

published guidelines on the disclosure and contractual arrangements of PPPs to strengthen transparency and continues to be a major player in funding PPPs.⁹⁶

Unlike other fields, there is no international body entrusted in creating standards and frameworks for PPPs.⁹⁷ As there is no official international frameworks, there is a strong push for the UN to create these in support for the 2030 Agenda.⁹⁸ UNECE, which is based in Geneva, has been the most prominent actor in the field of PPPs in creating guidelines and standards for the creation of PPPs.⁹⁹ UNECE has worked in a broad array of areas developing PPP models such as infrastructure, health, energy, transportation, and land management.¹⁰⁰ Member States have given a mandate for UNECE to develop voluntary standards across different sectors.¹⁰¹ For example, in the transportation PPP draft standards, one such recommendation includes having an initial criteria for selecting road projects as sometimes infrastructure projects get funded without any prior discussion on community needs.¹⁰² Four of these sectors are up for final approval in November 2018 including renewable energy, roads, rails, and water and sanitation.¹⁰³ Along with developing these standards, UNECE has also developed draft guiding principles on people-first PPPs for the SDGs that will focus on the values of placing people first rather than focus on value for money that will be also presented in November 2018.¹⁰⁴

Civil society organizations (CSOs) such as the European Network on Debt and Development have also been an active voice to point out where PPPs have failed and where they can do better.¹⁰⁵ A handful of groups including the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), and Global Policy Forum (GPF) have even written a report titled *Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2017: Reclaiming Policies for the Public*, calling out PPPs and the risks they hold.¹⁰⁶ Civil society has called for a more holistic approach when implementing the Agenda as their capacity and funding needs to be strengthened in order to produce more reliable data to measure against progress.¹⁰⁷ For example, Costa Rica established a national pact for implementing the 2030 Agenda which allows civil society to a formal role where they are included into the agenda and meetings and are able to follow-up and review discussions.¹⁰⁸ Civil society presence provides another mechanism of accountability to the private sector on their commitments to be inclusive and demonstrate good will in supporting local communities.¹⁰⁹

⁹⁶ UN ECOSOC *Public-Private Partnerships and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Fit for Purpose?*, 2016; World Bank, *Infrastructure and Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018.

⁹⁷ UNECE, *Concept Note on the Creation of an International Association of PPP Units*, 2017.

⁹⁸ Sharma, *Infrastructure & Public-Private Partnerships*, 2016.

⁹⁹ Saner, *Financing SDGs through PPPs: Need for Standards, Institutions, and Capacity Building*, 2017.

¹⁰⁰ UNECE, *UNECE activities on Sustainable Development*, 2018.

¹⁰¹ UNECE, *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through people-first Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018.

¹⁰² UNECE, *PPP Standards Development Process*, 2018.

¹⁰³ UN IATF on Financing for Development, *Summary of the Inter-Agency Taskforce Meeting on Public Private Partnerships*, 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Discussion Papers on the Theme of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Submitted by Major Groups and Other Stakeholders*, 2018; Romero, *Opinion: Public-Private Partnerships Don't Work. It's Time for the World Bank to Take Action*, 2018.

¹⁰⁶ Global Policy Watch, *PPP: Corporations Divert UN Agenda, Claims Civil Society Report*, 2017.

¹⁰⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Discussion Papers on the Theme of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Submitted by Major Groups and Other Stakeholders*, 2018.

¹⁰⁸ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Civil Society*, 2018.

¹⁰⁹ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Non-Governmental Organizations*, 2018.

Including Women and Vulnerable Groups into PPPs

The movement to develop “Guiding Principles on people-first PPPs for the UN SDGs” also places women’s empowerment as one of the criteria of the guidelines.¹¹⁰ Empowering women can help to build strong economies, fair societies and improve the quality of life for communities.¹¹¹ The people-first PPP projects include a four-point criteria that is recommended for a project’s economic effectiveness:

“(1) Enhance the role of women inside companies at senior decision-making levels, undertaking PPPs and in the PPPs themselves; (2) Help women-led companies in the supply chain compete in tenders for projects; (3) Make a difference in the communities where they do business, by helping young women and train them to become the business leaders of the future; and (4) Promote a gender perspective in the design and operational stage of the delivery of projects, so that these help women deal with their special challenges.”¹¹²

As an important cross-cutting theme throughout the 2030 Agenda, achieving gender equality involves placing women in decision-making processes in PPPs.¹¹³ In these formal efforts to create pipelines for gender equity in the private sector and public sphere, there still exists the need to change the culture of how stakeholders interact and actively allow for the promotion and inclusion of women.¹¹⁴

The inclusion of all people in society, especially women and vulnerable groups, is a main priority for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.¹¹⁵ However, incorporating inclusion into practice within the Agenda takes effort and intention among all of the actors responsible toward the achievement of the SDGs.¹¹⁶ As PPPs start to play a larger role in the financing of the SDGs, it will be particularly important for these partnerships to reflect the inclusivity that is needed also called for by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in regards to developing and adopting inclusive guidelines for the use of PPPs.¹¹⁷ Current industries where PPPs are most prevalent are industries that are not as dynamic in including larger roles for women and vulnerable groups.¹¹⁸ Key statistics highlight the current disparity in inclusion of women in these infrastructure sectors as comprising of “only 1% of women-owned businesses contributing to the global public procurement volume, representing a total of \$15 trillion.”¹¹⁹ The Secretary-General’s report on the “Trends and Progress in International Development Cooperation” outlined the importance of making sure that the needs of vulnerable groups including to women and girls, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities are being realized and ensuring their full participation when it comes to project planning and development in the spirit of the SDGs.¹²⁰ The report reaffirmed the important role states have in ensuring that with private sector engagement, the impacts and contributions are serving the needs of poor and vulnerable communities.¹²¹ Governments could also introduce regulations that promote women participation, and provide incentives for the private sector to act more vigorously in enhancing women’s

¹¹⁰ UNECE, *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through People-first Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018; UNECE, *Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs*, 2017.

¹¹¹ UNECE, *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through People-first Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ UNECE, *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through People-first Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018; UNECE, *An Introduction to the UNECE Guiding Principles on People-First PPPs (PfPPPs) for the UN SDGs*, 2018.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ UNECE *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through People-first Public-Private Partnerships*, 2018.

¹²⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Trends and Progress in International Development Cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General*, 2018.

¹²¹ Ibid.

economic empowerment.¹²² Many countries have already introduced legislation that make employing persons with disabilities mandatory, and companies can then promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities by providing employment opportunities.¹²³

The Role of Big Data for Partnerships

Data partnerships are an increasing demand among PPPs as new types of infrastructure sectors are in need of data to carry out the critical work for sustainable development.¹²⁴ Data plays a key role in decision-making and planning for both governments and the private sector.¹²⁵ With the proliferation of electronic platforms, data can provide open accountability, however it can also be a barrier to segments of the population that are out of reach.¹²⁶ The role of the private sector can be seen in providing access to large and highly complex data sets in order to better help measure progress of the SDGs.¹²⁷ The use of big data can reach those that are often excluded for instance, women and girls tend to be left off of official data records, however, mobile phones leave a digital footprint.¹²⁸ With this type of data, evaluation of the implementation of the SDGs could show if everyone is being captured and impacted.¹²⁹

As the digital divide highlights key issues with inclusivity, another facet that PPPs should take into consideration is how data often varies between age groups, economic brackets, and geographic location.¹³⁰ However, it is not solely a technological issue that groups such as women and girls remain invisible in the data and reach.¹³¹ The discourse of inclusion and visibility remains at the international and national levels where efforts for inclusion are political in nature.¹³² If there is no political will to invest in receiving data that captures everyone, then the work to try to fill the digital gap is futile.¹³³ PPPs can offer a new way for data partnering to enhance more informed public policy making.¹³⁴ However, the private sector usually controls the access and rights to big data, making it not readily available.¹³⁵

With having more timely and available data, governments can support evidence-based decision-making to enhance their work.¹³⁶ For example, in Bangladesh big data was used in an analysis of electricity consumption to address power outages and also built the digital capacity for local organizations to deliver better online services.¹³⁷ Other types of data partnerships include GSMA's Big Data for Social Good Initiative that leverages the data, that mobile companies collect, to address humanitarian crises.¹³⁸ Initial

¹²² UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 1*, 2018; UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector*, 2018.

¹²³ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Private Sector*, 2018.

¹²⁴ UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Strengthening and Harnessing the Means of Implementation through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Drive Transformation Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, 2018.

