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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL PLENARY
BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

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Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Conference New York (NMUN•NY)! This year's Economic and Social Council Plenary (ECOSOC) staff is: Directors Katrena Ann Porter (Conference A) and Nyla Langford (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Aiskell Roman (Conference A) and Asra Shakoor (Conference B). Katrena will graduate from Southern University Law Center in May, and currently works as a student law clerk for a judge in the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She is excited to return for her third year on staff at NMUN•NY. Nyla recently spent four years working in oncology clinical research and drug development, and is now Director of Operations for a science learning laboratory in Dallas, Texas. This is her fourth year on staff. Aiskell currently works for the scholarly journal *Latin American Perspectives* as its coordinating secretary and aspires to begin law school next year. This is her second year on staff. Asra is currently studying for her MSc in Regulation at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and is a Parliamentary Intern at the House of Commons. This is her second year on staff.

The topics under discussion for ECOSOC are:

I. Mainstreaming Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda
II. Fostering Sustainable Development Practices through Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
III. Social and Economic Integration through Sustainable Urbanization

The Economic and Social Council Plenary plays a unique role within the United Nations as a primary organ tasked with discussing crosscutting issues related to development, cooperation, and international standard setting. In addressing these issues, ECOSOC may initiate studies, call international conferences, submit draft conventions to the General Assembly, and make recommendations. Through policy dialogue and oversight for specialized agencies, functional commissions, and regional commissions, ECOSOC's mandate allows for the responsibility to address problems with comprehensive approaches.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee; however, it is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in full detail, as well as use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography as part of your research to expand your knowledge on these topics and prepare to discuss solutions with fellow delegates. Prior to the conference, each delegation will submit a position paper based on their preparation (due March 1). Please take note of the NMUN policies on the website and in the Delegate Preparation Guide regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment, awards philosophy/evaluation method, etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The NMUN Rules of Procedure are available to download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference, and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the Committee or the Conference itself, you are welcome to contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Ardis Smith (Conference A) and Monika Milinauskyte (Conference B). You can reach either USG by contacting them at: usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best for your preparation and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A

Katrena Ann Porter, *Director*
Aiskell Roman, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Nyla Langford, *Director*
Asra Shakoor, *Assistant Director*

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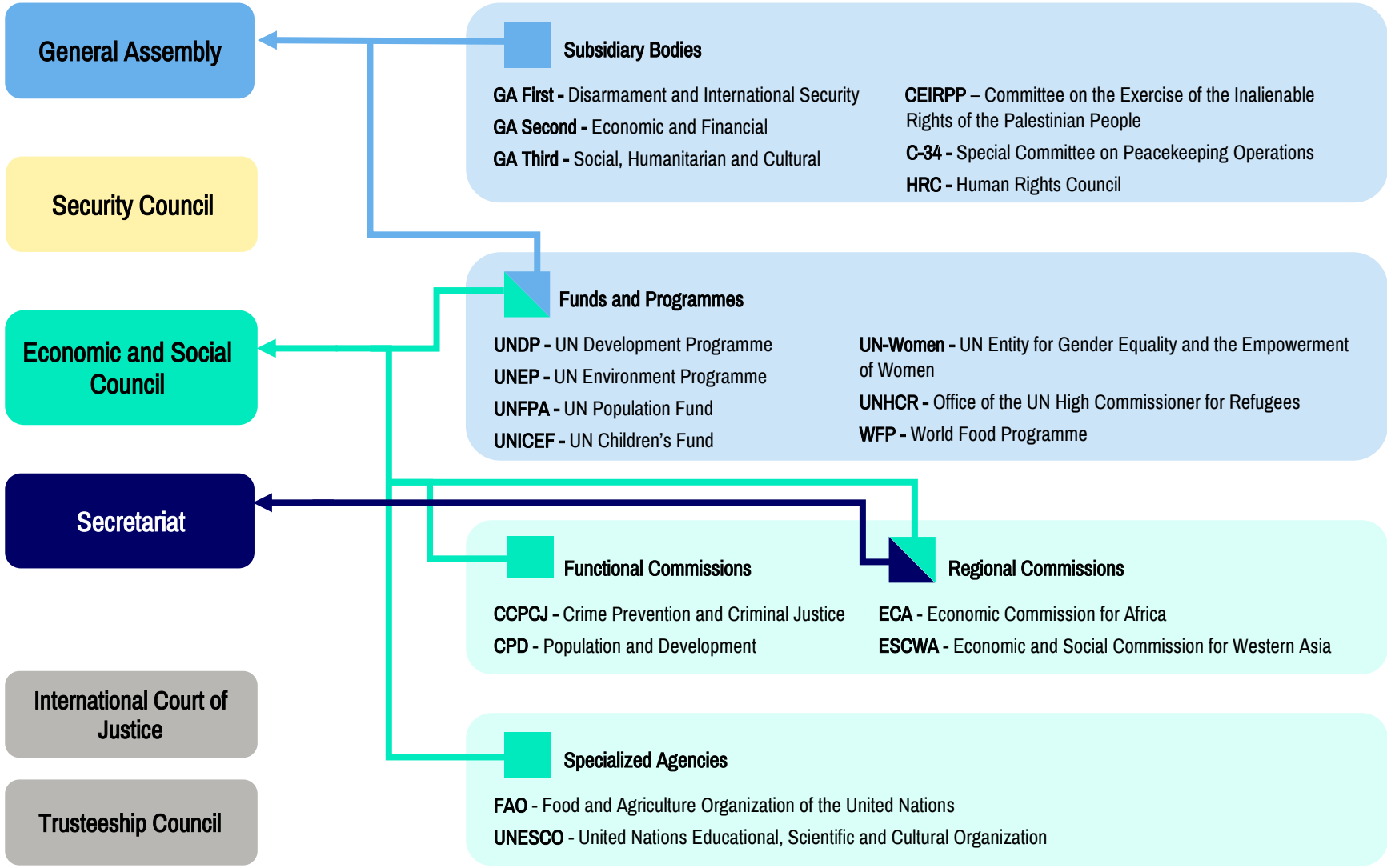
Abbreviations

AMR	Annual Ministerial Reviews
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CEB	Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CSO	Civil society organizations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DCF	Development Cooperation Forum
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GA	General Assembly
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEPMI	Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative
HLP	High-level Panel
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
HLS	High-level Segment
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Natural
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
NMUN	National Model United Nations
OWG	Open Working Group
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UN	United Nations
UNACLA	United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WHO	World Health Organization
WPAY	World Programme of Action for Youth
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WUC	World Urban Campaign

United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN System simulated at NMUN•NY. It shows where each committee "sits" within the system, to help understand the reportage and relationships between the 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* 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 70% of UN resources through its oversight of 14 Specialized Agencies and thirteen functional and regional commissions.[2] In 2013, ECOSOC underwent a series of reforms which attempted to expand its functions and powers as:

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*, ECOSOC is mandated to address economic and social matters. It submits an annual report to the General Assembly.

- "A leadership forum for policy dialogue and recommendations;
- The lead entity to address new and emerging challenges;
- A forum for the balanced integration of sustainable development;
- An accountability platform for universal commitments, monitoring and reporting on progress at all levels."[3]

The Council is mandated to serve as a main body for policy dialogue; review and advise Member States and other UN entities on economic, social, cultural, educational, and health-related topics; as well as lead discussion on the implementation of the international development framework.[4] In the last decade, the General Assembly, in resolutions 61/16 of 9 January 2007 and 68/1 of 13 December 2013, to strengthened the working methods of the Council in two reforms.[5] The latter recognized the leading role of the Council in "identifying emerging challenges and promoting reflection, debate and innovative thinking on development, as well as in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development."[6] Therefore, with the expansion of its role and responsibilities, the work of the Council remains critical, especially in preparing, monitoring and implementing the post-2015 development agenda and facilitating global discussions around the sustainable development goals (SDGs).[7]

History

In the 1960s and 1970s, the number of subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC increased significantly due to the influence of developing countries that broadened the agenda of the UN. This group of Member States called for a stronger focus on urgent issues such as the elimination of underdevelopment, poverty, and the unequal position of their countries in the world economy.[8] Following this, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/197 of 1977, on the "Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System," which was the first attempt to make ECOSOC more effective through better coordination between ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies.[9] During that time, the Council also experienced changes in its membership. It originally had 18 members, increasing to 27 on 31 August 1965 under the GA resolution 1991B (XVIII).[10] In 1971, the membership was expanded again under the GA resolution 2847/XXVI and currently is 54 Member States.[11]

In the mid-1990s, the UN system faced significant duplication of work due to unclear mandates and overlapping operational activities of its various entities. As a result of this, General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 1995 tried to solve the problems arising from the shared responsibility between the Assembly and ECOSOC by "expressly

[1] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.
[2] Public Broadcasting System, *Kofi Annan Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*
[3] UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.
[4] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.
[5] Ibid.
[6] UN ECOSOC, *Further Review of the Implementation of Resolution 61/16 of the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council.*
[7] UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2014 Development Agenda*.
[8] Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 20.
[9] Ibid., p. 19.
[10] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2013-14*, 2013, p. 128.
[11] Ibid.

assigning the policy guidance role to the General Assembly and putting emphasis on the coordination role of ECOSOC" [12] This interpretation was confirmed by the GA in resolution 57/270B of 2002.[13]

The Council's role as a coordinator of development activities has always been at the center of its mandate, and it is the only body within the UN system that issues consultative status to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to attend and participate in various UN meetings, conferences, and special sessions to voice their concerns to international community.[14] Consultative status is given by the standing committee on NGOs of ECOSOC, established in 1946 and comprising 19 Member States.[15] ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 of 24 July 1996 indicated the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in granting the consultative relationship.[16] Currently, 3,900 NGOs hold consultative status with the Council.[17]

Mandate

The Economic and Social Council's mandate is articulated in the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) as follows:

> "The Economic and Social Council may make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters and may make recommendations with respect to any such matters to the General Assembly to the Members of the United Nations, and to the specialized agencies concerned. It may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all."[18]

The Council fulfills its mandate under the overall authority of the General Assembly, and with the consultation of a broad range of civil society actors and in conjunction with the work completed by its subsidiary bodies.[19] In 2007, the Council's mandate was expanded under General Assembly resolution 61/16, to strengthen its leadership towards increasing international development cooperation, particularly on the outcomes of the main UN summits and tracking implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[20] In particular, the Council was mandated to organize the biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which would become part of Council's High-level segment; focus on developing partnerships with civil society and other organizations; and strengthen the role of the Council's functional commissions.[21] The resolution also requested ECOSOC to establish a multi-year program of work for Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMRs) where Member States could assess the progress on the MDGs and identify further work needed towards the full implementation of international development goals.[22] Such reform placed ECOSOC as a leading body in fostering cooperation among Member States towards sustainable development, and the General Assembly identified further ways to place ECOSOC as an action-oriented and effective coordinator of the UN system-wide international development agenda under the resolution 68/1(2013).[23] In particular, the resolution requested ECOSOC to prioritize thematic sessions such as the humanitarian segment; to regularly hold management and coordination meetings with the key stakeholders, and promote dialogue on financing for international development.[24]

Governance, Structure and Membership

[12] Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 20.
[13] Ibid.
[14] UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.
[15] UN DESA NGO Branch, *The Committee On NGOs*.
[16] UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*; UN ECOSOC, *Consultative Relationship between the United Nations and Non-governmental Organizations* (E/1996/31), 1996, pp. 53-61.
[17] UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.
[18] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Article 62.
[19] ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 4.
[20] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.
[21] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council* (A/RES/61/16), 2007, p. 2.
[22] Ibid., p. 3.
[23] UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council* (A/RES/68/1), 2013, p. 5.
[24] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

The Economic and Social Council comprises 54 members, each elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.[25] The members are distributed in accordance with the geographical position of the applicants to achieve equal representation from all continents: 14 seats are allocated to African States, 11 to Asian States, six to Eastern European States, ten to Latin American and Caribbean States, and 13 to Western European and other States.[26] Each member has one representative and one vote in the Council.[27] All decisions are made by a simple majority of those members present and voting.[28]

The Council holds two annual sessions, consisting of an organizational session when elections to the Bureau take place, and a substantive session, which is further divided into five "segments" focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council's work.[29] The working method of the Council was further reformed under the GA resolution 68/1 in 2013, and its work is now organized as follows:

High-level Segment (HLS): For 2014 and 2015, the HLS includes an Annual Ministerial Review to review the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.[30] The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) will also continue to be held biennially in 2014.[31] In addition to this, the HLS entails ministerial-level meetings of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.[32]

Integration Segment: This segment aims to "make full use of its multidisciplinary network of specialized bodies," by monitoring and promoting "the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the work of ECOSOC system," through the consolidation of "all the inputs of Member States, the subsidiary bodies of the Council, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders."[33] This segment consolidates important messages on primary themes and action-oriented recommendations from the Council system.[34]

Operational Activities for Development Segment: This segment monitors the follow-up to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) recommendations, and alignment with the work of the Specialized Agencies.[35] It will help the Council to provide efficient coordination to the UN Programmes and Funds.[36]

Coordination and Management Meetings (CMM): CMMs are held regularly for the Council to "review the reports of its subsidiary bodies (functional commissions, regional commissions and committees of experts) and consider specific thematic issues for which the Council is expected to play a coordinating role, such as gender mainstreaming."[37] The Council works closely with the Secretariat of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) during these meetings.[38]

Humanitarian Affairs: This segment serves as a thematic forum for discussion on addressing operation challenges and normative progress on the humanitarian policy.[39] In June 2014, the segment focused on the future of humanitarian affairs and operation of the activities as well as addressed the importance of transitioning from relief to development.[40]

[25] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members*.
[26] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members*; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X, Article 61.1-2.
[27] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X.
[28] UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 22; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X.
[29] UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 8.
[30] UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods,* 2014.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] UN ECOSOC, *2014 Humanitarian Affairs Segment*.
[40] Ibid.

