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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2017 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Commission for Social Development (CSocD). This year's staff is: Directors Daniel Sweeney (Conference A) and Yannick Stiller (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Arvind Krishnan (Conference A) and Safeya Zeitoun (Conference B). Daniel received his B.S. in Political Science from Arizona State University in 2016 and is returning to NMUN•NY for his third year on staff. Yannick graduated with a M.Sc. in International Political Economy from the London School of Economics in 2016. He currently works as a Research Assistant for the University of Oslo and is looking forward to his second year on NMUN•NY staff. Arvind recently received his B.A. in Political Science from California State Fullerton and currently works at the U.S. House of Representatives. Safeya received her B.A. in Economics from the American University in Cairo. She is currently enrolled in a Master of International Economics program at the Graduate Institute in Geneva.

The topics under discussion for CSocD are:

- I. Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Society and Development
- II. Promoting Social and Economic Inclusion of Refugees
- III. Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

CSocD is a functional commission that advises the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on matters of social policy. The Commission plays a critical role in the assessing and reviewing the implementation of the *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development* from the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. CSocD offers a forum for the international community to discuss a wide range of topics related to social progress of all persons, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it will be critical for delegates to understand the Commission's role as an advisory body undertaking normative, not operational or programmatic, work.

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 2017 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers](#) website.

Two essential resources for your preparation are the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) and the [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) available to download from the NMUN website. The [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. The [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 tandem, these documents thus serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions.

Please take note of information in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) on plagiarism and the prohibition of pre-written working papers and resolutions. Additionally, please review the [NMUN Policies and Codes of Conduct](#) on the NMUN website regarding the Conference dress code; awards philosophy and evaluation method; and codes of conduct for delegates, faculty, and guests regarding diplomacy and professionalism. Importantly, any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. Adherence to these policies is mandatory.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Tsesa Monaghan (Conference A) and Dominika Ziemczonek (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

Daniel Sweeney, *Director*
Arvind Krishnan, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Yannick Stiller, *Director*
Safeya Zeitoun, *Assistant Director*



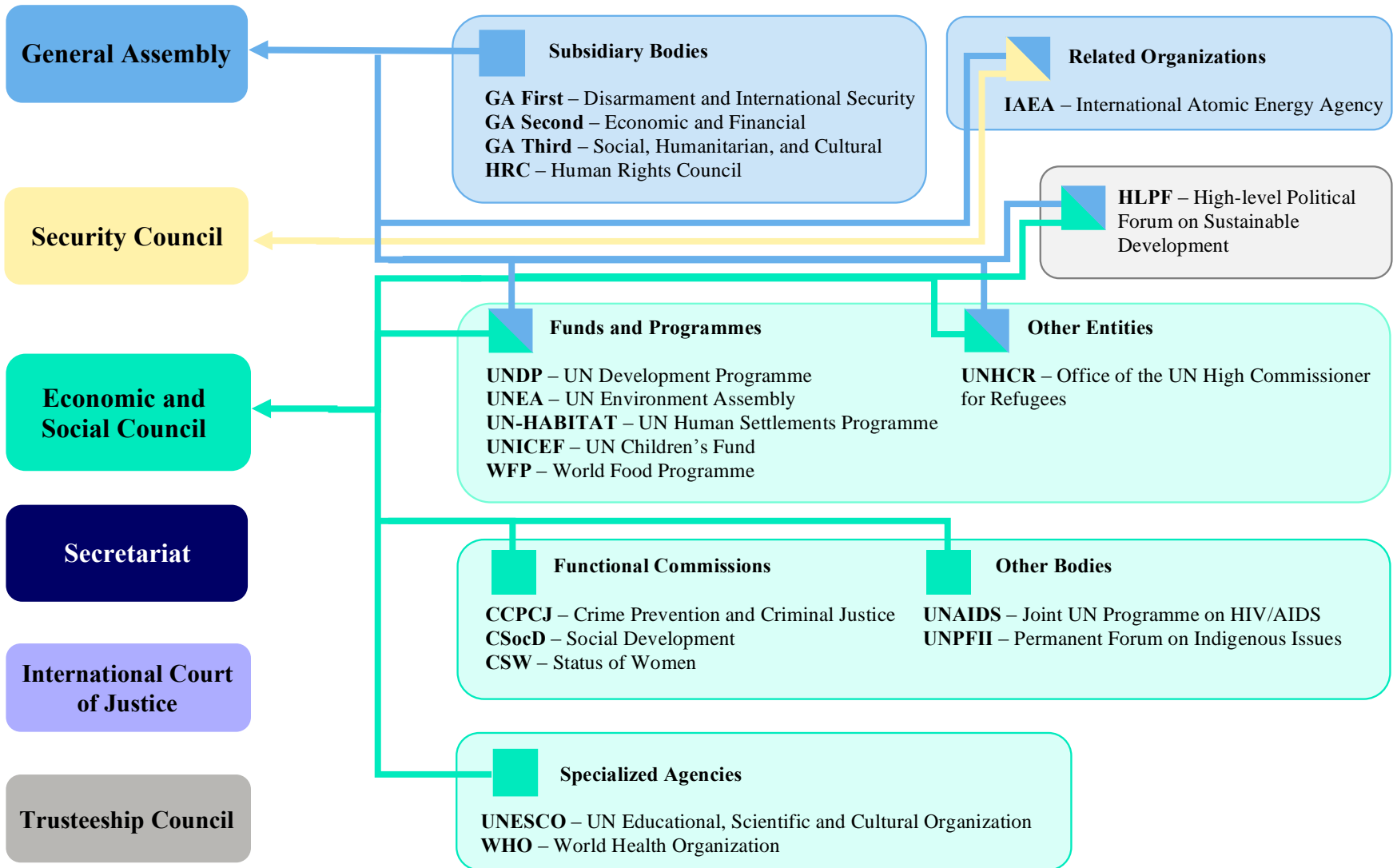
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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

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





Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CBR	Community-based rehabilitation
CEECIS	Central Eastern European Commonwealth of Independent States
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities
CSocD	Commission for Social Development
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DSPD	Division for Social Policy and Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GDP	Gross domestic product
HRC	Human Rights Council
IASG	Inter-Agency Support Group for the <i>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i>
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
ILO	International Labour Organization
LPA	Lagos Plan of Action
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIDP	Motor Industry Development Plan
NEPAD	<i>New Partnership for Africa's Development</i>
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official development assistance
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAA	Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
THP	The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration
UDHR	<i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNNADAF	<i>United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s</i>
UNPAAERD	<i>United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development</i>
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WHO	World Health Organization



Committee Overview

Introduction

The Commission for Social Development (CSocD) is a key actor in the United Nations (UN) system to review and advise on matters of social development, which, in its most simple form, can be understood as “people-centred sustainable development.”¹ Since the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, the Commission has been tasked with monitoring the implementation of the *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development* (Copenhagen Declaration) and *Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development* (Programme of Action).² These documents further define social development and emphasize that, while intertwined with economic development and environmental protection, social development is about considering the needs of people as the core component of development.³ They further highlighted poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion as key components that must be addressed in social policy and development.⁴ The UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) further defines social development as “processes of change that lead to improvements in human well-being, social relations and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable, and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice.”⁵ These definitions help demonstrate that CSocD has a wide purview in the international system and as an advisor to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on matters within its mandate.⁶

The **Commission for Social Development** (CSocD) is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Social progress, justice, and protections have been a priority of the UN since its inception in 1945 and were highlighted in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) in 1948.⁷ The UN reiterated its commitment to social development in 1969 with the *Declaration on Social Policy and Development*, which states that importance must be placed on individual human lives.⁸ Further, it goes on to address that social development cannot exist so long as cultural genocide and other injustices remain.⁹ These early documents highlight the UNs commitment to social policy and development throughout its history, something that CSocD strives to further within its mandate.¹⁰

CSocD, originally called the Social Commission, was established in 1946 by ECOSOC resolution 10 (II) as a functional commission and expert body to advise on social policy.¹¹ Since then, both the Commission’s mandate and membership have been expanded to address a greater variety of issues and it has become a forum for high-level panels concerning development.¹² The Commission has viewed the newly adopted *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) as an opportunity to enhance its role within the UN system in promoting international development and monitoring and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.¹³ The body and its Bureau have identified poverty as an especially important issue that the Commission must address in the near future.¹⁴

¹ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1996, p. 2.

² *Ibid.*; New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 164.

³ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1996, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵ UNRISD, *Social Development in an Uncertain World: UNRISD Research Agenda 2010-2014*, 2011, p. 2.

⁶ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

⁸ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on Social Progress and Development (A/RES/2542 (XXIV))*, 1969.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 163.

¹² UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

¹³ Benson, Commission on Social Development Discusses Role in Advancing SDGs, *Sustainable Development Policy and Practice*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹⁴ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World’s Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016.

Governance, Structure, and Membership

CSocD is a functional commission of ECOSOC and thus reports directly to the Council.¹⁵ Its main responsibility is to address and advise on the more technical aspects of policy making for ECOSOC in the area of social development, and it recommends draft resolutions for adoption by ECOSOC.¹⁶ CSocD is serviced by the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the UN Secretariat which supports the Commission in collecting information on the effectiveness of international policy concerning social development.¹⁷ Further, the DSPD resolves the logistical challenges that are necessary in organizing meetings and forums for the Commission.¹⁸ In accordance with a strategy that was reaffirmed in 2012, the Commission operates on a two-year review and policy cycle in which one session focuses primarily on analyzing policy and how it has shaped global social development, while the following set of meetings focuses on creating policy recommendations and draft resolutions.¹⁹

CSocD has traditionally had a Bureau made up of one chair and four vice-chairs to help set the agenda for the entire two-year policy cycle pursuant to ECOSOC decision 2002/210.²⁰ In order to improve the efficacy of the body, Bureau members are now elected at the conclusion of each session and serve for two consecutive meetings, instead of two calendar years.²¹ The Commission begins the next session immediately following the conclusion of the previous one only to elect the new Bureau before going into recess until the next year to begin the substantive work.²² Presently, the Bureau chair is Ion Jinga of Romania; he is joined by two vice-chairs in the Bureau who were elected at the beginning of the 55th session in February 2016.²³ The remaining officials are to be selected by February 2017 when the session resumes.²⁴ Increasing the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Bureau has been a priority as the Commission continues to establish itself within the UN system.²⁵

The original membership of the Commission was 18, but it has grown multiple times since the inaugural session, with its last expansion in 1996.²⁶ The current membership sits at 46 Member States, giving voice to a wider range of Member States as the UN itself continues to grow in size.²⁷ Membership is based on proportional regional representation, with 12 seats for African states, 10 for Asia-Pacific, 5 for Eastern Europe, 9 for Latin America and the Caribbean, and 10 for Western Europe and Other States.²⁸

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The current mandate of CSocD is primarily to examine existing policy and proposing new framework for the purposes of sustainable social development.²⁹ While the Commission's original mandate was to advise ECOSOC on matters related to social policy, CSocD has gone under significant transformation since then.³⁰ The most notable expansion of its mandate came in 1995 at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, as it is now the main body responsible for the implementation and monitoring of its outcome documents, the *Copenhagen*

¹⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Subsidiary Bodies of ECOSOC*.

¹⁶ UN DSPD, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-fourth session (E/2016/26-E/CN.5/2016/5)*, 2016.

¹⁷ UN DSPD, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010.

¹⁸ UN DESA, *DESA Divisions*.

¹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development (E/RES/2012/7)*, 2012, p. 1.

²⁰ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Improvement of the work of the Commission for Social Development (2002/210)*, 2002.

²⁶ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*; New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 164.

²⁷ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

²⁸ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016; New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, pp. 164-166.

²⁹ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

*Declaration and Programme of Action.*³¹ The Programme of Action made a renewed call for a review of CSocD and for it to be strengthened as a policy advisory body that would examine and recommend changes in international framework concerning social development.³² The three main themes of the Summit were poverty eradication, productive employment, and social integration.³³ Another outcome of the Summit was for ECOSOC to consistently review the Commission's role and prioritize strengthening its capacity.³⁴

In addition to its follow-up on the *Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action*, CSocD's mandate further includes providing policy advice on issues of social development more broadly; anticipating potential issues in social development and making recommendations accordingly; promoting information exchange to better understand social development; and advising ECOSOC on how coordination can be improved on issues of social development.³⁵ This mandate may continue to expand as the Commission looks towards defining its role in implementation of the SDGs; it has been endorsed by the Secretary-General as valuable to achieving the SDGs through its specialized review and policy cycle.³⁶

As included in its mandate, the Commission serves as a forum for important discussions about social development in the global community.³⁷ As a committee, it has often invited field experts to participate in high-level discussion panels aimed at producing action-oriented recommendations to ECOSOC concerning policy.³⁸ A prime example of this was when Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke during the 54th session aiming to help shape the global agenda and promote themes relevant to the entire global community, including the post-2015 development agenda.³⁹

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The most recent review and policy biennium for CSocD began in 2015 during its 53rd session, considering the theme "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world."⁴⁰ The meetings featured two expert panels, the first to discuss the theme of the 53rd and 54th sessions while the second examined the importance of social development in the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the SDGs.⁴¹

In February 2016, CSocD met for its 54th session and adopted three draft resolutions for consideration by ECOSOC, including one on "Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development" as it completed the 2015/16 review and policy biennium.⁴² Emphasis was placed on removing barriers to equality in order to enhance opportunity for all, and the Commission noted that strong social progress is important for creating sustainable financial growth.⁴³ Cultural success was defined as diminishing social inequalities between groups, something that the CSocD identified as pivotal for economic growth.⁴⁴ Unusual for the Commission, this draft resolution required a vote instead of being adopted by consensus due to debate over the phrase "right to development."⁴⁵ The session concluded with remarks from Ion Jinga in addition to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who emphasized the importance of poverty reduction as a significant challenge that the international community still faces.⁴⁶ These

³¹ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1996, p. 84.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ UN DSPD, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010, p. 2.

³⁴ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1996.

³⁵ UN DESA, *Mandate and Terms of Reference*.

³⁶ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016.

³⁷ UN DSPD, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁹ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016.

⁴⁰ UN CSocD, *53rd Session of the Commission for Social Development*.

⁴¹ UN CSocD, *Report on the 53rd Session (E/2015/26-E/CN.5/2015/9)*, 2015; UN CSocD, *Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world (E/CN.5/2016/L.3)*, 2016.

