



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL PLENARY BACKGROUND GUIDE 2016

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THE NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS • JAPAN

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20-26 November 2016 • www.nmun.org

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2016 National Model United Nations Conference in Kobe, Japan (NMUN•Japan)! We are excited to introduce you to our committee, the Economic and Social Council Plenary (ECOSOC). The Director of ECOSOC is Ardis Smith, and the Assistant Director is Nanako Ueda. Ardis has a B.A. in History and a MPhil in Historical Studies, and currently lives near Salt Lake City, Utah. This is her eleventh conference as an NMUN staff member. Nanako is a junior student studying International Relations at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. She has participated in three NMUN conferences as a delegate. She is excited to serve as a NMUN staff member for the first time.

The topics under discussion for ECOSOC are:

- I. Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals for All Nations and Peoples and All Segments of Society
- II. Building a Resilient World Through Disaster Risk Reduction

ECOSOC is one of the main primary organs of the United Nations (UN), and has a significant role within the UN system. Within its mandate, ECOSOC discusses and reports upon issues of social, economic, and environmental significance, as well as supervises the work of subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies under its purview. ECOSOC has in recent years focused extensively on sustainable development; with the recent adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, ECOSOC now has the important task of monitoring and implementing the SDGs. Accordingly, its work is highly significant within the international community.

This Background Guide is a helpful resource as you begin your research on the topics for ECOSOC; however, it is only a starting point for your research. We encourage you to research deeply into the topics before this committee and into your Member State's policies and positions in relation to these topics, as well as what ECOSOC and the international system have done thus far. As you research, look for innovative solutions that can help address these topics and make an impact for global citizens.

In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#). Please note [NMUN policies](#) on the NMUN website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct, dress code, sexual harassment, and the awards philosophy and evaluation method. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory. Another useful resource is the [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which is available to download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential resource in preparing for the conference, and a reference to use during committee sessions.

Please let us know if we can help with any questions as you prepare for NMUN•Japan. Our Deputy Secretary-General, Yvonne Jeffery, can be reached at yvonne@nmun.org.

Thank you for your preparation for NMUN•Japan, and we look forward to seeing you this November!

Sincerely,

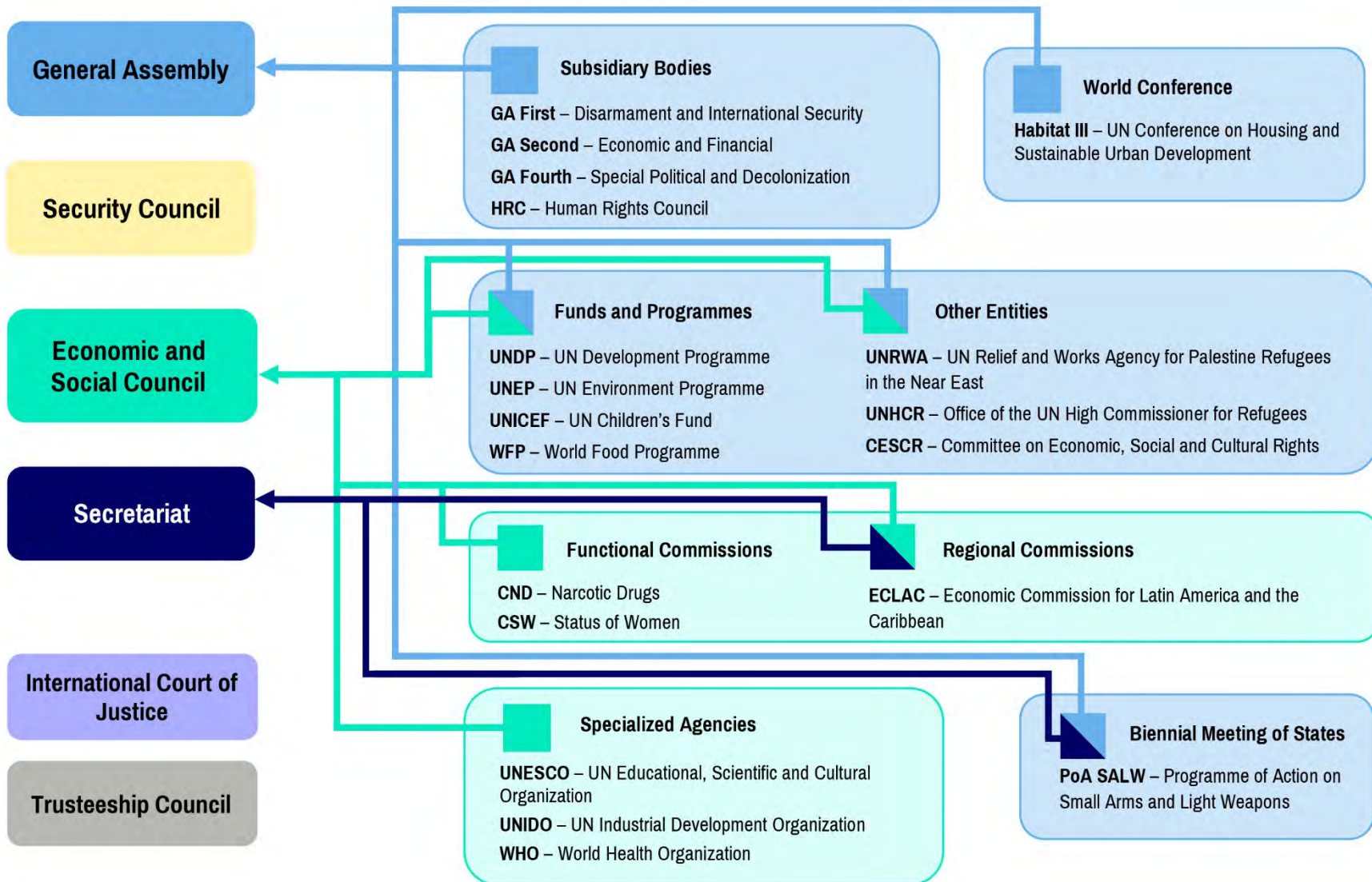
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United Nations System at NMUN

This diagram illustrates the UN System simulated at NMUN. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system, to help understand the reportage and relationships between the entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN System.



Committee Overview

Introduction

Chapter X of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a founding body and one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN).¹ ECOSOC indirectly oversees 70% of UN resources through its oversight of specialized agencies and its own subsidiary bodies.² The Council is mandated to serve as a main body for policy dialogue on economic, social, and environmental development topics, and on sustainable development; review and advise Member States and other UN entities on matters within this mandate; and lead discussion on the implementation of the international development framework.³

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

ECOSOC has experienced some reform since its inception.⁴ In the 1960s and 1970s, developing countries broadened the agenda of the UN and sought a stronger focus on urgent issues such as the elimination of underdevelopment, poverty, and the unequal position of their countries in the world economy.⁵ Following this, the UN General Assembly (GA) adopted resolution 32/197 of 1977, on the “Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System,” which attempted to make ECOSOC more effective by increasing coordination with its subsidiary bodies.⁶ ECOSOC also saw an increase in its membership to 54 Member States as a result of GA resolution 2847 (XXVI) of 1971.⁷ To avoid any duplication of work due to unclear mandates, GA resolution 50/227 of 1995 clarified the role of the GA to provide policy guidance and for the role of ECOSOC to focus on coordination, an interpretation confirmed by the GA resolution 57/270 B (2002).⁸

The GA implemented further reform in the past decade to strengthen the working methods of ECOSOC through GA resolutions 61/16 of 2007 and 68/1 of 2013.⁹ The 2013 reforms included an expansion of ECOSOC’s functions and powers to enable the Council to take the lead on identifying and discussing recently emerging challenges; act as a policy forum for global leaders, especially concerning the integration of sustainable development efforts; and to provide a platform of accountability for all levels of monitoring and reporting on universal commitments.¹⁰ These reforms keep ECOSOC’s role and work critical to preparing, monitoring, implementing, and facilitating global discussions around the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹¹

Governance, Structure and Membership

ECOSOC comprises 54 members, each elected by the GA for overlapping three-year terms.¹² The members are distributed in accordance with the geographical position of the applicants to achieve equal representation from all continents: 14 seats are allocated to African Member States, 11 to Asian Member States, six to Eastern European Member States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean Member States, and 13 to Western European and other Member States.¹³ Each member has one representative and one vote in the Council, and all decisions are made by a simple majority of those members present and voting.¹⁴ ECOSOC is governed by a President and a Bureau

¹ UN ECOSOC, *About Us*, 2016.

² Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*.

³ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*; UN ECOSOC, *About Us*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2016.

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

⁵ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 2005, p. 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷ New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook: 2015-16*, 2015.

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

⁹ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*; UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2013.

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

¹¹ UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*.

¹² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X; UN ECOSOC, *Members*, 2016.

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

¹⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 22; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter X.

consisting of five representatives – the President and four Vice-Presidents – all of whom are elected to one-year terms by the Council at the outset of each session.¹⁵ The Bureau assumes responsibility for setting the Council’s agenda, devises action plans, and collaborates with the Secretariat on administrative duties.¹⁶ Its membership rotates equally among regional blocs.¹⁷

The Council meets twice annually, once for an organizational session, or when elections to the Bureau take place, and once for a substantive session, which is further divided into five “segments” focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council’s work.¹⁸ The working methods of the Council were further reformed under the GA resolution 68/1 in 2013, and its work is now organized as follows:

High-level Segment (HLS): The HLS includes a thematic Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), a biannual Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), and ministerial-level meetings of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).¹⁹

Integration Segment: Focusing on harmonizing the work of ECOSOC members, subsidiary bodies, and stakeholders, this segment consolidates important messages on primary themes and action-oriented recommendations from the Council system.²⁰

Operational Activities for Development Segment: Monitoring the follow-up to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review’s (QCPR) recommendations and alignment with the work of the specialized agencies, this segment helps ECOSOC provide efficient coordination for UN programmes and funds.²¹

Coordination and Management Meetings (CMM): At these regular meetings, the Council reviews the work of its subsidiary bodies and considers the coordination of work across thematic issues within its mandate, such as gender mainstreaming.²² The Council works closely with the Secretariat of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) during these meetings.²³

Humanitarian Affairs: This segment serves as a thematic forum for discussion on addressing operation challenges and normative progress on humanitarian policy.²⁴

ECOSOC oversees the work of its subsidiary bodies, which hold their own sessions and provide recommendations, draft resolutions, and annual reporting to the Council.²⁵ The different types of subsidiary bodies include the following:

Functional Commissions: The eight functional commissions are entities that discuss one or several specific themes, and make recommendations on those themes.²⁶ Functional commissions, in particular, have a responsibility for following up on the major UN conferences, in accordance with the role of ECOSOC.²⁷

Regional Commissions: The five regional commissions aim to foster economic integration, oversee the implementation of regional sustainable development initiatives, and help address economic and social issues in sub-regions by fostering multilateral dialogue, cooperation, and

¹⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992.

