

# THE NGO WORLD



20<sup>th</sup> Edition

## DIHAD

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THEME

DIHAD 2004-2024

Humanitarian Diplomacy and a Journey to the Future

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# From Crisis to Catalyst: NGO-Led Resilience Building

In an era defined by unprecedented challenges, the concept of resilience has emerged as a beacon of hope and necessity. Nowhere is this more evident than in the vital work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide.

As we delve into the theme of “Building Resilient Communities,” we recognize the indispensable role NGOs play in empowering societies to weather storms, both literal and metaphorical. Resilient communities are not merely those that endure adversity; they are those that bounce back stronger, more united, and better prepared for the future. NGOs, with their grassroots presence, nimble structures, and unwavering commitment to social justice, are uniquely positioned to catalyze this transformation.

At the heart of building resilient communities lies a deep understanding of local contexts and needs. NGOs, with their emphasis on community-driven solutions, prioritize the voices of those most affected by adversity. Whether responding to natural disasters, economic downturns, or systemic injustices, NGOs work alongside communities to identify vulnerabilities, mobilize resources, and implement sustainable interventions.

Yet, resilience is not solely about withstanding crises; it is about fostering a culture of preparedness

and adaptation. NGOs engage in capacity-building initiatives, equipping communities with the tools and knowledge to anticipate and mitigate risks. They promote environmental conservation, economic diversification, and social cohesion, laying the foundation for long-term resilience.

Moreover, building resilient communities necessitates collaboration across sectors and stakeholders. NGOs forge partnerships with governments, businesses, academia, and local organizations, recognizing that collective action yields greater impact. By harnessing the collective wisdom and resources of diverse actors, NGOs create ecosystems of resilience that transcend individual efforts.

As we confront the myriad challenges of our time – from climate change to global health crises to socioeconomic inequalities – the imperative to build resilient communities has never been clearer. Through their dedication, innovation, and solidarity, NGOs are not only agents of change but architects of a more resilient and equitable world.

Warm regards,

**Zafar Iqbal**  
Editor-in-Chief, The NGO World

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# Forming A Public-Private Partnership To Scale Your Nonprofit's Mission



Rita Soronen

Public-private partnerships can help nonprofits rapidly grow a program, attract added resources and expand into new areas. Such partnerships have been critical in helping us at the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption scale our Wendy's Wonderful Kids® program. This program finds safe, permanent homes for children lingering in foster care across the United States. To date, public-private partnerships have helped the Foundation scale in 18 states and gain a foothold in the remaining 32 states and the District of Columbia.

To maximize benefits and ensure the longevity of the arrangement, nonprofit leaders

must take care to approach such partnerships strategically.

## Is A Public-Private Partnership Right For Your Nonprofit?

First, a nonprofit's executive team must determine the goals of establishing a financial and programmatic partnership with a government entity. There are two primary reasons nonprofits consider this strategy. The first is to help secure resources at the scale necessary to sustain and expand programmatic work. The second concerns the nature of a nonprofit's work, which may require deep involvement with government actors and agencies that make the case for the partnership.

Philanthropy often provides nonprofits with crucial resources, particularly during the startup and early phases of an organization's life cycle. Public and private foundations can be crucial partners in supporting a nonprofit's work as an organization grows and expands. However, it can be difficult for philanthropic entities to provide resources at the level necessary to

vastly scale a nonprofit's program and enter new regions. Government partners, on the other hand, can often tap into sizable resources to support this effort.

The nature of a nonprofit's work may help determine whether a public-private partnership is feasible. We work closely with state government entities across the country that oversee child welfare systems. Forming innovative co-investment partnerships with state governments has been a successful approach to implement and sustain Wendy's Wonderful Kids. The incentive for these partnerships is twofold: States are supported to deliver mandated services with efficiency, added resources and accountability, and states can realize substantial returns on investment through engagement in the partnership.

## Steps Before Entering Into A Public-Private Partnership

Even when the motivations for forming a public-private

partnership are clear, nonprofits must still undergo the necessary steps before proposing such an arrangement.

- **Step 1: Invest in data collection and evaluation.** A nonprofit's leadership team must be able to make the case to government leaders that a collaboration is worthy of a partnership. One of the ways we made this case was through a rigorous, five-year evaluation of the program with an external research partner that showed a significant impact. Additionally, as a program expands, ongoing assessment and studies should continue to share evidence of impact and reinforce how such partnerships can amplify positive outcomes.
- **Step 2: Identify the need and the gap.** A nonprofit should spend time researching areas where its program can be most useful in helping meet local needs, where additional resources are critical to serve populations in need and where there is an appetite in the public sector to engage in unique partnerships.
- **Step 3: Identify the decision-makers.** Next, nonprofits should identify the stakeholders within the governmental structure of the region or state that can make decisions regarding public-private partnerships, such as a county commissioner, agency lead or elected official. If
- **Step 4: Discuss a pilot program.** Particularly in the initial stages of scaling a program, nonprofits should test the effectiveness of their work within a new area. A nonprofit may choose to pilot a program based on a combination of factors, such as areas with the greatest need of services, preexisting relationships and opportunities to secure additional funding. With thoughtful reflection on lessons learned and a successful pilot, nonprofits and governments can discuss allocating additional funding to the program. For example, our foundation began piloting Wendy's Wonderful Kids across seven cities in 2004. After data confirmed the successful implementation, there was support for a phased approach to expanding the program across all 50 states.
- **Step 5: Consult those with lived experience.** Regardless of the issue at the center of a proposed public-private partnership, program managers should actively work to engage the perspectives of those with lived experience. People

these individuals are not already known, a nonprofit should look within its existing network of relationships to help identify these decision-makers. It is often useful to pull together a group of stakeholders for advice and input or to engage an existing consortium that can help with influence conversations.

who would or have benefited from a nonprofit's program can help make important improvements or provide critical insights into local conditions, contexts and needs.

- **Step 6: Determine the level of a nonprofit's ongoing involvement.** Once a public-private partnership is formed, and a program is embedded programmatically and financially, a nonprofit may begin lessening its day-to-day involvement. However, a nonprofit will likely need to remain connected to assess the impact of any changes on sustainability, such as leadership transitions within the state or agency, or to simply assure ongoing program fidelity.

Public-private partnerships offer nonprofits a valuable opportunity to broaden and amplify their programmatic efforts. However, it is crucial to approach collaboration with care. But after conducting the proper research, documentation, evaluation and relationship-building, nonprofits can and should look to such partnerships as an effective strategy to advance their mission and better serve those in need.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2024/04/22/forming-a-public-private-partnership-to-scale-your-nonprofits-mission/?sh=9bf60a85beaa>

# Nonprofit Social Media: 5 Ways to Promote Your Cause



Clark Boyd

**N**onprofit social media is highly competitive, but it can be rewarding, too. Read on to learn about five ways you can use social media to grow your nonprofit's audience.

Social media management is a fundamental marketing component for nonprofits. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can reach new supporters and raise awareness of your cause.

But it's harder than ever to cut through without spending huge amounts of money on social media content promotion.

The five ideas below are creative, cost-effective ways that you can harness social media's full potential to your nonprofit's advantage.

The 5 ways nonprofits can use social media to promote their causes and grow a following:

- Tell stories
- Make the most of emojis
- Hijack hashtags
- Give back to your audience
- Follow the news cycle

## 1. Tell stories

People can't get enough of stories. A skillfully constructed narrative keeps people's attention, whether on a cinema screen or a smartphone screen. In particular, people love a

good human interest story. Most companies know this. The problem is you need compelling material to make an engaging story.

Nonprofits have an innate advantage here. Their work affects people's lives, and these interactions are significant and important. Social media networks now provide more tools to help create narratives.

The Stories ad format on Instagram and Facebook is designed for this purpose, as the name suggests. Research has found that Instagram images containing faces attract 38% more engagement from followers than images without a face.



Charity: Water does an excellent job of curating their Instagram feed, with many striking visuals featuring people.

They also post videos on their IGTV channel, a popular way to connect with followers today.

You can create videos for a much lower cost than ever before, and it doesn't need to involve a large production team. What people crave more than anything is a sense of

social connection, which you can achieve using a smartphone camera.

Speak to people who have been affected by your work and develop this insight into a social media campaign.

## 2. Make the most of emojis

Emojis have become the universal language of the internet. Each of the individual characters has the potential to go viral. The World Wildlife Fund used this knowledge to great effect in its #EndangeredEmoji Twitter campaign in 2015.

They promoted 17 emojis of endangered animals and asked their followers to tweet them. For each tweet, the user automatically donated a small amount of money to the charity.

Over 59,000 people signed up to donate, and the campaign hashtag was tweeted over 500,000 times in the first month of the campaign.

This is a creative way to raise awareness and donations. It makes the audience feel like they are part of the campaign, plus they can choose their favorite emoji to post.

Nonprofits should take time to prepare standalone campaigns like this one alongside their usual social media content calendar schedule.

The WWF took the existing popularity of emojis and tied this to their own fundraising efforts. If you are abreast of the latest social media trends, your nonprofit should be able to pick up on similar ideas.

Use social media scheduling



tools with advanced features like social listening to identify new conversations, shares, and purchasing behaviors. This will ensure that you can turn increased attention into increased donations.

## 3. Hijack hashtags

It takes a long time to grow an audience on social media. You need to post consistent, quality content for months before you start to gain traction. There are very few shortcuts.

You can still be clever in how you engage with trending hashtags, however. One nonprofit, WATERisLIFE, decided to turn the #FirstWorldProblems trend on its head.

Typically, this hashtag tells of people in richer countries who can't find a good movie to watch on Netflix, or who can't quite heat their pool to the right temperature.

There is a knowing sense of self-deprecation in these posts, but WATERisLIFE felt they clouded an important message. In response, they developed what has been one of the most successful Facebook nonprofit campaigns to date.

WATERisLIFE took real social media posts and had their staff at an orphanage in Haiti read them, then respond with their own problems.

Naturally, this brought some perspective to first world

problems. As WATERisLIFE CEO Ken Surritte noted, "A third of the world needs water." Proceeds from the campaign helped to drill six new wells and build a water treatment plant, too.

This provides a lesson for other nonprofit social media strategy managers. You can take a popular trend and steer the conversation in a different direction.

## 4. Give back to your audience

Nonprofit organizations rightly use social media to ask for donations, but they also need to give back to their followers. Some of these followers may already have received support from the organization.

For example, Planned Parenthood posts frequently on Instagram about its stance on issues such as universal health care. It directly addresses its audience and makes clear how followers can receive the support they need.

You can give back to your audience in other ways.

Try running contests that ask followers to like and share your posts for a chance to win. You can incorporate a quiz about your nonprofit's area of focus to keep it relevant to the organization. This is a tried and tested social



media campaign for nonprofits that increases followers and engagement.

## 5. Follow the news cycle

Social media is the ideal platform for instant reaction to news headlines. As stories break, interest surges, which can be used to your nonprofit's advantage. Monitor your industry's news closely by setting up alerts. You can do this within any free social media scheduler.

You should also prepare your own resources within your social media marketing plan, so you can link back to your content when relevant stories arise. This ensures that you are channelling the audience's attention back to your cause.

It's important to engage with your followers when they react to your posts. You can use Facebook's Messenger for Business tool to keep the conversation going, once interest in the initial story subsides.

This social media strategy helps turn your fans into social media ambassadors.

## In summary: Social media for nonprofits

There are numerous benefits of social media for nonprofit organizations. You can attract new followers, educate people about your cause, and raise donations.

In a competitive market, you need to have clear ideas on how you will use [social media management tools](#) to your advantage. Everyone is on social media, so how will you stand out?

The five ideas we've discussed in this article should give you plenty of food for thought.

Source: <https://www.fool.com/the-ascent/small-business/social-media/nonprofit-social-media/>

# Breaking into new donors for small and medium-sized NGOs

In the ever-evolving landscape of non-profit organisations (NGOs), securing donor funding is crucial for sustainability and growth.

While attracting and retaining donors may seem like a daunting task, it is essential for the success of any grant-seeking organisation. Here, we delve into the importance of breaking into new donors and offer advice on how small and medium-sized NGOs can navigate this process effectively.

MzN's research spanning from 2016 to 2021 sheds light on the significant correlation between attracting new institutional donors and income growth. Organisations that successfully attract at least two new donors annually experience nearly twice the income growth compared to those that don't. This highlights a fundamental truth: NGOs that actively seek out new donors tend to be more innovative, communicative, and financially successful.

One key characteristic of financially attractive NGOs is their outward focus. These organisations maintain consistent communication with donors, working groups, the public, and other stakeholders. By prioritising engagement activities and fostering meaningful connections, they cultivate a supportive network that contributes to their growth and sustainability.

Another element to note is that successful NGOs optimise their efficiency by strategically allocating resources. They streamline business development processes by outsourcing or digitising tasks that can be handled externally or automated. This includes activities

such as bidding opportunity identification, concept note creation and proposal development. By freeing up valuable time and energy, organisations can focus on activities that drive engagement and impact, such as research, advocacy campaigns, and participation in relevant forums and conferences.

In today's competitive landscape, breaking into new donors requires a proactive and strategic approach. Small and medium-sized NGOs must embrace innovation and professionalism in their fundraising efforts to stand out and attract potential supporters. Here are some proven techniques to help NGOs navigate the process of expanding their donor base:

## Strategic Networking

Building and nurturing relationships with potential donors is essential. Find out which in-person conferences your preferred donors will be attending and meet them there. The same goes for online engagements. Leverage existing connections to meet new donors and expand your network.

Engaging with donors before the call for proposals goes out is a strategic move that boosts your chances of selection. Early

communication demonstrates your commitment and allows you to tailor your proposal to their interests.

## Research and Analysis

Stay informed about donor trends, funding opportunities, and emerging priorities. Conduct thorough research to identify potential donors aligned with your organisation's mission and values.

## Diversified Fundraising Strategies

Explore innovative approaches to fundraising beyond traditional grant funding. Learn how to develop compelling pitches to attract investment from individuals, corporations, and other potential donors. By diversifying your funding sources, you can reduce dependency on grants and create a more sustainable financial model for your organization.

## Create and maximize cost recovery options to boost funding use

Explore strategies for generating unrestricted funding to support your organization's operations and programs. By maximizing cost recovery options, you can increase your organization's financial flexibility and enhance its ability to achieve its mission.

In our [upcoming webinar on 22 April](#), we will delve deeper into these strategies and provide insights into upcoming funding opportunities from major donors such as USAID, the EU, GIZ, and others for the remainder of 2024. By adopting proactive approaches and leveraging available resources, small and medium-sized NGOs can position themselves for future growth and impact in the NGO sector.

As non-profit leaders in organisational development, strategy, and change, embracing innovation and adaptability in donor engagement efforts is vital.

Together, we can navigate the challenges and opportunities of breaking into new donors.

Source: <https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2024/04/breaking-into-new-donors-for-small-and-medium-sized-ngos/>



# Study: With Donor-Advised Funds, Unexpected Giving Leads Donors to Expand Their Philanthropy

Vanguard Charitable, a nonprofit and sponsor of donor-advised funds (DAFs), released a new edition of Why Giving Matters: Responsive granting with donor-advised funds spurs greater total giving. The report includes more than a decade's worth of insight into donor giving from over 32,000 Vanguard Charitable DAF accounts as well as donor survey responses on giving sentiment and behavior. The study reveals a continued increase in support from all Vanguard Charitable donors, specifically around long-term, expected giving and responsive, unexpected giving. Results suggest donors' unanticipated, responsive giving to events like natural disasters and humanitarian crises also causes their expected giving to increase as well, resulting in a boost to their total giving.

Vanguard Charitable donors who use their Vanguard Charitable DAF for unexpected grants gave 39% more than those who use their DAF only for expected, ongoing giving. The research indicates that a donor's unexpected granting also encourages more expected granting, with a 24% increase in prioritized, ongoing giving from their Vanguard Charitable DAF.

"It's so inspiring to see our donors' generosity in supporting the causes and charities they care about most," said Rebecca Moffett, president of Vanguard Charitable. "This year's Why Giving Matters

report underscores the essential role DAFs play in facilitating not only long-term planned giving, but unexpected giving as well. That flexibility, combined with our quality investments and low-fee structure, enables more dollars to go to nonprofits in need."

The report details how by using a DAF, Vanguard Charitable donors can be agile in the way they fulfill their philanthropic goals. Expected giving serves as the true lifeblood for nonprofits. In diversifying to include unexpected giving, donors can provide resources to respond quickly and efficiently during emergent events. The result of this multi-faceted approach is an increase in both giving types and total giving overall.

"There are always core charities we give to but enough is left over to be flexible with unexpected needs," said one Vanguard Charitable donor. "If something doesn't pop up, we just give a bit more to our regular charities."

## Additional Survey Findings

More than three-quarters of individuals who give unexpectedly say their unexpected giving increases their total giving, rather than displacing the giving they'd already planned to do.

46% of nonprofits receiving an unexpected grant from Vanguard Charitable receive a second grant

from the same donor in the future.

Over 72% of donors identified two or more types of events as inspiring their unexpected giving, suggesting donors respond to a variety of prompts for giving.

Over the last ten years, Vanguard Charitable donors' expected giving has grown 17% per year, while unexpected giving has grown 24% per year.

"At World Central Kitchen, we cherish the invaluable contributions of both our expected and unexpected donors. Expected giving is the backbone to sustaining our ongoing operations and enables WCK to respond with the 'urgency of now' in the wake of a disaster," Tunde Wackman, Chief Development Officer, World Central Kitchen. "In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or humanitarian emergencies, unexpected giving becomes a lifeline for our ability to scale activations, providing immediate relief and support where it is needed most. Together, these forms of giving form a dynamic synergy that fuels our mission, enabling us to deliver nourishment, comfort, and hope to communities facing hardships."

To access the exclusive Why Giving Matters 2024 report and learn more about effective philanthropy, donor-advised funds, and how to maximize your charitable impact, [click here](#).



## Breather for charitable trusts, NGOs as CBDT again extends deadline for registration and renewal

**Previously, CBDT had extended the deadline for filing Form 10A/ Form 10AB multiple times. Earlier the last date for filing the form was extended to September 30, 2023.**

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has again extended the deadline for filing Form 10A/ Form 10AB under the Income-tax Act, 1961, to June 30, 2024, the government announced on April 25. The extension aims to facilitate smoother compliance procedures.

Form 10A is used during the initial registration or approval of a trust, institution, or NGO, while Form 10AB is necessary for subsequent renewals.

Previously, the CBDT had extended the deadline for filing Form 10A/ Form 10AB multiple times. Earlier, the last date for filing the form was

extended to September 30, 2023.

The CBDT's decision comes after the government received representations from various quarters, urging for more time beyond the last extended deadline. The extension applies to certain provisions of Section 10(23C), Section 12A, Section 80G, and Section 35 of the Act.

The existing trusts, institutions, or funds, which failed to file Form 10A for assessment year (AY) 2022-23 within the previously extended due date, and later applied for provisional registration as a new entity and received Form 10AC, can now surrender the Form 10AC

and apply for registration for AY 2022-23 as an existing entity in Form 10A until 30th June 2024, the government clarified.

Also, trusts, institutions, or funds whose re-registration applications were rejected solely due to late filing or filing under the wrong section code, may submit fresh applications in Form 10AB within the extended deadline of June 30, 2024.

The applications as per Form 10A/ Form 10AB must be filed electronically through the e-filing portal of the Income Tax Department.



## Dubai Charity Association

The Dubai Charity Association signed a cooperation agreement with the DB World Charitable Foundation, to achieve more humanitarian partnership between them on the local scene, enhance aspects of work and coordination together to achieve the goals and objectives that serve their programs, adopt joint initiatives and unify efforts to serve the community, in addition to exchanging Experience, information, and work to develop a work strategy that enables them to spread their humanitarian and development goals and activities.

The agreement was signed by His Excellency Ahmed Al Suwaidi, Executive Director of the Dubai Charity Association, and by His Excellency Latifa Al Qamzi, Director General of the Dubai Charity Foundation, and from the Dubai Charity Foundation. The signing came on the sidelines of Dubai Charity's participation in the

activities of the twentieth session of the Dubai Charity Foundation. Dubai International Relief and Development Exhibition and Conference DIHAD 2024, in the presence of a number of directors and officials from both parties.

