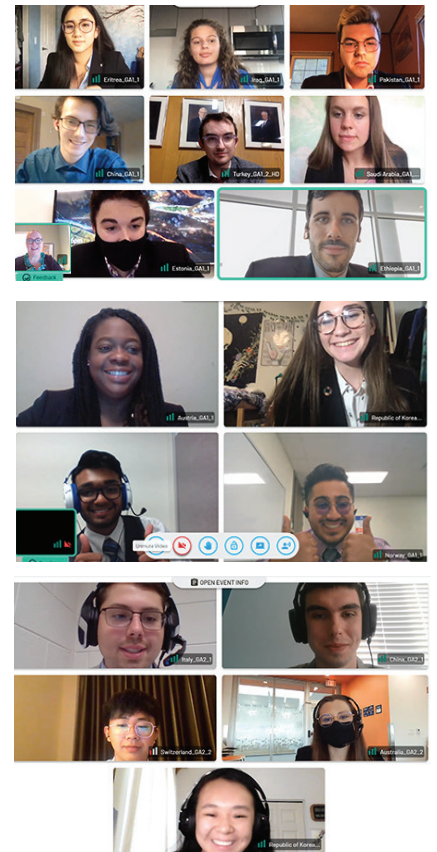# NMUN•DC

Washington, DC USA
5-7 November 2021
nmun.org/conferences/washington-dc.html

United Nations Development Programme
Background Guide 2021

Written by: Allison C. Uhrick, Director;
Lisa Huynh, Assistant Director; Bryant Larson, Assistant Director-IS

NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2021 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This year's staff is: Director Allison C. Uhrick and Assistant Director Lisa N. Huynh. Allison holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Affairs. She plans to pursue a Master of Science in Public Policy next Spring. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science with a concentration in International Relations and a Master of Science in Applied Economics.

The topics under discussion for UNDP are:

I.   Building a Sustainable and Resilient Blue Economy
II.   COVID-19 Recovery: Building Back Better

As one of the United Nations' leading operational programs in international development, UNDP works directly with 170 countries and territories to reduce inequality and eradicate poverty by implementing strategy plans in accordance with its three focus areas: sustainable development, democratic governance, and climate and disaster resilience. In this context, UNDP aims to promote and advance the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With a focus centered around sustainable development, UNDP assists countries in developing policy, leadership skills, partnering abilities, and building resilience. UNDP advocates for change and to provide countries with access to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to conduct additional research, explore your Member State's policies in-depth, and examine the policies of other Member States to improve your ability to negotiate and reach consensus. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will use their research to draft and submit a position paper. Guidelines are available in the NMUN Position Paper Guide.

The NMUN website has many additional resources, including two that are essential both in preparation for the conference and as a resource during the conference. They are:
1.   The NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide, which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not discuss the topics or agenda with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2.   The NMUN Rules of Procedure, which includes the long and short form of the rules as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretary-General Ana Willett at usgana.dc@nmun.org or Secretary-General Courtney Indart at secgen.dc@nmun.org.

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

Sincerely,
Allison C. Uhrick, Director
Lisa N. Huynh, Assistant Director

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Committee Overview

Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) embodies Article 55 of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), which outlines the organization's responsibility to promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development," as prerequisites to peace.[1] Originally, the United Nations' (UN) development initiatives largely consisted of providing technical advice through the UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) and supporting pre-investment projects through the UN Special Fund for the benefit of less developed countries.[2] To streamline these assistance programs, General Assembly resolution 2029 (XX) consolidated the EPTA and the UN Special Fund to establish UNDP on 1 January 1966.[3] Today, as the leader of the UN's "global development network," UNDP assists countries with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and implementing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) (2030 Agenda).[4]

> At NMUN•DC 2021 we simulate the **Executive Board of UNDP** in terms of composition and size; however, delegates are not limited to the strict mandate of the Executive Board as a budgetary and administrative body during the conference. For the purposes of our NMUN•DC 2021, conference and in line with our educational mission of the conference, the committee has the ability to make programmatic and policy decisions on issues within the mandate of UNDP in line with the overall function of the organization.

Governance, Structure, and Membership

UNDP leadership consists of an Administrator and an Executive Board.[5] Each Administrator serves for a term of four years following their nomination from the Secretary-General and their confirmation from the General Assembly.[6] In most cases, this official oversees UNDP's five Regional Bureaus, provides assistance to its four supervisory Bureaus, and convenes the UN Sustainable Development Core Group (UNSDG Core Group) as Vice-Chair.[7] The UNSDG Core Group, which consists of 10 UN Executive Heads and the rotating chairs of the five Regional Economic Commissions, allows UNDP to acquire the practical experience and intellectual acumen needed for responding to the global system's broad array of development challenges.[8]

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[1] Charter of the United Nations, 1945, Art. 55; UNDP, *UNDP for Beginners: A Beginner's Guide to the United Nations Development Programme*, 2015, p. 4.

[2] UN General Assembly, *Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance for Economic Development of Under-Developed Countries (A/RES/304 (IV))*, 1949; UN General Assembly, *Establishment of the Special Fund (A/RES/1240 (XIII))*, 1958.

[3] UN General Assembly, *Consolidation of the Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in a United Nations Development Programme (A/RES/2029 (XX))*, 1965.

[4] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2019-20*, 2019, p. 251; UNDG, *The Sustainable Development Goals Are Coming to Life*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

[5] Secretariat of the UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS Executive Board, *Information Note About the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services*, 2018.

[6] UNDP, *About Us: Our Leadership*, 2020.

[7] Secretariat of the UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS Executive Board, *Information Note About the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services*, 2018, pp. 1-3; UNDP, *About Us: Our Leadership*, 2020; UNDP, *2021 Organizational Chart*, 2021; UNDP, *Our Partners: Overview*, 2021.

[8] UNDP, *Our Partners: Overview*, 2021.

Meanwhile, the Executive Board serves as UNDP's premier administrative body.[9] Its diverse range of functions include implementing policies approved by the General Assembly and administered by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as delivering annual reports at each substantive session on the committee's current priorities.[10] For 2021, these consist of "eradicating poverty in all its forms", promoting policies that have a multiplier effect on the SDGs, and safeguarding development gains through a greater resilience to disasters and global crises.[11] Apart from its close collaboration with both UN organs, the Executive Board also oversees the allocation of UNDP's $4.8 billion voluntary contributions and monitors the performance of each fund and program's operational activities.[12] Comprised of 36 members, the Council selects Board representatives for the purpose of maintaining an equitable geographic distribution among its five Latin American and Caribbean States, seven Asian-Pacific States, four Eastern European States, eight African States, and 12 Western European and Other States (WEOS).[13] Although most representatives serve for three years, each Member State included as part of the WEOS adheres to its own rotational scheme, meaning that some do not serve a full term.[14]

Alongside both senior positions, the Bureau plays a vital role in streamlining UNDP's operational activities, namely through its organization of board meetings, its advancement of transparent decision-making, and its selection of teams for field visits.[15] Pursuant to the Executive Board's Rules of Procedure, the Bureau's President and four Vice-Presidents convene on a regular basis.[16] These meetings typically occur once a month and in addition to the three standard conferences held alternatively in New York or Geneva each year.[17] Throughout these sessions, the Bureau prepares an annual workplan for the Board's consideration in close consultation with the Secretariat.[18] However, unlike the Executive Board, which adopts decisions by consensus and a vote when necessary, the Bureau does not make decisions on any substantive matters.[19] Instead, these officials brief and share information with their regional groups on the Bureau's deliberations.[20] This is because Bureau representatives are selected by their fellow board members solely for the purposes of promoting dialogue and acting as liaisons for their respective regional blocs.[21] For example, in its most recent election, H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva of the Eastern European States became President of the Bureau, with Vice-Presidents from the WEOS, African States, Asian-Pacific States, and Latin American and Caribbean States.[22]

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[9] UN General Assembly, *Further Measures for the Restructuring and Revitalization of the United Nations in the Economic, Social, and Related Fields (A/RES/48/162))*, 1994.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS, *UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (DP/2017/38)*, 2017, p. 2.
[12] UNDP, *Funding Compendium 2019*, 2020, p. 5; UNDP, *Our Funding: UNDP's Funding Channels*, 2020; UNDP, *Information Note on the Executive Board*, 2021.
[13] UNDP, *Information Note on the Executive Board*, 2021.
[14] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2019-20*, 2019, p. 254; UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, *Regional Groups of Member States*, 2020.
[15] UNDP, *Executive Board: Overview*, 2021.
[16] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS, *Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, of the United Nations Population Fund, and of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/2011/18)*, 2011.
[17] Ibid, p. 5; UNDP, *Information Note About the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services*, 2020.
[18] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS, *Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, of the United Nations Population Fund, and of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/2011/18)*, 2011, p. 5.
[19] UNDP, *Information Note About the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS*, 2020.
[20] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS, *Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, of the United Nations Population Fund, and of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/2011/18)*, 2011, p. 4; UNDP, *Information Note About the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services*, 2020.
[21] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS, *Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, of the United Nations Population Fund, and of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/2011/18)*, 2011, pp. 4-5.
[22] UNDP, *The Executive Board: The Bureau*, 2021.

