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New agenda adopted – for people and planet

The United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development saw a record number of government leaders converge on United Nations headquarters in New York on 25-27 September. Vowing to leave no one behind, they pledged their commitment to the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, encompassing 17 universal and transformative sustainable development goals.



Watch the video: <http://bit.ly/1YPaGzM>

“We have reached a defining moment in human history,” said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the summit opening. “The people of the world have asked us to shine a light on a future of promise and opportunity,” he said. “Member States have responded with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The new agenda is a promise by leaders to all people everywhere,” Ban Ki-moon stressed.

The new agenda is comprised of 17 goals and 169 targets aimed at wiping out poverty, fighting inequality and tackling climate change over the next 15 years, also building on the

achievements made by their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have guided global development efforts since 2010. The new agenda also calls for peaceful and inclusive societies, recognizing that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and its goals apply to all countries, developed and developing.

A full programme of events kicked off the summit, with film screenings, performances by UN Goodwill Ambassadors Shakira, Angelique Kidjo, as well as call to action by Nobel



Laureate Malala Yousafzai, along with youth representatives representing all 193 UN Member States.

“Setting a new gold standard for participation”



The summit was the culmination of years of global consultations, behind-the-scenes work, and inclusive meetings to ensure that the voices of individuals, civil society and the business sector from all corners of the world were heard.

“It’s official; this is the most inclusive process that the UN has ever had,” said Thomas Gass, UN DESA’s Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, as he addressed a celebratory audience at the Peoples’ Voices Award Ceremony on the eve of the new agenda’s adoption.

He praised not only the millions of individuals who have participated and shared their views in this process, but also acknowledged the important role played by civil society organizations in engaging the system, “setting a new gold standard for participation”.

Ensuring food security and technology facilitation

During the summit, UN DESA contributed to a number of different meetings and events on a variety of topics, ranging from the implementation of technology towards a sustainable world, how to measure key milestones in the fight against poverty to food security.

“Many within the international community believe that it is indeed possible to eradicate hunger and ensure good, healthy, sufficient and sustainable nutrition for all,” Mr. Gass said as he moderated a side event gathering ministers and other high-level representatives on 26 September, putting a spotlight on food security in the context of the new development agenda.



“Since 1990-1992, our efforts have seen 216 million people lifted out of hunger,” he explained, while at the same time also underlining the work still needed to be done, as well as the potential of SDG 2 and its targets to end hunger.

Later that day, a mechanism that seeks to promote science, technology and innovation to achieve the new agenda, which was also launched at the summit, was discussed at a side event supported by UN DESA’s Division for Sustainable Development.

“Technology can help us live up to the promise to leave no one behind, the technology facilitation mechanism is a new important tool that can make this possible”, said Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

He also said that the transformative sustainable development goals will only be meaningful once we start implementing and working in a determined way to make them happen. “Today we start the crucial process of turning vision and goals into reality”, he said.

Measuring key milestones in the fight against poverty

On the summit’s last day, UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo had back-to-back engagements throughout the day, joining first the event “Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: A Commitment to Action,” hosted by UN Women and the People’s Republic of China.



Mr. Wu also took part in an unveiling ceremony of a new postage stamp to mark the implementation of the SDGs for persons with disabilities, as well as in a high-level event on “Anchoring the Multidimensional Poverty Index in the

Post-2015 Development Agenda,” where he delivered the message of the Secretary-General.

He explained that almost “1.5 billion people in 91 developing countries are living in poverty, with overlapping deprivations in education, health and living standards,” according to the latest estimates from the UNDP Multidimensional Poverty Index.

“Our challenge, at the global, national and local levels, is to reduce these numbers and ensure lives of dignity for all,” Mr. Wu said. “That means accurately tracking vulnerability, exclusion and other key variables,” he continued, “seizing the great potential of the data revolution to help us better measure poverty and get a full picture of its impacts. Only then will Governments, which will be in the driver’s seat of implementation, be able to determine and pursue their national priorities,” Mr. Wu stressed.

Initiatives for the new goals are being captured in the UN DESA Partnerships for SDGs platform, which saw over 40 new registrations around the summit and now counts over 1750 registered initiatives.

Leaving no one behind

With the adoption of the new goals, the world will embark on a 15 year journey towards sustainable development for all. It will require intense cooperation, political will, and the stamina of the United Nations and the international community. But as world leaders agreed in New York, the prospect of reaching these ambitious goals makes it all worth it.

“These Goals are a blueprint for a better future,” said Ban Ki-moon as he addressed a press briefing following the adoption. “Now we must use the goals to transform the world. We will do that through partnership and through commitment. We must leave no-one behind.”

For more information:

[UN Summit on Sustainable Development](#)

[2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

[Partnerships for SDGs Platform](#)

[Webcast: Food security in the post 2015 agenda the Milan Charter in the context of the new global partnership for sustainable development](#)

[Webcast: Anchoring a Universal Multidimensional Poverty Index within the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[Technology Facilitation Mechanism](#)

Better data for better lives: Statistics at the center of sustainable development

As the global statistical community embarks on the final phase of defining a new indicator framework to review progress of the newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world community prepares to celebrate World Statistics Day on 20 October.



