General Assembly Second Committee
Background Guide 2020

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Athiang Makuoi and Emma A. Bott, Assistant Directors
Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2020 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the General Assembly, Second Committee (GA2). This year’s staff is: Directors Mihai Gheorghe Cioc (Conference A) and Martin Schunk (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Athiang Makuoi (Conference A) and Emma Bott (Conference B). Mihai holds a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) and is currently completing his Juris Doctor (J.D.). Martin holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Linguistics and is finishing his Master of Arts in Media Culture and Media Economy in Germany. Currently, he is interning as a Carlo-Schmid-Fellow at the communications department of an international organization in New York City. Athiang holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing where she explored studies in international relations and policy theory. Currently, she is pursuing a Masters focused on health policy reform. Emma has a Bachelor of Management emphasizing in human resources and minoring in history. Currently, Emma is attending law school.

The topics under discussion for the General Assembly Second Committee are:

I. Financing for Development
II. Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development
III. Disaster Risk Reduction

The General Assembly Second Committee is one of six Main Committees of the UN General Assembly which is a foundational organ of the United Nations. The Second Committee focuses on macroeconomic policy questions in regard to international trade, external debt sustainability, financing for development, and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Additionally, the Committee discusses development topics such as globalization and interdependence, the eradication of poverty, and the operational activities of the UN system. In addressing these topics, the Second Committee drafts recommendations to the General Assembly Plenary, convenes conferences and summits, and requests the Secretary-General to report on significant issues and to host side events.

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 2020 in accordance with the guidelines in the Position Paper Guide and the NMUN•NY Position Papers website.

Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Conferece A
Mihai Gheorghe Cioc, Director
Athian Makuoi, Assistant Director

Conference B
Martin Schunk, Director
Emma Bott, Assistant Director

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

“The real danger is not the threat to one’s economy that comes from acting. It is, instead, the risk to one’s economy by failing to act.”

Introduction

Article 7 of the Charter of the United Nations establishes the General Assembly as one of the six foundational organs of the United Nations. The General Assembly is composed of six Main Committees, including the General Assembly Second Committee (Second Committee). The Main Committees share similar arrangements in structure, governance, membership, functions, and powers, but each Main Committee addresses a specific thematic area.

The Second Committee represents the economic and financial committee of the General Assembly. The Second Committee addresses a variety of issues related to financing for development, information and communication technologies (ICTs) for development, macroeconomic policy, globalization and interdependence, the eradication of poverty, among others. The work of the Second Committee involves other United Nations (UN) development bodies such as, but not limited to, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Additionally, to support General Assembly resolution 70/1 on Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the Second Committee works to implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) through policy recommendations.

Governance, Structure, and Membership

Chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations regulates the functioning of the General Assembly and empowers the General Assembly and its Main Committees to formulate recommendations that promote international economic and social cooperation. Article 9(1) of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the General Assembly and its Main Committees comprise all Members of the UN. At present, 193 Member States, two observer states, and multiple non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other entities form the General Assembly. Each Member State has a single vote of equal weight which allows Member States to express their voices and encourages consensus-based decisions. Observer states...

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1 UN Secretary-General, Address to the General Assembly, 2018.
4 Ibid.
5 UN General Assembly, Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), 2019.
7 UN General Assembly, Summary by the President of the Economic and Social Council of the special high-level meeting of the Council with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (A/69/83), 2014.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
and NGOs can participate to the General Debate, but may not vote. The General Assembly seeks to adopt resolutions by consensus which requires a high level of cooperation among Member States.

The General Assembly convenes annually in the third week of September and commences with General Debate and the allocation of agenda items. The General Committee of the General Assembly allocates the agenda items for each of the Main Committees which lays out the main areas for discussion. The President of the General Assembly and 21 Vice-Presidents constitute the General Committee of the General Assembly. On 4 June 2019, the General Assembly appointed Tijjani Muhammad-Bande as its President for the 74rd session. From January to September, the General Committee focuses on thematic debates, consultations, and meetings through organized working groups that discuss specific topics. The United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat), and the Governing councils of the three Rio Conventions report about their activities and outcomes to the Second Committee. Subsequently, the Second Committee drafts resolutions and reports to the General Assembly based on each report and agenda item it considered. The General Assembly Plenary considers these reports and votes on the adoption of the included draft resolutions from the Second Committee.

To complete its policy work and to bridge national action and international policies, the Second Committee partners with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) which provides significant substantive support. Likewise, the Second Committee works in collaboration with the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination to operationalize and implement development policies and activities, and with the United Nations Development Group who facilitates collaboration with ECOSOC.

**Mandate, Functions, and Powers**

As part of the General Assembly, articles 55 to 60 of the *Charter of the United Nations* mandates the Second Committee to promote higher standards of living and employment, and improved conditions of economic and social development. To fulfill its mandate, the Second Committee drafts proposals and reports to the General Assembly Plenary on norm setting and policy recommendations, convenes conferences and summits, and requests the Secretary-General to report on significant issues and to host

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18 Newly-elected Nigerian UN General Assembly President Pledges focus on “peace and prosperity” for most vulnerable, UN News, 2019.
19 UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.
21 Ibid.
side events. Precisely, the Second Committee drafts national and international policy norms specific to economic and development areas related to macroeconomic questions such as international trade, external debt sustainability, financing for development, and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 

The Second Committee addresses the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy recommendations that tackle poverty eradication, human settlements, economic growth, globalization, and ICTs. To draft recommendations pertinent to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Second Committee tracks and monitors the progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the reports it mandates to the Secretary-General. For example, in the report to the General Assembly on “Macroeconomic Policy Questions: External Debt Sustainability and Development,” the Second Committee requests the Secretary-General to assess the impact of investment requirements on developing states’ external debt sustainability to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Pursuant to this report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/221 on “External Debt Sustainability and Development,” that further requests the Secretary-General to analyze the core indicators on external debt sustainability in developing states, and invites Member States to take the necessary measures to achieve SDG 17.4. Likewise, the Second Committee supports Member States in enacting legislation and implementing policies that respect international norms. For instance, to reinforce the national financing frameworks for sustainable development and mitigate the impact of the fourth revolution on financing in developing states, the Second Committee collaborates with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development and ECOSOC to enact policy recommendations respecting the intergovernmental agreed conclusions on financing for sustainable development and to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Additionally, General Assembly resolution 72/313 mandates the Second Committee to pursue its mission on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. Consequently, the Second Committee continues to reduce duplications in the agendas of the Second and Third Committee, ECOSOC and its substantive bodies, and the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Second Committee also streamlines the overall program of work of the General Assembly by updating working methods and reducing the number and length of draft resolutions. Further, the Second Committee may provide directions on special situations including least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS). Facing low productive capacity, limited market access and high vulnerability to external shocks, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS are key in attaining the

27 UN General Assembly, Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), 2019.
28 Dag Hammarskjöld Library, Reports of Principal Organs to the General Assembly, 2019.
29 UN General Assembly, Macroeconomic policy questions: external debt sustainability and development (A/73/536/Add.3), 2018.
31 UN General Assembly, Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), 2019.
33 UN General Assembly, Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/72/313), 2017.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 UN General Assembly, Organization of work of the Second Committee: Note by the Secretariat (A/C.2/73/L.1), 2018.
SDGs, especially SDG 1 on the eradication of poverty. Moreover, the Second Committee may formulate recommendations related to international social and health issues through cultural and social cooperation, the observance and the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

**Recent Sessions and Current Priorities**

During its 73rd session, the Second Committee discussed financing for sustainable development, ICTs for development, and disaster risk reduction (DRR), among other topics. Notably, Member States reaffirmed climate change as the most important threat to food security and economic development, stressing the need for further investments and financing, South-South and triangular cooperation, and rural and agricultural development that rely on programs supported by institutional measures promoting responsible investment. Furthermore, the Second Committee stressed that bridging the financial gap in achieving the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** requires inclusive and sustainable policies, regulations and incentives that further global partnerships which generate employment, investments, and technology transfers through ICTs. Further, Member States reaffirmed the role of resilient regional commissions in supporting national capacities to implement DRR practices through integrated policy recommendations, normative support, and technical capacity.

General Assembly resolution 73/223 on “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development” recalls that financing for sustainable development requires a global financial environment anchored in sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. Effectively, the report of the Second Committee to the General Assembly highlights the need for further national resources mobilization, partnerships and international cooperation, and investments in data and capacity. To that end, the General Assembly recommends Members States to implement the agreed conclusions of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development that tackle a variety of issues such as, but not limited to, debt sustainability, international trade and cooperation, and domestic and international private business and finance, among others.

General Assembly resolution 73/218 on “Information and communications technologies for sustainable development” reaffirms the potential of ICTs to provide new solutions to development challenges that promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and accelerate progress across all 17 SDGs. Precisely, the Second Committee recommends national and international


39 UN General Assembly, Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), 2019.


41 UN General Assembly, Devastating Impacts of Climate Change Threatening Farm Outputs (GA/EF/3499), 2018.

42 UN General Assembly, Global Partnerships: Crucial for Progress but Must be tempered By United Nations Values (GA/EF/3505), 2018.

