THE 2016 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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20-24 March (Conf. A) & 27-31 March (Conf. B) • www.nmun.org

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Update for the Economic and Social Council

Committee Overview

Recent Developments

The United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) commenced its contributions to the 2030 Development Agenda by making plans for the 2016 Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) via a symposium in November 2015.[1] Another routine meeting, between ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly (GA) Second Committee, was also held in November.[2] The subject of the meeting was global corporate tax avoidance and its consequences.[3] These meetings addressed issues central to ECOSOC's program of work for 2016.[4]

The government of Uganda and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) developed the DCF High-Level Symposium, and held it in Kampala, Uganda from 4-6 November 2015.[5] This was the first opportunity since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015 for actors to discuss ways to leverage development cooperation.[6] Over 150 participants from governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector agreed that development cooperation was fundamental to the SDGs' success.[7] In order to support an integrated, nuanced approach to the SDGs, they recommended that pre-existing resources be adapted.[8] This recommendation also applies to development cooperation actors, with a need for them to understand regional and national development priorities.[9] This echoes previous recommendations of ECOSOC's Regional Commissions, indicating a future role the ECOSOC system has in fitting global goals to national targets.[10] Moreover, supporting regional sectoral frameworks was identified as key for delivery of the SDGs; special mention was given to the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa, as well as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program.[11] Additionally, participants acknowledged that trust among partners can only be achieved if existing commitments, such as "0.7% of Gross National Income for Official Development Assistance (ODA)" and $100 billion for combatting climate change, are honored.[12]

In October 2015, UN DESA staff prepared policy briefs to provide context for several workshops held before this symposium to inform its discussions.[13] The briefs focused on how to adapt and monitor development cooperation policy in order to advance the 2030 Agenda.[14] Country Results Frameworks (CRFs) were the feature of one workshop that underscored their importance for achieving the SDGs.[15] DCF participants recognized the challenges that different current CRFs face, namely a lack of transparency, resources, and political relevance.[16] To address these issues, one main symposium outcome was to call for greater prominence and investment in CRFs.[17]

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[1] UN ECOSOC, *DCF Uganda High Level Symposium: Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality*, 2015.

[2] UN DPI, *Economic and Social Council President Urges Stronger Cooperation to Thwart Tax Evasion and Avoidance,* 2015.

[3] Ibid.

[4] UN ECOSOC, *Opening Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Oh Joon, President of the Economic and Social Council: Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Economic and Social Council in New York, on 22 January 2016,* 2016.

[5] UN ECOSOC, *DCF Uganda High Level Symposium: Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality*, 2015.

[6] Ibid.

[7] UN DESA, *Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality Official Summary,* 2015.

[8] UN DESA, *A Revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development and Adjusting Development Cooperation for Implementing the SDGs,* 2015.

[9] UN DESA, *Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality Official Summary,* 2015.

[10] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *UN Regional Commissions' Report Recommends Adapting Global Post 2015 Goals to National* Realities, 2015.

[11] UN DESA, *A Revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development and Adjusting Development Cooperation for Implementing the SDGs,* 2015.

[12] UN DESA, *Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality Official Summary,* 2015.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] UN DESA, *Making Use of Country Results Frameworks for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* 2015.

[16] Venter, *Promoting integrated, aligned and country-driven results frameworks to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* 2015.

[17] UN DESA, *Making Use of Country Results Frameworks for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* 2015.

Participants supported the vision that the DCF continue to contribute to global-level monitoring of implementing the 2030 Agenda, via ideas such as those prepared at the symposium.[18]

Also, in November, global corporate tax was discussed. Four to 10% of global corporate income tax revenue, equivalent to $100 - $240 billion, is uncollected annually.[19] The loss is more acutely experienced in developing countries which require more investment in development.[20] At this routine meeting between ECOSOC's and the GA, ECOSOC President Mr. Oh Joon warned that, "[s]ince taxation is predominantly a stable, predictable source of finance, losses present a threat to sustainable development."[21] With a lack of information exchange, tax avoiders and evaders exploit loopholes, hindering countries' tax collection efforts.[22] In addition to calling on national, regional, and international tax authorities to collaborate and increase efforts to curb tax evasion, the Tax Committee intends to gather biannually as well as deepen its relations with ECOSOC via the Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters.[23] This follows ECOSOC decision 2015/214, which convened the Eleventh Session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters in Geneva.[24] This is in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), which was the outcome of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015.[25] UN Member States in July decided to increase the committee's resources, and boost its effectiveness and operational capacity, as part of the AAAA.[26]