⁴² UN CSocD, *54th Session of the Commission for Social Development*, 2016.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016.

comments continued a main discussion point of the CSocD, which had discussed economic inequality and prioritized poverty reduction during the 2014 session as well.⁴⁷

The 54th session was significant as it marked the first meeting since the adoption of the SDGs, which CSocD intends to have a significant role in implementing.⁴⁸ The Secretary-General addressed the Commission's significant work during the 54th session and highlighted its efforts in making progress in achieving food security, gender equality, education, and the rights of persons with disabilities.⁴⁹ He went on to promote CSocD as a driving force in building momentum for the SDGs.⁵⁰ During the 54th session, there were calls to implement policy across the global community that would support the SDGs that promote social justice.⁵¹ Much of the most recent biennium saw the Commission note that social development was paramount to creating sustainable economic progress.⁵²

The 55th session is scheduled to resume February 2017 and will begin the Commission's next review and policy cycle with the theme of "Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all."⁵³ This theme seeks to renew the Commission's dedication to eliminating not only social, but also economic inequality across the globe, and also aims to refocus the role of CSocD towards the priorities determined at the 1995 Copenhagen Summit.⁵⁴ While the Commission is named for social development, it often analyzes economic matters as they pertain to the larger mandate of the committee, since economic and social development are highly interconnected.⁵⁵ Most recently pointing to poverty as the greatest challenge facing the global community, the Commission focused on economic inequality as a priority for social progress in 2014, and has consistently noted that the two are codependent in improving lives around the world.⁵⁶ During the next two sessions, CSocD is expected to analyze implementation of the SDGs.⁵⁷

Conclusion

CSocD has seen its mandate expand since first being established in 1946, which has allowed for greater capacity to affect the global community.⁵⁸ Further, with the implementation of the SDGs, the Commission has an opportunity recommend policies that will have a long lasting impact on the entire international community by using the review and policy cycle.⁵⁹ Through being serviced by the DSPD, the Commission is able to address a wide scope of issues pertaining to social development and have a significant impact on the entire global community.⁶⁰ CSocD can address both economic and social development needs through reviewing, analyzing, and recommending international policy to ECOSOC.⁶¹

⁴⁷ UN DPI, *Focus on Growing Inequality at Opening of UN Commission on Social Development*, 2014.

⁴⁸ UN CSocD, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*, 2016.

⁴⁹ UN DPI, *This must be 'year of traction' to propel 2030 development Agenda, says UN Chief*, 2016.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Ghana calls for Social Protection support to achieve SDGs*, Ghana Web, 2016.

⁵² Sullivan, *Social Development Means What, Exactly, for Parents?*, *Huffington Post*, 2016.

⁵³ UN CSocD, *55th Session of the Commission for Social Development*, 2016.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ UN DPI, *Poverty Remains World's Biggest Challenge, Social Development Commission Chair Says as Session Concludes with Approval of 3 Texts, Election of New Vice-Chairs (SOC/4837)*, 2016; UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1996.

⁵⁶ UN DPI, *Focus on Growing Inequality at Opening of UN Commission on Social Development*, 2014.

⁵⁷ UNRISD, *Social Development in an Uncertain World: UNRISD Research Agenda 2010-2014*, 2011, p. 10.

⁵⁸ UN, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010.

⁵⁹ Benson, *Commission on Social Development Discusses Role in Advancing SDGs, Sustainable Development Policy and Practice*, 2016.

⁶⁰ UN, *What is the Commission for Social Development and What Should it Achieve?*, 2010.

⁶¹ Ibid.



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Benson, C. (2016, March 8). Commission on Social Development Discusses Role in Advancing SDGs. *Sustainable Development Policy and Practice*. Retrieved 26 September 2016 from: <http://sd.iisd.org/news/commission-on-social-development-discusses-role-in-advancing-sdgs/>

This news article highlights what the role of the Commission will be in regards to the SDGs and their implementation. The comments from the UN Secretary-General indicate that the Commission will be vital in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Further, CSocD will prioritize the SDGs during the next review and policy cycle. Delegates can use this source to understand what the Commission will have as their main priority for the next session and also to understand its role in implementation of the SDGs.

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (n.d.). *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)* [Website]. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/undated-nations-commission-for-social-development-csod-social-policy-and-development-division.html>

This is the main overview from the ECOSOC website on the Commission for Social Development. Here, relevant information can be found on the history of the committee including its membership, governance, and mandate. In addition, a full list of recent sessions and draft resolutions can be found at this link. This source should be used primarily to understand the Commission's work and historical development.

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2016). *55th Session of the Commission for Social Development* [Website]. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/undated-nations-commission-for-social-development-csod-social-policy-and-development-division/csod55.html>

This website details the proposed agenda and the relevant themes for the 2017 session of CSocD, which is scheduled to take place in February 2017 at the UN headquarters in New York. The theme "Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all" specifies what the Commission's priorities will be in the future. Delegates can also look to the notes from expert group meetings in June on poverty eradication to better understand what CSocD focuses on.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.) *Mandate and Terms of Reference* [Website]. Retrieved 23 October 2016 from:

<http://undesadspd.org.dnnmax.com/CommissionforSocialDevelopment/Mandate.aspx>

This page from the website of DSPD, as part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, clearly lays out the mandate of CSocD and highlights the different facets of its work. It also links to the Commission's Programme of Work. This should help delegates better understand what the committee can and should do, which will be critical in its simulation.

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2016, February 8). *This must be 'year of traction' to propel 2030 development Agenda, says UN chief* [News Article]. Retrieved 17 July 2016, from:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53183#.V7Y1azUxWM9>

This news article depicts some of the main points for how the CSocD hopes to fulfill its role in achieving the SDGs. It also gives the Secretary-General's view on the role of the Commission and how it might look to expand itself in the future. It is a good indicator of what the key themes and issues that will be looked at as a part of the agenda for the committee in the near future.

United Nations, World Summit for Social Development. (1996). *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*. Retrieved 21 August 2016 from: www.undocs.org/a/conf.166/9

This document is a report on the proceedings and contains the agreements from the 1995 Copenhagen Summit. The summit was monumental in discerning how the UN would address social development in the future. It includes an agreement stating not only agreed upon beliefs but how it would use those to improve social development throughout the global community. Because this summit has played a significant role in shaping CSocD's mandate, delegates may find this report useful for understanding how the Commission approaches social development.



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I. Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Society and Development

“We have a moral duty to remove the barriers to participation, and to invest sufficient funding and expertise to unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities. Governments throughout the world can no longer overlook the hundreds of millions of people with disabilities who are denied access to health, rehabilitation, support, education and employment, and never get the chance to shine.”⁶²

Introduction

Around the world, over one billion people live with some form of disability and over 190 million people are faced with severe disabilities, according to a 2011 report by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.⁶³ Further, as the average lifespan continues to grow around the world, the population of persons with disabilities will increase due to debilitations that often occur as an effect of ageing.⁶⁴ Accordingly, the United Nations (UN) Commission for Social Development (CSocD) continues to prioritize this topic and promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in social development.⁶⁵

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, defines disability as “a limitation in a functional domain that arises from the interaction between a person’s intrinsic capacity, and environmental and personal factors.”⁶⁶ Persons with disabilities are a population that often struggle for social integration, decent work, and acceptable standards of living.⁶⁷ Policies and frameworks that should apply to this population are often poorly implemented and ineffective, leaving policy gaps that range from a lack of education opportunities and discrimination in the workforce to grave violations of basic human rights.⁶⁸ On a societal level, negative stigma also plays a significant role in limiting opportunities for participation and integration.⁶⁹

It is the mandate of CSocD to create an economic, social, cultural, legal, and political environment that will allow all people to succeed and ensure that people are the focus of international development efforts.⁷⁰ Although the responsibility to fulfill international commitments ultimately rests with Member States, the Commission supports them in doing so by providing advice and guidance. This guide will first provide an overview of the international and regional frameworks in place and the work of international actors in regards to the creation of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society and development. It will then introduce the topics of addressing stigma and eliminating discrimination towards people with disabilities, ensuring more inclusive educational opportunities, and promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

International and Regional Framework

International and regional frameworks play a critical role in ensuring equal opportunity for persons with disabilities by setting the expectations and guidelines for governments to adhere to. CSocD has adopted several draft resolutions discussing inequalities facing persons with disabilities that have been adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).⁷¹ Most recently, during the Commission’s 54th session, the body called for the inclusion of persons with

⁶² WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. ix.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁶⁴ UN DESA, *Global Status Report on Disability and Development*, 2015, p. 41.

⁶⁵ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995, p. 1; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

⁶⁶ WHO, *Towards a Common Language for Functioning, Disability and Health*, 2002; UN DESA, *Global Status Report on Disability and Development*, 2015, p. 31.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶⁸ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6; UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/70/297)*, 2015.

⁶⁹ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6.

⁷⁰ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995, p. 6.

⁷¹ UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-third session (E/CN.5/2005/7)*, 2005, p. 4; UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-sixth session (E/CN.5/2008/10)*, 2008, p. 11; UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-ninth session (E/CN.5/2011/12)*, 2011, p. 5; UN CSocD, *Report on the fiftieth session (E/CN.5/2012/9)*, 2012, p. 16; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-first session (E/CN.5/2013/15)*, 2013, p. 12; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-second session (E/CN.5/2014/10)*, 2014, p. 27; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-third session (E/CN.5/2015/9)*, 2015, p. 20.

disabilities in decision-making, tending to the needs of women and children, improving data collection, mobilizing resources, and increasing cooperation.⁷² CSocD has published draft resolutions regarding the rights of persons with disabilities in nearly all of its sessions since 2005.⁷³

The overarching document in equality and human rights, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), entitles everyone to the rights and freedoms it sets forth without distinction of any kind.⁷⁴ Despite this, persons with disabilities face discrimination, exclusion, and dehumanization, and they regularly find themselves in non-inclusive environments, violating their rights as established in the UDHR.⁷⁵ Addressing this, the General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons* in 1975, which reinforced and emphasized the rights of persons with disabilities.⁷⁶ In 1982, the General Assembly adopted resolution 37/52, which created the *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons* to promote effective measures to ensure integration of persons with disabilities into social life and development.⁷⁷ The General Assembly also proclaimed the UN Decade of Disabled Persons from 1982 to 1992, which raised awareness on the topic.⁷⁸ In 2006, the General Assembly adopted the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, a key document in international law to promote the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities.⁷⁹ This Convention does not give persons with disabilities any additional rights other outside of those included in the UDHR; rather, it highlights the fact that human rights also apply to persons with disabilities, who are often more vulnerable to human rights violations.⁸⁰

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* seeks to counter human rights violations often encountered by persons with disabilities.⁸¹ Emphasis is placed upon equal recognition before the law, non-discrimination, and access to justice, as well as additional protections for women and children with disabilities as they face additional risks of abuse.⁸² The Convention also focuses on raising awareness to combat stereotypes and increasing education so that persons with disabilities can participate in public and political life, find employment, and enjoy an adequate standard of living.⁸³ To implement and enforce these rights, the Convention established the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). By mandating action instead of simply recommending it, the adoption of the Convention established that the rights of persons with disabilities need reinforcement and that inclusion and equal opportunities are a key part of human rights and development.⁸⁴

The objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were one such example where persons with disabilities were not expressly included in the implementation process despite a clear need for inclusion.⁸⁵ To better include persons with disabilities in the development agenda, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 62/127 in 2008 and 65/186 in 2011 on realizing the MDGs for persons with disabilities.⁸⁶ In 2015, the General Assembly

⁷² UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-fourth session (E/CN.5/2016/9)*, 2016, p. 5.

⁷³ UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-third session (E/CN.5/2005/7)*, 2005, p. 3; UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-sixth session (E/CN.5/2008/10)*, 2008, p. 11; UN CSocD, *Report on the forty-ninth session (E/CN.5/2011/12)*, 2011, p. 5; UN CSocD, *Report on the fiftieth session (E/CN.5/2012/9)*, 2012, p. 16; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-first session (E/CN.5/2013/15)*, 2013, p. 12; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-second session (E/CN.5/2014/10)*, 2014, p. 27; UN CSocD, *Report on the fifty-third session (E/CN.5/2015/9)*, 2015, p. 20.

⁷⁴ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

⁷⁵ UN WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6; UN HRC, *Thematic study on the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community: Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/28/37)*, 2014.

⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (A/RES/3447 (XXX))*, 1975, p. 1.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (A/RES/37/52)*, 1982.

⁷⁸ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (A/RES/38/28)*, 1983, p. 1.

⁷⁹ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

⁸⁰ UN DESA, *Why do we need a convention for persons with disabilities? Don't they have the same rights as everyone else?*, 2006, p. 1.

⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ UN DESA, *Disability and the Millennium Development Goals*, 2011, p. 1.

⁸⁶ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities (A/RES/62/127)*, 2007, p. 1; UN General Assembly,

adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a comprehensive approach to international development after the expiration of the MDGs.⁸⁷ Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs were created to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.⁸⁸ SDG 4 on ensuring quality education calls for inclusion of students with disabilities, as they are often excluded in education systems.⁸⁹ SDGs 8 and 10 promote inclusive employment and the reduction of inequality to counter the discrimination many persons with disabilities face in the workforce.⁹⁰ SDG 11 emphasizes the role of sustainable communities, while SDG 17 calls for stronger partnerships in accomplishing these tasks.⁹¹ The SDGs highlight issues that marginalized groups face and encourage inclusivity when working towards these goals.⁹²

Role of the International System

The UN has focused on mainstreaming disability in its work in all agencies and organizations, but much work remains to be done. A number of entities play an especially important role in these efforts and are working towards realizing the rights of person with disabilities.⁹³ CSocD has played a critical role in promoting and including the rights of persons with disabilities in the international development agenda and continues to work towards inclusion for all.⁹⁴ This is included in its mandate as a body tasked with monitoring, reviewing, and appraising the implementation of the *Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action* (1995), which specifically mentions persons with disabilities as a disadvantaged group.⁹⁵ As an advisory body, it focuses on writing resolutions that guide Member States to ensure that individuals are at the heart of development and policies, including marginalized populations, and takes a “social and rights-based approach.”⁹⁶ The Commission also serves as a critical forum to discuss these issues, such as in its 54th session in 2016, where it held a multi-stakeholder panel discussion on disability and the SDGs.⁹⁷ ECOSOC, to which CSocD reports, works with its many subsidiaries towards ensuring social progress and development for all, including people with disabilities.⁹⁸

Additional UN organizations also work on this topic, but with a focus specified by their own mandate. For example, WHO assesses overall health trends while also providing research and leadership in building sustainable institutional capacity.⁹⁹ The Secretariat for the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, part of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), is a “Focal Point on Disability issues” and has been actively promoting accessibility for all.¹⁰⁰ DESA sits as co-chair of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (IASG) and the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Accessibility.¹⁰¹ The IASG focuses on aiding its 25 UN agencies better cooperate to achieve the goals of the Convention.¹⁰²

To support the Convention, WHO, in collaboration with the World Bank, published the *World Report on Disability* in 2011.¹⁰³ The report offers estimated statistics on disabilities for the first time in nearly 40 years, finding that over

Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond (A/RES/65/186), 2011, p. 1; UN General Assembly, Keeping the promise: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond: Report of the Secretary-General (A/65/173), 2010, p. 4.