43 UN General Assembly, Regional Commissions Must be Strengthened to Better Assist with Implementing Sustainable Development Agenda (GA/EF/3507), 2018.

44 UN General Assembly, Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development (A/RES/73/223), 2019.

45 Second Committee, Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development Report of the Second Committee (A/73/537), 2018.


47 UN General Assembly, Information and communications technologies for sustainable development (A/RES/73/218), 2019.
stakeholders to address SDGs by integrating ICTs, and to work in collaboration with UN entities to align their reports and work plans with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The Second Committee also acknowledges the increasing importance of the digital economy in the global economy as well as the need to prioritize the participation of all Member States to develop an inclusive global digital market. Consequently, the Second Committee urges Member States to implement e-commerce initiatives that allow developing states to participate in trade development through electronic exchanges based on internet supply assistance.

The 73rd session addressed another key point through General Assembly resolution 73/231 on “Disaster risk reduction” that further encourages Member States to implement DRR strategies into social, economic, and environmental investments. Likewise, it recommends Member States to conduct infrastructure assessments to strengthen regulatory frameworks for land-use planning, and to build codes to reduce the economic losses caused by the raising number of exposures to environmental hazards. Moreover, the Second Committee urges Member States to implement and strengthen national disaster loss databases that conduct and develop multi-disaster risk assessments that take into account climate change projections and are supported by evidence-based DRR strategies and risk-informed development investments.

**Conclusion**

As an essential component to the functioning of the UN, the Second Committee addresses the international economic and financial priorities, including those established by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The Second Committee continues to streamline its work with the overarching goals of improving economic and financial systems worldwide and achieving the SDGs. In doing so, the Second Committee seeks to utilize emerging trends and innovative ideas to promote the most effective solutions to address financing for development, to utilize technologies such as ICTs to attain the SDGs, and to mitigate the financial and economic costs of natural hazards through the integration of DRR policies by Member States. The Second Committee will continue to play a pivotal role in advancing efforts to promote sustainable development and address related issues.

**Annotated Bibliography**


As the founding document of the UN, an understanding of the Charter of the United Nations is essential to comprehend the functions and the mandate of the General Assembly and its Second Committee, and of the United Nations as a whole. Delegates may pay attention to the Preamble, and Chapters IV and IX to gain an in-depth understanding of the mandate and the functioning of the Second Committee within the UN system.

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48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
56 UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)*, 2019.
57 Ibid.
This handbook provides a comprehensive look at the UN and its principal organs and committees. Delegates can find a detailed explanation of the structure, processes, and procedures of the Main Committees of the General Assembly in this source. The breakdown of the structure, membership, and functionality of these committees is a useful point for delegates to begin their research and gain an overall understanding of where the committee falls within the UN framework. In particular, the detailed listing of all current membership and leadership of key committees, as well as the structure and reporting of subsidiary organs will be a useful starting point for understanding the complicated framework of UN action.

This guide is a practical introduction to the General Assembly, its different committees, and their relationship with each other and different UN system actors. It provides delegates with a solid, comprehensive, and insightful way to leverage the UN system and staff to its full potential in finding solutions to the issues on the committee’s agenda. Its straightforward and practical language provides useful technical information, as well as in-depth coverage of how the UN General Assembly functions throughout its program of work.

This website is a useful resource for delegates to gain familiarity with the work of the Second Committee throughout its current session and what has been accomplished in previous sessions. It represents the main platform used by the Committee to give information about its role, functions, and mandate, and it publishes press releases that show the addressed topics with insight from different actors. Delegates may gain knowledge about the Committee’s proceedings and the represented countries, and the voting blocs on the topics addressed by the Second Committee.

Bibliography


I. Financing for Development

“Our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals will require a surge in financing and investments.”58

Introduction

Financing for Development (FfD) is defined by the United Nations (UN) as “[m]obilizing and increasing the effective use of financial resources and achieving the national and international economic conditions needed to fulfil internationally agreed development goals.”59 Since the start of the FfD process in the early 2000s, these development goals were originally defined as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which lasted from 2000 until 2015, followed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) beginning in 2015.60

Two important tools for FfD within the SDGs are “Official Development Assistance” (ODA) and “Foreign Direct Investment” (FDI).61 ODA is defined as “government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries.”62 A typical example for ODA is the funding of development programming through a bilateral channel, such as a governmental aid agency, or through a multilateral channel such as UN agencies or multilateral development banks (MDBs).63 By contrast, FDI describes “a category of cross-border investment in which an investor resident in one economy establishes a lasting interest in and a significant degree of influence over an enterprise resident in another economy.”64 A typical example of FDI is an investor from one country purchasing shares of a company from another.65 However, while FDI and ODA represent the more traditional sources of development financing, new instruments and innovations for the mobilization of financial resources are also emerging.66

The current UN FfD framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) (2015), functions as the financial and economic backbone of the 2030 Agenda, and supports its full implementation.67 However, the Financing for Development Report 2019 (2019) by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development (IATF) states that the progress towards the SDGs is hampered by a lack of funding and investments.68 For instance, in the first two quarters of 2018, private investments in infrastructure in developing countries reached $43.5 billion, which represents only a slight increase compared to the same time frame in previous years, and is still significantly below the 2012 peak of more than $75 billion.69 And even the 2012 peak is not enough to cover the $1 trillion to $1.5 trillion annual gap in infrastructure investments in developing countries.70 As properly functioning infrastructure is essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries, more action is therefore needed towards the mobilization of financial resources for sustainable development is needed.71

58 UN Secretary-General, Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2019, p. vi.
60 UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1), 2015.
64 OECD, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), 2019.
65 OECD, FDI flows, 2019.
69 Ibid., pp. 61-62.
International and Regional Framework

The first proposal for an international conference on FfD was made in 1991 by Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), who then referred the issue to the General Assembly. While the General Assembly subsequently decided to consider such a conference, it was not until 1998 that the General Assembly in resolution 52/179 on “Global partnership for development: high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development” eventually decided to actually convene a conference on FfD in the new millennium.

This led to the first International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002 and its outcome document, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey Consensus) (2002). The goal of this conference was to advance economic and financial policy action on an international, national, and regional level in order to ensure development for all. The Monterrey Consensus sought to mobilize financial resources for the achievement of the MDGs. The Monterrey Consensus was subsequently followed by the Second International Conference on Financing for Development, which took place in Doha, Qatar and saw the adoption of the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development ("Doha Declaration"). While the Doha Declaration largely reaffirmed the commitments of the Monterrey Consensus, it also highlighted additional challenges to the FfD process, such as the increasing need for financing climate action, volatile commodity prices, and providing assistance to post-conflict countries. In addition, the Doha Declaration established another follow-up accountability process for FfD, which culminated in the AAAA in 2015.

The AAAA represents the most recent framework of the FfD process. Adopted against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda, the AAAA identified several cross-cutting issues that link the FfD process to sustainable development. These issues range from “delivering social protection and essential public services for all” to “promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.” For this purpose, the AAAA highlights seven action areas pertaining to sustainable development: domestic resources, private businesses and finance, international development cooperation, international trade, debt and debt sustainability, systemic issues, and science, technology, innovation and capacity-building.

Following the adoption of the AAAA, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda with resolution 70/1 (2015), which contains 17 SDGs and stresses the importance of the FfD process for its implementation. The aim of the SDGs was to provide a concrete, targeted plan for the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of global sustainable development. Additionally, several cross-cutting

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78 Ibid., pp. 20-21.
79 Ibid., pp. 22-23.
81 Ibid., pp. 5-7.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid., pp. 7-35.
85 Ibid., p. 3.
issues that are based on the SDGs underpin the AAAA action areas, including gender equality, zero hunger, and social protection among others. 86

In addition to the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement (2015) and the Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (2015) also inform the FfD process. 87 The Paris Agreement highlights the importance of mobilizing climate finance for the realization of the climate action objectives, which are intrinsically linked to sustainable development. 88 The agreement further draws particular attention to the role developed countries play in mobilizing financial resources for climate action. 89 Similarly, the Sendai Framework aims to facilitate public and private investments in disaster risk reduction on a national and international level. 90 As such, the FfD framework seeks to work towards financing and implementing disaster risk management, compatible with the Sendai Framework. 91

**Role of the International System**

The General Assembly Second Committee functions as one of the main bodies to discuss and ensure accountability of FfD. 92 It regularly reviews the current progress on FfD and makes recommendations to the plenary session of the General Assembly on the adoption of relevant resolutions, most notably its resolutions on the “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development.” 93 Furthermore, the Second Committee deals with various other topics pertaining to the FfD process as part of its agenda item “Macroeconomic policy questions,” including the connection between “International trade and development” in General Assembly resolution 73/219 (2018) and the connection between the “International financial system and development” in General Assembly resolution 73/220 (2018), among other issues. 94 These agenda items are generally based on the action areas of the AAAA. 95

The General Assembly also holds the quadrennial High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development. 96 While the Monterrey Consensus first introduced the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development as the main review mechanism for the FfD process on a biennial basis, the AAAA established that the High-level Dialogue be held after the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the General Assembly, which is only held every four years and colloquially referred to as the “SDG Summit.” 97 The most recent High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development took place on 26 September 2019 and was the first High-level Dialogue since the adoption of the AAAA and the 2030 Agenda in 2015. 98 It focused on the financing gap of the SDGs and the mobilization of financial resources for climate action, which thematically links the High-Level Dialogue to the Climate Summit also occurring

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86 UN IATF, Cross-cutting issues, 2019.
88 COP 21, Paris Agreement, 2015.
89 Ibid., art. 9.
92 UN General Assembly, Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), 2019.
93 UN General Assembly, Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development (A/RES/73/223), 2018.
95 UN DESA, General Assembly, 2019.
during the High-level Week of the General Assembly’s 74th session. In the political declaration of the 2019 SDG Summit, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to mobilizing “adequate and well-directed” financial resources.

