

SRMUN Atlanta 2015
Unifying Our Global Community through
Humanitarian Collaboration
November 19-21, 2015
Atlanta, GA
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Dear Delegates,

I would like to offer you a warm welcome to the SRMUN Atlanta 2015! My name is Devon Preston, and alongside my wonderful Assistant Director Victoria Suri-Beltran, I will be the Director for this year's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). As a dais we have come together to put forward two topics that we hope will foster great diplomacy and debate, as well as strengthen your abilities and understanding of the world we live in today - all the while keeping in mind this year's theme for the conference: *Unifying Our Global Community Through Humanitarian Collaboration*. We are hoping to see great work created from this body, and are committed to making this experience the very best for each participant.

The topics to be discussed for the Economic and Social Council are:

- I. Strengthening Sustainable Economic Growth Through the Protection of Natural Resources
- II. Promoting Economic Growth of Rural Areas through the Global Public Health Agenda

As the United Nations' "central platform for reflection, debate, and innovate thinking on sustainable development," the Economic and Social Council functions by engaging a wide variety of stakeholders in dialogue on sustainable development, and does so through programmatic cycles of meetings, each of which is accompanied by an annual theme to keep discussions sustained and focused forward. ECOSOC has also undergone reforms in the last decade to strengthen the Council at large, but with special attention to the implementation and follow-up on all major United Nations conference summits in the economic, social, environmental, and related fields.

In order to help facilitate your growth via this committee and conference as a delegate, we as a dais have worked tirelessly to prepare a background guide that will give you the very best starting position in research and understanding of the topics at hand. This being said, this guide is in no way and should not be misconstrued as an exhaustive source for your research. To be truly successful as a delegate, and make this experience the best it can be for both yourself and the other delegates within the committee, it is important to do more in-depth research beyond this guide. The technical appendix guide to this background guide is a great place to begin expanding your research, but do not feel as though you need stop there. Delve into the vast array of sources at your fingertips and emerge ready to tackle the topics laid out before you.

Delegations are required to submit a position paper addressing both of the aforementioned topics. These position papers should be no longer than two pages in length, and must be single-spaced. The best position papers provide clear understanding of your Member State's stance on the topic or issue, any history your Member State already has with the topic or issue, and plan of action in addressing the topics within the committee at conference. Strong, precise, and well-thought position papers are an amazingly effective way to prepare for the conference, and can be used as a guide throughout to help focus the debate within the committee. **Position papers are due no later than 11:59 EST on 30 October 2015 via the online submission system.** It may benefit you greatly as well to not focus solely on your own Member State, but the regional opinions and those of the international community at large. Please keep in mind the SRMUN plagiarism policy, which is found in the Delegate Preparation Guide. These guidelines are absolutely mandatory.

Victoria and I we want to wish you the very best of luck in your preparation for the conference!

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The History of the Economic and Social Council

In Article 10 of the United Nations Charter, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was created as one of the principal organs of the United Nations.¹ Established in 1946 the committee began with only 18 members, until its final and most recent change in 1973 that expanded the committee to 54 members in order to respond to the increasing necessity to handle the needs of developing countries.² Each member is elected by the General Assembly (GA) to serve a three year term, however after these terms are served they can automatically be renewed which results in Member States holding “near permanent” membership on the council.³ ECOSOC is comprised of 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional committees and 5 regional commissions, and it is the regulatory body for over 70 percent of the UN -human and financial resources.⁴

According to the committee mandate, “ECOSOC is responsible for promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress; identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems; facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”⁵ In addition to these functions, ECOSOC is responsible for investigating and conducting studies that relate to the effects of poor economic and social conditions including matters of health, education, culture and socio-economic indicators.⁶

Providing a better structure to execute development goals and sustainable development, ECOSOC utilizes a programmatic cycle to consolidate and organize its large variety of functions and powers. In this capacity, ECOSOC plays a key role in the coordination with policy makers, academics, foundations and over 3,200 registered non-governmental organizations, in order to create and focus on sustainable development within the world. Due to this they have an annual theme for each programmatic cycle, each section of the cycle are as follows: The High-Level segment provides guidance for sustainable development, holds reviews for the UN agenda and reviews trends within development every two years.⁷ The Integration Segment which runs annually is charged with balancing the economic, social and environmental factors of sustainable development.⁸ The Humanitarian Affairs Segment focuses on the integration and coordination of humanitarian efforts while the Operational Activities for Development Segment serves as a guide for UN funds and programs throughout the system. The Coordination and Management Meetings (CMM) handles information from expert bodies that report to the committee in order to ensure organization and development issues as well as handle specialized issues in certain regions and countries.⁹ In 2008 they added the Partnership forum which is responsible for creating a task-force between the private sector and foundations to aid governments in approaching development concerns.¹⁰ Since 2012 the Youth Forum has been added to the cycle in order to bring the voice of the youth into discussions concerning the Millennium Development Goals. All of these steps “serve as the central mechanism for the activities of the United Nations systems and its specialized agencies, and reviews trends and data to achieve cooperation among development goals supervises the subsidiary and expert bodies in the economic, social and environmental fields.”¹¹

In the last decade of its existence ECOSOC has continued to focus on sustainable development as well as the integration of the Millennium Goals. Their most recent initiatives have included promoting the rights of the

¹ “About ECOSOC” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed February 25, 2015).

