

THE OLIVE TREE

Edition 9. September - October 2018

How travel and tourism can
contribute to the UN Sustainable
Development Goals



พระเจ้าทรงเป็นนิรันดร์

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

ศาสตร์ของพระราชากับการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน His Majesty's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for SDGs

หลักปรัชญาของเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงเป็นหลักในการคิด ตัดสินใจ และการปฏิบัติ สำหรับการดำเนินชีวิตหรือประกอบกิจการงานใดๆ ด้วยการใช้ **ความรู้** และ **คุณธรรม** เป็นฐาน ผ่านการไตร่ตรองด้วยการใช้หลักสำคัญ ๓ ประการ ได้แก่ พอประมาณ ไม่มากเกินไป ไม่น้อยเกินไป มีเหตุผล ตามหลักวิชาการ มีภูมิคุ้มกัน หรือรองรับการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือวิกฤตที่อาจเกิดขึ้น ซึ่งจะนำไปสู่การพัฒนาอย่างสมดุลในทุกมิติ ไม่ว่าจะเป็นด้านเศรษฐกิจ สังคม สิ่งแวดล้อม และวัฒนธรรม อันเป็นแนวทางที่จะนำไปสู่ **ความสุขที่ยั่งยืน** ได้อย่างแท้จริง

"Sufficiency Economy Philosophy" is a mindset for decision-making. We base our decisions on our **Knowledge** using our internal value - our **virtues** - through applying the three principles of **moderation, reasonableness** and **prudence**. We aim for the outcomes of our decision to be balanced among the four dimensions of human life: **economy, society, environment** and **culture**, in order to promote sustainable happiness for all.



The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy of Thailand's late monarch, His Majesty King Bhumibhol Adulyadej, designed in the aftermath of the 1997 Asian economic crisis, offers one of the best models of Alternative Development globally. It is now going mainstream, primarily because it has much in common with the UN SDGs. Thailand, where the 1997 Asian economic crisis started, is certainly according it more respect than ever before. The rest of the world needs to follow if true "Sustainability" is to be realised.



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EXECUTIVE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER



THE OLIVE TREE

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MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE EDITOR

IMTIAZ MUQBIL

Every September, global leaders gather at the United Nations HQ in New York for what is billed as their Annual Summit. They assess the state of the world, offer their perspectives on global issues and initiate ideas to advance the Global Agenda known as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2018, three years into the 15-year schedule (2016-2030) for achieving the SDGs, however, the chances of success appear dim.

Just two years before the end of the first two decades of the 21st Century, there appears to be an extraordinarily dangerous degree of global turmoil and tumult. The fact that the travel and tourism industry is growing exponentially should not lead to a false sense of complacency. Growth is creating its own set of problems. Both internally and globally, a Perfect Storm appears to be brewing.

Like the hurricanes and typhoons which often devastate many popular tourism destinations, this looming Perfect Storm could have devastating consequences. Many travel and tourism industry leaders who have great fondness for the concept of disruption may find themselves confronting more disruption than they can handle. Indeed, this hackneyed concept of “disruption” as some kind of force for good is long overdue to be trashed and recognised for what it really is, a potential threat to the world at large.

In May-June 2017, when I launched this unique publication The Olive Tree, with the support of Mr Hiran Cooray, Chairman of Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka, the game-plan was to boost awareness of how Travel & Tourism could become a part of the solution in thwarting the potential disruptions and achieving the SDGs. It was intended to look beyond climate change and launch a new process of mindset change.

Having spent the majority of my professional journalistic life covering Travel and Tourism, now widely known as the world’s most successful services sector, I firmly believe that this exceptional industry is both a major contributor to, and beneficiary of, the UN SDGs in their entirety, not selectively. And the month of September, which marks both the International Day of Peace and the International Day of Tourism, along with the UN Annual Summit, is the perfect launchpad for both a mindset change and an agenda change to thwart this looming Perfect Storm of man-made problems.

Like with previous issues, this September-October 2018 edition of The Olive Tree is full of material to provide some intellectual feedstock in pursuing that cause.

Imtiaz Muqbil, Executive Editor, Travel Impact Newswire.
www.travel-impact-newswire.com



MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN, JETWING HOTELS

HIRAN COORAY

September is a very important month for travel and tourism. This is the month in which the industry commemorates both the International Day of Tourism and the International Day of Peace, both exactly one week apart.

There is no doubt that the sustainability agenda is moving on to a whole new level. Globally, the travel and tourism industry has launched many campaigns to protect, preserve and conserve the natural environment. There is universal and unequivocal recognition that this lonely planet is in grave peril and a lot more needs to be done, very quickly, to change course.

This recognition did not come overnight. It took nearly three decades of sustained effort to sound the alarm on the threat of climate change and force a mindset change. Today, consumption patterns are well on the way towards new and alternative forms of energy that are at the heart of the environmental sustainability movement.

Now, the time has come for a more important mindset change.

Conserving the natural environment is only a small part of the overall definition of sustainability. The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals cover far more ground than just the natural environment. They focus on far bigger issues affecting the planet at large — all components of the “operating environment” of the travel & tourism industry. Hence, travel and tourism now needs to venture beyond the usual comfort zones and start tackling challenges which have not heretofore been on the industry agenda.

We at Jetwing are proud to be taking the first step in that direction. In October 2018, we will be partnering with Travel Impact Newswire to launch the first forum to advance the mindset change and expand the definition of sustainability. Like the famous Chinese proverb, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Having partnered with Travel Impact Newswire to launch this unique publication, The Olive Tree, designed to raise awareness of the UN SDGs as a whole, we are now equally proud to be taking it to the next level from talk to potential action.

I look forward to this movement gaining traction in the years ahead, for the greater good of our Planet, our children and grandchildren.

Hiran Cooray, Chairman, Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka.
www.jetwinghotels.com



MESSAGE FROM FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, FREME TRAVEL, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

MICHAEL LEE

The name of Brunei Darussalam translates as The Abode of Peace. With more than 70% forest cover and a population of only 423,000, Brunei is truly an Abode of Peace in both spirit and letter.

Brunei Darussalam's bio-rich tropical rainforests are in pristine condition and protected by effective legislation. They act as global carbon sinks, absorbing millions of tonnes of carbon emissions and alleviating the impact of climate change. That in itself is a significant contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

This rainforest heritage is at the core of Brunei Darussalam's tourism promotion efforts. Plans call for a doubling of tourist arrivals by air (from 218,000 tourists in 2015 to 450,000 tourists by 2020). Nature tourism will allow visitors to feel the peace in the clean, green surroundings of Ulu Temburong national park, and enjoy eco-adventure activities such as bird-watching, trekking and river-rafting.

Established in 1971, Freme Travel has built a revered reputation for reliable and professional service and is considered to be the most innovative Travel Agency in Brunei Darussalam. We are experts in special interest adventure activities, corporate team building, education programmes, sports (eg. golf) and many more. Guests can stay overnight and relax in the arms of Mother Nature at our very own Rainforest Lodge at Ulu Temburong National Park.

Please click here for more on our [Temburong tours](#) and [Teambuilding tours](#).

Freme Travel is proud to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals and The Olive Tree, the first and only travel trade publication devoted to strengthening the contribution of Travel & Tourism to the UN SDGs.

LEAD STORY 1

Thirteen of the 17 SDGs are adversely affected by alcohol



Stockholm, 16 August 2018 – The 69th World Congress – the highest decision-making body of IOGT International – convened in Sigtuna, Sweden, between 6-11 August 2018.

IOGT International is the premier global network for evidence-based policy measures and community-based interventions to prevent and reduce harm caused by alcohol and other drugs. Its heart-driven work protects children and youth, makes communities safer, and promotes health and development worldwide.

The IOGT International World Congress is a unique opportunity for all participants to share their experiences and expertise, to listen and learn from inspiring leaders from around the world, and create new contacts and friendships.

The three main events are the world congress session, the lifestyle festival and the future made here conference. Beyond these main events, there's a rich offer of workshops, seminars and other activities.

The overarching topic for the workshops and seminars are global issues. Outstanding discussions explore how to shape, influence and tackle global issues through innovative and effective grass-roots work and methods used in local communities.

The following declaration was issued after the World Congress:

We, the delegates of the 69th IOGT International World Congress “Future Made Here”, gathered

to galvanize fresh momentum in our efforts to tackle alcohol as major obstacle to sustainable development.

We note with alarm the lack of progress in preventing and reducing alcohol harm in countries around the world.

13 of 17 Sustainable Development Goals are adversely affected by alcohol. Every ten seconds a human being dies due to an alcohol-related cause. Globally, alcohol is the leading risk factor for premature death and disability among people between the ages of 15 to 49. Alcohol harm is decimating our families, hurting our communities, undermining our economic productivity, and impeding progress for all. All this is manufactured and fueled by the alcohol industry, their harmful products and unethical business practices, which include tax avoidance, pervasive marketing and industry self-regulation.

Not only is Big Alcohol ruthlessly pursuing profits with no regard for Human Rights, human dignity, and human well-being. The alcohol industry is also engaging in aggressive political activities to undermine, derail and obstruct evidence-based and cost-effective alcohol policy measures that would benefit people and societies.

We are deeply concerned about the fact that our governments are dangerously off track in fulfilling their commitments to promoting a better life for all through tackling alcohol harm.

Independent science shows that the alcohol policy best buys hold considerable and largely untapped potential to promote health, foster development and to protect especially vulnerable groups like children and youth, women and people in deprived and marginalized communities. For example, a \$1 investment in the alcohol policy best buy measures generates a return of \$9 dollars. These alcohol policy best buys are important tools to help achieve the SDGs.

The lack of progress in policy implementation and enforcement since the adoption of the WHO Global Alcohol Strategy in 2010 make the need for a binding international agreement abundantly clear.

Therefore, we call for the adoption of a Framework Convention on Alcohol Control. In the era of the Agenda 2030, sustainable development will not be possible without renewed and high-level political commitment and persistent, evidence-based action to prevent and reduce alcohol harm. It is high-time that governments make alcohol policy solutions the priority they should be in order to achieve development for all.

Further information about the IOGT and the World Congress, [pls click here](#).

Importance to travel & tourism

Alcohol is a much bigger health hazard than cigarettes. It is also very intrinsic part of the travel and tourism industry. Quite paradoxical, isn't it? How come there are no statistics on the toll extracted by alcohol, including deaths by motorcycle-riding drunken tourists or health problems caused by alcoholism amongst industry employees? How much money does alcohol generate for the Duty Free companies, hotels, bars and government tax departments? Why does it get far less attention as a health hazard than the cigarette industry? The destruction caused by alcohol will probably never be discussed in a fair, open and transparent manner amongst the so-called travel & tourism thought leaders. It will be a cold day in hell before speakers from the anti-alcohol movement are invited to deliver keynote speeches at our events.

LEAD STORY 1.1

Major global killer, alcohol caused 3m deaths in 2016, Lancet study reveals

ALCOHOL IS AN OBSTACLE TO ACHIEVING 13 OUT OF 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND 52 OF 169 TARGETS



Through its multiple Human Rights, public health, social and economic harms, alcohol is a massive obstacle to development.

Evidence-based alcohol policy measures are drivers of development, health, social justice and economic prosperity. More information at www.iogt.org



SEATTLE, August 23, 2018. University of Washington media release – A new scientific study concludes there is no safe level of drinking alcohol.

The study, [published today in the international medical journal *The Lancet*](#), shows that in 2016, nearly 3 million deaths globally were attributed to alcohol use, including 12 percent of deaths in males between the ages of 15 and 49.

“The health risks associated with alcohol are massive,” said Dr. Emmanuela Gakidou of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington and the senior author of the study. “Our findings are consistent with other recent research, which found clear and convincing correlations between drinking and premature death, cancer, and cardiovascular problems. Zero alcohol consumption minimizes the overall risk of health loss.”

The study does not distinguish between beer, wine, and liquor due to a lack of evidence when estimating the disease burden, Gakidou said. However, researchers used data on all alcohol-related deaths generally and related health outcomes to determine their conclusions. Alcohol use patterns vary widely by country and by sex, the average consumption per drinker, and the attributable disease burden. Globally, more than 2 billion people were current drinkers in 2016; 63% were male.

“Average consumption” refers to a standard drink, defined in the study as 10 grams of pure alcohol, consumed by a person daily, about the equivalent of:

- A small glass of red wine (100 ml or 3.4 fluid ounces) at 13% alcohol by volume;
- A can or bottle of beer (375 ml or 12 fluid ounces) at 3.5% alcohol by volume; or
- A shot of whiskey or other spirits (30 ml or 1.0 fluid ounces) at 40% alcohol by volume.

“Standard drinks” are different by country. For example, in the UK a standard drink is 8 grams of alcohol, whereas in Australia, the US, and Japan, it is 10 grams, 14 grams, and 20 grams, respectively.

The study, part of the annual Global Burden of Disease (GBD), assesses alcohol-related health outcomes and patterns between 1990 and 2016 for 195 countries and territories and by age and sex.

It provides findings on prevalence of current drinking, prevalence of abstention, alcohol consumption among current drinkers, and deaths and overall poor health attributable to alcohol for 23 health outcomes, such as communicable and non-communicable diseases and injuries, including:

- Cardiovascular diseases: atrial fibrillation and flutter, hemorrhagic stroke, ischemic stroke, hypertensive heart disease, ischemic heart disease, and alcoholic cardiomyopathy;
- Cancers: breast, colorectal, liver, esophageal, larynx, lip and oral cavity, and nasal;
- Other non-communicable diseases: cirrhosis of the liver due to alcohol use, diabetes, epilepsy, pancreatitis, and alcohol use disorders;
- Communicable diseases: lower respiratory infections and tuberculosis;
- Intentional injuries: interpersonal violence and self-harm;
- Unintentional injuries: exposure to mechanical forces; poisonings; fire, heat, and hot substances; drowning; and other unintentional injuries; and
- Transportation-related injuries.

“We now understand that alcohol is one of the major causes of death in the world today,” said Lancet Editor Richard Horton. “We need to act now. We need to act urgently to prevent these millions of deaths. And we can.”

This study used 694 data sources on individual and population-level alcohol consumption, along with 592 prospective and retrospective studies on the risk of alcohol use. More than 500 GBD collaborators, such as researchers, academics, and others from more than 40 nations contributed to the study, according to Max Griswold, senior researcher and lead author.

“With the largest collected evidence base to date, our study makes the relationship between health and alcohol clear – drinking causes substantial health loss, in myriad ways, all over the world,” Griswold said.

In 2016, eight of the leading 10 countries with lowest death rates attributable to alcohol use among 15- to 49-year-olds were in the Middle East: Kuwait, Iran, Palestine, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Jordan, and Syria. The other two were Maldives and Singapore.

Conversely, seven of the leading 10 countries with highest death rates were in the Baltic, Eastern European, or Central Asian regions, specifically Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, Mongolia, Latvia, and Kazakhstan. The other three were Lesotho, Burundi, and Central African Republic. Health officials in those nations, Gakidou said, would be well served by examining the study’s findings to inform their policies and programs to improve the health and well-being of their constituents.

“There is a compelling and urgent need to overhaul policies to encourage either lowering people’s levels of alcohol consumption or abstaining entirely,” she said. “The myth that one or two drinks a day are good for you is just that – a myth. This study shatters that myth.”

ALCOHOL-ATTRIBUTABLE DEATH RATES (PER 100,000 PEOPLE), 15-49 YEARS, BOTH SEXES, 2016

Highest rates:

1. Lesotho: 145.3
2. Russia: 118.4
3. Central African Republic: 108.8
4. Ukraine: 92.2
5. Burundi: 81.1
6. Lithuania: 76.1
7. Belarus: 71.2
8. Mongolia: 67.6
9. Latvia: 65.5
10. Kazakhstan: 62.2

Lowest rates:

1. Kuwait: 0.3
2. Iran: 0.4
3. Palestine: 0.4
4. Libya: 0.7
5. Saudi Arabia: 0.7
6. Yemen: 0.9
7. Jordan: 1.3
8. Maldives: 1.4
9. Singapore: 1.6
10. Syria: 1.7

PREVALENCE (%) OF CURRENT DRINKERS, ALL AGES, 2016

MALES

Highest prevalence:

1. Denmark: 97.1
2. Norway: 94.3
3. Argentina: 94.3
4. Germany: 94.3
5. Poland: 93.8
6. France: 93.1
7. South Korea: 91.3
8. Switzerland: 91.2
9. Greece: 90.8
10. Iceland: 90.3

Lowest prevalence:

1. Pakistan: 0.9
2. Bangladesh: 1.0
3. Egypt: 1.1
4. Mali: 2.5
5. Morocco: 3.0
6. Senegal: 3.2
7. Mauritania: 3.2
8. Syria: 5.0
9. Indonesia: 7.2
10. Palestine: 7.9

FEMALES

Highest prevalence:

1. Denmark: 95.3
2. Norway: 91.4
3. Germany: 90.0
4. Argentina: 89.9
5. New Zealand: 88.5
6. Switzerland: 88.4
7. Slovakia: 87.2
8. France: 86.9
9. Sweden: 86.1
10. Iceland: 84.8

Lowest prevalence:

1. Bangladesh: 0.3
2. Morocco: 1.1
3. Pakistan: 1.5
4. Egypt: 1.5
5. Nepal: 1.5
6. Syria: 1.6
7. Bhutan: 1.9
8. Myanmar: 2.3
9. Tunisia: 2.3
10. Senegal: 2.6

POPULATION AVERAGE OF STANDARD DRINKS DAILY, ALL AGES, 2016

MALES

Greatest number of drinks:

1. Romania: 8.2
2. Portugal: 7.3
3. Luxembourg: 7.3
4. Lithuania: 7.0
5. Ukraine: 7.0
6. Bosnia and Herzegovina: 6.5
7. Belarus: 6.0
8. Estonia: 6.0
9. Spain: 5.8
10. Hungary: 5.5

Lowest number of drinks:

1. Pakistan: 0.0008
2. Iran: 0.004
3. Kuwait: 0.02
4. Comoros: 0.02
5. Libya: 0.02
6. Bangladesh: 0.03
7. Palestine: 0.04
8. Mauritania: 0.05
9. Yemen: 0.05
10. Saudi Arabia: 0.05

FEMALES

Highest number of drinks:

1. Ukraine: 4.2
2. Andorra: 3.4
3. Luxembourg: 3.4
4. Belarus: 3.4
5. Sweden: 3.2
6. Denmark: 3.2
7. Ireland: 3.1
8. United Kingdom: 3.0
9. Germany: 2.9
10. Switzerland: 2.8

Lowest number of drinks:

1. Iran: 0.0003
2. Kuwait: 0.01
3. Mauritania: 0.02
4. Libya: 0.02
5. Pakistan: 0.03
6. Timor-Leste: 0.04
7. Palestine: 0.04
8. Yemen: 0.04
9. Tunisia: 0.04
10. Syria: 0.05

LEAD STORY 2

‘Defend the people, not the States’, says outgoing UN human rights chief



Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights meeting with indigenous community leaders in Guatemala. November 2017.

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 15 August 2018 - For four years, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has been taking governments across the world to task, exposing human rights violations and robustly advocating for the rights of victims.

His appointment by the Secretary-General back in 2014 was a landmark: he became the first Asian, Muslim and Arab ever to hold the post.

Before that, Zeid had already enjoyed a long and distinguished career, both at the UN and as a Jordanian diplomat. He served his country in several capacities, notably as Ambassador to the United States, and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, with a stint as President of the Security Council in January 2014.

Throughout his career, Zeid has demonstrated a commitment to international law, playing a major role in the establishment of the International Criminal Court, as the first President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court - turning the court from an idea into a reality - and, eight years later, overseeing the legal definition of the crime of aggression and the court's jurisdiction over it.

In his last major interview with UN News, the UN human rights chief tells us that the “real pressure on this job comes from the victims and those who suffer and expect a great deal from us.”

“Governments are more than capable of defending themselves. It's not my job to defend them. I have to defend civil society, vulnerable groups, the marginalized, the oppressed. Those are the people that we, in our office, need to represent,” he adds, noting that “oppression is making a comeback”.

When asked about whether his view of the UN and what it can achieve has diminished during his time spent speaking out loudly in defence of the abused and defenceless over the past four years, he says:

“It’s very difficult to tolerate abuse of the UN when I keep thinking of the heroic things that people do in the field, whether the humanitarian actors or humanitarian personnel, my human rights people, the people who are monitoring or observing. And I take my hat off to them. I mean, they are the UN that I will cherish and remember.”

UN News: When you compare the human rights landscape today to when you took over the UN human rights office back in 2014, what are the key differences that you see?

Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein: When I took over, it coincided with the terrible videos put online by Daesh, or ISIS, which stoked a great deal of fear and horror. And we began to see a sort of a deepening of the crisis in Syria and in Iraq. And this then folded into two things:

One, a great determination to embark on counter-terrorism strategies, which we felt were, in part, excessive in certain respects. Every country has an obligation to defend its people, and the work of terrorism is odious and appalling and needs to be condemned and faced. But whenever there is excessive action, you don’t just turn one person against the State, you turn the whole family against the State. Ten or maybe more members could end up moving in the direction of the extremists.

And then, the migration debates, and the strengthening of the demagogues and those who made hay out of what was happening in Europe for political profit. As each year passed, we began to see a more intense pressure on the human rights agenda.

UN News: You have been very outspoken and you’ve called out governments and individual leaders around the world who have abused human rights. Do you see that as the most important role for the UN human rights chief?

Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein: Yes. At the Human Rights High Commission, you’re part of the UN, but also part of the human rights movement and both are equally important. As I said on earlier occasions, governments are more than capable of defending themselves. It’s not my job to defend them. I have to defend civil society, vulnerable groups, the marginalized, the oppressed. Those are the people that we, in our office, need to represent.

I always felt that that is the principle task: we provide technical assistance, we collect information, we go public on it. But in overall terms, the central duty for us is to defend the rights of those most marginalized and those that need it.

UN News: what if you come under pressure to stay silent?

Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein: Well, the interesting thing is that the pressure on this particular job doesn’t really come very much from the governments. They all attack the office because we criticize all of them, but we also point to areas where there is improvement, and I sometimes will praise the government for doing the right thing.

The real pressure on this job comes from the victims and those who suffer and expect a great deal



Mr. Al Hussein, during an official mission to Libya. Tripoli, Libya, 10 October, 2017.
UNSMIL/Abel Kavanagh

from us. That's the pressure that I think matters most in terms of the need to do the right thing. *UN News: Have there been times, therefore, when you've had to compromise a bit too much and maybe even let rights campaigners down in some way?*

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: No, not in that sense because I think I've been outspoken enough and I think I broke new ground when it came to High Commissioners. I can tell you in almost every meeting I sit with governments and I say things that I know they would never have heard before from someone in the UN.

No, the enormity of the suffering of people creates a feeling of inadequacy that, no matter what I do—an interview like this, a press conference, a report—it's not going to restore a disappeared son or daughter to his or her mother. I know it won't end the practice of torture immediately. I know that the residents in an IDP [Internally Displaced Peoples] camp, are not going to next day be moved into something more improved.

And that feeling is the pressure that I'm speaking about. It's this sort of feeling that no matter what I do, it's unequal to the colossal challenge that stands before us.

UN News: Have there been times when you thought it best to use quiet diplomacy to work behind the scenes?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: We're always trying. We're always trying to use quiet diplomacy. I mean, we're constantly meeting with governments, and I send letters, and we conduct phone calls.

But on occasion we make a determination that we've tried these tracks, it hasn't worked, and that I'm going to go public. Sometimes, I asked my spokesperson to do it; sometimes, I ask my regional office to do it; and other times, I'll do it myself. But it's carefully thought through.

There was one foreign minister, for example, I needed to speak to. We were planning to send a technical mission to his country and, for almost a year, he avoided me. I saw him here in the GA [General Assembly] and he said, "Yes, yes, yes," and then just avoided me. So then, we got a message to him that I'm going to go public tomorrow, and he was on the phone right away.

And the lesson learned was that if you don't sometimes threaten to speak out, you don't grab their attention. And I would rather err on the speaking out part than staying silent.

I first worked with the UN in 1994, 1995 in the former Yugoslavia. And I saw what catastrophes silence can bring. And I think from that point on, I was determined not to be silent when the evidence before us was presented.

UN News: What's touched you most personally in the job? What have been those moments, the encounters with people that have meant the most to you?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: There have been many. I think it's very hard to listen to the suffering of people. One of the times was when I went to the Ilopango detention centre in El Salvador. [Four young women] had been sentenced to 30 years in prison. They claimed these were obstetric emergencies: miscarriages. The State claimed that these were terminations of pregnancy.

When I sat with them - I had with me a full team, my office, assistants and interpreters - I think within the space of about 10 minutes we were all weeping; we were in tears because their suffering was so extreme. One of them was telling us how her foetus was on the ground and rather than take her to a hospital, they handcuffed her and took her to prison. And I thought the cruelty, the capacity for human cruelty is amazing.

I saw the president after that and I said, "Why is it that all these girls are poor? Every single one of them?" It's as if it's only the poor that face these sorts of conditions. This is the point that really strikes home that time and again: the poor suffer all the consequences. And that for me was a moment that will always remain with me. And there have been quite a few like that.



Mr. Al Hussein, meeting women during a visit to the Panzi hospital, in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, July 2016. OHCHR

UN News: Is there a specific moment that stands out as being the most difficult or perhaps even the most consequential during your tenure?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: It's all been difficult. When you're defending the rights of people, and there's so much pressure exerted upon you from this deep inner need or desire to help them, it's all quite tough.

But I take inspiration from the amazing human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, activists in so many countries who do amazing, brave things to highlight the plight of others; to defend the rights of others. Whatever I may want to complain about day in, day out, it's nothing compared to the pressure that these people face, confront, overcome — often they have no fear.

These are the real leaders; these are the people that inspire. Not many of the politicians who claim to be leaders and are weak and self-serving, and are leaders in name only. The real leaders are the ones who, against all odds, will do the right thing and then often pay a price for it, and be detained for it.

