

Summary of Spotlight Session 5: “Enhancing capacities for transformation: Building partnerships to harness science, technology and innovation”

No single person or institution can tackle global challenges single-handedly;
“ If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”

January 31st
4:15 – 5:15 pm EST
Trusteeship Council Chamber - Hybrid

Moderator

Patrick Paul Walsh - SDSN

Speakers

Imme Scholz - Heinrich Böll Foundation – Co-chair of the UN GDSR 2023.

Thanos Giannakopoulos - UN Library

Jayashri Wyatt - UN Academic Impact

Brighton Kaoma - SDSN Youth

Background on the event

The 2023 UN Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) is being prepared by an Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the UN Secretary-General to allow a more effective SPI to accelerate action and overcome recent impediments that stand in the way of progress on sustainable development. This session outlines the table of contents for the 2023 UN GSDR to be presented at the SDG Summit, the mid-point review of the SDGs, during the General Assembly in September 2023.

The UN Library works to promote a Global Scientific Commons of knowledge as a key enabler for all stakeholders to implement the SDGs. In the support of the latter, this session outlines the role of the UN Digital Library and UN Open Science Conferences since 2019.

UN Academic Impact outlines three key initiatives to populate the global commons and enhance SPI including a SDG Toolkit for HEIs, entry points for academia to contribute to UN Meetings and the creation, in partnership with SDSN, of an “Overlay” of academic resources hosted in digital library repositories across the world that are oriented to the SDGs.

Finally, the session outlines the important role that youth can play in these initiatives, STI and SPI for the SDGs.

Key Issues discussed

The UN GSDR 2023 will build on the 2019 GSDR the six entry points and four levers for change; *Governance, Economy and finance, Individual and collective action, Science and technology*, but adds a fifth lever *capacities*. Acceleration and enabling the transformations across all nations is critical. The time dynamics of transformation and implementation will be explicitly addressed. In particular, spill-overs across nations and losers of transformational processes. Multilateral approaches will be needed to have well-resourced levers of transformational pathways across all nation states. This may need a Global Code of Conduct for SDG STI across nations and pledges from nations to cooperate.

The United Nations Knowledge Commons, a suite of programmes, networks and outreach actions was initiated by the Libraries of the global United Nations Secretariat. The goal is to offer these resources to policymakers, UN staff and citizens worldwide, contextualized and free of charge, through a network of interoperable repositories. Since 2019, the UN Library in collaboration with partners has been convening the UN Conference on Open Science. You are invited to join us on 8-10 February 2023, at the 3rd UN Open Science Conference.

UN Academic Impact outlined how partnerships around higher education institutions can focus on open scientific cooperation across borders and build an open SDG Knowledge Commons that enhances science policy interfaces really at all levels of governance. Initiatives include a SDG Tool Kit, bringing academia to the table to connect directly with policymakers at UN meetings and a partnership with SDSN to create an “overlay” of repositories of curriculum and other multimedia resources that can be accessed in multi languages and repurposed for free.

There is an urgent need to close inequalities for young people evidenced by inconsistent funding for STI and less global representation of young women and girls in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics as well as ICT subjects and the exclusion of young people in state partnerships for science policy.

Key recommendations for action

The UN GSDR 2023 will receive feedback from missions and many presentations in the run up to the SDG Submit.

An invite to join the 3rd UN Open Science Conference on 8-10 February 2023.

Call to fund an UN AI and SDSN project to create an “overlay” of repositories of curriculum and other multimedia resources that can be accessed in multi languages and repurposed for free.

Globally, we have 1.8 billion young people between 18-25 years of age. This equates to 1.8 essential leaders, communicators and innovators for partnerships. UN office for youth will be an important vehicle for coordinating youth STI and SPI across the world for the SDGs.