

# BACKGROUND BRIEF

Economic and Social Council  
World Scout Jamboree Model UN 2019

**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



## What is the role of the Economic and Social Council?

Chapter X of the Charter of the United Nations (1945) established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a founding body and one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN). ECOSOC indirectly oversees the allocation of 70% of UN resources through its oversight of 14 specialized agencies and 13 functional and regional commissions.

The Council serves as the primary body for policy dialogue on economic, social, cultural, educational, and health-related topics; to advise and coordinate the activities of Member States and other UN entities on matters within this mandate; and to lead discussion on the implementation of the international development framework. ECOSOC has undergone several reforms since its inception; in the 1960s and 1970s, developing Member States broadened the agenda of the UN and sought a stronger focus on urgent issues such as the promotion of development and the elimination of poverty.

General Assembly resolution 2847 (XXVI) (1971) increased ECOSOC membership from 27 to 54 in order to better reflect the UN's economic and geographic diversity. The General Assembly then adopted resolution 32/197 in 1977 to address the "Restructuring of economic and social sectors of the United Nations System" and to improve ECOSOC's effectiveness by increasing coordination with its subsidiary bodies. To avoid any duplication of work due to broad mandates, General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 1995 clarified that its role is to provide policy guidance while ECOSOC's focus is on coordination of work.

ECOSOC acts as a policy forum for global leaders, especially concerning the integration of sustainable development efforts; and provides a platform of accountability for all levels of monitoring and reporting on universal commitments. In 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/305 reiterating that ECOSOC "should be guided by the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and flexibility."

## Governance, Structure, and Membership

ECOSOC is comprised of 54 members, each of which is elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.<sup>12</sup> The members are elected according to the geographical distribution of UN Member States to ensure representation from all regions and levels of development.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six primary organs of the UN. Under the authority of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), ECOSOC is mandated to address economic and social matters. It submits an annual report to the General Assembly. 4 African States, 11 to Asian States, six to Eastern European States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean States, and 13 to Western European and Other States. Each member has one representative and one vote in ECOSOC, and all decisions are made by a simple majority of those members present and voting.

ECOSOC is governed by a President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur, in tandem with a Bureau consisting of five representatives: the President and four Vice-Presidents. The current Council President is Inca Rhonda King who was elected as the 74th President in July 2018. All of these representatives are elected to one-year terms at the outset of each session. The Bureau is responsible for setting ECOSOC's agenda, devising action plans, and collaborating with the Secretariat on administrative duties.<sup>18</sup> Its presidency rotates equally among regional blocs.

ECOSOC meets twice annually for one organizational session and one substantive session. Organizational sessions are dedicated to administrative aspects, such as agenda setting and elections to the Bureau take place. During substantive sessions, meetings are divided into five segments focusing on separate thematic aspects of the Council's work.

## Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The Charter of the United Nations mandates ECOSOC to “make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters” including human rights and freedoms, to the General Assembly and its specialized agencies. ECOSOC may also provide information and assist the Security Council when addressing humanitarian crises, such as the Ebola crisis, natural disaster response, and in addressing the situation in Haiti.

As emphasized by recent reforms accentuating this role, ECOSOC also provides coordination, monitoring, and advice to programs, agencies, and funds on international development policies and their implementation. Examples of this coordination role include facilitating cooperation between economic institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1998 and establishing in 2007 what has become ECOSOC's High-Level Segment. ECOSOC fulfills its mandate both through its subsidiary bodies and in consultation of a broad range of civil society organizations (CSOs).

## Special Meetings on Emergency Situations

There are more than 3,900 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with consultative status that may attend and participate in various UN meetings, conferences, and special sessions to voice their concerns to the international community. Consultative status is given by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs, which was established in 1946 and is comprised of 19 Member States. The Committee on NGOs directly reports to ECOSOC on the procedural and substantive matters raised by CSOs. ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 of 1996 defines the principles, eligibility requirements, rules, procedures, obligations, and responsibilities for NGOs and the UN in establishing the consultative relationship. In the latest report from June 2018 session, the Committee granted consultative status to 209 NGOs, deferred an additional 223 NGOs for consideration in 2019, and reviewed quadrennial reports.

## Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

Beginning with the operational activities for the development segment, from 27 February to 1 March, several 2018 ECOSOC sessions have reflected the Council's priorities of repositioning the UN development system and strategies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The 2018 Partnerships Forum further established ECOSOC's interest in improving coordination with private organizations to better support the development community.

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/ecosoc-partnerships-forum>

## ECOSOC Partnerships Forum



Bill Clinton, Founder of the Clinton Foundation and former President of the United States, delivers the keynote address at the 2015 Partnerships Forum of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on the theme, "The role of partnerships in achieving the post-2015 development agenda: Making it happen". UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

## Conclusion

ECOSOC plays a key role in coordinating activities and programs through the expansive UN system for humanitarian, development, and various other issues. The Council has demonstrated a commitment to mobilizing resources and building efforts to tackle key priority issues, including the promotion of development and the formation and maintenance of international partnerships. It has also initiated collaboration across UN entities to ensure political commitment toward a new development framework and the SDGs, which the Secretary-General has called a "paradigm shift" for operations across the UN. The contributions of the Council, both as a forum for discussion and in providing policy guidance, are significant, and its role will continue to grow in the "post-2015 development agenda." As President King highlighted as her priorities, clear organizational leadership, strong monitoring mechanisms, and a revitalized ECOSOC are necessary to address the challenges to achieving the SDGs by 2030.

## TOPIC 1: ENGAGING YOUTH IN BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



What is the participation of youth in promoting sustainable development?

