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General Assembly Second Committee Background Guide 2020

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2020 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the General Assembly, Second Committee (GA2). This year's staff is: Directors Mihai Gheorghe Cioc (Conference A) and Martin Schunk (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Athiang Makuoi (Conference A) and Emma Bott (Conference B). Mihai holds a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) and is currently completing his Juris Doctor (J.D.). Martin holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Linguistics and is finishing his Master of Arts in Media Culture and Media Economy in Germany. Currently, he is interning as a Carlo-Schmid-Fellow at the communications department of an international organization in New York City. Athiang holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing where she explored studies in international relations and policy theory. Currently, she is pursuing a Masters focused on health policy reform. Emma has a Bachelor of Management emphasizing in human resources and minoring in history. Currently, Emma is attending law school.

The topics under discussion for the General Assembly Second Committee are:

- I. Financing for Development
- II. Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development
- III. Disaster Risk Reduction

The General Assembly Second Committee is one of six Main Committees of the UN General Assembly which is a foundational organ of the United Nations. The Second Committee focuses on macroeconomic policy questions in regard to international trade, external debt sustainability, financing for development, and the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Additionally, the Committee discusses development topics such as globalization and interdependence, the eradication of poverty, and the operational activities of the UN system. In addressing these topics, the Second Committee drafts recommendations to the General Assembly Plenary, convenes conferences and summits, and requests the Secretary-General to report on significant issues and to host side events.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2020 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers](#) website.

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

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the General Assembly Department, Collin King (Conference A) and Leah Schmidt (Conference B), at usg.ga@nmun.org.

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

Sincerely,

Conference A

Mihai Gheorghe Cioc, *Director*

Athian Makuoi, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Martin Schunk, *Director*

Emma Bott, *Assistant Director*

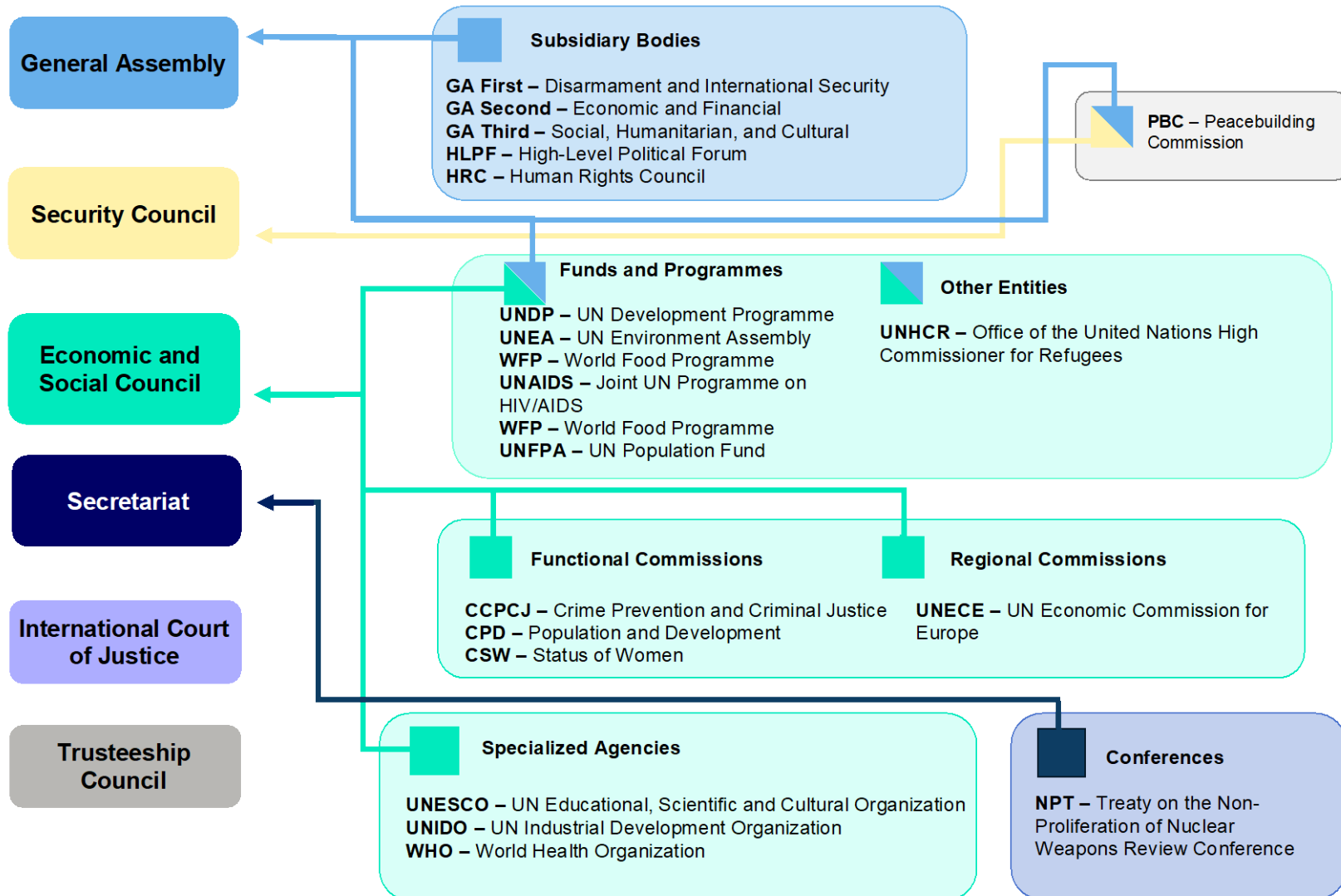


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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

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



Committee Overview

“The real danger is not the threat to one’s economy that comes from acting. It is, instead, the risk to one’s economy by failing to act.”¹

Introduction

Article 7 of the *Charter of the United Nations* establishes the General Assembly as one of the six foundational organs of the United Nations.² The General Assembly is composed of six Main Committees, including the General Assembly Second Committee (Second Committee).³ The Main Committees share similar arrangements in structure, governance, membership, functions, and powers, but each Main Committee addresses a specific thematic area.⁴

The **General Assembly Second Committee** (Second Committee) is one of the six Main Committees of the General Assembly. A report is issued to the General Assembly Plenary for each item allocated to a Main Committee.

The Second Committee represents the economic and financial committee of the General Assembly.⁵ The Second Committee addresses a variety of issues related to financing for development, information and communication technologies (ICTs) for development, macroeconomic policy, globalization and interdependence, the eradication of poverty, among others.⁶ The work of the Second Committee involves other United Nations (UN) development bodies such as, but not limited to, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).⁷ Additionally, to support General Assembly resolution 70/1 on *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* the Second Committee works to implement the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) through policy recommendations.⁸

Governance, Structure, and Membership

Chapter IV of the *Charter of the United Nations* regulates the functioning of the General Assembly and empowers the General Assembly and its Main Committees to formulate recommendations that promote international economic and social cooperation.⁹ Article 9(1) of the *Charter of the United Nations* provides that the General Assembly and its Main Committees comprise all Members of the UN.¹⁰ At present, 193 Member States, two observer states, and multiple non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other entities form the General Assembly.¹¹ Each Member State has a single vote of equal weight which allows Member States to express their voices and encourages consensus-based decisions.¹² Observer states

¹ UN Secretary-General, *Address to the General Assembly*, 2018.

² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

³ New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2018-2019*, 2019, p. 21.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁶ *Ibid.*; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2017, p. 71.

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Summary by the President of the Economic and Social Council of the special high-level meeting of the Council with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (A/69/83)*, 2014.

⁸ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*, 2019.

and NGOs can participate to the General Debate, but may not vote.¹³ The General Assembly seeks to adopt resolutions by consensus which requires a high level of cooperation among Member States.¹⁴

The General Assembly convenes annually in the third week of September and commences with General Debate and the allocation of agenda items.¹⁵ The General Committee of the General Assembly allocates the agenda items for each of the Main Committees which lays out the main areas for discussion.¹⁶ The President of the General Assembly and 21 Vice-Presidents constitute the General Committee of the General Assembly.¹⁷ On 4 June 2019, the General Assembly appointed Tijjani Muhammad-Bande as its President for the 74rd session.¹⁸ From January to September, the General Committee focuses on thematic debates, consultations, and meetings through organized working groups that discuss specific topics.¹⁹ The United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat), and the Governing councils of the three Rio Conventions report about their activities and outcomes to the Second Committee.²⁰ Subsequently, the Second Committee drafts resolutions and reports to the General Assembly based on each report and agenda item it considered.²¹ The General Assembly Plenary considers these reports and votes on the adoption of the included draft resolutions from the Second Committee.²²

To complete its policy work and to bridge national action and international policies, the Second Committee partners with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) which provides significant substantive support.²³ Likewise, the Second Committee works in collaboration with the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination to operationalize and implement development policies and activities, and with the United Nations Development Group who facilitates collaboration with ECOSOC.²⁴

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

As part of the General Assembly, articles 55 to 60 of the *Charter of the United Nations* mandates the Second Committee to promote higher standards of living and employment, and improved conditions of economic and social development.²⁵ To fulfill its mandate, the Second Committee drafts proposals and reports to the General Assembly Plenary on norm setting and policy recommendations, convenes conferences and summits, and requests the Secretary-General to report on significant issues and to host

¹³ Ibid.; UN General Assembly, *Observers*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *List of non-Member States, entities and organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly (A/INF/73/5/Rev.1)*, 2019.

¹⁴ UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*, 2019.

¹⁵ New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2018-19*, 2019, p. 17.

¹⁶ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee): Agenda items and periodicity*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Allocation of agenda items to the Second Committee (A/C.2/73/1)*, 2018; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2017, pp. 18-38.

¹⁷ Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2017, p. 17.

¹⁸ *Newly-elected Nigerian UN General Assembly President Pledges focus on "peace and prosperity" for most vulnerable*, UN News, 2019.

¹⁹ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

²⁰ Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2017, p. 72; UN DGC, *The United Nations System*, 2019.

²¹ Ibid.

²² UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *UN Documentation: General Assembly*, 2019.

²³ UN DESA, *About UN DESA*, 2019; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2017, p. 73.

²⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Office for Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

²⁵ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UNEG, *UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System*, 2014.

side events.²⁶ Precisely, the Second Committee drafts national and international policy norms specific to economic and development areas related to macroeconomic questions such as international trade, external debt sustainability, financing for development, and the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.²⁷

The Second Committee addresses the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* through policy recommendations that tackle poverty eradication, human settlements, economic growth, globalization, and ICTs.²⁸ To draft recommendations pertinent to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the Second Committee tracks and monitors the progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the reports it mandates to the Secretary-General.²⁹ For example, in the report to the General Assembly on “Macroeconomic Policy Questions: External Debt Sustainability and Development,” the Second Committee requests the Secretary-General to assess the impact of investment requirements on developing states’ external debt sustainability to meet the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.³⁰ Pursuant to this report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/221 on “External Debt Sustainability and Development,” that further requests the Secretary-General to analyze the core indicators on external debt sustainability in developing states, and invites Member States to take the necessary measures to achieve SDG 17.4.³¹ Likewise, the Second Committee supports Member States in enacting legislation and implementing policies that respect international norms.³² For instance, to reinforce the national financing frameworks for sustainable development and mitigate the impact of the fourth revolution on financing in developing states, the Second Committee collaborates with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development and ECOSOC to enact policy recommendations respecting the intergovernmental agreed conclusions on financing for sustainable development and to implement the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.³³

Additionally, General Assembly resolution 72/313 mandates the Second Committee to pursue its mission on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.³⁴ Consequently, the Second Committee continues to reduce duplications in the agendas of the Second and Third Committee, ECOSOC and its substantive bodies, and the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in light of the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.³⁵ The Second Committee also streamlines the overall program of work of the General Assembly by updating working methods and reducing the number and length of draft resolutions.³⁶ Further, the Second Committee may provide directions on special situations including least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS).³⁷ Facing low productive capacity, limited market access and high vulnerability to external shocks, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS are key in attaining the

²⁶ UN General Assembly, *Organization of work of the Second Committee: Note by the Secretariat (A/C.2/73/L.1)*, 2019; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2018-19, 2019*, p. 23.