¹⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Bureau*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 9.

¹⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Bureau*, 2016.

¹⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council*, 1992, p. 8.

¹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2016.

²⁵ Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations: An Issues Paper*, 2005, p. 36.

²⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related field (E/RES/1998/46)*, 1998.

²⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related field (E/RES/1998/46)*, 1998.

collaboration within and between regions.²⁸ As regional commissions target problems and challenges within their geographical scope, in most cases, members of a commission are countries from that particular region.²⁹

Expert Bodies Composed of Governmental Experts: The four bodies that fall into this category are focused on narrow topics that ECOSOC has identified as important and deserving of additional attention or particular expertise.³⁰

Other subsidiaries include standing committees, ad hoc, and other related bodies.³¹ Specific methods of work have been adopted within each subsidiary organ to align with the mandate of each entity and are updated regularly; significant recent changes include the replacement of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) by the HLPF in 2013, per ECOSOC resolution 2013/19.³² In addition to the subsidiary bodies, ECOSOC also oversees the work of the UN's specialized agencies, which are independent entities that maintain their own budget, membership, and leadership.³³

Mandate, Functions and Powers

The *Charter of the United Nations* mandates ECOSOC to “make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters,” including human rights and freedoms, to the GA and its specialized agencies.³⁴ ECOSOC may also “furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist [it] upon request.”³⁵ As emphasized by recent reforms accentuating this role, ECOSOC also provides coordination, monitoring, and advice to UN programmes, agencies, and funds on international development policies and their implementation.³⁶ Examples of this coordination role include facilitating cooperation between economic institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1998 and establishing the biennial high-level DCF, now part of the Council's HLS, in 2007.³⁷ In recent years, ECOSOC has developed an increasing role in addressing and monitoring UN efforts on the sustainable development pillars – economic, social, and environmental development; in coordinating sustainable development projects across many stakeholders; and in the follow-up for conferences on sustainable development.³⁸

The Council fulfills its mandate under the overall authority of the GA, and with the consultation of a broad range of civil society actors, having more than 4000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with consultative status who may attend and participate in various UN meetings, conferences, and special sessions to voice their concerns to the international community.³⁹ Consultative status is given by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs, established in 1946 and comprising 19 Member States, and which directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by civil society organizations (CSOs).⁴⁰ ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 of 1996 indicated the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations, and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in granting the consultative relationship.⁴¹ In the latest report from the June 2016 session, the Committee recommended consultative status to 188 NGOs, deferred for consideration an additional 235 NGOs, and reviewed 336 quadrennial reports.⁴²

²⁸ UN Regional Commissions, *About*.

²⁹ New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2015-16*, 2015.

³⁰ UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, *Overview*.

³¹ UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*, 2016.

³² UN General Assembly, *Format and Organizational Aspects of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 7.

³³ UN DPI, *The United Nations System*, 2015; UN DPI, *Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others*, 2016.

³⁴ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 62.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Arts. 62, 63, 65.

³⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (E/RES/2013/5)*, 2013, p. 1.

³⁶ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*; UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

³⁷ UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/61/16)*, 2007, p. 2.

³⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2016.

³⁹ UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.

⁴⁰ UN DESA, *Committee on NGOs convenes for first session of 2014*, 2014; UN DESA NGO Branch, *The Committee On NGOs*.

⁴¹ UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*; UN ECOSOC, *Consultative Relationship between the United Nations and Non-governmental Organizations (E/RES/1996/31)*, 1996, pp. 53-61.

⁴² UN ECOSOC, *Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2016 resumed session (E/2016/32(Part II))*, 2016, pp. 1.

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

One of the current key priorities of the Council is the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its accompanying SDGs.⁴³ The SDGs were formed through intergovernmental negotiations and adopted within the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the GA at the Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015.⁴⁴ 2016 is the first year of SDGs implementation, and accordingly many discussions are occurring on the topic of sustainable development, as is seen with recent ECOSOC meetings.⁴⁵ From 22 to 24 February 2016, ECOSOC held its annual Operational Activities for Development Segment, which discussed the relationship between long-term development within the UN and the 2030 Agenda, as well as reviewed implementation of the QCPR.⁴⁶ The 2030 Agenda was also discussed at ECOSOC's Integration Segment, which was held from 2 to 4 May on the topic of "Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through Policy Innovation and Integration."⁴⁷ At the Integration Segment, several points were highlighted and recommendations made, including the need for the SDGs to involve both "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches; the importance of implementing the SDGs at the local level for success; and the value of technology and data in implementing and monitoring the SDGs.⁴⁸ The following month, the Council's HAS met from 27 to 29 June 2016, in order to discuss the recent World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and achieving the SDGs in an inclusive manner.⁴⁹

ECOSOC's HLS occurred from 18 to 22 July 2016, on the theme of "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results."⁵⁰ The HLS overlapped with the 2016 HLPF, facilitated by ECOSOC from 11 to 20 July.⁵¹ The HLPF has been vital to the coordination, implementation, and accountability measures around the SDGs, and the 2016 HLPF meeting was of particular importance in monitoring the progress of the SDGs, as it was the first HLPF held following the adoption and initial implementation of the SDGs.⁵² The 2016 HLPF discussed the topic of "Ensuring That No One Is Left Behind," a main goal of the 2030 Agenda.⁵³ The Forum included discussions on SDGs progress during the first year of implementation; aspects of strategies for leaving no one behind, including education, addressing poverty, and economic growth; the role of civil society in implementing the SDGs; and national voluntary reviews.⁵⁴

ECOSOC has also held other recent meetings on topics that connect to sustainable development and the SDGs, including youth and financing for development. Within the UN, ECOSOC leads the discussion around youth participation and inclusion, as well as other youth-related issues, as part of its role in leading international conversations around thematic topics.⁵⁵ On 1 and 2 February 2016, ECOSOC held its annual Youth Forum on the topic of "Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda."⁵⁶ Many young people and officials from around the world attended the forum in New York City, and discussed the integration of youth into SDGs implementation, as well as how young people can use communication, such as social media, to effectively discuss and promote the

⁴³ UN ECOSOC, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*; UN DESA, *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*, 2016.

⁴⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

⁴⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 6; UN ECOSOC, *All Events*, 2016.

⁴⁶ UN ECOSOC, *2016 Operational activities for development segment*, 2016.

⁴⁷ UN ECOSOC, *2016 Integration Segment: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy innovation and integration*, 2016.

⁴⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Economic and Social Council 2016 Integration Segment, 2 – 4 May 2016: Summary*, 2016, p. 3.

⁴⁹ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2016.

⁵⁰ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC High-level segment: "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results,"* 2016.

⁵¹ UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016.

⁵² UN ECOSOC, *President's Summaries of the High-level segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council and High-level political forum on sustainable development*, 2015; UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016.

⁵³ UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2016/75)*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

⁵⁴ UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016.

⁵⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Theme for the integration segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council (E/2014/L.23)*, 2014, p. 1.

⁵⁶ UN ECOSOC, *2016 ECOSOC Youth Forum: "Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda" on 1-2 February*, 2016.

SDGs.⁵⁷ The Youth Forum emphasized the significant role young people play in reaching the SDGs, as well as the need to incorporate youth into decision-making, SDGs monitoring, funding, and global partnerships.⁵⁸ From 18 to 20 April 2016, ECOSOC held its first ever Financing for Development (FfD) follow-up forum at UN Headquarters.⁵⁹ The FfD forum met to follow-up on the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3), which occurred in July 2015 and adopted the significant *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* on FfD in the post-2015 development agenda.⁶⁰ ECOSOC's FfD forum was attended by many governmental officials, as well as officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, the UN, and civil society and private sector participants.⁶¹ The forum discussed themes connecting to the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, and resulted in an outcome document of conclusions and recommendations that highlighted the recent Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Financing for Development report titled, "Addis Ababa Action Agenda: Monitoring Commitments and Actions."⁶²

Conclusion

As one of the primary organs of the UN, the Economic and Social Council plays a key role in coordinating the expansive UN system. The Council has demonstrated a commitment to, and leadership in, mobilizing action on key priority issues, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, youth inclusion in decision-making processes, and financing for development. It has also initiated much-needed global collaboration across UN entities to ensure political commitment towards the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The contributions of the Council both as a forum for discussion and in terms of policy guidance are significant, and its role will continue to grow in the post-2015 era, in order to most effectively facilitate social, economic, and sustainable development worldwide.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Informal Summary*, 2016.

⁵⁹ UN DESA, *2016 ECOSOC FfD forum*, 2016.

⁶⁰ UN FfD3, *Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2015; UN FfD3, *The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2015.

⁶¹ UN DESA, *2016 ECOSOC FfD forum*, 2016.

⁶² UN ECOSOC, *Financing for Sustainable Development: follow up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2016; UN IATF, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda: Monitoring commitments and actions*, 2016.

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<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml>

The Charter of the United Nations is the foundational document of the UN. It lays out the mandate and structure of not only the Economic and Social Council, but also the remaining five principle organs. Member States are obliged to uphold the Charter's articles and are to hold these articles above all other treaties. It is an essential starting point in researching the UN. Chapter X, Articles 61 to 72, of the Charter describes ECOSOC's composition, functions and powers, voting, and rules of procedure.

