# Committee Overview

## Introduction

Following the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was formed to act as a deliberative and co- operational forum for Member States to better prevent the outbreak of future hostilities. The General Assembly, one of the six principal organs of the UN established under the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), was created to act as the wholly representative and deliberative arm of the organization. The large variance in the scope of its mandate led the General Assembly to allocate its work among six committees that would allow each to focus on a specific theme. The stated mandate of the Third Committee is the discussion of all matters related to social, humanitarian, and cultural affairs. Since its foundation, this mandate has naturally developed to also include a particular specialization as the primary forum for issues around human rights. More than 50% of the resolutions adopted by the committee in recent years were submitted under the human rights agenda addressing a variety of subtopics, thereby making it the world's largest and most prominent forum for international human rights norm creation. Over 90% of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are linked to human rights and labor standards, underlining the importance the human rights agenda for achieving the SDGs. This overview will introduce the Third Committee through a contextualization of its work within the General Assembly structure, an overview of its governance and membership, and an analysis of its mandate and associated powers before examining its current priorities.

### Governance, Structure, and Membership

In accordance with the *Charter of the United Nations*, the General Assembly is comprised of 193 UN Member States, as well as the Holy See and the State of Palestine as Observer States. Furthermore, the work of the committee is supported by non-governmental and intergovernmental observers like the European Union and the International Criminal Court. All main General Assembly committees begin their annual session in mid-September, following the drafting and allocation of agenda items by the General Committee to each specific committee, according to theme and content. The Third Committee meets annually for eight weeks every October and November as part of the General Assembly's annual regular session. Relevant reports of the Secretary-General are issued just before each corresponding agenda item, followed by an allotted time for questions for clarification or analysis. As is the case for all General Assembly committees, the Third Committee adopts draft resolutions on each agenda item and a report to the General Assembly Plenary. All documents require a simple majority to be adopted, unless agenda item is considered an important question, like for example those on peace and security, which require a two-thirds majority. Based on this, the Plenary then adopts the draft resolutions, either through a vote or by consensus, as recommended in the committee report.

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) is the ceremonial head of the General Assembly, elected each year by a simple majority to a one-year nonrenewable term. The PGA's duties are to facilitate the plenary sessions by directing discussion, managing the administration of meetings, and enforcing the General Assembly Rules of Procedure. The PGA does not preside over all six General Assembly committees separately; rather, Chairs and Vice-Chairs are the facilitators of individual committees. The PGA also performs executive duties such as meeting regularly with the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, and the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); communicating with the press and the public; and, organizing high-level meetings for certain thematic issues. Specifically, the Third Committee elects a bureau every year ahead of the session, made up of a Chair, three Vice-Chairs, and a Rapporteur.

All General Assembly committees are supported by secretariats, which provide substantive and logistical support to the committees. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the primary substantive wing of the Third Committee's secretariat, acting as a natural focal point for human rights bodies, reports, and other publications. Given the varied nature of its work, various other UN entities may serve as substantive secretariats for the Third Committee, such as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Volunteers program, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Furthermore, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) provides an annual report to the Third Committee on its own recent sessions and discussions. Independent Experts, Special Rapporteurs, and Working Groups that compile reports and advise the HRC will also engage in interactive dialogues with the Third Committee on a variety of subjects.

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at OSMUN 2020 and demonstrates the reportage and relationship between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position purpose and powers within the UN system.
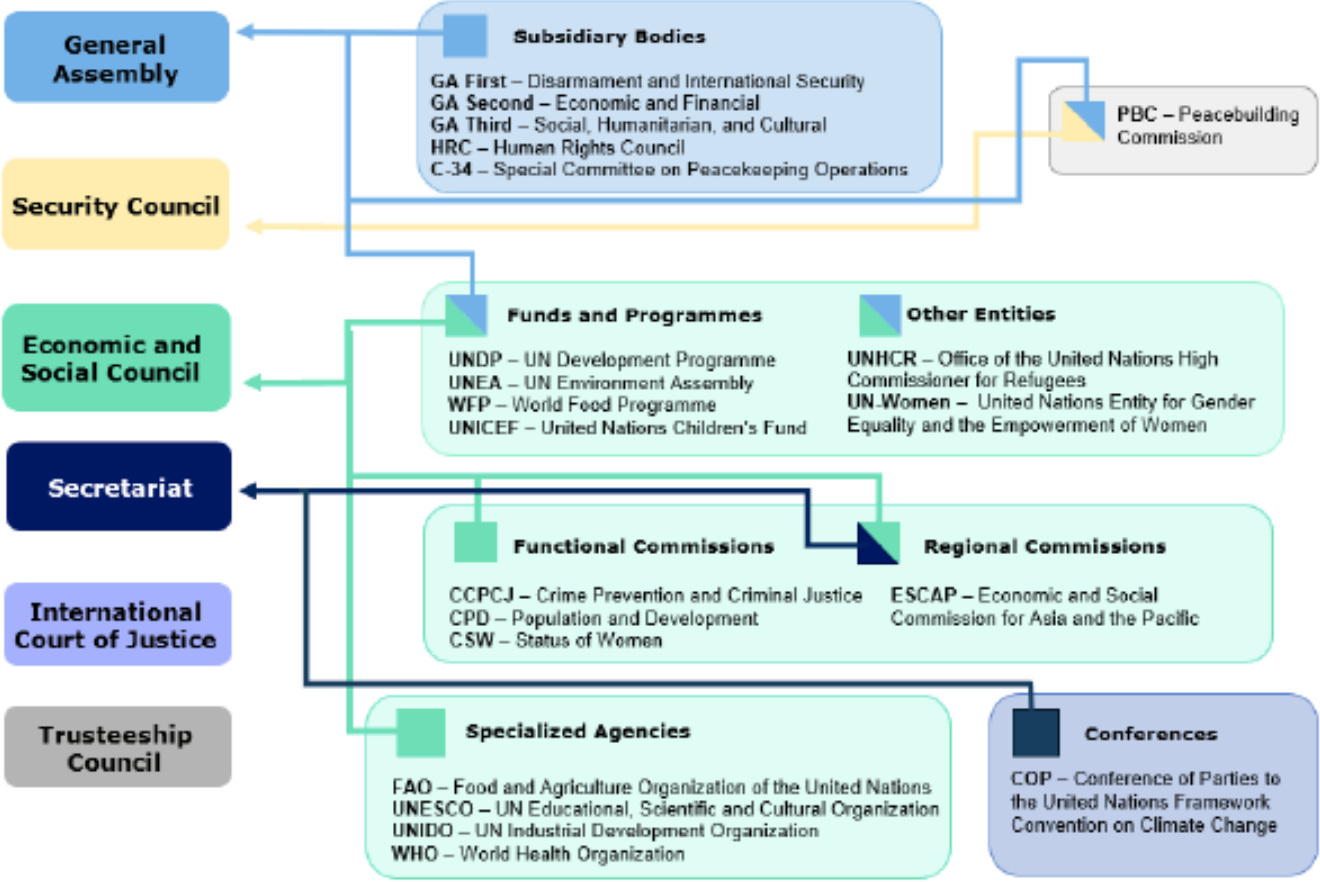


*Mandate, Functions, and Powers*

The Third Committee derives its direction from a variety of UN documents.[28] Articles 10-17 of the *Charter of the United Nations* are the principal guidelines for the substance and scope of all General Assembly

committees. These articles state that the General Assembly has the authority to "initiate studies and make recommendations," as well as "receive and consider reports" from other organs of the UN, including the Security Council. Article 1 also speaks of "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all," which has been said to be the foundation of *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) and the mandate of much of the Third Committee's work. Nearly every international human rights instrument since the UDHR has built upon its core principles, thereby enlarging the Third Committee's mandate by extension. The Third Committee used the UDHR as the groundwork to adopt additional and more specific international human rights instruments, chief among them the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) (1966) and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966). These documents, along with the two optional protocols to the ICCPR make up what is known as the *International Bill of Human Rights*. Both covenants differ from the UDHR in that they are legally binding multilateral treaties to those Member States that have either ratified or acceded to them.