²⁷ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

²⁸ UN DGC, *Promote Sustainable Development*, 2019.

²⁹ Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Reports of Principal Organs to the General Assembly*, 2019.

³⁰ UN General Assembly, *Macroeconomic policy questions: external debt sustainability and development (A/73/536/Add.3)*, 2018.

³¹ UN General Assembly, *External Debt Sustainability and Development (A/RES/73/221)*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *External Debt Sustainability and Development Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/234)*, 2019.

³² UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

³³ UN General Assembly, *Fourth Industrial Revolution Taken Up in Report of Task Force on Financing for Development (GA/EF/3492)*, 2018.

³⁴ UN General Assembly, *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/72/313)*, 2017.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ UN General Assembly, *Organization of work of the Second Committee: Note by the Secretariat (A/C.2/73/L.1)*, 2018.

³⁷ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019; Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1)*, 2011.

SDGs, especially SDG 1 on the eradication of poverty.³⁸ Moreover, the Second Committee may formulate recommendations related to international social and health issues through cultural and social cooperation, the observance and the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.³⁹

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

During its 73rd session, the Second Committee discussed financing for sustainable development, ICTs for development, and disaster risk reduction (DRR), among other topics.⁴⁰ Notably, Member States reaffirmed climate change as the most important threat to food security and economic development, stressing the need for further investments and financing, South-South and triangular cooperation, and rural and agricultural development that rely on programs supported by institutional measures promoting responsible investment.⁴¹ Furthermore, the Second Committee stressed that bridging the financial gap in achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* requires inclusive and sustainable policies, regulations and incentives that further global partnerships which generate employment, investments, and technology transfers through ICTs.⁴² Further, Member States reaffirmed the role of resilient regional commissions in supporting national capacities to implement DRR practices through integrated policy recommendations, normative support, and technical capacity.⁴³

General Assembly resolution 73/223 on “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development” recalls that financing for sustainable development requires a global financial environment anchored in sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth.⁴⁴ Effectively, the report of the Second Committee to the General Assembly highlights the need for further national resources mobilization, partnerships and international cooperation, and investments in data and capacity.⁴⁵ To that end, the General Assembly recommends Members States to implement the agreed conclusions of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development that tackle a variety of issues such as, but not limited to, debt sustainability, international trade and cooperation, and domestic and international private business and finance, among others.⁴⁶

General Assembly resolution 73/218 on “Information and communications technologies for sustainable development” reaffirms the potential of ICTs to provide new solutions to development challenges that promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and accelerate progress across all 17 SDGs.⁴⁷ Precisely, the Second Committee recommends national and international

³⁸ UN General Assembly, *Least Developed Nations Lagging Behind on Attaining Sustainable Development (GA/EF/3504)*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/69)*, 2019.

³⁹ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁴⁰ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development (A/RES/73/223)*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *Information and communications technologies for sustainable development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: disaster risk reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2019.

⁴¹ UN General Assembly, *Devastating Impacts of Climate Change Threatening Farm Outputs (GA/EF/3499)*, 2018.

⁴² UN General Assembly, *Global Partnerships: Crucial for Progress but Must be tempered By United Nations Values (GA/EF/3505)*, 2018.

⁴³ UN General Assembly, *Regional Commissions Must be Strengthened to Better Assist with Implementing Sustainable Development Agenda (GA/EF/3507)*, 2018.

⁴⁴ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development (A/RES/73/223)*, 2019.

⁴⁵ UN Second Committee, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development Report of the Second Committee (A/73/537)*, 2018.

⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development (A/RES/73/223)*, 2019; UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up (E/FFDF/2018/3)*, 2018.

⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, *Information and communications technologies for sustainable development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2019.

stakeholders to address SDGs by integrating ICTs, and to work in collaboration with UN entities to align their reports and work plans with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.⁴⁸ The Second Committee also acknowledges the increasing importance of the digital economy in the global economy as well as the need to prioritize the participation of all Member States to develop an inclusive global digital market.⁴⁹ Consequently, the Second Committee urges Member States to implement e-commerce initiatives that allow developing states to participate in trade development through electronic exchanges based on internet supply assistance.⁵⁰

The 73rd session addressed another key point through General Assembly resolution 73/231 on “Disaster risk reduction” that further encourages Member States to implement DRR strategies into social, economic, and environmental investments.⁵¹ Likewise, it recommends Member States to conduct infrastructure assessments to strengthen regulatory frameworks for land-use planning, and to build codes to reduce the economic losses caused by the raising number of exposures to environmental hazards.⁵² Moreover, the Second Committee urges Member States to implement and strengthen national disaster loss databases that conduct and develop multi-disaster risk assessments that take into account climate change projections and are supported by evidence-based DRR strategies and risk-informed development investments.⁵³

Conclusion

As an essential component to the functioning of the UN, the Second Committee addresses the international economic and financial priorities, including those established by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.⁵⁴ The Second Committee continues to streamline its work with the overarching goals of improving economic and financial systems worldwide and achieving the SDGs.⁵⁵ In doing so, the Second Committee seeks to utilize emerging trends and innovative ideas to promote the most effective solutions to address financing for development, to utilize technologies such as ICTs to attain the SDGs, and to mitigate the financial and economic costs of natural hazards through the integration of DRR policies by Member States.⁵⁶ The Second Committee will continue to play a pivotal role in advancing efforts to promote sustainable development and address related issues.⁵⁷

Annotated Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945). Retrieved 18 July 2019 from: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html>

As the founding document of the UN, an understanding of the Charter of the United Nations is essential to comprehend the functions and the mandate of the General Assembly and its Second Committee, and of the United Nations as a whole. Delegates may pay attention to the Preamble, and Chapters IV and IX to gain an in-depth understanding of the mandate and the functioning of the Second Committee within the UN system.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: disaster risk reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2019.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁵⁵ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁵⁶ UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2019). *United Nations Handbook 2018-19*. Retrieved 17 July 2019 from: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/peace-rights-and-security/work-with-the-un-and-other-partners/un-handbook-2018-19/>

This handbook provides a comprehensive look at the UN and its principal organs and committees. Delegates can find a detailed explanation of the structure, processes, and procedures of the Main Committees of the General Assembly in this source. The breakdown of the structure, membership, and functionality of these committees is a useful point for delegates to begin their research and gain an overall understanding of where the committee falls within the UN framework. In particular, the detailed listing of all current membership and leadership of key committees, as well as the structure and reporting of subsidiary organs will be a useful starting point for understanding the complicated framework of UN action.

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. (2017). *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. Retrieved 18 July 2019 from: https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-new-york/en/documents/UN_GA_Final.pdf

This guide is a practical introduction to the General Assembly, its different committees, and their relationship with each other and different UN system actors. It provides delegates with a solid, comprehensive, and insightful way to leverage the UN system and staff to its full potential in finding solutions to the issues on the committee's agenda. Its straightforward and practical language provides useful technical information, as well as in-depth coverage of how the UN General Assembly functions throughout its program of work.

United Nations, General Assembly. (2019). *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*. Retrieved 19 July 2019 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/index.shtml>

This website is a useful resource for delegates to gain familiarity with the work of the Second Committee throughout its current session and what has been accomplished in previous sessions. It represents the main platform used by the Committee to give information about its role, functions, and mandate, and it publishes press releases that show the addressed topics with insight from different actors. Delegates may gain knowledge about the Committee's proceedings and the represented countries, and the voting blocs on the topics addressed by the Second Committee.

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I. Financing for Development

“Our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals will require a surge in financing and investments.”⁵⁸

Introduction

Financing for Development (FfD) is defined by the United Nations (UN) as “[m]obilizing and increasing the effective use of financial resources and achieving the national and international economic conditions needed to fulfil internationally agreed development goals.”⁵⁹ Since the start of the FfD process in the early 2000s, these development goals were originally defined as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which lasted from 2000 until 2015, followed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiated by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) beginning in 2015.⁶⁰

Two important tools for FfD within the SDGs are “Official Development Assistance” (ODA) and “Foreign Direct Investment” (FDI).⁶¹ ODA is defined as “government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries.”⁶² A typical example for ODA is the funding of development programming through a bilateral channel, such as a governmental aid agency, or through a multilateral channel such as UN agencies or multilateral development banks (MDBs).⁶³ By contrast, FDI describes “a category of cross-border investment in which an investor resident in one economy establishes a lasting interest in and a significant degree of influence over an enterprise resident in another economy.”⁶⁴ A typical example of FDI is an investor from one country purchasing shares of a company from another.⁶⁵ However, while FDI and ODA represent the more traditional sources of development financing, new instruments and innovations for the mobilization of financial resources are also emerging.⁶⁶

The current UN FfD framework, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) (2015), functions as the financial and economic backbone of the 2030 Agenda, and supports its full implementation.⁶⁷ However, the *Financing for Development Report 2019* (2019) by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development (IATF) states that the progress towards the SDGs is hampered by a lack of funding and investments.⁶⁸ For instance, in the first two quarters of 2018, private investments in infrastructure in developing countries reached \$43.5 billion, which represents only a slight increase compared to the same time frame in previous years, and is still significantly below the 2012 peak of more than \$75 billion.⁶⁹ And even the 2012 peak is not enough to cover the \$1 trillion to \$1.5 trillion annual gap in infrastructure investments in developing countries.⁷⁰ As properly functioning infrastructure is essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries, more action is therefore needed towards the mobilization of financial resources for sustainable development is needed.⁷¹

⁵⁸ UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019, p. vi.

⁵⁹ UN ICFD, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002, p. 5.

⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁶¹ OECD, *Official Development Assistance (ODA): What is ODA?*, 2019, p. 1; OECD, *Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)*, 2019.

⁶² OECD, *Official Development Assistance (ODA): What is ODA?*, 2019, p. 1.

⁶³ OECD, *Development Co-operation Profiles: Trends and insights on development finance*, 2019.

⁶⁴ OECD, *Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)*, 2019.

⁶⁵ OECD, *FDI flows*, 2019.

⁶⁶ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. xviii.

⁶⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 10-11; UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, pp. 1-2, 7.

⁶⁸ UN IATF, *Financing for Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. xvii.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

⁷⁰ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 6.

⁷¹ UN IATF, *Financing for Development Report 2019*, 2019, pp. xvii, 61.

