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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Background Guide 2024

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2024 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce to you our committee, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Your committee's work is facilitated by volunteer staffers. This year's committee staff are: Director Lisa N. Huynh and Assistant Director Steven Gentiel Vanhulle (Session 1), and Director Catherine Tomczyk and Assistant Director Subham Barua (Session 2). Lisa N. Huynh studied Economics and Political Science with a focus on International Relations at California State University, Sacramento. She also holds a Master's degree in Applied Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park. She currently works as an Economist for the US federal government. Steven G. Vanhulle studies Global Economic Affairs at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. His background focuses primarily on poverty reduction in post-communist states. Catherine Tomczyk holds a B.A. in International Affairs from the University of New Haven and is currently completing her Master's in Public Administration. Subham Barua is a senior studying Political Science (International Affairs) at the University of California, Riverside, and currently works as a research fellow for MSIRA at UC Riverside, focusing on environmental justice and international law. The preparation of these materials was supported by Under-Secretaries-General Eric Lowe (Session 1) and Johanna Barton (Session 2).

The topics on the agenda for this committee are:

1. Promoting a Healthy, Protected, and Productive Workforce in Asia and the Pacific
2. Addressing the Expanded Riskscape in Asia and the Pacific

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 bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the conference, each delegation should submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. ET on 1 March 2023 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers website](#).

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

- The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions.
- The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee, please contact the Deputy Secretaries-General at [dsg.ny@nmun.org](mailto:dsg.ny@nmun.org).

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

Lisa N. Huynh, Director  
Steven Gentiel Vanhulle, Assistant Director  
Session 1

Catherine Tomczyk, Director  
Subham Barua, Assistant Director  
Session 2



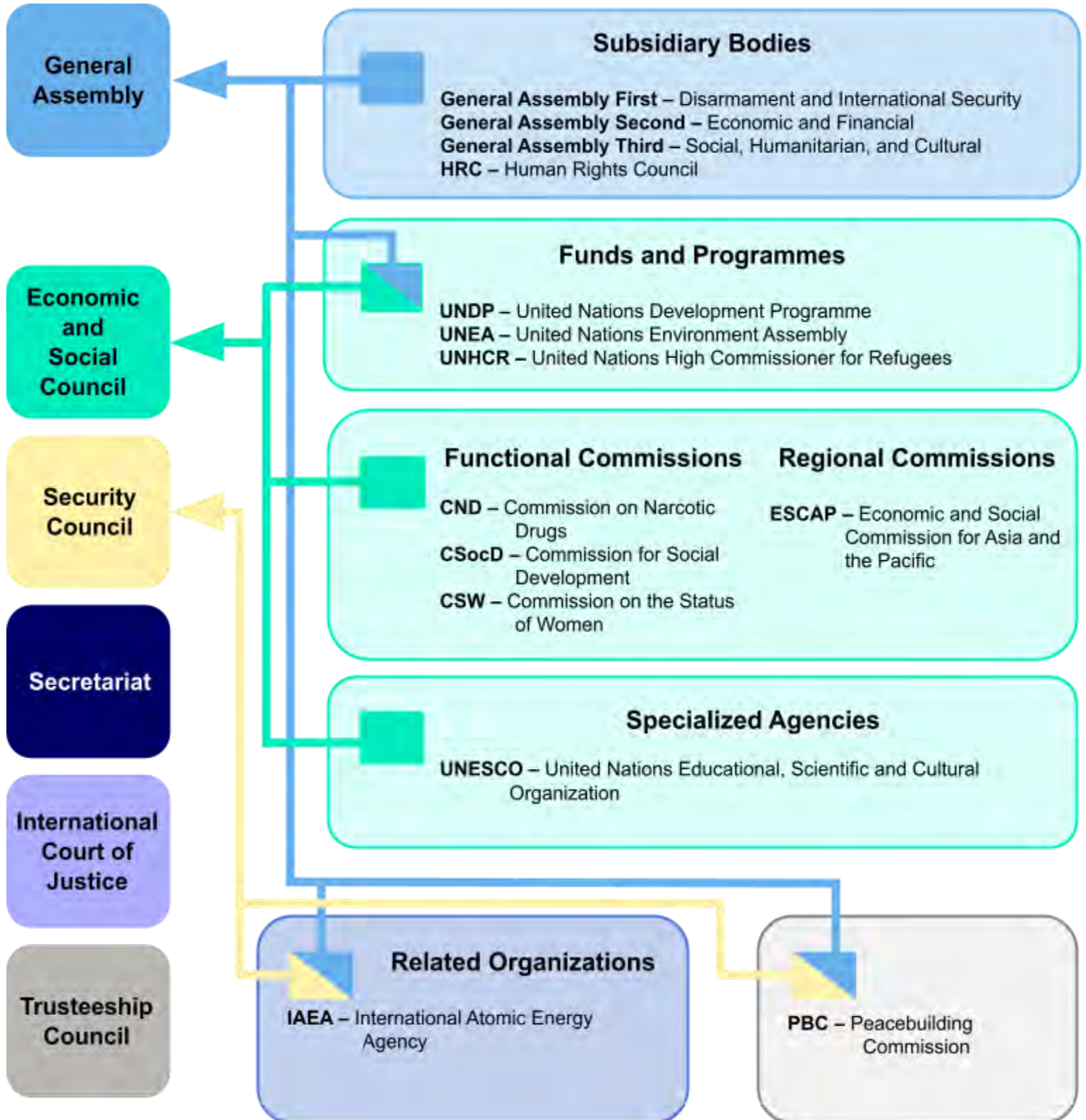
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## United Nations System at NMUN·NY

This diagram illustrates the United Nations system simulated at NMUN·NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system to demonstrate 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 United Nations system.





## Committee Overview

### **Introduction**

The Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is one of the five regional commissions established under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>1</sup> The commission is a highly inclusive body that brings together its 53 Member States, 9 Associate Members, other United Nations entities, and various regional stakeholders to address socioeconomic issues.<sup>2</sup> ESCAP includes highly diverse countries and a large geographic region, stretching from Turkey in the west to Kiribati in the east and its Member States are home to nearly two-thirds of the world's population.<sup>3</sup>

### **Mandate, Functions, and Powers**

As a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, ESCAP's mandate falls under Chapter X of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945).<sup>4</sup> The Charter allows ECOSOC to "make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters" and "make recommendations with respect to any such matters" to Member States and other entities.<sup>5</sup> ECOSOC created ESCAP and tasked it with: facilitating regional development; initiating studies of economic and technological problems; collecting and disseminating statistical information; providing advisory services; and related functions.<sup>6</sup> ESCAP meets in an annual session that provides a forum for its Member States to discuss and negotiate on prevailing issues, ultimately adopting resolutions with recommendations for its Executive Secretary, Member States, and other bodies, or otherwise taking direct action with its Secretariat and subsidiary bodies.<sup>7</sup>

ESCAP exclusively focuses on issues pertaining to Asia and the Pacific and the actions it takes in its resolutions can be summarized as:

- **ESCAP generally:** makes policy, norm-setting, and other recommendations to Member States and other United Nations entities; promotes regional cooperation and integration; initiates studies, the dissemination of information, and the drafting and publication of reports, especially through its subsidiary bodies; calls for or hosts conferences, workshops, events, or similar fora; provides assistance, especially technical assistance, to its Member States.<sup>8</sup>
- **ESCAP does not generally:** address issues outside of its regional scope; dictate the specific actions required to implement policies it recommends, allowing Member States and other bodies to determine operational details; take action in a country without the agreement of the government of that country; create new bodies, except in those rare circumstances where the nature of its work has changed such that the role of its subsidiary bodies requires assessment.<sup>9</sup>

ESCAP's resolutions are influenced by decisions of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, with its specific mandate being laid out by ECOSOC resolution 37(IV), which created the Economic Commission for Asia

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ESCAP History*. N.d.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About ESCAP*. N.d.

