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Economic and Social Council Background Guide 2025

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2025 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce to you our committee, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Your committee's work is facilitated by volunteer staffers. This year's committee staff are: Director Ruth Spickermann and Assistant Director Subham Barua (Conference A), and Director Pauline Bischoff and Assistant Director Hassan Moinuddin (Conference B). Ruth is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, Sociology, and Law at the University of Erfurt, Germany. Subham Barua holds a B.A. in Political Science (International Affairs) where he focused on conflict resolution, international law and environmental justice. Pauline holds a bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from the University of Magdeburg and is currently pursuing a career in musical theater while studying Jazz-Pop Singing in Wiesbaden. Hassan studied Philosophy at Royal Holloway, University of London. He currently works as a British Sign Language interpreter for a charity that promotes Deaf and disability awareness. The preparation of these materials was supported by Under-Secretaries-General Gamaliel Perez (Conference A) and Courtney Indart (Conference B) with contributions by Under-Secretaries-General for Conference Management Joshua Andersen (Conference A) and Kenny Nguyen (Conference B).

The topics on the agenda for this committee are:

1. Empowering Women and Girls in the Achievement of the SDGs
2. Strengthening Humanitarian Assistance in the Face of Climate Crises

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 2025 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.

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

Ruth Spickermann, Director
Subham Barua, Assistant Director
Conference A

Pauline Bischoff, Director
Hassan Moinuddin, Assistant Director
Conference B



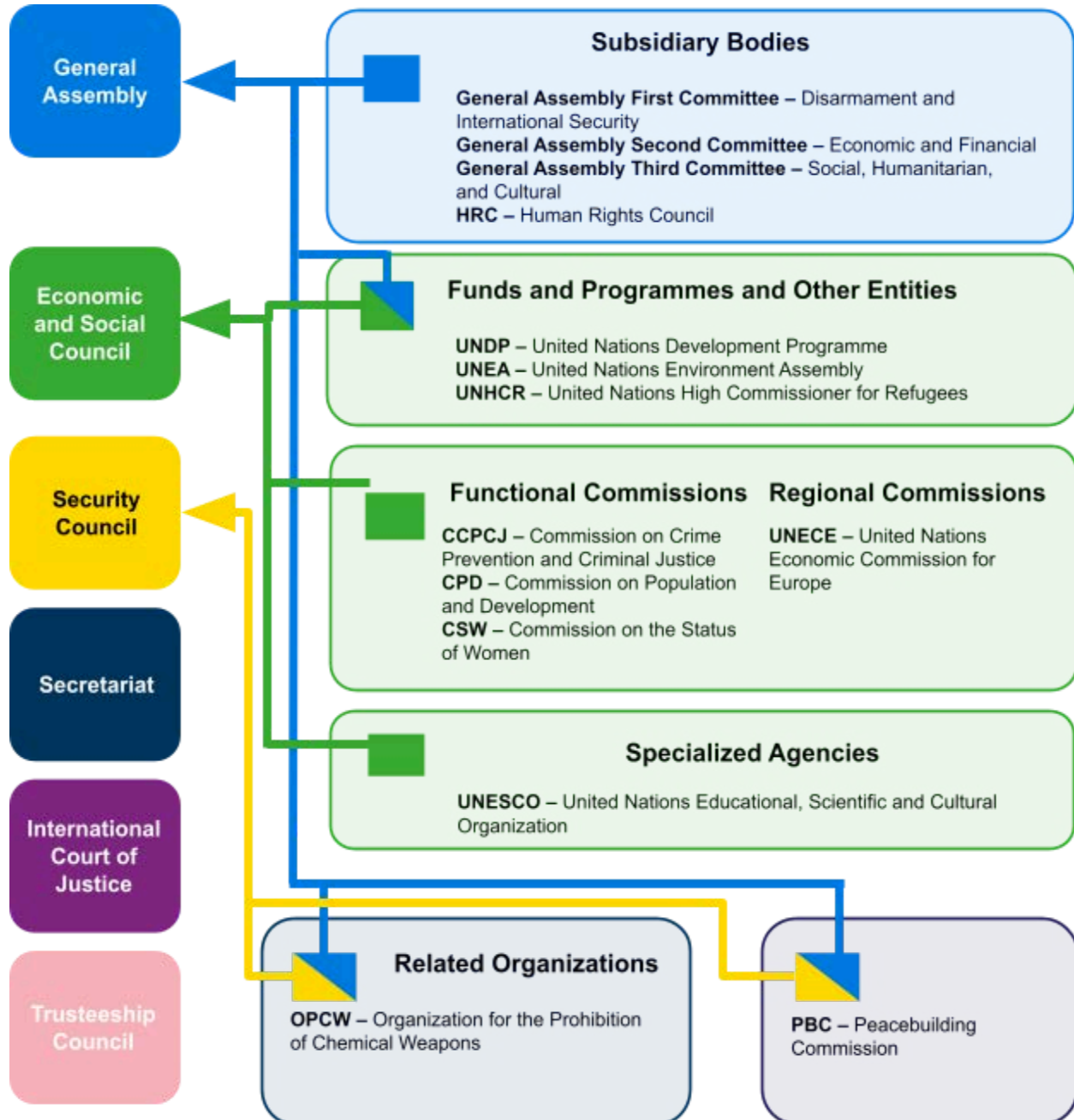
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United Nations System at NMUN·NY

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 and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations established by the *Charter of the United Nations* in 1945.¹ It serves as the primary body for policy dialogue on economic, social, cultural, educational, and health-related topics, advises and coordinates the activities of its subsidiary bodies on these topics, and leads discussions on the implementation of the international development framework.² As such, ECOSOC is highly involved in coordinating efforts to achieve the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015) and efforts to advance several other international frameworks.³

Mandate, Function, and Powers

The main function of ECOSOC is to coordinate the activities of its subsidiary bodies and United Nations specialized agencies.⁴ Article 62.1 of the *Charter of the United Nations* allows ECOSOC to “make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters” to present to the General Assembly and to United Nations specialized agencies.⁵ ECOSOC may also call for international conferences and hold special meetings on global development emergencies and humanitarian crises.⁶ A prominent example of such a special meeting is the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which is held annually under the auspices of ECOSOC, apart from every fourth year, when it is held under the auspices of the General Assembly.⁷

Broadly speaking, the following non-exhaustive list summarizes ECOSOC’s mandate:

- ECOSOC will **generally**: provide policy recommendations to Member States and other international bodies; coordinate efforts by its subsidiary bodies and United Nations specialized agencies; follow up and review progress towards these activities; convene international conferences; create subsidiary thematic commissions, in those rare instances where there is ubiquitous demand for continuous examination of a broad subject area.⁸
- ECOSOC **will not generally**: design and implement projects or programs; direct United Nations specialized agencies to develop or implement specific projects or programs; decide on budgetary matters of United Nations entities.⁹

¹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *About us*. N.d.; United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. art. 7.

² United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *About us*. N.d.; United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. art. 62.

³ Ibid; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. para. 47.

⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *About us*. N.d.

⁵ United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. art. 62.

⁶ Ibid; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emerging Issues and Emergency Situations*. N.d.

⁷ United Nations, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *Structure*. N.d.

⁸ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC at a Glance*. 2024. p. 2.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme. *About us*. 2023; United Nations Development Programme. *Executive Board*. 2023; United Nations, General Assembly. *Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee)*. N.d.