Finally, 22 January 2016 marked the 70th anniversary of ECOSOC's inaugural meeting.[27] President Oh spoke on the occasion, highlighting the Council's theme for the year ahead: "Implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Moving from Commitments to Results."[28] In addition to the upcoming DCF, a High-level Political Forum and a Forum on Financing for Development, which will take place in 2016.[29] These events promise to stress the Council's centrality to promoting sustainable development policy integration in Member States' strategies for achieving the 2030 Agenda.[30] In spite of this stress, they will also remain crucial to the Council's success in 2016.

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[18] UN ECOSOC, *DCF Uganda High Level Symposium: Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality*, 2015.
[19] UN DPI, *Economic and Social Council President Urges Stronger Cooperation to Thwart Tax Evasion and Avoidance,* 2015.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] UN DESA, *Eleventh Session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matter*s, 2015.
[25] UN DPI, *Economic and Social Council President Urges Stronger Cooperation to Thwart Tax Evasion and Avoidance,* 2015.
[26] Ibid.
[27] UN ECOSOC, *Opening Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Oh Joon, President of the Economic and Social Council: Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Economic and Social Council in New York, on 22 January 2016,* 2016.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

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> *The Development Cooperation Forum is a biennial event and a crucial tool for ECOSOC leadership in development policy matters. 2015's DCF Symposium was the first high-level event post-adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. Delegates would do well to consult this summary and gauge how concerned actors are talking about development. The bulk of the summary provides the recommendations in bold, with additional elaboration on each one following.*

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2015, November 11). *Economic And Social Council President Urges Stronger Cooperation To Thwart Tax Evasion And Avoidance* [News Article]. Retrieved 4 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/special/ecosoc-tax-evasion-avoidance.html

> *As a stable source of finance, lost taxation due to exploitation of loopholes and lack of adequate international cooperation represents a threat to many developing countries' aims of achieving the SDGs. It is important to note ECOSOC's role in the issue, in terms of consulting with the General Assembly (GA) Second Committee, supporting the United Nations Tax Committee, and working within the framework of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. This source will help delegates understand ECOSOC's reporting relationship with the GA, in addition to its oversight of the UN Tax Committee.*

Venter, E. (2015). *Promoting integrated, aligned and country-driven results frameworks to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* [Policy Brief]. *2016 Development Cooperation Forum Policy Briefs.* Retrieved 5 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf15/dcfuganda_brief_crf.pdf

> *Country Results Frameworks (CRFs) help provide mutual accountability between development cooperation partners. They are also a knowledge sharing tool and a common policy space. This brief was prepared to inform discussion at the 2015 DCF Symposium regarding a working definition of CRFs as well as important influences and requirements. It also stresses that strong follow-up support on the CRF's targets at country level is crucial. Delegates should also be mindful of how data and technology can play a greater role in sustainable development.*

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United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *A Revitalized Global Partnership For Sustainable Development And Adjusting Development Cooperation For Implementing The SDGs* [Background Note]. Retrieved 6 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf15/dcfuganda_global_partnership.pdf

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *Development Cooperation for a New Era: Making the Renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development a Reality Official Summary* [Report]. Retrieved 5 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf15/dcfuganda_official_summary.pdf

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United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016, January 22). *Opening Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Oh Joon, President of the Economic and Social Council: Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Economic and Social Council in New York, on 22 January 2016.* Retrieved 26 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/president/statement_2016/statement_ecosoc_president_21_january_2016.pdf

Venter, E. (2015). *Promoting integrated, aligned and country-driven results frameworks to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* [Policy Brief]. *2016 Development Cooperation Forum Policy Briefs.* Retrieved 5 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf15/dcfuganda_brief_crf.pdf