This day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010 to recognize the central role of statistics for development and their importance in shaping our societies. A statistical day was already a tradition in over 100 countries around the world, but the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution marking 20 October as World Statistics Day brought a strong recognition of the important role of statistics in people's lives.

The first World Statistics Day was commemorated on 20 October 2010. Five years later, the celebration is taking place at a crucial moment for the statistical community. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which raised the political relevance of statistics, draw to a close at the end of this year, and world leaders have adopted a new agenda that will guide efforts to ensure sustainable development for all.

The MDG monitoring experience

The experience of monitoring the MDGs has taught very important lessons and demonstrated the centrality of statistics to development. Monitoring has helped keep the focus on policy priorities; informed the global political debate; and helped advocacy and communication with the public. In turn, this has

raised awareness on the need to constantly improve consistency and harmonization of indicator production and utilization; and for building statistical capacity.



MDG monitoring has also shown what effective interagency collaboration can achieve. Over a period of almost fifteen years, over thirty international agencies within and beyond the UN system, worked effectively together to produce a yearly report on MDG progress,

oversee methodological developments on the indicators, and ensure that the best and most up-to-date data on the goals and targets were made available to policy makers and to the public.

The Inter-agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on MDG Indicators gained recognition from many parts of the international community as a unique mechanism for collaboration across agencies and national statistical systems. Moreover, as the number of experts from national statistical systems became part of the group, they brought their national experiences, needs and priorities to the discussion, and made important recommendations to the UN Statistical Commission for follow-up in areas of capacity and methodological development.

The IAEG on MDG Indicators also became an important coordination mechanism to review and address inconsistencies between national and global monitoring, exposing the underlying reasons for differences between international and national data sets and advising on strategies to resolve them.

Indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The review of progress towards the goals and targets set by the new development agenda adopted on 25 September, will require an even greater level of collaboration and coordination across countries and international agencies. The number of policy areas addressed by the agenda is significantly larger and the scope of the indicators will require the involvement of the whole statistical system in every country.

Building on the experience and lessons learnt over the last fifteen years, last March the United Nations Statistical Commission created at its 46th session the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), which will operate similarly to the IAEG on MDG Indicators. One important new aspect is that the IAEG-SDGs will be country-led, ensuring full country ownership in the implementation of the monitoring programmes.

Twenty-eight Member States are represented in the group by their national statistical experts. These experts will work closely with

representatives of international agencies and civil society to identify a set of indicators that will be used to review progress in the 17 goals, based on regional and global figures.

The indicator framework will have to match the level of ambition of the new development agenda, ensuring that all targets are equally addressed by appropriate measurements, that data are disaggregated to the desirable level and that all population groups are covered. This will require increased resources, new methodological developments, integrating new data sources with traditional ones, building partnerships and increased cooperation across countries.

From 26-28 October, the IAEG-SDGs will meet for the second time to finalize a proposal for an indicator framework to be presented to the United Nations Statistical Commission at its next session in March 2016. Already, a number of consultations have taken place to allow all stakeholders to provide their inputs to the discussion. These have included an online platform for collaboration between IAEG-SDG members and observers as well as online consultations for members, observers and civil society. All of the inputs received during these consultations will feed into the discussions set for October.

“Reaching the MDGs has been an integral focus of UN DESA’s work, with statistics being at the centre of all our efforts – in setting the right standards, providing data and analysis and working closely with countries to strengthen national statistical capacities,” said Lenni Montiel, UN DESA’s Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development.

“With the new group of experts, the IAEG on SDG Indicators, we want to replicate that successful experience and ensure that this work is supported,” Mr. Montiel stressed.

“This is also why I will host a Twitter chat on 22 October, welcoming the online audience to join me to discuss how the statistical work and lessons learned from this vast experience will be the springboard for the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” he added, inviting the Twitter audience to join him via his twitter handle [@LenniMontiel](#).

Celebrating World Statistics Day



The celebration of World Statistics Day will be an opportunity to raise awareness in countries around the world of the importance of increasing the production and use of statistics. In addition, celebrations will showcase the important

contribution statistics make to everyday life, to inform policy and decision makers as well as to guide decisions that impact people in all countries.

The celebration will also serve as an opportunity to raise awareness of the continuous need to improve statistical systems and to invest resources to strengthen the statistical capacity in countries where funding is limited.

Over the next fifteen years, countries will design policies and interventions to meet a set of very ambitious goals—an impossible task without sound and timely statistics to inform them and review them.

Improved data sources, sound statistical methods, new technologies and strengthened statistical systems enable better decisions that eventually result in better lives for all of us.

In sync with the contribution of statistics to improving the lives of many is the theme for this occasion—Better Data. Better Lives. Throughout the world, this day will showcase how statistics and the statistical community strives to bring about this vision for all of us.

For more information:

[World Statistics Day 2015](#)

[Sustainable Development Goal indicators website](#)

Sustainable development through building age inclusive urban environment

According to the newly released 2015 Revision of World Population Prospects, there are 901 million people aged 60 or over in 2015, making up 12 percent of the global population. With a 3.26 percent growth rate each year, the number of older persons in the world is projected to be 1.4 billion by 2030 and 2.1 billion by 2050, and could rise to 3.2 billion in 2100.



