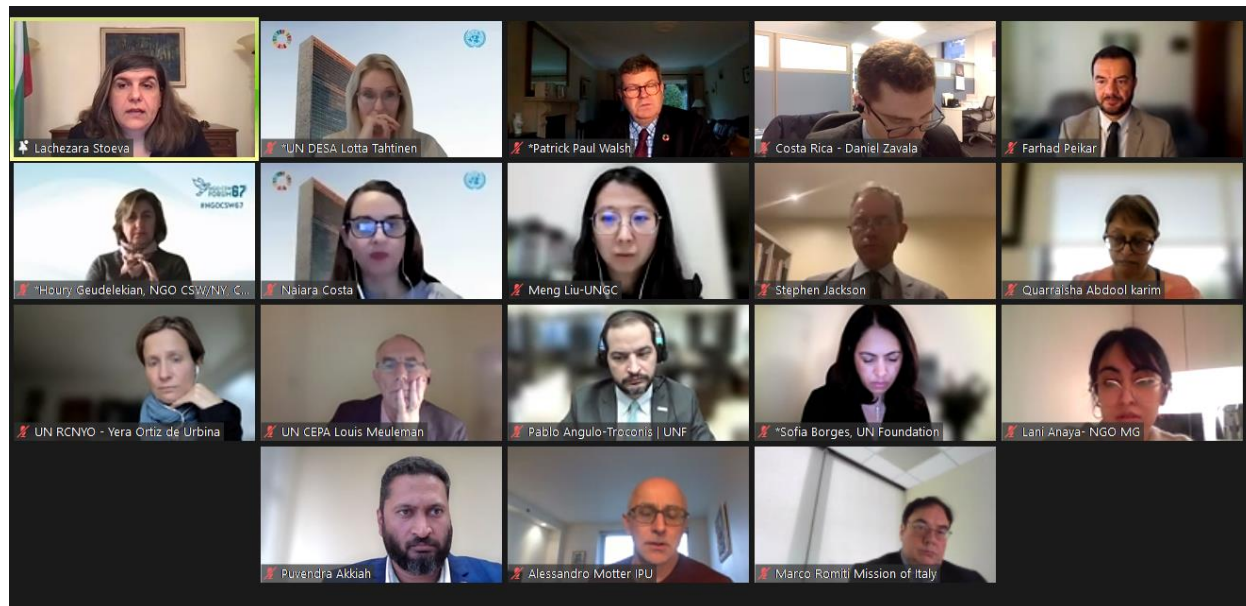


Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group to the ECOSOC President on the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum

Expert Group Meeting 30 November 2022

Summary



1. Background:

Further to General Assembly resolution ([A/RES/75/290A](#)) on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the **2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum** will be held on **31 January** next year on the main theme of the ECOSOC and the July session of the [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#) “Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels.” Multiple actors and stakeholders are expected to participate in the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum, including UN Member States, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, as well as international organizations, parliamentarians, local governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, scientists, academia, women, youth and others.

The General Assembly has requested that the annual ECOSOC Partnership Forum be organized in consultation with stakeholders and allow interactive discussions among all stakeholders to provide impetus to the work ahead of the Council and the HLPF.

To support inclusive preparations, the ECOSOC President, H.E. Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva, has established an informal **Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group** to advise her on the organization of the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum. The list of Members of the Advisory Group can be found [here](#).

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On 30 November 2022, DESA and the United Nations Foundation collaborated in the organization of an Expert Group Meeting (EGM), bringing together members of the Multi-Stakeholders Advisory Group to compile their proposals for the Partnership Forum programme and ideas to support outreach and mobilization towards the Forum.

More information:

- About the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum: <https://sdgs.un.org/events/ecosoc-partnership-forum-2023>
- Members of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory on the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum: <https://padlet.com/romanetholome/1rshhrky76fvgsam>
- Padlet with highlights from EGM discussions: <https://padlet.com/jraye33/EGM2023>
- Side-events: Apply by **16 December 2022** – [Here](#)

A summary of the discussions held during the EGM can be found below.

2. Opening Remarks:

Ms. Sofia Borges (*Senior Vice President and Head of the New York Office UN Foundation*) stressed that 2023 will be a pivotal year for the SDGs as it marks the midway point to 2030 while the SDGs implementation is backsliding due to lingering effects of the pandemic, an unsteady macroeconomic outlook, a rise in violent conflicts, misinformation, and hate speech. However, she stressed that the SDGs can still be achieved by doubling down on the pace of implementation, with the Partnership Forum as the kick-starter and a first stop on the roadmap to the 2023 SDG Summit. She noted that the UN Foundation exists to incubate effective partnerships and highlighted two examples: 1) Partnerships with youth, especially from countries with large populations of young people and where most future generations will be born, so they can be designers of their own future and 2) Partnerships with civil society to strengthen the inclusion of diverse voices at the UN.