<sup>3</sup> Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. *ESCAP - United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific*. 2020.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945.

<sup>6</sup> Economic and Social Council. *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure*. 1974. pp. 1-3.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About the Commission*. N.d.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Offer of Support at the National Level*. 2021; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure*. 1974. pp. 1-3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Proposed programme plan for 2023: Note by the secretariat (ESCAP/78/28)*. 2022. p. 4.



and the Far East, and ECOSOC resolution 1985 (LVII), which changed the Commission's name to ESCAP and adjusted its mandate to equally address issues of both economic and social development.<sup>10</sup>

### **Governance, Funding, and Structure**

ESCAP's work is overseen by its Executive Secretary, who heads its Secretariat and is appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General.<sup>11</sup> The Executive Secretary is supported by a team of two Deputy Executive Secretaries and 11 Directors, five of whom serve in ESCAP's subregional offices.<sup>12</sup> Member States can request training, advisory services, and other support directly from these offices, whose efforts more narrowly focus on the needs of their respective areas.<sup>13</sup> ESCAP also has five regional institutions that focus on specific substantive areas, namely: the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development; the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology; the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management; the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization; and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.<sup>14</sup> Each of these institutes is managed by a Governing Council that is responsible for the institute's budget, implementation of work, and advising ESCAP Directors.<sup>15</sup> ESCAP's Secretariat also maintains numerous knowledge and information-sharing tools, databases, partnerships, toolkits, and online training portals.<sup>16</sup>

ESCAP's main session takes place in May each year, typically in Bangkok, Thailand.<sup>17</sup> During the session, each Member State has one vote and decisions are made by a simple majority.<sup>18</sup> ESCAP'S work, including its adopted resolutions, is reported to ECOSOC.<sup>19</sup> Reflecting the needs of the region, ESCAP has established thematic subsidiary committees on: Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development; Trade and Investment; Transport; Environment and Development; Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation; Disaster Risk Reduction; Social Development; Statistics; and Energy.<sup>20</sup> Each of the committees meets twice a year to discuss issues under their purview.<sup>21</sup>

ESCAP's core functions, including its staff, annual sessions, and offices, are funded through the United Nations regular budget, with allocations proposed each year by the Secretary-General and United Nations Secretariat.<sup>22</sup> The regular budget also covers a portion of the technical assistance that ESCAP provides to its members, but extrabudgetary sources of funding, primarily bilateral cash contributions from Member and non-Member States, account for over two-thirds of total financing for technical cooperation.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Change of name from "Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East" to "Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific" (E/RES/1895(LVII))*. 1974.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana*. N.d.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Senior Management Team*. N.d.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Subregional Activities for Development*. N.d.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Regional Institutions*. N.d.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ESCAP Websites*. N.d.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About ESCAP*. N.d.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/CST/INF/4Corr.1)*. 2008. p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About ESCAP*. N.d.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Committees*. N.d.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Committees*. N.d.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About ESCAP*. N.d.; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Proposed programme plan for 2023: Note by the secretariat (ESCAP/78/28)*. pp. 87-91.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (ESCAP/79/22)*. 2023.



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United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure*. 1974.  
Retrieved 21 October 2023 from: [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP\\_ToR-Rules\\_EN.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP_ToR-Rules_EN.pdf)





# 1. Promoting a Healthy, Protected, and Productive Workforce in Asia and the Pacific

## **Introduction**

The Asia Pacific region is home to over 3.2 billion working-age people, with nearly half living on a daily income of \$5.50 USD or less and often lacking access to social protection.<sup>24</sup> Approximately 2.9 million of these employees die annually from occupational accidents and diseases such as dermatitis and respiratory illnesses, and at least 402 million suffer nonfatal occupational injuries such as burns, shocks, and amputations.<sup>25</sup> These workers are employed across 3 prominent industries: agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; manufacturing; and wholesale and retail trade.<sup>26</sup> Around 1.6 billion individuals lack health insurance in the region and 60% of employees cover their own health care expenses.<sup>27</sup> In the absence of income protection, they receive no compensation, and only 1 in 5 individuals have access to private health care or health insurance, an issue that has shown greater salience during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>28</sup> These realities manifest into related issues, including income insecurity, poverty and inequality, and lack of access to healthcare, each of which hinders progress towards sustainable development goal (SDG) 8 (promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all).<sup>29</sup>

Social protection refers to a comprehensive range of policies aimed at guaranteeing individuals' income security and facilitating their access to healthcare services through the provision of cash or in-kind benefits such as health insurance and childcare.<sup>30</sup> Comprehensive social protection systems serve as safeguards against various forms of income loss resulting from disease, disability, maternity, employment-related injuries, unemployment, old age, or the death of a family member.<sup>31</sup> Social and other protections can help to ensure a healthy workforce, meaning that workers are both physically and psychologically fit as a result of appropriate working conditions.<sup>32</sup> While recognized, mental welfare of employees has often been neglected throughout the Asia Pacific region, and, despite calls for safeguards, the majority of Member States in the region do not meet the global average when it comes to investments in social protections.<sup>33</sup> Over the past two years, social protection expenditures in the region have averaged 7.5% of gross domestic product (GDP), with half of the countries allocating 2.6% or less, falling considerably below the global average of 12.9%.<sup>34</sup>

## **International and Regional Framework**

Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948) established the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work, and for protection against unemployment.<sup>35</sup> The UDHR also stipulates that everyone who works has the right to just and favorable

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<sup>24</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> International Labour Organization. *Safety and health at work in Asia and the Pacific*. 2023.

<sup>26</sup> International Labour Organization. *Asia–Pacific Employment and Social Outlook 2022 Rethinking sectoral strategies for a human-centered future of work*. 2022.

<sup>27</sup> International Labour Organization. *Extending social health protection: Accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Asia and the Pacific*. 2021.

<sup>28</sup> International Labour Organization. *Safety and health at work in Asia and the Pacific*. 2023.

<sup>29</sup> International Labour Organization. *Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2023

<sup>30</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Promoting Inclusion Through Social Protection: Report on the world social situation 2018*. 2018. p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific. *Social Outlook for the Poorly Protected: Poorly Protected*. 2018.