Older persons are becoming an increasingly central demographic group in our world. To bring more attention to older persons, the United Nations is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) on 1 October with the theme “sustainability and age inclusiveness in the urban environment”.

Events worldwide to celebrate older persons

Events marking the IDOP are scheduled around the world on 15 October, including a panel discussion in New York under the theme “Key components for age inclusiveness in urban environments”, a fundraising luncheon “Changing how we view older persons”, and another in Geneva, Switzerland titled “How to get to 100 and enjoy it!”.



The objectives of this year's celebration are to draw attention to building

age-inclusive cities in policy and technique scale, engaging older persons' participation in city planning, building partnerships between government and the private sector to provide affordable and appropriate housing and transportation, as well as increasing inter-generational support for the social, economic and cultural arenas.

Keeping up with changing demographic trends

“The steady increase in human longevity represents one of the greatest transformations and challenges of our time. However, failure to keep pace with changing demographic trends will make it difficult to achieve a sustainable, secure and fulfilling future for people of all ages,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed during the celebrations of the day last year. He pointed out that to realize sustainable development, older persons are a vital factor that should be taken into account.

The challenges caused by older persons residing in urban areas stand out, due to the fact that the move of older people to cities is occurring at higher frequency and on a larger scale. Six out of every 10 people in the world are expected to reside in urban areas by 2030. Consistent with urbanization trends, the number of older persons is increasing most rapidly in urban areas in developing countries.

This means that the number of people over 60 living in cities may grow to over 900 million by 2015, making up a quarter of the total urban population in developing countries. Based on these facts, the impact of the new urban environment on older persons, as well as the impact of older persons on the new urban environment, takes centre stage at this year's event.

“In this effort, we must address shifting demographics, especially the needs and concerns of the world's increasing number of older persons,” Ban Ki-moon said.

Strengthening human rights protection

In recent decades, the UN has made efforts within various areas affecting older persons' lives, including strengthening their human rights protection, promoting a society for all, realizing longevity and reducing aging pressures occurring in social settings. This year, the commemoration seeks to demonstrate that an age-inclusive agenda is crucial for sustainable urban environments to promote equity, welfare and shared property for all.

Along with the IDOP celebration, the World Population Ageing Report 2015: Highlights is expected to be launched in October. The report will further illustrate the global trends in population ageing and include a series of indicators of the ageing process by development regions, major areas, regions and countries.

For more information:

[International Day of Older Persons 2015](#)

[UN DESA's Population Division](#)

Global Dialogue on Development

UN General Assembly's Third Committee begins work



The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, which focuses its work on a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world, will begin its work in October, chaired by H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale of Morocco.

As in previous sessions, an important part of the work of the Committee will focus on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council which was established in 2006. In October 2015, the Committee will hear and interact with 54 such special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of working groups as mandated by the Human Rights Council.

The Committee also discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination.

The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control. The Third Committee will consider the rights of indigenous peoples under agenda item 70:

- (a) Rights of Indigenous Peoples – presentation of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
- (b) Follow up the outcome document of the high level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples – during which a statement on the progress report of the Secretary-General will be made by UN DESA's Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo in his capacity as senior official responsible for follow up to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. This progress report outlines some key elements on next steps with particular emphasis on the system wide action plan.

An annual resolution is expected to be adopted at the Third Committee of the General Assembly which is facilitated by Bolivia and Ecuador.

For more information: [Third Committee of the General Assembly](#)

Torch bearers of a sustainable and inclusive future

Young people, representing 193 Member States, gathered at UN headquarters on 25 September to be part of a historic moment; the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. UN DESA got a moment to speak to them about the new sustainable development goals, before the major event kicked off, bringing together performers like Shakira, Angelique Kidjo and Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai.

Watch video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jidwdc5IjtI>

Arriving at the United Nations before sunrise in order to get prepared for the opening ceremony, youth representatives shared their thoughts and hopes for this new agenda, just hours away from its adoption.



“The sustainable development goals offer us a unique opportunity to change the mindset of the world’s leaders,” said Carlo Angeles from Peru. “They also

provide us the opportunity to engage youth in the implementation process, helping us to create the world we want for 2030.”

Poverty, education, climate change, gender equality and inequality were some of the concerns that these young people raised. “I am concerned about inequality between and within countries,” said Julie Lund from Brazil. “I think there is a lot of difference in access to what people can achieve and until we can level the playing field there is no real development”.

At the same, they expressed faith in the ability of the new goals to bring about change around the world and they also underlined the need to focus on their implementation. “I think it is a goal for all of us to know what they are about, and only by knowing this

we can actually do something about it,” said Jilt van Schayik from the Netherlands.

“It is extremely important to engage youth, because we are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but the leaders of today,” stressed Lucia Gareton from France, on the importance of youth involvement. “These are our goals, and the time to get them done is now.”



The participation of 193 youth, representing the global community, was organized by the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth and the Office of the Special Advisor

of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning.

“It’s a once-in-a-life-time opportunity,” said Ahmad Alhendawi, the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth. “I think it’s a very powerful message that young people are witnessing this moment,” he stressed. “They are going to be partners in implementation and they will also hold governments accountable to the promise they are making today.”