⁸⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 1.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ UN CSocD, *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2010/6)*, 2009.

⁹⁴ UN CSocD, *Multi-stakeholder panel discussion: Implementation of the Post-2015 development agenda in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2016, p. 1.

⁹⁵ UN World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995, pp. 1, 27, 84.

⁹⁶ Ibid.; UN CSocD, *Multi-stakeholder panel discussion: Implementation of the Post-2015 development agenda in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2016, p. 1.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, p. 11; International Disability Alliance, *ECOSOC*.

⁹⁹ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

¹⁰⁰ UN DESA, *Inequality Matters: Report of the World Social Situation*, 2013, p. 3; UN DESA, *About Us*.

¹⁰¹ UN DESA, *Inequality Matters: Report of the World Social Situation*, 2013, p. 3.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 1.

one billion people in the world live with some form of disability, more than double the previous number.¹⁰⁴ This surprising statistic brought attention to the issues faced by people with disabilities and spurred large-scale action.¹⁰⁵ One such action was the creation of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities by Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution 26/20 in 2014.¹⁰⁶ The Special Rapporteur works with Member States to identify and resolve human rights violations facing persons with disabilities, while also promoting best practices and concrete solutions to better safeguard said rights.¹⁰⁷ The Special Rapporteur works closely with UN bodies discussing the topic of disability and reports annually to the HRC and the General Assembly, in addition to informing CSocD.¹⁰⁸ Also reporting to the HRC is the CRPD, which is made up of 18 independent experts and monitors the implementation of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.¹⁰⁹ All Member States who ratified the Convention report regularly to the CRPD.¹¹⁰

Beyond the UN, hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work locally and globally on the inclusion of persons with disabilities by cooperating between Member State governments and international bodies to create better opportunities for persons with disabilities.¹¹¹ NGOs, particularly disability rights organizations, also play an important role on the local level by aiding persons with disabilities in achieving better standards of living and countering the stigma that exists surrounding disability.¹¹²

Combatting Stigma and Discrimination

Defined as a set of negative and unfair beliefs that a society or group of people has about something, stigma is a serious problem that permeates nearly every aspect of disability.¹¹³ Negative societal attitudes regarding persons with disabilities have been and continue to be a powerful obstacle to ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.¹¹⁴ Persons with disabilities are regularly victims of discrimination, violence, and bullying, resulting in lowered self-confidence and reduced societal participation.¹¹⁵ The *Multinational Study of Attitudes toward Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities* found that general populations across ten Member States held considerable misconceptions about disability and underestimated the capabilities of persons with disabilities.¹¹⁶ Without addressing these misunderstandings through education, the stigma surrounding disability cannot be resolved.¹¹⁷

As part of the global effort to combat stigma and misconceptions, advocates for persons with disabilities use “person-first language,” using the term “persons with disabilities” or “people with disabilities.”¹¹⁸ Language plays an important role in shaping individual and societal views, and it can perpetuate negative stereotypes and stigma against people with disabilities.¹¹⁹ The idea is that an individual is not defined by their disability and that they are recognized as a person before any mention of their disability.¹²⁰

¹⁰⁴ UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons*, 1982, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ WHO, *Update on national launches of the World report on disability*, 2012.

¹⁰⁶ UN HRC, *Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/RES/26/20)*, 2014, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*; UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan E. Mendez (A/HRC/22/53)*, 2013, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Egüez & UNHCR, *NGOs and UN Agencies Assisting with Persons with Disabilities*, 2008, p. 8; UN CSocD, *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda*, 2009, p. 8; UN ECOSOC, *Disability statistics: Report of the Secretary-General and the Washington Group*, 2016, p. 3; University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, *Disability Statistics Annual Report*, p. 4.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹³ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*; WHO, *Prevalence and risk of violence against adults with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies*, 2012, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ Special Olympics, *Multinational study of attitudes towards individuals with intellectual disabilities*, 2003, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6.

¹¹⁸ The Arc, *What is People First Language?*, 2016.

¹¹⁹ UN Enable, *Frequently Asked Questions*, 2007.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

Education to Raise Awareness

Negative attitudes and behaviors towards persons with disabilities can be adjusted through improving education on what disability entails.¹²¹ Among the most powerful method of combatting these issues is ensuring full social integration of persons with disabilities.¹²² Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) projects are community-based programs that promote social integration for persons with disabilities.¹²³ CBR projects have shown to be a powerful method of reforming societal mindsets by bringing people together.¹²⁴ Due to simplicity, CBR can be implemented in rural areas with little infrastructure potentially making it an accessible option for all Member States.¹²⁵ Over a three- to four-year period, a CBR project in rural India saw a 30-40% increase in meeting attendance by persons with disabilities alongside a similar increase in general community participation.¹²⁶ Increased interaction between persons with disabilities, community members, and medical personnel also spurred increased medical rehabilitation and intervention throughout the community.¹²⁷ Increasing the number of CBR projects can better integrate persons with disabilities into society and aid in providing equal opportunities in society and development.¹²⁸

Well-planned informational or social media campaigns can also educate populations on a large-scale basis.¹²⁹ In Norway, duration of untreated mental illness fell from an average of 114 weeks in 1997 to 20 weeks in 1999 through a series of public informational campaigns on the signs of mental illness.¹³⁰ More recently, social media campaigns have played a role in raising awareness on disability and related issues. The UN #DrawDisability campaign focused on student artist renditions of disability and their reflections on the issue.¹³¹ Similar campaigns focusing on combatting stigma through facts and knowledge have the potential to spread new messages and move towards equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.¹³²

Education System Reform

Equitable access to education is critical to the fulfillment of all children's human rights, highlighting the necessity of Member States to make education more accessible for students with disabilities.¹³³ Unfortunately, students with disabilities often face exclusion and discrimination by societies and schools.¹³⁴ This can be seen in school attendance rates of students with disabilities in relation to that of other students.¹³⁵ In 2011, differences in primary school attendance rates between students with disabilities and those without ranged from 10% in India to 60% in Indonesia.¹³⁶ Similar disparities were found with secondary school attendance rates with variances of 15% in Cambodia and 58% in Indonesia.¹³⁷

The type of impairment also plays a role in determining school attendance: those with physical impairments tend to face fewer obstacles than students with sensory or intellectual impairments, as physical limitations can sometimes be more easily addressed.¹³⁸ In Burkina Faso, only 10% of deaf children ages seven through twelve were enrolled in school, in comparison to 40% of physically-impaired students.¹³⁹ With an estimated 93 to 150 million youth with disabilities, it is imperative that action be taken to improve education rates for this population as mandated by SDG

¹²¹ Thornicroft et al., *Reducing stigma and discrimination: Candidate interventions*, 2008, p. 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹²³ ILO et al., *CBR: A strategy for rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion of people with disabilities*, 2004, p. 2.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Dalal, *Social interventions to moderate discriminatory attitudes: the case of the physically challenged in India*, 2006, p. 381.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

¹³⁰ Joa et al., *The key to reducing duration of untreated first psychosis: information campaigns*, 2007, p. 469.

¹³¹ Global Observatory for Inclusion, *#DrawDisability*.

¹³² WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 267.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 205-227.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 207.

¹³⁹ UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized*, 2010, p. 183.

4 and article 24 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.¹⁴⁰ The need for strong policies that adequately address the needs of persons with disabilities is apparent mainly on two levels: government and school.

On the policy level, there is much debate regarding the best method of handling education for persons with disabilities.¹⁴¹ Education can be mainstreamed and handled by a national department of education, or it can be specialized for persons with disabilities and handled by a department of health or social welfare.¹⁴² Proponents of specialized education argue that by tailoring approaches to students with disabilities, a better quality education can be provided.¹⁴³ However, separate and specialized institutions are usually limited to urban areas and students with disabilities living in rural communities are often forced to forego education altogether.¹⁴⁴ Another unintended consequence of this approach is that children with disabilities are segregated and excluded from society and the dynamic interaction between students with and without disabilities is limited.¹⁴⁵ Due to such concerns, the argument for mainstreaming education for students with disabilities has gained traction.¹⁴⁶ The increased participation in communities can help provide students with disabilities with equal opportunities in society and development. Education mainstreaming also has the benefit that integrating students with disabilities into standard education systems, rather than specialized separate institutions can be a cost saving measure.¹⁴⁷ Regardless of which approach is taken, it remains critical that there be strong cooperation between departments of education, health, social welfare, and employment to ensure that students with disabilities do not fall through policy gaps.¹⁴⁸

While systemic educational issues should be addressed by governments, schools are also important actors in ensuring equal opportunities for young people with disabilities. WHO has recognized the importance of individual assessment of students with disabilities to identify their individual needs.¹⁴⁹ A proper assessment can reveal what support systems the student might need, what type of teaching styles would be most effective in reaching the student, and what kind of environment might best allow the student to thrive.¹⁵⁰ Once recognized, programs can be tailored to maximize chances of success.¹⁵¹ Early assessment, identification, and intervention can greatly reduce the level of education support students with disabilities might need in the future.¹⁵² Acting upon such assessment requires teachers trained to work with students with disabilities and adapt teaching styles and learning environments to accommodate student needs, which in turn requires building training programs for teachers.¹⁵³ This will pose more of a challenge in rural areas due to lack of access to such specialists.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, providing classrooms with learning support assistants can provide students with disabilities with increased attention and help increase participation.¹⁵⁵ Least developed countries (LDCs) will face financial obstacles to establish such education programs; as outlined in SDG 17, a strong partnership between Member States, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) can play a pivotal role in realizing such programs.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁰ UN WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 205; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹⁴¹ UNESCO, *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities*, 2015, p. 13.

¹⁴² UNICEF, *The Right of Children with Disabilities to Education: A Rights-Based Approach to Inclusive Education in the CEECIS Region*, 2011, p. 16.

¹⁴³ UNESCO, *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities*, 2015, p. 13.

¹⁴⁴ UNICEF, *The Right of Children with Disabilities to Education: A Rights-Based Approach to Inclusive Education in the CEECIS Region*, 2011, p. 11.

¹⁴⁵ UNESCO, *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities*, 2015, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 214.

¹⁴⁸ World Vision UK, *Education's Missing Millions*, 2007, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 223.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

¹⁵⁶ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

Creating equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in society and development requires improved employment opportunities, as this population faces significant disadvantages in accessing employment.¹⁵⁷ Per the 2011 World Health Survey, which examined 51 countries, the average employment rate for men with disabilities was 52.8%, while it was 19.6% for women with disabilities.¹⁵⁸ This is a sharp contrast to the employment rates of 64.9% for men without disabilities and 29.9% for women without disabilities.¹⁵⁹ Vocational and rehabilitation programs can play a major role in combatting this variance in employment rates. A 2007 International Labour Organization (ILO) study in Malawi, South Africa, and Zambia found training drastically improved employment rates, with 70% of persons with disabilities who received training in Zambia finding employment.¹⁶⁰ Training programs have the potential for great successes but require increased research to understand what training methods are most effective for what disabilities and why.¹⁶¹ Barriers to such training must also be addressed; these include training fees, awareness of training providers, and accessibility of training centers, transportation, family responsibilities, and unwillingness by persons with disabilities to undergo such training.¹⁶²

Societal misconceptions also play a considerable role in low employment rates for persons with disabilities. Stigmas surrounding persons with disabilities promote discrimination against them in the workforce.¹⁶³ Per the ILO study, 31% of persons with disabilities in Zambia and 38% of persons with disabilities in South Africa believed discrimination to be the reason they were unable to find employment.¹⁶⁴ Addressing such prejudices through community education can enable change in societal attitudes and, alongside national anti-discrimination legislation, contribute to implementation of the *Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.¹⁶⁵ Supported employment programs can help persons with disabilities find employment.¹⁶⁶ Businesses can also help employees with disabilities reach their potential by training managers in best practices on how to manage persons with disabilities.¹⁶⁷ Another option available for persons with disabilities is self-employment. Especially in rural areas, persons with disabilities trained with entrepreneurship and self-employment programs can find great success.¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

Article 1 of the UDHR declares, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”¹⁶⁹ With one in seven people living with a disability, and with that number growing ever larger, ensuring equal rights for this population is a critical issue facing CSocD.¹⁷⁰ Improving education systems can ensure that students with disabilities are better equipped and prepared for the world ahead.¹⁷¹ At the same time, efforts must be made to increase opportunities for gainful employment for people with disabilities. In addressing education and employment, the negative stigmas that surround disability must also be addressed.¹⁷² CSocD will continue to play an important role in advising Member States and other UN entities on these issues.

¹⁵⁷ World Bank, *Disability and Poverty in Developing Countries: A snapshot from the World Health Survey*, 2011.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁵⁹ WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 227.

¹⁶⁰ ILO, *Strategies for Skills Acquisition and Work for People with Disabilities in Southern Africa*, 2007, p. 16.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ ILO, *Moving Forward: Toward decent work for people with disabilities – Examples of good practices in vocational training and employment from Asia and the Pacific*, 2003, p. 126.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹⁶⁹ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, p. 1.

¹⁷⁰ WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 5.

¹⁷¹ UNESCO, *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities*, 2015, p. 5.

¹⁷² WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 6.