<sup>34</sup> International Labour Organization. *More than half of people in Asia and the Pacific still lack social protection, says a new ILO report*. 2022.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. 1948.



remuneration to ensure that they and their family can enjoy an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.<sup>36</sup> The right of all individuals engaged in employment to possess the right to receive fair and satisfactory compensation was further reinforced by the *International Covenant on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights* (1976), specifically articles 6 and 7.<sup>37</sup> These articles specify the provision of favorable work circumstances encompassing various aspects such as ensuring adequate income, fair salaries, adequate standards of living, safe and healthy working conditions, as well as opportunities for relaxation and leisure.<sup>38</sup>

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), overseen by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), serves as the primary United Nations forum for the assessment and evaluation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) (2030 Agenda) and the SDGs on a global scale.<sup>39</sup> In the discussions during the 2020 HLPF, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) reported that Member states were prioritizing more sustainable solutions, such as bolstering social protection, providing quality education, and accelerating the transformation to inclusive green economies as a pathway to move forward for the 2030 Agenda.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, ESCAP's Asia and the Pacific *SDG Progress Report 2022: Widening Disparities Amidst COVID-19*, highlighted specific actions that needed to be taken to meet the deadline of SDGs.<sup>41</sup> For SDG 3 (good health and well being), the report highlighted the need to prioritize mental well-being, the mitigation of road traffic fatalities, the reduction of household health-related expenses, and the enhancement of healthcare service provision capabilities.<sup>42</sup> For SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), the report recommended that Member States in the region enhance adherence to labor rights and facilitate the provision of satisfactory employment prospects, particularly for the younger population.<sup>43</sup>

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) *Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights to Work* (1998) established an international benchmark for labor standards.<sup>44</sup> The declaration includes provisions on freedom of association and the fundamental right to engage in collective bargaining.<sup>45</sup> It also calls for the eradication of all types of coerced and forced labor, such as child labor, and the removal of discriminatory practices in employment and occupation.<sup>46</sup> In the past decade, the ILO has also harmonized other frameworks to meet the standards of an evolving workforce, such as the *Global Framework on Core Skills for Life and Work in the 21st Century* (2021), which recognizes efforts that are being made to facilitate the advancement of individuals' personal and professional growth by means of lifelong learning.<sup>47</sup> The framework comprehensively examines existing global and national core skills frameworks to identify the most important core skills necessary to adapt to the future of work.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations, Human Rights Council. *International Covenant on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights*. 1976.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations, High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *High Level Political Forum 2023*. 2023.

<sup>40</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific. *ESCAP at the High Level Political Forum in 2022*. 2022.

<sup>41</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific. *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2022: widening disparities amidst COVID-19*. 2022.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. p. 10.

<sup>44</sup> International Labour Organization. *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*. 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> International Labour Organization. *Global Framework on Core Skills for Life and Work in the 21st Century*. 2021. p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



In the Asia-Pacific region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ESCAP have both produced labor frameworks.<sup>49</sup> The *ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network: Good occupational safety and health practices 2008/2009* set standards for occupational safety and health (OSH) practices within the ASEAN Member States, focusing on the establishment of national OSH frameworks, enforcement mechanisms, outreach initiatives, training programs, and research endeavors.<sup>50</sup> In October 2020, ESCAP recognized the fundamental importance of social protection for their workforce in attaining inclusive and sustainable development through the adoption of the *Action plan to strengthen regional cooperation on social protection in Asia and the Pacific*.<sup>51</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

In 2008, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2008/18 on “Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All” and reaffirmed the attainment of full and productive employment, along with the provision of decent work, as holding significant importance in the eradication of poverty and persistence of a healthy workforce.<sup>52</sup> The aforementioned objectives were also discussed as core goals within both national and international policies, as well as national development strategies by many Member States in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>53</sup>

The 2021 HLPF produced the *Report of the Eight Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development*, which called for the implementation of a green deal tailored to address sustainability issues at both regional and global levels by adopting a triple bottom line strategy that includes environmental protection, social equity, and economic growth.<sup>54</sup> The report also discussed the need for a revised fresh social compact that guarantees economic recovery and resilience from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic while simultaneously advocating for the rights of all workers, promoting equality, and fostering inclusion in alignment with SDG 8.<sup>55</sup>

Since its establishment in 1919, the ILO has served as the main international organization working to establish labor standards, advance employment law, and design initiatives that foster equitable and satisfactory employment opportunities for all.<sup>56</sup> A specialized agency of the United Nations, the ILO facilitates collaboration between governments, employers, and workers from 187 Member States.<sup>57</sup> The ILO established 2006 to 2015 as the Asia-Pacific Decent Work Decade, which focused on competitiveness and jobs, youth employment, protection of migrant workers, labor market governance, and local development for decent work.<sup>58</sup> The ILO has also worked to promote the creation of decent jobs through its *Local Development for Decent Work* program, with which it encourages the improvement of quality of life, the creation of decent jobs, and the development of sustainable local economies by: working to enable public-private partnerships; enhance communication and cooperation among policymakers, employers' associations, and workers' associations; and prevent child labor, trafficking, as well as forced and bonded labor, among others.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *Basic mandate, function and composition*. 2020.

<sup>50</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *Occupational Safety and Health Network: Good occupational safety and health practices*. 2009.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific. *Action plan to strengthen regional cooperation on social protection in Asia and the Pacific*. 2021. p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All (E/RES/2008/18)*. 2018.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Report of the Eight Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development*. 2021.

<sup>55</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All (E/RES/2008/18)*. 2018.

<sup>56</sup> International Labour Organization. *About the ILO*. 2023.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> International Labour Organization. *Local development for decent work*. 2023; International Labour Organization. *Asia-Pacific Decent Work Decade*. 2023.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.



ESCAP's *Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific Series* is a prominent publication released every 2 years that focuses on significant social changes and trends in the region, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>60</sup> The publication examines the essential activities and methods that are required to attain the social aspect of sustainable development in a harmonized and comprehensive manner.<sup>61</sup> Regarding social protection, ESCAP adopted the *Action Plan aimed at enhancing regional cooperation on social protection in the Asia-Pacific region* in 2020, which functions as a guiding document for regional efforts to advance a shared vision, strategy, and platform for social protection.<sup>62</sup> At the national level, the action plan seeks to encourage Member States to establish effective and well-coordinated social protection measures that adhere to principles of non-discrimination, reliability, and transparency and institutionalize systems for public access to appeal and complaint procedures as an integral component of the service delivery process.<sup>63</sup> At the regional level, the action plan looks to ensure that ESCAP Members have access to technical assistance and capacity building to support upon request.<sup>64</sup>

Promoting respect for labor rights is one of the core principles of the *United Nations Global Compact*, a voluntary framework and accompanying mechanism that was established in 2000.<sup>65</sup> The United Nations Global Compact provides direction and guidance in enhancing the adherence of businesses to adequate labor standards.<sup>66</sup> This is done by integrating and executing the United Nations Global Compact's principles on labor, specifically principle three, which states that "businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining," principle 4, on the "elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor," principle 5, on the "effective abolition of child labor," and principle 6, on the "elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation."<sup>67</sup>

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) works specifically in this region to promote sustainable development, social progress, and a balance between the environment and economic growth.<sup>68</sup> In 2021, the ADB, in collaboration with ESCAP and the United Nations Development Programme, produced *Building Forward Together: Towards an inclusive and resilient Asia and the Pacific*, a partnership report that underscored the risk for increased social and economic disparity in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>69</sup> The report analyzed the critical determinants that are influencing the likelihood of an economic recovery in the Asia Pacific and concluded that social protection, digitalization, economic structure, environmental hazards, vaccination rates, and fiscal spaces are the major categories that need to be examined for Member States.<sup>70</sup>

### **Post Pandemic Workforce**

In 2020, the Asia and the Pacific region experienced a decrease in gross domestic product of 2.2% due to the lack of trade caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>71</sup> Travel restrictions, lockdown, and the suspension of production activities disrupted supply chains and left many people with a lack of income security.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>62</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific. *Action plan to strengthen regional cooperation on social protection in Asia and the Pacific*. 2021.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations Global Compact. *Realization of Decent Work for All: Labour and Decent Work*. 2023.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Asian Development Bank. *Development Issues in Asia and the Pacific*. 2023.

