



New York City, NY, USA
3-7 April (Conf. A) / 10-14 April (Conf. B)



Economic and Social Council Plenary Background Guide 2022

Written by: Alliyah L. Edwards and Allison C. Uhrick, Directors
Matthias Burtscheidt and Filippo Maria Margheritini, Assistant Directors



NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

THE WORLD'S LARGEST UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SIMULATION • SINCE 1927

13570 Grove Dr., Suite 294 • Maple Grove, MN 55311

www.nmun.org • info@nmun.org • 612.353.5649

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2022 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Economic and Social Council Plenary (ECOSOC Plenary). This year's staff are: Directors Alliyah L. Edwards (Conference A) and Allison Uhrick (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Matthias Burtscheidt (Conference A) and Filippo Maria Margheritini (Conference B). Alliyah holds two Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Political Science, and is pursuing a Masters of Arts in Criminal Justice Administration. Allison holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Affairs. Filippo holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and recently obtained a Masters in Middle East, Caucasus, and Central Asian Security Studies, and plans to pursue a career with international organizations. Catherine is a junior at the University of New Haven studying International Affairs with a minor in Criminal Justice.

The topics under discussion for the ECOSOC Plenary are:

1. Realizing Sustainable Economic Growth by Achieving SDG 8
2. Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries

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

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2022 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers](#) website.

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Conference A

Alliyah L. Edwards, *Director*

Matthias Burtscheidt, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Allison C. Uhrick, *Director*

Filippo Maria Margheritini, *Assistant Director*

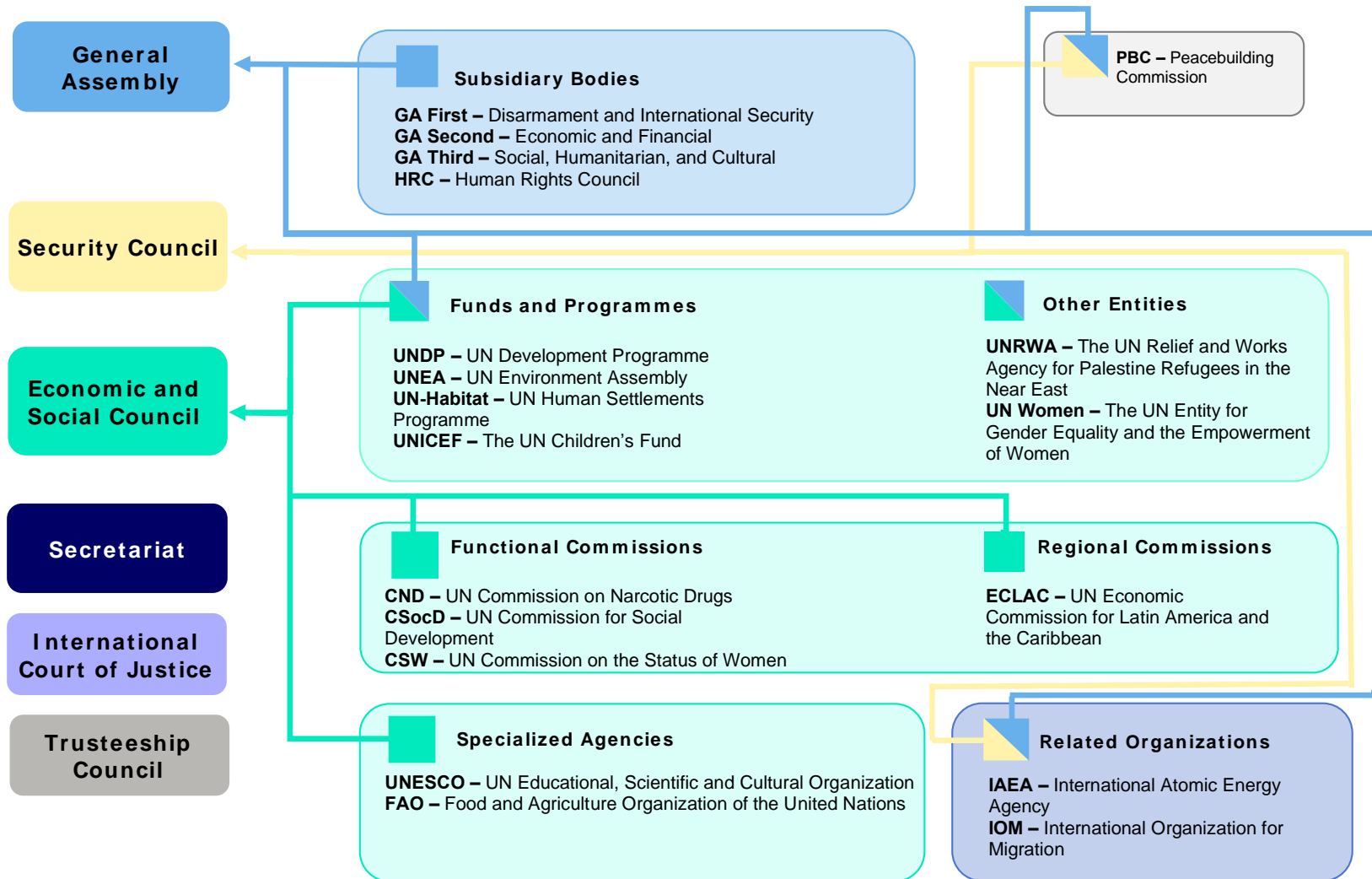


Table of Contents

United Nations System at NMUN•NY.....	2
Committee Overview.....	3
Introduction	3
Governance, Structure, and Membership.....	4
Mandate, Functions, and Powers	5
Recent Sessions and Current Priorities.....	6
Conclusion	7
Annotated Bibliography.....	8
Bibliography	8
1. Realizing Sustainable Economic Growth by Achieving SDG 8.....	13
Introduction	13
International and Regional Framework.....	14
Role of the International System	15
Impacts of COVID-19 in Achieving SDG 8	16
Gender Inclusiveness in Sustainable Economic Growth.....	18
Conclusion	19
Further Research.....	20
Annotated Bibliography.....	20
Bibliography	21
2. Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries	26
Introduction	26
International and Regional Framework.....	27
Role of the International System	28
Partnerships for Public Health in Least Developed Countries.....	29
Strengthening South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation	30
Conclusion	31
Further Research.....	31
Annotated Bibliography.....	31
Bibliography	32

United Nations System at NMUN•NY

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



Committee Overview

Introduction

Chapter X of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a founding body and one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN).¹ ECOSOC oversees the allocation of approximately 70% of UN resources through its oversight of 12 specialized agencies, and 13 functional and regional commissions.² The Council is mandated to serve as the primary body for policy dialogue on economic, social, cultural, educational, and health-related topics, to advise and coordinate the activities of Member States and other UN entities on matters within this mandate, and to lead discussion on the implementation of the international development framework.³

ECOSOC has undergone several reforms since its inception; notably, during 1960s and 1970s, developing Member States worked to broaden the agenda of the UN and bring focus to new areas, including the promotion of development and the elimination of poverty.⁴ In 1971, General Assembly adopted resolution 2847(XXVI), which amended Article 61 of the *Charter of the United Nations* by increasing ECOSOC membership from 27 to 54, in order to better reflect global economic and geographic diversity.⁵ In 1977, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/197, *Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System*, and sought to improve ECOSOC's effectiveness by increasing coordination with its subsidiary bodies.⁶ To avoid any duplication of work due to broad mandates, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50/227 (1995) on *Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields*, clarifying that its role is to provide policy guidance while ECOSOC's focus is on coordination of implementation.⁷

Throughout the last decade, the General Assembly implemented additional reforms aimed at strengthening the working methods of ECOSOC.⁸ These reforms included an expansion of ECOSOC's functions to enable it to lead on identifying and discussing emerging challenges, to act as a policy forum for global leaders through the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), and provide a platform of accountability for all levels of monitoring and reporting on universal commitments.⁹ An example of this is ECOSOC's commitment to engaging youth in a partnership focused on ensuring the successful attainment of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹⁰ This partnership began when the 2010-2011 Year of Youth prompted the first ECOSOC sanctioned Youth Forum in 2012, a meeting that engaged youth and brought to light issues like unemployment for the younger generation.¹¹ The success of the first sanctioned ECOSOC Youth Forum has now resulted in a more structured and thorough annual forum.¹² In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/305, reiterating that ECOSOC's work should be rooted in inclusivity,

¹ UN ECOSOC, *About ECOSOC*.

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

³ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.

⁴ New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*, 2021.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁶ UN General Assembly, *Restructuring the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System (A/RES/32/197)*, 1977.

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Further Measures for the Restructuring and Revitalization of the United Nations in the Economic, Social and Related Fields (A/RES/50/227)*, 1996.

⁸ New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*, 2021; 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.

⁹ UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

¹⁰ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Youth Forum*, 2019.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

transparency, and flexibility.¹³ The 2020 Youth Forum was slated to take place in mid-April 2020, but has since been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a new date to be announced at a later time.¹⁴

Governance, Structure, and Membership

ECOSOC is comprised of 54 Member States, each of which is elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.¹⁵ The members are elected according to the geographical distribution of UN Member States that are meant to ensure representation from all regions and levels of development.¹⁶ Seats are allocated to each of the following five regional groups of states: 14 to Africa, 11 to Asia and the Pacific; six to Eastern European; 10 to Latin American and Caribbean; and 13 to Western European and Others Group.¹⁷ ECOSOC proceedings are overseen by a President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur, in tandem with a Bureau consisting of the President and four Vice-Presidents.¹⁸ These representatives are each elected for a one-year term at the end of each annual session in July.¹⁹ The Bureau is elected by the full Council annually in July.²⁰ The Bureau sets ECOSOC's agenda, devises action plans, and collaborates with the Secretariat on administrative duties.²¹ ECOSOC's presidency rotates among the regional groups.²² The current president is Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile of Botswana, who was elected for the 2022 session.²³

Each year, ECOSOC meets for one organizational session, which typically takes place anytime between February and July, and one substantive session, which usually occurs in mid-July.²⁴ Organizational sessions are dedicated to administrative aspects, such as agenda setting and elections to the Bureau.²⁵ During substantive sessions, meetings are divided into five segments: the High-Level Segment, the Coordination Segment, the Operational Activities Segment, the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, and the Integration Segment, with each focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council's work.²⁶ The addition of these five segments were mandated by General Assembly resolution 68/1 (2013), *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*.²⁷ Each annual segment allows the plenary body to focus on specific agenda items and dedicate a specific number of working days to each segment.²⁸ The High-Level Segment and HLPF, established by General Assembly resolution 67/290 and jointly guided by ECOSOC and the General Assembly, focus on the implementation progress of the SDGs.²⁹ The Coordination Segment meets

¹³ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 68/1 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*, 2018, p. 3.

