



BACKGROUND GUIDE

WAMUNC XXIV

United Nations Development
Programme

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

In 1965, the United Nations created the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in order to tackle global issues in developing nations, including the empowerment of women, the accomplishment of global sustainability, and the prevention of climate change and pollution. The program is managed by 36 members, representing both developed and developing nations, but has voluntary financing from Member States of the UN, with an annual budget of about 5 billion dollars. UNDP is composed of country offices, in 134 countries, regional offices, research offices, and several departments such as the Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnership (BRSP), the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), and the Global Fund.

The UNDP works on a variety of projects across the world. In Africa specifically, the UNDP uses the Sustainable Development Goals to determine the projects that receive funding on a country by country and region by region case. The UNDP is currently working to ensure that developing countries have access to funding and support in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNDP is running various projects to promote democratic governance, sustainability, climate resilience, gender equality, and more. Because UNDP runs different programs based on the needs of specific countries and regions, projects with similar goals may be carried out in different manners in different locations.

Throughout the years, in order to achieve their goals, UNDP has partnered with several UN branches, such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO), and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), amongst others. With the collaboration and cooperation of these various organisms, UNDP provides the groundwork for international alliances to combat world poverty, encourage politically representative environments, and prevent further damage to our planet. Also, in order to provide information about the help that was provided, and as a measure of accountability, UNDP publishes yearly the “Human

Development Report”, which also includes tools to foster advancement in all areas, analysis of the current status of the SDGs and proposals to further help nations accomplish their goals. The Human Development Reports are often used to determine policy changes and possible proposals that will further the current or future projects.

In order to achieve this, the UNDP is the primary distributor of the funds of the UN, working in over 170 countries as a coordinator for development work, predominantly in anti-poverty programs. Despite being the principal manager of the UN funds, UNDP does not provide monetary aid for individuals, companies, or other private groups, the economic collaboration is solely based upon its interaction with the nation’s government. However, it does works with private contractors, or “vendors”, which contact with the UNDP.

Throughout the 2022 United Nations Development Programme Committee, there will be two different topics discussed based on two of the Sustainable Development Goals. The topics will be discussed in a random order decided on the day of the committee. The first topic is Extreme Poverty Reduction in Africa. The second topic is Gender Equality in Africa. Please be prepared to discuss both topics by reading both sections of the background guide and doing research on your country’s position on both topics.

LETTER FROM THE CRISIS

DIRECTOR

Esteemed Delegates,

It is my honor to welcome you to the Washington Areas Model United Nations Conference XXIV! I am immensely excited for excellent debate on a complex and developing topic that remains relevant to not just diplomacy within Africa but across a much broader scale. I am looking forward to creative solutions, productive debates, and substantive discussions within the framework of the United Nations Development Programme. As this year's conference is using an online format, I am looking forward to seeing Model UN virtually and hope that you all are ready to bring your own insights about MUN to the table. Additionally, I hope you all have a productive and positive experience in the online format.

My name is Gabby Zeidler and I am a Junior at the Elliot School of International Affairs. I am a member of GW's Model UN team and a project manager for Community Engagement Consulting through the Nashman Center of Community Service. I study Peace Studies and International Affairs with a concentration in International Development and a minor in Political Science. I am originally from Las Vegas, Nevada, and am excited to be in Washington DC now. I am excited to see all of the different perspectives that you bring to the table. I am happy to share my experiences as we work through this conference!

Sincerely,

Gabby Zeidler

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BACKGROUND GUIDE

Topic A: Poverty Reduction in Africa

Poverty in Africa

Millions of people live in extreme poverty and hunger around the world; over 711 million people live on less than US\$1.90 a day, the World Bank definition of Extreme Poverty. The United Nations has made one of its highest priorities the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, specifically through the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Extreme poverty is the total lack of a human's means of survival, including access to food, shelter, clothing, physical protection, and community, as well as the lack of means of improving one's life, through methods such as education, medical aid, or employment. Extreme poverty often leads to malnourishment and unemployment, and this combination of factors does little to pull these victims out of their impoverished situation. This cycle is remorseless and destructive, and it affects multitudes of men, women, and children.

About 690 million people are undernourished across the world. Of this, 257 million of those undernourished reside in Africa. About 20 percent of the entire African population experiences hunger daily and 60 million children in Africa are underfed despite the continent's economic growth in the past 50 years.