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

UNDP emanated from the 1965 consolidation of the EPTA and the UN Special Fund to reinforce development efforts and curtail the significant overlap existing between either mandate.[23] The General Assembly established the agency to empower lives and build global and national resiliency through resolution 2029 (XX).[24] Per its newly formed mandate, UNDP built on the settled practices of the previous agencies by retaining the principles, procedures and provisions of each.[25] However, unlike its predecessors, UNDP optimizes project success through strategic direction and oversight.[26] UNDP is uniquely positioned to support the UN Development System's (UNDS) "coherent, effective, and efficient support for countries seeking" to translate the SDGs into action.[27] To do so, UNDP relies on the UNSDG Core Groups common approach to implementing the SDGs called MAPS: Mainstreaming, Acceleration, and Policy Support.[28] MAPS also ensures that the principles found within the 2030 Agenda are fully integrated into national development frameworks through UN guidance and resources.[29] Furthermore, it identifies where Member States experience the most difficulty in implementing the SDGs, and it makes certain that the expertise and skills of the UN system are made available in a timely and low-cost manner.[30]

In its efforts to support and supplement the development priorities of Member States, UNDP's work is facilitated through five Regional Hubs: Africa, the Arab States, Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.[31] Guided by UNDP's Strategic Plans, these coalitions provide their Country Offices with readily accessible advisory services and knowledge-sharing platforms built to assist Member States with developing policies, institutional abilities, and resilience.[32] To supplement these efforts, UNDP administers the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UN Volunteers (UNV) program.[33] Partnerships like these are crucial to the overall work of UNDP as they allow the agency to finance its various operational activities and to mobilize volunteers to engage directly in the UN's post-conflict recovery and sustainable development work.[34]

Throughout its more than 55-year existence, UNDP has also experienced a series of wide-ranging, administrative reforms.[35] Beginning in 1990, UNDP published the first edition of the Human Development Reports (HDR).[36] Commissioned annually by a team of independent experts, these reports are distinguished for their editorial independence, as ensured by the General Assembly, and their groundbreaking analysis, which has frequently challenged the notion that economic indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP) offer up a true depiction of a state's economic success.[37] These reports focus on three basic dimensions when conducting their annual country assessments: per-capita income, life expectancy, and literacy.[38] In its latest edition, the 2020 HDR doubled down on this notion, explaining that the untold suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic has interacted with the world's other layered crises, threatening significant development reversals on all fronts of the SDGs.[39] Additionally, in 1994,

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[23] Simon, *The History of the UNDP*, 2013; Muttukumaru, *The Funding and Related Practices of the UN Development System*, 2015, p. 4.

[24] UN General Assembly, *Consolidation of the Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in a United Nations Development Programme (A/RES/2029 (XX))*, 1965.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2019-20*, 2019, pp. 249-250; UNDP, *Our Partners: Overview*, 2021.

[28] UNDP, *SDGs in Action*, 2017.

[29] UNSDG, *MAPS - Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for the 2030 Agenda*, 2015.

[30] Ibid.

[31] UNDP, *Our Partners: Overview*, 2021.

[32] UNDP, *About Us: UNDP in Asia and the Pacific*, 2021.

[33] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2019-20*, 2019, p. 251.

[34] UNDP, *Our Partners: Overview*, 2021.

[35] UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *UN System Documentation: UNDP*, 2021.

[36] UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *UN System Documentation: Development*, 2021.

[37] UNDP, *The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene,* 2020, p. 22.

[38] UNDP, *About Human Development*, 2021.

[39] UNDP, *The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene,* 2020.

Member States endorsed General Assembly resolution 48/162.[40] In it, they called for the 48-member Governing Council to be superseded by the Executive Board, an administrative body that was charged with providing inter-governmental support as well as oversight duties for each new project.[41] This way, UNDP could maximize the impact of its projects by being receptive to the priorities of every recipient country.[42]

Over the past several years, UNDP's role in poverty eradication and inequality reduction has continued to expand in pursuit of spurring progress towards the SDGs.[43] A prominent example of this is the introduction of the Accountability System for its substantial role in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of UNDP operations.[44] Accountability and transparency ensure that UNDP will exemplify the highest ethical standards with the funds and resources that Member States contribute for UN development efforts.[45] In commitment to these values, the Accountability System provides a framework for performance management comprised of the Office of Audit and Investigations, the UNDP Ethics Office, and the Independent Evaluation Office.[46] UNDP's accountability assessments follow an "independent, cyclical audit," which allows the programme to promote greater learning and better decision-making among stakeholders.[47] As a result, the Accountability System is vital in achieving desired performance results, because ensures through its oversight policy that UNDP is utilizing its resources in adherence to the agency's ethical and professional standard metrics.[48]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN mobilized a system-wide action campaign and entrusted UNDP with serving as the technical lead of its socio-economic response.[49] In accordance with its new-found role, UNDP has provided UN Country Teams with country-specific strategies designed to reduce the impact of COVID-19.[50] Typically, these recommendations have focused on improving social protection measures, strengthening health care systems, and managing multi-sectoral crises.[51] For instance, in March 2020, UNDP swiftly launched its first project, "Prepare, Respond, Recover," an initiative designed to expedite the UN's capacity to address the growing number of requests for assistance from developing Member States.[52] As part of the preliminary phases of UNDP's programmatic offer, UNDP disbursed $30 million to 130 Country Offices through its Rapid Response Facility.[53] This aimed to provide medical supplies for health care workers; ensure protection for marginalized communities; and support countries in the process of undergoing socio-economic assessments.[54]

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[40] UN General Assembly, *Further Measures for the Restructuring and Revitalization of the United Nations in the Economic, Social and Related Fields (A/RES/48/162)*, 1994.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] UN General Assembly, *Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (A/RES/59/250)*, 2005; UN General Assembly, *Repositioning of the United Nations Development System in the Context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (A/RES/72/279)*, 2018.

[44] Executive Board of the UNDP and of the UNFPA, *The UNDP Accountability System (DP/2008/16/Rev.1)*, 2008; UNDP, *About Us: UNDP in Asia and the Pacific,* 2021.

[45] UNDP, *Accountability*, 2021.

[46] Ibid.

[47] UNDP, *UN in Action: Global Level*, 2021.

[48] Executive Board of the UNDP and of the UNFPA, *The UNDP Accountability System (DP/2008/16/Rev.1)*, 2008; UNDP, *A Beginner's Guide to the United Nations Development Programme*, 2015, p. 20.

[49] UNDP, *COVID-19 UNDP's Integrated Response*, 2021, p. 2.

[50] Ibid; UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2020.

[51] UNDP, *COVID-19 UNDP's Integrated Response*, 2021; UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2020.

[52] UNDP, *COVID-19 UNDP's Integrated Response*, 2021, p. 3; UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2020, p. 2.

[53] *COVID-19: $30 Million Rapid Response Facility Launched for Vulnerable Countries*, UNDP, 2020; UNDP, *Update on UNDP's Socio-Economic Response – Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2021, p. 14.