Similar to the General Assembly, ECOSOC also regularly discusses FfD as part of its annual Forum on Financing for Development follow-up. Like the High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly, the Forum was established in the AAAA with the aim of reviewing the annual progress on FfD and the implementation of the SDGs. The agreed conclusions and recommendations from the Forum inform the follow-up process of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the annual HLPF under ECOSOC. Additionally, all the Forum’s conclusions and recommendations since its inception in 2016 have fed into the 2019 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development. At the most recent Forum on Financing for Development follow-up in April 2019, ECOSOC highlighted several issues that need future focus, including work towards international tax cooperation, the unequal distribution of FDI among African countries, least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), and the slowly decreasing numbers of ODA.

Within the Secretariat of the UN, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and its Financing for Sustainable Development Office (FSDO) support the FfD process. FSDO functions as a focal point within the FfD process and coordinates intergovernmental and UN efforts towards achieving sustainable development. FSDO also provides policy analyses and recommendations on actions within the FfD process to both, Member States and the Secretary-General. Convened by Secretary-General as per the AAAA, IATF functions as the main coordinating mechanism within the wider UN system for the FfD follow-up process. IATF provides annual reports about the current developments on FfD and the implementation of the AAAA, with the most recent report being *Financing for Sustainable Development 2019* (2019). While FSDO is the substantive lead of IATF’s work, other UN bodies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, such as the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), provide substantive input to IATF’s reports.

In addition to the work of DESA, FSDO and IATF, the Secretary-General put forward the *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in July 2019. This roadmap, together with the Secretary-General’s *Strategy for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* from September 2018, seeks to better align UN’s work with the areas of action contained within the AAAA. The Secretary-General’s strategy establishes three primary objectives: “[a]ligning global economic

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100 UN General Assembly, *Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (A/RES/74/4)*, 2019, p. 5.
103 Ibid.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
111 UN IATF, *About the IATF*, 2019.
112 UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.
113 Ibid., p. 3.
policies and financial systems with the 2030 Agenda;” “[e]nhancing sustainable financing strategies and investments at regional and country levels;” and “[s]eizing the potential of financial innovations, new technologies and digitalization to provide equitable access to finance.”\textsuperscript{114} These three objectives are supported by six action areas, which range from integrating the 2030 Agenda and the \textit{Paris Agreement} into policies to speeding up the work of the UN system on development financing.\textsuperscript{115}

International financial institutions (IFIs) and MDBs as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also take up central roles within the FfD process.\textsuperscript{116} IFIs and MDBs are responsible for the mobilization of public financial resources, provide for financing of projects that are relevant to sustainable development yet are not economically feasible, and have to a large extent already adopted strategies that are in line with the 2030 Agenda and the AAAA.\textsuperscript{117} In contrast to IFIs and MDBs, OECD works primarily as a policy setting international organization.\textsuperscript{118} In this context, OECD is at the core of collecting data on FfD and providing concrete policy recommendation to its Member States.\textsuperscript{119} Within the OECD system, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is responsible for setting policies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.\textsuperscript{120}

Additionally, civil society organizations (CSOs), most notably non-governmental organizations (NGO) that provide development programming, also are important actors in the implementation of the FfD process, as DAC countries of OECD often allocate their ODA either to or through CSOs.\textsuperscript{121} Many CSOs united their efforts in the Civil Society Financing for Development Group, which, through its Addis Ababa CSO Coordination Group, represents civil society concerns within the FfD follow-up process.\textsuperscript{122} Similarly, the NGO Committee on Financing for Development, as a member of the Addis Ababa CSO Coordination Group, advocates for mobilizing financial resources for sustainable development and empowering developing countries to take part in the FfD process.\textsuperscript{123}

\textbf{Mobilizing External Financial Resources for Sustainable Development}

\textit{Official Development Assistance}

ODA remains one of the key drivers of financing the 2030 Agenda.\textsuperscript{124} Most of international ODA is provided for by DAC countries of the OECD and has increased over the past decade.\textsuperscript{125} Yet, in 2018, ODA from DAC countries reached a total of $149.3 billion, which amounts to a decrease of 2.7\% from 2017 after inflation adjustment.\textsuperscript{126} This decrease is due to a decline in in-donor refugee costs, the expenses for assisting refugees in donor countries, whose share within total net ODA dropped from 11\% in 2016 to 7.3\% in 2018.\textsuperscript{127} Therefore not accounting for the decrease of in-donor refugee costs, total net ODA in 2018 has remained relatively stable in comparison to 2017.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{118} OECD, \textit{Who We Are}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{119} OECD, \textit{Financing for sustainable development}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{120} OECD, \textit{Development Assistance Committee (DAC)}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{121} OECD, \textit{Aid for Civil Society Organisations: Statistics based on DAC Members’ reporting to the Creditor Reporting System database (CRS)}, 2016-2017, 2019, pp. 1-4.
\textsuperscript{122} Civil Society Financing for Development Group, \textit{About}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{123} NGO Committee on Financing for Development, \textit{NGO Committee on Financing for Development}, 2018.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{126} UN IATF, \textit{International development cooperation}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.; OECD, \textit{In-donor refugee costs in ODA}, 2019.
\textsuperscript{128} UN IATF, \textit{International development cooperation}, 2019.
However, in 1970, the General Assembly established in resolution 2626 (XXV) that developed countries should aim to provide at least 0.7% of their gross national incomes (GNI) as ODA to developing countries by 1975. This target of ODA inflows will help developing countries achieve economic growth and was repeatedly reaffirmed by the international community in the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration, and the AAAA, and it is also reflected in SDG target 17.2 (Partnerships for the Goals). Yet, in 2018, only five out of 28 DAC countries of OECD and 2 of 21 non-DAC developed countries have reached the target of 0.7% of their GNI as ODA. This demonstrates the mismatch between commitments made by the international community, and the actual delivery of ODA to financing sustainable development in developing countries in order to promote their economic growth. In October 2019, the Group of 77 (G77) introduced a draft resolution on “Promoting investments for sustainable development,” which recognized that “there is a need to reverse the declining trend of [ODA] commitments by donor countries.”

Foreign Direct Investment

Compared to portfolio investments and cross-border bank loans, FDI represents the largest and most stable portion of private capital flows for developing countries. FDI can foster economic benefits for developing countries by generating employment, building productive capacity, and enabling the transfer of technical expertise. Yet since 2015, global FDI inflows, the FDI flows into a country, have decreased steadily from $2 trillion in 2015 to $1.3 trillion in 2018. This stark decline is mostly due to the decrease in FDI inflows into developed countries, since the FDI inflows for developing countries are relatively stable at around $700 billion in 2018. However, the FDI inflows to LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS in particular, are in a declining, which could lead to significant impediments in sustainable development for those countries.

There are also several problems associated with FDI, such as the inequality in FDI inflows among developing countries and the misuse of FDI for unsustainable development, as well as overly rigid investment policies, which negatively impact FDI or do not even allow for FDI. In addition, private investments in sustainable infrastructure remain unchanged despite the many initiatives attempting to facilitate more private investment in sustainable infrastructure. This is mainly due to infrastructure projects, especially within the renewable energy sector, not yet being profitable enough.