<sup>69</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Building Forward Together: Towards an inclusive and resilient Asia and the Pacific*. 2021.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> International Monetary Fund. *Regional Economic Outlook Asia and Pacific Navigating the Pandemic: A Multispeed Recovery in Asia*. 2020. p. 4.

<sup>72</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The Impact and Policy Responses for COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific*. 2020. p. 3.



Even though the workforce is made up of 3.2 billion working-age people, about half of the workforce survives on about \$5 per day, putting them on the verge of poverty, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>73</sup> In 2021, economic growth rose to 6.5% and has now slowed down to 3.8% in 2023.<sup>74</sup> The region is in the middle of recovering from the pandemic.<sup>75</sup> While there has been some recovery in the employment sector, the region's labor market is not on track to their pre-pandemic numbers because most of these jobs are informal and lack governmental protections.<sup>76</sup> An increase in decent work opportunities can help encourage productivity and competitiveness in jobs, increase labor market governance, and protect migrant workers.<sup>77</sup>

In 2022, the ILO amended their 1998 *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*. The declaration was originally adopted to protect workers and grant them fundamental protections, but has since been amended to meet the social needs of workers in a post-pandemic society.<sup>78</sup> The rights outlined in the declaration include the elimination of all forms of forced labor, child labor, and the elimination of discrimination in respect to employment.<sup>79</sup> One of the amendments enacted an annual follow-up for Member States to present their application of the declaration at the ILO International Labour Conference and inform other Member States on trends within their progress.<sup>80</sup> Establishing these fundamental rights can contribute to the promotion of decent work opportunities for individuals in Asia and the Pacific, potentially aiding the region in its economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>81</sup> As the region begins to recover from the pandemic, there has also been a shift towards more temporary and casual jobs due to the convenience of these jobs, which also have less protection and lower wages since the start of the pandemic.<sup>82</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic also pushed women and youth out of work and these groups have not returned to the workforce at the same rate as men.<sup>83</sup> Enhancing the protection of these fundamental rights for workers could have an impact on the rate at which women and youth rejoin the workforce and the trend towards more permanent employment.<sup>84</sup>

About half of the working population is living paycheck to paycheck on the verge of poverty and do not have income insurance if they fall ill.<sup>85</sup> In 2014, prior to COVID-19, multiple countries in Southeast Asia committed to the establishment of the Decade of Strengthening Human Resources for Health, to begin in 2015, alongside the World Health Organization.<sup>86</sup> The decade sought to encourage national and regional action that would: ensure that by 2030 all communities have access to health care workers to meet their needs; increase healthcare sector job opportunities; create a pathway to healthcare insurance access; and introduce wage insurance for workers.<sup>87</sup> Health employment has been identified as an axis that can

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<sup>73</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 2.

<sup>74</sup> International Monetary Fund. *Outlook for Asia and Pacific: Asia and Pacific Recovery Unabated amid Uncertainty*. 2023. p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> International Labour Organization. *Jobs in Asia and the Pacific record modest recovery while future prospects remain challenging*. 2022.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> International Labour Organization. *The Decent Work Agenda*. 2023.

<sup>78</sup> International Labour Organization. *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*. 2022. p. 9.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 5.

<sup>82</sup> Mercer-Blackman et al. *Emerging labor market trends in post-COVID South Asia*. 2023.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> World Health Organization. *Health workforce*. 2023.

<sup>87</sup> World Health Organization. *Global strategy on human resources for health: Workforce 2030*. 2016. p. 14.



provide more opportunities for women and youth.<sup>88</sup> These efforts seek to facilitate the region's recovery from the pandemic and mitigate potential future losses.<sup>89</sup>

### **Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8**

The 2030 Agenda included 17 SDGs to be achieved by 2030.<sup>90</sup> SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) includes targets that are meant to drive both decent work and economic growth for all and are of particular importance in the highly populated Asia Pacific region.<sup>91</sup> For example, SDG 8.8 specifically aims to protect workers rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers and those in dangerous employment.<sup>92</sup>

SDG 8.5 aims to achieve productive employment and decent work for all, including those with disabilities and other vulnerable populations, and equal pay for work value.<sup>93</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of prioritizing the long-term economic planning and the implementation of inclusive policies that support green economic development.<sup>94</sup> According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the green economy is a low-carbon, socially inclusive, and resource efficient economy.<sup>95</sup> Employment growth in a green economy is driven by public and private investment into environmentally friendly infrastructure, assets that allow for carbon reductions, and enhanced resource efficiency.<sup>96</sup> Creating national and regional green economy strategies in Asia and the Pacific can help promote the achievement of SDG 8 and an inclusive workforce.<sup>97</sup> In the region, more than two thirds of the workers are involved in informal employment, burdened by low wages, subject to long hours, and have a lack of social protection.<sup>98</sup> ASEAN has promoted the safeguarding of the workforce, more specifically the care workforce, by recognizing their role and to ensure their rights and promote gender equality.<sup>99</sup>

The ADB has funded projects and supported economic growth projects throughout the region.<sup>100</sup> In Sri Lanka, the ADB worked to improve decent work opportunities through upskilling, reskilling, and on-the-job training, each of which are all designed to augment the capabilities of those who are unemployed, which can also fuel economic recovery from the pandemic.<sup>101</sup> Through its programming, the ADB found that expanding any industry must be accompanied by technological investments to support production and employment growth, especially to be sustainable in the long-term.<sup>102</sup> These approaches aligns with the

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>89</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 8.

<sup>90</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>91</sup> United Nations, Asia-Pacific Knowledge Management Hub. *SDG8 Decent Work and Economic Growth*. 2023.

<sup>92</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*. 2023.

<sup>93</sup> United Nations, Asia-Pacific Knowledge Management Hub. *SDG8 Decent Work and Economic Growth*. 2023.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. *Green Economy*. 2023.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Green economy*. 2023.

<sup>98</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth*. 2023.

<sup>99</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ASEAN forum emphasizes valuing and investing in the care economy as key to advancing gender equality*. 2023.