International and Regional Framework

The first proposal for an international conference on FfD was made in 1991 by Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), who then referred the issue to the General Assembly.⁷² While the General Assembly subsequently decided to consider such a conference, it was not until 1998 that the General Assembly in resolution 52/179 on “Global partnership for development: high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development” eventually decided to actually convene a conference on FfD in the new millennium.⁷³

This led to the first International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002 and its outcome document, the *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development* (Monterrey Consensus) (2002).⁷⁴ The goal of this conference was to advance economic and financial policy action on an international, national, and regional level in order to ensure development for all.⁷⁵ The Monterrey Consensus sought to mobilize financial resources for the achievement of the MDGs.⁷⁶ The Monterrey Consensus was subsequently followed by the Second International Conference on Financing for Development, which took place in Doha, Qatar and saw the adoption of the *Doha Declaration on Financing for Development* (“Doha Declaration”).⁷⁷ While the Doha Declaration largely reaffirmed the commitments of the Monterrey Consensus, it also highlighted additional challenges to the FfD process, such as the increasing need for financing climate action, volatile commodity prices, and providing assistance to post-conflict countries.⁷⁸ In addition, the Doha Declaration established another follow-up accountability process for FfD, which culminated in the AAAA in 2015.⁷⁹

The AAAA represents the most recent framework of the FfD process.⁸⁰ Adopted against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda, the AAA identified several cross-cutting issues that link the FfD process to sustainable development.⁸¹ These issues range from “delivering social protection and essential public services for all” to “promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.”⁸² For this purpose, the AAAA highlights seven action areas pertaining to sustainable development: domestic resources, private businesses and finance, international development cooperation, international trade, debt and debt sustainability, systemic issues, and science, technology, innovation and capacity-building.⁸³

Following the adoption of the AAAA, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda with resolution 70/1 (2015), which contains 17 SDGs and stresses the importance of the FfD process for its implementation.⁸⁴ The aim of the SDGs was to provide a concrete, targeted plan for the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of global sustainable development.⁸⁵ Additionally, several cross-cutting

⁷² UN General Assembly, *International conference on the financing of development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/47/575)*, 1992, p. 2; UN ECOSOC, *Resolutions and Decisions of the Economic and Social Council: Second regular session of 1991 (E/1991/91/Add.1)*, 1991 p. 45.

⁷³ UN General Assembly, *Convening of an international conference on the financing of development (A/RES/46/205)*, 1991; UN General Assembly, *Global partnership for development: high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development (A/RES/52/179)*, 1998.

⁷⁴ UN ICFD, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002.

⁷⁵ IMF, *Financing for Development: Revisiting the Monterrey Consensus*, 2015, p. 7.

⁷⁶ UN ICFD, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002, p. 5.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, *Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (A/RES/63/239)*, 2008.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-35.

⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 10.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

issues that are based on the SDGs underpin the AAAA action areas, including gender equality, zero hunger, and social protection among others.⁸⁶

In addition to the 2030 Agenda, the *Paris Agreement* (2015) and the *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (2015) also inform the FfD process.⁸⁷ The *Paris Agreement* highlights the importance of mobilizing climate finance for the realization of the climate action objectives, which are intrinsically linked to sustainable development.⁸⁸ The agreement further draws particular attention to the role developed countries play in mobilizing financial resources for climate action.⁸⁹ Similarly, the Sendai Framework aims to facilitate public and private investments in disaster risk reduction on a national and international level.⁹⁰ As such, the FfD framework seeks to work towards financing and implementing disaster risk management, compatible with the Sendai Framework.⁹¹

Role of the International System

The General Assembly Second Committee functions as one of the main bodies to discuss and ensure accountability of FfD.⁹² It regularly reviews the current progress on FfD and makes recommendations to the plenary session of the General Assembly on the adoption of relevant resolutions, most notably its resolutions on the “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development.”⁹³ Furthermore, the Second Committee deals with various other topics pertaining to the FfD process as part of its agenda item “Macroeconomic policy questions,” including the connection between “International trade and development” in General Assembly resolution 73/219 (2018) and the connection between the “International financial system and development” in General Assembly resolution 73/220 (2018), among other issues.⁹⁴ These agenda items are generally based on the action areas of the AAAA.⁹⁵

The General Assembly also holds the quadrennial High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development.⁹⁶ While the Monterrey Consensus first introduced the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development as the main review mechanism for the FfD process on a biennial basis, the AAAA established that the High-level Dialogue be held after the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the General Assembly, which is only held every four years and colloquially referred to as the “SDG Summit.”⁹⁷ The most recent High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development took place on 26 September 2019 and was the first High-level Dialogue since the adoption of the AAAA and the 2030 Agenda in 2015.⁹⁸ It focused on the financing gap of the SDGs and the mobilization of financial resources for climate action, which thematically links the High-Level Dialogue to the Climate Summit also occurring

⁸⁶ UN IATF, *Cross-cutting issues*, 2019.

⁸⁷ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (A/RES/69/283), 2015; COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

⁸⁸ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, art. 9.

⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (A/RES/69/283), 2015, pp. 14-16.

⁹¹ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313), 2015, p. 11.

⁹² UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.

⁹³ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development* (A/RES/73/223), 2018.

⁹⁴ UN General Assembly, *International trade and development* (A/RES/73/219), 2018; UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development* (A/RES/73/220), 2018.

⁹⁵ UN DESA, *General Assembly*, 2019.

⁹⁶ UN DESA, *High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development: Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

⁹⁷ UN ICFD, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002, p. 22; UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313), 2015, p. 37.

⁹⁸ UN DESA, *High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development: Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

during the High-level Week of the General Assembly's 74th session.⁹⁹ In the political declaration of the 2019 SDG Summit, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to mobilizing “adequate and well-directed” financial resources.¹⁰⁰

Similar to the General Assembly, ECOSOC also regularly discusses FfD as part of its annual Forum on Financing for Development follow-up.¹⁰¹ Like the High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly, the Forum was established in the AAAA with the aim of reviewing the annual progress on FfD and the implementation of the SDGs.¹⁰² The agreed conclusions and recommendations from the Forum inform the follow-up process of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the annual HLPF under ECOSOC.¹⁰³ Additionally, all the Forum's conclusions and recommendations since its inception in 2016 have fed into the 2019 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development.¹⁰⁴ At the most recent Forum on Financing for Development follow-up in April 2019, ECOSOC highlighted several issues that need future focus, including work towards international tax cooperation, the unequal distribution of FDI among African countries, least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), and the slowly decreasing numbers of ODA.¹⁰⁵

Within the Secretariat of the UN, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and its Financing for Sustainable Development Office (FSDO) support the FfD process.¹⁰⁶ FSDO functions as a focal point within the FfD process and coordinates intergovernmental and UN efforts towards achieving sustainable development.¹⁰⁷ FSDO also provides policy analyses and recommendations on actions within the FfD process to both, Member States and the Secretary-General.¹⁰⁸ Convened by Secretary-General as per the AAAA, IATF functions as the main coordinating mechanism within the wider UN system for the FfD follow-up process.¹⁰⁹ IATF provides annual reports about the current developments on FfD and the implementation of the AAAA, with the most recent report being *Financing for Sustainable Development 2019* (2019).¹¹⁰ While FSDO is the substantive lead of IATF's work, other UN bodies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, such as the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), provide substantive input to IATF's reports.¹¹¹

In addition to the work of DESA, FSDO and IATF, the Secretary-General put forward the *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in July 2019.¹¹² This roadmap, together with the Secretary-General's *Strategy for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* from September 2018, seeks to better align UN's work with the areas of action contained within the AAAA.¹¹³ The Secretary-General's strategy establishes three primary objectives: “[a]ligning global economic

⁹⁹ UN DESA, *Preliminary Programme for the General Assembly High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development*, 2019.

¹⁰⁰ UN General Assembly, *Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (A/RES/74/4)*, 2019, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ NGO Committee on Financing for Development, *An Introductory Guide to Financing for Development*, 2018, p. 13.

¹⁰² UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 37.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up (E/FFDF/2019/3)*, 2019, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up (E/FFDF/2019/3)*, 2019, pp. 4-6.

¹⁰⁶ UN DESA, *Financing for Sustainable Development Office*, 2019.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ UN IATF, *About the IATF*, 2019.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*; UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019.

¹¹¹ UN IATF, *About the IATF*, 2019.

¹¹² UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

policies and financial systems with the 2030 Agenda;” “[e]nhancing sustainable financing strategies and investments at regional and country levels;” and “[s]eizing the potential of financial innovations, new technologies and digitalization to provide equitable access to finance.”¹¹⁴ These three objectives are supported by six action areas, which range from integrating the 2030 Agenda and the *Paris Agreement* into policies to speeding up the work of the UN system on development financing.¹¹⁵

International financial institutions (IFIs) and MDBs as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also take up central roles within the FfD process.¹¹⁶ IFIs and MDBs are responsible for the mobilization of public financial resources, provide for financing of projects that are relevant to sustainable development yet are not economically feasible, and have to a large extent already adopted strategies that are in line with the 2030 Agenda and the AAAA.¹¹⁷ In contrast to IFIs and MDBs, OECD works primarily as a policy setting international organization.¹¹⁸ In this context, OECD is at the core of collecting data on FfD and providing concrete policy recommendation to its Member States.¹¹⁹ Within the OECD system, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is responsible for setting policies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.¹²⁰

Additionally, civil society organizations (CSOs), most notably non-governmental organizations (NGO) that provide development programming, also are important actors in the implementation of the FfD process, as DAC countries of OECD often allocate their ODA either to or through CSOs.¹²¹ Many CSOs united their efforts in the Civil Society Financing for Development Group, which, through its Addis Ababa CSO Coordination Group, represents civil society concerns within the FfD follow-up process.¹²² Similarly, the NGO Committee on Financing for Development, as a member of the Addis Ababa CSO Coordination Group, advocates for mobilizing financial resources for sustainable development and empowering developing countries to take part in the FfD process.¹²³

Mobilizing External Financial Resources for Sustainable Development

Official Development Assistance

ODA remains one of the key drivers of financing the 2030 Agenda.¹²⁴ Most of international ODA is provided for by DAC countries of the OECD and has increased over the past decade.¹²⁵ Yet, in 2018, ODA from DAC countries reached a total of \$149.3 billion, which amounts to a decrease of 2.7% from 2017 after inflation adjustment.¹²⁶ This decrease is due to a decline in in-donor refugee costs, the expenses for assisting refugees in donor countries, whose share within total net ODA dropped from 11% in 2016 to 7.3% in 2018.¹²⁷ Therefore not accounting for the decrease of in-donor refugee costs, total net ODA in 2018 has remained relatively stable in comparison to 2017.¹²⁸

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

¹¹⁶ UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/280)*, 2018, pp. 2, 13; OECD, *Financing for sustainable development*, 2019.

¹¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/280)*, 2018, pp. 13-14.

¹¹⁸ OECD, *Who We Are*, 2019.

¹¹⁹ OECD, *Financing for sustainable development*, 2019.

¹²⁰ OECD, *Development Assistance Committee (DAC)*, 2019.

¹²¹ OECD, *Aid for Civil Society Organisations: Statistics based on DAC Members' reporting to the Creditor Reporting System database (CRS), 2016-2017*, 2019, pp. 1-4.

¹²² Civil Society Financing for Development Group, *About*, 2019.

¹²³ NGO Committee on Financing for Development, *NGO Committee on Financing for Development*, 2018.

¹²⁴ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 77.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ UN IATF, *International development cooperation*, 2019.

¹²⁷ Ibid.; OECD, *In-donor refugee costs in ODA*, 2019.

¹²⁸ UN IATF, *International development cooperation*, 2019.