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131 UN DESA, *Official development assistance as a percentage of gross national income (GNI),* 2019.
133 UN IATF, *Domestic and international private business and finance,* 2019.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid., p. 2.
137 Ibid., p. 2.
Blended Finance

One approach to ensuring profitability of sustainable infrastructure projects is blended finance.\textsuperscript{142} Blended finance is defined as the use of ODA or other means of development finance to leverage additional private financial resources, including FDI, for sustainable development in developing countries.\textsuperscript{143} The AAAA first set up the principles on blended finance, which include sharing risks and benefits fairly among project partners, establishing transparent accountability measures, and complying with the social and environmental standards.\textsuperscript{144} These principles are complemented by the OECD DAC “Blended Finance Principles” which include, among others, the prioritization of local development needs.\textsuperscript{145} However, the OECD report on Blended Finance in the Least Developed Countries 2019 (2019) showed that blended finance is not as effective for LDCs as it is for other developing countries, since some LDCs are not able to mobilize any private investment from development financing whatsoever.\textsuperscript{146} This shows that the existing FfD framework is not providing enough support for LDCs to mobilize enough financial resources for achieving sustainable development.\textsuperscript{147}

Financial Innovations in Financing for Development

The international financial system is currently undergoing processes of market disruption due to the emergence of innovative financial technology (fintech) and digitalization in finance.\textsuperscript{148} Fintech encompasses a variety of technologies, such as mobile payments, machine learning, big data, and cryptocurrencies.\textsuperscript{149} Fintech can help providing financial services to marginalized people and thereby contribute towards financial inclusion and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.\textsuperscript{150} For example, fintech allows for lower transaction costs of remittances by migrant workers, which the UN defines as funds “sent by people living and working abroad to their home countries.”\textsuperscript{151} Total global remittances rose from $633 billion in 2017 to $689 billion in 2018 and, for developing countries, now amount to more than three times the volume of ODA.\textsuperscript{152} While remittances are not comparable to ODA or FDI in that remittances simply represent personal financial sources, they can still contribute to the development of a country’s economy when used as investments in small businesses or education.\textsuperscript{153} However, the average transaction costs for remittances currently remains at around 7%, and in some regional corridors, in particular in African corridors as well as SIDS, even amounted to 10%.\textsuperscript{154} Only mobile remittances service providers from the fintech industry currently allow for transaction costs at approximately 3%, which meets the goals of both the AAAA and SDG target 10.10.c (“Reduce inequality within and among countries”), and thus provide for

\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{143} OECD, OECD DAC Blended Finance Principles for Unlocking Commercial Finance for the Sustainable Development Goals, 2018, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{145} OECD, OECD DAC Blended Finance Principles for Unlocking Commercial Finance for the Sustainable Development Goals, 2018, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{146} OECD, Blended Finance in the Least Developed Countries 2019, 2019, pp. 10-11.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., p. 60.
\textsuperscript{149} UN DFTF, Harnessing Digitalization in Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals: Co-Chairs’ Progress Report to the Secretary-General of the Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals, 2019, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{150} UN IATF, Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019, 2019, pp. 154-158.
\textsuperscript{152} UN DESA, The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019, 2019, p. 57.
the financial inclusion of marginalized people. In this context, the G77 introduced a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly Second Committee on "Financial inclusion for sustainable development" in October 2019, which highlights the potential positive contribution of fintech to financial inclusion through the reduction of remittance transaction costs.

Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General launched the “Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals,” also referred to as the “Digital Financing Task Force” (DFTF), in November 2018. In its 2019 progress report, DFTF addressed the benefits and opportunities of digitalization in finance as well as the risks associated with it and how the current regulatory framework impacts its further development. While ECOSOC’s “Forum for Financing for Development” already recognized the importance of fintech in 2018, the G77 only just introduced a draft resolution to the Second Committee in October 2019 which takes note of the risks of fintech. Addressing the benefits and risks associated with fintech is particularly important, as the Secretary-General highlighted in his 2019 report on the “International financial system and development” (A/74/168) to the Second Committee that the current international financial framework does not appropriately regulate fintech actors and products.

Conclusion

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an ambitious development plan and financing the progress towards the SDGs will be key to achieving the 2030 Agenda. However, the UN IATF Financing Sustainable Development Report 2019 (2019) showed that many financing gaps to effective FfD remain, and that current financing efforts are insufficient. The ODA is falling behind the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda and the AAAA, while FDI inflows, although remaining relatively stable for developing countries, are unequally distributed and investments in sustainable infrastructure is lacking. Similarly, remittances from migrant workers still face the hurdle of high transaction costs, preventing them from becoming more impactful for sustainable development. With these current trends and the advancements in fintech, it becomes apparent that further regulatory steps and appropriate policy initiatives on a global scale from the General Assembly are necessary to facilitate financing for sustainable development.

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates should first look to understand the structures of the FfD process: What role does the General Assembly Second Committee play within the FfD process? What are the

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163 Ibid., pp. 11-94.
164 Ibid., pp. 11-94.
165 UN Secretary-General, Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2019, pp. 1-7.
interlinkages between the General Assembly and ECOSOC? How does ECOSOC’s work inform the General Assembly’s work? Looking at mobilizing external financial resources, what are the developments in other aspects of the FfD process, such as domestic resource mobilization, international trade, or external debt among others? Are there other innovations that currently are emerging and might be beneficial for financing sustainable development? Additionally, what are the risks and benefits of blended finance? How can the risks of blended finance be mitigated? As per SDG 5, which aims to “[a]chieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,” how can a gender perspective be mainstreamed into the FfD process? Are there any examples for a regulatory framework that allows for a profitable use of fintech for sustainable development, yet addresses its risks?

Annotated Bibliography

This publication has been provided by the NGO Committee on Financing for Development, a committee composed of various non-governmental organizations to promote a civil society perspective on sustainable development. With this publication, the Committee provides a brief overview over key aspects of the FfD process, and highlights some of the more critical aspects of the FfD process within the UN system, such as the focus on mobilizing private finance for sustainable development within the AAAA. This document will provide a useful overview over the FfD topic and provide a solid basis for delegate’s further research.

The World Investment Report 2019 is issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It covers four sections: global trends in investments, regional trends in investments, the current situation of global investment policies, and special economic zones. While the thematic focus of this report are special economic zones, this report is will be useful for delegates as it details the current trends in global and regional investments as well as in investment policy. This report also showcases various statistics of FDI flows, which ultimately inform the success of financing for sustainable development.

This website for the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development is operated by DESA and its FSDO. It presents an overview over the program of the High-level Dialogue, its outcome document, and various supporting documents. Since the High-level Dialogue will be the first one since the adoption of the AAAA in 2015, this event will be important for delegates to consider in their research. This website can provide delegates with a starting point for their research into FfD from the perspective of the General Assembly.

The Sustainable Development Goals Report is a yearly publication by the Statistics Division of DESA. It showcases the current progress towards the achievement of the SDGs and highlights areas where further action for sustainable development is needed. In the context of this report, SDG 17 “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” is of highest relevance for
delegates researching the role of FfD, in particular mobilizing external financial resources for sustainable development.


In this resolution, the General Assembly highlights and takes note of the work of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, as well as the Global Infrastructure Forum. It further requests that the Secretary-General compile the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of all of the reports of the IATF, as well as all of the agreed conclusions and recommendations of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, into one summary report to be presented at the 2019 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development of the General Assembly. This resolution functions mainly as a review of the current financing for development process, and delegates will find it useful as a starting point for their further research on Second Committee priorities for development financing.


The General Assembly annually adopts a resolution on the relationship between the “International financial system and development” under the agenda item “Macroeconomic policy questions.” This resolution highlights the importance of reforming the international financial system to adapt to the growing needs for financing sustainable development and provides concrete recommendations thereon. It is therefore crucial for delegates to consider the work of the international community on this topic, as it directly links to theAAAA and its action areas. Additionally, delegates might look to this resolution to identify further important actors within the FfD process.


Per General Assembly resolution 73/223 (2018) on the “Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development,” the Secretary-General was requested to create a synthesis report, compiling all the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of all IATF reports as well as the outcome documents of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up. This synthesis report was presented at the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development and showcases the most important developments within the FfD process over the past four years. Delegates will profit from reading this report, as it helps them visualize the end goal of follow-up process for FfD.


The Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019 is the fourth report by IATF on the current progress on development financing. This report is divided into four sections: two thematic sections and two sections reviewing the current developments in FfD. Within this publication, IATF also provides recommendations on the further course of action. It is important for delegates to review this document as it explains key challenges and issues that the FfD process faces, and provides a number of best practice examples.

The Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents the Secretary-General’s attempt at providing a concrete plan of action for the mobilization of financial resources for sustainable development. The roadmap provides specific action areas and key asks and highlights priority areas and current initiatives by the UN system on FfD. Delegates will find this document useful as the key asks contained in the roadmap function as concrete policy recommendations for a number of actors within the FfD process.