Ms. Marion Barthélemy (*Director, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, UN DESA*) emphasized that the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum will be a strategic moment to build momentum towards the SDG Summit and to discuss how to scale up SDG implementation through collaboration and participation. She explained that the Partnership Forum is expected to engage countries, the UN system, including international financial institutions, as well as international organizations, parliamentarians, local governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, scientists, academia, women, youth and other stakeholders. Ms. Barthélemy noted that the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum will be preceded by a virtual Partnership Exchange, on 30 January. The 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum will consist of plenary sessions held in-person, and 6 informal spotlight sessions held in hybrid format. She then summarized preliminary findings from the [online stakeholder consultation](#), done in preparation for the Forum. In total, 724 inputs were received from stakeholders based in 107 countries with responses coming from many sectors. The biggest participation was from NGOs, followed by education and academic institutions. She noted that DESA is currently reviewing all inputs and preparing a summary report to be launched in early January and that all responses are already available at the [Forum's webpage](#). Finally, she shared initial insights from the prep-survey that was shared with the Members of the Advisory Group prior to the EGM. Respondents had indicated that they expect the [2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum](#) to facilitate the fostering of alliances between the UN and all other

sectors to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Additionally, members of the Advisory Group had proposed a few themes to be discussed during the event, including:

- *SDG Localization, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Cities*
- *Using Science, Technology and Innovation to Accelerate the 2030 Agenda*
- *Resilient Local Finances in times of crises*
- *Transforming Education for Sustainable Development*
- *Enhancing regional capacity for manufacturing vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics*
- *Addressing worsening inequalities and its impact on sustainable development*
- *Addressing Gender Based Violence and its direct influence on development and peace*

3. Session 1: 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum - Proposals for the thematic focus of discussions

In this session, participants discussed proposals for the thematic focus of the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum and its informal spotlight sessions, including strategies that consider the interlinked nature of the SDGs, processes that support enabling environments for partnerships at all levels and potential contributions to the 2023 SDG Summit.

Initial reflections

Ms. Maria Azul Schwartzman (Youth Climate Council Global Alliance) emphasized that when thinking about the SDGs, the word that comes to mind is “*momentum*”. Momentum needs to be built again towards the SDGs. She also noted that the UNFCCC COP26 and COP27 had highlighted two issues on the financing aspect of climate action: 1) how to fund climate change adaptation and mitigation and 2) how to move money from the Global North to the Global South. She recommended generating a strategy to create new “momentum” for the 17 Goals and having the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum focus discussions around climate financing.

Prof. Patrick Paul Walsh (Vice President for Education and Director, SDG Academy, SDSN) proposed for the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum to focus on the “[Our Common Agenda](#)” report by the Secretary-General as a key enabler to getting back on track on SDG implementation. He referred to the positive example of the “[Transforming Education Summit](#)” and recommended for “Transforming Education” to be one of the themes discussed during the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum. Prof. Walsh also suggested for the Partnership Forum to discuss SDG financing, including the establishment of partnerships with intergovernmental banks as well as promoting microfinance.

Discussion

During the ensuing exchange, the members of the Advisory Group highlighted a number of key issues, including:

- The importance of public-private partnerships in accelerating SDG implementation.
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement requires an enabling environment, including the protection of civic space, as well as tailored approaches for fostering partnerships and for sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources at all levels.
- The ECOSOC Partnership Forum should be the “Champion” for SDG 17, while acting as a “marketplace” for all actors to achieve all the SDGs.

- The ECOSOC Partnership Forum should showcase successful partnerships, platforms and mechanisms and focus on success stories on the ground.
- Consideration should be given to how the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum could discuss the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR).
- A number of proposals were made for the focus of the six informal 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum spotlight sessions, including:
 - Knowledge sharing and building partnerships between different knowledge systems, including indigenous knowledge;
 - Financing for the SDGs;
 - Ensuring meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including youth and persons with disabilities;
 - Ensuring access to quality/transformational education, health care, universal access to vaccines and social care;
 - Science, technology, and innovation for the SDGs.
 - Localization of the SDGs.
 - SDG synergies.

4. Session 2: Strengthening Outreach for the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum

In this session, participants discussed ideas to strengthen engagement and outreach in the lead up to the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum. Participants also shared suggestions about how to follow up on the discussions and recommendations of the Forum, including in connection with other ECOSOC meetings and processes, the [HLPF \(July 2023\)](#), and the [2023 SDG Summit](#).

Initial reflections

Ms. Ms. Maria Yera Ortiz (Deputy Director of the Regional Commissions NY Office) shared remarks on behalf of **Ms. Rosa Malango** (Director, United Nations Regional Commissions' Office). Ms. Ortiz stressed that leveraging existing networks and platforms at the regional and country level would be an effective way to raise awareness and promote engagement in the 2023 Partnership Forum. She highlighted the UN Resident Coordinator System and the Regional Collaborative Platforms as effective means to achieve this. Ms. Ortiz emphasized balanced representation from all regions and suggested including at least one youth speaker in every roundtable/panel. Ms. Ortiz proposed for the [Regional Forum for Sustainable Development](#) to be used to channel the outcomes of the Partnership Forum.