However, in 1970, the General Assembly established in resolution 2626 (XXV) that developed countries should aim to provide at least 0.7% of their gross national incomes (GNI) as ODA to developing countries by 1975.¹²⁹ This target of ODA inflows will help developing countries achieve economic growth and was repeatedly reaffirmed by the international community in the *Monterrey Consensus*, the *Doha Declaration*, and the AAAA, and it is also reflected in SDG target 17.2 (Partnerships for the Goals).¹³⁰ Yet, in 2018, only five out of 28 DAC countries of OECD and 2 of 21 non-DAC developed countries have reached the target of 0.7% of their GNI as ODA.¹³¹ This demonstrates the mismatch between commitments made by the international community, and the actual delivery of ODA to financing sustainable development in developing countries in order to promote their economic growth.¹³² In October 2019, the Group of 77 (G77) introduced a draft resolution on “Promoting investments for sustainable development,” which recognized that “there is a need to reverse the declining trend of [ODA] commitments by donor countries.”¹³³

Foreign Direct Investment

Compared to portfolio investments and cross-border bank loans, FDI represents the largest and most stable portion of private capital flows for developing countries.¹³⁴ FDI can foster economic benefits for developing countries by generating employment, building productive capacity, and enabling the transfer of technical expertise.¹³⁵ Yet since 2015, global FDI inflows, the FDI flows into a country, have decreased steadily from \$2 trillion in 2015 to \$1.3 trillion in 2018.¹³⁶ This stark decline is mostly due to the decrease in FDI inflows into developed countries, since the FDI inflows for developing countries are relatively stable at around \$700 billion in 2018.¹³⁷ However, the FDI inflows to LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS in particular, are in a declining, which could lead to significant impediments in sustainable development for those countries.¹³⁸

There are also several problems associated with FDI, such as the inequality in FDI inflows among developing countries and the misuse of FDI for unsustainable development, as well as overly rigid investment policies, which negatively impact FDI or do not even allow for FDI.¹³⁹ In addition, private investments in sustainable infrastructure remain unchanged despite the many initiatives attempting to facilitate more private investment in sustainable infrastructure.¹⁴⁰ This is mainly due to infrastructure projects, especially within the renewable energy sector, not yet being profitable enough.¹⁴¹

¹²⁹ UN General Assembly, *International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (A/RES/2626(XXV))*, 1970, p. 43.

¹³⁰ OECD, *The 0.7% ODA/GNI target – a history*, 2019; International Conference on Financing for Development, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002, p. 14; UN General Assembly, *Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (A/RES/63/239)*, 2008, p. 12; UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 17; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 26.

¹³¹ OECD, *Official development assistance as a percentage of gross national income (GNI)*, 2019.

¹³² UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, 2019, p. 56.

¹³³ UN General Assembly, *Promoting investments for sustainable development: draft resolution (A/C.2/74/L.4)*, 2019, p. 2.

¹³⁴ UN IATF, *Domestic and international private business and finance*, 2019.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2019*, 2019, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³⁸ UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 13-14; UN General Assembly, *Promoting investments for sustainable development: draft resolution (A/C.2/74/L.4)*, 2019, p. 2.

¹³⁹ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 60; UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 15-21.

¹⁴⁰ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 61-62.

¹⁴¹ Griffith-Jones & Leistner, *Mobilising Capital for Sustainable Infrastructure: The Cases of the AIIB and the NDB*, 2019, p. 2.

Blended Finance

One approach to ensuring profitability of sustainable infrastructure projects is blended finance.¹⁴² Blended finance is defined as the use of ODA or other means of development finance to leverage additional private financial resources, including FDI, for sustainable development in developing countries.¹⁴³ The AAAA first set up the principles on blended finance, which include sharing risks and benefits fairly among project partners, establishing transparent accountability measures, and complying with the social and environmental standards.¹⁴⁴ These principles are complemented by the OECD DAC “Blended Finance Principles” which include, among others, the prioritization of local development needs.¹⁴⁵ However, the OECD report on *Blended Finance in the Least Developed Countries 2019* (2019) showed that blended finance is not as effective for LDCs as it is for other developing countries, since some LDCs are not able to mobilize any private investment from development financing whatsoever.¹⁴⁶ This shows that the existing FfD framework is not providing enough support for LDCs to mobilize enough financial resources for achieving sustainable development.¹⁴⁷

Financial Innovations in Financing for Development

The international financial system is currently undergoing processes of market disruption due to the emergence of innovative financial technology (fintech) and digitalization in finance.¹⁴⁸ Fintech encompasses a variety of technologies, such as mobile payments, machine learning, big data, and cryptocurrencies.¹⁴⁹ Fintech can help providing financial services to marginalized people and thereby contribute towards financial inclusion and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.¹⁵⁰ For example, fintech allows for lower transaction costs of remittances by migrant workers, which the UN defines as funds “sent by people living and working abroad to their home countries.”¹⁵¹ Total global remittances rose from \$633 billion in 2017 to \$689 billion in 2018 and, for developing countries, now amount to more than three times the volume of ODA.¹⁵² While remittances are not comparable to ODA or FDI in that remittances simply represent personal financial sources, they can still contribute to the development of a country’s economy when used as investments in small businesses or education.¹⁵³ However, the average transaction costs for remittances currently remains at around 7%, and in some regional corridors, in particular in African corridors as well as SIDS, even amounted to 10%.¹⁵⁴ Only mobile remittances service providers from the fintech industry currently allow for transaction costs at approximately 3%, which meets the goals of both the AAAA and SDG target 10.10.c (“Reduce inequality within and among countries”), and thus provide for

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ OECD, *OECD DAC Blended Finance Principles for Unlocking Commercial Finance for the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, pp. 15-16.

¹⁴⁵ OECD, *OECD DAC Blended Finance Principles for Unlocking Commercial Finance for the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018, p. 5.

¹⁴⁶ OECD, *Blended Finance in the Least Developed Countries 2019*, 2019, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 60.

¹⁴⁸ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 67.

¹⁴⁹ UN DFTF, *Harnessing Digitalization in Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals: Co-Chairs’ Progress Report to the Secretary-General of the Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2019, p. 20.

¹⁵⁰ UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 154-158.

¹⁵¹ UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/73/280)*, 2018, p. 13; UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 63; OECD, *Non-ODA flows to developing countries: Remittances*, 2019.

¹⁵² UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, 2019, p. 57.

¹⁵³ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/260)*, 2019, p. 9; UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 62-63.

¹⁵⁴ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, 2019, p. 57.

the financial inclusion of marginalized people.¹⁵⁵ In this context, the G77 introduced a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly Second Committee on “Financial inclusion for sustainable development” in October 2019, which highlights the potential positive contribution of fintech to financial inclusion through the reduction of remittance transaction costs.¹⁵⁶

Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General launched the “Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals,” also referred to as the “Digital Financing Task Force” (DFTF), in November 2018.¹⁵⁷ In its 2019 progress report, DFTF addressed the benefits and opportunities of digitalization in finance as well as the risks associated with it and how the current regulatory framework impacts its further development.¹⁵⁸ While ECOSOC’s “Forum for Financing for Development” already recognized the importance of fintech in 2018, the G77 only just introduced a draft resolution to the Second Committee in October 2019 which takes note of the risks of fintech.¹⁵⁹ Addressing the benefits and risks associated with fintech is particularly important, as the Secretary-General highlighted in his 2019 report on the “International financial system and development” (A/74/168) to the Second Committee that the current international financial framework does not appropriately regulate fintech actors and products.¹⁶⁰

Conclusion

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an ambitious development plan and financing the progress towards the SDGs will be key to achieving the 2030 Agenda.¹⁶¹ However, the UN IATF *Financing Sustainable Development Report 2019* (2019) showed that many financing gaps to effective FfD remain, and that current financing efforts are insufficient.¹⁶² The ODA is falling behind the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda and the AAAA, while FDI inflows, although remaining relatively stable for developing countries, are unequally distributed and investments in sustainable infrastructure is lacking.¹⁶³ Similarly, remittances from migrant workers still face the hurdle of high transaction costs, preventing them from becoming more impactful for sustainable development.¹⁶⁴ With these current trends and the advancements in fintech, it becomes apparent that further regulatory steps and appropriate policy initiatives on a global scale from the General Assembly are necessary to facilitate financing for sustainable development.¹⁶⁵

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates should first look to understand the structures of the FfD process: What role does the General Assembly Second Committee play within the FfD process? What are the

¹⁵⁵ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 13; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 21.

¹⁵⁶ UN General Assembly, *Financial inclusion for sustainable development: draft resolution (A/C.2/74/L.23)*, 2019, p. 4.

¹⁵⁷ UN DFTF, *United Nations Secretary-General’s Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals: Framework Document*, 2019, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ UN DFTF, *Harnessing Digitalization in Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals: Co-Chairs’ Progress Report to the Secretary-General of the Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2019, p. 20; UN DFTF, *United Nations Secretary-General’s Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals: Framework Document*, 2019, pp. 2-3.

¹⁵⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up (E/FFDF/2018/3)*, 2018, pp. 6-7; UN General Assembly, [International financial system and development: draft resolution \(A/C.2/74/L.14\)](#), 2019, p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/168)*, 2019, p. 13.

¹⁶¹ UNDP, *Financing the 2030 Agenda: An Introductory Guidebook for UNDP Country Offices*, 2018, p. 6.

¹⁶² UN IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. xvii.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-94.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-94.

¹⁶⁵ UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019, pp. 1-7.

interlinkages between the General Assembly and ECOSOC? How does ECOSOC's work inform the General Assembly's work? Looking at mobilizing external financial resources, what are the developments in other aspects of the FfD process, such as domestic resource mobilization, international trade, or external debt among others? Are there other innovations that currently are emerging and might be beneficial for financing sustainable development? Additionally, what are the risks and benefits of blended finance? How can the risks of blended finance be mitigated? As per SDG 5, which aims to "[a]chieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," how can a gender perspective be mainstreamed into the FfD process? Are there any examples for a regulatory framework that allows for a profitable use of fintech for sustainable development, yet addresses its risks?

Annotated Bibliography

NGO Committee on Financing for Development. (2018). *An Introductory Guide to Financing for Development*. Retrieved 16 July 2019 from: <http://www.ngosonffd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/An-Introductory-Guide-to-Financing-for-Development.pdf>

This publication has been provided by the NGO Committee on Financing for Development, a committee composed of various non-governmental organizations to promote a civil society perspective on sustainable development. With this publication, the Committee provides a brief overview over key aspects of the FfD process, and highlights some of the more critical aspects of the FfD process within the UN system, such as the focus on mobilizing private finance for sustainable development within the AAAA. This document will provide a useful overview over the FfD topic and provide a solid basis for delegate's further research.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2019). *World Investment Report 2019*. Retrieved 23 August 2019 from: https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wir2019_overview_en.pdf

The World Investment Report 2019 is issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It covers four sections: global trends in investments, regional trends in investments, the current situation of global investment policies, and special economic zones. While the thematic focus of this report are special economic zones, this report is will be useful for delegates as it details the current trends in global and regional investments as well as in investment policy. This report also showcases various statistics of FDI flows, which ultimately inform the success of financing for sustainable development.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development: Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 24 August 2019 from: <https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffdialoque/#home>

This website for the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development is operated by DESA and its FSDO. It presents an overview over the program of the High-level Dialogue, its outcome document, and various supporting documents. Since the High-level Dialogue will be the first one since the adoption of the AAAA in 2015, this event will be important for delegates to consider in their research. This website can provide delegates with a starting point for their research into FfD from the perspective of the General Assembly.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2019). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*. Retrieved 23 August 2019 from: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2019.pdf>

The Sustainable Development Goals Report is a yearly publication by the Statistics Division of DESA. It showcases the current progress towards the achievement of the SDGs and highlights areas where further action for sustainable development is needed. In the context of this report, SDG 17 "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" is of highest relevance for

delegates researching the role of FfD, in particular mobilizing external financial resources for sustainable development.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). [Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development \(A/RES/73/223\)](#). Adopted on the report of the Second Committee (A/73/537). Retrieved 22 August 2019 from:

<https://undocs.org/A/RES/73/223>

In this resolution, the General Assembly highlights and takes note of the work of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, as well as the Global Infrastructure Forum. It further requests that the Secretary-General compile the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of all of the reports of the IATF, as well as all of the agreed conclusions and recommendations of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, into one summary report to be presented at the 2019 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development of the General Assembly. This resolution functions mainly as a review of the current financing for development process, and delegates will find it useful as a starting point for their further research on Second Committee priorities for development financing.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). [International financial system and development \(A/RES/73/220\)](#). Adopted on the report of the Second Committee (A/73/536/Add.2).