² Ibid.

³ “Economic and Social Council UN Elections,” UNElections.org, <http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/34> (accessed February 27, 2015).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “What ECOSOC Does,” The United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/meetings/2005/hl2005/ECOSOCinfo> (accessed February 25, 2015).

⁶ Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml/>, June 26, 1945 (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁷ Ibid

⁸ “About ECOSOC” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed February 25, 2015).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

disabled, education, guidelines for crime prevention, and a focus and assistance for women of Palestine.¹² In reports of strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance, the committee has established resolution E/2013/L.20 they stress the importance of utilizing different non-governmental organizations to keep international bodies informed and ready to respond to urgent conditions.¹³ The committee works with specialized agencies that include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and commissions for various regions in order to support economic and social issues that handle the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, extending aid and support for the food crisis in Malawi, and building infrastructure to combat the rising debt and weak currency in Kenya.¹⁴

The President of the Economic and Social Council is His Excellency Martin Sajdik who was elected on 14 January of 2014.¹⁵ ECOSOC meets once a year for a duration of four-weeks, members are appropriated a spot based on geographical representations with a total of 14 spots to African Member States, 11 spots to Asian States, 6 to Eastern European Member States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean Member States, and 13 that are given to Western European and other Member States.¹⁶

The Members of the UN Economic and Social Council are:

ALBANIA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, BANGLADESH, BENIN, BOLIVIA, BOTSWANA, BRAZIL, BURKINA FASO, CHINA, COLOMBIA, CONGO, CROATIA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GHANA, GREECE, GUATEMALA, HAITI, HONDURAS, INDIA, ITALY, JAPAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KUWAIT, KYRGYZSTAN, MAURITANIA, NEPAL, PAKISTAN, PANAMA, PORTUGAL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SAN MARINO, SERBIA, SOUTH AFRICA, SUDAN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TOGO, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TURKMENISTAN, UGANDA, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ZIMBABWE.

¹² "2014 ECOSOC Resolutions" The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/res2014.asp> (accessed February 27, 2015).

¹³ "United Nations ECOSOC human affairs segment" The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/julyhls/has2013.shtml> (accessed March 6, 2015).

¹⁴ "ECOSOC holds general discussion on strengthening coordination of humanitarian assistance," Reliefweb, <http://reliefweb.int/report/china/ecosoc-holds-general-discussion-strengthening-coordination-humanitarian-assistance> (accessed March 7, 2015).

¹⁵ "ECOSOC" The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>, (accessed February 27, 2015).

¹⁶ Ibid.

I: Strengthening Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protection of Natural Resources

Introduction

Economic growth is a main goal of all Member States, both developed and developing. However, while pursuing economic growth, it is crucial that government leaders and elected officials focus on pursuing sustainable options. One of the biggest means of income for many Member States is the extraction and selling of natural resources, furthering the need for developing truly sustainable options for the future. In the interest of this pursuit, strides have already been made by the General Assembly, such as A/RES/64/236 from 2009 “in which it decided to organize the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development at the highest possible level in 2012. . .” and subsequently the outcome document from the Conference entitled “The future we want.”¹⁷ In just the first item from the outcome document, those at the conference noted that “[they], the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives. . . renew [their] commitment to sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations.”¹⁸ With this in mind, the General Assembly worked towards meaningful solutions, and the infrastructure needed to do such, which are represented in “The future we want” outcome document.

One of the major roadblocks to sustainable development is poverty, which is the greatest economic challenge we face globally.¹⁹ The three main overarching objectives and essential requirements of sustainable development are as follows: poverty eradication; changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption; and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development.²⁰ After the Rio+20 Summit in 2012, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emerged for the global community. It was reaffirmed that these goals should “not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action against the territorial integrity or political independence of any [Member] State.”²¹ An important distinction of the SDGs, as also noted in the documents coming from Rio+20, is that they are more so extensions and expansions of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); they find their standing on the solid foundation set by the MDGs, and seek only to complete the unfinished business of them and responding to new challenges.²² While the SDGs are an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development, they are also defined as aspirational global targets, with each government setting its own national targets with respect to their national circumstances and using the SDGs as a guide.²³ These goals also integrate economic, social, and environmental aspects, as these three prongs are all necessary to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.