For more information:

[UN Summit on Sustainable Development](#)

[The Focal Point on Youth in UN DESA](#)

[UN Youth Envoy](#)

Coming together to end poverty and discrimination



The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is commemorated annually on 17 October. This year, the observance will take place on 16 October at UN Headquarters.

The day will be commemorated this year under the theme “Building a sustainable future: coming together to end poverty and discrimination”, recognizing that a sustainable future – in which the needs and aspirations of everyone are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations – cannot be realized where poverty and discrimination continue to exist.

The commemoration will include a message from the Secretary-General and first-hand accounts of people living in poverty who are working to eradicate poverty from their own lives and communities. The event is organized in partnership with the International Movement ATD Fourth World, the NGO Committee for Social Development and UN DESA, supported by the Permanent Missions of France and Burkina Faso to the United Nations.

For more information: [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#)

Trends and Analysis

International standards for civil registration and vital statistics



Twelfth Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Council of Civil Registration, Identity and Vital Statistics (CLARCIEV) will take place from 6 to 9 October in Asunción, Paraguay.

CLARCIEV invited UN DESA's Statistics Division to deliver a presentation on the revised set of international standards for civil registration and vital statistics – Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3 – in the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda. In addition, UN DESA's Statistics Division will also participate on the panel on vital statistics in the context of civil registration in Latin America.

For more information: [UN DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Indigenous peoples and Agenda 2030



An expert group meeting will be held on "Indigenous peoples and Agenda 2030" at UN Headquarters on 22-23 October.

There are references to indigenous peoples in the agreed text of the 2030 Development Agenda to be adopted at the Summit in September. To better identify UN DESA's strategic support to Member States, its Division for Social Policy and Development is organizing a two-day expert group meeting on 22 and 23 October.

The meeting will bring together experts, Member States and representatives of the UN system to discuss how to position indigenous peoples rights in the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda. The three indigenous-specific mechanisms

(Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) will also participate. This will also inform the inter-agency and expert group meeting on indicators, which will be held in Bangkok on 26-28 October.

For more information: [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#)

From Rio to Paris: Higher education for climate change action



PARIS2015
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
COP21·CMP11

In the run up to the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21), the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) will meet on 14 October at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to take stock of progress made since Rio+20 by higher education in the advancement of sustainable development and climate change.

Participants will share best practices and lessons learned and discuss the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions in business and technological innovations around climate change adaptation and mitigation. They will encourage new or enhanced commitments by HESI members, particularly around the facilitation of academic and scientific inputs into the formulation of climate policies. They will also compose a message and a set of policy recommendations to be presented to the UNFCCC Secretariat at COP21.

Call for Contributions

In preparation for the event, UN DESA is preparing a progress report on the impact of Higher Education institutions in advancing sustainable development and climate change. This HESI climate action report will be presented at the event to the representative of the French Presidency of COP21.

Contributions to this report are sought from higher education institutions, who are asked to respond to the following question:

- What initiatives has your higher education institution taken towards making progress towards climate change action, in terms of teaching, research, outreach, or greening campuses?

Submissions should be limited to 500 words, the deadline is 1 October 2015. Details on how to submit contributions can be found at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdination/hesi/climatechangeaction>

The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative was created by a consortium of UN entities (UNESCO, UN-DESA, UNEP, Global Compact and UNU) in the run up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (RIO+20).

For more information: [From Rio to Paris: Higher Education for Climate Change Action](#)

Strengthening health information systems



The Seventh Annual Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Network to Strengthen Health Information Systems (RELACSIS) will be held on 26-28 October in San Jose, Costa Rica.

UN DESA's Statistics Division will participate in the discussions of this expert group coordinated by Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/WHO. The meeting will focus health statistics issues, including the production of quality vital statistics.

Results from the 2013-2015 programme of work will be presented, and main concerns to be taken into account for the 2015-2016 programme of work will be reflected upon. Participants will include delegates from the statistics offices within Ministries of Health, National Statistics Offices and other stakeholders within the Ministries of Health linked to maternal health and/or health surveillance systems. Spanish, English and French speaking countries are represented.

For more information: [UN DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Social development and Agenda 2030



UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) will organize an expert group meeting on "Social Development and Agenda 2030" from 21 to 27 October in New York.

The main objective of the meeting is to prepare DSPD for its support of the work of the Commission beyond 2015, by providing a strategic framework for addressing sustainable development from a social perspective. The meeting consists of two segments: the first segment will have thematic focus and will take place on 21-23 October; and the second segment focusing on social groups will take place on 26-27 October.

Recognizing the need for strengthening the social dimension of sustainable development, Member States, during the 53rd session of the Commission for Social Development (February 2015), urged to enhance policy coherence: 1) within social sectors; and 2) through integrating social policy/perspectives into broader and more complex policy-making processes, and vice versa, incorporating economic and environmental perspectives into social policy-making.

Building on the work of the Division, the meeting will produce a set of concrete and action-orientated recommendations, with the participation of experts, Member States, representatives of UN entities, civil society organizations and DESA Divisions.