Retrieved 22 August 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/220>

The General Assembly annually adopts a resolution on the relationship between the “International financial system and development” under the agenda item “Macroeconomic policy questions.” This resolution highlights the importance of reforming the international financial system to adapt to the growing needs for financing sustainable development and provides concrete recommendations thereon. It is therefore crucial for delegates to consider the work of the international community on this topic, as it directly links to the AAAA and its action areas. Additionally, delegates might look to this resolution to identify further important actors within the FfD process.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session. (2019). [Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development: Report of the Secretary-General \(A/74/260\)](#). Retrieved 17 September 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/74/260>

Per General Assembly resolution 73/223 (2018) on the “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development,” the Secretary-General was requested to create a synthesis report, compiling all the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of all IATF reports as well as the outcome documents of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up. This synthesis report was presented at the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development and showcases the most important developments within the FfD process over the past four years. Delegates will profit from reading this report, as it helps them visualize the end goal of follow-up process for FfD.

United Nations, Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development. (2019). *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*. Retrieved 21 August 2019 from:

<https://developmentfinance.un.org/sites/developmentfinance.un.org/files/FSDR2019.pdf>

The Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019 is the fourth report by IATF on the current progress on development financing. This report is divided into four sections: two thematic sections and two sections reviewing the current developments in FfD. Within this publication, IATF also provides recommendations on the further course of action. It is important for delegates to review this document as it explains key challenges and issues that the FfD process faces, and provides a number of best practice examples.

United Nations, Secretary-General. (2019). *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 22 August 2019 from: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/UN-SG-Roadmap-Financing-the-SDGs-July-2019.pdf>

The Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents the Secretary-General's attempt at providing a concrete plan of action for the mobilization of financial resources for sustainable development. The roadmap provides specific action areas and key asks and highlights priority areas and current initiatives by the UN system on FfD. Delegates will find this document useful as the key asks contained in the roadmap function as concrete policy recommendations for a number of actors within the FfD process.

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II. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Development

Introduction

During its 73rd session, the Second Committee highlighted that information and communication technologies (ICTs) facilitate financing and economic opportunities for sustainable development, and enable global connectedness and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.¹⁶⁶ ICTs exist in two categories of usage; the instrumental usage that sustains capacity-building, education and governmental policy reforms, and the industrial usage that creates economic opportunities through software, hardware and communication services.¹⁶⁷ ICTs include, but are not limited to broadband and internet services, mobile and computer devices, and software for communication.¹⁶⁸ Access and use of ICTs grants the opportunity to participate in the digital world and contribute to the digital economy.¹⁶⁹ ICTs can be harnessed to promote inclusive economies through expanding participation in the digital economy and e-commerce.¹⁷⁰ This strengthens international trade, promotes capacity-building for economic opportunity and development, and increases employment opportunity and the employability of individuals.¹⁷¹ The Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) acknowledges General Assembly resolution 70/125 (2015) that highlights the cross-cutting contributions of ICTs to development.¹⁷² Additionally, ICTs impact development challenges such as financing for development by encouraging investments and partnerships from all levels of government, private partnerships, and civil societies.¹⁷³

Digitalization allows for increased participation in business platforms, online financial services, competitive markets, and education training.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, it holds an essential role in fostering Information Societies, which are outlined as societies geared towards the sharing of knowledge and information, which improves global connectedness.¹⁷⁵ Further, digitalization allows access to internet services, information and data on a global scale.¹⁷⁶ Information Societies accelerate progress towards sustainable development by addressing social and economic structural imbalances within the international community.¹⁷⁷ These Information Societies integrate e-strategies, specifically e-government and e-economies that target opportunities in strengthening financial systems.¹⁷⁸ E-strategies promote international cooperation through the strengthening of partnerships between governments, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address the distribution of ICT resources.¹⁷⁹

¹⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

¹⁶⁷ ITU, *Visions of the Information Societies, The Nature of Information Society: A Developing World Perspective*, 2003.

¹⁶⁸ ITU, *The ICT Development Index: Methodology, Indicators, and Definitions*, 2019.

¹⁶⁹ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

¹⁷⁰ IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 6.

¹⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.

¹⁷² UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

¹⁷⁵ WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

¹⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.

¹⁷⁷ WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

However, there are a number of considerations that impact the implementation of ICTs; including, the creation of transnational policy agendas, cybersecurity and exploitation, and the digital divide.¹⁸⁰ The digital divide is a significant barrier to the integration and implementation of ICTs, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS).¹⁸¹ Within the UN system, this digital divide denotes those who have access to ICTs identified as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage and those who do not.¹⁸² Many developed countries continue to advance their use of ICTs with newly patented equipment and improved services, such as 5G networks.¹⁸³ In comparison to developing regions, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS have limited access to these new technologies and remain limited to ICT tools such as basic mobile and internet connections, and may lack proficient training on how to use these products and services.¹⁸⁴ Developing regions often face, additional barriers such as challenging geographical terrain, social and economic inequalities, and particularly isolated communities; this disproportionately impacts women, and youth, who remain the lowest subscribed users of the population in developing regions.¹⁸⁵

International and Regional Framework

The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) (2015) emphasizes that investing in economic resources that promote capacity-building and economic growth creates an enabling environment that promotes empowerment, equitable economic growth, and sustainable development.¹⁸⁶ Additionally, the AAAA encourages the creation of policies and frameworks that promote investments in ICTs, and bridges to strengthen public-private partnerships (PPPs) and partnerships between governmental bodies.¹⁸⁷ Second, the 2003 WSIS and 2005 WSIS reaffirm the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples to sustainable livelihoods and well-being.¹⁸⁸ This collaboration of the international community provided a global alignment for generating access, use, and sharing of knowledge, with the common desire to regulate ICTs for universal benefit.¹⁸⁹ The WSIS resulted in two outcome documents: the *Declaration of Principles* (2003), the *Tunis Commitment* (2005) and the *Tunis Agenda* (2005).¹⁹⁰ The *Declaration of Principles* underlines the relationship between the development of ICTs and societies, and improved quality of life for all.¹⁹¹ Through addressing international cooperation and partnerships, access to knowledge, and fostering enabling environments, ICTs enhance sustainable development and increase human productivity, economic growth and employability.¹⁹² The *Tunis Commitment* and the *Tunis Agenda* address internet governance, policy recommendations, and mechanisms for financing to encourage the implementation of ICT resources for sustainable development.¹⁹³ These documents note that the cost of ICTs and attaining sustainable funding for ICTs would help in the implementation process and bridge the digital divide.¹⁹⁴ The digital divide presents the challenge in integrating ICTs into regions that lack basic

¹⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2015.

¹⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

¹⁸² UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.

¹⁸³ UN General Assembly, *Impact of rapid technology change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/72/242)*, 2018.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.

¹⁸⁶ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.; WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.

¹⁹¹ WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

access, infrastructure, and skill sets for utilization.¹⁹⁵ As ICTs evolve, this creates a larger divide between developed countries, with resources to attain these tools, and developing countries who lack the financial structure.¹⁹⁶

In addition to the outcome documents of the WSIS, an annual forum was formed to discuss the implementation of the commitments, and in recent years, the role of ICTs in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹⁹⁷ An outcome of the 2016 WSIS Forum was the creation of the WSIS Action Lines and a supporting SDGs Matrix which outlines the role of ICTs in each SDG, and the influence in advancing sustainable development.¹⁹⁸ Examples include the utilization of ICTs for weather forecasting to send early warning signs that increase preparedness against natural hydro metrological related disasters.¹⁹⁹ This was successfully implemented by Member States which assisted in reducing vulnerability to climate-related hazards, and targeted SDG 13.3 by improving education and institutional capacities on climate mitigation and early warning.²⁰⁰

Role of the International System

As a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) studies the relationship between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda.²⁰¹ The priority theme of the 22nd session of CSTD examined “the impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development.”²⁰² Although emerging ICTs accelerate the pace towards achieving the SDGs, ITCs may disrupt markets and widen existing economic and social gaps. Monitoring this negative impact of ICTs aligns with the objective outlined in the 74th session of the Second Committee, to coordinate the role of new technologies in sustainable development.²⁰³ This includes the development of governmental strategies and policy recommendations that address investments needed in infrastructure, capacity-building, and financial systems.²⁰⁴

The annual WSIS Forum is a collaboration of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Committee on Trade (UNCTAD).²⁰⁵ The WSIS Forum highlights key themes including; economic growth opportunities, strengthening governance of the digital world, and ICTs for sustainable development.²⁰⁶ The WSIS is further supported through reports presented by these agencies, for example, UNCTAD’s Information Economy Report from 2017 that draws the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies.²⁰⁷ The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) facilitates this collaboration by engaging various stakeholders to discuss public policy regarding issues and opportunities related to the internet.²⁰⁸ A 2018 IGF report highlights the increasing number of publicly available free internet access points to encourage the use of

¹⁹⁵ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

¹⁹⁶ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

¹⁹⁷ UN DESA, *WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*, 2019.

¹⁹⁸ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

¹⁹⁹ UN DESA, *WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*, 2019.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ UN ECOSOC, *Science, Technology, and Innovation for Development*, 2019.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

²⁰⁶ WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.

²⁰⁷ UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

²⁰⁸ WSIS, *Tunis Agenda*, 2005.

ICTs for social and economic development and global connectedness.²⁰⁹ To that effect, Open Educational Resources (OER), which are freely accessible digital resources for learning, sharing, and teaching, allow for public access to information, and inclusion through digitalization.²¹⁰ The utilization of public domain content, existing under open-licenses, OER permits for no-cost access to learning, research, and information.²¹¹ This initiative enables capacity-building efforts and enhances ICT skills.²¹² The United Nations Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies is an example of how ICT innovations bring a positive impact on the social and economic development of countries.²¹³

Similarly, ITU works to accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs; notably by coordinating and developing international standards alongside the private sector, governments, and CSOs.²¹⁴ ITU also assists efforts to establish affordable and accessible ICTs by promoting opportunities on economic and sustainable development.²¹⁵ For example, ITU launched the ITU-McCaw Foundation Broadband Wireless Network Project for Africa that implements broadband wireless networks with ICT applications at affordable rates within hospitals and remote areas.²¹⁶ This improved the efficiency of the health care systems and enhanced national e-strategies, specifically e-health.²¹⁷ Such projects reduce the financing barrier faced by LDCs to implement ICTs in remote areas by partnering with organizations that can bring in resources, ensuring improved accessibility and capacity for individuals in the community.²¹⁸ Additionally, ITU leads studies that examine International Internet Connectivity (IIC) by conducting research on Internet Service Providers (ISP), the connectedness between countries, and the barriers faced by LDCs.²¹⁹ Internet cost inflation due to high traffic in areas with lower proportions of ISPs, prompted the IIC to establish an international standard to connect local Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) with local communities to reduce traffic and internet costs.²²⁰ These hubs improve global connectedness all while reducing the digital divide and increasing affordability in isolated regions.²²¹

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) commits to the creation and advancement of Inclusive and Sustainable Development through forming knowledge and capacity-building frameworks centered around the development of ICT skills and development.²²² The outcomes of these initiatives enhance employment, food security, well-being, and create a sustainable livelihood.²²³ An example of this is recognized within the agricultural communities of LDCs where women account for 70% of the agriculture labor force and contribute significantly towards the socio-economic development of the regions that surround them.²²⁴ UNIDO's Agribusiness Development Branch assists in the development of agriculture to generate employment, address food security, and promote entrepreneurship.²²⁵

²⁰⁹ IGF, *IGF 2018 Messages – Development, Innovation, and Economic Issues*, 2018.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ UNESCO, *Building Knowledge Societies, Open Educational Resources (OER)*, 2019.