Past Efforts

From the inception of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, it was apparent that some of the objectives were lofty challenges. Despite this fact, the national governments and leading institutions of the world have worked towards achieving the MDGs.²⁴ The efforts put forth by all parties involved has materialized into unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest global citizens.²⁵ Those same parties were all members of the Rio+20 Summit and are working together to continue the momentum generated by the MDGs into a post-2015 development agenda, which focuses most on sustainable development and translates into the Sustainable Development Goals.²⁶ These goals aim to complete or expand the work of the MDGs, rather than replace them. They are meant to recall what has been done to near the bar set by the MDGs, but to also show which areas of development still need to be addressed. The goals, summarized here, are quite overarching and far-reaching: ending

¹⁷ “Future We Want Outcome Document,” United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>, (accessed August 15, 2015).

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ “Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals,” United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal>, (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ “Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015.” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

poverty, ending hunger, enduring gender equality, ensuring clean water and sustainable energy, combatting climate change, promoting inclusive institutions and societies.

“The future we want” document reaffirms the UN and its Member States’ governments’ recognition of the need to achieve the SDGs

“by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration and restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges.”²⁷

These new goals are set before Member States not as mandates, but as aspirations to achieve as they continue to build up their own nations, their regions, and therefore the world around them.

Economic Growth and Natural Resources

It is one thing to note the issues at hand, and another thing completely to begin to work towards change. With a global focus shifting from the MDGs to the new SDGs, Member States are encouraged to make decisions and changes towards the future keeping in mind sustainable economic growth, and how to protect their resources for future generations while still benefiting from them in the here-and-now. In the short- to medium-term on the subject, it is thought that environmental policy and economic growth are in conflict with one another; increases in economic activity are thought to be bad for the environment, and vice versa, environmental policies are portrayed as dragging down growth.²⁸ When examined at length and from multiple dimensions, explicitly or implicitly, environmental regulation takes the form of defining and assigning or re-assigning property rights.²⁹ This is comparable to taking away or reducing a subsidy from a sector (polluter) that is financed by others (victims). This corrects a distortion in relative prices, suggesting that, implemented appropriately; environmental protection can be beneficial for the environment and the economy.³⁰ Many Member States have already begun to put together strategies towards building new models for sustainable economic growth, and many can be implemented in developed and developing countries alike. One such case is found in Canada, which has three paths to which they intend to increase sustainable economic growth.³¹ Another example can be found in the United Kingdom, who have begun focusing their efforts in “returning the UK to sustained and durable economic growth,” with special attention to “ensuring environmental assets are available to improve wellbeing and to facilitate future growth; and managing the risks to growth from adverse environmental events.”³²

Though work has been done already to begin minimizing the impact we have as a global community on the Earth itself, the progress thus far has not stopped our impact from growing. About a quarter of the earth’s land area is highly degraded (up from 15 percent in 1991) and 5.2 million hectares of forests are lost every year.³³ Rivers and lakes are drying up, groundwater aquifers are getting depleted, oceans are becoming acidified, and “more than 30 percent of global fisheries that are harvested are overfished.”³⁴ “27 percent of the world’s 845 species of reef-building corals have been listed as threatened and an additional 20 percent are considered near threatened, while

²⁷ “Future We Want Outcome Document,” United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>, (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁸ “Protecting the Environment and Economic Growth: Trade-Off or Growth-Enhancing Structural Adjustment?,” European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication7726_en.pdf (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ “Stimulating Sustainable Economic Growth,” Canadian International Development Agency, [http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/EconomicGrowth/\\$file/Sustainable-Economic-Growth-e.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/EconomicGrowth/$file/Sustainable-Economic-Growth-e.pdf) (accessed August 15, 2015).

³² Tim Everett, Mallika Ishwaran, Gian Paolo Ansaloni, and Alex Rubin, “Economic Growth and the Environment,” Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69195/pb13390-economic-growth-100305.pdf, March 2010, (accessed August 15, 2015).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

other species are disappearing from the planet at a rate more rapid than previously seen in human history.³⁵ Much of the change to the environment we see can be attributed to the 30 percent increase in greenhouse gas emissions in the last two decades.³⁶

The need for change is already present, and is sure to continue to grow in correlation with the world population's growth.³⁷ The global population is projected to reach 8 billion by 2030 and 9 billion by 2050, and 70 percent of those living in resource-intensive urban areas.³⁸ Cities will only become more populated by those years, and they are already responsible for 60-80 percent of energy consumption, 75 percent of carbon emissions, and consumption of 75 percent of the world's natural resources.³⁹ These rates would only increase with time, which is all the more incentive to find solutions now. At the same time 1.4 billion people still lack access to modern energy services and some 2.5 billion lack basic sanitation facilities.⁴⁰ Inequality is also on the rise; today the 1.2 billion poorest people account for 1 percent of the world's consumption while the billion richest consume 72 percent of the world's resources.⁴¹ Despite the existence of widespread poverty and under consumption by the poor, global utilization of resources and their associated impacts has already surpassed sustainable levels under which humanity is expected to operate safely (the safe operating space), resulting in climate change, biodiversity loss and changes in the global nitrogen cycle.⁴²