Further Research

How can CSocD promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society and development within its mandate? How can CSocD promote the mainstreaming of persons with disabilities within the UN system? How can the implementation of the SDGs be more inclusive of people with disabilities in a coherent and cohesive way? What steps can be taken to fill current gaps in the implementation of international agreements? How can CSocD improve its function as a monitoring body, including strengthened measuring and evaluation mechanisms? How can negative stigmas regarding persons with disabilities be reduced? What should the role of CSocD be in realizing full equality and reducing discrimination against persons with disabilities? What partnerships can be created to establish a more inclusive education system for students with disabilities? What types of policy options can CSocD recommend to further employment for persons with disabilities?

Annotated Bibliography

International Labour Organization. (2003). *Moving Forward: Toward decent work for people with disabilities – Examples of good practices in vocational training and employment from Asia and the Pacific* [Report]. Retrieved 29 August 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_bk_pb_89_en.pdf

This source provides analysis on case studies in vocational training and rehabilitation centers for persons with disabilities throughout South East Asia. It is published by the ILO, a specialized agency of the UN that deals with labor standards. It also reviews self-employment possibilities for persons with disabilities and case studies in what was and was not successful. Delegates will find this report helpful in addressing the employment issues persons with disabilities face.

United Nations Children's Fund. (2011). *The Right of Children with Disabilities to Education: A Rights-Based Approach to Inclusive Education in the CEECIS Region* [Report]. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: [http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/Background_NoteFINAL\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/Background_NoteFINAL(1).pdf)

This report was written by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and takes a detailed look at the challenges in ensuring access to education for children with disabilities in the Central Eastern European Commonwealth of Independent States (CEECIS) region. Although this study is regional in nature, its findings are relevant for all Member States as certain aspects of disability are universal. It reviews improving early assessment of disability, combatting stigmas and prejudice against those with disabilities, and improving educational systems for increased inclusion of students with disabilities. When designing solutions, this source gives valuable insight into what has and has not worked in the CEECIS region. Taking into consideration the region's political, social, and economic landscape, delegates can consider adjusting and utilizing its findings in any region.

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2009). *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2010/6)*. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2010/6>

This report discusses approaches to mainstreaming disability in the international development agenda. Delegates can gain a much better understanding of the challenges in mainstreaming disability in regional policy frameworks, bilateral cooperation, and multilateral cooperation, as well as recommendations on how to overcome them. Delegates will find this report helpful as they search for cooperation-based solutions as well as a financing measure for LDCs.

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2015). *Report on the Fifty-third session (E/CN.5/2015/9)*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2015/9>

This is the report by CSocD on its 53rd session, held in 2015. Although CSocD regularly reviews the topic of disability, this report goes over the latest draft resolution CSocD proposed on mainstreaming disability. It offers a relevant and recent glimpse into what CSocD believes needs to be done on the subject and can be a valuable resource for delegates to see what has been proposed and done in the past.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *Global Status Report on Disability and Development*. Retrieved on 23 October 2016 from: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/disability/2016/GlobalStatusReportonDisabilityandDevelopment.pdf>

This report compiles and analyzes a vast array of data on disability and was published by DESA. DESA is an important actor in discussing issues around disability in the UN, and works to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society and development. Delegates can gain a stronger understanding of the overall issue of inclusion, and what major challenges Member States face in ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society and development.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-first session. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*. Retrieved 15 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/61/106>

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the centerpiece document in discussing the rights of persons with disabilities. Its adoption in 2006 brought great awareness to the issues faced by people with disabilities. The subject has since become a major point of discussion in development as it is an admission that the current state of rights for persons with disabilities is unacceptable and in need of reinforcement. Understanding this document will allow delegates to better understand the issues persons with disabilities face and the rights they are entitled to, and thus gain better understanding of what needs to be done.

United Nations, Human Rights Council. (2014). *Thematic study on the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community: Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/28/37)*. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/28/37>

One of the greatest struggles faced by persons with disabilities is exclusion from communities and the inability to live independently. This report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to the HRC goes over those issues and suggests services as well as support programs and facilities that can be implemented by governments and civil societies to alleviate these issues. It also reviews recommendations on national implementation and the role international cooperation can play in aiding its success. Delegates can gain a better understanding of why inclusion in society is pertinent to persons with disabilities and the challenges they face in remaining independent.

World Health Organization. (2002). *Towards a Common Language for Functioning, Disability and Health [Report]*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: <http://www.who.int/classifications/icf/icfbeginnersguide.pdf>

Written by WHO, this report goes over the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). The ICF provides a standard language for health conditions and descriptions of health conditions. This source reviews the ICF classifications that will be used many times throughout this guide and how the ICF is used, as well as concepts of functioning and disability. By understanding the ICF, delegates will better understand disability and be able to better frame the topic and what solutions can be most effective in combatting barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities.

World Health Organization & World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Retrieved 15 July 2016 from: http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

Published by WHO and the World Bank, the World Report on Disability found that over one billion people in the world live with some form of disability and nearly 200 million people are faced with severe disabilities. It examines definitions of disability, a global picture of disabilities in the world, the indirect and direct costs of disabilities, barriers to health care, therapy and rehabilitation, assistance and support, enabling environments, education, and work and employment, as well as recommendations on how to improve their situation. This report helps delegates develop an understanding as to what challenges persons with disabilities face internationally.

World Vision UK. (2007). *Education's Missing Millions [Report]*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: <http://cdn.worldvision.org.uk/files/4613/8029/8799/Educations-Missing-Millions-Main-Report.pdf>

This report by World Vision UK studies the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. It features case studies on country policies on education for students with disabilities. It goes over what policies were effective and what policies were not so effective. It also goes over how NGOs and communities can play powerful roles in including students with disabilities in the



education system. Delegates can find a plethora of information regarding country specific disability policies as well as great ideas on how to establish CBR projects.

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II. Promoting Social and Economic Inclusion of Refugees

“...the lives of millions of fellow human beings will be further diminished if they languish in camps or on the margins of cities without access to basic needs, livelihoods and income opportunities.”¹⁷³

Introduction

Today, the world faces a refugee crisis of proportions unprecedented since the establishment of the United Nations (UN) after World War II.¹⁷⁴ The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are currently 65.3 million people forcibly displaced worldwide, of which 21.3 million have refugee status.¹⁷⁵ The crisis is caused, in part, by protracted intra-state conflicts, making it unlikely that large refugee movements will come to a rapid halt or that those forcibly displaced will have an opportunity to be safely repatriated to their homes in the near future.¹⁷⁶ The international community’s efforts to mitigate the suffering of a growing refugee population in the wake of these circumstances have thus far been inadequate, with little planning for long-term displacement and insufficient support for host communities.¹⁷⁷ Consequently, greater international cooperation is necessary to prevent the exacerbation of this humanitarian crisis and to address the needs of displaced persons.¹⁷⁸

Among those forcibly displaced, a refugee is defined by the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (the Refugee Convention) as any person who, “... owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”¹⁷⁹ The writing and adoption of the Refugee Convention (and later its 1967 Protocol) was instigated by the large movement of refugees in the aftermath of World War II and the need to define the social and legal rights of refugees, as well as their duties towards their host countries.¹⁸⁰ At the time, the UN Secretary-General envisioned the post-World War era as a period of assimilation of refugees, wherein they would have the means to provide for themselves with dignity, rather than relying on aid from international organizations for their subsistence.¹⁸¹ This vision is reflected in the text of the Refugee Convention, which sets forth mechanisms to enable self-reliance and social integration for refugees.¹⁸² However, the state of refugees today indicates that intentions and principles of the Refugee Convention in this regard have not been fully realized; to the contrary, it is more likely for refugees to be residing in camps or informal settlements and living off humanitarian aid than to be integrated into society.¹⁸³

The UN facilitates three response mechanisms to protect and assist refugees: voluntary repatriation, integration into the host community, or resettlement into another country.¹⁸⁴ Voluntary repatriation, while an oft sought after goal, is usually not possible in the immediate aftermath of displacement due to ongoing conflicts in the refugees’ states of origin.¹⁸⁵ The latter two responses, on the other hand, are predicated upon the assimilation of refugees into their states of destination, both socially and economically.¹⁸⁶ Today, there is a prevalence of “protracted” refugee situations, loosely defined by the UNHCR as a refugee situation that extends beyond five years; refugees in these instances are left for years with their basic economic, social, and psychological needs unfulfilled.¹⁸⁷ Despite of

¹⁷³ UN General Assembly, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*, 2016, p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁵ UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*; UN General Assembly, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*, 2016, p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁷⁹ *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951, p. 14.

¹⁸⁰ UNHCR, *The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol*, 2011.

¹⁸¹ UN ECOSOC, *Memorandum Prepared by the Secretary-General for the Ad Hoc Committee on Statelessness and Related Problems, Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons*, 1950.

¹⁸² *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

¹⁸³ UNHCR, *Shelter*.

¹⁸⁴ UNHCR, *Solutions*.

¹⁸⁵ UNHCR, *The State of the World’s Refugees 2006: Human Displacement in the New Millennium*, p. 112.

¹⁸⁶ UNHCR, *Solutions*.

¹⁸⁷ UNHCR, *Protracted Refugee Situations (EC/54/SC/CRP.14)*, 2004, pp. 1-2.

facing no direct threat to their lives, refugees in these contexts live in a state of stagnation with limited, if any, access to wage-earning employment opportunities, education, healthcare, or other services.¹⁸⁸ UNHCR estimates that it takes an average of 17 years before refugees can be safely repatriated.¹⁸⁹

The Commission for Social Development (CSocD) has repeatedly emphasized that social and economic inclusion for all is a necessary precondition for social development.¹⁹⁰ The Commission has a history of advocating for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups to be fully integrated into their communities through inclusive policies adhering to a human rights-based approach.¹⁹¹ Thus, CSocD’s advisory role for Member States can work towards achieving social development by promoting the inclusion of refugees into their host communities.

International and Regional Framework

The UN has been a proponent of the inclusion of refugees since its inception. This is most clearly highlighted in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, which continue to act as the primary source of international law relating to refugees.¹⁹² The Refugee Convention recognizes refugees’ entitlement to basic human rights outlined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) and endeavors to ensure that refugees have “the widest possible exercise of these rights and freedoms.”¹⁹³ As such, it consistently affords refugees the most favorable treatment possible in their host communities.¹⁹⁴ This is demonstrated by the legal entitlements of refugees in the Convention, which grant them rights at least as favorable as those given to any foreign resident in a state, and in some cases, rights identical to those of nationals of a state.¹⁹⁵ Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the Refugee Convention outline the rights of refugees lawfully staying in a state regarding their access to courts, property rights ownership, gainful employment, housing, and public education, all of which constitute essential components for the social integration of refugee populations.¹⁹⁶

The UN has advocated for greater social development internationally, urging Member States to adopt people-centered development policies that focus on the material as well as the spiritual needs of individuals to ensure higher living standards for all people worldwide.¹⁹⁷ In 1995, the *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, in which the *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development* was first published, expressed the commitment of the UN to take actions for the “promotion of social progress... based on full participation by all,” with an emphasis on empowering the most vulnerable groups.¹⁹⁸ The fourth commitment of the Copenhagen Declaration focuses on promoting inclusive social integration based on the principles of non-discrimination against anyone, particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.¹⁹⁹ Article 16 of the Copenhagen Declaration identifies refugees as being among those vulnerable groups and acknowledges that their displacement and subsequent marginalization has tragic consequences for the social development of both their home and host states.²⁰⁰ In addition, the ninth commitment explicitly pledged to provide resources to states facing challenges meeting the needs of their refugee populations.²⁰¹

Reaffirming its commitment to economic prosperity and social development for all human beings worldwide, the UN adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in September 2015.²⁰² While declaring the UN’s efforts to “ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality” the Agenda also pledged that, in this process, no one would be left behind, including

¹⁸⁸ UNHCR, *The State of the World’s Refugees 2006: Human Displacement in the New Millennium*, pp. 106, 115.

¹⁸⁹ UNHCR, *Aid to Refugees and Displaced People Worldwide*.

¹⁹⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Emerging issues: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: moving from commitments to results for achieving social development (E/CN.5/2016/4)*, 2015, p. 7.

¹⁹¹ UN DESA, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

¹⁹² *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951; *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1967.

¹⁹³ *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

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

refugees.²⁰³ Among the 17 SDGs and the 169 affiliated targets of 2030 Agenda, many goals and targets call for action to achieve the social and economic inclusion of all people.²⁰⁴ Specifically, SDG 1 advocates for equal rights to economic resources and equal access to basic services for all people, particularly the vulnerable.²⁰⁵ SDG 4 calls for the provision of inclusive quality education for all, and Target 4.5 specifically highlights the importance equal educational access for children in vulnerable situations.²⁰⁶ SDG 8 focuses on promoting inclusive economic growth and decent work and the protection labor rights for all, regardless of citizenship.²⁰⁷ In the context of refugee populations, this encompasses supporting refugees' entrepreneurial activities, generating productive employment opportunities, preventing discrimination and exploitation, and securing safe working environments.²⁰⁸ Finally, SDG 10 calls for reducing inequalities between and among Member States, and Target 10.2 in particular aims to promote the social and economic inclusion irrespective of race, ethnicity, origin or other status.²⁰⁹

Guided by its commitment to implement the Copenhagen Declaration, ECOSOC, on the recommendation of CSocD, adopted resolution 2010/12 on "Promoting social integration" in 2010.²¹⁰ The resolution calls for the social integration of all groups, highlighting the need to remove barriers that persistently prevent people from fully participating in society.²¹¹ The resolution identifies poverty and unemployment as key barriers to social integration and recognizes that social integration policies should include securing basic needs, such as education, housing, and healthcare for marginalized groups.²¹² In its 54th session in 2016, CSocD recognized that the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the commitments made in the Copenhagen Declaration are mutually reinforcing; this is elaborated in the draft resolution "Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World," later adopted by ECOSOC as resolution 2016/8.²¹³ It encourages Member States to take all measures necessary to realize the goal of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind, namely by promoting social integration and equal access to essential public services.²¹⁴ It further emphasizes the importance of cooperation between governments and civil society to extend and implement inclusive social policies for all members of society, including the vulnerable and marginalized.²¹⁵ The resolution reiterates the need for policies targeting economic inclusion by promoting equitable access to labor markets and encourages the developed Member States to meet their official development assistance commitments.²¹⁶ Although the Commission thus far has not discussed the thematic issue of refugee integration specifically, this resolution, as well as others adopted by the Commission, defines a framework in which refugees' right to inclusion should be considered and prioritized.²¹⁷

Role of the International System

CSocD acts as an advisory commission to oversee the implementation of social development policies aimed at achieving the goals set forth in the *Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action* in 1995.²¹⁸ In its annual sessions, CSocD relies on a collaborative process among its Member States, other UN organizations and subsidiaries, as well as non-governmental organizations to develop sustainable policies targeting social development.²¹⁹ CSocD has collaborated with policymakers from a wide range of Member States; university professors; representatives from the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD); UNHCR; various regional commissions, including the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; and others to

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ UN DESA, *CSocD48 Expert Group Meetings (EGMs)*.