Governance
ECOSOC has its own rules of procedure that also administer the election process of the President, the Vice-President, and the Rapporteur, all elected for a one year term.[41] The Bureau provides a leadership role within ECOSOC. It consists of five representatives, the President and four Vice-Presidents, who are elected to one-year terms at the outset of each annual session by the entire 54 members of the Council.[42] The Bureau assumes responsibility for setting the Council's agenda, devising an action plan and collaborating with the Secretariat on administrative duties.[43] Bureau membership rotates equally among regional blocs.[44] The current President of ECOSOC Plenary, Mr. Martin Sajdik, was elected on 14 January 2014.[45]

Subsidiary Bodies
ECOSOC oversees 14 subsidiary bodies that are "required to report annually to ECOSOC on their activities submitting draft resolutions and recommendations to the Council."[46] The Council's subsidiary bodies hold their own sessions and produce recommendations, and their work is assessed by ECOSOC during the substantive session.[47] The two most common types of subsidiary bodies are functional and regional commissions, and specific methods of work have been adopted within each subsidiary organ to align with the mandate of each entity:

> **Functional Commissions:** The nine functional commissions are "deliberative bodies whose role is to consider and make recommendations on issues in their areas of responsibility and expertise."[48] Functional commissions in particular have a responsibility for following up to the major UN conferences, in accordance with the role of ECOSOC.[49]
>
> **Regional Commissions:** The five regional commissions aim to foster economic integration, oversee the implementation of regional sustainable development initiatives, and help addressing economic and social issues in sub-regions.[50] In order to carry out these objectives, the commissions "promote multilateral dialogue, knowledge sharing and networking at the regional level, and work together to promote intra- regional and inter-regional cooperation, both among themselves and through collaboration with other regional organisations."[51] Regional commissions target problems and challenges within their geographical scope, while functional commissions deal with issues related to their constituting subject. Consequently, a member of a regional commission can only be a country from this region (with one exception: the United States is a member of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)).[52]
>
> **Expert Bodies composed of Governmental Experts:** The seven bodies that fall into this category are focused on narrow topics that ECOSOC has identified as important and deserving of additional attention or particular expertise.[53] These bodies consider issues falling within the scope of the Commission´s work in order to improve the information, guidance, policy or regulations on the issue, with a particular aim for coherence and consistency at the international level.[54]

Additional types of committees that report to ECOSOC include standing committees, ad-hoc bodies, and other related bodies.[55] Working methods and structural changes are made to subsidiary organs regularly; however, the most significant change of note is the establishment of the High-level Political Forum on

[41] UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992.
[42] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Bureau*.
[43] Ibid.
[44] UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 9.
[45] UN ECOSOC, *President*.
[46] UN Dag Hammarsk*jöld* Library, *Functional Commissions.*
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] UN ECOSOC, *Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related field* (E/1998/46), 1998, p. 76.
[50] UN Regional Commissions, *About*.
[51] Ibid.
[52] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2013-14*, 2013, p. 161.
[53] UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, *Overview*.
[54] UNCTAD, *About International Standards of Accounting and Reporting.*
[55] UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.

Sustainable Development. Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was abolished as of 20 September 2013, per ECOSOC resolution 2013/19, and replaced with the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), which convenes annually under the auspices of ECOSOC.[56]

Functions and Powers

The *Charter of the United Nations* indicates that ECOSOC "may make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters and may make recommendations with respect to any matters to the General Assembly [GA], to the Members of the United Nations, and to Specialized Agencies concerned."[57] It "may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist [it] upon request."[58] In addition to this, the Council serves a critical role in providing coordination, monitoring and advice to the UN programs agencies, and funds on international development policies and their implementation.[59] In particular, it monitors and evaluates the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of UN operational activities for development, a policy mechanism, which was created under the GA landmark resolution 67/226 of 2013.[60] Other functions of the Council entail: encouraging Member States to implement relevant policies; providing financial resources; cooperating with relevant actors; mainstreaming and integrating good practice policy at a national level; strengthening national level responses and capacity on a certain issue; sharing information and good practice; appointing a national focal point; and providing support and better coordination with relevant entities of the UN system.[61]

The Council also requests entities within the UN system to take action. For example, it requested the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to provide "substantive contributions" to the development of guidelines on crime prevention in urban areas.[62] It also invited all entities within the UN system to contribute to the implementation of the *Istanbul Programme of Action* (2011), and requested that Specialized Agencies strengthen existing measures of support and appropriate programming responses.[63] Additionally, the Council urged UN agencies to strengthen humanitarian response capacity; provide technical cooperation for long-term partnerships; and recommended that the Emergency Relief Coordinator enhances coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian response, especially through expertise and technology transfer to developing countries to build resilience.[64] The Council's functions and powers were further expanded with the adoption of the General Assembly resolution 68/1 in 2013 which mandated the body to provide leadership to the UN system through adoption of an annual theme; organize thematic segments of the Council throughout the year; and convene an Integration Segment to monitor and promote the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the work of the Council.[65]

ECOSOC regularly requests the Secretary-General to follow-up on certain issues, and provide more concrete, formal support as well as the resources necessary from within the budget of a regional or functional commission to carry

[56] UN General Assembly, *Format and Organizational Aspects of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 7.
[57] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Article 62.
[58] Ibid., Arts. 62, 63, and 65.
[59] 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.
[59] UN General Assembly, *Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system (A/RES/67/226),* 2012, pp. 1, 18, 19.
[60] Ibid.
[61] UN ECOSOC, *Taking action against gender-related killing of women and girls (A/RES/2013/36)*, 2013, pp. 3-4; UN ECOSOC, *Model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against children in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice (A/RES/2013/34),* 2013, p. 3.
[62] UN ECOSOC, *The rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 (A/RES/2013/33),* 2013, pp. 4-5.
[63] UN ECOSOC, *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (A/RES/2013/46),* 2013, p. 3.
[64] UN ECOSOC, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/2013/6),* 2013, p. 2.
[65] 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, pp. 3-4.

out certain activities.[66] In 1998, ECOSOC initiated a meeting with the heads of various economic institutions, such as state finance ministers, members of the World Bank and of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leading to an increase in cooperation between these financial institutions.[67] Recently, both the General Assembly and the Council attempted to strengthen partnerships by launching a joint Assembly-ECOSOC meeting to "examine ways on which transformative post-2015 development agenda can best be supported by multi-stakeholder partnerships that responds to sustainable development and complement intergovernmental efforts to shape a renewed global partnership for development."[68]

The Council established a standing Committee on NGOs in 1946, which directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by civil society organizations.[69] In July 2010, ECOSOC granted consultative status to the tenth organization working internationally for the protection of sexual minority rights, a step that has led to an increase in the focus of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues in the international sphere.[70] This example shows the importance of collaboration across various organizations, which was identified as one the key reforms needed at the Council in order to strengthen economic, social, cultural development, and human rights across Member States. In the latest report in June 2014, the Committee granted consultative status to addition 158 NGOs, reviewed quadrennial reports and held informal consultations on improving working methods of the Committee to meet the needs of NGOs.[71]

Current Priorities

One of the key priorities of the Council currently is to manage the transition from the MDGs to the new development framework, and lead the discussion on monitoring and implementation of SDGs.[72] The President of ECOSOC stressed in his remarks at the General Assembly's High-level Event on the post-2015 development agenda that it is crucial to make the new development goals action-oriented by building national capacity and ensuring efficient review systems, like the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), are in place to monitor impact.[73] The Council, therefore, serves an instrumental role in coordinating preparations, leading monitoring and implementation process through QCPR and Annual Ministerial Review, as well as fostering global partnerships in the post-2015 setting through DCF.[74] In addition to this, both GA and ECOSOC work closely to promote innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development, initiating a thematic forum for such discussion in April 2014.[75] At the event, the participants agreed to focus on scaling-up all forms of collaboration in the post-2015 setting; promote the implementation of existing global commitments, and address "the emerging role of innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships."[76]

For the third consecutive year, ECOSOC led discussion around youth participation and inclusion, especially in the post-2015 development agenda. In June 2014 the Council hosted a Youth Forum where UN Member States, youth councils, government agencies and other organizations identified the following global priorities for immediate action: youth unemployment and lack of access to decent jobs and education, young people's health, good governance, entrepreneurship and participation in decision-making processes.[77] These pressing issues were consolidated in the advocacy strategy drafted by all the participants which serves as a "roadmap" towards closer collaboration between young people and the UN agencies, civil society and private sector.[78] Following this, the

[66] UN ECOSOC, *Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/RES/2013/43),* 2013, pp. 3-4.
[67] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.
[68] UN DESA, *UN Assembly, Economic and Social Council launch joint talks on development partnerships,* 2014.
[69] UN DESA, *Committee on NGOs convenes for first session of 2014,* 2014.
[70] IGLHRC, *United Nations Grants Official Status to U.S.-based International LGBT Rights Group*, 2010.
[71] UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2014 resumed session (E/2014/32/2),* 2014, pp. 1, 46.
[72] UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*.
[73] UN ECOSOC, *Keynote Address by His Excellency Mr. Martin Sajdik, President of the Economic and Social Council,* 2014, p.2.
[74] UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*.
[75] UN DESA, *The role of partnerships beyond 2015,* 2014.
[76] Ibid.
[77] UN DESA, *Uniting for youth beyond 2015,* 2014.
[78] Ibid.

Council decided to focus explicitly on employment creation and decent work as a theme for the Integration Segment of its 2015 session; ECOSOC, therefore, remains a central body for youth-related issues.[79]

The Council's biennial Development Cooperation Forum has prioritized other important issues, such as development assistance and accountability, as increasing number of non-state actors such as NGOs, private sector, and philanthropies have been contributing to international cooperation.[80] The Forum plays a central role in monitoring trends in international development cooperation and streamlining operational activities and their delivery, which feeds into stronger policy integration between the work of the UN and variety of other development partners involved in development activities.[81]

Recent Sessions

In March 2014, ECOSOC convened the Development Cooperation Forum's High-Level Symposium, on the topic "Accountable and effective development cooperation in a post-2015 era," to discuss ways how to improve development cooperation and measure its impact.[82] The President of ECOSOC stressed that the Symposium would demonstrate the relevance of DCF and its instrumental role in ensuring "development cooperation is fit for purpose in the post-2015 era."[83] Participants discussed issues such as quality and effectiveness of development cooperation, how it will look like post-2015, and how to design frameworks for effectively monitoring development cooperation and making sure it is accountable.[84] These discussions also fed into the first ministerial meeting of the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, which was held in Mexico in April 2014.[85] In July 2014, the Annual Ministerial Review was convened as part of ECOSOC High-level Segment at the UN Headquarters in New York.[86] It took place in the overall substantive context of the final effort to accelerate progress towards the MDGs by 2015, the continued follow-up to Rio+20, and the discussions for elaborating the post-2015 development agenda.[87]

The High-level Political Forum was held under the auspices of ECOSOC's for the first time from 30 June to 9 July 2014.[88] The Forum replaced the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, formed in 1992 after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to generate action on energy issues, sustainability in production and consumption.[89] The outcome document of the 2014 ECOSOC High-level Segment and the High-level Political Forum was the Ministerial Declaration, themed "Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future."[90] It stressed the commitment to establishing inclusive and a people-centered post-2015 development agenda that will build upon the legacy of MDGs.[91]The Declaration also identified that poverty eradication, sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and natural resources as key requirements for sustainable development which need to be at the center of the new development framework.[92]

The Council has also released its provisional agenda with the key events for 2015. The upcoming sessions will include: high-level policy dialogue with international financial and trade institutions; the second High-level Political

[79] UN ECOSOC, *Theme for the integration segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council (E/2014/L.23),* 2014, p.1.
[80] UN ECOSOC, *Development Cooperation Forum;* UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods,* 2014, p.1.
[81] UN ECOSOC, *Development Cooperation Forum.*
[82] UN DESA, *ECOSOC convenes symposium on development cooperation,* 2014.
[83] Ibid.
[84] UN ECOSOC, *Accountable and Effective Development Cooperation in a Post-2015 Era: Official Symposium Summary,* 2014, pp: 1-3.
[85] UN DESA, *ECOSOC convenes symposium on development cooperation,* 2014.
[86] UN ECOSOC, *2014 Annual Ministerial Review.*
[87] Ibid.
[88] UN DESA, *-level Political Forum (under the auspices of ECOSOC).*
[89] UN DESA, *New Forum seeks to set stage for future global development agenda,* 2014.
[90] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the 2014 session of the Economic and Social Council (E/2014/L.22)*, 2014, p. 1.
[91] Ibid., p. 3.
[92] Ibid., p. 3.

Forum on sustainable development; review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries; and other meetings to follow-up on General Assembly's recommendations.[93]

Conclusion

The Economic and Social Council plays a key role in coordinating the expansive UN system. So far the Council has demonstrated a commitment and leadership in mobilizing action on tackling key priority issues, such as sustainable development, youth inclusion in decision-making processes, decent work and employment, and gender issues. It has also initiated much-needed global collaboration across UN entities to ensure political commitment towards a new development framework and SDGs. The contributions of the Council both as a forum for discussion and in terms of policy guidance are significantly important and its role will continue to grow in the post-2015 era, where clear organizational leadership and strong monitoring mechanisms to assess the progress towards SDGs will be required.