Dr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy (HLPF Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism (HLPF MGoS CM) reminded that the world was still recovering from a health crisis. Dr. Loutfy voiced some of the lessons to be learned from COP27 regarding climate change resilience, as well as regenerative archaic agricultural and economic systems for food security and the realization of all the SDGs. Dr. Loutfy also stressed the key role that civil society plays in delivering the SDGs. The 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum should underscore the importance of including a more systematic approach to opportunities for engagement by supporting participation from the Global South and having more open participatory processes. He called for partnerships, collaboration, transparency, inclusion, and accountability to be a cornerstone of our work. He encouraged involving major groups and other stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in decision making processes at all levels when discussing policies and programs for COVID-19 recovery, including the development of accessible

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digital infrastructure. Dr. Loutfy encouraged member states to create and use high quality disaggregated data, including citizen generated data, which should incorporate participation from marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities.

Ms. Houry Geudelekian (Chair, NGO Committee on the Status of Women) emphasized the lessons learned in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including by increasing participation and called for bold actions to achieve concrete results.

Discussion

Amongst the proposals made during the discussion were:

- Identify exemplary examples of partnerships at the Partnership Forum and spotlight them at the 2023 SDG Summit.
- The importance of demonstrating interlinkages between all major UN events and milestones towards the SDG Summit.
- Need to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration in support of the SDGs.
- Importance of providing meaningful space for local and regional governments in related intergovernmental processes.
- Need to further consider how to bring the recommendations from the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum into related intergovernmental processes.

5. Review of Discussion and Next Steps:

Ms. Lotta Tahtinen, (Chief, Outreach and Partnership Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, DSDG, UN DESA) informed that DESA would be consolidating a summary report of the meeting, focusing on key messages and themes to be discussed during the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum.

She invited members of the Advisory Group that would be interested in **proposing the organization of Spotlight Sessions** to share their proposals with the Secretariat by 6 December 2022. Once the themes have been established, DESA will invite Advisory Group Members to organize and collaborate on these spotlight sessions. Ms. Tahtinen also invited interested participants to apply for side-events by 16 December.

6. Closing Remarks

In her closing remarks, **the president of ECOSOC H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva**, expressed her appreciation to the participants for agreeing to be a part of the advisory group, and for the excellent discussions.

She reflected on the importance of connecting the work of the ECOSOC in 2023 with the preparations for the SDG Summit. H.E. Ms. Stoeva noted the stakeholders were crucial for the implementation of the SDGs and that they needed to also be part of related decision-making processes. She stressed the importance of youth participation in all ECOSOC meetings and events to ensure that their views and contributions could be part of the solutions.

H.E. Ms. Stoeva noted how financing of the SDGs had emerged as a key theme during the EGM , as well as SDG localization, and the importance of transformational education. She noted the importance of the

UN Resident Coordinators and expressed her appreciation for having the Resident Coordinator of Kenya as a Member of the Advisory Group. Finally, she thanked all participants and encouraged their active engagement in the 2023 ECOSOC Partnership Forum.

7. Annex:

Please see all inputs from Advisory Group members in the Menti-survey below:

Given the main theme of the ECOSOC Partnership Forum, what issues should be featured during discussions, including the informal spotlight sessions?



Food and energy security	Strengthening network of partners	Climate action and the energy transition
Climate and biodiversity alignment	Education FinancePeace ProcessesYouth	Climate action and financing just transition
Reform of public institutions	innovative partnerships to accelerate Climate actions	How can Partnerships be strengthened to accelerated towards the SDG summit
Multistakeholder partnership to promote and finance climate adaptation and, particularly, climate-adapted livelihoods to power the SDGs	How to ensure effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	Food security, partnerships, accountability, finance
Role of young people in supporting partnerships for SDGs	Enhancing civic space at the UN	Addressing gender based violence in all its forms
Finance, inequalities and localization.	Concentration of industry worldwide, growing monopoly power, role of transnational corporations	Financial Resilience in times of crisis
Gender equality and youth inclusion in policy making	Given that there are many thematic moments throughout the year, the partnership forum could focus on making partnerships work and different dimensions like finance, structure, etc	How to accelerate transformations to achieve the SDGs
Water and climate	- More discussion on the multi-lateral order challenges- Covid-19 impacts - economic, education, social, livelihoodsystems approaches to solutions	How could the policies with which the COVID-19 pandemic was handled in the year 2020 (national lockdown policies, reduction in international transportation, etc) could be used to further the Agenda 2030 in future years
Highlight role of CSO and ensuring their meaningful participation at UN meetings	Strengthening local finances to face instability and crises	Discussions around debt and high inflation, food insecurity and shortage, and the continued recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- All topics should be intersectional to cover more than one
SDG. - Engage Governments- Reviews of progress and
identification of issues