<sup>100</sup> Development Asia. *Promoting Access to Decent Work in Sri Lanka*. 2023.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid; Li. *Reskilling and Upskilling the Future-ready Workforce for Industry 4.0 and Beyond*. 2022.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.



broader goal of achieving decent work and economic growth while addressing the specific challenges Sri Lanka faces as outlined in SDG 8.1 and 8.2.<sup>103</sup>

At the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, the World Trade Organization (WTO) discussed ways to incorporate international trade into the growing green economy through monitoring national measures, enhancing the conversation on the green economy to avoid trade tensions, and promoting an international trading system that takes capacity-building initiatives into account for developing countries.<sup>104</sup> The ILO published its *Decent Work Agenda* in 1999, which focused on the promotion of employment, the assurance of labor rights, the expansion of social protection, and the facilitation of social dialogue.<sup>105</sup> The agenda influenced several subsequent frameworks, including the *United Nations Global Compact*, the *2005 World Summit Outcome*, and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.<sup>106</sup> All of these frameworks seek to support governments and the private sector in the adoption of policies that promote the formalization of work, increase wages, improve social protection, and otherwise encourage the transition towards better standards of work.<sup>107</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The Asia-Pacific region has notable challenges in ensuring sufficient social protection and opportunities for decent work for its substantial population.<sup>108</sup> Of the 3.2 billion working-age individuals, a substantial portion still struggles to access social protection and are faced with health risks and occupational hazards.<sup>109</sup> A lack of income protection, health insurance, and access to healthcare services in the region leaves workers economically, physically, and psychologically.<sup>110</sup> Member States in the region continue to examine the establishment of comprehensive social protection systems and how to ensure the provision of decent work for everyone, a fundamental aspect of SDG 8.<sup>111</sup> However, promoting decent work is a multi-faceted problem that requires extensive collaboration to ensure a protected and productive workforce.<sup>112</sup>

### **Further Research**

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should consider: What kind of economic policies can be used to help the economy and workers in the region? What social protections should be put in place to protect workers against any future crises? What else can be done in the region to foster a more inclusive working environment for all? How can women, youth and other vulnerable populations be included in the transition to a green economy?

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> World Trade Organization. *Harnessing trade for sustainable development and a green economy*. 2011. p. 2.

<sup>105</sup> International Labour Organization. *Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2023. p. 3.

<sup>106</sup> International Labour Organization. *Decent Work*. N.d.

<sup>107</sup> International Labour Organization. *Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2023. p. 9.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. 2022. p. 2.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p. vii.

<sup>110</sup> World Health Organization. *Health workforce*. 2023.

<sup>111</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>112</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All (E/RES/2008/18)*. 2018.



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## 2. Addressing the Expanded Riskscape in Asia and the Pacific

### **Introduction**

Climate change threatens sustainable development, as disasters will continue to disrupt every economy.<sup>113</sup> With populations and economies growing within Asia and the Pacific, the effects of climate change will exacerbate and increase the region's vulnerability and exposure to natural disasters.<sup>114</sup> Over the past 50 years, natural hazards in the region, such as floods, droughts, heatwaves, surface winds, and storms, have affected 6.9 billion people.<sup>115</sup> 13 of the 30 countries most vulnerable to climate-related impacts are located in this region, and natural disasters could lead to 7.5 million more people falling into poverty by 2030.<sup>116</sup> Currently, 58% of the region is exposed to multiple hazards.<sup>117</sup> To address the increased vulnerability, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is tasked with developing effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures and integrating them into poverty reduction strategies and development plans.<sup>118</sup> By strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable development, Member States can begin to undertake the challenges that multi-hazards present to vulnerable communities.<sup>119</sup>

A disaster hazard is "a potential damaging physical event, natural phenomenon, or human activity" like climate change that threatens to cause serious disruptions in communities due to the loss of life or injury of persons.<sup>120</sup> Disaster hazards create significant economic or environmental impacts that exceed the available resources of an affected community to respond.<sup>121</sup> When many disaster hazards occur simultaneously, effective recovery becomes more difficult.<sup>122</sup> DRR minimizes these disruptions by employing practices that reduce risk from disaster hazards and emphasize systemic efforts focused on managing causal factors.<sup>123</sup> Efforts often focus on preventative measures, like reducing hazard exposure and making communities and critical infrastructure more resilient.<sup>124</sup>

According to ESCAP, a disaster riskscape is a DRR tool that uses a probabilistic risk model to analyze the disaster-climate-health nexus.<sup>125</sup> It maps population and infrastructure exposure to multi-hazard hotspots and then calculates their economic impact and adaptation costs to help set new priorities.<sup>126</sup> Within a disaster riskscape, risk hotspots interact with vulnerabilities in the region to determine the severity of the

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<sup>113</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction*. N.d.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Resilience in a riskier world: managing systemic risks from biological and other natural hazards*. 2021.

<sup>116</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Leaders gather at annual UN policy forum to tackle Asia and the Pacific's most daunting threat - climate change*. 2023.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Resilience in a riskier world: managing systemic risks from biological and other natural hazards*. 2021.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *2009 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*. 2009. pp. 10-11.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Methodology*. N.d.; United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The Asia-Pacific disaster riskscape*. 2019. p. 2.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.



risk and estimate economic costs within the disaster-climate-health nexus.<sup>127</sup> Risk-informed development leverages DRR findings, for example, disaster riskscape can be translated into workable frameworks to determine best practices and limit hazard exposure, particularly among communities most vulnerable to disasters.<sup>128</sup> The complex interactions between new and existing hazards require equally dynamic solutions like mapping disaster riskscape.<sup>129</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

To establish a global blueprint for DRR measures, the international community focused primarily on underlying disaster risk drivers and established a relationship between institutional capacity and local or national plans of action.<sup>130</sup> The *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (Sendai Framework) (2015) established a framework for DRR by providing Member States with guidelines to protect development gains from disaster risks and calling for regional action strategies, including institutional capacity building.<sup>131</sup> The framework recommended that decision-making processes be risk-informed, people-centered, and preventative by encouraging DRR practices that are “multi-hazard, multisectoral, inclusive, and accessible.”<sup>132</sup> This ties closely with other international frameworks, such as the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015) and the *Paris Agreement* (2015).<sup>133</sup>

The 2030 Agenda outlined 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provided a blueprint to Member States on the different dimensions of development for peace and prosperity.<sup>134</sup> The expanded riskscape in Asia and the Pacific threatens many aspects of SDG 11 (sustainable development of cities and communities), SDG 13 (climate action), and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities).<sup>135</sup> SDG 11 and DRR are integral to sustainable economic and social development, reaffirming the need to reduce disaster risks by reducing the exposure of vulnerable populations to disasters and building resilient infrastructure.<sup>136</sup> Particularly among small island developing states (SIDS), their narrow resources, small size, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks leave them more vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters and climate change.<sup>137</sup> Implementing DRR and combating climate change, which are cross-cutting issues, will help achieve other SDGs and reduce global inequalities.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Methodology*. N.d.

<sup>128</sup> Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction. *What is risk-informed development?* 2023.

<sup>129</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The Asia-Pacific disaster riskscape*. 2019.

<sup>130</sup> United Nations, World Conference on Disaster Reduction. *Report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/6)*. 2005. pp. 15-18, 22-23; United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015. p. 10.

<sup>131</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *What is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction?* 2015. p. 10; United Nations, World Conference on Disaster Reduction. *Report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/6)*. 2005. pp. 15-18, 22-23.

<sup>132</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015. p. 10.

<sup>133</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Paris Agreement*. 2015; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>134</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.