²¹² UNESCO, *Intergovernmental Expert Meeting adopts revised Draft Recommendation on Open Education Resources*, 2019.

²¹³ UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

²¹⁴ ITU, *ITU's approach to using ICTs to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p. 9.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ ITU, *International Internet Connectivity*, 2016.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² UNIDO, *Introduction to Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development*, 2015.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ UNIDO, *Agribusiness Development: Transforming rural life to create wealth*, 2013, p. 25.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

Bridging the Digital and Knowledge Divide

ITU reports that 4.3 billion people still remain offline or have limited access to ICTs.²²⁶ Those who are offline have no access to ICT tools such as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage.²²⁷ Other obstacles in the divide are the quality of broadband connection, distance between towers in local regions, and the associated costs in attaining these ICTs.²²⁸ Statistics show that the divide is predominantly present between developed countries, and LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs.²²⁹ Within developing states these barriers are increased by factors such as geographical isolation, urbanization, and gender inequalities which constrain the instrumental and industrial use of ICTs.²³⁰ The existence of the digital divide further results in a knowledge divide, a lack of technological literacy, inadequate proficiency in the use of ICTs, and inability to access readily available information online.²³¹ Closing the digital and knowledge divide stimulates economic growth by enabling inclusive economic participation, which expands global e-commerce markets.²³² The expansion of global e-commerce translates to greater engagement and opportunity at regional levels.²³³ UNCTAD reports that emerging economies largely contribute to increasing global e-commerce and international trade by expanding the international flow of goods and services, and sustaining economic growth.²³⁴

The World Bank suggests that increasing global connectedness and financial growth through ensuring participation in the digital economy, can be achieved by providing telephone and internet services.²³⁵ This will increase opportunities in international trade, economic and social development, and lift developing regions out of poverty.²³⁶ Additionally, it will allow for the development of capacity through technology literacy and proficiency, and provide new employment opportunities.²³⁷ The ability to understand how to use a telephone or navigate the internet also builds on the foundation of Information Societies which encourage the creation of national and international e-strategies.²³⁸ These e-strategies promote dialogue in areas for development that influence trade, health, agriculture, education; but, most importantly logistics in harnessing ICT resources.²³⁹ For developing countries, this provides opportunities for policy recommendations and partnerships with developed states and private investors to lay the groundwork for commerce and innovation.²⁴⁰

The development of new ICTs creates a large amount of e-waste as the ICTs once utilized in developed countries are not being reused or disposed of in sustainable and environmentally conscious ways.²⁴¹ This leaves a considerable environmental imprint, but also a missed opportunity to share these resources.²⁴² In 2016 alone, 44.7 million metric tons of e-waste was generated, and only 8.9 million tons were collected and managed.²⁴³ Encouraging the re-use of ICT devices through global partnerships enables digital

²²⁶ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016.

²²⁷ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.

²²⁸ IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019.

²²⁹ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.

²³² IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019.

²³³ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²³⁴ UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

²³⁵ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²³⁶ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²³⁷ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (E/RES/2018/28)*, 2018.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ ITU, *Handbook for the Development of a Policy Framework on ICT/E-waste*, 2018.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

inclusion and tackles the barrier of financial access by providing affordable costs for these reused devices.²⁴⁴ The joint efforts from International Solid Waste Organization (ISWA), United Nations University, and ITU established the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership that collects worldwide e-waste statistics to track e-waste and influence international and regional capacities to work together in utilizing these unused ICT devices.²⁴⁵ These statistics assist in evaluating the number of unused ICT industrial tools in order to increase their life cycle.²⁴⁶ This addresses opportunities in closing the digital and knowledge divide by encouraging the recycling and reusing of ICT industrial tools for capacity-building and economic growth in regions who currently do not have access to these resources.²⁴⁷

Challenges in Financing ICTs for Development

Attaining sustainable financing and investments, investing in ICTs for development to stimulate trade, and creating economic growth opportunity remain some of the largest challenges in achieving the SDGs.²⁴⁸ The lack of funding for ICT initiatives increases the strain on already existing financial systems, resulting in a greater challenge to promote sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.²⁴⁹ During the 74th session of the Second Committee, the integration of financial mechanisms to fund ICTs, increasing partnerships with private investors, and civil society was deemed critical for accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda.²⁵⁰

The Secretary-General's Strategy for Financing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* further emphasizes the importance of transforming financial systems by addressing current financial constraints and focusing on three main objectives.²⁵¹ First, by aligning global economic policies and economic systems between developed and developing Member States to support the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.²⁵² Second, by improving current financial strategies and investments at all levels of government, with emphasis on inclusivity for all Member States, by considering affordability and availability of resources.²⁵³ And last, by investing in financial innovations, technologies, and digitalization in order to ensure an equitable environment for development and economic opportunity.²⁵⁴ Further attention and development is required on international financing strategies that enable cooperative development and align with regional governments in order to resolve the lack of resources by Member States.²⁵⁵ Investments must be focused on exploring all means of implementation, most importantly ICTs.²⁵⁶ The *Tunis Agenda for Information Societies* details the importance of commitment from all levels of government, the international community, PPPs, and stakeholders to achieve access to all people so that all may benefit from ICTs.²⁵⁷ Considering the review of the implementation of the WSIS, quickly adapting financial mechanisms for ICT infrastructure is necessary to maintain progress towards the 2030 Agenda.²⁵⁸

The Task Force on Financial Mechanism reviews existing financial mechanisms that meet the challenges in ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 3-7.

²⁴⁹ UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

²⁵⁰ UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.

²⁵¹ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²⁵² UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.

²⁵⁸ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

sustainable development.²⁵⁹ Affordability of ICTs remains a challenge particularly for developing countries that lack the resources and depend on the international community to invest in their infrastructure.²⁶⁰ This dependency holds the potential risk of increasing international debt and an unsustainable foundation for financing.²⁶¹ The ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF), a partnership between Members of ITU, the public and private sector, and financial agencies, works to accelerate sustainable development by co-financing multilateral ICT development projects.²⁶² An example of this success is the partnership of Member States in assisting the establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications.²⁶³ This initiative allowed for the introduction of computerized systems for management, capacity-building for skills training, and the creation of interconnection policies which regulate radio communications, broadcasting, carrier and service providers, and costs.²⁶⁴ The Second Committee advocates for developing broadband for all; however, in order to implement this on a global scale, industrial infrastructure and instruments for ICT must become more affordable.²⁶⁵ This includes hardware, software, cellular towers, routers, equipment, and power boxes or generators.²⁶⁶ Without the infrastructure to sustain the usage of ICTs, they will not be viable, and their operations will have no effect on social or economic development.²⁶⁷

Conclusion

ICTs are critical enablers of economic and social development, and catalysts in the achieving the 2030 Agenda.²⁶⁸ Utilizing ICTs sustains inclusive digitalization that stimulates digital economy and a diverse e-commerce market.²⁶⁹ This promotes economic growth, in addition to expanding trade and global value chains which supplement regional economic opportunities.²⁷⁰ This can only be accomplished through the instrumental use of ICTs that promote capacity-building efforts that will boost technology literacy and understanding.²⁷¹ Additionally, the promotion of ICTs develops Information Societies where the sharing of knowledge and information creates an increasingly connected world, with readily available data online.²⁷² This translates into stronger cooperation for financial and economic policies that will continue to strengthen the global economy, in addition to development of financial strategies and mechanisms required to ensure realistic implementation of ICT initiatives.²⁷³ However, incorporation of ICTs for all continues to face challenges in bridging the digital divide, securing global financing, and establishing cooperative ICT development policies.²⁷⁴ The 74th session of the Second Committee, focused on the follow-up of the WSIS, and the implementation of ICTs at regional levels of government.²⁷⁵ This is most

²⁵⁹ ITU, *The Report of the Task Force on Financing Mechanisms for ICT for Development*, 2004.

²⁶⁰ IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 16.

²⁶¹ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²⁶² ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects*, 2019.

²⁶³ ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects: Assistance for the Establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications in East Timor*, 2011.

²⁶⁴ ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects: Assistance for the Establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications in East Timor*, 2011.

²⁶⁵ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

²⁶⁸ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

²⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

²⁷² WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

²⁷³ UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

²⁷⁴ ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

²⁷⁵ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

important in ensuring inclusive participation and policy adaptability for Member States.²⁷⁶ Additionally, urgency is noted in strengthening international financial systems to ensure financial inclusion and management, and progress is continued towards the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.²⁷⁷

Further Research

As delegates continue their research, they should consider the following questions: What other challenges may the international community face in financing ICTs for sustainable development? What more can be achieved to integrate ICTs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs? Are there other mechanisms that reduce the digital and knowledge divide? How does debt management influence the global financing system, and what can be done to address this? How can e-waste be recycled or reused to assist with providing ICT access and use? What role do regional governments, public and private sector, and civil societies play in financing ICTs for sustainable development?

Annotated Bibliography

Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development. (2019). *Financing for Sustainable Development Report*. Retrieved 20 September 2019 from: <https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2019>

This report highlights the current status of global financing for sustainable development. It breaks down the trends, challenges, and opportunities in the UN financial system, and provides insight to a multitude of key financing insights. This source will be useful for delegates in understanding the current structure of global financing, and key factors challenging the system. Additionally, it outlines the role of ICTs, e-commerce, and international trade in accelerating the economy and the 2030 Agenda.

International Telecommunication Union. (2016). *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*. Retrieved 16 August 2019 from:

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2016/Content/documents/outcomes/WSISForum2016—WSISActionLinesSupportingImplementationSDGs.pdf>

The WSIS Action Lines provides direct linkages between ICTs development, the WSIS Action Plan, and the 17 SDGs. This source outlines the influence of ICTs on the 2030 Agenda in addition to providing examples about the individual goals. Additionally, it discusses the role regional governments, multi-stakeholders, public and private partnerships, and investments in promoting ICTs for development. Delegates will find this source helpful in understanding the relationship between ICTs and implementing SDGs.

International Telecommunication Union. (2019). *The ICT Development Index: Methodology, Indicators, and Definitions*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/statistics/ITU%20Development%20Index.pdf>

This source provides an understanding of the measurement tools, analysis, and definitions for the consideration of ICT development. The methodologies used within this source provides a technical understanding of terminology, and measurable tools of usage. It focuses on individualizing the components used towards accessing the integration of ICTs within communities. This source will assist delegates in grasping the timeline, and the current development track of ICTs on a global scale.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Outcome Document of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/125>

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

The source showcases the current initiatives taking place within the UN system surrounding ICTs and their influence in progressing global sustainable development. This resolution lists the collaboration among different bodies within the UN system, private partnerships, and civil societies. In consideration of the topic, delegates may find this provides a detailed overview of the current work the General Assembly is contributing to implementation. This source also provides insight to the progress made in implementing the items from WSIS. Additionally, there is explanation of the linkages between ICTs and sustainable development.