Within the "Future We Want" outcome document, the General Assembly reaffirmed many of its commitments in the vein of natural resources and conservation, through clauses such as clause 108 "we reaffirm our commitments regarding the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food. . .", clause 121 "we reaffirm our commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, to be progressively realized for our populations with full respect for national sovereignty. . .", and clause 127 "we reaffirm support for the implementation of national and subnational policies and strategies. . . using an appropriate energy mix to meet developmental needs. . .".⁴³ However, even with these reaffirmations, one of the core challenges of the post-2015 development agenda will be lifting one billion out of absolute poverty and also meet the needs of nine billion people in 2050 when it comes to energy, land, water, food, and material supply - all while keeping climate change, biodiversity loss, and other environmental impacts within acceptable limits.⁴⁴ The twin issues of reducing overconsumption/waste of natural resources and providing secure access to natural resources must be considered simultaneously, so as to not allow either resource extraction/use or disposal of waste/emissions pass the thresholds our world can withstand.⁴⁵

Managing the world's resources effectively and responsibly is already becoming paramount in our world today, and it will continue to power a socially equitable and environmentally benign economic growth.⁴⁶ The International Resource Panel (IRP) has drawn attention to both current practices and future opportunities for ensuring sustainable management of natural resources through its assessments over the last six years.⁴⁷ Some of the good experiences and technology advances for managing resources through improved productivity in the use of energy, land, water, and materials include:

- Energy: fossil fuel use by the pulp and paper industry in the United States declined by more than 50 percent between 1972 and 2002, largely through energy efficiency measures, power recovery through co-generation, and increased use of biomass.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "Future We Want Outcome Document," United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁴⁴ "Managing and Conserving the Natural Resource Base for Sustained Economic and Social Development," United Nations Environmental Programme, <http://www.unep.org/resourcepanel/Portals/50244/publications/IRP%20Think%20Piece%20Contributing%20to%20the%20SDGs%20Process.pdf>, 7 February 2014, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

- Water: In Australia, where GDP rose by 30 percent and water consumption was reduced in *absolute* terms by 40 percent during the same short period from 2001 to 2009
- Materials: substantial savings in material use have been realized in recent years through miniaturization and some by recycling. Much more can be achieved through improved durability of products and sharing of underutilized resources. For example, 80 percent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from iron/steel industries can be achieved in the recycling of scrap iron.⁴⁸

More opportunities for enhancing productivity lie not in specific technologies, but in policies and process that enable systemic improvements, cascades of use, and in synergies running through the whole production and consumption chains and life cycles of products. With many examples of these types of systemic improvements available, the question is begged why relatively few of these manifestly beneficial opportunities have been appropriated and disseminated on a global scale - the short answer being that there are still a variety of resource challenges at a local/domestic level that make it impossible to create a "one size fits all" solution.⁴⁹ Numerous factors come into play when considering how to effectively manage resources with sustainability in mind, such as: framework conditions under which innovations are encouraged; technology development and investment in resource-efficient technologies; education and awareness of resource productivity; and design at all levels (for products, services, cities, infrastructures, etc.) for sustainable resource management. Though many options are available or under serious development that address these factors, the need for visionary political and business leadership to foster the required policy coordination in the public and private domains needed to effectively decouple economic growth rates from escalating resource usage is still glaringly present in developed and developing countries alike.⁵⁰ Effective policy is necessary to ensure sustainable and responsible management of resources, but it can only be as effective as the bodies that oversee it. This is why it is so crucial that the United Nations and all the Member States within act now to tackle the challenges we are already beginning to face.

Conclusion

The world we live in today is the most accessible it has ever been, but it has come at a price. It is now time to reexamine how we maintain our levels of growth and consumption while still managing to preserve enough resources for our future generations to also enjoy and survive with the environment. John Stuart Mill stated in *Principles of Political Economy* that "If the earth must lose that great portion of its pleasantness which it owes to things that the unlimited increase of wealth and population would extirpate from it, for the mere purpose of enabling it to support a larger, but not a better or a happier population, I sincerely hope, for the sake of posterity, that they will be content to be stationary, long before necessity compels them to it."⁵¹ We edge ever closer now to this precipice, as we continue to deplete our world of that which makes it so vital to our being so rapidly. We must now make the effort to be smarter and more innovative in how we use the resources at our disposal, and how we can make our consumption more sustainable for future generations.

Committee Directive

In order for the world we live in to continue operating at the level it does, we must make changes now to ensure our longevity with the resources we have. There is no better committee to deal with the impact of Sustainable Economic Growth and Protection of Natural Resources than the Economic and Social Council. Delegates should be knowledgeable on what their own Member State is doing in endeavors to pursue more sustainable options for consumption, and how they are protecting their natural resource base. Delegates should also look for those Member States who have already put plans in place to examine if they are working, or if any of the methods one Member State uses can be applied effectively in their own. Delegates should also consider the Sustainable Development Goals at length, both with regards to how they expand upon the Millennium Development Goals which end this year, as well as what new challenges they address. Does environmental protection really mean a halt to economic growth? What natural resources are in the most danger? Could limits be imposed on a global scale as to how much

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Richard B. Howarth, "Sustainability, Well-Being, and Economic Growth," Center for Humans and Nature, <http://www.humansandnature.org/sustainability--well-being--and-economic-growth-article-116.php>, September 2012, (accessed August 15 2015).

consumption is allowed within a certain timeframe? These are just a few select questions that may prove beneficial to consider during your preparation.