¹²⁵ UN-Women, *Gender Equality and Big Data: Making Gender Data Visible*, 2018.

¹²⁶ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Local Government*, 2018.

¹²⁷ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Private Sector*, 2018.

¹²⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 2*, 2018.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Maarooof, *Big Data and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

¹³¹ Data2X, *Big Data and the Well-Being of Women and Girls: Applications on the Social Scientific Frontier*, 2017.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector: Session 2*, 2018.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ UN ECOSOC, *In Preparation for the 2018 ECOSOC Special Meeting: Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Societies Through Participation of All: Local Government*, 2018.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ GSMA, *GSMA Launches Big Data for Social Good Initiative*, 2017.

trials have begun in India, Brazil, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Thailand to develop capabilities to monitor and alert if there is a spread of disease.¹³⁹ By using mobile data, GSMA is allowed to provide insights on human movement patterns.¹⁴⁰ It has been recommended that this partnership should be made as a formal PPP between mobile companies and governments in order to continue establishing formal laws and regulations that further protect project's sustainability.¹⁴¹ Data for Climate Action organized a prize challenge for data scientists and researchers to search among data that was contributed by various companies in the private sector in order to solve for climate related issues such as climate mitigation, climate adaptation, etc.¹⁴² Similarly, data collaboratives are a take on a new approach to the PPP model in which researchers directly interact with the private sector to exchange data to solve public problems.¹⁴³ Data collaboratives and partnerships are quickly addressing the new way collaboration between the public and private sector are taking to address public policy issues.¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

As the private sector and PPPs play a larger role in financing for sustainable development, there is increased pressure for these types of partnerships to adhere to the spirit of the 2030 Agenda.¹⁴⁵ With the private sector typically looked down upon for focusing on profits over people, a new wave of business management is focusing on contributing back to communities and toward enhancing social good.¹⁴⁶ Companies are increasingly aware of the amount of data and information available on business practices and therefore strive to incorporate inclusive and sustainable practices into their operating models.¹⁴⁷ However, establishing PPPs that are inclusive will require both governments and the private sector to establish guidelines that adhere to the values put forth in the 2030 Agenda.¹⁴⁸ In order for PPPs to work in the spirit of the Agenda, they must be reimagined to be more inclusive as well as be accompanied by legal and regulatory frameworks that include provisions for transparent accounting and adequate risk-management measures.¹⁴⁹ With inclusion at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, developing partnerships that leaves no one behind not only leads to better accountability in institutions, but also creates resilient societies.¹⁵⁰

Further Questions

In moving forward with their research, delegates should consider the following questions: What examples are there of policy/legislation that actively support partnerships for inclusive development, particularly with business? What are the opportunities and challenges for the private sector in promoting inclusion and participation in the work place and in local communities? How can the private sector help to empower women through PPPs? How can public and private sector entities be incentivized to share big data and related technologies for public good? What needs to be done to scale-up big data for sustainable development projects and PPPs promoting inclusion and participation of "vulnerable" groups? How can the private sector use the big data and analysis to better target services for vulnerable groups while also promoting more resilient and inclusive societies?

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¹³⁹ GSMA, *GSMA Launches Big Data for Social Good Initiative*, 2017.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ UN Global Pulse, *The State of Mobile Data for Social Good Report*, 2017.

¹⁴² Data for Climate Action, *The Data*, 2018.

¹⁴³ GovLab, *Data Collaborative*, 2018.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ ECOSOC, *Report of the Economic and Social Council Forum in Financing for Development Follow-up*, 2018.

¹⁴⁶ UNIDO & United Nations Global Compact, *Engaging with the Private Sector in the Post-2015 Agenda*, 2014.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ UNECE, *Part II: The 8 Guiding Principles for People-First PPPs in Support of the UN SDGs*, 2018.

¹⁴⁹ UN DPI, *Done Right, Expanded Partnerships Can Deliver More Sustainable Results – Deputy UN Chief*, 2018.

¹⁵⁰ UNECE, *Part II: The 8 Guiding Principles for People-First PPPs in Support of the UN SDGs*, 2018.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Public-Private Partnerships and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Fit for Purpose?* [Working Paper]. Retrieved 08 June 2018 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2288desaworkingpaper148.pdf>

This working paper will provide delegates with an overview of PPPs and how they work. The paper provides a critical and nuanced perspective of how to evaluate PPPs so that they are serving the purpose of delivering the public service work that they partner to do. Delegates will understand how PPPs are currently viewed and how they are being reimagined with the 2030 Agenda. The sense of urgency is present in the working paper as this will be a key debate in the UN as the private sector is being called on to fill the financing gap for the SDGs.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contributions of the Private Sector* [Summary]. Retrieved 08 June 2018 from:

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2018doc/2018-partnership-forum-summary.pdf>

The 2018 ECOSOC Partnership Forum is an important to understand because of the topics under discussion, such as inclusive business models that drive inclusion and the role of big data for public good. The forum discussed the contributions of the private sector in partnering for resilient and inclusive societies. As the topic of the background guide focused on inclusive development regarding PPPs, this is an excellent overview of the Partnership Forum which discussed how the private sector can be more inclusive. Delegates will find the perspectives of the private sector within this summary.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Report of the Economic and Social Council Forum in Financing for Development Follow-up (E/FFDF/2018/3)*. Retrieved 21 June 2018 from:

<https://undocs.org/E/FFDF/2018/3>

The follow-up and review for finalizing for development toward implementation of the 2030 Agenda assessed progress and gaps across the action areas of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and across several SDGs. What delegates would find in this document are the important cross-cutting issues that are highlighted including the promotion of gender equality in empowering women and girls within development corporation. The report recognizes the gaps of financial inclusion of women, people in rural and remote areas, elderly people, youth, migrants, and people with disabilities, in regards to the formal sector.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (2017). *Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs* [Presentation]. Retrieved 08 June 2018 from:

https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2017/PPP/Activity_ECE-CityU/Geoffrey_Hamilton-UNECE_People-first_PPPs.pdf

UNECE has been extensively researching and providing guidance on PPPs. The presentation is an example of how UNECE thinks about how PPPs can be incorporated into the SDG framework to support inclusive development with focusing on people first instead of the value saved in with traditional PPP. The way PPP is traditionally thought about is in the model of providing money for activities, but UNECE is putting forth a new way to think about PPP that centers the needs of people. Contrary to the current PPP model based on value for money, the People First model focuses on putting people first in regards to the impact of these partnerships. Delegates should think about how a people-first agenda would align with the private sector's interest and if it is capable of being broadly adopted.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (2018). *Database of Case Study Material* [Report]. Retrieved 27 June 2018 from:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2018/PPP/Forum/Documents/Case_Study_Database_2018.pdf

The database of case study material offers a wealth of information of 60 types of projects related to PPPs. The UNECE has been gathering case studies and aims to gather over

500 by the end of 2018. Delegates can refer to these cases when preparing their positions papers on what types of projects their respective countries have carried out and the different types of sectors that partnerships are currently being operated in. These case studies will most likely be referred to in further publications on people first PPPs as it gains more traction.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (2018). *Part II: The 8 Guiding Principles for People-First PPPs in Support of the UN SDGs* [Report]. Retrieved 27 June 2018 from: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2018/PPP/Forum/Documents/The_8_Guiding_Principles_for_People-first_PPPs_in_support_of_the_UN_SDGs-Part_II.pdf

UNECE's Guiding Principles for People First PPPs is an important document as this lays out the official recommendation for adopting it as an international standard. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development will then take these principles into the larger UN system to be discussed in the realm of the other frameworks that are currently in place and used by other UN agencies and institutions. Delegates will find this as the most comprehensive documents on what is People First PPP and the intention of how it should be implemented.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (2018). *Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through people-first Public-Private Partnerships* [Report]. Retrieved 27 June 2018 from: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2018/PPP/Forum/Documents/PPP_Forum_Geneva_2018_Report.pdf

This report highlights the third UNECE International PPP Forum "Scaling Up: Meeting the Challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through people-first Public-Private Partnerships." The report offers details on the current challenges and obstacles of having People First PPP, but also offers recommendations and follow-ups for additional consideration in developing a new set of guidelines. The report highlights the high-level debates such as the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups in the PPP model. Delegates will get a view of the current discussions around inclusion and partnerships as well as understand the context in which these recommendations are being put forth.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313). Retrieved Day Month Year from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/313>

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda highlighted the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies and the work toward an equitable economic system where no one is left behind. The Agenda also included the need for open dialogue to adopt guidelines and documentation for the use of PPP, and to build a knowledge base and share lessons learned through regional and global forums. The Agenda is a guiding framework for the work that has been done thus far in building momentum toward creating a shared understanding of how PPPs could operate. There are many PPP guidelines and frameworks that are inclusive, but the Agenda calls for new standards that would ultimately be a reference for PPPs. This is an important foundational document that delegates should reference in relation to partnerships and inclusivity.

