



KEY MESSAGES FROM THE INFORMAL NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT

As we enter the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is still suffering its devastating impacts and the recovery is highly uneven and fragile. ECOSOC will take stock of the lessons learned from the response to the crisis so far and make recommendations to redouble efforts for an inclusive and sustainable recovery guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This will be a key purpose of the new ECOSOC Coordination Segment created by the General Assembly in its June resolution on strengthening ECOSOC¹. The segment aimed to enable the Council to effectively carry out its Charter coordination mandates and to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the response to COVID-19, building on and coordinating the work of its subsidiary bodies and the UN system:

The objectives of the new Coordination Segment, taking place early in the year, are:

To take up coordination matters arising from subsidiary bodies, principal organs and specialized agencies in the economic, social, environmental and related fields.	To steer the ECOSOC system towards an efficient and integrated workflow throughout the Council cycle leading up to the HLPF.	To provide forward-looking policy guidance to ensure coherence and direction in the policies and normative work of subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies relating to the 2030 Agenda as well as to other aspects of the work of the Council.
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The UN Secretariat’s [informal note](#) to support the deliberations at the Coordination Segment was mandated by the General Assembly. The note shows that the 2021 theme of ECOSOC and the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) and the nine goals under review strongly resonated in the work of the subsidiary bodies and UN system entities. The theme focused on how the world could recover from COVID-19 in a way that advances the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The 2021 Ministerial Declaration appears to reflect or to have been inspired by many key messages from the subsidiary bodies. Taken together, the outcomes of subsidiary bodies also provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of the pandemic and a set of integrated policy recommendations.²

The following key messages emanate from the analysis in the Note and can help in developing ECOSOC’s guidance at the coordination segment.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR FOLLOW-UP OF THE 2021 MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

In view of the 2021 Ministerial Declaration and lessons learned from the response to COVID-19, the UN system and subsidiary bodies could be invited to enhance their work to follow up and develop policy guidance on the priority areas listed below. These priority areas, many of which are also addressed in the 2030 Agenda, could also guide the upcoming work in the ECOSOC forums and segments as well as the HLPF. All subsidiary bodies and the UN system should also provide inputs to the thematic reviews of the HLPF.

¹ General Assembly resolution [75/290 A](#) of 25 June 2021

² This year’s [note](#) places a special focus on the work of subsidiary bodies and coordinated work and initiatives of the UN system and selected organizations. It does not aim to be exhaustive.





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Vaccine equity: The COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) and its COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) need to be supported and fully funded. Country-level capacity for effective and efficient vaccination and testing should be strengthened and local manufacturing and delivery capabilities developed and scaled up.

Universal health coverage (UHC): The ECOSOC system should support countries efforts to strengthen their health systems towards implementing the 2019 Political declaration of the UN General Assembly high-level meeting on universal health coverage and WHO recommendations on UHC, maternal and child health care services.

Social protection systems: The ECOSOC system should support countries efforts to develop or strengthen nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including social protection floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. This is an essential part of the new social contract, anchored in human rights, between Governments and their people and within societies called for by the Secretary-General in his report on Our Common Agenda.

Food systems: Transforming the food systems aligned with the 2030 Agenda can play an essential role in driving the global recovery. Global integrated food systems and adequate farming technologies must be pursued to reduce poverty and hunger, deliver affordable, healthy diets for all, and protect the planet.

Biodiversity and climate change: Urgent and more ambitious action is needed to reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, climate change and pollution, with integrated ecosystem-based approaches, nature-based solutions and sustainable consumption and production, thereby also addressing crimes that affect the environment.

Inclusive growth: The ECOSOC system should support countries' efforts to pursue growth paths which prioritize employment creation and promote a decoupling of growth from environmental degradation. Recovery efforts should support the three dimensions of sustainable development, create decent jobs and support sectors most at risk. Decoupling growth from environmental degradation will require changing consumption and production patterns. These actions will also advance progress towards the biodiversity-related targets.

Women's empowerment: Transformational change requires women's empowerment, through meaningful participation and leadership in decision-making, in the economy, and in recovery efforts, equal pay for work of equal value, equal access to land and natural resources and eliminating discrimination and violence against women. Further progress should also be made in the adoption and implementation of national action plans to achieve gender parity by 2030.

Effective, accountable and transparent institutions: Recovery efforts must be guided by effective governance, particularly in service delivery and the management of public finances. This also entails addressing corruption, tax evasion, and illicit financial flows, which divert funds from the treasury and undermine the provision of essential public services and people's trust in their institutions.