Governance, Funding, and Structure

ECOSOC is composed of 54 Member States, 18 of which are elected each year by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms under a system of rotation that ensures equitable geographic representation.¹⁰ ECOSOC proceedings are overseen by a President and four Vice-Presidents, which together comprise its Bureau.¹¹ The Bureau sets ECOSOC's agenda, devises action plans, and collaborates with the Secretariat on administrative duties.¹² The funding for ECOSOC's activities and work comes largely from the United Nations regular programme budget.¹³

ECOSOC oversees the work of five regional commissions, eight functional commissions, 12 specialized agencies, six funds and programs, and several other related United Nations bodies.¹⁴ The functional commissions focus on specific issues and the regional commissions have a geographic focus.¹⁵ Other subsidiary bodies include standing, ad hoc, expert, and other related bodies.¹⁶ Each subsidiary body adopts specific methods of work to align with its mandate, which are updated regularly.¹⁷ ECOSOC also allows for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to consult on the work of the United Nations.¹⁸ More than 6,000 NGOs have been granted ECOSOC consultative status, enabling them to attend and participate in various United Nations meetings, conferences, special sessions, and other international discussions.¹⁹

The ECOSOC meeting cycle lasts one year from July to July and is divided into four groups.²⁰ The first group consists of the Partnership Forum and the Coordination Segment, which are held in February.²¹ While the Partnership Forum aims to bring together a wide array of stakeholders, from civil society and the private sector to academia and local governments, to discuss and exchange ideas to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the Coordination Segment is set up to coordinate the work of ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies and United Nations specialized agencies through general policy recommendations.²² The second group of meetings include various fora established by ECOSOC, including the Forum on Financing for Development Follow-up and the Youth Forum, which take place between April and May of each year.²³ The Development Cooperation Forum, which is also part of the second group, takes place every two years.²⁴ The third group comprises the Operational Activities for Development Segment, the Humanitarian

¹⁰ United Nations, General Assembly. *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.19)*. 2021. p. 39.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Proposed programme budget for 2024 (A/78/6 (Sect. 2))*. 2023. p. 75

¹⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC Coordination Segment*. N.d.

¹⁵ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies*. N.d.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ United Nations, General Assembly. *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/75/290 A)*. 2021. p. 9.

¹⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Introduction to ECOSOC Consultative Status*. N.d.

¹⁹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC at a Glance*. 2024. p. 13.

²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly. *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/75/290 A)*. 2021. pp. 4-5.

²¹ *ibid.* pp. 4-5.

²² *ibid.* p. 5.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*



Affairs Segment, and the Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development.²⁵ The fourth group focuses on the review of the implementation and progress towards the 2030 Agenda, comprising the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC and the High-level Segment of ECOSOC, both of which take place in July at the end of a meeting cycle.²⁶ The ECOSOC meeting cycle is further complemented by the Management Segment in June, which focuses on procedural questions and considers the reports and recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and United Nations specialized agencies.²⁷

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ United Nations, General Assembly. *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/72/305)*. 2018. p. 6.



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United Nations, General Assembly. *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/RES/75/290 A)*. 2021. Retrieved 20 October 2024 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/290%20A>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.19)*. 2021. Retrieved 20 October 2024 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/520/Rev.19>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Proposed programme budget for 2024 (A/78/6 (Sect. 2))*. 2023. Retrieved 23 October 2024 from: [https://undocs.org/en/A/78/6\(Sect.2\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/78/6(Sect.2))



United Nations, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *Structure*. N.d. Retrieved 20 October 2024 from: <https://hlpf.un.org/structure>



1. Empowering Women and Girls in the Achievement of the SDGs

Introduction

Gender equality is the principle that all individuals, regardless of their gender, have the same rights, opportunities and responsibilities.²⁸ This fundamental human right is enshrined in The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), which states in article 1 that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”²⁹ As all Member States have agreed upon achieving gender equality, gender mainstreaming was introduced by the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (BPfA), adopted in 1995.³⁰ Gender mainstreaming is the strategic process of integrating a gender perspective in all areas of policy, decision-making and implementation by all United Nations agencies, Member States, civil society actors, and stakeholders involved in development policy-making and programs.³¹

Achieving gender equality is a matter of justice and a catalyst for sustainable development.³² According to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and despite global commitments, women and girls still face significant disadvantages across multiple facets of life.³³ Women represent 70% of the world’s poor, 129 million girls globally are not in school, one in three women experience gender-based violence (GBV), and women perform 76% of unpaid care work.³⁴ Addressing these inequalities is imperative, as gender equality is vital for economic growth and sustainable development.³⁵ According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), closing the gap of women’s labor force participation could increase the economic output by 35%.³⁶

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, prioritizes gender equality as a key objective across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet still significant challenges remain in the pursuit of gender equality.³⁷ Currently, women’s and girl’s opportunities for education and economic opportunities are limited due to a significant amount of barriers, as well as persistent cultural norms.³⁸ At the same time, the persistence of GBV represents a serious threat for women’s and girl’s mental and physical health, as well as their ability for participation in their

²⁸ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Gender Equality*. N.d.

²⁹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*. 1948.

³⁰ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *How We Work. UN System Coordination. Gender Mainstreaming*. N.d.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Wakiaga. *Gender equality as a catalyst for achieving sustainable development*. 2023.

³³ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Economic empowerment*. 2024.

³⁴ United Nations Development Programme. *The Missing Piece: Valuing women’s unrecognized contribution to the economy*. 2024; United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund. *Girls’ Education*. N.d; World Bank Group. *Gender-Based Violence (Violence Against Women and Girls)*. 2019.

³⁵ European Investment Bank. *The Economic Power of Gender Equality*. 2024; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. *OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2023 Issue 1, Promoting gender equality to strengthen economic growth and resilience*. 2023.

³⁶ International Monetary Fund. *How to Close Gender Gaps and Grow the Global Economy*. 2022.

³⁷ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024*. 2024; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

³⁸ Maastricht School of Management. *Breaking Barriers: The Imperative for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment*. 2024.



social and community life.³⁹ Due to women's underrepresentation in politics and decision-making levels, a female perspective is often missing to combat barriers to gender equality.⁴⁰

International and Regional Framework

The UDHR is a milestone for gender equality as a human right.⁴¹ Article 1 underlines the importance of every individual being equal, regardless of their gender, and is supported by various other articles.⁴² This includes, article 2, declaring the same rights and freedoms to everyone; article 7, stating that every human being is the same before law; article 16, covering the right of free marriage; article 23, underlining the right of work; article 25, calling for the right of everyone to a life of prosperity, health, and well-being; and article 26, emphasizing the right to education for all.⁴³

Education and combating GBV are critical for achieving gender equality.⁴⁴ The BPfA identifies education as one of twelve key areas for action in order to achieve gender equality by emphasizing the need to eliminate gender disparities at all educational levels and to ensure equal access to education for women and girls.⁴⁵ This reflects a gender mainstreaming approach, ensuring that educational policies and programs account for and address the specific challenges faced by women and girls, such as cultural biases and gender stereotypes.⁴⁶ To protect women and girls from GBV, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (1979) (CEDAW) addresses this threat as a critical obstacle to achieving gender equality, calling on Member States to implement comprehensive measures to eliminate discrimination and protect women's and girl's rights.⁴⁷ CEDAW calls for legal, social and institutional reforms to protect women and girls from violence, to ensure equal treatment before the law, and to create effective remedies for violations of their rights.⁴⁸ Gender mainstreaming under CEDAW requires that all policies, laws, and practices be analyzed and reformed to ensure that they do not discriminate against women and girls and provide them with equal access to legal and social protection.⁴⁹ In 2000, the Security Council addressed the critical issue of gender equality in conflict and post-conflict situations by adopting its landmark resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security."⁵⁰ The resolution recognized the impact of conflict on women and girls by highlighting the need to protect them from GBV in conflict zones.⁵¹ It also reflects upon integrating gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes, ensuring that women's and girl's perspectives and participation are integrated into all levels of decision-making during and after conflicts.⁵²

³⁹ Council of Europe. *Why is gender-based violence a problem?*. 2024.

⁴⁰ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Women's leadership and political participation*. 2024.

⁴¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*. 1948.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Gender equality and education*. 2024.

⁴⁵ United Nations, General Assembly. *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1)*. 1995.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1979.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ United Nations, Security Council. *Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325(2000))*. 2000.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.