I. Ensuring Universal Access to Water

Recent Developments

As Member States gathered in New York in September 2015 to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the complex nature of the water sector was once again recognized.[31] Water and sanitation as key components of sustainable development were recognized in a side event of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) on 29 September 2015.[32] The event enabled Member States' representatives to link water and sanitation to the entire 2030 Agenda and to stress the implications of health, nutrition, and education from the lack of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH).[33]

To observe the progress towards achieving SDG 6, "Ensure Access to Water and Sanitation for All," a new monitoring framework is currently under development.[34] It is called "Integrated monitoring of water and sanitation related SDG targets – GEMI" and will focus on "water treatment, efficiency and water-related ecosystems (Targets 3 and 6 of Goal 6)."[35] GEMI will align itself to other existing projects to enhance the progress and monitoring of SDG 6 while also serving other SDGs under a scheme of multi-sector coordination.[36] The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) also recognized the importance of guaranteeing access to water and sanitation; it proposed a clustered review of SDG 6 as well as four other SDGs on 20 January during the 2016 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which serves as the main follow-up and review platform for the UN of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[37]

Significant advancements were also achieved in the legal field in 2015.[38] A new framework to emphasize the how the right to water differs from the right to sanitation is included in GA resolution 70/169, adopted by consensus on 17 December 2015.[39] According to this resolution, "access" is guaranteed when water for personal and domestic use is safe, affordable, and sufficient, while "sanitation" discusses non-discriminatory access to safe, dignifying, socially, and culturally acceptable sanitation.[40] The resolution expects to generate consciousness on the human rights challenges that are associated with both sanitation and access to water such as undernutrition and diarrhea.[41] Furthermore, in October 2015, guidelines on the delivery of sanitation services were issued in a report by the UN Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation (UN-Water), called "Eliminating discrimination and inequalities in access to water and sanitation."[42] This report emphasizes Member States' responsibilities to: ensure that "the provision of potable water and sanitation services" is non-discriminatory, repeal discriminatory legislation on this matter, settle targets and ensure an equal and universal distribution of water services, and monitor the performance of providers.[43]

The year 2015 also represented an opportunity for the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB) to publish its final report and policy recommendations, "The UNSGAB Journey" after a decade of research.[44] The report was published on 18 November 2015 and explains several strategic points on ensuring sustainable water management, including creating awareness, improving financing, and managing

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[31] UN-Water, *Monitoring Water and Sanitation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2016, p. 2.

[32] UN-Water, *Making it Happen: Ending Inequalities and Ensuring Access to Water and Sanitation and Hygiene for All as a Basis for Achieving the SDGs*, 2015.

[33] UN-Water, *Making it Happen: Ending Inequalities and Ensuring Access to Water and Sanitation and Hygiene for All as a* Ibid.

[34] UN-Water, *Monitoring Water and Sanitation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2016, p. 7.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *ECOSOC President Discusses Theme, Arrangements for HLPF 2016*, 2016.

[38] UN General Assembly, *The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation (A/C.3/70/L.55/Rev.1)*, 2015.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] UN DPI, *Proper sanitation becomes separate UN human right in enhanced fight against deadly infections,* 2015; Mahmud & Mbuya, *Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, and Nutrition in Bangladesh: Can Building Toilets Affect Children's Growth?* 2016, p. 17.

[42] UN-Water, *Eliminating discrimination and inequalities in access to water and sanitation*, 2015, p. 49.

[43] Ibid.

[44] UNSGAB, *The UNSGAB Journey*, 2015, p. 6.

resources more effectively.[45] The right to water represents another strong point of the report, and the board strongly encouraged Member States to accelerate institutional reforms and eliminate corruption to boost the capacities of water services.[46] Regarding sanitation, the report recommends steps such as incentivizing innovation, prioritizing sanitation as a health mechanism, and de-stigmatizing menstrual hygiene management.[47]Also in November, the UN Secretary-General facilitated a meeting that established a link between water management and disaster risk reduction.[48] There was also further discussion around the significant data gap present around the globe on issues of gender and water.[49]

Finally, in December 2015, the UN World Water Assessment Program (WWAP), working with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), presented the "UN WWAP-UNESCO Project on Gender Sensitive Water Monitoring Assessment and Reporting."[50] This cutting-edge initiative has developed indicators and methodologies for sex-disaggregated data collection, which will help include a gender perspective in water monitoring post-2015.[51] The WWAP provides an authoritative picture of the state and management of freshwater resources around the globe and coordinates the work of 31 UN-Water members.[52] It also promotes capacity development to empower institutions on areas such as water management and sustainable urban water infrastructure.[53] As evidenced, water was a critical issue on the agenda of the UN, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and ECOSOC's partners at the end of 2015 and will remain so well into 2016.

