

GWI United Nation Representative

Advocacy Report

2023

GWI advocacy goals

- 100% of United Nations Member States commit to policy, legislation, budget and infrastructure to facilitate transition of girls from primary to secondary school and ensure gender parity and gender equality throughout secondary education by 2030.
- By 2030 100% of United Nations low-income Member States have increased access to tertiary education for girls and women by 50%.
- 100% of United Nations Member States commit to and implement policies for continuing education to empower women throughout the life course, within the formal and informal economies.
- Influence the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.
- All 17 SDGs will include girls' education targets.

Please bear in mind these five overarching, long-term goals during any United Nations intervention that you make on behalf of GWI. Any intervention should push these five goals further.

NB: Although these goals represent GWI's mission, UN Reps are also invited to promote GWI key messages on areas where especially relevant e.g., women in STEM, securing investment in women teachers, addressing barriers to girls' education such as child marriage.

Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the World Food Program (WFP), and UN Women

United Nations; New York; June 1, 2023: *The importance of joint development solutions and quality financing in the face of multiple crises.* This report contains information from the Background Note as well as that obtained during the session.

Introduction

Efforts to recover from the socioeconomic setbacks caused by COVID-19 are being undermined by growing global challenges which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable people, especially women and girls, and have significantly increased poverty and inequality. Concurrently, the gap in financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is increasing. There is limited alignment between critical priorities related to climate, development, and humanitarian action, including the need to strengthen preparedness and increase systems' readiness to respond to emergencies. As a result, it is viewed as urgent that governments, the private sector, civil society, and international development partners collaborate to address the short-term impacts of current crises while promoting resilient, sustainable, and inclusive growth and recovery.



The UN system must collectively support government objectives and demonstrate the impact of delivering development solutions at scale. The approach must be centered on the principles of leaving no one behind, gender equality, and the right to equitable social services, particularly education, nutrition, water and sanitation, and health.

The United Nations Secretary-General recently called for a transformative SDGs Stimulus Package to:

- address the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress;
- expand contingency financing to countries in need; and
- increase affordable long-term financing for developing countries by at least \$500 billion annually.

Failure to do so will mean that many low- and middle-income countries will be unable to meet the SDGs or invest in renewable energy, universal social protection, quality education, decent job creation, universal health coverage, sustainable food systems, infrastructure, and digital transformation.

Key Entry Points

Protecting and enhancing social spending, particularly to strengthen education, gender equality, health, nutrition, and protection.

- Calls on the UN system and development partners to focus on ensuring that critical investments in social sectors are enhanced and protected, especially during times of economic distress. Public financing is the backbone of inclusive and sustainable financing and the key source of financing of the SDGs – these must be increased while working to unlock private capital to support innovation and address critical gaps.
- Enhance the quality of spending in terms of equity, transparency, credibility, efficiency, and effectiveness. Part of this includes addressing public procurement, which can account for 15-22% of GDP in LIC, by requiring accountability in terms of what products are purchased, how are they purchased, and who they are purchased from.
- New sources of financing must be identified to scale up innovation and address critical gaps. This includes increasing Official Development Assistance (ODA), transforming the current debt architecture, and identifying modalities for effective private and blended financing.

Momentum for social protection and its role in enabling SDGs

The right to social protection is at the forefront of UN interagency collaboration due to:

- its role in responding to consecutive global crises.
- its potential to contribute to accelerating progress towards multiple SDGs; and
- its role in enabling governments' leadership and capacity to meet these development goals.



Innovative financing solutions and partnerships

Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF) enable countries to align public and private financing policies and allow for innovative and blended financial solutions. These include Sovereign Sustainable Development Goal bonds, thematic bonds, regional and continental financing frameworks, and debit swaps for SDGs. 86 countries are currently using INFFs to establish a more coherent and sustainable financing architecture at country level.

Strengthening all forms of international development cooperation

ODA and all forms of development cooperation must be scaled up. In addition, there is a need to adapt and accelerate support for countries in debt distress with the objective of reducing their debt stock and providing long-term relief. Finally, coordination across and between bilateral and multilateral partners is needed. At present, 52 developing countries, containing half the world's population living in extreme poverty, suffer from severe debt problems and high borrowing costs. Too many are allocating a significant portion of their public revenue towards debt service payments, negatively impacting social sectors.

Integrated financing for inclusion and climate action

Aligning and integrating finance is essential for a just transition to resilient and low-carbon economies. In this regard, understanding the specific dynamics between poverty reduction, equity, and climate resilience policies is key. There is a need for stronger international cooperation, decisive global policy efforts, and scaling up financing in line with international commitments to protect the poorest nations from the spillover of developed countries' policies and to help to increase long-term investments in the SDGs and climate adaptation.

Unlock development financing in fragile and crisis settings

In an era of polycrises the global community must recognize that today's crises are increasingly long-lasting, recurring, and complex, requiring multi-year integrated development and financing solutions. The United Nations needs to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including financing across the three pillars. As part of this effort, the UN should explore financial solutions beyond ODA that include generating evidence on investment impacts.

Progress on joint innovative solutions

1. **United Nations Secretary-General Global Accelerator** – key principles to guide international and national financing of social protection are a rights-based approach to financing, the State as the key actor for both financing and implementation, and international resources to support the expansion of social protections in countries with limited fiscal space.
2. **Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF)** – collaboration between UN agencies, national governments, and various stakeholders, including IFIs, is needed.
3. **Just energy transitions** – to support the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. Supported by the UN system, 120 developing countries have increased ambitions within their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs),



strengthened mitigation and adaptation measures, and accelerated transitions to renewable sources. Governments must finance, implement, and monitor NDCs in a way that fully advances the SDGs. To achieve these, reforms on taxation, budgeting, and public finance management must be undertaken.

4. **Anticipatory action and the nexus between development and humanitarian financing** – need to move from an expensive crisis response to more forward-looking management of climate risks. Define the roles of various partners, the early warnings to be used, how to reach affected populations, and priorities for evaluation and learning.

Additional comments by UN Executive Board Members from Various Agencies and Member States:

1. Change the narrative around the role of NGOs – Civil Society can be accountable and improve imbalance. There should be a greater effort made to involve NGOs in programming and policy development.
2. Need an honest discussion about why we are behind on the SDGs.
3. There will be an SDG Summit in September, 2023 (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/SDG-Stimulus-to-Deliver-Agenda-2023.pdf>).
4. High interest rates in developed countries are hurting low- and middle-income countries.
5. Need publicly shared data.
6. Only results count.
7. Need to prepare for upcoming pandemics.
8. If the Just Transition occurs, up to 8.4 billion jobs could be created in the green and blue economy by 2030.
9. Sweden commented that they are a country of only 10 million people, yet they are one of three countries that provide 38% of core development funding – in their view the UN needs to do better with the monies it is given.
10. Concerns expressed in terms of shrinking democratic space.
11. Need tech transfer from developed to developing countries.
12. Private funds often come with strings.
13. To date the largest safety net has been school lunch programs.

Submitted by:

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Empowering women and girls through lifelong, quality education and training. GWI, formerly International Federation of University Women (IFUW), in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO