NMUN•DC

Economic and Social Council Plenary

Background Guide 2019

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2019 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This year's staff is: Director Zachary Parker and Assistant Director Allison Uhrick. Zachary holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Supply Chain Management and works as a Supply Chain Planner for a major international machine and equipment distributor. Allison holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Affairs from Stockton University. She plans to pursue a Master's degree in Public Policy this Spring.

The topics under discussion for ECOSOC are:

  I.   Engaging Youth in Building Partnerships for Sustainable Development
  II.   Reducing Global Inequality

ECOSOC is one of six main organs in the United Nations system and addresses issues related to sustainability, development, and cooperation. ECOSOC oversees specialized agencies and both functional and regional commissions that discuss issues of economic and social importance and may hold international conferences on an annual or monthly basis. ECOSOC submits an annual report to the General Assembly, in addition to drafting conventions and providing recommendations for action on economic and social issues. ECOSOC's responsibilities as a primary organ for coordination and cooperation have grown to address implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

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 conduct additional research, explore your Member State's policies in-depth, and examine the policies of other Member States to improve your ability to negotiate and reach consensus. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will use their research to draft and submit a position paper. Guidelines are available in the NMUN Position Paper Guide.

The NMUN website has many additional resources, including two that are essential both in preparation for the conference and as a resource during the conference. They are:
1. The NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide, which 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 discuss the topics or agenda with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. The NMUN Rules of Procedure, which includes 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-Secretary-General Daniel Sweeney at usgdaniel.dc@nmun.org or Secretary-General Chase Mitchell at secgen.dc@nmun.org.

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

Sincerely,
Zachary Parker, Director
Allison Uhrick, Assistant Director

Committee Overview

Introduction

Chapter X of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a founding body and one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN).[1] ECOSOC indirectly oversees 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; in the 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, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2847(XXVI), which sought to amend Article 61 of the *Charter of the United Nations* to increase ECOSOC membership from 27 to 54 in order to better reflect the UN's economic and geographic diversity.[5] The amendment became operative in 1973 after a sufficient number of Member States had ratified the document.[6] In 1977, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/197 to address the "Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System" and to improve ECOSOC's effectiveness by increasing coordination with its subsidiary bodies.[7] To avoid any duplication of work due to broad mandates, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50/227 in 1995, clarifying that its role is to provide policy guidance while ECOSOC's focus is on coordination of implementation.[8] This interpretation was reinforced by General Assembly resolution 57/270 in 2002.[9]

Throughout the last decade, the General Assembly implemented additional reforms aimed at strengthening the working methods of ECOSOC.[10] These reforms included an expansion of ECOSOC's functions and powers to enable it to take the lead on identifying and discussing emerging challenges; to act as a policy forum for global leaders, especially concerning the integration of sustainable development efforts; and to provide a platform of accountability for all levels of monitoring and reporting on universal commitments.[11] An important example of this is ECOSOC's commitment to engaging the youth in a partnership focused on ensuring the successful attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[12] This partnership began when the 2010-2011 Year of Youth prompted the first ECOSOC sanctioned Youth Forum in 2012, which successfully engaged the youth and brought to light issues like unemployment for the younger generation.[13] The success of the first sanctioned youth-forum has now resulted in a more structured and thorough annual forum.[14] In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/305 reiterating that ECOSOC "should be guided by the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and flexibility."[15]

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[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] Ibid.
[4] Rosenthal, *The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*, 2005, p. 20.
[5] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18*, 2018.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid, p. 19.
[8] Ibid, p. 19.
[9] Ibid, p. 20.
[10] Ibid; 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.
[11] UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.
[12] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Youth Forum,* 2019.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] 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.

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.[16] 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; seats are allocated to each of the following groups of states: 14 to African, 11 to Asian, six to Eastern European, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean, and 13 to Western European and Other.[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] All of these representatives are elected to one-year terms at the outset of each session.[19] The Bureau is responsible for setting ECOSOC's agenda, devising action plans, and collaborating with the Secretariat on administrative duties.[20] ECOSOC's presidency rotates among the regional groups.[21] The current Council President is Inga Rhonda King, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, who was elected in July 2018.[22]

Each year, ECOSOCs meets for one organizational session, which typically takes place anytime between February and July, and one substantive session, which usually occurs in mid-July.[23] Organizational sessions are dedicated to administrative aspects, such as agenda setting and elections to the Bureau.[24] During substantive sessions, meetings are divided into five segments focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council's work.[25]

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.[26] The two most common types of subsidiary bodies are functional and regional commissions, but other subsidiary bodies include standing, ad hoc, expert, and other related bodies.[27] Each subsidiary body has adopted specific methods of work to align with its mandate, and methods are updated regularly.[28]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The *Charter of the United Nations* 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 the General Assembly and to UN specialized agencies.[29] ECOSOC may also provide information and assist the Security Council when addressing humanitarian crises, such as in natural disaster response.[30] Most recently, a special meeting was convened in April 2019 to respond to Cyclone Idai and the negative impact it may have on progress made towards SDGs in the affected countries.[31] As emphasized by recent reforms accentuating this role, ECOSOC also provides coordination, monitoring, and advice to UN programs, agencies, and funds on international development

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[16] Ibid; UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Members*.
[17] Ibid; *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] UN ECOSOC, *President of ECOSOC*, 2018.
[23] Ibid, p. 1.
[24] Ibid, p. 4.
[25] Ibid, p. 8.
[26] UN Dag Hammarskjold Library, *Functional Commissions*, 2014.
[27] UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.
[28] UN General Assembly, *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*, 2013, p. 7.
[29] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
[30] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emergency Situations*, 2016.
[31] UN ECOSOC, *Presidential Statement on the occasion of the ECOSOC Special Meeting Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe*, 2019.

policies and their implementation.[32] To further allow for coordination, a 2007 reform of ECOSOC established the High-Level Segment, an annual meeting that brings together representatives from governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society to discuss development cooperation.[33]

In addition to overseeing its subsidiary bodies, ECOSOC's mechanisms allows for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to consult on the work of the UN.[34] There are more than 3,900 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.[35] Applications for consultative status are considered by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs, which was established in 1946 and is comprised of 19 Member States.[36] The Committee on NGOs directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by NGOs.[37] ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 of 1996 defines the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations, and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in establishing the consultative relationship.[38] In the latest report from June 2019 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.[39]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

Beginning with the Operational Activities Segment, from 27 February to 1 March, several 2018 ECOSOC subsidiary organs, including the annual High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Forum for Financing and Development, reflected the Council's focus on a united global approach of repositioning the UN development system and strategies for achieving the SDGs by 2030.[40] The 2018 Partnerships Forum further established ECOSOC's interest in improving coordination with private organizations to better support the development community.[41] From 23-26 April 2018, the Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) met to review the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015) on financing sustainable development.[42] The resulting report recommended three pillars of action: facilitate the use of all financial resources including innovative options at all levels, improve and align incentives for public and private actors with sustainable development, and operationalize financial frameworks.[43] Following the most recent Humanitarian Affairs Segment, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2018/11 on "strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations," (2018) which calls for humanitarian agencies to renew their efforts toward development coordination by using initial rapid assessment tools that help reach communities that are difficult to access with medical care, clean water, and food supplies.[44]

The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) met for the 6th time from 21-22 May 2018, with discussions placing additional emphasis on future action and policy to assist economically and socially vulnerable

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[32] 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.

[32] Ibid; UN ECOSOC, *The New ECOSOC – Overview of Functions and Working Methods*, 2014.

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

[34] UN DESA NGO Branch, *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*.

[35] Ibid.

[36] UN DESA, *Committee on NGOs convenes for first session of 2014*, 2014; Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid; UN DESA NGO Branch, *The Committee on NGOs*; UN ECOSOC, *Consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (E/RES/1996/31)*, 1996, pp. 53-61.

[39] UN DPI, *Concluding Session, Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends Status for 219 Groups, Adopts Report Containing 2020 Meeting Schedule*, 2019.

[40] UN ECOSOC, *2018 Operational Activities for Development Segment*, 2018.

[41] UN ECOSOC, *2018 Partnerships Forum*, 2018.

[42] UN ECOSOC, *Follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/FFDF/2018/L.2)*, 2018.

[43] Ibid.

[44] UN ECOSOC, *2018 Humanitarian Affairs Segment*, 2018.

peoples.[45] Following the DCF, ECOSOC held its 2018 special meeting on "sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all," which emphasized the importance of connectivity, government engagement, and civic responsibility.[46] All of this fed into the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which was held from July 9-18 2018 and had the theme of "Transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies."[47]

The HLPF serves as a space in which the international system can review progress on the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and provides governments an opportunity to discuss their efforts.[48] The 2018 HLPF reviewed progress made on SDGs 6 on clean water and sanitation, 7 on affordable and clean energy, 11 on sustainable cities and communities, 12 on responsible consumption and production, 15 on life on land), and 17 on partnerships for the goals.[49] During the HLPF, the UN Youth Envoy, Jayathma Wickramanayake, commended the world's growing youth population as the most interconnected generation ever, and pushed the reality that their contributions as activists, advocates, innovators, and entrepreneurs is key to achieving the SDGs.[50] Building upon the themes of the HLPF, the High Level Segment (HLS) from 16-19 July 2018 was "from global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities," affirming the need for sustainable solutions and reducing risks in the face of economic, environmental, or social crises to facilitate continued development in communities.[51]

The 2019 HLPF was be held from 9-18 July 2019 with the theme of "empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality."[52] The SDGs scheduled for review are 4 on quality education, 8 on decent work and economic growth, 10 on reduced inequalities, 13 on climate action, 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17 on partnerships for the goals.[53]

Conclusion

ECOSOC is responsible for coordinating activities and programs through the expansive UN system towards the ultimate goal of sustainable development.[54] 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.[55] It has also collaborated with other UN entities to promote progress on development frameworks and the SDGs while also becoming a global platform for youth to contribute to sustainability discussions.[56] President King has highlighted that her priorities are to provide clear organizational leadership, strong monitoring mechanisms, and to revitalize ECOSOC such that it can address global challenges and work to achieve the SDGs by 2030.[57]

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[45] UN ECOSOC, *6th Biennial High-level Meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)*, 2018.
[46] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Special Meeting "Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all"*, 2018.
[47] UN ECOSOC, *High-level Political Forum organized under the auspices of ECOSOC*, 2018.
[48] UN ECOSOC, *Compilation of main messages for the 2018 voluntary national reviews (E/HLFP/2018/5)*, 2018.
[49] UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" (E/HLS/2018/1)*, 2018.
[50] UN DPI, *Progress has been made, but 'not at a sufficient speed to realize the SDGS': UN ECOSOC President*, 2018.
[51] UN ECOSOC*, ECOSOC High-level Segment: "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities"*, 2018.
[52] UN Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform, *High-Level Political Forum 2019 Under The Auspices Of ECOSOC.* 2019.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Educational Broadcasting Corporation, *Kofi Annan – Center of the Storm: Who Does What?*, 2016.
[55] Ibid.
[56] UN ECOSOC, *Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/124-E/2018/3)*, 2017.
[57] Ibid.