Under its overall mandate as the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, the Third Committee spends a large portion of its time discussing matters relating to human rights and rights norm setting. However, the Third Committee's work can encompass a broad variety of issues, including those beyond human rights, demonstrated during this current 75th session where topics included biodiversity, International Day of Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and the advancement of women (Beijing +25).

As part of the General Assembly, the Third Committee strives for consensus in its work, and approximately 70% of its resolutions were adopted by consensus between the 60th and 70th session. The work of the Third Committee is of a normative nature, in that it does not actually carry out the operations or tasks called for in its resolutions. The Third Committee primarily works through the initiation of studies and the creation of nonbinding recommendations. The task of operationalizing the Third Committee's recommendations is primarily delegated to the various agencies and offices of the UN Secretariat. The Third Committee can request studies to be undertaken by relevant UN bodies such as OHCHR, UNHCR, UN-Women, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). UN-Women, for example, delivered the "Report of the Secretary-General on violence against women migrant workers" (A/72/215) to the Third Committee on 25 July 2017, and UNODC similarly issued the "Report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the world drug problem" (A/72/225) on 19 July 2017, prepared in response to resolutions 70/130 (2017) and 71/211 (2017), respectively. The Third Committee can also call for conferences to highlight certain issues, with a notable recurring example being the World Conference on Women, originating from the Third Committee resolution 3276 (XXIX) (1974), and monitored regularly through follow-up reviews every five years.

*Conclusion*

The Third Committee continues to perform a central role within the UN system, providing an overarching forum of discussion for a wide variety of social, humanitarian, and cultural issues and as the largest representative body for human rights norm setting. Particularly within the context of the adoption of the SDGs and its mandate, the Third Committee's work continues to be integral to improving human rights situations around the world. Delegates should aim to understand the historical precedents the Committee has set through its work on human rights and humanitarian issues, as well as how these achievements continue to contextualize and influence the work it does today across a broad spectrum of topics and situations.

# Annotated Bibliography

*Charter of the United Nations*. (1945). Retrieved 30 July 2018 from:
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/
> *The Charter is the fundamental document that underpins and informs all of the subsequent work of the United Nations. Delegates should understand the document as the foundational blueprint of the UN, both in terms of its structure and powers, but also its guiding ideals and objectives. Although much subsequent work has expanded upon the core principles of the Charter, it is essential that delegates understand the primary document and its context. Of particular interest is Article 17, which outlines the primary functions and powers of the General Assembly.*

International Service for Human Rights. (2017). *Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from:
https://www.ishr.ch/sites/default/files/article/files/ishr_3rd_com_handbook_eng_web.pdf
> *This handbook by the International Service for Human Rights provides an overview of the Third Committee's work and structure. It also highlights the Third Committee's relationship with other UN bodies and stakeholders, as well as the role of regional and political groups. This is a valuable source for delegates looking to familiarize themselves with the work of the Third Committee and how it falls in the overall General Assembly and United Nations architecture.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2018). *Universal Human Rights Instruments* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from:
https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/universalhumanrightsinstruments.aspx
> *This website provides a list of universal instruments relating to human rights issues like prevention of discrimination, rights of women, and rights of persons with disabilities.*
> *Given that the Third Committee is the largest and most prominent international forum for human rights protection, this source is a helpful tool that outlines the legal framework of human rights for delegates. This is a useful guide for delegates as the instruments are separated by category and so delegates can quickly access international instruments related directly to the human rights issues they are looking for.*

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2018). *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases: General Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.un.org/press/en/content/general- assembly
> *This website includes the latest meetings coverage and press releases from the General Assembly. It is a straightforward and easy to navigate, and includes links to the different General Assembly committees, including the Third Committee. This is a useful source for delegates looking for updates on General Assembly meetings and progress or for press releases concerning particular topics.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Third Committee. (2018). *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Documents of the 72nd Session* [Website]. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml
> *This website provides links to documents of the Third Committee's seventy-second session, including the allocation of agenda items and the reports to the plenary. The page is easy to understand, and in addition to accessing the documents, it can be used to navigate to other webpages that provide further information about the committee, such as press releases. This will be useful starting point for delegates as they prepare for the conference.*

*Introduction*

# I.     Mitigating Climate Change for Inequalities

*Introduction*

Climate change and inequality are two of the most important challenges currently faced by the global community. According to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change is any change to the climate over a period of time, and can happen through either natural causes or can be caused by humans. Despite a generally large focus on the scientific aspects of climate change, the international community is also paying attention to its social and economic effects. From natural disasters and rising sea levels to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, climate change continues to not only threaten sustainable development as a whole, but also social development. Climate change impacts all individuals regardless of their socioeconomic background. Although climate change presents a universal threat to development, not all Member States and people experience its impacts equally. In 2015, natural disasters claimed the lives of over 700,000 people and affected more than 1.5 billion people, leaving some in vulnerable situations, such as women and children, disproportionately affected.

The need to address climate change and inequality is particularly recognized in the 2016 World Economic and Social Survey (WESS), which highlights the links between climate and development such as the impact of climate hazards on people's livelihoods. Specifically, development strategies aiming to promote socioeconomic progress tend to exclude the poor, the most vulnerable, and the marginalized. Among the international community, the United Nations (UN) Commission for Social Development (CSocD) plays a central role in addressing climate change and inequality by promoting social development. CSocD particularly endorses addressing the social dimensions of climate change, which can both promote social development and develop successful climate-resilient strategies. Further, progress in achieving the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reducing inequality requires action such as mitigating and adapting to climate change.

### International and Regional Framework

Adopted in 1948, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) laid the foundation for international human rights, which plays a significant role in achieving social progress and mitigating inequality by recognizing that all persons have rights regardless of their background. The 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) affirmed the significant role that the environment plays in promoting human well-being and economic development. The *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment* (1972), also known as the *Stockholm Declaration*, further stressed the responsibility that both developing and developed countries carry in protecting and improving the environment.