[54] Ibid, p. 14.

Shortly thereafter, in July 2020, UNDP allocated an additional $500 million in funding as part of its second programmatic offer: "Beyond Recovery, Towards 2030."[55] In tandem with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), this offer aimed to safeguard at-risk groups, uphold Member States' rule-of-law, and restore livelihoods disrupted by the public health crisis in more than 100 Member States.[56] To assist with these efforts, as well as to ensure that decision makers could positively manage the pandemic's complexity, UNDP established the Integrated Digital Assessments Initiative (IDA) and the COVID-19 Data Futures Platform.[57] Since its creation, IDA has supported more than 40 Country Offices amidst the process of developing their Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIAs).[58] It has done so by measuring the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable households through the procurement of rapid and reliable, evidence-based solutions.[59] Through compiling multiple sources of data across UN agencies and the private sector, the COVID-19 Data Futures Platform has managed to simulate the impact of "temporary basic incomes, gender informed recovery, and green fiscal recovery packages" on the SDGs as well as their projected cost at the national level.[60] Introduced in December 2020, this open-source platform has also permitted UNDP to assess individuals' ability to recover from the ongoing public health crisis by displaying the varied impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable households through UNDP's more than 128 SEIAs.[61]

Throughout its first annual session for the 2021-2022 program cycle, the Executive Board convened to adopt the workplan submitted by the Bureau and the Secretariat.[62] As part of their priority areas, the group identified governance and fragility, the climate crisis, and surging inequalities to be of greatest concern for the global community moving forward.[63] However, in considering that the COVID-19 pandemic had reduced global human development for the first time in 30 years, the group acknowledged that the current crisis would likely test the UN's ability to deliver upon those same objectives.[64] Nevertheless, UNDP reaffirmed its commitment to resolving these challenges through sustainable actions and programs.[65] For instance, on 29 January 2021, UNDP launched the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) fundraising campaign alongside the UN Environmental Programme and the UNCDF.[66] Through blended finance and public-private partnerships, the GFCR is set to generate more than $2 billion and will serve as a pipeline for investible projects capable of restoring coral reefs.[67] In March 2021, UNDP also announced the nine winners of its Ocean Innovation Challenge (OIC), a yearly contest for ocean conservation projects.[68] Since its introduction in 2020, the OIC has been a unique tool for UNDP to utilize in pursuit of achieving SDG 14 "Life Below Water" and all related targets.[69]

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[55] UNDP, *COVID-19 UNDP's Integrated Response*, 2021, p. 7; UNDP, *Update on UNDP's Socio-Economic Response – Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2021, p. 5.

[56] Ibid.

[57] UNDP, *Integrated Digital Assessments*, 2021; *UNDP Launches New COVID-19 Data Futures Platform*, UNDP, 2020.

[58] UNDP, *Integrated Digital Assessments*, 2021.

[59] UNDP, *Update on UNDP's Socio-Economic Response – Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2021, p. 7.

[60] *UNDP Launches New COVID-19 Data Futures Platform*, UNDP, 2020.

[61] Ibid.

[62] UNDP, *Executive Board: First Regular Session 2021*, 2021.

[63] Executive Board of the UNDP, the UNFPA, and the UNOPS, *Provisional Agenda, Annotations, List of Documents and Workplan*, 2020; UNDP, *Executive Board: First Regular Session 2021,* 2021; UNDP, *Progress Update on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 72/279 on Repositioning of the UN Development System,* 2020, pp. 1-2; UNDP, *Update on UNDP's Socio-Economic Response – Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2021, pp. 1-14.

[64] UNDP, *COVID-19 Pandemic*, 2021; UNDP, *Executive Board: First Regular Session 2021,* 2021; UNDP, *Update on UNDP's Socio-Economic Response – Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2021, pp. 1-14.

[65] UNDP, *Executive Board: First Regular Session 2021,* 2021,.

[66] UNDP, *Global Fund for Coral Reefs Launches Fundraising Campaign*, 2021.

[67] Ibid.

[68] UNDP, *Ocean Innovation Challenge*, 2021.

[69] Ibid.

Conclusion

The UNDP Executive Board's position atop three organizations, UNDP, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and UN Office for Project Services, as well as its cooperative function with UNSDG Core Group, uniquely situates it to further development on all levels. With a wide range of working areas, including poverty reduction, crisis prevention, democratic governance, environmental protection, and human rights, UNDP can target the most important aspects for sustainable and equal human development with innovative strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021.[70] UNDP continues to work toward enhancing effective and inclusive democratic governance, strengthening resilience, eradicating poverty, and reducing inequalities and does so by working both bilaterally and multilaterally, achieving the SDGs.[71] UNDP continues to take the necessary measures to aid the international community in its goal of achieving the SDGs, even as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have challenged the development landscape.[72] UNDP also remains poised to play a significant role in responding to and assisting governments in mitigating the effects of COVID-19.[73]

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> *This handbook provides information not only on UNDP, but also on the complete organization of the UN. Delegates can find basic information about all programs, committees, and funds within the UN system, including a quick overview of UNDP. Furthermore, it provides information on the role of UNDP within the UN system and gives the vital organizational structure to help delegates understand the role of UNDP within the United Nations' system.*

United Nations Development Programme. (2020). *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030*. Retrieved 24 February 2021 from: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hiv-aids/beyond-recovery--towards-2030.html
> *This publication details the work that UNDP has been doing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Delegates can find basic information pertaining to UNDP's collaboration with other UN agencies and will also be able to learn how UNDP's partnership with COs is helping Member States recover from the global health crisis. Thus, this is a great starting point for delegates wishing to understand the scope of UNDP's work amidst the evolving state of the pandemic.*

United Nations Development Programme. (2021). *Executive Board: First Regular Session 2021*. Retrieved 13 February 2021 from: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/executive-board/documents-for-sessions/adv2021-first.html
> *This site explains the current priorities of UNDP for the 2021 program cycle. These reports give detailed outlines on the failures and successes of past UNDP initiatives, ranging from the agency's COVID-19 response to its attempts at resolving the climate crisis. These reports will serve delegates well in understanding the full scope of UNDP's work over the span of one annual program as well as the amount of planning that is involved beforehand for each new project.*

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[70] Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, *UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (DP/2017/38)*, 2017.
[71] UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030*, 2020.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.

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integrated-response.html

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launches-fundraising-campaign.html

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I. Building a Sustainable Blue Economy

"We all rely on the ocean, which covers two-thirds of our planet, to regulate our climate, provide us with food, medicine, energy, and even the very air we breathe. Put simply, without a healthy ocean, there is no life on Earth."[74]

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) envisions a blue economy with significant value from the ocean, seas, and coastal areas, while also protecting its ecosystem and enabling sustainable use.[75] Known as the ocean's economy, the blue economy is an approach in which marine spatial planning, or methods used by the public sector to influence an even distribution of activities across various sectors, works in tandem with marine conservation.[76] As of July 2020, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) found that a blue economy is the world's seventh largest economy based on gross domestic product (GDP), valued at an estimated $3 trillion USD annually, while supporting the livelihoods of more than 3 billion people.[77] A majority of these 3 billion people live in developing countries with 90% of the world's fishers residing in these areas, while 30 to 50% of a Small Island Developing States' (SIDS) GDP depend on ocean-based tourism.[78] As a result, 80% of the world's resources are transported through maritime routes.[79] Currently, organizations such as the European Investment Bank Group (EIB) support a sustainable blue economy by investing in sustainable seafood production, supporting green infrastructure and technologies on new and existing fishing vessels, and financing over 33 offshore wind projects in coastal areas of the European Union (EU).[80]

The natural resources the blue economy depends on are eroding quickly under the pressures of irresponsible human activities and the ongoing threat of climate change.[81] Nearly 34% of all fish stocks are overfished at unsustainable biological levels, meanwhile the ocean's temperatures are continuing to rise and eradicating almost half of the world's coral reefs.[82] The ocean itself is becoming more acidic due to increasing levels of carbon dioxide absorption, and by 2050, there could be more plastic than fish in the ocean.[83] Investing in sustainable practices, conservation, and biodiversity are key for implementing a sustainable blue economy under the guidance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[84] The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) works in conjunction with other UN agencies, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), along with international financial institutions, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) to improve water and ocean management as well as sustain livelihoods at the local and international levels.[85] UNDP believes that a successful and sustainable blue economy is dependent on the utilization of ocean resources for human benefit in a manner which can meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations.[86]