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 This report details the reforms adopted by the General Assembly on the work of ECOSOC in 2013. Particularly, these reforms enhanced the role of the Council as a leader in policy dialogues and recommendations; introduced the high-level political forum on sustainable development; created a platform for accountability for universal commitments, monitoring and reporting on progress; and emphasized the need for greater cooperation among development agencies. This source will be helpful for delegates as this report summarizes the ways ECOSOC has planned to implement these reforms and follow through on creating a more accountable international system.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018, May 23). *ECOSOC Special Meeting "Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all"* [Press Release]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2018doc/2018-ecosoc-special-meeting-summary.pdf

 This summary on a May 2018 special meeting by the ECOSOC President focuses on the council's recent efforts towards sustainable development. The six main themes of this meeting emphasized global responsibility, government accountability and action, and aligning incentives for public-private partnerships. Specifically, the statement emphasizes that the international community needs to address structural barriers within legal frameworks. Delegates can use this document to better understand how ECOSOC fulfills its mandate by holding forums and meetings to address sustainable development topics.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/FFDF/2018/L.2)* [Report]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: https://undocs.org/E/FFDF/2018/L.2

 This document on the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda discusses how ECOSOC promotes coordination to advance policies and agenda items. This review provides highlights on the current state of international development cooperation, debt sustainability, domestic financial resources, and systemic financial issues. In regards to financing development, this document highlights how the UN system is working to address technological changes and encourage streamlined financial systems to help those in need of financial assistance. Delegates would benefit from taking note of action items that came from this review to guide how they address any discussion on financing development.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" (E/HLS/2018/1).* Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: https://www.undocs.org/e/hls/2018/1

 Emphasizing the discussions and outcomes of the most recent high-level segments, the Ministerial declaration provides a brief summation of current and future work. Specific items that have been highlighted are the International Decade for Action: "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028, the New Urban Agenda, and the review of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. Additionally, the declaration states formal commitments by leaders and attendees of the segment to achieving sustainable development. This document can be of particular use to delegates when researching topics related to sustainable development and ECOSOC.

United Nations, General Assembly & Economic and Social Council. (2017). *Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/124-E/2018/3).* Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/72/124

This report by the Secretary-General was prepared in response to the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) as outlined in General Assembly resolution 71/243 (2016). It contains the Secretary-General's vision for the repositioning of the UN development system and was presented to the Economic and Social Council on 5 July 2017 for consideration. As the main body reviewing the implementation of the QCPR mandate, ECOSOC was highly involved in the drafting of the report through the ECOSOC Dialogue and will be influential in the finalization of the report through its Operational Activities Segment. Delegates should refer to this report to gain an understanding of ECOSOC's long-term aims and consider what short-term policies and coordinating efforts will help ECOSOC achieve these goals.

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I. Engaging Youth in Building Partnerships for Sustainable Development

"Young people's empowerment, development and engagement is an end in itself, as well as a means to build a better world."[58]

Introduction

Today's youth population includes nearly 1.8 billion people, the largest number in human history, with nearly 90% residing in developing countries.[59] The 1981 Secretary-General's report "International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace" defines youth as persons between ages 15 and 24.[60] The United Nations (UN) supports youth by providing a platform to address their needs, advance their engagement in development projects, and allow their voices to be heard.[61] The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has recognized the importance of partnering with youth to ensure they are engaged and empowered in global development efforts.[62]

Sustainable development ensures that the needs of the present day are met without harming the actions of future generations to meet their own development needs.[63] ECOSOC's efforts in partnerships and youth engagement are reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[64] The last of the SDGs, Goal 17 "Partnerships for the Goals," set targets for the overarching framework and partnerships that would be necessary to achieve the Goals.[65] Stronger partnerships contribute to sustainable development by allowing for knowledge sharing and the mobilization of resources that build capacity in Member States.[66] Through its numerous partnerships with other UN organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), and national governments around the world, ECOSOC has sought to address poverty, climate change, and other development issues, to ensure that today's youth will benefit from inclusive, safe, and sustainable societies by the SDG's target year, 2030, and beyond.[67]

International and Regional Framework

Numerous international agreements recognize the need to acknowledge and protect young people, including the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), which states in Articles 3 and 19 that everyone, including youth, are given the right to life and security, and that everyone has the right to freedoms of expression through any media, respectively.[68] These rights for youth are also reflected in the 1960 General Assembly Resolution 1572(XV), "Measures designed to promote among youth the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples," which reaffirms the principles of the UDHR and encourages both governments and individuals to exchange ideas of mutual respect and peace with young people from around the world.[69] The importance of the UDHR and mutual peace and respect for young peoples was also reaffirmed in the *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples* (1965).[70] Principle V states any youth

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[58] UN ECOSOC, *Youth2030: Working with and For Young People*, 2018, p. 6.
[59] Ibid, p. 4.
[60] UN General Assembly, *International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace; Report of the Secretary-General* (*A/36/215*), 1981, p. 15.
[61] Youth Policy, *Youth2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy*, 2019.
[62] Ibid, p. 6.
[63] UN DPI, *The Sustainable Development Agenda*, 2016.
[64] Sherif, *Unleashing the Potential of Youth: Youth2030 and Generation Unlimited*, 2018.
[65] UN DESA, *World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2018.
[66] UN Environment, *Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals*, 2019.
[67] Ibid.
[68] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (*A/RES/217 A (III)*), 1948.
[69] UN General Assembly, *Measures designed to promote among youth the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples* (*A/RES/1572(XV)*), 1960.
[70] UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples* (*A/RES/2037(XX)*), 1965.

organization should make their contributions to youth engagement and partnerships without discrimination, and should promote a free exchange of ideals between young people and their partners.[71]