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[45] UNSGAB, *The UNSGAB Journey*, 2015, p. 6.

[46] Ibid., p. 7.

[47] Ibid., p. 8.

[48] UN DPI, *Special UN event stresses key role of water management in tackling challenges of climate change,* 2015.

[49] UNESCO, *UN WWAP UNESCO Project on Gender Sensitive Water Monitoring Assessment and Reporting*, 2015.

[50] UNESCO, *WWAP contribution to COP 21*, 2015.

[51] UNESCO, *UN WWAP UNESCO Project on Gender Sensitive Water Monitoring Assessment and Reporting*, 2015.

[52] UNESCO, *World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP): About WWAP*, 2015.

[53] UNESCO, *Capacity Building on Water and Sustainable Development*, 2015.

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> *This website provides a comprehensive description of the WWAP project. It will serve delegates as a benchmark for the design of their own initiatives, guided by an organized structure and clear objectives. This website also provides clear insight on the lack of data pertaining to gender and water issues, justifying the pertinence of the project. Delegates will be able to use this data during the to help inform their own positions and proposals.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Human right to safe drinking water and sanitation (A/70/203)* [Report]. Retrieved 5 January 2016 from: http:/undocs.org/A/70/203

> *Beyond defining water access and sanitation, this report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation establishes a guide of standards that guarantee both human rights. It establishes the criteria of availability, accessibility, quality, and affordability for the provision of sanitation and hygiene, and for the guarantee of water access. These criteria will guide students to a deeper understanding of the role of the international community on the topic. It is also useful as a tool to frame scopes of action and refine proposals and recommendations.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation (A/C.3/70/L.55/Rev.1).* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 8 January 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/C.3/70/L.55/Rev.1

> *This document represents the outcome of a long process of negotiations towards ensuring that access to water and sanitation is regarded officially as a human right. It also provides a framework for sanitation, water, and hygiene, as well as an assessment of water services. Delegates are encouraged to use this document as a legal framework that will guide their proposals and a resource that will keep them aware of the importance of distinguishing between the implications of both water access and sanitation as human rights.*

UN Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation. (2015). *Eliminating discrimination and inequalities in access to water and sanitation* [Policy Brief]. Retrieved 6 January 2016 from: http://www.unwater.org/fileadmin/user_upload/unwater_new/docs/UN-Water_Policy_Brief_Anti-Discrimination.pdf

> *This policy brief emphasizes the importance of non-discrimination, equality, and communal participation in decision-making processes. It also exposes the obligations of state and non-state actors regarding the right to water and sanitation as well as the effective and organized supply of water. Furthermore, it represents a tool for delegates to understand mechanisms to better track the progress of water programs and projects.*

United Nations, Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation. (2015). *The UNSGAB Journey* [Report]. Retrieved 7 January 2016 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/8701unsgab-journey-web.pdf

> *The content of this document is the work of an eminent group of people spanning a decade. It will help delegates understand the impact of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation on achieving better water management practices and influencing national policies at a global scale. As well, delegates will be able to study its policy recommendations and consider them during the development of their own proposals.*

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II. Utilizing Youth Employment for Sustainable Development

Recent Developments

As the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ahmad Alhendawi noted in his end of year letter, the United Nations (UN) system saw several significant developments related to youth employment for sustainable development in the past year, and most notably in recent months.[54] During its 70th session, the General Assembly (GA) reiterated the importance of the global youth agenda and the role of the Envoy in harmonizing the work across UN entities, Member States, youth groups, academia, and civil society as well as the importance of several youth forums.[55] In November 2015, the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) endorsed the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.[56] Introduced by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Director-General and developed in partnership with 19 UN bodies, the initiative lays out actions to support youth employment across the UN system and its partners to support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, "inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all."[57] It plans to increase high-level global engagement in youth employment policy, increase the scale and scope of regional and national efforts to increase youth employment, share knowledge and expertise, and to increase and leverage resources supporting these efforts.[58] Endorsement of this initiative means it can provide a model for partners and Member States as they implement youth employment initiatives related to the SDGs, including the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), its programs and its funds.[59]