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[74] UNCTAD, *Why a sustainable blue recovery is needed*, 2020.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Houghton, *A Sustainable Development Goal for the Ocean: Moving from Goal Framing Towards Targets and Indicators for Implementation*; UNECE, *Spatial Planning: Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance*, 2008.
[77] UNCTAD, *Why a sustainable blue recovery is needed*, 2020.
[78] Ibid.
[79] FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture: Sustainability in Action*, 2020.
[80] EIB, *Clean oceans and the blue economy: Overview*, 2021.
[81] FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture: Sustainability in Action*, 2020.
[82] UNDP, *Water and ocean governance*, 2021.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] UNDP, *Water and ocean governance*, 2021; UNEP, *Enabling sustainable, resilient and inclusive blue economies*, 2021; UN DESA, *Diving into the Blue Economy*, 2019.
[86] UNDP, *Blue Economy: a sustainable ocean economic paradigm*, 2018.

International and Regional Framework

The international community has historically addressed the potential successes of the blue economy through effective water and ocean governance.[87] The *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS), a legally-binding document established in 1982, defines the rights and responsibilities of Member States with respect to their use of the world's oceans, whilst establishing guidelines for Member States to follow in regards to the environment, businesses established in coastal areas, and management of marine natural resources.[88] The Convention establishes a Member State's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which, as outlined in UNCLOS, is an area in which a sovereign coastal state assumes jurisdiction of the exploration and use of marine resources within the Member State's respective section of the sea, which extends up to 200 nautical miles from the coastline.[89] Within their respective EEZ, Member States can claim and exercise exclusive fishery management authority over all fish and fishery resources in the area.[90] In addition, Member States are encouraged by UNCLOS to explore and utilize the world's oceans for peaceful and sustainable purposes, such as for marine scientific research and technologic purposes.[91] UNCLOS also calls for protecting marine environments from the harmful effects of dredging, drilling, and waste disposal.[92]

Ten years later, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a specialized UN agency responsible for maritime transport and security, adopted the *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage*, also known as the Civil Liability Convention (CLC) in 1992, to ensure adequate compensation is available to anyone who suffers oil pollution damage as a result of maritime casualties involving oil-carrying ships.[93] The CLC covers pollution damage from oil spills suffered in a party Member State's territory, including the territorial sea, and is also applicable to ships that carry oil in bulk as cargo.[94] The protocols of the 1992 Convention also widened its scope to include pollution damage caused within a Member State's EEZ.[95] In this case, pollution damage is still covered, but any compensation for environmental damage is limited to costs related to improving the contaminated environment.[96] That same year, the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) adopted *Agenda 21*, an action agenda for the UN, individual governments, and multilateral organizations to address and implement sustainable development practices in four priority areas: Social and Economic Dimensions; Conservation and Management of Resources and Development; Strengthening the Role of Major Groups; and Means of Implementation.[97] *Agenda 21* aimed for every local government around the world to implement its own version of Agenda 21, and to achieve global sustainable development by the year 2000, as the "21" in the action plan refers to its original target of the 21st century.[98] Chapter 17 of the Agenda primarily focused on the protection of oceans, coastal areas, and the sustainable use and development of living marine resources, while acting in accordance with UNCLOS.[99] The chapter calls for Member States to: Apply preventative and precautionary measures to avoid degrading marine environments; Reduce the risks of long-term and irreversible damages; Integrate marine environment protections into general environmental, social and economic development policies; and Improve livelihoods in coastal areas, with a focus in developing countries, to assist in reducing the further degradation of marine and coastal environments.[100]

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[87] UNDP, *Water and ocean governance*, 2021.
[88] UNCLOS III, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.
[89] OECD, *Glossary of Statistical Terms: Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)*, 2001.
[90] Ibid.
[91] UNCLOS III, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.
[92] Ibid.
[93] IMO, *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC)*; IMO, *Introduction to IMO*.
[94] IMO, *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC)*.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992.
[98] Ibid.
[99] UNCED, *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Chapter 17: Protection of the Oceans, All Kinds of Seas, Including Enclosed and Semi-Enclosed Seas, and Coastal Areas and the Protection, Rational Use and Development of Their Living Resources* (*A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. II)*), 1992.
[100] Ibid.

Role of the International System

In recent years, UNDP and its international and regional partners have taken steps to build upon and develop a more sustainable blue economy.[101] The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place in 2012 and established clear measures for implementing action plans in the context of sustainable development.[102] In the Conference's outcome document, "The future we want" (A/RES/66/288), Member States called for "holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem."[103] With oceans as one of the four thematic areas of focus, Rio+20 stressed the importance of conserving and promoting the sustainable use of oceans and seas in the context of sustainable development.[104] This was accomplished through the importance of oceans and the blue economy in its contributions to sustained economic growth, food security, poverty eradication, establishment of employment opportunities, and creating sustainable livelihoods.[105] As a result of "The future we want," The *Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States* was held in 2014 with similar goals outlined in the outcome document, but with a particular focus on SIDS.[106] The *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway* (SAMOA Pathway), the outcome agreement of the Conference, reaffirms the commitments of Rio+20, as well as encourages SIDS to form partnerships with the international community to increase both financial and sustainable investments in education.[107] In addition, the SAMOA Pathway aims for a particular focus in macroeconomic policies, sustainable economic management, debt sustainability, and responsible borrowing and lending, in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth for full and productive employment opportunities and social protections throughout SIDS.[108]

The landmark document, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, was a direct outcome of Rio+20 as a solution to the post-2015 development agenda with the introduction of the SDGs.[109] The SDGs are an important blueprint to building a sustainable blue economy, as all 17 Goals are relevant to the area.[110] However, the blue economy highlights a particular focus on SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), to address streams of trash and waste which enter marine ecosystems and work to reduce and eliminate them; SDG 13 (Climate Action), which addresses the urgent action needed to address climate change and to include economic opportunities to address challenges arising from the ocean's role in the planet's carbon cycle; and SDG 14 (Life Below Water), to promote marine ecosystem restoration and encourage the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources.[111] In addition to the 2030 Agenda, in 2015 the SagarMala Project launched in India with the goal of enhancing their logistics sector's performance, while also unlocking the potential of the country's waterways and coastline through remodeling and modernizing coastal ports and enhancing the country's coastal community development by the year 2035.[112]

Following the 2030 Agenda, the UN commemorated World Oceans Day in June of 2017 by hosting the first *High-Level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable*

[101] UNDP & GEF SGP, *Blue Economy: Community Solutions*, 2019.
[102] UN SDGs Knowledge Platform, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*, 2021.
[103] UN General Assembly, *The future we want* (*A/RES/66/288*), 2012, p. 8.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.; UN SDGs Knowledge Platform, *Oceans & Seas*, 2021.
[106] UN SDGs Knowledge Platform, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*, 2021.
[107] UN General Assembly, *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway* (*A/RES/69/15*), 2014.
[108] Ibid.
[109] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (*A/RES/70/1*), 2015.
[110] Scorse & Colgan, *The Blue Economy and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018
[111] Lee, *The Blue Economy and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges and Opportunities*, 2020; Scorse & Colgan, *The Blue Economy and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018; UNDP, *Goal 14 Targets*, 2021.
[112] Ministry of Shipping, *About SagarMala: Vision*; Press Information Bureau, *SagarMala Programme*, 2017.

development, informally known as The United Nations Oceans Conference.[113] The Conference, taking place annually, aimed to reverse the declining health of the world's oceans for the benefit of the Earth and its inhabitants.[114] Three major outcomes emerged from the 2017 Ocean Conference: A declaration known as "Our ocean, our future: call for action" (A/71/L.74), which reaffirms the commitments by the international community to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development; A report from the co-chairs of the conference on partnership dialogues, with a focus on strengthening cooperation and establishing new partnerships to advance the implementation of SDG 14; and voluntary commitments by more than 1,300 businesses, governments, and CSOs to implement SDG 14.[115] The most recent Ocean Conference, due to take place in April of 2020, was postponed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, per a decision by the General Assembly, while encouraging the international community to continue its efforts on ocean action to achieve SDG 14.[116]