United Nations, Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development. (2016). *Summary of the Inter-Agency Taskforce Meeting on Public Private Partnerships*. Retrieved 21 June 2018 from: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Summary-of-IATF-meeting-on-Public-Private-Partnerships-16-December-2016-Final.pdf>

The Inter-Agency Task Force meeting on 16 December 2016 reviewed the principles of PPPs alongside the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The meeting also discussed a set of 12 guidelines developed by international organizations and governments in relation to the 2030 Agenda. Delegates will get a deeper sense of how the move to standardize and internationalize PPP guidelines is gaining traction. The Inter-Agency Task Force is an

important actor in bringing together the many different stakeholders in the financing agenda for sustainable development and the actor responsible for bringing these standards into the wider UN system. Through this Task Force delegates will understand how PPPs are interacting with the wider UN system.

Saner, R. (2017). *Financing SDGs through PPPs: Need for Standards, Institutions, and Capacity Building*. The Centre for Socio-Economic Development. Retrieved 21 June 2018 from:

http://www.csend.org/images/articles/files/20170830-RS_2017_Financing_SDGs_through_PPPs_3.pdf

This report written by the Centre for Socio-Economic Development, an independent non-profit organization who carries out research, provides a summary of PPPs in relation to the financing of the SDGs. This background document provides the appropriate overview of the current actors such as UNECE and how they are working toward creating international PPP standards. Delegates will gain knowledge of the context in which PPPs are being discussed and what are the sectors UNECE is beginning to establish standardized PPPs for. Delegates will find this useful as it puts into context the history of PPPs and how the development of the SDGs requires a rethink of how PPPs are implemented.

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II. Harnessing New Technologies to Achieve the SDGs

“Every once in a while a new technology, an old problem and a big idea turn into an innovation.”¹⁵¹

Introduction

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.”¹⁵² Technology has served as a focal point of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), with 48 of the 169 sustainable development targets relating closely to information and communications technology (ICTs).¹⁵³ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines ICTs as:

“information-handling tools - a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information. They include the “traditional” ICTs of radio, television and telephone, and the “new” ICTs of computers, satellite and wireless technology and the Internet.”¹⁵⁴

In pursuit of sustainable development, the United Nations (UN) system and its global partners are exploring new and emerging technologies to provide a more inclusive and sustainable future for all.¹⁵⁵ In a 2016 survey of global scientists, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) identified opportunities for technological advancements in agriculture, medicine, governance and political transparency, sustainable energy, natural resource management, health and safety, and financing for development.¹⁵⁶ Emerging technologies that have been harnessed for sustainable development include big data, the Internet of Things (IoT), nanotechnology, artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, and 3-D printing.¹⁵⁷ With these advancements come new challenges, however, as Member States, the private sector, and civil society work to identify barriers to access, competing cultural norms, and emerging ethical concerns.¹⁵⁸

International and Regional Framework

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) adopted *Agenda 21*, which addressed the issues of sustainable development and the environment.¹⁵⁹ At the UN Conference on the Implementation of *Agenda 21* in 2009, delegates proposed to organize a conference in 2012 on sustainable development hosted by the government of Brazil.¹⁶⁰ *Agenda 21* has established its support for environmentally-sound technologies, which are technologies that “have the potential for significantly improved environmental performance relative to other technologies” as a way of protecting the environment in a sustainable manner.¹⁶¹

¹⁵¹ Sorvino, One of America's Most Successful Inventors Dean Kamen Talks Segway, Clean Water and Robotics. *Forbes*, 2016.

¹⁵² UN WCED, *Our Common Future*, 1987, p. 54.

¹⁵³ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 42.

¹⁵⁴ UN ICTs TF, *Tools for Development: Using Information and Communications Technology to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, 2003, p. 4.

¹⁵⁵ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 53; UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals*.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. xi.

¹⁵⁸ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, pp. 46-53; UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals*.

¹⁵⁹ UN DESA, *Agenda 21*; UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992, p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/RES/64/236)*, 2010, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ UN Environment, *Environmentally Sound Technologies*.

The MDGs emerged from the *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, which was adopted at the Millennium Summit in 2000.¹⁶² The MDGs emphasized the importance of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) required for sustainability, as seen by MDG Goal 8.F which sought to “make available benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.”¹⁶³ In 2003, stakeholders of the world met in Geneva for the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to address the scientific and technological aims of the MDGs.¹⁶⁴ Known as the *Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action*, the outcome document established 11 Action Lines by which global stakeholders might use technology to advance development.¹⁶⁵ The second phase of the WSIS established the *Tunis Commitment and Agenda for the Information Society* (2005).¹⁶⁶ The outcome of this Summit led to the creation of the International Governance Forum (IGF), which is a multi-stakeholder forum dedicated to policy discussions in relation to all levels of Internet governance, as well as dealing with issues of affordability and availability of Internet around the world.¹⁶⁷

As the 2015 deadline for the MDGs approached, global stakeholders acknowledged that future gains would not be possible without a focus on development and technologies that were both socially and environmentally sustainable.¹⁶⁸ In response, the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* to continue the work of the Millennium Declaration and the WSIS after 2015.¹⁶⁹ The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets act as a framework for international actors to pursue sustainable development.¹⁷⁰ In 2015, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) established a framework for the financial implementation of the SDGs by aligning the financial, economic, social and environmental priorities and policies.¹⁷¹ The Addis Ababa Action Agenda proclaimed that new technologies are significant enforcers of both economic growth and sustainable development.¹⁷²

Role of the International System

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) contributes to sustainable development by acting as the central platform within the UN for dealing with integration, action, and follow-up and review for sustainable development.¹⁷³ ECOSOC plays a key role in knowledge sharing, action, and policy implementation by hosting annual meetings of the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), which provides a regular venue for reviewing progress toward and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.¹⁷⁴ In 2019, ECOSOC will host HLPF in a discussion of SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17, with the theme of “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.”¹⁷⁵

The 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda established a Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) to act as a multi-stakeholder collaboration between nations, academia, the private sector, civil

¹⁶² UN DPI, *Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000)*, 2000; UN DESA, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 8.

¹⁶³ UN DESA, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 67.

¹⁶⁴ WSIS, *The Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action*, 2003, p. 4.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁶⁶ WSIS, *Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*, 2005, p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁶⁸ UN DESA, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 8; UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 2.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁷³ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting Sustainable Development*.

¹⁷⁴ UN DESA, *High-Level Political Forum*.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

society, UN agencies, and other stakeholders.¹⁷⁶ TFM also works with the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation (IATT), as well as an online platform for achieving the SDGs.¹⁷⁷ This task team collaborates with 10 representatives from all previously mentioned stakeholders in order to prepare the meetings of the Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum).¹⁷⁸ This 10 Member Group also collaborates on STI with other UN agencies such as the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations Environment (UN Environment), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and the World Bank.¹⁷⁹

As convened by the President of ECOSOC, the STI Forum was put in place in order to act as a platform to foster multi-stakeholder interaction to identify and evaluate any technological needs and gaps, as well as to help promote development and exchange of technologies for the SDGs.¹⁸⁰ The STI Forum allows for collaboration between multi-stakeholders from civil society, the scientific community, and the private sector, as well as offering an online platform in order to further capacity-building initiatives, cooperation and effectiveness in regards to matters of STI.¹⁸¹ At the 2018 STI Forum, stakeholders discussed SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15, with the goal of assessing new and current technologies in place for implementing these SDGs.¹⁸² The forum notably addressed the global technological gaps and rapid technological changes, and established the potential for digital technologies, nanotechnology, biotechnology, AI, IoT and other forms of new technologies toward achieving the SDGs and improving all areas of society.¹⁸³ At the 2018 STI Forum, members discussed the potential for progressing STI toward achieving the SDGs through policies and action plans, including increased STI gender-sensitivity and responsiveness; delegates also discussed the need for new technologies such as big data and AI to be utilized for the improved well-being of all, including populations which have historically been marginalized.¹⁸⁴ The STI Forum also addressed the need to mobilize STIs in order to reach those who are the furthest left behind and identified the need for increased connectivity via IT Infrastructure as a way to reach those most isolated from the global Information Society.¹⁸⁵

ECOSOC also benefits from the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) and the Forum on Financing for Development (FfD).¹⁸⁶ The DCF works with multi-level stakeholders to engage in capacity-building through events, research projects and other activities, acts as a follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda as well as promoting capacity-building, transfer of technological development, and policy changes.¹⁸⁷ The 2016 FfD Forum dealt with follow-up of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda)for financing in relation to sustainable development.¹⁸⁸ In 2016, the FfD worked with intergovernmental bodies such as

¹⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 55.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 31; UN DESA, *STI Forum 2018 Third Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals 5 – 6 June 2018*, 2018.