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2015). *United Nations Handbook: 2015-16*. Retrieved 8 July 2016 from: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/securedfiles/MFAT151-UN-Handbook_2015-16.pdf

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

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

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

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Sustainable Development* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2016 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/sustainable-development>

This website summarizes the role of the ECOSOC in promoting sustainable development throughout the UN system and the international community. It specifies ECOSOC's responsibilities in relation to sustainable development, and provides information on and links to the specific meetings that ECOSOC facilitates in relation to sustainable development, as well as links to other key issues that ECOSOC discusses. This is a good initial source for understanding the mandate and work of ECOSOC in relation to sustainable development.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2013). *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 22 October 2014 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/1>

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

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I. Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals for All Nations and Peoples and All Segments of Society

Introduction

At the end of 2015, the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expired.⁶³ While the MDGs had many significant successes in improving the lives of global citizens, they also in other ways impacted different individuals unequally, which was highlighted during the post-2015 development agenda process that resulted in the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015.⁶⁴ The 17 SDGs and their accompanying 169 targets formally came into effect in January 2016 and aim to address poverty and inequality and promote sustainable development throughout the world.⁶⁵

At the adoption of the SDGs, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that the 2030 Agenda “pledges to leave no one behind.”⁶⁶ The SDGs were carefully drafted in order to more fully consider the needs of individuals often marginalized within international development, and the SDGs have great potential in meeting the needs of and empowering such individuals.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the inclusion of all peoples in sustainable development will allow for the overall achievement of the SDGs, as including all peoples is essential to the SDGs.⁶⁸ However, much work must be done to ensure that marginalized groups are included within the SDGs' implementation, and that they benefit from sustainable development.⁶⁹ Marginalized groups make up a significant portion of the world's population: for example, there are 370 million indigenous peoples, 836 million individuals living in extreme poverty, and one billion persons with disabilities globally.⁷⁰ Within some Member States, marginalized groups can be purposefully left out of development, and in others, they are inadvertently ignored through a lack of attention or data collection.⁷¹ Individuals within these groups also face discrimination based upon sex, ethnicity, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, and other factors.⁷² Identifying peoples who are marginalized and addressing their needs is essential in order to ensure that the SDGs are met by 2030.⁷³ As the international community, including Member States, civil society, and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consider the universal and inclusive implementation of the SDGs, such efforts will ensure that the SDGs are met for all nations and peoples and all segments of society.

International and Regional Framework

In September 2000, Member States gathered in New York City at the Millennium Summit and adopted the *Millennium Declaration*, which discussed desired areas of improvement in the 21st century.⁷⁴ Following the Summit, the MDGs were established as a set of eight goals and related targets that sought to address the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.⁷⁵ Member States, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the international community reported upon the progress of the MDGs through a variety of methods, including an annual MDGs Report, regional reports, conferences, and a task force.⁷⁶ The MDGs were successful in their progress towards many goals; they also showed the ability of the international community to work

⁶³ UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, 2016.

⁶⁴ UNDP, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁶⁵ UN DPI, *The Sustainable Development Agenda*, 2016.

⁶⁶ Ban, *Secretary-General's remarks at Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2015.

⁶⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; Melamed, *Leaving no one behind: How the SDGs can bring real change*, 2015, p. 1.

⁶⁸ IISD Reporting Services, *CSOs Address 'No One Left Behind', Follow-Up and Review, Development Financing*, 2016.

⁶⁹ Melamed, *Leaving no one behind: How the SDGs can bring real change*, 2015, p. 1.

⁷⁰ UN DESA, *Indigenous peoples share hopes for the SDGs*, 2016; UNDP, *Goal 1: No poverty*, 2016; UN DESA, *Monitoring and Evaluation of Disability-Inclusive Development*, 2016.

⁷¹ Bhatkal, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, pp. 1-2, 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

⁷³ ODI, *Leaving no one behind*, 2016, p. 1; UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 4; ODI, *Leave no one behind: who's at risk?*, 2015.

⁷⁴ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000; UN DPI, *Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000)*.

⁷⁵ UN DPI, *Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000)*; UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015.

⁷⁶ UN DPI, *Reports*, 2016.

together to combat poverty.⁷⁷ However, the 2015 MDGs Report also noted that “Despite many successes, the poorest and most vulnerable people are being left behind,” and that “Targeted efforts will be needed to reach the most vulnerable people.”⁷⁸ The language of the MDGs was largely general, not focusing on specific needs, and Secretary-General Ban noted in the report that “progress has been uneven.”⁷⁹

In 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where the international community decided to pursue a post-2015 development agenda that would focus on sustainable development, described as the Sustainable Development Goals.⁸⁰ Between 2012 and 2015, the UN, Member States, civil society, and global citizens held lengthy discussions on the new development agenda and how to more fully include all individuals.⁸¹ The post-2015 development agenda planning process included an Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals, a High-Level Panel (HLP) of Eminent Persons, high-level events and thematic dialogues, and extensive intergovernmental negotiations.⁸² In July 2015, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development was also held, resulting in the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, which addresses financing for the post-2015 development agenda.⁸³ In August 2015, Member States reached consensus on the outcome document, and on 25 September 2015, the SDGs and their targets were unanimously adopted by all Member States as a part of the 2030 Agenda.⁸⁴ The SDGs formally started on 1 January 2016 and will remain in force through 2030.⁸⁵ In March 2016, the UN Statistical Commission formed an Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to create specific indicators to measure and monitor the success of the SDGs.⁸⁶

In relation to including all persons in the SDGs and ensuring that no one is left behind, international documents also highlight the rights of marginalized groups.⁸⁷ These include the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) of 1948, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) of 1979, and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) of 2007.⁸⁸ In addition, the 1975 *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons* spoke about the general rights of persons with disabilities, which were further elaborated upon in the 2006 *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD).⁸⁹

Role of the International System

Many UN organizations and international partners address issues related to marginalized groups and an inclusive approach to the SDGs. Within the UN, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) is the organization that supports and promotes global gender equality institutionally and amongst Member States.⁹⁰ In 2015, UN-Women published a report proposing indicators on women for several SDGs.⁹¹ The organization has started an editorial series on its website that highlights the experiences of women around the world, showing the interconnectivity of the SDGs.⁹² UN-Women also supports the work of the Commission on the Status of

⁷⁷ UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸⁰ UN DESA, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, pp. 1, 46-48.

⁸¹ UN DESA, *Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2016; UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 3.

⁸² UN DESA, *Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2016; UN DESA, *Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 [sic] Agenda*, 2016.

⁸³ UN FfD3, *The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2015.

⁸⁴ UN DPI, *Consensus Reached on New Sustainable Development Agenda to be adopted by World Leaders in September*, 2015; UN DPI, *UN adopts new Global Goals, charting sustainable development for people and planet by 2030*, 2015.

⁸⁵ UN DPI, *The Sustainable Development Agenda*, 2016.

⁸⁶ UN DESA Statistics Division, *IAEG-SDGs*, 2016.

⁸⁷ UN-Women, *Women and girls with disabilities must not be left behind*, 2016.

⁸⁸ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/211 (III))*, 1948; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007.

⁸⁹ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (A/RES/3447 (XXX))*, 1975; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

⁹⁰ UN-Women, *About UN Women*.

⁹¹ UN-Women, *Women and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*; UN-Women, *Monitoring Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges*, 2015.

⁹² UN-Women, *From where I stand*.

Women (CSW), a functional commission under ECOSOC; during its 60th session, CSW discussed the topic of “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development.”⁹³

In light of the first year of the SDGs’ implementation, UN Enable, the Secretariat for the CRPD, started a campaign for 2016 entitled #Envision2030 to highlight the need to mainstream disability and what doing so can accomplish with the work of the SDGs.⁹⁴ Noting that the 2030 Agenda “holds a deep promise for persons with disabilities everywhere,” #Envision2030 seeks to raise awareness of the SDGs and how they can positively impact persons with disabilities, foster discussion on disability amongst those working with the SDGs, and create internet resources on the SDGs and disability; the campaign also encourages all people to engage with the campaign on social media.⁹⁵ In October 2015, an expert group meeting (EGM) was held on indigenous peoples and the 2030 Agenda.⁹⁶ In May 2016, representatives of indigenous peoples met during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to discuss the topic of “Indigenous peoples: conflict, peace and resolution” and the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the SDGs.⁹⁷ Another recent meeting of significance was the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in May 2016; marginalized groups were addressed during the Summit’s side events, as well as in the endorsement of a *Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action*.⁹⁸

ECOSOC was actively involved in the post-2015 development agenda process, and is an important actor in relation to the SDGs.⁹⁹ In its mandate, ECOSOC is tasked with addressing social, economic, and environmental development, which are the three pillars of sustainable development.¹⁰⁰ ECOSOC addresses issues of financing for development, and has a biennial Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) and a Financing for Development (FfD) follow-up forum.¹⁰¹ ECOSOC also holds Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMRs), which measure the progress of UN conference and outcomes.¹⁰² During 2016, many ECOSOC meetings have focused on the SDGs, including the Integration Segment in May, the Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) in June, and the High-Level Segment (HLS) in July.¹⁰³ The HLS overlapped with the first High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) to be held following the adoption of the SDGs, which occurred from 11 to 20 July 2016 in New York City.¹⁰⁴ The role of the HLPF is to review SDGs progress, and as the “most inclusive and participatory forum at the United Nations,” it brings together many stakeholders for development.¹⁰⁵ It meets under the auspices of both the UN General Assembly (GA) and ECOSOC, and met under ECOSOC in 2016.¹⁰⁶ The theme of the 2016 HLPF meeting, which produced a Ministerial Declaration, was “Ensuring That No One is Left Behind;” in preparation for the HLPF, a Report of the Secretary-General was released on the “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.”¹⁰⁷

The work of civil society is also important in empowering marginalized individuals and meeting the SDGs inclusively.¹⁰⁸ Civil society actors contributed to the development of the 2030 Agenda through public consultation,

⁹³ UN-Women, *About UN Women*; UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*, 2016; UN-Women, *In Focus: CSW60*.