The achievement of the 2030 Agenda and gender equality are linked to various SDGs.⁵³ In 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/1, titled, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”⁵⁴ The 2030 Agenda introduced 17 SDGs aimed at addressing a wide range of global challenges and included gender perspectives throughout.⁵⁵ SDG 1 (no poverty) highlights that gender equality is crucial for eliminating poverty, as women and girls are significantly more affected by economic disadvantages, for example due to women globally earning 20% less than men, unpaid care work, limited access to education leading to limited economic opportunities, and restricted access to financial resources.⁵⁶ SDG 3 (good health and well-being) emphasizes that improving gender equality leads to better health outcomes by ensuring women and girls have equal access to healthcare.⁵⁷ SDG 4 (quality education) underscores the importance of equal educational opportunities for everyone.⁵⁸ SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) points out that gender equality in the workplace supports sustainable economic progress.⁵⁹ And lastly, SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) shows that addressing gender inequalities is key to reducing overall inequalities.⁶⁰ Gender mainstreaming across these SDGs ensures that gender equality is integrated into every aspect of sustainable development, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the 2030 Agenda.⁶¹

Role of the International System

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) demonstrates its commitment to gender mainstreaming through the adoption of an agreed conclusion and multiple resolutions.⁶² Since 1997, ECOSOC has adopted an agreed conclusion and four resolutions on gender mainstreaming, including the most recent resolution 2017/57 “Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs of the United Nations system.”⁶³ The resolution emphasizes the importance of eliminating gender inequalities, promoting women's and girl's empowerment and ensuring that gender considerations are systematically

⁵³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (A/52/3)*. 1997; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/14)*. 2008; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2010/INF/2/Add.1)*. 2010; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2015/6)*. 2015; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2017/57)*. 2017.

⁶³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (A/52/3)*. 1997; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/18)*. 2008; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2010/INF/2/Add.1)*. 2010; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2015/6)*. 2015; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2017/57)*. 2017.



integrated into all United Nations policies and programmes.⁶⁴

The United Nations human rights sector focuses on all issues surrounding gender equality, including a GBV-free environment.⁶⁵ In 2016, the Human Rights Council covered these matters and adopted resolution 32/19, titled, “Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women,” which calls for intensified global actions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls through comprehensive, multi-sectoral approaches and enhanced international cooperation.⁶⁶ The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council ensures that countries are held accountable for their commitments to gender equality.⁶⁷ The UPR is a unique process that involves a comprehensive review of the human rights records of all Member States.⁶⁸ The latest review cycle began in November 2022.⁶⁹ During this review, Member States are evaluated on their adherence to international human rights obligations, including those related to the rights of women and girls.⁷⁰ By highlighting gender-based issues and offering recommendations for improvement, the UPR ensures that Member States remain focused on empowering women and girls as part of their broader human rights agenda.⁷¹

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) UN Women are committed to supporting women and girls to achieve gender equality.⁷² UN Women's *Strategic Plan 2022-2025* outlines the organization's priorities and goals to promote gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment worldwide.⁷³ UN Women also receives support through development aid from international aid organizations and bilateral donors who provide funds specifically for gender equality initiatives.⁷⁴ The Global Fund for Women and UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality provides grants to grassroots organizations that campaign for women's and girl's rights.⁷⁵ Additionally, CSW addresses gender equality through resolutions regarding the equality of medical care, as well as through “Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system” (2015).⁷⁶ Both entities are supported by international agencies, for example the Gender Equality Index and UN Women's Empowerment Principles, which analyze gender-disaggregated data to monitor progress on gender equality.⁷⁷ Initiatives like the HeForShe

⁶⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2017/57)*. 2017.

⁶⁵ United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women (A/HRC/RES/32/19)*. 2016.

⁶⁶ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Research Brief: Strengthening Accountability Through the Universal Periodic Review*. 2019; United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women (A/HRC/RES/32/19)*. 2016.

⁶⁷ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Research Brief: Strengthening Accountability Through the Universal Periodic Review*. 2019.

⁶⁸ United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Basic facts about the UPR*. 2024.

⁶⁹ United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Universal Periodic Review*. 2024.

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⁷¹ United Nations Development Programme. *UN good practices: How the universal periodic review process supports sustainable development*. 2022.

⁷² United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *About UN Women*. 2024.

⁷³ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Strategic Plan 2022-2025*. 2021.

⁷⁴ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Fund for Gender Equality*. N.d.

⁷⁵ Global Fund for Women. *What We Do*. 2024.

⁷⁶ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2015/6)*. 2015.

⁷⁷ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Monitoring Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*:



campaign by UN Women actively engage men and boys as advocates for gender equality by encouraging them to publicly commit to supporting gender equality, participate in awareness-raising events, and challenge discriminatory practices.⁷⁸

In addition to the United Nations bodies that deal specifically with the realization of gender equality, other bodies within the international system also continue to address this matter.⁷⁹ The International Labour Organization (ILO) further emphasized the achievement of gender equality in the work field in combination with combating GBV by adopting convention No. 190 “Violence and Harassment in the World of Work” (2019), contributing to SDG 5 and SDG 8.⁸⁰ This convention recognizes the right of everyone to work free from gender-based violence and harassment.⁸¹ In terms of health, *The Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (2016-2030)*, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), emphasizes the importance of ensuring that women, children, and adolescents have access to high-quality health services.⁸² It focuses on addressing health needs through targeted interventions, improving health systems, and promoting gender-sensitive policies, supporting SDG 3.⁸³

Combating gender inequality requires support not only from the United Nations system, but also from the private sector and funding mechanisms.⁸⁴ Global networks such as the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) support women’s and girl’s economic and educational opportunities, supporting SDGs 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10.⁸⁵ We-Fi mobilizes finances to address the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs and helps them access capital, markets, and networks to grow their businesses, while GPE works to ensure that girls receive a quality education, focusing on gender-equitable education systems and policies that promote equal access to schooling.⁸⁶ In alignment with these efforts, the World Bank and IMF give priority to gender-specific programs and provide funding for projects that promote the economic empowerment of women.⁸⁷ The World Bank implements initiatives such as the Gender Equality and Development Strategy to address gender gaps in education, health and economic empowerment by providing financial support and technical assistance to improve women’s access to jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities and financial services.⁸⁸ Similarly, the IMF incorporates gender considerations into its economic assessments and policy advice by highlighting the

Opportunities and Challenges. 2015. United Nations, Global Compact. *Endorse the Women’s Empowerment Principles*. 2024.

⁷⁸ The Kathmandu Post. *Daniel Radcliffe lauds Emma Watson’s gender equality campaign*. 2024; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women United Kingdom. *Our Work: HeForShe*. 2024.

⁷⁹ International Labor Organization. *Convention C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention*. 2019; World Health Organization. *The Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (2016-2030)*. 2015.

⁸⁰ International Labor Organization. *Convention C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention*. 2019.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² World Health Organization. *The Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (2016-2030)*. 2015.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Global Partnership for Education. *Gender Equality*. N.d; International Monetary Fund. *Women, Work, and the Economy: Macroeconomic Gains from Gender Equity*. 2013; Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative. *Mission*. N.d; World Bank Group. *Gender Overview*. 2024.

⁸⁵ Global Partnership for Education. *Gender Equality*. N.d; Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative. *Mission*. N.d.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ International Monetary Fund. *Women’s Empowerment and the IMF*. 2024.

⁸⁸ World Bank Group. *Gender Overview*. 2024.



macroeconomic benefits of gender equality and removing barriers to women's economic participation through programs such as “Women, Work, and the Economy”, focusing on increasing female labor force participation, closing gender wage gaps, and promoting policies that enhance access to education, finance, and childcare.⁸⁹

Empowering Women and Girls Through Climate Education

Addressing gender disparities and involving women and girls in climate action can significantly enhance the sustainability of established communities.⁹⁰ If women and girls have more access to productive resources, then farm yields could increase by 20-30% to feed an additional 100-150 million people.⁹¹ The empowerment of women and girls is pivotal for the achievement of the SDGs, especially in the context of climate change as they are often the ones most responsible for securing food and water for their families.⁹² ECOSOC and its regional commissions are dedicated to empowering all women and girls in the context of climate change towards achieving SDGs 2 and 11.⁹³

Women and girls are the groups most affected by climate change impacts, representing four out of five of all displaced people due to their limited roles in society and access to nourishments.⁹⁴ Empowering them with education, economic opportunities, and decision-making can help improve their resilience to climate-related shocks as per SDGs 5, 8 and 10.⁹⁵ The EmPower program, led by the United Nations Environment Programme, focuses on giving training and resources to female agricultural workers which can mitigate climate impacts and secure their livelihoods.⁹⁶ In the agricultural sector, only 12.8% of women are landowners due to barriers held in many countries despite the sector employing one third of women worldwide.⁹⁷ If these women received the same level of training and resources that are available to men, the agricultural output could increase by 4% and feed more people according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).⁹⁸ This method is in line with SDG 1 which aims that by 2030 women and men will have equal rights to resources, services and land ownership.⁹⁹

SDG 5 allows for the empowerment of women through ensuring their full participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision-making in both the political and economic sectors.¹⁰⁰ Women's participation in climate policy and decision-making processes is essential for developing comprehensive

⁸⁹ International Monetary Fund. *Women, Work, and the Economy: Macroeconomic Gains from Gender Equity*. 2013.