¹⁸¹ World Bank, *World Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 30.

¹⁸² UN ECOSOC, *Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals: Note by the Secretariat (E/HLPF/2018/6)*, 2018, p. 3.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸⁴ UN ECOSOC, *President's Summary of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. 7.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁸⁶ UN ECOSOC, *About the Development Cooperation Forum*; UN DESA, *2016 ECOSOC FfD Forum*.

¹⁸⁷ UN ECOSOC, *About the Development Cooperation Forum*.

¹⁸⁸ UN DESA, *2016 ECOSOC FfD Forum*.

the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on implementing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and human development.¹⁸⁹

Improving Access to Technology

ICTs act as a significant factor for advances in development and social inclusion in areas such as health, education, transport, and telecommunications.¹⁹⁰ One of the barriers in this regard is the tendency for technological production and distribution to revolve around capital and skilled labor in developed nations, which can have negative economic effects and lead to further inequalities.¹⁹¹ Technological innovation also plays a key role in the advancement and implementation of technology in key areas, and where technological innovation takes place is vital as well.¹⁹² Technology from developed countries, for example, often dominates the market and does not always leave room for new technologies from developing countries.¹⁹³

The connectivity of all global citizens to ICTs such as the Internet is key going forward for global progress and achieving the 2030 Agenda.¹⁹⁴ UN DESA has found a correlation between limited technical competency with ICTs and barriers to access; thus, limited connectivity threatens to widen the inequality gap and further exclude certain individuals and groups.¹⁹⁵ Recent 2017 data from UNCTAD shows that for every 100 inhabitants, there were 97.1 active mobile broadband subscriptions in developed regions compared to just 48.2 active subscriptions for every 100 inhabitants in developing regions.¹⁹⁶ Internet access at home is especially low in sub-Saharan Africa, at 18%, compared to 48.1% in the Asia-Pacific region and 84.2% access in Europe.¹⁹⁷

For these reasons, ensuring proper infrastructure to provide connectivity to those who live in rural and remote areas is key to helping achieve the SDGs.¹⁹⁸ One major issue with technological connectivity is what is called the “last mile,” or the issue of infrastructure cost-effectiveness, especially in regards to cellular communications and Internet access.¹⁹⁹ The use of ICTs can help to eradicate problems of poverty by reaching remote communities by capitalizing on already existing efforts in place.²⁰⁰ In order to improve access to technology, the technology itself will need to be affordable for all individuals, especially those in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).²⁰¹ This relates specifically to the affordability of many SDG indicators, but specifically SDG 9.c on expanding access to ICTs and ensuring universal Internet access by 2020.²⁰²

The Role of New Technology in Inclusion

One obstacle to achieving the SDGs is low awareness of the 2030 Agenda among governments, businesses, and the public.²⁰³ ICTs have potential to overcome this issue through new and innovative

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 42.

¹⁹¹ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 42; UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. xii.

¹⁹² World Bank, *World Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 228.

¹⁹³ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 42.

¹⁹⁴ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 8.

¹⁹⁵ UN DESA, *Leaving No One Behind: The Imperative of Inclusive Development (ST/ESA/362)*, 2016, p. 70.

¹⁹⁶ UNCTAD, *Implementing World Summit on the Information Society Outcomes, 2016-2017 (UNCTAD/SER.RP/2017/12)*, 2017, p. 5.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁹⁸ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, pp. 15-16.

¹⁹⁹ World Bank, *World Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 212.

²⁰⁰ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 9.

²⁰¹ ITU, *ICTs, LDCs, and the SDGs: Achieving Universal and Affordable Internet in the Least Developed Countries*, 2018, p. 1.

²⁰² UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 21.

²⁰³ UNESCO, *Community-Based Learning for Sustainable Development*, 2017, p. 1.

methods for awareness and education.²⁰⁴ One significant example is the use of the United Nations Virtual Reality (UNVR) project.²⁰⁵ This allows individuals from across the world to gain insight into the conditions faced by those in hardship situations by experiencing a story through a virtual reality headset.²⁰⁶ Through UNVR, viewers can for example follow the daily life of a 12-year old Syrian refugee girls, or witness the life of a Liberian woman helping children through the Ebola crisis.²⁰⁷

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes the needs of those who are historically left behind, including vulnerable groups such as women, people with disabilities, displaced persons, and indigenous communities.²⁰⁸ ICTs may also be harnessed to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.²⁰⁹ The link between the rights of women and technology is clearly reflected in target 5.b which aims to utilize technology and ICTs to achieve technological self-sufficiency and inclusivity for women and girls.²¹⁰ ICTs can directly empower women and girls in many ways, such as contributing to the eradication of poverty, improving health and education, offering sustainable agricultural opportunities, and providing employment opportunities.²¹¹ However, women around the world currently have less access to the Internet than men, which threatens to widen gender gaps in use, access, and technical proficiency across ICT.²¹²

Individuals with disabilities encompass 15% of the total global population, and new forms of technology can improve their quality of life.²¹³ One area in which new technologies can help individuals with disabilities is thorough accessibility and inclusion, in accordance with Article 4 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD), which stipulates that States parties should actively “promote accessibility in design and development as well as availability of new technologies, including those of ICTs.”²¹⁴ UN General Assembly resolution 70/213 of 2016 on “Science, technology and innovation for development” further states that in order to empower people with disabilities, technology will need to be advanced with disability-inclusive development and with accessibility in mind.²¹⁵ By improving areas of assisted technology, which aims to assist or “enable people with disabilities to participate in social life and to live independently,” societies can help to better include persons with disabilities into society.²¹⁶ Examples of emerging technologies used in these applications include 3-D Printing for prosthetic limbs, improved electric wheelchairs, smart glasses, and GPS navigation for people with vision-impairments.²¹⁷

To address the issue of ICT access for indigenous people, the Global Forum of Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society (GFIPIS) met for the first time in 2003; in addition to universal benefits of health, education, and global citizenship, delegates affirmed the use of ICTs to preserve and share traditional knowledge systems and cultural heritage.²¹⁸ In this context, delegates noted that linguistic homogeneity of the Internet and other ICTs represented one of the largest barriers for indigenous peoples for societal and digital inclusion.²¹⁹ WSIS C8 Action Line on Cultural Diversity and Identity, Linguistic Diversity and Local Content reiterates the need for indigenous peoples to develop and access content in their own

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁰⁵ UN SDG Action Campaign, *Overview*.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 3.

²⁰⁹ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 41; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 6.

²¹⁰ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 41; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 18.

²¹¹ ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 41.

²¹² Ibid., p. 43.

²¹³ UNDP, *Spark, Scale, Sustain: Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017, p. 19.

²¹⁴ UN DESA, *Article 4 – General Obligations*.

²¹⁵ UN General Assembly, *Science, Technology and Innovation for Development (A/RES/70/213)*, 2016, p. 4.

²¹⁶ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 49.

²¹⁷ Hansen, *How New Technology Can Transform the World for People with Disabilities*, *The Star*, 2016.