For more information: [UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development](#)

Experts gather to discuss international tax cooperation



The eleventh session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters will be held from 19 to 23 October at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

This meeting of the Committee, held in accordance with the decision of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of June this year, will be crucial to ensure the timely update of the [United Nations Model Double Taxation Convention between Developed and Developing Countries](#) before the end of the Committee's current term, which lasts until June 2017.

An important aspect of the new version of the UN Model will be the taxation of technical services (such as consultancy contracts for example), an ever more significant issue for cross-border trade. During the upcoming deliberations, the Committee will also discern whether current rules sufficiently protect countries from aggressive tax planning that would inappropriately make use of tax treaty benefits and discuss the application of treaty rules to hybrid entities.

The concept of "connected projects" with respect to permanent establishments, i.e. the degree of economic presence in any country that would give rise to taxing rights, will also be debated, especially in light of a more digitalized economy and keeping in mind the specific concerns and realities of developing countries.

As the Committee of Experts relies on a Subcommittee structure to work between annual sessions, the meeting will give the Subcommittees the possibility to report on their work and to receive guidance. The Subcommittee on Transfer Pricing will present on its progress towards the next update of the [United Nations Practical Manual on Transfer Pricing for Developing Countries](#). The Manual provides guidance on the policy of intra-group pricing in accordance with the arm's length principle and focuses especially on developing countries, supporting them in their "transfer pricing journey". The update will include new chapters, such as on intra-company services, but will also revise parts of the Manual in light of recent developments.

The Subcommittee on Extractive Industries Taxation Issues will present several guidance notes for approval to the Committee, including on capital gains taxation, tax treaty issues and decommissioning of extractive facilities. Progress made on other guidance notes will also be discussed with the Committee.

Other agenda items include work towards the next update of the Manual for the Negotiation of Bilateral Tax Treaties between Developed and Developing Countries, base erosion and profit shifting and its consequences for developing countries as well as capacity development. The Secretariat will present a paper on dispute resolution issues for developing countries in international tax cases.

In light of the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 13-16 July, the Secretariat expects increased participation of country observers, civil society and business.

For more information: [Eleventh session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters](#)

UN DESA Energy Grant awarded to expand use of life-saving 'Solar Suitcase'



The first-ever US\$1 million UN-DESA Energy Grant was awarded to We Care Solar, a non-profit organization, to enhance and expand the use of its 'Solar Suitcase'.

By making solar power simple, accessible and affordable, this device allows for the provision of electricity for medical procedures during childbirth in many developing countries, helping to avoid life-threatening complications for mothers and children.

"The United Nations is shining a light on an area that has all too often been overlooked — the lack of reliable electricity in health facilities," said Dr. Laura Stachel, co-founder of We Care Solar, after receiving the award at a ceremony at UN headquarters on 14 September.

"I have had the privilege of working with hundreds of health workers who have seen the miracle of light and power in saving lives, and we have much more work to do." "This award is the beginning of a brighter future for women everywhere," she added. "No woman should die giving life."

The Solar Suitcase provides off-grid health clinics with solar power for critical obstetric and surgical lighting, mobile phones, fetal heart rate monitors and other essential medical devices. It thereby facilitates timely and appropriate emergency care,

reducing maternal and infant morbidity in more than 20 countries in Africa and South Asia.

In the last five years, We Care Solar, in close collaboration with local partners, has succeeded in empowering 5,000 health workers in the areas of solar energy utilization, installation and servicing to ensure the Solar Suitcases have a long-lasting impact. With the help of the Energy Grant, We Care Solar will be able to bring the programme to scale, maximize the products' effectiveness, and build capacity.

A Special Award was also given to Masdar, the Renewable Energy Company of Abu Dhabi, for its leadership, vision, innovation and long-standing successful efforts in advancing clean energy around the world. "I am honoured that Masdar has been recognized for our achievements in making the goal of providing greater access to energy worldwide a reality," said Dr. Nawal Al-Hosany, Masdar Director of Sustainability. "Masdar represents the embodiment of the UAE's commitment to advancing safe, clean and secure energy, and to transitioning from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy. We are committed to continuing to collaborate with local, regional and global partners to forward the sustainable energy agenda worldwide."

BYD received special recognition for its dedication to the promotion of clean technologies in the area of public transportation, which accounts for one third of total pollutants from transportation. To date, BYD's electrified transportation fleets have been adopted in over 150 cities in 36 countries.

Sustainable energy crucial for achieving development goals

In his opening remarks, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described sustainable energy as a key priority for the United Nations that connects economic growth, social equity, a stable climate and a healthy environment: "Energy underpins our efforts to achieve development objectives – from reducing extreme poverty to enhancing food security, from powering essential health services to providing electricity for education."

Despite strenuous efforts by the international community, one person in five still lacks access to electricity; more than a third of humanity relies on wood, charcoal, animal and crop waste for cooking and heating; and some 4 million people die each year from the effects of indoor air pollutants. The Secretary-General commended the event as going beyond a symbolic ceremony and as celebrating the initiatives and actions of all 12 selected grant applicants.

UN-DESA Grant a unique undertaking

The President of the 69th session of the General Assembly, Sam Kutesa, sees in the Grant "an opportunity to show the world the best examples that demonstrate how science, technology and

innovation can be put into practice to induce change and to transform the world."