<https://unchronicle.un.org/article/youth-lead-way-more-connected-and-sustainable-world>

<https://sdgactioncampaign.org/2018/02/09/youth-leaders-engage-with-un-sdg-action-campaign-during-ecosoc-youth-forum/>

<https://sdgsinaction.com/>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/>

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/ecosoc-partnerships-forum>

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/ecosoc-youth-forum>

<https://www.youthforum.org/ecosoc-youth-forum-and-commission-social-development-bring-attention-youth-poverty-and-prosperity>



## TOPIC 2: REDUCING GLOBAL INEQUALITY



### What is the problem? What is global inequality?

You can get an answer to this important question at: It this very short video (2 minutes and 12 seconds) designed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) you will learn what is global inequality and how it affects millions of communities living in extreme poverty while enormous rewards go to people at the very top. <http://www.oecd.org/social/inequality.htm>

**10%**

The richest 10 percent earn up to 40 percent of total global income.

**217 years**

At the current rate of progress, the World Economic Forum says it will take 217 years to close the gender gap in employment opportunities and pay.

**300%**

In developing countries, rural women are up to three times more likely to die in childbirth than women living in urban centres.

*"Equality refers to our qualities to be treated as equals. It suggests that all humans have a level of sameness. Yet, we know that individuals are unique with specific skills, talents, and perspectives. We know that social, cultural and political factors value some experiences over others.*

*So is achieving equality possible? In many respects, equality is the ultimate goal. We all wish to see a world absent of discrimination. A world where all people have equal opportunities. A world with equal access to and control over resources, benefits, and services. It is through equitable processes in which people obtain equality. It is through the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities, and the recognition that different needs should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalances in the current system".*

<https://centreforglobalequality.org/student-voice/is-global-equality-possible/>



### Are there different types of inequality?

**Yes**, there are different types of inequality. Please watch the video GOAL 10: Reduced Inequalities to learn about them. It will take you just one minute!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wjcE-1-OdQ>

**THE  
80 RICHEST PEOPLE OWN  
THE SAME WEALTH  
AS THE 3.5 BILLION  
POOREST PEOPLE**



Reduce inequalities within and among countries

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

**Sustainable Goal 10, Reduced Inequalities.** What is the goal and why is it important? What are some examples of inequality? These are some of the very important questions that you can find answers to in this link: [https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/16-00055j\\_Why-it-Matters\\_Goal10\\_Equality\\_new-icon.pdf](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/16-00055j_Why-it-Matters_Goal10_Equality_new-icon.pdf)

**More specifically, can we actually achieve equality for everyone in this world?  
Read what this official UN material indicates!**



**Do you like sketches?** Check this and in other sketches to learn about **GOAL 10** and about the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) at: <http://www.maurotoselli.com/sustainable-development-goals-sketchnotes.html>

You can also check this link about women and equality: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2015/12/infographic-human-rights-women>

## Why addressing inequality matters?



<https://unchronicle.un.org/article/goal-10-why-addressing-inequality-matters>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

What are the negative consequences of wealth?



# GOAL 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES

BY: MARGREET DE HEER



THE **HUMAN RIGHTS** OF ALL PEOPLE  
MUST BE PROTECTED AND RESPECTED!

1. PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY  
GET SUPPORT AND ACCESS TO  
**ECONOMIC GROWTH**

WE MUST  
MAKE SURE:



2. LAWS AND PRACTICES DO **NOT DISCRIMINATE**  
AGAINST ANYBODY

EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITIES  
AND RIGHTS



3. DISADVANTAGED AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE  
MUST BE **PROTECTED**

REPRESENTATION  
IN PUBLIC LIFE



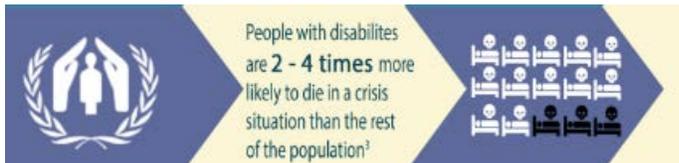
4. PEOPLE WHO LEAVE ONE COUNTRY TO LIVE IN  
ANOTHER BENEFIT FROM **LAWS TO PROTECT THEM**

WELCOME!  
YOU HAVE  
RIGHTS



# EQUALITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

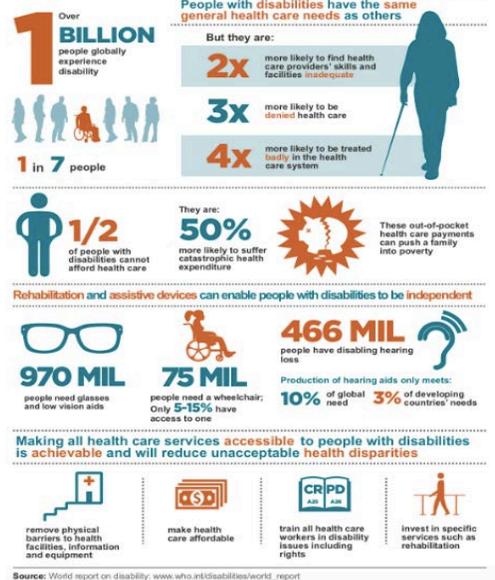
[http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/animating-my-thoughts-about-disability?cid=ECR TT\\_worldbank\\_EN\\_EXT](http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/animating-my-thoughts-about-disability?cid=ECR TT_worldbank_EN_EXT)



<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2017/02/Humanitarian-Action-Infographic.jpg>



## Better health for people with disabilities



## Addressing global inequality



### How can THE WORLD solve it?

- Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries
- Encourage official development assistance and financial flows
- Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies

## What can be done?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HZ1HdLzEs>

What countries have been somehow successful reducing inequalities?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptdqs88Jd5Q>