As recognized by the GA, several youth forums and meetings recently let youth voice their input about youth employment issues. One of these meetings was the 11th Conference of Youth in November, where 5,000 attendees produced the Youth Manifesto to COP21 ahead of the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP21).[60] A key theme in this manifesto was adaptation to the climate crisis; requested actions included increased financing for youth to start businesses around adaptation and the allocation of funds at the country level to support broader youth employment and adaptation initiatives.[61] The ninth UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Youth Forum – Young Global Citizens for a Sustainable Planet met in late October, also to discuss climate change and the post-2015 development agenda.[62] Part of its conclusions included a call to increase recognition of vocational training as an alternative to formal school education.[63] Additionally, the 2015 AIESEC Youth Action Summit brought youth together in December 2015 to look at the SDGs, discuss decent work, economic growth, and how to mobilize youth to achieve the SDGs.[64] ECOSOC hosted the 2016 Youth Forum from 1-2 February 2016, focusing on "Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda," collating the outcomes of these recent global forums as a foundation, and using them to inform its work in building youth employment.[65]

A wealth of new data was also released recently around youth employment that should inform ECOSOC's planning and programs. In October, the ILO released a report on "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth."[66] Highlights include while the global youth unemployment rate remains steady around 13%, the number of unemployed has dropped by 3.3 million since 2009.[67] The ILO report also indicates that the global youth share of the overall unemployment numbers is shrinking, though still high at 36.7%.[68] Working poverty or underemployment remains a significant problem as poverty rates among youth in developing countries remain high and many work irregular jobs or in the informal economy.[69] In December, the UN Capital

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[54] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *End of Year Letter from the Envoy on Youth*, 2015.

[55] UN General Assembly, *Policies and programmes involving youth (A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1)*, 2015.

[56] ILO, *UN Chiefs endorse Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth*, 2015.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] International Campaign for the Youth Employment Decade, *The UN endorses the ILO's Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth*, 2015.

[60] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *End of Year Letter from the Envoy on Youth*, 2015.

[61] Conference of Youth, *Manifesto! #COY11 – Paris 2015*, 2015.

[62] UNESCO, *Conclusions of the Youth Forum*, 2015; UNEP Climate Action, *Find out more about COP15*, 2015.

[63] Ibid.

[64] AIESEC, *Agenda*, 2015.

[65] UN ECOSOC, *Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda*, 2015.

[66] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015*, 2015.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

Development Fund (UNCDF) released the report "Recommended Practices and Lessons Learned in Providing Financial and Non-Financial Services to Youth: Insights from the YouthStart Program," which is a program UNCDF has run since 2010 to pilot how to deliver financial services to youth and increase economic opportunities.[70] The pilots have found that savings, loans, and financial training can increase economic opportunity, especially in vulnerable populations.[71]

The ILO is an important partner to the UN and ECOSOC on youth employment initiatives, as seen by their involvement with the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and tracking of youth employment data.[72] Their Youth Employment Programme (YEP) works at the country level and overlaps with ECOSOC's work in these areas, meaning there are opportunities for the organizations to work together and also learn from each other's work.[73] In late November, the ILO's Work4Youth (W4Y) project, a part of YEP, released its 2014-2015 newsletter highlighting achievements from the past two years.[74] Many of its successes focused on data that ECOSOC may consider in its own work: W4Y conducted 50 school-to-work transition surveys in 35 countries and released over 20 national reports analyzing this data; released a series of thematic reports around youth and informal employment, rural development, and education; published technical briefs on topics like young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs); and supported the Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015 report.[75]