Extreme poverty exists for a number of reasons. Many undeveloped countries lack the resources to provide for their citizens, and many more countries lack the infrastructure to adequately and rapidly distribute their aid to impoverished populations. Basic necessities, such as food and clothing, can be scarce in developing countries or in subsistence areas. Other necessities, such as housing and protection, can be difficult to guarantee in areas where property rights are little regarded or police protection is ineffective. Even in countries where medical aid, education, and employment services are provided, some populations lack the means of obtaining these services, and so wallow in their extreme poverty, unable to improve their lives. Africa and Asia house a majority of the impoverished population.

The extreme poverty rate in the region increased from 33 percent in 2019 to 35 percent in 2021, especially given the drastic impacts the COVID-19 global pandemic had on Africa and the availability of aid and development projects. South Sudan and Burundi had the highest share of population living on less than US\$1.90 per day, 85 percent and 80 percent, respectively. Statistically, nine out of 10 African children do not meet the World Health Organization's criteria for a minimum acceptable diet, and two in five children do not eat meals on a regular or scheduled basis. Children who suffer from such hunger also experience stunted growth and impaired cognitive development.

COVID-19 has contributed to the rise in extreme poverty and hunger in Africa because of downturned economies, healthcare expenses, the lack of previous funding, and the lack of new funding. Because the COVID-19 pandemic has not let up and is predicted to continue, Africa will continue to struggle with extreme poverty, hunger, and famine without further and immediate intervention.

Past Poverty Reduction Programs

Following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, the UN established eight Sustainable Development Goals to improve the world. The first goal was to eradicate hunger and poverty. The UN recognized the prevalence of extreme poverty and hunger across all its member nations and knew that protecting the basic rights of each person is imperative for creating an international community that is healthy and peaceful. This Sustainable Development Goal aims to halve the number of people who are starving, to raise the income of people living below poverty, and increase job opportunities. The United Nations Development Programme connects member nations to the resources, organizations, and contacts they need to improve the economic and social conditions of their countries via a strong international network. For example, the UNDP connects nations with resources such as financial literacy initiatives, microfinance providers, agricultural assistance, and more. Through these services, they aim to achieve no poverty.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in India is supported by the UNDP, which provides farmers without land the right to 100 days of paid work, which helps many impoverished, unemployed people, especially women, find enough employment to help them become self-sustainable.vi Public works guided by the UNDP have also helped other nations empower borderline impoverished workers. For example, the UNDP established the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange, which maximized the use of existing resources and improved communication between by creating an agricultural cooperative.

The Global Poverty Project is an example of an NGO that focuses on the eradication of poverty. The Global Poverty Project runs numerous programs to this end, including medical assistance, awareness campaigns, research, and outreach programs. By strategically utilizing already existent NGOs and recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, the international community can make significant progress towards achieving no poverty.

Possible Solutions

Possible solutions to reduce poverty are varied and often require large amounts of funding. One solution is to provide countries with financial aid programs, but this funding often has many restrictions and can be misused by corrupt governments.

Poverty and hunger can also be decreased by creating and investing in jobs for the poor, thereby stimulating the economy and reducing unemployment. Government works are one way of creating jobs for the poor, as is investing in small businesses and lowering the barrier to employment and business creation. Farmers are often targeted in the battle against extreme poverty including economic benefits and stimulus because it not only provides jobs but also food. Primary education and vocational training are essential, and government should take steps to make these services affordable and available to all people to help increase the ability for people to get and retain jobs. As a result, impoverished people will have the resources they desperately need to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves. Other creative and effective solutions have been implemented across the world. Delegates are tasked with creating a resolution that will help promote the end of poverty in Africa sustainably.

Topic B: Gender Equality in Africa

Gender Equality in Africa

Equality between women and men refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female, according to the United Nations. Women earn only 77 cents for every dollar that men get for the same work. 35 percent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence. Women represent just 13 percent of agricultural landholders. Almost 750 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday. Two-thirds of developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary education. Only 24 percent of national parliamentarians were women as of November 2018, a small increase from 11.3 percent in 1995.