²¹⁸ UNESCO, *Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society: Emerging uses of ICTs*, 2016, p. 7.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 16.

languages.²²⁰ UNESCO has proposed the use of emerging technologies to support initiatives to preserve and distribute indigenous cultural heritage.²²¹

SDG 2: Utilizing New Technology to Eliminate Hunger and Improve Agricultural Sustainability

The 2030 Agenda has established a framework for eliminating hunger, achieving sustainable food security, and ending all forms of malnutrition in the world.²²² In a 2018 report, the Secretary-General recommended that new forms of ICTs be utilized to empower farmers in rural areas.²²³ UNCTAD has recommended the use of ICTs in water management, as water is essential when it comes to food and agriculture, with 70% of the world's freshwater supplies being devoted to agriculture.²²⁴ Since many farmers don't have access to consistent or safe water to use toward agriculture, solar and hydro-powered irrigation pumps, affordable rainfall storage systems, specialized greenhouses, and other technologies might be used for irrigation systems.²²⁵ One example is the Waterboxx, which collects surrounding dew and rainwater around a plant to be stored and used over long periods of time.²²⁶ Nanotechnology is being used for the preservation of foods by fusion with a natural compound, hexanal, that prolongs the edibility of the food, benefiting small-scale farmers and those in poverty.²²⁷ Additionally, the use of big data and the IoT, have the potential to help farmers in areas of agricultural output by helping with decision-making, planting times and crop management, as well as uses for insurance purposes.²²⁸

Conclusion

Harnessing new technologies will be an important function of achieving the SDGs.²²⁹ ECOSOC and its many forums and reporting organizations will need to continue to foster ways to improve the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs.²³⁰ Improving access to technology will be crucial for achieving the 2030 Agenda and leaving no one behind, as the availability of technology is integrally linked with the socio-economic development and status of states.²³¹ In order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the international community will need to raise awareness and build capacity toward utilizing new technologies to help empower those who are furthest behind and who have been marginalized the most.²³²

²²⁰ UNESCO, *Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society: Emerging uses of ICTs*, 2016, p. 5.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²²² ITU, *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals*, 2017, p. 15; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 7.

²²³ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 23; UN ECOSOC, *Harnessing New Technologies to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2018/66)*, 2018, p. 4.

²²⁴ UNCTAD, *The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in Ensuring Food Security by 2030*, 2017, p. 14.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

²²⁷ UNCTAD, *The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in Ensuring Food Security by 2030*, 2017, p. 17; UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p.18.

²²⁸ UNCTAD, *The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in Ensuring Food Security by 2030 (UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2017/5)*, 2017, p. 20; UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p.10; UNCTAD, *Report: New Technology Can Fix Global Problems If Managed Well*, 2018.

²²⁹ UNCTAD, *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. xi; UN General Assembly, *Science, Technology and Innovation for Development (A/RES/70/213)*, 2016, p. 5.

²³⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting Sustainable Development*; UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.

²³¹ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 42.

²³² UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 7.

Further Research

While conducting further research, delegates should consider some of the following questions: How can ECOSOC work closely with states to build their capacity, particularly given the limited resources available? How are technologies currently shared, and how could this process be reformed in order to make it more effective, particularly for developing countries? What are some of the challenges that states must address to better support the innovation and implementation of new technologies? How can the improvement of ICTs help to achieve the SDGs? What can ECOSOC do to reduce the digital divide? How can the SDGs and the WSIS Action Lines work together to ensure that no one is left behind? What measures need to be taken in order to ensure that the digital divide within and among nations and peoples does not continue to widen?

Annotated Bibliography

International Telecommunications Union. (2017). *Fast-Forward Progress: Leveraging Tech to Achieve the Global Goals* [Report]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.itu.int/en/sustainable-world/Documents/Fast-forward_progress_report_414709%20FINAL.pdf

This report, published by the ITU, is a collaborative collection of insights from many UN agencies, programs and international organizations on the realization of ICTs and the SDGs. This report looks at all 17 SDGs and examines how new technologies and ICTs can help to advance sustainable development throughout the world. The report gives examples of positive, but also negative effects of the technological gaps and barriers in the world. This provides great insight for learning about specific case studies and the work of the public and private sectors in regard to information and technology application for the achievement of the SDGs.

International Telecommunications Union. (2018). *ICTs, LDCs, and the SDGs: Achieving Universal and Affordable Internet in the Least Developed Countries* [Report]. Retrieved on 24 August 2018 from: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/LDCs/Pages/Publications/LDCs/D-LDC-ICTLDC-2018-PDF-E.pdf>

This report focuses on ICTs in some of the least prosperous areas of the world. The report focuses on ICTs and how they can be used to achieve the SDGs in the LDCs. In addition, it provides a thorough overview of the role that the Internet plays in regard to the SDGs and how increasing Internet usage and availability can help achieve the SDGs in the LDCs. This report is useful for insight into the infrastructure and connectivity gaps that exist in LDCs and also goes into detail on SDG 9.c, which aims to increase access to ICT's and provide access to the Internet in the LDCs by 2020.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2017). *New Innovation Approaches to Support the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2017/4)*. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/dtlstict2017d4_en.pdf

This official report by UNCTAD revolves around the relationship between new forms of innovation and the SDGs. The report provides an in-depth look at the role the various forms of innovation can have in achieving the SDGs. It ties in the importance of innovation approaches needed for the 2030 Agenda and to solve other global issues. The report also provides important details in regard to policy recommendations and new and emerging approaches to innovation and global issues. This report is a significant source since it provides key figures, explanations, and examples of innovation and innovative technologies an opportunities.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2018). *Technology and Innovation Report 2018: Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development* [Report]. Retrieved August 24, 2018 from: <http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2110>

The Technology and Innovation Report 2018 is a new and detailed report on the relationship between technology and the SDGs, provided by UNCTAD. This report seeks to provide a starting point for dialogue between the fields of STI and the implementation of the SDGs. The report focuses mostly on frontier, or new and emerging technologies,

such as 3-D printing, biotechnologies, big data, and AI, and their current and potential future success on improving global issues. This source is significant due to not only its deep background on various kinds of frontier technologies, but also its deep insight on technological gaps, needed policies toward technologies, and emerging approaches and opportunities in the technological field.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*. Retrieved 4 July 2018 from:

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2328Global%20Sustainable%20development%20report%202016%20\(final\).pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2328Global%20Sustainable%20development%20report%202016%20(final).pdf)

The Global Sustainable Development Report is a report produced by many different agencies, departments and programs within the UN system, including input from academia and civil society. This report focuses heavily on SDGs and inclusivity, as well as emerging difficulties and solutions to their implementations. Chapter 3, "Perspectives of scientists on technology and the SDGs," is of specific interest for delegates, since it highlights the global expertise from scientists in regard to using technology as a tool to successfully achieve the SDGs.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *STI Forum 2018 Third Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals 5 – 6 June 2018* [Website]. Retrieved 4 July 2018 from:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/TFM/STIForum2018>

This website serves as a main gateway for background information on the third STI Forum in 2018, the concept of which was originally elaborated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. The STI Forum provides a large platform for collaboration and interaction between many important stakeholders for sustainable development and STI. This website will help to give a background into how technology and the SDGs work together and how the public and private sectors, as well as academia and other stakeholders can work together to successfully improve technologies, innovation and communication on many different levels while achieving the SDGs.

United Nations Development Programme. (2017). *Spark, Scale, Sustain: Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals* [Report]. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from:

<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/innovation/Version%2024%20web%20friendly%20-%20August%202%20-%20%20Annual%20Report%202016%20V17.pdf>

This Annual Report from 2017 is an overview from the UNDP Innovation Facility on Innovation and Development information from the year 2016. This report provides a large focus on already proven and emerging global innovations that seek to improve development, foster inclusivity and provide better governance with an emphasis around the SDGs and the public and private sectors of society. This report is significant due to its insight into many case studies of innovation and technology, and how that is successfully working toward helping the SDGs and improving the world in many ways..

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Harnessing New Technologies to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2018/66)*. Retrieved 8 October 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/E/2018/66>

This recent 2018 Report of the Secretary-General to ECOSOC provides a general overview of the current and past developments of technologies and the Sustainable Development Goals. This report elaborates on both the potential positive and negative impacts of the development of new technologies toward humanity. It then calls upon the international community to work together to achieve capacity-building, policy changes and improved governance, and various UN platforms such as the TFM and the Internet Governance Forum to help foster these changes.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 3 July 2018 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

This resolution from the seventieth session of the General Assembly in 2015 is the founding document for the establishment and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda would replace the Millennium Development Goals and establish 17 goals with 169 targets in order to transform our world into a better place within the next 15 years. This important resolution has helped to lay the groundwork for all international work toward today's sustainable development and gives key insight into how important technology is for successfully achieving all 17 goals and transforming our world into a better one for all.

World Summit on the Information Society. (2018). *WSIS Forum 2018 Outcome Document: Leveraging ICTs to Build Information and Knowledge Societies for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* [Report]. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2018/Files/documents/outcomes/WSISForum2018_ForumTrackOutcomes.pdf

The WSIS Forum 2018 Outcome Document provides a collection of valuable information on ICTs for achieving the SDGs provided by the ITU. This is a collection of outcome results from various sessions submitted to the 2018 WSIS Forum. This report provides an in-depth analysis on many levels of ICTs examples and how they relate to the SDGs and global issues. This is a significant source due to its vast information on case studies from UN agencies, NGOs, IGOs, and civil society.