⁹⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Women and Climate Change*. 2024.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women. *Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes (E/CN.6/2022/L.7)*. 2022.

⁹⁴ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Women and Climate Change*. 2024.

⁹⁵ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *The Role of Women in Rural Development, Food Production and Poverty Eradication*. 2014.

⁹⁶ United Nations Environment Programme. *EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies*. 2023.

⁹⁷ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment*. 2018.

⁹⁸ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *The Role of Women in Rural Development, Food Production and Poverty Eradication*. 2014.

⁹⁹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *SDG 1: No Poverty*. 2024.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.



and inclusive climate strategies.¹⁰¹ The European Investment Bank shows that countries with higher female representation in parliament are more likely to ratify international environmental treaties.¹⁰² Women's unique perspectives and talents lead to more effective climate change solutions as their leadership in climate initiatives ensures that policies reflect the needs of their communities.¹⁰³ FAO recognizes that climate change has impacted rural women and girls due to limited access, participation and control over resources fundamental to climate adaptation due to them being male-dominated fields.¹⁰⁴ The Business and Sustainable Development Commission's initiative, WomenRising 2030, pledges to open opportunities for more than \$12 trillion in new market value linked to the SDGs.¹⁰⁵ The intention is to demonstrate how women's leadership and engagement in business is critical to driving significant economic opportunities and better performance, leading to effective climate change boosting.¹⁰⁶ Programs like the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)'s Women's Leadership for Peace addresses the gap in international peace and respond directly to the unique challenges faced by women.¹⁰⁷ The programme provides women with a strong skill set to take up leadership roles and increase their potential by defining authentic leadership within their respective contexts.¹⁰⁸

ECOSOC's subsidiaries work with countries to address region-specific challenges related to girls' education, providing tailored support and capacity-building initiatives.¹⁰⁹ Programs that focus on climate education for girls can assist in fostering a generation of women who are well-prepared to lead action on climate change.¹¹⁰ Only 49% of all Member States have achieved gender equality in regards to girls education.¹¹¹ With education, women are more likely to be more proactive towards sustainable practices and environmental conservation as organizations like the Sustainable Agriculture Network occurred from women grassroot movements.¹¹² ECOSOC advocates for increased funding in women's and girl's education through financial institution initiatives such as the GPE, mobilizing resources for programs towards girls.¹¹³ The 2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum was the result of the collaboration between ECOSOC and GPE to showcase the voices of young female change-makers who have been mobilizing solutions in their local communities.¹¹⁴ Education is a powerful tool in combating climate change and promoting gender equality as established in SDG 4.¹¹⁵ ECOSOC states that educating girls improves their socio-economic status and equips them with the understanding to address certain environmental

¹⁰¹ United Nations Department of Global Communications. *Women and Climate Change*. 2024.

¹⁰² European Investment Bank. *The Economic Power of Gender Equality*. 2024.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization. *Women's Leadership and Gender Equality in Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa – A Call for Action*. 2021.

¹⁰⁵ WomenRising2030 and Business and Sustainable Development Commission. SDG Hub. *Better Leadership, Better World: Women Leading for the Global Goals*. 2018.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ United Nations Institute for Training and Research. *Women's Leadership for Peace*. 2024.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)*. 2024.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. *Girls' Education*. 2024.

¹¹² Sustainable Agriculture. *Empowering Women, Enriching the Earth: Inspiring Environmental Sustainability Through Inclusion*. 2021.

¹¹³ Global Partnership for Education. *How We Work*. 2024.

¹¹⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum Summary*. 2024.

¹¹⁵ United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.



challenges.¹¹⁶ Under ECOSOC's guidance, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) reviews progress on the SDGs, related to education and gender equality, allowing for the sharing of policy recommendations amongst Member States.¹¹⁷ The 2024 HLPF focused on reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises with attention on education regarding women and girls, reinforcing their empowerment.¹¹⁸

Addressing Gender-Based Violence to Promote Gender Equality

GBV is defined as any harmful act against a person because of their gender.¹¹⁹ It is considered a serious violation of human rights as affirmed in the UDHR.¹²⁰ According to WHO, GBV is considered a major public and clinical health issue.¹²¹ The prevalence of GBV is reflected in 49,000 women and girls being killed by an intimate partner or family member in 2022, and one in three women worldwide experiencing physical or sexual violence, often perpetrated by an intimate partner, in their lifetime.¹²² In 2021, UN Women revealed that around 243 million women and girls aged 15 to 49 experienced sexual or physical violence by an intimate partner in the past year.¹²³ The World Bank estimates that 35% of women globally have faced violence in the workplace.¹²⁴

GBV has various root causes and appears in many forms.¹²⁵ Women and girls face GBV due to a wide set of factors that are categorized in cultural, legal, economic, and political factors.¹²⁶ Patriarchal and sexist views, cultural norms, and traditional beliefs legitimize violence against women and girls to maintain male dominance, control women's sexuality, and uphold concepts of family honor, leading to widespread GBV.¹²⁷ The lack of economic resources makes women particularly vulnerable to violence because financial dependency often limits their ability to leave abusive situations, creating self-perpetuating cycles of violence and poverty, while unemployment and poverty among men can lead them to assert their masculinity through violence.¹²⁸ Violence against women and girls can be identified in the following forms: intimate-partner violence, sexual violence, femicide, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, and online or technology-facilitated violence.¹²⁹ However, all forms of GBV are significantly harmful for women and girls and can lead to mental and health consequences, which

¹¹⁶ United Nations, Department for Global Communications. *High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*. 2024.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A/RES/48/104)*. 1993.

¹²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*. 1948.

¹²¹ World Health Organization. *Violence against women*. 2024.

¹²² United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. N.d; World Bank Group. *Gender-Based Violence (Violence Against Women and Girls)*. 2019; World Health Organization. *Violence against women*. 2024.

¹²³ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of Covid-19*. 2021.

¹²⁴ World Bank Group. *Gender-Based Violence (Violence Against Women and Girls)*. 2019.

¹²⁵ World Bank Group. *Breaking the Cycle: Ending Gender Based Violence and Empowering Women in Sierra Leone*. 2024.

¹²⁶ Council of Europe. *What causes gender-based violence?*. 2024.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *FAQs: Types of violence against women and girls*. N.d.



ultimately limit women's and girls' access to health and well-being, education, economic opportunities, and social participation.¹³⁰

The interconnection of addressing GBV is evident in international frameworks, resolutions and the 2030 Agenda.¹³¹ While CEDAW serves as an international bill of rights for women by providing a legally binding instrument for Member States to eliminate GBV, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women, Peace and Security" recognizes the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls and calls for their protection and participation in peace processes.¹³² Therefore, these frameworks align with the goals of the 2030 Agenda.¹³³ GBV is directly linked to SDG 5, in particular as it aims to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in private and public areas, including human trafficking and other types of exploitation.¹³⁴ Addressing GBV is essential for the achievement of SDG 1, as it empowers women to participate fully in economic activities, thereby lifting themselves and their families out of poverty and similarly contributes to SDG 3 by ensuring women and girls have access to health services free from violence and discrimination.¹³⁵ The impact of GBV extends to SDG 4, as it often hinders women's and girls' access to education.¹³⁶ Violence, or the threat of violence, can prevent girls from attending school and women from pursuing higher education or vocational training, limiting their opportunities for personal and societal development.¹³⁷ Addressing GBV is crucial for achieving SDGs 8 and 10, as safe and supportive environments enable women to participate in the workforce, contribute to economic productivity, and attain financial independence.¹³⁸

Combating GBV requires a multi-level approach, covering data and research, legislation and policies, the cooperation of international and national entities, the private sector, and civil society.¹³⁹ Within the United Nations system, ECOSOC and CSW play a significant role in supporting these efforts by setting international standards facilitating global dialogue.¹⁴⁰ ECOSOC, collaborates with civil society to enhance the capacity of local actors in combating GBV, providing technical assistance and fostering partnerships, which is outlined in the report of the Secretary-General 2019/65 "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality."¹⁴¹ Additionally, data and research are critical in understanding the root causes

¹³⁰ World Health Organization. *Violence against women*. 2024.