Science-policy interface and the need for evidence-based policies: The ECOSOC system should help countries strengthen research and development efforts, scale up the application of STI solutions, promote technology transfer and diffusion, and capacity building while countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes. Digital transformation requires building sufficient infrastructure, and access to digital technologies and skills, particularly in LDCs and other vulnerable countries. Investing in timely, reliable and disaggregated data and statistics, as well as geospatial information, is critical to monitor the pandemic and to respond to it through evidence-based approaches





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Stronger focus on the most vulnerable groups: The Council could provide further guidance on how to operationalize the leave no one behind principle building on the existing efforts by the UN Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) and UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and taking into account the assessments of all subsidiary bodies, including the Committee on ESCR.

STRENGTHENING IMPACT OF THE WORK OF ECOSOC, ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES, THE HLPF AND THE UN SYSTEM

In recent years, the ECOSOC system has largely aligned its work to the theme of the Council, while respecting individual mandates, and increased horizontal collaboration. Areas for strengthening ECOSOC system's contribution to the work of the Council and the HLPF, and their impact towards the 2030 Agenda include:

More systematic integration between the review process led by the HLPF, including through the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), and the policy and normative work by the ECOSOC system: Inputs of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and UN system should be taken into account in the deliberations on the draft ECOSOC/HLPF Ministerial Declaration. In addition, subsidiary bodies could review the latest Ministerial Declaration when preparing their outcomes and agendas, to include the most relevant elements. The follow-up to the Ministerial Declaration by the UN system could be incorporated into strategic plans and documents for discussion at the Executive Boards.

Interlinkages: The Council could identify key interlinkages across the SDGs to be considered for follow up by subsidiary bodies and UN system entities. Guidance could also be provided by ECOSOC on key interlinkages among the SDGs under review, inviting relevant bodies and UN system entities to come together for joint follow-up, for example at the Coordination Segment.

Gender equality: The in-depth review of SDG5 in 2022 is an opportunity for all subsidiary bodies and UN system entities to address the gender dimensions of the SDGs in their work. Consistent efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies as well as in the policies and programmes of the UN system, building on existing plans, tools and initiatives, would be a key contribution to creating greater policy coherence.

Climate action: Within their respective mandates, the subsidiary bodies could collaborate on how COVID-19 recovery efforts must be aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals of the Paris Agreement to "build forward better".

Countries in special situations: A more systematic mainstreaming of a focus on countries in special situations by subsidiary bodies would help to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is implemented everywhere.

ECOSOC/HLPF Themes: The **early decision** by the General Assembly on the annual theme for the ECOSOC/HLPF sessions, as well as the Goals to be reviewed by the Forum in 2024, as decided by the GA in its June resolution, would facilitate further alignment by ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, as well as their contribution to the Ministerial Declaration.

UN System: The Council could provide guidance to scale up and accelerate efforts by the UN system to systematically integrate the vision and principles of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs throughout its strategic plans, work programmes, and activities and to ensure that their support to Member States in the recovery from the pandemic are aligned with the SDGs and accelerate their implementation. UN system specialized agencies, including independent specialized agencies, and other UN entities could:





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- be invited to address in greater depth the issues mentioned above
- identify interlinkages between the SDGs and strengthen cooperation in those areas where the linkages are strongest
- further analyze policies that aim to respond to COVID-19 while advancing the SDGs, and develop policy guidance based on lessons learned and approaches that delivered good results
- follow-up and implement the recommendations directed to the UN system in the 2021 Ministerial Declaration of ECOSOC and the HLPF, along with other recommendations, and provide information on their respective follow-up actions through the note of the Secretary-General to the 2023 coordination segment
- review the lessons from the HLPF voluntary national reviews and thematic reviews and take them into account in developing their policy recommendations, programmes, plans and activities
- elaborate policies and actions that can contribute to the elaboration of a possible global vaccine plan, as proposed by the Secretary-General in Our Common Agenda
- Specialized agencies, through their collaboration with various sectoral ministries, could be encouraged to help countries take a more coordinated and integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, building on the General Assembly guidance on UN development system operational activities.