¹⁴ UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *UN75 Youth Envoy and ECOSOC Youth Forum Postponement Letter to Member States*, 2020.

¹⁵ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members*.

¹⁶ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 68/1 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*, 2018, p. 3; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members; Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 68/1 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*, 2018, p. 3; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members; Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Bureau*.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ IISD, *ECOSOC President Offers Preview of 2022 Session*, 2021.

²⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*, 1992, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁸ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 61/16 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2013, p. 4.

²⁹ UN General Assembly, *Format and Organizational Aspects of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC High-level Segment*, 2019; UN, *High-Level Political Forum, Lessons Learned from the First Cycle of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)*, 2019.

annually upon the discretion of the Council and focuses on carrying out the recommendations brought forth by the High-level Segment.³⁰ The Operational Activities Segment meets annually after the “first regular sessions of the executive boards of the funds and programmes of the United Nations system,” and focuses on providing guidance to ECOSOC on the implementation and strategies established by the General Assembly.³¹ The Humanitarian Affairs Segment is held in June and focuses on strengthening assistance from Member States on humanitarian emergencies with the additional goal of transitioning relief efforts towards development efforts.³² Lastly, the Integration Segment focuses on consolidating “all the inputs of Member States, the subsidiary bodies of the Council, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders and to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.”³³

ECOSOC oversees 14 subsidiary bodies and forums that hold their own sessions and provide recommendations, draft resolutions, and annual reports to the Council and, in some cases, to other bodies.³⁴ The two most common types of subsidiary bodies are functional, which focus on specific issues, such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and regional commissions that focus on geopolitical topics, such as the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).³⁵ Other subsidiary bodies include standing, ad hoc, expert, and other related bodies.³⁶ Examples of subsidiary bodies include: the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, which serves as a standing committee; the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, which serves as an ad hoc body; and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which serves as an expert body.³⁷ Each subsidiary body has adopted specific methods of work to align with its mandate, and methods are updated regularly.³⁸

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

Article 62(1) of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) mandates that ECOSOC “may make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters,” including human rights and freedoms, to present to the General Assembly and to UN specialized agencies.³⁹ ECOSOC may also provide information and assist the Security Council when addressing humanitarian crises, including public health emergencies.⁴⁰ For instance, ECOSOC has continually addressed COVID-19 and held an informal briefing on “Joining Forces: Effective Policy Solutions for Covid-19 Response” on 11 May 2020.⁴¹ As emphasized by recent reforms accentuating this role, ECOSOC also provides coordination, monitoring, and advice to UN programs, agencies, and funds on international development policies and their implementation.⁴² To further allow for coordination, a 2007 reform of ECOSOC brought forth by General Assembly resolution 61/16, established the High-level

³⁰ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 61/16 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2013, p. 4.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³³ UN General Assembly, *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 61/16 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/68/1)*, 2013, p. 4.

³⁴ UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Functional Commissions*, 2014.

³⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ UN General Assembly, *Format and Organizational Aspects of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 7.

³⁹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁴⁰ UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emergency Situations*.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² 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; UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

Segment, an annual meeting that brings together representatives from governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society to discuss development cooperation.⁴³

In addition to overseeing its subsidiary bodies, ECOSOC's mechanisms allow for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to consult on the work of the UN.⁴⁴ There are more than 5,000 NGOs that have been granted ECOSOC consultative status, allowing them to attend and participate in various UN meetings, conferences, and special sessions and participate in international discussions.⁴⁵ By obtaining consultative status, these NGOs are allowed to provide insight to different UN bodies, discussion, and policies as they pertain to specialized topics and regions.⁴⁶ Applications for consultative status are considered by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs, which was established in 1946 and is made up of 19 Member States.⁴⁷ The Committee on NGOs directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by NGOs.⁴⁸ ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 (1996) defines the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations, and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in establishing the consultative relationship.⁴⁹ While the Committee on NGOs has postponed its meetings due to COVID-19, at its 1 September 2018 session, the Committee granted consultative status to 219 NGOs, deferred an additional 198 NGOs for consideration in 2020, and reviewed quadrennial reports of suspended NGOs, which resulted in the reinstatement of 37 organizations and the removal of 115 organizations.⁵⁰

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

Beginning ECOSOC's annual session, the Operational Activities Segment met from 19-22 and on 27 May 2020 to review the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 (2017), the *Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system*, and resolution 72/279 (2018) on *Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system*.⁵¹ The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities (QCPR) is a tool for Member States to provide policy recommendations to the UN development system and the 2020 QCPR was generally regarded as successful by participants.⁵² In the context of the QCPR, the Secretary-General called for shifting focus to "how the UN development system can ensure accelerated efforts as we embark on the Decade of Action for the SDGs."⁵³ The inputs generated by the Operational Activities Segment will be given to the General Assembly during its General Debate in fall 2020.⁵⁴

From 9-11 June 2020, ECOSOC's Humanitarian Affairs Segment met virtually under the theme "Reinforcing humanitarian assistance in the context of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations: taking action for people-centered solutions, strengthening effectiveness, respecting international humanitarian law and promoting the humanitarian principles."⁵⁵ The high-level panel discussions and

⁴³ UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/61/16)*, 2006.

⁴⁴ UN DESA, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.

⁴⁵ UN ECOSOC, *List of Non-governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council as of 1 September 2018 (E/2019/INF/5)*, 2018.

⁴⁶ UN DESA, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ UN DESA, *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.

⁵⁰ UN DGC, *Concluding Session, Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends Status for 219 Groups, Adopts Report Containing 2020 Meeting Schedule*, 2019; UN DESA, *The Committee on NGOs, 2020*.

⁵¹ UN ECOSOC, *The 2020 Operational Activities for Development Segment*, 2020.

⁵² UN ECOSOC, *QCPR in 2020, 2020*; UN ECOSOC, *2020 ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment Chair's Summary*, 2020, p. 4.

⁵³ UN ECOSOC, *2020 ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment Chair's Summary*, 2020, p. 3.

⁵⁴ UN ECOSOC, *The 2020 Operational Activities for Development Segment*, 2020.

⁵⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2020.

events focused on areas affected by the pandemic, such as the treatment of internally displaced persons (IDPs), innovation and new technology, and sexual and gender-based violence.⁵⁶ Additionally, a joint event by the Humanitarian Affairs Segment and the Operational Activities Segment addressed peacebuilding in humanitarian crises by looking at the Central Sahel to identify opportunities of further collaboration.⁵⁷

In preparation of the 2020 HLPF, the Secretary-General published his report on “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development,” highlighting COVID-19’s effects on the global economy and vulnerable populations.⁵⁸ The report called for strengthened multilateralism in Member States’ COVID-19 pandemic response.⁵⁹ The 2020 annual HLPF was held from 7-16 July 2020 under the theme “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.”⁶⁰ In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, sessions were held virtually, and participants addressed how to achieve the SDGs while tackling the pandemic.⁶¹ As part of the 2020 HLPF, 47 Member States presented their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), outlining their progress on the SDGs.⁶² The draft ministerial declaration of the HLPF highlighted participants’ commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit’s Political Declaration, which was adopted in September 2019.⁶³ The draft declaration further recognizes the need for an immediate and global ceasefire, improved resilience, universal access to social protection and health services, and strengthened cooperation.⁶⁴ Additionally, former ECOSOC President Juul stated that the UN is committed to combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and “rebuilding better after the pandemic, with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* as our roadmap.”⁶⁵ The theme for HLPF 2021 will be determined in September 2020 by the General Assembly.⁶⁶

Conclusion

ECOSOC is responsible for coordinating activities and programs through the expansive UN system towards the ultimate goal of sustainable development.⁶⁷ The Council has demonstrated a commitment to mobilizing resources and building efforts to address key priority issues, including the promotion of development and the formation and maintenance of international partnerships, such as partnerships with business entities for the purpose of funding development initiatives.⁶⁸ As the Council’s current President, Collen Vixen Kelapile states, “ECOSOC must rise to the occasion” of helping global recovery from

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Humanitarian Affairs Segment, 2020*; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Joint Informal Event of the Operational Activities and Humanitarian Affairs Segments Transition from Relief to Development: The Multidimensional and Interconnected Challenges in the Central Sahel Region: Reducing Needs, Risks and Vulnerabilities for People Through Closer Humanitarian, Development and Peacebuilding Collaboration, 2020*, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2020/59)*, 2020, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁰ UN ECOSOC, *High-Level Political Forum 2020 Under the Auspices of ECOSOC, 2020*.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the 2020 Session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2020 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Convened Under the Auspices of the Council, on the Theme “Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development”: Advance Version (E/2020/L.20–E/HLPF/2020/L.1)*, 2020, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-7.

⁶⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Statement by President of ECOSOC Mona Juul on the Adoption of the Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development Convened Under the Auspices of the Council Through Silence Procedure on 17 July 2020*, 2020, p. 1.

⁶⁶ IISD, *Member States Consider 8-Goal Review for 2021 HLPF, 2020*.

⁶⁷ Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.

⁶⁸ Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.

COVID-19, and wage “a spirited war against disease, poverty and inequality, impacts of climate change.”⁶⁹

Annotated Bibliography.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*. Retrieved 16 July 2021 from:

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

This report was published in accordance with the changes and reforms that were made to allow ECOSOC to better fulfil its mandate. The report outlines the key points made within General Assembly resolution 68/1 (2013) and the new set of priorities for ECOSOC in addressing global issues. Additionally, the chart included in the document highlights the yearly schedule of ECOSOC as well as its meeting structure. Delegates would find this useful in understanding ECOSOC’s current mandate and structure that extends beyond Chapter X of the Charter of the United Nations.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development, Report of the Secretary-General (E/2020/59)*. Retrieved 18 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/e/2020/59>

This Report of the Secretary-General was published on 8 May 2020 in preparation for the 2020 HLPF. In response to the outbreak of COVID-19, the report notes key areas that can have a significant socioeconomic impact on people’s wellbeing. In line with the provisional agendas, the report also addresses areas such as energy and extreme poverty. Delegates would find this document useful in understanding the priorities of ECOSOC and the background of HLPF 2020.