⁹⁴ UN Enable, *#Envision2030: 17 goals to transform the world for persons with disabilities*, 2016.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ UN DESA, *EGM on Indigenous Peoples and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development*.

⁹⁷ UN DESA, *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues concludes with the adoption of the 15th session report*, 2016; UN DESA, *Indigenous peoples share hopes for the SDGs*, 2016.

⁹⁸ UN WHS, *About the World Humanitarian Summit*, 2016; UN WHS, *Side Events Schedule*, 2016; UN Enable, *New charter for persons with disabilities at WHS*, 2016.

⁹⁹ UN DESA, *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*, 2016.

¹⁰⁰ IISD, *Topic: Sustainable Development*.

¹⁰¹ UN ECOSOC, *Financing Sustainable Development*, 2016; UN DESA FfD, *2016 ECOSOC FfD forum*, 2016.

¹⁰² UN ECOSOC, *Mandate*, 2016.

¹⁰³ UN ECOSOC, *All Events*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *2016 Integration Segment: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy innovation and integration*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC High-level segment: “Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results,”* 2016.

¹⁰⁴ UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ UN DESA, *High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)*, 2016; UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016.

¹⁰⁷ UN DESA, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2016/75)*, 2016.

¹⁰⁸ Coates, *The Post-2015 Agenda: A Global Call To Increase Civil Society Space*, *InterAction*, 2015.

and will remain important in implementing the SDGs.¹⁰⁹ In ECOSOC's work, the Council often includes civil society partners in its meetings and efforts, and it offers NGOs consultative status.¹¹⁰ There are many organizations that promote the rights of more vulnerable populations; some include Save the Children, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), and CARE International.¹¹¹

Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals

At the adoption of the SDGs, Secretary-General Ban emphasized that implementation is essential to the success of the SDGs.¹¹² This implementation should be conducted on the local, national, regional, and international levels, and requires "a renewed global partnership" in order to ensure that all Member States work together.¹¹³ Furthermore, the SDGs should be implemented equally and universally to reach all individuals within a Member State and globally.¹¹⁴ Implementation should have an early focus on inclusivity to ensure that inclusion is a priority from the beginning, as having an inclusive mindset early on can allow for greater inclusion with lesser cost, and because greater and quicker progress will be needed for groups who were impacted by the MDGs unequally.¹¹⁵

On the international level, global partnerships and development cooperation are needed for implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the SDGs.¹¹⁶ The HLPF is the main way through which the 2030 Agenda will be reviewed, with reviews also happening on the national level.¹¹⁷ Within its work, ECOSOC provides other opportunities for review, including through the DCF, AMRs, and FfD follow-up forum.¹¹⁸ The SDG indicators developed by the IAEG-SDGs will also assist in measuring success.¹¹⁹ Funding will be important for implementation on all levels, as the SDGs will require a large amount of financial resources in order to be effective, and financing should come from both the international community and from national resources, as well as through official development assistance (ODA).¹²⁰ Conventions and principles on human rights should be incorporated into the implementation and review of the SDGs, in order to ensure that the rights of all persons are being met and that sustainable development progress is inclusive.¹²¹ The idea of "no one left behind" should also be applied to Member States within the global community, as different countries and regions have different needs and abilities to address sustainable development.¹²² Small Island Developing States (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and least developed countries (LDCs) are examples of countries who face unique challenges and have specific requirements; special care should also be given that developing countries are included in implementing the SDGs to minimize unequal gaps between Member States in development efforts.¹²³

On the national level, Member States must identify marginalized groups within their country, and then ensure the inclusion of such persons within development.¹²⁴ To address poverty and discrimination, Member States can look to

¹⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 3, 10.

¹¹⁰ UN ECOSOC, *2016 Integration Segment: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy innovation and integration*, 2016; UN DPI, *Civil Society*, 2016.

¹¹¹ Save the Children, *From Agreement to Action: Delivering the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016; IDA, *The 2030 Agenda – Introductory Toolkit for persons with disabilities*; IWGIA, *The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*, 2013; CARE International, *About*, 2016.

¹¹² Ban, *Secretary-General's remarks at Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2015.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Melamed, *Leaving no one behind: How the SDGs can bring real change*, 2015, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ ODI, *Leaving no one behind*, 2016, p. 1; Melamed, *Leaving no one behind: How the SDGs can bring real change*, 2015, p. 2; Porter, Older people and those with disabilities are being left behind by humanitarian aid, *The Guardian*, 2015; Nicolai, et al., *Projecting progress: Reaching the SDGs by 2030*, 2015, pp. 11-12.

¹¹⁶ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 10; UN ECOSOC, *UN Development Cooperation Forum can contribute to advancing 2030 Agenda*, 2016.

¹¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 12.

¹¹⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*, 2016.

¹¹⁹ UN DESA Statistics Division, *IAEG-SDGs*, 2016.

¹²⁰ UN DPI, *The Sustainable Development Agenda*, 2016.

¹²¹ IISD Reporting Services, *CSOs Address 'No One Left Behind', Follow-Up and Review, Development Financing*, 2016.

¹²² IISD Reporting Services, *CSOs Address 'No One Left Behind', Follow-Up and Review, Development Financing*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, p. 7.

¹²³ UN FfD3, *The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2015; UN ECOSOC, *High-level UN forum on development cooperation paves way for 'leaving no one behind,'* 2016.

¹²⁴ Bhatka, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, p. 2.

modify existing policies and programmes for marginalized groups; they can also look to establish targeted policies in order to reduce overall inequality, and to acknowledge where normative discrimination exists and to address such.¹²⁵ As vulnerable persons are often left out of decision-making, Member States and the international community can actively seek the input and inclusion of marginalized individuals, to receive direct information on their needs and to more fully include their voices in policies and efforts.¹²⁶ Data collection is also important, to make sure that needs are better met and “that policymakers and activists have the information they need to make informed decisions.”¹²⁷ Member States can increase their data collection capacities in relation to marginalized persons, and civil society can also assist in data collection, particularly at the local level.¹²⁸ Technological advances can be considered as helpful means for data collection, including social media, phone calls and texts, and the internet.¹²⁹ On the national and local levels, CSOs and NGOs can provide support, helping marginalized persons and providing data to governments on the needs of individuals.¹³⁰ In their efforts, Member States should look to work in concert with other countries, regions, and international entities, to avoid “work[ing] in silos” and to “engage all actors.”¹³¹

Meeting the SDGs for All

A main theme of the 2030 Agenda is that no one will be left behind.¹³² While the needs of different peoples vary, individuals who are marginalized commonly share experiences of discrimination.¹³³ There are also many intersections between marginalized groups, such as rural women who are older persons or children who are disabled.¹³⁴ Poverty is also connected to other forms of inequality, and marginalized groups are disproportionately affected by poverty.¹³⁵ The following subsections, which are not exhaustive, will explore how to more fully meet the SDGs by the greater inclusion of women and girls, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples.¹³⁶

Women and Girls

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls was explicitly mentioned in MDG 3, and MDGs efforts led to improvements for the status of women; however, much remains to be done to ensure worldwide gender equality for women and girls.¹³⁷ Women have lower rates of involvement in the labor force and earn less money than men.¹³⁸ One in three women experience gender-based violence (GBV), often at the hands of a domestic partner.¹³⁹ Women encounter inequality in the law, control over household assets, and participation in decision-making.¹⁴⁰

There is one standalone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women, SDG 5; 11 other goals have targets related to gender.¹⁴¹ Addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women not only improves the lives of women and girls, but also greatly contributes to overall development; for example, increasing opportunities for women and reducing the gender gap could contribute 12 trillion dollars annually to global gross domestic product (GDP).¹⁴² The role of women in achieving the SDGs is vital, and women should accordingly be further empowered in order to ensure SDGs success.¹⁴³ Methods for achieving greater gender equality include upholding international

¹²⁵ Bhatka, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, pp. 5-6.

¹²⁶ Meeks & Tardi, Sustainable development goals could signal a sea change for disabled people, *The Guardian*, 2015.

¹²⁷ Collacott & Wainwright, Poor people living with disabilities are counting on better data for better lives, *The Guardian*, 2015.

¹²⁸ Collacott & Wainwright, Poor people living with disabilities are counting on better data for better lives, *The Guardian*, 2015; UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 12.

¹²⁹ UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 12.

¹³⁰ Stuart, *How to leave no one behind: a workable plan for ambitious aims*, 2016; UNSDN, *The Key to Agenda 2030? The Inclusion of People, All People!*, 2016.

¹³¹ Ban, *Secretary-General's remarks at Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2015.

¹³² UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

¹³³ UNSDN, *The Key to Agenda 2030? The Inclusion of People, All People!*, 2016.

¹³⁴ Bhatkal, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, pp. 3-4.

¹³⁵ Bhatkal, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, pp. 1, 3; ODI, *Leave no one behind: who's at risk?*, 2015; Collacott & Wainwright, Poor people living with disabilities are counting on better data for better lives, *The Guardian*, 2015; UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Nicolai, et al., *Projecting progress: Reaching the SDGs by 2030*, pp. 12, 38.

¹³⁷ UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, pp. 28-31.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

¹³⁹ UN-Women, *SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*.

¹⁴⁰ UN DPI, *The Millennium Development Goals Report: 2015*, 2015, pp. 31.

¹⁴¹ UN-Women, *In Focus: CSW60*.

¹⁴² Stewart, Tackling gender inequality could add \$12tn to world economy, study finds, *The Guardian*, 2015.