[93] UN ECOSOC, *Provisional Agenda* (E/2015/1), 2014, pp. 1-2.

Annotated Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945, 26 June). Retrieved 21 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/intro.shtml

The Charter of the United Nations is the foundational document of the UN. It lays out the mandate and structure of not only the Economic and Social Council, but also the remaining five principle organs. Member States are obliged to uphold the Charter's articles and are to hold these 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.

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2013, September). United Nations Handbook 2013-14. Retrieved 19 October 2014 from: http://www.mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/UN-Handbook-2013-web%20PDF.pdf

This is an excellent source for the delegates to gain background information on the complex UN system and its main organs. This comprehensive handbooks presents detailed information on the UN family organizations, explains their functions, structure and role. It also gives an overview on various subsidiary organs established under the Charter, UN Programmes and Funds, and other organizations related to the UN system as a whole. Delegates are encouraged to read the section on ECOSOC in detail to understand its structure, membership, working methods and linkage with various subsidiary bodies.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (1992). *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*. Retrieved 22 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/pdf/rules.pdf

This document provides an overview of the key ECOSOC sessions, its programme of work, agenda setting, voting procedures, the structure of the Bureau and Member States' representation as well as ECOSOC's relationships with other organs and bodies. It is important that delegates familiarize themselves with the original rules of ECOSOC to gain a better understanding how the Council works and what it attempts to accomplish. The rules of procedure at National Model United Nations (NMUN) have been adapted for the simulation, and are not identical to the original rules as presented in this document.

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 22 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/1

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

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Provisional Agenda* (E/2015/1). Retrieved 22 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2015/1

This document lists the provisional agenda items and work plan for the Council in 2015, which also represents the expanded functions and powers of the body. It provides detailed information about the organization of the High-level Segment, identifies which key UN conferences, outcome documents and agreements are planned to be reviewed and followed up, as well as presents the main operational activities to strengthen development cooperation. Delegates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the main priorities and themes of the Council for 2015 and continue researching further how all these action items will be carried out next year.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods* [Brief]. Retrieved 22 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf14/the_new_ecosoc_31_march_2014.pdf

This briefing document details the new functions and working methods of the Council following General Assembly resolution 68/1 of 2013. It provides an excellent summary on how ECOSOC's role has been enhanced, and outlines the main priorities for the work of ECOSOC which include greater development cooperation, improved monitoring processes to tracks SDGs and accountability. Delegates will greatly benefit from this resource as it summarizes the key outcomes of the resolution 68/1, and clarifies the extent to which Council's functions and powers have been expanded.

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I. Mainstreaming Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

"Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies."[94]

Introduction

Mainstreaming youth is the promotion of youth equality through empowerment initiatives to improve conditions for youth worldwide.[95] This concept was first introduced in the 1980s, when the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) declared 1985 as the "International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace."[96] With approximately 85% of the world's youth living in the developing world, it is fundamental to mainstream youth in future initiatives.[97] By 2050, the population is estimated to increase by another 2.2 billion people, with youth majorities in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.[98] As the upcoming generation, youth must be integrated within policy-making and in the future development agenda.[99] Governments must prioritize the needs of rising youth cohort in their respective countries, and adapt economic policies as well as political systems accordingly.[100]

The GA defined youth for the first time in resolution 36/28, adopted in 1981, as "those between 15-24 years."[101] More recently, GA resolution 68/130, adopted in December 2013, encouraged youth participation in national and international decision-making processes, and emphasized the importance of supporting young people with education, security, and decent work to ensure their full contribution to the development agenda.[102] Engaging youth is a challenge that requires cooperation between governments, civil society organizations, and regional and national actors to strengthen policies and ensure a "shared vision' for 2050.[103] Youth representatives in policy-making empower young people as a group and provide fresh, innovative insights that can further benefit the sustainability goals.[104]

This guide will outline the importance of mainstreaming youth in the post-2015 development agenda through international and regional framework as well as the international system as a whole. The guide will then delve into some of the main challenges youth face, primarily focusing on methods to strengthen youth inclusion and participation to allow young people ultimately to contribute towards the monitoring process and implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

International and Regional Framework

The *World Programme of Action for Youth* (WPAY), adopted by the GA in 1995, offers policy direction over 15 priority areas to improve global youth conditions, including education, employment, and health, while protecting their fundamental rights of life.[105] The Programme urges governments to protect youth's rights by promoting non-discrimination, tolerance and the equality of opportunities for both men and women.[106] The recent World Conference on Youth held 5-10 May 2014 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, marked the first event where the UN successfully

[94] WFUNA, *Youth Perspectives on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*.
[95] World Conference on Youth, *Colombo Declaration on Youth*, 2014.
[96] UN General Assembly, *International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace (A/RES/36/28)*, 1981.
[97] UN DESA, *Youth: Frequently asked questions*, 2013.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Council of Europe, *UNESCO's Action With and For Young People*, 2014, p. 2; UN DESA, *Youth: Frequently asked questions*, 2013.
[100] Ibid; UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1),* 2013, p. 6.
[101] UN DESA, *Youth: Frequently asked questions*, 2013.
[102] UN General Assembly, *Policies and Programmes Involving Youth (A/RES/68/130)*, 2014.
[103] Ibid; UN ECOSOC, *Economic and Social Council 2014 Youth Forum*, 2014, p. 1.
[104] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, *Roads from Rio +20: Pathways to achieve global sustainability goals by 2050*, 2012, p. 10.
[105] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth,* 2010.
[106] Ibid.

integrated youth in discussions with Member States.[107] The *Colombo Declaration on Youth* (2014) was adopted at the end of the event, calling for youth inclusion in the monitoring and implementing process of the SDGs and supporting youth involvement in the development agenda.[108]

At the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (also referred to as "Rio +20"), Member States agreed to focus on SDGs.[109] The most outcome of Rio +20 was resolution 66/288 "The Future We Want," adopted by the GA on 27 July 2012.[110] The outcome paved the way for both institutions and policy processes aimed at advancing sustainable development at the international level. Importantly, the outcome established a High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) for sustainable development, to meet annually with the guidance of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to provide political leadership and recommendations for sustainable development, and also initiated an Open Working Group (OWG) to ensure the contribution of diverse perspectives and experiences towards the SDGs.[111] The resolution addressed youth inclusion in the post-2015 development agenda and the promotion of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) from 2012-2022, as committed in the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), *Agenda 21* (1992) and the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation on sustainable consumption and production* (2002).[112] The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is heavily involved with sustainable development initiatives within its role as the secretariat for the 10YFP (2012).[113] UNEP organizes the funding to support sustainability projects designed to strengthen youth inclusion with the environment through creating job opportunities and contributing to poverty eradication. [114]

The HLPF met for the second session in New York from 30 June – 9 July 2014, where further commitments to the post-2015 agenda were made.[115] Following this meeting, the HLPF Ministerial Declaration and the report of High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) to ECOSOC were both adopted.[116] The HLPF will meet next in July 2015 to discuss the implementation of the SDGs.[117] The OWG recently met in July 2014 and adopted a report containing a proposal of 17 SDGs.[118] This report was presented to the GA during its annual session in September 2014 and will form a basis for intergovernmental discussions on the SDGs over the next 12 months along with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report compiling Member States' opinions, which is expected in November 2014.[119] Two officials will be appointed to create an agenda for intergovernmental negotiations next year, and the final SDGs will be presented at a special GA session in September 2015.[120]

Role of the International System

ECOSOC Youth Forums have mainstreamed youth needs through discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.[121] The most recent forum held from 2-3 June 2014 aimed to "bring the voice of youth" in shaping the future development framework through a total of five working sessions which involved a variety of youth ambassadors.[122] Youth participants recognized the urgency to prioritize youth employment and empowerment in the post-2015

[107] International Women's Health Coalition, *Colombo Declaration on Youth: Mainstreaming Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014.
[108] WCY, *Colombo Declaration on Youth*, 2014.
[109] UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2010; UN, *Beyond 2015*, 2014.
[110] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[111] UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, *Introduction to the Proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014; UN, *Beyond 2015*, 2014.
[112] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[113] UNEP, *What is the 10YFP?*.
[114] Ibid.
[115] UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014; UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum 2014 (under the auspices of ECOSOC)*, 2014.
[116] UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum 2014 (under the auspices of ECOSOC)*, 2014.
[117] UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum 2014*, 2014.
[118] GSC, *UN Working Group on SDGs Finalized Its Work*, 2014; UN Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, *Introduction to the Proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.
[119] Ford, *UN begins talks on SDGs, 'Carrying the hopes of millions and millions'*, 2014.
[120] Ibid.
[121] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC,* 2014.
[122] UN ECOSOC, *Economic and Social Council 2014 Youth Forum*, 2014, p. 1.

agenda.[123] The ECOSOC President further emphasized the role of young people as catalysts in implementing the SDGs; his summary of the conference highlighted potential methods to mainstream youth, such as involving youth in the SDG monitoring and implementation process, mobilizing youth to pressure governments, and opening the decision-making process to allow youth contributions towards policy formulation nationally and on the international stage in the ECOSOC High-level segment, July 2014.[124]

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been a notable supporter of youth mainstreaming.[125] It was the first UN agency to define and develop specific programs for youth and established a Youth Forum, which runs alongside the biennial sessions of the General Conference.[126] This has become a "unique" platform for young delegates from Member States to exchange ideas and discuss pertaining issues among the forum.[127] Since 1998, the Bureau of Strategic Planning has dedicated a Section for Youth, which directly communicates with UNESCO and youth NGOs worldwide.[128] UNESCO prioritizes its work with youth through an *Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021*), which outlines future strategic partnerships to be created between youth organizations and youth-related stakeholders to promote youth engagement, particularly in policy formulation and decision-making mechanisms around economic and civic issues.[129]

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the UN's specialized agency on information and communication technology, hosted the Beyond (BYND) 2015 Global Youth Summit in Costa Rica from 9-11 September 2013.[130] This Summit brought together a range of youth participants physically and through social media platforms to address the role of technology in combating global challenges and framing the post-2015 development agenda.[131] The outcome document, the *BYND 2015 Global Youth Declaration* (2013), is a significant milestone for youth representation, becoming the first publically sourced document endorsed by the GA in resolution 68/130, adopted December 2013.[132] It urges governments to support young people through education provisions, political representation and youth investments.[133] The Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth additionally fosters youth engagement through a team of youth-led organizations and UN entities.[134]

Regional Organizations

Efforts to mainstream youth in the post-2015 development agenda were supported by the Regional Youth Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean in Quito, Ecuador in May 2014.[135] This forum attempted to allow youth representatives and various regional organizations, governments, and civil society to engage in discussion and form recommendations for the post-2015 development agenda.[136] The participants agreed on and prioritized youth empowerment in the new framework.[137] Additionally, increasing investments are being made in Africa, where 65% of the population is under the age of 35 and nearly 50% is below the age of 19, to strengthen the participation of this "youth bulge" in the post-2015 development framework.[138] These investments include strengthening research and information on African youth issues, developing policies in line with the *African Youth Charter* and promoting youth participation socially and in decision-making.[139]

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[123] UN ECOSOC, *Economic and Social Council 2014 Youth Forum: Summary*, 2014, p. 2.
[124] Ibid.
[125] UN ECOSOC, *Economic and Social Council 2014 Youth Forum*, 2014 p. 1.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Council of Europe, *UNESCO's Action With and For Young People*, 2014, p. 4.
[128] Ibid., p. 3.
[129] UNESCO, *UNESCO and Youth- Strategy*, 2014.
[130] ITU, *BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit, Costa Rica, 9-11 September*, 2014; ITU, *BYND 2015: 2013 Costa Rica Declaration*, 2013.
[131] ITU, *BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit, Costa Rica, 9-11 September*, 2014.
[132] ITU, *BYND 2015: 2013 Costa Rica Declaration*, 2013.
[133] ITU, *BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit, Costa Rica, 9-11 September*, 2014.
[134] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Regional Youth Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean opens in Quito*, 2014.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] UNESCO, *Youth as active citizens in Africa/ Youth as partners in African society*.
[139] Ibid.

Civil Society Organizations
Inclusion of youth in the post-2015 development framework has been supported by several civil society organizations, which are also notable for incorporating youth into development projects, creating opportunities for youth to actively participate in the development framework, praising youth development initiatives and continuing research on youth issues.