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)*. Retrieved 14 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/1>

While Chapter X of the Charter of the United Nations established the foundation of ECOSOC that is held to this day, its operational work and priorities have shifted along with the change in the UN’s priorities. General Assembly resolution 68/1 strengthened ECOSOC’s role within the UN system, and revised the segment system of ECOSOC, changing it to its current five segment approach, and establishing high-level and multi-stakeholder forums. It is highly recommended that delegates familiarize themselves with the content of this monumental resolution to understand the current foundation of ECOSOC.

Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945). Retrieved 25 July 2021 from:

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

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

Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/un/who/ecosoc.html>

International Institute for Sustainable Development. (2020). *Member States Consider 8-Goal Review for 2021 HLPF*. Retrieved 20 August 2021 from: <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/member-states-consider-8-goal-review-for-2021-hlpf/>

International Institute for Sustainable Development. (2021). *ECOSOC President Offers Preview of 2022 Session*. Retrieved 10 November 2021 from: <https://sdg.iisd.org/news/ecosoc-president-offers-preview-of-2022-session/>

⁶⁹ UN DGC, New ECOSOC President aims to maximize ‘reach, relevance and impact,’ UN News, 2021.



New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2020). *United Nations Handbook 2021-22*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/peace-rights-and-security/our-work-with-the-un/un-handbook/>

United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld Library. (2014). *Functional Commissions*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://research.un.org/en/docs/ecosoc/functionalcommissions>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=30>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2020). *High-Level Political Forum 2020 Under the Auspices of ECOSOC*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2020). *The Committee on NGOs*. Retrieved 20 August 2021 from: <http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=80>

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. (2019, June 4). *Concluding Session, Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends Status for 219 Groups, Adopts Report Containing 2020 Meeting Schedule*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/ecosoc6995.doc.htm>

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. (2021, July 23). *New ECOSOC President aims to maximize 'reach, relevance and impact.'* *UN News*. Retrieved 10 November 2021 from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1096342>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *About ECOSOC*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Development Cooperation Forum*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/development-cooperation-forum>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *ECOSOC Bureau*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/bureau.shtml>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *ECOSOC Members*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/members.shtml>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emergency Situations*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/ecosoc-special-meetings-emergency-situations>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *List of Non-governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council as of 1 September 2018 (E/2019/INF/5)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/E/2018/INF/5>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/subsidiary-bodies-ecosoc>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *QCPR in 2020*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/qcpr-2020>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (1992). *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council (E/5715/Rev.2)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/E/5715/Rev.2>



United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (1996). *Consultative Relationship Between the United Nations and Non-governmental Organizations (E/RES/1996/31)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: https://www.unov.org/documents/NGO/NGO_Resolution_1996_31.pdf

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2013). *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)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/E/RES/2013/5>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *The new ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*. Retrieved 16 July 2021 from: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf14/the_new_ecosoc_31_march_2014.pdf

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2019). *Follow-up and Review of the Financing for Development Outcomes and the Means of Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/FFDF/2019/3)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/en/E/FFDF/2019/3>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2019). *ECOSOC High-level Segment*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/events/2019-6>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2019). *Report of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Convened Under the Auspices of the Economic and Social Council at its 2019 Session (E/HLPF/2019/7)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/E/HLPF/2019/7>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *2020 ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment Chair's Summary*. Retrieved 15 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/oas/OAS2020-VPSummary.pdf>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *2020 Management Segment*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/2020-management-segment>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development, Report of the Secretary-General (E/2020/59)*. Retrieved 18 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/e/2020/59>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *ECOSOC High-level Segment*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/2020ecosochigh-levelsegment>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *ECOSOC Joint Informal Event of the Operational Activities and Humanitarian Affairs Segments Transition from Relief to Development: The Multidimensional and Interconnected Challenges in the Central Sahel Region: Reducing Needs, Risks and Vulnerabilities for People Through Closer Humanitarian, Development and Peacebuilding Collaboration*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Provisional%20Concept%20Note%20for%20the%202020%20Transition%20Event.pdf>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Humanitarian Affairs Segment*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/events/2020/humanitarian-affairs-segment>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Integration Segment*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/25553375>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the 2020 Session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2020 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Convened Under the Auspices of the Council, on the Theme "Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable*



Development": Advance Version (E/2020/L.20–E/HLPF/2020/L.1). Retrieved 18 August 2021 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26780MD_2020_HLPF_HLS.pdf

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *President of ECOSOC*. Retrieved 17 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/president-ecosoc>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *QCPR in 2020*. Retrieved 15 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/qcpr-2020>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020, July 13). *Statement by President of ECOSOC Mona Juul on the Adoption of the Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development Convened Under the Auspices of the Council Through Silence Procedure on 17 July 2020*. Retrieved 18 August 2021 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26779Letter_MD_Silence_Procedure.pdf

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020, July 23). *Statement by President of ECOSOC Munir Akram on the 2021 Organizational Session: First Informal Meeting Election of the Bureau of ECOSOC on 23 July 2020*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/president/2021/statement-incoming-president-2020-2021.pdf>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *The 2020 Operational Activities for Development Segment*. Retrieved 18 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/2020-operational-activities-development-segment>

United Nations, General Assembly. (2013). *Format and Organizational Aspects of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (A/RES/67/290)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/67/290>

United Nations, General Assembly, Thirty-second session. (1977). *Restructuring the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System (A/RES/32/197)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/32/197>

United Nations, General Assembly, Fiftieth session. (1996). *Further Measures for the Restructuring and Revitalization of the United Nations in the Economic, Social and Related Fields (A/RES/50/227)*. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/50/L.73). Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/50/227>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-first session. (2006). *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/61/16)*. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/L.24). Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/61/16>

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)*. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/68/L.2). Retrieved 14 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2018). *Review of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 68/1 on the Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/72/L.64). Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/72/305>

United Nations, General Assembly & United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *UN75 Youth Envoy and ECOSOC Youth Forum Postponement Letter to Member States*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2020doc/UN75_Youth_Plenary_and_ECOSOC_Youth_Forum_postponement-Letter_to_Member_States.pdf



United Nations, High-Level Political Forum. (2019). *Lessons Learned From the First Cycle of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23135Summary_of_EGM_on_HLPF_review_FINAL.pdf

United Nations, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy of Youth. (2019). *2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2019/05/2019-ecosoc-youth-forum/>

1. Realizing Sustainable Economic Growth by Achieving SDG 8

Introduction

Sustainable economic growth is a rate of maintained growth that does not create significant economic burdens on future generations and can drive societal progress within society by creating decent jobs and improving living standards globally.⁷⁰ Because of this, the importance of sustainable economic growth is recognized in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, (“decent work and economic growth”).⁷¹ Specifically, goal target 8.1 directly addresses sustainable economic growth by aiming to sustainably increase the annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, with a focus on an annual GDP growth of 7% for least developed countries (LDCs).⁷² LDCs, according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), are in need of this support due to their lower-income status and increased vulnerability to environmental and economic shocks as a result of poor and unsustainable infrastructure.⁷³ In the context of SDG 8, dialogue on sustainable economic growth includes areas such as: monitoring employment and unemployment rates with a focus on those not in education, employment, or training (NEET); measuring a country’s material footprint, known as its allocation of extracted raw materials (biomass, fossil fuels, and metal and non-metal ores) for economic demand; and labor rights, safe working conditions, and child labor and forced labor.⁷⁴ Since its initial spread, the COVID-19 pandemic has thwarted economic growth, leading to a decrease in global employment and productivity.⁷⁵ As a result of the pandemic, the international community saw a sharp decrease in global GDP and an increase in unemployment for women, which led to a larger population percentage of people falling under NEET.⁷⁶

Within the aforementioned areas of focus within SDG 8, the first includes levels of employment and unemployment rates, focusing on those who are in the NEET category and on equal access to decent work.⁷⁷ The second is a country’s material footprint, which is the allocation of used raw material extraction to the final demand of an economy.⁷⁸ The total material footprint is considered as the “sum of the material footprint for biomass, fossil fuels, metal ores and non-metal ores.”⁷⁹ The third concerns labor rights, safe working environments, and child labor and forced labor.⁸⁰ Since its initial propagation, the COVID-19 pandemic has thwarted economic growth, leading to a plunge in global productivity and employment, which has led to a steep collapse of global GDP, in addition to greater unemployment for women, and leading to larger numbers of youth in NEET.⁸¹

International and regional organizations around the globe, including those within the United Nations (UN) system, such as UN DESA, the International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), among others, have acted since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda to support Member States in advancing the SDGs.⁸² In particular, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has continuously monitored goal targets and facilitated dialogue among governmental and non-governmental bodies to achieve the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda.⁸³

⁷⁰ Economics Online, *Sustainable Growth*.

⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p.14.

⁷² Global Goals for Sustainable Development, *8: Decent Work and Economic Growth*.

⁷³ UN DESA, *Least Developed Countries (LDCs)*.

⁷⁴ Čuček, *Overview of Environmental Footprints*, p. 173; SDG Tracker, *Decent Work and Economic Growth*, 2018.

⁷⁵ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020*, 2020, p. 40.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ SDG Tracker, *Decent Work and Economic Growth*, 2018.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021.

⁸³ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

International and Regional Framework

The right to work in decent and fair conditions are preserved in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), first published in 1948.⁸⁴ In article 23, the UDHR highlights not only the right to work, but the right to human dignity in working conditions, equal pay for equal labor, and access to work.⁸⁵ The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) provides further guidelines to promote fair labor rights as well as the right of assembly.⁸⁶ Additionally, the *Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States* (1974) provides further guidelines for Member States and the international community on sustainable economic growth.⁸⁷ Chapter III states the necessity to safeguard the environment, calling for further cooperation among Member States in this sphere.⁸⁸ Chapter III further endorses economic practices, which range from lower tariffs to a fair distribution of economic development.⁸⁹ Similarly, the *Declaration on the Right to Development* (1986), affirming through article I, that development is an inalienable human right and emphasizes the importance of its achievement, while simultaneously upholding human rights and individual liberties.⁹⁰ The *United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (2011) also presents a set of guidelines for States and private businesses in order to promote labor rights and human rights.⁹¹ ILO's *Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization* is another landmark document adopted by the organization in 2008, which underlines the need for social justice in the transformative age of globalization and highlights four foundational pillars: employment, social protection, social dialogue, and fundamental principles and rights at work.⁹²

The *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (1992), providing the frameworks for creating the Conference of the Parties (COP), highlighted the importance of preserving the natural environment and addresses increasing greenhouse gasses emissions.⁹³ Article IV calls for the inclusion of climate change in economic policies and greater cooperation in fields such as extraction of resource and research, among the others.⁹⁴ Similarly, the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (2000) provided the framework for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and later, inspiration for the SDGs.⁹⁵ The MDGs highlight the need for international cooperation to achieve economic growth, and sustainability, in order to limit anthropogenic disasters and preserve the environment in Chapter IV.⁹⁶ Lastly, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015) provides a framework to for financing sustainable development through three dimensions: inclusive economic growth, protecting the environment, and promoting social inclusion.⁹⁷

The landmark resolution for sustainable development remains General Assembly resolution 70/1, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted in 2015 which outlines the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).⁹⁸ The 2030 Agenda, which comprises 17 goals and 169 related targets seeks to bring peace and prosperity, advance human rights, and protect the environment through international cooperation and development.⁹⁹ In particular, SDG 8 seeks to promote

⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200A (XXI))*, 1966.