In 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) adopted the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, which was built on existing international agreements that highlighted the need to protect the global environment for development. The Rio Declaration acknowledges the importance of including various social groups in environmental protection and development processes and the protection of the environment and natural resources for marginalized groups. UNCED also resulted in the creation of *Agenda* 21, which focuses on elements of sustainable development, including an emphasis on the particular vulnerability of some Member States to climate change. The need to include all social groups in reaching sustainable development is further acknowledged in the 1995 *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*, an outcome document from the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD). Specifically, the Copenhagen Declaration emphasizes that people should be placed at the center in working towards sustainable development.

2015 resulted in several international agreements in regards to climate change and inequality, as well as sustainable development more broadly, including General Assembly resolution 70/1, also known as the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The 2030 Agenda includes 17 objectives, the SDGs, which have over 150 targets. Most relevant to the topic of climate change and inequality are SDGs 1, 8, 10 and 13, which focus on issues such as poverty, economic growth, reducing inequalities within and between Member States, and climate change. Other notable international agreements in 2015 include the *Paris Agreement* and the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*.

The *Paris Agreement*, which was adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC), commits its State parties to the common goal of mitigating climate change and its consequences, paving a new path in global climate efforts. In addition, the *Paris Agreement* recognizes that an effective and progressive response to climate change requires immediate action, including promoting the rights of various social groups unequally



**COUNTRIES THAT JOINED THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT**

Ratified (146)  Signed (48)  Not signed/Withdrawing (3)

United States
Nicaragua
Syria

impacted by climate change, such as children, women, and indigenous persons. Further, to effectively address climate change and its uneven impacts requires a long-term response that protects individuals, livelihoods, and the environment, simultaneously. The *Paris Agreement* also highlights the need to approach climate change in a gender-responsive and inclusive way.
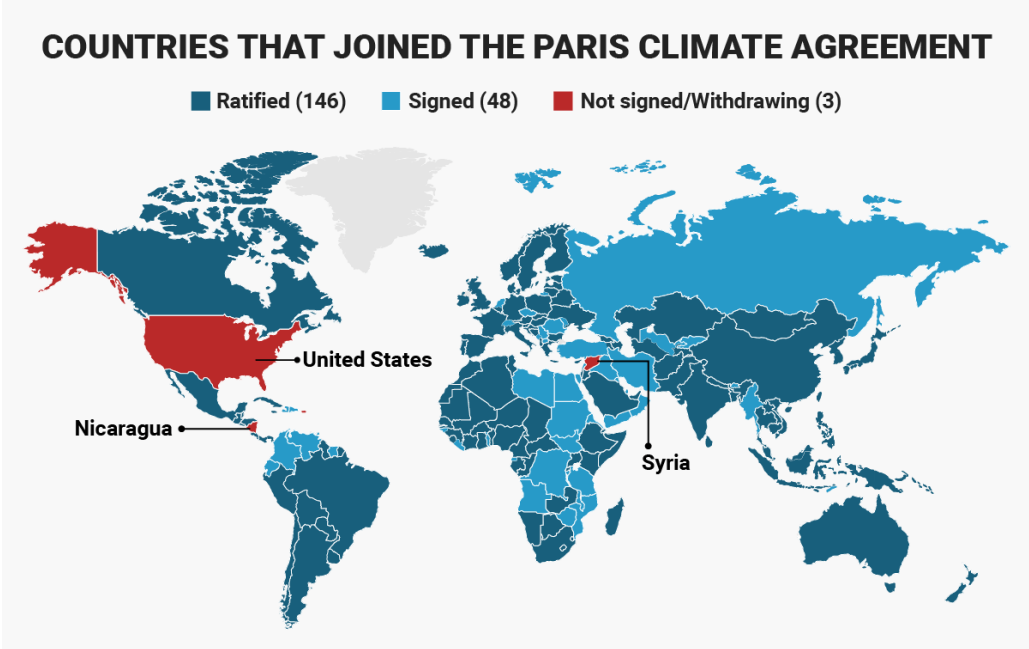
At the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), Member States reaffirmed their commitment to reducing disaster risks, which occurs as a result of climate change, through the Sendai Framework. The Framework stresses that reducing disaster risks and climate change requires special attention to people disproportionately affected. The Sendai Framework also emphasizes the importance of a more inclusive approach to disaster risk and encourages cooperation between national governments and various social groups. Overall, the implementation of inclusive measures can further reduce vulnerability to climate risk and strengthen response and recovery to disasters.

*Role of the International System*

In 2014, CSocD held a high-level panel meeting on "the social drivers of sustainable development," which discussed the ways in which social initiatives can support the social, economic, and political pillars of sustainable development. This discussion highlighted that addressing climate change and expanding the scope of social policy can effectively reduce inequalities and achieve inclusive growth. At the body's 53 session in 2015, CSocD discussed the need for the international community to address the social dimensions of climate change, which can open up opportunities to mitigate inequality. In 2016, at the 54th session, CSocD emphasized that empowering people, especially those most vulnerable, can be a key strategy to achieving inclusive economic growth and effectively addressing environmental challenges. At the 55th session in 2017, CSocD also highlighted the importance of promoting the rights of groups such as youth and indigenous persons in achieving sustainable development. Further, CSocD stressed that inclusive policies are necessary in order to not only reduce inequalities, but also fully implement the 2030 Agenda.

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) also address climate change and inequality; one effort to do so is the UN Poverty-Environment Initiative (UN-PEI), which aims to promote economic policies that support those living in poverty, while taking into account environmental sustainability.[349] UN-PEI partners with national governments to better understand, and act on, the linkages between environmental sustainability and poverty reduction. For example, UN-PEI helps Member States integrate green economy approaches, which fosters sustainable economic development, through managing the risks of climate change by directing natural resources to improve the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable. UN-PEI also works to reduce inequality by promoting gender and human rights principles, particularly promoting nondiscrimination and empowerment.

In addition, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) play an important role in addressing climate change and inequality. UNICEF underscored the importance of a child-centered approach in addressing climate change in their 2015 report titled *Children and the Changing Climate: Taking Action to Save Lives*. In accordance with the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (1995), UN-Women works to ensure the involvement of women in the creation of environmental policies and programs, as well as creating ways to measure the effect of development and environmental policies on women.

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) also plays a major role in addressing climate change and inequality. Specifically, UNISDR recognizes climate change as a key driver of disasters, and stresses the need to improve climate adaptation and risk reduction efforts. In its 2015 *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, UNISDR noted that disaster risk is not distributed evenly around the world, but shows that exposure and vulnerability to disasters vary as a result of different risk drivers. In addition, in relation to the Sendai Framework, UNISDR encourages Member States and the international community to reduce disaster risk by strengthening the

development and implementation of inclusive policies, such as empowering individuals disproportionately impacted by disasters.

*Poverty and the Environment*

The poverty-environment nexus refers to the relationship between the environment, natural resources, and human and economic development. Nearly 700 million people around the world live on only $1.90 or less per day, and many of these individuals have their incomes based upon natural resources. However, environmental and natural resources also are impacted by climate change, which can have significant economic and social repercussions for the poor. Persons living in poverty are especially vulnerable because they often lack the ability to address the impacts of climate change. Moreover, continuous environmental degradation will worsen poverty, hunger, and economic inequality.