¹⁴³ UN-Women, *SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*.

law on women's rights, economically empowering women, promoting greater inclusion of women in political processes and humanitarian efforts, improving Member States' budgeting for the needs of women and girls, and teaching men and boys to support empowerment efforts.¹⁴⁴

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities compose approximately one-seventh of the world's population.¹⁴⁵ Those with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty, poor access to healthcare, hunger, and inadequate living conditions, and 80% of persons with disabilities live in a developing country.¹⁴⁶ One in five women has a disability, and women with disabilities are disproportionately affected by conflict and GBV, with a decreased ability to leave violence or access services.¹⁴⁷ Children with disabilities have lesser access to education; approximately one-third of children who do not attend school have a disability, and in Africa, only around 10% of children with disabilities go to school.¹⁴⁸

Persons with disabilities often face marginalization, and their inclusion in achieving the SDGs is needed in order to meet the SDGs.¹⁴⁹ Disability was not explicitly included in the MDGs, while the 2030 Agenda mentions disability 11 times – including within SDGs 4, 8, 10, 11, and 17 – and other SDGs relate to aspects of life for persons with disabilities.¹⁵⁰ In including persons with disabilities in the SDGs, Member States should incorporate disability into funding and policies, as is called for in the CRPD.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, specific, multi-stakeholder efforts between Member States, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society are needed in order to provide programmes and spaces for persons with disabilities.¹⁵² These efforts should work with existing programmes wherever possible in order to save funding, and should also be in line with the CRPD.¹⁵³ Member States should continue to ratify and implement the CRPD, and the international community can promote the engagement of persons with disabilities and raise awareness of their needs, as well as actively include persons with disabilities in decision-making processes and advocacy on the national, regional, and global levels.¹⁵⁴ Also, accommodations and support should be made available to ensure that persons with disabilities can engage in their communities socially and economically.¹⁵⁵

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples compose approximately 5% of the global population, live on 20% of worldwide territory, and contribute cultural heritage and knowledge to the international community.¹⁵⁶ However, they often experience high levels of injustice, poverty, discrimination, a lack of decision-making and land rights, and a shorter life expectancy, in both developed and developing countries.¹⁵⁷ These challenges exacerbate access to education, and indigenous births are sometimes not registered, which can lead to trafficking and the inability of individuals to vote or run for office.¹⁵⁸ Indigenous women experience decreased access to healthcare and a higher number of infectious diseases.¹⁵⁹ In addition, many indigenous children and youth face poor nutrition, armed conflict, home loss, and pollution.¹⁶⁰

Indigenous peoples are mentioned explicitly in SDG 2 and SDG 4, as well as in five SDG indicators; other SDGs also connect to aspects of the needs of indigenous peoples.¹⁶¹ At the most recent UNPFII meeting, Secretary-General

¹⁴⁴ UN-Women, *SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*.

¹⁴⁵ UN DESA, *Monitoring and Evaluation of Disability-Inclusive Development*, 2016.

¹⁴⁶ UN Enable, *#Envision2030 Goal 1: No Poverty*, 2016.

¹⁴⁷ UN-Women, *Women and girls with disabilities must not be left behind*, 2016; Nagarajan & Jerry, *Conflict deepens dangers and worsens exclusion for women with disabilities*, *The Guardian*, 2015.

¹⁴⁸ Bhatkal, et al., *Leave no one behind: The real bottom billion*, 2015, p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ UN Enable, *#Envision2030 Goal 1: No Poverty*, 2016.

¹⁵⁰ Meeks & Tardi, *Sustainable development goals could signal a sea change for disabled people*, *The Guardian*, 2015; UN Enable, *#Envision2030: 17 goals to transform the world for persons with disabilities*, 2016; IDDC & IDA, *The 2030 Agenda: The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Introductory Toolkit*.

¹⁵¹ Meeks & Tardi, *Sustainable development goals could signal a sea change for disabled people*, *The Guardian*, 2015.

¹⁵² UNSDN, *The Key to Agenda 2030? The Inclusion of People, All People!*, 2016.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ UNSDN, *The Key to Agenda 2030? The Inclusion of People, All People!*, 2016; IDDC & IDA, *The 2030 Agenda: The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities: Introductory Toolkit*.

¹⁵⁵ UN Enable, *#Envision2030 Goal 1: No Poverty*, 2016.

¹⁵⁶ UN DESA, *Economic and Social Development*; UN DESA, *Children and Youth*; UN DESA, *Environment*.

¹⁵⁷ UN DESA, *Economic and Social Development*.

¹⁵⁸ UN DESA, *Education*.

¹⁵⁹ UN-Women, *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples*, 2015.

¹⁶⁰ UN DESA, *Children and Youth*.

¹⁶¹ UN DESA, *Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda*; UN DPI, *Indigenous Peoples & the 2030 Agenda*.

Ban stated that “States must be held accountable for implementing the 2030 Agenda, with full respect for the rights and minimum standards guaranteed for indigenous peoples in the [UNDRIP].”¹⁶² Indigenous peoples’ rights should be protected and incorporated into all development, human rights policies, and international programmes, to guarantee the full involvement of indigenous peoples within international development.¹⁶³ National and international reports should include information regarding the needs of indigenous peoples.¹⁶⁴ Member States should ensure that indigenous children can access their indigenous culture and speak their indigenous language.¹⁶⁵ Member States should also consider the needs of indigenous peoples in education, housing, healthcare, and related aspects of social and economic development, so that indigenous peoples have “equal access” to such programmes, and in order to make sure that programmes respect “the diversity of the cultures of” and “empower indigenous peoples” through direct involvement.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the voices of indigenous peoples, including women and youth, should be incorporated within decision-making on all levels, so that sustainable development is conducted in a manner that considers the needs of and empowers indigenous peoples.¹⁶⁷

Conclusion

Marginalized groups experience development success unequally, and their needs are often not considered in sustainable development efforts. However, all individuals have a great ability to contribute to the success of the SDGs, and the greater inclusion of all peoples, including women, those who have disabilities, indigenous peoples, the poor, children, older persons, ethnic groups, religious minorities, migrants, persons discriminated against due to sexual orientation and gender identity, and other individuals who experience marginalization will allow for the SDGs to be more fully achieved by 2030. Accordingly, Member States, civil society, and the international community must work together on the local, national, regional, and international levels to promote inclusion and ensure that the SDGs are met for all nations and peoples and all segments of society.

Further Research

In considering this topic, delegates should consider the following questions: Who are individuals within your Member State that experience marginalization and discrimination? What efforts has your Member State made to address the needs of these peoples in government and social policies and to include them in development efforts? How can the international community promote increased data collection on the national and local levels to assist in increased inclusion? How can the international community most effectively monitor and review the implementation of the SDGs? What are the specific needs within the international community and within your Member State of women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, those affected by poverty, and other individuals? How can all peoples contribute to sustainable development and the achievement of the SDGs?

¹⁶² UN DESA, *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues concludes with the adoption of the 15th session report*, 2016.

¹⁶³ UN DPI, *Ban urges UN system to bolster support for indigenous peoples, as annual forum concludes*, 2016; UN DESA, *Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda*.

¹⁶⁴ UN DESA, *Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda*.

¹⁶⁵ UN General Assembly, *Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2)*, 2014, p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ UN DESA, *Environment*; UN General Assembly, *Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2)*, 2014, p. 3.

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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2016 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

In July 2016, the first High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was held. The theme was “Ensuring That No One is Left Behind,” and the HLPF adopted a Ministerial Declaration and discussed effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This site is the official website for the HLPF, and provides useful links to the programme of the Forum, including information on side events, and documentation from the HLPF. Due to its direct relevance to the topic of including all peoples in the Sustainable Development Goals, this resource will be immensely helpful in accessing recent UN documents on Ensuring That No One is Left Behind.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development, Disability. (n.d.). *#Envision2030: 17 goals to transform the world for persons with disabilities* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030.html>

#Envision2030 is a UN initiative that addresses the inclusion of disability into efforts to achieve the SDGs. This website discusses the goals of the campaign and links to pages on each of the 17 SDGs and how each goal connects to the experiences of individuals with disabilities. The linked webpages also include additional resources. The #Envision2030 website is an excellent resource for delegates in understanding the challenges and needs of persons with disabilities and how such relate to the SDGs.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (n.d.). *Women and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* [Website]. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs>

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN-Women, is a significant UN organization tasked with addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women within the UN system and throughout the world. This UN-Women website provides key information on the importance of including women in efforts to achieve the SDGs, in order to accomplish the goals themselves and to further international development. The site links to helpful resources on how women can be active participants in achieving the SDGs, including webpages that focus on each SDG in relation to what women experience and how they can contribute to the success of that SDG. These SDG-specific pages also list stories and initiatives for each SDG. This website is useful for delegates in their research, as it provides extensive information on meeting the needs of women and how to include women in implementing the SDGs.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

In September 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted as the international community’s goals for development from 2016 through 2030. This source is the official document that was adopted, General Assembly resolution 70/1. It includes a preamble on the motivations of establishing the Agenda, a declaration on the Agenda, the 17 goals and their accompanying 169 targets, and a discussion on how the SDGs will be implemented. Accordingly, this document is essential for delegates, as it outlines the philosophies behind the development of the SDGs, lists the SDGs and their targets, and emphasizes the need to include all nations and peoples and all segments of societies in the implementation of the SDGs over the next 15 years.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. (2016). *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda (E/C.19/2016/2)*. Retrieved 2 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/C.19/2016/2>

In October 2015, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues’ (UNPFII) Secretariat held an expert group meeting (EGM) to discuss Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda. Following this meeting, the EGM released this report on the same topic, which discusses the importance of including indigenous peoples into the SDGs and how to meet their needs as the 2030 Agenda is addressed over the next 15 years. The report includes background information on the connections between the SDGs and indigenous peoples, a discussion of the EGM meeting, and recommendations moving forward. This report will be helpful to delegates in understanding the

importance of including indigenous peoples as the SDGs are approached and what can be done on multiple levels to ensure the inclusion of indigenous peoples.