¹³¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1979; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015; United Nations, Security Council. *Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325(2000))*. 2000.

¹³² United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1979.

¹³³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Business for Social Responsibility HerProject. *What We Work*. N.d; Global Fund for Women. *Closing the digital gender gap in partnership with Google this International Women's Day*. 2024; MeToo Movement. *Get To Know Us*. 2024; Spotlight Initiative. *What we do*. 2024; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. N.d.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations, Sustainable Development Group. *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. 2024.

¹⁴¹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality (E/2019/65)*. 2019.



of GBV, and ECOSOC has advocated for improving data collection through initiatives like UN Women's Global Database on Violence Against Women, which collects and disseminates information on laws, policies, and research related to GBV to guide policy decisions and legislative reforms.¹⁴² CSW, monitors the implementation of frameworks like the BfPA, which outlines strategic objectives to combat GBV and empowers Member States to develop national action plans.¹⁴³ Through its annual sessions, CSW formulates policy recommendations, advocates for stronger legal frameworks, and promotes international cooperation to advance gender equality and protect women's and girl's rights, thereby contributing to the broader goals of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.¹⁴⁴ The general impact of efforts to combat GBV in the legislative area is reflected in 162 countries having passed laws criminalizing domestic violence and 147 countries having passed laws against sexual harassment in the workplace.¹⁴⁵ Another notable initiative in combating GBV is the "Spotlight Initiative," a collaboration between the United Nations and the European Union and focusing on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls by addressing root causes and providing comprehensive support services for survivors.¹⁴⁶ In the private sector, companies like Google and Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) have been active in addressing GBV.¹⁴⁷ Google collaborates with nonprofits and advocacy groups to support initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing GBV, such as funding technology projects that assist survivors and raise awareness.¹⁴⁸ BSR's HERproject is another example, focusing on enhancing women's health, economic empowerment, and gender equality in supply chains through education and support programs.¹⁴⁹ Civil society plays a pivotal role in raising awareness and advocating for change, with movements like #MeToo leading the charge.¹⁵⁰ The #MeToo movement, which gained global prominence in 2017, highlighted the pervasive nature of sexual harassment and assault, leading to increased public awareness and policy reforms.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

Gender equality and the achievement of the SDGs are mutually linked to each other.¹⁵² Empowering women and girls is pivotal for the achievement of the SDGs and the advancement of global equality.¹⁵³ As the UDHR asserts, gender equality is a fundamental human right, which represents the foundation for the 2030 Agenda and all linked SDGs.¹⁵⁴ The 2030 Agenda underscores the necessity of gender equality, not

¹⁴² United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Improving the Collection and use of Administrative Data on Violence Against Women*. 2022.

¹⁴³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/1999/2)*. 1999.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Commission on the Status of Women*. N.d.

¹⁴⁵ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. N.d.

¹⁴⁶ Spotlight Initiative. *What we do*. 2024.

¹⁴⁷ Business for Social Responsibility. HerProject. *What We Work*. N.d; Global Fund for Women. *Closing the digital gender gap in partnership with Google this International Women's Day*. 2024.

¹⁴⁸ Global Fund for Women. *Closing the digital gender gap in partnership with Google this International Women's Day*. 2024.

¹⁴⁹ Business for Social Responsibility HerProject. *What We Work*. N.d.

¹⁵⁰ MeToo Movement. *Get To Know Us*. 2024.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² International Institute for Sustainable Development. *Achieve Gender Equality to Deliver the SDGs*. 2017.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*. 1948.



only as a goal in itself but as a catalyst for broader progress.¹⁵⁵ In particular, SDG 5 (gender equality) and frameworks like CEDAW and *The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* emphasize the importance of eliminating discrimination and violence, ensuring equal opportunities, and integrating gender perspectives into all policies.¹⁵⁶ Despite significant progress, disparities persist across education, health, and economic opportunities, impacting women and girls disproportionately.¹⁵⁷ Addressing these challenges through comprehensive strategies and international collaboration will empower women and girls, drive sustainable development, and help create a more equitable world for all.¹⁵⁸

Further Research

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should consider: What policies can be developed to ensure comprehensive and inclusive educational opportunities for women and girls, particularly in underrepresented regions? How can successful gender equality initiatives be evaluated and adapted for different cultural and socio-economic contexts? In what ways can gender-sensitive approaches be integrated into economic development programs? What are the impacts of gender-based violence on women's empowerment, and how effective are existing support systems in addressing these issues? How can innovative strategies be employed to engage men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality? What roles can international financial institutions and global partnerships play in advancing women's rights, and how can their efforts be optimized to further the achievement of the SDGs?

¹⁵⁵ United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

¹⁵⁶ United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1979; United Nations, General Assembly. *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1)*. 1995; United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

¹⁵⁷ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. N.d.

¹⁵⁸ Business for Social Responsibility HerProject. *What We Work*. N.d; Global Fund for Women. *Closing the digital gender gap in partnership with Google this International Women's Day*. 2024; MeToo Movement. *Get To Know Us*. 2024; Spotlight Initiative. *What we do*. 2024; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. N.d.



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<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/overview>

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https://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-women#tab=tab_1



2. Strengthening Humanitarian Assistance in the Face of Climate Crises

"The climate crisis is THE defining challenge that humanity faces."¹⁵⁹

Introduction

The climate crisis is an ongoing crisis that is rapidly worsening and is a main cause of humanitarian need.¹⁶⁰ Although the United Nations does not explicitly define what constitutes humanitarian need, it broadly encompasses the needs of individuals who have been impacted by crises, including armed conflict, natural disasters, and health emergencies.¹⁶¹ The climate crisis arises from the effects of climate change, which refers to long-term shifts in temperature and weather, particularly arising as a result from human activities.¹⁶² The climate crisis and humanitarian crisis are two integrated issues that are also multi-dimensional, meaning that they occur on multiple fronts simultaneously.¹⁶³ Climate events like floods, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, and tropical storms can worsen inequalities like access to food, water, shelter, and healthcare in vulnerable communities and also force communities to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence.¹⁶⁴

Effects of climate change cause large scale disasters, which necessitate national or international assistance.¹⁶⁵ In 2019, 34 million individuals were acutely food insecure while 24.9 million individuals were forcibly displaced due to extreme climate related events.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, climate disasters caused by human activity have doubled for the last 20 years, with 7,348 large-scale disasters occurring between 2000 and 2019, affecting 4.2 billion people and claiming 1.23 million lives globally.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, climate-induced impacts such as floods are anticipated to impose an additional \$1.1 trillion burden on healthcare systems with the emergence and spread of climate sensitive diseases such as malaria and dengue.¹⁶⁸ Heat waves are identified as the most significant cause of economic losses, while floods and droughts are the primary causes of climate-related mortality.¹⁶⁹

The *Charter of the United Nations* outlines that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to foster international cooperation in order to solve humanitarian problems.¹⁷⁰ In this regard, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) serves as the central platform for coordinated efforts to address humanitarian

¹⁵⁹ World Meteorological Organization. *Climate change indicators reached record levels in 2023: WMO*. 2024.

¹⁶⁰ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Why the Climate Crisis is a Humanitarian Emergency*. 2020.

¹⁶¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/46/182)*. 1991.

¹⁶² United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *What is Climate Change?*. 2024.

¹⁶³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *ECOSOC HAS: Climate and humanitarian actors must work together*. 2024.

¹⁶⁴ World Economic Forum. *Quantifying the Effect of Climate Change on Human Health*. 2024.

¹⁶⁵ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*. 2024; World Economic Forum. *Quantifying the Effect of Climate Change on Human Health*. 2024.