In 2002, several organizations, including the World Bank and UNDP, drafted *Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management*. This identified several key areas for policy action to improve the environment and reduce poverty, one of which includes strengthening the capacity of the poor to manage the environment. The Poverty-Environment Partnership (PEP) was also started in 2002, which is a network committed to reduce poverty and promote climate resilience and environmental sustainability. PEP recognizes the link between environmental sustainability and poverty reduction that was mentioned in *Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management*. Moreover, inequality continues to be of international concern, as it hinders both poverty reduction and sustainability in regards to the environment. Further, according to data provided by the World Bank, nearly 100 million people will fall into poverty by the year 2030 without climate-sensitive development policies and strategies.

In response to the issue of poverty and the environment, the international community is beginning to adopt green economy strategies that focus on improving human well-being and social equity, as well as mitigating climate change. An inclusive green economy also aims to improve the use of resources while reducing the impacts of climate change. Moreover, sustainable use of environmental resources acts as a safety net against the social and economic consequences of climate change, and protects the livelihoods of the poor. For example, green economy strategies include social protection, which aims to ensure access to basic goods and services by removing social and economic barriers. With improved resource efficiency and healthier ecosystems, the poor are able to have greater access to social and economic opportunities and have a way out of poverty.

*Climate Change and Vulnerability*

Climate change, extreme weather events, and the uneven distribution of their impacts often pose the largest threat to the least developed states and vulnerable communities due to their limited ability to adapt and cope. Existing structural inequalities, such as discrimination based on factors like gender and race, also affect the ability of social groups to adapt to and address the consequences of climate change. Some of the most vulnerable groups to climate change include those living in small-island developing states (SIDS), women and children, and indigenous persons.

*SIDS*
Despite contributing to less than one percent of all GHG emissions, SIDS are among the most affected by climate change. In particular, the rise in sea levels and natural disasters pose the largest threat to the environment and sustainable development of SIDS. Both sea level rise and natural disasters often exacerbate the socioeconomic and environmental vulnerability of SIDS, since many of the individuals living in these areas rely heavily on coastal ecosystems for food and livelihoods. For example, when a significant portion of a population is affected by natural disasters, there can be long-lasting consequences for recovery and overall development. Each social group, having different priorities and facing different challenges, experience uneven impacts in situations of disaster and emergency. However, these unique priorities and challenges are sometimes not included in development policies, leaving the needs of vulnerable groups overlooked or ignored in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. The *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway* (2014) in particular recognizes that strengthening disaster preparedness and response, as well as emergency relief, is especially important for those living in SIDS.

In addition, the rise in sea levels from climate change continues to threaten the livelihoods of many individuals living in SIDS. Specifically, SIDS rely heavily on fisheries and tourism, which provide for the livelihoods of many individuals. A significant challenge to the tourism industry is ocean acidification, or increased concentrations of carbon dioxide in oceans, which leads to the degradation of coral reef ecosystems. If current declines in coral reefs continue, there can be significant socioeconomic consequences for those in the tourism industry, and this will also hinder sustainable development. However, ocean acidification is only one of the many issues faced by SIDS. More broadly, strategies to reduce the consequences of climate change in SIDS must include the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems.

*Women and Children*
Unequal power relations and structural and social barriers can place women in vulnerable situations and limit their capacity to effectively respond to the impacts of climate change. Specific challenges faced by women include a

lack of access to resources, political exclusion, and forms of social marginalization such as discrimination. For example, the livelihoods of women in the agricultural sector continue to be threatened by climate change, which results in a lack of food sources derived from the natural environment. Moreover, despite the important role women play in combating climate change, the potential lack of inclusion of women in the development of climate change policies is still a significant challenge to addressing their needs in the context of climate change.

Despite international efforts and actions on climate change, such as the development of programs to help communities adapt to its impacts, inadequate attention is given to the impacts of climate change on children. As a result of climate change, the most disadvantaged children often live in poor living environments, which can pose a number of challenges including a lack of access to adequate health, education, and safety. For example, household air pollution results in more than half a million deaths of children less than five years old due to respiratory infections on an annual basis. Further, extreme climate events, such as droughts and heat waves, can create consequences for children, including being removed from school. Reducing inequality among children requires promoting their resilience to climate change and its impacts. UNICEF has recommended increasing access of basic services to the poorest children as a means to respond to the effects of climate change.

*Indigenous Peoples*
For the majority of indigenous populations, climate change is not only a significant threat to their existence, but also a major issue of human rights and equity. In particular, indigenous peoples highly depend on natural resources and ecosystems, making them especially susceptible to climate change. Climate change also exacerbates the challenges faced by indigenous peoples, which include political and economic marginalization, and discrimination and unemployment. For example, indigenous peoples in the Arctic depend on hunting, fishing, and gathering natural resources for supporting the local economy and providing a foundation for their cultural and social identity. Yet, due to melting and freezing of snow and ice, indigenous peoples in the Arctic have less access to food, leading to decreased social and economic opportunities. In addition, deforestation in developing Member States can result in displacement and migration of indigenous person to cities, many of whom may face increased discrimination. In response to climate change impacts on indigenous persons, a number of UN agencies, including the UNDP, have encouraged the inclusion of indigenous persons in climate action plans, which can both improve the human rights of such individuals and mitigate the impacts of climate change generally.

### Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change

Building resilience and adaptation to climate change and its impacts remain important for promoting development and reducing inequality, especially for the most vulnerable populations. Climate change resilience and adaptation refers to the ability to predict hazards and absorb shocks, with the goal of reducing climate risks. Some actions currently taken by the international community include approaching food security and addressing climate-related

extreme events and risks. Through adopting these strategies, states and local communities can help reduce the occurrence of inequality caused by climate change.

Promoting sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture remains important in addressing inequality because nearly two-thirds of the world's poor rely on agriculture for their income. Moreover, climate-resilient agriculture can mitigate hunger and poverty, therefore generating sustainable and fair growth. As a method of aiding the most vulnerable in the agricultural sector, the international community has adopted climate smart agriculture (CSA) strategies, such as reducing food loss and waste. CSA builds upon sustainable agricultural practices, often considering the different social, economic, and environmental contexts of a certain location. However, challenges still remain, as diverse groups of people experience climate change differently. Some methods of addressing the challenges and risks of climate change include addressing gender discrimination in regards to resources and employment, as well as implementing social protection programs for smallholder farmers.

Additionally, disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies can facilitate climate risk management and reduce losses and damages associated with the effects of climate change. One common strategy of DRR is the early warning system (EWS), which aims to protect communities from disasters caused by climate change by issuing risk information before these events occur. However, because socioeconomic factors lead to varied levels of vulnerability around the world, DRR strategies must be appropriate to local needs and conditions. Moreover, many EWS may cover one geographical region, but not others.