In 2018, Kenya—partnered with Canada and Japan and sponsored by UNDP—hosted the first global conference on Sustainable Blue Economy, where participants from around the world were educated on building a blue economy to harness the potential of the world's oceans and seas to improve the livelihoods, particularly those in developing states and SIDS, as well as women, youth, and indigenous peoples, as well as to use the latest scientific advancements and innovations to build prosperity, while also preserving and conserving the ocean for future generations.[117] In the same year, the Seychelles successfully launched the world's first sovereign blue bond, a sustainable bond used to finance projects related to ocean conservation.[118] Proceeds from the blue bonds were used to expand marine protected areas and support fisheries projects and, as of 2020, blue bonds are still in operational use.[119]

Reducing Marine Pollution in a Blue Economy

According to the World Bank, roughly 3 billion people globally rely on clean and healthy marine environments as a source of food and employment.[120] While ocean resources boost growth and wealth around the globe, the ocean's ecological health has been declining in recent years due to marine pollution.[121] UNDP estimates that ocean pollution has nearly tripled since pre-industrial times, equating to almost 13 million metric tons per year.[122] As a result, there has been an exponential growth in eutrophication, or an overabundance of plant nutrients present in a body of water due to land runoff, and areas of low oxygen in the oceans and seas, causing hundreds of billions of dollars in economic damage every year.[123] Moreover, the increasing acidity in oceans due to the effects of climate change is reducing the productivity of marine fisheries around the world, leading to losses in food security and income.[124] This is cause for concern, as FAO reports that the annual average increase in fish consumption has outpaced the annual average increase in population growth.[125] As a result, the demand for fish is expected to increase exponentially as human population growth also continues to increase exponentially.[126] Furthermore, between 4.8 to 12.7 million metric tons of plastic, out of the roughly 300 million metric tons produced every year, reach the ocean, negatively impacting marine ecosystems and

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[113] Ocean Conference, *About: Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14*, 2017.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ocean Conference, *Outcomes*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Our ocean our future: call for action* (*A/71/L.74*), 2017.
[116] UN DESA, *2020 UN Ocean Conference Postponed*, 2020.
[117] Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, *The Conference*, 2018.
[118] World Bank, *Seychelles Launches World's First Sovereign Blue Bond*, 2018.
[119] Blended Finance Taskforce, *Seychelles Blue Bonds*, 2020; World Bank, *Seychelles Launches World's First Sovereign Blue Bond*, 2018.
[120] World Bank, *Blue Economy*, 2020.
[121] Ibid.
[122] UNDP, *1st Call: Marine Pollution Reduction*, 2020.
[123] Ibid.
[124] High-Level Panel for A Sustainable Ocean Economy, *The Expected Impacts of Climate Change on the Ocean Economy*, 2019.
[125] FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture: Sustainability in Action*, 2020.
[126] Ibid.

harming marine organisms.[127] According to the 2019 report *Addressing Marine Plastics: A Systemic Approach*, UNEP showed that marine plastics cause an estimated $13 billion in damages annually, with the cost in damages continuing to grow.[128] In the context of a blue economy, plastics not only negatively impact these ecosystems, but the high-volume tourist areas located in and around them.[129] Plastics can damage the aesthetics and value of tourist destinations, which can lower tourism-related incomes and increase costs for repeated cleaning and maintenance of these locations.[130]

As of 2020, there are a few examples of action taken to reduce eutrophication and marine plastics at the regional or international levels.[131] One example would be the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, established by the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution in 2009 to reduce, prevent, and control pollution in the Black Sea basin.[132] In addition, the Commission was created to preserve and protect its marine environment, while also promoting integrated maritime policy and coastal zone management.[133] In 2020, UNDP created the Ocean Innovation Challenge and launched the first challenge on "Marine Pollution Reduction", SDG 14.1.[134] UNDP provided examples of innovations for consideration, including designs for biodegradable plastic substitutes, as well as financial and policy incentives to minimize fishing net losses and optimize them for recycling or re-use.[135] While UNDP and the Commission provide comprehensive guidance to address and reduce marine pollution, such as introducing plastics waste collection substitutes and creating policy and economic incentives for promoting safe wastewater practices, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has caused a surge in marine plastics due to the improper disposal of personal protective equipment, face masks, and single-use containers, as international and local governments have called for an increase in production of these items to lessen potential exposure and spread of the virus.[136] As a result, there is an increased pressure on industry and supply chains to acknowledge their negative contributions to marine pollution, and establish new, sustainable business models to reduce unnecessary plastic use and show their commitments to sustainability.[137]

The Role of Climate Change in the Blue Economy

Climate change has altered the ocean's chemistry, climate, and sea level.[138] Anthropogenic climate change, or human-generated climate change, driven by the increase in emissions of greenhouse gases dating back to the Industrial Revolution, have negatively impacted and will continue to impact marine habitats and ecosystems, which will, in turn, severely impact the blue economy.[139] One particular sector of the blue economy, coastal and maritime tourism, is highly dependent on good water quality and environmental conditions.[140] The effects of rising ocean temperatures and resulting ocean acidification have also impacted coral reefs, causing a decline in "on-reef" tourism, affecting the livelihoods of millions of people living in SIDS and coastal developing nations, who rely heavily on coral reef and eco-tourism as a means of income.[141] According to the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, coral reef cover is expected to decline between 72-87%, resulting in on-reef tourism values to exponentially decrease by 90% by the year 2100 without human intervention.[142]

[127] UNDP, *1st Call: Marine Pollution Reduction*, 2020.

[128] UNEP, *Addressing Marine Plastics: A Systemic Approach – Recommendations for Actions*, 2019.

[129] IUCN, *Marine Plastics*.

[130] Ibid.

[131] UNDP, *1st Call: Marine Pollution Reduction*, 2020.

[132] UNEP, *The Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution*.

[133] Ibid.

[134] UNDP, *1st Call: Marine Pollution Reduction*, 2020.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Malpass, *Fighting against a tide of marine plastic as COVID-19 worsens problem*, 2020.

[137] Andersen, *Marine litter and the challenge of sustainable consumption and production*, 2020.

[138] High-Level Panel for A Sustainable Ocean Economy, *The Expected Impacts of Climate Change on the Ocean Economy*, 2019.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Caribbean Maritime University, *What are the Sectors of the Blue Economy?*

[141] High-Level Panel for A Sustainable Ocean Economy, *The Expected Impacts of Climate Change on the Ocean Economy*, 2019.

[142] Ibid.

SIDS are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, especially those who are heavily invested and reliant in a blue economy.[143] For example, Seychelles are particularly environmentally, economically, and socially vulnerable to climate change, with the coastal plateau of Mahe containing over 90% of the island's economic activities only 6 feet above sea level.[144] The increase in sea levels, and increasing ocean temperatures threaten the livelihoods of entrepreneurs living and operating in the plateau and, in turn, can lead to a reduced fish population, loss of revenue from fisheries and tourism, and a reduction in the availability of clean water.[145] Additionally, coastal developed and developing countries, such as Belize, struggle with the impacts of climate change, and impact the potential for a flourishing blue economy as a result.[146] The population of mangrove trees in Belize was reduced by 30-50%, with an estimated 30% of sea grass beds also lost in the last 150 years.[147]

Conclusion

The blue economy is critically important in the context of the global economy.[148] The world's marine ecosystems not only provide a supply of food for the human population, they also assist in regulating the global climate, foster biodiversity, and provide opportunities and support for employment and improved livelihoods.[149] Ocean-based industries and activities create millions of jobs and contribute nearly $2 trillion to the global economy every year.[150] As a result, the conservation and sustainable use of the world's oceans and seas are essential for a successful and sustainable blue economy.[151] While marine pollution and climate change have sought to offset progress made by UNDP and its partners in the context of the blue economy and the SDGs, the international community will continue to work together in creating new areas of opportunity for economic activities with a lower impact on ecosystems, while also sustaining livelihoods and creating employment opportunities.[152]

Further Research

Moving forward in their research, delegates should consider questions such as: What steps can the international community take to support fishers and fisheries in areas vulnerable to climate change? How can the success of blue bonds in Seychelles be scaled globally to other developed countries and SIDS? How can UNCLOS be updated to reflect the development of a sustainable blue economy? What challenges lie ahead for Member States who struggle to implement sustainable blue economy practices? How can the international community hold industries and supply chains accountable for their contributions to marine pollution?