The *Paris Agreement* was adopted at the 21st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21), which called for Member States to limit global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius.<sup>139</sup> The Asia and the Pacific region emits more than half of global greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>140</sup> The greenhouse gas emissions impact individuals across borders.<sup>141</sup> As climate change and variability continue to exacerbate risks, countries look to effectively manage these threats and achieve the SDGs.<sup>142</sup> The Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda, and the *Paris Agreement* have established a clear mandate for countries to align their strategies and approaches towards climate change and DRR to achieve sustainable development.<sup>143</sup>

To affirm the commitment to the Sendai Framework, the Member States of the Asia-Pacific region implemented the *Asia-Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024 for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* to be reviewed every few years.<sup>144</sup> With the goal of “preventing disaster risk to protect sustainable development,” the plan focused on understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in DRR for resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response.<sup>145</sup> The action plan emphasizes strengthening cooperation regarding DRR strategies to reduce the risk and impact of disasters.<sup>146</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

ESCAP promotes regional cooperation to address and provide solutions to sustainable development challenges in the region.<sup>147</sup> ESCAP’s Secretariat provides technical assistance and capacity-building services to support national development and regional agreements, generates action-oriented frameworks, and supports resilient, sustainable, and inclusive development within the region.<sup>148</sup> ESCAP’s Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction prioritizes regional cooperation for multi-hazard DRR and resilience-building.<sup>149</sup> The committee is working on an integrated multi-hazard risk assessment in response to disaster risks, which would alleviate the cascading risks of natural or biological hazards and increase preparedness.<sup>150</sup>

Originally established in 2005, the ESCAP Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness provides support for a multi-hazard approach to tsunami early warning.<sup>151</sup> It was broadened to include disaster and climate preparedness in 2010 and expanded to encompass SIDS in the Southwest Pacific in 2015.<sup>152</sup> The fund has expanded effective early warning systems and fostered regional collaboration,

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<sup>139</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Paris Agreement*. 2015.

<sup>140</sup> United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals. *Climate Action*. N.d.

<sup>141</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Climate Action*. N.d.

<sup>142</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Common Ground between the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework: Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction*. 2019. p. 1.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Asia-Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024 for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*. 2021.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. pp. 1-6.

<sup>146</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Asia-Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024 for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*. 2021. p. 15.

<sup>147</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *About ESCAP*. N.d.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *A conference structure of the Commission to advance sustainable development (ESCAP/RES/78/2)*. 2022.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ESCAP Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness*. N.d.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.



benefitting 19 countries.<sup>153</sup> By consolidating its resources, the fund also facilitates south-south cooperation to enhance disaster resilience in countries that face high risks and limited capacities.<sup>154</sup>

ESCAP's biennial publication the *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report* aims to highlight the vulnerabilities of different regions and demonstrate awareness of disaster risks and the associated threats to sustainable development.<sup>155</sup> These reports provide innovative policy options and tools to address natural hazards in the region for policymakers, experts, or any agency or organization working on these issues in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>156</sup> The *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2023* highlights the natural and biological disasters in the region following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the effects of climate change have exacerbated the consequences to current populations and infrastructures.<sup>157</sup> As a result, the Asia-Pacific riskscape has expanded and reshaped.<sup>158</sup>

ESCAP established the Asia Pacific Disaster Resilience Network to close data gaps and support multi-hazard early warning systems.<sup>159</sup> It also "provides a multi-disciplinary approach to disaster risk management and its integration with inclusive and sustainable development."<sup>160</sup> As part of this network, ESCAP established the Asia-Pacific Risk and Resilience Portal 2.0 and the Resilience SDG Action Tracker, which provide and monitor SDG trends and data for Asia-Pacific as well as observe the effects on the economy, societies, and the environment.<sup>161</sup> ESCAP also led a forum for experts on disaster-related statistics, co-organized by other United Nations agencies including the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).<sup>162</sup> The expert forum shares and reviews disaster-related statistics to monitor DRR commitments and identify good practices to guide risk-informed development.<sup>163</sup>

ESCAP works with other United Nations agencies and international partners to address the expanded riskscape and climate change.<sup>164</sup> According to ESCAP, the most urgent challenges in the region revolve around infrastructure financing and climate change.<sup>165</sup> With the increase of extreme weather events, investment in climate-resilient infrastructure becomes paramount in order to foster sustainable development and significantly impact societies.<sup>166</sup> Developed in 1968, the Typhoon Committee was organized as a joint ESCAP and World Meteorological Organization (WMO) project to coordinate and promote measures that would minimize material damage and deaths in the region.<sup>167</sup> The committee focuses on hydrology, meteorology, DRR, and training and research, and its goal is to minimize the loss of lives and reduce the social, economic, and environmental impacts of typhoon-related disasters through enhanced regional cooperation.<sup>168</sup> In 2018, ESCAP established the Infrastructure Financing and

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report*. N.d.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction: Regional Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction*. N.d.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Risk and Resilience Portal*. N.d.

<sup>162</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. *Third Expert forum for producers and users of disaster-related statistics*. 2023.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Forging the right partnerships for climate-resilient infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific*. 2023.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/70/INF/5)*. 2014.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.



Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Network of Asia and the Pacific, which encouraged governments and private actors to “design, implement, and monitor sustainable infrastructure projects that are resilient to the impacts of climate change” and develop frameworks to construct climate-resilient infrastructure.<sup>169</sup>

ESCAP is actively involved with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).<sup>170</sup> In 2022, ESCAP’s contributions to COP27 included key recommendations for the region, such as the importance of directing investments toward DRR and resilience.<sup>171</sup> It also recommended facilitating regional cooperation to national agreements and commitments, such as development strategies regarding carbon neutrality, which would play a vital role in protecting development gains and shielding Member States from the adverse effects of the interconnected crises.<sup>172</sup>

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has similar goals as ESCAP and aspires to adapt and effectively respond to challenges, particularly those posed by natural disasters.<sup>173</sup> ASEAN seeks to build a resilient community, which aligns with the United Nations Secretary-General’s Prevention Agenda that strives for a risk-informed development strategy to address both disasters and climate change impacts and achieve the 2030 Agenda.<sup>174</sup>

### ***Enhancing Cooperative Efforts for Disaster Risk Reduction***

According to ESCAP’s *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2022*, progress towards SDG 13 (climate action) has regressed in every Asia-Pacific subregion due to high disaster mortality rates and slow advancement towards fully implementing UNFCCC recommendations beyond local and national DRR plans.<sup>175</sup> The report found that from 2004-2014, around half of the global disaster mortalities from climate-related hazards occurred in the Asia-Pacific region and resulted in the death or injury of approximately 2 million individuals and the displacement of an additional 23 million.<sup>176</sup> ESCAP further observed that a decline in the total number of disasters in the region has been offset by more devastating impacts and higher costs in recovery.<sup>177</sup>

Current ESCAP pathway models predict an increase in extreme weather hazards that will contribute to cascading risk, including high surface winds like tropical cyclones and sand storms, heavy precipitation and flooding, hot temperatures, and agricultural drought.<sup>178</sup> Likewise, the WMO notes that a consistent rise in sea levels puts Pacific SIDS in peril of higher annual losses and subsequent adaptation costs compared to landlocked Asia-Pacific countries.<sup>179</sup> These costs represent the average annual losses from cascading risk and are calculated as a percentage of a country’s gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Forging the right partnerships for climate-resilient infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific*. 2023.