*Conclusion*

Climate change and inequality continues to be a major barrier to achieving the 2030 Agenda, especially in regards to SDG 13 on climate change and SDG 10 on reducing inequalities within and between Member States. Climate change threatens the livelihood of more than one-tenth of the global population and impedes sustainable development. In particular, in 2015, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to reducing poverty, mitigating the effects of climate change, and achieving inclusive and equitable societies through the adoption of several international agreements addressing the issues of climate change and inequality. Vulnerabilities to the consequences of climate change are often exacerbated as a result of structural inequalities, such as unequal access to physical and financial resources, and inequality in regards to political representation. Further, in response to climate change and inequality, the international community has adopted resilience and adaptation strategies, which strive to facilitate a more inclusive future for all individuals. CSocD continues to be a key actor in discussing

climate change and inequality, stressing that addressing the social dimensions of climate change and inequality is crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

*Further Research*

While researching the topic, delegates are encouraged to consider the following: What can Member States do to reduce both the effects of climate change and inequality simultaneously? How can addressing climate change and inequality together help develop effective strategies for promoting social development? How can Member States effectively address the different needs of each social group in regards to addressing climate change and reducing inequality? What role can local communities, especially those most affected by climate change, play in mitigating the effects of climate change and inequality? What role can inclusive social development policies play in ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background and socioeconomic status, are able to resist the impacts of climate change? Additionally, how can CSocD help and guide the international community to address the issue of climate change and inequality?

# Annotated Bibliography

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2014). *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*. Retrieved 19 July 2017 from: http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/ar5_wgII_spm_en.pdf
*This document summarizes the impacts of climate change. In addition, this summary for policymakers discusses vulnerability to climate change and the ways in which to adapt to its effects. This document is also important because of its discussion on the complexity between climate change and its relationship with socioeconomic processes. Further, the document looks at hazards, vulnerability, and exposure in relation to climate change. As delegates research concrete ideas to mitigate the impacts of climate change and inequality, they may find the third section on managing future risks and building resilience particularly helpful.*

Pozarny, P. (2016). *Climate change and social development*. Governance and Social Development Resource Centre. Retrieved 19 October 2017 from: http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GSDRC_CC_SocDev.pdf
*This document focuses on the link between climate change and social development. This guide consists of three major sections, one of which discusses climate change and social development; the section, "Understanding climate change as a social development issue," will be especially important for the delegates, as it provides a general overview of climate change itself and highlights the importance of promoting social development in climate change policies.*

Rahman, A. (2000). *Environment-Poverty Nexus: A Global Overview*. Retrieved 25 August 2017 from: http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan019719.pdf
*Although published in 2000, this document will be helpful to delegates because of the discussion on the linkages between the environment and poverty. In particular, this overview of the environment-poverty nexus shows that climate change is both a social and economic issue.*
*Further, delegates will find some of the case studies useful as they research, which can provide deeper understanding of the ways in which environment and poverty are interconnected issues. Among the most helpful sections of this document also include its discussion of the relationship the global environment-poverty nexus has with the former Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and international development in general.*

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2014). *High-Level Panel Discussion on Emerging Issues: the social drivers of sustainable development* [Chair's Summary]. Retrieved 24 August 2017 from: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csocd/2014/CSocD52ndsessionSummaryPaneldiscussionEmergingIssues.pdf
*The Chair's Summary on the high-level panel discussion highlighted the importance of the social dimensions of sustainable development. One key takeaway from this document is its emphasis on the role that social policies play in the achievement of sustainable development. In addition, the summary also*

*structural inequalities in order to promote growth and development for all persons, groups, and institutions. As a whole, it is important for delegates to read this document because of its focus on the social dimensions of sustainable development. Moreover, the summary can also help delegates understand the role of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) within the international community. brings attention to a few challenges, which include the need for addressing*

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2015). *Agenda item 3 (a), priority theme: "Rethinking and strengthening social development in a contemporary world"* [Chair's Summary]. Retrieved 15 July 2017 from: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/2015/chairsummary.pdf
*Published in 2015 by CSocD, this document highlights the outcomes of the committee's 53rd session. Important points from this document include Member States' commitment to and reaffirmation of the* Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. *Specifically, one of the key points to consider from this session is that challenges to social development are universal. As a whole, this document summarizes some of the most important issues currently faced by the international community. Further, because this summary highlights some of the most pressing issues regarding social development, delegates will find this resource helpful. In addition to discussing both climate change and inequality, a couple of other key issues that delegates may find useful include social inclusion and poverty reduction.*

United Nations, Commission for Social Development. (2017). *Report on the fifty-fifth session* (*E/2017/26*). Retrieved 17 July 2017 from: http://undocs.org/E/2017/26
*This report provides a summary of the high-level panel and discussion of barriers and strategies to eradicate poverty. In particular, the report highlights that the effects of ongoing climate change continue to hinder global social and economic growth. In addition, the document also includes two relevant resolutions, which focus on partnerships for development in Africa and the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The report will be one of the most helpful resources for the delegates to further their understanding of the role CSocD plays in dealing with social development issues.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *World Economic and Social Survey 2016: Climate Change Resilience: an opportunity for reducing inequalities* [Report]. Retrieved 22 August 2017 from: https://wess.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/WESS_2016_Report.pdf
*Published in 2016 by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), this report focuses on the importance of mitigating climate change in reducing inequalities at the international level in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Overall, this document highlights the need to address the linkages between social development and the environment as a condition for sustainable development. Delegates will find this document the most helpful in having a clear and deep understanding of climate change and inequality.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Development Policy and Analysis Division. (2016). *Policy Brief #45: The Nexus between Climate Change and Inequalities*. Retrieved 18 July 2017 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/WESS2016-PB2.pdf
*This document highlights the link between climate change and inequalities. In particular, this policy brief shows climate change and inequality as interdependent, and multiple sources of inequality exacerbate the risk to climate change. This document will also be particularly helpful for delegates as it provides a simplified overview of the ways in which climate change and inequalities correlate with one another. Further, the policy brief also discusses the ways in which climate change and inequality can hinder progress on achieving the goals and targets outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Overall, the document will also be important for delegates to consider because the information provided can facilitate deeper understanding of the challenges of climate change and inequality.*

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2011). *Fact Sheet: Climate Change Science – the Status of Climate Change Science Today*. Retrieved 20 September 2017 from: https://unfccc.int/files/press/backgrounders/application/pdf/press_factsh_science.pdf
*This fact sheet effectively provides a general overview of climate change. As a whole, this document provides the definition of climate change, as well as the effects of climate change on both ecosystems and development. Further, the fact sheet provides resources on climate change*

*impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability. For delegates, this document would be a good starting point for understanding the issue of climate change and its impacts.*

The World Bank Group, et al. (2002). *Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management: Policy Challenges and Opportunities*. Retrieved 24 August 2017 from:
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/347841468766173173/pdf/multi0page.pdf
*This World Bank document focuses on the linkages between poverty and the environment. Specifically focusing on the reduction of poverty and management of the environment, the document is comprised of two parts. First, the document discusses the importance of the environment to persons living in poverty. Second, the document highlights policy opportunities to reduce poverty and mitigate environmental degradation. This document will be helpful to delegates because of its thorough discussion of the linkages between poverty reduction and environmental management. In particular, delegates will find sections 1.3 on vulnerability and the environment and 2.2 on enhancing assets of those in poverty useful as they research climate change and inequality.*

## II. Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making

*Introduction*

Gender diversity in government and public institutions is crucial as decision-making bodies create policies that affect men's and women's rights and choices. Supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making promotes balance in policy making processes, and encourages the development of gender-inclusive policies and programs. According to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), women set a positive example for women and girls in their political leadership and decision-making. Further, women leaders often put on the agenda issues that have been previously under-addressed, such as the elimination of gender-based violence, parental leave, and childcare, and make these topics priorities, leading to a more equitable society. UN-Women has also noted that there is a window of opportunity to engage boys and young men in the support of women in leadership roles.