²¹¹ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting social integration (E/RES/2010/12)*, 2010.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ UN ECOSOC, *Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World (E/RES/2016/8)*, 2016.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995; UN ECOSOC, *Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World (E/RES/2016/8)*, 2016.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ UN DESA, *Commission for Social Development (CSocD)*.

²¹⁹ UN DESA, *Commission for Social Development*.

recommend policies for the advancement of social integration.²²⁰ Thus far, CSocD has focused on national policies promoting the integration of vulnerable and marginalized citizens within each Member State exclusive of any mention of foreign residents, whether migrants or refugees.²²¹ However, based on the aforementioned commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration and the extraordinary ongoing refugee crisis, it is firmly within CSocD's mandate to begin discussions on this topic and recommend policies addressing the social exclusion of refugees.²²²

Tasked with “supervising international conventions for the protection of refugees,” UNHCR has been the main UN organization working for refugee rights, not only in a humanitarian relief capacity, but also with regards to ensuring access to sustainable livelihoods, education, and public health.²²³ Much like CSocD's collaborative policy cycles, building partnerships with local authorities, civil society organizations, and other UN entities has marked UNHCR's broad-based efforts for the inclusion of refugees in social and economic spheres of life.²²⁴ Numbering 900 strategic partnerships to date, these have aided both the design and implementation of programs targeting refugees' social integration and resettlement.²²⁵ For example, UNHCR's 2009 *Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* outlines the Office's role in encouraging local authorities to legally allow refugees to seek wage-earning income and gain access to public health services.²²⁶

Among the non-governmental actors partnered with UNHCR advocating for the economic and social integration of refugees is the Hague Process on Refugees and Migration (THP).²²⁷ THP works to build a comprehensive network of stakeholders in migration and to develop “actionable solutions” based on thorough research and expertise.²²⁸ For example, recent research by THP on refugee integration was conducted in collaboration with Maastricht University's Graduate School of Governance and the UN University.²²⁹ The research follows stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, and civil society organizations in eight cities across the world to evaluate refugee integration efforts.²³⁰ As a result of their research, THP encourages local governments and businesses to form partnerships to address the multidimensional issue of refugee integration and highlights case studies in which such partnerships have been successful.²³¹ THP also highlights that cities should constitute the primary unit of analysis in addressing refugees' needs, since it is at the city level that refugees form social connections and carry out their daily activities.²³²

In a renewed commitment to the alleviation of suffering and the protection of human rights for all, the UN Secretary-General convened the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 with “Leave no one behind” as one of its core principles, focusing primarily on responses to forced displacement.²³³ Pertinently, the Secretary-General used the summit as a platform to galvanize the international community into sharing responsibility for large movements of refugees and upholding the provisions of the Refugee Convention.²³⁴ In this context, he aptly noted that refugees “should be able to enjoy a minimum standard of treatment, such as freedom of movement, basic health, social, and economic rights and recognition of identity and legal status.”²³⁵ The summit pointed to the necessity of creating an equitable international cooperation framework that provides adequate resourcing to host countries.²³⁶ The summit

²²⁰ UN DESA, *CSocD48 Expert Group Meetings (EGMs)*.

²²¹ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting social integration (E/RES/2010/12)*, 2010; UN ECOSOC, *Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World (E/RES/2016/8)*, 2016.

²²² UN DESA, *Commission for Social Development*; UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*.

²²³ UNHCR, *What We Do*.

²²⁴ UNHCR, *Governments and Partners*.

²²⁵ UNHCR, *Non-Governmental Organizations*.

²²⁶ UNHCR, *UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas*, 2009, pp. 17-18.

²²⁷ The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, *About Us*.

²²⁸ The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, *What We Do*.

²²⁹ Juzwiak et al., *Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²³³ World Humanitarian Summit, *Learn*.

²³⁴ UN General Assembly, *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility: Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit (A/70/709)*, 2016, p. 24.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

determined that, central to social and economic inclusion, such a framework must involve a revision of national refugee response policies, namely as they relate to vital public services such as education and healthcare.²³⁷

In September 2016, the High-Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, convened by the UN General Assembly, took place to follow up on the commitments outlined at the World Humanitarian Summit.²³⁸ During the High-Level Meeting, Member States pledged to form a comprehensive refugee response framework that includes national authorities, as well as international organizations and civil society partners, in order to adopt a ‘people-centered’ approach that is in accordance with international law.²³⁹ More specifically, Member States committed to ease administrative processes hindering refugee integration, provide quality primary and secondary education to all refugee children, and ensure that the basic health needs of refugees are met.²⁴⁰ The shift in rhetoric towards national policies for the social inclusion of refugees strongly echoes the CSocD’s principles, guided by the commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration.²⁴¹

Access to Education

Articles 21 to 23 of the Refugee Convention are designed to ensure that refugees are granted equal access to services such as housing, public education, and public relief assistance.²⁴² However, in reality, refugees often face many difficulties in accessing basic services for a myriad of reasons; education is among the main services that refugees have difficulties accessing.²⁴³ In 2009, school enrolment rates for refugee children were estimated to be 76% at the primary level and only 36% at the secondary level, with a large gender gap with even lower enrolment rates for girls.²⁴⁴ Today, the situation is worse; more recent estimates in the wake of the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis highlight the extent of the problem in small neighboring states like Lebanon, where it is estimated that 80% of registered Syrian refugee children are not enrolled in schools.²⁴⁵ Refugees’ inability to access education has severe long-term effects on their ability to be integrated into the societies in which they reside, and inevitably, on their own personal development and future opportunities.²⁴⁶ Lack of education significantly worsens the employment prospects available to an entire generation of refugees post-resettlement.²⁴⁷ This makes it more likely for them to live and remain in poverty, as well as limiting their capacity to make positive economic contributions to their host communities in the long run.²⁴⁸ Moreover, educational facilities can serve as a space to build tolerance and multicultural values among children from a young age; lack of integration in educational systems therefore reduces refugee children’s opportunities to socially engage with their peers.²⁴⁹

Among the many barriers to access is the number of refugees relative to the limited financial and institutional capabilities of their host countries.²⁵⁰ In states that receive a large influx of refugees, the existing schooling system often cannot support all the incoming students, as there are insufficient classrooms and teachers.²⁵¹ Both financial and time constraints prevent an adequate expansion of these facilities to meet the needs of incoming refugees.²⁵² Overcrowding in classrooms is not only preventing more refugees from enrolling in schools, but it is also having a

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

²³⁸ UN General Assembly, *Summit for Refugees and Migrants – 19 September 2016*, 2016.

²³⁹ UN General Assembly, *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*, 2016.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995.

²⁴² *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

²⁴³ Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 6.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ UNHCR, *The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis*, 2013, p. 43.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, *Towards an Inclusive Approach to Citizenship: Investing in Education for the Empowerment of All City Residents*, 2008, p. 4.

²⁴⁷ Ott, *The Labour Market Integration of Resettled Refugees*, 2013, p. 12.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁴⁹ The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration, *Towards an Inclusive Approach to Citizenship: Investing in Education for the Empowerment of All City Residents*, 2008, p. 4.

²⁵⁰ UNHCR, *The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis*, 2013, p. 45.

²⁵¹ Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 26; UNHCR, *The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis*, 2013, p. 45.

²⁵² Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 45.

negative impact on the quality of education of refugees and nationals alike by raising the student-to-teacher ratio.²⁵³ Another barrier, exacerbated by the aforementioned negative impact on education, is discrimination against refugee children in schools.²⁵⁴ This discrimination takes many forms, including: preventing children from entering the school system due their legal status as refugees, unwillingness to recognize previous schooling certificates, and bullying of refugee children in schools.²⁵⁵ Moreover, the language of instruction often makes it difficult for refugee children to follow the curricula in their host countries.²⁵⁶

UNHCR, in partnership with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local ministries of education, has undertaken efforts to address some of these concerns.²⁵⁷ One such collaboration has been between UNHCR and the Educate A Child program, which was implemented in 12 states across Africa and Asia.²⁵⁸ The partnership primarily addressed issues pertaining to the funding and institutional capabilities in these states by constructing classrooms, distributing textbooks and learning materials, and training teachers, ultimately allowing more than 250,000 refugee children to enroll in schools.²⁵⁹ On the local government level, the policies of the Nairobi City Council in the Kenyan capital, which hosts more than 62,000 refugees, provides another example of refugee integration in public education.²⁶⁰ Kenya is a country with an often-cited protracted refugee situation that has lasted over 20 years due to influxes from Somalia and South Sudan.²⁶¹ The Nairobi City Council has funded places for refugees at 205 schools, enabling 7,500 refugee children to enroll.²⁶² The city council has also ensured that refugees do not incur education costs higher than Kenyan nationals in the same system.²⁶³ Nevertheless, there are still high cost barriers to accessing secondary education, for which there is insufficient funding.²⁶⁴ Overall, while such non-discriminatory policies have made progress towards the inclusion of refugees, they are not sufficiently far-reaching or comprehensive.

Access to Healthcare

Another basic public service refugees face barriers in accessing is healthcare. Often coming from areas of conflict and/or unfavorable conditions in camps, refugees frequently suffer a variety of acute as well as chronic medical conditions that must be addressed in their host countries.²⁶⁵ As is the case with education, increasingly large refugee populations have difficulties accessing healthcare due to financial constraints as well as language barriers.²⁶⁶ On the one hand, financial constraints limit states’ ability to provide adequate medical supplies, hospital beds, and trained doctors to attend to the needs of incoming refugees.²⁶⁷ At the same time, refugees with little financial resources find it prohibitively expensive to seek medical care in the absence of coverage by aid organizations or the public healthcare system.²⁶⁸ Meanwhile, language barriers proved to be a significant hurdle for refugees at every level of the healthcare system, from seeking appropriate medical facilities, to scheduling appointments, to interacting with

²⁵³ UNHCR, *The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis*, 2013, p. 46.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

²⁵⁵ Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 26; UNHCR, *The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis*, 2013, pp. 50-51.

²⁵⁶ Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 39.

²⁵⁷ UNHCR, *Education*.

²⁵⁸ UNHCR, *Educate A Child*.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ Sturge, *Nairobi, Kenya: A Case Study from: Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014, p. 18; UNHCR Kenya, *Figures at a Glance*.

²⁶¹ UNHCR Kenya Country Office, *Overview*.

²⁶² Sturge, *Nairobi, Kenya: A Case Study from: Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014, p. 18.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ Morris et al., *Healthcare Barriers of Refugees Post-resettlement*, 2009, p. 529.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; Behrouzan & Parkinson, *Negotiating Health and Life: Syrian Refugees and the Politics of Access in Lebanon*, 2015, p. 325; Sheikh-Mohammed et al., *Barriers to Access to Healthcare for Newly Resettled Sub-Saharan Refugees in Australia*, 2006, p. 594.

²⁶⁷ Behrouzan & Parkinson, *Negotiating Health and Life: Syrian Refugees and the Politics of Access in Lebanon*, 2015, p. 325.

²⁶⁸ Sheikh-Mohammed et al., *Barriers to Access to Healthcare for Newly Resettled Sub-Saharan Refugees in Australia*, 2006, p. 596.

medical professionals and obtaining prescribed treatments.²⁶⁹ Miscommunication arising due to language barriers makes it difficult both for doctors to understand patients' medical histories and symptoms, and for patients to understand diagnoses and treatment options from medical staff.²⁷⁰ Negligence to treat illnesses often leads to further deteriorations in refugees' general health conditions, thereby hampering their physical ability to perform other tasks, such as attending school or working.²⁷¹

In emergency response situations, the case of Lebanon in the ongoing refugee crisis continues to illustrate these barriers; the small country holds more than 6.5% of the world's current refugee population.²⁷² Consequently, Lebanese hospitals have exceeded their capacity in terms of beds and medical staff necessary to address the health needs of both nationals and incoming Syrian refugees.²⁷³ Even though registered Syrian refugees are provided 75% coverage of costs in the Lebanese public healthcare system, the remaining 25% is a heavy burden for many refugee families who often find themselves weighing healthcare options in terms of necessity and price.²⁷⁴ In post-resettlement situations, financial hardships also arise because refugees may not be eligible to enroll in public insurance programs; they may also face difficulties paying insurance premiums.²⁷⁵

Many programs and partnerships have sought to provide refugees with healthcare access at a level similar to that of nationals.²⁷⁶ As indicated by the Lebanese example, this often comes in the form of efforts to integrate refugees into the state-provided government health services.²⁷⁷ The Australian government similarly commits to provide refugees with a level of healthcare identical to that of Australian nationals, as well as pledging to accommodate their linguistic needs.²⁷⁸ Another example is the partnership between the national Department of Health in Kenya and the International Organization for Migration to provide the Eastleigh Community Healthcare facility in Nairobi.²⁷⁹ The facility provides free health screening, vaccinations, reproductive health services and primary care for refugees in the Eastleigh suburb, in which a large proportion of refugees live.²⁸⁰ Although successful in mitigating further suffering, these efforts have not reached the majority of refugees, signifying a need for more extensive actions and greater collaboration among not only local governments in host countries, NGOs, and UN organizations, but also the international community at large.²⁸¹

Labor Market Access and Integration

Access to productive employment is reaffirmed as an important means for social integration and poverty eradication in the Copenhagen Declaration.²⁸² The International Labour Organization defines productive employment as "employment yielding sufficient returns to labor to permit the worker and her/his dependents a level of consumption above the poverty line."²⁸³ Moreover, the right to wage-earning employment is enshrined in article 17 of the Refugee Convention, which provides that refugees should benefit from the same access to employment opportunities as most-favored foreigners.²⁸⁴ However, article 17 attracted the largest number of reservations from States parties to the

²⁶⁹ Morris et al., *Healthcare Barriers of Refugees Post-resettlement*, 2009, p. 533; Sheikh-Mohammed et al., *Barriers to Access to Healthcare for Newly Resettled Sub-Saharan Refugees in Australia*, 2006, p. 595.