⁸⁷ UN General Assembly, *Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States resolution (A/RES/3281 (XXIX))*, 1974.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Right to Development (A/RES/41/128)*, 1986.

⁹¹ UN OHCHR, *Guiding Principles on Businesses and Human Rights*, 2011.

⁹² ILO, *Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*.

⁹³ UNCED, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015, p. 1

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, pp. 3, 6.

productivity, entrepreneurialism and innovation while implanting equal access to labor with fair and decent working conditions.¹⁰⁰

Role of the International System

ECOSOC monitors and assesses progress achieved in sustainable development as well as provides a platform for Member States, governmental, and non-governmental actors to discuss and cooperate on the aforementioned fields.¹⁰¹ The ECOSOC Youth Forum provides an annual platform for young persons to engage with governmental institutions on matters of sustainable development.¹⁰² In particular, the 2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum emphasized the importance of closing gaps between education and professionalism, as well as providing decent working conditions for entry-level internships and traineeships.¹⁰³

The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), overseen by ECOSOC, facilitate dialogue among governmental and non-governmental bodies, while also providing recommendations to enhance cooperation for the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰⁴ The Forum on Financing for Development Follow-Up (FFD), mandated by the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, aims to assess current development finances and relative allocations, while also establishing dialogue with the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).¹⁰⁵ The Operational Activities for Development Segment (OADS), as outlined in General Assembly resolution 72/305, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*, seeks to guarantee accountability and optimize activities in relation to the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰⁶

The 2016 General Assembly resolution 70/299, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level* led to the strengthening and enhancement of ECOSOC and its subsidiaries bodies in accordance to the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰⁷ General Assembly resolution 72/279, *Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system*, calls for an enhancement to the operations of the UN system's local ramifications, such as country offices, while also improving the streamlining process from the international, regional and local levels, allowing for increased cooperation among these actors.¹⁰⁸

In addition to ECOSOC, actors throughout the UN system, as well as the private sector, play a central role in achieving sustainable economic growth.¹⁰⁹ Among these, the project Fashion Makes Change by the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, unites actors across the fashion market and civil society under the goal of empowering women and taking action against climate change in the apparel industry.¹¹⁰ The project directly funds the "Empower@Work Collaborative" (E@W), a joint effort of foundations, nonprofits

¹⁰⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 19.

¹⁰¹ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

¹⁰² ECOSOC, *2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum Summary*, 2021.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ UN ECOSOC, *A Brief History: ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum*; UN ECOSOC, *About the Development Cooperation Forum*; UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

¹⁰⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Financing for Sustainable Development*.

¹⁰⁶ UN General Assembly, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*, 2018, p.5.

¹⁰⁷ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level (A/RES/70/299)*, 2016, pp.2-4.

¹⁰⁸ UN General Assembly, *Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/RES/72/279)*, 2018.

¹⁰⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

¹¹⁰ UN SDGs Partnerships Platform, *Fashion Makes Change*.

and the ILO-IFC Better Work project.¹¹¹ Through their initiative, E@W directly supports women in the fashion industry, especially within the garment and footwear industry, while additionally seeking to advance gender balancing throughout the supply chain.¹¹² According to Fashion Makes Change, its programs have reached more than five million workers with skills, knowledge, and confidence for more than a decade.¹¹³ Moreover, the UN Global Compact (UNGC), adopted in 2005 by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, encourages partnerships between UN institutions and businesses by providing good governance practices and recommendations for all adhering businesses following the UNGC's ten principles, which focus on areas of human and labor rights, as well as environmental sustainability.¹¹⁴ Another platform developed by the UNGC, the SDG Compass, aims to advance SDGs within companies, by providing specific tools and indicators developed by academia, civil society, private and public sector, while also monitoring their efforts and developing feedback.¹¹⁵

Among UN bodies, UN DESA, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) share responsibilities in monitoring, analyzing and implementing sustainable development measures and participate in several international meetings, including the DCF and the FFD Forum.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, ILO's mission seeks to promote decent work, uphold labor standards while advancing social justice.¹¹⁷ The organization has been providing a platform for dialogue among its tripartite components, including workers, employers and governments, as well as relevant data and analysis on progress related to SDG 8.¹¹⁸

At the civil society level, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has been proactive in its efforts to achieve SDG 8 through its campaign "Time for 8."¹¹⁹ The campaign's goals include strengthening the role of trade unions in relation to national and international institutions, emphasizing the role of SDG 8 within the 2030 Agenda, and calling for a new social contract that addresses the needs of workers and society in a sustainable way.¹²⁰ In implementing a new social contract between governments, workers and businesses, the "Time for 8" campaign advocates for upholding labor rights, decent minimum wages, establishing dialogue for ecological and technological transitions.¹²¹ In addition to advocating for due diligence and accountability as drivers for businesses' operations, the ITUC has spearheaded efforts towards their initiative by training and mobilizing workers worldwide, advocating to and negotiating with governments and businesses, and raising awareness on labor rights and workers' grievances through reports and events.¹²²

Impacts of COVID-19 in Achieving SDG 8

The COVID-19 pandemic halted, and reversed, years of economic progress in achieving SDG 8, as well as progress toward sustainable economic growth.¹²³ According to ECOSOC's statistics division, global GDP growth per capita declined by 4.6% in 2020, and is predicted to increase by 4.3% in 2021.¹²⁴ While economic growth was in decline prior to the pandemic, as demonstrated by the decrease by 0.5% in

¹¹¹ Fashion Makes Change, *Our Mission*.

¹¹² Fashion Makes Change, *Impact*.

¹¹³ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁴ UN Global Compact, *Our Governance*; UN Global Compact, *The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact*.

¹¹⁵ SDG Compass, *About us*.

¹¹⁶ UN ECOSOC, *About the Development Cooperation Forum*.

¹¹⁷ ILO, *Mission and impact of the ILO*.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁹ UN Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform, *Time for 8 – The clock is ticking for a new social contract*.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*.

¹²¹ ITUC, *A New Social Contract for Recovery and Resilience*; ITUC, *ITUC takes demand for a New Social Contract to the UN General Assembly*.

¹²² ITUC, *A New Social Contract for Recovery and Resilience*; ITUC, *ITUC FRONTLINE CAMPAIGNS AND FOUR PILLARS FOR ACTION 2021*, pp. 25,26; ITUC, *ITUC takes demand for a New Social Contract to the UN General Assembly*.

¹²³ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021, p. 42.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

global GDP, the pandemic hardened economic conditions, unemployment, income, and safety.¹²⁵ According to the ILO, up to 400 million workers could have been unemployed by the second quarter of 2020.¹²⁶ Additionally, 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy, which are workers operating outside formal arrangements such as law or practice, were affected by the pandemic, with income decreasing up to 81%.¹²⁷ According to the ILO, informal economies comprise those economic activities that are not encompassed by formal arrangements.¹²⁸

The tourism industry faced particular hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹²⁹ As reported by UNDESA in *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021* (2021), the tough losses in this sector make this field one of the most hard hit by the effects of the pandemic.¹³⁰ According to the *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020* (2020), tourism became a more relevant component of a country's GDP between 2008 and 2018.¹³¹ The report encourages restarting economic growth in a post-pandemic world by financially recovering tourism, not only for the sector itself, but also for businesses which benefit from the industry.¹³² UNDP has worked to revive former and ongoing projects focused on sustainable tourism and revitalize these projects through marketing aimed at domestic tourists.¹³³ For example, the Via Dinarica hiking trail in Bosnia and Herzegovina has become an emerging area of sustainable tourism through its empowerment and investments of local communities, while also providing accessibility and networking opportunities.¹³⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted informal economies around the world.¹³⁵ The ILO in 2018 estimated more than 60% of the world's employed population are in the informal economies.¹³⁶ However, 93% of the world's informal employment is present in emerging and developing countries, in particular: Africa (85.8%); the Middle East (68.6%); Asia and the Pacific (68.2%); the Americas (40%); and Europe and Central Asia (25.1%).¹³⁷ As early as April 2020, the ILO published generic guidelines from *Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries* (2020), emphasizing the role and size of informal economies and the economic and health challenges created by the pandemic.¹³⁸ In the report, the ILO states that the heaviest impacted sectors, wholesale and trade retail, account for about 25% of the informal non-agricultural economies in the world, and one third in the developing world.¹³⁹ The informal economy not only plays an important role in the global economy, it also plays an important role in the thematic areas of SDG 8.¹⁴⁰ Informal economies focus on target 8.3, which seeks to formalize small and medium enterprises with the ultimate goal of providing financial benefits and fair labor standards.¹⁴¹

The ILO provides specific guidelines on how to tackle the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.¹⁴² These guidelines are based on four pillars: stimulating the economy and employment; supporting enterprises,

¹²⁵ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021, p. 40.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹²⁷ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020*, 2020, p. 41; OECD, *Tackling Vulnerability in the Informal Economy*, 2019, p.16; UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021, p. 43.

¹²⁸ OECD, *Tackling Vulnerability in the Informal Economy*, p.26.

¹²⁹ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021, p. 43.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹³³ UNDP, *Can tourism survive in a post-COVID world?* 2020.

¹³⁴ UNDP, *Via Dinarica – Second Phase*, 2018, pp. 2, 7, 14.

¹³⁵ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021, pp. 42-43.