CONCLUSION

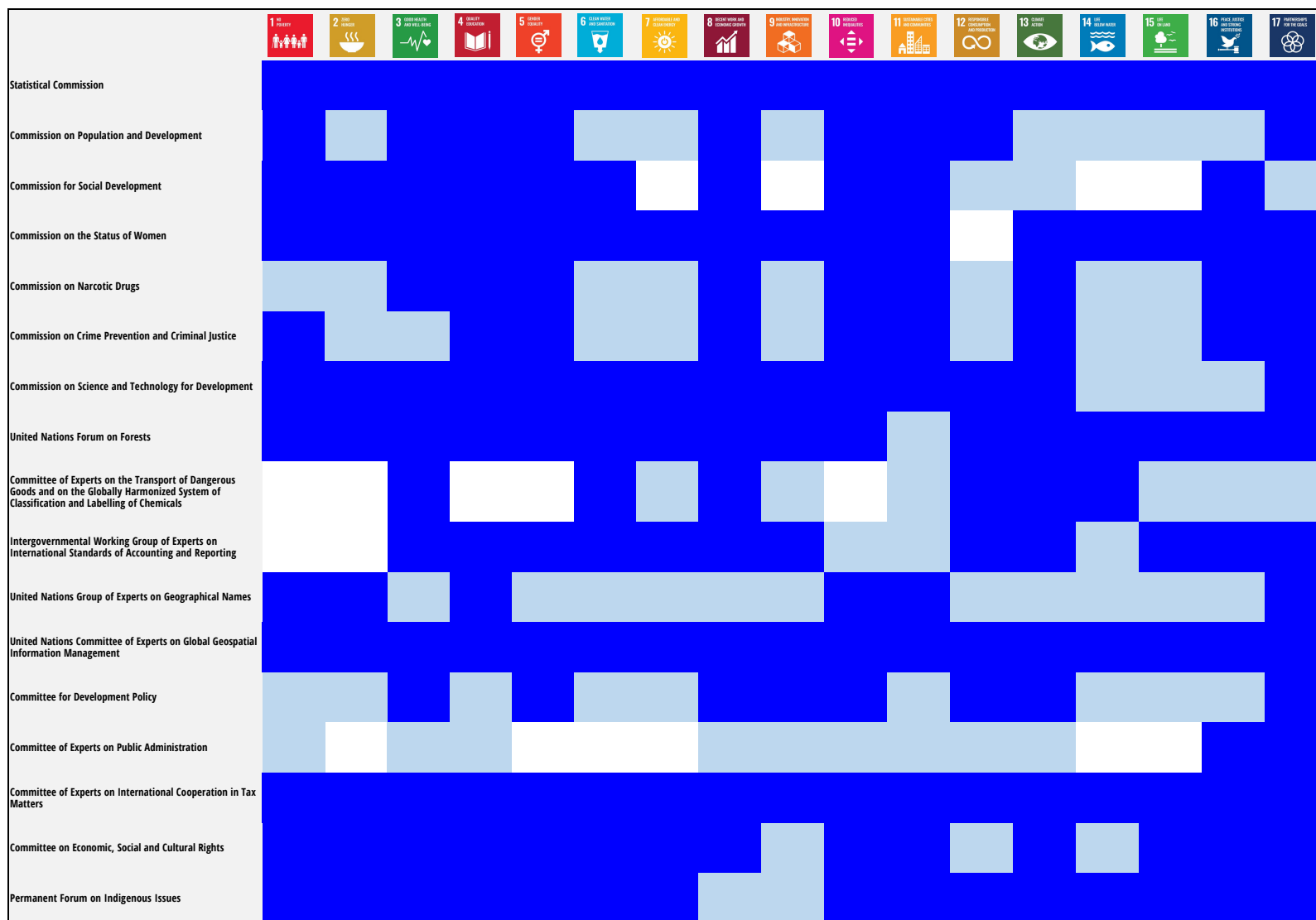
Member States are invited to consider focusing on the above recommendations at the coordination segment, so that their feedback and guidance can be reflected in the summary by the ECOSOC President and conveyed to all stakeholders for follow-up during their 2022 sessions and activities and subsequently.

Discussion Questions for Member States' consideration:

- What are priority areas for a sustainable recovery and accelerated implementation of the SDGs where ECOSOC functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies can add value?
 - What are the opportunities for better collaboration among the subsidiary bodies and between the subsidiary bodies and UN system entities?
 - How can the UN system, including specialized agencies, ensure that their support to Member States in recovery from the pandemic are aligned with the SDGs and accelerate their implementation? What are areas for enhanced coordination?
 - How can the Council strengthen the impact of the work of ECOSOC functional commissions, expert bodies and regional commissions on its various segments and forums as well as on the HLPF?
 - What are some key interlinkages among the SDGs under review in 2022 and 2023, that ECOSOC subsidiary bodies could explore and further analyze jointly?
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MAPPING OF THE WORK OF ECOSOC FUNCTIONAL COMMISSIONS AND EXPERT BODIES AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Legend:
 Direct/frequent support
 Indirect/less frequent support and/or addressed through interlinkages
 The subsidiary body does not address this SDG

This mapping exercise is available on the [ECOSOC subsidiary bodies website](#) and on the [2022 Coordination Segment website](#).