His Excellency Ahmed Al Suwaidi expressed his welcome to the partnership with DB World Charitable Foundation, appreciating its role in promoting humanitarian values and initiatives, and stressing Dubai Charity's keenness to expand its partnerships as it is one of the main pillars on which its strategy and institutional values are based, noting that these agreements activate charitable work. And development, and represents an advanced step in cooperation between Emirati charitable institutions, through joint projects and integrated programs that meet their humanitarian aspirations.

The Executive Director of the Dubai Charitable Society added: "This

agreement, which is considered a qualitative leap in the level of humanitarian partnership between the Foundation and the Society, seeks to improve and develop programs, projects and services related to the target groups, and for both parties to share knowledge, experiences, advice and best practices related to their field of work in charitable and humanitarian work. In accordance with the authentic approach established by the late founding father Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, may God rest his soul, and supported by the sound vision of our wise leadership, which made the UAE a global model to be emulated in the field of humanitarian and volunteer work, and established its image abroad as a symbol of humanitarian giving.

Source: [https://web.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=844776881014588&id=100064468519374&mibextid=xfxF2i&rdid=w\\_k2NIVBMOvPfvf4r](https://web.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=844776881014588&id=100064468519374&mibextid=xfxF2i&rdid=w_k2NIVBMOvPfvf4r)

# Avaada Foundation Honored with 'Best NGO of the Year in Education Sector 2024' Award

**Avaada Foundation's Rural Integrated Education Program operates in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, and Uttarakhand, Haryana, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, impacting numerous lives through its holistic approach to education.**

Avaada Foundation, the social development arm of Avaada Group, has been honored with the prestigious 'Best NGO of the Year in Education Sector 2024' award at the 10th CSR Summit & Awards held in Mumbai. This esteemed recognition celebrates the impactful work of Avaada Foundation's Rural Integrated Education Program (RIEP), aimed at providing quality education to rural communities across India.

The award was presented in the presence of eminent dignitaries and industry leaders, acknowledging Avaada Foundation's commitment to fostering a rich learning environment and empowering students in rural areas.



the Foundation ensures that its interventions are tailored to address the specific needs of communities. For instance, The Rural Integrated Education Program focuses on innovative teaching methodologies, including the 'Mind Opening Technique' for interactive education. This initiative aims to provide students in rural areas with a holistic learning experience, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and lifelong learning skills.

### About Avaada Foundation

The Avaada Foundation is dedicated to social development work across India, focusing on the four pillars of foundation that is the Education, Empowerment, Environment, and Health (Triple E and H). The goal is to uplift marginalized communities and empower society by providing quality education, ensuring access to adequate healthcare, providing skill-based training & capacity building opportunities, and actively working towards environmental protection.

Source: <https://www.pv-magazine-india.com/press-releases/avaada-foundation-honored-with-best-ngo-of-the-year-in-education-sector-2024-award/>

**Avaada Foundation's Rural Integrated Education Program operates in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, and Uttarakhand, Haryana, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, impacting numerous lives through its holistic approach to education.**

Speaking about the award, Mr. Vineet Mittal, Chairman, Avaada Group, expressed gratitude for the recognition and emphasized the organization's dedication to uplifting society and empowering marginalized communities through quality education and healthcare initiatives.

At Avaada Foundation, every initiative is meticulously designed after thorough stakeholder engagement and needs-based assessments. By deploying the Theory of Change methodology,



## Managing Director of SWT, Engages in Humanitarian Diplomacy at DIHAD Conference

**M**ohamed Mubassir, the Managing Director of Sadaqa Welfare Trust (SWT), recently participated in the 20th edition of the Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference and Exhibition (DIHAD) held at the World Trade Centre from April 23 to 25, 2024.

DIHAD stands as a pioneering platform dedicated to fostering innovation and sustainability in the humanitarian sector. Mubassir, representing SWT, seized the opportunity to showcase the trust's achievements, latest projects, and the humanitarian and charitable services provided to beneficiaries in Sri Lanka.

This participation underscores SWT's commitment to enhancing cooperation with organizations, associations, and institutions dedicated to addressing the needs of those affected by crises and disasters. By engaging in such

forums, SWT aims to exchange knowledge and stay abreast of the latest developments and innovations in the humanitarian, relief, and development fields.

Mubassir's presence at DIHAD exemplifies the spirit of humanitarian diplomacy and signifies SWT's proactive stance in shaping the future of humanitarian

efforts. Together with like-minded partners, SWT remains steadfast in its mission to create a more resilient and equitable world for all.

For further information about Sadaqa Welfare Trust and its humanitarian initiatives, visit SWT's website. <https://www.sadaqawelfaretrust.org>



## Building Bridges for Social Good: SWT's Mubashir and The NGO World's Iqbal Forge Partnership

**D**uring the DIHAD Conference, Managing Director Mohammed Mubashir of Sadaqa Welfare Trust (SWT) had a productive meeting with Mr. Zafar Iqbal, the founder of The NGO World. They engaged in discussions regarding mutual understanding and potential collaborations for social good. Both leaders expressed enthusiasm about the prospect of joining forces to address pressing

social issues and enhance the impact of their respective organizations. The meeting was marked by a shared commitment to leveraging resources and expertise to create positive change in communities in need. It laid the foundation for future collaboration aimed at fostering sustainable development and humanitarian assistance.

## The Heartwarming Story of Sadaqa Welfare Trust: Led by SHM Mubassir Managing Director of SWT

**S**adaqa Welfare Trust (SWT) is a shining example of kindness and determination, thanks to Managing Director SHM Mubassir's inspiring leadership. When tough times hit Sri Lanka, Mubassir didn't hesitate to start SWT, showing his commitment to helping others.

SWT's reach goes far and wide, teaming up with organizations in different countries like Australia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and Germany. Together, they've made a big difference in Sri Lanka and beyond.

SWT has done amazing things, like providing water connections, giving out food packs during Ramadan, and helping with school supplies. They've also helped with healthcare, performing surgeries and other medical procedures for those in need.

Mubassir's dedication has been the driving force behind SWT's success. His leadership has made SWT a beacon of hope for many. Let's keep supporting SWT's mission to make the world a better place for everyone.





## JICA has fostered JJ partnership



Kawasaki Mitsuyoshi

Through Blue Mountain Coffee, Reggae icon Bob Marley and Athlete Usain Bolt, Jamaica, a small country located in the Caribbean, is known to the world. On the other hand, the unstable security situation, which is represented by the number of homicide victims per 100,000 people – more than 20 victims per year since 1990 (the number of victims during 2019-2021 were the largest in the world) has cast a dark shadow over the country's growth. In 2024, celebrating Japan CARICOM Friendship Year 2024, and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Jamaica, I will look back on JICA's cooperation history to date and look ahead to a new

JJ partnership (efforts to further solidify the bond between the two countries through bilateral cooperation).

### Cultural exchanges that are essential for dealing with Jamaica

Mr. Daichi HIRATA, one of the leaders of Okinawan culture, said, "Culture is not a snack, but a staple food," but in Jamaica, it is precisely a staple food through music and dance. The people of Jamaica have inherited the spirit of freedom, self-reliance, and sovereign from their ancestors who won liberation from slavery (1838) and independence from the British colony (1962), and it seems that men and women of all ages are enjoying their lives despite serious issues such as security problems and economic disparity. In 2015, Japan assisted Jamaica with a grant aid for "the project for the improvement of the exhibition and audiovisual equipment of the Institute of Jamaica". Today, visitors

to the institution such as children and tourists are sure to pass on the country's cultural heritage. In addition, "Reggae Bon Bon" (a fusion of reggae music and Bon Odori), which was announced in 2022 as JICA's original official content for the 60th anniversary, has been performed on various occasions in Tokyo and Kingston in 2024, coloring the present and future of the JJ partnership. In the fall of 2024, we will hold a "JICA Day" in collaboration with the JICA Alumni Association in Jamaica (JAAJ), with the aim of deepening cultural exchanges between the two countries, including Reggae Bon Bon.

### Blue Mountain Coffee cultivation-Contribution of Japan's public and private sectors

The largest export market for Blue Mountain Coffee is Japan, accounting for about 70% of all exports, and this is owing to

the public-private partnership efforts between UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. and the Japanese government (JICA), such as the "Basic Survey and Development Plan Survey" for Jamaican coffee cultivation conducted by JICA from 1981 to 1982, the "Blue Mountain Coffee Development Pilot Project" from 1983 onwards with JICA development financing, and also the Blue Mountain Coffee Development Project (Yen Loan: 5.941 billion yen, loan agreement signed in April 1984, loan completed in April 1997). Thanks in part to these efforts, the establishment of cultivation techniques and the development of core infrastructure facilities and equipment, such as the renovation of refining plants, have progressed, and it is leading to the establishment and maintenance of the quality of this coffee, which has long been highly regarded by coffee lovers around the world.

"Allow me," is the message of Mr. William, who works for the refinery of Jamaica UCC Blue Mountain Coffee Company Ltd.. The cooperation between JICA and the local company established by UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. in March 1982 has also made a pioneering contribution to the creation of an inclusive society by employing people with intellectual disabilities in around 2012. In December 2023, at the "Employment EXPO 2023" held in Kingston, I received the following message from Mr. William: "Even if you have a disability, you can work if you have the opportunity to make the most of your characteristics". In fact, in 2012, JICA volunteer was assigned to the Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) where Mr. William learned, and acted as a catalyst between JAID and the company, which led to the realization of social participation of people with disabilities.

Source: [https://www.jica.go.jp/english/information/blog/1535092\\_24156.html](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/information/blog/1535092_24156.html)

### The importance of showing Japan's face in development cooperation

A government official who is well aware of Japan's cooperation to Jamaica expressed her gratitude to me for JICA's water supply improvement project. Yen Loan, "The Kingston Metropolitan Area Water Supply Improvement Project" (6.644 billion yen, loan agreement signed in July 1996 and loan completed in May 2010), which contributed to the stable supply of water in the metropolitan area, and Technical Cooperation(T/C), "Capacity Building of Water Maintenance(March 2007-November 2010)" were collaboratively extended. Through the T/C, human resource development and management systems were strengthened in terms of the operation, maintenance, and management of the implementing agency (National Water Commission). When looking back on the achievements of Japan's development cooperation to Jamaica, there are surprisingly few technical cooperation projects, and I believe that the collaboration of Loan and T/C, which has received high praise for its "visible face of Japan" in terms of both funding and technology, will serve as a reference model for strengthening the JJ partnership in development cooperation in the future.

### A new challenge that will lead to the promotion of JJ exchanges

Since 1989, approximately 500 JICA volunteers have been dispatched to Jamaica, and security issues have been a major risk since then, so safety measures have become a top priority for the JICA Jamaica Office that supports their activities.

In FY2023, we have just started "Jamaica Capacity Building on the Community Police-KOBAN System (Third Countries Training Program)." With the cooperation of the Military Police of the State of São Paulo of Brazil, which has succeeded in restoring public order by building a regional police system with reference to Japan police boxes-KOBAN since 2005, the Japan-Jamaica-Brazil trilateral cooperation project aims at strengthening the capacity to carry out community police activities in Jamaica to reduce crimes such as murders, robberies and shootings, and improve public safety. We aim to improve the capacity of Jamaican police officers. Beyond that, there is a desire to increase investment in Jamaica by Japanese private companies and to further promote JJ's people-level exchanges through various culture activities

### Conclusion

At one meeting, Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness directly praised me, saying, "Japan/JICA is a great partner!" There is no doubt that behind this message was JICA's volunteer work in addition to JJ exchanges through the JAAJ and about 700 Jamaicans who have participated in various subject-specific training programs in Japan since 1971. How to utilize the knowledge and experience cultivated by each of them for the future development of the JJ partnership, and how to use it to foster cooperative relationships with countries in the Caribbean region, are important issues for us as the person in charge of operations in Jamaica. We will continue to work in this regard, bearing in mind that the 60-year anniversary is an opportunity to encourage people to take on challenges with a new mindset. I would be delighted if this blog could spark your interest in "JJ partnership".



## NGO advocates increased investment in education

**A** non-governmental education organisation, Beta Nigeria, has called on both federal and state governments to urgently increase budgetary allocations for the education sector in order to effectively address the challenges of the sector.

The National Lead for Beta Nigeria, Abdulsalam Badamasi, made the call at a roundtable discussion with civil society organisations, journalists, and other key stakeholders to amplify the demand for educational reform in Abuja.

Badamasi insisted that the future of Nigeria could only be secured through improved investment in education at all levels.

He noted that investments in education would translate to the creation of a skilled workforce, economic growth, and innovation in the long term for the country.

He said the organisation would engage governments at all levels in

ensuring that the menace of out-of-school children is tackled.

“We are expanding the framing in the education conversation; we are bringing in new voices.

“We call on our politicians, service providers, agencies, and parents to come together to see how they can increase a certain level of commitment and investment in education.

“We believe that once that increased investment is realised in education, most of the problems and issues in education can be resolved.

Speaking on inclusivity, he said, “Our campaign is going to be very inclusive and is going to factor in the voices of persons with disabilities, the voices of women, and also, of course, the voices of anybody that cares about education.

“The roundtables culminated Beta Nigeria’s first efforts, launched in January 2024, proving there was public interest in the initiatives

and their potential to revitalise the Nigerian education system,” Badamasi said.

He added, “Our dynamic, youthful population is full of potential,” saying the crisis in the education system means millions face a bleak future.

“When all of Nigeria’s children are going to school, staying in school, and learning more, we will build a more resilient, more secure, and more prosperous country,” he stated.

Also, the former Special Adviser to President Muhammadu Buhari on Social Investment, Maryam Uwais, emphasised the importance of advocacy because many issues regarding education relate to behavioural change.

According to her, people need to change their approach towards convincing parents, communities, and religious or faith-based leaders to engage with the value of formal education.

Read more at <https://tribuneonline.ng.com/ngo-advocates-increased-investment-in-education/>

## Transforming Education: The Impact of the ‘local’ school model and Yuva Unstoppable

**I**n the heart of Kheda District, Gujarat, lies Vavdi Primary School, a beacon of hope for rural education. For the past five years, Hiren Hasmukhbhai Sharma, a dedicated primary school teacher, has witnessed a remarkable transformation in his school, thanks to the partnership with Amitabh Shah founded NGO - Yuva Unstoppable.

The journey of partnership began five years ago when Yuva Unstoppable initiated a tablet program at Vavdi Primary School. As the collaboration evolved, it culminated in the establishment of five smart classrooms, revolutionizing the way students engage with learning materials.

However, the impact extended beyond digital technology. Yuva Unstoppable’s intervention also addressed crucial infrastructure gaps, upgrading WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities in the school. With separate dishwashing and handwashing

areas, students now have access to hygienic facilities that were previously lacking.

Situated in a small village with limited access to government support, Vavdi Primary School faced numerous challenges before Yuva Unstoppable’s intervention. Teachers, although technologically savvy, lacked access to digital hardware and software essential for modern teaching methods. Consequently, the quality of education suffered, impacting student enrolment and performance.

‘Our school transformation programme at Yuva Unstoppable makes sure that schools have all the facilities necessary to make this environment conducive to learning and growth. We invest in infrastructure, technology, training and behaviour change to ensure a holistic development programme in the school’, says Amitabh Shah, Founder Yuva Unstoppable.

A visit by the Yuva Unstoppable team opened the school’s eyes to the transformative potential of smart classrooms. Children, many of whom had never experienced such technology, became more engaged and curious learners. The result? A significant increase in enrolment, with parents eager to send their children to a school equipped for success.

The success story of Vavdi Primary School is evident in its academic performance. With the installation of smart classrooms, students’ learning outcomes have improved, setting them on a path to a brighter future. ‘Remarkably, 25 students chose to transfer from a nearby private school to Vavdi Primary School, a testament to the impact of Yuva Unstoppable’s interventions’, states Sharmaji.

Read more at <https://ians.in/vmpl/transforming-education-the-impact-of-the-local-school-model-and-yuva-unstoppable>

## Education Policy and Practice in the Global South: Insights from Pakistan

The interconnected relationships between education policy, practice, and the lived experiences of those in the Global South forms the core of episode six of CID's [Road to GEM](#) podcast series. With the expertise of [Javed Ahmed Malik](#), Program Director of the Malala Fund in Pakistan, we dive deep into the evolving landscape of education policy, highlighting pivotal shifts and enduring challenges in making quality education accessible to all.

### Highlights from the Conversation

An economist by training, Malik challenges the prevailing reliance on empirical research methods such as randomized control trials (RCTs) when evaluating education policy. While acknowledging the importance of evidence and data, he critiques these methodologies and their narrow focus for sometimes “missing the forest for the trees.” Malik underscores the importance of understanding educational reforms within their full social, cultural, and political contexts—a reminder that data should inform rather than dictate policy.

During the conversation, Malik critiques supply-side interventions in education. Despite significant investments, there remains a persistent gap in educational quality and access, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas. Malik shares compelling evidence from the Malala Fund's initiatives, which prove to him that demand for education is not the issue; rather, it's the lack of functional schools and qualified teachers. His insights shed light on the urgent need for systemic improvements, from hiring practices to teacher training, to ensure that every school



can deliver on the promise of providing a quality education to all students.

Malik addresses the high dropout rates in Pakistan and similar countries, attributing them to systemic failures rather than a lack of desire for education. His advocacy for a more holistic approach to education reform, emphasizing the quality of learning and the empowerment of educators, is a powerful call-to-action. The success stories he shares from his work illustrate the transformative potential of well-implemented education policies that genuinely meet the needs of communities.

Central to our discussion is the critique of the international development sector's approach to education policy in the Global South. Malik calls for a shift from centralized decision-making towards greater localization and responsiveness to the needs of the communities served. He argues for development practices that prioritize agility, relevance, and the leveraging of local expertise, challenging the sector to adopt a more nuanced and effective approach to supporting education globally.

As we look towards the future, the conversation underscores the importance of gender equity in education. Malik passionately advocates for targeted efforts to support girls' education, highlighting the compound benefits of such initiatives on societal well-being and economic development. His vision for a future where gender takes center stage in international development is both inspiring and pragmatic, emphasizing the need for representation, inclusion, and empowerment at all levels of policy and practice.

This episode of [Road to GEM](#) offers invaluable insights for anyone interested in the nexus of education, policy, and international development. Malik's expertise and experiences remind us that effective education policy is not just about building schools or hiring teachers; it's about creating systems that are equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of every child. As we continue our journey towards global empowerment, let these insights guide our efforts to craft education policies that truly make a difference in the lives of those in the Global South and beyond.

Source: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/cid/voices/education-policy-and-practice-global-south-insights-pakistan>

## Kwara education commissioner commends NGO engagement with students with special needs

**K**wara State Education Commissioner, Hajia Sa'adatu Moddibo Kawu, commended NGO, Bundies Care Support Initiative for partnering with UNESCO to engage students with special needs on International Good Deeds Day.

Hajia Kawu gave this commendation during an event hosted by the Bundies Care Support initiative to mark the 2024 Good Deeds Day celebration.

The Commissioner noted that projects by [UNESCO](#) have supplemented the state government's investments in schools across Kwara State, particularly in providing access to quality and inclusive education in technical, vocational, and entrepreneurship fields, along with fostering conducive learning environments.

The Bundies Care Support initiative, Kwara State chapter, celebration of Good Deeds Day was in collaboration with the state government's Ministry of

Education and Ministry of Social Development, partnered with UNESCO.

The event, hosted by Bundies Care Support Initiative, engaged students from Apata Yakuba School for special needs in Ilorin to commemorate the occasion.

Mrs Funmilayo Adefila Osiegbu stressed the importance of citizens contributing to and complementing government efforts, particularly advocating for nationwide avenues for schools with special needs to showcase their skills.

The Commissioner for Social Development, represented by Elder Kayode Ayanwale, thanked the Good Deeds Day Kwara State chapter for their contributions to renovating and donating to the skill acquisition centre of the school for special needs, urging sustained support beyond one-time activities.

Dr. Lateef Idowu, UNESCO's Secretary, represented by Mrs. Bukola Akin, commended the

organizers of Good Deeds Day for their commendable efforts.