Youth employment continues to be a challenge globally. Several key actors and frameworks have been developed recently to specifically address issues around youth employment, such as the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the Global Initiative of Decent Jobs for Youth. Simultaneously, as the Envoy on Youth works to increase youth participation, there have been increasing opportunities for youth to voice their ideas and participate in the process of addressing youth employment issues, particularly in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.[76] Forums like the 11th Conference of Youth ahead of COP21, the ninth UNESCO Youth Forum, and ECOSOC's 2016 Youth Forum specifically address topics in the space where youth employment and sustainable development converge; outcomes from these conferences provide ECOSOC with a way forward on these issues and how to best utilize youth employment initiatives to serve the SDGs.[77] Data and best practices from partners can help ECOSOC better measure and evaluate the efficacy and impact of its programs while outcomes and learnings of other UN programs and the ILO's YEP can inform better design within ECOSOC programs.

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[70] UNCDF, *Recommended Practices and Lessons Learned in Providing Financial and Non-Financial Services to Youth*, 2015.
[71] Ibid.
[72] ILO, *UN Chiefs endorse Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth*, 2015.
[73] ILO, *Youth Employment Programme*, 2015.
[74] ILO, *Work4Youth Newsletter: 2014-2015*, 2015.
[75] Ibid.
[76] UN Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *Meet the Envoy*, 2015.
[77] UNICEF, Voices of Youth, *#Employment*, 2015.

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> *Written by 250 youth from 55 countries, the COY11 Manifesto! reviewed several values and themes from the youth perspective ahead of the climate talks in Paris in December 2015. The first section codifies values important to youth that inform their position and recommendations around specific themes in the second half of the paper. Themes included education, adaptation, youth inclusion, and sustainable food production. Delegates can use this resource to understand the current dialogue among international youth relating to climate change and some topics within the sustainable development agenda. The recommendations can be used as examples and models for informing delegate positions.*

International Labour Organization. (2015). *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth* [Report]. Retrieved 10 January 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/youth/2015/lang--en/index.htm

> *Released in October 2015, this report provides a wealth of data on the reality of youth and unemployment in the world. It provides global and regional outlooks, an overview of youth labor markets in developing countries, youth transitions in the labor market, and policy recommendations to countries and the international community on how to create more decent jobs for young people. The website also links to videos, graphics, and summaries of key findings as well as the report itself. Delegates can use this resource to better understand the specific challenges in creating decent jobs for youth as well as see how their specific country or region fits into the global statistics. The policy recommendations could also be useful for delegate research.*

International Labour Organization. (2015). *Work4Youth Newsletter: 2014-2015*. Retrieved 10 January 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_430266.pdf

> *This newsletter released by the ILO is a great place for delegates to see a summary of the crosscutting work the Work4Youth project has done in the past two years. It provides a summary of the research and data collection over this period of time, explains why the data is important, and links to the full reports. The newsletter also highlights work done in national and regional workshops towards improving youth employment and how the project has engaged with research partners to increase the knowledge on the topic. Delegates can use this resource to access more specific information and to better understand how robust the ILO's work is in regards to youth employment and how international organizations like the UN can engage with Member States on the issue.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Policies and programmes involving youth (A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1)* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 10 January 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1

> *The only resolution from the GA's 70th session to directly discuss youth unemployment, 'Policies and programmes involving youth' recognizes the 20th anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, notes quality youth employment as one of the biggest global challenges, and welcomes the role of the Envoy on Youth among other recognitions. The resolution includes 25 clauses with recommendations to increase youth employment across a variety of measures. Delegates should use this resource first as a summary of what the GA and UN have recently done around this topic and secondly to see what the priorities and tasks the GA has laid out for the UN system and its partners. This resolution should inform delegates' positions and recommendations.*

United Nations, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. (2015). *End of Year Letter from the Envoy on Youth*. Retrieved 10 January 2016 from: http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/12/end-of-year-letter-from-the-envoy-on-youth/

> *While more broadly focused on youth rather than the topic of youth employment and sustainable development, this end of year letter provides an excellent summary of youth-related initiatives, forums, and achievements in 2015. Some key highlights include the UN Chief Executive Board's endorsement of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, World Youth Skills Day, and an overview of what is being done to promote youth interests and involvement at the regional level. Delegates should use this resource to gain a broad understanding of what happened relating to*

youth in 2015 as well as a channel to more in depth information, as many of the events featured in this letter also include links to additional sources.