He also noted that the Grant is a unique undertaking that focuses on and stresses the need for not only innovation and implementation, but for capacity building on energy for sustainable development.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hongbo expressed his deep gratitude to the Grant applicants, saying that they had demonstrated through their initiatives and actions how they are contributing to the United Nations vision of sustainable energy. He also recognized the leadership of the China Energy Fund Committee (CEFC), whose funding support has made this Grant possible.

"Energy belongs to everyone on this earth, and access to energy should be a basic human right for every man and woman, there is enough energy to go around for all of us," said Dr. Patrick Ho, Secretary-General of the China Energy Fund Committee.

"Powering the Future We Want" initiative

The UN-DESA Energy Grant is a capacity building initiative launched and managed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), in collaboration with the CEFC, a Hong Kong based NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC. Titled "Powering the Future We Want", this initiative offers a grant in the amount of one million US dollars to fund capacity development activities in energy for sustainable development. The grant is awarded to an individual, institution or partnership based on past and current achievements in leadership and innovative practices in advancing energy for sustainable development.

For its first award, the UN-DESA Energy Grant received over 200 applications. The winner has been selected through a rigorous review and objective assessment of these applications, undertaken in multiple stages, guided by an Advisory Council and a High-level Steering Committee. The initiative will be implemented annually.

Winner of the US\$1 million 2015 UN-DESA Energy Grant: We Care Solar. Winner of a Special Award: Masdar. Special recognition: BYD.

Ten finalists: Eco-Fuel Africa; Electricity Regulatory Authority of Uganda; MicroEnergy International; Pact Institute; Powerhive; Self Employed Women's Association, Bharat (SEWA Bharat); SolarAid; Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF); Strathmore Energy Research Centre (SERC); Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (CREEC), and; Village Energy, We Care Solar.

UN DESA Grant website: [Powering the Future](#)

United Nations launches mechanism to promote science, technology and innovation



A Technology Facilitation Mechanism that seeks to promote science, technology and innovation to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable was launched at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, when over 150 Heads of State and Government officially adopted the new agenda.

To mark the mechanism's launch, the Governments of Brazil and France, with the support of the UN Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs, co-hosted a high-level side event, bringing together multi-stakeholders including Member States, the UN system, civil society, private sector and academia. The high-level representatives expressed their expectations in relation to the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM), how it could help achieve the 2030 Agenda and how their countries or organizations are prepared to support its operation.

The mechanism is the first major United Nations initiative to support the implementation of the SDGs since the Addis Ababa Third International Conference on Financing for Development was held earlier this year. It will be based on multi-stakeholder collaboration between Member States, civil society, private sector, scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders.

The mechanism is comprised of a United Nations inter-agency task team on science, technology and innovation (STI); an annual multi-stakeholder forum; and an online platform as a gateway for information on existing STI initiatives, mechanisms and programs.

“We know from history that science, technology and innovation are the key drivers of economic growth, of poverty reduction, of rising living standards. Now we must ensure that they are among the central enablers for realizing the SDGs and that all countries, particularly the poorest and those furthest behind, can tap into the benefits of modern science, technology and innovation,” said the President of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketof, at the event.

“Technology can help us live up to the promise to leave no one behind, the technology facilitation mechanism is a new important

tool that can make this possible”, said Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. But he also said that the transformative sustainable development goals will only be meaningful once we start implementing and working in a determined way to make them happen. “Today we start the crucial process of turning vision and goals into reality”, he said.

Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development of France, highlighted the important role of technology in the context of the climate negotiations in Paris at the end of the year. A commitment from all parties, private investments, and international partnerships would be needed.

Mauro Vieira, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, stressed the importance of technology for developing countries and his country's long-standing efforts to achieve progress in this area. He explained that technology facilitation also means enabling developing countries to develop technologies themselves.

Sujata Mehta of the Ministry of External Affairs of India highlighted the important role that Brazil and France have played in developing the TFM, and expressed her hope that the mechanism would become the home for technology discussion at the UN.

Among others, following panellists contributed to the discussion: Ms. Megan Smith, US Chief Technology Officer, Office of Science and Technology Policy, and former Vice-President of Google, USA; Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) headquartered in South Africa; Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, Member of the UN SG's Scientific Advisory Board, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Science Advisor to the Prime Minister, Malaysia; Mrs. Adeline Lescanne, CEO of Nutriset. The event was moderated by Mr. Elliott Harris, Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the New York Office of UNEP.

For more information:

[Technology Facilitation Mechanism](#)

Capacity development

Developing environment statistics



UN DESA's Statistics Division is organizing a sub-regional workshop for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, entitled "Environment Statistics in support of the Implementation of the Framework for the

Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013)" led by the Division, in collaboration with the ECOWAS Secretariat. The workshop will take place in Lomé, Togo from 19 to 23 October, with hosting and on-ground support being provided by the ECOWAS Secretariat and the Government of Togo.

Several other international and inter-governmental organizations are expected to participate in the workshop, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and L'Observatoire Économique et Statistique d'Afrique Subsaharienne (AFRISTAT).