¹⁶⁶ World Economic Forum. *Quantifying the Effect of Climate Change on Human Health*. 2024.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ United Nations Conference on International Organization. *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Art. 1 Nr. 3.



challenges.¹⁷¹ Through its numerous subsidiary bodies, commissions, and partnerships, ECOSOC enables a more coordinated and effective global response to humanitarian challenges by facilitating the exchange of ideas, best practices, and resources amongst Member States.¹⁷²

Addressing the climate crisis requires strengthening humanitarian assistance.¹⁷³ Humanitarian assistance is the provision of aid that seeks to safeguard the lives of vulnerable populations and alleviate their distress.¹⁷⁴ The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states that four principles lie at the core of all humanitarian assistance, which are, humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.¹⁷⁵ UNHCR upholds these principles when responding to all kinds of crises so that the efforts provided to mitigate the crises are humanitarian and non-political in nature.¹⁷⁶ In this regard, strengthening early warning systems (EWS), can help communities prepare for hazardous climate-related events and ensure that humanitarian aid follows the four principles and reach communities quickly.¹⁷⁷ EWS are an adaptive measure for climate change that use integrated communications systems for hazard monitoring, forecasting, disaster risk assessment, communication, and preparedness.¹⁷⁸ Strengthening humanitarian assistance also ties into strengthening the resilience of people that are displaced by climate change.¹⁷⁹ They are at a higher risk of being displaced again if they are unable to prepare for, withstand, and recover from climate-related disruptions and stressors.¹⁸⁰ As a result, it is important to ensure that the international community and Member States include displaced people in decision making processes so that they are able to receive resources needed for adaptation.¹⁸¹

International and Regional Framework

In 2015, the international community produced three landmark global agendas for a sustainable future, which cover limiting the global temperature rise, reducing disaster risk, and global sustainability.¹⁸² The *Paris Agreement*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), and the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030* (Sendai Framework) were all adopted in 2015 to set a course toward climate-resilient societies and economies, making climate change a central focus in all three post-2015 agendas.¹⁸³ The *Paris Agreement* aims to keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C compared to levels before industrialization, which would reduce the risks and impacts of climate change significantly.¹⁸⁴ It further recognizes the need to support developing states that are especially

¹⁷¹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *What does ECOSOC do?*. N.d.

¹⁷² *ibid.*

¹⁷³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The Climate Crisis is a humanitarian crisis*. 2024.

¹⁷⁴ United States, Department of State. *Refugees and Humanitarian Assistance*. 2024.

¹⁷⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Emergency Handbook - Humanitarian Principles*. 2015.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Early Warning Systems*. 2024.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate Change and Displacement*. 2024.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*

¹⁸² United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat. *Opportunities and options for integrating climate change adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*. 2017.

¹⁸³ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*



vulnerable to climate change impacts.¹⁸⁵ The 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serves as a global roadmap for combating inequalities and protecting the planet.¹⁸⁶ SDG 13 (climate action) aims to combat climate change and reduce global warming as well as help Member States adapt to already existing hazards resulting from climate change.¹⁸⁷ Several of the SDGs can be linked to humanitarian issues.¹⁸⁸ SDG 1 (no poverty) aims to support people in poverty to reduce their vulnerability to climate-related disasters of all forms.¹⁸⁹ SDG 2 (zero hunger) aims to ensure access to food to people in vulnerable situations, while SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) aims to reduce the number of people affected by disasters, including those caused by climate change.¹⁹⁰ The Sendai Framework shifted efforts from managing disasters to managing current and future risks.¹⁹¹ It seeks to help manage the risks of disasters in development at every level, as well as within and among all sectors.¹⁹² It also reflects a broader approach to disaster risk reduction by incorporating climate-related disasters and promoting resilience-building.¹⁹³ In humanitarian contexts, disaster risk reduction complements emergency responses through a focus on minimizing exposure and vulnerability to disasters.¹⁹⁴

The General Assembly has adopted frameworks to provide guidance on effective cooperation regarding international migration for all stakeholders.¹⁹⁵ Climate change is a root cause of displacement, which leaves displaced people in need of humanitarian assistance.¹⁹⁶ The *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (New York Declaration) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2016 and contains a wide range of commitments to improve mechanisms, which protect refugees and migrants.¹⁹⁷ Within the New York Declaration, Member States committed to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance to countries most affected and closing all funding gaps.¹⁹⁸ Further, Member States committed to working towards the adoption of a global compact on refugees and a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.¹⁹⁹ In 2018 the *Global Compact on Refugees* and the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and*

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The Sustainable Development Agenda*. N.d.

¹⁸⁷ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*. N.d.

¹⁸⁸ Blind. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Humanitarian SDGs: Interlinking the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the Agenda for Humanity*. 2019.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.* p. 8.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 8.

¹⁹¹ United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat. *Opportunities and options for integrating climate change adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*. 2017. p. 8.

¹⁹² United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Sendai Framework at a Glance*. N.d.

¹⁹³ United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat. *Opportunities and options for integrating climate change adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*. 2017. p. 9.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *DRR in humanitarian and fragile contexts*. N.d.

¹⁹⁵ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Legal and Normative Framework for International Migration*. 2019. p. 57.

¹⁹⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *What We Do - Climate change and displacement*. N.d.

¹⁹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*. N.d.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *New York Declaration*. 2024.

¹⁹⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*. N.d.



Regular Migration were adopted by the General Assembly.²⁰⁰ The *Global Compact on Refugees* aims for more international cooperation to support communities that host large populations of displaced persons and to ensure that refugees can lead a productive life.²⁰¹ One of the aims is to support countries and communities hosting refugees by enhancing humanitarian responses.²⁰² The *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* comprehensively covers all dimensions of international migration.²⁰³ It names 23 objectives for state action to address challenges in connection with current migration.²⁰⁴ The objectives include protecting human rights of migrants and providing access to basic services as well as the commitment to minimize adverse drivers of migration, including addressing climate and disaster-related displacement.²⁰⁵

Role of the International System

ECOSOC brings together Member States, United Nations organizations, and other relevant stakeholders in their Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) to discuss ways to address pressing humanitarian concerns.²⁰⁶ Since 1998, HAS has been an important forum for discussing issues related to the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.²⁰⁷ Each year, Member States and other stakeholders discuss current and emerging humanitarian challenges.²⁰⁸ One of the high-level panel discussions during the 2023 HAS was held under the theme “Strengthening humanitarian assistance in the face of climate change: humanitarian implications, lessons and recommendations for future action.”²⁰⁹ The 2023 HAS resulted in the adoption of ECOSOC resolution 2023/16 on “Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.”²¹⁰ This resolution calls on Member States and regional and international organizations to, within their specific mandates, foster cooperation and financing for disasters related to climate change.²¹¹ Further, it calls for stakeholders to study and address humanitarian effects of climate change and addresses climate disaster related displacement.²¹² During the 2024 HAS Member States discussed humanitarian assistance in the face of conflicts and climate change.²¹³ One of the high-level panel discussions was held under the theme of “Addressing the adverse impacts of climate change in humanitarian emergencies.”²¹⁴ Other panels

²⁰⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)*. N.d; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The Global Compact on Refugees*. N.d.

²⁰¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The Global Compact on Refugees*. N.d; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR master glossary of terms*. N.d.

²⁰² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The Global Compact on Refugees - UNHCR Quick Guide*. 2018. p. 5.

²⁰³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)*. N.d

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *ibid.*

²⁰⁶ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Coordinating Humanitarian Action*. N.d.

²⁰⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2023*. N.d.

²⁰⁸ *ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *ibid.*

²¹⁰ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (E/RES/2023/16)*. 2023.

²¹¹ *ibid.* pp. 9, 13.

²¹² *ibid.* pp. 12, 20.

²¹³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *2024 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment and ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development*. N.d.