And I think that's what keeps us fuelled and working on their behalf.

Again, the point to be made is that, yes, we are part of the UN, but we're also part of a human rights movement. The UN is creating order amongst States: with us, we look at the heart of the relationship between the governing and the governed and so, of course, it's going to be sensitive. People have their rights, the States have their obligations, their commitments. And we have to defend the people.

UN News: Where do you think you've made the biggest difference, personally? And have you made mistakes?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: I don't know. The question ought to be addressed to civil society, victims' groups, human rights defenders. And if they said, "Zeid has done a good job," I'd be very content with that. If they said, "Zeid could have done better," I'd have to learn to live with it and accept it. It's really for them to quantify the extent to which I have achieved something or whether they think that I was able to undertake my responsibilities in the right manner.

UN News: you said that being High Commissioner for Human Rights is a unique job within the UN, and you seem to have followed a fairly similar path to your predecessors in making yourself unpopular with governments. Do you want to see your successor sticking to that path?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: The fundamental point that I mentioned earlier is that the States can defend themselves. Our job is not to defend the States, and the law is there for the protection of the weak, not in defence of the strong.

And so, we look at the law, we look at the obligations of States, and our job is to defend the individual victims, vulnerable communities, marginalized communities, or oppressed communities.

Oppression is making a comeback. Repression is fashionable again.

And so, I don't believe anyone holding this position — even if they felt differently — can ultimately conduct business in a manner that departs too radically from the way that I, or my predecessors, have done it. If you try to depart, it will be extremely unpleasant for you because you're going to hear it from the very people who are suffering. And there can be nothing that will tear at your conscience more, if you abandoned them. So, my belief is that the job defines the conduct.



*Mr. Al Hussein, at the 38th Regular Session
of the Human Rights Council.
18 June 2018.
UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferre*

UN News: Is there any other key advice you'd give?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: I would always say be in good health because it is a demanding job, and it is taxing. Whoever takes this job has to be ready for it. Some jobs in the UN system are viewed as sinecures, retirement posts for national officials. This is not one of them. This requires complete commitment.

UN News: For you, where to next? And as a seasoned ex-diplomat with so much UN experience, how has doing this job changed your view of the world?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: I don't know, maybe I'll be a journalist!

I've been away from my family; I need to spend time with them and then I'll look and see what new direction I'd want to take myself. But I need a rest as well.

UN News: having walked this tightrope, do you feel perhaps a little more appreciative of what the UN does, or perhaps a little less?

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: No, if I were to, in the future, think of the UN, I would think of the moments in the field where I see the UN doing amazing things.

It's very difficult to tolerate abuse of the UN when I keep thinking of the heroic things that people do in the field, whether they be humanitarian personnel, my human rights people, the people who are monitoring, observing, with some threat to themselves: I take my hat off to them. They are the UN that I will cherish and remember.

To the outside world, the jargon, the terminology, seems inaccessible. I think that the work that UN personnel do in the field is much more understandable. That's how I entered the UN, in the field, and that's how I got to know it. And I think that's where the UN has enormous impact and needs to continue to make the investment and do the right thing.

Importance to travel & tourism

Just look at the great quotes in this interview. "If you don't sometimes threaten to speak out, you don't grab their attention. And I would rather err on the speaking out part than staying silent." "The poor suffer all the consequences." And perhaps the best one of them all, "The real leaders are the ones who, against all odds, will do the right thing and then often pay a price for it, and be detained for it." Unfortunately, there is not a single travel & tourism industry leader who will ever dare to challenge the status quo. Rocking the boat is not on their agenda.

LEAD STORY 3

‘Finding global solutions for global problems’ focus of UN-civil society forum



United Nations, (UN News Centre) 22 August 2018 - The [67th United Nations Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organization \(DPI/NGO\) Conference](#) kicked off today at UN Headquarters in New York, with speeches affirming the importance of multilateralism, closer partnerships between the UN and civil society, and the role that young people have to play.

The two-day conference is an international forum, where around 2,000 representatives from over 300 NGOs meet with UN officials, leading influencers, members of academia and media to discuss issues of global concern.

This theme of this year's edition is the value of multilateralism, at a time of rising scepticism about the role of the UN in solving some of the world's greatest challenges. There is also a focus on opportunities for closer partnership between the UN and civil society, and working together to promote [the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), otherwise known as the 2030 Agenda.

Opening the conference, Alison Smale, [Under Secretary-General for Global Communications](#), and head of the UN Department of Public Information, said that stronger links to civil society provide the greatest chance for dealing with global problems that no one country can solve.

Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International and conference Chair, described the event as “a ground-breaking moment for civil society to advocate together for people-centered multilateralism that can tackle economic inequality, gender injustice and threats to rights-based governance.”

Highlighting the UN's efforts to make the organization more relevant to young people, the conference recorded nearly 44 per cent youth registrants. Ms. Madison Ross, Co-chair of the Youth Sub-Committee, and a speaker at the opening plenary session, expressed her hope that the conference will serve “as an opportunity for youth to be heard and not undermined, benefiting all generations and all other sectors in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).”



Martha Pobee, Vice-President, Office of the President of the General Assembly, addresses the 67th United Nations DPI/NGO Conference, held under the theme “We the Peoples...Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems”.
UN Photo/Loey Felipe

Speaking on behalf of the [General Assembly](#), Her Excellency Mrs. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Vice-President of the General Assembly and Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, underlined the crucial importance of civil society participation in ensuring the success of the UN and multilateralism, pointing out that the current session of the General Assembly has seen the first-ever “one-on-one” briefing between the [President of the General Assembly](#) and civil society representatives.

The conference will assess how effectively the 2030 Agenda is being promoted and enacted, and explore global attitudes towards the UN. It will conclude with the presentation of the Official Outcome Document, drafted by civil society, for adoption at the closing plenary session. This will include a [Youth Declaration](#), detailing the commitments made by young people to contribute towards the UN efforts in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Embrace ‘people-centered multilateralism,’ UN-civil society forum urges

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 23 August 2018 - Thursday afternoon, the 67th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) [Conference](#) concluded, pledging to “uplift those whose human rights are most under threat and to protect our planet by living in harmony with nature.”

“DPI is proud to work closely with civil society to plan this unique event for networking and examining together how the UN and the NGO community can work together solve global problems,” said Ms. Alison Smale, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications.

The participants adopted by acclamation in the closing session an outcome document entitled ‘People Centered Multilateralism: A Call to Action,’ and which will be known by the shorthand the [New York Action Plan](#).

It contains specific civil society commitments, as well as calls for the UN Secretary-General, Member States, multinational corporations and the UN itself.



A young woman wears a shirt bearing the logo of the 67th DPI/NGO Conference at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 22 August 2018.
UN Photo/Loey Felipe

“We are heartened to see how strong support is for multilateralism among civil society and how committed they are to partner in the spirit of the [UN Charter](#),” Ms. Smale added.

The chair of this year’s Conference, Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International, said: “The outcome document sets us on a path to reimagine multilateralism – how we work together to tackle the global problems we face. I’m proud that that this week, we have had the audacity to identify those daunting challenges and to respond boldly and with one voice.”

Youth played an integral role in planning and participating in the Conference, including with a dedicated ‘youth hub’. They also adopted a [Youth Declaration](#), “We the Future,” part of the outcome document, which offers a set of visions, commitments and recommendations, drafted by and for youth.

At the closing, Ms. Smale announced that next year, Utah’s Salt Lake City would host the 68th conference. from 26 to 28 August.

Salt Lake City Mayor Jackie Biskupski said: “As a city committed to being inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, it is an honour to be the first US host city of the UN-DPI Conference.”

She underscored that Salt Lake City would be an excellent opportunity for the UN and the world’s NGOs “to expand awareness in this country of sustainable development goals and the value of global unity.”

Two years ago, in the city of Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, the DPI/NGO Conference embarked on “an ethos of global citizenship.”

In that same people-centred spirit, this year’s Conference re-committed to foster multilateralism dedicated both to human rights and sustainable development – with a pledge to uplift the rights of those most under threat.

Importance to travel & tourism

The keywords here are “A path to reimagine multilateralism – how we work together to tackle the global problems we face.” The conference then “had the audacity to identify those daunting challenges and to respond boldly and with one voice.” This may be a golden opportunity for travel and tourism to take a cue from that language and “identify its own daunting challenges” in a realistic manner. Precisely because it does not identify those daunting challenges, travel & tourism is unable to come up with any practical solutions beyond the most superficial and parochial ones that fall within the traditional comfort zones. The UN SDGs are door-openers in more ways than one. The industry can do a lot more to build on the spirit of multilateralism to identify global solutions.

LEAD STORY 3.1

“We the Future” Full Text of the Youth Declaration



67th United Nations DPI NGO Conference

United Nations Headquarters, 22-23 August 2018

Preamble

We, the young peoples of the world gathered at the 67th United Nations DPI/ NGO Conference, join our voices and efforts to uphold the value of multilateralism and re-commit ourselves to seeking global solutions for global problems, including but not limited to, achieving the targets set forth in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Youth, with our unique capacities and vibrant energy, are propelling humanity's movement towards a new future. Today, millions of families are still trapped in extreme poverty, struggling to access even basic resources like education, healthcare and employment. Today, a quarter of the world's youth still live in the shadows of violent conflict, everything from wars to human trafficking to substance abuse threaten to steal the promise of our tomorrow. And today, all on the Planet Earth are impacted by environmental degradation, communities of people and creatures are endangered by pollution, climate change, sea-level rising, and many other byproducts of human development.

If we don't join in concerted action now, we may not have an earth to live on tomorrow.

The rising generations recognize that we must work collectively, across national, generational, and other real or fabricated boundaries, to shift the current paradigm and create new global and multilateral structures, to weave a new tapestry of economic, technological, environmental and social life that can drive humanity's evolution towards collective prosperity. We have power in numbers and when united, can demand immense change. We the Youth are taking the lead and contributing our expertise, energy, experience, passion, and creativity in implementing global solutions. It is in this spirit that we set forth this Declaration of our shared visions, commitments, and recommendations.

Visions

We the Youth are united in our vision for a peaceful and sustainable world. Together we affirm that:

Global problems are beyond the power of any single entity to tackle; partnerships are essential to create and facilitate lasting change. Multilateralism is more than partnership by multiple entities, but rather inclusive collaboration of states and non-state actors. We need to implement the new collaborative model, as described in “People-Centered Multilateralism: A Call to Action”, recognizing and respecting all peoples’ right to participate, especially those who have been traditionally underrepresented.

We will continue to work together and undertake sustainable actions that can benefit all of humanity; we will continue to work towards ending conflict, countering violence and building sustainable and lasting peace.

We share responsibility for our planet, strive to live in harmony with nature, and must work to minimize the human-made effects of climate change.

We must create economic systems that can provide for the well-being of all, ensuring that development does not take precedence over the health of people and the planet.

We are one in our humanity, with natural and inalienable human rights, including the right to determine our future; civic participation must also be a right ensured to all.

We work to remove all forms of discrimination against sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, religion, physical appearance, political affiliation, other-abled individuals, which are all counterproductive to progress.

We must be included in decision-making at all levels of political processes and structured mechanisms for youth participation must be incorporated into all public institutions.

Commitments

We pledge to commit our abilities, efforts, and heart to:

Increase awareness of and work persistently towards the accomplishment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, their corresponding targets, and the commitments set forth in the Gyeongju Youth Declaration.

Become active global citizens supporting our peers across their spectrum of needs, from ending poverty in all dimensions, supporting women and girls, to quests for public office and other leadership positions in service of the community. We also proactively demand space for youth in all public fora.

Become more conscious of the effects of our own consumption activities and make responsible decisions in our daily lives that can help in achieving Agenda 2030.

Increase awareness of and advocate for human rights in our work, honor all life with respect, and join together to fight the injustices committed against youth across the world;

Contribute to the repositioning of the UN Development System and improvement of other international bodies, making them more progressive, fair, sustainable, effective, youth-friendly, and shouldering our share of the responsibility in shaping the future of our world.

Serve as open partners, sharing our technology, information, knowledge and skills with those who can benefit from them and creating opportunities for intergenerational partnerships, learning from friends and spreading best practices.

Help create safe spaces of expression for those who are left out of the existing political system, including but not limited to residents of conflict-ridden areas, migrants, displaced people, refugees, stateless people, and other groups in vulnerable situations.

Draw on our advantageous position as youth to facilitate peacebuilding, reconciliation, and the cultivation of new communities.

Recommendations

Fully understanding that in order to achieve a paradigm shift, we need more than just personal action. By resonating the hopes of youth around the world, we, with a unified voice, call upon:

States and other entities committed in multilateral agreements to deliver their promises and to be trustworthy partners to ensure stability in the rules-based international order.

States and non-state actors to augment diversity and inclusion across all spectra in their decision-making process, making sure that those most impacted are part of the deliberations, understanding that superficial tokenism does not foster true partnership.

States to ensure access to quality and culturally-relevant education for all, reaching even the most vulnerable communities, providing the materials and knowledge to cultivate independent learners.

States to integrate Agenda 2030 into all facets of their education curricula, considering informal, non-formal, experiential, service-based and interdisciplinary education as emphasized elements of the learning experience.

States to consciously design their education systems to enhance global citizenship by fostering inclusivity, developing leadership, and encouraging innovation and creativity in youth.

States to address youth unemployment as a priority by investing in workforce development, creating green jobs, internships, and apprenticeships, supporting entrepreneurship; and to implement effective workplace policies to protect youth from exploitation.

Everyone to respect youth as equal partners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Everyone to consider environmental consequences, including those affecting life on land, life below water, and the global climate, and to prioritize the use of renewable energy and technology.

Governments to increase financial resources for public health concerns, such as mental health and wellness, drug use and addictions, family planning, wireless radiation, reducing cancer risk amongst the youth, and the global obesity epidemic.

All levels of government to dedicate time, space, and resources to develop localized plans that achieve the targets of the SDGs.

Further information: [67th UN DPI/NGO Conference](#)

LEAD STORY 4

As conflicts become more complex, 'mediation is no longer an option; it is a necessity' - UN chief



*Secretary-General António Guterres addresses the Security Council meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security, with a focus on mediation and settlement of disputes.
UN Photo/Evan Schneider*

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 29 August 2018 - As war and the mediation of peace have become increasingly complex, innovative thinking is needed to save and improve the lives of millions, United Nations [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) told the [Security Council](#) on Wednesday.

Speaking alongside the UN chief were the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, a member of his [High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation](#), and Mossarat Qadeem, the co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, a civil society group working to prevent violent extremism in Pakistan.

As speakers at the [day-long debate](#) warned that the maintenance of international peace and security faces multiple challenges, Mr. Guterres noted that many internal conflicts feature a deadly mix of fragmented armed groups and political interests, funded by criminal activities, and that peace agreements are becoming more elusive and short-lived.

Archbishop Justin [expressed concern](#) that the international rules-based order is struggling, with national interests too often allowed, “even in this chamber”, to overcome the wisdom of those who have lived through war.

For this reason, the Secretary-General has made diplomacy for peace one of his key priorities, with a focus on prevention and investment in mediation, peacebuilding and sustainable development.



*Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, addresses the Security Council meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security..
UN Photo/Loey Felipe*

As an example of his commitment, he pointed to the creation of the High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation in September 2017, which aims to allow the UN to work more effectively with regional organizations, non-governmental groups and others involved in mediation around the world.

Mr. Guterres pointed to the work of Board member and former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo – who travelled to Liberia on behalf of the Secretary-General to support the peaceful transfer of power after the 2017 elections – as an example of how the Board can be deployed in the cause of conflict prevention.

He added that the UN already has a wide range of mediation resources at its disposal, including special envoys and representatives pursuing consultations, good offices and formal talks.

An example is the [UN Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers](#), a group with expertise on a wide range of issues connected to peace negotiations. The group, part of the [UN Mediation Unit](#), is providing crucial advice in areas of conflict, from the Central African Republic to Yemen and South Sudan.

Archbishop Justin described the Unit as a vital component of the UN's cross-agency and cross-departmental reconciliation strategy, which is helping to build shared understanding between the UN and its partners.

Mr. Guterres told the Council that the UN recognizes the important role played by an “enormous range” of actors, from national bodies to civil society group, women's organisations, religious leaders and young activists.

In South Sudan, where a peace deal has recently been agreed, the UN envoy there is supporting local efforts to address communal conflicts and, as Archbishop Justin explained, church leaders are playing an increasingly important role in moving the South Sudanese peace process beyond its current roadblocks.



*Mossarat Qadeem, Co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, addresses the Security Council meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security..
UN Photo/Evan Schneider*

The Secretary-General and Ms. Qadeem both emphasised the importance of investing in women's meaningful participation and leadership in peace processes. Mr. Guterres cited the emergence of regional networks of women mediators, such as the Nordic Women's Mediators' Network and the African Union's FemWise group.

Ms. Qadeem highlighted ways in which women have been excluded from mediation, with many sceptical of their ability to talk to violent extremist groups like the Tamil Tigers or the Taliban. In fact, women have played mediation roles in both cases.

For example, several years ago a group of mothers of missing soldiers in Sri Lanka successfully mediated a ceasefire, which was followed by peace talks. And Ms. Qadeem shared her own experience of speaking with the Taliban in Pakistan.

"I found the courage not only to speak with them to release my staff members they had captured, but I took the chance to seek support for the implementation of health and education projects. This is mediation."

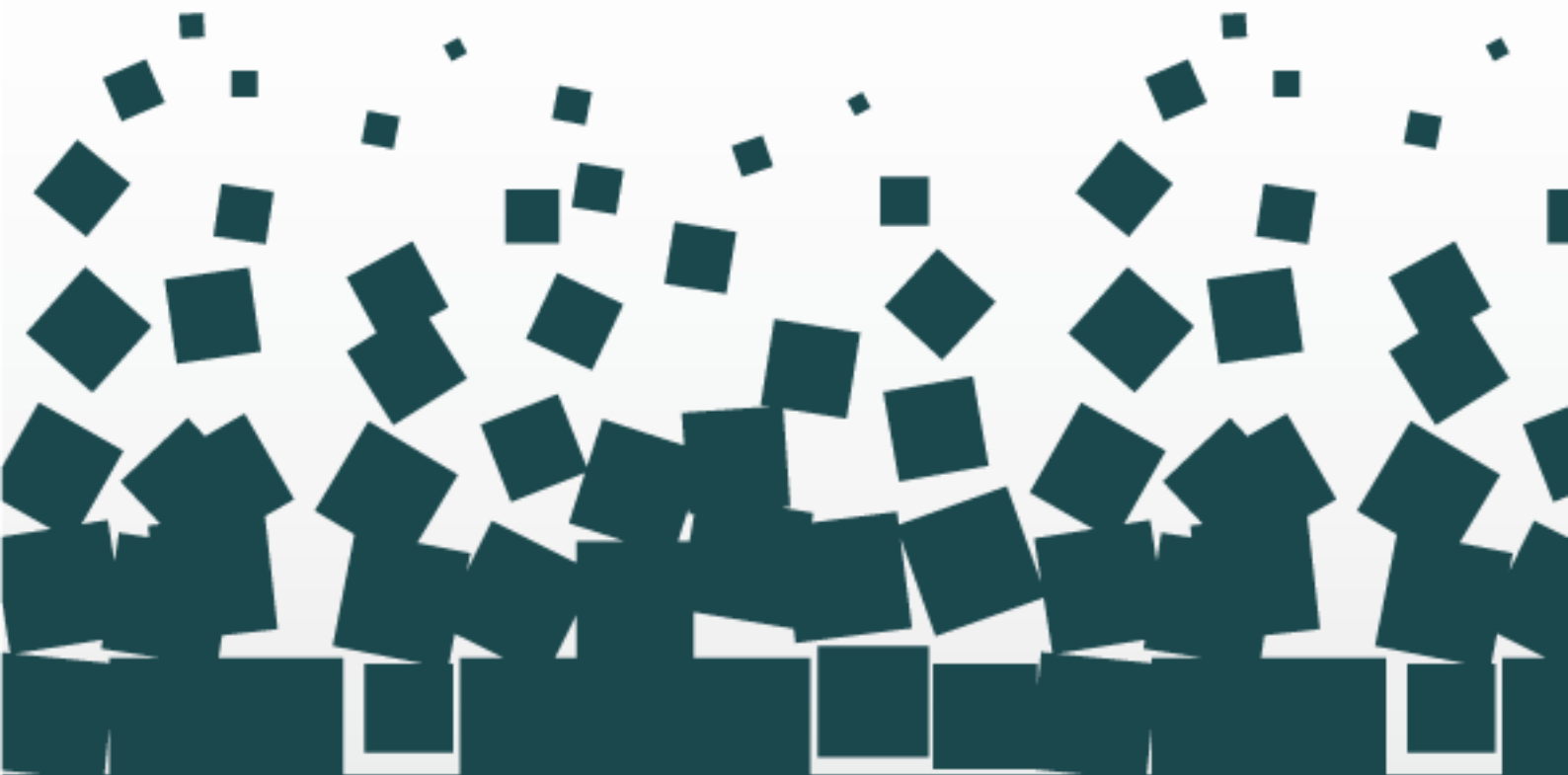
The UN chief told the Council that a changed conflict landscape calls for bold, creative thinking in international mediation: using social media effectively as a tool to bring communities together, speaking with one voice, and supporting the mediation efforts of regional and sub-regional organisations. "Innovative thinking on mediation", he said, "is no longer an option; it is a necessity."

Importance to travel & tourism

The UN Secretary-General is calling for "innovative thinking" to prevent and avert war and conflict, rather than manage and clean-up after they break out. This High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation could well become a major partner of the Travel & Tourism industry in pursuing this cause. Perhaps making members of this board regular speakers at industry forums and events would be a far better option than the usual gang of suspects from the technobabble corps.



SDG 1: Children worst hit by rise in climate-driven extreme weather





*Two-year-old Rumana is led by a community worker as she and her family are relocated to a safer area of the Kutupalong-Balukhali camp, in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, which was hit by monsoon rains in July.
UNICEF/UN0219088/Modola*



SDG 1: Children worst hit by rise in climate-driven extreme weather

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 31 August 2018 - Governments are being pressed by the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) to act now to safeguard younger generations from the immediate and long-term impacts of so-called "extreme weather events."

The devastating floods in southern India, wildfires ravaging the western United States and the record-breaking heatwaves baking countries across much of the northern hemisphere, are putting children in immediate danger while also jeopardizing their future, the agency said in a press release issued on Friday.

"In any crisis, children are among the most vulnerable, and the [extreme weather events we are seeing around the world](#) are no exception," said Ted Chaiban, UNICEF Director of Programmes.

"Over the past few months, we have seen a stark vision of the world we are creating for future generations. As more extreme weather events increase the number of emergencies and humanitarian crises, it is children who will pay the highest price."

These extreme weather events during June and July, causing injury, death, environmental damage and other losses.

UNICEF stated that although individual weather events cannot specifically be attributed to climate change, their increasing frequency and severity correspond with predictions of how human activities are affecting the global climate.

These conditions have numerous impacts on children. For example, they contribute to the increased spread of “childhood killers” such as malnutrition, malaria and diarrhoea, UNICEF explained.

Heatwaves put children at risk, with infants and younger children more likely to die or suffer from heatstroke, while floods threaten their survival and development through causing injuries or death by drowning, or compromising water supply and damaging sanitation facilities. Meanwhile, poor families are particularly affected by drought, which can lead to crop failure, livestock deaths and loss of income.

“As the world experiences a steady rise in climate-driven extreme weather events, it is children’s lives and futures that will be the most disrupted,” Mr. Chaiban continued. “Therefore, it’s vital that Governments and the international community take concrete steps to safeguard children’s future and their rights. The worst impacts of climate change are not inevitable, but the time for action is now.”

UNICEF has proposed an “[agenda for action on climate change](#).” It calls for strengthening health systems to respond to a changing climate and more extreme weather events.