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II. Promoting Economic Growth of Rural Areas through the Global Public Health Agenda

Introduction

The strain on economic resources and the extent by which an economy can grow is considerably affected by the state of the citizens that create that local, regional, or national economy. In recognizing the importance of health care systems, many institutions like that of the United Nations have established certain Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) that aim to meet certain measures of good health, such as addressing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. But despite being an essential part of a growing economy and decreasing poverty, millions living in the most impoverished Member States are without proper healthcare services and are exposed to even greater risks due to their economic position. Living on less than USD \$1 per day, 883 million people are living below the poverty line with a large portion of this population being represented in rural populations.⁵² Unlike their counterparts in urban centers people confined to rural areas have little to no access to proper health care services, thus leading to the prevalence of diseases of poverty. Diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrheal diseases and respiratory infections are among the most recognized amongst the global health organizations and yet remain to be neglected and categorized as issues isolated to developing or underdeveloped nations.⁵³ Rural poverty and lack of healthcare is a global phenomenon that ranges to all income countries alike.⁵⁴

Over 1.5 billion of the world's population are affected by a group of parasitic and bacterial diseases that are known as neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), including 800 million children.⁵⁵ Disproportionately affecting the most impoverished people, these diseases are considered to be an issue of negligence since many have been eliminated in most populations "except among the most marginalized".⁵⁶ This does not only lead to disability and pain amongst those infected they also contribute to greater and lasting issues of "malnutrition, cognitive impairment, and stunted growth".⁵⁷ The lack of proper health care services has shown affects on maternal health, school attendance, social isolation, ability to work, and infant mortality rates.⁵⁸ Regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have

⁵² "Agriculture and Poverty Reduction." The World Bank World Development Reports, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTWDRS/0,,contentMDK:21501332~pagePK:478093~piPK:477627~theSitePK:477624,00.html>, (Accessed May 6, 2015)

⁵³ Stevens, Phillip, and And The. "Diseases of Poverty." And the 10/90 Gap Diseases of Poverty and the 10/90 Gap, November 2004. <http://www.who.int/intellectualproperty/submissions/InternationalPolicyNetwork.pdf> (Accessed May 1,2015)

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "Thomson Reuters Foundation: Neglected Tropical Diseases," Thompson Reuters Foundation, <http://www.one.trust.org/spotlight/Neglected-tropical-diseases/?source=spotdrop> February 2015, (accessed 20 Apr. 2015).

⁵⁶ Global Health," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, June 2011, <http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/ntd/> (accessed 20 July 2015).

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ "Impact of NTDs." The END Fund, <http://www.end.org/whatwedo/impact>, (accessed June 05, 2015).

maintained the highest concentration of rural poverty and suffer from NTDs and other diseases alike, reinforcing more impoverished communities.⁵⁹

Neglected Tropical Diseases

One of the most pressing issues in health care services needed in rural areas would be systems set up to prevent the spread of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). Affecting more than one billion people in the poorest populations NTDs prevail and persist under the conditions of poverty and are especially connected to people in the most isolated conditions.⁶⁰ In agricultural or mostly rural areas communities lack a “strong political voice and so people affected by these tropical diseases have a low profile and status in public health priorities.”⁶¹ The spread of these diseases, despite most being treatable, has continued due to issues caused by unsafe drinking water, poor housing conditions and a lack of sanitation systems.⁶² Often times these NTDs are not deadly but instead fester for years infecting a larger amount of people, and as a result causes disabilities, disfigurement, and malnourishment.⁶³ Over 500,000 people die annually as a result of these complications and over 875 million children suffer malnutrition, cognitive impairment, and stunted growth due to NTDs⁶⁴. Often times these keep children away from school and adults unable to work, which is correlated with the affects that NTD’s have on the wage-earning capacity in the future.⁶⁵

While treating these diseases is relatively cheap, the obstacle of establishing health care services in rural places has proved to halt these health care initiatives. For example the World Health Organization determined that kits needed to test and treat malaria costs approximately USD \$0.50; with these kits, cases of Malaria would be around 150 million, lowering from almost 200 million in the first year.⁶⁶ However, due to a lack of funding and organization by state and non-state actors, NTDs continue to be a product of poor housing and sanitation, poor health, and unsafe water. Lack of health care causes these mostly treatable diseases to become lifelong causes of pain and disablement and in turn resulting in economic and social isolation.⁶⁷ Programs such as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) have worked towards their goal of vaccinating 243 million of the poorest children in the world while the Partnership for Disease Control Initiatives (PDCI) have begun to collaborate with pharmaceutical companies, WHO, and NGO’s in order to provide health care services.⁶⁸ In Uganda they have donated pharmaceutical drugs in order to eliminate six common NTD’s and have started to build sustainable facilities on a country-wide program.⁶⁹ Reflected in the annual ministerial review of 2009 by ECOSOC, Member States such as China devoted 850 billion Yuan for their major health programme and have resolved to begin to increase coverage of health care services throughout the rural areas.⁷⁰ Despite these advancements in the way that rural health care is being addressed, it still has not closed the gap that exists between health care systems between urban and rural areas. Despite being amongst the most impoverished, the average person in Sub-Saharan Africa will devote \$30.00 from their earnings to health care.⁷¹ This is especially difficult since most people in these areas are depending on an economy based in agriculture with limited or no access to state programs such as social security. This rivals their counterparts in urban areas which have more access to these programs or to jobs that provide more income.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "NTD Overview." The END Fund. <http://www.end.org/whatwedo/ntdoverview>, (accessed June 07, 2015).