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II. Building a Resilient World Through Disaster Risk Reduction

*If we are to succeed in realizing our goals, fulfilling our promises, and living up to the United Nations Charter, urgent action is now needed.*¹⁶⁸

Introduction

From 2005 to 2015, over 1.5 billion people were impacted by disasters, including 700,000 lost lives.¹⁶⁹ The economic losses from disasters vary by income, from \$1.66 trillion, accounting from 1994 to 2013 for 0.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in high-income countries, and \$71 billion, accounting for 5.1% of GDP in low-income countries.¹⁷⁰ For Small Island Developing States (SIDS), future disaster losses represent an existential threat.¹⁷¹ Other countries also face a significant impact on their future development, meaning that disasters are an universal issue that the global community is facing.¹⁷²

More than 80% of disasters are natural-hazard related.¹⁷³ To clarify the difference between hazards and disasters, a hazard is a “severe or extreme event such as a flood, storm, earthquake, volcanic eruption etc. which occurs naturally in any part of the world,” and a disaster is “A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread...losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.”¹⁷⁴ Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is defined by the United Nations (UN) Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) as “The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.”¹⁷⁵ This indicates that DRR includes not only the methods of what individuals and Member States can implement to reduce risks, but also analyzing individuals and Member States from various perspectives – such as employment systems, food security, poverty, and the protection of human rights – to identify what makes them vulnerable.¹⁷⁶ Resilience is described as “The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.”¹⁷⁷ When building resilience, it is crucial to identify what kind of peoples, groups, and regions are vulnerable or resilient, and what the difference is between them and why the difference exists.¹⁷⁸ As climate-related hazards happen frequently and are becoming more intense, not only reducing the risk and impact of hazards themselves but also building enough capacity to respond to potential hazards is essential for sustainable development.¹⁷⁹ DRR cuts across all three aspects and sectors of the core of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – which illustrates that building resilience through DRR contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹⁸⁰ The integration of all sectors, which is one of the mandates of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is essential for achieving sustainable development; furthermore, addressing DRR and resilience will allow the international community to build a resilient world through disaster risk reduction.¹⁸¹

¹⁶⁸ Ban, *Opening remarks to Member States on preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit*, 2016.

¹⁶⁹ UN DESA, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*, 2015.

¹⁷⁰ CRED, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 2015: A Global Perspective*, 2015, p. 40.

¹⁷¹ Shultz, et al., *Disaster risk reduction and sustainable development for small island developing states*, 2016.

¹⁷² Leoni, SIDS link climate change and disaster risk, *UNISDR*, 2014.

¹⁷³ CRED, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 1995-2015*, 2015.

¹⁷⁴ CRED, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 2015: A Global Perspective*, 2015, p. 12; UNISDR, *Terminology*, 2009.

¹⁷⁵ UNISDR, *Terminology*, 2009.

¹⁷⁶ CDKN & ODI, *Inclusion and empowerment of at risk groups in reducing disaster risk*, 2015.

¹⁷⁷ UNISDR, *Terminology*, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Wisner, et al., *At Risk: natural hazards, people’s vulnerability and disasters*, 2003.

¹⁷⁹ UNISDR & WMO, *Disaster Risk and Resilience: Thematic Think Piece*, 2012.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ UN ECOSOC, *Mandate of the ECOSOC Integration Segment*.

International and Regional Framework

The current concept of DRR has been discussed since 1989 when the first International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), from 1990 to 1999, was launched.¹⁸² The concept of DRR was also discussed in *Agenda 21*, the outcome document from the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, before the first World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), held in Yokohama, Japan, in 1994, which adopted the *Yokohama Strategy*.¹⁸³ The Strategy introduced guidelines for action on the prevention, preparedness, and mitigation of disaster risk.¹⁸⁴ The *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* was the outcome of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, which referred to disasters as a factor impeding sustainable development.¹⁸⁵ At the second WCDRR in 2005, a major 10-year plan called the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* (HFA) was established, which described the importance of reducing disaster risk and discussed the direction of how various sectors could be involved to address DRR.¹⁸⁶ Strategies, priority actions, and an expected result of the “substantial reduction of disaster losses” during the following 10 years were set as common goals in HFA.¹⁸⁷ In order to share experiences and exchange ideas for creating universal agreements, government representatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), experts, and UN organizations gather at the Global Platform for DRR, which has been held every two years since 2007.¹⁸⁸

Most recently and significantly, the Third WCDRR, held in March 2015 in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, adopted the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, the successor to the HFA.¹⁸⁹ Some of the added or changed values in the Sendai Framework from the HFA are more engagement of all society and more emphasis on reducing the magnitude of disasters.¹⁹⁰ The Framework also alarmed the frequency and intensity of emerging biological hazards becoming equally deadly with natural hazards.¹⁹¹ The targets and priorities aimed to be achieved by 2030 crosscut with several SDGs.¹⁹² For example, priority 2 covers SDG 17 for promoting international cooperation; priority 3 includes SDGs 3, 4, and 9 for lowering mortality rates and ensuring safety with health and educational facilities; and the priorities overall connect with SDG 11, especially target 5.¹⁹³

Other international documents of significance relate to DRR and resilience; for example, the *Paris Agreement*, an international consensus agreement adopted in December 2015 at the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) includes aspects of the Sendai Framework.¹⁹⁴ For instance, Article 7 of the *Paris Agreement* coincides with the Sendai Framework’s focus on reducing mortality, economic losses, and damage to critical infrastructure such as schools and hospital.¹⁹⁵ In recent decades, urbanization has been one of the major drivers for rising disaster risks; the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been addressing urbanization since the first UN Conference On Human Settlements (Habitat I) in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, and Habitat II in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.¹⁹⁶ At Habitat III in October 2016, a New Urban Agenda will be adopted, which will include strategic and sustainable human settlements planning, development, and management.¹⁹⁷ Clauses 79 to 83 in the Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda published on May 2016 mentions how disaster- and

¹⁸² UNISDR, *Who we are*.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ UNISDR, *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation*, 1994.

¹⁸⁵ UN WSSD, *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20)*, 2002.

¹⁸⁶ Salim, Rio’s call to action on disaster risk reduction, UNISDR, 2012; UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)*.

¹⁸⁷ Velasquez, *A Guide to Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015.

¹⁸⁸ UNISDR, *The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2013.

¹⁸⁹ UNISDR, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015; UNISDR, *Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030*, 2015; UN WCDRR, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 2015.

¹⁹⁰ Velasquez, *A Guide to Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015.

¹⁹¹ UNISDR, *Terminology*, 2009; UNISDR, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 2015: A Global Perspective*, 2015.

¹⁹² Aitsi-Selmi & Murray, *Disaster risk reduction; a cross-cutting necessity in the SDGs*, 2015; UNISDR, *Disaster risk reduction and resilience in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

¹⁹³ *Sendai Framework influence on new SDGs*, UNISDR, 2015.

¹⁹⁴ UNFCCC, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

¹⁹⁵ UNISDR, *Paris Agreement shows political will to reduce disaster risk*, 2015.

¹⁹⁶ UN-Habitat, *History, mandate & role in the UN system*.

¹⁹⁷ UN Habitat III, *About HABITAT III*.

climate-resilient cities are important for all peoples.¹⁹⁸ In addition, the European Union (EU) launched an *Action Plan on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* in June 2016, which shows a clear path toward achieving regional disaster resilience.¹⁹⁹ The outcome document adopted at the International Conference on SIDS in Samoa, the *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway*, also refers to DRR action plans.²⁰⁰

Role of the International System

In May 2016, ECOSOC held its Integration Segment and a special meeting on the “Impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon.”²⁰¹ At the special meeting requested by UN General Assembly (GA) resolution 70/110, Member States not only received updates on the El Niño phenomenon and its adverse effects on economic, social, and environmental aspects of development, but also discussed how to act to increase their resilience.²⁰² The effective usage of financial resources for DRR was highlighted in the resulting presidential statement.²⁰³

Since UNISDR was established in 1999 by GA resolution 56/195, it has been the international platform for proposing global frameworks and strategies and implementing DRR.²⁰⁴ UNISDR promotes socio-economic and humanitarian activities on all levels, such as for UN organizations, regional organizations, and civil society, and currently encourages Sendai Framework implementation.²⁰⁵ UNISDR held a High Level Forum in Florence, Italy, in June 2016, which aimed to promote local level implementation of the Sendai Framework to build resilient communities; reaffirmed the interconnection of DRR, sustainable development, and climate change; and provided input for Habitat III and COP22.²⁰⁶ The six regional platforms of UNISDR also aim to address regional positions and objectives on this topic; these include the European Forum on DRR and the Asia Partnership meeting.²⁰⁷

Other UN and international organizations also address DRR and resilience. The GA has adopted resolutions and Secretary-General reports on DRR since 1998, with themes including the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, reducing the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, and Natural Disasters and Vulnerability.²⁰⁸ In 2011, the GA held a thematic debate on DRR for the first time in order to reflect the importance of it in the Rio+20 outcomes the following year.²⁰⁹ This year, the International Day for Disaster Reduction, which was established by the GA in 1989 to raise awareness of DRR, is on 13 October.²¹⁰ In July 2016, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for DRR launched “The Sendai Seven Campaign – 7 Targets, 7 Years,” which encourages Member States to address each target of the Sendai Framework.²¹¹ The UN World Health Organization (WHO) addresses DRR in its “Work Plan on Climate Change and Health Aims and Objectives: 2014-2019,” which was endorsed in February 2015.²¹² Moreover, WHO is currently putting emphasis on health emergency management in urban areas, which requires capacity development to prepare for and respond to emergency situations.²¹³ The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is supportive and active in mainstreaming DRR into agriculture to ensure food security, which is clearly stated in objective five of *FAO’s Strategic Framework 2010-*

¹⁹⁸ UN Habitat III, *HABITAT III Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda*, 2016.

¹⁹⁹ UNISDR, *UN welcomes European Commission Action Plan on Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2016.

²⁰⁰ Leoni, SIDS link climate change and disaster risk, *UNISDR*, 2014.

²⁰¹ UN ECOSOC, *Implementing the 2030 Agenda through Policy Innovation and Integration Concept Note*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Impacts of the 2015/16 El Nino phenomenon: Reducing risks and capturing opportunities*, 2016.

²⁰² UN ECOSOC, *Impacts of the 2015/16 El Nino phenomenon: Reducing risks and capturing opportunities*, 2016.

²⁰³ UN ECOSOC, *Presidential Statement on the occasion of the ECOSOC Special Meeting on Impacts of the 2015/16 El Nino phenomenon: Reducing risks and capturing opportunities*, 2016.

²⁰⁴ UNISDR, *Who we are*.

²⁰⁵ UNISDR, *UNISDR Science and Technology Conference on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 2016; UNISDR, *International Conference on the Implementation of the Health Aspects of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 2016.