In 2012, Restless Development, a youth-led development agency, created a toolkit entitled "Youth Consultations for a Post-2015 Framework," to guide youth on consulting with other young people on the development agenda.[140] Youth workshops were held worldwide, including one in South Africa in October 2013, where over 100 youth participants met to discuss sexual reproductive health and rights.[141] This particular workshop allowed youth to express their concerns on rights violations and prioritize measures to combat these issues.[142] The collective outcome of the Restless Development workshops, a report on governance and the post-2015 development framework, included recommendations on the importance of integrating youth in development efforts.[143] These recommendations were discussed by Restless Development's partners, including Plan International, at the 8th session of the Open Working Group in February 2014, ultimately contributing to the wider future development scope.[144]

Action Aid additionally supported youth prioritization in the post-2015 agenda through the pressure they placed during events such as the 2013 High-level Panel on the post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP).[145] In their research, Action Aid narrowed down the fundamental priorities for the development framework and predominantly campaigned to bring human rights into the agenda.[146] Their 2012 report "Righting the MDGs: contexts and opportunities for a post-2015 development framework" offers guidance specifically highlighting the need to set goals which reflect the socio-political landscape of our generation, including the vast youth population.[147]

Opportunities for Mainstreaming Youth

There are five priority areas for youth in the future development agenda: education, employment and entrepreneurship, health, good governance and peace and stability.[148] To address these priorities and create an inclusive environment for young people, it is essential to ensure youth have universal access to education and healthcare, decent work opportunities, participation in decision-making processes, gender equality, and human rights protection.[149]

Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship
In developing countries, poor educational quality and lack of access to education leaves over 250 million children of primary school age unable to read or write, even after four years of schooling.[150] By improving the quality of education in low-income countries, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty, reducing the overall rates by 12%.[151] Estimates also indicate that by ensuring girls complete education past primary level, the gross domestic product (GDP) of a country could increase by 1.5%, and those who received training for specific jobs could contribute towards a 4.4% increase in GDP.[152] For these reasons, it is crucial to incorporate educational challenges within the post-2015 development framework, which will be instrumental in ensuring that youth receive universal

[140] Restless Development, *Youth Consultations for a Post-2015 Framework*, 2014.
[141] Restless Development, *Youth Workshops in Eastern Cape on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights*, 2013.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Restless Development, *Youth Workshops in Eastern Cape on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights*, 2013.
[144] Restless Development, *Post-2015: Backing A Governance Goal*, 2014; UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, *Intervention from Margaret Akello at the Eighth Meeting of the Open Working Group on SDGs Co-Chair's meetings with the Major Groups and other Stakeholders on 7 February 2014, in New York*, 2014; UN Department of Public Information, *Filling classrooms with poorly trained teachers undercuts education gains, warns UN,* 2014.
[145] Action Aid, *Post-2015 Development Policy: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*, 2013.
[146] Action Aid, *Righting the MDGs: contexts and opportunities for a post-2015 development framework*, 2012, p. 3.
[147] Ibid.
[148] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, pp. 1-2.
[149] Ibid.
[150] UNESCO, *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2013/4: Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all*, 2014, p. 5.
[151] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, p. 3; UN DPI, *More teachers- better trained and supported- needed to reach education targets,* 2013.
[152] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, p. 4.

access to high-quality primary and post-primary education.[153] Teachers must be well-trained and supportive to reach the individual learning targets for youth in developing countries.[154] Along with improving educational quality, it is fundamental to increase the spectrum of the educational agenda on various other issues, including human sexuality, human rights, and rising terrorism threats to ensure youth are aware of their civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights and responsibilities.[155]

Youth living in rural, remote areas and those with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and are often subject to limited education and work opportunities. In 2013, 74 million of the 200 million people unemployed were young people due to insufficient job opportunities and lack of qualification.[156] Education and capacity building in employment are the key to lifting youth out of poverty, and this must be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda to prevent the continuously increasing gap of youth inequalities.[157] Youth must also recognize the importance of education, and training facilities and resources should be made available through cooperation between governments and civil society organizations to prepare youth to compete in the current job market.[158] Youth unemployment can also be addressed by altering the job market to eliminate exploitive work and unpaid traineeships in favor of initiatives such as school-to-work transition policies, apprenticeships, and new jobs that follow international standards for gender equality, pay and social rights.[159] Furthermore, youth from developing countries must have access to newly emerging technologies to keep up with the requirements of the current age.[160]

Health, Peace and Personal Security

Mental health conditions affect 20% of youth across the globe and according to a World Health Organization report (WHO) published in 2014 entitled, "Health of the World's Adolescents," the top three causes of death for youth include road traffic accidents, HIV and suicide.[161] In order to tackle these issues, youth should be entitled to access affordable and quality health services and treatments, including mental health services and sexual and reproductive healthcare.[162] It is also important for governments to cooperate with educational and health institutions to ensure both boys and girls receive basic health information on nutrition, exercise, hygiene and sanitation, and sexual healthcare.[163] The topic of youth with mental health conditions should be incorporated within the framework to ensure young people can take responsibility in managing their lives and have access to the social and medical support available to them.[164]

Violence and trafficking are also threats to youth, particularly in conflict-affected countries where young women and men both face increased risks of physical and sexual abuse and exploitation.[165] Overall, 43% of homicide victims are aged 15-29, and more than half of sexual assaults take place against girls younger than 16 years old.[166] Governments must cooperate at the international level to consider security risks within the post-2015 development framework, take action on removing all forms of violence against young people in schools, households, public spaces, detention centers and the internet, and legalize instruments to protect vulnerable youth.[167]

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[153] UNFPA, *Investing in youth pays dividends, evidence from Sri Lanka shows*, 2014.
[154] UN DPI, *More teachers- better trained and supported- needed to reach education targets*, *UN warns*, 2013; UN DPI, *Filling classrooms with poorly trained teachers undercuts education gains, warns UN*, 2014.
[155] UNFPA, *Investing in youth pays dividends, evidence from Sri Lanka shows,* 2014; UN DPI, *At UN meeting, tolerance and education highlighted as critical allies against terrorism,* 2014.
[156] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, p. 3.
[157] UNESCO, *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2013/4: Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all*, 2014; UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010.
[158] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, pp. 3-4.
[159] Ibid.
[160] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010.
[161] WHO, *Health of the World's Adolescents*, 2014, p. 5.
[162] UNFPA, *Investing in youth pays dividends, evidence from Sri Lanka shows*, 2014; UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, pp. 8-9.
[163] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, pp. 4-5.
[164] ILO, *The UN in Zambia calls for inclusion of youth with mental health conditions*, 2014.
[165] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, pp. 4-5; UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, p. 5.
[166] Ibid.
[167] UNODC, *Global Study on Homicide*, 2013, p. 11; UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, p. 54; UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Five-Year Action Agenda,* 2014.

Governance and Participation

To ensure that programs and policies will meet the needs of youth, young people must have political representation in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of services.[168] As the upcoming generation, youth can contribute significantly towards their country policies, especially those affecting them directly including education, employment and healthcare.[169] It is also imperative for governments to empower youth and make it clear that their voices matter.[170] Governments and regional actors must support, promote and engage with youth-led organizations and help voice their concerns locally and internationally.[171]

The Role of Youth in Implementation and Monitoring of the post-2015 Development Agenda

Communication between youth and external actors is crucial for them to become active citizens addressing global issues.[172] To ensure that the post-2015 development agenda addresses the unique needs of all peoples, it is fundamental for there to be a range of youth representatives from different backgrounds, including rural and urban areas, a variety of religious sects and ethnic groups, and equal representatives of age and gender.[173] Through engaging integrated youth policies at the national, regional and international levels, we can ensure youth priorities are met within countries and that youth are included in the implementation and monitoring processes required for the future development framework.[174] Governments should allocate and invest resources in youth, strengthen national capacities in collecting data on youth-related concerns to address their needs, as well as integrate young people in policy-making processes.[175]

At global and regional levels, UN regional commissions can play key roles in addressing youth-related issues within countries and facilitating youth involvement in decision-making processes.[176] Regional commissions must ensure that data is transparent and available to youth in accessible formats to ensure they are able to track implementation efforts.[177] Furthermore, the creation of alternative civil society organizations with youth representatives, such as the Youth Advisory Board recommended by the *Colombo Declaration on Youth* (2014), can contribute to evaluating the target results of the SDGs.[178] Another method to involve young people in the monitoring process of the SDGs is through the Youth Delegate program, in which Member States nominate young people from their respective country to address the General Assembly Third Committee (GA 3).[179]

Furthermore, the universal periodic review mechanism used by the UN Human Rights Council, which invites civil society representatives to write shadow reports, could be a vehicle to engage young people in the monitoring process.[180] Youth can also help strengthen the implementation and monitoring process by following the accountability mechanisms outlined in the 2014 report entitled "Young people's engagement in strengthening accountability for the post-2015 agenda."[181]

Conclusion

[168] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *The Global Youth Call*, 2014, p. 6; WHO, *Health of the World's Adolescents*, 2014, p. 12.
[169] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, p. i.
[170] UN Development Group, *Post-2015 Development Agenda: Guidelines for Country Dialogues*, 2012, p. 51.
[171] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Five-Year Action Agenda,* 2014.
[172] WHO, *Health of the World's Adolescents*, 2014, p. 12.
[173] UN System Task Team, *Statistics and Indicators for the post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 30.
[174] WHO, *Health of the World's Adolescents*, 2014, p. 12; UN System Task Team, *Statistics and Indicators for the post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 20.
[175] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, pp. 42-45; UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of ECOSOC (A/RES/68/1),* 2013, p. 6.
[176] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, pp. 62-73; Plan International, *Young people's engagement in strengthening accountability for the post-2015 agenda*, 2014, pp. 16-17.
[177] Plan International, *Young people's engagement in strengthening accountability for the post-2015 agenda*, 2014, pp. 16-17.
[178] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, pp. 62-73; WIT, *Bringing Young People To the Forefront Of SDG Monitoring*, 2014.
[179] WIT, *Bringing Young People To the Forefront Of SDG Monitoring*, 2014.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Plan International, *Young people's engagement in strengthening accountability for the post-2015 agenda*, 2014, p. 3.

Youth are the future and their innovative ideas and actions can be considered a catalyst force in terms of meeting the targets of the SDGs; therefore, it is vital for youth needs to be mainstreamed in the post-2015 development agenda. Governments and key organizations at the national, regional and international levels must adopt more open policies to include youth.[182] Young people can play a role in raising their concerns and leveraging their political impact to place pressure on governments and ensure the new set of development goals are reached.[183] Education is the foundational brick to overcoming many development challenges, and youth must have access to quality educational systems with basic understandings of health issues, life skills and primary education to surmount social and economic barriers. Threats to security and human rights also bar youth from full engagement, and these issues must be prioritized in development initiatives to strengthen youth empowerment through education, employment, and economic security. Youth are invaluable resources of action and, as their generation grows and comes into power, their inclusion and appreciation in the post-2015 development agenda can help build a diverse and sustainable future.

Further Research

Delegates should research further how youth can be mainstreamed into the post-2015 development agenda, particularly the monitoring and implementation processes. What additional advantages can youth bring to the post-2015 development framework? What actions must governments take to ensure youth are integrated into decision-making processes around the post-2015 development agenda? What are the remaining barriers to youth participation and involvement in the global discussions on the new development framework? What can be done on local, national and international levels to overcome such barriers?

[182] UN Development Group, *Post-2015 Development Agenda: Guidelines for Country Dialogues*, 2012, p. 51; UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Message from the United Nation's Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on World Environment Day*, 2014.

[183] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, *Roads from Rio +20: Pathways to achieve global sustainability goals by 2050*, 2012, p. 44.

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International Telecommunication Union. (2014). *BYND 2015: 2013 Costa Rica Declaration.* Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.itu.int/en/bynd2015/Documents/bynd2015-global-youth-declaration-en.pdf

Written by youth attendees at the BYND 2015 summit, this declaration offers insightful methods of ensuring that youth are prioritized within the post-2015 development framework. Providing concise goals in association with the future development agenda, this is an excellent source for delegates to grasp ideas coming from youth delegates. This source will help delegates to gain an understanding about the important role youth can bring to the SDGs.

Mueller, M. & J. Groth. (2014). *UNESCO's Action With and For Young People*. *Forum 21 - European Journal on Youth Policy*, N°5-6 – 3/2006. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue_N5-6/N5-6_Unesco_en.pdf

This source digests the role of youth and mainstreaming issues in relation to the UN and UNESCO. It offers a concise history of youth developments within the international framework. This is a helpful source for delegates to gain a solid understanding of how youth are prioritized within the UN framework. This can be used as a beginning guidance source of the youth organizations that endeavor to support the role of youth within the international framework. Delegates can use the many organizations listed in the article to investigate relevant policies and intiatives.

PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. (2012). *Roads from Rio +20: Pathways to achieve global sustainability goals by 2050* [Report]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://roadsfromrio.pbl.nl/

This report addresses the development framework. It focuses on the problems faced when attempting to reach development goals and provides ideas on how to improve the monitoring section, to ensure the goals can be fully implemented. Conducted by the PBL Netherlands Assessment Agency to highlight ways in which the international arena can support the development framework, this is an excellent source for delegates to develop ideas on implementing and monitoring, which can be applied in relation to mainstreaming youth.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Economic and Social Council 2014 Youth Forum* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: www.un.org/en/ecosoc/youth2014/

This source is the home page for the ECOSOC Youth Forum. This website offers links to current and previously existing events and commitments youth have made in relation to development within the UN. Delegates should use this source to further research on youth involvement and to gather additional resources from the document sections, of previous commitments made by youth. Delegates will find this as a great aid, when researching international and regional initiatives to mainstream youth.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2014). *Policies and Programmes Involving Youth (A/RES/68/130)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 10 October 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/130

This resolution is particularly important for the delegates to familiarize with because it focuses explicitly on outlining the key issues towards full implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth. This document also provides important recommendations to Member States such as establishment and promotion of youth-led organizations and policies in order to strengthen youth inclusion in decision-making processes. It highlights the need for sustainable youth participation in designing, implementing and assessing UN's youth policies and programs. Delegates should review these recommendations in depth and consider ways how they could be implemented and fostered.

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 11 July 2014 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/1

When considering the post-2015 agenda, it is fundamental to improve on existing models. This General Assembly resolution outlines the agreements and recommendations how to strengthen the

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).The emphasis on youth participation and engagement is highlighted in clause 24. This resolution provides an excellent overview on how improvements in the way in which UN works can help progress some of the development goals in the post-2015 agenda.

United Nations, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. (2014). *The Global Youth Call* [Report]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-Global-Call-on-Youth_with-endorsements_3-June-2014.pdf

This report presents a global consensus on specific proposals related to youth inclusion in the post-2015 development framework. It summarizes the key outcomes from global consultations and outlines the main five thematic areas from MyWorld2015 survey, namely education, employment and entrepreneurship, health, good governance, and peace and stability. Delegates will benefit from reading this material as it clearly outlines the key target areas for youth in post-2015 development agenda.

