

United Nations Development Programme

CHMUN XIX
General Assembly

Committee Background:

Born from the merging between The United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was established on November 22, 1965 to aid countries in eliminating poverty, developing self-sufficiency, as well as to bolster human capital. The UNDP is led by a 36-member executive board, consisting of representatives from developed and developing nations alike. The UNDP carries out developmental assistance initiatives at a scale larger than any other UN program or subsection.

Today, the UNDP supports international development primarily through the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a result of the assistance and action provided by the UNDP, 38 million new voters were registered across 30 countries, 1.6 billion USD was raised to support countries with COVID-19 response, and 43 countries received support to confront gender-based violence.



Topic 1: Promoting Sustainable Infrastructural Development

Introduction:

Infrastructure is defined as a system of structures and facilities that serve communities. Specifically, infrastructure can be classified as either hard or soft, with hard infrastructure referring to tangible structures such as roads and bridges, whereas soft infrastructure constitutes facilities providing services, such as healthcare, education, and law enforcement. These structures are critical to the function and success of both individuals and nations alike. Despite their necessity, infrastructure, especially hard infrastructure, can have severe ramifications, especially for the environment. For instance, seventy-nine percent of all greenhouse gas emissions can be attributed to infrastructure. These ramifications increase when infrastructure is poorly planned and managed. As infrastructure affects the environment, the environment affects infrastructure. Climate change can significantly damage buildings and physical structures, notably ones that are shoddily built or aging. A majority of infrastructure is not designed to weather the level and frequency of natural disasters spurred on by climate change. Infrastructure in place currently is both destructed by and destructive to the space it occupies, and is not optimized for a modern world.

Sustainable infrastructure refers to any structure or facility that is designed and operated to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. Clean energy plants, climate-resistant physical structures, and low carbon/decarbonised transport are all examples of sustainable infrastructure. Developing sustainable infrastructure is a valuable tool in revitalizing the global economy as well as combating the climate crisis. Furthermore, 92% of SDG targets are attainable through sustainable infrastructure investment. Though sustainable infrastructure offers a streamlined, efficient method to solving a variety of issues, there is a severe lack of investment for such practices to be put in place. Shifting to sustainable infrastructure is a process most nations are unfamiliar with, and it would require adaptation and expansion for many countries, and as a result, wide-scale implementation of sustainable infrastructure is largely unheard of and unseen. Many of these green systems have been spearheaded within recent years, and as such there is little known regarding their cost of upkeep. The



novelty and unknown long-term implementation costs that shroud sustainable infrastructure have ultimately caused a lack of implementation and investing for sustainable infrastructure.

Current Events:

In recent years, sustainable infrastructure has garnered buzz, primarily within the private sector. Investors in private funds have begun to realize the importance of sustainable infrastructure to solving environmental, economic, and social issues. Sustainable infrastructure is slowly, but surely, being implemented in developing and developed nations alike. Though entire infrastructure systems in countries are yet to fully reach optimal sustainability, many countries are making concentrated efforts to push sustainability. Policymakers across nations have pushed for sustainability and sustainable systems. Clean energy systems have especially taken off in several nations, with some even being able to reach near-emission free levels of power production. However, sustainability for physical structures such as roads and bridges are yet to be popularized and remain largely untapped. Furthermore, the concept of utilizing sustainable infrastructure to mitigate social and economic challenges is underused as well, in comparison to the popularity of other sustainable infrastructure systems.

Past UN Action:

The UN has touted sustainable infrastructure as a vital tool to solving climate and economic issues in one fell swoop. One of the specific aspects of Goal 9 of the SDGs is centered around the development of sustainable, resilient infrastructure. In addition, the UN is a partner of the Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership, which highlights the necessity of sustainable infrastructure and promotes its development. In March 2019, multiple UN agencies released a statement that urged the need for intersectional, sustainable development of infrastructure, entitled. The statement details the multiple uses of infrastructure to mitigate poverty, climate issues, and to support human rights and well-being.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can developing nations fund sustainable infrastructure?