¹³⁶ ILO, *More than 60 per cent of the world's employed population are in the informal economy*.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ ILO, *Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries*.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.1.

¹⁴⁰ ILO, *Relevant SDG Targets related to Informal Economy*; ILO, *Informal Economy*.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² ILO, *A policy framework for tackling the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 crisis*, 2020.

jobs and incomes; protecting workers in the workplace; and relying on social dialogue for solutions.¹⁴³ More specifically, the ILO recommends the adoption of fiscal policies such as equity injections, loan guarantees and tax exemptions, which would allow for fiscal relief for both employers and employees.¹⁴⁴ Another priority is the protection of workers, not only through healthcare assistance, unemployment, and sickness benefits, but by adapting measures in the workplace without jeopardizing workers' health.¹⁴⁵ In this regard, Thailand and South Africa have, respectively, increased financial protection for nationals and non-nationals who seek emergency healthcare and extended unemployment insurance for domestic workers.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, the ILO published *COVID-19 crisis and the informal economy* (2020), which produced policy guidelines through a multi-sectorial approach.¹⁴⁷ The recommendations include supporting greater access to affordable healthcare and limiting the spread of the virus through adequate communication and coordination programs to raise awareness on COVID-19 and safeguarding workers in the workplace.¹⁴⁸

In May 2020, ECOSOC addressed the socio-economic spillovers caused by the pandemic by encouraging stimulus packages to keep businesses open, including businesses in informal economies and businesses for labor and human rights.¹⁴⁹ In July 2021, the HLPF focused on the issue of eye health and hosted a side event addressing the connection between eye vision, SDG 8 and COVID-19.¹⁵⁰ The event highlighted that vision loss costs an estimate of \$411 billion and encouraged greater access to eye healthcare to boost economic growth.¹⁵¹ In May 2021, HLPF highlighted economic recovery through the Business and Industry Major Group, which is pivotal for the achievement of SDG 8, which stressed the importance of partnerships and cooperation among businesses, while maintaining a high quality standard for business meetings and improving frameworks in coordination with UN bodies.¹⁵² In the same month, ECOSOC highlighted the opportunity and necessity for a sustainable economic recovery from the pandemic, as well as preventing economic downfall, in the report *2021/62 Sustainable and resilient recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development*.¹⁵³

Gender Inclusiveness in Sustainable Economic Growth

The lack of gender inclusivity in the economy has been an ongoing issue prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as demonstrated by SDG 8.5, which emphasizes non-discrimination and women in the workforce.¹⁵⁴ As reported by the IMF in its policy paper *Pursuing Women's Economic Empowerment* (2018), gender inclusiveness leads to a number of benefits within a country's economy, including increased growth, productivity, and economic resilience, as well as fostering equality in income distribution.¹⁵⁵ In addition, the IMF draws attention to systemic normative and legislative inequalities, including gender pay gaps, which are still present worldwide.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, the OECD stated that gender-based discrimination in social institutions hampers economic development as it reduces countries' income.¹⁵⁷

¹⁴³ ILO, *A policy framework for tackling the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 crisis*, 2020.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

¹⁴⁵ ILO, *A policy framework for tackling the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 crisis*, 2020, pp. 9-13.

¹⁴⁶ ILO, *COVID-19 crisis and the informal economy: Immediate responses and policy challenges*, 2020, p. 5.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-6.

¹⁴⁹ ECOSOC, *Accelerated action and transformative pathways: Realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁵⁰ IAPB, *Eye Health & SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.*, 2021.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² UN Business and Industry Major Group, *HLPF 2021 // Sectoral Paper*, 2021.

¹⁵³ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable and resilient recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (E/2021/62)*, 2021.

¹⁵⁴ ILO, *Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all*.

¹⁵⁵ IMF, *Pursuing Women's Economic Empowerment*, 2018, pp. 5-6.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-11.

¹⁵⁷ OECD, *Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?*, 2016, p. 31.

In 2020, UN Women published the report *From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*, exposing the pandemic's effects on women in the workforce, where a woman's employment is 19% more at risk compared to men.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, the report also highlights loss in income experienced by 60% of 740 million women, who are employed in informal economies, and a 72% job loss among domestic workers, 80% of whom are women.¹⁵⁹ The UN Women report, as well as the IMF report, both include proposals increasing a woman's accessibility for childcare, healthcare, and economic security.¹⁶⁰

In addition, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) launched numerous projects to advance women-led investments through trainings, partnerships and financial facilitations.¹⁶¹ UNIDO further supports youth professional formation and women's inclusiveness through the Learning and Knowledge Development Facility (LKDF), which fosters industrial skills development for young people in emerging economies and promotes sustainable and industrial development through projects such as the Académie de Conduite de Camions En Sécurité (ACCES) in Morocco.¹⁶² A collaboration between the Moroccan government, Volvo Group, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and UNIDO, ACCES provides Moroccan women with training programs to become well-trained and skilled truck and bus drivers, as well as Moroccan youth with an interest in road transport.¹⁶³

In addition, UN Women has been proactive in promoting women inclusivity in the economy through projects such as Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), created alongside the UN Global Compact, with the goal of promoting gender equality and women inclusiveness within businesses.¹⁶⁴ Other initiatives through UN Women include Markets for Change, which seeks to advance safety, equality, women empowerment, and inclusivity in marketplaces in the Pacific.¹⁶⁵ In 2012, UN Women, in cooperation with other UN agencies, implemented *the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women*, which enhanced women's participation and empowerment in rural economies.¹⁶⁶

ECOSOC reiterated the importance of women's empowerment and equal access to services and opportunities through its resolution 2016/3, *Multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women*.¹⁶⁷ Alongside its resolution 2021/52, *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system*, ECOSOC further highlighted gender inequality and provided recommendations for gender mainstreaming.¹⁶⁸ Such policies focus on the gender inclusiveness in the post-pandemic recovery plans at an international and national levels, but also enhancing capacity-building aiming to advance gender equality.¹⁶⁹

Conclusion

The pathway to achieving SDG 8 presents different, multi-faceted obstacles which encompass social and environmental themes, from the increasing number of youth in NEET to labor rights and material footprints.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, challenges faced by women in the workplace are hindering sustainable

¹⁵⁸ UN Women, *From Insight To Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*, 2020, p. 5.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

¹⁶¹ UNIDO, *Contribution to Gender Equality Progress*, 2020.

¹⁶² UNIDO, *Contribution to Gender Equality Progress*, 2020; LKDF, *About LKDF*; LKDF, *Access Morocco*.

¹⁶³ LKDF, *Access Morocco*.

¹⁶⁴ WEPS, *About*, 2020.

¹⁶⁵ UN Women, *Women's Economic Empowerment Programme*.

¹⁶⁶ IFAD, *Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women*, (n.d.).

¹⁶⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/RES/2016/3)*, 2016.

¹⁶⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2021/52)*, 2021.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁷⁰ SDG Tracker, *Decent Work and Economic Growth*, 2018.

economic growth and reducing development.¹⁷¹ The COVID-19 pandemic has thwarted economic growth and accentuated pre-existing inequalities, consequently halting progress towards the goals of the 2030 Agenda.¹⁷² As UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated in his remarks at the ECOSOC segment for the OAS: “the COVID-19 crisis has shone a spotlight on international cooperation.”¹⁷³ The pandemic has further exposed existing challenges, such as lack gender inclusiveness, which have limited progress towards SDG 8.¹⁷⁴ Through round-table diplomacy and robust joint efforts, Member States and stakeholders must not only recover from the global pandemic, but are encouraged to start recovery with the goal of advancing equality, social justice, and sustainable economic growth, aiming to achieve the target goals of SDG 8 by 2030.¹⁷⁵

Further Research

When researching this important topic, delegates should consider how ECOSOC’s role and capacity can achieve sustainable economic growth, and additional questions such as: How are the different socio-economic scenarios around the world affect the implementation of policies aimed at advancing SDG 8? How can countries involve different stakeholders to advance sustainable economic growth and achieve SDG 8? What UN agencies and organs can provide the right platform to address the aforementioned issues? How can countries tackle COVID-19 while remaining on track to achieve SDG 8? What policies should be prioritized in furthering sustainable economic growth?

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2020/57)*. Retrieved 29 June 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/E/2020/57>

The annual report presented by the Secretariat assesses the progress made worldwide in reaching the SDGs. Given the recent outbreak of COVID-19, the report did not focus extensively on the effects of the pandemic, but consistently reiterated information and analysis related to the SDGs. The section on SDG 8 briefly provides figures and information regarding economic growth as well as highlighting instances of lack of decent work conditions.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2021). *2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum Summary*. Retrieved 22 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2021doc/2021-Youth-Forum-Summary.pdf>

The summary on the 2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum provides an overview for the event held under the auspices of ECOSOC. The event summary is important for better understanding the type of events ECOSOC organizes, providing further understanding the body’s mechanism and dynamics. Additionally, the summary highlights the vision of youth on the SDGs, as the participants emphasized numerous issues relevant for the new generations.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2020). *From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142>

¹⁷¹ OECD, *Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?*, 2016; IMF, *Pursuing Women’s Economic Empowerment*, 2018; UN Women, *From Insight To Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*, 2020.

¹⁷² UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021.

¹⁷³ UN Secretary-General, *UN Secretary-General’s remarks to ECOSOC Segment on Operational Activities for Development on 18 May 2021*, in New York, 2021.

¹⁷⁴ UN Women, *From Insight To Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*, 2020; UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021.

¹⁷⁵ UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*, 2021.

This report highlights the hardships and outfalls caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on women. The report analyses various themes, focusing on socio-economic issues that span from domestic violence to healthcare. The report is particularly relevant for delegates due important information on women in the workforce and how the pandemic has affected the category.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second Session. (2018). *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*. Retrieved on 22 June 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/72/305>

This resolution is a landmark document that strengthened and further defined ECOSOC's role in response to the 2030 Agenda. The resolution contains a practical understanding on the role required by this body as well providing guidance on its subsidiary fora. Delegates will find this document helpful in planning policy proposals that are applicable and congruent with ECOSOC and its mission.

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (2020). *Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries*. Retrieved 22 June 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_743032.pdf

This report provides an assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic on informal economies and includes valuable insight on the state of formal economies in both developed and developing countries. The report is important for delegates to gain a comprehensive understanding of the progress made on SDG 8 and sustainable economic growth.