Annotated Bibliography

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> This article examines scientific evidence of the link between the blue economy and the SDGs, as well as acknowledging the boundaries of the blue economy and the interests of stakeholders. Despite the association of the blue economy with SDGs 14-17, the authors

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[143] Senarante, *COVID-19, Blue Economy, and the Climate Change Agenda: The Case of Seychelles*, 2020, p. 4.
[144] Ibid, p. 4-5.
[145] Ibid, p. 5.
[146] Caribbean Community, *The Blue Economy and Climate Change in the Context of Sustainable Development: Reflections from the perspective of Belize, CARICOM, and SIDS*.
[147] Ibid.
[148] High-Level Panel for A Sustainable Ocean Economy, *The Expected Impacts of Climate Change on the Ocean Economy*, 2019.
[149] UNDP & GEF SGP, *Blue Economy: Community Solutions*, 2019.
[150] Ibid.
[151] High-Level Panel for A Sustainable Ocean Economy, *The Expected Impacts of Climate Change on the Ocean Economy*, 2019.
[152] UNCTAD, *Why a sustainable blue recovery is needed*, 2020; UN DESA, *Diving into the Blue Economy*, 2019.

have found that stakeholders prefer to support SDGs 3 and 8 as these two SDGs provide an immediate impact on human life. This article can be used for delegates to examine the certain challenges for the blue economy highlighted by the authors and to create their own solutions as an answer to these challenges.

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (1992). *Agenda 21*. Retrieved 17 February 2021 from: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf

A product of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 focuses on four main themes: Social and Economic Dimensions; Conservation and Management of Resources for Development; Strengthening the Role of Major Groups; and Means of Implementation. With a major objective of every local government to adopt its own Agenda 21, delegates can use the agenda to determine how to further include local communities and governments in establishing dialogue for building a sustainable blue economy.

United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Third Session. (1982). *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. Retrieved 16 February 2021 from: https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

UNCLOS highlights the responsibilities and rights of Member States with respect to the use of the world's oceans. The Convention establishes an outline for marine businesses to follow as a way to sustainably manage natural marine sources. UNCLOS provides a legal framework for conserving and sustainably managing the ocean and its resources and can be used for delegates to implement policies and programs with respect to international law.

United Nations Development Programme & The GEF Small Grants Programme. (2019) *Blue Economy: Community Solutions*. Retrieved 16 February 2021 from: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sgp/blue-economy--community-solutions.html

This document promotes social inclusion, economic growth, and improved livelihoods while ensuring environmental sustainability for oceans and seas. Implemented by UNDP with contributions from the GEF Small Grants Programme, the publication provides examples from various regions, ecosystems, and cultures, of the potential impact local communities can have in ocean management and sustainability, and how they can benefit from the long-term effects of their impacts. Delegates can use this document as a framework for implementing these community-based programs and activities at the international level.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The future we want* (*A/RES/66/288*). Retrieved 16 February 2021 from: https://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288

This resolution was an outcome of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20. The conference produced this outcome document called "The future we want," which contains practical measures for implementing sustainable development measures across the globe. Focusing on the themes of poverty eradication, food security and sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy, promoting full and productive employment, delegates can identify the connection between this document and its relevance in building a sustainable blue economy while also contemplating the various uses of the outlined practices from the document at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

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290632532/Better+Finance%2C+Better+Food+-+Case+study+catalogue+60.pdf

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14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
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II. COVID-19 Recovery: Building Back Better

Introduction

The year 2020 marked the beginning of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[153] With the COVID-19 pandemic spreading across the globe, however, global development processes were forced to abruptly shut down.[154] While the pandemic is primarily seen as a health crisis, it is also a humanitarian and development crisis—threatening to hinder political, social, and economic development at the global scale for generations to come.[155] According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the effects from the pandemic could potentially raise the number of individuals living in poverty to over 1 billion by 2030.[156] Since the onset of the pandemic, UNDP has worked closely with international organizations and institutions, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, to support Member States in their recovery efforts.[157] UNDP partnered with Member States globally to help support health systems in countries such as Bosnia, El Salvador, Nigeria, and Vietnam.[158] Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic is important for UNDP to build international and national resilience to crises, eradicate poverty, and reduce inequality, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized groups.[159]

In order to provide a pathway beyond the pandemic, UNDP aims to promote a "Build Back Better" approach to COVID-19-related recovery efforts.[160] As an approach to recovery which highlights the importance of strengthening infrastructure and building resilience against future disasters, Build Back Better encourages the creation of sustainable policies which emphasize governance, social protection, digital disruption, and a green economy.[161] With previous experience in epidemic recovery efforts, including the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), Ebola, and malaria epidemics, UNDP partnered with organizations such as the Global Fund to mobilize treatment, healthcare resources, and appropriate funding.[162] UNDP and the Global Fund further supported countries in implementing their health programs and strengthening institutions to deliver essential health services among hard-to-reach and challenging populations.[163] With support from the United Nations (UN), COVID-19 pandemic recovery can provide a needed change to preventative approaches in development and all sectors of disaster risk reduction (DRR) around the globe.[164]

International and Regional Framework

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the international community has incorporated the Build Back Better framework and terminology in humanitarian relief and recovery.[165] The framework to Build Back Better was established following the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in *Lessons Learned from Tsunami Recovery: Key Propositions for Building Back Better* (2006), a report produced by the United Nations Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery.[166] Ten propositions to Build Back Better were acknowledged in this report, which includes promoting fairness and equity in recovery; empowering local

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[153] UNSDG, *Decade of Action*.
[154] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[155] Ibid.
[156] UNDP, *Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals,* 2021.
[157] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[158] UNDP, *COVID-19: Looming crisis in developing countries threatens to devastate economies and ramp up inequality,* 2020; UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[159] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[160] UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030*, 2020.
[161] OECD, *Building Back Better: A Sustainable Recovery after COVID-19*, 2020.
[162] UNDP, *Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2021; UNDP, *Partnership with the Global Fund.*
[163] UNDP, *Partnership with the Global Fund.*
[164] UNDRR, *General Assembly puts the Sendai Framework at the centre of COVID-19 response and recovery policy,* 2020.
[165] GFDRR, *Building Back Better in Post-Disaster Recovery*.
[166] UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, *Lessons Learned from Tsunami Recovery: Key Propositions for Building Back Better*, 2006.

governments to manage recovery efforts; ensuring the UN and other multilateral agencies clarify their roles and relationships in the early stages in recovery, among others.[167] The terminology was expanded upon further in the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (2015) as one of the four priorities outlined in the document, which include disaster recovery, risk reduction, and sustainable development.[168] With the objective of reducing disaster risk, loss of livelihoods and health, and reducing negative economic, social, and environmental impacts, the *Sendai Framework* outlined the obligations for Member States to periodically prepare and update disaster preparedness plans and policies; promote disaster preparedness recovery and response exercises on a regular basis; and to prepare and strengthen regional approaches to disaster recovery for a rapid and effective disaster response.[169] In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the *Sendai Framework* ensures a protection-oriented and risk-informed approach to COVID-19 responses and sustainable socio-economic recovery.[170]