United Nations Population Fund. (2014). *Investing in youth pays dividends, evidence from Sri Lanka shows* [Article]. Retrieved 10 July 2014 from: http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/17692

This article from the United Nations Population Fund emphasizes the very importance of mainstreaming youth in projects with the UN. This is crucial for delegates to understand in order for them to grasp the full importance of youth involvement in future youth forums and other related UN projects, particularly the post-2015 development agenda. The "Generation Youth" report linked in the article further emphasizes how investment in youth is a fundamental component of our future.

United Nations, Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. (2014). *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved 8 October 2014 from: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html

This webpage provides a breakdown of the proposed goals in the post-2015 development agenda. This is a useful site to gain understanding of the aims for the post-2015 development era, and it provides the basis of the different subtopics, which are covered within this topic. Delegates may find this useful when conducting research on SDGs as this site provides them with a good overview of the current goals and discussions around them.

United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. (2013). *Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda: A report from the Working Group on Monitoring and Indicators*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/UNTT_MonitoringReport_WEB.pdf

This report evaluates indicators used with the Millennium Development Goals and offers lessons, improvements and provides new innovative sources of data for future monitoring purposes. Furthermore, the report offers new methods of measuring inequality across regional areas and population groups which delegates may find useful as areas to be resolved. This is an excellent source for the delegates to begin their research on how to improve regulations in relation to the post-2015 development agenda.

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II. Fostering Sustainable Development Practices through Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

"The paradigm shift towards sustainable development requires a renewed focus on people-centered development that prioritizes the expansion of capabilities, the eradication of poverty and the reduction of all types of inequalities, and that promotes the rights and agency of women."[184]

Introduction

Over the past four decades, sustainable development has become a key goal within the United Nations (UN) system and at all levels of governance throughout the world.[185] Sustainable development is defined as the ability to meet society's present needs without sacrificing the possibility of society meeting its own requirements in the future.[186] The UN has divided sustainable development into three pillars, each of which women can play a role in: social development, environmental protection, and economic development.[187] Statistics reflect that women often take part in job sectors such as construction, manufacturing, financial and business services, and engineering, which are essential to maintaining a green economy.[188] Further, applying sustainable development ideas in female-run households can lead to a reduction in poverty, domestic violence, environmental issues and health problems.[189] As a result of these and other statistical outcomes, a number of UN entities such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) have addressed gender equality and empowering women in order to achieve sustainable development goals.[190]

International and Regional Framework

A focus on sustainable development within the international community emerged in the early 1970s and has since grown at a quick pace.[191] However, the UN's focus on supporting women originated in the *Charter of the United Nations*.[192] The UN has often discussed sustainability, development and gender equality simultaneously, yet separately, in previous years.[193] In 2000, the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) emphasized the notion that the two concepts should be integrated.[194]

Sustainable Development

In 1972, the UN Conference on the Human Environment took place in Stockholm, Sweden, where a discussion of the "rights of the human family to a healthy and productive environment" led to further conversations on access to food, water, family planning, and related issues.[195] Almost a decade later, the International Union for the Conservation of Natural Resources (IUCN) published a document called the *World Conservation Strategy* (WCS) which stated that nature cannot be conserved without development that relieves the impoverished across the globe, thus emphasizing the inherent connection between both conservation and development.[196] In 1982, the *World Charter for Nature* (A/RES/37/7) was adopted by the UN General Assembly (GA), stating that "man's needs can be met only by ensuring the proper functioning of natural systems."[197] One year later, the GA created the World

[184] Puri, *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Central to Sustainable Development*, 2013.
[185] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[186] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *About the Rio+20 Conference*, 2012.
[187] Ibid; UN-Women, *Sustainable Development and Climate Change*, 2014.
[188] UN-Women, *Facts and Figures*, 2014.
[189] Ibid.
[190] UNDP, *Women's Empowerment*, 2014; UNEP, *Women*, 2014; UN-Habitat, *Gender*, 2014; UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2011.
[191] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[192] United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[193] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The History of Sustainable Development in the United Nations*, 2014; United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[194] United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[195] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The History of Sustainable Development in the United Nations*, 2014.
[196] Ibid.
[197] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The History of Sustainable Development in the United Nations*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *World Charter for Nature (A/RES/37/7)*, 1982.

Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in order to formulate "a global agenda for change."[198] In 1992, the first UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) occurred in Rio de Janeiro, where *Agenda 21: A Programme of Action for Sustainable Development* was developed, resulting in increased Member State participation in working towards sustainable development.[199] In 1993, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was formed, and in 1997, the GA held its 19th Special Session (UNGASS-19) with the goal of creating a "Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21."[200] Ten years after *Agenda 21* was developed, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held in 2002 to renew the world's obligation to work towards sustainable development.[201] Most recently, in 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) occurred, where sustainability issues were discussed in conjunction with MDGs 3 and 5, the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and the post-2015 development agenda, the latter two of which are ongoing discussions related to the development and renewing of international development goals following the 2015 expiration of the MDGs.[202] By the end of this conference, numerous entities and bodies made over 700 commitments to achieving the sustainability agenda, resulting in pledges of over $500 billion for various actions such as empowering female entrepreneurs in Africa, planting 100 million trees, recycling at least 800,000 tons of PVC per year, and greening 10,000 square km of desert.[203]

Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

The support of women's rights was present in the 1945 *Charter of the UN*, and CSW was created the following year by ECOSOC in order to work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.[204] This Commission emphasized the need for the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to include gender-neutral language.[205] In 1979, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) was adopted by the GA, which highlighted the rights of women in relation to gender equality and discrimination.[206] In 1985, the Third World Conference on Women took place in Nairobi, where non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in a forum that discussed the movement of gender equality which led to the creation of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).[207] In 1995, the landmark Fourth World Conference on Women resulted in the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, which has been described as recognizing "the need to shift the focus from women to the concept of gender, recognizing that the entire structure of society, and all relations between men and women within it, had to be re-evaluated."[208] Understanding this, MDGs 3 and 5 on gender equality and improving maternal health, respectively, emphasized attention to gender issues that the UN system continues to address.[209]

Role of the International System

The UN system has more recently discussed the connection between sustainable development, gender equality and empowering women. The importance of ECOSOC in discussing sustainable development has been highlighted, particularly with the Council's charge to explore whether or not commitments made at the Rio+20 conference are achieved.[210] In addition to this, gender equality and female empowerment have often been emphasized in the workings of ECOSOC during events including the 2013 High-level and general ECOSOC meetings.[211] In 2012, in

[198] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The History of Sustainable Development in the United Nations*, 2014.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] UN-Women, *The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20*, 2014; UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014; United Nations, *We Can End Poverty: Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015*, 2014; UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014; UN DESA, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*, 2014.
[203] UN DESA, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*, 2014; UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Rio+20 Voluntary Commitments*, 2012, p. 1.
[204] United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Ibid.
[209] United Nations, *Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*, 2014; United Nations, *Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health*, 2014; United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[210] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[211] UN DESA, *High Level ECOSOC Meeting Encourages Action on Women's Empowerment*, 2010.

cooperation with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), ECOSOC presented the Vienna Policy on Gender Equality in which policy recommendations were developed regarding the changes in advancement of women's empowerment as a result of a global shift in development.[212] Recently, as a part of ECOSOC's 2014 High-level segment, the Council hosted the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2014, where the theme was "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals."[213] ECOSOC will also host the 2015 HLPF on "Strengthening integration, implementation and review – the HLPF after 2015."[214]

Other UN entities have focused on the significance of gender equality and development. For example, UNDP focuses on economic and sustainable development, democratic governance, poverty reduction, and crisis prevention and recovery.[215] UNDP also participates in several projects and initiatives such as the Global Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative (GEPMI) and the Secretary-General's initiative UNiTE to End Violence Against Women as methods to further the MDGs and sustainable development.[216] UNEP focuses on addressing environmental conditions and trends, developing environmental instruments, and strengthening institutions for managing the environment, while also approaching gender equality issues.[217] Furthermore, UNEP, through the Women's Major Group, recognizes the incorporation of women as a means to achieve the goals of sustainable development, gender equality and women's empowerment.[218] This group utilizes both regional and global planning in order to help generate policy suggestions to help address sustainability and gender issues.[219] The UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) provides a different perspective on sustainability, gender, and women's empowerment because of its strong emphasis on urbanization, particularly in relation to adequate housing, energy, sanitation, infrastructure, and water.[220] UN-Habitat maintains discussions regarding women and girls in local and urban governance, rights to land and housing, gender equal towns and cities, safety and security in cities, and livelihood and economic empowerment of women and girls.[221] UN-Habitat also utilizes an initiative called the Gender Equality Network as a forum for individuals to discuss and create solutions to gender issues in urban areas.[222]

Additionally, CSW has previously addressed gender equality and sustainable development in its workings.[223] The Commission on the Status of Women creates multi-year work programmes in order to help implement the goals of the *Beijing Platform for Action*.[224] UN-Women was created to focus on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment throughout international efforts.[225] This agency merged four pre-existing agencies and bodies: the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the Division for the Advancement of Women.[226] A recent movement led by UN-Women is the "HeForShe" initiative, which aims to promote gender equality by mobilizing 1 billion men and boys as advocates for achieving gender equality.[227]

Civil society organizations (CSOs) also play a significant role in working towards achieving both women's empowerment and development goals.[228] CSOs have a unique involvement in reaching these goals as they facilitate citizen action while additionally strengthening civic engagement.[229] Organizations such as the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development are

[212] UN DESA, *Vienna Policy Dialogue on Gender Equality*, 2012.
[213] UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum 2014*, 2014.
[214] Ibid.
[215] UNDP, *Women's Empowerment*, 2014.
[216] Ibid.
[217] UNEP, *The Voice of the Environment*, 2014.
[218] UNEP, *Women*, 2014.
[219] Ibid.
[220] UN-Habitat, *Goals & Strategies of UN-Habitat*, 2014.
[221] UN-Habitat, *Gender*, 2014.
[222] Ibid.
[223] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2011.
[224] Ibid.
[225] United Nations, *Women*, 2014.
[226] Ibid.
[227] UN-Women, *HeForShe UN-Women Solidarity Movement of Gender Equality Action Kit*, 2014.
[228] UNDP, *Civil Society Advisory Committee to UNDP*, 2014.
[229] Ibid.

examples of groups that recognize the inherent connection of women's rights to development.[230] In terms of the post-2015 development agenda, AWID provided critical analysis on human rights and financing for development during the recent beginning of 69th session of the General Assembly, stating that in their current form, the SDGs lack the "real ambition for urgent transformational change the world needs to achieve gender equality, women's human rights, sustainable development in harmony with nature, and end equalities."[231] For the actual means of, and financing for, the implementation for the goals, AWID calls for a stronger focus on human rights and the availability of public funding for sustainable development.[232]

Promoting Sustainable Development Practices

The Economic and Social Council is a key facilitator in the UN system to achieve international goals on sustainable development.[233] Generally, ECOSOC focuses on six building blocks of sustainable development that are recognized throughout other UN bodies and entities: water, poverty eradication, natural resource management, energy, sustainable urbanization, and food security and nutrition.[234] Each of these key areas illustrates the impact that gender equality and women's empowerment can have on promoting sustainable development practices.[235] Specifically, ECOSOC and the UN help facilitate the work of entities and bodies that focus on these building blocks and women, through the interaction of NGOs and agencies.[236] In turn, these interactions can lead to policy coordination in order to achieve specific goals, such as the MDGs and SDGs.[237] By understanding the inter-dependence of the MDGs and the SDGs, ECOSOC can use gender equality and women empowerment, along with a global partnership for development, as a starting place to help lead to the achievement each of the remaining goals.[238] For example, empowering women can lead to solving development issues, which in turn can lead to the elimination of poverty and the increase of education.[239]

Water

The UN Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation (UN-Water) focuses on several goals: water resources, water governance, water-related disasters, wastewater pollution and water quality, and drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene.[240] In relation to these goals, UN-Water has found evidence that using a gender-sensitive developmental approach can be effective in both the conservation of water and sustainability of water.[241] For example, 90% of water and wood gathering in Africa is done by women, and female involvement in the creation and monitoring of water projects can increase the effectiveness of such projects up to six or seven times.[242] As a result of these successes, UN-Water recommends women and men as equals at all levels of water resource management and governance, thus removing women and girls from unpaid activities and disempowerment as well as simultaneously addressing water sustainability and other issues.[243] These efforts can be effective in approaching this issue; for example, a Tanzanian study found that reducing the length of distance women and girls must travel for water has resulted in increased school attendance by 12%.[244]

Poverty Eradication

According to UNDP, women are often the primary producers of food and carry the burden of farming land, carrying water, grinding grain, and cooking.[245] Yet, women often lack access to education, land, financial resources, and jobs, which in turn can lead to inefficient practices regarding food production.[246] As a result, UNDP focuses on promoting

[230] AWID, *About AWID*, 2014; Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, *Our History*, 2014.
[231] AWID, *UNGA69: Human Rights And Financing For Development In The Post-2015 Agenda*, 2014.
[232] Ibid.
[233] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid.
[236] UN ECOSOC, *What Does ECOSOC Do*, 2005, p. 1.
[237] Ibid.
[238] WHO, *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*, 2014.
[239] UN DESA, *Achieving Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Strengthening Development Cooperation*, 2010, p. 129.
[240] UN-Water, *UN-Water's Recommendations for a Global Goal on Water*, 2014.
[241] Ibid.
[242] UN-Water, *Water and Gender Factsheet*, 2013.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.
[245] UNDP, *Gender and Poverty Reduction*, 2014.
[246] Ibid.