The *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995, is a plan that addresses youth engagement and sustainable development.[72] The action plan includes education, employment, poverty, and other areas of concern, all of which are still priority areas for addressing youth concerns today.[73] The action plan stresses the importance of organizational and institutional commitments to its implementation and action rather than just statements of intent.[74] These frameworks were reaffirmed in the SDGs from the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted by the General Assembly in 2015.[75] Referred to by the UN as an ambitious plan of action, the 2030 Agenda aims to fight inequalities, end poverty, and tackle climate change, all while ensuring no person is left behind.[76]

ECOSOC has recognized that youth empowerment and participation are especially important in the thematic areas of civic engagement, political participation, peacebuilding, and resilience-building.[77] These thematic areas reflect the pillars of the UN system as a whole.[78] ECOSOC worked in conjunction with the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth in 2018 to develop the youth strategy plan *Youth2030: Working with and For Young People*, which aims to scale up national and regional actions to realize the rights of young people, meet their needs, and to advance their possibilities as agents of change.[79] The UN has highlighted the need to leverage the positive role young people can play in sustainable development, including in the advancement of peace and prevention of conflict, as highlighted in the Security Council resolutions 2250 (2015) on "Youth, Peace and Security" and 2419 (2018) on "Maintenance of international peace and security."[80] Resolution 2250 (2015) was the first Security Council resolution dedicated to the positive and vital role of youth in the creation and promotion of international peace and security.[81] Resolution 2149 (2014), calls for the increased role of young people to negotiate and implement peace agreements.[82]

Role of the International System

Through its annual meetings, regional commissions, and its role in the UN development system, ECOSOC has significant ability to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders and young people on a range of issues in relation to sustainable development.[83] ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies often asses innovations and strategies that contribute to positive and effective partnerships for sustainable development, including youth partnerships.[84] ECOSOC also encourages learning and dialogue for partnership issues in relation to national and international development issues, including enhancing coordination, reporting, governance, and implementation between young people and youth-focused organizations, Member States, civil society organizations (CSOs), and think tanks.[85] CSOs, such as the Global Partnership for Education and the Youth Association for Population and Development, can help enhance transparency and good governance in developed and developing countries by contributing to

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[71] Ibid.

[72] UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/RES/50/81)*, 1996.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] UNDP, *Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace (2016-2020)*, 2015.

[78] Ibid.

[79] UN OSGEY, *Youth2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth*, 2018.

[80] UN Security Council, *Maintenance of International Peace and Security* (*S/RES/2250 (2015)*), 2015.

[81] Dunhill, *Youth and Sustainable Peace*, 2018.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Gilbert, *2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator – ECOSOC Partnership Forum 11th April*, 2019.

[84] UN ECOSOC, *Partnerships*, 2019.

[85] Dumitriu, *The United Nations System – Private Sector Partnerships Arrangements in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017, pp. iii-iv, 2.

increased public debate on issues surrounding the formulation and implementation of policies regarding youth engagement and the SDGs.[86]

Established in 2012, the UN's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) plays a key role in reviewing the 2030 Agenda and provides recommendations for improvement on sustainable development.[87] At its 2018 session, "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies," HLPF acknowledged the importance of youth becoming active agents of change and partners for the SDGs and called for more youth participation at meetings.[88] The Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace (2016-2020) (Youth-GPS), a project established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2016, works to address youth partnerships in three priority areas: increasing youth empowerment; youth civic engagement and participation in political decision-making and processes; and strengthening youth engagement in resilience and peace-building efforts.[89] These interconnected areas are prioritized because of their demographic importance to developing countries, contributions to poverty reduction, and an increase in standards of living.[90] Likewise, the 2018 strategy *Engaging Young People for Health and Sustainable Development* from the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends actors in the private sector who already benefit from youth engagement, to collaborate with local and national governments to engage their young people in health and sustainable development planning, and to provide mentoring and training support to the young people involved.[91] These actors recognize that young people are more likely to engage and participate in future development efforts if other organizations can demonstrate that their inclusion made a difference.[92]

The ECOSOC Youth Forum brings together representatives from youth-focused and youth-led organizations and acts as a platform policy discussions and innovation for sustainable development.[93] The main focus of the Youth Forum is the role young people play in reviewing, monitoring, and developing partnerships to achieve the SDGs.[94] The 2018 session focused on the role of youth in building sustainable and resilient communities.[95] Key action areas and recommendations were identified and presented to Forum participants and the ECOSOC President, including access to education and skill-building for youth and encouraging partnerships between young people, local governments, civil society, and the private sector.[96] With proper partnerships and education for skill building, local governments and organizations can provide young people with apprenticeship opportunities, which can lead to permanent employment.[97] At the regional level, the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD) is an annual forum held to discuss pathways to implementing and reviewing the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region.[98] The theme for the 2018 Forum, "Highlighting the Role of Youth in the Arab World in Fostering Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies," addressed the role of youth in becoming agents of change for sustainable development, and how young people in present and future generations can benefit from the common good and natural resources in similar manners as generations before.[99] To further emphasize the importance of youth engagement, the 2018 AFSD agenda for the first time included a youth representative to the Forum's plenary and special sessions.[100]

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[86] UNICEF, *Participation of Children, Youth, and Civil Society: Element 2*.
[87] UN SDG Knowledge Platform, *High-Level Political Forum*, 2019.
[88] UN OSGEY, *High-Level Political Forum 2018: "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"*, 2018.
[89] Ibid, p. 1.
[90] Ibid, p. 13.
[91] WHO, *Engaging Young People for Health and Sustainable Development*, 2018, p. viii.
[92] Ibid, p. 16.
[93] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Youth Forum*, 2019
[94] Ibid.
[95] UN ECOSOC Youth Forum, *The role of youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities*, 2018, p. 1.
[96] ILO, *Young People Call for Action on Decent Work at UN Youth Forum*, 2018.
[97] Ibid.
[98] UN ESCWA, *Arab Forum for Sustainable Development*, 2018.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