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III. Ensuring Access to Technical, Vocational, and Tertiary Education

“Education must do more than produce individuals who can read, write and count. It must nurture global citizens who can rise to the challenges of the 21st century. At any age people can learn. Let us give them the chance – so that we can all create a new future.”²³³

Introduction

Equal and equitable access to education is a fundamental human right that is necessary to achieve sustainable development.²³⁴ Since the beginning of the Education for All (EFA) movement in 1990, the United Nations (UN) has focused on ensuring that every child has access to quality education.²³⁵ A fundamental challenge that education faces currently is the number of youth not in school.²³⁶ According to the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS), in 2016 over 263 million adolescents were not attending or receiving a formal education, and nearly 140 million of those youth were between the ages of 15-17.²³⁷ Often, children in this age group forego furthering their education due to poverty, lack of access to primary education, or the economic need to seek out employment.²³⁸ The global community has the opportunity to strengthen retention and achievement in school by providing access to technical, vocational, and tertiary education.²³⁹

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), was a term adopted by the UN at the world conference on TVET (1999) in Seoul.²⁴⁰ TVET can be defined as, “the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work.”²⁴¹ Furthermore, TVET programs provide post-secondary courses in which learning marketable and technical skillsets allow for the preparation of skilled laborers entering the workforce.²⁴² TVET institutions focus on teaching the technical skills needed for craft and trade jobs.²⁴³ Tertiary education is defined by the World Bank as, “all post-secondary education, including both public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools.”²⁴⁴ Promoting access to tertiary education is interdependent with access to all levels of education in achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Education 2030 framework.²⁴⁵ Ensuring higher and TVET education currently faces several obstacles, such as: accessibility, affordability, and accountability, which disproportionately affect those with lower socio-economic status and marginalized communities.²⁴⁶ Building awareness of the EFA movement and engaging the public-private sectors in the discussion on how to overcome barriers will aid in promoting and achieving lifelong learning for all.²⁴⁷

International and Regional Framework

The Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) commitment to ensuring access to technical, vocational, and tertiary education is derived from the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948).²⁴⁸

²³³ UN DPI, *Remarks at the World Education Forum on "Sustainable Development Goals and Education,"* 2015.

²³⁴ World Education Forum, *The Dakar Framework for Action*, 2000, p. 8.

²³⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Education For All Agenda*, 2011.

²³⁶ UNESCO, *One in Five Children, Adolescents, and Youth is Out of School*, 2018, p. 2.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²³⁹ United States Council for International Business, *Business for 2030*.

²⁴⁰ UNESCO-UNEVOC, *What is TVET?*, 2006.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ World Bank, *Higher Education*, 2017.

²⁴⁵ WEF, *Incheon Declaration*, 2015, p. 40.

²⁴⁶ UNESCO-IIEP, *Three Challenges for Higher Education and SDGs*, 2016; UNESCO, *Six Ways to Ensure Higher Education Leaves No One Behind*, 2017, p. 3.

²⁴⁷ UNESCO, *Timeline: The Global Education Movement*.

²⁴⁸ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217A (III))*, 1948.

Article 26 discusses the importance of education as a fundamental human right, and reiterates that, “technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”²⁴⁹ Article 13 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (1966), further establishes the UN’s pledge of universal access to education.²⁵⁰ Emphasizing the right for everyone to have access to education, the article proclaims that this will aid the overall “maintenance of peace” in a free society.²⁵¹ In 2006, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2006/15 which supports equitable access to TVET and higher education to promote youth employment.²⁵²

The *World Declaration on Education for All*, in conjunction with the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, was adopted at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand (1990) and established the EFA.²⁵³ The original declaration reiterated the need for every person to meet their basic learning needs, and encouraged the pursuit of universal access to education through strong partnerships and a commitment to learning.²⁵⁴ In 2000, the *Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments* was adopted by the World Education Forum (WEF) in Senegal.²⁵⁵ The purpose of the WEF (was to assess the progress that each country had made toward achieving the goals outlined at the 1990 World Conference on Education.²⁵⁶ The framework is a collective call to action that incorporates six regional frameworks adopted at conferences between 1999 and 2000.²⁵⁷ One of the emphasized points is that “the heart of EFA lies at country levels.”²⁵⁸ In total, 164 governments pledged to work toward the international initiative which outlined six goals to achieve by 2015:

1. Expanding and improving early childhood education
2. Ensuring free access to primary education for minorities and unprivileged children
3. The learning needs of all people are achieved through equitable access to learning
4. 50% improvement for adult literacy
5. Eliminate gender disparities and achieve gender equality
6. Increase quality of education, ensure excellence, and achieve measurable learning outcomes.²⁵⁹

In 2000, the *UN Millennium Declaration* established the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the *Millennium Summit of the United Nations*.²⁶⁰ The MDGs were the predecessors to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* at the *UN Conference on Sustainable Development* (2012).²⁶¹ One of ECOSOC’s main responsibilities is, “examining lessons learned from the MDGs, assessing the transition into the post-2015 development agenda, and considering implementation issues.”²⁶² 17 goals are outlined in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, each with specific targets to be achieved by the international community by 2030.²⁶³ SDG 4 focuses on “inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”²⁶⁴ Targets 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 emphasizes equal access to technical, vocational, and

²⁴⁹ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

²⁵⁰ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² UN ECOSOC, *Promoting Youth Employment (E/RES/2006/15)*, 2006, p. 1.

²⁵³ UNESCO, *Timeline: The Global Education Movement*.

²⁵⁴ UNESCO, *World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, 1990, p. 7.

²⁵⁵ World Education Forum, *The Dakar Framework for Action*, 2000, p. 3.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ World Education Forum, *The Dakar Framework for Action*, 2000, p. 8.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ UNDP, *Millennium Development Goals*, 2000.

²⁶¹ UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.

²⁶² UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

²⁶³ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

²⁶⁴ UNESCO, *Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its Targets*.

higher education for decent work.²⁶⁵ SDG 8 on equitable work and economic growth also addresses the importance of youth access to employment, education, and vocational training.²⁶⁶ In 2017, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2017/9 to reaffirm their previous commitment to the MDGs and SDGs in regards to the advancement of general equality within higher education and TVET.²⁶⁷

The *Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action* became the successor to EFA at the 2015 WEF.²⁶⁸ Over 1600 participants from 160 countries attended to establish a vision for education to accomplish by 2030.²⁶⁹ This declaration commits to “promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all”, with a focus on ensuring access to technical, vocational, and tertiary education.²⁷⁰ This framework was established to help with the implementation of SDG 4 and underscores the importance of implementing the goals at national and regional levels.²⁷¹

Role of the International System

ECOSOC partners with UNESCO, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and other UN agencies to ensure equitable access to TVET.²⁷² The UNESCO-International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) was established at the UNESCO General Conference in 1999.²⁷³ The purpose of UNESCO-UNEVOC is to assist with implementing EFA, support lifelong learning opportunities, and promote best TVET practices.²⁷⁴

Beginning in 2012, the Director-General of UNESCO started hosting EFA High-Level Forums with the purpose of raising international awareness and support for education.²⁷⁵ UNESCO developed the Strategy for TVET 2016-2021 after an evaluation of the original Strategy for TVET 2010-2015.²⁷⁶ The goal of the new strategy was to help outline how UNESCO will aid the international community and Member States in maximizing the outcomes of the three priority areas related to TVET and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.²⁷⁷ The three priority areas include “fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship,” “promoting equity and gender equality,” and “facilitating the transition to green economies and sustainable societies.”²⁷⁸ By ensuring access to TVET and equipping all youth and adults with the necessary skills to enter the workforce, the international community will be able to better achieve the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* as a whole.²⁷⁹

In 2014, ECOSOC, alongside UNESCO, UN-Women, and the Permanent Missions of Bangladesh and the government of Denmark organized a Ministerial Meeting on Education and Gender Equality, which primarily discussed removing the barriers to female education.²⁸⁰ The Director-General of UNESCO, Ms.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (A/70/472/Add.8)*.

²⁶⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System (E/RES/2017/9)*, 2017.

²⁶⁸ World Education Forum, *Incheon Declaration*, 2015, p. 6.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² UN DPI, *The United Nations System*, 2017.