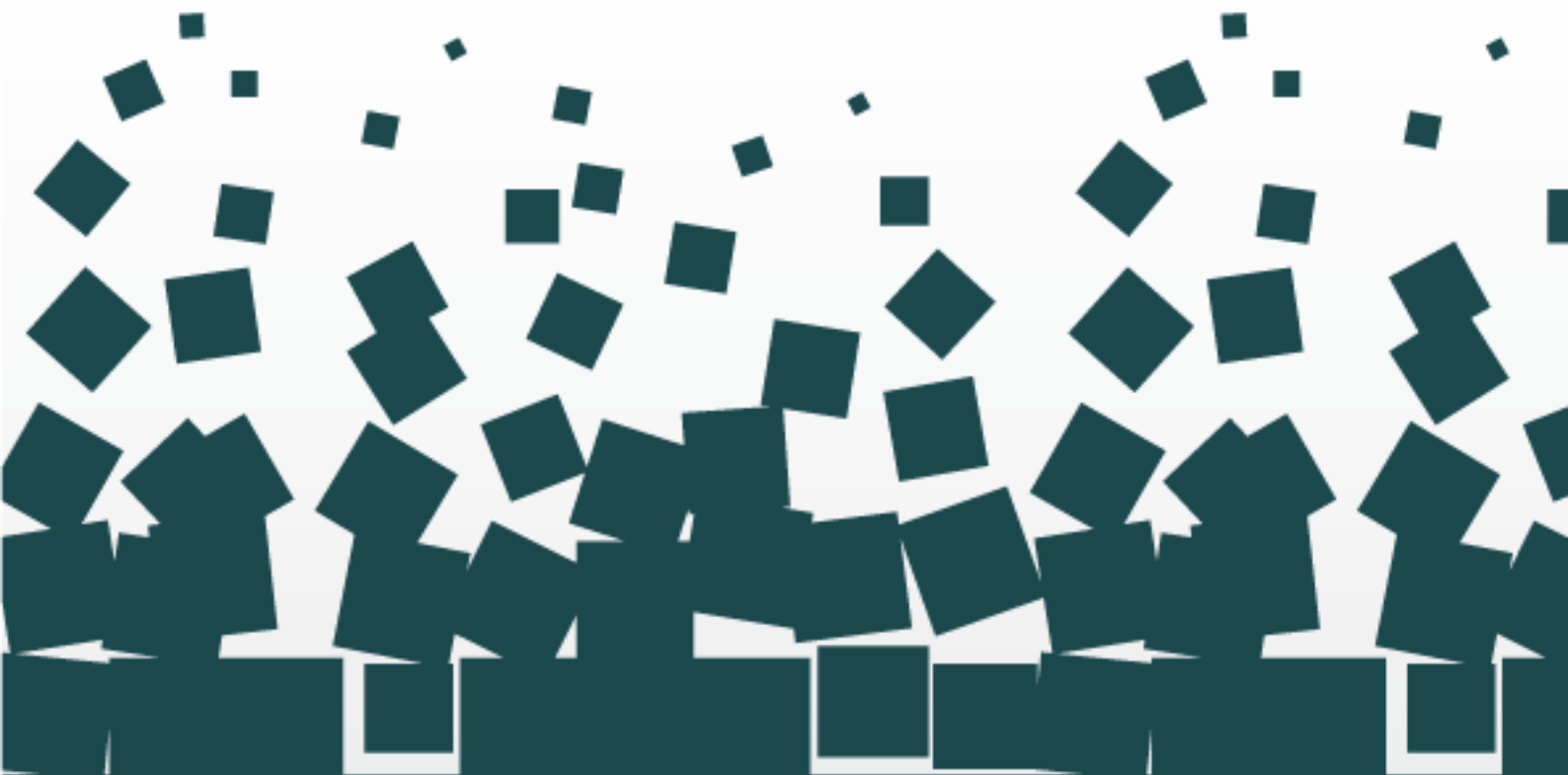
Other measures include increasing investment in climate resilient agricultural, water and sanitation services; educating children and young people about the issue of climate change, and reflecting their needs in national strategies and action plans.

Importance to travel & tourism

Children are the worst affected by all kinds of global misery – be it conflict, environmental problems, natural disasters, financial crises, etc. The travel & tourism industry often hails the contribution of the “young generation”. But anyone a family, especially young children and grandchildren, in this “industry of peace” needs to start thinking seriously about what can be done to alleviate these problems, especially the man-made ones. We spend a lot of time, money and effort to attract children to our theme parks, attractions and playgrounds. Millions of children in other parts of the world will never be so lucky.



SDG 1: Lack of access to clean water, toilets puts children's education at risk





*Children wash hands at the canteen of Secondary School No 20 in Toretsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine.
UNICEF/Aleksey Filippov*



SDG 1: Lack of access to clean water, toilets puts children's education at risk

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 27 August 2018
- Millions of children are going to school without basic hygiene facilities, and the goal of universal access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene remains “a huge challenge,” the United Nations warned on Monday

A new joint UN agency study, [Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools: 2018 Global Baseline Report](#), says that good hygiene facilities in schools provide the basis of a healthy learning environment, and that girls are more likely to attend when they are on their period.

Moreover, children who pick up good hygiene habits at school can reinforce positive life-long behaviours in their homes and communities, says the report.

However, millions of children are going to school without basic hygiene facilities: over 30 per cent of schools worldwide do not provide safe

drinking water; a third of schools do not provide the most basic of toilet facilities (such as septic tank, pit latrines or composting toilets); and nearly 900 million children go to schools with no handwashing facilities with soap and water.

The annual report is produced by the [World Health Organization/UN Children's Fund Joint Monitoring Programme](#), or JMP, which has been monitoring global progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene since 1990.

It looks at the progress made towards reaching the targets of two of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs): [Goal 6](#) (Clean water and sanitation), and [Goal 4](#) (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all).

Commenting on the report, Kelly Ann Naylor, Global Chief of [Water, Sanitation and Hygiene at UNICEF](#), said that “If education is the key to helping children escape poverty, access to water and sanitation is key to helping children safely maximize their education. To neglect this is to be careless with the well-being and health of children,”

Universal access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene in schools is part of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), but achieving this ambitious target presents a huge challenge. The JMP has designed tools to make it easier to track progress across countries, towards a basic level of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene service.

Importance to travel & tourism

Same message as the earlier story: Children are the worst affected by all kinds of global misery – be it conflict, environmental problems, natural disasters, financial crises, etc. The travel & tourism industry often hails the contribution of the “young generation”. But anyone a family, especially young children and grandchildren, in this “industry of peace” needs to start thinking seriously about what can be done to alleviate these problems, especially the man-made ones. We spend a lot of time, money and effort to attract children to our theme parks, attractions and playgrounds. Millions of children in other parts of the world will never be so lucky.

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



SDG 3: Tobacco industry giants “wolves masquerading as sheep” – UN health official





Close to 7 million people die every year from tobacco-related illnesses according to the World Health Organization (WHO). UN News/Yasmina Guerda



SDG 3: Tobacco industry giants “wolves masquerading as sheep” – UN health official

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 22 August 2018 - United Nations agencies must join forces at the policy level and refuse interference from tobacco companies in their programmes so the destructive impact of tobacco can be effectively addressed and lives can be saved, the head of the UN tobacco control treaty watchdog ([WHO FCTC Secretariat](#)) told UN News on Wednesday.

The WHO FCTC – [World Health Organization](#) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which is celebrating 15th adoption anniversary this year – is a global health treaty that advocates for the control of tobacco production, sale and use, as a way to reduce tobacco-related illnesses, deaths, environmental degradation and poverty across the world.

According to a [report](#) by WHO and the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), it is estimated that up to one billion people could die from tobacco-related diseases this century. Currently, over seven million people die every year due to tobacco use.

In addition, tobacco costs the global economy over a trillion dollars annually in medical expenses and lost productivity. As for the environmental impacts –deforestation and soil degradation for tobacco cultures, as well as water and soil pollution from cigarette littering – they cannot be overstated.



The impact of tobacco production and use on the environment, in terms of deforestation, pollution and soil degradation cannot be overstated.

UN News/Y. Guerda

“In 15 years, we have made a lot of progress, with tobacco-control measures in place in most of the world’s countries for example,” [said Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva](#), the Head of the WHO FCTC Secretariat. “But we are still facing a great deal of interference from the tobacco companies in government decision-making and even inside our own house, within UN agencies,” she regretted.

Article 5.3 of the [Convention](#) requires that parties to the treaty ensure that their public health policies are protected “from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry”. The article is based on the idea that there is a fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between the tobacco industry’s interests and public health interests.

As early as 2008, guidelines were developed for the effective implementation of Article 5.3 but the industry’s efforts remained successful too often.

“They are wolves masquerading as sheep,” said Dr. da Costa e Silva, referring to poverty-reduction programmes and other development projects that tobacco industry giants are funding, in partnership with several international inter-governmental organisations.

“The tide is turning however and, more and more, there is a reckoning that the mission of governments and UN agencies, and the interests of the tobacco industry are simply not compatible,” she noted.

Over the past two years, the European Union’s multi-billion-dollar deal with tobacco firms ended, and the UN Global Compact ([UNGCG](#)) – an initiative to engage companies “to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption” – decided to exclude from its partners companies that “derive revenue from the production and/or manufacturing of tobacco.”

Another recent milestone was the adoption in 2017 of a [resolution](#) by the Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#)) under the auspices of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force ([UNIATF](#)) on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), a group of UN and other inter-governmental entities created four years ago to help governments tackle [NCDs](#) worldwide.

The text encourages members of the Task Force to prevent tobacco industry interference, recalling the WHO FCTC model policy, which states that the UN must ensure a “consistent and effective separation between its activities and those of the tobacco industry, to preserve its integrity and reputation” and that “engagement with the tobacco industry is contrary to the United Nations system’s objectives, fundamental principles and values”. Similar language was [adopted again](#) in 2018.



*The ECOSOC chamber,
UN Headquarters.
UN Photo.*

“The ECOSOC resolutions show major progress towards the UN-as-a-whole recognising that tobacco companies represent a public health problem and that, inherently, they cannot be part of the solution,” the head of the FCTC Secretariat said. “But the issue persists and some UN agencies seem to remain unable to secure alternative sources of funding for their development programmes,” she regretted.

According to the WHO FCTC Secretariat, to date, only the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), the World Bank, WHO, the UNCG and the [UN Children’s Fund \(UNICEF\)](#) have policies in place to prevent interference from the industry. The [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) is also currently reconsidering its terms of cooperation with these companies, especially from a child labour perspective, as the industry relies heavily on it for its production processes.

“We are working to get more entities, especially UN agencies, to take the necessary steps to align their policies on tobacco industry interference with the overall principles of the United Nations,” said Dr. da Costa e Silva.

“It’s very simple,” she concluded. “The war against the devastating effects of tobacco can only be won if the UN stands united and remains coherent with its own values”.

In a month, a [High-Level Meeting on NCDs](#) will take place as part of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly in New York, to discuss trends and progress made on reducing risk factors for NCDs, including tobacco-related illnesses, and to recommend steps forward.

Importance to travel & tourism

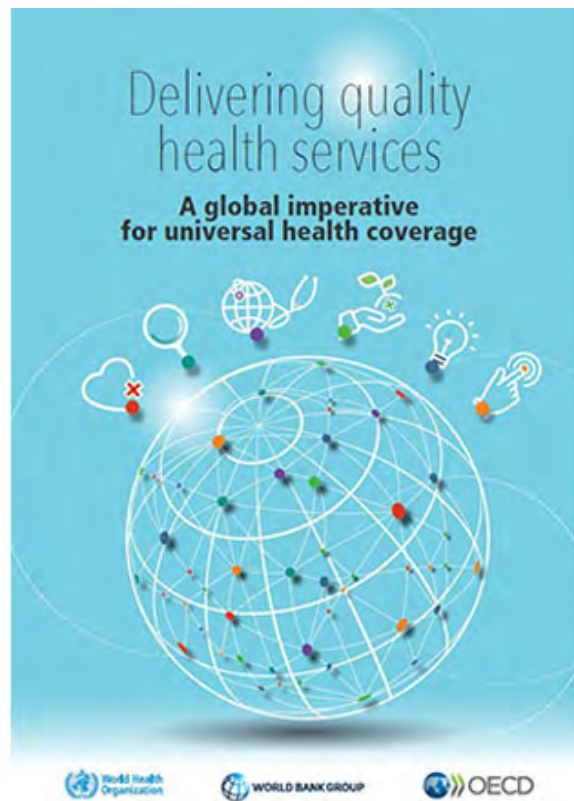
If seven million die every year from tobacco use, and three million die every year from alcohol, why are the Duty-Free stores stocked with these killers?

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



**SDG 3: Low quality healthcare
is increasing the burden of
global illness and health costs**





SDG 3: Low quality healthcare is increasing the burden of global illness and health costs

PARIS, OECD News release, 05/07/2018 - Poor quality health services are holding back progress on improving health in countries at all income levels, according to a new joint report by the OECD, World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

Today, inaccurate diagnosis, medication errors, inappropriate or unnecessary treatment, inadequate or unsafe clinical facilities or practices, or providers who lack adequate training and expertise prevail in all countries.

The situation is worst in low and middle-income countries where 10 percent of hospitalized patients can expect to acquire an infection during their stay, as compared to seven percent in high-income countries. This is despite hospital-acquired infections being easily avoided through better hygiene and appropriate use of antimicrobials. At the same time, one in ten patients is harmed during medical treatment in high-income countries.

These are just some of the highlights from *Delivering Quality Health Services – a Global Imperative for Universal Health Coverage*. The report also highlights that sickness associated with poor quality health care imposes additional expenditure on families and health systems.

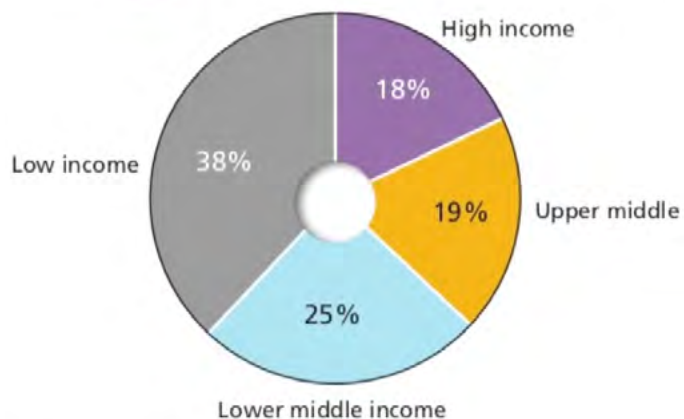
There has been some progress in improving quality, for example in survival rates for cancer and cardiovascular disease. Even so, the broader economic and social costs of poor quality care, including long-term disability, impairment and lost productivity, are estimated to amount to trillions of dollars each year.

“Without quality health services, universal health coverage will remain an empty promise,” said OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría. “The economic and social benefits are clear and we need to see a much stronger focus on investing in and improving quality to create trust in health services and give everyone access to high-quality, people-centred health services.”

“At WHO we are committed to ensuring that people everywhere can obtain health services when and where they need them,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

make accurate diagnoses one third to three quarters of the time, and clinical guidelines for common conditions were followed less than 45 percent of the time on average.

Figure 3.4 Burden of disease caused by adverse events, 2015



Percentage of average DALYs/country. Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2015.

“We are equally committed to ensuring that those services are good quality. Quite honestly, there can be no universal health coverage without quality care.”

“Good health is the foundation of a country’s human capital, and no country can afford low-quality or unsafe healthcare,” World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim said. “Low-quality care disproportionately impacts the poor, which is not only morally reprehensible, it is economically unsustainable for families and entire countries.”

Other key findings in the report paint a picture of quality issues in healthcare around the world:

- Healthcare workers in seven low and middle-income African countries were only able to

- Research in eight high-mortality countries in the Caribbean and Africa found that effective, quality maternal and child health services are far less prevalent than suggested by just looking at access to services. For example, just 28 percent of antenatal care, 26 percent of family planning services and 21 percent of sick-child care across these countries qualified as ‘effective’.
- Around 15 percent of hospital expenditure in high-income countries is due to mistakes in care or patients being infected while in hospitals.

The three organisations outline the steps governments, health services and their workers, together with citizens and patients, urgently need to take to improve health care quality. Governments should lead the way with strong national health care quality policies and strategies. Health systems should focus on competent care and user experience to ensure confidence in the system.

Citizens should be empowered and informed to actively engage in health care decisions and in designing new models of care to meet the needs of their local communities. Health care workers should see patients as partners and commit themselves to providing and using data to demonstrate the effectiveness and safety of healthcare.

The full report is available at <http://www.oecd.org/health/delivering-quality-health-services-a-global-imperative-9789264300309-en.htm>.

Importance to travel & tourism

These issues are worth thinking about at the regularly held forums on health and wellness. The entire health and wellness sector is today designed for the rich. The travel and tourism component is also driven by expenditure patterns. It would be useful to factor in creative ways by which the less well off can also benefit from the health and wellness boom. Many grassroots cures and remedies existed in local communities long before the medical and pharmaceutical juggernauts came along. It would be useful to revive these.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SDG 3: OECD Health spending rises at fastest rate in 7 years





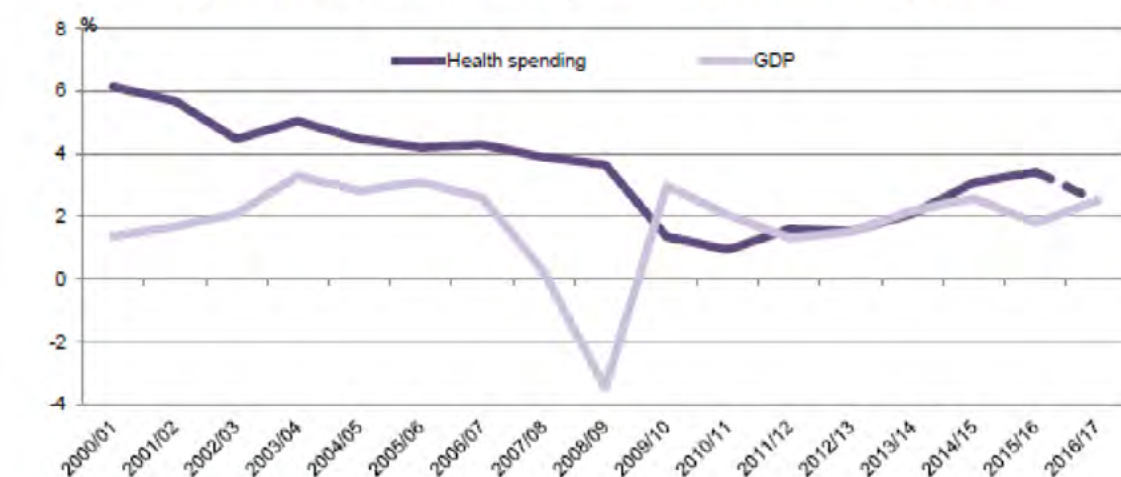
SDG 3: OECD Health spending rises at fastest rate in 7 years

New OECD data and analysis on health spending show that health spending in 2016 grew by its fastest rate in seven years, with further growth expected in 2017, according to OECD Health Statistics 2018, released on June 28. OECD spending on health care increased by 3.4%, on average, in 2016, the highest rate since 2009 although still below pre-crisis levels.

The OECD Manual A System of Health Accounts (SHA, revised edition March 2017) provides a standard framework for producing a set of comprehensive, consistent and internationally comparable accounts to meet the needs of public and private-sector health analysts and policy-makers.

WHAT'S NEW - POLICY BRIEF SPENDING ON HEALTH: LATEST TRENDS

Figure 1. Annual growth of health expenditure and GDP, in real terms, 2000-17



Source: OECD Health Statistics 2018.

OECD spending on health care increased by 3.4%, on average, in 2016, the highest rate since 2009 although still below pre-crisis levels. Preliminary estimates for 2017 expect spending to keep growing but by less, at around 2.5%. The figures refer to what governments and individuals spent.

Health spending as a share of GDP was 8.9% in 2016 and is forecast to remain at this level in 2017. At 17.2% of GDP, health spending was highest in the United States, and significantly more than Switzerland (12.3%) and France (11.5%), the second and third highest spenders. At the other end of the scale, Turkey (4.2%) and Mexico (5.4%) each spent less than 6% of their GDP on health.

Excerpts from the Policy Brief:

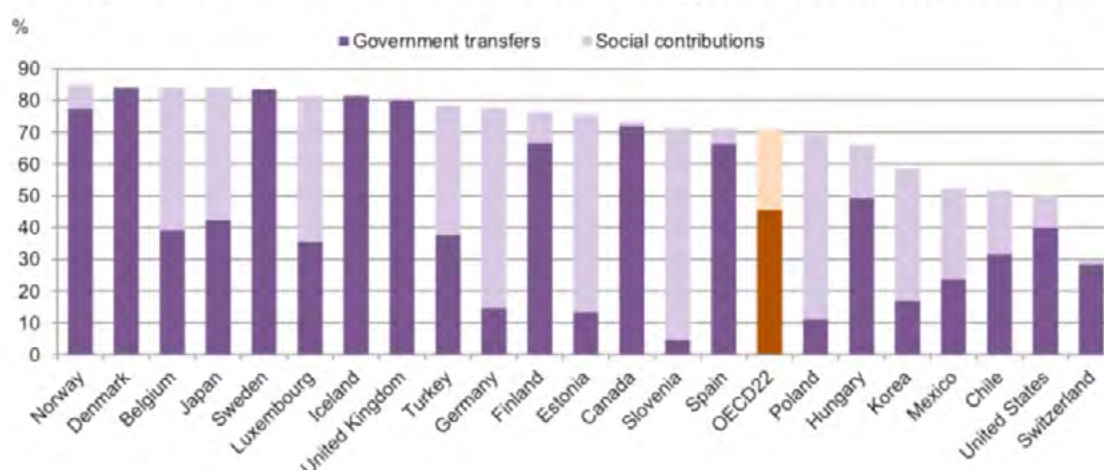
Health spending accounts for close to a tenth of total economic activity, having stabilised in recent years. The consumption of health care goods and services represented 8.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2016. Preliminary estimates expect this ratio to remain at this level in 2017, albeit hiding a wide variation across OECD countries.

At 17.2% of GDP, health care consumption represented a much larger share of the economy in the United States, and significantly more than Switzerland (12.3%) and France (11.5%), the second and third highest

spenders. At the other end of the scale, Turkey (4.2%) and Mexico (5.4%) each spent less than 6% of their GDP on health.

In per capita terms, health spending in 2017 is estimated to have reached USD 4 069 (adjusted for differences in price levels) on average across the OECD. This is roughly 70% more than OECD countries spend on education for each citizen. In the United States, the average spend is expected to have risen above USD 10 000 for the first time in 2017 with health being the biggest item of final household consumption. Per capita spending was also significantly above the OECD average in Switzerland (USD 8 009), Luxembourg (USD 7 049) and Norway (USD 6 351). By contrast, Mexico, Turkey and Colombia each spent around a tenth of the level of the United States on health care, at around USD 1 000 per person.

Figure 3. Public financing as a share of total health spending, by funding source, 2016 or nearest year



Note: Contributions to compulsory private health insurance schemes (and not Social Health Insurance) are usually considered as funded from private sources.

Source: OECD Health Statistics 2018.

In nearly all countries the vast majority of health services are obtained either via government schemes or some form of compulsory health insurance. In the United Kingdom, Iceland, Denmark and Sweden, around 80% of all spending is financed by national or regional government schemes, such as the National Health Service (NHS). In the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Japan, Luxembourg and the Slovak Republic on the other hand, 70% or more of health care costs are covered by social health insurance.

Out-of-pocket payments, which represent direct payments by households, represent around a fifth of all health spending across OECD countries. As a regressive form of health financing, dependent on the ability to pay, these typically weigh more heavily on poorer households. In Latvia and Mexico, households directly shoulder more than 40% of all health spending suggesting challenges to achieve effective universal health coverage in those countries. On the other hand, patients are much better protected against the financial burden of health care costs in France, where out-of-pocket spending is only around 10% of total health spending and in the Netherlands (11%).

A number of countries have implemented policies to significantly reduce out-of-pocket payments in recent years. Chile and Mexico, for example, have reduced the share of out-of-pocket spending by more than a tenth since 2000 by increasing public coverage.

On the other hand, the out-of-pocket spending share is now around 3-5 percentage points higher than in 2009 in Greece, Portugal and Spain, as these countries took certain measures to contain public budgets, including higher cost-sharing and adjusting entitlements to public benefits.

Taxes and social security contributions fund more than two-thirds of health spending across the OECD. For 22 OECD countries for which data is available, government transfers (primarily from taxes) and social

security contributions combined, fund on average 71% of all health spending. The proportion of these “public” sources is highest in Scandinavia, Belgium and Japan, accounting for 84% or more of all health spending. On the other hand, government revenues and social contributions fund only around half of all health care costs in Mexico, Chile and the United States, and as little as 30% in Switzerland.

Spending on outpatient care grew the fastest

Overall health spending growth in 2016 was mainly triggered by increases in outpatient care (+4.4%) with long-term care (+3.0%), retail pharmaceuticals (+2.8%) and inpatient care (+2.2%) recording more moderate growth. For these key health care services, the pattern of spending growth has been less than uniform over the last decade. In the years preceding the crisis (2004-08), spending on outpatient care was typically growing at around twice the rate of inpatient care (5% vs. 2.8%). There was a drastic slowdown in both inpatient and outpatient spending during the crisis years (2008-12) due to salary freezes and reductions in service payments. Since the crisis, outpatient spending has once again outpaced inpatient spending - albeit with annual increases below pre-crisis levels.

Specific policies to strengthen primary care and avoid costly hospitalisations, as well as wider use of same-day and ambulatory procedures have contributed to this development. At the same time, increased demand, the inclusion of new services in the public benefit basket and the extension of coverage to previously uninsured individuals also led to increased spending in the outpatient sector. Outpatient spending growth was significantly above average in recent years in Iceland, Estonia and Latvia.

Long-term care was the fastest growing area of health spending prior to the crisis, averaging nearly 7% annually. While growth slowed, it remained relatively strong (4.3%). Yet, unlike other sectors, growth of long-term care has decreased further, currently standing at around 3% per year. The exceptionally high pre-crisis levels can be explained by long-term care policies in some countries; for example, Korea introduced a population-wide Long-term Care Insurance programme. Long-term care expenditure has also increased strongly in more recent years in some countries. In Germany, a number of reforms extended the group of people entitled to public long-term care services and improved financial coverage, resulting in growth nearly twice as fast as other health spending.

Spending on retail pharmaceuticals is growing again after years of stagnation

After a number of years of flat or even negative growth, retail pharmaceutical spending has resumed stronger growth: 3.1% in 2015 and 2.8% in 2016. Several countries took measures to reduce pharmaceutical spending during the crisis - such as cutting manufacturer prices and margins for pharmacists and wholesalers, introducing compulsory rebates, de-listing of some pharmaceuticals and incentivising the use of generics. Patent expiries for a number of blockbuster drugs also contributed to the fall in spending over this period. However, new high-cost treatments such as for Hepatitis C and some oncological drugs help explain a return to positive growth rates. In 2016, pharmaceutical spending in Latvia and Estonia increased by 10% or more, while Korea, Switzerland and Spain saw rises of more than 5%.