Progress has been made toward achieving equitable participation between men and women in governance and decision-making, as demonstrated by the 11.5% increase in women's participation in national parliaments from 1995 to 2016. However, UN-Women reports that, as of June 2016, only 22.8% of all national parliamentarians worldwide were women. Another statistic from October 2017 shows that only 11 women were serving as a Head of State and only 12 as a Head of Government. As of June 2018, the world average for female representation in government houses was merely 23.8%. Nevertheless, the representation of women parliamentarians varies significantly across geographic regions. In general, recent research shows that Nordic countries perform well, with a female representation in legislative houses over 40%. The situation in other states differs, with Pacific countries having the lowest rate of women's participation with an average of only 15.6% of legislators being women. According to UN-Women, no Member State has fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and, based on the current rate of progress, it estimates that it will take 82 years until the gender gap in political participation is closed. This topic will address the most important international and regional systems and documents related to the gender gap in governance and decision-making. It will also examine the roles of various international bodies and organizations as well as other United Nations (UN) and non-UN actors in addressing the role of women in governance and decision-making.

*International and Regional Framework*

The UN and its Member States have demonstrated commitment to supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making through foundational documents, including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) (1979), and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (BPfA) (1995). The UDHR states that all rights, freedoms, and international principles outlined in the document are applicable to all people without regard to sex, thereby establishing a foundation for gender equality.

CEDAW, known by many as an international bill of rights for women, establishes in Article 7 that women should be granted the right to vote in all elections, be eligible for all publicly elected bodies, participate in the creation and implementation of government policies, and have the opportunity to perform public service at all levels of government. Article 8 of CEDAW specifies that Member States should enact reasonable measures that ensure women are able to represent their Member States on an international level, and participate in the work of international organizations on equal terms with men. In 1997, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued *General Recommendation No. 23*, which is related to the participation of women in political and public life. It outlines that States parties should "take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country," and to ensure gender equality in the application of basic rights, including the right to vote, the right be elected to public office, and the right to participate in the formulation of government policy. The General Recommendation further establishes that it is the Member State's responsibility to address discriminatory public opinion against women.

The BPfA adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, establishes a basis for the advancement of women and girls in many key areas such as education, the economy, and power and decision-making. Chapter 4 Paragraph 181 outlines the importance of equal participation of women in decision-making in providing more accurate representation of the needs of society, balancing and strengthening democracy, and ensuring that the interests of women are addressed. Paragraph 181 further acknowledges the need for gender equality in government and decision-making in order to progress the advancement of women in all other areas.

The importance of increasing women's political participation has also been included in the UN's development agenda through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 and the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), adopted in 2015. SDG 3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women, provided a foundation for the increased involvement of women in governance. SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and SDG 10 focuses on the reduction of inequality within and among states, working to address the outstanding challenges that the MDGs did not resolve. The progress and achievement of the 2030 Agenda is jeopardized without women's political empowerment and equal access to leadership positions.

*Role of the International System*

UN-Women works on an expansive range of areas to fundamentally address women's rights and empowerment in a manner that can ignite gender equality progress across all Member States. The UN- Women's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* (2017) provides current international context for supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making, as well as an overview of the work that the body will engage in between now and 2021. Areas in which UN-Women focuses its work most relevant to the participation of women in governance can be found under the Strategic Plan's Outcome Two: "Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems." UN-Women's efforts to achieve this outcome are focused in four areas: more female engagement with and leadership of political processes and institutions; more local and national plans, strategies, and budgets that are considered gender responsive; more data tracking on the progress of gender equality; and more justice institutions. UN-Women predicts that Outcome Two will contribute to achieving numerous SDGs, including the goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 16, and 17. In fact, UN-Women accounts for about one-third of total UN personnel contributing to the achievement of SDG 5. UN-Women launched several projects to achieve the SDGs, including its Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality initiative, which asks Member States to make commitments to address challenges that affect women and girls specifically.
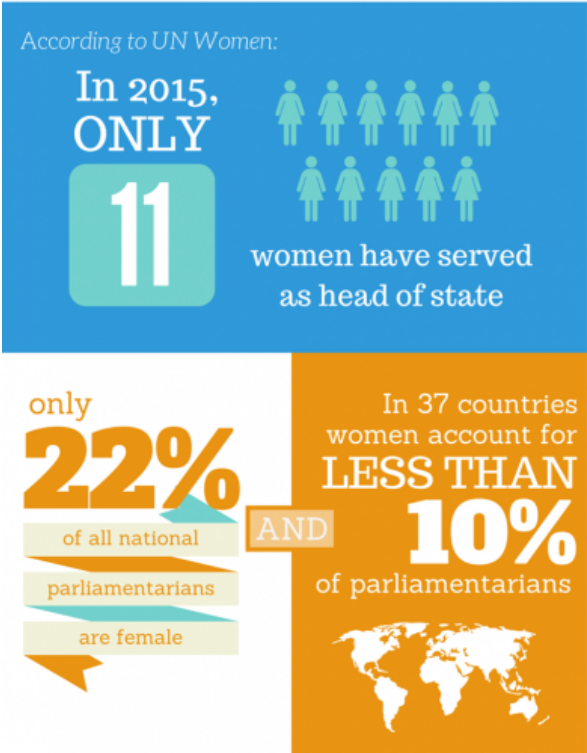
UN-Women has recognized the need for collaboration to address challenges related to the unequal participation of women, and it therefore partners with a number of organizations in order to accomplish the outcomes outlined in its *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* and to foster the achievement of the SDGs. UN- Women often collaborates with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to bolster gender equality goals related to women in governance and decision-making. Additionally, UNDP independently supports partner organizations in the development of policy and legal reforms on this issue. Another key UN-Women partnership is with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The two organizations collaborate to publish data and statistical information related to women in governance, which provides an important source for Member States. The 2017 Women in Politics Map, which depicts global rankings for women in executive and parliamentary government positions, is one example of this partnership. UN-Women also partners with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an organization that independently works to advance democracy globally through supporting and safeguarding democratic political institutions and processes. UN-Women, in collaboration with the IPU, UNDP, and International IDEA initiated the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics or, shortly, the iKNOW Network, in 2007. Drawing upon the expertise of the four partner organizations, the iKNOW Network works to build knowledge about women in government worldwide, and provide a platform for women to share their experiences in politics. UN-Women also engages in a number of regional partnerships to achieve the SDGs addressed in its Strategic Plan through the Step It Up program, and collaborates with regional organizations to support the progress of women in governance and decision-making.