Building Partnerships through Youth Employment and Education

Nearly three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, there is still a high number of youth experiencing poor access to education.[101] Approximately 142 million youth are not in school, nearly 30% of the poorest 12- to 14-year old children have never attended school, and a significant number of youth are still unable to receive a quality education.[102] Inequalities within countries regarding youth education are also apparent when factors such as poverty, gender, disability, and refugee status are considered.[103] These inequalities are often reinforced through violence and discrimination, where these marginalized groups are most often targeted and inhibit their educational opportunities.[104]

According to the *World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 71 million young people are currently unemployed.[105] As new entrants into the work force, young people are the most vulnerable workers.[106] Either large workloads are given to them with no assistance, or they are the first to lose their jobs when a company needs to make cuts to their programs.[107] In addition, it is increasingly difficult for marginalized and vulnerable youth groups such as migrants, young persons with disabilities, young women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth to secure and maintain decent employment due to discrimination and violence.[108] Youth unemployment prevents young people from securing independent and stable housing or other accommodations for eventually starting a family.[109] Additionally, unemployment creates damaging mental effects for social ills where young people are most prone, such as marginalization, low self-esteem, lack of skills, and impoverishment.[110]

To address the issue of youth employment, ECOSOC hosted the event "Breaking new ground: Partnerships for more and better jobs for young people" in conjunction with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Office for Partnerships, and the UN Global Compact in 2012.[111] The event identified issues affecting policy and innovations for promoting youth employment, which included unequal access to education, poverty, and gender inequalities, among others.[112]

Youth, Peace, and Sustainable Development

SDG goal 16, "Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions" and targets 16.2 and 16.7 aim to end violence and torture against children and promote responsive and inclusive decision-making at all levels.[113] ECOSOC addressed SDG 16 and its targets at the 2019 ECOSOC Youth Forum during the "SDG 16 and youth empowerment for peaceful, just and inclusive societies" interactive webinar.[114] The Council connected young people and SDG 16 by encouraging local and national governments to empower young people by allowing their participation in decision-making processes.[115]

Member States face several obstacles in achieving the SDG targets and creating a positive image of youth, which places which can help to increase their participation in peace and development.[116] Situations of bullying and severe physical assault provide a distorted perception of young people as perpetrators of

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[101] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth*, 2010, p. 18.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid, p. 12.
[105] Lebada, *World Report Explores Role of Youth in Achieving 2030 Agenda*, 2019.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] SDG Philanthropy Platform, *The United Nations World Youth Report 2018*, 2019.
[109] Ibid, p. 18.
[110] Ibid, p. 18.
[111] UN DESA, *Working Together to Solve Youth Employment*, 2012.
[112] Ibid.
[113] UN DPI, *Sustainable Development Goal 16*, 2019.
[114] Richard, *Webinar: SDG16 and youth empowerment for peaceful, just and inclusive societies*, 2019.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.

violence, although most young people do not engage in violent acts.[117] These negative perceptions of youth inhibit their ability to convince decision-makers to provide young people with an opportunity to participate in making decisions on peace and development.[118] The 2018 report on *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace, and Security*, published through a partnership between the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), was developed so the voices of young people who would not ordinarily have the chance to participate in a policy process could be included.[119] The study calls upon governments and international actors to undergo a seismic shift to recognize young people as the 'missing peace' in the peace and development process.[120] *The Missing Peace* sets out how resolution 2250 can be implemented through young people's successful participation in formal and informal peace processes.[121] Encouraging these partnerships can help streamline policies and youth action at the national, regional, and global levels.[122]

Conclusion

Young people today face challenges and are often overlooked in their communities, which often inhibits their ability to fully participate in public affairs.[123] The international community has taken steps in recent years to create a more inclusive approach to address the role of youth in sustainable development.[124] Youth have a major role in sustainable development, as they and the youth generations following them will be living in a world of the outcomes of sustainable development practices for the next fifty years.[125] While the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda continue to be implemented globally, it is up to the international community to provide strategies and actions to engage youth in building a sustainable world for everyone.[126]

Further Research

Delegates can further their knowledge by considering questions such as: How can the international community better integrate youth in governance and institutions in the context of the SDGs? How can youth empowerment be best harnessed to also encourage participation in politics and society? What steps can ECOSOC take to better address the number of development issues plaguing youth today to improve sustainable human development? What steps can be taken regionally to engage youth in building partnerships for sustainable development?

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https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf
> *This report is a simplified version of the original General Assembly resolution 50/81, which established the World Programme of Action for Youth and additionally includes the extension from 2005. The report highlights particular areas of concern among youth populations, which includes employment, education, the environment, and globalization. This report provides frameworks for implementing policy at the national and global levels and recommends Member States to create more programs for youth empowerment and*

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[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] UN PBSO & UNFPA, *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018, p. 54.
[120] Ibid, p. 127.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Save the Children, *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth and Peace and Security*, 2018.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.

development. Delegates can use the information within the strategy plan to understand what best practices the international community has done and how they can be expanded moving forward.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* Retrieved 25 February 2019 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf

> *The* World Youth Report *examines the supportive roles of the* 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *and current youth development efforts. The* World Youth Report *offers Member States and other stakeholders information to identify progress made to provide recommendations for addressing youth issues, assess policy gaps, and chart potential policy responses. Delegates should use this document to guide their research and identify what programs have been successful in promoting youth empowerment within the 2030 Agenda.*