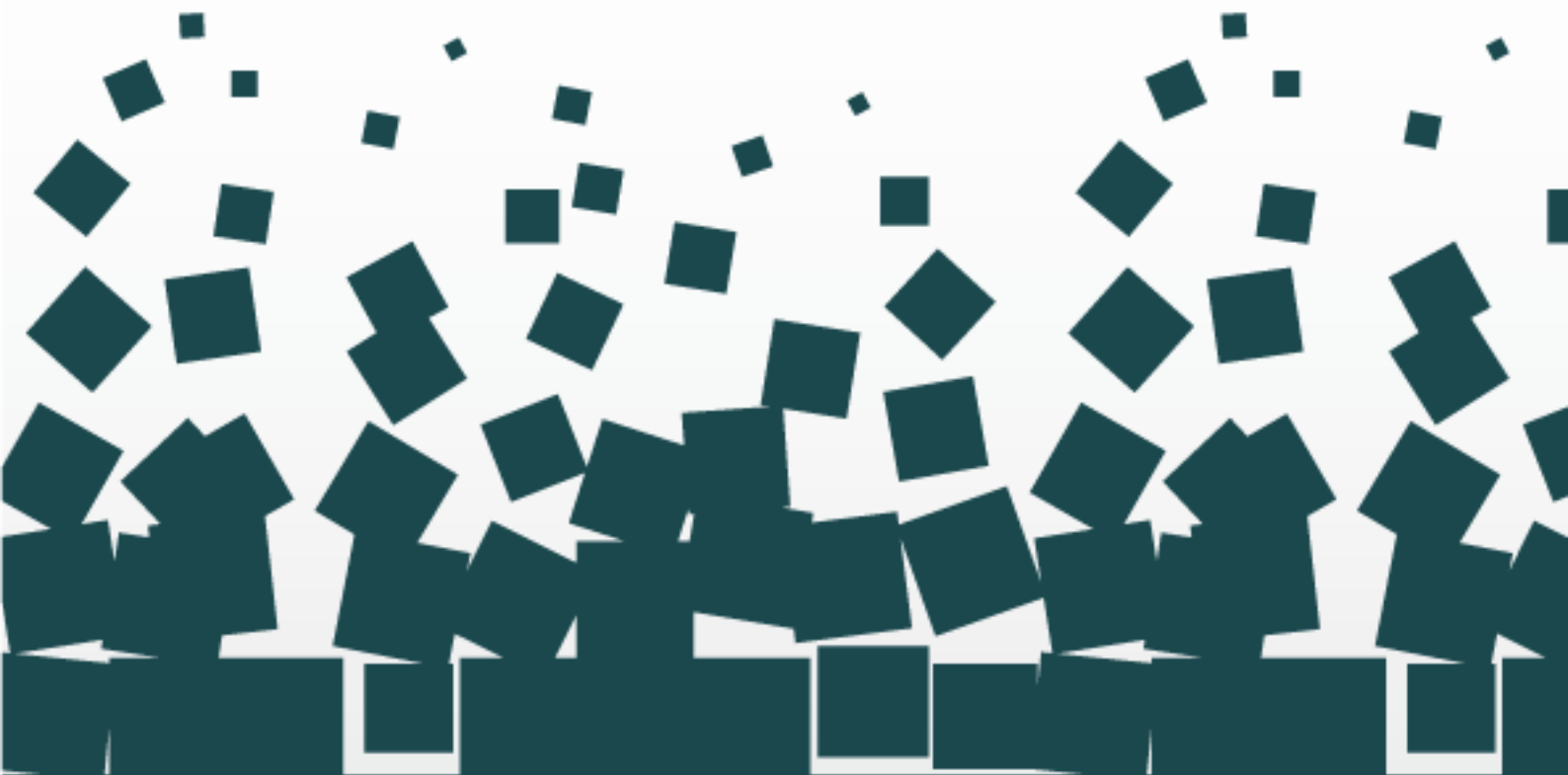
The retail pharmaceutical sector only tells part of the story since spending on pharmaceuticals used during hospital care can typically add another 30% to a country's pharmaceutical bill.

Importance to travel & tourism

Health and wellness has now become a major money-spinner. Unhealthy societies are unproductive societies, and the same applies to workplaces. Like with all other industry forums, the health and wellness sector needs to broaden its outlook and look more comprehensively at all the various ramifications and implications of marketing it as a full-fledged business. It can be inflationary and discriminatory.



SDG 4: Four education trends countries everywhere should know about





Students at Catholic University of Peru, Edgar Rivera, Pablo Suarez and David Ramirez (names left to right) study homework together at the university in Lima, Peru on June 27, 2013. © Dominic Chavez/World Bank



SDG 4: Four education trends countries everywhere should know about

By Harry A. Patrinos and Eduardo Velez Bustillo

Washington DC., Aug 15, 2018, World Bank news release -- Recently, we reached out to education experts around the world to hear what they considered the most pressing issues facing our sector today. Surprisingly, they all said that little has changed in terms of our most common challenges. What was changing, they agreed, were the innovative ways that the global community has begun tackling them.

Our discussions frequently came back to advances in neuroscience, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Blockchain, and the consequences of negative population growth—as well as the ways that these phenomena are changing and challenging the way we think about education. Some of these changes have received more attention than others, but we are convinced of their importance—and education stakeholders around the world should be paying attention.

Neuroscience

Since the 1990s, experts have been trying to link neuroscience and education, but only in the last decade or so has there been a consensus that neuroscience has a prominent place in education. In fact, based on neuroscience research, some scientists argue that the way the brain learns and processes information needs to be a paradigm for education reform—specifically for boosting literacy, but also overall learning and cognitive development more broadly.

Reading depends on the ability of the visual system to recognize sets of small objects, like letters, as patterns. Cognitive science tells us that people start to learn with small chunks, such as a letter, then connect these letters into words until the brain recognizes them in the same way the brain recognizes faces. Once this is achieved, then students can read; and only then can they understand and learn.

The tools offered by neuroscience improve our understanding of the links between hearing, processing linguistic sounds, and the development of literacy—and this is increasingly critical to ensuring that children everywhere are learning to read. Tools for teaching literacy based on this new research has already proven to be effective, especially for low-income children. Indeed, emerging information from the field of neuroscience can be leveraged to help ensure that all young people learn to read at the right age.

MOOCs

Massive Online Open Courses have incredible potential. Although there is nothing particularly new about this technology (many universities have been offering on-line courses for decades using a similar technology, such as video lectures), there has been a major shift in terms of the scale involved. Many enthusiastic supporters of MOOCs initially thought that they would replace the traditional model of higher education, provide a cost-effective alternative, and “scale up” higher education.

And while this hasn’t happened, MOOCs still have potential. For example, the Khan Academy provides free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere and more than 100 million people have benefited from courses in about 40 languages on topics ranging from mathematics and computer programming to grammar and art history. MOOCs offered by universities such as Coursera are providing a variety of courses, which now attract more than 23 million students a year, up from about 81 million students when it started ten years ago. MOOCs are also used to provide corporate training in a cost-effective manner.

This is revolutionary for education practitioners who are looking to expand education access in the developing world. Indeed, research indicates that MOOCs are providing opportunities for people with limited access to education. Developing countries should take note and explore ways to expand access to this tool for their populations.

Blockchain

Though [blockchain](#) is not widely used in education, it will be soon. Today our banking transactions, shopping, communications—and almost anything else—can be done online. These online processes are recorded and blockchain technology collects that data into encrypted blocks that can never be changed or modified and throws open the pieces across a global network of nodes or distributed computers (users).

This technology has the potential to innovate the way data is shared between education providers and users, ensuring data integrity and interoperability in a way that will surely benefit the education sector as a whole. Blockchain creates opportunities for decentralization; increases transparency, speed and effectiveness; removes unnecessary intermediaries; reduces costs; and facilitates auditing processes. NGOs are already using blockchain solutions to increase aid effectiveness by developing platforms that enable people anywhere in the world to build a secure identity for themselves. Migrants, for example, have skills or education credentials that they want recognized in their new countries and having this secure and indestructible identity is helping poor and otherwise vulnerable people participate more equally in the global economy.

Consequences of negative population growth

As populations in some countries decline due to lower fertility, an increasing number of better-educated young people are migrating to urban areas. The number of primary school students, though, is decreasing and in many countries, schools are closing and consolidating. In sparsely populated areas, the number of children has decreased even further, and school consolidation is increasing the distance between home and school for many children.

This is disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations, with the potential to undermine equitable access to education. And paradoxically with fewer students in the system, there's a risk that overall quality will decrease as well, because the system will be less demanding in accepting new students. Second, in a dynamic labor market the older workers will need an agile supply of training for new skills demanded by the global competition. The implication is that countries with a negative population growth will need to identify new incentive structures to maintain students' and society's commitment to education. It may also be time to reintroduce multi-grade teaching to deal with the growing numbers of small schools.

Education systems, especially in developing countries, are facing a number of challenges—most pressingly, improving the quality of learning at all levels. And though there are different pathways forward for achieving this goal, we are confident that the four themes we explored here are a great place to start.

Importance to travel & tourism

The speed of change today is such that there is no way that education facilities will be able to keep up. Over time this will only widen the rich poor income gap, because only the rich will be able to afford the highly specialised education that is necessary to keep up with the pace of change. That will open up a whole new set of socio-political issues that are not difficult to foresee.



SDG 5: ICAO and South Africa partner on major step forward for gender equality in global aviation





ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu delivering her key note address to the first ever Global Aviation Gender Summit.



SDG 5: ICAO and South Africa partner on major step forward for gender equality in global aviation

Montréal and Cape Town, 14 August 2018, ICAO News release – In a major step forward for gender equality and gender action in international air transport, ICAO and South Africa’s Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) were joined by over 500 leaders and experts from around the world in Cape Town for the opening of the first-ever Global Aviation Gender Summit.

SACAA was supported by the Government of the Republic of South Africa through its Department of Transport, and the event was jointly opened and closed by ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu, and by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Transport for South Africa, Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga.

Representing Member States and the entire range of air transport sector operations, and bringing perspectives and insights from a range of civil society and United Nations agencies with strong gender equity mandates, the event’s participants heard from a series of leaders on why the #TimeIsNow for concrete actions and commitments for gender equality in global aviation.

“As a woman who has spent virtually her entire career in the service of international civil aviation, this is truly an exciting moment for me,” commented Dr. Liu in her keynote opening address. “Aviation already contributes greatly to peace, prosperity and sustainable development, all over the world, but it can do even more for our society, and especially for women.”

Highlighting the vast global scope and forecast growth of worldwide air transport operations, Dr. Liu underscored that the optimal performance of the sector relies, at its core, on highly skilled, technical and managerial professionals. In order to meet its future needs, air transport “must first become a better example of gender equality in action, and address head-on why women are still underrepresented in the

majority of the technical and executive positions in aviation,” she noted.

“And while the current imbalance may be a challenge to those of us already serving as professionals in this sector, it is also an important opportunity for the next generations of girls now completing their studies and entering the workforce.”

ICAO and South Africa designed the Global Aviation Gender Summit to analyze the issue through both behavioural and socio-economic lenses, with special focus on the importance of diversity, inclusiveness, and the positive impacts expected in terms of organizational effectiveness and success.

Dr. Liu commented that the participants’ work should align with and support the global efforts underway in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and in particular, SDG5 on Gender, stressing as well that “we especially must not lose sight of the key role to be played in all of these efforts by reliable, disaggregated data on gender, whether for trend analysis, workforce planning, or related needs.”

Dr. Liu also praised the UN agency’s South African partners for the landmark aviation gender event, congratulating and thanking the Honourable Deputy Minister of Transport for South Africa, Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga, and the State’s Director General of the Civil Aviation, Ms. Poppy Khoza, for their support and leadership.

The ICAO Secretary General concluded her remarks by recognizing that it was “critical to our longer-term success that our agreed approaches advocate among both governments and the private sector,” and that in each case “the need for strong commitments and leadership, at the highest levels, must be consistently underscored.”

The event concluded with participants establishing a roadmap of action aimed at accelerating gender equality and the advancement of women and girls. A communiqué in this regard was subsequently issued and read out to the event by the Deputy Minister of Transport, Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga.

During her mission to address the Summit, which took place 8 to 10 August 2018, Dr. Fang Liu, also held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Transport of South Africa, Dr. Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande, focussing on the sustainable development benefits of aviation growth to both the State and the region. Dr. Liu underscored to the Minister how ICAO-compliant air connectivity serves as a catalyst for sustainable development and the achievement of 15 of the 17 United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr. Liu encouraged Minister Nzimande to ensure the prioritization of civil aviation development within South Africa’s national economic development strategy, and especially as it relates to infrastructure planning and human resources capacity development.

Recognizing that the South Africa civil aviation industry is at an advanced level compared to some other African States, the Secretary General also highlighted the importance of the opportunity it has to be an aviation leader in the region, and support other African States in training and capacity building, as well as advocate advocacy gender equality in aviation. . The Minister acknowledged the relevance of Dr. Liu’s points, and expressed his thanks to ICAO for its role in encouraging and enabling the sustainable development of aviation throughout Africa.

Dr. Liu was also informed by the Minister that South Africa had now joined the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), and that it would seek to play a regional leadership role in fostering the growth enabled by liberalization through the enhancement of aviation training provisions.

Further details:

[Global Aviation Gender Summit](#)

[ICAO's Women in Aviation Portal](#)

[YouTube Recordings](#)

[ICAO's No Country Left Behind initiative](#)

[Aviation and the UN SDGs](#)

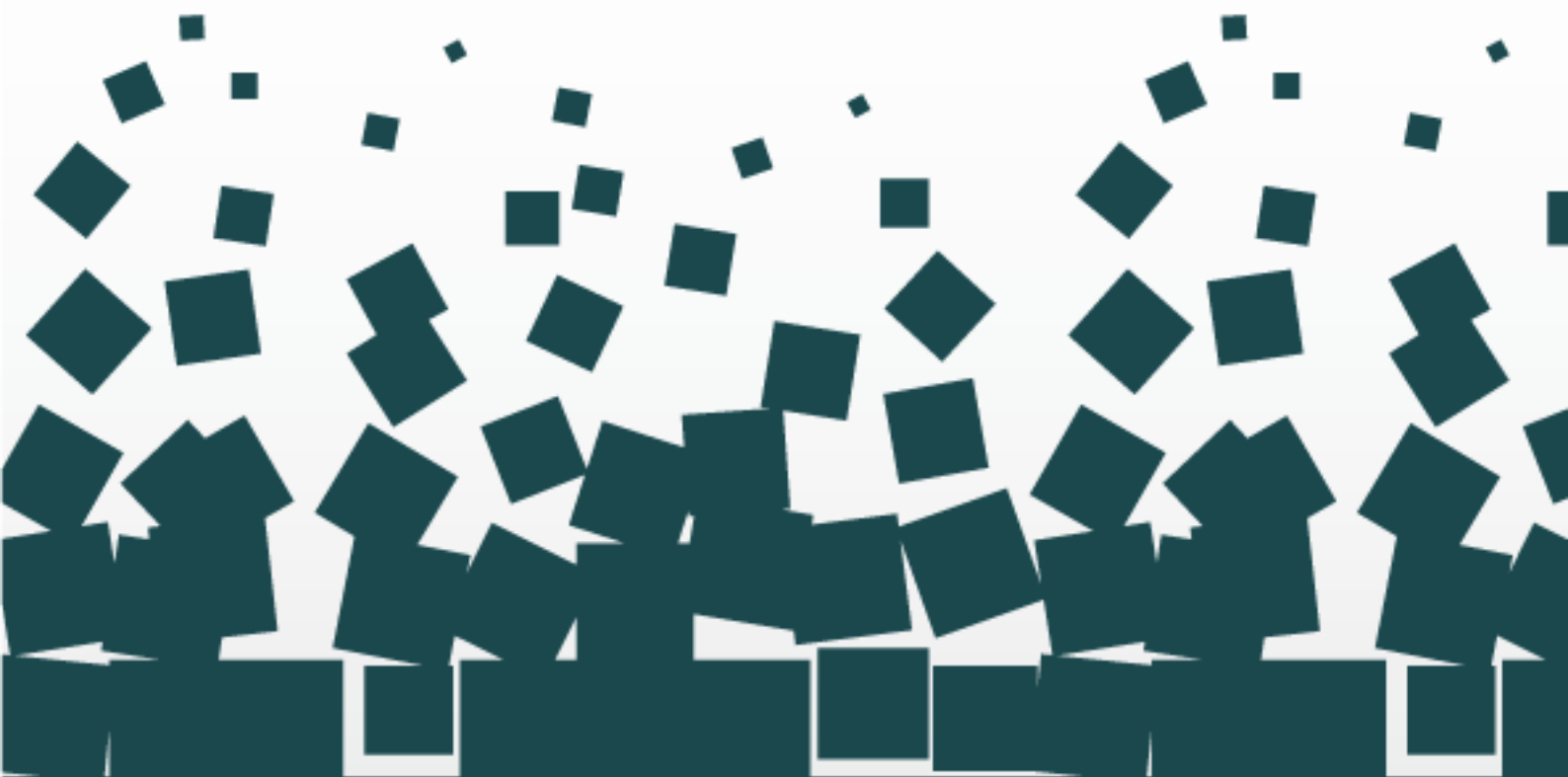
Importance to travel & tourism

This was a very unique event which can easily be replicated right across the board in travel and tourism. Many of the issues flagged in this conference are of relevance to the many women who work in travel and tourism as a whole. This conference provided a very good template on which to pattern similar events industry-wide. The presentations are publicly available and contain an enormous amount of resources and background data on how to further the cause of gender equality.

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH

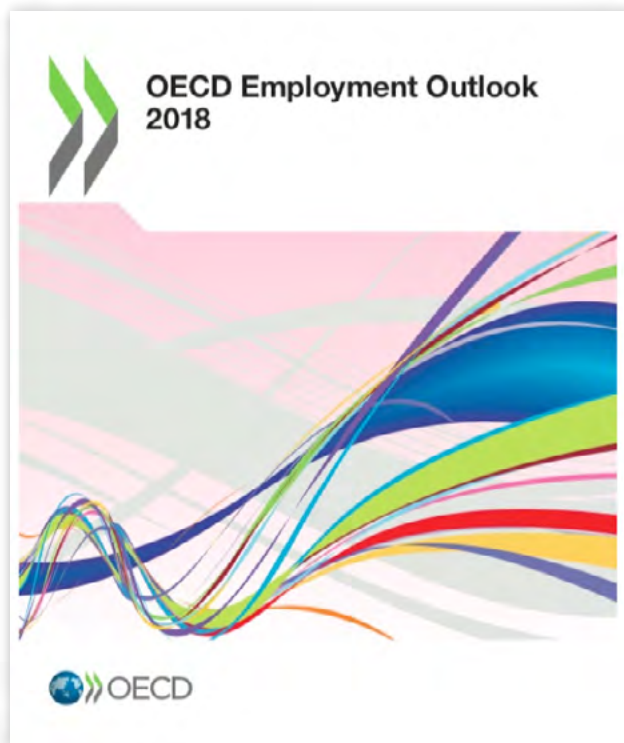


SDG 8: OECD employment rising amidst unprecedented wages stagnation





SDG 8: OECD employment rising amidst unprecedented wages stagnation



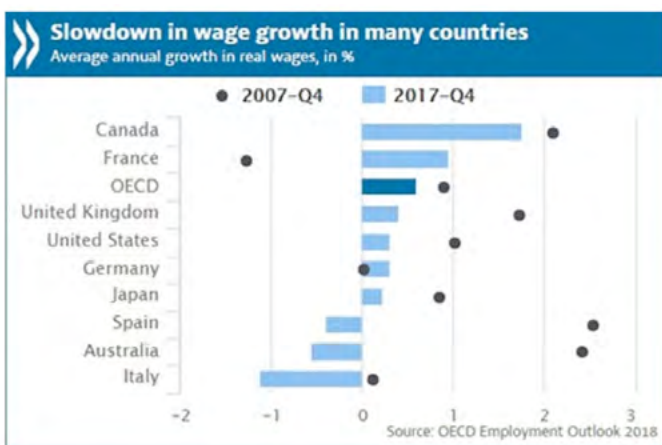
Paris, OECD news release, 04/07/2018 - Economic growth is picking up and unemployment has reached record lows in some OECD countries but wages continue to stagnate. Unless countries can break this cycle, public belief in the recovery will be undermined and labour market inequality will widen, according to a new OECD report.

The OECD Employment Outlook 2018 says that the employment rate for people aged 15-74 in the OECD area reached 61.7% in the OECD area at the end of 2017. For the first time there are more people with a job today than before the crisis. The employment rate in the OECD is expected to reach 62.1% by the end of this year and 62.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Some of the strongest improvements occurred among disadvantaged groups, such as older workers, mothers with young children, youth and immigrants.

Unemployment rates are below, or close to, pre-crisis levels in most countries. Job vacancies have also reached record highs in Japan, the euro area, the United States and Australia. The OECD unemployment rate is predicted to continue falling, to reach 5.3% at the end of 2018 and 5.1% the following year. Yet the picture continues to be mixed in terms of jobs quality and security, while poverty has grown among the working age population, reaching 10.6% in 2015 compared to 9.6% a decade earlier.

Wage growth remains remarkably more sluggish than before the financial crisis. At the end of 2017, nominal wage growth in the OECD area was only half of what it was ten years earlier: in Q2 2007, when the average of unemployment rates of OECD countries was about the same as now, the average nominal wage growth was 5.8% vs 3.2% in Q4 2017.

More worryingly, wage stagnation affects low-paid workers much more than those at the top:



real labour incomes of the top 1% of earners have increased much faster than those of median full-time workers in recent years, reinforcing a long-standing trend.

“This trend of wageless growth in the face of a rise in employment highlights the structural changes in our economies that the global crisis has deepened, and it underlines the urgent need for countries

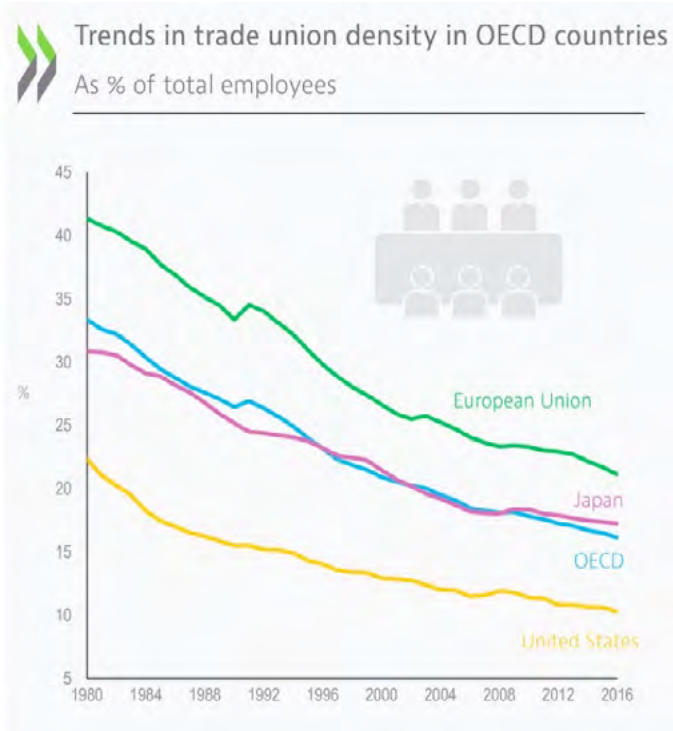
to help workers, especially the low-skilled,” said OECD Secretary-General Ángel Gurría, launching the report in Paris. “Well-targeted policy measures and closer collaboration with social partners are needed to help workers adapt to and benefit from a rapidly evolving world of work, in order to achieve inclusive growth.”

Low inflation and the major productivity slowdown have contributed to wage stagnation, as well as a rise in low-paying jobs. The Outlook notes a significant worsening in the average earnings for part-time workers relative to full-time workers. Declining coverage of unemployment benefits in many countries and persisting long-term unemployment may also have contributed. Fewer than one-in-three jobseekers receive unemployment benefits on average across the OECD, and the longer-term downward trend of benefit coverage has continued in many countries since the crisis.

Countries should develop high-quality education and training systems that provide learning opportunities throughout the life course, says the OECD. Evidence suggests that the low skilled are three times less likely to receive training than high-skilled workers. More needs to be done to overcome this gap, as highlighted in the recently launched Policy Framework for Inclusive Growth, with better targeted training measures for workers at risk of becoming trapped in low-wage, low-quality jobs or in joblessness, together with a greater involvement of employers, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises that struggle to offer training.

New evidence in the Outlook shows that co-ordinated collective bargaining systems, with strong and self-regulated social partners and effective mediation bodies, contribute to high levels of employment, a better quality work environment, including more training opportunities, and greater resilience of the labour market to shocks.

This year’s Outlook includes analysis of how labour market gender inequalities evolve over the career of men and women. Even if the gap in annual



average labour income between men and women has fallen significantly, women's annual labour income was still 39% lower on average than that of men in 2015 across the OECD. This measure takes account of gender differences in participation, as well as of hours worked and hourly earnings when employed.

Much of this gap is generated in the first half of women's careers, the report finds. Family policies, measures to encourage behavioural changes and actions promoting changes in the workplace,

such as increased take-up of flexible working time arrangements by both fathers and mothers, would help create more inclusive career paths for both men and women.

The report and country notes available for Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, are available at <http://www.oecd.org/employment/oecd-employment-outlook-19991266.htm>.