Regional actors have also advanced efforts to increase the role of women in governance and decision- making. For example, 22 Member States of the African Union (AU) have managed to include 30% or more women in their respective parliaments since the adoption of the BPfA in 1995. The League of Arab States addressed women's involvement in politics through the adoption of a regional plan of action in 2012. The plan outlines a number of strategic areas and objectives, one of which calls for the participation of women at all levels of decision-making.[331] The plan also emphasizes the necessity of an increase in women's representation in the judiciary at all levels, including in international courts. The Council of Europe demonstrated commitment to the Step It Up initiative through its *Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017*, which aimed to contribute to the achievement of SDG 5 by fostering balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making. The Council also made commitments to put more women in top decision-making positions by setting a legally binding objective for 40% of listed company board members to be women by 2020.

### *Codifying Women's Participation in Governance*

Formalizing women's participation in governance through policies can support the involvement of women in governance and decision-making in a systematic manner. This formalization is critical if the international community is to meet one of SDG 5's key targets to ensure women's full and effective participation in political life. One way in which UN-Women works to codify the participation of women in governance is through supporting an increase of women in parliaments and local governments. UN-Women's partnership with the IPU is key in achieving the SDGs through tracking mechanisms for data related to women's representation as government leaders, and in addressing Member States' specific barriers to the inclusion of women in governance. This partnership also takes form in the shared support of gender quotas and women's coalitions, and in facilitating the inclusion of women's organizations in Member States' constitution development processes. UN-Women has determined that constitutions and legal reform are a fundamental component in establishing a structure that can be expanded to include provisions such as quotas for female representation and equal opportunities for women in strategic plans and budgets. This determination is based on CEDAW's call to signatory states to include the ideals and principles of gender equality in Member State constitutions. UN- Women advances constitutional and legal reform through supporting the integration of gender equality principles in constitutions and promoting consensus surrounding the implementation of them. Redrafted constitutions created in collaboration with UN-Women have resulted in more seats for women in parliaments.



AT A GLANCE:
Women in Governance

According to UN Women:
In 2015, ONLY 11 women have served as head of state

only 22% of all national parliamentarians are female

AND

In 37 countries women account for LESS THAN 10% of parliamentarians

Another key component to codifying women's inclusion in governance is increasing women's participation in elections as both voters and candidates. However, there are a number of gender-specific barriers

that exist to women's participation in elections. Examples include gaps in monetary resources for female candidates as compared to male candidates or unsafe locations of polling places that make some women voters to be reluctant to use them. UN-Women notes that some electoral management bodies and governments are unaware of barriers to women's participation. In order to address these voting challenges, UN-Women advocates for national election regulations that ensure fair opportunities in voter registration and campaigning. These efforts include the implementation of temporary quotas, education campaigns to inform women about registering to vote, protections from election-related violence, and training for women to be effective political candidates and leaders. Through its Fund for Gender Equality, UN-Women fosters global partnerships and codifies women's participation in governance by using the fund to mobilize women from across the political spectrum in Member States. Additionally, UN-Women and UNDP collaborate on a number of regional and global initiatives related to electoral cycle support that aim to ensure women's equal participation as voters and candidates. In addition to UN- Women, UNDP itself promotes gender-inclusive political processes through supporting civic engagement, constitutional reform, and parliamentary development. Partnerships such as these prove to be necessary to promote meaningful collaboration with the diverse and unique parliaments and legislatures of all Member States.

A study conducted by the IPU of 187 women in elected leadership positions in 65 different Member States found that hostile cultural attitudes surrounding women's participation in politics was noted as the second most significant barrier to women running for parliament. Cultural barriers such as gender stereotypes, patriarchal values, and nascent democratic structures can present significant barriers to women's participation in governance, resulting in fewer women in decision-making institutions
generally.

### *Accountability in Governance and Decision-Making*

The *UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)*, agreed upon in 2012, is an effort to increase UN accountability and coherence related to gender issues. UN-SWAP is the first organization to assign a standard set of performance indicators for the gender-related work of all UN entities. UN-Women is one of the main bodies tasked with supporting and implementing these standards. In her recent speech, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women, Åsa Regnér, discussed the importance of accountability, noting that a revolution in gender statistics and accountability for gender-related commitments is necessary to achieve gender equality and the 2030 Agenda. Examples of accountability concerns are demonstrated through frustration surrounding Member States' commitments to gender equality that are ultimately deficient of allocated financial resources. This frustration raises questions about how financial resources designated by Member States for gender equality efforts are actually expended, an additional accountability challenge. Discrepancies in financial allocations and the tracking of funding for gender

equality mechanisms, such as funding for programs and policy implementation, often result from challenges surrounding cultural attitudes about women as political leaders.

According to UN-Women, tracking financial investments in gender equality is important to ensure accountability and progress of gender equality commitments made by Member States. The 2015 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life* also identifies financial and economic accountability for financial investments in gender equality and women's empowerment as important. In order to increase accountability of Member States and other actors, the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life recommends establishing or strengthening independent institutions and advisory bodies to integrate gender concerns in policy, monitoring the implementation of gender equality efforts, and facilitating audits and measurements of these efforts. The recommendations further support increased collaboration between data-collecting bodies to increase their effectiveness in addressing accountability challenges.

Further efforts by UN-Women, Member States, and other actors are ongoing to develop ways to track investments in gender equality. An example of these efforts is the creation of Gender Responsive Budgets (GRBs), which work to ensure that the allocation of public resources is conducted in a fashion that contributes to the advancement of gender equality. GRBs have demonstrated usefulness and success in following money trails for gender equality and women's empowerment investments. Challenges and solutions related to accountability must be addressed as they impact the implementation of all policies aimed to advance women's participation in governance and decision-making.

### The Role of Men and Boys in the Involvement of Women in Leadership Roles

A recent UN report notes that, while gender equality has been recognized as a principle of international law as early as 1948 in the UDHR, the notion that men and boys have a specific role in actualizing this principle has only been recently articulated. UN-Women notes the benefits that gender equality provides for people of all genders, and the importance of the role of men and boys in promoting the empowerment of women and girls. Given the existing pattern of gender inequality, men have predominant control of economic resources, political power, and cultural norms, meaning that men control many of the resources that are required for policy change to support women. In addition, through recognizing their privileges, boys and men can alter existing norms and structures surrounding masculinity and patriarchal practices that currently perpetuate inequalities between men and women.

Moving toward a more gender equal world requires men and boys to reconsider traditional constructions of masculinity and relationships with women and girls. However, there are a number of challenges associated with changing the mindsets of men and boys with regard to supporting women in leadership roles, including their doubt and even explicit opposition. For example, some men accept gender equality in theory, but still engage in practices that bolster male dominance in public and political

spheres. Other men demonstrate resentment toward gender equality programs, claiming that these programs give women undeserved advantages.