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III. Education in Post-Conflict Situations

Recent Developments

With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, the United Nations (UN) committed itself to ensuring "inclusive and equitable quality education and [promoting] lifelong learning opportunities for all" (SDG 4), and also recognized the unique educational needs of post-conflict and fragile states.[78] The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), like many experts and international agencies, has now begun to focus on how to maximize progress on the SDGs related to education and ensure that targets are measurable and actionable for the long term.[79] As a body designed to unite and coordinate actions across the UN system that has unique connections to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), ECOSOC is positioned well to progress the implementation of the SDGs and improve education in post-conflict situations.[80]

Although ECOSOC itself has not had any meetings on education or conflict in recent months, in December 2015 the Council hosted its second Dialogue on Longer-term Positioning of the UN Development System in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[81] The discussions, which will influence how the UN Development Group (UNDG) will implement educational SDGs in post-conflict areas, focused on increasing efficiency through partnerships, data sharing and collection, and accountability throughout the UNDG.[82] Additionally, the regular session of the Committee on NGOs is scheduled for the end of January 2016, during which several NGOs that work in post-conflict situations will submit their quadrennial reports.[83] There are also 13 educationally-focused NGOs being considered for consultative status, including the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes Education Trust, a South Africa-based organization that works throughout the African continent to prevent recurrence of conflict through education and training.[84]

Subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC, including the Regional Economic Commissions, have continued their efforts to address education in post-conflict situations and related issues as well at the end of 2015.[85] In October 2015 the Economic Commission for Africa held seminars in Zambia on the subject of "Conflict, Peace and Regional Economic Integration in Southern Africa: Bridging the Knowledge Gaps and Addressing the Policy Challenges" which sought to increase "interaction and knowledge sharing among Southern Africa's scholars," educate the public on the root causes of conflict, and provide several methods for conflict resolution in a lecture format.[86] In November 2015, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia released a report on the impact of conflict and instability on development in the Arab region, which highlighted the significant negative impact of conflict on education and noted that approximately "40 per cent of school-age children in Iraq, Libya, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen were not attending school as of mid-2015."[87]

During a December 2015 meeting of the General Assembly (GA), which was held in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, education and conflict were common themes.[88] While addressing the GA, the representative of the Gulf Cooperation Council highlighted the group's efforts to support "countries and regions in conflict through providing development assistance with a view to reducing the number of children who did not receive basic education."[89] Several speakers associated themselves with the Group of 77 and

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[78] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 13-14.
[79] Anderson, *We have SDGs now, but how do we measure them?* 2015.
[80] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC as a unifying platform for sustainable development*.
[81] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *UN System Highlights Initiatives for SDG Implementation*, 2015.
[82] Ibid.
[83] UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, *Provisional agenda of the 2016 regular session* (*E/C.2/2016/1*), 2016.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Social Science Research Council, *APN-UNECA Seminar Series on Conflict, Peace, and Regional Economic Integration in Southern Africa*, 2015.
[86] UN ECA, *Inaugural Southern Africa Lecture Series, Conflict, Peace and Regional Economic Integration in Southern Africa: Bridging the Knowledge Gaps and Addressing the Policy Challenges*, 2015.
[87] UN ESCWA, *The impact of conflict and instability on development in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.2/4)*, 2015.
[88] UN DPI, *Twenty Years after World Summit, Human-centred, Inclusive Approach Still Key to Achieving Equitable Social Development, Speakers tell General Assembly*, 2015.
[89] Ibid.

stressed the high level of impact that conflict has on social development and education.[90] At a later meeting, the GA adopted resolution 70/127, which included calls to assist youth in conflict and post-conflict situations in line with the World Programme of Action for Youth and recognized the importance of protecting schools and universities in these situations.[91]

Regional bodies, particularly the European Union (EU), have also made progress on addressing education in post-conflict situations.[92] Despite debates and a regional schism caused by the massive number of refugees entering EU countries, in November 2015 the EU adopted a "resolution on education for children in emergency situations and protracted crises."[93] The resolution called for EU members to establish "education corridors" that would allow students from conflict-affected areas to attend their universities and prioritized access to education over fears of the potential negative impact of migrants.[94] The EU has also made recent attempts to address the financing gap for education by establishing multiple trust funds designed for fragile states and refugees or informal migrants, especially from Syria and several African states.[95] Several experts from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees have highlighted providing access to education for Syrian child refugees as highly important, but also noting their large numbers pose a unique challenge.[96]