Mrs. Eunice Abidoye, Director of School Services, representing the Ministry of Education, shed light on the challenges faced by schools for special needs and advocated for improvements.

The renovated centre was officially commissioned by Elder Ayandele, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Social Development, accompanied by other directors and representatives from Bundies Care Support Initiative.

Good Deeds Day, a global initiative uniting people from over 100 countries, aims to promote acts of kindness for the betterment of humanity. Since its inception in 2007, millions of individuals, communities, organizations, and businesses have voluntarily participated, echoing the vision of its founder, Shari Arison from Israel, who believes in the transformative power of doing good and fostering positivity in society.

Source: <https://tribuneonlineng.com/kwara-education-commissioner-commends-ngo-engagement-with-students-with-special-needs/>



## WHY 2024 COULD BE A HUGE YEAR FOR THE SDGs IN THE U.S.



Caroline Kleinfox

**T**here is a growing movement across the United States — fueled by students, local leaders, and community members of all kinds — to harness the power and potential of the ambitious global plan to address poverty, hunger, inequality, and climate change to build a better America for all. The United Nations Foundation's Director of U.S. SDG Policy Planning Caroline Kleinfox

explains how the Sustainable Development Goals offer a unifying blueprint that people across the country can get behind.

A more just, sustainable, and prosperous future is within reach for all Americans. We can — and must — realize that future by working together on the issues that matter to us all.

In my role as Director of U.S. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Policy Planning at the UN Foundation, I have the great privilege of meeting with people across the country who are doing exactly that: bettering their communities and striving to

ensure no one is left behind. Take the students at [Carnegie Mellon University](#), who are embracing the values enshrined in the Goals and leading the school's fourth Voluntary University Review on the SDGs. Then there are local officials from San Antonio to Hawai'i County, San Diego and beyond, who are working with local universities to build transparent, accountable, and locally aligned SDG initiatives. In Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, researchers are meeting with leaders across their states to share the power of SDG data for decision-making. And people of all generations are engaging in dialogue and advocacy in communities and campuses across the country through the United

Nations Association of the USA. While this work takes many forms, one thing is clear: The spirit of the SDGs is alive and well in the U.S., and it is inspiring innovation and leadership across states, sectors, and generations.

This groundswell of support for the SDGs comes at an inflection point for the 2030 Agenda. Last year marked the halfway point to the 2030 deadline, which saw organizations and governments across the world grapple with the painful recognition that [only 15% of SDG indicators](#) are on track. At the same time, they heard urgent calls to accelerate progress and collaboration toward our shared objectives. The [Hawai'i SDG Youth Council](#), comprised of Indigenous middle school and high school students from the Kamehameha Schools, voiced a particularly powerful call to action in their [opening statement to the state's Voluntary Local Review \(VLR\)](#), which reports state-level progress toward the SDGs:

**"We, the youth of Hawai'i, plead with you to act now. Let us look to the past for wisdom and to the future for survival. We only have one Island Earth, let us do our best to take care of it and each other. We are one species, with one planet, one chance. He ali'i ka 'āina, he kauwā ke kanaka."**

### AMID POLARIZATION, THE GOALS ARE BUILDING UNITY

This urgency is warranted as domestic progress across the SDGs remains uneven. The 2023 Sustainable Development Report showed that while the U.S. is not on track to achieve any individual Goal, there are upward trends for 10 of the 17 Goals — though this

progress is [unequal across racial and ethnic groups](#). The challenges Americans are grappling with are vast: an ["epidemic of loneliness and isolation"](#); increasing and intensifying disasters fueled by climate change; the reversal of the constitutional right to an abortion; and [extraordinary gun violence](#), now the [leading cause of death for children in the United States](#).

Despite this, or perhaps because of this, many communities, youth leaders, policymakers, and individuals are identifying with the SDGs as a point of unity — not a set of Goals imposed upon them, but aspirations that are rooted in common values identified through dialogue and deep work from citizens all around the world. The challenges we face now, and the benefits of achieving these goals, will affect all Americans. As Ali Zaidi, Assistant to the President and National Climate Advisor, said during a fireside chat at our [flagship event](#) in September: "We all share in the challenge. Hurricanes don't swerve because you live in a red district or a blue one. Wildfires don't pick and choose your home based on who you voted for." This is a people-first framework, built on the promise of [Leave No One Behind](#): that we must commit to reach those most in need first.

### SDG INNOVATIONS ACROSS AMERICA

This year, many long-standing efforts to advance the SDGs are moving forward, others are being reinvigorated, and entirely new initiatives are emerging. In many cases, these initiatives are modeled either directly or indirectly on early SDG localization innovations from across the country. In Hawai'i, for example, the incredible Hawai'i SDG Youth Council is now mentoring other students across the state in a new effort to raise awareness and ambition for the Goals among

young people via the Hawai'i Green Growth Local2030 Hub partners through the Local2030 Islands Network with Guam, Palau, and other SDG leaders. Across the country, people are pioneering smart, strategic, and innovative ways to take local action on the Global Goals. A few highlights:

1. Atlanta launched the [One Million Trees Initiative](#) to plant and conserve trees across the metropolitan area by 2030. Once completed, the initiative is projected to capture 1.4 billion gallons of water and 530,000 tons of carbon dioxide annually. It's all part of a sustainability plan rooted in the SDG framework to expand the city's green spaces and reduce its carbon footprint — a major challenge given that Atlanta is home to the world's busiest airport.



2. The [University of California, Davis](#) is working with the City of Sacramento to complete the city's first VLR on the SDGs. The city recently conducted extensive community outreach to complete a new General Plan 2040, which recently went into effect. Through this collaboration, the university and the city are aligning city principles, policies, and programs with the Global Goals. The VLR will examine all 17 SDGs and highlight innovative approaches to SDG-related community engagement,

inclusion, and climate action, as well as to arts and culture.

3. The [New York City Junior Ambassadors program](#) fosters global citizenship among public middle school and high school students by connecting local to global, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals framework. Each year, students are inspired by the inner workings of the United Nations and the profound impact of New York City on the global stage. Since the program's launch in 2015, about 5,300 students and educators from classrooms and after-school programs citywide have participated. This year, the city is hosting approximately 740 students and educators, a testament to the program's enduring impact and resonance within the city.



4. In Michigan, the [Community Foundation of Greater Flint](#) (CFGF) has been working with the SDGs as a framework for measuring impact. Over the past two years, CFGF has mapped its grantmaking and community leadership work to specific SDG targets and intends to use the targets to classify and monitor its grantmaking going forward. What began as an effort to assess the foundation's impact has led to the development of additional use cases for the SDGs across all functions of the foundation,

including communications, community outreach, development, financial investing, donor advising, and strategic planning.

5. [Global Philadelphia's SDG initiative](#) is creating 17 unique murals to build awareness and community around the Goals, connecting them directly with people and organizations that care about the SDGs. For each mural, the organization matches an artist, funder, and local nonprofit working to advance a specific Goal. In a city known as the "[Mural Capital of the World](#)," the result is a powerful public communications campaign embedded within a deep local artistic tradition.

The variety and creativity of these examples demonstrate how diverse applications of the Goals can be. And they underscore an enduring truth: The strongest and most sustainable examples of SDG engagement in the United States are rooted in local priorities, values, and strengths.

### **BUILDING SDG MOMENTUM IN 2024**

Over the past five years, the [Brooking Institution's Center for Sustainable Development](#) and the United Nations Foundation have partnered on the [American Leadership on the SDGs initiative](#), responding to interest from people working across the country on the SDGs to come together, share knowledge, and develop new innovations in partnership. This program cultivates stories of innovation and leadership from across the country and provides a platform for thought leadership on the potential of the Goals to be leveraged at the national level and across sectors. Further, it has brought people together to share

and learn from these stories and the incredible knowledge and place-based experiences of leaders of all ages and backgrounds. This work has revealed that in the U.S., while knowledge of the SDGs as a framework is [low](#), Americans generally align with the values embedded in the Goals. Many Americans are, in fact, already working to advance the Goals in some way, and generally align with the values embedded in them.

In 2024, we must ask ourselves how we can further leverage the SDGs to offer stories and tools for collaboration and progress at a time of polarized, crisis-oriented rhetoric, and in an election year that is widely seen as having tremendous implications for United States' global standing and its domestic efforts in pursuit of sustainability and climate resilience. As a starting place, we can learn from the innovations and initiatives from the first half of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to accelerate progress on equity, prosperity, and environmental stability. National leaders, including President Joe Biden, have called for a recommitment to the Global Goals. President Biden's [remarks](#) last fall at the United Nations General Assembly marked the first time a sitting U.S. president publicly spoke about the SDGs since 2016.

There is a movement here that is gaining momentum. Composed of inspiring youth, experienced professionals, and dedicated volunteers – sustainability experts and novices alike – who have identified the SDGs as an agenda for action despite a current lack of national SDG-aligned funding streams. Across the country, changemakers and champions are embodying the spirit of the SDGs by showing us what resilience, sustainability, and equity look like in action.

# Leveraging Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific



Fatima Yasmin

**Keynote address by Fatima Yasmin, ADB Vice-President for Sectors and Themes, at the High-level Thematic Roundtable on "Socio-economic Outlook, Emerging Challenges and Solutions for Asia and the Pacific," 80th Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 22 April 2024, UNESCAP Conference Hall, Bangkok, Thailand**

## **Introduction**

Distinguished delegates and participants, good morning to you all!

At the outset I would like to thank UN-ESCAP for organizing this roundtable and inviting me to present the keynote at this regional event as part of your 80th Commission. On behalf of the Asian Development Bank, I am delighted by the opportunity to engage in the discourse on solutions that address the socioeconomic challenges of the region leveraging digital innovation for sustainable development.

### **I. Multifaceted development challenges of the region**

Asia has made good progress in improving living conditions, such as in increasing food security, reducing

the prevalence of malnutrition and related improvements in health and well-being.

However, several concomitant challenges – a 'polycrisis' – have set back development progress made over the past 60 years. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and extreme weather events, international conflicts, and the resulting stresses on trade and fiscal regimes risk stalling the progress made on the SDGs.

The Asia and the Pacific region is the most disaster-prone and is extremely vulnerable to climate change. Between 2015 and 2022, climate-related natural disasters affected 800 million people and caused \$400 billion in losses, having devastating impacts especially for the vulnerable communities.

As the world is transitioning towards an increasingly digitalized economy, policymakers face a new form of inequity: 'the digital divide'. In developing economies, digital divide has been an impediment for poverty reduction. To counter this aggravating curse, ensuring equitable access to data and digital technologies has become a top policy mandate.

The increased cost of living crisis has aggravated the pandemic's reversal of poverty reduction as higher costs of living have hit the economically vulnerable groups the hardest. Even small price fluctuations profoundly affect the vulnerable groups as they spend the bulk of their limited resources on basic necessities such as food and energy.

ADB research suggests that even without the increased costs of living, economically vulnerable groups face a "poverty premium or penalty," as they end up paying higher prices to avail of various types of goods and services.

Combined with other crises, such as the corona pandemic and rising costs of living, exacerbated the socioeconomic impact. Current global and regional policies do not adequately support the integration of priorities such as poverty, climate, food security, education, digitalisation, etc.

However, one good indication is that the region is economically recovering. In 2023, Asia's growth momentum continued, driven by strong consumption and investment which further accelerated during the second half of the year. However, the level of growth varied across subregions, and even within countries. For example, South Asia demonstrated robust economic growth at 6.4%, while the Pacific region experienced a comparatively lower growth at 3.5%. While the region's overall growth momentum is a top priority, ensuring an equitable recovery within countries is of paramount importance....

Source: <https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/why-2024-could-be-a-huge-year-for-the-sdgs-in-the-u-s/>

Source: <https://www.adb.org/news/speeches/leveraging-digital-innovation-sustainable-development-asia-pacific-fatima-yasmin>



## Türkiye and UNDP reaffirm strategic partnership for sustainable development

**N**ew York - A high-level strategic dialogue reaffirmed that the partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Türkiye plays an important role in advancing sustainable, equitable and peaceful development at the global, regional and country levels.

The robust partnership harnesses Türkiye's geopolitical stance and substantial development expertise, fostering innovative sustainable development solutions across multiple focus areas and enhancing the capacity to address emerging challenges collaboratively. Spanning several decades, the partnership with Türkiye gained

new impetus in 2011 with the signature of the Partnership Framework Agreement. Today, Türkiye hosts both the UNDP's Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) and the Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development (ICPSD) and serves as the most significant supporter of UNDP's regional programme in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Türkiye is one of the few contributors to UNDP's core resources with multi-year pledges. In addition, Türkiye and UNDP maintain a close relationship at the country level, where UNDP implements a large and diverse programme in support of national development priorities.

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner,

who opened the consultations, expressed gratitude for the dynamic partnership, emphasizing the strategic alignment between Türkiye's vision to support Agenda 2030 and UNDP's mission. "UNDP's collaboration with Türkiye across global, regional and country levels amplifies our impact on critical issues, including green and just transitions, innovation, private sector involvement and rapid crisis response. These efforts are critical for accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," said the Administrator.

The consultations, co-chaired by Ms. Ivana Živković, Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Europe and

the CIS and Esen Altuğ, Director General of Multilateral Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, provided a timely opportunity to reinforce this vital collaboration and discuss ways to further elevate impact.

Ambassador Altuğ emphasized Türkiye's dedication to fostering sustainable development solutions, stating, "Türkiye will continue to play a prominent role in supporting the SDGs globally in cooperation with its partners. Our longstanding partnership with UNDP will remain a critical enabler to implement this vision."

The consultation, attended by key stakeholders from both sides, delved into pressing global challenges, emphasizing climate action, digitalization, and support for least-developed countries. Discussions also emphasized the importance of multilateralism in addressing global challenges and the emerging role of Istanbul as a key UN hub.

**The partnership consultations took place just days after the Government of Türkiye generously reconfirmed its multi-annual contributions to UNDP's core resources and the regional programme in Europe and the CIS, for three years covering 2025 to 2027.**

This new funding comes on top of prior contributions by the Government of Türkiye to UNDP over the last ten years. UNDP's core resources are the pillar of its support to the world's poorest countries and conflict and crisis settings. These resources allow UNDP to remain agile in diverse and dynamic situations and to leverage financing for the SDGs. Türkiye's commitment to the regional programme is critical for fostering multi-sectoral and integrated solutions across Europe and Central Asia, capitalizing on UNDP's innovations and thought leadership.

With this renewed commitment of partnership, Türkiye and UNDP will continue to jointly shape a sustainable framework for future generations, including in increasingly complex development settings and fragile contexts, building on the immense potential of Türkiye.

Source: <https://www.undp.org/news/turkiye-and-undp-reaffirm-strategic-partnership-sustainable-development>

## The fight to save the SDG indicator for foundational learners



Sophie Edwards

**T**he race is on to save a key SDG education indicator measuring foundational learning that could be dropped due to a lack of data. Debate flares over inclusion criteria, cautioning against perfectionism at the expense of progress.

The fight is on to preserve a key education indicator to measure reading and math levels among early-grade school children, which may be dropped from the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring framework due to low reporting levels.

Tensions are running high within the global education community as different players weigh in on how to preserve SDG 4.1.1a – which focuses on the proportion of children in grades two and three "achieving at least a minimum proficiency level" in reading and mathematics, by sex – which is set to be deleted from the SDG monitoring framework next year unless more countries start providing data.

The decision to downgrade SDG 4.1.1a was announced during an October meeting of the United Nations Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, sending shockwaves through the global education community amid fears that important progress in improving foundational learning....

Source: <https://www.devex.com/news/the-fight-to-save-the-sdg-indicator-for-foundational-learners-107365>

## EXPLORING THE LINKS BETWEEN PEOPLE, THEIR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**Population, Health and Environment is a development approach that recognises the links between local communities, their health and the natural resources upon which they depend. This week, we co-hosted an event to find out more.**

On Tuesday 23 April, we welcomed two leading experts in a webinar looking at [Population, Health and Environment \(PHE\)](#). Dr Karen Hardee is the co-author of the recent report, [Breaking Silos](#), and Dr Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka is the Founder and CEO of the Ugandan organisation, [Conservation Through Public Health](#). The event took place in the lead-up to the Commission on Population and Development in New York next week, which Population Matters will attend.

The webinar was co-hosted by three like-minded organisations, Population Matters, Population Connection and Population Media Center. You can find out more about the speakers and the hosts below, but for now, we invite you to watch the full webinar.

### TWO EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELD

We were very fortunate to

welcome two fantastic speakers to our webinar, both of whom bring decades of knowledge and experience to their fields. Unfortunately, Margaret Edison, the Director of the Population Management and Development Department of Nigeria's National Population Commission, was not able to join us on the day.

Dr Karen Hardee has been a social demographer for over 30 years and is President of Hardee Associates. She has extensive technical and leadership experience working with a range of development agencies and NGOs and as a consultant on family planning and reproductive health; rights-based programming; gender equity; global development and climate change; policy and program development; research; and evaluation.

Dr Hardee was the co-author of the recent [Breaking Silos](#) report, which was funded by the Weeden Foundation and publication was

co-ordinated by Population Matters, which you can download [here](#).

Dr Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka is a leading wildlife veterinarian, conservationist, and scientist working to save the critically endangered mountain gorillas of East Africa. She is the Founder and CEO of [Conservation Through Public Health](#), a Ugandan NGO that promotes conservation by improving the health and well-being of people and wildlife, enabling both groups to safely coexist on the edges of protected areas. Dr Gladys was one of our [Change Champion award winners](#) on World Population Day 2023.

### ON THE SAME TEAM

We were fortunate to hold the event with two fantastic organisations that do amazing work. We encourage you to investigate their work further.

## NGOs accuse ADB of funding Indonesia coal plants despite clean energy promises

Green NGOs have accused the Asian Development Bank of indirectly financing coal plants in Indonesia through a \$600 million loan despite promises to no longer fund projects tied to the fossil fuel, according to a new report.

The report by four NGOs alleges the ADB loan given in 2021 to Indonesia's state power company to fund its ten-year business plan and "promote the use of clean energy" has no clause blocking spending on new coal facilities.

The Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN) plan contains more than a dozen new coal projects, including an expansion at Java island's Suralaya, one of the biggest coal-fired plants in Southeast Asia, which will add two generating units to eight in operation.

"ADB's loan agreement doesn't just fail to exclude coal. It actually allows PLN to use ADB funding for coal-fired power plants," said Dustin Roasa, research director at Inclusive Development International, which published the report Wednesday.

"The loan's eligible expenditures expressly cover anything in PLN's 10-year plan, which does not shy away from new coal."

The report gives locals' accounts of how a previous expansion at Suralaya in Banten province neighbouring capital Jakarta "displaced families, reduced fish stocks... and sickened their children".

The impact of pollution from Suralaya costs Indonesia \$1 billion every year because of preventable deaths, work absences and medical costs, a study published last year by the Europe-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said.

"Publicly funded institutions like the Asian Development Bank must include robust coal exclusions in contracts... in order to end coal finance for good," said Daniel Willis, finance campaigner at NGO Recourse.

The report said the loan entered PLN's general bank account and was not put into a separate account that could be monitored, allowing it to be spent however PLN wants. It did not claim the loan was directly used to fund Suralaya.

PLN and the ADB did not respond to an AFP request for comment about the report, which was released ahead of the bank's annual meeting in Georgia next week. The report said the ADB has previously denied the loan could be used for coal-fired power plants.

The bank provides loans and grants for projects in the poorest countries in the Asia-Pacific region and has pledged to not fund "new coal-based capacity for power and heat".

The ADB has a financing scheme for Asian governments to retire coal plants and in December agreed on a deal with the owners of the Cirebon-1 coal-fired power plant in Indonesia to shut it down seven years early.

Source: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20240425-ngos-accuse-adb-of-funding-indonesia-coal-plants-despite-clean-energy-promises>

# International NGO calls for urgent action to strengthen PHL Clean Air Act

**A**s the Philippines is set to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999 on June 27, an international environment group said it is vital to acknowledge both the progress made and the challenges that persist in the work towards cleaner air.

This concern is likewise significant as the world will mark Earth Day on April 22.