Bibliography

Čuček et al., (2015). *Overview of Environmental Footprints in "Assessing and Measuring Environmental Impact and Sustainability"*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780127999685000051>

Economics Online. (n.d.). *Sustainable Growth*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: https://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Managing_the_economy/Sustainable_growth.html

Fashion Makes Change. (n.d.). *Impact*. Retrieved 24 July 2021 from: <https://fashionmakeschange.org/pages/empower-work-collaborative>

Fashion Makes Change. (n.d.). *Our Mission*. Retrieved 24 July 2021 from: <https://fashionmakeschange.org/pages/about>

International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness. (2021). *Eye Health & SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.iapb.org/blog/eye-health-sdg-8-decent-work-and-economic-growth/>

International Fund for Agricultural Development. (n.d.). *Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women*. Retrieved 19 September 2021 from: <https://www.ifad.org/en/jprwee>

International Monetary Fund. (2018). *Pursuing Women's Economic Empowerment*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2018/05/31/pp053118pursuing-womens-economic-empowerment>

International Trade Union Confederation. (2019). *ITUC takes demand for a New Social Contract to the UN General Assembly*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-takes-demand-for-a-new-social?lang=en>



International Trade Union Confederation. (2021). *ITUC FRONTLINE CAMPAIGNS AND FOUR PILLARS FOR ACTION 2021*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_frontlinesandpillarsreport_en_2021

International Trade Union Confederation. (n.d.). *A New Social Contract for Recovery and Resilience*. Retrieved 24 July 2021 from: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/a-new-social-contract?lang=en>

Learning and Knowledge Development Facility. (n.d.). *About LKDF*. Retrieved 19 September 2021 from: <https://lkdfacility.org/about/about-lkdf/>

Learning and Knowledge Development Facility. (n.d.). *Access Morocco*. Retrieved 19 September 2021 from: <https://lkdfacility.org/acces-morocco/>

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*. Retrieved 25 September 2021 from: https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/GuidingprinciplesBusinesshr_en.pdf

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2016). *Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/does-gender-discrimination-in-social-institutions-matter-for-long-term-growth_5jm2hz8dgl6-en;jsessionid=XmCxAfgWN37110EBOmuvegoJ.ip-10-240-5-115

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2019). *Tackling Vulnerability in the Informal Economy*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/tackling-vulnerability-in-the-informal-economy_939b7bcd-en#page3

Sustainable Development Goals Tracker. (2018). *Decent Work and Economic Growth*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://sdg-tracker.org/economic-growth>

United Nations Business and Industry Major Group. (2021). *HLPF 2021 // Sectoral Paper*. Retrieved 17 September 2021 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/28054Business_and_Industry_Major_Group.pdf

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2020). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2021). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2021.pdf>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *Least Developed Countries (LDCs)*. Retrieved 20 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category.html>

United Nations, Development Programme, (2018). *Via Dinarica – Second Phase*. Retrieved 17 September 2021 from: https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BIH/Via%20Dinarica%20Phase%20II%20Prodoc_signed_Jul18.pdf

United Nations, Development Programme, (2020). *Can tourism survive in a post-COVID world?*. Retrieved 17 September 2021 from: <https://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/stories/tourism-survive-post-covid-world.html>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *A Brief History: ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum*. Retrieved 19 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/a-brief-history>



United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *About the Development Cooperation Forum*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/about-development-cooperation-forum>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *About us*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-us>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Financing for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/spring-meeting-of-ecosoc>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 19 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/sustainable-development>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/RES/2016/3)*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/E/RES/2016/3>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2021). *2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum Summary*. Retrieved 22 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2021doc/2021-Youth-Forum-Summary.pdf>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2021). *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2021/52)*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/en/E/2021/52>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2021). *Sustainable and resilient recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development (E/2021/62)*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/E/2021/62>

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (n.d.). *Women's Economic Empowerment Programme*. Retrieved 19 September 2021 from: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/fiji/womens-economic-empowerment>

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2020). *From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142>

United Nations, General Assembly, Third session. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/udhr.pdf>

United Nations, General Assembly, Eleventh Session. (1966). *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200A (XXI))*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: [https://undocs.org/A/RES/2200\(XXI\)](https://undocs.org/A/RES/2200(XXI))

United Nations, General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session. (1974). *Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States resolution (A/RES/3281 (XXIX))*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=a/res/3281\(XXIX\)](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=a/res/3281(XXIX))

United Nations, General Assembly, Forty-first session. (1986). *Declaration on the Right to Development (A/RES/41/128)*. Retrieved 18 September 2020 from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/righttodevelopment.aspx>

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-fifth session. (2000). *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, Retrieved 18 September 2020 from: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Millennium.aspx>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013). *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/290>

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*. Retrieved 23 August 2020 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/313>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level (A/RES/70/299)*. Retrieved 24 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/299>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 20 June 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2018). *Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/RES/72/279)*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/279>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2018). *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*. Retrieved 22 June 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/305>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session. (2019) *Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (A/RES/74/4)*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/74/4>

United Nations Global Compact. (n.d.). *Our Governance*. Retrieved 26 July 2021 from: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/sdg-2030/goal-8/lang--en/index.htm>

United Nations Global Compact. (n.d.). *The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact*. Retrieved 26 July 2021 from: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles>

United Nations, Industrial Development Organization. (2020). *Contribution to gender Equality Progress*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.unido.org/sites/default/files/files/2021-08/UNIDO%27s%20Contribution%20to%20Gender%20Equality%20Progress%20across%20Critical%20Areas%20of%20Concern%20-%20Beijing%2B25.pdf>

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (n.d.). *ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/campaigns/voices-on-social-justice/WCMS_099766/lang--en/index.htm

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (n.d.). *Informal Economy*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/themes/informal-economy/lang--en/index.htm>

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (n.d.). *Mission and impact of the ILO*. Retrieved 21 June 2021 from: <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/lang--en/index.htm>

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (n.d.). *More than 60 per cent of the world's employed population are in the informal economy*. Retrieved 23 July 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_627189/lang--en/index.htm



United Nations, International Labour Organization. (n.d.). *Relevant SDG Targets related to Informal Economy*. Retrieved 13 October 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/themes/informal-economy/WCMS_558574/lang-en/index.htm

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (2020). *COVID-19 crisis and the informal economy: Immediate responses and policy challenges*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/briefingnote/wcms_743623.pdf

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (2020). *A policy framework for tackling the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 crisis*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_745337.pdf

United Nations, International Labour Organization. (2020). *Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries*. Retrieved 22 June 2021 from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_743032.pdf

United Nations Secretary-General. (2021). *UN Secretary-General's remarks to ECOSOC Segment on Operational Activities for Development on 18 May 2021*. Retrieved 4 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-05-18/un-secretary-generals-remarks-ecosoc-segment-operational-activities-for-development-presentation-of-report-and-vision-for-the-continuation-of-un-reform-and-the>

United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform. (n.d.). *Fashion Makes Change*. Retrieved 20 June 2021 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=38510>

United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform. (n.d.). *Time for 8*. Retrieved 20 June 2021 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=34928>

United Nations Statistics Division. (n.d.). *Environment Glossary*. Retrieved 20 July 2021 from: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/environmentgl/gesform.asp?getitem=467>

Women's Empowerment Principles. (2020). *About*. Retrieved 19 September 2021 from: <https://www.weeps.org/about>

2. Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries

“The LDCs are poised to be the next wave of development achievement. Investing in LDCs is not charity. It is an opportunity -- for all.”¹⁷⁶

Introduction

Approximately one billion people, around 14% of the world population, live in least developed countries (LDCs), of which half are living in extreme poverty.¹⁷⁷ Simultaneously, the population is increasing with LDCs having the fastest population growth rate in the world with population numbers estimated to double by 2050.¹⁷⁸ In the United Nations (UN) system, LDCs are defined as “countries that have low levels of income and face severe structural impediments to sustainable development.”¹⁷⁹ Further, they are characterized by vulnerabilities to external economic pressures and an unstable socio-economic situation.¹⁸⁰ The LDC category was first introduced in 1971 by General Assembly resolution 2768 (XXVI), *Identification of the least developed among the developing countries*, which acknowledged the special needs of this specific group.¹⁸¹ As of 2021, the LDC group is comprised of 46 UN Member States.¹⁸² Regionally, over two thirds of the countries are located in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁸³ The remaining LDCs include 12 states located in Asia and the Pacific, as well as Haiti being the only LDC in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁸⁴

LDCs are categorized by the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹⁸⁵ CDP reviews the status of the LDCs based on socio-economic situations and development of the states, using three criteria: income, human assets, and economic and environmental vulnerability.¹⁸⁶ In regard to the income criteria, countries with a three-year average of gross national income (GNI) per capita lower than \$1018 are included on the list.¹⁸⁷ The Human Assets Index (HAI) indicates the education and health of a society and comprises six indicators including child mortality, literacy, or gender parity in school enrollment.¹⁸⁸ The Economic and Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI) consists of eight indicators, which are divided into an economic and an environmental subindex, with four indicators each.¹⁸⁹ If countries are unable to reach specific combined thresholds in the three criteria, they will be included in the LDC category.¹⁹⁰

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide policy guidance and set targets for LDCs in order to support socio-economic development and eventually graduate from the LDC category.¹⁹¹ The SDGs also

¹⁷⁶ Ban, *Opening remarks to the Media at the opening of the 4th UN Conference on Least Developed Countries*, 2011.

¹⁷⁷ UNCTAD, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*, 2018, p. 1.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ UN-OHRLLS, *The Least Developed Countries: Facts and Figures 2020*, 2020, p. 1.

¹⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *Identification of the Least Developed among the Developing Countries (A/RES/2768 (XXVI))*, 1971.

¹⁸² UN-OHRLLS, *The Least Developed Countries: Facts and Figures 2020*, 2020, p. 1.

¹⁸³ UN-OHRLLS, *About LDCs*.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ UN DESA, *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*, 2018, pp. 6-7.

¹⁸⁶ UN DESA, *LDC Identification Criteria & Indicators*.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ UN DESA, *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*, 2018, p. 3.