²⁰⁶ UNISDR, *High Level Forum on Implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at Local Level*, 2016; Protezione Civile, et al., *High Level Forum “Implementing Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at Local Level,”* 2016.

²⁰⁷ UNISDR, *Regional Platforms*; UNISDR, *6th Annual Meeting of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR)*, 2015; UNISDR, *ISDR Asia Partnership (IAP) meeting of 2015*, 2015.

²⁰⁸ UNISDR, *UN Resolutions and Reports*.

²⁰⁹ UNISDR, *UN General Assembly to hold first-ever debate on disaster risk reduction*, 2011.

²¹⁰ UNISDR, *International Day for Disaster Reduction*.

²¹¹ UNISDR, *UNISDR launches “Sendai Seven” campaign to save lives in disasters*, 2016.

²¹² UN WHO, *WHO Workplan on Climate Change and Health: Aims and Objectives: 2014-2019*, 2015.

²¹³ UN WHO, *Technical Report: Health systems in urban disasters*, 2013.

19.²¹⁴ There are several humanitarian civil societies which work with disaster relief; one is the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).²¹⁵ It is the largest humanitarian organization in the world, and provides aid for victims of disasters and supports building capacities for the recovery of communities.²¹⁶ IFRC not only provides aid to devastated areas, but also publishes documents and reports about implementation, analysis on climate-related events, and guidelines for various sectors.²¹⁷

Disaster Risk Reduction and What Make Hazards into Disasters

Hazards become disasters when human lives are lost and livelihoods are destroyed.²¹⁸ The causes of disasters are wide-ranging, from ecological to social and economic causes.²¹⁹ From 1994 to 2013, the number of weather-related hazards, especially floods and storms, occurred more frequently and intensely, while geophysical disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruption have remained more or less stable during these years.²²⁰ Flooding accounts for 43% of all disasters during this time period, affecting 2.5 billion people.²²¹ Death rates due to disasters rose to an average of more than 99,700 deaths per year, excluding megadisasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis.²²² Unsustainable development in high-risk areas turns hazards into major catastrophes.²²³

However, the level of damage by disasters differs from country to country depending on various factors such as geographical features, economic status, and social customs.²²⁴ For example, climate-related disasters are especially an urgent issue for SIDS, as highlighted in the *SAMOA Pathway*; SIDS often have limited resources, are isolated, and experience more frequent disasters because of geographic, geophysical, and topographical characteristics.²²⁵ Least developed countries (LDCs) are exposed to both natural and man-made disasters.²²⁶ This is because not only do they experience poverty; social systems, such as those associated with gender, age, and disabilities, can also impact a country's vulnerability.²²⁷ The IFRC defines vulnerability in the context of DRR as "the diminished capacity of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural or man-made hazard."²²⁸ Each individual's capacity to respond to and prepare for disasters heavily depends on their Member State.²²⁹ For instance, where women's status is lower than men's societally, women tend to have lessened access to education and information, and are not informed about evacuation routes, facilities, and early warning notifications.²³⁰ This leads to women being unable to evacuate immediately when disasters occur.²³¹ People with disabilities also are unable to escape, and are often excluded from decision-making and planning of such processes.²³²

Building Disaster and Climate Resilience

The international community can reduce vulnerability and exposure to disasters by building collective resilient communities, or the idea of "Think Globally, Act Locally."²³³ Resilience in situations of potential hazards is determined by how many resources a community has in relation to addressing their needs.²³⁴ Resources can be wide-

²¹⁴ FAO, *Thirty-eighth Session Reviewed Strategic Framework (C 2013/7)*, 2013.

²¹⁵ IFRC, *Our vision and mission*.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ IFRC, *What we do*.

²¹⁸ CRED, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 1995-2015*, 2015, p. 7.

²¹⁹ McClean, UN family agrees plan for disaster risk reduction, *UNISDR*, 2013.

²²⁰ CRED, et al., *The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters 2015: A Global Perspective*, 2015, p. 10.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 7.

²²² Ibid., p. 13.

²²³ Ibid., p. 12.

²²⁴ Wisner, et al., *At Risk: natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters*, 2003, p. 5.

²²⁵ Shultz, et al., *Disaster risk reduction and sustainable development for small island developing states*, 2016, p. 34.

²²⁶ Bruckner, *Climate change vulnerability and the identification of least developed countries*, 2012.

²²⁷ IFRC, *Focus on gender and diversity in disaster risk reduction*, 2015.

²²⁸ IFRC, *What is vulnerability?*.

²²⁹ IFRC, *Gender and diversity for urban resilience: An analysis*, 2015, p. 3.

²³⁰ JICA, *Policies and Actions for Gender and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction*.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² UNISDR, *Living with Disability and Disasters*, 2014.

²³³ Nabarro & Nayyar, Think globally, act locally to meet development goals, *World Economic Forum*, 2016.

²³⁴ SCRA, *How to Help Your Community: A Manual for Planning and Action*, 2010, p. 19.

ranging, including materials, financial resources, information, and human resources.²³⁵ Material resources are land or natural resources, adequate housing, and basic infrastructure; these are often distributed unequally around the world.²³⁶ For example, there are currently 842 million undernourished people, and 14% of individuals living in developing countries suffer from severe hunger.²³⁷ Most of these individuals in rural areas make their living through the most disaster-vulnerable sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, forests, and livestock.²³⁸ However, this does not mean that resource-poor countries cannot be resilient; resources for resilience can be cultivated and resilience skills can be further developed, and every community has a potential to be resilient.²³⁹ One example of a best practice is agro-ecological farming in Cambodia, which supports small-scale farming impacted by unpredictable rainfall through developing drought-resilient agricultural techniques that are based on local knowledge and materials.²⁴⁰ Resilience also includes recovery processes, or the ability to “spring back from” a shock.²⁴¹ Measures for post-disaster recovery and reconstruction are inseparable from strategic DRR.²⁴² For example, Pakistan launched a subsidy program for rebuilding housing after the 2005 earthquake, which succeeded with 90% of new housing meeting seismic construction criteria.²⁴³ Japan also has a successful model that demonstrates the significant role of the private sector in resuming functions in communities after disasters.²⁴⁴ Prompt funding resources from the well-established disaster recovery management systems in Japanese banking and insurance sectors helped many local communities build back swiftly after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake.²⁴⁵ Many countries are undertaking longer-term disaster resilient recovery methods rather than simply restoring systems in the short term.²⁴⁶

Urbanization and Disaster Risk Reduction

As addressed in SDG 11, rapid population growth and unsustainable development are ongoing, especially in cities.²⁴⁷ Currently, 54% of the world’s population live in urban areas, and this is expected to grow to 66% by 2050.²⁴⁸ In most cases, urban economic growth is not meeting population growth, which leads to poorly-planned urbanization and causes serious environmental degradation including land exploitation, greenhouse gas emissions, and water contamination.²⁴⁹ This environmental damage from human activities directly connects to the effects of climate change, such as heat waves, precipitation patterns, and frequency and intensity of hazards, which are the drivers of disasters.²⁵⁰ In Africa, 72% of the urban population lives in informal settlements.²⁵¹ More and more people are moving into cities located in highly disaster-exposed areas such as coastlines, floodplains, and the flanks of volcanos.²⁵² The poorest and the most marginalized who move into urban places are exposed to hazards while trying to pursue access to resources such as basic services, especially education and information; adequate infrastructure; and employment.²⁵³ Mainstreaming climate change action and DRR into urban planning is pivotal for avoiding uncontrolled urban development.²⁵⁴ Many best practices are seen in the Asia region, such as in Vietnam and the Philippines, where inundation areas increased and roadways became non-functional by intense rainfalls and typhoons with urban development.²⁵⁵ Both countries made full use of the flood risk model for decision-making,

²³⁵ SCRA, *How to Help Your Community: A Manual for Planning and Action*, 2010, p. 19.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ UN DPI & UN WCDRR, *Agriculture and Disaster Risk*, 2014.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ SCRA, *How to Help Your Community: A Manual for Planning and Action*, 2010, p. 19.

²⁴⁰ Green Alliance, *Eradicating poverty through environmentally resilient development*, 2013, p. 5.

²⁴¹ GFDRR, *Resilient Recovery: An Imperative for Sustainable Development*, 2015, p. 10.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁴⁶ GFD Ibid., p. 10.

²⁴⁷ UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*, 2014.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Friend, et al., *Understanding urban transformations and changing local patterns of risk: lessons from the Mekong Region*, 2016.

²⁵⁰ UNISDR, *How to Make Cities More Resilient: A Handbook for Local Government Leaders*, 2012.

²⁵¹ The World Bank Group Experience & GFDRR, *Building Resilience: Integrating Climate and Disaster Risk into Development*, 2013.

²⁵² Friend, et al., *Understanding urban transformations and changing local patterns of risk: lessons from the Mekong Region*, 2016, p. 4.

²⁵³ Lovell & Masson, *Equity and inclusion in disaster risk reduction: building resilience for all*, 2014, p. 3.

²⁵⁴ IGES, *Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development*, 2016.