2. How can sustainable infrastructure be promoted to nations who would require an entire infrastructure overhaul to implement sustainable systems?
3. Should private investment in infrastructure be prioritized over public investment in infrastructure?
4. In what ways can sustainable infrastructure be optimized for supporting human rights?

Helpful Links:

1. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization/>
2. <https://www.github.org/sustainable-infrastructure/>
3. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/delivering-on-sustainable-infrastructure-for-better-development-and-better-climate/>



Topic 2: Implementing Green Farming Practices in Cities

Introduction:

Green farming is a collection of practices that seek to produce positive results for the environment, profitability, and social and economic equity. The techniques utilized as part of green farming often protect soil health, ensure biodiversity, optimize water use, and reduce pollution. Other methods may promote the safety and wellbeing of laborers on farms, or benefit the local economy.

Urban farming is concerned with the growing and distribution of agricultural goods that takes place in an urban or suburban environment. Due to limited open space in urban and suburban areas, urban farming often takes on unconventional forms. Examples include hydroponic facilities, vertical farming, and rooftop gardens. Many popular urban farming techniques are inherently sustainable, such as vertical farming and hydroponics, which use up to 95% less water than traditional farming practices. Furthermore, urban farming reduces carbon footprint, as the need for importing food is decreased by the production of food within the city itself. Urban farms also support reduced chemical use, which benefits both the community and the environment. When urban food supply can be provided by urban sources, it decreases the dependence upon industrial agriculture, and thus mitigating the negative effects brought upon by industrial agriculture. Urban agriculture also increases human capital through the gained knowledge and skills brought on by farming and gardening.

Sustainable urban farming is a recent movement that focuses on prioritizing eco-friendly, socially conscious agricultural methods that can be utilized to cultivate agricultural goods in an urban setting. Sustainable urban farming contributes to overall sustainable urban development and is a valuable tool to lower carbon emissions and strive for a healthier environment. Additionally, sustainable urban farming highlights the need for food resilience and security, which is not as specifically emphasized within urban farming and its practices.

Current Events:

The urban farming industry is rapidly growing and fifteen percent of the global food supply comes from urban farms and urban agriculture. The market size for global urban farming was valued at

CHMUN XIX 6



129 billion USD in 2021, and is projected to hit 203 billion USD by 2027. However, the majority of the market share is concentrated in North America. Urban farming is not utilized as frequently in developing regions, which is explained by many of the frequent criticisms faced by urban farming. The techniques utilized to practice urban agriculture often require a level of resources which may not be available in all regions, especially developing regions. Even so, urban agriculture is promoted to developing countries as it increases access and availability of food.

Past UN Action:

Goal 2 of the SDGs revolves around ending hunger and promoting sustainable farming. The UN has released briefs through its various agencies that highlight the practicality and benefits of urban agriculture. Furthermore, they highlight the abilities of urban agriculture to achieve multiple different SDG goals. In a 2015 brief, urban agriculture was related to the SDGs concerned with ending poverty, ending hunger, food insecurity, and promoting sustainable farming, ensuring sustainable consumption and production, and promoting the sustainable use of ecosystems and land. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) agency of the UN administers various urban food initiatives, such as the Urban Food Agenda, which promotes the need for sustainable development and food security in urban regions.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can urban farming— which requires resources readily available and is energy intensive— be promoted to developing nations?
2. How can the scale of urban farming be improved to feed larger populations ?
3. How can gentrification be reduced near urban farm centers?
4. Should urban farming be privatized or should urban farms be established in cities by federal governments?



Helpful Links:

1. <https://sarep.ucdavis.edu/sustainable-ag/urban-agriculture>
2. <https://sarep.ucdavis.edu/sustainable-ag>
3. <https://www.fao.org/urban-peri-urban-agriculture/en>



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Topic 2

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