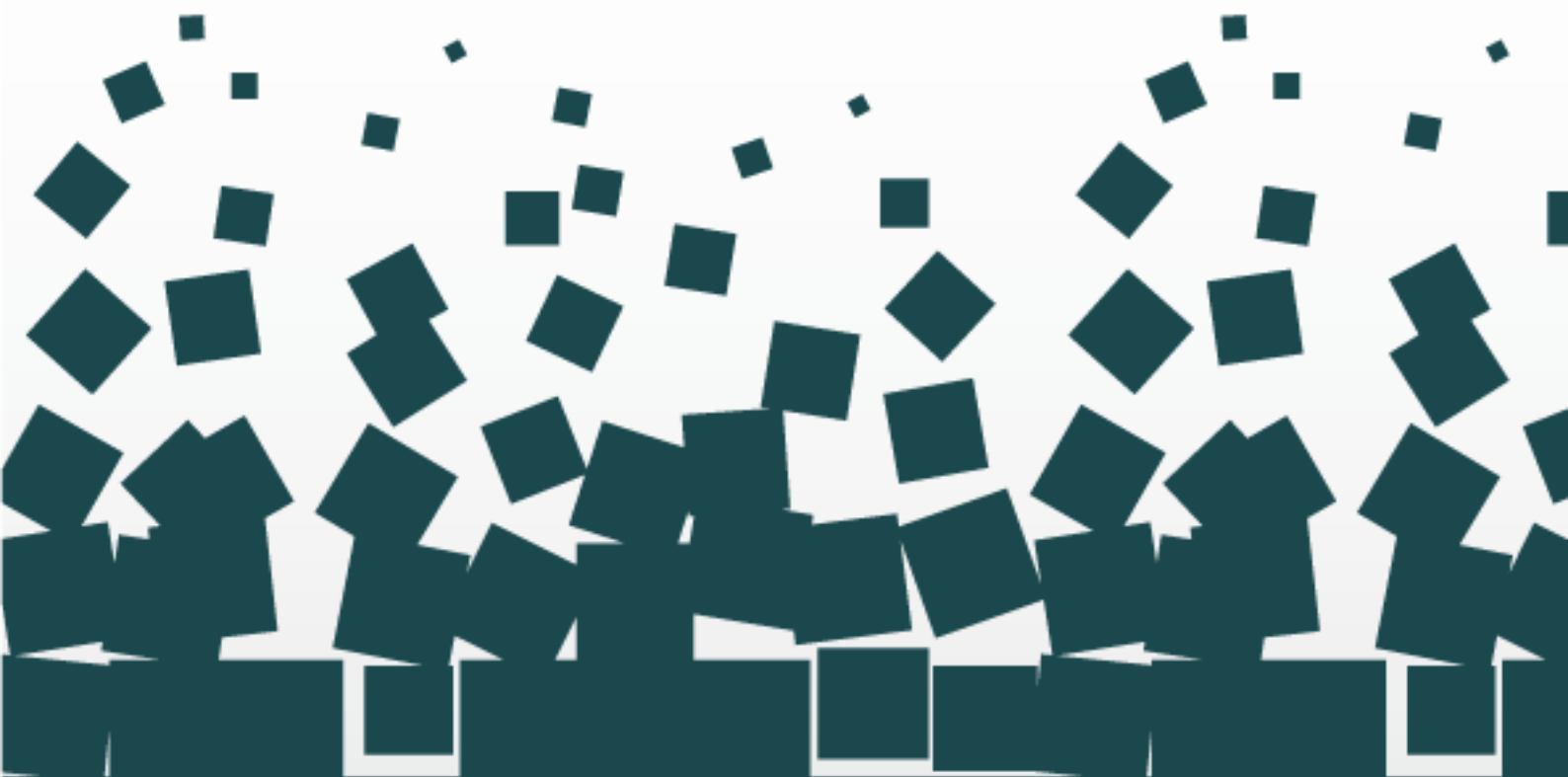
Importance to travel & tourism

Finally, something that is not growing. Worth exploring further in the context of travel & tourism. The industry has been growing phenomenally in terms of arrivals and expenditure, but what about wages and salaries? How will wages be impacted by robotics and their ability to do the manual and menial jobs at the grassroots level? The least educated and the lowest income people will be even more threatened. What will be the socio-political impact of that?

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG 8: Creative economy has new impetus in digital world





Picture source: UNCTAD



SDG 8: Creative economy has new impetus in digital world

Beijing, 17 August 2018, UNCTAD news release - The intersection of the creative and digital economies – and the emerging opportunities at this nexus – was an important discussion point at a recent services trade fair in Beijing, China, with UNCTAD and the others focusing on how the digital world is shaping new economic and trade models.

The 2018 Beijing International Forum on Creative Economy and Summit on Augmented Reality Industry Development took place as part of the China Trade in Services Fair in Beijing from May 28 to June 1. “Services are a powerful economic driver,” UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant said during a keynote speech to open the fair “They made up 56% of developing countries’ total GDP in 2016, and 54% of their total employment in 2017.

”UNCTAD Creative Economy Programme Chief Marisa Henderson was also a keynote speaker at the creative economy forum. She was joined by UNCTAD’s Creative Economy Programme team which participated in several side meetings and events to highlight the growing role of the creative economy for economic development.

New engine

The forum was held on 29 May and was jointly hosted by the World Trade Point Federation and the Beijing Municipal Commission of Commerce with the participation of UNCTAD. It tackled the theme of how technological innovation promotes the development of creative economy. Participants looked at how augmented reality, technology and the creative industries are combining to form a new engine for economic growth.

Ms. Henderson spoke about the creative economy in the digital era.

“In terms of development, digital creation, distribution and participation have revolutionized the creative and many other industries and are driving new economic and trade models forward,” she said.

“Creative workers and creative content are already integral to bringing the digital world to life – and it is critical that we understand both this contribution and how it promotes socio-economic development.” Ms. Henderson’s keynote was supported by a presentation by team member, Carolina Quintana, on the trends in international trade in creative industries, led by dynamic markets in East Asia. It focused on the region’s increasing digital content market share in services sectors related to architecture, audio-visuals and personal, cultural and recreational services.

More than 200 people attended the forum, including experts and officials of international organizations, the Chinese public sector, chambers of commerce and enterprises.

Ms. Quintana was also invited to speak at the Beijing Forum on International Industry Development. At this event she discussed the important integration of the “exhibition industry” in the creative industry ecosystem.

“Exhibitions are an important way to showcase destination and goods and services offerings – especially creative goods and services. They contribute to creative enterprise, trade, export development and tourism, as well as knowledge bases and community cohesion.”

Creative China rising

The fair took place just over six months after the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), where the cultural and creative industries were highlighted as one of the main pillars of the national economy.

In his address at the CPC, President Xi Jinping’s issued a call to boost the vitality of the domestic cultural and creative sector by upgrading its industrial structure, fostering major brands and boosting consumption.

China has consistently moved toward a more creative, consumer-driven economy. The value added from China’s culture-related sectors clocking \$463.9 billion in 2016 a 13% rise from the previous year, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics and reported by China Daily. This value added accounted for 4.14% of China’s gross domestic product (GDP), up 0.17 percentage point from the share in 2015.

“Chinese and more broadly Asian growth represents great opportunities for other developing countries which wish to strengthen cultural exchanges and creative industries cooperation with these fast-growing economies,” Ms. Henderson said.

UNCTAD also took part in meetings with the Beijing Municipal Government to jointly organize a Creative Economy Forum in 2019 and participate in Exhibition Industry International Trade Forum, part of the renowned annual China International Import Fair in Shanghai, due to take place on 6–7 November.

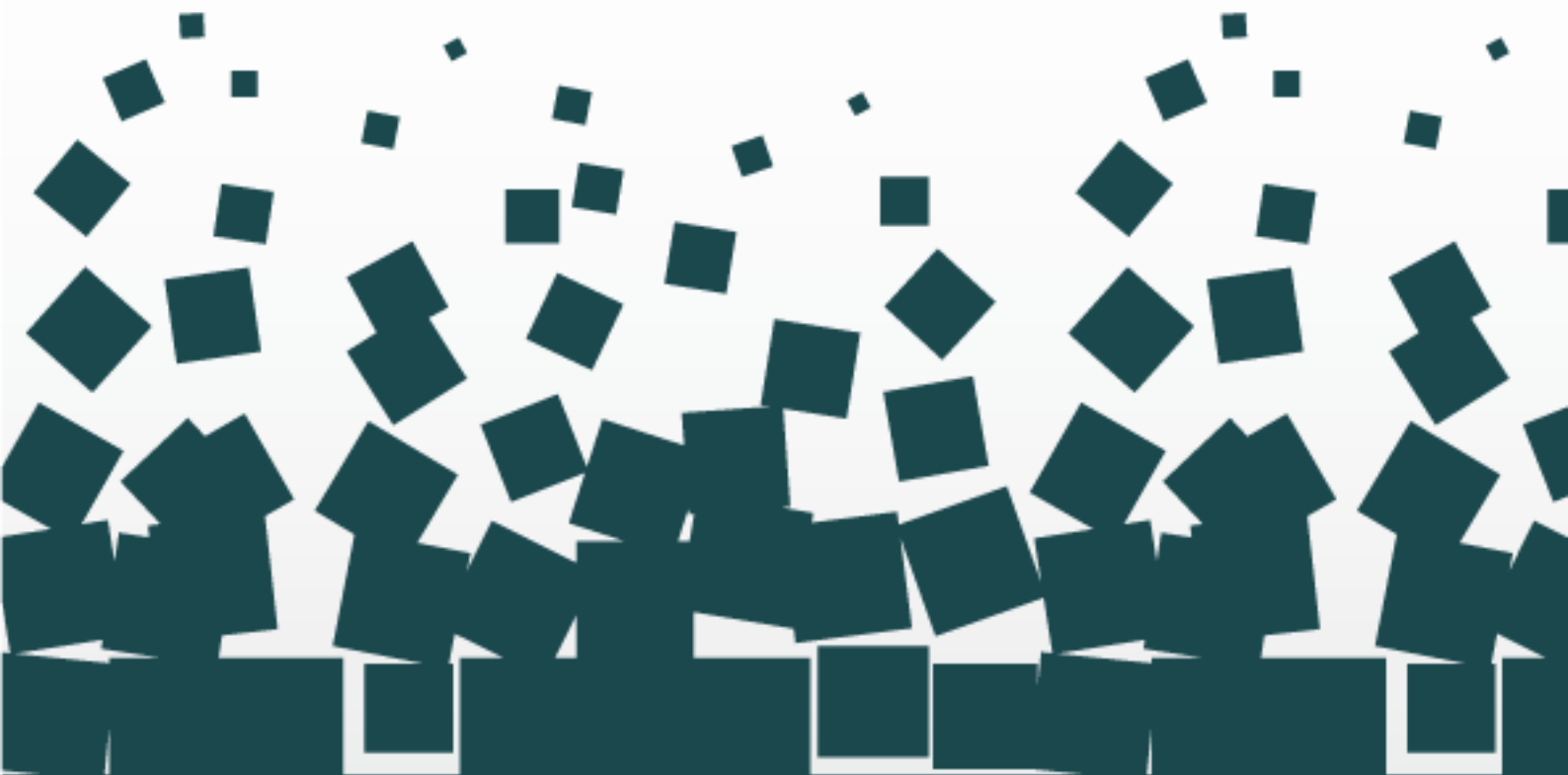
Importance to travel & tourism

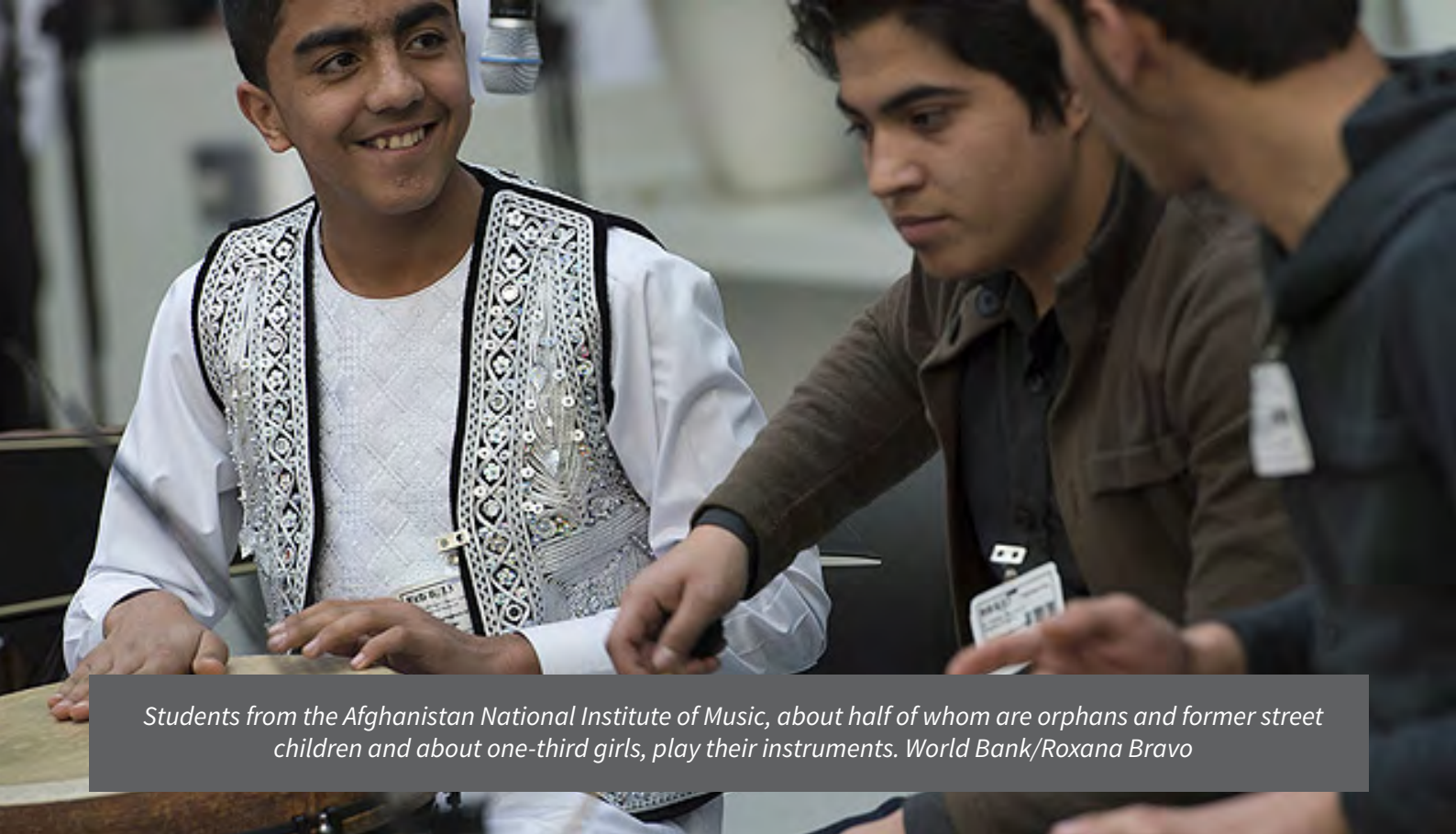
Travel and tourism is a major contributor to the creative economy across the board. We are arguably the biggest global purchasers of artwork, design, interior furnishings and decorations, literary works, music and dance, uniforms, and much more. All this creates an enormous number of jobs. Global designers recognise the potential of travel & tourism. Given the enormous diversity of demographics and incomes, the sky is the limit.

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH

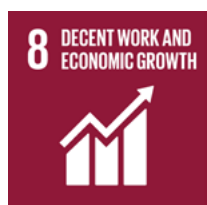


**SDG 8: Safe spaces offer
security and dignity for youth,
and help make the world
‘better for all’**





Students from the Afghanistan National Institute of Music, about half of whom are orphans and former street children and about one-third girls, play their instruments. World Bank/Roxana Bravo



SDG 8: Safe spaces offer security and dignity for youth, and help make the world ‘better for all’

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 10 August 2018
- The world’s young people need safe spaces – both physical and digital - where they can “freely express their views” and “pursue their dreams” was the core message of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to mark this year’s International Youth Day.

“The hopes of the world rest on young people,” said the UN chief on Friday, in advance of the official Day, which is celebrated annually on 12 August.

“Peace, economic dynamism, social justice, tolerance – all this and more, today and tomorrow, depends on tapping into the power of youth,” he added.

There are currently 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 in the world – the largest youth population ever.

Political instability, labour market challenges and limited space for political and civic participation have led youth to becoming increasingly more isolated, raising the need for more safe spaces where they can meet, engage and express themselves.

Mr. Guterres pointed out that more than 400 million young women and men live amidst armed conflict or are vulnerable to organized criminal violence.

Moreover, he elaborated that “millions face deprivation, harassment, bullying and other infringements of their rights.”

Safe spaces offer security and dignity while interacting. These include civic spaces to engage in governance issues; public spaces to take part in community activity such as sport digital spaces to interact virtually across borders; and

well-planned physical spaces for diverse youth; especially those vulnerable to marginalization or violence.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically Goal 11, emphasizes the need for the provision of space towards inclusive and sustainable urbanization.

“We must invest so that young people have access to education, training and decent jobs to achieve their full potential,” underscored the Secretary-General.

“The United Nations is strongly committed to listening to the voices of young people – and opening pathways for meaningful participation in decisions that affect them,” he continued, announcing a new strategy to be launched in

September “to step up our work with and for young people.”

“In making the world safe for young people, we make the world better for all,” concluded Mr. Guterres, “I wish all a happy International Youth Day!”

For her message for the day, Jayathma Wickramanayake, the UN Youth Envoy, stressed: “Young women and girls are particularly vulnerable, as are young refugees and migrants, youth living in conflict-prone or humanitarian settings, and LGBTQI young people,” referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex.

Events to celebrate International Youth Day 2018 will take place all over the world to promote youth engagement and empowerment.

Importance to travel & tourism

This is related in many ways to the earlier lead story about the youth conference. There is always a lot of talk about involving young people in the decision-making process to shape their own futures. However, the reality is that most such events stick to preaching to the converted. It is worth exploring whether the current generation is truly leaving behind an ideal world for the next generation, according to its own declarations, or whether it is leaving behind a world in a major mess. What responsibility does the current generation bear for the state of affairs and what can it still do to change course?



SDG 12: Thought For Food: Changing the way we eat





Jelmer de Haas / Thought For Food



SDG 12: Thought For Food: Changing the way we eat

Paris, UN Environment Programme, 20 Aug 2018 - The Thought For Food team likes a challenge – encouraging innovation in agriculture, and changing the way we eat. Having just closed the latest Thought For Food Summit in Rio, Brazil, we caught up with Program Director, Jared Yarnall-Schane, to ask what drives Thought For Food, and how young people can join the movement towards a more sustainable environment.

Q: What is your message to young people with an interest in agriculture?

A: Everyone must eat! We all eat food three times a day. Food is inherently impactful; we must engage with it every day, it impacts our communities and how we come together, for example to enjoy a meal. We believe that if you want to get to social impact and environmental change, food and agriculture provide a tremendous way to do that while bringing people together to tackle a common challenge.

Q: Why do we need to change the way we currently eat and make food?

A: Our population is growing, our climate is changing, and our food preferences keep evolving. To make sure there is enough safe, healthy and affordable food, we need to make significant changes to our food system. People want their food system to be transparent - from who grows it to how it arrives in the grocery store. They want food that is good for them and the planet. And perhaps most importantly people all around the world want food that tastes good.

Q: What is your vision for the future?

A: Our big goal is to help feed 9 billion people by 2050. We believe in the potential of young people: that's why each year we put out a call for young people aged between 18 and 25 to change the status quo and the way we currently produce and manufacture food. This year we had the challenging task of selecting ten amazing finalists from 800 teams in 160 countries. This just shows the scope of the talent out there in the world. Participants came from Australia, Brazil, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Their solutions range from materials made from surplus poultry feathers to substitute polystyrene used in food packaging, to a water quality monitoring system specifically developed for refugee camps and areas with limited water access. We believe that by supporting innovations like this, we can change the future and build a better, more productive but environmentally sustainable way of living.

Q: How are you doing things differently at Thought For Food and why?

A: We think young people are naturally entrepreneurial and challenge the status quo. They possess the passion to implement the things that need to be changed. We use different and interesting approaches to engage young people: we have 200 next-generation innovators coming together to learn as part of our annual Thought For Food Summit in Rio, Brazil. We build skills such as masterclasses, where we bring in inspirational people to talk about fundraising, storytelling, and how to use data to enhance impact. We take participants through an intensive accelerator programme, where they receive mentorship and training to further develop their concepts by gathering customer feedback, building their organizational structures and sharpening their business models. We believe a mixture of these supportive techniques can inspire people towards change.

Q: What lessons did you learn from your recent Summit and what take-aways can you share?

A: Good ideas come from everywhere. This was proven to be true as we saw teams from all over the world take the stage as finalists in this year's Thought For Food Challenge. We also have continued to show that young people care more about collaboration than competition, with several of our young and growing startups opening their data and processes to other entrepreneurs. In addition, we learned that food and agriculture companies are excited to engage with the changing food ecosystem. They want to leverage their supply chain, connections, and experience for impact and to make the world a better place. We encourage readers to join us!

This is part of a Young Champions of the Earth series highlighting inspirational work of young people around the world. Find out more about the [Young Champions of the Earth](#), powered by Covestro.

Importance to travel & tourism

More calls for the young people to force change, in a way that shifts away from conventional wisdoms. The key quote here is: “To make sure there is enough safe, healthy and affordable food, we need to make significant changes to our food system. People want their food system to be transparent - from who grows it to how it arrives in the grocery store. They want food that is good for them and the planet. And perhaps most importantly people all around the world want food that tastes good.” If travel & tourism is now promoting Gastronomy Tourism big time, factoring the key message of that quote into the system would be well worth it.



SDG 12: Banning straws and bags won't solve our plastic problem





More than 8 million tons of plastic waste wind up in the ocean every year. Photo by Trocaire/Flickr



SDG 12: Banning straws and bags won't solve our plastic problem

by Mathy Stanislaus, Circular Economy Fellow

Washington DC., August 16, 2018, World Resources Institute - It seems to be the summer of plastic bans. Starbucks, Hyatt, the city of Seattle and others have all committed to phase out plastic straws. Stafford Township in New Jersey passed a plastic bag ban just last month, joining dozens of other American cities and states imposing taxes or bans on single-use plastics.

But is this a good thing?

Not if that's all we do.

The Case for Banning Plastic

Use of single-use plastics (think wrappers, straws and bags) has skyrocketed over the last few decades. But as I explained recently, our ability to recycle these plastics at scale remains poor. Globally, 8 million metric tons of plastic trash

leak into our natural spaces each year, harming wildlife, mucking up the ocean and jeopardizing people's livelihoods.

So it's understandable why bans are becoming popular. The beaches of New Jersey, for example, bring in billions of tourism dollars each year, creating jobs and funding local municipal needs. These sprawling, sandy spaces and the busy boardwalks that line them are an important part of local life. There are clear personal and economic incentives to keep these beaches clean, which make plastic bans politically palatable despite the inconvenience.

Monmouth County, New Jersey, which earned nearly \$2.5 billion in tourism revenue in 2016, adopted what Clean Ocean Action called the most comprehensive plastic ban in the United States. The law was passed in May 2018, just before the start of beach season, and prohibits local businesses from distributing plastic bags, straws

and Styrofoam containers. Local coverage of the ban indicates that it was well-received by residents and business owners. Monmouth Beach Mayor Sue Howard explained that, “If you live on the Shore, and you walk on the beach, and you see plastic straws and Styrofoam containers, you know what the damage is.”

Where Plastic Bans Fall Short

It’s encouraging that local governments are focusing on passing laws to fight plastic litter. Unfortunately, while these laws may reduce the most visible form of plastic pollution, it could be at the expense of other environmental impacts. That’s because, somewhat ironically, disposable plastic bags require fewer resources (land, water, CO2 emissions, etc.) to produce than paper, cotton or reusable plastic bags—by a wide margin.

For example, Denmark’s Ministry of Environment and Food found that you would need to reuse a paper bag at least 43 times for its per-use environmental impacts to be equal to or less than

that of a typical disposable plastic bag used one time. An organic cotton bag must be reused 20,000 times to produce less of an environmental impact than a single-use plastic bag. That would be like using a cotton bag every day for nearly 55 years. (Note that these figures aggregate the bags’ impact on water use, CO2 emissions, land use and more, but they do not include their impact on plastic pollution.)

Banning plastic straws is also increasingly popular. Starbucks recently announced that it would phase out use of plastic straws by the year 2020. Straws don’t provide as much utility as bags, so for many this is an easy adjustment.

But these bans leave the impression that they solve the plastics pollution problem without much discussion of systematic solutions. As a society, we should think holistically about the products we use and their impacts. We can’t just ban bad products—we must invest in alternatives.



*Many cities, states and businesses have banned or taxed single-use plastic bags.
Photo by Zainub Razvi/Flickr*

How Consumers, Governments and Businesses Can Beat Plastic Pollution

That same Danish study suggests that the most eco-friendly bag option for consumers is polyester, reused at least 35 times. This keeps plastic pollution out of our natural spaces and reduces the per-use environmental impacts of the bag to the lowest-possible levels. However, it will take a lot more than reusable bags to solve the plastics pollution problem. Right now, only about 9 percent of plastics are recycled globally.

As of January 1, China refused to import most recyclable materials from the United States and other developed countries, claiming the materials exceeded acceptable contamination levels. This has backed up the flow of disposed paper and plastic, causing serious problems for local waste management companies. However, there may be an ironic upside to China's decision. For too long, the easy option of shipping excess recyclables to China has resulted in underinvestment in optimizing plastics, maximizing their recovery and reducing waste.

Governments at the state and federal levels need to team up with private industry to address more systemic issues.

We need to invest in redesigning plastics so that they can be readily broken down into their molecular units and remanufactured into new plastics of the same quality, the essence of a closed loop system. We need better recycling technology that can address the major obstacle of recycling plastics: about 25 percent of plastics collected are contaminated and therefore unusable. We need to reinvest government budgets in the infrastructure and associated policies needed for these systemic solutions.

Once these technologies are deployed at a large scale, we can start recapturing the economic value of plastics, incentivizing their recovery and recycling, while minimizing plastic pollution and overconsumption of natural resources.

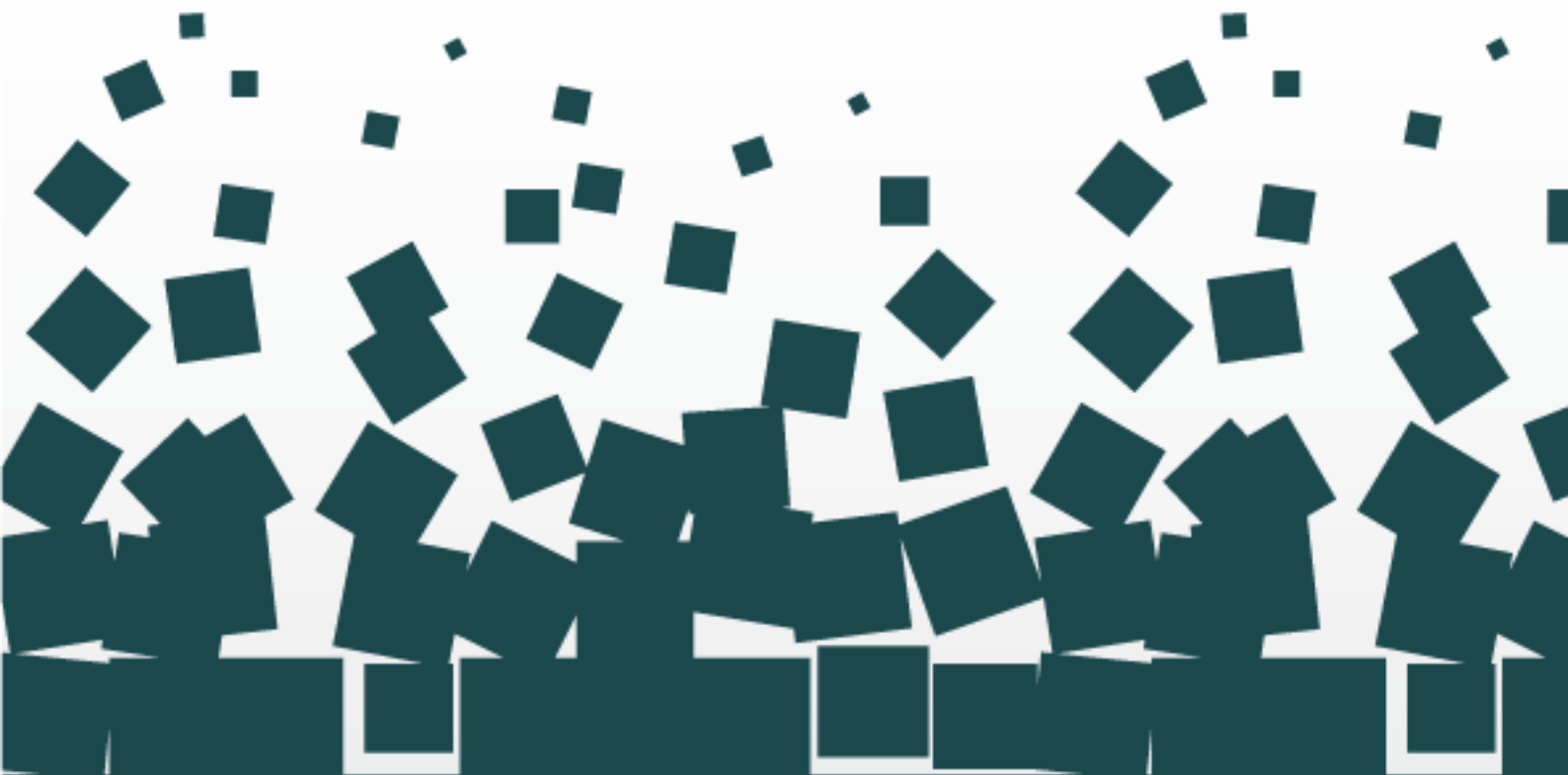
We need a wider array of smart public policies, a recycling infrastructure that's right-sized for the problem, better recycling technology and new business models. Banning single-use plastic bags and straws without significant further action is putting a finger on a spigot at a time when we need to suppress the tidal wave.

Importance to travel & tourism

This article challenges the conventional wisdom and the blind rush that starts off whenever the marketing machinery cranks up to popularise a fad. The latest game in town is banning plastic straws. Travel & tourism has been focussing on sustainability issues for more than 40 years. Why has it only just awoken to the impact of plastic straws? What does this actually say about the Johnny-come-lately mentality within travel and tourism? Indeed, this article puts another spanner in the works: Will banning plastic straws actually make any tangible or practical difference? Or will it make the problem worse? Will this be debated within travel and tourism? I am not sure.



SDG 15: To beat hunger and combat climate change, world must 'scale-up' soil health





*Healthy soils help grow our food, clean our water, store carbon, and reduce risks of droughts and floods.
FAO/Giuseppe Bizzarri*



SDG 15: To beat hunger and combat climate change, world must 'scale-up' soil health

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 13 August 2018 - Healthy soils are essential to achieve 'Zero Hunger' – and other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – peace and prosperity, the United Nations agriculture agency chief underscored in Brazil at the World Congress of Soil Science.

On Sunday, more than 2,000 scientists gathered in Rio de Janeiro under the theme “Soil Science: Beyond food and fuel,” for a week of exploring the increasingly complex, diverse role of soils; grappling with resilient agriculture practices to address environmental and climatic changes; and confronting threats to food security and sovereignty.

“Soil degradation affects food production, causing hunger and malnutrition, amplifying food-price volatility, forcing land abandonment and involuntary migration-leading millions into poverty,” said José Graziano da Silva, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in a video message noting that approximately one-third of the Earth’s soil is degraded

The FAO The Status of the World’s Soil Resources report had identified 10 major threats to soil functions, including soil erosion, nutrient imbalance, acidification and contamination.

Mr. Graziano da Silva stressed the importance of sustainable soil management as an “essential part of the Zero Hunger equation” in a world where more than 815 million people are suffering from hunger and malnutrition.

Soils and climate change

“Although soils are hidden and frequently forgotten, we rely on them for our daily activities and for the future of the planet,” the FAO chief said, underscoring the important support role they play in mitigating or adapting to a changing climate.

Mr. Graziano da Silva specifically pointed to the potential of soils for carbon sequestration and storage – documented in FAO’s global soil organic carbon map. “Maintaining and increasing soil carbon stock should become a priority,” asserted the UN agriculture chief.

He also noted how soils act as filters for contaminants, preventing their entry into the food chain and reaching water bodies such as rivers, lakes and oceans, flagging that this potential becomes limited when contamination exceeds the soils’ capacity to cope with pollution.

In his message, Mr. Graziano da Silva noted the Global Soil Partnership in which FAO works with governments and other partners to build technical capacity and exchange knowledge on sustainable soil management through the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management.

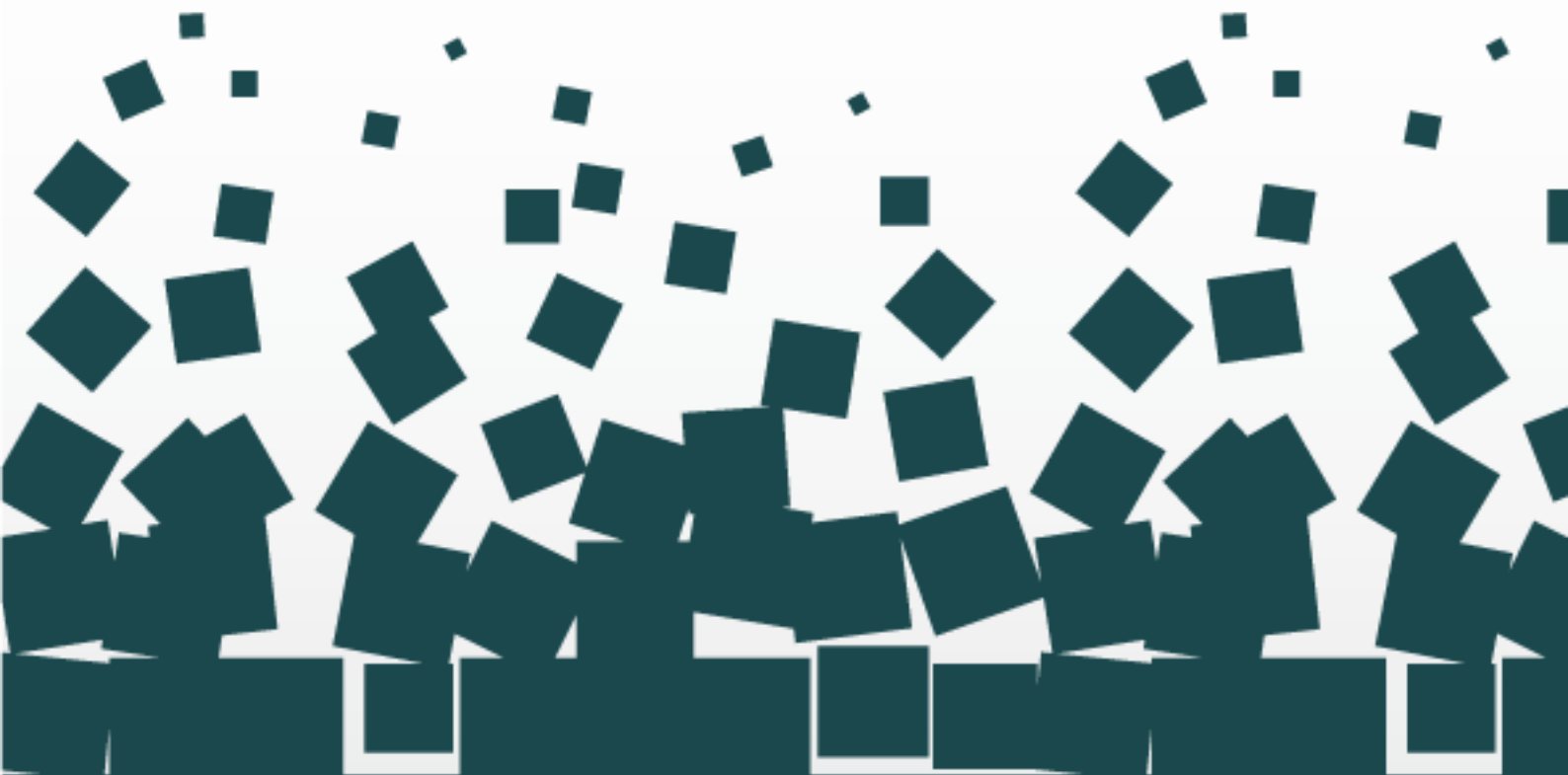
“Let us make soils a vehicle of prosperity and peace, and show the contribution of soils to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,” concluded the FAO Director-General said.

Importance to travel & tourism

Another eye-opener. Soil, water, air — all part of what we call the natural habitat that is critical to planetary survival. All inter-connected in ways humans will never fully understand. As a major consumer of just about everything, travel & tourism needs to develop a far deeper understanding of its impact on Planet Earth.



SDG 15: Monsanto lawsuit ruling a 'significant recognition' of victims' human rights - UN rights experts





15 LIFE
ON LAND



SDG 15: Monsanto lawsuit ruling a 'significant recognition' of victims' human rights - UN rights experts

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 15 August 2018
- The court decision to award nearly \$290 million to a terminally-ill man from the United States who claimed his cancer was caused by a herbicide in a commercial weed killer, has been welcomed by two United Nations human rights experts as a “significant recognition” of the responsibilities that chemical companies have to consumers.

A court in California on Friday ruled that chemical giant Monsanto should compensate Dewayne Johnson, a school groundskeeper, after a jury found the company did not place a warning label on its weed killers, stating that their widespread use could cause terminal cancer.

Mr. Johnson, 46, had regularly used Monsanto products RoundUp and Ranger Pro in his work, according to media reports. He was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma four years ago and doctors do not expect him to live beyond 2020.

“The ruling recognises the potential causal relations between cancer and Monsanto’s glyphosate-based weedkillers, including RoundUp, and the company’s negligence by failing to inform users of cancer risks,” the independent UN experts said in a statement issued on Wednesday.



Special Rapporteur Dainius Pūras.



Special Rapporteur Hilal Elver

“This decision is a significant recognition of the human rights of victims, and the responsibilities of chemical companies.”

They said the court’s decision reflects a 2015 assessment that glyphosate, a herbicide, was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “probably carcinogenic to humans”.

It showed that “internal company documents” demonstrated that Monsanto had known for decades that glyphosate, and specifically, Roundup, could cause cancer. The company has appealed the ruling.

“We regret that the ruling came too late as Mr. Johnson is suffering from terminal cancer. No monetary compensation is adequate for his life,” the statement continued.

“We express our deepest condolences for his pain and suffering and praise his courage and unwavering will to fight for his rights.”

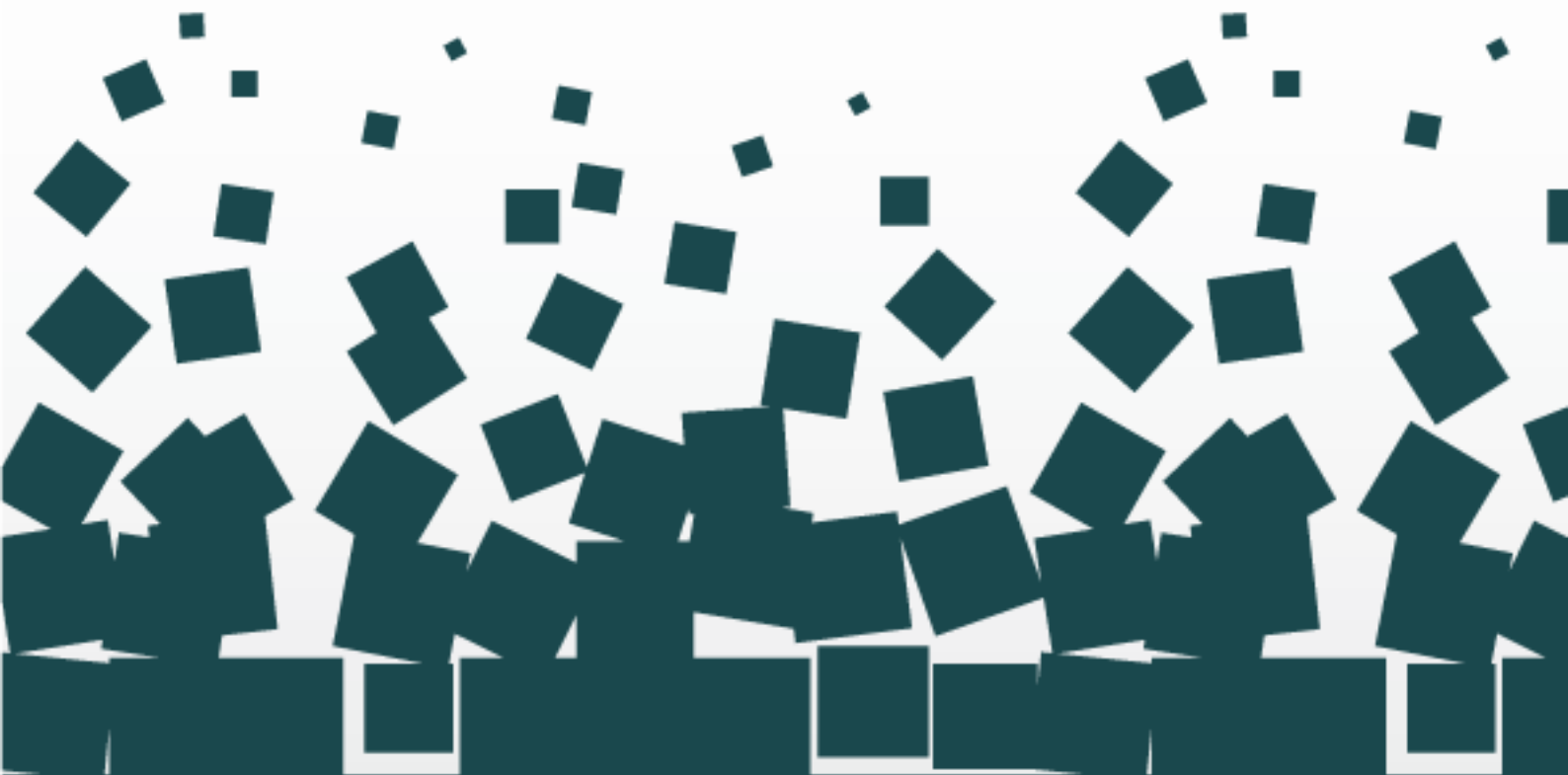
The UN experts who released the statement are Hilal Elver, Special Rapporteur on the right to food, and Dainius Pūras, Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health. Ms. Elver is set to present a report on the rights of agricultural workers at the UN General Assembly in New York, in just a few weeks’ time.

Importance to travel & tourism

Yes, agricultural workers also have rights. They are the ones who toil and slave to produce the crops, fruits and vegetables consumed daily on the lavish buffet tables of travel and tourism. For decades, farmlands across the world have been sprayed with a variety of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilisers that have long known to be carcinogenic. Who knows how many people have died right across the value chain. This threat explains the global shift towards organic agriculture, and the travel and tourism industry, a major consumer of agricultural products, can do a lot more to accelerate this trend.



SDG 15: New study raises red flags on tax haven role in environmental destruction





Picture source: ICIJ website



SDG 15: New study raises red flags on tax haven role in environmental destruction

By [Scilla Alecci](#)

Washington DC, August 13, 2018, [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists](#) - Tax havens – and the financial secrecy they provide – may bolster industries tied to Amazon deforestation and the unsustainable management of natural resources, a new study has found.

“We need to start seeing the environmental costs of tax havens” and “how financial actors and financial flows are shaping the planet in very profound ways,” said Victor Galaz, a researcher at Stockholm University’s Resilience Centre and the leading author of the report that looked at the use of tax havens by agribusiness and fishing companies.

The study, which started after the unveiling of the Panama Papers investigation in April 2016 and was [published Monday in the journal Nature Ecology & Evolution](#), examined jurisdictions where agribusiness conglomerates operating in the Amazon and fishing vessels involved in illegal activities are registered.

An analysis of Brazilian central bank data from 2000 to 2011 revealed that at least nine of the world’s largest producers of soy and beef, two industries considered to be main drivers of deforestation, use offshore subsidiaries to finance their operations in the Amazon forest, which Galaz called “a sleeping giant” in the climate change system. Scientists agree that deforestation is one of the main causes of global warming as the carbon dioxide that is typically absorbed by trees gets released in the atmosphere when they are cut or burnt.

The Stockholm University researchers found that, over the decade, about 70 percent of foreign capital – or about \$18.4 billion – reached the operating companies in Brazil after being routed through subsidiaries in low or zero tax rate jurisdictions, such as the Cayman Islands. (Central bank data is not available for the years after 2011.)

Such routing is legal and often used to decrease companies' tax burden, the report says. The lack of transparency associated with operations in tax havens, however, makes it difficult for watchdogs and researchers to monitor how offshore financing may affect operations “on the ground.”

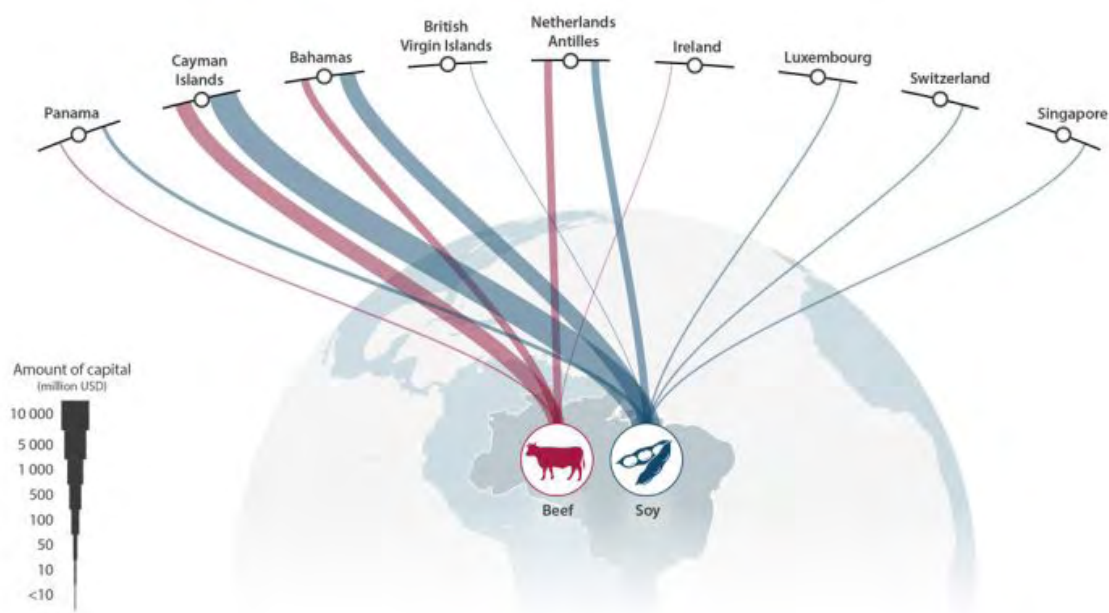
Although the years examined partly overlap with the highest rate of deforestation in the Amazon, the authors say it's currently “impossible” to establish a direct link between capital flowing from tax havens, land use and environmental damage.

“Direct proof of causality remains elusive,” according to the report.

In response to the researchers, international grain companies including Louis Dreyfus Company, Cargill, Bunge and Amaggi Group have said their organizational structures and trading policies comply with the law and that they are committed to the highest environmental standards.

Stockholm University researchers traced the foreign cash making its way into the beef and soy industries.

[Nature Ecology & Evolution](#)



In the past, investigations by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and its partners have shown how natural resource and agribusiness companies often take advantage of the secrecy provided by the offshore industry for various purposes, including tax avoidance.

Last year, ICIJ partners [Premiere Lignes](#) in France and [Poder360](#) in Brazil reported that the Brazilian Amaggi and the Swiss-French Louis Dreyfus in 2009 set up a joint venture to operate in Bahia and other areas of Brazil. According to the investigation, the beneficial owner of the joint venture's Cayman Islands subsidiary was Brazil's current agriculture minister, Blairo Maggi, who denied any wrongdoing.

The findings were part of the [Paradise Papers](#), a global investigation based on 13.4 million leaked files which detailed how wealthy individuals and corporations use shell companies in tax havens to avoid or evade taxes.

In Namibia, the ICIJ found that Pacific Andes, a major fishing company, set up a Mauritius subsidiary to manage its operations in the country and take advantage of a treaty between the two jurisdictions that shielded it from taxes. Pacific Andes told ICIJ the majority of the fees stayed in Namibia as capital. Another report by ICIJ published in November 2017 found that a Singapore-based [pulp and paper producer used a web of shell companies](#) to avoid paying withholding tax on loans and to expand its Indonesian operations, while allegedly contributing to the destruction of the country's fragile rainforest. A company spokeswoman said it "meets all tax obligations in the jurisdictions where it operates."

At the time, experts interviewed by ICIJ questioned forestry and agribusiness companies' practice of funding their business through offshore subsidiaries to exploit natural resources in developing countries.

"While profits are really earned from tangible land-based operations, a large portion of profits are routinely declared in jurisdictions with low corporate tax rates," said Tom Picken, the forests and finance campaign director for Rainforest Action Network, a nongovernmental organization.

As a result, Picken said, supplying countries may end up with a lower tax revenue and fewer funds to implement critical national development programs for health, education and infrastructure.

The [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates](#) that about \$200 billion is lost every year by developing countries due to tax avoidance.

The Stockholm University report also explores the role of tax havens in enabling and disguising illegal fishing. Through analyzing multiple datasets, researchers found 70 percent of vessels identified by Interpol as responsible for carrying out illegal or unregulated fishing are currently, or have been, flagged in a financial secrecy jurisdiction, mainly in Panama and Belize.

The study is part of an on-going research project that explores the relationship between financial markets and sustainability and will eventually include other environment-impacting sectors. To promote sustainability, you need accountability, which comes with transparency, Galaz said. Only then "you have the power to change things," he said. "Any progress we can do would have environmental benefits."

Related articles

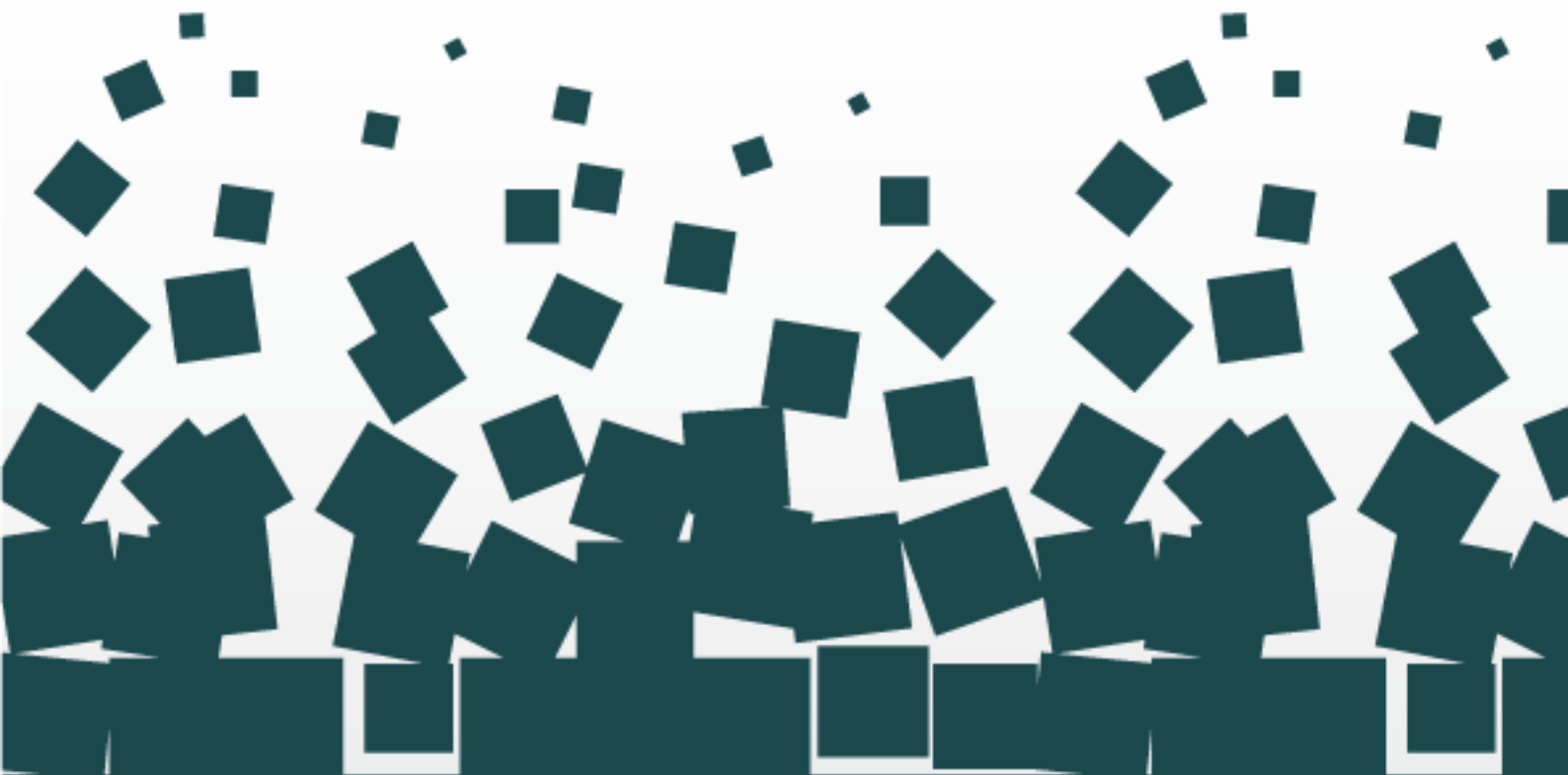
- [Leaked Records Reveal Offshore's Role In Forest Destruction](#)
- [Tax Haven Mauritius' rise comes at the rest of Africa's expense](#)
- [Out of Africa, Into Tax Havens](#)

Importance to travel & tourism

Key quote: "To promote sustainability, you need accountability, which comes with transparency." Travel and tourism is now going big on sustainability but how well does it fare on the scale of accountability and transparency? Not very high, I would think. Travel and tourism is in fact a major contributor to tax evasion and tax avoidance. Multinational corporations and equity funds have billions of dollars stashed in the tax havens. In spite of that, they are constantly demanding more tax-cuts from governments. This is what worsens the rich-poor income gap and, as this report indicates, perhaps accelerates environmental destruction.



SDG 15: Think trees! Changing mindsets one step at a time





Primary school children in Ndemiu, Makueni County, Kenya, help clear part of their school compound for seed-beds for tree seedlings. Picture source: UNEP



SDG 15: Think trees! Changing mindsets one step at a time

Nairobi, 20 Aug 2018, UN Environment Programme -- When two people [started cleaning up a beach](#) in Mumbai in 2016, they could never have imagined how their tiny spontaneous action would snowball. Not all environmental interventions are done by governments or large organizations. There's a role for small, motivated groups to make a difference too.

In Kenya, some 140 km southeast of Nairobi, a small group of volunteers is beginning to change mindsets and take action to restore a semi-arid landscape within a primary school compound.

Last year the group – officially registered as the Mission Concern Association – did a survey of the area to look for schools with sufficient available land for tree-planting. Their idea was to beautify a school compound while at the same time provide hands-on education to pupils, their parents and teachers.

Ndemiu primary school near Malili town in Makueni County fitted the bill. It has 108 pupils, a nearby water source, sufficient land (at least 1.6 hectares, or four acres) for tree-planting, as well as the support of parents, teachers and the local community.

“Education is vital if we are to create a young generation of eco-warriors to tackle the huge environmental challenges the world is facing,” says Sam Barratt, a UN Environment education expert.

A generation ago, the area had plenty of trees and wildlife, and the aim of the project is to try to restore the landscape and spread the tree-planting habit to other local schools: once the 1,000 seedlings are transplanted, the school will become a source of tree seedlings for other schools.

“You have to start somewhere, and with tree-planting there’s no short-cut. You have to think long-term,” says Jack Muriungi, team leader of the small band of volunteers (six women and four men from various professions in Nairobi).

Seeds were purchased from the Kenya Forestry Research Institute, which also provided valuable

advice on which species to plant. In all, the plan is to grow some 20 different varieties of trees, including fruit trees. The trees will provide fuel, shade, act as a wind-break and prevent soil erosion, as well as playing their part in mitigating climate change.



*Watering the seedbeds.
Picture source: UNEP*

Further technical advice and support comes from “Mwasi” a sub-county Kenya Forest Service officer, who has been actively involved in organizing the school’s seedbeds. Watering the seedlings, transplanting them and looking after the saplings will be down to the school.

Seedlings of Faith sideshow

“Small restoration initiatives like this one have been growing worldwide in recent years,” says UN Environment Forest and Landscapes Expert Tim Christophersen.

“Our task as the United Nations is to help them connect with each other, learn from each other and help governments to encourage more local action. We need to replicate these examples many times, and grow them to a landscape scale, to have a significant impact on climate change.”

Every year, Africa loses an estimated 2.8 million hectares of forest, with deforestation and land degradation seriously affecting its environment and people.

[The Global Landscapes Forum \(GLF\)](#) is holding a conference in Nairobi on 28-29 August 2018 to help build and align international, national and private sector support for forest and landscape restoration. Led by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) alongside founding partners UN Environment and the World Bank, with core funding provided by the German Government, GLF accelerates action towards the creation of more resilient, equitable, profitable, productive and healthy landscapes, and the achievement of the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals.



*Women fetch water from a nearby reservoir.
Picture source: UNEP*

The [Global Partnership for Forest and Landscape Restoration](#) is launching a new report at the Forum, titled Restoring forests and landscapes: the key to a sustainable future.

For further information on the Makueni project:
Jack Muriungi: mconcern2018@gmail.com

For further information on the “landscapes approach” and the GLF: Tim Christophersen: Tim.Christophersen@un.org

Further Resources

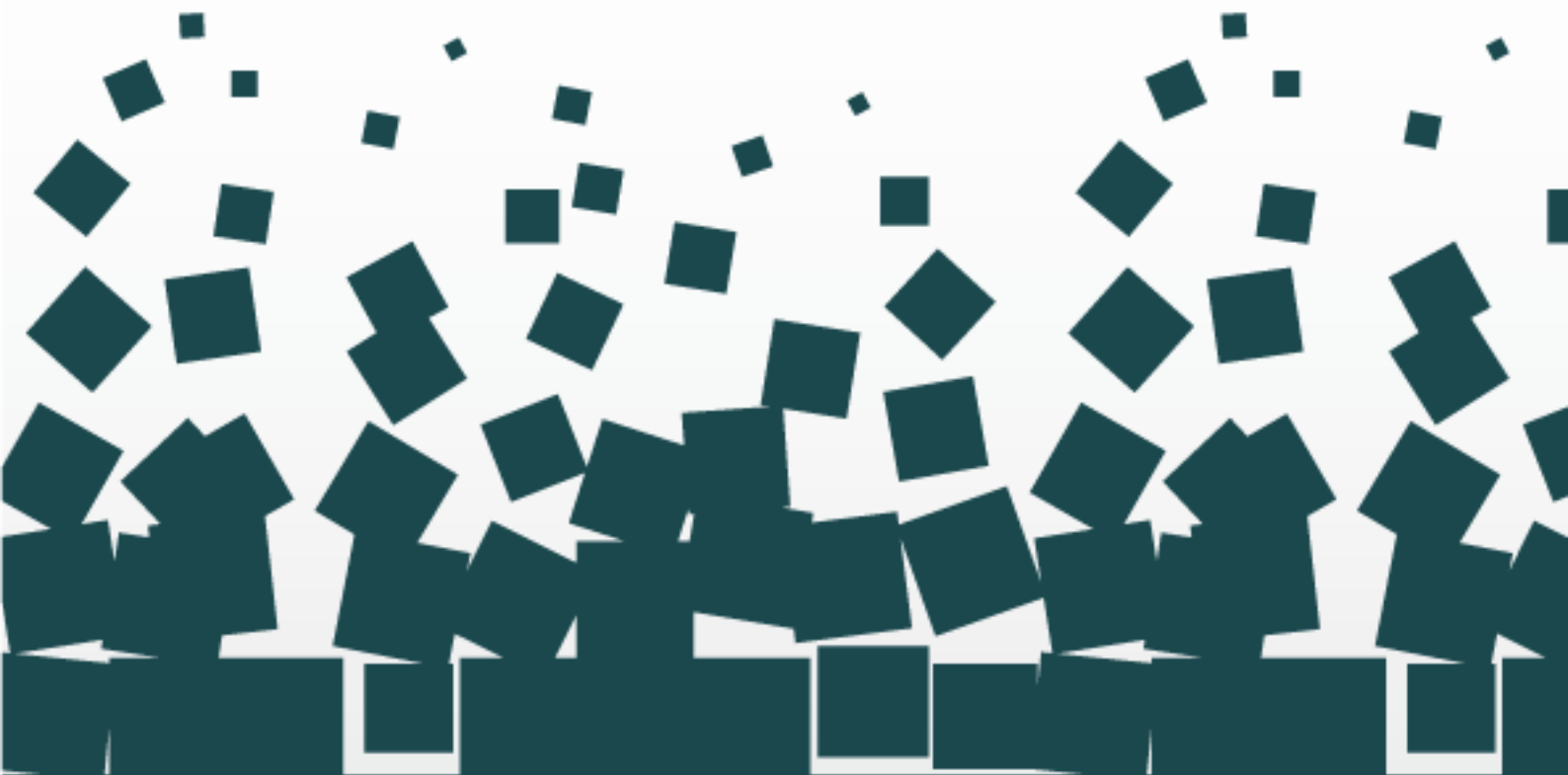
- [Global Landscapes Forum](#)
- [Global Partnership for Forest and Landscape Restoration](#)

Importance to travel & tourism

If every country planted one tree somewhere for every tourist arrival annually, it would change the world like nothing else. Think about it.



SDG 15: 'Think beyond farm jobs' to reach sustainable development, UN agriculture chief advises African youth





A new talking app helps farmers like Tazelekwew, in southern Ethiopia, detect whether their crops have been infected by Fall Armyworm. FAO/Tamiru Legesse



SDG 15: ‘Think beyond farm jobs’ to reach sustainable development, UN agriculture chief advises African youth

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 20 August 2018 - For the African continent to achieve sustainable development, more jobs must be created for its young people, including in the digitalized agriculture sectors, the United Nations agriculture chief told an international conference on Monday.

“We need to take action to make agriculture more attractive to young people,” underscored José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), at the Youth Employment in Agriculture Conference in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

“They must perceive agriculture as a remunerative and profitable sector and the dissemination of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in rural areas play an important role in this regard,” he added.

Over 60 percent of Africa’s estimated 1.2 billion people are under the age of 25 –mostly living in rural areas.

Yet, there is a growing uncertainty over the continent’s preparedness to tap this precious resource, which requires that tens of millions of rural area jobs be created annually for the continent to harness the dividends of its youth.

Mr. Graziano da Silva’s remarks came at the opening of the two-day event, which is co-organized by FAO, the Rwandan Government and the African Union (AU) to share knowledge and best practices on agriculture, youth employment, entrepreneurship and ICT innovations to prioritize interventions going forward.

Other keynote speakers included Li Yong, Director-General of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); Geraldine Mukeshimana, Rwanda’s Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources;

and Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture.

Growing population means growing food demands

Mr. Graziano da Silva noted that due to continued population growth, rapid urbanization and dietary changes accompanying rising household incomes, Africa's food demand is projected to grow in the coming years by more than 50 per cent, providing "an invaluable and untapped potential" to address youth unemployment challenges, albeit amid numerous constraints.

He pointed out that young people are usually employed on a casual or seasonal basis, with limited access to relevant education and technical training; limited access to finance, information and markets; and low involvement in decision-making processes.

"These constraints become a bottleneck that also impede young people to start an agricultural business of their own. As a result, young rural people are migrating," explained the FAO chief.

Meanwhile, the World Bank expects that by 2030, African agribusinesses will create a \$1 trillion market.

"In the coming years, more and more of the agricultural activities and employment will require digital skills," he stressed, calling cooperatives "the best way to provide family farmers and young professionals with technical assistance, capacity building, and access to modern technologies."



FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva addressing the opening session of the regional conference on Youth Employment in Agriculture. FAO/Luis Tato

Mr. Graziano da Silva also encouraged youth to "think beyond farm jobs" and explore employment opportunities across the agri-food chain, such as in food processing, distribution, marketing and retail.

This "new kind of rural transformation" means equipping rural areas with basic services such as education, health, electricity, internet access and so on. "These services are themselves another important source for employment, especially for women and young people," he said.

Importance to travel & tourism

This is one area in which Africa and Asia can learn a lot from each other. Many Asian countries, especially the rice growing countries of south-east Asia, relied on agriculture as the bedrock of their economies, long before manufacturing and tourism came along. These experiences, for better and for worse, can be shared with the African countries for mutual benefit. At the end of the day, people have to eat even though they do not have to travel. Hence, agriculture will always remain a far more important economic sector than travel and tourism.



SDG 16: Helping farmers helps peace





FAO helps displaced people in Syria raise chickens. Picture source: FAO



SDG 16: Helping farmers helps peace

Rome, 7 August 2018, (FAO News release) - Civil wars and conflicts have increased markedly in the past decade, leading to the recent reverse of a steady trend towards reducing hunger.

They take their heaviest toll on rural communities engaged in agriculture. Wheat output in Syria has fallen by 40 percent and processed-food output in Iraq suffered a double-digit decline. In Sierra Leone's civil war in the 1990s, 70 percent of livestock were destroyed and oil palm and rice production fell by more than 25 percent. In Burundi, research shows that an individual's exposure to violence made them almost one-fifth less likely to grow coffee even four years after the war ended.

In economic terms, agricultural losses due to conflicts notably outstrip international development assistance. More dramatically, the multiple impact of conflicts - including forcibly displaced people and malnourished children - erode development in the very places that most

need them. Some 75 percent of the world's stunted children live in conflict-affected countries, and an estimated 87 percent of all people living in extreme poverty also live in environmentally vulnerable and fragile countries.

Agriculture and food systems are remarkably resilient, but as FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva told the United Nations Security Council, "when these systems are lost, they are almost impossible to rebuild."

In response to these challenges, FAO has developed a new Corporate Framework to support sustainable peace in the context of Agenda 2030 allowing the agency to transform its engagements in conflict-affected situations into deliberately focused, strategic and evidence-based approaches geared to supporting sustainable peace.

In synthesis, it guides FAO to craft its interventions in a conflict-sensitive manner that can contribute

to the prevention of the outbreak, escalation, continuance and - importantly - the recurrence of conflict.

The Organization is committed to work “on, in and through” conflicts. As outlined in the Framework, this approach comprises, respectively, actions to minimize, avoid and resolve conflicts where food, agricultural and natural resources may be drivers; saving lives, protecting food systems and productive assets and building resilience in the midst of conflict, and seeking always to advance sustainable development including poverty reduction and managing natural resources in a conflict-sensitive manner throughout a conflict cycle.

Keeping farms out of the fight

At a time when conflicts over natural resources - including land and water - are increasingly frequent, it's important to note that agriculture is an arena that can be, in the framework's own words, “a source of peace or conflict, of crisis or recovery, of tragedy or healing.”

FAO supports rural communities in coping with conflict. FAO has promoted participatory approaches to strengthening land tenure in the wake of civil wars in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique and now Colombia. Agriculture projects help reintegrate former combatants as part of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration programmes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and the Philippines.

Often working with partner UN organizations, FAO is contributing to sustaining peace in Afghanistan, the Lake Chad Basin, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, amongst

others - all conflict hotspots today. Such work consists of helping set up dairy systems, providing seeds and farming inputs, devising shock responsive and risk informed social protection schemes and even supporting local peace deals to allow for livestock vaccination programmes to continue - a FAO specialty that has produced historic results including the elimination of Rinderpest at a time of armed conflict across East Africa.

A common theme is to support countries to maintain food production even in the worst of times.

Another area of exceptionally strong comparative advantage for FAO is in early warning systems, including seed security assessments, pastoralist forage metrics, market and food price monitoring, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis Model (RIMA), the Food Chain Crisis Early Warning bulletins and Early Warning Early Action quarterly bulletins, along with numerous local partnership networks such as the drought resilience programme with IGAD to support pastoralists in the Horn of Africa.

These have a clear role to play in strategies to bolster food security with an eye to pre-empting potential conflicts, mitigating the humanitarian toll of those underway and reducing the risk of conflict relapse when peace has been agreed.

As agriculture is the primary economic sector in most conflict-affected states today, its importance is especially strong even beyond the basics of food security. It can be an engine of stabilization and recovery and contribute to the social fabric of trust.

Importance to travel & tourism

One of the big trends today is the promotion of gastronomy tourism. This is designed to forge stronger linkages between the agriculture and the travel and tourism sectors. As usual, travel and tourism is looking at this from a very superficial perspective – job creation, income distribution, etc., etc. However, as the headline makes clear, helping farmers helps peace. If the whole concept of gastronomy tourism can be reframed in that context, it will certainly give the marketing campaign a lot more meaning and substance.



SDG 16: Photo essay: Growing coffee, sowing peace in Colombia





Picture source: UN Women



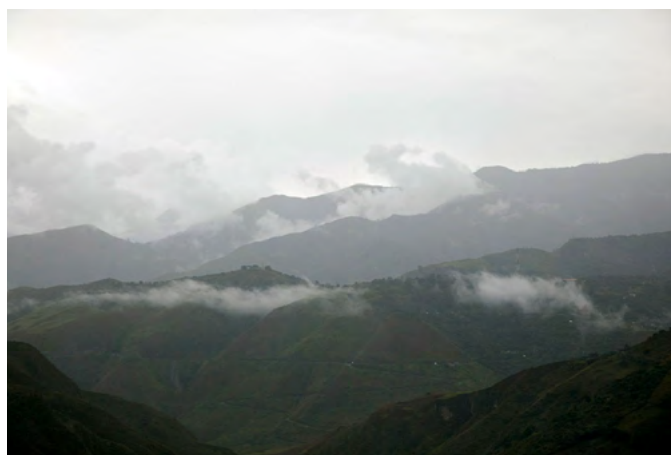
SDG 16: Photo essay: Growing coffee, sowing peace in Colombia

07 August 2018 Source: UN Women For Cielo Gomez, every day is work day, starting with coffee 5:30 am. A mother of three, a wife, and now a coffee grower with her own land, it's a labour of love.

Gomez and her family live in the municipality of El Tablón de Gómez, in the southeast of Nariño territory, Colombia. The municipality is known for its coffee and scarred by decades of conflict between the Colombian guerillas, army and the paramilitary forces. Its most recent claim to fame is successful land restitution to farmers, with 562 families being part of the programme and 198 [restitution sentences](#) implemented since 2013.

More than [7 million](#) people in Colombia were displaced by the armed conflict since 1985, and some 8.3 million hectares of land was illegally occupied. The final peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was signed in 2016, ending more than 50 years of conflict.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law (Law 1448) aims to return illegally acquired land to its rightful occupants. In many cases, the land restitution process formalized the ownership of land for those who had already returned to their land but did not have formal documents to prove ownership.

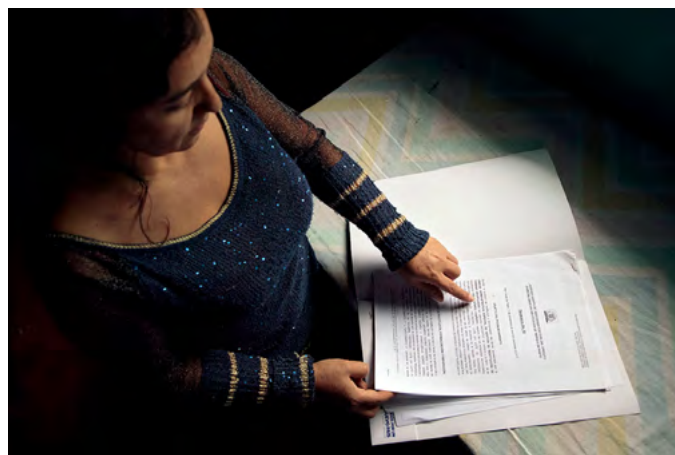


Picture source: UN Women

“In April 2003, there was a conflict between the guerillas and the army. We were all afraid. A child was killed in the cross fire in La Victoria. The military went to every house, looking for the guerillas and threw out our things—mattresses, clothes, everything...” recalls Cielo Gomez. “I was in my in-law’s house when the military came to our house. The guerillas had put bombs on the route between my home and my in-law’s home, so the military couldn’t reach us.”

Cielo’s story is echoed by many others in the area. There was mass exodus of people, trying to escape the escalating violence, having to leave their homes, land and any possessions that they couldn’t physically carry with them. The Gomez family were among those who decided to come back after a month in hiding, as they had nowhere else to go.

“When we returned, we found that the roof of our house was destroyed, there was no electricity...The army said they had killed and buried the guerillas in mass graves.”



Picture source: UN Women

Cielo and her family got their land back as part of the land restitution process initiated by the Government of Colombia. But at first the land was only in her husband’s name.

Through a UN Women project implemented by Corporation for the Social, technological and economic development of Colombia (CORPDESARROLLO), funded by the Government of Sweden, Cielo learned about her right to land, developed leadership and business skills.

“There were three lots of land, and now I own one of them, and the other two are under my husband’s name. We grow coffee in all three lots. Both of us are now land owners and that’s economic autonomy,” says a proud Cielo.

Since then, she has taken a loan from the bank and bought another piece of land.

“I have 10,000 bushes of coffee now. I used to think before that women can plant and grow coffee and harvest, but not trade it,” she says, adding that she asked her husband to help with planting the coffee. “It will be a 50-50 partnership, I told him, and we would both benefit from selling the coffee.”



Picture source: UN Women

Cielo can now afford to hire 10 workers to work her land. For Deyanira Cordoba, a young woman from the same project, visiting Cielo, coffee-growing runs in the family across generations. “My dream is to become a coffee entrepreneur and help my parents and my community,” says Deyanira. “It’s not just men who can do business. We women can make and achieve our own goals.”

[Read Deyanira’s story>](#)



Picture source: UN Women

The project also worked with men and discussed masculinity issues with them. “My husband understood that women work all the time, even on Sundays, while men have rest at home. He understood that women have the right to rest as well. Now he shares some of the chores at home. He washes his own dishes and feeds the animals,” says Cielo.



Picture source: UN Women

Oneda Alban, 40 years old, from the village of La Victoria, has a very similar story. She is the first woman in her family to ever own land, although she had grown coffee all her life. Not only did the project make her aware of her rights, it had a tremendous impact on her relationship with her husband.



Picture source: UN Women

“My husband went for the masculinity training,” explained Oneda. “In the second workshop that my husband attended, they gave him this little pot and asked him to throw it and to think of a person he loved.” For Oneda’s husband, the pot represented Oneda, and how violence impacted her.

“My husband put the pot back together and wrote my name on it. He came home and said, ‘I have a surprise for you.’ He gave me the pot. He had never before brought me a gift! Since that day, we started talking to each other like a couple. We are teaching our boys to treat women with respect.”



Picture source: UN Women

Growing coffee is hard work. Often, small farmers like Cielo, Oneda and Lucia don’t make nearly enough for their products. That’s where 27-year-old Joana Gomez, Coordinator of the Trading Team at the association of coffee growers (ASOPRO Café) in Tablón de Gómez wants to make a difference. She is the only woman in the trading team and joined UN Women’s project in 2017.

“I love coffee and knowing everything about coffee, but also where it goes,” she says. “The coffee growers do all the work, but make minimum amount of money. Most of the benefit goes to the intermediaries who trade the coffee.”

The Association takes away the middlemen in coffee trading so that the farmers can bring their beans, roast them and trade them directly. Currently, the association can produce a maximum of 1,000 pounds of coffee in a year. A complementary project by FAO is teaching the members sustainable agricultural practices as well as tasting skills, so that they can roast different varieties of coffee.



Picture source: UN Women



Picture source: UN Women

“We are applying for quality standard record, barcode and permit from the national coffee federation. Without this permit, we cannot produce more and cannot trade internationally,” explains Joana Gomez.

“My dream is to export this coffee internationally, so that people know the excellent quality of our coffee. Anyone who has tasted this coffee is charmed by its taste, You won’t find another coffee like this in Colombia.”

Two years after the historic peace agreement that formally ended five decades of conflict between the Government of Colombia and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), peace is intimately linked with economic empowerment, justice and decent life. For the coffee-growing women of Tablón de Gómez, life is safer, at last. Now they are working to make their lives better, growing coffee and sowing peace.

Importance to travel & tourism

This article was very specifically chosen for inclusion in this issue because coffee is a very important component of travel and tourism. Normally, a cup of coffee is seen as being nothing more than that; a beverage to be consumed in the midst of boring conferences or after meals. But this article makes clear that it can often be much more sublime and significant than just a beverage. Take a deep breath, read this article again and think very, very carefully about what that cup of coffee actually means.



SDG 16: Caspian Sea deal an invaluable step towards easing regional tensions





Secretary-General António Guterres briefs press at UN Headquarters. UN Photo/Mark Garten



SDG 16: Caspian Sea deal an invaluable step towards easing regional tensions

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 14 August 2018 - António Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, has welcomed the historic signing of the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, which took place on Sunday, marked by a ceremony which brought together the leaders of the five countries bordering its coastline.

The region has been a subject of dispute, ever since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Up until that time, the Caspian - the largest enclosed body of water on earth - was shared by just two states, the USSR and Iran.

Today, Iran has to share it with Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, all of which have different, and divergent, interests as far as the sea is concerned. Furthermore, one major sticking point has been whether to define the Caspian as a lake (which would mean it is divided equally between all five countries), or a sea (and therefore governed by the United Nations Law of the Sea).

A UN Spokesperson said that the Secretary-General hailed the document as a demonstration of the importance of regional cooperation, vital for maintaining international peace and security, and congratulated the five signatory countries for their landmark achievement.

The spokesperson added that the Secretary-General believes the Convention should prove invaluable in regulating a wide range of longstanding issues among the Caspian Sea littoral States, and is a significant step in the easing of regional tensions.

Whilst many issues are a long way from being resolved, the accord reportedly takes a compromise approach, dividing the seabed into territorial zones (as is the norm with a lake) and the surface as international water (as is the norm for an officially designated sea). It is believed that further talks will be needed to deal with a number of outstanding issues.

Importance to travel & tourism

Wonderful. All the countries that border the Caspian Sea are major tourism destinations in their own right. Any agreement that leads to peace and stability amongst them will be good for travel and tourism and eventually for all the peoples by generating jobs and income. The Caspian Sea is also under enormous environmental pressure, which is another factor that triggers conflict. One hopes that the peace agreement will also help address the environmental challenges.



SDG 16: Ripple effects of war: How violence can persist after formal peace is declared





*A group of men, women, and children in Kenya.
Picture credit: Curt Carnemark/ World Bank*



SDG 16: Ripple effects of war: How violence can persist after formal peace is declared

by Jocelyn Kelly

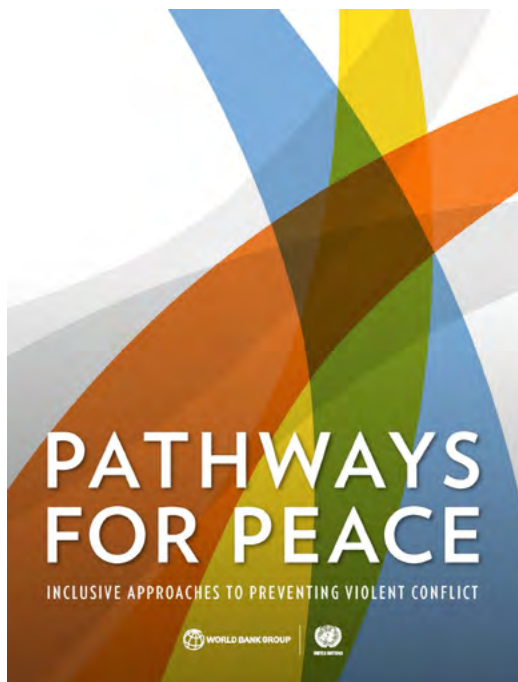
Washington DC., 08/14/2018. Source: World Bank. When I first visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2007 as a public health researcher, I was trying to understand the complex issue of how young men get recruited into rebel groups in war-torn regions of central Africa. What I learned was both surprising and heartbreaking: a person who experienced war violence as a child could be more likely to engage in conflict as a young adult.

Young men who had experienced extreme war violence in their past would often state this as a reason to take up arms. Even more tragically, these same young men would often struggle to reintegrate peacefully into their communities when hostilities ended. The violence they had experienced their whole lives through war persisted within their homes and communities even when formal peace was declared.

I was struck by the “cyclicity” of conflict. Even when fragile peace was declared, war had traumatized populations that had experienced high levels of violence. They were deeply affected by these experiences. It begged the question: does war violence morph into less visible forms of violence that continue to affect communities even after bullets stop flying? Sadly, this is a particularly pressing question now.

Currently, the levels of political conflict in the world are among the highest since the cold war. The world is host to the largest number of refugees since World War II. The need to understand how to truly end conflict and build sustainable peace is more pressing than ever. In response to these crises, the World Bank and United Nations published a flagship study, [Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict](#). The report highlights the importance of addressing the long-term impact of conflict. This is particularly difficult

when wars have become ever more complex, prolonged and diffuse.



As part of the Pathways for Peace report, I undertook research to explore the long-term impact of conflict. By combining data about

health and conflict, and using mathematical modeling techniques, we can expose previously hidden patterns in human behavior. I wanted to examine whether war could affect the levels of violence against women in a society, even after peace was declared.

For this effort, I took data from three conflict-affected countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, and Liberia. Although each country had a different type of conflict, similar patterns emerged from each context. In districts that experienced higher levels of conflict violence, intimate partner violence (or IPV, which is physical, sexual, or psychological harm committed by a partner or spouse) against women was also significantly higher long after the conflict had ended.

In Kenya and Liberia, women living in a district with conflict fatalities were 50 percent more likely to experience IPV than women in districts with no conflict fatalities. When levels of conflict are split into low, medium, and high levels, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya had significantly higher levels of IPV in high- compared to low-conflict districts.

Development for Peace

Solutions to tackle fragility, conflict, violence



IPV is notoriously hard to study at the best of times due to underreporting of this sensitive issue. In countries just emerging from war, it is easy to let hidden forms of violence fall by the wayside. Yet, IPV and other forms of sexual violence have devastating effects. IPV affects not only the victim, but also the victim's children, family and the community as a whole. Children who live in homes with domestic violence are also more likely to become victims or perpetrators of this abuse when they grow up, further perpetuating cycles of conflict. But thoughtful public health programming can help prevent and address IPV and other forms of violence.

These results suggest that human aggression does not immediately end with the signing of peace accords. Rather, it may persist and morph into subsequent damaging forms, including IPV and sexual violence. Ignoring post-conflict violence during the reconstruction phase can hamper the social healing, resiliency, and economic recovery of a nation. If IPV and sexual violence remain an unrecognized post-conflict problem, then conflict resolutions will amount to only a precarious peace, and the stability of nations will be undermined.

Importance to travel & tourism

Travel and tourism has long claimed to be an industry of peace. But oftentimes, this claim rings hollow because the industry steers clear of any practical action to advance the cause. Issues related to conflict and violence are often considered political or geopolitical challenges and swept under the carpet even though it can be argued that they have a far bigger impact on travel and tourism than climate change or technological change. As a major beneficiary of peace, travel and tourism can actually make a significant contribution to being a part of the solution in a realistic and apolitical manner. Reports such as this Pathways To Peace offer food for thought in that direction.



SDG 16: Let Nagasaki remain 'the last city' to suffer nuclear devastation, says museum director





The smoldering ruins of Nagasaki, about 700 metres from the hypocentre of the explosion, as seen on 10 August 1945. UN Photo/Yosuke Yamahata



SDG 16: Let Nagasaki remain ‘the last city’ to suffer nuclear devastation, says museum director

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 8 August 2018 - It's essential that Nagasaki's devastation should "not be forgotten" now or in the future, if the threat of nuclear war is to be lifted, said the Director of the Japanese city's Atomic Bomb Museum, ahead of a visit there on Thursday by the UN Secretary-General.

António Guterres was in Tokyo on Wednesday where he held talks with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe before traveling west to meet with the Mayor of Nagasaki and participate in the 73rd Nagasaki Peace Ceremony. The number of survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – or hibakusha as they are known in Japanese, is decreasing each year.

Japan's health ministry says that as of last March, only 155,000 survivors remain, with 90,000 having died over the past decade. Moreover, the number of survivors directly exposed to radiation in the cities and their surrounding areas, has dipped below 100,000 for the first time, with the average age being 82 years old.

Before the commemoration, Akitoshi Nakamura, Director of Atomic Bomb Museum spoke to UN News. Having started working at the Museum 60 years after the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, just three days after Hiroshima, Mr. Nakamura enthusiastically shared the citizens "high hopes" as they "eagerly" await Mr. Guterres' arrival.

"We are, from the bottom of our hearts, welcoming the SG's visit here," he asserted.

Laying out plans for the Secretary-General's visit, Mr. Nakamura shared his hopes that the UN chief would join local children in making origami cranes, a symbol of peace, before touring the museum where

highlights include a clock that stopped at 11:02 am, when the bomb was dropped; documents charting the catastrophe after the bombing; and the broken belfry dome of the Urakami Cathedral.

“We would like him to see those,” said the curator. “But more than anything, we would like him to see the photos of hibakusha.”

“What is most horrific is the effect of nuclear radiation, so we would like him to see the documents and panels that show the effects of nuclear radiation on health,” Mr. Nakamura elaborated.

The museum traces the catastrophe that unfolded after the bomb.

“We want people to see what a horrific weapon an atomic bomb is, and the kind of devastation over 14,000 nuclear weapons around the world can bring,” Mr. Nakamura stressed, explaining the museum’s aim to eliminate stockpiles of nuclear weapons, by illustrating the horrors they inflict.

“The two atomic bomb museums, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are about something that happened in the past, but they also are important in the sense that they trigger an awareness of the danger that nuclear weapons may cause in the future,” he said.

After 73 years, Mr. Nakamura does not want the experiences of the dwindling number of survivors to be forgotten along with them.

Calling it “the most important thing,” he said that “the museums continue telling the story of what happened at the time, in order for it to not be forgotten.”

Hiroshima was the first city to be devastated by an atomic bomb, on 6 August, 1945, and for the time being at least, Nagasaki is the last. With that distinction, Mr. Nakamura spells out “it’s very important to prevent another exposure to an atomic bomb.”

“We, the citizens of Nagasaki, have been appealing to the world to make Nagasaki the last city devastated by an atomic bomb,” he said.

As hibakusha numbers decline, education that carries on their voices becomes ever more important.

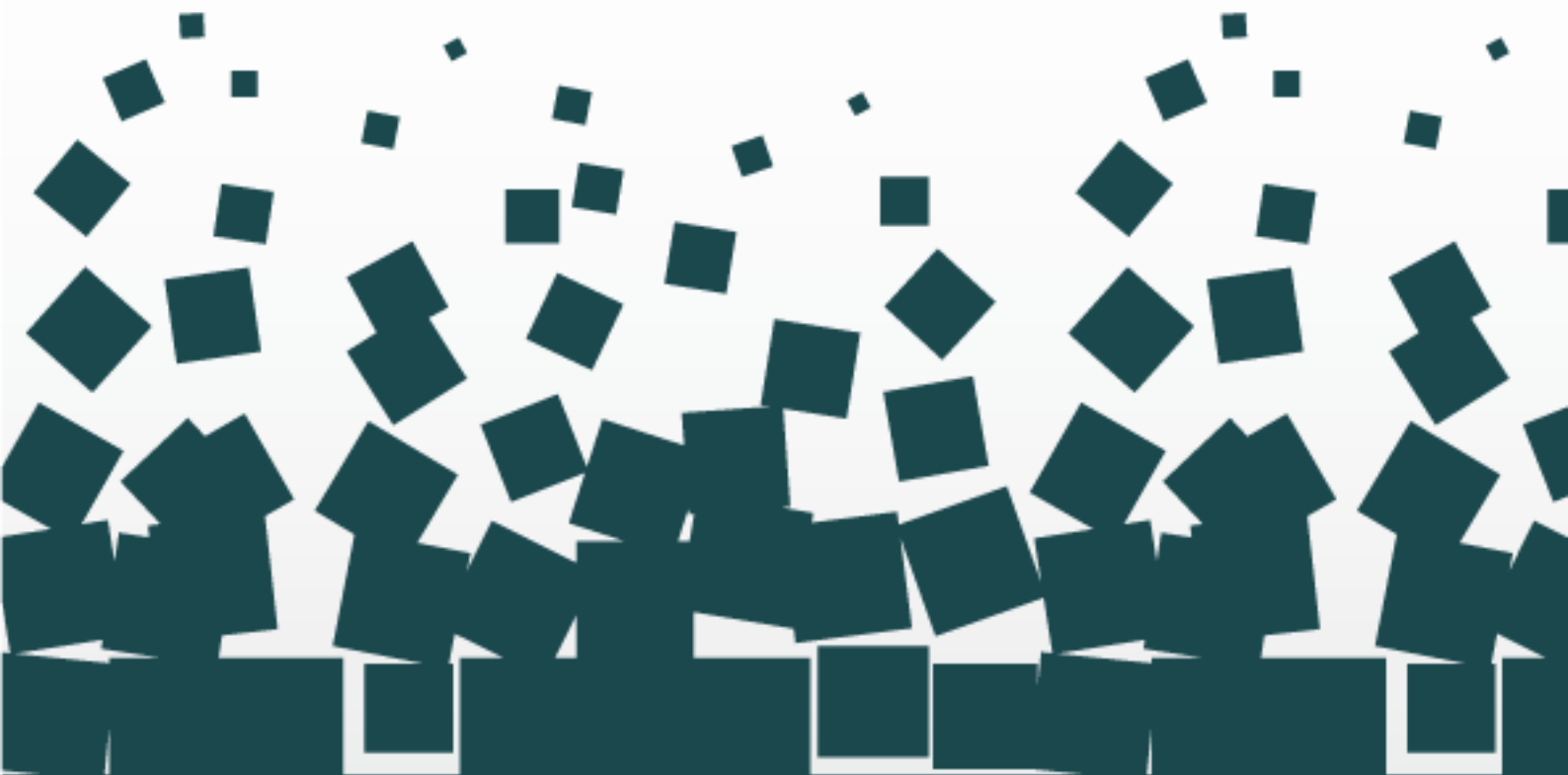
Importance to travel & tourism

In March 2018, I fulfilled a lifelong dream by visiting this museum. It is indeed a mind-numbing experience. While images of the death and destruction certainly bring tears to one’s eyes, especially those of the babies and children, even more incomprehensible is the continued policy-making that enables continued production of these devastating weapons. One cannot imagine the expenditure that must have gone into producing 14,000 nuclear weapons, and how much better the world would have been if that money had been spent on advancing many of the causes that we now call the Sustainable Development Goals. If travel and tourism is to truly realise its claim to be an industry of peace, making people such as Akitoshi Nakamura, Director of Atomic Bomb Museum, regular keynote speakers at industry forums will become a necessity.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



SDG 17: Multilateralism: The only path to address the world's troubles





*Secretary-General António Guterres (center) meets with Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh.
UNFPA Bangladesh/Allison Joyce*

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SDG 17: Multilateralism: The only path to address the world's troubles

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 14 August 2018
- As the world's problems grow, multilateralism represents to best path to meet the challenges that lie ahead, said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Tuesday, launching his annual report.

The Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization for 2018, also tracks the progress made over the last year in maintaining peace and security, protecting human rights, and promoting sustainable development.

"I started my tenure calling for 2017 to be a year of peace, yet peace remains elusive," said the UN chief in the report's introduction, noting that since January last year "conflicts have deepened, with grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law; inequality has risen, intolerance has spread, discrimination against women remains entrenched and the impacts of climate change continue to accelerate."

"We need unity and courage in setting the world on track towards a better future," stressed Mr. Guterres, crediting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for generating coordinated efforts by Member States and civil society to "alleviate poverty and build peaceful, prosperous and inclusive societies."

Wide-ranging reform

The most comprehensive reform of the UN development system in decades already underway, led by Mr. Guterres and his deputy, Amina Mohammed, aims to strengthen the Organization's capacity to support Member States in achieving the 17 SDGs.

While the report points to gains, such as increased labour productivity, access to electricity and strengthened internet governance, it also illustrates that progress has been uneven and too slow to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals within the given time frame.

For example, in 2015, three out of 10 people did not have access to safe drinking water, and 60 per cent lacked safe sanitation. Moreover conflicts, disasters and climate change are also adversely affecting populations.

The report underlines the importance of building stronger multilateral partnerships with Member States; regional and international organizations; and civil society; to “find solutions to global problems that no nation alone can resolve.”

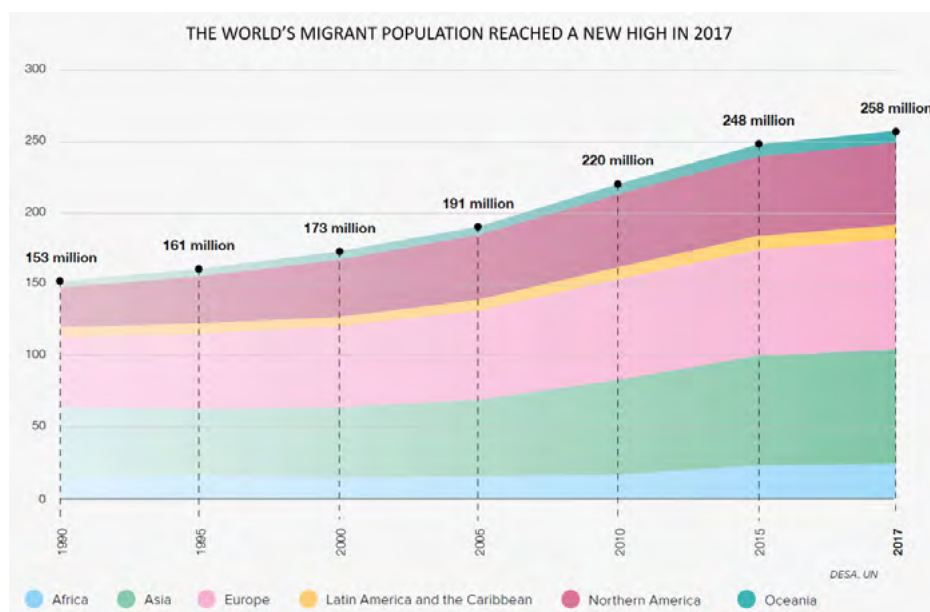
Although the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of 2018 reflected some positive initiatives, it also showed the urgent need to step up efforts in areas such as energy cooperation, water and terrestrial ecosystems.

According to the report, “partnerships are key to achieving the SDGs” – and as of June, 3,834 partnerships had been registered with the Partnerships for the SDGs online platform from different sectors across all the 17 goals.

With regard to technology, last October a joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Second Committee welcomed Sophia, the first robot to sit on a UN panel. This gave a glimpse into the advances being made in the realm of Artificial Intelligence.

Turning to young people, UN Youth Envoy, Jayathma Wickramanayake, of Sri Lanka, is continuously advocating for their needs and rights, including in decision-making processes at all levels, and in strengthening the UN system’s coordination on delivering for youth, and with their increased participation.

The UN report also spoke to the growing scale, complexity and impact of global migration. In July, the General Assembly agreed a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which will be presented for adoption in December at an Intergovernmental Conference in Morocco.



Source: United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization.

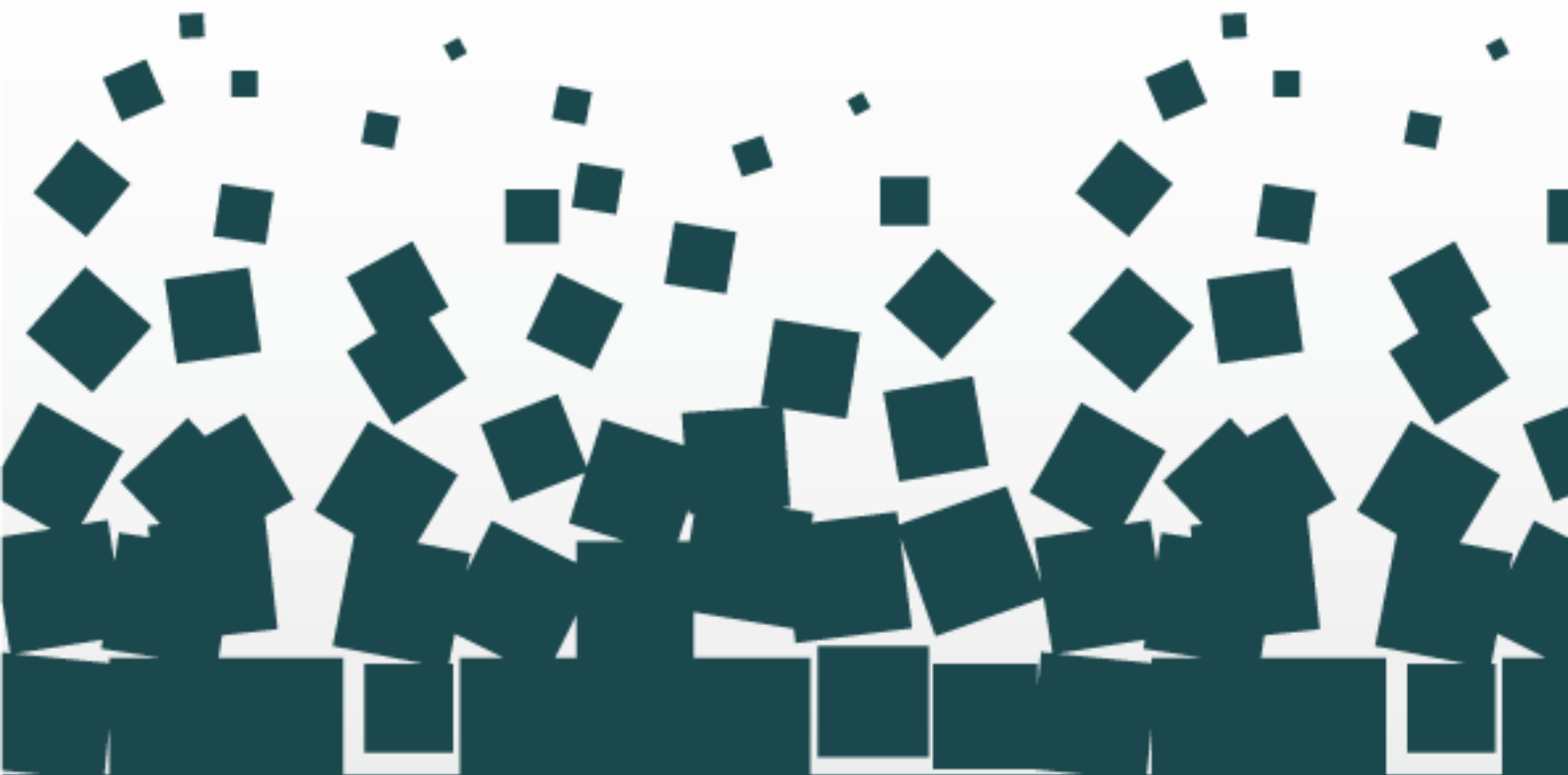
Importance to travel & tourism

Multilateralism is UN jargon for what health and wellness refers to as holistic solutions. Just as no disease can be treated in isolation, without a comprehensive analysis of all the factors that caused it, so too can “problems without passports” never be solved in isolation or individually by any one country or entity. Travel and tourism is by its very nature a very multilateral and global industry that impacts all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It is ideally placed to be a part of the solution.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



SDG 17: How Civil Society monitoring helps prevent corruption in forest conservation





Children on a train at a reception centre for refugees and migrants in Gevgelija in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. UNICEF/Ashley Gilbertson

17 PARTNERSHIPS
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SDG 17: How Civil Society monitoring helps prevent corruption in forest conservation

July 19, 2018, Transparency International - Although deforestation contributes nearly a fifth of the world's carbon emissions, large-scale destruction of forests often goes unchecked by authorities, making it ripe for corruption.

To prevent this, in 2016 the UN launched [Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation \(REDD+\)](#), a programme designed to conserve forests in developing countries. REDD+ incentivises forest conservation by rewarding countries that cut down fewer trees.

REDD+ and corruption

[Unfortunately, deforestation programmes, like REDD+, are often vulnerable to corruption.](#) In many cases, weak governance allows officials to falsify conservation data for monetary gain while deforestation happens anyway.

Countries have a lot of money to lose. In the 1990s, Indonesian Ministry of Forestry took [US\\$600 million from its Reforestation Fund](#) to finance politically favoured projects that did not contribute to the Fund's objectives.

To help prevent this type of corruption, Transparency International has released a new report on Independent REDD+ Governance Monitoring. It provides recommendations for the design and implementation of effective independent monitoring to check if forests are really being conserved, if funds intended for communities reach them and other key factors. The report also draws on several case

studies across the world, including in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zimbabwe, Vietnam and Cameroon.

Online mapping in the Congo

Between 2013 and 2015, a local civil society organisation (CSO), Moabi, and its partners [piloted a monitoring system](#) in the DRC. Relying on community observers and coordinators to collect information and conduct site visits, the programme aimed to capture any potential infractions through smartphone photos and GPS records.

[Moabi published the information on an online mapping platform](#) and shared it with Congolese authorities, REDD+ project partners and independent observer organisations to advocate for action and enforcement.

This relatively low-cost, low-tech system of combining paper-based methods and smartphone technology is replicable for future projects dealing with a wide range of land-use activities.

Community volunteers in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, trained community volunteers use a monitoring system developed by [Transparency International Zimbabwe](#) to review funds, record corruption-related complaints and raise awareness about corruption and deforestation. Any items flagged through this system are addressed through monthly, multi-stakeholder hearings to engage authorities and citizens on these issues.

Engaging government in Vietnam

Similarly, from 2013 to 2015, the [Rural Development and Poverty Reduction Fund](#) fostered local awareness of and greater participation in REDD+ in Quang Binh province, Vietnam. The programme delivered [workshops, communication tools and techniques, and learning products](#) to local communities, which in turn helped communities gather data and complaints. They also had face-to-face meetings with authorities, which helped build trust and increase accountability.

Building partnerships in Cameroon

In Cameroon, several CSOs formed the [Standardized External Independent Observation System](#) (SNOIE), which divides responsibilities for data collection, observation, verification, reporting, communication and advocacy activities, based on the relative expertise of each entity.

SNOIE is a wide-scale project in which civil society monitors activities at the local, sub-national and national levels and advocates for change.

Including civil society

Moving forward, programmes like REDD+ should look to CSOs to help monitor progress and ensure that countries are complying with social and environmental safeguards. This creates transparency and holds governments to account so that they do more to support REDD+ and its stakeholders.

You can read about more monitoring systems and how to design and implement effective ones in [Independent REDD+ Governance Monitoring](#).

Importance to travel & tourism

This is one of the most important partnerships that can be formed by travel and tourism going forward. It is becoming absolutely imperative to involve civil society groupings in industry forums because they are the ones who provide check and balance mechanisms, ask important and relevant questions without fear or favour, and advance the cause of transparency and accountability. These are all issues the travel and tourism prefers to sweep under the carpet because they raise “inconvenient truths”. Over time, living in denial is not a sustainable path in its own right.