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2018). *Youth2030: Working With and For Young People* [Report]. Retrieved 25 February 2019 from: https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/18-00080_un-youth-strategy_web.pdf

> *The* Youth2030 *report describes the critical role of youth today in shaping the future health of the planet and the future progress of humankind as a whole. Because of the growing number of youth in the world, it is important for Member States, as well as the entire UN system, to work closely with young people, support their rights, and provide adequate conditions for youth to play an active role within the international community. Through plans of actions created by a number of UN agencies, young people can assist in achieving peace and sustainable development for everyone. Delegates will find this source helpful in identifying necessary priorities that can be discussed within ECOSOC's mandate.*

United Nations, Peacebuilding Support Office & United Nations Population Fund. (2018). *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace, and Security* [Report]. Retrieved 30 April 2019 from: https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-10/youth-web-english.pdf

> *This report is the report requested from Security Council resolution 2250. This report goes into detail on the role that youth play in peace and security, including how youth can contribute to peace. The report also provides a number of important recommendations on how to better incorporate youth into leadership positions. Delegates will find this report extremely useful when looking to understand partnerships for youth, and how they can work to improve the role of youth in the international community.*

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> *Youth-GPS highlights youth empowerment to sharpen response to youth challenges at the global level, while boosting implementations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UNDP's Youth Strategy 2014-2017, and Security Council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security. Youth-GPS is a response to young people's concerns in national, regional, and global affairs, and a response to the growing demand for updated strategic support in youth programming for development. This document identifies problem areas in sustainable development and provides recommendations for delegates to keep in mind when improving partnerships for youth.*

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II. Reducing Global Inequality

"Reducing inequalities and eliminating discrimination are central to leaving no one behind and realizing human rights for all"[127]

Introduction

Since 1980, global inequality has risen and in 2016 an average of 49.5% of global income was earned only by the top 10% of global earners.[128] Global inequality is measured by factors including income, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, religion and opportunity, which threatens economic growth, social advancement, and overall development.[129] Reducing levels of inequality can lead to improvements in human capital, economic growth, social improvements, and gender empowerment.[130] In addition to inequality between individuals, there are significant inequalities between countries and regions, though some developing countries are making strides in improving the lives of the impoverished.[131] Between 2010 and 2016 the wealth of the bottom 40% of the population in roughly 60 countries grew more quickly than the remaining population.[132] Resolutions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have consistently promoted sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including by reducing global inequality and ECOSOC adopted the theme of "Empowering people and ensuring inclusivity and equality" for 2019.[133]

Income inequality can be measured in a number of ways, including share of national income, economic coefficients, or distribution amongst different social groups.[134] One widely used measure for global inequality is the Gini index, which measures income distribution within a country.[135] The differences in the equality gap both within a country and between countries can be an important identifier in understanding overall income growth.[136] SDG 10, Reduced Inequalities, sets targets aimed and achieving greater equality and improving the wellbeing of all persons.[137]

International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1948.[138] Article 2 of the UDHR states that all persons are equal, regardless of any differences, including "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, prosperity, birth, or other status."[139] The 1993 *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* reemphasized the importance of securing human rights for all, stating that differences in peoples should not create a difference in treatment and outlining ways to implement and monitor the effectiveness of global equality and human rights frameworks.[140] The UN generally seeks to promote equality through its work and has progressively worked to improve global equality through work of various UN bodies and by

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[127] OHCHR, *Speech by the High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, at the Expert meeting on Reducing Inequalities: SDG 10 Progress and Prospects on 2 April 2019, in Geneva*, 2019.
[128] World Inequality Lab, *World Inequality Report 2018*, 2017.
[129] UN DESA, *Equality: Why it Matters*, 2018, p.1; UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.
[130] The World Bank, *World Development Report 2012*, 2011.
[131] Ibid, p. 2.
[132] UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018*, 2018.
[133] UN ECOSOC, *Promoting sustainable development*; Risse, *ECOSOC Changes Annual Theme to Align with HLPF 2019*, 2019.
[134] Ibid, pp. 27-28.
[135] UNDP, *Income Gini Coefficient*.
[136] Ibid.
[137] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World:* the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] World Conference on Human Rights, *Vienna Declaration and Programme for Action*, 1993.

promoting the adoption of frameworks that address specific vulnerable groups.[141] The 1963 *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination,* and the 2007 General Assembly resolution 61/295 on *the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* both promote the importance of equality for specific populations.[142] In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* was discussed and adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, a milestone achievement in promoting gender equality.[143] In 2014 the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted resolution 27/32 on *Human rights, sexual orientation, and gender identity*, which detailed the specific disadvantages for various minority groups, including gender and sexual minorities, and that all human rights are "universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated."[144]

Some of the targets that encompass SDG 10 include social, economic, and political inclusion, income equality, improving global financial system monitoring, and increasing official development assistance.[145] While the indicators capture multiple dimensions of equality, such as promotion of social inclusion without discrimination, mobility and migration of peoples, or financial/economic equality, almost all look at the financial implications of economic equality, including income growth, wage policies, or improving global financial markets.[146] The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA), which focuses on financing for development and efforts to streamline and maintain focus on reducing economic equality, is the most recent framework aiming to address these financial problems.[147]

Role of the International System

ECOSOC and it subsidiary commissions regularly address inequality.[148] The ECOSOC Integration Segment and the Operational Activities for Development Segment both play a critical part in ensuring the SDGs are achieved by working with other stakeholders and by seeking to improve the efficiency of ensuring UN activities and partnerships aimed at achieving the SDGs.[149] At the 2019 Integration Segment, ECOSOC examined the General Assembly's resolution on repositioning the UN development system, though no decisions have yet been made.[150] Outside of ECOSOC, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) collects data and has issued reports on inclusion and equality as a development policy tool in a number of areas, including education, social protection of youth, responding to an ageing population, persons with disabilities, indigenous groups, and marginalization.[151] The HRC leads the promotion of human rights and the UDHR.[152] During its 40th session, the HRC's 3rd agenda item focused on *The Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights, Including the Right to Development.*[153]