The workshop is part of a series of events of UN DESA's Statistics Division's regular programme of technical cooperation to support the implementation of the FDES 2013 in member states. It follows the United Nations Statistical Commission's endorsement in 2013 of the revised FDES 2013 as the framework for strengthening environment statistics programmes in countries. The Commission also recognized the FDES 2013 as a useful tool in the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The FDES 2013 is a multi-purpose conceptual and statistical framework which marks out the scope of environment statistics. It provides an organizing structure to guide the collection and compilation of environment statistics at the national level and is very relevant for policy analysis and decision making.

The Workshop will focus on, inter alia, building national capacities for the implementation of the FDES 2013. It aims at providing statisticians from National Statistical Offices and selected experts from Ministries of Environment (or equivalent institutions) with detailed knowledge and understanding of contemporary approaches to environment statistics, thus allowing them to identify gaps and deficiencies in environmental data, and

contribute to the production of regular, accurate and reliable environment statistics.

Key elements of the Workshop include: in-depth presentation on and discussion about the FDES 2013, including its components, sub-components, topics and Basic/Core Sets of Environment Statistics; application of the Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT); definition of key concepts and terminology in the field of environment statistics spanning topics such as water, waste, biodiversity, agriculture, emissions of greenhouse gases, extreme events and disasters, and environmental health; use of various data sources such as geospatial information systems, remote sensing, scientific research, administrative data; and an introduction to the methodological Manual for the Basic Set of Environment Statistics currently under development.

The Workshop content is very relevant to the SDGs since many of the environment statistics to be discussed and analysed are necessary for the measurement of countries' progress toward achieving the Goals. The implementation of the FDES 2013 will help countries address the increasing demand for integrated information in support of integrated policies in the follow-up to Rio+20 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the strengthening of environmental statistics and indicators. The Workshop will also discuss the further development and implementation of the regional programme on environment statistics for the ECOWAS member states.

For more information: [Environment Statistics Section in UN DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Big data for official statistics



The Second Global Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics will take place on 20-22 October in Abu Dhabi.

Innovations in technology, widespread penetration of electronic devices, and the rapid

rise in the use of technology for social purposes all bring fundamental changes to the availability of real-time information. Such massive, highly dynamic and weakly structured data is commonly referred to as Big Data.

Recognizing the potential of Big Data, the UN Statistical Commission established in 2014 a global working group (GWG)

to provide strategic vision, direction and coordination of a global programme on Big Data for official statistics. Within this context the 2nd Global Conference on Big Data will take place on 20-22 October in Abu Dhabi. This conference intends to take the development of Big Data one step further from examples towards guidance, which can stimulate training, pilot projects and bringing pilot projects into the production environment.

The GWG promotes the practical use of Big Data, promotes capacity building and sharing of experiences, while finding common solutions for the challenges. The opening day of the conference coincides with the second World Statistics Day, which proclaims “Better data. Better lives.” This means that opening day provides the unique opportunity to celebrate World Statistics Day, while highlighting the benefits of Big Data for official statistics.

The event is organized by UN DESA’s Statistics Division, the National Bureau of Statistics of the United Arab Emirates (NBS UAE), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Statistical Office of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC-Stat).

For more information: [International Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics](#)

Sustainable data for sustainable development



International Seminar on World Statistics: Sustainable Data for Sustainable Development will be held in Xi’an, China on 20-22 October.

UN DESA’s Statistics Division and the National Bureau of Statistics of

China are jointly organizing an International Seminar on “World Statistics: Sustainable Data for Sustainable Development”, to be held on 20-22 October in Xi’an, China. In addition, the observance event for World Statistics Day 2015 will be held in the morning of 20 October at the same venue.

The UN Summit on Sustainable Development, launched the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to succeed the Millennium Development Goals. The seminar to be held at the occasion of the World Statistics Day will in this context provide a unique and timely opportunity for the global statistical community to gather and exchange views and ideas on how to measure and monitor Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

Statisticians and experts from around the world will deliberate on the new indicators and a monitoring framework for Sustainable Development Goals and how to mobilize the data revolution for sustainable development.

For more information: [UN DESA’s Statistics Division](#)

Developing monitoring framework for new SDGs



The second Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), will be

held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 26-28 October.

The IAEG-SDGs has been established by the Statistical Commission at its 46th session to develop an indicator framework for the monitoring of the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda at the global level, and to support its implementation.

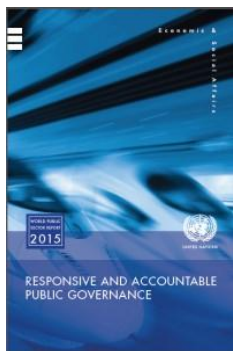
The main objectives of the meeting are to review the list of possible global indicators; discuss the global indicator framework, interlinkages across targets and critical issues including data disaggregation; and discuss the work plan and next steps.

For more information: [Second meeting of the IAEG-SDGs](#)

Publications and Websites

Technical reports

2015 World Public Sector Report (WPSR)



The 2015 World Public Sector Report (WPSR) analyses responsiveness and accountability as two fundamental principles of governance which are key, cross-cutting enablers of development. As the international community has just adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015 WPSR intends to contribute by highlighting critical issues of public governance.