²⁷⁰ Morris et al., *Healthcare Barriers of Refugees Post-resettlement*, 2009, p. 533.

²⁷¹ UN General Assembly, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*, 2016, p. 7.

²⁷² UNHCR, *Population Statistics Data Overview*.

²⁷³ Behrouzan & Parkinson, *Negotiating Health and Life: Syrian Refugees and the Politics of Access in Lebanon*, 2015, p. 325.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.

²⁷⁵ Morris et al. *Healthcare Barriers of Refugees Post-resettlement*, 2009, p. 533.

²⁷⁶ UNHCR, *UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas*, p. 4.

²⁷⁷ Behrouzan & Parkinson, *Negotiating Health and Life: Syrian Refugees and the Politics of Access in Lebanon*, 2015, pp. 326-327.

²⁷⁸ Australian Medical Association, *Healthcare of Asylum Seekers and Refugees*, 2015.

²⁷⁹ Juzwiak et al., *Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014, p. 61.

²⁸⁰ Sturge, *Nairobi, Kenya: A Case Study from: Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014, pp. 10, 17.

²⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*, 2016, p. 11.

²⁸² World Summit for Social Development, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development*, 1995.

²⁸³ ILO, *Understanding the Deficits of Productive Employment and Setting Targets: A Methodological Guide*, 2012, p. 4.

²⁸⁴ *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

Convention.²⁸⁵ Data from various studies shows that there is a “refugee gap” between resettled refugees and citizens and other immigrant groups in the labor markets of many Member States.²⁸⁶ This means that, after controlling for observable characteristics like education and previous work experience, refugees have poorer labor market outcomes than other groups and suffer from significantly higher rates of unemployment than the rest of the population.²⁸⁷ Moreover, even when refugees have access to productive opportunities, they are often employed in unskilled labor in jobs incompatible with their level of education or training.²⁸⁸ Exclusion from the labor market not only makes self-sufficiency nearly impossible for refugees, but also erodes their previous work experience, worsening their future employment prospects.²⁸⁹

Discrepancies between refugees’ abilities and their labor market outcomes can be attributed to disabling legal frameworks in host states, as well as xenophobia and discrimination against refugees.²⁹⁰ The former largely encompasses difficulties for refugees to obtain the necessary permits that would enable them to seek employment, exacerbated by bureaucratic procedures that vary from one state to another.²⁹¹ They also face hurdles in having their professional certifications recognized outside their states of origin, especially in specialized professions such as medicine, law, and engineering, thus precluding them from working in their previous field of employment.²⁹² Meanwhile, discrimination and xenophobia operate on many levels, be it on the part of employers refusing to hire refugees, on the part of co-workers creating an inhospitable work environment, or on the part of the general public in the host country fuelling discriminatory rhetoric against refugees.²⁹³ As is the case with education and healthcare, language barriers also impede labor market access for refugees; inability to communicate with peers makes refugees less desirable candidates to employers.²⁹⁴

Global efforts to address the economic exclusion of refugee communities have ensued with two primary mutually reinforcing objectives: providing minimum subsistence-level incomes for refugees to allow them to become self-reliant, and integrating refugees into their host states’ economies through decent employment opportunities.²⁹⁵ For example, the European Parliament has outlined policy recommendations for the labor market integration of refugees within the European Union.²⁹⁶ They recommended language courses and vocational training for refugees, as well as suggesting a more efficient mechanism for Member States to identify refugees’ competencies.²⁹⁷ Meanwhile, on a micro-level, Adus, a civil society organization in Brazil, has partnered with local businesses in São Paulo to encourage firms to hire refugee workers.²⁹⁸ At the moment, these partnerships focus only on providing job opportunities for unskilled labor with no requirement of prior work experience.²⁹⁹ However, workers are paid fairly and may be extended assistance to find housing.³⁰⁰ Both the UN General Assembly and THP have recently highlighted the importance of strengthening such partnerships with the private sector to promote the integration of refugees, particularly in the economic sphere.³⁰¹

²⁸⁵ Hathaway, *The Rights of Refugees Under International Law*, 2005, p. 96.

²⁸⁶ Ott, *The Labour Market Integration of Resettled Refugees*, 2013, p. 11.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

²⁸⁹ UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, pp. 13-14.

²⁹⁰ Ott, *The Labour Market Integration of Resettled Refugees*, 2013, p. 12.

²⁹¹ Turner, *Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan*, 2015, p. 395.

²⁹² Ott, *The Labour Market Integration of Resettled Refugees*, 2013, p. 32.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁹⁴ European Parliament, *Refugees: social inclusion and integration into the labour market*, 2016.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*; UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014.

²⁹⁶ European Parliament, *Refugees: social inclusion and integration into the labour market*, 2016.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ Juzwiak et al., *Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses*, 2014, p. 35.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*; UN General Assembly, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*, 2016.

Conclusion

The social and economic inclusion of refugees into their host communities is central to affording them a life with dignity and respect. Commitments and efforts made by the international community to ensure their inclusion have made some progress in improving the conditions and living standards of those forcibly displaced from their homes, be it through access to gainful employment, educational opportunities, training programs, or other measures. However, these efforts have only partially addressed the needs of the global refugee population. As this population continues to grow, the reliance on a few states to shoulder the costs of refugee integration alongside humanitarian agencies is unsustainable. As a result, there is a need for social development policies to transition to a period of shared responsibility for refugee populations. This period should be defined by a renewed commitment to the rights set forth in the Refugee Convention by the UN system and its Member States. Today, millions of refugees are deprived of their rights. Going forward, a human-centered approach guided by the principles of both the Refugee Convention and the Copenhagen Declaration will be critical for the full economic and social inclusion of refugees worldwide.

Further Research

Achieving social and economic inclusion for refugee communities remains a goal and a challenge for the UN and its subsidiaries, guided by the principles of human rights and inclusive development. Delegates should consider questions including: What social development policies can be recommended by CSocD to contribute to Member States' and UN entities' efforts to integrate refugees? How can Member States remove the language barriers hindering refugees' access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities? What mechanisms would be most effective to eliminate discrimination against refugees in these areas? How can Member States ensure quality healthcare for all refugees? How can challenges such as the recertification of skilled refugee workers be addressed in a multitude of settings worldwide? Which organizations can CSocD partner with to develop practical policies for the social and economic inclusion of refugees specifically?

Annotated Bibliography

Dryden-Peterson, S. (2011). *Refugee Education: A Global Review*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: www.unhcr.org/4fe317589.pdf

The report published by the UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service provides an extensive account of the state of refugee education, including the challenges faced in integrating refugee children into public education systems in their host states, as well as successful mechanisms that involved collaboration between UNHCR, ministries of education in the host states, and civil society organizations. The review offers insights from a diverse geographic range of states, particularly in Africa and Asia. Since education has repeatedly been identified as a necessary component for social inclusion, it is instructive to look at the author's recommendations for future policymaking in this area.

European Parliament. (2016). *Refugees: social inclusion and integration into the labour market*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P8-TA-2016-0297+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

As one of the most recent texts on the topic of social inclusion and labor market integration of refugees, this resolution affirms gradually increasing commitment to address the refugee crisis on a social level. Even though the resolution was adopted by the European Parliament, and therefore specifies policies put forth in European Union Member States, it provides guidelines for actions that can be recommended on a broader multilateral scale. Most importantly, it reiterates the rights of persons with refugee status to benefit from social protection policies in the absence of their entitlements from their states of origin. Social policies proposed include the provision of language courses, education, and training necessary for labor market integration.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2014). *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf>

Highlighting the UNHCR's ongoing framework for providing productive opportunities to refugees and displaced persons worldwide, the Strategy highlights possible mechanisms that can be adopted for economic inclusion. It provides an overview of the UNHCR's objectives and the

partnerships utilized to achieve them. The strategy also includes indicators to measure the success of various policies, helping states track progress and enabling them to revise programs and efforts to increase efficacy.

Ott, E. (2013). *The Labour Market Integration of Resettled Refugees*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: www.unhcr.org/5273a9e89.pdf

Authored by an independent consultant for UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Series, the study focuses on the current status of resettled refugees in labor markets and points to the lack of sufficient literature and policies in this area. Specifically, it emphasizes the centrality of labor market integration in approaches for poverty alleviation of refugees, and sheds light on the existing barriers to their integration. By highlighting the gap between labor market access for refugees as opposed to other immigrants or marginalized groups, as well as the positive outcomes associated with their integration, the study reinforces the pertinence of targeting economic inclusion for refugees. The study also includes promising practices that have been adopted by various states in integrating resettled refugees into their labor markets.

United Nations, Department for Economic and Social Affairs. (2009). *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration: Lessons learned from existing policies and practices*. Retrieved 2 September 2016 from: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2009/Ghana/ghanareport.pdf>

Written in preparation for the forty-eighth session of CSocD in collaboration with the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare of the Government of Ghana and the UN Development Programme, the report provides insights into the mechanisms through which the Commission's policy review process operates by working with national actors. In this context, both the methodology and the content (which proposes national policies for social inclusion) serve as a useful window to understand and learn how to build upon the prior work of the Commission. The report also highlights best practices and lessons learned to guide delegates in strengthening future recommendations and policies on this topic.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2009). *Promoting social integration: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2010/2)*. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2010/2>

Prepared in response to the priority theme for CSocD's forty-eighth session, the report provides an overview of the current regional and national policies for social integration, including youth inclusion, gender parity, and others, as well as providing recommendations to promote more inclusive societies. While the report does not address the issue of social integration for refugees, it provides a foundation upon which policies for this specific group can be designed. Among the most relevant elements of the report for the topic at hand are group-specific responses, cultural sensitivity without forced assimilation, and removing discriminatory barriers to employment.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2014/3)*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2014/3>

Published to address the priority theme for the fifty-second session of CSocD, the report focuses on means of achieving poverty eradication, primarily through the elimination of discriminatory frameworks that act as barriers to participation in productive activities. The report advocates for a more inclusive society for all, and promotes decent work and anti-discrimination as among the primary venues to reach this goal. Such values can be extended individuals with refugee status in host states worldwide to foster their inclusion.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2015). *Emerging issues: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: moving from commitments to results for achieving social development (E/CN.5/2016/4)* [Note by the Secretariat]. Retrieved 1 September 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2016/4>

Prepared by CSocD at its fifty-fourth session, this note by the Secretariat explores the Commission's role in achieving the SDGs by translating the commitments of the 2030 Agenda into progress in the area of social development. The note identifies the key priorities and targets to achieve social development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, among which is social inclusion and investing in universal access to basic social services, including education and healthcare. While the inclusion of refugees is not explicitly addressed, the note defines CSocD's

catalyzing role in achieving sustainable development by selecting future priority themes that reflect the SDGs and incorporating them into its Member States' national policy frameworks.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2016). *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/59)*. Retrieved 10 August 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/70/59>

Written in preparation for the High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, the report contextualizes the topic by providing an overview of the trends in global refugee movements and the status of refugees. It further calls for multilateral action against discrimination and details successful endeavors to address refugee integration at national and regional levels. The report also recognizes that long-term national efforts are imperative since refugees typically remain displaced for a lengthy period.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-first session. (2016). *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*. Retrieved 3 October 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/1>

As the outcome document of the High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants in September 2016, this political declaration outlines the most recent commitments agreed upon by Member States to respond to the increasing global movements of refugees. The declaration defines the contemporary scope of the problem, and recalls all the relevant refugee response frameworks and instruments of international law. It also clearly states the importance of addressing the global crisis using a sustainable, human rights-based approach, consistent with the principles of the 2030 Agenda. Most importantly, it reaffirms Member States' commitment to meet the needs of refugee populations and expand the opportunities available to them in host communities.

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III. Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) has always directed special attention towards Africa's unique development needs, most recently in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015), which established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).³⁰² With 41% of its people living in extreme poverty, sub-Saharan Africa is the only region that failed to meet Target 1.A of the MDGs to halve the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day.³⁰³ The need for a special regional focus on Africa becomes clear when one compares the levels of economic development of Africa and East Asia, two regions that had a comparable gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 1970, but whose development paths have deviated dramatically since then.³⁰⁴ By 2010, GDP per capita was \$8,483 in East Asia but only \$1,701 in Africa.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, efforts to reduce poverty and ensure inclusive growth are undermined by extreme income inequality, which continues to grow in one fourth of states in sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰⁶

In order to address escalating poverty levels and systemic underdevelopment, African Member States created the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD) in 2001.³⁰⁷ NEPAD was essentially designed as a bargain: African states pledged to set up and police standards of good governance in return for increased official development assistance (ODA), foreign direct investment (FDI), and a lowered obstacles to trade by developed states.³⁰⁸ The UN embraced NEPAD and adopted it as a key strategic framework for all development efforts in Africa.³⁰⁹ Within the UN system, the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) is especially involved in supporting NEPAD because of its mandate to ensure that people remain at the center of development.³¹⁰ CSocD assesses new and emerging issues in regard to the social dimensions of NEPAD and provides related policy guidance to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).³¹¹

According to a recent report of the Secretary-General, suitable policies and good institutions are needed to reduce inequality and ensure that economic growth benefits all members of society, including women, youth, and other often marginalized groups.³¹² The Secretary-General identified active labor market policies that intervene in labor markets by subsidizing employment or offering training schemes as fundamental for the recovery of African economies from job losses resulting from the global economic crisis and continued population growth.³¹³ Moreover, investments to close tremendous gaps in energy, information, and transportation infrastructure will accelerate economic growth and industrialization, supporting job creation.³¹⁴ Additional international cooperation is needed to support African Member States in terms of finance, trade, technology transfer, and capacity-building to enable them to implement policies that enhance growth and generate employment.³¹⁵

³⁰² UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015, p. 7.

³⁰³ UN DESA, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, p. 15.

³⁰⁴ African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, 2015, p. 26.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General* (E/CN.5/2016/2), 2016, p. 5.

³⁰⁷ UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 14 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly* (A/57/304), 2002, p. 7.

³⁰⁸ Taylor, *NEPAD – Toward Africa's Development or Another False Start?*, 2005, p. 45.

³⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *Final review and appraisal of the United Nations Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development* (A/RES/57/7), 2002, p. 3.