Almost all countries in Africa have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and more than half have ratified the African Union's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. Other milestones include the African Union's declaration of 2010–2020 as the African Women's Decade. Yet, women and girls are disadvantaged in many areas and don't enjoy the same opportunities as their male counterparts. This is true for almost all public sectors, ranging from unequal access to basic social services (health, education, water & sanitation, energy, etc.), unequal property rights, and persistent gender gaps in the labor market and the public sphere.

African women achieve only 87 percent of the human development outcomes of men. African women hold 66 percent of all jobs in the non-agricultural informal sector and only make 70 cents for each dollar made by men. Only between 7 and 30 percent of all private firms have a female manager. There are 16.7 million girls out of school in sub-Saharan Africa, 9.3 million of which will never set foot in a classroom. There are 16.7 million girls out of school in sub-Saharan Africa, 9.3 million of which will never set foot in a classroom.

There are many different aspects of the gender disparity from political representation and participation, forced child marriage, lack of education, lack of access to jobs, pay disparity, stigmatization of survivors of sexual assault and harassment, female genital mutilation, and more.

Economic Impacts of the Lack of Women's Equality

According to the 2016 Human Development Report, the gender gap costs sub-Saharan Africa \$US95 billion a year. Women account for more than 50 percent of Africa's combined population, but in 2018 generated only 33 percent of the continent's collective GDP. This reinforces and fuels inequality and compromises Africa's long-term economic health.

To integrate women into society, they must be given equal opportunities to become educated through primary education and college, along with job training, which will further the progress of incorporating women into the working world. There are many non-governmental organizations and international organizations working towards incorporating women into the workforce through job training programs, educational programs, and grant availability.

Past Gender Equality Promotion Programs

UNDP programs and projects are informed by gender analysis in their design and implementation. UNDP seeks to identify and integrate the different needs, constraints, contributions, and priorities of women, men, girls and boys into its programming. Both women and men are able to participate meaningfully and equitably, have equal access to program and project resources, and receive comparable social and economic benefits.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) worked together on a program to prevent SGBV that led to an 88 percent decrease in SGBV cases and improved women's access to justice by 33 percent. In

addition, UNDP's program "Ending Gender-Based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals" tests and implements approaches to prevent and effectively eliminate GBV and generate lasting, transformational change.

In Egypt, UNDP partnered with Microsoft and the National Council for Women to launch the Aspire Social Innovation Hub. The Hub aimed to address the gender gap by fostering innovation and entrepreneurship among young women, with a focus on computer science. The hub targeted young Egyptian women aged 20 to 27 who show passion for learning new technologies and creating social impact in their own communities. Two hubs were launched in Cairo and Ismailia. From this initiative, young women conceptualized 10 projects, targeting four thematic areas: refugee aid, health care, road safety, and child rights.

Possible Solutions

Possible solutions to increase women's rights and achieve gender equality can take in place many different parts of society and life. They often require large amounts of funding and oversight. One solution is to provide countries with female-specific financial aid programs, but this funding often has many restrictions and can be misused by corrupt governments.

The gender gap can also be decreased by creating and investing in jobs and education for women, thereby stimulating the economy and reducing unemployment for women. This can be done through government programs, local community municipals, or international programs.

Primary education and vocational training are essential for girls and young women. Through education, women will have the ability to get a wider variety of jobs and are more likely to be able to hold a job for a longer period of time with high compensation. Other creative and effective solutions have been implemented across the world. Delegates are tasked with creating a resolution that will help promote gender equality in Africa sustainably.

Chair's Expectations

Before you come to the conference, there are a few things I wanted to touch on as expectations for debate and how to make sure the day is as productive as possible!

First, while the purpose of this conference is first and foremost helping you learn more about world diplomacy and cooperation, that cannot happen if you do not come prepared to debate. Make sure to conduct lots of research into your nation's prior positions on sustainable development and know how to defend them! This will ensure you will be more productive in writing resolutions and giving substantive speeches that generate new ideas on the floor.

Second, be engaged! I'm very glad you've all decided to participate in Model UN. With the conference being online and it will be far more interesting if you can be present for the entire time we're in session with your cameras turned on to make sure there's lots of active participation.

Third, be respectful of the topic, its history, and your fellow delegates. The debate will be a lot more fun and engaging if everyone is respectful and understands that this topic is just as much about the people in Africa it affects as it is about the broader development and funding decisions.

Finally, have fun! We're looking forward to seeing you all this spring and seeing what you all bring to the table!

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