²¹⁴ *ibid.*



discussed humanitarian law and its consequences, new technology in humanitarian assistance, and the role of women and girls in humanitarian action.²¹⁵

ECOSOC periodically hosts special meetings to address emerging issues or emergency situations.²¹⁶ These meetings have been held to address public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, the global food crisis in 2008, and after natural disasters to promote coordinated support for affected countries and bring attention to the impact these disasters have on sustainable development.²¹⁷ These meetings not only raise awareness for the issues that are discussed but are a high level policy platform to coordinate relevant stakeholders and develop a strategic response.²¹⁸ In 2017, ECOSOC held a meeting to address the impact of hurricanes, strengthening resilience, and reconstruction.²¹⁹ The meeting not only discussed resilience and recovery for disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes, but also addressed how climate change affects disasters related to weather events such as floods, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, and tropical storms, especially in climate vulnerable states.²²⁰ In 2018, ECOSOC held a follow-up meeting to review achievements in vulnerable states and explore new approaches to financing climate resilience.²²¹ Following the 2017 ECOSOC special meeting, Member States mobilized approximately \$3 billion in response to the Atlantic hurricanes in 2017, which only accounted for a part of the \$6.9 billion in damages sustained in 2017.²²²

Humanitarian assistance is delivered by a system of United Nations entities and other stakeholders, which work together to provide comprehensive humanitarian aid.²²³ The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is responsible for coordinating all response efforts during an emergency.²²⁴ OCHA not only leads the international efforts to develop a robust humanitarian architecture, it also works to prepare vulnerable communities for emergencies through different tools, including early warning reports.²²⁵ OCHA manages the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which ensures that humanitarian assistance can be deployed fast and effectively by providing funds that are available shortly after a sudden-onset emergency.²²⁶ CERF enables immediate responses when a new crisis emerges and is designed to complement other funding sources.²²⁷ These funds are available to United Nations agencies, funds, and programs to meet the most urgent and life-saving needs with priorities set out in

²¹⁵ *ibid.*

²¹⁶ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC Special Meetings on Emerging Issues and Emergency Situations*. N.d.

²¹⁷ *ibid.*

²¹⁸ *ibid.*

²¹⁹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *ECOSOC Special Meeting - Aftermath of recent hurricanes: Achieving a risk-informed and resilient 2030 Agenda*. 2017.

²²⁰ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Presidential Statement on the occasion of the ECOSOC Special Meeting on Aftermath of recent hurricanes: Achieving a risk-informed and resilient 2030 Agenda*. N.d.

²²¹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Pathways to resilience in climate-affected Small Island Developing States (SIDS)– A Forward-Looking Resilience Building Agenda: Promises, results and next steps*. 2018.

²²² *ibid.*

²²³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Deliver Humanitarian Aid*. N.d.

²²⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *We coordinate*. N.d.

²²⁵ *ibid.*

²²⁶ United Nations, Central Emergency Response Fund. *Who We Are*. N.d; United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Deliver Humanitarian Aid*. N.d; United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *We fund*. N.d.

²²⁷ *ibid.*



Humanitarian Response Plans.²²⁸ At the national level, the United Nations Development Programme facilitates operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention, and preparedness, while Resident Coordinators coordinate emergency responses.²²⁹ UNHCR coordinates international action to protect refugees and is able to provide emergency protection and humanitarian assistance on short notice.²³⁰ Being the world's largest humanitarian network, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is an important actor of civil society to provide humanitarian support before, during, and after disasters and health emergencies.²³¹ IFRC works with communities that are exposed to climate-related hazards and increases disaster risk reduction efforts.²³² IFRC further considers climate risks and anticipates extreme weather events before their impact to combat the negative humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis.²³³

As the United Nations' leading organization on the state of the earth's atmosphere, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) takes on a leading role in global efforts to protect the climate.²³⁴ WMO monitors the climate and provides data and climate change predictions to its Member States.²³⁵ WMO further supports Member States in making climate-smart decisions by collaborating with them directly and publishing the Global and Regional State of the Climate reports.²³⁶ WMO supports the adoption of EWS to analyze and identify potential weather and climate-related risks and hazards and thereby facilitate early action to safeguard lives and livelihoods in the face of climate-related disasters.²³⁷ Such actions, guided by forecasts or risk analysis, help prevent or mitigate the impacts of hazardous events before they fully develop.²³⁸ WMO is co-leading the implementation of the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative together with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).²³⁹ EWS can be used to identify risks early and warn all relevant actors and populations, which can reduce risks and damages caused by disasters.²⁴⁰ UNDRR is the leading agency for the coordination of disaster risk reduction within the United Nations system.²⁴¹ UNDRR responds to the increase of climate-related disasters and considers addressing the climate emergency a high priority.²⁴² UNDRR works on these issues through programs like the Comprehensive Disaster and Climate Risk Management which promotes a thorough risk analysis in a country, provision of guidance and technical resources, and capacity development while strengthening the synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.²⁴³

²²⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *We fund*. N.d.

²²⁹ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Deliver Humanitarian Aid*. N.d.

²³⁰ *ibid*; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *What We Do - Respond to emergencies*. N.d.

²³¹ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. *About the IFRC*. 2024.

²³² International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. *Climate-smart disaster risk reduction*. 2024.

²³³ *ibid*.

²³⁴ World Meteorological Organization. *Overview*. 2024.

²³⁵ World Meteorological Organization. *Climate*. 2024.

²³⁶ *ibid*.

²³⁷ World Meteorological Organization. *Early warning system*. 2024.

²³⁸ Risk-informed Early Action Partnership. *Glossary of Early Action Terms - 2022 Edition*. 2022. p. 12.

²³⁹ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Early warnings for all (EW4All)*. N.d.

²⁴⁰ International Labour Organization. *The importance of early warning systems in disaster risk reduction*. 2022.

²⁴¹ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Our work*. N.d.

²⁴² United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Comprehensive Disaster and Climate Risk Management (CRM)*. N.d.

²⁴³ *ibid*.



Using Early Warning Systems to Reach the Most At-Risk People

EWS significantly reduce the number of deaths and damages resulting from weather, water, or other climate events such as floods, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, and tropical storms.²⁴⁴ Coordinated disaster management, in conjunction with the advancement of EWS, preserves lives in high risk areas.²⁴⁵ Mortality rates related to climate disasters are eight times lower in Member States with comprehensive multi-hazard EWS than in those with limited or nonexistent EWS due to shorter response times.²⁴⁶ Economic losses can be mitigated by 30% by providing 24 hours notice of a hazardous event.²⁴⁷ An investment of \$800 million in early warning systems is estimated to prevent annual global losses between \$3 and \$16 billion.²⁴⁸

EWS leads to faster mobilization of resources and faster response time to natural disasters.²⁴⁹ EWS provides communities and responders with additional time to prepare for and respond to an imminent disaster by issuing early warnings and can involve the evacuation of individuals from high-risk areas, the establishment of infrastructure security, and the execution of emergency plans.²⁵⁰ Recognizing the importance of EWS in strengthening humanitarian assistance to mitigate the climate crisis, the United Nations Secretary-General launched the EW4All initiative - to ensure every person on earth is protected by EWS by 2027.²⁵¹ EW4All focuses on four key areas: improving global disaster risk knowledge, detecting and forecasting hazards, sharing warnings effectively, and enhancing preparedness.²⁵² EWS also enables improved coordination among agencies and stakeholders, such as government affiliated emergency relief organizations and non-governmental organizations, involved in disaster response.²⁵³ Early warnings provide additional time to effectively coordinate and expedite initiatives across a variety of sectors, including local governments and international organizations.²⁵⁴

ECOSOC plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of global agreements, of which ECOSOC prioritizes EWS as a core target.²⁵⁵ For example, the Sendai Framework establishes explicit objectives to significantly enhance the accessibility of multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information to individuals worldwide by 2030.²⁵⁶ ECOSOC guarantees accountability and encourages the incorporation of these objectives into national and regional disaster risk management plans by tracking progress against the seven global targets of the framework, in collaboration with UNDRR.²⁵⁷ Furthermore, by emphasizing the significance of disaster risk data collection and dissemination, ECOSOC encourages

²⁴⁴ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Early Warnings for All*. 2024.

²⁴⁵ *ibid.*

²⁴⁶ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Fast Facts on Warnings for All*. 2024.

²⁴⁷ *ibid.*

²⁴⁸ *ibid.*

²⁴⁹ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2023*. 2023.

²⁵⁰ International Federation of the Red Cross. *Early Warning, Early Action*. 2024.