World Summit on the Information Society. (2003). *Declaration of Principles*. Retrieved 14 August 2019 from: <https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/7.html>

This declaration represents the foundation of the commitment from the UN body of the common desire in recognizing ICTs as enablers of sustainable development. Within this source you will also find the call for all UN entities, governmental bodies, and civil societies to work towards the creation of policy to support these objectives. For delegates this source aids in providing insight to the root of current implementation initiatives, and the calls to actions that shape current strategies.

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International Telecommunication Union. (2019). *ICT Development Fund Projects*. Retrieved 18 September 2019 from: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Projects/Pages/ICT-DF.aspx?Status&Theme&Region&Country&ICTDF=1&Keyword>

International Telecommunication Union. (2019). *The ICT Development Index: Methodology, Indicators, and Definitions*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/statistics/ITU_ICT%20Development%20Index.pdf

Internet Governance Forum. (2018). *IGF 2018 Messages – Development, Innovation, and Economic Issues*. Retrieved 22 August 2019 from: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/6037/1409

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III. Disaster Risk Reduction

Introduction

Over the past 10 years, disasters have affected more than 1.5 billion people globally, and led to casualties, displacement, and large-scale economic, social, and environmental consequences.²⁷⁸ The cost of disasters has amounted to more than \$1.3 trillion in recovery efforts worldwide over the past decade, including the rebuilding of infrastructure as well as the restoration of social services and local markets.²⁷⁹ The United Nations (UN) defines disaster risk reduction as the “concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and reduce the casual factors of disasters.”²⁸⁰ The goal of disaster risk reduction is to decrease the destruction caused by events such as floods, droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis through preventative practices.²⁸¹ As the UN uses both “natural hazards” and “disasters” to refer to these events, it is important to distinguish between the two terms.²⁸² While “[n]atural hazards are severe and extreme weather and climate events,” disasters result from the destruction of people’s lives and livelihoods as a direct consequence of natural hazards.²⁸³ In this context, disaster risk management is defined as “the systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills/capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities; in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards, and the possibility of disaster.”²⁸⁴ The activities of disaster risk management are related to the prevention and mitigation of the negative impacts of hazards and resulting disasters, as well as increasing preparedness to effectively respond and recover from further hazards and disasters.²⁸⁵

Disasters also present a threat to sustainable development as states which are trapped in an endless cycle of trying to respond to and recover from disasters are then unable to focus on sustainable development, particular those states with already limited infrastructure capacity.²⁸⁶ The 2015 *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (Sendai Framework) represents the current UN framework document on disaster risk reduction.²⁸⁷ The goals of the Sendai Framework also recognize climate change as a driver of disaster risk, and emphasize the importance of good governance for disaster risk reduction.²⁸⁸ In this context, the Sendai Framework calls for the creation and effective implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction plans by 2020.²⁸⁹ Additionally, it notes that by recognizing the economic consequences of disasters and planning response in advance, the impacts of disasters can be minimized or reduced.²⁹⁰

International and Regional Framework

The first global framework document on disaster risk reduction was the *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*, which was adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 1994 and set out the first disaster risk reduction principles, a plan action for disaster risk reduction, and

²⁷⁸ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 2.

²⁷⁹ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019; UNDP, *Planning and implementing recovery*, 2019.

²⁸⁰ UNDRR, *What is Disaster Risk Reduction?*, 2019.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ WMO, *Natural hazards and disaster risk reduction*, 2019.

²⁸⁴ UNOOSA, *Risks and Disasters*, 2019.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 11.

²⁸⁷ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 2.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7; Planitz, Sendai Target E: Just One More Year to Go, *UNDP*, 2019.

²⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 4.

follow-up guidelines.²⁹¹ As a follow-up to the Yokohama Strategy, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015* (2005), which aimed to create a stronger and more detailed plans for disaster risk reduction that focuses on the role required by different partners, including local and national governments.²⁹² The Hyogo Framework provides practical guidelines with the purpose of creating more resilient communities by reducing the negative impact of disasters on social, economic and environmental assets.²⁹³ In 2015, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction officially adopted the Sendai Framework with its four priority action areas: comprehending disaster risk, improving disaster risk governance for disaster risk management, mobilizing financial resources for disaster risk reduction, and improving disaster preparedness.²⁹⁴

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), which focuses on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to initiate action to promote sustainable development.²⁹⁵ Out of the 17 SDGs, SDG 1, 11 and 13 are particularly relevant to disaster risk reduction.²⁹⁶ For example, SDG 13 (climate action) aims to “[s]trengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters [sic] in all countries.”²⁹⁷ Additionally, SDG 1 (no poverty) works to decrease vulnerable populations’ exposure to climate-related disasters along with the consequences of these disasters, while SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) targets a reduction of economic losses resulting from disasters.²⁹⁸

Other key frameworks that relate to disaster risk reduction include the *Paris Agreement* (2015) and the *New Urban Agenda* (2016).²⁹⁹ The *Paris Agreement* was adopted in 2015 by the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change as a framework document for climate action in order to limit the rising temperatures resulting from climate change to below 2° Celsius.³⁰⁰ The *Paris Agreement* (2015) aims to assist in disaster risk reduction efforts by mitigating the effects of climate change, which exacerbates coastal vulnerability, sea levels, atmospheric heat, and other phenomena, thereby increasing the quantity and impact of many types of natural disasters.³⁰¹ The *New Urban Agenda*, adopted 2016 by the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), is a key framework to address the growing urban population of the world challenges.³⁰² The *New Urban Agenda* highlights the connection between sustainable urban development and disaster risk reduction, as it stipulates that Member States who “[a]dopt and implement disaster risk reduction and management” have more sustainable urban infrastructure, and therefore less loss of life due to disasters.³⁰³

²⁹¹ UNDRR, *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World: guidelines for natural disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation*, 1994.

²⁹² UNDRR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2007.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (A/RES/69/283), 2015, pp. 9-16.

²⁹⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015, p. 1.

²⁹⁶ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction* (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 7.

²⁹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015, p. 23.

²⁹⁸ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015, pp. 15, 21-22.

²⁹⁹ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁰¹ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction* (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 3.

³⁰² UN General Assembly, *New Urban Agenda* (A/RES/71/256), 2016, p. 2.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Role of the International System

Within the current disaster risk reduction framework, the General Assembly is mandated by the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Sendai Framework to review the progress and the implementation of disaster risk reduction efforts.³⁰⁴ As such, the General Assembly Second Committee considers disaster risk reduction as part of its agenda item on “sustainable development.”³⁰⁵ In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/231 on “Disaster risk reduction,” which stresses that capacity-building support, in particular for developing states, should be a top priority in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.³⁰⁶ The General Assembly further stated in its resolution that national and local disaster risk reduction strategies are keys to achieving sustainable development.³⁰⁷ In September 2019, the UN also hosted the Climate Action Summit where resilient infrastructure and resilience to climate impacts were key discussion points.³⁰⁸

In its resolution 61/198 from 2006 on the “International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction,” the General Assembly established the “Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction” (Global Platform).³⁰⁹ The purpose of the Global Platform is to assist with the review of the progress on disaster risk reduction as well as the monitoring and implementation of the Sendai Framework.³¹⁰ In May 2019, the sixth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Geneva Switzerland.³¹¹ At this session, the Global Risk Assessment Framework (GRAF) was launched.³¹² GRAF is an interdisciplinary platform to improve disaster risk understanding and disaster risk management with the goal of supporting decision-makers in disaster risk reduction efforts and to mobilize financial resources for disaster risk reduction.³¹³ In addition to GRAF, the sixth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction also focused on gender-sensitive and inclusive disaster risk reduction.³¹⁴

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) is the main focal point for disaster risk reduction strategies and data within the UN Secretariat, and it is headed by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.³¹⁵ The General Assembly established UNDRR with its resolution 56/195 (2001) on the “International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction,” with its main objective being to better coordinate disaster risk reduction efforts of Member States.³¹⁶ In 2017, the UNDRR updated the *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience* (Plan of Action) to better align the Plan of Action with the Sendai Framework, the *Paris Agreement*, and the 2030 Agenda.³¹⁷ The goal of the Plan of Action is to better coordinate the work of the wider UN system on disaster risk reduction.³¹⁸

Some examples of UN system wide efforts on disaster risk reduction include the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations Development

³⁰⁴ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (A/RES/69/283), p. 3.

³⁰⁵ UN General Assembly, *Agenda items and periodicity*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* (A/RES/56/195), 2002, p. 2.

³⁰⁶ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction* (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 5.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁰⁸ UN DGC, UN General Assembly: Here are the 5 big summits to watch out for, *UN News*, 2019.

³⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* (A/RES/61/198), 2006, p. 4.

³¹⁰ Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, *About the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² *Ibid.*; Mead, *Global Assessment Report Explores Role of Risk Reduction in Achieving SDGs*, *International Institute for Sustainable Development*, 2019.

³¹³ UNDRR, *Global Risk Assessment Framework*, 2019.

³¹⁴ Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, *About the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³¹⁵ UNDRR, *Who we are*, 2019.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

³¹⁷ UNDRR, *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience*, 2017, p. 8.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-13.

Programme (UNDP).³¹⁹ UN-Women promotes and facilitates the contribution of women to disaster risk reduction and the leadership of women therein.³²⁰ To this end, UN-Women has proposed creating gender responsive disaster risk reduction sector briefs for different sectors to raise awareness of the role that gender plays in disaster risk mitigation and recovery.³²¹ UNESCO focuses on capacity-building efforts for countries' disaster risk management programs, and collaborates with other UN agencies on this mandate.³²² Recent efforts by UNESCO include setting up early warning systems, which help states expand their technological and scientific capacity to identify potential disaster then monitor and prepare for the potential disaster.³²³ Similarly, UNDP emphasizes disaster risk reduction by fostering risk-informed development and promoting cooperation and coherency of disaster risk plans among states as an important piece of disaster risk reduction.³²⁴ UNDP also works to provide information regarding risks and early warning system to states and presently has 64 programs focused on early warning systems.³²⁵

UNESCO and UNDRR are part of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES), which aims to provide a comprehensive approach to safe school facilities, school disaster risk management, and risk reduction management.³²⁶ Civil society organizations (CSOs), in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs), are also part of GADRRRES, such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Plan International, and Save the Children.³²⁷ IFRC aims to reinforce disaster preparedness, promote the mitigation of the negative impacts of hazards, and protect development from disasters.³²⁸ Plan International, an NGO that aims to advance children's rights, works to enhance disaster preparedness through education and school programs.³²⁹ Similarly, Save the Children, another NGO that focuses on children's rights, centers their DRR efforts on children and provides guidelines for the protection of children in disasters.³³⁰

Developing Local and National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies

National and local disaster risk reduction strategies help monitor the success of disaster risk reduction efforts and outline the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors.³³¹ Disaster risk reduction strategies also identify the technical and financial capacities and how to allocate them.³³² Furthermore, national disaster risk strategies need to comply with the Sendai Framework, while local disaster risk strategies have to comply with national strategies.³³³ The Sendai Framework establishes seven targets, out of which target (e) aims to "substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020."³³⁴ The deadline for achieving target (e) is 31 December 2020, which is set at an earlier date than those of the other six targets in order to facilitate their achievement by 2030.³³⁵ However, by May 2019, only 91 national disaster risk reduction strategies were in place.³³⁶ Furthermore,

³¹⁹ UN-Women, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019; UNESCO, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2017; UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³²⁰ UN-Women, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² UNESCO, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2017.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³²⁵ Ibid.; UNDP, *Preparedness & early warning*, 2019.

³²⁶ UNESCO, *School Safety*, 2017; GADRRRES, *GADRRRES Members*, 2019.