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "Impact of NTDs." The END Fund, <http://www.end.org/whatwedo/impact>, (accessed June 05, 2015).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "Deployment of Community Health Workers across Rural Sub-Saharan Africa: Financial Considerations and Operational Assumptions." World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/91/4/12-109660/en/>, (accessed June 06, 2015)

⁶⁷ "Why are some tropical diseases called “neglected”?”, World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/features/qa/58/en/>, January 2012, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁶⁸ "Global Public Health." Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/reportcard/PDFs/Public_Health_Report_Card_Backgrounder_June%202014.pdf, June 2014, (accessed June 25, 2015).

⁶⁹ "Global Public Health." Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/reportcard/PDFs/Public_Health_Report_Card_Backgrounder_June%202014, 2011, (accessed June 07, 2015).

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Past Efforts

In the last two decades many institutions have taken a role in addressing the need to focus on targeting the eradication of poverty and sustainable development through the global health agenda. In 2003 the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) took on “an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development”.⁷² More specifically, the Millennium Development Goals highlight issues such as high child mortality rates, poor maternal health, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, as well as addressing malaria and other tropical diseases.⁷³ The lack of proper healthcare services affects a person’s ability to contribute to their society; this includes the ability to attend school, for women to seek equality in their community, and for many to seek a better economic position in their capacity to sustain their life with proper nutrition and better living conditions. Although the Rural Poverty Report of 2011 revealed that 325 million rural people were lifted out of extreme poverty, it has done little to offset the more than 70 percent of those that continue to live in extreme poverty within rural areas today.⁷⁴ In areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa or parts of South America and South Asia, livelihoods, food security and agricultural systems are dependent on the health of those in the community. This leads to severe repercussions when the framework of their local economies are interrupted. For example in 2001 it was reported by Kenya’s Ministry of Agriculture that 58 percent of deaths were caused by AIDS which led to the loss of about 50 percent of agricultural extension farmers in sub-Saharan Africa.⁷⁵ The result of prolonged illnesses and diseases that spread so quickly is that it undermines actions taken to help reduce poverty while also crippling the ability for infrastructure to develop and to prevent the spread of future diseases.⁷⁶

In 2012 the World Health Organization set a roadmap that laid out targets to curb these diseases, and it was this initiative with support from donor governments, pharmaceutical companies and NGO’s that the London Declaration of 2012 was established which seeks to “unite to combat NTD’s”.⁷⁷ This goal aims to target the infrastructure that supports health care in all areas by enlisting local, regional and international organizations. By 2020 their goal is to fill in the gaps of health care systems including extending drug access programs, creating adequate funding to NTD programs, and to extend these programs to isolated areas.⁷⁸ Additionally, players in the global health field have moved to confront the issue of tending to rural populations and creating a better framework to address the resurgent periods of infectious diseases.⁷⁹ The World Health Assembly made progress to address the ability of Member States to prevent, control and eliminate NTD’s.⁸⁰ Furthermore it has been established by the United Nations that providing “universal health coverage” is in the post 2015 development agenda.⁸¹

An immense amount of progress has been seen in the arena to improve systems of health care in all under developing and developed Member States. The Economic and Social Council, the World Health Organization, the General Assembly and countless other organizations and committees have undertaken in meeting the goal of eradicating diseases. Not only have international and country goals been geared towards seeing success in ensuring the right to be healthy, the issues of rural development and health care systems has begun to be addressed like never before. Despite the fact that many of these international bodies have named universal health coverage as a crucial tool to “increase healthy life expectancy to reduce poverty and to promote equity, and to achieve sustainable

⁷² UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development: Progress in Partnerships. The United Nations report on Policies into Practice. (Accessed 25 April 2015).

⁷³ UN Millennium Goals. United Nations Millennium Summit. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>, September 2000, (accessed April 20, 2015).

⁷⁴ "Rural Poverty Reduction." The Elgar Companion to Development Studies, http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/briefingpapers/ruralpov/pdf/ifad_rural_poverty.pdf 2006, (accessed 20 April 2015).