²⁵¹ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Early warnings for all (EW4All)*. N.d.

²⁵² *ibid.*

²⁵³ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2023*. 2023.

²⁵⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵⁵ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *What does ECOSOC do?*. N.d.

²⁵⁶ United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat. *Opportunities and options for integrating climate change adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*. 2017.

²⁵⁷ *ibid.*



the utilization of data to enhance EWS.²⁵⁸ For example, the Global Risk Assessment Framework of UNDRR incorporates data from a variety of sources to assist policymakers in the identification of risk hotspots and the development of effective early warning systems that are tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations.²⁵⁹ Thus, strengthening EWS increases overall efficiency when trying to provide humanitarian assistance.²⁶⁰

Implementing adequate EWS and improving its access is important for frontline communities to adapt to the rise in the effects of human included climate change.²⁶¹ In this regard, frontline communities are those that are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as those communities in Member States that are least developed, landlocked, or small islands.²⁶² Despite producing the least amount of carbon emissions, these communities disproportionately suffer from extreme weather events like cyclones, drought, and the existential threat to life from rising sea-levels and remain with insufficient EWS infrastructure.²⁶³ While the EW4All initiative has increased access to EWS, gaps still remain.²⁶⁴ Low coverage areas include the Caribbean and the Americas and Africa despite relative progress from previous years.²⁶⁵ Furthermore, coverage remains at less than 50% in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states (SIDS).²⁶⁶ Despite advancements in technology, some frontline communities remain difficult to reach and therefore intense community outreach is required to ensure their engagement with EWS.²⁶⁷

Climate Induced Migration and Displacement

Climate change and displacement are interconnected.²⁶⁸ As extreme weather events and environmental conditions worsen, they contribute to multiple overlapping crises, such as poverty and loss of livelihood, which eventually create conditions for further forced displacement.²⁶⁹ As of 2021, over 80% of forcibly displaced individuals are residing in developing countries, many of which are inadequately prepared to manage the exacerbated consequences of climate change and displacement.²⁷⁰ The World Bank estimates that in 2050, without significant action on climate mitigation and adaptation, approximately 216 million could end in displacement within their own countries due to climate-related impacts.²⁷¹ Since 2008,

²⁵⁸ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals*. 2023.

²⁵⁹ United Nations, Office of Disaster Risk Reduction. *Global Risk Assessment Framework (GRAF): Strengthening Methods for Risk Analysis & Risk data governance in Sudan*. 2022.

²⁶⁰ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals*. 2023.

²⁶¹ United Nations, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. *On the Frontline of Climate Crisis, World's Most Vulnerable Nations Suffer Disproportionately*. 2024.

²⁶² *ibid.*

²⁶³ *ibid.*

²⁶⁴ United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2023*. 2023.

²⁶⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶⁶ *ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate Change and Displacement*. 2024.

²⁶⁹ *ibid.*

²⁷⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Global Report on International Displacement (GRID) 2021*. 2021

²⁷¹ World Bank Group. *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*. 2021.



21.5 million people have been forcibly displaced annually by weather-related sudden onset hazards like floods, storms, wildfires, and extreme temperatures.²⁷² Individuals who are compelled to evacuate an area that has been significantly affected by climate change have less resources to move across vast distances in order to find safe refuge and basic necessities like food, water, and shelter.²⁷³

Climate change disproportionately affects those that have been displaced as a result of its effects.²⁷⁴ Essentially, climate change acts as a catalyst for conflict by exacerbating poverty, loss of livelihoods, and tensions among communities in regard to competition for resources such as water and land for agriculture.²⁷⁵ Concurrently, a significant number of forcibly displaced individuals are residing in the most climate-vulnerable environments in the world.²⁷⁶ These individuals, mostly internally displaced, are unable to access environmentally sustainable resources and are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change.²⁷⁷ Women, girls, and other groups frequently experience increased risks and burdens from the effects of climate change as a result of their existing roles, responsibilities, and cultural norms.²⁷⁸ For example, in communities where women play a central role in agriculture, crop yields and food production can be adversely affected by climate change, which can threaten their livelihood.²⁷⁹

The United Nations lacks a proper framework when it comes to the rights or status of those displaced by climate change.²⁸⁰ The term “climate refugees” is frequently employed to refer to individuals who are compelled to evacuate their homes as a result of climate-related events, but is not an officially recognized term in international law.²⁸¹ Despite the alarming number of individuals that get displaced from the effects of climate change, the UNHCR’s *1951 Refugee Convention* provides protection exclusively to individuals in search of safety after fleeing war, violence, conflict, or persecution, but not those affected by climate induced factors.²⁸² Although there is no official legal definition, the United Nations has implemented measures to confront climate displacement and the more extensive issues associated with climate migration.²⁸³ *The Paris Agreement* explicitly acknowledged this in its preamble, stating that climate change impacts could trigger displacement and emphasizing the need for improving legal frameworks to protect those affected.²⁸⁴ Furthermore, the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018)* explicitly identifies environmental factors and climate change as the primary factors driving

²⁷² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Why UNHCR is taking action on climate change displacement*. 2024.

²⁷³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts*. 2024.

²⁷⁴ *ibid.*

²⁷⁵ *ibid.*

²⁷⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and disaster displacement*. 2024.

²⁷⁷ *ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. *The climate crisis is unjust for rural women*. 2024.

²⁸⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights. *COP 27: Urgent need to respect rights in all climate action*. 2022.

²⁸¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts*. 2024.

²⁸² *ibid.*

²⁸³ *ibid.*

²⁸⁴ Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Paris Agreement*. 2015.



migration and highlights the need for Member States to cooperate on the matter.²⁸⁵ Regional refugee laws like the Organization of African Unity's *Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* (1969) or Latin America's *Cartagena Declaration on Refugees* (1984) include climate related events in their definitions of refugees.²⁸⁶ ECOSOC, in its role as a facilitator, can propagate an exchange of these ideas with relevant stakeholders in the international community to make way for discussions for a possible international framework or law regarding the status of "climate refugees."²⁸⁷ As a result, strengthening existing frameworks can help strengthen humanitarian assistance provision by consolidating a legal basis for providing such aid.²⁸⁸

Conclusion

The climate crisis is a significant contributing factor to humanitarian needs.²⁸⁹ It causes food insecurity, displacement, loss of lives, and economic losses.²⁹⁰ Member States have adopted extensive frameworks to combat climate change, strengthen humanitarian assistance, and support individuals that have been displaced due to climate-related disasters.²⁹¹ ECOSOC, the United Nations system, and civil society work together on combating climate change and providing humanitarian assistance to people affected by climate-related disasters.²⁹² One way to decrease damages and loss of life due to climate events is the implementation of EWS as they can lead to faster response times when disasters occur.²⁹³ Climate change causes the forcible displacement of people.²⁹⁴ People that have been displaced by climate change are subsequently more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.²⁹⁵ When addressing the climate crisis, humanitarian assistance needs to be addressed as well to combat the adverse effects of climate change on people's lives.²⁹⁶

²⁸⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)*. N.d.

²⁸⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts*. 2024.

²⁸⁷ United Nations. *What does ECOSOC do?*. N.d.

²⁸⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts*. 2024.

²⁸⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Why the Climate Crisis is a Humanitarian Emergency*. 2020.

²⁹⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Fast Facts on Warnings for All*. 2024; World Economic Forum. *Quantifying the Effect of Climate Change on Human Health*. 2024.

²⁹¹ United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat. *Opportunities and options for integrating climate change adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*. 2017; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Legal and Normative Framework for International Migration*. 2019.

²⁹² United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Deliver Humanitarian Aid*. N.d; United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Coordinating Humanitarian Action*. N.d.

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²⁹⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts*. 2024.

²⁹⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Climate change and disaster displacement*. 2024.

²⁹⁶ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The Climate Crisis is a humanitarian crisis*. 2024.



Further Research

As delegates conduct further research and consider how to address this topic, they should consider: What can ECOSOC do to improve humanitarian assistance in the face of climate crises? How does climate change affect your Member State and its region? How can ECOSOC support the establishment of early warning systems? What role does your Member State have in the context of climate migration? What gaps exist in the connection of climate disasters and humanitarian assistance?



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