The General Assembly also advocates for COVID-19 recovery efforts to incorporate environmental and climate-sensitive approaches in line with the original goals outlined in the landmark document *Transforming our world:* the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) (2030 Agenda).[171] As a plan of action to integrate sustainable development with growth targets and indicators to ensure environmental, social, and economic inclusion, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) prioritize 17 goals as a blueprint to achieve a more sustainable future.[172] The pandemic exacerbated several ongoing problems the SDGs aim to address, such as reducing poverty (SDG 1), gender equality (SDG 5), reducing inequality (SDG 10), and building sustainable communities (SDG 11).[173] Due to this, it is important for Member States to prioritize the SDGs in their recovery measures, such as investing in the low-carbon economy to spur job growth, while avoiding harmful fossil fuel-driven growth alternatives.[174] Furthermore, the *Paris Agreement* (2015), adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), prioritizes long-term temperature reduction across the globe to reduce greenhouse emissions by limiting global warming to below two degrees Celsius.[175] The *Paris Agreement* highlights the importance for Member States to reduce emissions and support sustainable plans to increase the resilience of communities against future impacts of humanitarian disasters and climate change.[176]

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has taken additional steps to "Build Back Better" and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.[177] In 2020, he launched the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) to assist Member States struggling to contain the virus.[178] Under the GHRP, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are tasked with implementation through launching public information campaigns, delivering medical supplies and laboratory equipment, and establishing hubs across Asia, Latin America, and Africa to move supplies and workers.[179] The plan was adjusted twice to encompass the secondary effects of the pandemic, such as increased gender-based violence and

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[167] UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, *Lessons Learned from Tsunami Recovery: Key Propositions for Building Back Better*, 2006.
[168] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283),* 2015.
[169] UNECE, *Sendai Framework*.
[170] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283),* 2015; UNDRR, *General Assembly puts the Sendai Framework at the centre of COVID-19 response and recovery policy,* 2020.
[171] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; COP 21, Paris Agreement, 2015.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1),* 2015; COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015; WRI, *Building Back Better After Coronavirus (COVID-19),* 2021.
[175] COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.
[176] UN Climate Change, *Call to Action for a Climate-Resilient Recovery from COVID-19,* 2020.
[177] UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, *General Assembly Adopts Omnibus Resolution Calling for Holistic COVID-19 Response, among 3 Passed on Global Health Threat, Malaria,* 2020.
[178] Ibid.
[179] UN Africa Renewal, *UN launches US$2 billion global response to fight COVID-19,* 2020.

disruptions to essential health services.[180] Initially, $2 billion was allocated to the GHRP, and as of February 2021, funding has increased to $3.73 billion to support growing recovery efforts.[181]

The General Assembly similarly supported several resolutions to address the pandemic.[182] Resolutions "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic" (A74/L.92) and "United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19" (A/74/L.57) were adopted to call for solidarity and international cooperation in allocating scarce resources across the globe.[183] Both resolutions encourage Member States to increase research and funding efforts for developing vaccines, medications, and humanitarian responses, while also emphasizing the importance of international cooperation and transparency to improve information sharing among the scientific community.[184] The importance of these resolutions are highlighted through progress in global vaccine development, and as of February 2021, there are at least seven different vaccines available worldwide—with more than 60 in clinical development.[185] Additionally, an estimated 1.76 billion vaccine doses have been administered worldwide as of May 2021.[186]

Role of the International System

The various facets of the COVID-19 pandemic are separated into three categories: health crisis, humanitarian crisis, and socio-economic crisis.[187] The health crisis refers to the impacts of virus transmission on community health and the efforts to contain it.[188] The humanitarian crisis is the forced displacement of individuals due to issues of overcrowded populations, limited resources or hospital capacity, and adversities to implementing the recommended health and social measures in place to limit transmissions.[189] The socio-economic crisis highlights the disruptions to economic and social life, including loss of jobs, reduced income due to unemployment, and disruptions to education caused by the sudden shifts to virtual schooling.[190]

UNDP, while working closely with WHO, is focused on addressing inequalities which were exacerbated since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.[191] Through its *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan*, UNDP has prioritized continuous updates and adjustments to the plan analyzes the pandemic from the perspective of a health crisis and identifies strategies to end the pandemic, suppress and reduce exposure, and build resilience and readiness for the future.[192] The response requires the combined efforts of the UN system, national governments, and private sector actors to meet the strategic objectives of socio-economic sustainability and ensure efficiency.[193]

Utilizing the COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility, UNDP's utmost priority is alleviating poverty and reducing its impact across low- and middle-income countries, as well as areas of poverty, weak governance, and fragile infrastructure.[194] The Facility assists in providing countries with medicine for patients, COVID-19 test supplies, and personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers, and supports local initiatives for communities to raise awareness on the risks of COVID-19.[195] Since the

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[180] UN OCHA, *Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19 Progress Report: Final Progress Report, 22 February 2021,* 2021.
[181] Ibid.
[182] UN DPI, *General Assembly Adopts Omnibus Resolution Calling for Holistic COVID-19 Response, among 3 Passed on Global Health Threat, Malaria,* 2020.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] WHO, *COVID-19 vaccines,* 2021.
[186] Holder, *Tracking Coronavirus Vaccinations Around the World,* 2021.
[187] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[188] Ibid*;* WHO, *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan,* 2021.
[189] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[190] Ibid.
[191] WHO, *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan,* 2021.
[192] Ibid.
[193] WHO, *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan,* 2021.
[194] UNDP, *COVID-19: $30 million Rapid Response Facility launched for vulnerable countries,* 2020.
[195] Ibid.

Facility's launch, 83 countries have benefitted from its resources, leading to approximately $23.3 million in resource commitments.[196] Since COVID-19 disproportionately affects marginalized populations, UNDP highlights the importance of assessing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on societies, economies, and vulnerable groups to encourage sustainable and inclusive recovery efforts among governments.[197] For instance, the UNDP–World Bank Emergency Crisis Response Project in Yemen provided short-term employment opportunities to provide income support in targeted communities, while increasing livelihood of community access to social services.[198] UNDP and World Bank offered critical community-based and economic services to millions of people—collaborating with humanitarian partners to assist Yemenis—by creating employment and stabilizing the economy.[199]

Other organizations, such as the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), outlined sustainable practices that are crucial to Build Back Better, combat the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and establish international standards and solutions to social, economic, and environmental issues.[200] The 2020 report, *Building Back Better: A Sustainable Recovery after COVID-19*, highlights key vulnerabilities in the socio-economic system throughout developing countries, as they lack sufficient resources and infrastructure to respond to crises.[201] As a result, developing countries struggle to acquire sufficient medical supplies due to inadequate supply chains and experience uneven employment loss throughout the population.[202] Because of this, OECD discourages economic growth prioritization over long-term resilience.[203] OECD believes an unbalanced approach to recovery will result in deeper social inequalities.[204] Moreover, OECD identifies the impacts of environmental degradation on the current economic system, such as damages to natural ecosystems, pollution, and overconsumption of natural resources, resulting in the increased risk of virus transmissions from animals to humans.[205] To "Build Back Better," OECD aims to address and encompass these issues to identify sustainable, long-lasting solutions for developing infrastructure and improve disaster resilience.[206]

Addressing Socio-Economic Crises to Build Back Better

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) briefing report *World Economic Situation and Prospects* (2021) warns of negative long-term, socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic if Member States do not commit to more sustainable recovery efforts.[207] Resilient investments in infrastructure and systems, such as hazard-control infrastructure, remodeling hospitals to provide an adequate number of beds, and promoting sustainable technology use in manufacturing processes can help reduce potential damages from future disasters and crises.[208] According to the report, the pandemic affected approximately 2.7 billion workers worldwide, or nearly 81% of the global workforce.[209] Income losses due to unemployment from the pandemic effect lower income communities harder, particularly women in low-income communities, as they represent more than half of the labor-intensive service sector workforce.[210] If these adverse effects to marginalized communities remain unaddressed, the long-term consequences could be detrimental to future growth, productivity, investments, and employment across the globe.[211]