Bibliography


II. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Development

Introduction

During its 73rd session, the Second Committee highlighted that information and communication technologies (ICTs) facilitate financing and economic opportunities for sustainable development, and enable global connectedness and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ICTs exist in two categories of usage; the instrumental usage that sustains capacity-building, education and governmental policy reforms, and the industrial usage that creates economic opportunities through software, hardware and communication services. ICTs include, but are not limited to broadband and internet services, mobile and computer devices, and software for communication. Access and use of ICTs grants the opportunity to participate in the digital world and contribute to the digital economy. ICTs can be harnessed to promote inclusive economies through expanding participation in the digital economy and e-commerce. This strengthens international trade, promotes capacity-building for economic opportunity and development, and increases employment opportunity and the employability of individuals. The Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) acknowledges General Assembly resolution 70/125 (2015) that highlights the cross-cutting contributions of ICTs to development. Additionally, ICTs impact development challenges such as financing for development by encouraging investments and partnerships from all levels of government, private partnerships, and civil societies.

Digitalization allows for increased participation in business platforms, online financial services, competitive markets, and education training. Additionally, it holds an essential role in fostering Information Societies, which are outlined as societies geared towards the sharing of knowledge and information, which improves global connectedness. Further, digitalization allows access to internet services, information and data on a global scale. Information Societies accelerate progress towards sustainable development by addressing social and economic structural imbalances within the international community. These Information Societies integrate e-strategies, specifically e-government and e-economies that target opportunities in strengthening financial systems. E-strategies promote international cooperation through the strengthening of partnerships between governments, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address the distribution of ICT resources.

166 UN General Assembly, Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218), 2018.
173 Ibid.
178 Ibid.
179 Ibid.
However, there are a number of considerations that impact the implementation of ICTs; including, the creation of transnational policy agendas, cybersecurity and exploitation, and the digital divide. The digital divide is a significant barrier to the integration and implementation of ICTs, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS). Within the UN system, this digital divide denotes those who have access to ICTs identified as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage and those who do not. Many developed countries continue to advance their use of ICTs with newly patented equipment and improved services, such as 5G networks. In comparison to developing regions, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS have limited access to these new technologies and remain limited to ICT tools such as basic mobile and internet connections, and may lack proficient training on how to use these products and services. Developing regions often face, additional barriers such as challenging geographical terrain, social and economic inequalities, and particularly isolated communities; this disproportionally impacts women, and youth, who remain the lowest subscribed users of the population in developing regions.

International and Regional Framework

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) (2015) emphasizes that investing in economic resources that promote capacity-building and economic growth creates an enabling environment that promotes empowerment, equitable economic growth, and sustainable development. Additionally, the AAAA encourages the creation of policies and frameworks that promote investments in ICTs, and bridges to strengthen public-private partnerships (PPPs) and partnerships between governmental bodies. Second, the 2003 WSIS and 2005 WSIS reaffirm the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples to sustainable livelihoods and well-being. This collaboration of the international community provided a global alignment for generating access, use, and sharing of knowledge, with the common desire to regulate ICTs for universal benefit. The WSIS resulted in two outcome documents: the Declaration of Principles (2003), the Tunis Commitment (2005) and the Tunis Agenda (2005). The Declaration of Principles underlines the relationship between the development of ICTs and societies, and improved quality of life for all. Through addressing international cooperation and partnerships, access to knowledge, and fostering enabling environments, ICTs enhance sustainable development and increase human productivity, economic growth and employability. The Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda address internet governance, policy recommendations, and mechanisms for financing to encourage the implementation of ICT resources for sustainable development. These documents note that the cost of ICTs and attaining sustainable funding for ICTs would help in the implementation process and bridge the digital divide. The digital divide presents the challenge in integrating ICTs into regions that lack basic
access, infrastructure, and skill sets for utilization.\textsuperscript{195} As ICTs evolve, this creates a larger divide between developed countries, with resources to attain these tools, and developing countries who lack the financial structure.\textsuperscript{196}

In addition to the outcome documents of the WSIS, an annual forum was formed to discuss the implementation of the commitments, and in recent years, the role of ICTs in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).\textsuperscript{197} An outcome of the 2016 WSIS Forum was the creation of the WSIS Action Lines and a supporting SDGs Matrix which outlines the role of ICTs in each SDG, and the influence in advancing sustainable development.\textsuperscript{198} Examples include the utilization of ICTs for weather forecasting to send early warning signs that increase preparedness against natural hydro meteorological related disasters.\textsuperscript{199} This was successfully implemented by Member States which assisted in reducing vulnerability to climate-related hazards, and targeted SDG 13.3 by improving education and institutional capacities on climate mitigation and early warning.\textsuperscript{200}

**Role of the International System**

As a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) studies the relationship between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda.\textsuperscript{201} The priority theme of the 22\textsuperscript{nd} session of CSTD examined “the impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development.”\textsuperscript{202} Although emerging ICTs accelerate the pace towards achieving the SDGs, ITCs may disrupt markets and widen existing economic and social gaps. Monitoring this negative impact of ICTs aligns with the objective outlined in the 74\textsuperscript{th} session of the Second Committee, to coordinate the role of new technologies in sustainable development.\textsuperscript{203} This includes the development of governmental strategies and policy recommendations that address investments needed in infrastructure, capacity-building, and financial systems.\textsuperscript{204}

The annual WSIS Forum is a collaboration of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Committee on Trade (UNCTAD).\textsuperscript{205} The WSIS Forum highlights key themes including; economic growth opportunities, strengthening governance of the digital world, and ICTs for sustainable development.\textsuperscript{206} The WSIS is further supported through reports presented by these agencies, for example, UNCTAD’s Information Economy Report from 2017 that draws the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies.\textsuperscript{207} The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) facilitates this collaboration by engaging various stakeholders to discuss public policy regarding issues and opportunities related to the internet.\textsuperscript{208} A 2018 IGF report highlights the increasing number of publicly available free internet access points to encourage the use of


\textsuperscript{197} UN DESA, *WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*, 2019.


\textsuperscript{200} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{204} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{206} WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.


\textsuperscript{208} WSIS, *Tunis Agenda*, 2005.
ICTs for social and economic development and global connectedness. To that effect, Open Educational Resources (OER), which are freely accessible digital resources for learning, sharing, and teaching, allow for public access to information, and inclusion through digitalization. The utilization of public domain content, existing under open-licenses, OER permits for no-cost access to learning, research, and information. This initiative enables capacity-building efforts and enhances ICT skills. The United Nations Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies is an example of how ICT innovations bring a positive impact on the social and economic development of countries.

Similarly, ITU works to accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs; notably by coordinating and developing international standards alongside the private sector, governments, and CSOs. ITU also assists efforts to establish affordable and accessible ICTs by promoting opportunities on economic and sustainable development. For example, ITU launched the ITU-McCaw Foundation Broadband Wireless Network Project for Africa that implements broadband wireless networks with ICT applications at affordable rates within hospitals and remote areas. This improved the efficiency of the health care systems and enhanced national e-strategies, specifically e-health. Such projects reduce the financing barrier faced by LDCs to implement ICTs in remote areas by partnering with organizations that can bring in resources, ensuring improved accessibility and capacity for individuals in the community. Additionally, ITU leads studies that examine International Internet Connectivity (IIC) by conducting research on Internet Service Providers (ISP), the connectedness between countries, and the barriers faced by LDCs. Internet cost inflation due to high traffic in areas with lower proportions of ISPs, prompted the IIC to establish an international standard to connect local Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) with local communities to reduce traffic and internet costs. These hubs improve global connectedness all while reducing the digital divide and increasing affordability in isolated regions.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) commits to the creation and advancement of Inclusive and Sustainable Development through forming knowledge and capacity-building frameworks centered around the development of ICT skills and development. The outcomes of these initiatives enhance employment, food security, well-being, and create a sustainable livelihood. An example of this is recognized within the agricultural communities of LDCs where women account for 70% of the agriculture labor force and contribute significantly towards the socio-economic development of the regions that surround them. UNIDO’s Agribusiness Development Branch assists in the development of agriculture to generate employment, address food security, and promote entrepreneurship.