International nongovernment group Clean Air Asia said that despite strides in technology and environmental awareness over the past decades, the current emission standards for stationary sources, including coal-fired power plants, outlined in the Philippine Clean Air Act remain outdated.

"While a significant piece of legislation, it [Act] fails to fully address the continuing threat posed by coal-fired plants, which jeopardize public health and environmental sustainability," Clean Air Asia said in a statement. Clean Air Asia is working for better air quality, and healthier, more livable cities.

The group explained that coal-fired plants are notorious for emitting harmful pollutants—such as sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), particulate matter (PM), and mercury—contributing significantly to air pollution.

"These pollutants have been linked to various health issues, including respiratory diseases and



cardiovascular problems, leading to thousands of premature deaths annually. Air pollution accounts for more than 1 in 9 deaths globally," the group said, citing a Health Effects Institute 2024 report.

It pointed out that it is alarming that the Philippines currently maintains some of the "most lenient" SO<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emission standards in the region, as highlighted in Clean Air Asia's "Coal-Fired Power Plants Emissions Standards" report in 2021.

"Urgent measures are needed to tighten these standards in line with international best practices and to protect public health," it proposed.

It pointed out that in March this year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued a consultation draft of a proposed Department Administrative Order updating the emission standards for stationary

sources of air pollution, including coal-fired power plants.

"The draft order cuts the current allowable emissions of PM, SO<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> for coal-fired power plants by 50 percent, making the standards more stringent. While this is a step in the right direction, the allowable emissions must be cut further to align with international best practice in Asia to safeguard public health," the anti-pollution NGO said.

It added that "lowering the allowable emissions further would result in higher health benefits for communities near the facilities"

The group pointed to its 2021 study in Bataan that showed that implementing 100 mg/NCM (SO<sub>x</sub>), 100 mg/NCM (NO<sub>x</sub>), and 30 mg/NCM (PM) emission limits (as per international best practice in Asia) could result to up to an ~83 percent reduction in acute respiratory infections, and consequently can avoid higher health costs

Glynda Bathan-Baterina, deputy executive director of Clean Air Asia, underscores the urgency of action.

"The tightening of emission standards means better safeguards for the health of our citizens. Stringent emission standards means lesser air pollutants released by coal-fired power plants and other industrial facilities," said Bathan-Baterina.

"Clean Air Asia is at the forefront of working for a cleaner, healthier future for all Filipinos, particularly considering the detrimental health impacts associated with coal-fired plants," she added.

Tighter emission standards means that coal-fired power plants may need to install pollution control devices or adopt processes to keep air emissions within standards.

Coal-fired power plants releasing high levels of pollution and unable to meet emission standards and those whose operations would no longer be economically feasible could be prioritized for retirement.

This strategic approach aligns with the country's Nationally Determined Contributions target of achieving a 75 percent reduction in emissions as well as with the country's clean air and health goals. Environmental and health considerations must be important pillars of a just energy transition process, promoting a cleaner and more resilient energy sector.

"As we commemorate the anniversary of the Philippine Clean Air Act, let us seize this opportunity to fulfil an important mandate in the Act and its implementing rules that within two years from the effectivity of the Act, the DENR shall revise stationary sources emission standards based on internationally-accepted standards, for the protection of the public's health and welfare. This is long overdue. It is time to get it done," Clean Air Asia said.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/21/international-ngo-calls-for-urgent-action-to-strengthen-phl-clean-air-act/>



## Sania Nishtar received award "Commandeur de la Republique"

**D**eeply humbled and honoured to accept the award of "Commandeur de la Republique" from President Faustin-Archange Touadéra on behalf of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and our Alliance partners.

We appreciate this recognition of our ongoing partnership and all we have achieved together. Now we must use this moment of celebration as a springboard to further successes in boosting vaccine access, uptake and coverage for all people in the Central African Republic.

Source: [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sania-nishtar-bb2a8123a\\_deeply-humbled-and-honoured-to-accept-the-activity-7181578722850856962-HK-x/?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_android](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sania-nishtar-bb2a8123a_deeply-humbled-and-honoured-to-accept-the-activity-7181578722850856962-HK-x/?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_android)

# The Great Green Wall: A Wall of Hope or a Mirage?



Mathias Agbo Jr

Conceived as a symbol of hope in the fight against environmental degradation in the Sahel region of Africa, the Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative aims to reverse the damage inflicted upon the fragile ecosystem through reforestation. However, the project has faced numerous challenges as its progress has been hindered by the complex interplay of environmental, socio-cultural, and political factors prevalent in the region.

In 2007, the Africa Union (AU) General Assembly adopted a resolution to implement the Great Green Wall (GGW) project across the Sahel region. The GGW – an ecological reclamation – aims to combat desertification and ecosystem degradation by restoring at least 100 million hectares of degraded land, sequestering 250 million metric tons of carbon, and creating 10 million green jobs by 2030. The project is expected to cover a landmass of nearly 8,000 kilometres (4,971 miles) with a width of 15 kilometres (9.3 mi), stretching from Djibouti through West Africa to Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa.

Over the last 60 years, the Sahel region has seen temperatures rise exponentially, owing to more frequent and intense heatwaves. These changes have contributed to famine, poverty, and armed conflicts that have plagued the region for four decades. Rapidly deteriorating natural ecosystems across the Sahel have exacerbated these issues, along with the effects of poor land and water management and unsustainable ecological practices. The region's growing population, one of the fastest in the world, has

also contributed to the problem by intensifying competition for food and water within the ecosystem that supports the lives and species of the region.

Beyond halting and reversing decades of ecosystem degradation across the Sahel, the project also aims to ensure food security, provide jobs, enhance livelihoods, and combat poverty in the region.

## Making a Case for the Great Green Wall

The Sahel region experiences annual rainfall patterns that fluctuate between 200-800mm and is increasingly affected by flash and riverine flooding. These conditions result in crop failures for rainfed agriculture, which is catastrophic for the region, since about 80% of the population are subsistence farmers, pastoralists, and fishermen whose livelihoods heavily rely on crops, which, unfortunately, are extremely sensitive to variations in climatic conditions.

In 2020 alone, over 220,000 people were displaced, at least 45 were killed, and 10,000 hectares of cropped farmlands were destroyed in Niger alone due to droughts. The ecological implications of droughts are particularly significant for the Sahel, leading to desertification, reduced plant cover across the region, and the attenuation of key regional water sources such as the Lake Chad basin. The lake has shrunk to one-tenth of its original size since the 1970s, with the surface area contracting from 25,000 square kilometres (9,653 square miles) to just over 3,789 square kilometres in 2017, resulting in the loss of surrounding vegetation cover and rendering the ecosystem desolate.

Acute food shortages and rising poverty arose in the region in recent years as a consequence of environmental degradation, climate change, and an exponentially growing population.

According to the World Bank, the population of the Sahel will grow from 200 million to 340 million by 2050, a growth that is seen as the primary driver of armed conflict in the region. Land productivity across the region has decreased, resulting in declining crop yields. Farmers have started seeking new fertile land for agriculture, encroaching on traditional grazing rangelands, and triggering conflicts between farmers and herders.

Reports by the US Council on Foreign Relations and other researchers have also cited these local conflicts as a plausible alibi for the recruitment of vulnerable local farmers and herders by terrorist groups like the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), a militant group and administrative division of the Islamic State (IS), and Boko Haram, an Islamist jihadist organization based in northeastern Nigeria but also active in Chad, Niger, northern Cameroon, and Mali.

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**Several experts attest that the socio-ecological problems in the Sahel have significantly eroded the ability of local communities to adapt. Against this background, the Great Green Wall initiative was established.**

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Initially conceived as a reforestation intervention, the GGW has metamorphosed into a more ambitious strategy for regional ecosystem rejuvenation and a broader ecological, economic, and social enhancement vehicle for the Sahel. The project is now expected to lead to greater precipitation, a cooler surface temperature, and increased ground cover, which will

protect the soil from encroaching desertification.

## Criticism of the GGW

The idea of the GGW is not entirely novel. A similar afforestation program was initiated in the United States in the 1930s, seeking to plant walls of trees from the Great Plains to Texas to slow the growth of the Dust Bowl. China also launched a Green Wall in the 1970s to halt the spread of sand dunes outside the Gobi Desert.

Despite the potential of the GGW to restore ecosystems and stop desertification, it has been met with skepticism from several experts. They have raised concerns about the efficacy of this strategy and its capacity to halt and reverse ecological degradation across the Sahel region. The idea that the GGW is solely based on extensive tree planting as a form of ecosystem restoration has been contested by these academics. Critics of the initiative contend that the current complex ecological problems in the Sahel cannot be adequately addressed by a rigid wall of trees, arguing that livelihoods are better served through diversification and dynamic fine-tuning of strategies, as demanded by specific local risks and milieus.

According to Chris Reji, a Senior Fellow at the World Resources Institute, the 20% survival rate of newly planted trees in the Sahara since the 1980s is evidence of the ineffectiveness and efficacy of the current afforestation approach of the GGW. Experts are also concerned that improperly managed afforestation could potentially result in the variation of biomes and the introduction of non-native and potentially invasive species, depriving local species of their habitats and causing a significant loss of agricultural revenue.

In a statement to the Indigenous People of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC), Sada

Albachir, the head of a local Tuareg organization in Niger, criticized the introduction of non-native species, which led to the distortion of biodiversity and water scarcity in the region. For their part, indigenous pastoralist groups are worried that the GGW is disrupting the historical migration patterns of pastoralists, as they are presently unable to move as freely as they used to on account of this. In a socio-spatial context, growing expansive plantations as part of the GGW could lead to the displacement of people currently living on this land, a source of worry for most indigenous communities.

Scientific arguments have also been made against the initiative. Recent studies suggest that the project will significantly impact the regional climate and beyond. Palaeoclimatologist Deepak Chandan explained that the presence of thick vegetation in the Sahel region will result in a darker land surface instead of the blinding desert sands. This will cause the ground to absorb more heat. Moreover, denser vegetation affects the amount of dust in the atmosphere, reducing available dust particles' ability to reflect sunlight into space. As a result, more solar radiation reaches the surrounding land, causing more heat and humidity relative to the ocean. This leads to larger differentials in atmospheric pressure, resulting in stronger monsoon winds.

Another major failing of the GGW, as indicated by another analysis, is the erratic monitoring of already implemented initiatives. The GGW initiative has been criticized for inadequate monitoring of already implemented initiatives. Experts have found that the metrics designed for monitoring progress do not fully grasp the specific socio-ecological frameworks and vulnerabilities of the communities involved.....

Source: <https://earth.org/the-great-green-wall-a-wall-of-hope-or-a-mirage/>



# Macron's billion trees target leaves scientists and NGOs sceptical

**French President Emmanuel Macron has pledged to plant one billion trees in France over 10 years, but environmentalists and researchers question whether this programme will achieve its stated biodiversity and climate objectives.**



Nathan Canas

**M**acron announced the plan at the Conference on Climate Change in Egypt in November 2022 (COP27). The target is equivalent to planting around 100 million trees over an area three to four times the size of Marseille each year until 2032.

Forests have long been recognised for their potential to counter the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity. Policy-makers

particularly appreciate the ability of trees to absorb carbon from the atmosphere.

In support of the president's target, an inter-ministerial commission 'Conseil Supérieur de la Forêt et du Bois' published in July 2023 a report which estimated that there are between 1.5 and 1.7 million hectares of potential forest areas to be renewed in France.

However, some scientists and environmental NGOs fear that

Macron's initiative is too focused on the commercial benefits of forestry, to the detriment of the programme's stated ecological objectives.

## Commercial forestry and sustainability

While trees absorb carbon and provide habitats for nature, the impact of commercially farmed trees on climate and biodiversity objectives is [more complex](#) and dependent upon how the trees are grown and harvested.

Commercial practices such as planting only one tree species and 'clear cutting' – harvesting all the trees in an area at the same time – can have a detrimental impact on local biodiversity. Trees ill-suited to local conditions are less likely to survive to maturity, the stage with the greatest biodiversity and climate benefits.

How the harvested wood is used will determine a tree's climate impact. The wood used in construction, for example, could store carbon for many years. However, if wood is burnt to produce energy, the carbon in the wood is quickly re-released back into the atmosphere.

## Contested public funding

The cabinet of Marc Fesneau, the French minister for agriculture and food sovereignty, told Euractiv that 67.5 million trees had already been planted thanks to public funding.

A €250 million aid fund for public and private forest owners has been allocated for this year by the French Agriculture Ministry, through the 'France Relance' government investment plan. Private forest owners, who own three-quarters of

France's forests, will receive 60% of this funding.

Bruno Doucet, head of campaigns at French NGO Canopée, told Euractiv that 10,000 hectares of healthy well-established forests (including 6,500 hectares in Natura 2000 areas) were razed to benefit from this aid and replanted for industrial purposes.

**According to Canopée, this practice is widespread. A March 2022 report claimed that 87% of the projects financed by the 'France Relance' plan involved clear-cutting.**

Contacted by Euractiv, the Ministry of Agriculture responded that where trees had been felled, this was "to stem the spread of parasites and replant species adapted to climate change".

The public funding also requires forest owners to comply with several strict requirements to ensure the resilience of future forests – for example, there must be a management plan and a minimum diversity of tree species.

However forest owners can [access this grant](#) and cut down their trees, if this is needed for tree health reasons: because the trees are vulnerable to climate change or because of the plantation's low economic performance.

## Natural regeneration

In France, forest cover has grown by [more than 3 million hectares since 1985](#), driven by the natural regeneration of abandoned agricultural land.

Building on this trend, leftist opposition parliamentarian Henrik

Davi called for "letting nature take its course" as a means to reforest France.

The politician – a former director of research in forest ecology at the national research agency INRAE – also called for introducing more 'sustainable' forestry.

This method of maintaining forests involves reducing the density of groupings of trees in some areas, by removing only the largest or oldest trees, selecting tree species that are most resistant to France's future climate, and allowing greater natural regeneration.

Private forest owners reject this approach, as explained by Antoine d'Amécourt, president of the sectoral association Fransylva, who told Euractiv that commercial forestry can accelerate forest regeneration and make forests more resistant to climate change.

However, calls for a more sustainable approach to forestry are being heard at the political level.

**A politically diverse group of 118 parliamentarians are proposing a new law to increase the storage of carbon in French forests.**

Tabled in the National Assembly in [December 2023](#), the new rules would legally define and limit 'clear-cutting', and require commercial forestry to diversify their plantations.

[National media](#) reported that the government wants to act on the issue but is stuck because of disagreement between the agriculture and ecological transition ministries.

Source: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-environment/news/macrons-billion-trees-target-leaves-scientists-and-ngos-sceptical/>



## Pakistani teenager gets new life after heart transplant from Indian donor

**Ayesha waited years for the procedure, and is now able to carry on pursuing her goals**

**K**arachi resident Ayesha Rashan, 19, has received a life-saving heart transplant from a 69-year-old organ donor in India, reported The Indian Express. The procedure, paid for by an NGO and costing over INR3.5 million, was carried out in Chennai, marking the end of a five-year wait for the patient. "I can breathe easy now," Ayesha told the Times of India. "I plan on completing my schooling in Karachi. I want to become a fashion designer."

Ayesha's family had initially taken her to India in 2019 following cardiac arrest and heart failure. According to news reports in Indian media, a heart transplant was suggested at the time by a senior cardiac surgeon. As a result, Ayesha

was placed on a waiting list. In the meantime, as a stopgap measure, she was fitted with a left ventricular assist device to help her heart pump blood.

Ayesha flew back home after the procedure, but in 2023, her health deteriorated as her heart began to malfunction on the right side. In addition, Ayesha's heart pump had developed a leak. "It was terrible watching my daughter suffer," recalled her mother, Sanobar. "We reached out to the surgeon and told him we couldn't afford surgery, but he asked us to come to India."

It was decided by Ayesha's medical team in India that at this juncture, the only viable option was a heart transplant. The procedure took

place on January 31, with Ayesha being discharged on April 17. Ayesha's medical bills were covered by the NGO Aishwarya Trust, as well as donations from medical professionals and former patients.

"We decided to take the risk partly because the condition of the donor's heart was good and partly because we knew this was Ayesha's only chance," explained Dr Suresh Rao KG, co-director at MGM Healthcare's Institute of Heart and Lung Transplant. With her health now stable, Ayesha has been cleared by her medical team and is now able to return home.

Have something to add to the story? Share it in the comments.

## CSOs call for increased public funding to eliminate tropical diseases

**B**olgatanga, April 12, GNA – About 30 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and their partners have called for prompt increased investment and funding towards the elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Ghana.

According to them, the conditions are still prevalent in Northern Ghana over the years, but the needed attention and funding had not been given to the areas.

NTDs are a diverse group of conditions such as Elephantiasis, Buruli ulcer, Yaws and Leprosy among others caused by variety of pathogens and mainly prevalent among impoverished communities in tropical areas.

The organisations made the advocacy at the inauguration of CSOs platform on NTDs in Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region.

It was organised by the Development Research and Advocacy Centre (DRAC), an NGO in collaboration with the Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) with funding support from the Anesvad Foundation.

Some of the organisations include Restorative Seed Society, Northern Patriots in Research and Advocacy, Integrated Youth Needs and Welfare, Widows and Orphans Movement, Participatory Action for Rural Development Alternatives, Centre for Social Mobilisation and Sustainable Development among others.

Mr Milton Aberinga, the Programmes Director, DRAC, said an assessment conducted showed that in the Upper East Region, NTDs were prevalent in



the Bongo, Nabdam and Kassena-Nankana West Districts, adding that cases of leprosy were very high in Bongo, causing serious public health concern.

He said DRAC had been working with major stakeholders, including GHS and community leaders over the years, through training to identify people with cases of NTDs and guide them to seek medical attention as part of efforts to eliminate such diseases.

He said donor support was unsustainable and government investment in the sector had been low over the years and underscored the need for increase advocacy for government to pay attention and allocate more resources to the fight against NTDs.

"We are not saying that support for NTDs has ceased completely, it's just that it has reduced drastically, we are not getting the needed support from the public sector on it, that is why NTDs are making a strong comeback to the system," he said.

Mr Emmanuel Konlan, the Upper East Regional Disease Control Officer, GHS, noted that most of the people affected by NTDs were vulnerable people such as rural poor women and there was the need to collectively fight the phenomenon.

He said the GHS had been working with some volunteers to identify and educate community members who had such conditions to seek healthcare at facilities, adding that although some of the drugs were free, their supply had been irregular.

Mr Thomas Adua Abambire, the Upper East Regional Vice Chairman of the Coalition of NGOs in Health, said NTDs had not only affected the health of the persons but had adversely impacted their livelihoods and called for serious attention to the problem.

He said due to misconceptions and stigmatisation, many affected persons were not reporting to health facilities for treatment and advocated that public institutions like the GHS should be empowered to intensify education at the community level about the diseases.

Mr Duncan Adogboba Alemna, the Upper East Regional Research Officer, GHS, said research had shown that leprosy was still high in the region and to achieve universal health coverage, there was the need to eliminate NTDs.

"Sometimes, we are not able to provide them the medications because some of the medications are not covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme," he said.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2464049/pakistani-teenager-gets-new-life-after-heart-transplant-from-indian-donor>

Source: [https://gna.org.gh/2024/04/csos-call-for-increased-public-funding-to-eliminate-tropical-diseases/#google\\_vignette](https://gna.org.gh/2024/04/csos-call-for-increased-public-funding-to-eliminate-tropical-diseases/#google_vignette)

# H1 Launches New Solution Empowering Doctors to Find Global Health Opportunities

**H**1, a platform for global healthcare data with a database of 10M+ healthcare professional profiles, announced a new module within its H1 Connect platform designed to connect doctors interested in global medical missions with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) supporting these humanitarian efforts. With a renewed focus on building a robust global health network, H1 Connect leverages H1's extensive network of 250+ life sciences companies, healthcare entities, and NGOs to connect doctors with various global health opportunities worldwide. The solution enables doctors to build their own profiles, access global health training and resources through H1's partners, collaborate with like-minded medical peers, and apply to join NGO "ready reserve" rosters or specific medical missions via a marketplace of global health opportunities.