women's and girls' economic rights and opportunities, including women in planning, budgeting, and policy-making processes, and ensuring equal access to essential services such as health and education.[247] One successful example of poverty reduction took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where unemployed women over 40-years-old were trained in a program to become professional nannies.[248] As a result of this program, women were able to obtain jobs even before completing training, thus leading to economic empowerment and eventually, a reduction in poverty.[249] This initiative has positively affected over 47,000 people so far, and more than 140 similar projects have been successfully executed.[250] By advancing women's economic empowerment through granting access to land, resources, paid work, and planning and budgeting, women are able to maintain a financial livelihood which in turn assists in the eradication of poverty.[251]

Natural Resource Management

Lack of access to natural resources, particularly water, minerals, and land, can often cause conflict within Member States.[252] Because of key responsibilities of gathering water and managing land, women play an important role in managing those natural resources.[253] Specifically, educating women on irrigation and water management can lead to higher productivity while also addressing issues of soil erosion that can occur through subsistence agriculture which women are normally limited to using.[254] As a result of gaining water entitlements, women can avoid catalysts for violence and promote economic recovery through their participation in decision-making.[255] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has also proposed addressing gender equality in natural resource management through training modules on gender, collecting data on gender analysis in relation to water management, and addressing women's access to control and ownership of water resources.[256] For concrete evidence of the connection between women and natural resource management, a case study in Senegal found that female members of a community were able to revive a rare mangrove species by planting 2000 hectares of the plant.[257] Women were the key actors in this instance because a majority of the men were engaged in other work activities.[258] As a result, the mangroves influenced the local environment by increasing local oysters, honeybees, and carp.[259]

Energy

According to UN-Women, women and girls often lack access to modern energy sources.[260] As a result, women in many Member States across the world use inefficient stoves that can result in lung disease, lung cancer, and pneumonia due to indoor air pollution.[261] Education on safe cooking solutions can help reduce climate emissions while saving lives.[262] Additionally, women can be educated regarding solar engineering that will make them both technically and financially self-sufficient, in turn contributing to more renewable energy options.[263] An example of this occurred in Mauritania, where a solar-powered oven was installed in a small village.[264] Over 250 households use the oven, which can output a large number of loaves of bread, in turn resulting in products that can be sold.[265] This and similar efforts reduce poverty, empowers women, and utilizes sustainable energy simultaneously.[266]

Sustainable Urbanization

[247] UNDP, *Gender and Poverty Reduction*, 2014.
[248] UNDP, *Tackling Women's Unemployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2014.
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid.
[251] UNDP, *Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting*, 2014; UNDP, *Women's Economic Empowerment*, 2014.
[252] UNDP, *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, 2014, p. 16.
[253] Ibid., p. 9.
[254] FAO, *FAO Programme: Natural Resources*, 2014.
[255] UNDP, *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, 2014, p. 9.
[256] FAO, *FAO Programme: Natural Resources*, 2014.
[257] UNDP, *Reviving rare mangroves in Senegal*, 2014.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid.
[260] UN-Women, *UN-Women: Equality, Empowerment and Energy*, 2011, p. 1.
[261] UN-Women, *Facts and Figures*, 2014.
[262] UN-Women, *UN-Women: Equality, Empowerment and Energy*, 2011, p. 1.
[263] Ibid., p. 2.
[264] UNDP, *In Mauritania, Solar Energy Helps Vulnerable Communities*, 2014.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid.

According to ECOSOC, "urbanization can be an effective tool for the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development."[267] Consideration of gender is important within sustainable urbanization, particularly in relation to urban migration, slum growth, and urban services such as sanitation, water, and transportation.[268] Over half of the world's population lives in urban areas, but women and girls often suffer negative aspects of urbanization unequally.[269] Negative effects of urbanization include lack of access to clean water, sanitation issues, low-quality housing, unemployment, and crime.[270] Women are often affected more by these than men because of unequal poverty rates and lack of access to resources to improve living situations.[271] As a result, empowering women starting within their own homes is one way to increase the standard of living.[272] Increasing affordable and low-income housing options can also ease the burden of child-rearing, income-earning, and household management, and make a neighborhood more habitable as a result.[273] One successful case study related to this took place in Bangladesh, where women participated in a training offered by UNDP's "Urban Partnerships in Poverty Reduction," in order to understand how to manage their finances.[274] As a result of that training, a series of slums were transformed into small businesses, thus assisting in cleaning up the area and increasing the ability to obtain safe sanitation and water.[275]

Food Security and Nutrition

Food security has been defined as "when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preference for an active and healthy life."[276] As noted previously, women are often in charge of growing and preparing food for the home.[277] However, they are often limited in their access to lands, must only eat food remaining after male family members have eaten, and providing care for family which can prevent them from spending as much time growing and gathering food.[278] Yet, when women have control over assets and what to produce, they tend to produce food that allows for family security, whereas men tend to produce what produces the most cash crops.[279] By assisting women in the training of hygiene and sanitation, improving food processing, increasing access to decision-making, and creating gender-sensitive indicators, all of which can lead to safer practices and better nutrition, women can be empowered while also addressing food security and nutrition sustainability issues.[280] In an FAO training project in Afghanistan, women who were primary producers of poultry and eggs were trained in order to increase their production.[281] As a result of their training, in the first three years, the women produced 20 million eggs, consuming 7.5 million themselves.[282] The remaining eggs were then traded or sold, and this contributed to family food security and nutrition and assisted the families financially.[283]

The Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

In May 2013, UN-Women created a summary note reinforcing the importance of recognizing MDG 3 as a singular goal, while simultaneously working to address gender equality in other MDGs.[284] The note also emphasized the importance of focusing on these same issues through the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs.[285] Several

[267] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014.
[268] United Nations, *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanisation*, 2009, p. 1.
[269] Ibid.
[270] UN Women Watch, *Gender Equality for Better Cities and a Better World*, 2014.
[271] Ibid.
[272] UN Women Watch, *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanisation*, 2009, p. 2.
[273] Ibid., p. 3.
[274] UNDP, *Bangladesh: Transforming Life in the Slums*, 2014.
[275] Ibid.
[276] UN International Fund for Agricultural Development, *The Future of World Food and Nutrition Security*, 2014.
[277] FAO, *Women Play a Decisive Role in Household Food Security, Dietary Diversity and Children's Health*, 2014.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Asian Development Bank, *Gender Equality and Food Security: Women's Empowerment as a Tool against Hunger*, 2013, p. 71.
[280] FAO, *FAO's New Strategic Framework Will Mainstream Gender Equity in all of Its Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development*, 2014.
[281] FAO, *Poultry Projects Enhance Lives of Afghan Women*, 2014.
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid.
[284] UN-Women, *UN-Women Outlines Post-2015, SDGs Proposal*, 2013.
[285] Ibid.

proposals in the note include addressing gender equality via the sustainable development pillars, increasing equality in decision-making, promoting freedom from violence, and improving access to resources in reference to gender equality.[286] In addition, other documents specifically address the inherent need for the equality of men and women in the future of sustainable development. For instance, the Rio+20 outcome document *The Future We Want* states that women's empowerment requires full participation in the creation and revision of policies regarding sustainable development.[287] In Chapter 24 of *Agenda 21*, CEDAW and conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are referenced and emphasis is placed on their implementation.[288] Of the proposed SDGs, Goal 5 focuses on empowering women by proposing to end discrimination, eliminate violence, stop harmful practices such as genital mutilation, promote shared responsibilities with the family and within the household, ensure leadership and decision-making, provide access to reproductive health means, and reform land ownership and other laws through technology and legislation.[289] Each of those goals are accessible within ECOSOC's mandate and as a result, should be addressed and met while also promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.[290]

Conclusion

Because of the key role of women in every aspect of society, women also play an important part in each element of sustainable development. As a result, promoting gender equality and empowering women is essential to creating solutions to sustainable development issues such as water, poverty eradication, natural resource management, energy, sustainable urbanization, and food security and nutrition. Some of the major issues that may hinder the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment may be a lack of infrastructure, cultural and religious practices, lack of implementation methods, and lack of training. The MDGs must be met, and the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs must be developed, while also respecting Member States' sovereignty, cultural and religious practices, and other regional or global ideals. Proper implementation of achieving goals must be made, and understanding where the MDGs fell short may assist in planning the future priorities for action. With efforts from UN entities and Member States, gender equality, empowering women, and sustainable development can be advanced for the good of the global community.

Further Research

While conducting research, delegates should consider questions such as: what types of solutions jointly stem from the platform of women's empowerment and sustainable development? How can those solutions be implemented in each pillar or building block of sustainable development? How can the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs be developed to promote sustainable development practices through gender equality and the empowerment of women? What shortfalls of the MDGs can be addressed through reaching the goals of the SDGs, particularly in relation to sustainable development and gender equality and women's empowerment?

[286] UN-Women, *UN-Women Outlines Post-2015, SDGs Proposal*, 2013.
[287] UN DESA, *Women: Highlighted*, 2014.
[288] Ibid.
[289] UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.
[290] UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*, 2014.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2014). *Women play a decisive role in household food security, dietary diversity, and children's health* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-programme/gender-food/en/

On this website, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) explains the importance of women in obtaining food security. Delegates may find the FAO's targets at the bottom of this page helpful in understanding the goals of the Organization regarding mainstreaming gender equity in order to improve food security and nutrition. In addition, this page helps show some of the problems that lack of gender equality may cause in those same arenas.

United Nations. (2014). *Women* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/women/index.shtml

The United Nations website features a section on women and the UN where delegates can read about the history of women's rights throughout the UN. This website is vital for understanding how women's rights have developed and come to be a much more mainstream issue today. This page also links to several major outcomes of women's rights such as the Beijing Platform for Action, Millennium Development Goals, and others. Here, women are highlighted as a global issue that the UN places a major focus on.

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. (2014). *The History of Sustainable Development in the United Nations* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.uncsd2012.org/history.html

This website contains a timeline history of sustainable development in the United Nations. It provides a thorough discussion of the origination of the sustainable development agenda and how it has changed over the years. Delegates can use this source as a means of understanding the frame of mind of the importance of sustainable development to the UN's mandate.

United Nations Development Programme. (2014). *Women's Empowerment* [Website]. Retrieved 9 July 2014 from: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/overview.html

Here, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explains its goals in relation to women's empowerment and development. Links provide articles showing examples of the way that Member States have succeeded in those areas. Furthermore, information regarding projects and initiatives is provided which is specifically related to women and development. Delegates may find the section on "Our Stories" most helpful as it provides a large quantity of case studies of various Member States.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Sustainable Development* [Website]. Retrieved 9 July 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/sustainable.shtml

On its website, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) addresses sustainable development and cites important conferences and summits where sustainable development was highlighted. Rio+20 and its impact on the UN system can be found here. Further, this website provides links to the building blocks of sustainable development throughout the UN system regarding energy, food security and nutrition, natural resource management, poverty eradication, sustainable urbanization, and water.

United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation. (2013). *Water and Gender Factsheet*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.unwater.org/publications/publications-detail/en/c/204289/

UN-Water created this infographic in order to provide quick facts regarding the relationship between water and gender. Statistics on the infographic show the importance of women in the water gathering process. Through this resource, delegates may better understand the burden that women often bear as a result of their duties of water gathering.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2011). *UN-Women: Equality, Empowerment and Energy*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/side_events/MRFCJ_and_UNW_sideevent_FINAL.pdf

This document is a quick briefing on equality, empowerment and energy, relating to the issues of gender equality and sustainable development that arose at the Fifty-fifth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2011. Here, delegates can understand several issues that women are burdened by in relation to energy sources in and around the home. In addition, several suggestions and solutions to those problems are also proposed in this article.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2014). *The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20* [Website]. Retrieved 9 July 2014 from: http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/environment

This website provides fast facts including statistics regarding the way that women and girls are inherently tied to sustainable development. Here, recent news articles can be found regarding women's achievements in various areas of development. A list of links also provides other documents from various UN bodies discussing the connection between sustainable development and women.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2014). *Facts and Figures* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.unwomen.org/co/news/in-focus/the-united-nations-conference-on-sustainable-development-rio-20/facts-and-figures

This site contains a number of thought-provoking figures regarding the importance of gender equality in sustainable development. Statistics included on the website show how women are often very prevalent in all sustainability areas. These figures are a means to explicitly show delegates the types of challenges that women are facing and how they might overcome them as well.

Women Watch. (2009). *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanisation*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/urban/downloads/WomenWatch_Gender_Equality_and_Sustainable_Urbanisation-fact_sheet.pdf

In 2009, UN-Women Watch produced an article on the importance of women in the role of sustainable urbanization. Here, delegates can peruse examples of how women are burdened in urban environments, while also observing ways in which those burdens can be overcome. Additionally, delegates can understand how women are essential in maintaining sustainable urbanization through empowerment.