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210 Ibid.
211 UNESCO, Building Knowledge Societies, Open Educational Resources (OER), 2019.
215 Ibid.
217 Ibid.
218 Ibid.
220 Ibid.
221 Ibid.
223 Ibid.
224 UNIDO, Agribusiness Development: Transforming rural life to create wealth, 2013, p. 25.
225 Ibid.
**Bridging the Digital and Knowledge Divide**

ITU reports that 4.3 billion people still remain offline or have limited access to ICTs.\(^{226}\) Those who are offline have no access to ICT tools such as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage.\(^{227}\) Other obstacles in the divide are the quality of broadband connection, distance between towers in local regions, and the associated costs in attaining these ICTs.\(^{228}\) Statistics show that the divide is predominantly present between developed countries, and LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs.\(^{229}\) Within developing states these barriers are increased by factors such geographical isolation, urbanization, and gender inequalities which constrain the instrumental and industrial use of ICTs.\(^{230}\) The existence of the digital divide further results in a knowledge divide, a lack of technological literacy, inadequate proficiency in the use of ICTs, and inability to access readily available information online.\(^{231}\) Closing the digital and knowledge divide stimulates economic growth by enabling inclusive economic participation, which expands global e-commerce markets.\(^{232}\) The expansion of global e-commerce translates to greater engagement and opportunity at regional levels.\(^{233}\) UNCTAD reports that emerging economies largely contribute to increasing global e-commerce and international trade by expanding the international flow of goods and services, and sustaining economic growth.\(^{234}\)

The World Bank suggests that increasing global connectedness and financial growth through ensuring participation in the digital economy, can be achieved by providing telephone and internet services.\(^{235}\) This will increase opportunities in international trade, economic and social development, and lift developing regions out of poverty.\(^{236}\) Additionally, it will allow for the development of capacity through technology literacy and proficiency, and provide new employment opportunities.\(^{237}\) The ability to understand how to use a telephone or navigate the internet also builds on the foundation of Information Societies which encourage the creation of national and international e-strategies.\(^{238}\) These e-strategies promote dialogue in areas for development that influence trade, health, agriculture, education; but, most importantly logistics in harnessing ICT resources.\(^{239}\) For developing countries, this provides opportunities for policy recommendations and partnerships with developed states and private investors to lay the groundwork for commerce and innovation.\(^{240}\)

The development of new ICTs creates a large amount of e-waste as the ICTs once utilized in developed countries are not being reused or disposed of in sustainable and environmentally conscious ways.\(^{241}\) This leaves a considerable environmental imprint, but also a missed opportunity to share these resources.\(^{242}\) In 2016 alone, 44.7 million metric tons of e-waste was generated, and only 8.9 million tons were collected and managed.\(^{243}\) Encouraging the re-use of ICT devices through global partnerships enables digital

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\(^{230}\) Ibid.


\(^{238}\) Ibid.


\(^{240}\) Ibid.


\(^{242}\) Ibid.

\(^{243}\) Ibid.
inclusion and tackles the barrier of financial access by providing affordable costs for these reused devices. The joint efforts from International Solid Waste Organization (ISWA), United Nations University, and ITU established the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership that collects worldwide e-waste statistics to track e-waste and influence international and regional capacities to work together in utilizing these unused ICT devices. These statistics assist in evaluating the number of unused ICT industrial tools in order to increase their life cycle. This addresses opportunities in closing the digital and knowledge divide by encouraging the recycling and reusing of ICT industrial tools for capacity-building and economic growth in regions who currently do not have access to these resources.

**Challenges in Financing ICTs for Development**

Attaining sustainable financing and investments, investing in ICTs for development to stimulate trade, and creating economic growth opportunity remain some of the largest challenges in achieving the SDGs. The lack of funding for ICT initiatives increases the strain on already existing financial systems, resulting in a greater challenge to promote sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. During the 74th session of the Second Committee, the integration of financial mechanisms to fund ICTs, increasing partnerships with private investors, and civil society was deemed critical for accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda.

The Secretary-General’s Strategy for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development further emphasizes the importance of transforming financial systems by addressing current financial constraints and focusing on three main objectives. First, by aligning global economic policies and economic systems between developed and developing Member States to support the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Second, by improving current financial strategies and investments at all levels of government, with emphasis on inclusivity for all Member States, by considering affordability and availability of resources. And last, by investing in financial innovations, technologies, and digitalization in order to ensure an equitable environment for development and economic opportunity. Further attention and development is required on international financing strategies that meet the challenges in ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for

The Task Force on Financial Mechanism reviews existing financial mechanisms that meet the challenges in ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for

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244 Ibid.
245 Ibid.
246 Ibid.
247 Ibid.
252 UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
sustainable development. Affordability of ICTs remains a challenge particularly for developing countries that lack the resources and depend on the international community to invest in their infrastructure. This dependency holds the potential risk of increasing international debt and an unsustainable foundation for financing. The ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF), a partnership between Members of ITU, the public and private sector, and financial agencies, works to accelerate sustainable development by co-financing multilateral ICT development projects. An example of this success is the partnership of Member States in assisting the establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications. This initiative allowed for the introduction of computerized systems for management, capacity-building for skills training, and the creation of interconnection policies which regulate radio communications, broadcasting, carrier and service providers, and costs. The Second Committee advocates for developing broadband for all; however, in order to implement this on a global scale, industrial infrastructure and instruments for ICT must become more affordable. This includes hardware, software, cellular towers, routers, equipment, and power boxes or generators. Without the infrastructure to sustain the usage of ICTs, they will not be viable, and their operations will have no effect on social or economic development.

Conclusion

ICTs are critical enablers of economic and social development, and catalysts in the achieving the 2030 Agenda. Utilizing ICTs sustains inclusive digitalization that stimulates digital economy and a diverse e-commerce market. This promotes economic growth, in addition to expanding trade and global value chains which supplement regional economic opportunities. This can only be accomplished through the instrumental use of ICTs that promote capacity-building efforts that will boost technology literacy and understanding. Additionally, the promotion of ICTs develops Information Societies where the sharing of knowledge and information creates an increasingly connected world, with readily available data online. This translates into stronger cooperation for financial and economic policies that will continue to strengthen the global economy, in addition to development of financial strategies and mechanisms required to ensure realistic implementation of ICT initiatives. However, incorporation of ICTs for all continues to face challenges in bridging the digital divide, securing global financing, and establishing cooperative ICT development policies. The 74th session of the Second Committee, focused on the follow-up of the WSIS, and the implementation of ICTs at regional levels of government. This is most

266 Ibid.
269 Ibid.
273 UN Secretary-General, Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2019.
important in ensuring inclusive participation and policy adaptability for Member States. Additionally, urgency is noted in strengthening international financial systems to ensure financial inclusion and management, and progress is continued towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Further Research**

As delegates continue their research, they should consider the following questions: What other challenges may the international community face in financing ICTs for sustainable development? What more can be achieved to integrate ICTs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs? Are there other mechanisms that reduce the digital and knowledge divide? How does debt management influence the global financing system, and what can be done to address this? How can e-waste be recycled or reused to assist with providing ICT access and use? What role do regional governments, public and private sector, and civil societies play in financing ICTs for sustainable development?

**Annotated Bibliography**


This report highlights the current status of global financing for sustainable development. It breaks down the trends, challenges, and opportunities in the UN financial system, and provides insight to a multitude of key financing insights. This source will be useful for delegates in understanding the current structure of global financing, and key factors challenging the system. Additionally, it outlines the role of ICTs, e-commerce, and international trade in accelerating the economy and the 2030 Agenda.


The WSIS Action Lines provides direct linkages between ICTs development, the WSIS Action Plan, and the 17 SDGs. This source outlines the influence of ICTs on the 2030 Agenda in addition to providing examples about the individual goals. Additionally, it discusses the role regional governments, multi-stakeholders, public and private partnerships, and investments in promoting ICTs for development. Delegates will find this source helpful in understanding the relationship between ICTs and implementing SDGs.


This source provides an understanding of the measurement tools, analysis, and definitions for the consideration of ICT development. The methodologies used within this source provides a technical understanding of terminology, and measurable tools of usage. It focuses on individualizing the components used towards accessing the integration of ICTs within communities. This source will assist delegates in grasping the timeline, and the current development track of ICTs on a global scale.


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276 Ibid.
The source showcases the current initiatives taking place within the UN system surrounding ICTs and their influence in progressing global sustainable development. This resolution lists the collaboration among different bodies within the UN system, private partnerships, and civil societies. In consideration of the topic, delegates may find this provides a detailed overview of the current work the General Assembly is contributing to implementation. This source also provides insight to the progress made in implementing the items from WSIS. Additionally, there is explanation of the linkages between ICTs and sustainable development.


This declaration represents the foundation of the commitment from the UN body of the common desire in recognizing ICTs as enablers of sustainable development. Within this source you will also find the call for all UN entities, governmental bodies, and civil societies to work towards the creation of policy to support these objectives. For delegates this source aids in providing insight to the root of current implementation initiatives, and the calls to actions that shape current strategies.

Bibliography


III. Disaster Risk Reduction

Introduction

Over the past 10 years, disasters have affected more than 1.5 billion people globally, and led to casualties, displacement, and large-scale economic, social, and environmental consequences. The cost of disasters has amounted to more than $1.3 trillion in recovery efforts worldwide over the past decade, including the rebuilding of infrastructure as well as the restoration of social services and local markets. The United Nations (UN) defines disaster risk reduction as the “concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and reduce the casual factors of disasters.” The goal of disaster risk reduction is to decrease the destruction caused by events such as floods, droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis through preventative practices. As the UN uses both “natural hazards” and “disasters” to refer to these events, it is important to distinguish between the two terms. While “[n]atural hazards are severe and extreme weather and climate events,” disasters result from the destruction of people’s lives and livelihoods as a direct consequence of natural hazards. In this context, disaster risk management is defined as “the systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills/capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities; in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards, and the possibility of disaster.”