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[196] Ibid.
[197] UNSDG, *Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19,* 2020.
[198] UNDP, *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.*
[199] Ibid.
[200] OECD, *Building Back Better: A Sustainable Recovery after COVID-19,* 2020.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] UN DESA, *World Economic Situation and Prospects: February 2021 Briefing, No. 146,* 2021.
[208] GFDRR, *Building Back Better in Post-Disaster Recovery.*
[209] UN DESA, *World Economic Situation and Prospects: February 2021 Briefing, No. 146,* 2021.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) published *A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic impacts to COVID-19* to analyze and assess the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic and formulate a strong framework to address specific areas of need around the world.[212] The report focuses on the five pillars of the UN framework (protecting health, basic services and social protection, macroeconomic response, social cohesion and community resilience, and economic recovery), while also identifying cross-cutting issues of gender equality and environmental sustainability.[213] Furthermore, UNDP launched the COVID-19 Data Futures Platform as an interactive platform to combine data from throughout the UN system, nonprofit and development partners, and academia for analysis, insights, and collaboration between partners to develop strategies and solutions for recovery.[214] As of December 2020, the platform provides simulations on three specific issues: gender informed recovery, socio-economic analysis, and green fiscal recovery.[215] The Platform provides support to governments in creating sustainable and inclusive policies for recovery efforts.[216]

UNDP's work has continued to strengthen the resilience of health systems in addressing the socio-economic crisis, especially among developing countries with less-developed health systems.[217] However, UNDP additionally acknowledges the need to protect the most vulnerable populations within developing countries who are at-risk from other humanitarian issues, such as overcrowded livings areas, under-served areas, or fleeing persecution.[218] Member States most affected by the pandemic, such as India, have fragile infrastructure, health systems, and densely populated urban areas.[219] Because of this, self-isolation is difficult and, as a result, fewer resources are available to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.[220] Governments must improve preparedness for future disasters by rebuilding and restoring physical infrastructures to help streamline resources and allocate them in rural regions that have less access to materials like sanitation products.[221]

Prioritizing Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of technology access, which exacerbated inequalities, especially with the move to a more technological society.[222] Communities with poor access to technology or internet may experience difficulties acclimating to jobs which moved online.[223] Students have also faced obstacles at home from virtual schooling, especially those in low-income areas, as they do not have the income for proper access to a computer or an internet connection.[224] While many communities do not have internet access, the disparity becomes more apparent along income, age, race, and urban and rural lines.[225] For example, more than fifty percent of individuals in India do not have internet access, and as a result, classes must be delivered by loud speaker in some rural communities.[226]

The COVID-19 pandemic additionally exposed the increase in gender inequalities.[227] Women are disproportionately affected, as they are more likely to lose their job than men.[228] Women serve as the primary source for childcare and eldercare in many countries and, as a result of childcare and eldercare

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[212] UNSDG, *A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19,* 2020.
[213] Ibid.
[214] UNDP, *COVID-19 Data Futures Platform,* 2021.
[215] UNDP, *UNDP launches new COVID-19 Data Futures Platform,* 2020.
[216] UNDP, *COVID-19 Data Futures Platform,* 2021.
[217] UN, *Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, 2020.*
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid.
[221] GFDRR, *Building Back Better in Post-Disaster Recovery.*
[222] WEF, *5 things COVID-19 has taught us about inequality,* 2020.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] WEF, *5 things COVID-19 has taught us about inequality,* 2020.
[226] Ibid.
[227] UN DPI, *COVID-19 has exposed endemic gender inequality, Guterres tells UN Women's commission,* 2021.
[228] Ibid.

facility closures, women are more likely to stay home to care for children and the elderly.[229] Moreover, women serve as a crucial part of leadership and recovery; however, they are often absent from high-level decision-making processes, limiting gender equality in government processes.[230]

In response, UNDP launched several initiatives worldwide to support countries in their national pandemic response, which include initiatives for universal basic income.[231] In Nigeria, the UN launched the COVID-19 Basket Fund, to provide cash transfers and food distribution to vulnerable groups who suffer from income loss or food insecurity.[232] The Basket Fund helps conglomerate and nationalize investment resources to channel their financial support efficiently in response to the pandemic.[233] In Zimbabwe, UNDP additionally coordinated with the public sector to create linkages for rural farmers who cannot deliver goods into the city.[234] UNDP hopes to collaborate with the private sector to mitigate losses and strengthen the supply management systems within Zimbabwe.[235]

Conclusion

To prioritize the goals of UNDP and the *2030 Agenda*, UNDP emphasizes a sustainable and inclusive recovery plan to build countries back better from the COVID-19 pandemic.[236] Its emphasis on the socio-economic response includes incorporating aspects of disaster risk reduction, climate change, sustainable energy to strengthen sustainability and resilience to limit vulnerability among the world's poor and reduce inequality to build back better.[237] Partnering with Member States and international organizations, UNDP directly focuses on recovery efforts around the world to develop sustainable initiatives in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic.[238] Through projects such as the COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility and the *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan*, UNDP continues to ensure the international community can successfully "Build Back Better" in accordance with the *2030 Agenda*, while also ensuring no one is left behind.[239]

Further Research

Moving forward in their research, delegates should consider questions such as: How are collaborations and partnerships addressing already existing socio-economic disparities in their pandemic response? How is UNDP helping to close the technology and resource gap, especially in education? What steps can UNDP take to address different recovery approaches for developed and developing countries, as well as low- and middle-income countries? How can UNDP address issues of inclusivity and gender equality more effectively?

Annotated Bibliography

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> *This resource offers a thorough explanation on what building back better means when addressing the social and economic damages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It*

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[229] Ibid.

[230] Ibid.

[231] UNAIDS, *UNAIDS facilitates establishment of the COVID-19 basket fund in Nigeria,* 2020.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid.

[234] UNDP, *COVID-19 Pandemic Response in Africa: Humanity needs leadership and solidarity to defeat the coronavirus,* 2021.

[235] Ibid.

[236] WRI, *Building Back Better After Coronavirus (COVID-19),* 2021.

[237] Ibid.

[238] WHO, *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan,* 2021.

[239] UNDP, *Beyond Recovery: Towards 2030,* 2020.

outlines factors that need to be considered to achieve inclusive sustainable growth and building resilience among communities. In addition, it discusses sustainable practices and examples of how to achieve these goals practically across various sectors. This resource will help delegates understand how Member States can build their economies back better.

United Nations Development Programme. (2020). *COVID-19: UNDP's Integrated Response.* Retrieved 11 February 2021 from: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hiv-aids/covid-19-undp_s-integrated-response.html
> *This resource details the UNDP's integrated response to tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. The pamphlet discusses the three objectives of their integrated approach: to prepare, respond, and recover. It offers an extensive breakdown of the three immediate priorities of the UNDP when responding to the crisis and the financial aspects to fund these ideas and projects. This pamphlet provides delegates with comprehensive action taken by the UNDP so far to address the crisis.*

United Nations Development Programme. (2020). *COVID-19: Looming crisis in developing countries threatens to devastate economies and ramp up inequality.* Retrieved 10 February 2021 from: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/COVID19_Crisis_in_developing_countries_threatens_devastate_economies.html.
> *This article introduces the socio-economic concerns that have arisen among vulnerable countries. It provides important statistics about the overall issue and suggests priorities that should be considered when addressing this issue internationally. This resource identifies vulnerabilities with health systems and infrastructures that worsens recovery prospects and identifies how countries can collaborate with each other to address these issues. Delegates may use this resource to understand the UNDP's call to actions and direct initiatives in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.*

United Nations Sustainable Development Group. (2020). *Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.* Retrieved 10 February 2021 from: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_report_socio-economic_impact_of_covid19.pdf
> *This report provides information on the UN's integrated response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the overall effects of the pandemic on the international community. This pamphlet breaks down the social, economic, and political implications of the global pandemic. It also includes sustainable solutions and partnerships to help assist the current global response. This comprehensive guide from the UN will be useful for delegates to understand the entire UN's response to the pandemic and current priorities.*

World Health Organization. (2021). *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan.* Retrieved 15 March 2021 from: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-for-the-new-coronavirus
> *This resource gives a very thorough overview of the WHO's current response, involvement, and future priorities towards addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. This article has information on the epidemiological situation (spread of the virus) and the WHO's national-level preparedness and response plan. The WHO provides a framework for countries to transfer that knowledge into coordinated action and build for the future. Delegates will find this resource useful for their initial research on how the WHO has responded to the pandemic thus far.*

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