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Puri, L. (2013). *Gender equality and women's empowerment central to sustainable development* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/9/ded-remarks-on-actionaid-event

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III. Promoting Social and Economic Integration through Sustainable Urbanization

Introduction

Throughout the tenure of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations (UN) has urged the implementation of actions to eradicate poverty and improve socioeconomic and environmental development worldwide by 2015.[291] In order to continue these efforts after the 2015 MDGs deadline, the High-Level Panel (HLP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has developed recommendations towards the adoption of a post-2015 development agenda and the eradication of extreme poverty by 2030.[292] The HLP emphasizes in its report, "A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development," the importance of inclusive and equitable economic and social development in order to reduce poverty, income disparity, and environmental degradation through access to basic services and housing; increasing accountability for governments and institutions; and encouraging cooperation and partnerships at the local, national and regional levels.[293] Additionally, in June 2014, the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals published the Zero Draft with 17 proposed goals and targets that focus on specific goals while also targeting interrelated issues that connect poverty eradication measures with social, economic and environmental dimensions.[294] As a key component of the post-2015 discussion, sustainable urbanization is currently one of the main goals of the international community and specifically of the Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC).[295]

According to the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the global population is expected to increase to 9.3 billion by 2050, with 6.3 billion people living in urban areas.[296] Hence, the twenty-first century has seen an unprecedented population growth with benefits and obstacles that emphasize the importance of discussing sustainable urbanization.[297] Sustainable urbanization is the ability to ensure that urbanization can be connected to development in economic, social, and environmental methods.[298] Although sustainable urbanization is recognized within national and international agendas, a 2014 DESA report points out that there is not a set definition of what an urban settlement is, hence the criteria of what constitutes urbanization can vary between Member States.[299] However, in order to consider an area an urban settlement, according to DESA, it must show that it meets a minimum level of population density, employment in the formal sector, infrastructure for providing education, manufacturing, health services, water and sanitation.[300] To further understand how these characteristics shape urban development, this topic will examine the participation of the UN and the involvement of the international community in promoting social and economic policies through sustainable urbanization and how these policies further the goals of the post-2015 development agenda.

International and Regional Framework

The 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment greatly contributed to international awareness on how mankind affects and is affected by its relationship with the environment.[301] Integrating economic, social and environmental development, now widely recognized as the three dimensions of sustainable development, was an idea first discussed by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) and its resulting 1987 Brundtland Report, also known as "Our Common Future."[302] This was further reiterated as a main objective in the discussions leading to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), or Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.[303] As a result of the Earth Summit, its outcome document, *Agenda 21*, was a milestone in discussing the need of an action plan for all levels of governance to promote sustainable development

[291] UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014.
[292] UN High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development*, 2014, pp. v-vi.
[293] Ibid.
[294] UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.
[295] UN ECOSOC, *1st ECOSOC Integration Segment (27-29 May 2014) to focus on Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014. pp. 1-2.
[296] UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision: Highlights*, 2011, p. 1.
[297] Ibid.
[298] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014.
[299] UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision: Highlights*, 2014. p. 4.
[300] Ibid.
[301] UNEP, *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, 2014.
[302] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[303] Ibid.

policies.[304] Greater emphasis was given to this issue in 1993 when the General Assembly (GA) established the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as the responsible body to monitor the outcome of *Agenda 21*.[305] *Agenda 21* provided Member States with a series of objectives and suggested deadlines with the ultimate goal of implementing a wide range of issues, including those with an urban dimension, such as sustainable settlement development; protecting and promoting human health, environmentally sound management of solid wastes and sewage-related issues; and other topics.[306] As a way to recognize not only urban settlements, but also the people affected by urbanization, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) placed importance and interest directly onto affected members of the global community, in particular in building awareness about women's empowerment as stated in the ICPD Programme of Action.[307] In 1996, the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements was held (Habitat II).[308] In 2014, the ICPD Beyond 2014 Review aimed to reinforce global commitment to solving world challenges through policies that include and engage all sectors of society, including the poor.[309]

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the UN adopted the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (2000) as a high-level commitment to eradicate poverty and to improve, protect and better the global, social, economic and environmental structure.[310] The MDGs highlight the relationship between the goals and urban poverty, as seen by MDG 7, which calls for environmental sustainability; its targets 7.C and 7.D request halving by 2015 "the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services" and achieving "improvement of living conditions for at least 100 million slum dwellers" by 2020, respectively.[311] The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) continued to draw attention to the importance of urban development by recognizing the role of cities, the need for improved water and sanitation conditions and combat pollution as mentioned by the WSSD Plan of Implementation.[312]

In 2012, the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference, *The Future We Want*, emphasized efforts to better world quality of life and to promote the role of cities within the international community.[313] The Future We Want noted the importance of incorporating local authorities to work in cooperation with national governments and other stakeholders towards public services, employment opportunities, and management and quality of resources as specified in the MDGs.[314] To highlight ECOSOC's mandate to mainstream sustainability as the main priority to the path to development, *The Future We Want* called upon the integration of ECOSOC as a key body to partner with other UN bodies to streamline, facilitate, and manage the three pillars of sustainable development.[315]

In January 2012, the UN High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability published its final report titled "Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing."[316] This report makes 56 recommendations addressed to all levels of governance in society and states that in order to achieve a holistic approach for sustainability, commitment to ensure social dimensions and environmental consciousness must incorporated in economic development policies.[317] Most recently, DESA also published the 2014 "Revision of World Urbanization Prospects" to provide empirical data in relation to urban and rural population distribution and urbanization trends worldwide.[318]

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[304] UN DESA, *Agenda 21*, 2014.
[305] UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2014.
[306] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Rio 2012 Issues Briefs, Prepared by UNCSD Secretariat, No. 5, Sustainable Cities,* 2014.
[307] UNFPA, *Overview*, 2014.
[308] UN-Habitat, *Habitat III,* 2014.
[309] UNFPA, *Overview*, 2014.
[310] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.
[311] MDG Monitor, *Goal 7 Ensure Environmental Sustainability*, 2014.
[312] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Rio 2012 Issues Briefs, Prepared by UNCSD Secretariat, No. 5*, Sustainable Cities, 2014.
[313] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.
[314] UN ECOSOC, *1st ECOSOC Integration Segment (27-29 May 2014) to focus on Sustainable Urbanization, 2014*. p. 1.
[315] UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288),* 2012.
[316] UN General Assembly, ***Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing: A Note of the Secretary General*** *(A/66/700)*, 2012.
[317] Ibid.
[318] UN DESA, Population Division. *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision: Highlights*, 2014, p. 4.

Role of the International System

The Economic and Social Council has often discussed the significance of sustainable urbanization. In 2012, ECOSOC resolution 2012/27 on human settlements recognized progress made towards achieving MDG 7 in improving the lives of slum dwellers.[319] It emphasized the need to counter the growth of slums in developing countries, as well as encouraged governments to work alongside the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) with the private sector and civil society to address the wide range of challenges affecting urban populations.[320] In September 2013, the GA adopted resolution 68/1 to enhance the oversight and leadership role of ECOSOC by strengthening its role as the key coordinator of activities within the UN system.[321] The role of ECOSOC's mandate was strengthened to monitor and report on progress made by adopting an annual theme to mainstream the three dimensions of sustainable development through convening an annual Integration Segment meeting on a different development theme for each segment's yearly cycle.[322] In addition to the 2014 Integration Segment, ECOSOC has focused on sustainable development and urbanization within other recent dialogues. In April 2014, ECOSOC President, H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik, expressed the urgent need for Member States and the UN to support the efforts of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), led by ECOSOC, to achieve sustainable development through a policy framework that supports, recommends and works alongside countries to overcome challenges, apply strategies, and promote initiatives of action.[323]

To further ECOSOC's role in the Rio+20 discussions and the post-2015 development agenda, the theme of ECOSOC's 2014 Annual Ministerial Review was "Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges to meet the MDGs in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future."[324] On 27 May 2014, ECOSOC held its first Integration Segment on the theme of sustainable development.[325] This meeting promoted the exchange of regional, national and local experiences and policies with recommendations to continue efforts towards achieving the MDGs and the post-2015 development agenda.[326] During the segment, Member States were called upon to consider the following three principles: to develop a national perspective on the role of urban centers; incorporate urban planning in public policy; and ensure planned city expansions to address informal settlements such as slums.[327] The outcome of this year's Integration Segment will become ECOSOC's contribution to Habitat III, the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, in 2016. As noted in General Assembly resolution 66/207, Habitat III's purpose is to continue the commitments made at Habitat II.[328]

There are also currently several global campaigns by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promoting sustainable urbanization. For instance, coordinated by UN-Habitat, the World Urban Campaign's (WUC) outcome document *The City We Need* lays out specific legislative framework for a representative and inclusive urban future.[329] Other campaigns are building awareness about the urban agenda; for example, the United Cities and Local Governments' (UCLG) mission is to represent the interests and role of local governments through cooperation with the international community.[330] At this year's first ECOSOC Integration Segment, UCLG recommended that citizens be at the heart of local governance, which in turn has the potential to reduce inequalities by implementing policies that ensure access to basic services.[331]

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[319] UN ECOSOC, *Human Settlements (E/RES/2012/27),* 2007.
[320] Ibid.
[321] 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.
[322] UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.
[323] UN DESA, *Opening Remarks at "Expert Group Meeting on the Role of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in the Post-2015 Development Framework,"* 2014.
[324] UN ECOSOC, *2014 Annual Ministerial Review*, 2014.
[325] UN ECOSOC, *1st ECOSOC Integration Segment (27-29 May 2014) to focus on Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014.
[326] Ibid., p. 1.
[327] UN-Habitat, *Keynote Address to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations 2014 Integration Segment Sustainable Urbanization,* 2014.
[328] UN-Habitat, *Habitat III,* 2014.
[329] The World Urban Campaign, *The World Urban Campaign Special Session at WUF7*, 2014.
[330] United Cities and Local Governments, *About Us,* 2014.
[331] United Cities and Local Governments, *#OurCitiesOurWorld Days at the UN ECOSOC: "Urban areas at the heart of great challenges, opportunities and promises,"* 2014.

Sustainable Urbanization

A half-century ago, two-thirds of the world's population lived in rural areas, and less than one-third of individuals lived in urban settlements; however, these statistics are now reversed, with more than half of the world's population living in urban areas.[332] This global demographic shift, if given the appropriate attention and resources, can allow sustainable urbanization strategies to benefit a greater proportion of the population.[333] Urbanization is a global trend but its effects vary greatly by region; Latin America and North America have the highest levels of urbanization, while Africa and Asia continue to have less than half of their populations living in rural areas.[334] Given that social and economic problems affect the standard of living and the overall productivity of cities, challenges of urbanization can include "ineffective urban planning, governance and financing systems; inefficient resource use; poverty, inequalities and slums, as well as inadequate delivery of basic services (including, water, sanitation and waste management)."[335] Nevertheless, socioeconomic conditions can lead cities to serve as platforms for creating efficient and sustainable urban populations, as they have the capacity to promote employment opportunities; practice efficient transportation options; and improve access to basic services, housing and clean water and reduced waste through the adoption of cohesive, redistributive policies with collaboration of local, national and regional governments.[336]

Social Integration

Slum poverty

Slums are the result of income inequality and stagnant economic growth, which drives individuals living in poverty to struggle to find adequate housing.[337] With one-third of the world's urban population living in overcrowded and underserviced slums, it is essential to consider the linkage between poverty, adequate urban planning, housing, safe water and sanitation.[338] For slums to be more habitable and adequate, they should be well structured, permanent and secured, and have access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure.[339] MDG 7 and its target 7.D called upon Member States to improve, by 2020, the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, and even though some progress has been achieved, unprecedented rapid slum growth has hindered the progress towards improving poor conditions in slums.[340] According to UN-Habitat, slum reduction can be achieved by implementing an integrated approach that incorporates "(1) awareness and advocacy; (2) long-term political commitment; (3) policy reforms and institutional strengthening; (4) implementation and monitoring; (5) and scaling-up of successful local projects."[341] For instance, since 2000 in Latin America and the Caribbean, an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions; in particular, in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic, the slum dweller populations have been successfully reduced by over one-third.[342] This was the result of a combination of preventive measures that control and oversee slum growth and incorporate economic policies that called on political responsibilities to encourage funding, policy reforms, oversight and institutional strengthening for the improvement of urban settlements.[343]

Sustainable urban mobility and transportation

Due to the complex nature of most urban areas, the main purpose of urban transportation and mobility is to enable population connectivity with education, employment, goods, services, public space for social interactions, and economic development.[344] Currently, UN-Habitat is working to restructure existent slum conditions in developing countries to reflect by focusing on redesigning streets and roads to facilitate traffic, enhancing accessibility in and out of slums, and improving urban planning and designing that highlight the different social functions of streets.[345] Furthermore, the UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA), whose main objective is to ensure

[332] UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision: Highlights*, 2014, p. 7.
[333] UN ECOSOC, *1st ECOSOC Integration Segment (27-29 May 2014) to focus on Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014.
[334] UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision: Highlights*, 2014, p. 7.
[335] UN ECOSOC, *2014 Integration Segment: Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014.
[336] Ibid.
[337] UN-Habitat, *The Challenge of Slums*, 2003, pp. 17, 52.
[338] Ibid., p. 5.
[339] UN-Habitat, *Street as Tools for Urban Transformation in Slums*, 2014, p. 5.
[340] UN-Habitat, *Revised Compilation for Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 5.
[341] UN-Habitat, *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: Bridging the Urban Divide*, p. 11.
[342] Ibid., p. 7.
[343] Ibid., p. 7.
[344] UN-Habitat, *Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility*, 2013, p. vii.
[345] UN-Habitat, *Street as Tools for Urban Transformation in Slums*, 2014, pp. 13-15.

dialogue between local authorities, the UN, and central governments, is another UN agency currently assisting countries with the urban planning recommendations.[346] UNACLA recommends the adoption of five principles designed to address the transportation needs of people in relation to the context of the city, including considering transportation within sustainable urbanization and planning, creating public transportation systems that work well, and supporting technologies for vehicles and energy.[347] Following these recommendations, the city of Kigali in Rwanda developed the "Kigali City Public Transport Master Plan" to implement a comprehensive approach to improve public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and parking policies and guidelines.[348] These changes in urban mobility are designed to help the city accommodate the increase in population while alleviating the city's infrastructure.[349]