⁷⁵ "HIV/AIDS, food security and rural development," United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS, http://www.un.org/ga/aids/ungassfactsheets/html/fsfood_en.htm, June 2001, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ "Neglected Tropical Diseases," Thompson Reuters Foundation, <http://www.one.trust.org/spotlight/Neglected-tropical-diseases/>, February 2015 (accessed June 4, 2015.)

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ "Global Public Health." Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/reportcard/PDFs/Public_Health_Report_Card_Backgrounder_June%202014.pdf, June 2014, (accessed June 25, 2015).

⁸⁰ "Global Public Health," Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/reportcard/PDFs/Public_Health_Report_Card_Backgrounder_June%202014.pdf, June 2014, (accessed August 15, 2015)

⁸¹ Ibid.

development all together” there still remains a lot of work in specifically acting to the issues in rural development and in establishing services and care that is needed.⁸²

Conclusion

When addressing the inadequacy of the systems set by non-governmental organizations, governments, and the international community, it is essential to consider that isolation remains one of the largest issues. A lack of infrastructure includes inadequate access to water, no electricity and shortage of medical equipment.⁸³ The construction of these infrastructures is not only difficult to establish but even more difficult to properly fund and continue. Despite the fact that many MDG’s are health related due to a lack of proper local health infrastructure that provides professionals, information, and treatments to all the areas that need it, many of the numbers lack improvements. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that only 150,000 of the twenty-three million Africans who are infected with HIV/AIDS receive the antiretroviral treatments, in addition to 35 million HIV-infected people that live in the developing world.⁸⁴ Although many private, international and national institutions have tried to provide funding to impact health care systems the effects of rampant poverty, neglect from governments and lack of technology has dampened on possible advancements. In rural regions of Tanzania many inequalities are apparent as a result of disparities in medical equipment and technology.⁸⁵ The United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS estimated that fewer than twenty percent of all infected individuals mostly living in rural areas of Tanzania are receiving any type of treatment⁸⁶.

It has recently become an established goal to “move away from reliance on out-of-pocket payments towards a system of repayment and pooling to ensure equitable access to health care;”⁸⁷ A part of the dialogue of ECOSOC concerning the global public health agenda has been the work needed to sustain better system of external funding in conjunction with national interests of the Member States that require help⁸⁸. The World Bank has published information stating that foreign aid dependency of thirty percent or more for public health systems exists in twenty-three countries.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the foreign aid provided to Member States such as Rwanda and Ethiopia subsidizes over fifty percent of their government health spending which has established issues of dependency and interrupted aid.⁹⁰ Functioning health services are vital for increased numbers of development and a growing economy, and because of this it is important for institutions from the government to the United Nations to cooperate and coordinate aid in order to be more effective. In an effort to further the establishments of health systems ECOSOC has engaged in dialogue concerning the importance of microfinance as a platform for reaching rural and impoverished areas, which would provide sustainability and a method to reach the most rural areas.⁹¹ Microfinance institutions are seen to provide financial services to low income populations and to therefore connect outside services and health products to rural areas through finance of health loans, savings and insurance.

⁸² “Universal Health Coverage at the center of sustainable development: contributions of sciences, technology and innovations to health systems strengthening,” Economic and Social Council, http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/julyhls/pdf13/concept_paper-uhc_during_ecosoc_amr.pdf, July 2013, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁸³ At Economic and Social Council Partnerships Forum, Speakers Stress Investment in Health-Care Systems Critical to Achieving Post-2015 Agenda Targets | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” UN News Center, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6691.doc.htm> (accessed July 4, 2015).

⁸⁴ Asad Moten, Daniel F. Schafer, and Elizabeth Montgomery. “A prescription for health inequity: building public health infrastructure in resource-poor settings,” US Library of Medicine, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3529314/>, December 2012, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ “Achieving the Global Public Health Agenda,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/pdfs/achieving_global_public_health_agenda.pdf, 2009, (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “Global Public Health.” Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/reportcard/PDFs/Public_Health_Report_Card_Backgrounder_June%202014.pdf, June 2014, (accessed June 25, 2015).

Committee Directive

As a committee, Member States should focus on ensuring rural populations have better practices and systems for healthcare services. As established from many regions in the world today, the rate by which rural communities are provided these services has been profoundly inhibited. The committee should look towards current issues facing the health of a rural community more specifically the way by which Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) are handled where they are most prevalent. Delegates should understand and address the need for healthcare when approaching the economy of a rural area as far as health effecting labor, fertility, birth, and death rates. Given all the information presented above, delegates should discuss and examine the following: has your Member State's government or a NGO been successful in instituting programs or initiatives on the issue? Who are the dynamic players that have a role in solving this issue? Delegates should also address the factors of healthcare to rural populations including the dependency on social services, educational facilities and how can this system become more invested in better healthcare systems.

Technical Appendix Guide

Topic I - Strengthening Sustainable Economic Growth Through the Protection of Natural Resources

1. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal>, 2014.

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

As they are mentioned early in the guide, the Sustainable Development Goals have been copied here for quick reference.

“What Is Sustainable Development?” International Institute of Sustainable Development. <https://www.iisd.org/sd/> 2013.