Disasters also present a threat to sustainable development as states which are trapped in an endless cycle of trying to respond to and recover from disasters are then unable to focus on sustainable development, particular those states with already limited infrastructure capacity. The 2015 Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) represents the current UN framework document on disaster risk reduction. The goals of the Sendai Framework also recognize climate change as a driver of disaster risk, and emphasize the importance of good governance for disaster risk reduction. In this context, the Sendai Framework calls for the creation and effective implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction plans by 2020. Additionally, it notes that by recognizing the economic consequences of disasters and planning response in advance, the impacts of disasters can be minimized or reduced.

International and Regional Framework

The first global framework document on disaster risk reduction was the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World, which was adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 1994 and set out the first disaster risk reduction principles, a plan action for disaster risk reduction, and

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278 UNDP, Disaster Risk Reduction, 2019; UN General Assembly, Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 2.
279 UNDP, Disaster Risk Reduction, 2019; UNDP, Planning and implementing recovery, 2019.
280 UNDRR, What is Disaster Risk Reduction?, 2019.
281 Ibid.
282 Ibid.
283 WMO, Natural hazards and disaster risk reduction, 2019.
284 UNOOSA, Risks and Disasters, 2019.
285 Ibid.
288 Ibid., p. 5.
289 Ibid., p. 7; Planitz, Sendai Target E: Just One More Year to Go, UNDP, 2019.
290 UN General Assembly, Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 4.
follow-up guidelines. As a follow-up to the Yokohama Strategy, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (2005), which aimed to create a stronger and more detailed plans for disaster risk reduction that focuses on the role required by different partners, including local and national governments. The Hyogo Framework provides practical guidelines with the purpose of creating more resilient communities by reducing the negative impact of disasters on social, economic and environmental assets. In 2015, the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction officially adopted the Sendai Framework with its four priority action areas: comprehending disaster risk, improving disaster risk governance for disaster risk management, mobilizing financial resources for disaster risk reduction, and improving disaster preparedness.

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), which focuses on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to initiate action to promote sustainable development. Out of the 17 SDGs, SDG 1, 11 and 13 are particularly relevant to disaster risk reduction. For example, SDG 13 (climate action) aims to “[s]trengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters [sic] in all countries.” Additionally, SDG 1 (no poverty) works to decrease vulnerable populations’ exposure to climate-related disasters along with the consequences of these disasters, while SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) targets a reduction of economic losses resulting from disasters.

Other key frameworks that relate to disaster risk reduction include the Paris Agreement (2015) and the New Urban Agenda (2016). The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015 by the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change as a framework document for climate action in order to limit the rising temperatures resulting from climate change to below 2° Celsius. The Paris Agreement (2015) aims to assist in disaster risk reduction efforts by mitigating the effects of climate change, which exacerbates coastal vulnerability, sea levels, atmospheric heat, and other phenomena, thereby increasing the quantity and impact of many types of natural disasters. The New Urban Agenda, adopted 2016 by the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), is a key framework to address the growing urban population of the world challenges. The New Urban Agenda highlights the connection between sustainable urban development and disaster risk reduction, as it stipulates that Member States who “[a]dopt and implement disaster risk reduction and management” have more sustainable urban infrastructure, and therefore less loss of life due to disasters.

293 Ibid.
297 UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1), 2015, p. 23.
298 UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1), 2015, pp. 15, 21-22.
299 COP 21, Paris Agreement, 2015.
300 Ibid., p. 3.
301 UN General Assembly, Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/73/231), 2018, p. 3.
**Role of the International System**

Within the current disaster risk reduction framework, the General Assembly is mandated by the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Sendai Framework to review the progress and the implementation of disaster risk reduction efforts. As such, the General Assembly Second Committee considers disaster risk reduction as part of its agenda item on “sustainable development.” In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/231 on “Disaster risk reduction,” which stresses that capacity-building support, in particular for developing states, should be a top priority in the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The General Assembly further stated in its resolution that national and local disaster risk reduction strategies are keys to achieving sustainable development. In September 2019, the UN also hosted the Climate Action Summit where resilient infrastructure and resilience to climate impacts were key discussion points.

In its resolution 61/198 from 2006 on the “International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction,” the General Assembly established the “Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction” (Global Platform). The purpose of the Global Platform is to assist with the review of the progress on disaster risk reduction as well as the monitoring and implementation of the Sendai Framework. In May 2019, the sixth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Geneva Switzerland. At this session, the Global Risk Assessment Framework (GRAF) was launched. GRAF is an interdisciplinary platform to improve disaster risk understanding and disaster risk management with the goal of supporting decision-makers in disaster risk reduction efforts and to mobilize financial resources for disaster risk reduction. In addition to GRAF, the sixth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction also focused on gender-sensitive and inclusive disaster risk reduction.

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) is the main focal point for disaster risk reduction strategies and data within the UN Secretariat, and it is headed by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction. The General Assembly established UNDRR with its resolution 56/195 (2001) on the “International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction,” with its main objective being to better coordinate disaster risk reduction efforts of Member States. In 2017, the UNDRR updated the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (Plan of Action) to better align the Plan of Action with the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the 2030 Agenda. The goal of the Plan of Action is to better coordinate the work of the wider UN system on disaster risk reduction.

Some examples of UN system wide efforts on disaster risk reduction include the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations Development

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307 Ibid., p. 4.
308 UN DGC, UN General Assembly: Here are the 5 big summits to watch out for, UN News, 2019.
310 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, About the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2019.
311 Ibid.
315 UNDRR, Who we are, 2019.
316 Ibid.
318 Ibid., pp. 8-13.
Programme (UNDP).\(^{319}\) UN-Women promotes and facilitates the contribution of women to disaster risk reduction and the leadership of women therein.\(^{320}\) To this end, UN-Women has proposed creating gender responsive disaster risk reduction sector briefs for different sectors to raise awareness of the role that gender plays in disaster risk mitigation and recovery.\(^{321}\) UNESCO focuses on capacity-building efforts for countries’ disaster risk management programs, and collaborates with other UN agencies on this mandate.\(^{322}\) Recent efforts by UNESCO include setting up early warning systems, which help states expand their technological and scientific capacity to identify potential disaster then monitor and prepare for the potential disaster.\(^{323}\) Similarly, UNDP emphasizes disaster risk reduction by fostering risk-informed development and promoting cooperation and coherency of disaster risk plans among states as an important piece of disaster risk reduction.\(^{324}\) UNDP also works to provide information regarding risks and early warning system to states and presently has 64 programs focused on early warning systems.\(^{325}\)

UNESCO and UNDRR are part of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES), which aims to provide a comprehensive approach to safe school facilities, school disaster risk management, and risk reduction management.\(^{326}\) Civil society organizations (CSOs), in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs), are also part of GADRRRES, such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Plan International, and Save the Children.\(^{327}\) IFRC aims to reinforce disaster preparedness, promote the mitigation of the negative impacts of hazards, and protect development from disasters.\(^{328}\) Plan International, an NGO that aims to advance children’s rights, works to enhance disaster preparedness through education and school programs.\(^{329}\) Similarly, Save the Children, another NGO that focuses on children’s rights, centers their DRR efforts on children and provides guidelines for the protection of children in disasters.\(^{330}\)

**Developing Local and National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies**

National and local disaster risk reduction strategies help monitor the success of disaster risk reduction efforts and outline the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors.\(^{331}\) Disaster risk reduction strategies also identify the technical and financial capacities and how to allocate them.\(^{332}\) Furthermore, national disaster risk strategies need to comply with the Sendai Framework, while local disaster risk strategies have to comply with national strategies.\(^{333}\) The Sendai Framework establishes seven targets, out of which target (e) aims to “substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.”\(^{334}\) The deadline for achieving target (e) is 31 December 2020, which is set at an earlier date than those of the other six targets in order to facilitate their achievement by 2030.\(^{335}\) However, by May 2019, only 91 national disaster risk reduction strategies were in place.\(^{336}\) Furthermore,


\(^{320}\) UN-Women, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.

\(^{321}\) Ibid.


\(^{323}\) Ibid.

\(^{324}\) UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.


\(^{327}\) GADRRRES, GADRRRES Members, 2019.

\(^{328}\) IFRC, *The IFRC’s Approach to Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2019.


\(^{330}\) Save the Children, *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*, 2019.


\(^{332}\) Ibid.

\(^{333}\) Ibid., p. 252.


these strategies created by states are not of equal quality and have varying extents of coverage. For instance, in 2017, only 47 national disaster risk reduction strategies were aligned with principles laid out in the Sendai Framework. And out of those 47 strategies, only six national strategies were in full compliance with the Sendai Framework. Additionally, local disaster risk reduction strategies were reported by only 42 Member States, out of which only half were in strong compliance with their respective national strategy.