Water and sanitation

Although the UN has placed a major emphasis on improving water and sanitation services, about one-third of the world's population do not have proper sustainable sanitation management and an acceptable quality of drinking water, which negatively impacts the standard and quality of public health in urban areas.[350] Establishing water and sewage infrastructure, including dams, water treatment areas, reservoirs, sewage, and pipelines, has the capacity to shape the spatial development of cities by increasing the distribution of services to local areas which in turn leads to new developments.[351] Development progress is hindered by the lack to access to these services, as well as hazardous levels of water pollution, untreated water, and unsafe waste disposal and water drainage.[352] Accordingly, coordination among local and national levels of governance should be encouraged to continuously monitor infrastructure efficiency.[353] For example, many Arab cities have successfully maintained water supplies for their populations by prioritizing water security as a public good, hence ensuring supplies, demand management, conservation and desalination.[354] The implementation of infrastructure serves as a starting point for cities to facilitate prosperity, socioeconomic development and environmental protection.[355]

Women and civil society

For sustainable urbanization to be inclusive, it is essential for legislative and policy frameworks to include and reach out to marginalized groups, particularly women, in order for them to benefit equally from urbanization access to housing, land, and basic services.[356] One of the main socioeconomic challenges that women face is that unpaid domestic care and work responsibilities often result in lower-quality, unstable work.[357] Low-quality work is mainly found in the informal sector of the economy, and roughly 60% of the workforce in underdeveloped countries is composed of women.[358] The risks and vulnerability faced by women in cities are far greater than for men given that women often lack accessibility to resources and services and legislation that protects women's interests and needs.[359] Thus, by including women's voices within legislation and planning, urban development can benefit more sectors of society.[360] Furthermore, the UN's Women Watch focuses on building awareness on how gender equality issues relate to urban development affect urban poor women.[361] For instance, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN-Habitat and UN-Women launched a joint initiative, "Safe and Friendly Cities for All."[362] This initiative assesses eight large cities to increase local government's capacity to deal with violence against women, as well as by

[346] UN-Habitat, *Transport and Mobility Snapshots, Report from UNACLA*, 2013, p. 2.
[347] Ibid., pp. 8-9.
[348] Ibid., p. 14.
[349] Ibid., 2013, p. 14.
[350] UN-Habitat, *Revised Compilation for Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 8.
[351] UN-Habitat, *Global Report on Human Settlements 2009: Planning Sustainable Cities*, 2009, p. 157.
[352] International Institute for Environment and Development, *Urbanization, Gender and Urban Poverty*, 2012, pp. 6-7.
[353] UN-Habitat, *State of the World's Cities 2012/2013, Prosperity of Cities*, 2012, p. 59.
[354] Ibid., p. 60.
[355] Ibid., p. 57.
[356] UN-Habitat, *The Future We Want, The City We Need*, 2013, p. 11.
[357] International Institute for Environment and Development, *Urbanization, Gender and Urban Poverty*, 2012, p. 17.
[358] Ibid., p. 17.
[359] UN Women Watch, *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanization,* 2010.
[360] UN-Habitat, *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011, Bridging the Urban Divide*, 2010, p. 133.
[361] UN Women Watch, *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanization,* 2010.
[362] UN-Women, *The Future Women Want, A Vision of Sustainable Development for All*, 2012, p. 23.

incorporating women and youth's specific needs in all aspects of urban development and services to improve their participation and safety.[363]

Economic Integration

Inclusive employment opportunities
The fast rate of urbanization in developing countries is closely associated with the creation and availability of employment opportunities, yet many remain unemployed or underemployed, especially women and youth.[364] Lack of employment opportunities is the cause of social and political unrest recently manifested around the world, as the global youth unemployment stands at 12.4%, with 73.4 million youth looking for work.[365] As highlighted by the World Bank's 2013 "World Development Report on Jobs," poverty's main cause is the absence of employment opportunities that utilize the educational capacity of the workforce to its full extent.[366] For instance, women's inclusion in the workforce positively impacts urbanization as it encourages education and personal growth and generates more income.[367] Member States that have shown positive advancement towards poverty alleviation and employment creation have invested in social safety nets while promoting economic diversification through fostering macroeconomic policies to expand access to finance and employment.[368]

Urban informal economy
Urban informal economy is a phenomenon growing in developing countries, and cities still need to be inclusive and embrace the informal sector by protecting national economic growth through policies and strategies.[369] The informal economy sector is characterized by a lack of legal regulations and oversight for enterprises and the absence of worker protections such as social benefits and insurance.[370] Also, it includes wage or self-employed workers that have flexible work arrangements and are at the lowest end of the production chain.[371] These workers encompass a large number of the world's population due not only to the difficulties of finding jobs in the formal sector, but because of the relative low requirements of skills and education needed.[372] Efforts have also been made, such as by the International Labor Organization (ILO), to encourage governments to foster safe and regulated working environments through economic, social, legal and political frameworks.[373] These frameworks benefit the creation of sustainable, decent opportunities for employees and employers while expanding social security and encouraging all-inclusive approaches at the local level to represent all members of society.[374] To sustainably implement such frameworks, Member States should consider the potential of including the productivity of the informal economy workers by incorporating regulations that foster overall economic growth, such as registration and licensing, which in turn would allow for better implementation of worker's rights and benefits.[375]

The Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals

During the past 15 years, the UN development agenda has been largely centered in achieving the MDGs by 2015; as this deadline approaches, discussion is currently being held on what to do when the MDGs expire. The UN Secretary-General assigned the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, and the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons and Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning, to discuss new global development priorities.[376] As a result of Rio+20, Member States agreed to develop and ultimately adopt a series of SDGs that expand upon previously adopted international documents, requiring a greater level of commitment and

[363] UN-Women, *The Future Women Want, A Vision of Sustainable Development for All*, 2012, p. 23.
[364] UN-Habitat, *Revised Compilation for Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 14.
[365] Ibid.
[366] UN Development Programme, *Asia-Pacific Issue Brief Series on Urbanization and Climate Change No. 1*, 2013, p. 4.
[367] International Institute for Environment and Development, *Urbanization, Gender and Urban Poverty*, 2012, p. 17.
[368] ILO, *Jobs and Livelihoods at the Heart of the Post-2015 Development Agenda,* 2013, pp. 1-2.
[369] UN-Habitat, *The Future We Want, The City We Need*, 2013, p. 11.
[370] UN ECOSOC, *Rethinking the Informal Economy,* 2007, pp. 1-2.
[371] ILO, *The Informal Economy: Enabling Transition to Formalization*, 2007, p. 3.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid., p. 4.
[374] Ibid., p. 4.
[375] UN-Habitat, *Innovative Policies for the Urban Informal Economy*, 2006, p. 121.
[376] UN DESA, Population Division, *Development Agenda beyond 2015*, 2014.

exercise to clearly pave the path towards sustainable development.[377] The Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs has proposed 17 draft SDGs as a framework for the new agenda.[378] As the global population is increasingly living in urban settlements without proper access to socioeconomic opportunities, UN-Habitat is promoting the adoption of an urban SDG to build awareness about the key role of cities in the development and management of urban settlements and focus on the solutions necessary to overcome the challenges associated with management and improvement of urban development.[379] Most importantly, it is essential to recognize that the post-2015 development agenda is closely interrelated to the SDGs, and these two elements must be at the main focus of the global sustainable development discussion. Thus, it is imperative for Member States to be the key leaders in the discussion and to incorporate the participation and initiatives of all sectors of society including local and regional entities, grassroots organizations, private sector, and others.[380]

Conclusion

Cities that are well established with national and local governments and coordinated with regional agendas can address issues of inequality and inclusiveness through policies and accountability of investment and resources that apply to both the social and economic dimension of urbanization.[381] Overall, it is necessary to foster sustainable urbanization through an integrated framework that includes improved urban planning and design, economic and financial development tailored for cities and towns, increasing equitable access to urban basic services and mobility, and enhancing adequate housing and improving slum conditions.[382] Hence, sustainable urbanization is currently one of the most important issues that must be integrated at the core of international discussions as it involves how people of all class levels, governments and civil society move forward in dealing with the exponential population growth while ensuring equal access to social and economic benefits and resources and encouraging protection and maintenance of the environment.

Further Research

While researching this topic, delegates should consider the following questions: what aspects of urbanization should be prioritized in your Member State? What could local governments change to facilitate access to slums in a sustainable way? What tools can be made available to all sectors of society to create resilient, self-sufficient cities? How can civil society work in collaboration with the national government and regional actors to promote sustainable urbanization? How can more UN bodies such as UN-Habitat, UN Environmental Programme, and others take a greater role in the social and economic integration process of sustainable urbanization? How can women and youth have a greater role in promoting sustainable urban policies?

[377] UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.
[378] UN-Habitat, *Post 2015 Agenda*, 2014.
[379] Ibid.
[380] UN DESA, *Post-2015 Process*, 2014.
[381] UN-Habitat, *UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda: Sustainable Urbanization Thematic Piece,* 2012, p. 6.
[382] UN-Habitat, *Time to Think Urban*, 2013, pp. 6-14.

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United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2014). *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision: Highlights*. Retrieved 8 August 2014 from: http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/Highlights/WUP2014-Highlights.pdf

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' annual report offers a detailed, comprehensive analysis of data related to social, economic and environmental issues to better understand the areas of success and challenges in achieving urbanization. It explains trends and projections in population growth, urban developments, and the impact of megacities, and it provides policy recommendations for governments to equally share the benefits or urbanization. This report will serve delegates as a statistical guide to the broader discussion as it analyzes urban population changes and the impact it has in the development of countries and regions.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2012). *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods.* Retrieved 6 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf14/the_new_ecosoc_31_march_2014.pdf

This overview highlights the most important aspects of mandate reform of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It details the Council's role, mandate and new functions to implement the development agenda across the international community, as well as details the segments that are now part of ECOSOC's calendar. This overview will allow delegates to understand how ECOSOC may use its newly gained substantive leadership power to encourage sustainable development.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *2014 Integration Segment: Sustainable Urbanization 27-29 May 2014* [Summary]. Retrieved 6 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/integration/pdf/ecosoc_vp_summary.pdf

This summary is the result of the first Integration Segment meeting of ECOSOC, which focused on the promotion of sustainable urbanization while incorporating social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It highlights focus points, challenges and possible areas of improvement necessary to achieve cohesive integration of the social and economic frameworks. It serves as a guide for delegates to better understand and identify ECOSOC's role, goals and policy-making targets when discussing international urban development agenda.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2009). *Global Report on Human Settlements 2009: Planning Sustainable Cities*. Retrieved 9 August 2014 from: http://cn.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/GRHS2009/GRHS.2009.pdf

This document from the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) analyzes the social and economic challenges that are hindering the progress of sustainable urbanization in developing countries. In this report, successful urban planning examples are examined and highlighted as acceptable approaches to follow. The report will offer delegates a comprehensive study of issues, such as urban planning, demographic diversity, policy implementation and political participation progress monitoring, policy recommendations, to consider when researching for innovative ideas.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2013). *State of the World's Cities 2012/2013, Prosperity of Cities*. Retrieved 8 August 2014 from: http://mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=2917

Developed by UN-Habitat, this report discusses the shortcomings faced by the global urban populations and identifies major challenges across the developing world. It also analyzes specific country and regional examples to emphasize the seriousness of this topic. This document will broaden delegates view about the smaller, but important, issues faced by the subtopics of the urban agenda.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2013). *Time to Think Urban*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://unhabitat.org/time-to-think-urban-UN-HABITAT-brochure-2013/

This report from UN-Habitat offers a framework for a holistic approach to the integration of urban development in building sustainable cities. It highlights specific policy changes and areas

of focus to help countries transition to implementing and mainstreaming the urban agenda into all sectors of society. The report also provides an excellent overview of the type of approaches needed to promote inclusive and equitable development strategies.

United Nations, International Labor Organization. (2007). *The Informal Economy: Enabling Transition to Formalization*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@safework/documents/publication/wcms_110324.pdf

In 2007, the International Labour Organization published a document on how the informal economy can be utilized to foster urban economic development. This document explores the different aspects in which the informal economy interrelates with society, policy and services, as well as offers examples on how countries are incorporating the informal economy as part of their greater economic growth. This discussion will provide delegates with a different view on local economic prosperity.

United Nations, International Labor Organization. (2013). *Jobs and Livelihoods at the Heart of the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/statement/wcms_205641.pdf

This concept note on the post-2015 development agenda explains the relationship that the development agenda and policy-making have in relation to employment and living conditions. It highlights the importance of employment as a key catalyst to nurture positive effects in all aspects of society. The discussion will help delegates understand the essence of promoting inclusive employment opportunities for all members of society by examining how to further incorporate the basis of the Millennium Development Goals into future sustainable development discussions.

United Nations, Women Watch. (2014). *Gender Equality and Sustainable Urbanization* [Website]. Retrieved 11 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/urban/

This website serves as an introduction to the key role that gender equality plays in the urbanization process, as well as in detailing the particular challenges faced by women in urban societies. This useful site highlights key publications by different UN bodies that work in integrating women's roles in urban social and economic development matters such as migration, finances, water and sanitation, employment, climate, and decision-making. This is an extensive resource for delegates to consider when incorporating gender issues into their further research.

The World Urban Campaign. (2014). *Home* [Website]. Retrieved 8 August 2014 from: http://www.worldurbancampaign.org

The World Urban Campaign promotes dialogue, sharing and learning experiences on how to improve urbanization. This site is a portal for civil society to engage its interests, concerns and demands by building awareness. The resources section provide delegates with documentation useful to consider how civil society can play an important role in building urban communities such as in the latest news section, which shows latest actions taken in different parts of the world to bring awareness about urban development.

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