³¹⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Commission for Social Development: Report on the fifty-fourth session* (E/2016/26), 2016, p. 3.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General* (E/CN.5/2016/2), 2016, p. 17.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

International and Regional Framework

In the late 1970s, after economic growth in Africa had stalled on a continental level, the international community started to draft plans and programs to promote Africa's development.³¹⁶ The first concentrated effort to analyze and overcome the continent's development challenges was the *Lagos Plan of Action* (LPA), which was produced in 1980 by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the African Union (AU).³¹⁷ This plan identified historical injustices suffered through colonization as the main reason for Africa's underdevelopment.³¹⁸ The plan also emphasized inter-African trade and investment, a reduction in external debt, and import-substitution policies to reduce dependence on ex-colonial powers as critical for development.³¹⁹ The LPA succeeded in bringing the attention of the international community to the need for a coherent and ambitious development plan for Africa, although it ignored the broad issues of poor governance within African Member States.³²⁰ However, the LPA relied heavily on large-scale industrialization that worked well for East Asia but whose financial and technological preconditions were not similar in Africa.³²¹ The *UN Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development* (UNPAAERD), the first UN development program for Africa, was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1986.³²² UNPAAERD called upon the international community to finance reforms of African Member States' agricultural sectors in order to overcome recurrent food crises and to spur development.³²³ But most developed Member States did not align their own development policies with UNPAAERD and instead tied ODA to privatization and liberalization targets.³²⁴ Thus, UNPAAERD fell short of becoming the focal point for development policy or resource mobilization.³²⁵ In 1991, the General Assembly adopted the *UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s* (UNNADAF) to replace UNPAAERD.³²⁶ The new program identified pervasive political instability as the main barrier to Africa's development.³²⁷ The proposed measures included intensifying the democratization process and increasing regional economic integration.³²⁸ Similarly to UNPAAERD, UNNADAF was unsuccessful for two main reasons: institutional weaknesses, which prevented resolute implementation, and external factors, such as the reluctance of developed Member States to support the programs politically and financially.³²⁹

In 2001, the OAU adopted NEPAD as the new strategic framework for the sustainable development of Africa, which had been proposed by the heads of state of Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa.³³⁰ This framework includes a Peace and Security Initiative that aims to create strong regional institutions responsible for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as a Democracy and Political Governance Initiative that includes technical support for institutional reforms and a mechanism to evaluate progress of democratization.³³¹ The Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative aims to encourage investment into infrastructure, human resources, and agriculture.³³² Moreover, the framework includes calls on Member States to support these initiatives through debt relief, ODA, and increased domestic resource mobilization.³³³ In 2004, the AU reaffirmed its commitment to

³¹⁶ Taylor, *NEPAD – Toward Africa's Development or Another False Start?*, 2005, p. 19.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² UN General Assembly, *United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990* (A/RES/S-13/2), 1986, p. 3.

³²³ Ratsimbaharison, *The Failure of the United Nations Development Programs for Africa*, 2003, p. 23.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³²⁵ UN General Assembly, *Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery* (A/RES/46/151), 1991, p. 42.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

³²⁷ Taylor, *NEPAD – Toward Africa's Development or Another False Start?*, 2005, p. 28.

³²⁸ Ratsimbaharison, *The Failure of the United Nations Development Programs for Africa*, 2003, p. 50.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³³⁰ Organisation of African Unity, *New Africa Initiative: Merger of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Program and the Omega Plan* (AHG/Decl. I (XXXVII)), 2001.

³³¹ UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 14 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly* (A/57/304), 2002, p. 18.

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³³³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

NEPAD in the *Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa*.³³⁴ In this declaration, the AU placed emphasis on employment creation and poverty alleviation and suggested policy reforms to remove structural constraints to entrepreneurship, to promote private-public partnerships, and to encourage corporate social responsibility.³³⁵

ECOSOC welcomed this effort to develop an African-owned and African-led framework and invited the Secretary-General to initiate a process through which the UN could support the plan.³³⁶ In 2002, NEPAD was supported by the General Assembly in the *UN Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development*.³³⁷ In resolution 57/7 (2002), the General Assembly adopted NEPAD as the central framework document for all UN efforts for Africa's development.³³⁸ In resolution 70/295 (2016), the General Assembly expressed its concerns about the slow recovery of Africa's economy from the impact of the 2007-2009 world financial and economic crisis.³³⁹ In response, the resolution urges the international community to support measures to eradicate poverty, create jobs and sustainable development, promote the private sector, and fulfill all ODA commitments.³⁴⁰

ECOSOC has considered the social dimensions of NEPAD through CSocD annually, beginning in 2004 when CSocD focused on attempts of the UN system to harmonize coordination and efforts around the new framework.³⁴¹ In 2007, CSocD began evaluating the progress of NEPAD and urged Member States to increase the involvement of civil society and the private sector in efforts to reform government institutions.³⁴² Most recently, in 2016, CSocD encouraged African Member States to “prioritize structural transformation, modernize smallholder agriculture, add value to primary commodities, and improve public and private institutions” in accordance with NEPAD's framework.³⁴³ These assessments and recommendations were adopted by ECOSOC in resolutions 2007/28 and 2016/7, respectively.³⁴⁴

The *UN Millennium Declaration* (2000) influenced the creation of NEPAD through the establishment of the MDGs, which provided tangible targets for measuring success of development efforts.³⁴⁵ Because many of the MDG targets remained unmet, the UN further renewed its commitment to development through the SDGs in September 2015.³⁴⁶ Especially relevant for NEPAD are SDGs 1-5, 8, and 10, which are related to poverty, hunger, health, education, the empowerment of women and gender equality, reduced inequality, and inclusive growth and full employment.³⁴⁷ To ensure sufficient financing for the implementation of the SDGs, the international community adopted the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015), which aims to increase domestic financial resources, such as taxes, FDI, and ODA; reduce trade barriers for exports of developing Member States; and reduce the external debt of developing states.³⁴⁸ In the same year, the AU created *Agenda 2063* to catalyze development and strengthen African economic integration and political unity.³⁴⁹ *Agenda 2063* serves as a vision of a prosperous and united Africa based on the values of unity,

³³⁴ African Union, *Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa*, 2004, p. 6.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high level segment submitted by the President of the Council: The role of the United Nations in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development*, 2001.

³³⁷ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/RES/57/2)*, 2002, p. 2.

³³⁸ UN General Assembly, *Final review and appraisal of the United Nations Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/RES/57/7)*, 2002, p. 3.

³³⁹ UN General Assembly, *New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support (A/RES/70/295)*, 2016, p. 4.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ UN ECOSOC, *Implementation of the social objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (2004/16)*, 2004.

³⁴² UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2007/28)*, 2007, p. 2.

³⁴³ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2016/7)*, 2016, p. 7.

³⁴⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2007/28)*, 2007, p. 2; ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2016/7)*, 2016, p. 7.

³⁴⁵ UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 14 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/57/304)*, 2002, p. 13.

³⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

³⁴⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Commission for Social Development: Report on the fifty-fourth session (E/2016/26)*, 2016, p. 18.

³⁴⁸ UN Third International Conference on Financing for Development, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, 2015.

³⁴⁹ African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, 2015.

self-reliance, regional integration, and solidarity.³⁵⁰ It includes a roadmap for achieving these aspirations by promoting good governance, inclusive growth, and sustainable development.³⁵¹

Role of the International System

Within the UN system, CSocD plays a crucial role in supporting development by addressing new and emerging issues that might imperil social development and by advising ECOSOC on how to handle them.³⁵² In order to stay informed about the state of Africa's development and emerging challenges, ECOSOC requests the Secretary-General to provide an annual report on the social dimensions of NEPAD.³⁵³ CSocD convenes panel discussions and side events during its sessions that include civil society organizations and representatives of other UN bodies to discuss best practices and receive useful input for its consideration of the topic.³⁵⁴ CSocD's annual draft resolutions on the social dimensions of NEPAD assess the input and provide policy recommendations to ECOSOC.³⁵⁵

The most central actor in promoting and implementing the NEPAD agenda is the AU, which devised NEPAD as the region's main development program and integrated it into AU structures and processes.³⁵⁶ The AU established the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency) as its technical body to facilitate and coordinate continent-wide programs and projects.³⁵⁷ The NEPAD Agency has created four investment programs dedicated to human capital development; industrialization, science, technology and innovation; regional integration, infrastructure and trade; and natural resource governance and food security.³⁵⁸ The Agency's budget consists of funding allocated by the AU and Member State contributions, totaling \$11 million in 2015.³⁵⁹ During the AU's Year of Women's Empowerment and Development in 2015, the NEPAD Agency supported over half a million African women in areas including business skill development and vocational training.³⁶⁰ At the institutional level, they strengthened women's rights organizations with financial support, which led to increased representation and effective participation of women in decision-making processes.³⁶¹ The second important aspect of the implementation of NEPAD is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a self-monitoring mechanism to promote more effective governance that was launched in 2003 by the AU.³⁶² Its teams include independent experts from the African Development Bank (AfDB), the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which visit participating Member States to write reports about political, economic, corporate, and socio-economic governance.³⁶³ Its mandate is to ensure that the good governance policies and practices enshrined in NEPAD are met; by 2014, 34 African Member States had voluntarily acceded to the mechanism and 17 of them had been peer-reviewed.³⁶⁴

The General Assembly maintains momentum by annually evaluating the implementation of NEPAD and issuing recommendations to support progress.³⁶⁵ Additionally, the General Assembly proclaimed the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (2016-2025), which aims to unify and focus the efforts of the UN system and the AU in furthering sustainable industrialization of the continent.³⁶⁶ Furthermore, the Assembly encourages the UN Industrial Development Organization to scale up its technical assistance to promote inclusive and sustainable

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² UN ECOSOC, *Commission for Social Development: Report on the fifty-fourth session (E/2016/26)*, 2016, p. 3.

³⁵³ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2016/7)*, 2016, p. 12.

³⁵⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Commission for Social Development: Report on the fifty-fourth session (E/2016/26)*, 2016, p. 3.

³⁵⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2016/7)*, 2016.

³⁵⁶ NEPAD Agency, *About NEPAD*.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ NEPAD Agency, *Annual Report 2015*, p. 31.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 28.

³⁶² African Peer Review Mechanism & African Union, *Annual Report 2014, 2015*, p. 2.

³⁶³ Ibid., p. 4.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

³⁶⁵ UN General Assembly, *New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support (A/RES/70/295)*, 2016, p. 4.

³⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (2016-2025) (A/RES/70/293)*, 2016, p. 3.

industrial development.³⁶⁷ In resolution 57/300 (2003), the General Assembly endorsed the creation of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), which coordinates the preparation of reports on Africa and supports the implementation of NEPAD through global advocacy.³⁶⁸ The Secretary-General relies on OSAA for the drafting of his annual reports requested by CSocD.³⁶⁹

Since NEPAD serves as the strategic framework for all UN efforts towards Africa's development, many UN bodies including UNDP have entered into collaboration agreements with the NEPAD Agency and contribute to the implementation of NEPAD.³⁷⁰ One example of this cooperation is UNDP's support to NEPAD in developing the Mutual Accountability Standard for Africa.³⁷¹ ECA also assists the NEPAD Agency with capacity-building support and provides a platform for the UN system to engage with the AU system.³⁷² Moreover, several international economic institutions coordinate with the NEPAD Agency, such as the AfDB, which manages the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD-IPPF).³⁷³ This facility provides grant resources for regional infrastructure projects, such as the Benin-Togo-Ghana Electricity Interconnection Project and the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya Power Interconnection Project, which helped create resilient energy infrastructure.³⁷⁴ The World Bank provides financial and technical resources to the African Resilient Landscapes Initiative, which engages in forest and ecosystem restoration, climate smart agriculture, and rangeland management.³⁷⁵

Inclusive Development

The economies of African Member States grew on average 5% annually over the last decade, which allowed the continent to reduce its development gap relative to other developing states.³⁷⁶ However, this remarkable growth in momentum was accompanied by rising income inequality, trapping millions of people in poverty.³⁷⁷ Income inequality not only negatively impacts access to education and health and well-being, but also seriously limits human progress and economic growth.³⁷⁸ Of all disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities, ageing persons, indigenous people, and rural citizens, women are the largest disadvantaged group and still face the greatest obstacles to fully participating in, and benefiting from the growing economy.³⁷⁹ Only 65% of adult women in sub-Saharan Africa are working, and approximately 74% of these are working in low-yield agriculture and insecure informal employment.³⁸⁰ Women in many African countries struggle with low educational attainment, limited availability of childcare, and the impact of laws and customs that restrict women's ability to work outside the home.³⁸¹ This gender gap in employment opportunities begins with education, and only 23% of poor rural girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete their primary education.³⁸² A UNDP report published in 2016 found that gender inequality not only excludes women from benefiting from Africa's development, but also costs sub-Saharan Africa on average \$95 billion per year because the growth potential of women is not utilized.³⁸³ The report concludes that legal reforms that advance women's empowerment, higher participation of women in decision-making, better maternal health care, and targeted education policies are required to ensure gender equality in employment and more inclusive development.³⁸⁴

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ UN OSAA, *New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ UNDP, *NEPAD/UNDP Africa Strengthen their Collaboration*, 2011.

³⁷¹ UNDP, *UNDP's support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*, 2015.

³⁷² UN ECA, *NEPAD*.

³⁷³ African Development Bank Group, *NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility*.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ World Bank Group, *NEPAD Launches Initiative for the Resilience and Restoration of African Landscapes*, 2015.

³⁷⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 4.

³⁷⁷ African Development Bank Group, *African Economic Outlook 2016*, 2016, p. 99.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 13.

³⁸² Ibid., p. 11.