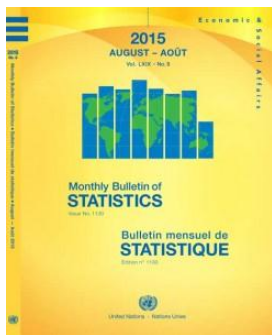
The report draws on discussions that took place at the 12th and the 13th Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), but particularly the 12th Session on the role of responsive and accountable public governance in achieving the MDGs and the post-2015 development agenda.

It also benefits from in-depth contributions from some Committee members. It supplements CEPA's deliberations with initial profiles of selected United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS) for 193 Member States. Through UNPACS, UN DESA is analysing aspects of public institutional capacity, e-government and citizen engagement.

- [To download](#)

Statistical compilations

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online



The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or bimonthly, quarterly and annual data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport,

construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

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In addition to the regular recurrent monthly tables, this issue includes bimonthly and quarterly tables: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; Earnings in manufacturing, by sex; Total exports and imports by regions: quantum and unit value indices and terms of trade in US dollars.

- [For more information](#)

The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics will be launched on 20 October 2015

The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics presents statistics and analysis on the status of women and men in the world, highlighting the current situation and changes over time. The report is the sixth in the series which has been published every five years by UN DESA's Statistics Division, as called for in the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. As in the past editions, the presentation is made in a format and language that non-specialists can readily understand.

The World's Women 2015 highlights that progress towards the goal of gender equality has been made in the last two decades in most areas of concern, although at low and uneven pace. Through a life cycle approach, the publication reveals the challenges and opportunities faced by women during their different stages of life. The different trajectories of women and men—from childhood through the working and reproductive stage to older age—are highlighted in the analysis undertaken in eight chapters of the report, each representing a broad area of concern: population and families, health, education, work, power and decision-making, violence against women, environment and poverty. A wide selection of statistics and indicators covered in the publication are presented in its Statistical Annex, that will be available online.

For more information: [UN DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Outreach material

Enable Newsletter

Prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) within UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, August issue is now available. The newsletter provides news from UN Headquarters and UN agencies and other news of relevance for the work to advance the rights of persons with disabilities.

- [Read full issue](#)

DESA NGO News

Published by UN DESA's NGO Branch, the latest issue is available online providing the most up-to-date information on news and upcoming events of interest to civil society at UN headquarters in New York, Geneva and elsewhere.

- [Read full issue](#)

Discussion papers

Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 82

Prepared by UN DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, September issue is available online with the following summary:

- Volatility soars in global financial markets
- Concerns over China's economy are mounting
- Stronger-than-expected GDP growth in the U.S., while economic growth slows in many developing countries

- [To download](#)

Comings and Goings

Tribute to Mr. Barney Cohen



Mr. Barney Cohen, Chief of the Population Studies Branch in the Population Division of UN DESA passed away suddenly on 19 September 2015 following a brief and unexpected illness. Mr. Cohen became a renowned international expert in demography and brought enormous intellectual curiosity, combined with an enthusiasm for new ideas, to his work at the United Nations. Resisting inertia and routine, he tirelessly sought-out and championed new initiatives.

His office was a place where new ideas were welcomed, the status quo was challenged, and real progress was made. He also served as Director of the Committee on Population of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC, before joining the United Nations.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments, Mr. Cohen is remembered for his quick wit and wry sense of humour, and for his humble and gentle spirit. He was the beloved husband of Christine van Reenen and devoted father of John and Rachael Cohen. In addition, Mr. Cohen was an enthusiastic soccer fan and a quietly dedicated volunteer for youth soccer through the NW Arlington Lions Soccer Club.

Mr. Cohen was born on 6 November 1959 in Plymouth, England. He earned a Master's degree in economics at the University of Delaware and a PhD in demography from the University of California, Berkeley. Four years in Sudan, first as a VSO volunteer and then as a UN volunteer, led to an enduring love for Africa and a lifelong commitment to work against poverty in the developing world.

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in September:

Charu Garg, Information Technology Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Sabine Henning, Senior Population Affairs Officer, Population Division

Mary Niland, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Calendar

October

[International Day of Older Persons 2015](#)

1 October

XII Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Council of Civil Registration, Identity and Vital Statistics (CLARCIEV)

6-9 October, Asunción, Paraguay

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17 October

[21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC \(COP21\), the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative \(HESI\)](#)

14 October, Paris

[Sub-regional workshop for ECOWAS region on “Environment Statistics in support of the Implementation of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics \(FDES 2013\)”](#)

19-23 October Lomé, Togo

[Eleventh Session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters](#)

19 - 23 October, Geneva

[World Statistics Day](#)

20 October

Expert group meeting on “Social Development and Agenda 2030”

21-27 October, New York

[2nd Global Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics](#)

20-22 October, Abu Dhabi

International Seminar on World Statistics: Sustainable Data for Sustainable Development

Xi'an, China, 20-22 October

7th Annual Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Network to Strengthen Health Information Systems (RELAC SIS)

26-28 October, San Jose, Costa Rica

Second Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs),

Bangkok, Thailand, 26-28 October

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communication Section/SPCS of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. DESA News is issued every month. Please click [here](#) to send inquiries.