<sup>170</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *COP27 a turning point as Asia and the Pacific highlights climate justice focus, increased ambitions and innovative solutions*. 2022.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ASEAN High-Level Policy Dialogue on Risk Assessment*. 2017.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience*. 2022. p. 3.

<sup>176</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance: Overview*. 2020; United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015. p. 10.

<sup>177</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023. p. 2.

<sup>178</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience*. 2022. pp. 2-3.

<sup>179</sup> World Meteorological Organization. *State of the Climate in Asia 2020 (WMO/1273)*. 2021. p. 8.

<sup>180</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience*. 2022. p. 17.





ESCAP estimates that the cost for Pacific SIDS countries to make necessary improvements is equal to 1.5% of their GDP.<sup>181</sup> Despite higher costs overall, the proportional costs of North and Central Asian adaptation measures remain the lowest at around 0.6% of their GDP.<sup>182</sup>

Coordination across sectors and between multiple levels of governance can help ensure that DRR efforts within countries consider the needs of vulnerable populations.<sup>183</sup> In particular, the Sendai Framework brings attention to existing gaps in engaging women and indigenous peoples.<sup>184</sup> According to the UNFCCC, this disparity is pronounced in developing countries where existing gender roles and cultural norms can contribute to cascading risk for women by limiting opportunities to resources and paid work.<sup>185</sup> Similarly, UNDRR estimates that around 370 million indigenous people are negatively impacted by climate change and face significant barriers to full participation in the formal economy.<sup>186</sup> Programs like UN Women's EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies and Words into Action are working to reduce these gaps by more effectively including vulnerable communities.<sup>187</sup> These programs build resilience through scalable, human rights-based climate action promoting the inclusion of indigenous peoples, cultural knowledge, increased access to finance and technology, and gender-responsive climate action.<sup>188</sup>

Enhanced cooperation between regional and sub-regional stakeholders is encouraged to better address transboundary hazards by including the public sector and other relevant actors in risk mitigation plans through resilience pathways and coordinating shared adaptation costs.<sup>189</sup> Transboundary hazards are especially difficult to address because they are widespread, affecting more than one country at once.<sup>190</sup> As a result, they require local and national plans to streamline preventative and response measures that match environmental impacts with a country's capacity.<sup>191</sup>

Likewise, developing Member States are more affected by extreme weather events like drought due to a higher dependency on small-scale agriculture intended to provide food to individual households.<sup>192</sup> In addition to having fewer resources to respond, small-scale agriculture remains particularly volatile due to underdeveloped markets, lower-quality inputs (like seeds), and a poor infrastructure that keeps communities disconnected.<sup>193</sup> As a result, these countries may have higher instances of poverty, as is the case in Afghanistan and Viet Nam, generating higher average annual losses overall as existing risk hotspots intensify and new ones emerge.<sup>194</sup> ASEAN estimates that every 1% increase in occurrences of

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>183</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. 2015. p. 7.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. p. 21.

<sup>185</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Five Reasons Why Climate Action Needs Women*. 2023.

<sup>186</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Indigenous Peoples and Disaster Risk Reduction: Participation for all*. N.d.

<sup>187</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies*. N.d.; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Words into Action: Using Traditional and Indigenous Knowledges for Disaster Risk Reduction*. 2022.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience*. 2022. pp. 5-6.

<sup>190</sup> American Geophysical Union. *Managing the Cascading Risks of Droughts: Institutional Adaptation in Transboundary River Basins*. 2018. pp. 811-812.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk and Resilience. University of California, Davis. *Developing Countries and the Future of Small-Scale Agriculture*. 2023.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The Asia-Pacific disaster riskscape*. 2019. pp. 3-6.



drought is met with a decrease in sub-regional GDP of 0.62%, with the agricultural sector more significantly impacted.<sup>195</sup>

ESCAP and its partners are trying to increase regional cooperation through planning, implementing, and evaluating risk-informed policies and decision-making.<sup>196</sup> The regional platforms MCR2030: Making Cities Resilient and the ASEAN Smart Cities Network promote progress towards SDG 11 (sustainable development of cities and communities) by bringing cities together in order to combat the effects of rapid urbanization and other urban risk hotspots.<sup>197</sup> These programs encourage communication by connecting local, regional, and global stakeholders to synergize preventative and response measures and enabling cooperation between different sectors of governance.<sup>198</sup>

Regional intergovernmental actors like the Economic Cooperative Organization and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation have organized and held conferences to prepare a regional DRR framework, strengthen vertical integration, coordinate training workshops, and assess sectoral progress.<sup>199</sup> Similarly, national plans like Cambodia's Building Resilient Agricultural Practices by Integrating Geospatial Information for Agricultural Monitoring in the Lower Mekong River Basin help reduce food insecurity from climate disasters by improving access to early warning systems and providing a cloud-based crop monitoring and forecasting platform.<sup>200</sup>

### ***Bridging the Technological and Digital Divide: Harnessing Emerging Technologies for Adaptation***

In November 2022, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres stated that vulnerable communities were increasingly blindsided by disasters, causing them to bear a disproportionate share of the climate-related costs even though they have significantly fewer resources to address them.<sup>201</sup> As a possible solution, he noted that multi-hazard early warning systems providing one day's notice could help countries better understand risk and assess possible solutions while reducing damage from disasters by up to 30%, and he committed to global coverage within five years.<sup>202</sup> In support of the measure, he announced an initial investment of \$3.1 billion and the creation of an advisory board to monitor progress.<sup>203</sup>

With nearly one-fourth of the world's developing countries being located in Asia and the Pacific, structural barriers and other pre-existing vulnerabilities have resulted in limited early warning system coverage, driving mortality rates five to eight times higher than in their developed counterparts who have more comprehensive systems in place for detecting disasters.<sup>204</sup> In order to make necessary changes, ESCAP estimates that the total cost for adaptation measures before a disaster will be around \$270 billion, but the

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<sup>195</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations et al. *Ready for the dry years: building resilience to drought in South-East Asia*. 2020. p.17.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. pp. 45-49.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. p. 49; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030)*. N.d.

<sup>198</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations et al. *Ready for the dry years: building resilience to drought in South-East Asia*. 2020. p. 49; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030)*. N.d.

<sup>199</sup> Economic Cooperation Organization. *ECO and Disaster Risk Reduction*. N.d.; Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. *Environment and Climate Change*. 2021.

<sup>200</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations et al. *Ready for the dry years: building resilience to drought in South-East Asia*. 2020. p. 41.