Reporting to both the General Assembly and ECOSOC, the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) meets annually to discuss trends, successes, and challenges of sustainable

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[141] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UN and the Rule of Law, *Equality and Non-discrimination.*
[142] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination (A/RES/1904(XVIII))*, 1963; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007.
[143] Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[144] UN HRC, *Human Rights, sexual orientation, and gender identity (A/HRC/RES/27/32)*, 2014, pp. 1-2.
[145] Ibid, p. 21.
[146] UN DESA, *Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries*, 2019.
[147] 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.
[148] UN ECOSOC, *Promoting sustainable development*; Risse, *ECOSOC Changes Annual Theme to Align with HLPF 2019*, 2019.
[149] UN ECOSOC, *ECOSOC Integration Segment*; UN ECOSOC, *Guiding Operational Activities for Development.*
[150] UN ECOSOC, *The operational activities for development segment*, 2019.
[151] UN DESA, *Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection Report on the World Social Situation 2018*, 2018.
[152] UN HRC, *Human Rights Council closes fortieth session after adopting 29 resolutions, including on Syrian Arab Republic, Nicaragua, and Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 2019.
[153] Ibid.

development, and more recently, the SDGs.[154] The theme of 2019's meeting is "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality," which will include an in-depth review and evaluation of the progression of SDG 10.[155] Organizations such as The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) work directly on gender equality, including on women's leadership, income, employment, and economic equality.[156] UN-Women has worked with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on measuring the of unpaid work of women and their ability to secure decent and fairly compensated jobs.[157] The UN Conference on Trade and Development also works to promote economic growth and development, including through the AAAA and by encouraging equitable financing for development.[158]

The private sector can also play a significant role in global equality, due to their large reach, influence, and impact.[159] The UN Global Compact's ten principles promote the fair treatment of workers, which can promote equality, and their *Women Empowerment Principles* lay out voluntary business practices that promote the empowerment of women.[160] Global equality can be advanced by leveraging the private sector to increase overall economic growth and reduce barriers to economic equality, including individual ability to own businesses and property and receive equal pay.[161]

Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals

In a keynote address at an event prior to the HLPF, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet stated that "reducing inequalities is fundamental to human rights" and expressed concern that progress on SDG 10 is lacking.[162] Multiple UN bodies have established the link between equality and all other SDGs, especially SDG 1, No Poverty, SDG 5, Gender Equality, SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.[163] In a 2015 report, UN DESA identified key areas where policy and international efforts could reduce global inequality, including: improving access to resources and services; addressing gender inequality; and ensuring economic opportunity.[164] As part of the SDG evaluation process, the SDGs will be reviewed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) at the 2020 Comprehensive Review.[165]

Understanding how equality and inclusivity can be considered from angles other than economic equality, including social factors such as education, health, energy, or the global physical environment are areas often overlooked when identifying opportunities to improve equality.[166] A fundamental aspect that the SDGs were built on was that no one should be left behind.[167] Many goals relating to equality are not on track to meet the 2030 deadline, which undermines many of the other SDGs as well.[168] The Committee for Development Policy conducted analysis of country submitted Voluntary National Reviews (VNR), and concluded that there is a need for more substantive information on reducing inequality, highlighting VNRs as important tools for policy creation and implementation for addressing inclusivity and equality.[169]

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[154] UN DESA, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
[155] Ibid.
[156] UN-Women, *About UN Women*.
[157] UN-Women, *Economic Empowerment of Women*.
[158] UNCTAD, *About UNCTAD*.
[159] Global Compact Network Canada, *Women's Empowerment and Beyond: How the Private Sector can Advance Gender Equality*, 2019.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Gonzalez, *Private sector engagement is key to success on gender equity*, 2017.
[162] Wahlén, *In Advance of the HLPF 2019, Experts Review Progress on SDG 10*, 2019.
[163] Ibid, pp. 15-26
[164] UN DESA, *Inequality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.
[165] UN-Stats, *8th Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), Agenda Item 10. Workplan and timeline review for 2020 Comprehensive Review*, 2018; Ibid.
[166] Ibid, p. 3.
[167] UN CDP, *Leaving no one behind*.
[168] UNOCHR, *SDGs: Leaving no one behind? Some are being pushed back,* 2018.
[169] UN CDP, *Report of the twenty-first session*, 2019.

In its 2019 session, ECOSOC identified the need for increased policies that address the extreme imbalance of economic wealth.[170] ECOSOC also made recommendations regarding organizations and workers, improved trade policies, and the advancement of industrial related work focusing on gender equality within the employment process.[171] In most of its resolutions and discussions, ECOSOC has highlighted the quality challenges for vulnerable groups and the need to advance policies that promote economic autonomy, as well as social inclusion and protection.[172]

Case Study: Inequality in Kenya

Kenya's has experience significant economic growth over the past three decades and, during that growth, inequality has decreased, with the country's Gini coefficient decreasing from 57.5 in 1992 to 40.8 in 2015.[173] While progress has been made on income inequality, Kenya still faces challenges in areas of economic and social equality, especially in terms of property ownership – 0.1% of the population owns as much as the remaining 99.9% of people combined.[174] Kenya has also struggled to make progress on SDG 1, in part because of large disparities in economic growth, investment, regional disparities, and differences in accepted social practices.[175] There also continue to be challenges towards incorporating equality in other goals, such as SDG 5 on Gender Equality; there are high levels of gender-based violence and significant differences in access to opportunity, economic growth, and control of resources.[176] Women enter the workforce each year at only about 5% per year.[177]