¹⁹¹ UNCTAD, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*, 2018, pp. 3-4.

help LDCs in overcoming their structural economic problems, while building efficient economies and production capacities.¹⁹² As the SDG's contribute to improving populations and strengthening partnerships, Goal 17 ("strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development") is impactful to ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies.¹⁹³

International partnerships are crucial for achieving sustainable development worldwide.¹⁹⁴ Therefore, the UN (especially ECOSOC) fosters global partnerships and cooperation between states, international organizations, NGOs, and donors from the private sector.¹⁹⁵ These partnerships occur on all levels (local, national, regional, and global), which is a key factor for development.¹⁹⁶ Development assistance is important for a large number of developing states from the global south to foster their economies and encourage trade and growth in those countries.¹⁹⁷ In 2019, \$147.4 billion were spent on international development assistance, however in 2020 those numbers declined by 40% due to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁹⁸ Consequently, international cooperation is more important than ever for developing countries to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and for the development of LDCs.¹⁹⁹

International and Regional Framework

In 2001 the General Assembly adopted resolution 56/227, *Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries*, establishing the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) as recommended by the conference.²⁰⁰ UN-OHRLLS is the main body to coordinate partnerships and support for LDCs within the UN system, while monitoring the implementation of policy programs for sustainable development in the states.²⁰¹

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/1, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).²⁰² While all 17 SDGs are important for achieving sustainable development, SDG 17 ("partnership for the goals") is a core goal for the development of LDCs.²⁰³ The SDGs directly and indirectly contribute to improving the socio-economic situation within LDCs, including SDGs 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 17, all of which are included in LDC national development strategies.²⁰⁴

The *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020* (2010), commonly known as the *Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)*, has provided support and partnerships for sustainable development in LDCs in the past decade.²⁰⁵ IPoA provides a framework for LDCs and their development partners to take actions towards strengthening the economic, social, and environmental situation within LDCs.²⁰⁶ Additionally, IPoA sets a number of principles for its implementation, such as country ownership, an integrated approach, and genuine solidarity in partnerships, as well as the target of

¹⁹² UNCTAD, *The Least Developed Countries Report 2020: Productive capacities for the new decade*, 2020, p. 53.

¹⁹³ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 26.

¹⁹⁴ UN, *Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*.

¹⁹⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

¹⁹⁶ UN, *Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ UN-OHRLLS, *Our Mandate*.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

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

²⁰³ UNCTAD, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*, 2018, p. 5.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-11.

²⁰⁵ UN General Assembly, *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1)*, 2011.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

sustained economic growth for each LDC of 7% per year.²⁰⁷ Further, the IPoA includes a set of principles for the development of LDCs, as well as eight specific priority areas on which LDCs and their development partners should focus on in their policies, such as productive capacity, human and social development, and good governance at all levels.²⁰⁸

Role of the International System

Every three years CDP assesses the list of LDCs and makes recommendations for graduation or for new countries to include on the list based on their criteria.²⁰⁹ ECOSOC then reviews and endorses the recommendations by CDP and presents their recommendation to the General Assembly who makes the final decision on a Member States' graduation from, or inclusion to, the LDC category.²¹⁰ To graduate, a country has to meet special graduation thresholds in the two out of the three criteria (GNI, HAI, EVI), in two consecutive triennial reviews.²¹¹ As an alternative, an income-only graduation is also possible, so long as the GNI of a country reaches at least double of the graduation threshold for income criteria in two consecutive reviews.²¹²

Alongside ECOSOC and CDP, UN-OHRLLS is responsible for the mobilization and coordination within the UN system, as well as providing international support to LDCs.²¹³ UN-OHRLLS is key to the implementation of programmes of action for LDCs through monitoring achievements in countries, as well as at regional and global levels, and is reporting the development processes to ECOSOC and the General Assembly through annual reviews.²¹⁴ Furthermore, NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) play a crucial role in supporting the development of LDCs, where they also play an active role in empowering marginalized populations in those regions.²¹⁵ For example, these organizations create awareness-raising campaigns and movements for topics such as social justice, gender equality, or climate justice.²¹⁶ Through the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, NGOs can actively collaborate in partnership with different UN agencies such as UN-OHRLLS, which assists in providing more legitimacy and democratic processes.²¹⁷

The 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) was set to take place in March 2021 with the goal of negotiating an updated IPoA, as its current term expired in 2020.²¹⁸ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, preparations for the conference were postponed and the conference is now scheduled to take place from 23 to 27 January 2022 in Doha, Qatar.²¹⁹ LDC5 is organized by UN-OHRLLS and will take place with Heads of States and Governments.²²⁰ As an outcome of the LDC5 conference, participants are expected to adopt a new Programme of Action for the next decade.²²¹

²⁰⁷ UN General Assembly, *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1)*, 2011, pp. 6-8.

²⁰⁸ UN-OHRLLS, *Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action – 2011*.

²⁰⁹ UN DESA, *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*, 2018, pp. 6-7.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹¹ UN DESA, *Graduation from the LDC category*.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ UN-OHRLLS, *Our Mandate*.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ LDC Watch, *Towards a World Without LDCs: Global Civil Society Report and Recommendations to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV)*, 2011, pp. 73-74.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

²¹⁷ UN-OHRLLS, *Civil Society/Non-governmental organizations*.

²¹⁸ UN-OHRLLS, *Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; 23-27 January 2022, Doha, Qatar. Background Note*, 2021, p. 2.

²¹⁹ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/RES/74/232 B)*, 2020.

²²⁰ UN-OHRLLS, *Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; 23-27 January 2022, Doha, Qatar. Background Note*, 2021, p. 2.

²²¹ UN, *LDC5 Conference*, 2021

Countries in the LDC category are granted special international support measures in three categories: trade-related measures, development cooperation, and participation in the UN system.²²² Those measures are based on international agreements and attempt to provide development assistance for LDCs.²²³ For example, LDCs receive preferential access to markets and goods, as well as special preferential treatments by the World Trade Organization (WTO).²²⁴ LDCs receive additional support for participation in the UN system and other international organizations through travel support and diplomatic trainings.²²⁵

Partnerships for Public Health in Least Developed Countries

Although the on-going COVID-19 pandemic is a global issue, LDCs are hit particularly hard due to the pandemic's aggravation to pre-existing inequalities.²²⁶ The consequences of the pandemic are directly affecting the achievement of various SDGs, such as SDG 3 ("good health and well-being"), but also goals 1, 2, 4, 8, and 16.²²⁷ Prior to the pandemic, LDCs have faced enormous issues regarding their public health systems.²²⁸ According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2017 the life expectancy in LDCs was an average of 62.2 years, compared to the global average of 71.4 years.²²⁹ However, the life expectancy in LDCs gradually increased by almost ten years since 2000.²³⁰ Further, 47% of deaths in LDCs are estimated to be caused by maternal, perinatal, communicable, and nutritional conditions, while the global average is 22%.²³¹

WHO supports and assists LDCs in developing national health policies, strategies, and plans, which were adopted by only 31 LDCs by 2017.²³² Further, 40% of WHO offices in LDCs played a major role as partners for creating national mechanisms to monitor health-related SDGs, as well as coordinating national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.²³³ For partnerships, WHO provides access and laboratory support to address infectious diseases in LDCs.²³⁴ It will remain an important challenge for LDCs to improve and secure access to public health services for their populations.²³⁵ Because of this, international partnerships are important for strengthening public health in LDCs.²³⁶ Partnerships between professionals, agencies, communities and individuals is a fundamental condition for functioning public health systems.²³⁷

Vaccination distribution is an important priority area of the UN in the fight against COVID-19.²³⁸ As of June 2021, only 3.1% of LDC populations received at least one vaccine dose and as of October 2021 that number has only grown to 3.5%.²³⁹ Only 1.2% of global vaccine doses have been distributed to LDCs,

²²² UN DESA, *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*, 2018, p. 27.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-33.

²²⁵ UN LDC Portal, *Support for the participation of LDCs in international organizations and processes*.

²²⁶ UN-OHRLS, *State of the Least Developed Countries 2021: Building back better in response to COVID-19*, 2021, p. 1.

²²⁷ UNDP, *COVID-19 and the SDGs: How the 'roadmap for humanity' could be changed by a pandemic*.

²²⁸ WHO, *Least Developed Countries Health and WHO: Country Presence Profile*, 2017.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2017, pp. 2-3.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 2017, p. 5.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²³³ WHO, *WHO country presence in least developed countries (LDCs), 2021*, 2021, pp. 15-16.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²³⁵ UN CDP, *Comprehensive Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Least Developed Country Category*, 2021, p. 27.

²³⁶ UN-OHRLS, *State of the Least Developed Countries 2021: Building back better in response to COVID-19*, 2021, pp. 120-121.

²³⁷ Olanipekun, *Partnership: an Effective Approach to Public Health*, 2013, p. 1.

²³⁸ WHO, *COVAX. Working for global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines*.

²³⁹ UN-OHRLS, *Vaccinations and COVID-19 Funding for Least Developed Countries*, 2021; Our World in Data, *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations*, 2021.

whereas 49.3% of the world population is fully or partially vaccinated.²⁴⁰ Through the COVAX vaccine sharing arrangement, a global collaboration agreement to ensure equitable access to vaccines, tests, and treatments to fight COVID-19 around the globe, LDCs are expected to receive two billion vaccine doses by the end of this year.²⁴¹ Therefore, agreements such as COVAX are important partnerships for LDCs need in their recovery from the pandemic.²⁴²

In addition to the WHO, most LDCs have established partnerships with academic institutions, as well as international and local NGOs.²⁴³ Twelve of the LDCs are implementing the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All (GAP) program.²⁴⁴ GAP is a program encompassing 13 multilateral agencies in the field of health and humanitarian development to support the achievement of health-related SDGs.²⁴⁵ WHO currently supports 192 South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation (SSTC) initiatives to improve public health in LDCs.²⁴⁶ Health systems in LDCs, however, are severely underfunded, a problem which is also highlighted by a lack of international support.²⁴⁷

Strengthening South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

While international donors and organizations from industrialized states play an important role in development partnerships for LDCs, another key factor includes partnerships among the developing countries of the global south, namely SSTC.²⁴⁸ While South-South cooperation describes the partnership between two or more developing countries, triangular cooperation indicates that this cooperation also involves certain industrialized countries or multilateral organizations (such as the UN) as support.²⁴⁹ The exchange of technology, knowledge, research, skills, and know-how among the global south countries is highly important for their development.²⁵⁰ ECOSOC encourages Member States for mutual learning and knowledge exchange to achieve the SDGs.²⁵¹ In particular response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SSTC can be important in economic recovery for the global south, as it can help compensate the existential needs in those countries.²⁵² Because of the insufficient support from the international community, coordination among the global south is essential for their future development.²⁵³

There are several examples of successful SSTC partnerships in LDCs.²⁵⁴ One such example includes the LDCs University Consortium on Climate Change, a program of ten universities in LDCs focusing on capacity-building through knowledge-sharing to address the challenge of climate change.²⁵⁵ Similarly, the Global South-South Development Center Project creates a network for knowledge and expertise sharing in the global south, including LDCs, and focusing on areas such as agriculture, environmental protection, and new energies.²⁵⁶ Such SSTC partnerships constitute best practices which can be utilized by other

²⁴⁰ UN-OHRLLS, *Vaccinations and COVID-19 Funding for Least Developed Countries*, 2021; Our World in Data, *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations*, 2021.