Doctors often want to get involved during times of crisis, but finding volunteer opportunities that match their skill sets and interests takes significant effort. H1 Connect simplifies the process by allowing doctors to create a profile in less than five minutes and automatically find and connect with volunteer initiatives. Tapping into H1's network of NGOs, doctors can swiftly apply to join specific rosters and access global health opportunities—ranging from providing clinical decision support in Zambia to engaging in emergency response work in Gaza.

Source: <https://www.nonprofitpro.com/article/h1-launches-new-solution-empowering-doctors-to-find-global-health-opportunities/>



Likewise, NGOs encounter the same problem from the opposite direction—they need qualified and vetted healthcare professionals, but struggle to find doctors who are willing to volunteer at the time of need. As a result, these organizations are forced to recruit doctors via word of mouth or relying on their existing networks. Now, NGOs, such as Save the Children, can leverage H1 Connect to build a "ready reserve" roster by posting an application to join a program that is instantaneously visible to thousands of vetted healthcare professionals.

H1 kicked off its initiative to connect doctors with global medical missions after the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack in Israel that escalated into a full-scale regional conflict. Immediately, H1 tapped into its comprehensive community of healthcare professionals to find,

recruit, and deploy doctors to help treat the thousands of casualties overwhelming Israeli hospitals. After the full-scale war launched in Gaza, H1 then connected with emergency medical teams to assist with staffing their rosters for medical missions to the region. H1 Connect has successfully enlisted thousands of doctors from around the world eager to extend their global health reach, and has placed dozens on medical missions with NGOs with even more on reserve rosters.

"We couldn't stand by on the sidelines and watch the catastrophe unfold in the Middle East. So, we reached out to every doctor on our platform and asked them if they wanted to volunteer knowing there was an immediate need in both Israel and Gaza," said Ariel Katz, H1's co-founder and CEO. "We believe global health issues must be addressed wherever

they are found. We don't take sides and we leave the politics out of it."

"In the midst of a humanitarian crisis, physicians with specialized skills and experience are needed on the front lines," said Dr. Rebecca Weintraub, Director of the Global Health Delivery Project at Harvard University and Chair of H1's Medical Advisory Committee. "H1 has a global platform to recruit and reach out to physicians across the globe. It is essential to respond and prepare ready reserves for medical missions."

"H1 has been a pleasure to work with, and we are very excited by the potential for H1 to support our Emergency Health Unit (EHU) roster management," said Simen Berger, EHU Roster Manager at Save the Children, an international NGO H1 has supported with healthcare professional recruitment since January 2024. "We want the healthcare professionals on our roster to have prior medical mission experience with other NGOs. H1's platform allows healthcare professionals to gain that experience by presenting them with opportunities to join multiple rosters and medical missions from a diverse group of NGOs."

"My experience with H1 was amazing. They connected me with a hospital in Israel, took care of all the logistics, and supported me throughout the process," said Dr. Noa Schwartz, a rheumatologist from New York who used H1 to volunteer at Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem. "They made me feel at ease, and knowing that they 'had my back' was very reassuring."

The H1 Connect platform serves a dual purpose: it provides a gateway for doctors who wish to tap into the expanding number of global health opportunities aggregated by H1 through its partners, while also offering NGOs and healthcare institutions the opportunity to connect directly with H1's qualified healthcare professionals.



## NGO wants improved medical care for migrants

**T**he NGO La Casita Hispanic Cultural Centre has asked the TT authorities to address the challenges faced by refugees and migrants in accessing healthcare services.

La Casita issued a public statement through its social media for World Health Day, April 7.

"These marginalised populations often endure arduous journeys, fleeing from communities affected by war, conflict, natural disasters, and economic crises, only to encounter barriers to healthcare upon arrival."

It said refugees and migrants constitute a diverse group with unique health needs that may differ from those of the host populations.

"Their experiences of displacement and migration, coupled with restrictive entry and integration policies, expose them to various health risks, including communicable diseases, injuries, mental health issues, and reproductive health complications. Despite these challenges, TT lacks a comprehensive national policy consistent with international standards governing migrants' access to ongoing healthcare services."

La Casita believes the current healthcare policy presents several specific challenges for refugees and migrants: immunisation requirements for children, language barrier, legal status and documentation, stigma and discrimination, financial constraints, limited knowledge of healthcare systems, cultural differences, fear of detention or deportation and health literacy.

"These challenges underscore the urgent need for TT to develop comprehensive policies ensuring equitable healthcare access for all migrants. The existing policy falls short in providing holistic care, and healthcare professionals may feel constrained in offering additional services due to policy restrictions."

On this World Health Day let us reaffirm our commitment to advocating for the rights and well-being of refugees and migrants in TT."

It said health knows no borders, and everyone has a collective responsibility to ensure refugees and migrants have access to the healthcare they need and deserve.

Source: <https://newsday.co.tt/2024/04/13/ngo-wants-improved-medical-care-for-migrants/>

# Gender Equality and Sustainable Development in the Tea Sector

**A**s major players in the industry increasingly acknowledge the pivotal role that women play in tea production, we are intensifying our efforts to empower women, promote gender equality, and foster inclusive growth.

This commitment has resulted in the development and implementation of inclusive recruitment policies, ensuring equal opportunities for women to advance in their careers and supporting work-life balance. By tapping into a diverse talent pool, we aim to cultivate a culture of equality and empowerment within our member organizations, striving for 50 per cent inclusion of women.

Investing in the professional development and skills training of female employees is essential for unlocking their full potential. To this end, we have introduced programs offering mentorship, leadership training, and technical skills development for women. These initiatives enable women to

assume leadership roles, contribute meaningfully to decision-making processes, and drive innovation and growth within the industry.

Recognising the critical role that women play in sustainable agriculture and food security, especially as primary caregivers and food producers in rural communities, we are engaging women and girls in initiatives promoting sustainable farming practices. These initiatives aim to improve access to resources and markets while enhancing food security for local communities. By empowering women as key stakeholders in agricultural production, we seek to ensure the long-term viability of the tea sector and contribute to the well-being and resilience of rural communities.

Capacity building is paramount to unlocking the sector's full potential. Education serves as a powerful tool for empowering women and girls, enabling them to overcome barriers, expand their opportunities,

and contribute to economic development.

Consequently, we are investing in programs that provide access to quality education and training for women and girls, including scholarships, vocational training, and entrepreneurship programs. By equipping women with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, we aim to transform individual lives and drive social and economic progress in tea-growing regions.

The tea sector has a unique opportunity to enhance its contribution to women's economic empowerment, gender equality, and sustainable development by fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and thriving ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders. As we progress towards a future where women are empowered to lead, innovate, and drive change, the tea sector is poised to establish new benchmarks for gender equality and sustainable development in Kenya and beyond.

Source: [https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/farmkenya/article/2001493068/gender-equality-and-sustainable-development-in-the-tea-sector#google\\_vignette](https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/farmkenya/article/2001493068/gender-equality-and-sustainable-development-in-the-tea-sector#google_vignette)

## Enabling the social service workforce

### Challenges and emerging trends within the social sector



Aydin Akca

**T**his report highlights the challenges and emerging trends within the social sector, and addresses plans on how the social service workforce will overcome those challenges and their future outlook.

The social service workforce plays a crucial role not only in social care but also significantly extends its impact into the realms of health and education. This intersection with the health and education sectors is a critical link that plays a fundamental role in fostering holistic well-being and societal advancement. The relationship between these sectors forms the backbone of a comprehensive support system for individuals and communities.

As society progresses, the social service sector must adapt to new challenges and opportunities. The workforce in this field faces various obstacles that require innovative solutions. Additionally, emerging trends are transforming the way social services are delivered, leading to a more efficient, inclusive, and technology-driven future. To understand this topic, it's crucial to recognize the two primary challenges faced by the social service workforce ecosystem:

1. Ensuring the workforce has the capacity and support needed to thrive.
2. Ensuring the workforce is available and resilient in the face of adversity.

To meet the needs of the growing population, the social service workforce must be properly supported. This includes implementing technological



advancements, job flexibility, and other digital tools to enhance the social service ecosystem. As demand for social service workers is expected to increase in the future, it's crucial to ensure that the workforce is equipped with the necessary resources to meet this demand.

Source: <https://www2.deloitte.com/ke/en/pages/strategy-operations/monitor-deloitte/articles/enabling-the-social-service-workforce.html>

## Seminar at Skripero Secondary School: "Green Schools, the green key to a better Environment"

**CORFU. The seminar "Green Schools, the green key to a better Environment" is being co-organized with Mareblue Beach Resort at the school on Wednesday 20 February at 09:00.**

This significant event is part of the programme ERASMUS+, GREEN SCHOOLS for a sustainable future 2.0 which Skripero school, representing

Greece, is participating in along with schools from 5 other countries.

At the seminar managers from the hotel will talk about the procedures and methods it uses which has led to the hotel receiving the Green Key certificate. Green Key is an ecological badge of quality for tourist properties. Tourism businesses that wish to be certified have to fulfil certain ecological conditions. Green Key was set up by the Foundation

for Environmental Education (FEE), an international NGO focussed on worldwide environmental education. FEE manages and coordinates Green Key worldwide and in Greece the national coordinator is the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, which Skripero School is a member of.

At the event pupils will also update village residents on the school's ecological activities and will clean up the pupils' bus stop and shelter.

Source: <https://enimerosi.com/en/news/30146/Seminar-at-Skripero-Secondary-School-Green-Schools-the-green-key-to-a-better-Environment>

# Human capital development for Islamic finance

## Upgrading knowledge, skills of current banking professionals a paramount concern

**K**ARACHI: The Federal Shariat Court's (FSC) landmark ruling in April 2022, aiming to eradicate interest from Pakistan's economy by December 2027, marked a significant turning point in the nation's financial realm.

This decisive judgement unequivocally prohibited Riba, encompassing all forms of banking interest, and initiated a concerted effort to transition the country towards an interest-free economic system by the designated deadline.

The Pakistani government and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) have embraced the FSC ruling, and a highly influential steering committee, headed by the SBP governor, is spearheading the transition of the financial system towards a more equitable and Shariah-compliant framework, following the constitutional mandate of 1973.

This steering committee receives backing from prominent industry professionals, central bank authorities, legal experts, and Shariah scholars. Various working groups and sub-committees within the central bank are currently engaged in addressing different facets of the conversion process.

As the financial sector gears up for the transition to an Islamic financial system, the endeavour to establish a banking and financial framework free from interest faces numerous hurdles. Key among these obstacles

is the imperative to enhance the expertise of human resources within the financial sector, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of Islamic finance principles and the requisite depth of knowledge. Additionally, upgrading the knowledge and skills set of the current banking professionals stands out as a paramount concern.

**According to the most recent data from the SBP, Islamic banking deposits have surpassed the 22% threshold, totaling over Rs6 trillion, while the asset base has expanded to Rs8.4 trillion.**

Shares financing has also seen an increase, reaching Rs3 trillion and constituting 26% of the market size. The number of bank branches and windows has surged to over 6,550.

The Islamic banking sector is predominantly represented by six full-fledged Islamic banks, with Meezan Bank leading the industry. Furthermore, the transition of Faysal Bank to a complete Islamic bank has further propelled the growth momentum.

Additionally, alongside these full-fledged banks, 16 conventional banks currently offer Shariah-compliant services through their dedicated branches and windows. To stimulate further expansion, Bank Makrama and ZTBL have recently declared their shift towards

Islamic banking, while The Bank of Punjab and Standard Chartered are in the process of assessing the conversion procedure.

This underscores a significant demand for professionals in Islamic banking. Major entities such as HMB Sirat, HBL, UBL, and NBP are also vigorously transitioning their conventional branches into Islamic operations. Based on information coming from banking insiders, more than 85% of the new branch licences issued for 2024 are designated for Islamic banking branches, signaling a significant transformation in Pakistan's banking landscape.

Moreover, it is estimated by industry experts that the conversion necessitates the retraining of approximately 150,000 banking professionals, alongside the induction of roughly 7,000 new employees annually. Against this backdrop, the preparation of human resources for the Islamic finance sector demands a coherent strategy comprising four primary components:

a) Comprehensive retraining of the existing banking professionals in Islamic banking and finance, enhancing their knowledge and skill set. b) Training of fresh recruits in Islamic finance principles and products to meet industry demand. c) Incorporation of Islamic finance into the curriculum of business schools and academic institutions, ensuring its integration

into educational frameworks. d) Continuous learning and upgradation of skills for the existing staff.

Firstly, the retraining of the existing staff involves a combination of specialised training and unlearning some old concepts while creating space for understanding the principles of Islamic finance. It requires implementing tailored educational programmes and workshops that cover Shariah-compliant financial practices, ethical considerations, and the specific regulatory frameworks associated with Islamic finance.

**Financial institutions need to encourage continuous learning and collaboration with experts to ensure a comprehensive understanding among their staff so they feel motivated and confident in the conversion process.**

Secondly, the training of fresh recruits involves offering training and orientation programmes to cover the basic concepts of Islamic finance, knowledge of the products offered by Islamic financial institutions, education on Shariah compliance and regulatory requirements, and developing of ability to differentiate between Islamic banking and conventional banking systems and products.

The use of case studies with practical examples, role-playing activities, simulations, and on-the-job training are important components of this strategy.

Moreover, applying hiring filters to give preference to those graduates who have studied Islamic finance and banking subjects is needed to get the right mindset of people in the sector. The third aspect of the strategy involves incorporating

Islamic finance, banking, and economic principles into the educational framework, starting from primary education to the curriculum of business schools, as fundamental subjects.

This ensures that graduates possess skill sets aligned with the current market demand, moving away from the outdated theories of conventional financial systems. Achieving this requires significant reevaluation within academic circles. At the school and college levels, there is a need to develop specific components focusing on Islamic finance literacy, emphasising ethical principles and fundamental concepts of Islamic trade and business rules. Meanwhile, at the university level, specialised courses and advanced tracks in Islamic finance, Islamic banking, and Islamic accounting are essential within business, finance, and accounting programmes.

The Sindh Higher Education Commission (HEC) has taken the initiative in this regard, issuing guidelines to all universities in the province to offer Islamic finance as a core subject while integrating Islamic finance and

business components into related courses. Similar initiatives are imperative from the federal HEC and other provinces to ensure a comprehensive integration of Islamic finance education across educational institutions.

The fourth element of this strategy focuses on continual learning and skills enhancement for the staff already engaged in the sector, ensuring they deliver improved services to customers. This entails prioritising professional development programmes, leadership pathways, refresher courses, and active engagement in conferences, webinars, and workshops to remain abreast of industry dynamics. In Pakistan, the Centre of Excellence in Islamic Finance (CEIF) at IBA Karachi has been pivotal in human capital development for Islamic finance, with support from the SBP and the Islamic finance sector.





# Reflecting on DIHAD 20th Edition: A Journey of Learning and Networking



Zafar Iqbal

**A**s the Chief Editor of "The NGO World" magazine, I recently had the privilege of attending the 20th Edition of the Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development Conference & Exhibition (DIHAD) held at the Dubai World Trade Centre from April 23rd to 25th, 2024. This year marked a significant milestone for us as The NGO World participated as a media partner, amplifying our commitment to covering the latest trends and insights in the humanitarian sector

DIHAD provided an unparalleled platform for leaders in the social, development, and humanitarian sectors to converge, exchange ideas, and explore innovative solutions to pressing global challenges. The diversity of stalls at the NGOs exhibition was a testament to the vast array of organizations dedicated to making a positive impact on communities worldwide.

One of the highlights of my experience was attending the thought-provoking sessions centered around the theme of "Humanitarian



Diplomacy." These sessions delved into the complexities of navigating diplomatic channels to address humanitarian crises effectively. From discussions on diplomatic negotiations to the role of media in shaping public perception, each session offered valuable insights that resonated with our mission at The NGO World.

**Beyond the educational sessions, DIHAD provided invaluable networking opportunities. Meeting with leaders and practitioners in the field allowed for meaningful exchanges of ideas and best practices. These connections have the potential to foster collaboration and partnerships that can amplify the impact of humanitarian efforts globally.**

During the event, I had the honor of presenting the latest edition of our magazine to H.E. Amb. Dr. Abdulsalam AlMadani, Chairman of

DIHAD Sustainable Humanitarian Organisation. It was a privilege to share our publication with a leader who embodies the spirit of humanitarianism and sustainable development.

In conclusion, DIHAD 20th Edition was a truly enriching experience that reaffirmed the importance of collaboration, innovation, and diplomacy in addressing the

world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. The insights gained and connections made during the conference will undoubtedly inform and inspire our work at The NGO World as we continue to strive for a more equitable and compassionate world. We look forward to continuing our partnership with DIHAD and contributing to the collective efforts towards positive social change.





# Carer daughter calls for aged care funding rethink to buy all-terrain-vehicle for dad on rural property



Jennifer Nichols

**A**tlanta Baker has painful memories of the last time she took her dad to a public park; his paranoia spiked and he scratched his arms until he bled, attracting a crowd of people and an ambulance.

Ms Baker is a full-time carer for her diabetic father William Baker, who has Korsakoff dementia, is diagnosed bipolar, suffers paranoia episodes, is on blood thinners after a triple heart bypass, and struggles to walk after a serious car accident 15 years ago.

With her father confined to his one-bedroom brick house and patio for the past 16 months, Ms Baker has been trying to find a safe way for the 71-year-old to visit his neighbour and enjoy the rented rural property in south-east Queensland's Mary Valley.

"I used to be able to put him in the car but because of his ankle injury I can't do that now and I have no way of getting him off this pad of concrete or out of those four walls," she said.

**"The more he's in here the more he finds it harder to go out so before that progresses any more, I really want some kind of intervention, so he doesn't become too reclusive."**

## Rural challenges

Mr Baker is now too old to be eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and his conditions are complex.

"I wash Dad, I clean, I do everything for Dad and I have done for the last few years because he's needed that, and because of his bipolar there are just a lot of complications there, so I'd just rather handle all of that," Ms Baker said.

She says her father's wheelchair is useless on the steep rural terrain, and his cognitive impairments, physical injuries and mental capabilities mean it would not be safe to let him drive a mobility scooter, even if one could handle the hills.

But with around \$64,000 of unspent funds sitting in his Level 4 Aged Care Home Care Package account, Ms Baker believes there is an accessibility answer.



sunshine, and it just makes a world of difference, but the legislation isn't accommodating for that," she said.

**"I'm just saying, 'hey I've looked into it, I've researched it; this is the best fit for Dad, can you just take a look and think about it?'"**

New SxS ATVs retail online for anywhere between \$7,000 to \$31,000 in Australia.

"There's a lot of needs that a lot of people need rurally that perhaps people who live in towns and cities don't need so much but do take for granted," Ms Baker said.

## Government response

A spokesperson for the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission has told the ABC that ATVs are considered vehicles, not mobility aids, and the purchase of them is a program exclusion.

But Ms Baker said her father's Home Care Program provider (which she has asked the ABC not to name) has written to the Aged and Community Care Providers Association to ask if an ATV could be considered an allowable expense, given its "direct relation to the consumer's care needs and the exceptional benefits to his mental health and wellbeing".

Ms Baker explained that she and her father are renting the property from a close friend and that moving is not an option they could afford.

She noted that she was not asking authorities for additional funding, and urged them to consider broadening the policy framework to provide more flexibility for people living in rural areas.

## ATV alternative

Ms Baker would like some of her father's package to be used to buy a Side-by-Side (SxS) All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) with a roof cover, a roll cage and seatbelts, that she could drive for him.

"Just to take him down for a cuppa near the dam in the afternoon or come down and sit under the fan and have a game of cards with me somewhere different, just out in the





Ms Kok said mental health and wellbeing were supported when people could get out of the house.

“That is the intent of the Home Care Package program as well, it is about people having social connection, it is about them connecting with their community and staying and avoiding also entering into an aged care facility prematurely,” she said.

A small bathroom in a rural home with basic mobility aids for aged care.

Ms Baker, who lives with prolapsed discs in her back, is also working to privately pay for renovations, including an upgrade to her father’s cramped bathroom, where a transfer seat is needed to reach the shower located over the bath.

“I will get to a stage very soon where I’m not going to be able to shower Dad in the bathroom, so that’s a bit worrying,” she said.