To address the root causes of inequality, Kenya has been working to implement specific frameworks and form partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to help improve social and economic benefits for vulnerable groups.[178] The government created an Equalization Fund, which works to correct the situation of disadvantaged vulnerable groups through improvements to basic services, Education, and access to government.[179] Kenya's also implemented an Economic Recovery Strategy between 2003 and 2007 and revised its constitution in 2008, all of which contributed to its efforts to reduce inequality.[180]

Several UN entities also operate in Kenya, and the *United Nations Development Assistance Framework Kenya* allows for the UN to support the people of Kenya in realizing sustainable development.[181] The framework is guided by three goals, one of which has a specific focus on governance, law, human rights, gender, and equality.[182] Reporting to both the General Assembly and ECOSOC, the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) works to coordinate work on the country level, including creating various tools and resources for implementing the SDGs at the regional and local level.[183] Although progress has been made, the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has indicated that there are still a number of challenges with different levels of equality, including review and change to labor,

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[170] UN ECOSOC, *Empowering people and ensuring inclusivity and equality (E/2019/95)*, 2019.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.
[173] UNDP, *Kenya - Human Development Indicators*.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Kenya Ministry of Devolution and Planning, *Implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in Kenya*, 2017, p. 21.
[176] Ibid, p. 31.
[177] United States Agency for International Development, *Kenya and East Africa Gender Equality and Female Empowerment*, 2018.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] National Gender and Equality Commission, *Status of Equality and Inclusion in Kenya*, 2016.
[181] Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Kenya, *United Nations Development Assistance Framework Kenya*.
[182] Ibid.
[183] UNSDG, *Tailoring SDG to Regional, Sub-National, and Local Contexts*, 2016.

sexual orientation, employment, and wage laws, in order to align with the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural rights.[184]

Conclusion

Many international leaders have identified address inequality and crucial to achieving the SDGs.[185] However, meeting SDG 10's targets is difficult, and many groups remain marginalized or left out of economic growth and development.[186] ECOSOC and its subsidiaries continue to examine how to improve global equality and examine policy and programmatic methods to achieve the SDGs.[187] Given the complex, interrelated nature of inequality, it is likely to remain a topic of international discussion and debate.[188]

Further Research

Moving forward with this topic, delegates should consider the following questions: How can the SDG targets and indicators be reviewed to better account for global improvements towards equality? How can Member States better ensure discrimination does not occur, effect equality? How can ECOSOC or other UN bodies encourage the private sector to better measure progress on equality within the workforce? What policies can governments adopt to encourage the private sector to better ensure income equality across gender? How can ECOSOC ensure SDG 10 is implemented across all types of work within a country?

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> *This report provides an in-depth analysis of various social challenges to achieving equality, specifically by looking at various groups affected by inequality. The report gives a wide variety of examples of various social inequalities that are affecting the potential in reducing and eliminating global inequality. It provides delegates a clear outline in the gaps that exist within different social inequalities, as well as potential solutions to eliminating global inequality. This resource will also be important when considering the relationship that inequality has with the other SDGs and how the SDG targets and indicators could potentially be improved. It will provide an in depth understanding of social inequalities, and the associated challenges.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018.* Retrieved 29 April 2019 from: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2018/TheSustainableDevelopmentGoalsReport2018-EN.pdf
> *This report is a key document in understanding the current success and challenges associated with the SDGs. In relation to inequality, the current successes are briefly highlighted, but this will be important in being able to understand the interrelationships of the other 16 SDGs and how they encompass aspects of equality. This will also be an important document for delegates to use when working to understand what changes may need to be made to SDG targets and indicators.*

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[184] UN ECOSOC, *Concluding observations on the combined second to fifth periodic reports of Kenya* (E/C.12/KEN/CO/2-5)*, 2016.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid, p.1.

United Nations, Fourth World Conference on Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.* Retrieved 1 March 2019 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf

> *The* Beijing Declaration *is a key document calling for and achieving global gender equality. The document outlines its goals for ensuring that women have equal opportunities as men, in areas such as education, voting, health care, or protection against violence, amongst others. Delegates will find this document important as they consider how the* Beijing Declaration *has been implemented and identifying what still needs to be done in terms of gender equality. The document identifies strategic objectives and goals, as well as how these goals can be considered from a policy and economic perspective, on a national, regional, and international level.*

United Nations, World Conference on Human Rights. (1993). *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.* Retrieved 1 March 2019 from: https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/vienna.aspx

> *The* Vienna Declaration *is an important document for providing more detail on the rights that all persons have regardless of their race, sexual orientation, gender, or religion. The* Vienna Declaration *provided a reaffirmation of the* Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, while also recognizing various forms of undeniable human rights. This document will be particularly useful for delegates in understanding the human rights protected under the declaration and how all persons are protected from discrimination or unequal practices. This document also outlines a plan for improving and streamlining human rights throughout the United Nations system.*

World Inequality Lab. (2017). *World Inequality Report 2018.* Retrieved 29 April 2019 from: https://wir2018.wid.world/files/download/wir2018-full-report-english.pdf

> *The World Inequality Report 2018 is an excellent resource providing both theoretical and data driven discussions on the current status of global inequality. The report identifies some in-country and regional analysis of current economic inequality and provides opportunities to understand how income and wealth disparities are identified. The report will also provide delegates with opportunities to understand future current challenges and potential outlooks on improving global inequality. The country and regional examples given within the report also demonstrate how inequality is present in both developed and developing countries.*

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