²⁷³ UNESCO, UNEVOC, *Who We Are*, 2018.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ UNESCO, *High-Level Policy Forum on ICTs and Education For All: Achievements and the Way Forward*.

²⁷⁶ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021*, 2016, p. 6.

²⁷⁷ UNESCO, UNEVOC, *Who We Are*, 2018.

²⁷⁸ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021*, 2016, p. 6.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ UNESCO, *ECOSOC: Ministerial Meeting on Education and Gender Equality*, 2014.

Irina Bokova, highlighted that “promoting quality education as a human right, as a force for human dignity, and for empowering women” is a priority.²⁸¹

The annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development takes place under the auspices of ECOSOC.²⁸² The forum has a “central role in follow-up and review of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.”²⁸³ In 2016, HLPF held the first review of the newly implemented SDGs and discussed the challenges of accomplishing the goals, including equitable access to education.²⁸⁴ The HLPF 2019 theme will be “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” and the forum will undertake an in-depth review of several SDGs, highlighting SDG 4 and SDG 8.²⁸⁵

Ensuring Access to TVET in Developing Countries

Improving access to TVET in developing countries is instrumental to increasing economic vitality and promoting capacity-building efforts in emerging economies.²⁸⁶ The 2015 statistics indicates that 73 million youth are unemployed, with 1.44 billion workers globally in vulnerable employment.²⁸⁷ This type of employment is often characterized by “inadequate earnings, low productivity and difficult conditions of work that undermine workers’ fundamental rights.”²⁸⁸ The most vulnerable regions, and the regional workers that make up over half this number, are located in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, with 75% of working citizens in a position of vulnerable employment.²⁸⁹ UNESCO-UNEVOC hosted an online conference in 2013 and published the *Tackling Youth Unemployment through TVET* report.²⁹⁰ The report outlines two common barriers: (1) lack of employable skills and (2) lack of job opportunities.²⁹¹ Many developing countries are subject to poor economic conditions and high rates of unemployment, which discourage job creation.²⁹² The report highlights that barriers to decent work can be alleviated by widening the access to TVET in developing countries, but this also faces its own challenges such as limited resources and physical boundaries.²⁹³ To meet the employment needs of today’s 1.3 billion youth, the global market will need to create 475 million jobs in the next 10 years.²⁹⁴

The International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works toward the “improvement of high-quality vocational education and training.”²⁹⁵ IVETA facilitates regional information sharing between developed and developing countries in order to find ways to improve and advance access to TVET.²⁹⁶ By increasing access to TVET institutions, countries may be able to increase job opportunities by using institutions to create jobs, offering entrepreneurship education, building public-private partnerships (PPPs), and ensuring that students receive proper technical and soft skills training.²⁹⁷ Implementing these programs will also help minimize skills mismatch and teach people the necessary skills needed to enter the job market on a national and regional basis.²⁹⁸

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² IISD, *High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)*.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021*, 2016, p. 3.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Business Today, *3 out of 4 Workers in India Fall in Vulnerable Employment Category: ILO*, 2018.

²⁸⁹ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021*, 2016, p. 6.

²⁹⁰ UNEVOC, *Tackling Youth Unemployment Through TVET*, 2013, p. 4.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid, p. 19.

²⁹³ Ibid, p. 16.

²⁹⁴ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021*, 2016, p. 4.

²⁹⁵ IVETA, *IVETA Strategic Plan*.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

Financial Resources as a Barrier to TVET

A major challenge to the success of TVET is the lack of financial resources to help in funding TVET programs and institutions, which can lead to poor-quality programs that discourage parents from enrolling their children in technical and vocational programs.²⁹⁹ Public-private partnerships with technical and vocational institutions can help support long-term learning processes.³⁰⁰ Nigeria designed their system through utilizing PPPs to help develop national occupation standards, which led to the creation of the National Vocational Qualifications Framework.³⁰¹ Improving teacher capacities and encouraging policy makers to grant more funding toward TVET institutions and programs can help mitigate the financial barrier to participation.³⁰² Member States can also look to international partners to help with funding such as the World Bank and African and Asian Development Banks.³⁰³ In 2017, the World Bank partnered with the Korean Ministry of Labor and the Human Resources Development Service of Korea to manage the Promoting Skills and Job Creation in East Asia program.³⁰⁴ The goal of this program is to build capacity for employment across East Asian and the Pacific region.³⁰⁵ This ongoing collaboration has several partner Member States involved including Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam to ensure the incorporation of best practices.³⁰⁶

Despite the challenges that deter access to TVET, there are several initiatives in place to mitigate the barriers, one of which is the Regional TVET Centers of Excellence initiative funded by the World Bank.³⁰⁷ This initiative will develop 16 TVET institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰⁸ These centers aim to, “train technicians and faculty; develop industry recognized short-term training; and provide support on quality assurance and curriculum development to promote regional mobility of skilled workforces in sub-Saharan Africa.”³⁰⁹ Another ongoing initiative to ensure access to TVET in developing countries is the partnership between Germany and Ethiopia.³¹⁰ For the past 10 years, Germany has been engaging in information sharing with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in order to make the TVET system “more practice-oriented.”³¹¹ More than 350,000 vocational youth will benefit from this ongoing partnership and improvements.³¹²

Equal Access to Higher Education

Currently, 57 million primary age children worldwide are not enrolled in school, despite a 91% enrollment rate across developing countries.³¹³ Achieving the targets and goals lined out in SDG 4 will lead to a better quality of life and is the basis for sustainable development.³¹⁴ Women and marginalized groups face high barriers when trying to access higher and vocational education.³¹⁵ Additionally, women are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and only 29% of professional researchers in the world are women.³¹⁶ In developing regions, the disparity grows

²⁹⁹ UNEVOC, *Tackling Youth Unemployment Through TVET*, 2013, p. 18.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁰³ UNEVOC, *Diversifying the Funding Sources for TVET*, 2017, p. 6

³⁰⁴ World Bank, *Partnering for Skills Development in East Asia and the Pacific*, 2017.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ World Bank, *Skills Development/TVET*.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Supporting TVET – Shaping the Future*, 2017, p. 11.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ UNESCO, *Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its Targets*.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ UNESCO, *Six Ways to Ensure Higher Education Leaves No One Behind*, 2017, p. 3.

³¹⁶ UIS, *Women are Missing from the Ranks of Higher Education and Research*, 2017.

significantly with only 30% of 3.3 million students enrolled in school being women.³¹⁷ Over the years, women have been successfully closing the gap worldwide and attending higher educational institutions at nearly the same rate as men, and since 2000, 33% more women have graduated from college than men.³¹⁸ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported that in the past 50 years, about 50% of the growth in OECD countries is a result of more women and girls receiving higher education.³¹⁹ In 2017, ECOSOC hosted the 6th Youth Forum, which provides a, “platform for youth to engage in a dialogue with Member States and share ideas on innovation, collective action and solutions to global problems.”³²⁰ This forum highlighted the need to achieve gender equality for women, with a focus on the empowerment of women and girls through the establishment of a sustainable support system.³²¹

Students with disabilities also face stark barriers to higher education and are significantly less likely to enroll in school, let alone continue to pursue tertiary education.³²² Over 150 million children live with disabilities and these children are 10 times more likely to not attend school.³²³ In many cases, there are physical barriers that hinder people with disabilities from pursuing education such as lack of accessibility of educational buildings, bullying, and segregation.³²⁴ Member States can combat these barriers by raising awareness of these issues through education and increasing understanding on inclusive education for people with disabilities.³²⁵ Girls with disabilities are also at a disadvantage to having access to education because of lack of information about sexual and reproductive health rights.³²⁶ Women and girls in this marginalized group are at more risk of violence-based discrimination and being denied access to quality education.³²⁷ Plan International, an organization working on breaking down these obstacles, advocates for the international community to eliminate the systematic exclusion of girls and women with disabilities.³²⁸ They created the call to action Let Me Decide and Thrive to push for equal and equitable rights for girls with disabilities in education and bring to light the importance of policy change for countries in this area.³²⁹

Case Study: Malawi

Lack of access to fundamental human rights, such as guaranteeing equal and free access to basic education, is a barrier people face globally.³³⁰ Within the female population, 80 million girls and women in sub-Saharan Africa are out of school at the primary and secondary levels of education.³³¹ In Malawi, there are barriers to education for women and girls due to the social pressures of marriage and early pregnancy which led to 51,313 girls dropping out of school between 2010-2013.³³² Less than 1% of citizens are enrolled in a tertiary education program in Malawi and there is less than 6% enrollment across sub-Saharan Africa.³³³ Additional barriers include: inadequate funding for programs, high entry requirements, and poor-quality education system.³³⁴ To reform the TVET education system, Malawi mapped out a

³¹⁷ UNESCO, *Six Ways to Ensure Higher Education Leaves No One Behind*, 2017, p. 3.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ OECD, *Gender Equality: Essential for Sustainable Growth*, 2018.