This source has a brief but insightful overview of what sustainable development truly entails, and what it at its core can be defined as. On top of that, there are links throughout the main page and the entire IISD website that can aid you in learning more about sustainable development, and in many cases, what work has already been done or began.

“Profitability is sustainability: 17 ideas on business and development,” The Guardian, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/jul/30/profitability-is-sustainability-17-ideas-on-business-and-development>, 2015.

This article brings forward a very prominent idea we see both at national and international levels - what role can the private sector play in development, and how can that best benefit the most people all at once? The article has considerations for the business, the government, and the civil societies involved in such interactions, and how each should view this new path towards sustainability.

“Eliminating Extreme Inequality: A Sustainable Development Goal, 2015–2030,” Ethics and International Affairs, <http://www.ethicsandinternationalaffairs.org/2014/eliminating-extreme-inequality-a-sustainable-development-goal-2015-2030/>, 2014.

Examining inequality is a key factor in determining how certain member states, and thereby the world as a whole, moves forward in the charge for sustainable development. This source does an excellent job of really prodding the reader forward to how inequalities are brought about, the dimensions they take, and how to move past those same things. It also contains a wealth of knowledge in the article’s own source material.

Sustainable Harvest International, <http://www.sustainableharvest.org/home/>, 2015

While not a news article or a deep source material, this TAG was included to give all delegates an idea of already in-place efforts that are being applied and having real world impacts. Delve into the website and learn about the methods that Sustainable Harvest International uses to really foster growth and development in those people and regions in which it invests, due to the help of donors wishing to see a better future for our world.

Earth Sharing, <http://earthsharing.org/>, 2015.

Another already in-place organization that has affiliates in three different countries, Earth Sharing is all about the world's resources being pooled and preserved, so that all of the world's people in need can be helped and everyone can benefit from the only source of life we have. No one person owns the world, and Earth Sharing is determined that everyone should therefore have access to and benefit from its resources.

"What is Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development?" Conserve Energy Future, <http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/what-is-environmental-sustainability-and-sustainable-development.php>, 2015.

Examining the difference between the two concepts in the article's title is going to be paramount for delegates to be properly prepared for this topic. While they seem to be interchangeable, it is important to recognize and address the differences between them. This article is not dense in the subject matter, and is merely meant to serve to provoke more thought into the idea on the part of the delegate.

"Environmental Sustainability," Microsoft, <https://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/en-us/working-responsibly/principled-business-practices/environmental-sustainability/>, 2015.

This is another example of what private corporations are trying to work towards to aid governments and NGOs alike in their efforts towards a sustainable development ideal and future for our world. It may serve as a smart source for ideas on how to go about setting up methods of fostering new methods that integrates many moving parts in the greater machine of sustainable development.

Topic II - Promoting Economic Growth of Rural Areas through the Global Public Health Agenda

"Advancing the Global Health Agenda," UN Chronicle, <http://unchronicle.un.org/article/advancing-global-health-agenda/>, 2011.

This article was published in 2011 but outlines the major issues we still face when addressing the health care agenda. It also touches upon the complexity that surrounds trying to institute these programs in the past and the current mindsets of organizations and Member States.

"Public Health Capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean," World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/management/publichealthcapacity.pdf>.

This document focuses on Latin America and the Caribbean including the persistence of certain diseases and the role of Essential Public Health Functions (EPHF's) on public health practices in rural areas.

"Improving the health of the World's Poorest People," Population Reference Bureau, http://www.prb.org/pdf04/improvingtheHealthbrief_Eng.pdf.

This article focuses on the need of developing Member States and health inequalities that exist in our world today. The author also includes a lot of research about the gap between developed and developing nations as well as the way progress is measured.

"Global Evidence on inequalities in rural health protection," International Labour Office, <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=51297>, 2015

The ILO addresses the financial aspects of providing health care as well as comparisons of rural areas and their urban counterparts up until the most recent year to collect data which is 2015.

"Rural health inequalities: data and decisions," The Lancet, [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(15\)60910-2/fulltext?rss=yes](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(15)60910-2/fulltext?rss=yes), May 2015.

This article goes through a lot of great statistics of rural poverty and its relation to poor health care systems as well as detailing issues of staff access deficit, financial deficit, out of pocket costs and policy.

“New ILO Report: The world needs more rural health workers,” Intra-Health, <http://www.intrahealth.org/blog/new-ilo-report-world-needs-more-rural-health-workers-lot-more#.Vbr0xflVgoI>.

This article provides information and overview of the United Nations International Labor Organizations report and the efficiency needed to administer health care workers and proper systems.

James Buchan, Ian D. Couper, Viroj Tangcharoensathien, Khampasong Thepannya, Wanda Jaskiewicz, Galina Perfilieva, and Carmen Dolea, “Early implementation of WHO recommendations for the retention of health workers in remote and rural areas,” The World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/91/11/13-119008/en/>, May 2013.

An article that gives examples of WHO recommendations and how they have been intended to be implemented.