²⁵⁵ ADB, *Reducing Disaster Risk by Managing Urban Land Use: Guidance Notes for Planners*, 2016, pp. 79-82.

which enabled them to establish efficient infrastructure such as resilient transportation, storm water drainage, and stable water supply routes, and properly use them during times of disaster.²⁵⁶

Information and Communications Technology and the Role of Communities

Innovative technologies, especially information and communications technology (ICT) and satellite systems, can be effective methods in expanding information resources for detecting, evaluating, and monitoring potential disasters and recovery processes.²⁵⁷ Information sharing is essential not only within disaster-affected communities, but also among all actors, including the government, NGOs, and volunteer communities, to make humanitarian operations work more efficient.²⁵⁸ For example, when floods occurred in Thailand in 2011, even though the government, private sector, and universities had installed an early warning system, the flood still resulted in grave results – 815 people dead and 13.6 million affected.²⁵⁹ Since flood information was not delivered interactively among system users, it did not reach the most affected individuals.²⁶⁰ Not only should these technologies be applied into national or local implementation to enhance disaster resilience in communities, but it also must be considered how systems would be truly useful in actual situations.²⁶¹ The World Bank has put the expansion of the early warning systems as one of their main focus in their Climate Change Action Plan adopted in April 2016, which aims to help countries which cannot afford large investment on their implementation to meet the *Paris Agreement*.²⁶²

A firm social network in the community also plays a significant role, especially during and after disasters.²⁶³ Community development should be taken as a long-term and wide-ranged approach towards building resilience.²⁶⁴ It is important for civil society to understand the risks and prepare for potential hazard events in their communities.²⁶⁵ For example, various kinds of communication channels played an important role before, during, and after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, especially for survival and recovery processes.²⁶⁶ Even though Japan has advanced media and telecommunications infrastructure, conventional information tools, such as radio, local newspapers, newsletters, and word of mouth, were the most useful resources for affected communities.²⁶⁷ Community networking is also vital for the rising problems of mental health for victims of hazards and disasters.²⁶⁸ Many people, both adults and children, suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts after an extreme hazard.²⁶⁹ For instance, after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, the rates of mental illness doubled.²⁷⁰ Moreover, 33% of the participants of a survey taken four years after the storm were still suffering from PTSD, and 30% were in psychological distress.²⁷¹ Since the health effects of climate change are broad in range, research is required to deeply consider methods to provide mental health services following disasters.²⁷²

Sustainable Development through Disaster Risk Reduction and Building Resilience

The connection between DRR, sustainable development, and climate change is inseparable.²⁷³ As the urgency of combatting climate change is emphasized in SDG 13, climate change directly affects poverty, health, social development, economic growth, demographics, migration, and environmental protection.²⁷⁴ The Sendai Framework mentions that prioritizing DRR and resilience building are indispensable for achieving sustainable development,

²⁵⁶ ADB, *Reducing Disaster Risk by Managing Urban Land Use: Guidance Notes for Planners*, 2016, pp. 79-82.

²⁵⁷ Acero, ICTs and the Sendai Framework, *UNISDR*, 2015.

²⁵⁸ Appleby, *Connecting the Last Mile: The Role of Communications in the Great East Japan Earthquake*, 2013.

²⁵⁹ Winjikulchai, Thailand's 2011 Flood Crisis Reveals Potential of Technology and Social Media in Disaster Response, *The Asia Foundation*, 2012.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *World Bank Group Sets New Course to Help Countries Meet Urgent Climate Challenges*, World Bank, 2016.

²⁶³ GFDRR, *Resilient Recovery: An Imperative for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

²⁶⁴ UN ISDR & UNDP, *Building Disaster Resilient Communities Good Practices and Lessons Learned*, 2007.

²⁶⁵ SCRA, *How to Help Your Community: A Manual for Planning and Action*, 2010, p. 19.

²⁶⁶ Appleby, *Connecting the Last Mile: The Role of Communications in the Great East Japan Earthquake*, 2013.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Mooney, et al., *Psychosocial Recovery from Disasters: A Framework Informed by Evidence*, 2011, pp. 32-35.

²⁶⁹ U.S. Global Change Research Program, *Mental Health and Well-Being: Key Findings*.

²⁷⁰ Ramsey, *Recovering From PTSD After Hurricane Katrina*, *The Atlantic*, 2015.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² Mooney, et al., *Psychosocial Recovery from Disasters: A Framework Informed by Evidence*, 2011, p. 35.

²⁷³ UNISDR & WMO, *Disaster Risk and Resilience: Thematic Think Piece*, 2012.

²⁷⁴ UNISDR, *Briefing Note on the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) in Paris*, 2015.

especially for local governments.²⁷⁵ Since DRR and building resilience cover all dimensions – social, economic, and environmental – in the context of development, intense cooperation within the whole community is required.²⁷⁶ Effective cooperation can be achieved by governments integrating DRR and resilience approaches into their policies and legislation, and also working with the private sector and civil society.²⁷⁷ For example, Costa Rica has established 60 Local Emergency Committees, which coordinate disaster response and recovery activities with members from local institutions such as the Catholic Church, the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity, the Chamber of Tourism, and regional schools.²⁷⁸ With the active participation of all members, each entity recognized the importance to be well-prepared for potential disasters and to strengthen unity for the region.²⁷⁹ Therefore, decentralizing resources and activities by coordinating the responsibility and principles for each sector is also important.²⁸⁰ In this way, each sector may also be able to utilize or even create better scientific disaster-related databases such as, but not limited to, early warning systems, hazard maps, and satellite systems, which would enable them to detect emerging risks.²⁸¹ The integration of gender, age, disability, and cultural perspectives into all policies and practices, which is highlighted in the Sendai Framework, cannot only improve the situation of specific peoples or groups, but also strengthen the capacities, including disaster preparedness and recovery processes, of entire communities, leading to building resilience.²⁸²

Conclusion

2015 was a significant year for UN, with the Sendai Framework being adopted in March, the SDGs in September, and the *Paris Agreement* in December, and 2016 is an important year in implementing these international agreements. The common point for all three instruments is that they cannot be achieved solely. The idea of no one being left behind, the concept of the 2030 Agenda, needs to be mainstreamed into all kinds of implementation. All sectors – political leaders, local governments, private sectors, civil society, and individuals – should fully understand DRR and resilience and take both short- and long-term action to build capacities to respond to potential risks. Member States have the primary responsibility to take the initiative to build resilience through reducing disaster risks, but the responsibility is also shared among various sectors including local governments, the private sector, and other stakeholders, in order to build a more resilient world.

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates can consider: How can the international community evaluate and address possible risks thoroughly before disasters happen? How can emerging new technologies be put into practical use throughout the world? How can DRR and resilience be used to build a better community? How can all Member States have greater resources towards building resilience? How can the concept of “No one left behind” be integrated into DRR implementation? What kind of connections can be made among DRR, building resilience, and sustainable development for your Member State’s policies? How can stakeholders work together with governments? What kind of partnerships can be employed to address DRR and resilience? To what hazards or disasters are your Member State vulnerable? What makes them vulnerable to that threat or hazard? What resources can best help facilitate recovery at the community level? What features encourage more community resilience?

²⁷⁵ UNISDR, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015.

²⁷⁶ UNISDR, *How to Make Cities More Resilient: A Handbook for Local Government Leaders*, 2012, p. 15.

²⁷⁷ UCLG, *Local and regional governments, at the heart of disaster risk reduction strategies*, 2014.

²⁷⁸ IFRC, *Case study: Landslide early warning in Costa Rica*.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ UCLG, *Local and regional governments, at the heart of disaster risk reduction strategies*, 2014.

²⁸¹ UN ESCAP & UNISDR, *Reducing Vulnerability and Exposure to Disasters: The Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2012*, 2012.

²⁸² CDKN & ODI, *Inclusion and empowerment of at risk groups in reducing disaster risk*, 2015.

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http://www.unisdr.org/2015/docs/climatechange/COP21_WeatherDisastersReport_2015_FINAL.pdf

This document would be the best to understand what “natural disasters” truly are and how much damage and impact human activities can have on the environment. It contains statistics and graphs, which clearly visualize the urgency and importance of discussing DRR and building resilience. Moreover, it suggests some important points delegates should be aware of when planning action. Since this document does not focus on specific regions or Member States but analyzes the issues from a broader perspective, it would help all delegates when thinking of and creating implementation and proposals for the international community.

Friend, R., et al. (2015). *Understanding urban transformations and changing local patterns of risk: lessons from the Mekong Region* [Report]. Institute for Social and Environmental Transition. Retrieved 28 May 2016 from:

<https://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/assets/documents/privatepages/Understanding%20Urban%20transformations%20and%20changing%20local%20patterns%20of%20risk%20lessons%20from%20the%20Mekong%20Region.pdf>

This document analyses the linkage between urbanization and DRR with particular focus on local approaches. It also illustrates how urbanization heavily depends on various infrastructure systems and services along with accessibility for people, which indicates the common aspect of sustainable development being multi-dimensional. This document allows delegates to understand that vulnerability on disasters could be accelerated by not only weak infrastructure and poor land management, but also fragile institutional mechanisms such as non-risk informed policies, weak governance, and unplanned development. It helps delegates to broaden their view on multi-scale, systems-oriented approaches toward building resilient cities.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2015). *Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* [Reflection Paper]. Retrieved 27 May 2016 from:

http://www.unisdr.org/files/46052_disasterriskreductioninthe2030agend.pdf

This document was written by UNISDR to clarify the strong interrelationship between DRR and two international agreements: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. It clearly explains how DRR serves as a key perspective in achieving sustainable development. It is easy to understand since it analyzes conceptual measures to achieve each target and goal from the perspective of building resilience and reducing disaster risk. This may be a start-up document for delegates to understand that DRR and building resilience are indispensable in achieving sustainable development.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2015). *Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* [Report]. Retrieved 10 May 2016 from:

http://www.unisdr.org/files/46694_readingsendaiframeworkfordisasterri.pdf

This document from UNISDR analyzes the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction section by section. Starting with stating general information about the Sendai Framework, it then digs deeper with concrete explanations of each section/clause. Moreover, it includes the difference between the Hyogo Framework and Sendai Framework and what elements were added when the Sendai Framework was established. Delegates can read this soon after reading the Sendai Framework itself in the beginning of their research, and/or delegates can come back to this document after thoroughly researching, which may help reaffirm their understanding of the topic and with the organization of their ideas.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction & World Meteorological Organization. (2012). *Disaster Risk and Resilience: Thematic Think Piece*. Retrieved 24 May 2016 from:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/thinkpieces/3_disaster_risk_resilience.pdf

This document is relatively short and easy to understand, and discusses how DRR and resilience are important in the post-2015 development agenda. It mentions that technological advances and appropriate applications are essential for maintaining both development and climate mitigation. It also explains how to make international agreements or common global goals truly effective and

what important role should they play. It emphasizes that immediate actions are urgently needed, and demonstrates some key points the international community should be aware of when taking actions. Delegates may not only begin research from here to get the concept of the relation between DRR and sustainable development, but it is also a great document to come back to when researching.

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