³²⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls*, 2017, p. 1

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Global Partnership for Education, *Children with Disabilities*, 2018.

³²³ Right to Education, *Persons with Disabilities*.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Global Partnership for Education, *Children with Disabilities*, 2018.

³²⁶ Plan International, *Let me Decide and Thrive*, 2017, p. 6.

³²⁷ Ibid, p. 8.

³²⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

³²⁹ Ibid, p. 6.

³³⁰ Human Rights Watch, *Africa: Make Girl's Access to Education a Reality*, 2017.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ ILO, *Integrating Core Work Skills into TVET Systems: Six Countries Case Studies*, 2015, p. 70; Africa-America Institute, *State of Education in Africa*, 2015, p. 10.

³³⁴ UNESCO, STEP, *Report Series 1*, 2017, p. 13

strategy to implement core skills by seeking out partnerships at the national and international level, which included UNESCO, the World Food Programme, the World Bank, and the Malawi Institute of Education.³³⁵ In 2004, the UN Girls' Education Initiative was implemented in the nation with the goal of acting as a bridge to foster relationships between stakeholders and the government.³³⁶ The results of this initiative helped establish the Girl's Education Movement, which raised the importance of girls education.³³⁷ This initiative also provided gender training and helped drive progress toward gender mainstreaming in education.³³⁸

Another partnership that Malawi formed to help break down the barriers surrounding TVET and higher education in the country is collaboration with the EU-UNESCO partnership for TVET and implementing the Skills and Technical Education Programme (STEP).³³⁹ STEP organized a regional workshop in the country to reflect on the results of different programs and examine the TVET system.³⁴⁰ The program identified areas of improvement needed in terms of restructuring the TVET curriculum and created regional action points for follow through.³⁴¹

Conclusion

Ensuring access to technical, vocational, and tertiary education is a basic human right, and can help provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.³⁴² The international community has made progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda since 2015, but developing countries still face several barriers to quality education for all.³⁴³ Poverty, conflict, and urban-rural disparities hinder the progress toward achieving SDG 4, and one in four girls in developing countries are not in school.³⁴⁴ ECOSOC, through the promotion of collective action and the drive to achieve sustainable development, is attempting to pave the path for capacity-building efforts, collaboration, and partnerships in the international community to actualize SDG 4 and the EFA goals.³⁴⁵

Further Research

When delegates are further researching this topic, it is vital that close attention is paid to the changing environment and progress being made on the Education 2030 Agenda, TVET programs, and discussions at the 2019 HLPF session. How can developing countries incorporate the use of PPPs to mitigate the financial barriers to TVET and tertiary education? What role does ECOSOC play in information sharing and coordinating exchange in finding solutions for equitable access to education? Regionally, how can developing states partner with NGOs to remove barriers to education for marginalized groups? Furthermore, how will Member States raise awareness and combat the surrounding stigmas of TVET programs?

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Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2017). *Supporting TVET – Shaping the Future* [Report]. Retrieved 21 October 2018 from:

https://www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/education/Materialie303_supporting_tvete.pdf

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development utilizes and focuses on development cooperation. This report, published in 2017, highlights the

³³⁵ UNGEI, *Malawi: Background*.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ UNGEI, UNGEI At 10, 2010, p. 23.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ UNESCO, STEP, Report Series 1, 2016, p. 7.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13

³⁴² WEF, *Incheon Declaration*, 2015, p. 6.

³⁴³ UNDP, *Goal 4: Quality Education*, 2018.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

programs that Germany has established for investing in high-quality TVET education. Germany works closely with African nations to engage in information sharing and acts as a donor to invest in TVET programs in developing countries. The report delves into the importance of gender equality, training, mitigation and displacement, and how the digital age affects TVET. Delegates will find this resource useful when researching how developing countries receive assistance from developed nations and form partnerships.

International Labour Organization. (2015). *Integrating Core Work Skills into TVET Systems: Six Country Case Studies* [Report]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_470726.pdf

The International Labour Organization in 2015 published a report providing case studies for Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, and Zambia detailing integrating educational for sustainable development in TVET programs within the countries. For each case study, delegates will find the backgrounds, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and outlined areas needed for improvement within each country. This report will be useful for delegates when seeking background information on TVET program implementation in African countries, and the importance of incorporating educational for sustainable development with TVET.

Plan International. (2017). *Let Me Decide and Thrive* [Report]. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: <https://plan-international.org/publications/let-me-decide-thrive-srhr-disability>

Plan International released this call to action in 2017 to call upon the international community to take action and alleviate the disparities for marginalized groups in education. The publication focuses specifically on women and girls with disabilities, and the barriers to education that they must overcome. Plan International highlights the severity of gender-based violence, bullying, and exclusion that women and girls with disabilities must endure. Delegates will find this report useful for further research into equality for marginalized groups.

United Nations, Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its Targets* [Website]. Retrieved 8 August 2018 from: <https://en.unesco.org/education2030-sdg4/targets>

SDG 4 is the basis for the Education 2030 agenda with the goal to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. SDG 4 is broken down into seven specific goals that the international community should strive to achieve by 2030. This page is useful when researching the different outcomes and the means of achieving those outcomes for SDG 4.

United Nations, Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. (2016). *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2016-2021* [Report]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002452/245239e.pdf>

Three priority areas are outlined by UNESCO to help Member States enhance the relevance of their TVET programs in order to achieve SDG 4 The first area is fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship, the second is promoting equity and gender equality, and third is facilitating the transition to green economies and sustainable societies. This report also offers an outline of how UNESCO will support Member States in achieving the outlined targets by providing research, reports, promoting capacity-building, and accountability. When researching, delegates will find this document useful for determining solutions to ensuring access to TVET programs.

United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *Accountability in Education: Meeting Our Commitments* [Report]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002593/259338e.pdf>

The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report team, with aid from UNESCO, published this report discussing the importance of accountability when furthering the education goals lined out in SDG 4. The report contains 21 chapters, each one targeting a different

group of actors involved in the collective responsibility of achieving education goals and the different targets identified in SDG 4. Delegates will find this report useful when seeking information on challenges faces with ensuring access to education and monitoring the progress of reaching the targets set out in SDG 4 by 2030.

United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics. (2018). *One in Five Children, Adolescents, and Youth is Out of School* [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs48-one-five-children-adolescents-youth-out-school-2018-en.pdf>

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, or UIS, published this fact sheet in 2018 on the latest UIS data available on education at the time. This sheet aims to show the progress made by the global community on SDG 4, three years after its adoption. The global trends in access to education have not improved significantly according to this data, but delegates can use this information to help determine what solutions can be disseminated and the areas to focus on.

United Nations, General Assembly, Third session. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: [http://undocs.org/A/RES/169\(II\)](http://undocs.org/A/RES/169(II))

This foundational resolution was adopted by the General Assembly in 1948. The UDHR is one of the documents that is a part of the International Bill of Human Rights. The UDHR has been the catalyst for several legally binding international human rights laws. The resolution expresses fundamental values shared by the international community. Delegates should use this resource to build upon fundamental human rights issues such as education.

World Bank. (2016). *Improving Higher Education in Malawi for Competitiveness in the Global Economy* [Report]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/978-1-4648-0798-5>

The World Bank performed a case study on Malawi, where they evaluated the impact of five different areas on improving the quality of higher educations within the country. The report is based upon public information, data analysis, and consultation of involved stakeholders. In order to pursue alternatives that would allow the Government of Malawi to increase access to higher education, they requested the World Bank to undertake this study. Delegates will find this report useful when seeking information on access to education in Malawi.

World Education Forum. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action*. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf>

In 2000, the WEF, hosted in Senegal, adopted the Dakar Framework for Action. This framework reaffirms that the six EFA goals should be handled at a national level, and governments have a responsibility to ensure these goals and targets are obtained. Challenges are outlined and include access to sustainable resources, financing, globalization, and marginalized groups. This is a great resource for delegates when seeking information on the advancements of the WEF, history behind the EFAs, and the international goals for this topic.

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