**“I actually cried; you get to the point where you’re so frustrated.”**

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-04-01/disability-aged-care-funding-accessibility-mobility-atv-rural/103558498>



**“I am doing everything that funding would normally cover. All I am saying is, ‘he can’t use a scooter, can I just use it for an ATV?’**

“It is not just a quality-of-life issue for him now, it is also for me, it is just so frustrating because I’ve uploaded photos, I’ve uploaded footage and I’m like, “can someone just listen please and help?”

### **Aged care advocacy**

Rebecca Kok from Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia said while she could not comment directly on Mr Baker’s case because of privacy reasons, she hoped his individual circumstances would be taken into account.

“Traditionally I guess the mobility aids that are out there are intended to be used by the individual, but I think that in a situation where the person is unable to utilise that piece of equipment themselves, there should be provision made into how they can have their needs met,” she said.

**“If they are in a rural area, if they are not able to use flat roads with that piece of equipment, then that should be looked at in terms of what is the best arrangement for that person.”**

A photo of a man’s feet next to a walking frame on wheels.

Mr Baker is unable to dress, groom, shower, prepare food for himself, or walk more than a few metres with his mobility walker.

## **NGO empowers women living with disability in Lagos**

**S**takeholders and governments at all levels have been urged to pay more attention and commitment to the worsening plight of Nigerians living with disabilities.

This point and more were made at the recently concluded medical fare for women living with disabilities.

The medifare was organised by a trail-blaizing Non-Governmental Organization, Empathy-Driven Women Initiative International (EDWIIN), in partnership with the Lagos State Chapter of the the Medical Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN). This year’s edition was aptly themed: “Inspire Inclusion in Health”. It is the Seventh in the annual series which debuted in 2017.

According to the organisers, the Medical Fair was planned with intent to highlight and bring to fore, the various issues and challenges faced by people living with disabilities as well as their impacts on society as a whole. The colourful event took place on 30th March, 2024 at the Teslim Balogun Stadium in Surulere, Lagos.

Women living with disabilities from all the nooks and crannies of the state and beyond had a rare opportunity to consult and be treated by some of the most experienced women doctors in the country. The beneficiaries were screened for various health issues like hypertension and diabetes. Others were screened for breasts, cervical cancer, eyes and dental checks, while others enjoyed free dental scaling and polishing.

There were other treatments, consultations, gifts and awards for some random and other deserving beneficiaries.

The convener of the initiative, Adiya Uri Ngozichukwuka used the opportunity to call on policy makers in particular and the government in general to commit more efforts and resources to the upliftment of people living with disabilities. She also stated that the Disability Act which was signed into law by President Muhammadu Buhari on the 23rd of January, 2019 and had a 5-year window for full implementation was yet to make a meaningful or visible impact. She, however said her organisation will continue to invest in the lives of these important but vulnerable and deprived members of society.

“Together, we created a beautiful medifare specifically designed for women living with disabilities. We celebrate the strength, resilience and the critical roles they play in a more inclusive future.”

“The Government is doing what it can but there is a big room for improvement. They should do more in terms of partnership with private bodies and NGO’s with proven track records and the wherewithal to reach out to these physically challenged women. The only way to make them active and useful members of society is to equip and improve their capacities as deserving citizens”, she stated.

Also speaking with journalists at the event, Dr. Funmi IGE, President, Lagos Chapter of the Medical Women Association of Nigeria, (MWAN) called on government



across board to do more for persons living with disabilities by ensuring that sign languages, interpreters and efficient mobility services are accessible at health centers and hospitals across the country.

“Peculiar issues concerning their reproductive and mental health should also be taken into cognisance in terms of policies and implementations. These are the only ways to ameliorate their plights”, she said.

Some of the visibly excited beneficiaries of the free medical outreach and gift items also thanked the organisers for always reaching out to them at the very point of their needs.

On her part, Turkson Abigael, Lagos State Women Leader of Persons Living With Disabilities thanked EDWIIN for consistently coming to the aid of people living with disabilities. She also called on the government to be more alive to their responsibilities and not leave the burden medical interventions of this nature to the Non Governmental Organisations alone.

Source: [https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/04/ngo-empowers-women-living-with-disability-in-lagos/#google\\_vignette](https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/04/ngo-empowers-women-living-with-disability-in-lagos/#google_vignette)



# NGO set to unite 6,000 for disability inclusion global advocacy

**A** prominent non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Nigeria, the Irede Foundation (TIF) has concluded plans to unite about 6,000 People Globally for Disability Inclusion beginning with "Out On A Limb Advocacy Walk" in Nigeria.

A statement from the foundation signed by Irene Dyboh explained that the event is set to take place on Saturday, April 13th, 2024, seeks to promote inclusive access to quality education and create a more inclusive workforce, thereby promoting economic empowerment for the physically challenged.

The highly anticipated 2024 "Out On A Limb" (OOAL) Advocacy Walk is expected to bring together a global community of individuals dedicated to empowering and including

persons with disabilities (PWDs) in society.

This year's event, with 60 locations participating worldwide, aims to celebrate every step taken towards building a more inclusive world.

Under the theme "Celebrating Every Step," OOAL harnesses the power of people to create engagement, mobilize communities, and inspire action according to the promoters.

"With the participation of 6,000 individuals joining hands and raising their voices, the event highlights the challenges faced by People Living with Disabilities and emphasizes the collective responsibility to foster a society that embraces diversity.

"The primary objective of the OOAL Advocacy Walk is to raise national and global consciousness about disability inclusion, promoting

positive attitudes and behaviors towards people with disabilities. Education is a key focus, advocating for inclusive access to quality education and ensuring that learners with disabilities have equal opportunities for lifelong learning," it stated.

In addition to education, the OOAL Advocacy Walk also aims to bridge the employability gap for individuals with disabilities. By fostering a positive attitude and behavior towards PWDs, the event seeks to create a more inclusive workforce and promote economic empowerment for this community.

The OOAL Advocacy Walk serves as both a platform for raising awareness and an opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of others. This year's event specifically targets children and youths with disabilities, as well

as the broader community of persons with disabilities.

"Join us on April 13th as we take a decisive step towards a more inclusive society. Together, we can empower and include persons with disabilities, celebrating every step towards a brighter future," the statement read in part.

The Irede Foundation (TIF) is a prominent non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Nigeria, established in 2012. TIF is dedicated to encouraging children living with limb loss, whether acquired or congenital, to live a life of fulfillment. The organization provides prosthetic limbs to child amputees between the ages of 0 and 18, while also focusing on disability advocacy, support groups for caregivers, and skills development trainings for persons with limb differences.

Source: <https://tribuneonlineng.com/ngo-set-to-unite-6000-for-disability-inclusion-global-advocacy/>



# Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education - PAGE

**K**nowledge shared, connections made, and futures empowered!

That marks the successful conclusion of our 3-day Mentorship & Peer Learning Workshop, a collaborative effort between PAGE and NOVE - Caring Humans, generously funded by Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) and UN Women Pakistan.



This intensive program equipped participants with invaluable skills in:

- Fundraising for NGOs: Exploring innovative strategies to secure sustainable funding for their vital work.
- Proposal development and Grant applications
- Program Development: Designing impactful programs that address the needs of their communities.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (M&E): Measuring progress, ensuring accountability, and showcasing the impact of their efforts.

- Teamwork and stress management

The 3-Day workshop was followed by a celebratory certification ceremony where DEPUTY COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE UN WOMEN PAKISTAN joined us, acknowledging the dedication and commitment of the participants.

Through collaborative learning and mentorship, this workshop fostered valuable knowledge exchange and empowered our employees to enhance their personal and organizational capacity.

We are confident these skills will translate into even greater impact on the lives we serve.

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7191811001862832128/>

# Crisis-Resilient Social Protection programme: World Bank to approve \$270m additional financing next month

**SLAMABAD:** The World Bank will provide additional financing of \$ 270 million for Crisis-Resilient Social Protection programme to support the development of an adaptive and crisis-resilient social protection system.

Sources revealed to Business Recorder that the Board of Directors of the World Bank is expected to meet in the last week of May to approve additional financing of \$ 270 million.

**The proposed AF will provide an additional credit in an amount of \$ 270 million to Crisis-Resilient Social Protection programme. The original project became effective in March 2021 and will be closing by end of June 2025. The proposed AF will extend the closing date for the project by a year till end of June 2026.**

\$600m social protection project: World Bank describes implementation progress as 'satisfactory'

The overall programme boundary is the same for both original project and the AF. The government programme's expenditure supported by Programme for Results (PforR) Financing (both original and additional) has been revised.

The change is due to incorporating actual expenditures for financial years 2020,-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23, adjustment due to a 75 percent spike in the exchange rate and adding budget of fiscal year 2025-26 in the expenditure framework due to extension of closing date up to June 30, 2026. Despite these

changes, the overall PforR financing is nine percent of the government's programme.

Official documents revealed that this AF will contribute to Result Areas 1 and 3 of the parent project. Disbursement Linked Indicator (DLI) proposed under the AF will cover some longer-term policy actions regarding the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER).

Under Result Area 1, the proposed results support: (a) adoption of recertification protocols to ensure predictability in programme exit and entry for BISP programmes during future recertifications; (b) institutionalization of an indexation mechanism for the base cash transfer programme (Kafaalat) benefits to prevent erosion in purchasing power and to protect against the impacts of economic shocks; (c) ensure accessibility to potential Kafaalat beneficiaries in the NSER who are not currently enrolled; (d) extension/expansion of MELA and programme touch points from Tehsil to Union Council level to improve accessibility; and (e) adoption of NSER as the agreed targeting mechanism nation-wide and development of a technology-supported mechanism to facilitate two-way data exchange with other programmes.

Under Result Area 3, the proposed actions support measures to correct the current overlap of federal and provincial cash transfer (CCT) programmes and to prevent future overlap, including gradual takeover by the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, through their own resources, of the services that are currently being provided by federal health and nutrition focused CCT.

Official documents revealed that Pakistan's poverty reduction has slowed amid recent shocks, while growth has remained volatile and slow. The country made significant progress towards reducing poverty between 2001 and 2018 when the expansion of off-farm economic opportunities and increased inflow of remittances allowed over 47 million Pakistanis to rise out of poverty.

However, rapid poverty reduction has not fully translated into improved socioeconomic conditions, as human capital outcomes have remained poor, with high levels of stunting at 38 per cent and learning poverty at 78 percent.

**The country experienced heavy monsoon rains in 2022 leading to catastrophic and unprecedented flooding with enormous human and economic impacts. Roughly 33 million people were impacted, and many permanently displaced.**

Moreover, critical constraints, including persistent fiscal and current account deficit, protectionist trade policies, unproductive agriculture, a difficult business environment, a heavy state presence in the economy, and a financially unsustainable energy sector, have remained unaddressed, leading to slow and volatile growth. Progress with poverty reduction has recently slowed amid macroeconomic instability, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the 2022 catastrophic floods.

## IMPORTANT CAPACITY FUNDING FOR LEGAL NEEDS RELATED TO TRIBAL NATIONS' LAND STEWARDSHIP

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) received a \$100,000 award from the [First Nations Development Institute's](#) (FNDI) "Stewarding Native Lands" program. The 2024 funding supports critical capacity at NARF, a national nonprofit legal organization, to meet the unique legal challenges of Tribal Nations seeking to address a wide variety of tribal eco-stewardship goals.

"Tribal governments are developing critical solutions as co-stewards to address climate change impacts on treaty-related, historically significant, and often sacred, ecosystems across the United States. Tribal governments offer unique and compelling ways to overcome red tape in public land management, build resilience in the

face of climate change, and heal from historical misunderstandings with their counterparts in federal, state, and local agencies as well as with private parties and NGOs. This generous grant from the First Nations Development Institute strengthens the capacity of the Native American Rights Fund to help provide technical legal assistance to Tribal Nations seeking to operate more effectively in these ways," said NARF [Staff Attorney Ada Montague Stepleton](#).

Land stewardship options, such as co-management/co-stewardship agreements, conservation easements, fee into trust, land return, and land-use planning regulations are all areas that Tribal Nations currently request help from NARF to navigate. This award will

help the nonprofit build capacity to meet the growing need for this type of technical assistance.

"Many Indigenous communities face climate change impacts firsthand. This grant from the First Nations Development Institute allows NARF to be where we are increasingly most needed: ensuring U.S. partners seek Free, Prior, and Informed Consent from Tribal Nations, so the first inhabitants of the lands and waters in question can raise concerns, share solutions based on thousands of years of experience, and participate in making well-informed decisions about protecting and managing shared resources," said Montague Stepleton.

Source: <https://narf.org/tribal-nations-land-stewardship/>

## Consider 'blended' approaches to doing good, charities and social enterprises urged

Tej Dhami describes the challenges of building models that deliver social good and turn a profit in the latest episode of Third Sector's The End of Charity podcast series

Charities and social enterprises need to be "less rigid" working in the for-good space to deliver the maximum impact, the managing director of a social change advisory group has said in a podcast interview.

Speaking in the latest episode of Third Sector's The End of Charity podcast series, which explores alternatives to the traditional charity model of doing good, Tej Dhami said that working across business and social enterprise for 15 years had taught her that "the old adage that you can do well and do good at the same time" was far more challenging than she had initially expected.

"There are some places where that works really well, but the social enterprise or the business model isn't always effective across all the kinds of social good that you would want to create," said Dhami.

She described participating in a social entrepreneurship programme that sought to develop business ventures that would provide solutions for specific social problems, and the challenges that came with trying to develop for-good organisations that can simultaneously turn a profit.

"I think those models where there's deep work and behaviour change involved, quite often they're really difficult to turn into a sustainable model," she said.

"One key lesson I've learned over the 15 years is that a lot of things just need grant funding."

But Dhami argued that the charitable and not-for-profit sector could

ultimately benefit from being less rigid about the distinctions between charitable and commercial models, taking "blended" approaches to for-good work.

She said "I think one of the problems we have in the sector with social investment and social enterprise is this somewhat arbitrary distinction between charity and social enterprise."

"Everyone working in that field is aiming to do good. So the question we always pose is: what is the most efficient way we can deliver that impact? How can we most efficiently use our resources? How can we create the most long-term impact?"

"Because that's where you get the most return on investment."

For the full interview, listen to The End of Charity: Who are charities missing? on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or your podcast platform of choice.

Source: <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/consider-blended-approaches-doing-good-charities-social-enterprises-urged/fundraising/article/1867137>

# Fund for Local Cooperation in 2024 - 2025 in Cambodia

The Fund for Local Cooperation (FLC) is a fund administered by the Embassy of Finland in Bangkok. The instrument is primarily used to support initiatives of local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), but funding can also be provided to science and technology communities, universities and other educational and research institutions, independent media, public corporations and cultural institutions (e.g. museums, libraries and theatres), chambers of commerce and commercial associations, organisations in the area of export and investment promotion, businesses, cooperatives, interest groups of companies and employees, foundations and religious organisations.

In Cambodia, the Embassy is currently prioritizing projects related to protection of human rights defenders, and promotion of good governance and democracy. FLC serves the Embassy as an important tool to broaden its networks and increase its impact in key areas of Finland's foreign and development policy. The aim is to establish partnerships with a limited number of organizations. Funding proposals will be assessed based on their relevance to local needs and priorities, and taking into account the relevance of a project in relation to the vision and the mission of the applying organization. The funding from FLC is project-based and as a principle, the Embassy prioritizes projects with a long-term impact over once off activities such as seminars or similar events. In assessing funding proposals, the Embassy also takes into account the level of professionalism demonstrated by the applicant, including proven record of sound financial administration and cooperation with international partners.

For any inquiries, please approach the Embassy via email to [sanomat.ban@gov.fi](mailto:sanomat.ban@gov.fi)

## CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

In 2024, the Embassy has a budget of approx. EUR 100,000 for FLC in Cambodia, which the Embassy foresees granting to 2 projects (max. EUR 50,000 each), each for a duration of preferably maximum 1 year. The Embassy calls interested organizations meeting the criteria defined on this page to submit their proposals to the Embassy by June 9 2024 via email to [sanomat.ban@gov.fi](mailto:sanomat.ban@gov.fi) (titled "Fund for Local Cooperation in Cambodia").

The expected outcomes of the projects are:

- Promoting a rights-based approach to development in Cambodia.
- Supporting the development of an active and impactful local civil society including human rights defenders.

The proposals should consist of the following:

- Cover letter addressed to the Embassy, dated and signed by an authorized representative of the organization.

- Basic information of the organization, including full contact details, legal status, description of activities, financing sources (fund-raising and donors).
- Project plan, including the name, description and timeline of the project and its activities, a needs assessment and a detailed result chain or logical framework presentation (reflecting Finland's overall goals) with a risk analysis element (including the likelihood and potential impact), information on project management and the key project persons, a clear and detailed project budget (including information on any other financing if available) and information on previous experience on related projects.
- Most recent annual report and financial statements and/or reports of other similar projects, when relevant.

An annual audit should be conducted on all projects receiving annual payments exceeding EUR 20,000. The partner organization may commission a project audit separately or as a part of the organization's own full audit. The project budget may include auditing costs as administrative costs, but the total administrative costs for a project shall not exceed 10 %.

The Embassy may request additional information from shortlisted organizations.

## Selection Process

Applicants should be legally registered civil society organizations, or other organizations listed above. For those applications shortlisted for final selection, the Embassy will assess the applicant organization's financial and administrative capacity.

FLC Partners are requested to apply key elements of Finnish development policy and quality standards, namely the Results Based Management (RBM), Human Rights Based Approach to Development (HRBA) and Cross-Cutting Objectives (CCOs) in their project plans. They are an important part of the selection criteria for FLC applications, and projects, which are assessed as Human Rights blind, cannot be funded. If needed, a capacity development plan can be part of the Project Plan for a systematic integration of the quality standards throughout the project cycle. See attachments for further details on Results Based Management, Human Rights Based Approach to Development and Cross-Cutting Objectives.

## FLC Funding cannot be granted:

- To Finnish Non-Governmental Organisations (separate applications

through the MFA unit in question)

- For projects of friendship associations in Finland (separate applications through the MFA unit in question)
- To Finnish Government agencies or public bodies (separate applications through the ICI instrument)

- To Finnish municipalities (separate applications through the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities)
- To Finnish businesses
- To the Government, ministries or municipalities of the host country
- To an unregistered association or organisation (however, taking into consideration the special circumstances in the host country)
- To support the activities of a political party
- For basic research
- For single cultural events (that have no permanent development impact)
- For charity
- For humanitarian aid
- In the form of a grant, scholarship or assistance for the applicant's personal use
- For purchasing land
- To a Fund
- For building the capital of microcredit systems (however, development projects and training are possible)

The FLC projects are, as a rule, not meant to cover the core expenditure of the partner organization.

Source: [https://finlandabroad.fi/web/tha/ajankohtaista/-/asset\\_publisher/TV8iYvdcF3ta/content/fund-for-local-cooperation-in-2024-2025-in-cambodia/384951](https://finlandabroad.fi/web/tha/ajankohtaista/-/asset_publisher/TV8iYvdcF3ta/content/fund-for-local-cooperation-in-2024-2025-in-cambodia/384951)





# UNICEF to provide \$20m for youth projects

Government and Unicef signed a letter of intent (LOI) during a high-level meeting

SLAMABAD: The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) would provide \$20 million to Pakistan to implement various programmes under its Generation Unlimited (GenU) plan, focusing on youth education, skills development, and employability prospects, according to a press release issued here on Thursday.

empowering every young person to thrive in the world of work.

Functioning as a public-private youth partnership the prime minister, this collaboration between the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and Unicef would convene stakeholders from the UN, private sector, public entities, and the International financial institutions (IFIs), the press release said.

The signing ceremony, which was held at the Prime Minister's House, was also witnessed by Prime Minister's Youth Programme Chairman Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, and Unicef officials Larissa Bruun and Mome Saleem, the press release said.

In this regard, the press release said, the government and Unicef signed a letter of intent (LOI) during a high-level meeting attended by key representatives from both sides, including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadil.

"This investment marks a significant step towards unlocking the potential of our young population.