In its resolution 73/231, the General Assembly recognized the shortfall on the progress towards target (e) and urged the prioritization of the development of national disaster risk reduction strategies. In particular, the General Assembly highlighted the importance of local disaster risk reduction strategies in this regard. Furthermore, the General Assembly also urged Member States in its resolution 73/231 to align their national disaster risk reduction strategies with the 2030 Agenda and their climate change adaption strategies for the Paris Agreement. It was noted that a lack of progress on target (e) of the Sendai Framework could potentially endanger the progress on the remaining six targets of the Sendai Framework as well as the SDGs.

One solution to facilitate further progress on target (e) is capacity-building, in particular through regional and international organizations, to assist Member States in developing and implementing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. Additionally, national and local disaster risk reduction strategies are best developed when they are part of a diverse collaboration of different stakeholders, such as representatives from different sectors, NGOs, and academia, among others. This refers back to an inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction emphasized in the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, but also points to the need for more extensive disaster risk planning and capacity.

Lastly, the actual implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies is an entirely separate issue, which further relies on the creation of implementation guidelines and the mobilization of financial resources for disaster risk reduction and risk-informed development. Altogether, the need for increased risk reduction capacity is great, but obstacles to effective implementation continue to hinder full Member State success.

Ensuring Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

Gender mainstreaming is defined by the UN as a strategy to make diverse people’s perspectives and experiences a key part of policy planning, specifically disaster risk reduction action plans, legislation, policies and programs with the goal of promoting equality. Within the Sendai Framework, gender mainstreaming is part of the guiding principle of inclusivity for disaster risk reduction, and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into disaster preparedness constitute one crucial pillar of the Sendai Framework. Additionally, the Sendai Framework recognizes women as key stakeholders within the entire disaster risk reduction process, whose input should be considered in all designing, resourcing

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337 Planitz, Sendai Target E: Just One More Year to Go, UNDP, 2019.
338 Ibid.
340 Ibid., pp. 254-255.
342 Ibid.
343 Ibid.
346 Ibid., p. 324.
347 Ibid., p. 324.
348 Ibid., p. 328.
349 Ibid.
350 UN-Women, Gender Mainstreaming, 2019.
and implementing of disaster risk recovery plans. This has been reiterated by the General Assembly in its resolution 73/231 in 2018, which encouraged Member States to include the opinions of women and people with disabilities in the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies, as they face disproportionate risk during disasters. Including these perspectives by ensuring the access to information and resources by women and people with disabilities will help to reduce social vulnerabilities instead of exacerbating them.

In 2016, UN-Women, together with the Government of Viet Nam, UNDRR and UNDP, organized the Regional Asia-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction, which resulted in the *Ha Noi Recommendations for Action on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction*. The recommendations build upon the four priorities of the Sendai Framework by developing indicators that are fully gender responsive. For example, the document recommends that states invest in female leadership to increase capacity and allow women and girls to play a strong and substantive role in disaster risk reduction. The document further recommended the institutionalization of the leadership of women and diverse groups in disaster preparedness response, recovery and reconstruction at national and local level. The goal of the Ha Noi recommendations is to create a strong regional disaster risk reduction framework that ensures that gender mainstreaming is part of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

**Strengthening International Cooperation on Disaster Risk Reduction**

While states themselves have the primary responsibility to reduce disasters, there is also a shared responsibility, especially when disasters have cross-border impacts. International cooperation helps states fill the gaps in their knowledge about disaster risk reduction. Some countries deal more frequently with disasters, most notably least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), archipelagic countries, and countries with extensive coastlines, due to their proximity to higher-risk geographic markers. Because of this, many states that are disaster-prone do not have the capacity to prepare, respond and recover from disasters therefore making international cooperation even more essential. The General Assembly has repeatedly encouraged international cooperation in disaster risk reduction to help mitigate the impact of Member States such as these who more impacted, as well as cross-border disasters. For instance, General Assembly resolution 73/231 (2018) mentions that developed states need to fulfill their commitments of official development assistance (ODA) regarding disaster risk reduction to have meaningful partnerships that are effective in reducing disaster risk.

One main focus of international cooperation is in gathering scientific knowledge in order to improve early warning systems for disaster risk reduction and to deepen the understanding of disaster risk. In this context, standardizations of data collection, risk analysis, monitoring systems and integrated

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352 Ibid., pp. 18-19.
356 Regional Asian-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction, *Ha Noi Recommendations for Action on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2016, p. 4.
357 Ibid.
358 Ibid., p. 7.
359 Ibid.
363 Ibid.

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assessments of risk allow for increased effectiveness of international cooperation on disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, the Sendai Framework states that international approaches on disaster risk governance and management could be grouped, based on ecosystems, where states with similar or shared ecosystems as well as shared resources can work together. This has been reiterated by General Assembly resolution 73/231 (2018), which “encourages all States, United Nations bodies and other relevant actors to promote ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction.” This further shows that international cooperation is not just between states, but also between UN bodies, agencies, programs and funds as well as civil society and other stakeholders.

In addition to the technical support, providing financial resources to help develop and implement disaster risk reduction strategies is another form of aid helpful to developing states, in particular LDCs, SIDS, LLDCs. Similarly, cooperation between the private and public sector also aids in disaster risk reduction. The private sector in particular can be a source of additional voluntary funding, which is important to disaster risk reduction in order to offset short-falls in ODA. This highlights the important role the financing for development framework, in particular the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015), plays for achievement of the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework.

Conclusion

Reducing disaster risk and meeting the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework is important to ensuring the success of the SDGs. The Sendai Framework mandates the General Assembly to review the current progress in disaster risk reduction. Overall, there has been progress on disaster risk reduction since 2015; however current efforts are not on track to meet the 2030 targets. For instance, as per target (e) of the Sendai Framework, there are not enough local and national strategies in place, which inhibits the progress towards the remaining six targets of the Sendai Framework. Additionally, inclusive disaster risk reduction is crucial, as it ensures that vulnerable groups are part of the full disaster risk reduction process, however there remains significant work to be done to ensure fully inclusive processes. Finally, international cooperation and the mobilization of development finance, both from the public and the private sector, are also important tools for disaster risk reduction, demonstrating another key area of work for the international community to commit to, in order to ensure full success of disaster risk reduction frameworks.

373 Ibid.
Further Research

As delegates begin their research, they should first ask if their country already has a disaster risk reduction plan on both the national and the local level, as well as research: What tools have been utilized by states to increase gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction planning? How can governments motivate the private sector to participate in the development of local and national capabilities to contribute to disaster risk reduction? How can data be better utilized by many states to improve the disaster risk reduction? Is there a method to create a consistent standard of quality for disaster risk reduction plans? How can existing disaster risk reduction standards and implementation of plans be more inclusive, particularly to vulnerable populations?

Annotated Bibliography


UNDP is an important UN program which aims to increase international cooperation around disaster risk reduction. From the UNDP’s website on DRR, delegates can get an overview on disaster risk reduction initiatives that increase international cooperation. This website is useful for delegates because it provides links to information on subtopics and aspects of subtopics mentioned in the background guide. This website will also be helpful for delegates to use in the start of their research to better understand disaster risk reduction from the perspective of a UN entity.


The UNDRR produces the Global Assessment Report on a biannual basis. The 2019 Global Assessment Report contains important data on the progress on the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework, which will be helpful in framing delegate research. This report also emphasizes the impact of disaster risk reduction and showcases best practice examples for delegates on how disaster risk reduction can be effectively implemented. This report particularly provides best practice examples for effective national and local disaster risk reduction strategies as well as the concrete principles, which each national disaster risk reduction plan should ideally include.


This resolution is the most recent General Assembly resolution on disaster risk reduction. As the main task of the General Assembly within the Sendai Framework is to review the progress on disaster risk reduction, this source provides delegates with an understanding of how the General Assembly approaches its mandate. Additionally, within this resolution, the importance of key international frameworks such as Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Rio Declaration, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement is reiterated. The resolution further highlights the importance of developing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies as well as gender mainstreaming and international cooperation in disaster risk reduction. Delegates could use the structure of this resolution as a guideline for their own proposals.


The Sendai Framework is the current UN framework on disaster risk reduction and is the most frequently referenced document in the international system on disaster risk reduction. The framework contains indicators and targets for disaster risk reduction useful
in measuring progress. The implementation of the Sendai Framework informs the work of not only governments, but also NGOs and UN agencies, funds and programs. It will be important for delegates to understand the various priority areas of the Sendai Framework as well as its targets in order to assess the current progress on global, national, and local disaster risk reduction efforts.


This document is the 2019 report of the Secretary-General on the “Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” (A/74/248). It provides insights on the current progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and informs the draft resolution of the Second Committee on the sub-agenda item “Disaster Risk Reduction.” The report details that, while some progress has been made, more action is required, and a failure to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework could threaten the global progress towards the SDGs. Delegates should look to this document to form their proposals for the conference.

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