²⁴¹ UN-OHRLLS, *Vaccinations and COVID-19 Funding for Least Developed Countries*, 2021.

²⁴² UN-OHRLLS, *State of the Least Developed Countries 2021: Building back better in response to COVID-19*, 2021, p. 13.

²⁴³ WHO, *WHO country presence in least developed countries (LDCs)*, 2021, 2021, p. 30.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²⁴⁵ WHO, *About the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All*.

²⁴⁶ WHO, *WHO country presence in least developed countries (LDCs)*, 2021, 2021, p. 30.

²⁴⁷ UN CDP, *Comprehensive Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Least Developed Country Category*, 2021, p. 27.

²⁴⁸ UNOSSC, *About UNOSSC*.

²⁴⁹ Piefer, *Triangular cooperation – Bridging South-South and North-South Cooperation?*, 2014, p. 1.

²⁵⁰ UN LDC Portal, *South-South cooperation and LDCs*.

²⁵¹ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

²⁵² UNCTAD, *COVID-19 crisis: How South-South cooperation can support economic recovery*, 2020.

²⁵³ UNCTAD, *South-South Cooperation at the time of COVID-19: Building Solidarity Among Developing Countries*, 2020, pp. 6-8.

²⁵⁴ UN LDC Portal, *South-South cooperation and LDCs*.

²⁵⁵ UN LDC Portal, *LDCs University Consortium on Climate Change – LUCCC*.

²⁵⁶ UNOSSC, *Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development -Volume 3*, 2020, pp. 353-354.

LDCs to support their own national developments.²⁵⁷ This is highlighted in a recent report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), titled *Building Solidarity Among Developing Countries*.²⁵⁸

Conclusion

International partnerships are essential for sustainable development in LDCs to improve their socio-economic situations and future livelihoods.²⁵⁹ Especially in times of COVID-19, international cooperation is crucial for sustainable and resilient recovery from the pandemic.²⁶⁰ The international community has to act in solidarity, and SSTC should remain a crucial role in LDC partnerships.²⁶¹ The upcoming months will reflect how situations in LDCs will develop and what the outcomes of the LDC5 conference in January 2022 will provide.²⁶²

Further Research

Delegates researching this topic should consider the following: What partnerships are essential for the development in LDCs? How can those partnerships for LDCs be improved to work more efficiently? How can the UN system support the public health systems in LDCs? How can the role of SSTC be increased in the international system? How could the outcomes of the LDC5 conference allow for further partnerships in advancing sustainable development among LDCs?

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, Committee for Development Policy. (2021). *Comprehensive Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Least Developed Country Category*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/CDP_Comprehensive_Study_2021.pdf

This study published by the Committee for Development Policy shows the impacts of COVID-19 on the LDCs. It demonstrates the negative consequences of the pandemic on the sustainable development of the LDCs in areas like health, trade, or tourism and it also elaborates on the effect of the pandemic on LDC graduation. The study demonstrates that many LDCs responded quite effectively to the pandemic with their policies and preventive measures. It is therefore a great resource for delegates to research on the development in LDCs and the impacts and policies connected to COVID-19.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2018). *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/aldc2018d4_en.pdf

This report published by UNCTAD focuses on the implementation of the SDGs in LDCs. It suggests policy recommendations on how to implement SDG guidelines in order with the targets of the IPoA. It also contains a whole section about international support policies, which elaborates on the partnerships mentioned in this background guide and is a great resource for the topic of international partnerships for LDCs.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*. 3rd Edition. Retrieved 05 August

²⁵⁷ UN LDC Portal, *South-South cooperation and LDCs*.

²⁵⁸ UNCTAD, *South-South Cooperation at the time of COVID-19: Building Solidarity Among Developing Countries*, 2020.

²⁵⁹ UNCTAD, *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*, 2018, p 155.

²⁶⁰ UNCTAD, *South-South Cooperation at the time of COVID-19: Building Solidarity Among Developing Countries*, 2020.

²⁶¹ UN LDC Portal, *South-South cooperation and LDCs*.

²⁶² UN, *LDC5 Conference*, 2021.

2021 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/2018CDPhandbook.pdf>

This handbook is the basic and comprehensive introduction to the topic of Least Developed Countries and should therefore be a starting point in every research. It contains all necessary information about the LDC category, criteria for their inclusion and graduation as well as the special support measures and development cooperation of the international community. The handbook gives a detailed overview about everything necessary to know about the socio-economic situation of the LDCs and is therefore an ideal comprehensive resource for delegates to start their research on this complex topic.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fifth session. (2011). *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1)*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1>

The Istanbul Programme of Action was the primary framework for support measures for LDCs in the past decade. This original text of the document includes the objectives, principles and priority areas of the programme. It is a good resource for delegates to understand why and how the support measures and development cooperation policies of the international community for LDCs were agreed on.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (2020). *Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development - Volume 3*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Good-Practices-in-SSTC-for-Sustainable-Development-Vol.-3-2020-Digital-Light-FINAL.pdf>

This third edition of the publication by UNOSSC elaborates on the practical implementation of SSTC in countries of the global south. It contains 195 examples of successful SSTC in developing countries, including various LDCs. In this report, delegates can get an impression of practical SSTC policies and their implementation which they can take as examples for their work at the conference.

Bibliography

Ban, K. (2011). *Opening remarks to the Media at the opening of the 4th UN Conference on Least Developed Countries*. Retrieved 25 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2011-05-09/opening-remarks-media-opening-4th-un-conference-least-developed>

LDC Watch. (2011). *Towards A World Without LDCs: Global Civil Society Report and Recommendations to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV)*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/en/conf/ldc/pdf/csoglobalreport.pdf>

Olanipekun, J. (2013). *Partnership: an Effective Approach to Public Health*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.910.5898&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Our World in Data. (2021). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations*. Retrieved 29 October 2021 from: <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>

Piefer, N. (2014). *Triangular cooperation – Bridging South-South and North-South Cooperation?* Retrieved 03 August 2021 from: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/awi/ssdc_piefer.pdf

United Nations (n.d.). *Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>

United Nations. (2021). *LDC5 Conference*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ldc5/about>

United Nations, Committee for Development Policy. (2021). *Comprehensive Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Least Developed Country Category*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from:

https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/CDP_Comprehensive_Study_2021.pdf

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2018). *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries – A Compendium of Policy Options*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/aldc2018d4_en.pdf

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2020). *COVID-19 crisis: How South-South cooperation can support economic recovery*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://unctad.org/fr/node/3025>

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2020). *South-South Cooperation at the time of COVID-19: Building Solidarity Among Developing Countries*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/gdsinf2020d4_en.pdf

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2020). *The Least Developed Countries Report 2020: Productive capacities for the new decade*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ldcr2020_en.pdf

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *Graduation from the LDC category*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category/ldc-graduation.html>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *LDC Identification Criteria & Indicators*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category/ldc-criteria.html>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures. 3rd Edition*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/2018CDPhandbook.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *COVID-19 and the SDGs: How the 'roadmap for humanity' could be changed by a pandemic*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://feature.undp.org/covid-19-and-the-sdgs>

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 03 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/sustainable-development>

United Nations, General Assembly, Twenty-sixth session. (1971). *Identification of the least developed among the developing countries (A/RES/2768 (XXVI))*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: [https://undocs.org/A/RES/2768\(XXVI\)](https://undocs.org/A/RES/2768(XXVI))

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fifth session. (2011). *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1)*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/a/res/70/1>

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session. (2020). *Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/RES/74/232 B)*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://undocs.org/A/RES/74/232%20B>



United Nations LDC Portal. (n.d.). *LDCs University Consortium on Climate Change – LUCCC*. Retrieved 03 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ldcportal/ldcs-university-consortium-on-climate-change-luccc/>

United Nations LDC Portal (n.d.). *South-South cooperation and LDCs*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ldcportal/south-south-cooperation-and-ldcs/>

United Nations LDC Portal (n.d.). *Support for the participation of LDCs in international organizations and processes*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ldcportal/category/participation-in-international-forums-isms/>

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (n.d.). *About UNOSSC*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-unossc/>

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (2020). *Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development - Volume 3*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Good-Practices-in-SSTC-for-Sustainable-Development-Vol.-3-2020-Digital-Light-FINAL.pdf>

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (n.d.). *About LDCs*. Retrieved 30 July 2021 from: <http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/>

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (n.d.). *Civil Society/Non-governmental organizations*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <http://unohrlls.org/partnerships/civil-societyn gos/>

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (n.d.). *Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action – 2011*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/istanbul-programme-of-action/>

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (n.d.). *Our Mandate*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/our-mandate>

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (2020). *The Least Developed Countries: Facts and Figures 2020*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: https://www.un.org/ohrlls/sites/www.un.org.ohrlls/files/ldc_facts_and_figures_2020.pdf

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (2021). *Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; 23-27 January 2022, Doha, Qatar. Background Note*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: https://www.un.org/ldc5/sites/www.un.org.ldc5/files/background_note_ldc5_conf.pdf

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (2021). *State of the Least Developed Countries 2021: Building back better in response to COVID-19. Follow up on the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: https://www.un.org/ldc5/sites/www.un.org.ldc5/files/pdf/stateLDC_2021/stateldc_2021.pdf

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. (2021). *Vaccinations and COVID-19 Funding for Least Developed Countries*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/>



World Health Organization. (n.d.). *About the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/sdg3-global-action-plan/about>

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *COVAX. Working for global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator/covax>

World Health Organization. (2017). *Least Developed Countries Health and WHO: Country Presence Profile*. Retrieved 05 August 2021 from: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255802/WHO-CCU-17.07-eng.pdf;jsessionid=EA2CACEBF1259A083DFE622B27042B02?sequence=1>

World Health Organization. (2021). *WHO country presence in least developed countries (LDCs), 2021*. Retrieved 18 September 2021 from: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/344255/9789240033412-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>