³⁸³ UNDP, *Africa Human Development Report 2016*, 2016, p. 73.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

Another key to ensuring that development benefits all people is engaging Africa's youth. Over 50% of Africa's population is under the age of 18, but at present the majority of them are living in poverty, often meaning that they have to work at an early age instead of furthering their education.³⁸⁵ In regions at a low stage of development, families demand that their children supplement the household income as soon as the compulsory education period ends, which forces 62% of African youth to forego secondary education.³⁸⁶ Having obtained only primary education, these young people are left with only poorly paid, low-quality jobs.³⁸⁷ Nine out of ten working youth in Africa are poor or near poor, meaning that they live on less than \$4 per day.³⁸⁸ More vocational training opportunities and more employment opportunities in high-skilled occupations could incentivize young people to remain in education.³⁸⁹

Decent and Productive Employment

The creation of decent and productive employment that “delivers a fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection for families” is key to translating Africa's impressive economic growth into social development.³⁹⁰ In 2014, the youth unemployment rate in North Africa was 30.6%, which deprives their states of their economic potential and results in high poverty rates.³⁹¹ Furthermore, unemployment can cause political instability and rebellions due to youth dissatisfaction with government.³⁹² In addition to a lack of employment opportunities for youth, Africa's labor force is expected to grow rapidly due to population growth on the continent, requiring the creation of 18 million new jobs every year until 2035.³⁹³ The economies of many African states are obstructed by an overreliance on basic agriculture and primary commodities, which are characterized by informal and low paid employment with poor working conditions.³⁹⁴ A shift towards low-technology, labor-intensive manufacturing industries supported by diversification and industrialization can improve the quantity and quality of jobs, as well as mitigate the impact of external shocks such as falling commodity prices.³⁹⁵ One example of the success of industrialization policies is the Motor Industry Development Plan (MIDP) implemented in South Africa.³⁹⁶ MIDP incentivized global automotive companies to build car factories in the country by offering them a rebate on duties for imports and a 20% reimbursement on investments in productive assets.³⁹⁷ The industry generated by MIDP created close to 100,000 well-paid and stable jobs in the industry and now contributes 6% to South Africa's GDP.³⁹⁸

Governments can complement these macroeconomic policies by developing active labor market policies that enhance the employability of disadvantaged groups, such as job search programs.³⁹⁹ Vocational training is another way of enabling individuals to increase their employability and their share of the profit on their work.⁴⁰⁰ As part of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the NEPAD Agency provides training in cooperation with local governments for young entrepreneurs and women in six African Member States; the program gives trainees the skills to produce high-quality agricultural products tailored to global demand instead of producing low-value basic agricultural products.⁴⁰¹ Although these programs yield success, more efforts on a broad scale are required.⁴⁰² Another project of the Agency established easy access to microcredit services via mobile banking for

³⁸⁵ African Development Bank Group, *African Economic Outlook 2016*, 2016, p. 95.

³⁸⁶ ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook*, 2016, p. 16.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ African Development Bank Group, *African Economic Outlook 2016*, 2016, p. 95.

³⁸⁹ ILO, *World Employment Social Outlook*, 2016, p. 15.

³⁹⁰ ILO, *Decent work*, 2016; UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 3.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁹² *Ibid.*

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁹⁶ UN ECA, *Making South Africa's Auto Industry's Success Story an Enduring One*, 2014, p. 2.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁸ UN ECA, *Making South Africa's Auto Industry's Success Story an Enduring One*, 2014, p. 1.

³⁹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 17.

⁴⁰⁰ NEPAD Agency, *Annual Report 2015*, 2015, p. 11.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

10,500 women in very remote areas of the Gambia, allowing them to invest in starting their own businesses.⁴⁰³ While this initiative is significant, more effort is required; four out of five African women lack access to an account at a formal financial institution, compared to only one out of four men.⁴⁰⁴

Governance reform and a supportive institutional environment are needed to enable the private sector to create jobs.⁴⁰⁵ In its country reports the APRM identifies obstacles such as extensive regulation, lacking institutional capacity, or corruption that limit the private sector's ability to contribute to economic development.⁴⁰⁶ The APRM also reviews democratization because policy decisions that are based on competitive elections are more transparent and inclusive of all people, but so far only 17 Member States have submitted enough information to be peer-reviewed.⁴⁰⁷ Despite recurrent pledges by African governments to support democratization, only 12% of African Member States are classified in the Freedom House Index as "free" while 39% are "not free."⁴⁰⁸ Botswana, for example, demonstrated how natural resources can benefit all people instead of a corrupt few if transparent and democratic institutions are in place.⁴⁰⁹ The country invested in higher value-added activities in its diamond sector, which created jobs for the country's youth, generated an extra \$6 billion of diamond sales for its economy, and generated enough taxes to fund free schooling for all to the age of 13.⁴¹⁰

Transport, Energy, Water, and Communication Infrastructure

Poor infrastructure hinders social development in several ways. Two thirds of the rural population in Africa live more than two kilometers away from an all-season road, which presents significant obstacles for these populations to participate in the growing economy of their country.⁴¹¹ Regular electricity shortages threaten industrialization by interfering with factory production, as well as interrupting services in schools and hospitals; this keeps 630 million Africans in energy poverty and endangers their health due to indoor smoke caused by burning wood or coal.⁴¹² Investing in infrastructure could create 2.5 million jobs and raise Africa's GDP by 2%, but African Member States often struggle to finance these projects.⁴¹³ Additional investments of \$93 billion a year are needed to close existing gaps in Africa's infrastructure needs.⁴¹⁴ In addition to a lack of funding, major challenges include political instability in fragile states, monopolists who benefit from shortages, structural problems such as difficult terrain or remoteness of inhabited areas, and lacking the expertise required to construct complex technology.⁴¹⁵

The Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative of the AU aims to accelerate regional infrastructure and close bottlenecks.⁴¹⁶ Recent priority projects include the construction of the missing 125 km of the Trans-Sahara Highway and a fiber optic project connecting all five capital cities of the East African Community Member States.⁴¹⁷ The Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) program initiated by the Secretary-General pursues a more decentralized approach; for example, it provides technical assistance to Green Mini-Grids developers who invest in off-grid solar home systems and communal mini-grids.⁴¹⁸ Investment in all kinds of infrastructure is needed to remove obstacles to development of remote areas, further the economic integration of Africa, and reduce poverty.⁴¹⁹

⁴⁰³ NEPAD Agency, *Gender*.

⁴⁰⁴ African Development Bank Group, *Financial Inclusion in Africa*, 2013, p. 75.

⁴⁰⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 17.

⁴⁰⁶ African Peer Review Mechanism & African Union, *Annual Report 2014*, 2015, p. 6.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁸ Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2016*.

⁴⁰⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 10.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁴ Agence Française de Développement & World Bank Group, *Africa's Infrastructure*, 2010, p. 18.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁶ NEPAD Agency, *Annual Report 2015*, 2015, p. 17.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴¹⁸ *SE4All Africa Hub to provide technical assistance to Green Mini-Grids developers*, SE4All Africa Hub, 2016.

⁴¹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p.14.

International Cooperation

Although increased efforts of African governments are paramount for social development, the continent still requires reliable and adequate support from its development partners.⁴²⁰ From 2013 to 2014, ODA from members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to Africa fell by 5% to \$28 billion.⁴²¹ This decline is especially concerning because ODA constitutes two thirds of external financing for Africa's 34 least developed countries and the current ODA commitments already fall short of the pledge these Member States made in 1978 to increase their ODA to at least 0.7% of GDP.⁴²² FDI can provide another powerful source of investment but many multinational enterprises are concerned about political or economic instability in African Member States.⁴²³ Developed Member States can contribute by incentivizing their companies to scale up FDI in Africa by providing investment insurance mechanisms.⁴²⁴ The Grow Africa Partnership can act as a role model in this regard: 210 companies have committed to invest more than \$10 billion in African agriculture and thereby created new and stable jobs.⁴²⁵ Trade barriers in developed Member States, especially for agricultural products, hinder African producers from selling their agricultural products in the markets of Europe and North America, which would allow them to move up in the production chain and generate more jobs in the agribusiness of African Member States.⁴²⁶ The Doha round of negotiations of the World Trade Organization provides a key opportunity to reshape trade regulations so that they spur development in Africa.⁴²⁷

Conclusion

In order to fully accomplish the SDGs on the continent and make the 21st century an African century, it is essential to keep people at the center of all development efforts. The impressive GDP growth rates of the past decade in Africa will not contribute to tangible social development unless they are accompanied by policies that reduce inequality and guarantee inclusion of all Africans in the booming economy.⁴²⁸ Investment in education and vocational training can unlock the potential of Africa's youth to set up new businesses or become skilled laborers. Industrialization, investments in infrastructure, and governance reforms are fundamental to providing decent and productive employment. The international community is key in supporting development efforts by providing adequate funding via ODA, FDI, and external debt relief. The relative ineffectiveness of UNPAAERD and UNNADAF has demonstrated that commitment of Africa's leaders and active involvement of developed Member States are prerequisites for the success of NEPAD.⁴²⁹ CSocD regularly reviews the NEPAD process and thus provides an excellent forum for sharing best practices and developing new ideas in improving social development in Africa.

Further Research

Delegates should concentrate their research on how CSocD can provide policy guidance to Member States to strengthen social development in Africa. How can educational programs be targeted towards the most disadvantaged groups, including women and rural populations? How can governments initiate industrialization without creating inefficient and bureaucratic public administration? How can the effectiveness of the APRM be improved? Which policies and institutions provide the best environment for a thriving private sector? What are the bottlenecks of regional infrastructure and what is the best approach to ensure access to transportation, energy, water, and information infrastructure for all Africans, and how can the international community assist African countries?

⁴²⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² UN, General Assembly, *International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (A/RES/2626 (XXV))*, 1970.

⁴²³ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 16.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/CN.5/2016/L.5)*, 2016, p. 9.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*, 2016, p. 5.

⁴²⁹ NEPAD Agency et al., *Africa's Decade of Change: Reflections on 10 years of NEPAD*, 2012.

Annotated Bibliography

African Development Bank Group. (2016). *African Economic Outlook 2016*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/AEO_2016_Report_Full_English.pdf

This report by the AfDB serves as excellent source for economic facts and figures through which to analyze Africa's development. It is divided into two parts, the first addressing Africa's performance and prospects and the second focusing on sustainable cities and structural transformation. Of special interest is Chapter 4, which looks into human development in Africa and how it must be addressed to reduce inequality and exclusion. The chapter explains why social development and reduced inequality is essential for sustainable economic growth. This resource is of special value for delegates that are interested in investigating the challenge of turning African cities into sustainable centers of social development.

African Peer Review Mechanism & African Union. (2015). *Annual Report 2014*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: <http://aprm-au.org/view-publication?nextpdi=3&&pubId=185>

The APRM is one essential pillar of NEPAD. It ensures that policies enacted by African governments conform to the agreed principles of NEPAD. The annual report of the APRM Secretariat includes a short FAQ section to explain how the mechanism works in practice. It also provides summaries of the progress in the participating countries and recent APRM activities. Delegates who seek options to improve governance in Africa should use this report to develop improvements to the mechanism.

African Union. (2015). *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: http://agenda2063.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Final_Draft_Agenda_2063_Framework_Formatted_TOC-1.pdf

Agenda 2063 is the new planning framework of the AU to coordinate and mainstream its development efforts. Additionally, it is meant to rekindle the passion for Pan-Africanism, a sense of African unity, self-reliance, integration, and solidarity. Delegates will find this relevant because NEPAD will be a central part of Agenda 2063 and therefore fully integrated into the AU system.

Ilorah, R. (2014). Recurring Challenges as Main Constraints to AU/NEPAD Projects. *Journal of African Business*, 15 (3): 156-168. Retrieved 28 August 2016 from: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15228916.2014.956637>

This study provides delegates with an independent and critical evaluation of NEPAD. The analysis is divided into evaluations of political, sociotechnological, and economic initiatives. The author identifies poor regional leadership, poor finances, and dysfunctional institutions as main determinants of disappointing results. In order to overcome these obstacles, the author suggests improving Africa's institutions and deepening regional integration.

NEPAD Agency. (n.d.). *About NEPAD* [Website]. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://www.nepad.org/content/about-nepad>

The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency is the implementing agency of the AU and is responsible for continent-wide programs and projects. Its website provides a great summary of the topic, recent developments, and relevant documents. Additionally, it gives an overview of what actual NEPAD-focused programs and projects look like and what challenges they face. A very well structured section titled "Our Work" introduces many different initiatives in the areas of governance, infrastructure, industrialization, and human capital development. Each initiative is summarized and briefly evaluated.

NEPAD Agency et al. (2012). *Africa's Decade of Change: Reflections on 10 years of NEPAD*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: <http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/pubs/2013decadeofchange.pdf>

Delegates interested in the idea behind, and the history of, NEPAD and its development since it was initiated in the early 2000s should read this report. The first chapter summarizes why NEPAD was necessary. The second chapter provides an historic overview of the program. The third chapter goes into detail on the issues addressed by NEPAD such as engaging Africa's youth and empowerment of women. Of special relevance is chapter six, which outlines challenges and opportunities for the next decade.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/RES/2016/7)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/RES/2016/7>

This is the most recent resolution adopted by ECOSOC upon suggestion of CSocD on the topic. The resolution of the fifty-fourth session presents both a good example of typical CSocD resolutions and what issues are of concern for CSocD. Furthermore, the resolution will provide delegates with an understanding of recent actions and remaining questions that should be addressed. The resolution highlights the progress made by African governments and welcomes recent developments such as the adoption of Agenda 2063. It also points out short-comings, such as the need to accelerate Africa's industrialization and the importance of maternal and child health as a precondition, an indicator, and an outcome of sustainable development.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2016/2)*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2016/2>

The most recent report of the Secretary-General to CSocD on the topic provides an excellent and up-to-date overview of the progress and remaining challenges of NEPAD. Since it builds on the work of the UN Secretariat, the report can be seen as a very reliable resource. In the report, he Secretary-General informs about recent events such as the Ebola outbreak and their consequences on social development. Furthermore, he addresses in a very comprehensive way all aspects of the topic such as rising inequality, inclusive development, and gaps in financing NEPAD.

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-seventh session. (2002). *Letter dated 14 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/57/304)*. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/57/304>

This letter to the General Assembly contains the fundamental document that established the topic in the UN system. Attached is the full text of NEPAD. Since it is the fundamental document of the NEPAD program, it is a valuable source to understand the origins and objectives of NEPAD. The text outlines the conditions for sustainable development and emphasizes the pledge of African leaders to ensure peace, security, democracy, and good governance. It then identifies investment in infrastructure, human resource development, agriculture, environment, culture, and science and technology as priorities for development efforts.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2016). *New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support (A/RES/70/295)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 23 August 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/295>

This is the latest consideration of the implementation of NEPAD by the General Assembly. The General Assembly reaffirmed its full support for the program and acclaimed the AU's Agenda 2063. It expressed concern over the adverse impact of the world financial and economic crisis and the slow recovery. Furthermore, the General Assembly urged the international community to scale up its support for the efforts of African states in implementing NEPAD by increasing ODA, FDI, debt relief, openness to African exports, and technology transfers.

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