³²⁷ GADRRRES, *GADRRRES Members*, 2019.

³²⁸ IFRC, *The IFRC's Approach to Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³²⁹ Plan International, *Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaption*, 2019.

³³⁰ Save the Children, *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*, 2019.

³³¹ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 316.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid., p. 252.

³³⁴ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, pp. 6-7.

³³⁵ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 4; Planitz, Sendai Target E: Just One More Year to Go, *UNDP*, 2019.

³³⁶ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/248)*, 2019, p. 4.

these strategies created by states are not of equal quality and have varying extents of coverage.³³⁷ For instance, in 2017, only 47 national disaster risk reduction strategies were aligned with principles laid out in the Sendai Framework.³³⁸ And out of those 47 strategies, only six national strategies were in full compliance with the Sendai Framework.³³⁹ Additionally, local disaster risk reduction strategies were reported by only 42 Member States, out of which only half were in strong compliance with their respective national strategy.³⁴⁰

In its resolution 73/231, the General Assembly recognized the shortfall on the progress towards target (e) and urged the prioritization of the development of national disaster risk reduction strategies.³⁴¹ In particular, the General Assembly highlighted the importance of local disaster risk reduction strategies in this regard.³⁴² Furthermore, the General Assembly also urged Member States in its resolution 73/231 to align their national disaster risk reduction strategies with the 2030 Agenda and their climate change adaptation strategies for the *Paris Agreement*.³⁴³ It was noted that a lack of progress on target (e) of the Sendai Framework could potentially endanger the progress on the remaining six targets of the Sendai Framework as well as the SDGs.³⁴⁴

One solution to facilitate further progress on target (e) is capacity-building, in particular through regional and international organizations, to assist Member States in developing and implementing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.³⁴⁵ Additionally, national and local disaster risk reduction strategies are best developed when they are part of a diverse collaboration of different stakeholders, such as representatives from different sectors, NGOs, and academia, among others.³⁴⁶ This refers back to an inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction emphasized in the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, but also points to the need for more extensive disaster risk planning and capacity.³⁴⁷ Lastly, the actual implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies is an entirely separate issue, which further relies on the creation of implementation guidelines and the mobilization of financial resources for disaster risk reduction and risk-informed development.³⁴⁸ Altogether, the need for increased risk reduction capacity is great, but obstacles to effective implementation continue to hinder full Member State success.³⁴⁹

Ensuring Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

Gender mainstreaming is defined by the UN as a strategy to make diverse people's perspectives and experiences a key part of policy planning, specifically disaster risk reduction action plans, legislation, policies and programs with the goal of promoting equality.³⁵⁰ Within the Sendai Framework, gender mainstreaming is part of the guiding principle of inclusivity for disaster risk reduction, and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into disaster preparedness constitute one crucial pillar of the Sendai Framework.³⁵¹ Additionally, the Sendai Framework recognizes women as key stakeholders within the entire disaster risk reduction process, whose input should be considered in all designing, resourcing

³³⁷ Planitz, Sendai Target E: Just One More Year to Go, *UNDP*, 2019.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 253.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 254-255.

³⁴¹ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 4.

³⁴² *Ibid.*

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/248)*, 2019, p. 4.

³⁴⁵ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 297.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ UN-Women, *Gender Mainstreaming*, 2019.

³⁵¹ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, pp. 6, 17.

and implementing of disaster risk recovery plans.³⁵² This has been reiterated by the General Assembly in its resolution 73/231 in 2018, which encouraged Member States to include the opinions of women and people with disabilities in the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies, as they face disproportionate risk during disasters.³⁵³ Including these perspectives by ensuring the access to information and resources by women and people with disabilities will help to reduce social vulnerabilities instead of exacerbating them.³⁵⁴

In 2016, UN-Women, together with the Government of Viet Nam, UNDRR and UNDP, organized the Regional Asia-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction, which resulted in the *Ha Noi Recommendations for Action on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction*.³⁵⁵ The recommendations build upon the four priorities of the Sendai Framework by developing indicators that are fully gender responsive.³⁵⁶ For example, the document recommends that states invest in female leadership to increase capacity and allow women and girls to play a strong and substantive role in disaster risk reduction.³⁵⁷ The document further recommended the institutionalization of the leadership of women and diverse groups in disaster preparedness response, recovery and reconstruction at national and local level.³⁵⁸ The goal of the Ha Noi recommendations is to create a strong regional disaster risk reduction framework that ensures that gender mainstreaming is part of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.³⁵⁹

Strengthening International Cooperation on Disaster Risk Reduction

While states themselves have the primary responsibility to reduce disasters, there is also a shared responsibility, especially when disasters have cross-border impacts.³⁶⁰ International cooperation helps states fill the gaps in their knowledge about disaster risk reduction.³⁶¹ Some countries deal more frequently with disasters, most notably least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), archipelagic countries, and countries with extensive coastlines, due to their proximity to higher-risk geographic markers.³⁶² Because of this, many states that are disaster-prone do not have the capacity to prepare, respond and recover from disasters therefore making international cooperation even more essential.³⁶³ The General Assembly has repeatedly encouraged international cooperation in disaster risk reduction to help mitigate the impact of Member States such as these who more impacted, as well as cross-border disasters.³⁶⁴ For instance, General Assembly resolution 73/231 (2018) mentions that developed states need to fulfill their commitments of official development assistance (ODA) regarding disaster risk reduction to have meaningful partnerships that are effective in reducing disaster risk.³⁶⁵

One main focus of international cooperation is in gathering scientific knowledge in order to improve early warning systems for disaster risk reduction and to deepen the understanding of disaster risk.³⁶⁶ In this context, standardizations of data collection, risk analysis, monitoring systems and integrated

³⁵² Ibid., pp. 18-19.

³⁵³ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 8.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.; UN-Women, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³⁵⁵ UN-Women, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

³⁵⁶ Regional Asian-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction, *Ha Noi Recommendations for Action on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2016, p. 4.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 7.

³⁶¹ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 3.

³⁶² UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 3.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/RES/56/195)*, 2002, p.3.

³⁶⁵ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 5.

³⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 10.

assessments of risk allow for increased effectiveness of international cooperation on disaster risk reduction.³⁶⁷ Furthermore, the Sendai Framework states that international approaches on disaster risk governance and management could be grouped, based on ecosystems, where states with similar or shared ecosystems as well as shared resources can work together.³⁶⁸ This has been reiterated by General Assembly resolution 73/231 (2018), which “encourages all States, United Nations bodies and other relevant actors to promote ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction.”³⁶⁹ This further shows that international cooperation is not just between states, but also between UN bodies, agencies, programs and funds as well as civil society and other stakeholders.³⁷⁰

In addition to the technical support, providing financial resources to help develop and implement disaster risk reduction strategies is another form of aid helpful to developing states, in particular LDCs, SIDS, LLDCs.³⁷¹ Similarly, cooperation between the private and public sector also aids in disaster risk reduction.³⁷² The private sector in particular can be a source of additional voluntary funding, which is important to disaster risk reduction in order to offset short-falls in ODA.³⁷³ This highlights the important role the financing for development framework, in particular the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015), plays for achievement of the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework.³⁷⁴

Conclusion

Reducing disaster risk and meeting the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework is important to ensuring the success of the SDGs.³⁷⁵ The Sendai Framework mandates the General Assembly to review the current progress in disaster risk reduction.³⁷⁶ Overall, there has been progress on disaster risk reduction since 2015; however current efforts are not on track to meet the 2030 targets.³⁷⁷ For instance, as per target (e) of the Sendai Framework, there are not enough local and national strategies in place, which inhibits the progress towards the remaining six targets of the Sendai Framework.³⁷⁸ Additionally, inclusive disaster risk reduction is crucial, as it ensures that vulnerable groups are part of the full disaster risk reduction process, however there remains significant work to be done to ensure fully inclusive processes.³⁷⁹ Finally, international cooperation and the mobilization of development finance, both from the public and the private sector, are also important tools for disaster risk reduction, demonstrating another key area of work for the international community to commit to, in order to ensure full success of disaster risk reduction frameworks.³⁸⁰

³⁶⁷ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary General (A/74/248)*, 2019, p. 5.

³⁶⁸ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 3.

³⁶⁹ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 5; UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 17.

³⁷⁰ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 4.

³⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary General (A/74/248)*, 2019, p. 12.

³⁷² UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 9.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 20.

³⁷⁵ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015; UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 11.

³⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 2.

³⁷⁷ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 21.

³⁷⁸ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/248)*, 2019, p. 4.

³⁷⁹ UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 8.

³⁸⁰ UNDRR, *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019, p. 21; UN General Assembly, *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*, 2018, p. 5.

Further Research

As delegates begin their research, they should first ask if their country already has a disaster risk reduction plan on both the national and the local level, as well as research: What tools have been utilized by states to increase gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction planning? How can governments motivate the private sector to participate in the development of local and national capabilities to contribute to disaster risk reduction? How can data be better utilized by many states to improve the disaster risk reduction? Is there a method to create a consistent standard of quality for disaster risk reduction plans? How can existing disaster risk reduction standards and implementation of plans be more inclusive, particularly to vulnerable populations?

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UNDP is an important UN program which aims to increase international cooperation around disaster risk reduction. From the UNDP's website on DRR, delegates can get an overview on disaster risk reduction initiatives that increase international cooperation. This website is useful for delegates because it provides links to information on subtopics and aspects of subtopics mentioned in the background guide. This website will also be helpful for delegates to use in the start of their research to better understand disaster risk reduction from the perspective of a UN entity.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2019). *2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: <https://gar.unisdr.org/sites/default/files/gar19distilled.pdf>

The UNDRR produces the Global Assessment Report on a biannual basis. The 2019 Global Assessment Report contains important data on the progress on the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework, which will be helpful in framing delegate research. This report also emphasizes the impact of disaster risk reduction and showcases best practice examples for delegates on how disaster risk reduction can be effectively implemented. This report particularly provides best practice examples for effective national and local disaster risk reduction strategies as well as the concrete principles, which each national disaster risk reduction plan should ideally include.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). *Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231)*. Adopted on the report of the Second Committee (A/73/538/Add.3). Retrieved 20 August 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/231>

This resolution is the most recent General Assembly resolution on disaster risk reduction. As the main task of the General Assembly within the Sendai Framework is to review the progress on disaster risk reduction, this source provides delegates with an understanding of how the General Assembly approaches its mandate. Additionally, within this resolution, the importance of key international frameworks such as Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Rio Declaration, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement is reiterated. The resolution further highlights the importance of developing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies as well as gender mainstreaming and international cooperation in disaster risk reduction. Delegates could use the structure of this resolution as a guideline for their own proposals.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. Retrieved 21 August 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/a/res/69/283>

The Sendai Framework is the current UN framework on disaster risk reduction and is the most frequently referenced document in the international system on disaster risk reduction. The framework contains indicators and targets for disaster risk reduction useful

in measuring progress. The implementation of the Sendai Framework informs the work of not only governments, but also NGOs and UN agencies, funds and programs. It will be important for delegates to understand the various priority areas of the Sendai Framework as well as its targets in order to assess the current progress on global, national, and local disaster risk reduction efforts.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session. (2019). *Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/248)*. Retrieved 25 October 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/74/248>

This document is the 2019 report of the Secretary-General on the “Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” (A/74/248). It provides insights on the current progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and informs the draft resolution of the Second Committee on the sub-agenda item “Disaster Risk Reduction.” The report details that, while some progress has been made, more action is required, and a failure to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework could threaten the global progress towards the SDGs. Delegates should look to this document to form their proposals for the conference.

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