"Through this ground-breaking collaboration, we look forward to bringing together a broad cohort of partners, to create opportunities, empower and pave the way for a brighter future for Pakistan's youth," Fadil told the signing ceremony.

Through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts, we aim to create opportunities for our youth to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress," Shehbaz told the signing ceremony.

The \$20 million would be utilised to implement various programmes under the GenU plan, according to the press release. Special emphasis would be placed on empowering marginalised youth, including young women and the Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) population, the release said.

GenU is a global partnership working to prepare young people to become productive and engaged citizens. It connects secondary-age education and training to employment and entrepreneurship.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2463131/unicef-to-provide-20m-for-youth-projects>

# Open call: UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity



Ano Shumba

projects will be selected based on their ability to generate concrete and lasting results towards the development of the creative sectors in developing countries that are Parties to the 2005 Convention.

Since 2010, the IFCD has invested more than \$11.5m through 152 projects in 71 developing countries. These diverse initiatives have contributed to the development and implementation of cultural policies, the strengthening of professional training and cultural entrepreneurship, supported access to new markets, and the participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups in cultural life.

Through the IFCD's 2024 open call, UNESCO renews its commitment to strengthening the cultural and creative industries in developing countries, as fundamental pillars for protecting and promoting cultural diversity, encouraging creativity and innovation, and for building a more sustainable world.

Project proposals should contribute to:

- The implementation and/or elaboration of policies and measures that have a direct, structural impact on the creation, production, distribution and access to a diversity of cultural goods and services.
- The strengthening of capacities in public institutions and civil society organisations to support viable local and regional cultural industries and markets.

Public institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are invited to submit proposals for the 15th edition of the UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD).

The call is open to public institutions and NGOs from eligible countries(link is external), as well as international NGOs registered in countries that are Parties to the 2005 Convention. Through an open and competitive process,

Source: <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/open-call-unesco-international-fund-cultural-diversity>





## Youth-led startups showcase sustainable development solutions at the Youth Social Innovation Lab (YSIL) 2023 Demo Day

The Demo Day of the Youth Social Innovation Lab (YSIL) 2023 organized by Youth Co:Lab in the Philippines brought together 41 young entrepreneurs, industry experts, ecosystem enablers, mentors, and partners to harness and further develop innovative ideas and solutions of young entrepreneurs.

As a culminating activity of a three-month Incubation Programme, on 26 January 2024, six social enterprises who stood out from a 20 cohort, namely [Capilli](#), [IndieCo](#), [Philip-Anaban](#), [Gro Up: A Card Game](#), [REPAMANA](#), and [Bakás Apparel](#), had the exciting opportunity to pitch and showcase their solutions.

From 2017-2022, YSIL has been a strategic platform, engaging over 250 young people, almost half of whom were from underrepresented sectors. Through this initiative, Youth Co:Lab, co-led by UNDP and Citi Foundation, had brought together young innovators in the Philippines who are making headway towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through entrepreneurship. The initiative has paved the way for new networks, life-long connections, and further opportunities for impact.

This year's YSIL was designed to be a more enriching experience, allowing participants to hone their entrepreneurial skills, practice and implement tools in their

social enterprise, and gather comprehensive feedback from mentors and industry experts while refining their business models. These young minds participated in nine module sessions revolving around the SDGs, Business Development, Finance, Marketing, Organizational Management, and Design Thinking.

**Selva Ramanchandran**, Resident Representative at UNDP Philippines expressed, "To the youth, I urge you to be proactive, resilient, and persistent on your entrepreneurial journey. Make your voices heard, take up space, and explore the multitude of opportunities. This endeavour will be challenging, but it will

also be rewarding. UNDP remains steadfast in its commitment to youth empowerment, the advancement of action plans for youth, and the strengthening of youth entrepreneurial communities. Together, let us forge a future where the entrepreneurial spirit of our youth thrives, making meaningful contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals."

**Alessandra Gutierrez**, founder of REPAMANA and YSIL 2023 graduate, voiced her sentiments, "It's truly motivating to witness fellow women entrepreneurs flourishing across diverse fields such as technology, agriculture, fashion, and more. With opportunities and a supportive environment, women founders can excel, and for me, YSIL 2023 provided precisely that nurturing space."

Recognizing the pivotal role young entrepreneurs play as agents of positive change, it's imperative

to underscore the significance of supporting them. With around 30% of the Philippines' population comprising young individuals, their potential for driving societal progress is undeniable.

"Citi and the Citi Foundation support initiatives that help the youth develop solutions to the biggest social challenges impacting their communities, and meet the Sustainable Development Goals," said **Paul Favila**, CEO of Citi Philippines. "As a global bank we play a role in helping address society's greatest challenges and our youth participants have given us a clear picture of the world they want to live in. We hope to do our part in making this a reality. We are inspired by their passion and commitment in taking those steps towards a more sustainable future for all."

**Reuel Ruiz Jr.**, one of YSIL 2023's mentors and Planning and Programs

Division Head of the Local Economic and Investment Promotions Office of the Quezon City Government, shared, "The energy at the event was electric, buzzing with innovative ideas from young social entrepreneurs tackling real-world issues. Witnessing their passion and creativity firsthand gave me hope for the future. The event was so well-organized, with insightful feedback from fellow mentors, experts, and opportunities to connect with like-minded changemakers."

YSIL aims to foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem by creating an environment where aspiring entrepreneurs are supported, encouraged, and provided with the resources they need to thrive and nurture innovation and startup growth.

Source: <https://www.undp.org/philippines/press-releases/youth-led-startups-showcase-sustainable-development-solutions-youth-social-innovation-lab-ysil-2023-demo-day>

# Investigating the factors affecting farmers' intention to adopt contract farming

**A**gricultural endeavors, especially in developing nations, entail inherent risks. Amidst challenges related to capital and agricultural marketing, contract farming emerges as a highly effective strategy. It not only facilitates capital accumulation but also ensures consistent product sales, establishes fair pricing, and contributes to the overall balanced development of the agricultural sector. This concern has been a longstanding global consideration, with Iran now addressing it. Recognizing the paramount importance of implementing contemporary agricultural methodologies, including contract farming, this research systematically investigates factors influencing farmers' intentions in Iran. A survey methodology is employed for systematic information collection from a statistical population of 98,777 farmers in rural Markazi Province, Iran. Using the Karjesi and Morgan table for sample size determination, a representative subset of 383 farmers is selected through stratified random sampling, ensuring proportional assignment within strata. A researcher-made questionnaire, validated by expert panels and confirmed for reliability through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, serves as the research instrument. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 27, and structural equation modeling was performed with

SmartPLS4. The findings reveal that trust (0.528), awareness (0.332), and attitude (0.168), exert the most substantial causal influence on farmers' intention to embrace contract farming. Consequently, the research findings offer practical recommendations for the adoption of contract farming, providing valuable insights to policymakers and stakeholders for implementing targeted interventions aimed at boosting farmers' willingness to participate in contractual agreements.

## Introduction

Changes in population and income, as well as advancements in technological processes at both the macroeconomic level and within food systems, are poised to impact poverty, inequality, and food security across various dimensions. Notably, poverty remains concentrated in rural areas, and due to persistent inequality, achieving the goal of eradicating hunger by 2030, as outlined by the FAO in 2017, appears challenging based on current trends<sup>1</sup>.

Recognizing the intricate connections between food security, nutrition, human health, ecosystem viability, climate change, and social justice, sustainable development necessitates resilient food systems. This perspective is emphasized by Caron<sup>2</sup>, underscoring the critical role of food systems in achieving sustainable development goals.

Sustainable agricultural intensification emerges as a pivotal strategy for land conservation, as highlighted by the FAO in 2018. Agronomic expansion is identified as one of the most effective instruments to alleviate widespread poverty, promote shared prosperity, and accommodate the projected population of 9.7 billion individuals by 2050. The agricultural sector's evolution proves two to four times more efficient in enhancing profits for the most vulnerable compared to other sectors.

Furthermore, farming plays a fundamental role in economic growth, contributing to 4% of the world's gross domestic product. In many developing regions, agriculture can account for more than 25% of GDP, showcasing its significance in driving economic development<sup>3</sup>. According to the FAO in 2023, the global agriculture value added reached 3.7 trillion in 2021. These figures underscore the substantial economic impact and potential for positive change within the agriculture sector on a global scale<sup>4</sup>. The progress driven by farming, the reduction of deprivation, and the availability of food face significant threats. Numerous shocks, ranging from disruptions associated with the coronavirus to extreme climate events and conflicts, are impacting food systems. These disruptions lead to higher food prices and an increase in malnutrition. Wars, in particular, have triggered global

food crises, pushing millions of people into severe deprivation<sup>3</sup>.

The repercussions of these vulnerabilities also contribute to income instability. Agriculture bears a disproportionate share of the impact of natural disasters, with many of these challenges directly affecting smallholders<sup>1</sup>. In light of the persistence of these crises, countries and societies must adopt more effective and sustainable strategies to build resilience and capacity to cope with shocks and stressors<sup>1</sup>.

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**Examining the evolution of government policies in agriculture reveals that developed countries and some developing nations, acknowledging the inefficiency of government intervention policies, have shifted towards utilizing market-based tools. Financial instruments, including certificates of deposit, commodity funds, and agricultural contracts, have emerged as a result of changes in factors influencing the supply and demand of agricultural products<sup>5</sup>.**

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Contract farming (CF) is among the approaches that can effectively address the drawbacks of the agronomic sector within the framework of market dynamics<sup>6</sup>. At the heart of CF lies a contractual agreement between farmers and consumers, mutually establishing regulations and conditions for the production and sale of cultivated items. These terms typically outline the remuneration for producers, the quantity and quality of items requested by buyers, and the delivery date. In certain situations, the agreement may also include additional detailed information

on the production process or the agricultural inputs provided by the customer<sup>4</sup>.

In the 1970s, Contract Farming (CF) emerged as a pro-poverty-alleviation approach in agricultural and rural development<sup>7</sup>. CF involves an agreement between farmers and processing/marketing companies for agricultural goods production and supply under specific contracts, often at predetermined prices<sup>8</sup>. Supporting institutions provide multifaceted functions such as risk management, capital and credit provision, information exchange, technology development, and legal services, enhancing added value production within the agricultural sector's chain<sup>10</sup>. Extensive literature documents CF's impact on farmers' productivity, efficiency, and income in both developed and developing countries<sup>7,9</sup>, establishing a meaningful farm-to-market connection. CF is attractive for planners fostering rural development, facilitating economically disadvantaged rural participation in industrial crop cultivation for access to commerce benefits through value-added processes<sup>10,11</sup>.

Transitioning to a market-oriented approach, as emphasized by Khosravi<sup>12</sup>, addresses market needs. Farmers adopting a market-oriented approach align their production plans with market signals, focusing on cultivating more marketable commodities<sup>13</sup>. Agricultural commercialization, based on market orientation, is imperative for breaking free from the poverty trap, especially in developing countries, requiring active encouragement. Market orientation significantly influences production and commercialization decisions, with specific crop choices signaling intended purposes<sup>14</sup>. Stabilization measures and mechanisms like commodity

exchanges and contract systems support production and supply chain management, removing traditional tools and ensuring stability and growth of investments in the agricultural sector<sup>8</sup>.

Challenges in the agricultural sector include market intermediaries, consumer needs understanding, inadequate access to machinery, low-productivity traditional practices, insufficient capital, limited inputs access, absence of diversified industries, and ineffective cultivation models. Governmental constraints hinder effective resolution<sup>12</sup>. Challenges include waste in the production chain, machinery devaluation, incomplete projects, and inadequate working capital, exacerbating sector issues. In the "market" domain, deficiencies in disseminating information, planning for export/import, and diplomatic efforts pose significant issues<sup>15</sup>. Contract Farming (CF) emerges as an optimal agricultural model, fostering a relationship and integration between industry and agriculture for mutual benefits<sup>16</sup>. Within the agricultural sector of Iran, the practice of formalized contractual agreements for various transactions, encompassing diverse forms of sharing and leasing, has been pervasive over an extended period. Contract cultivation, notably in the cultivation of at least two crops, specifically cotton and sugar beet, is substantiated by documented, codified, and nearly exhaustive historical records. These records serve as valuable resources for foreign businessmen and companies engaged in operations within Iran<sup>17</sup>. The merits of this contractual approach include income generation<sup>18,19,20</sup>, facilitated technology transfer, risk mitigation, and assurance of product and market quality <sup>21,22</sup>.

Read more at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-60317-x>



## Animal protection NGO urges election commitments to phase out animal testing

**Animal protection NGO Cruelty Free International recently presented its manifesto which asks for a phase-out of animal testing at the Houses of Parliament, including animal testing for cosmetics ingredients to be made illegal**

**C**ruelty-Free International launched its 'Pledge Cruelty-Free' campaign, which calls for the government to create a plan to phase out animal testing forever, with a minister dedicated to delivering this plan across all government departments. It also asks that homes be made safer by modernising the system and removing animals from the testing of chemicals that go into the products we use every day, such as clothes, household cleaning, furniture, electronic goods, paints and dyes, and food. Finally, it wants the UK's 1998 ban on testing cosmetics on animals, covering ingredients used both predominantly and exclusively in cosmetics, to be fully reinstated and put into law to protect it from being abandoned by future governments.

The campaign is supported by Cruelty-Free International's newly published 'Target Zero' report <sup>(1)</sup>, which sets out a proactive, targets-based action plan for the phase-out of animal testing, including practical, low-cost, concrete steps that any future government could take in its first term.

### Political support for cruelty-free science

The event was sponsored by Henry Smith, Conservative MP for Crawley and Vice-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare, who signed the organisation's pledge to support cruelty-free science.

Also signing the pledge were Diana Johnson, Labour MP for Kingston upon Hull North and Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee;

Sally-Ann Hart, Conservative MP for Hastings and Rye; and Alison Thewliss, MP for Glasgow Central and the SNP Home Affairs spokesperson.

Other MPs in attendance were Chi Onwurah, Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central and Shadow Science Minister; Sir Roger Gale, Conservative MP for North Thanet and Deputy Speaker of the House; Kerry McCarthy, Labour MP for Bristol East and Shadow Minister for Climate Change; Anna Firth, Conservative MP for Southend West; Jo Stevens, Labour MP for Cardiff Central; and Stephen Timms, Labour MP for East Ham.

Henry Smith MP said: "This report is an important contribution towards our efforts to end the suffering of animals. Ultimately, we all want to see a world where animal testing

is a thing of the past, but it's a big task that requires serious thinking. Cruelty-Free International has set out some concrete steps that we can take towards a phase-out of animal testing, and I strongly recommend that we give them serious consideration."

### Banning cosmetic testing on animals

In May 2023, during a judicial review by Cruelty-Free International of the UK Government's policy on testing cosmetics ingredients on animals, it was disclosed that the government had secretly lifted the ban on animal testing for cosmetics ingredients that was imposed in 1998. Following legal pressure exerted by Cruelty-Free International, the government partially reinstated the cosmetics testing ban, but it didn't go far enough. This new ban only covers ingredients used exclusively in cosmetics, whereas the previous ban also covered those used predominantly in cosmetics. Exclusive use accounts for just approximately 20% of the total ingredients used in cosmetics and represents a clear step backward.

In announcing the partial reinstatement of the cosmetics testing ban, the Home Secretary also revealed that "the government is committed to replacing animals used in science wherever scientifically possible" and was "working with industry... to improve safety by the application of new non-animal science and technology."<sup>(2)</sup> To honour these two commitments, the government must show political leadership and take steps to accelerate progress.

### Do we need to test on animals?

Home Office statistics show that there were over 2.76 million uses

of animals in laboratories in Great Britain in 2022. <sup>(3)</sup> 10% of those are tests required by regulators to assess the safety or effectiveness of chemicals, medicines, and other products.

Yet, despite tests which are meant to keep us safe, the pharmaceutical industry is in a silent crisis: 92% of drugs fail in clinical trials even though they passed extensive pre-clinical tests (including animal tests), which suggested that they were safe and effective. Meanwhile, the rapidly growing availability of non-animal methods, which often outperform traditional animal models, provides an opportunity to drive better outcomes and bring an end to animal suffering in laboratories.

Of the remaining uses of animals in British laboratories in 2022, 45% were in the creation and breeding of genetically altered animals, and a further 29% in basic, curiosity-driven research. Many of these tests, which aren't required by the regulator and are essentially voluntary, could be removed with minimal impact. This should be one of the first areas to be addressed in a comprehensive government-led plan to phase out testing on animals.

**Cruelty-Free International calculates that some 80,000 animal tests could be ended immediately, as they continue to be conducted despite the availability of approved non-animal alternatives.** <sup>(4)</sup>

Dylan Underhill, Head of Public Affairs at Cruelty-Free International, said: "The UK stands at a crossroads in its approach to animal testing. We know that, as a country, we can do so much better. Animal testing touches our lives in many ways that most of us don't appreciate, from

cosmetics and household products to clothes, furniture, plastics, electronic and white goods, paints, dyes, garden fertilisers, and food.

"The government's [attitude towards animal testing](#) has for too long been passive, and tolerant of an outdated status quo. Instead, to stop millions of animals being used in cruel and painful tests every year, we need progress and compassion. The government must do more to promote alternatives and end the use of animals in science, especially when modern innovations in non-animal methods can produce better results, potentially saving lives and resources."

Animal testing has been a topic of controversy for many years. However, it is still extensively implemented globally to test the safety and efficacy of products. According to recent statistics, China, Japan, and the US are the world's biggest users of animals in research and testing; 192.1 million animals were used for scientific purposes worldwide in 2015. <sup>(5)</sup> In 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, an independent agency responsible for safeguarding human health and the environment, announced that it would cease conducting or financing studies on mammals by 2035. However, this controversial plan was recently revoked on the grounds that the decision was not based on sound scientific evidence.

Upon the announcement, the EPA became the first federal agency to impose deadline-specific guidelines. The agency provided \$4.25 million in additional funding to five US universities to research and develop non-animal testing models to 'reduce, refine, and replace vertebrate animal testing.' While it still endeavours to support research into non-animal testing methods, strict deadlines are no longer in place.

Source: <https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/animal-protection-ngo-urges-election-commitments-to-phase-out-animal-testing/176389/>

# UNDP to launch district development plan in Balochistan

collaborative effort to address climate change and promote sustainable development across Balochistan

**QUETTA: United Nations Development Program (UNDP) will launch a district development plan covering 10 districts of Balochistan.**

The Assistant Secretary General of the UNDP, Kani Vigana Raja, discussed the looming threat of climate change and development projects with the Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Thursday.

This meeting underscored the collaborative endeavors between the UNDP and the Balochistan Government to initiate crucial projects throughout the province.

Chief Minister Bugti emphasized the imperative nature of addressing the adversities posed by climate change, particularly amidst aberrant weather patterns causing significant harm to crops and infrastructure.

He stressed the necessity of devising comprehensive strategies to mitigate the ramifications of climate change and ensure sustainable progress in the region.

Present at the meeting were Saboor Kakar, the Additional Chief Secretary (Development) Balochistan, UNDP Balochistan Chief, Zulfiqar Durrani, along with other officials.

Recognizing Balochistan's susceptibility to climate change, Chief Minister Bugti outlined his government's proactive stance in formulating a robust climate change policy.

He highlighted ongoing endeavors to explore alternative energy sources to cater to the region's energy demands, thereby stimulating economic growth and stability.

Furthermore, the Chief Minister accentuated Balochistan's potential

as an appealing destination for international investments.

He pledged streamlined processes and comprehensive facilitation through a one-window operation, aiming to foster a conducive environment for both domestic and international investors.

Under the aegis of the UNDP, Assistant Secretary-General Kani Vigana Raja unveiled the formulation of an extensive district development plan encompassing 10 districts of Balochistan.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2464306/undp-to-launch-district-development-plan-in-balochistan>



## Ministry of Community Development and Department of Community Development partner to enhance social sector

The [Ministry of Community Development](#) and the [Department of Community Development - Abu Dhabi](#)

have signed an agreement aimed at enhancing cooperation, coordination and exchange of expertise between the two entities.

The agreement serves to support and enable strategic ties and partnerships, facilitating joint efforts to improve the quality of services provided within the social sector.