To engage boys and men, UN-Women collaborates with Member States to take action through education campaigns and training young boys about gender issues. UN-Women partners with the MenEngage Alliance, which works to engage men and boys in conversations surrounding gender equality. They focus on joint advocacy activities addressing macro-level policies that perpetuate gender inequalities, and work to engage men from a positive perspective and address non-discrimination. The HeForShe campaign is an organization that also aims to engage men and boys to create a visible force for gender equality. Moreover, the HeForShe campaign is working to address the underrepresentation of women in governance by providing various suggestions and encouraging support for UN-Women's Step It Up Campaign to make diversity a priority in Member States. Through these campaigns, UN-Women trains young male volunteers to give presentations about ending violence against women and girls in high schools and on radio shows, and organizes events emphasizing the necessity of the balance of genders.

### Conclusion

UN-Women, together with its partners and through numerous efforts, including those outlined in its *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, is working to support women's involvement in governance and decision- making. First, it focuses on codifying women's participation in governance through the promotion of their greater participation in decision-making bodies and elections, as well as by constitutional reforms. Second, it strives to strengthen accountability in governance and decision-making through measures related to gender-based funding and tracking. Finally, through the cooperation with the MenEngage Alliance, the HeForShe campaign, and Step It Up commitments, it highlights the importance of engaging men and boys in gender equality efforts. Numerous challenges related to the key areas remain and should be addressed by the international community.

### Further Research

A significant number of challenges to achieving gender equality in governance and decision-making remain. Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: What states or national plans have been effective in addressing challenges to women's participation in governance and decision- making? What global policies have been previously effective in increasing women's participation? Are there ways that effective plans can be broadened and implemented on larger scales, improving the situation in more Member States? In what ways can UN-Women continue to support the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? What mechanisms can be developed to engage men and boys in women's participation in governance and decision-making specifically? What are some of the main barriers to reducing the global gender divide on the issue of women in politics?

ilibrary.org/governance/2015-oecd-recommendation-of-the-council-on-gender-equality-in-public-life_9789264252820-en#page1

>This document by the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life contains a number of
>recommendations related to gender equality in budgets, accountability and oversight of
>government bodies, a gender balance in public life, and improving gender equality in public
>employment. Delegates can review recommendation two regarding accountability and oversight
>mechanisms for broad suggestions about how to address issues of accountability. This will
>benefit their ability to craft specific solutions or suggestions to address accountability and
>financial tracking.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2017). *Better Governance for Gender Equality*.
Retrieved 3 September 2018 from: http://www.oecd.org/gov/gender-public-life-flyer.pdf

>This flyer issued by the OECD provides a brief, digestible summary of the importance of
>governance in promoting gender equality. In addition, it poses questions regarding remaining
>challenges to sound governance for gender equality, and includes an overview of the tools that
>promote sound gender equality governance. Delegates will benefit from reviewing this source as a
>supplement to the OECD's 2015 recommendations as it provides simple and clear explanations.

United Nations Development Group. (2013). *Financing for Gender Equality and Tracking Systems* [Report].
Retrieved 5 September 2018 from: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/UNDG-Gender- Equality-Marker-
Background-Note-Final-Sep-2013.pdf

>This background note prepared by the UN Development Group discusses financial tracking
>systems for gender equality and women's empowerment. The document provides extensive
>information about gender equality markers. Delegates will benefit from reading the Background
>and Context section of the report in order to best comprehend how tracking and monitoring
>systems work in practice, and gain a clearer understanding of these systems' limitations.

United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women. (2003). *The role of men and boys in achieving gender
equality* [Report]. Retrieved 12 September 2018
from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/Connell-bp.pdf

>This report provides a clear and concise overview of the involvement of men and boys in gender
>equality. In this source, delegates will find significant information on the reasons why men and
>boys must participate in supporting women and gender equality, obstacles to the participation of
>men and boys, as well as interesting case studies. Delegates can take particular interest in the
>sections entitled "Introduction" and "Obstacles and challenges," as these sections will provide
>them with a clearer understanding of the topic as a whole in order to develop more robust and
>effective solutions on their own.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (n.d.). *Engaging Boys and Young
Men in Gender Equality* [Website]. Retrieved 5 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what- we-
do/youth/engaging-boys-and-young-men-in-gender-equality

>This article provides new information about the role boys and young men play in supporting the
>advancement of women. It provides specific examples of solutions and projects that have been
>implemented in different Member States that include men and boys. This source is beneficial to
>delegates in their preparation for the conference because it provides an overview of the general
>concept of engaging men and boys in gender equality as well as some best practices that can be
>emulated in other Member States.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2017). *Strategic Plan 2018- 2021*.
Retrieved 20 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-
/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2017/second%20regular%20session%20 2017/unw-2017-
6-strategic%20plan-en-rev%2001.pdf

>*UN-Women's* Strategic Plan 2018-2021 *contains the strategic direction, objectives, and approaches that
>UN-Women will employ to support efforts to achieve gender equality.*

*The document outlines five strategic priorities, the most important of which for the purpose of this topic is Outcome 2. This outcome contains the direction of UN-Women related to women in governance as well as additional information regarding the specific SDGs relevant to the outcome. Delegates will benefit from reviewing Outcome 2 to have a clear understanding of the efforts of UN-Women surrounding the topic.*

*United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2017). Women's political parity slow to grow as UN launches latest 'Women in Politics' map [Website]. Retrieved 10 September 2018 from:* http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/4/women-in-politics-2017-map

> *This is the latest version of the "Women in Politics" map, which was jointly created by the IPU and UN-Women. It shows global rankings for women in head and parliamentary branches of government. Delegates can find Member State specific and regional information about the number of women in decision-making positions. This will benefit delegates when examining regional trends and their Member State's standing and understanding the data that exists for women in governance and decision-making.*

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Additional Partner Commitments* [Website]. Retrieved 1 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/additional-commitments

> *The Step It Up program was created by UN-Women to reach the 2030 Agenda and the therein included SDGs. The source provides hyperlinks to the pledges that a significant number of Member States have made to meet the 2030 Agenda. These pledges contain detailed information about Member States' specific actions and achievements. Delegates should read the link for the Member State that they represent as well as the links of regional partners. In addition, this source will be helpful for delegates as they can view the numerous commitments made by different Member States, and gather information on effective solutions that can be promoted on a global scale.*

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Tracking Investments* [Website]. Retrieved 1 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/governance-and-national-planning/tracking-investments

> *This UN-Women webpage gives an overview of the concept of tracking investments, clarifies the topic in plain language, and discusses the solutions that UN-Women has pursued to address the tracking of financial resources. It also provides references to documents such as the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which gives further insight into accountability efforts. Delegates will benefit from reading this source to gain clarity on the specific routes that UN-Women is pursuing with regard to tracking investments in gender equality and women's empowerment.*

United Nations, Fourth World Conference on Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Retrieved 29 July 2018 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf

> *The Beijing Declaration is a landmark agreement relating to the role of women in governance and decision-making, which provides insight into existing and historical mechanisms that have been established for the advancement of women. It outlines three primary strategic objectives, which are: to develop and strengthen governmental bodies, to integrate gender considerations in policy, and to gather and share data related to gender in order to support planning and evaluation. Paragraph 181 in particular is most significant and should be read to provide delegates with additional context, as it provides an overview of the importance and necessity of the participation of women in decision- making.*