<sup>201</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Secretary-General's remarks at the launch of the Early Warnings for All Executive Plan of Action [as delivered]*. 2022.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023. pp. vi, 9.



return on this investment is high, as every dollar spent on adaptation saves around six dollars in recovery and reconstruction.<sup>205</sup>

Frontier technology is technology that “reshapes industry and communications” while replacing “existing processes” and creating new solutions through innovations, like blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI).<sup>206</sup> Big data, or rapidly expanding and complex datasets that passively collect information from everyday interactions, offer decision-makers more information to inform policies and recognize trends.<sup>207</sup> The use of big data for technologies, like early warning systems, has the potential to cut costs while embedding increased capacity and resiliency within communities.<sup>208</sup> In particular, big data facilitates risk-informed decision-making on potential impacts, allowing for surveillance to detect hazards early and coordinate necessary response measures.<sup>209</sup>

According to the WMO, new and emerging technologies in the fields of computer and data science, like AI, can be used to augment human capacities by analyzing complex and dynamic weather prediction models, maximizing limited datasets, detecting hazards, and efficiently disseminating communications through early warning channels and between relevant stakeholders.<sup>210</sup> Furthermore, ESCAP has supported AI applications as a cost-effective and more accessible pathway that promotes collaborative initiatives through open-source and open-data frameworks.<sup>211</sup> For example, the Global Navigation Satellite System uses AI technology to forecast and track tsunamis to inform pre-disaster preparations and reduce response times through real-time data analysis of risk hotspots.<sup>212</sup> These types of technologies can also be adapted to assist with other disaster types like pandemics by mapping risk hotspots and predicting the spread of disease to inform containment measures.<sup>213</sup>

Advancing regional power system connectivity will enhance climate sustainability and resilience, and implementing and strengthening early warning systems for regions will improve response times to natural disasters.<sup>214</sup> To bridge the digital divide and development inequalities in the Asia-Pacific region, ESCAP adopted resolution 75/7 on “ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction: The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Platform” in 2019 to implement the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS).<sup>215</sup> ESCAP recognized that improving ICT access and capacity-building among vulnerable populations is essential to achieve the

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<sup>205</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: Subregional Pathways for Adaptation and Resilience*. 2022. p. 5; United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *For Every Dollar Invested in Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Six Dollars Are Saved, Secretary-General Says in Message for Disaster Risk Reduction Day*. 2019.

<sup>206</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Frontier Technology*. 2022.

<sup>207</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Global Issues: Big Data for Sustainable Development*. N.d.

<sup>208</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience*. 2022. p. 1.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> World Meteorological Organization. *Artificial Intelligence for Disaster Risk Reduction: Opportunities, Challenges, Prospects (WMO/Bulletin/71/1)*. 2022.

<sup>211</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Strategic Foresight to Applications of Geospatial Artificial Intelligence (GeoAI) to Achieve Disaster-related Sustainable Development Goals*. 2022.

<sup>212</sup> World Meteorological Organization. *Artificial Intelligence for Disaster Risk Reduction: Opportunities, Challenges, Prospects (WMO/Bulletin/71/1)*. 2022.

<sup>213</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Resilience in a riskier world: managing systemic risks from biological and other natural hazards*. 2021. p. 26.

<sup>214</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction: The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Platform*. N.d.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.; United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Advancing the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative through regional cooperation (ESCAP/RES/75/7)*. 2019.



SDGs.<sup>216</sup> The *Action Plan for Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (2022-2026)* hopes to mitigate disruptive socio-economic impacts and “build back better.”<sup>217</sup> The AP-IS initiative allows communities to gain access to regional digital connectivity and fosters cooperation between countries and other stakeholders to ensure adequate ICT infrastructures, like universal broadband connectivity.<sup>218</sup>

Frontier technologies like low Earth orbit satellites can increase digital connectivity, while regional-level broadband coverage and infrastructure can make technology access more affordable for users.<sup>219</sup> ESCAP partnered with the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development (APCICT) to promote information sharing on existing barriers and best practices.<sup>220</sup> APCICT worked to reduce the digital divide by promoting female entrepreneurship through the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI). Initially piloted in Sri Lanka, WIFI was first marketed to “war widows” to help build capacity for female-headed households in areas “severely affected by the civil war.”<sup>221</sup> To achieve this, WIFI offers women the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills using free, self-paced online courses through the APCICT Virtual Academy, and offers technical advisory assistance to governments and civil society organizations.<sup>222</sup>

For many countries in the region, cost is a significant barrier to implementing risk-informed adaptations.<sup>223</sup> For developing countries, ESCAP recommends partnerships with the private sector as a low-cost alternative to access emerging technologies and better incorporate technical expertise for new and existing development projects.<sup>224</sup> Public-private partnerships can provide incentives for private actors, particularly businesses, to buy and participate in blended financing initiatives based on risk-based performance evaluation.<sup>225</sup> Multi-donor funds like the Asia-Pacific Climate Finance Fund (AClIFF) can also be leveraged by low-income countries through regional financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB).<sup>226</sup> AClIFF provides lending and technical assistance to developing ADB Member States to help finance risk management projects related to climate adaptation and resilience.<sup>227</sup> Comprehensive local, national, and regional disaster financing plans can be used to embed DRR within institutions and facilitate formal channels for technology transfer and financing.<sup>228</sup> Thereby, DRR processes will become increasingly transparent and efficient as real-time data is captured and analyzed, allowing for upscaling to occur.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction: The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Platform*. N.d.; United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Advancing the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative through regional cooperation (ESCAP/RES/75/7)*. 2019.

<sup>217</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Accelerating climate action in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development (E/ESCAP/RES/79/1)*. 2023; United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific countries adopt 10 UN resolutions reaffirming commitments to protect the planet and its people*. 2023.

<sup>218</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction: The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Platform*. N.d.

<sup>219</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Outcome Report of the Sixth Session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee*. 2022. pp. 4, 21.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* p. 21.

<sup>221</sup> United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *National Launch of the Women and ICT Frontier Initiative in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*. 2016.

<sup>222</sup> Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information Communication Technology for Development. *WIFI*. 2023.

<sup>223</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 69, 98.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 90, 109.

<sup>226</sup> Asian Development Bank. *Asia-Pacific Climate Finance Fund*. 2023.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023. p. 109.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*



## **Conclusion**

The Asia-Pacific disaster riskscape evolves and shifts as climate change and other disaster risks intensify, placing more people each year in danger of displacement or loss of life or assets.<sup>230</sup> This resulted in the regression of progress towards SDG 13 (climate action) in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>231</sup> In response, DRR practices have also changed to more accurately evaluate risk hotspots through dynamic, multi-hazard approaches that harness emerging ICT technologies and assess data in real time.<sup>232</sup> Subregional and regional cooperation is an essential tool to share information on best practices and address transboundary hazards.<sup>233</sup> Even with added emphasis on embedded DRR processes, many Asia-Pacific communities continue to experience gaps in digital access, financing opportunities, adequate technology and infrastructure, and low commitment to the implementation of policy frameworks and institutional capacity.<sup>234</sup>

## **Further Research**

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should take into account: How can global frameworks be leveraged to foster effective policy measures? In what ways can technologies be made more accessible to address the challenges of climate change? What priorities should be considered to ensure all relevant stakeholders are included in decision-making processes, including women and other vulnerable persons? How can innovative financing products help reduce costs for low-income countries? How can the AP-IS be implemented to reduce the digital divide? What other considerations might constitute risk hotspots? What strategies can be employed to address transboundary hazards?

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<sup>230</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: Subregional Pathways for Adaptation and Resilience*. 2022.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>232</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *The Asia-Pacific disaster riskscape*. 2019.

<sup>233</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Asia-Pacific Riskscape @ 1.5°C: Subregional Pathways for Adaptation and Resilience*. 2022.

<sup>234</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Seizing the moment: targeting transformative disaster risk resilience*. 2023.



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