The adoption of the SDGs has renewed focus on education, especially in post-conflict areas, across the UN and especially within ECOSOC.[97] ECOSOCs subsidiary bodies have already begun to address the educational needs of post-conflict states, the GA has expressed the need to protect education in these areas, and regional bodies and NGOs continue to have prominent roles.[98] ECOSOC will continue to serve in its unifying role to focus efforts as necessary towards the achievement of SDG 4 and ensure access to education in post-conflict zones.[99]

[90] UN DPI, *Twenty Years after World Summit, Human-centred, Inclusive Approach Still Key to Achieving Equitable Social Development, Speakers tell General Assembly*, 2015.

[91] UN General Assembly, *Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its 70th session*, 2015.

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[93] Ibid.; Ackerman, *The refugee crisis in Europe: Bridging the education gap for Syrians in Turkey*, 2015.

[94] European Union, *European Parliament resolution on education for children in emergency situations and protracted crises (2015/2977(RSP))*, 2015.

[95] European Commission, *Bêkou Trust Fund - Introduction*, 2016; European Commission, *EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis*, 2015; European Commission, *A European Agenda on Migration*, 2015.

[96] Magaziner, *The Importance of Higher Education for Syrian Refugees*, 2015.

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> *This recent article from Xanthe Ackerman at the Brookings Institution provides insight on the challenges and potential solutions for education in ongoing conflict situations. It also provides basic arguments regarding refugees and migrants into Europe. In this source, delegates should seek to understand how Turkey specifically has adapted to being disparately impacted by refugees and taken massive efforts to continue to provide education.*

European Union. (2015). *European Parliament Resolution On Education For Children In Emergency Situations And Protracted Crises (2015/2977(RSP))*. Retrieved 7 January 2016 from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+MOTION+B8-2015-1240+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

> *This EU resolution cites a large number of precedents relevant to education in post-conflict situations and includes a wide variety of ideas and initiatives aimed at assisting children affected by conflict and other crises. Delegates should be aware when reading this that most conflict-affected states are developing and this resolution is from a developed regional group. Delegates should also look for the wide variety of topics related to education and conflict, which may need to be addressed in order to comprehensively address the topic.*

Magaziner, J. (2015). *The Importance of Higher Education for Syrian Refugees*. Retrieved 6 January 2016 from: http://wenr.wes.org/2015/12/the-importance-of-higher-education-for-syrian-refugees/

> *Magaziner analyzes and presents a strong case for providing high levels of education for Syrian refugees and touches on some of the massive impact of the refugee crisis. While the refugee crisis results from ongoing conflict, it has become a prominent topic of conversation in many regional groups and throughout the international community. Delegates should examine the obstacles to providing education and look at the current efforts listed, including those by UN agencies and NGOs as described in this source.*

United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2015). *The Impact Of Conflict And Instability On Development In The Arab Region (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.2/4)* [Report]. Retrieved 7 January 2016 from: http://css.escwa.org.lb/OES/3799/1500476.pdf

> *While this report focuses on a single region, the implications of conflict on education and related social issues in this region can easily be applied to any post-conflict state. Delegates should pay special attention to section I-B on health and education and section I-C on the forcibly displaced as they discuss concepts directly applicable to education in post-conflict situations. The conclusions and recommendations in section II will also give delegates a good point to start thinking about how to address education in post-conflict situations and implement the SDGs.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Policies and programmes involving youth (A/RES/70/127)*. Retrieved 27 January 2016 from: http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/70/127

> *This resolution, adopted at the 70th session of the General Assembly, explicitly mentions several initiatives on youth and education. Delegates can use this to gain an understanding of related topics in the UN system and should also think critically about how youth engagement can prevent relapse into conflict, especially in fragile states. While its text mentions education in conflict only a limited number of times, those few are in particularly useful and relevant contexts.*

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