The MoU signing ceremony was attended by Her Excellency Shamma Al Mazrui, Minister of Community Development, and His

Excellency Dr. Mugheer Khamis Al Khailli, Chairman of the Department of Community Development - Abu Dhabi, in addition to leaders from both parties.

The agreement aims to strengthen the frameworks of cooperation and coordination between the two entities, in relation to non-governmental social care institutions and centres operating within the social sector in Abu Dhabi, regulating their activities, activating their role in society and enabling them to provide specialised services in a way that enhances the quality of life of all members of society.

The agreement also aims to enhance the quality of social services by continuing to improve the licensing, inspection and oversight system in accordance with applicable legislation, through joint communication and coordination plans between the two sides. This reflects the complementarity of roles between the federal and local institutions in each emirate, in addition to enhancing cooperation and coordination in legislative areas and policies related to social sector centres and institutions; and exchanging experiences, information and new developments in the field.

Source: <https://www.mediaoffice.abudhabi/en/community/ministry-of-community-development-and-department-of-community-development-partner-to-enhance-social-sector/>

# Bengaluru NGO empowers 1 lakh youth to be job-ready

**Unnati's training programme is primarily focused on rural areas and it has more than 50% participation from women.**

**B**ENGALURU: While the unemployment rate in the country is alarming with the recently released 'India Employment Report 2024' revealing that nearly 83% of the unemployed workforce comprises youth, Bengaluru-based SCBS Unnati Foundation (SUF), an NGO, is actively working to bridge this learning gap and empower the youth to be job-ready and encourage pursuing higher education. Unnati's training programme is primarily focused on rural areas and it has more than 50% participation from women.

The employment report highlighted that the percentage of unemployed youth with secondary education or above rose from 35.2% in 2000 to 65.7% in 2022 and though enrollment in higher education in India is rising, the quality of education continues to remain a concern. The majority of the youth trained are from the final year of graduation in government colleges.

So far, the NGO has trained 1 lakh youth across 12 states in this fiscal year 2023-24 and aims to make a difference in the lives of 1 million youth in the country. Their UNXT programme offers a comprehensive approach to youth empowerment with a specific focus on skills development. It consists of 165 hours of classroom training, with 90 hours of classroom learning,

covering essential subjects such as values, English communication, and life skills. This will help address the learning deficit at school levels and the quality of education provided by learning institutions that are inadequate in the job market.

Not just classroom learning, participants are also engaged in over 75 hours of self-directed learning through a mobile app. These sessions are conducted in small batches of 35-40 students, each session lasts three hours outside regular college hours, within government college premises, and is offered free of charge.

Ramesh Swamy, Director, SCBS Unnati Foundation, said, "This year has been very special for Unnati

as we became the first NGO to be listed on the Social Stock Exchange. In this fiscal year alone, we have achieved the significant milestone of training 1,00,000 youth. The speciality of this 1 lakh has been the classroom model where the ChangeMakers (trainers) have actually touched the lives of these youth. This achievement marks a significant step forward in empowering individuals from marginalised communities, providing them with the skills and confidence needed to secure gainful employment and stand tall in society."

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/karnataka/2024/Apr/03/bengaluru-ngo-empowers-1-lakh-youth-to-be-job-ready>



# Global Empowerment Mission

**S**nippets from just two Global Empowerment Mission and The Howard G. Buffett Foundation distributions in the past two days out in Ukraine's oblast region. GEM Founder and President Michael Capponi joined ground teams on distributions meeting families that live there. Simultaneously, with other team leads, we do a minimum of 20 to 30 like this per day along the entire 600 mile stretch of Ukraine's front lines in 6 oblasts. Tens of thousands of people are served daily. In March alone, 245 semi trucks of vital aid was delivered directly into people's hands. Over 3,5000 trucks have been delivered to date. Impact is all that matters.

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7188556290548273153/>



# World Food Forum 2024

**T**he World Food Forum will focus on the theme, 'Good Food for All, for Today and Tomorrow'. The event aims to mobilize people of all ages from around the world to spark holistic, strategic, and at-scale sustainable agrifood systems transformation.

The event is a youth-led movement and network that aims to transform agrifood systems. The movement recognizes that every person on the planet needs good food to thrive, yet agrifood systems are facing increasing pressure, including from biodiversity loss, climate change, deforestation, and soil degradation.

The event will focus on four tracks: a youth assembly to empower and

connect young agents of change towards a sustainable global food systems; an innovation lab to inspire innovation to end hunger and transform food systems through global competitions and education to encourage behavior change; education to unite schools and youth groups to take action; and culture to bring together the world's youth to inspire action to end hunger and transform food systems.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN's (FAO) Youth Initiative supports the Forum in partnership with a global network of organizations, including the UN World Food Programme's (WFP) Youth Network, the UN Office of the Secretary-General's

Envoy on Youth, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, (UNESCO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Women, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Source: <https://sdg.iisd.org/events/world-food-forum-2024/>



## Unlocking Social Impact: The 180 Degrees Consulting Experience at NC State

**In just three years of operation, the NC State chapter of 180 Degrees Consulting serves as a catalyst for social impact, aiming to revolutionize the nonprofit sector by offering pro bono consultancy services.**

In the heart of North Carolina State University, a student-led initiative is making waves, connecting passion with purpose. Meet 180 Degrees Consulting, the world's largest consultancy for non-profits and social enterprises, and at the helm of its NC State branch is a dynamic group of students dedicated to driving positive change.

The NC State chapter of 180 Degrees Consulting serves as a catalyst for social impact, aiming to revolutionize the nonprofit sector by offering pro bono consultancy services. Covering a diverse array of areas such as marketing, social media, finance, website development, data analytics, business operations and fundraising, the club is committed

to helping local and global nonprofit organizations reach their full potential.

"Our goal is to generate unique solutions that empower nonprofits and social enterprises," says Jack Hagan, president of the NC State branch. "We want to provide students with a platform to gain real-world business experience while making a meaningful impact in our community."

Founded in 2021 by Adam Gilleland, the NC State branch of 180 Degrees Consulting was established with a dual mission. Firstly, to create a significant social impact by working pro bono for nonprofits in the community, and secondly, to offer students an invaluable opportunity to gain professional, real-world

business experience during their college years.

"The inspiration came from witnessing the transformative impact of other 180DC branches. I knew we had the potential to make a difference here at NC State," reflects Hagan.

Spearheaded by the former president, Kara Emsley, 180 Degrees Consulting at NC State has burgeoned into a powerhouse with over 50 active members and 25 nonprofit clients served in only three years of operations. Their exceptional growth earned them the prestigious "Best New Branch in the Americas Region Award" at the 180 Degrees Global Awards in Fall 2023 – "an impressive feat for a club that is only three years

young," as noted by [Annie Murray, interim director of the Career Management Center](#).

This accolade not only underscores the rapid expansion and impact of the NC State branch but also positions it as a beacon of excellence within the larger 180 Degrees Consulting network. Murray's acknowledgment highlights the significance of the club's achievements, showcasing how, in a short span, it has not only made a mark within the university community but has garnered recognition on a global scale.

Through their professional development programs, members have not only honed their consultancy skills but have also secured internships, job offers, case-competition final placements, and consulting career opportunities.

Starting a new organization at a large university comes with its challenges. The team at 180 Degrees Consulting overcame hurdles by relentlessly pursuing dedicated and passionate students through recruitment events and other avenues. The commitment to perfection is evident in the continuous improvement of projects, educational materials, and the overall consulting experience provided to members.

180 Degrees Consulting at NC State has left an indelible mark on the

university community. Over 100 students have had the opportunity to work in client-facing roles before graduation, significantly enhancing their professionalism and capabilities in a team environment. The branch's involvement in case competitions, both on campus and beyond, showcases the competence and reputation of NC State.

"Our members serve as role models for newer students," mentions Hagan, highlighting the Discovery Consulting Program that allows students to shadow projects and attend professional development workshops, accelerating their professional growth and preparing them for successful careers.

As the NC State branch continues to grow, the team at 180 Degrees Consulting is eagerly anticipating expanding their reach and collaborating with larger nonprofit organizations. The fall 2024 recruitment cycle holds exciting prospects as they aim to engage with more students and solidify their professional reputation at NC State.

In the world of 180 Degrees Consulting, each project is a step toward a better, more impactful future. As they navigate challenges and celebrate achievements, the club stands as a testament to the transformative power of student-led initiatives, leaving an enduring legacy of positive change at NC State.



## Health: NGO supports Goaso Hospital with Neglected Tropical Disease center

**A**n NGO called Tim Africa Aid Ghana has supported the Goaso Government Hospital in the Ahafo Region with a center for the treatment of Neglected Tropical Diseases.

At a brief ceremony to hand over the facility to the hospital, a member of the NGO, Isaac Kwabena Kakpeibe explained to Adom News that, they realized the hospital lacked well-equipped space to provide the needed treatment for neglected tropical diseases such as yaws, Buruli ulcer, leprosy, trypanosomiasis and others.

Hence, the NGO deemed it prudent to offer support.

He said persons with these diseases often shy away from visiting the hospital for treatment because of the stigma.

The Medical Superintendent at Goaso Government Hospital, Dr James Ankamah on behalf of the facility thanked the NGO for the gesture and assured to make good use of the facility.

He said, that with this facility available, the hospital will improve in handling Neglected Tropical Diseases at the Goaso enclave.

Source: <https://www.adomonline.com/health-ngo-supports-goaso-hospital-with-neglected-tropical-disease-center/>



# World Immunization Week 2024

24 to 30 April

**Humanly Possible: Immunization for All**

The global vaccine drives of the second half of the 20th century are one of humanity's greatest achievements.

Immunization campaigns have enabled us to eradicate smallpox, nearly defeat polio, and ensure more children survive and thrive than ever before.

This year World Immunization Week will celebrate 50 years of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) - recognizing our collective efforts to save and improve countless lives from vaccine-preventable diseases and calling on countries to ramp up investments in immunization

programmes to protect the next generations.

In just 5 decades we went from a world where the death of a child was something many parents feared, to a world where every child — if vaccinated — has a chance to survive and thrive.

At its inception in 1974, the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) focused on protecting all children against 6 childhood illnesses, but today, this number has grown to 13 universally recommended vaccines across the lifecourse, and 17 additional vaccines with context dependent recommendations. With the expansion of vaccination



programme across the life course we now call it the Essential Programme on Immunization.

In the last few years during the pandemic, progress on immunization slipped. While more than 4 million more children were vaccinated globally in 2022 compared to 2021, there were still 20 million children who missed out on one or more of their vaccines. Growing conflicts, economic downturns, and a rise in vaccine hesitancy are some of the threats to efforts to reach these children. As a result, the world is seeing sudden outbreaks of diphtheria and measles diseases that, until now, we'd had nearly in hand. While global vaccine coverage is good — with 4 out of 5 kids fully covered — we have more to do.

We can make it possible for everyone to benefit from the life-saving power of vaccines.

## Let's make this possible by:

- Ensuring vaccines are high on the priority list for governments in all countries;
- Advocating for vaccines to be an integral part of the planning and investment of health care across the life course;
- Making sure vaccination programmes are adequately financed and resourced in all countries;
- Accelerating research and innovation that advances access to, and support for, vaccines;
- Speaking out on the impact of vaccinations locally, nationally and globally.



Source: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-immunization-week/2024>

# Before it's too late: Humanitarian organisations urge participants of the Paris Conference for Sudan and its Neighbouring Countries to take immediate action to prevent further suffering and death

12 April 2024 – One year from the outbreak of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), representatives of humanitarian organisations working in [Sudan](#) and its neighbouring countries are sounding the alarm that Sudan is balancing on the precipice of one of the world's worst hunger crises, urging all actors to immediately scale up efforts to prevent famine and avoid the potential loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

Four months ago, more than 37% of the population - or at least 18 million people - were reported to be acutely food insecure (IPC3+), with nearly 5 million people on the brink of famine. Since then, [the conflict](#) - which is one of the main drivers of food insecurity - has expanded into traditional food-surplus areas. Without immediate

**Sofia Sprechmann Sineiro, Secretary-General, CARE International:**

*"We need global leaders in Paris to take this opportunity to come up with immediate, concrete solutions to the human tragedy that continues to unfold and is spilling over across the region. This is the time to turn the tide on this crisis, and world leaders need to stand by the very courageous, determined people of Sudan. We cannot see another month of violence, brutality, and increased suffering. The Paris Conference cannot be one of empty and hollow promises. It must result in decisive, meaningful, and inclusive commitments to respond to this devastating crisis to prevent famine, as has been said here, and bring an end to this war on women and girls."*

**Eatizaz Yousif, Sudan Country Director, International Rescue Committee:**

*"As we speak about the scale of the crisis, the role of local actors in this response cannot be overstated. Since April last year, it has been everyday Sudanese who have - often at great personal risk - stepped up to support each other and become a lifeline for millions of Sudanese. However, without sustainable, flexible, and predictable funding this lifeline remains under constant threat."*

action, and as Sudan enters an early lean season, the situation is expected to deteriorate rapidly in the coming weeks.

Children, women, and people with disabilities are disproportionately and severely affected by the hunger and malnutrition emergency in Sudan and neighbouring countries. Already, nearly 4 million children under 5 years old are acutely malnourished, of which 730,000 are projected to

suffer from severe acute malnutrition. A child who is severely malnourished is ten times more likely to die from common diseases like malaria or diarrhea than a healthy child. With over 70% of health facilities shut down in conflict areas, limited access to services, dropping child vaccination coverage and looming disease outbreaks compound the threats faced by these highly vulnerable groups.

In a context where widespread sexual and gender-based violence has already destroyed so many lives, hunger will only increase reliance on desperate coping mechanisms. There are deep concerns regarding reports of families already resorting to forcibly marrying off younger girls, or of women engaging in sex for money, simply to survive.

The deteriorating hunger crisis unfolding today is the direct result of the conflict and represents total disregard for international

**Dominic MacSorley, Humanitarian Ambassador, CONCERN Worldwide**

*"Hunger and suffering are at unprecedented levels, and yet we know Sudan has not hit its worst level of suffering. We can use words like 'famine-like conditions', but to be brutally frank, this does mean children are already dying. And the situation in Darfur and neighbouring states where Concern is working is particularly worrying our teams. There are reports of a rapid deterioration in the condition of children presenting at the various health facilities."*

humanitarian law and human rights law by all parties of the conflict. Sudan is rapidly becoming a stark illustration of conflict-induced hunger. Those facing the most acute food insecurity live in areas where violence has been most intense. Fighting has disrupted harvests and whilst markets continue to function in many locations, people's purchasing power has plummeted, and families forced to leave their homes and without income simply not afford spiraling food prices. At the same time, access to humanitarian assistance continues to be severely restricted by administrative barriers, restrictions on civilian movement, insufficient border crossing points, and insecurity, with the movements of essential supplies and personnel obstructed both into and within Sudan.

**Anette Hoffman, Senior Research Fellow at the Conflict Research Unit at the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands:**

*"We are very concerned that the global early warning system is failing Sudan. It was designed to address such crises by allowing for comparability to other crises around the world. But in the case of Sudan, the system is not working, so we published our analysis to urge global leaders to ensure that early warning can still enable early action. It might be too late to prevent famine in Sudan, but a concerted, timely response can still save hundreds of thousands of lives."*

The crisis in Sudan also poses significant challenges to regional security and economic stability. More than 1.8 million people have fled Sudan since April 2023, with the majority seeking refuge in [neighbouring countries](#) - [Chad](#), [South Sudan](#), [Egypt](#), [Ethiopia](#), and the [Central African Republic](#) - placing an incredible strain on already fragile countries with humanitarian crises of their own.

With famine looming, refugee numbers are likely to significantly increase as hunger drives people across international borders in search of food - often to areas that find themselves in dire food situations. In [Chad](#), which is [currently hosting more than half of all Sudanese refugees](#) in the region, the Government declared a state of food and nutrition emergency on 15 February 2024 and forecasts suggest that more than 3 million will face acute food insecurity this year. At the same time, close to 130,000 Sudanese individuals have sought refuge in [South Sudan](#) since April 2023, and over 500,000 South Sudanese who had previously fled conflict decades ago and sought refuge in Sudan have been forced to return, further straining resources and support systems. The influx has also intensified humanitarian needs in South Sudan, where three-quarters of the population require assistance. Additionally, South Sudanese oil exports through Sudan, accounting for 90% of its GDP, are now severely disrupted by the conflict in Sudan, causing a massive economic crisis further putting at risk the already fragile country and its population. What is at stake today is an entire region, from the Red Sea to the Sahel.

Ahead of the 'International Humanitarian Conference for Sudan and its Neighbours' taking place in Paris, France, 15 April, organisations speaking at a media briefing today urged donors, United Nations agencies, as well as parties to the conflict - and their regional backers

**Fatima Ahmed, from Zenab for Women in Development, a Sudanese NGO:**

*"As local responders, we know there are many ways inside Sudan to get food for those in need. People need basic types of food - lentils, sorghum - which are available in the country. As local NGOs, we have been receiving funds from international NGOs, and this is saving lives on the ground. We should focus on supporting and empowering local responders so they can scale-up what they're doing."*

- to immediately facilitate a scaling-up of the humanitarian response. Conference participants must renew efforts to bring about an end to the hostilities through an immediate ceasefire and an inclusive peace process. In addition, NGOs working in the region call on those attending the Paris Conference to increase funding for all humanitarian actors, including local organisations and mutual aid groups, strengthen diplomatic pressure to push for the provision of [unfettered humanitarian access](#), elevate efforts to address violations against civilians, defend the critical role of local responders and enhance diplomatic and donor coordination on Sudan and the wider region.

## Guatemala Prosecutors Raid International NGO Over Alleged Child Abuse

The Guatemalan attorney general's office on Thursday raided the offices of an international non-governmental organization as part of an investigation into alleged abuses against children, an official said.

A spokesperson for Save the Children confirmed shortly afterward that officials had arrived at its offices in Guatemala City, but declined to give more details.

The operation was the result of "a transnational investigation of great significance, since it concerns actions that could be related to violations and abuses against Guatemalan children," state prosecutor Rafael Curruchiche said in a video published on social media.

Authorities in the US state of Texas were involved in the case, he said.

The operation involves an "inspection, search and seizure of evidence," added Curruchiche, who heads the special prosecutor's office against impunity.

Source: [https://www.barrons.com/news/guatemala-prosecutors-raid-international-ngo-over-alleged-child-abuse-7123e7b4?refsec=topics\\_afp-news](https://www.barrons.com/news/guatemala-prosecutors-raid-international-ngo-over-alleged-child-abuse-7123e7b4?refsec=topics_afp-news)



## The ILO, the private sector, and employment promotion

In most countries, private enterprises create the most jobs. This is especially true in developing countries, where over 90 per cent of jobs are in the private sector. However, there are multiple constraints to sustainable enterprise development. This can include both internal and external factors. The ILO has tools and methods to address both. It works to build both the level of knowledge of entrepreneurs, while also addressing the external environment in which they operate in to make it more enabling.

For example, the ILO's Know About Business (KAB) training programme has contributed to the creation of an enterprise culture in many countries and societies. Many training centres around the world have been trained and certified by the ILO to conduct

such training independently. It promotes awareness among young people of the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment, and of their role in shaping their future and that of their country's economic and social development.

The [Start & Improve Your Business](#) (SIYB) programme is a management-training programme with a focus on starting and improving small businesses as a strategy for creating more and better employment in developing and transition economies. With an estimated outreach of 4.5 million trainees, a continuously growing network of more than 17,000 trainers and 200 Master Trainers in 2,500 partner institutions, SIYB is one of the biggest global

management training systems used for the support of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) currently on the market.

ILO's [Value Chain Development](#) work focuses on job creation and job quality improvement by using a market development approach. The ILO's interventions build on private sector development strategies that seek to strengthen enterprises, business relationships and services, market structures, and the business environment, so that they channel more benefits to the poor and create more and better jobs.

The [Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprise](#) (ESEE) Toolkit is a resource for employers' organizations and other business membership organizations wishing to assess the environment in which businesses start-up and grow.

Source: <https://www.ilo.org/partnering-development/private-sector-and-non-state-partners/ilo-private-sector-and-employment-promotion>

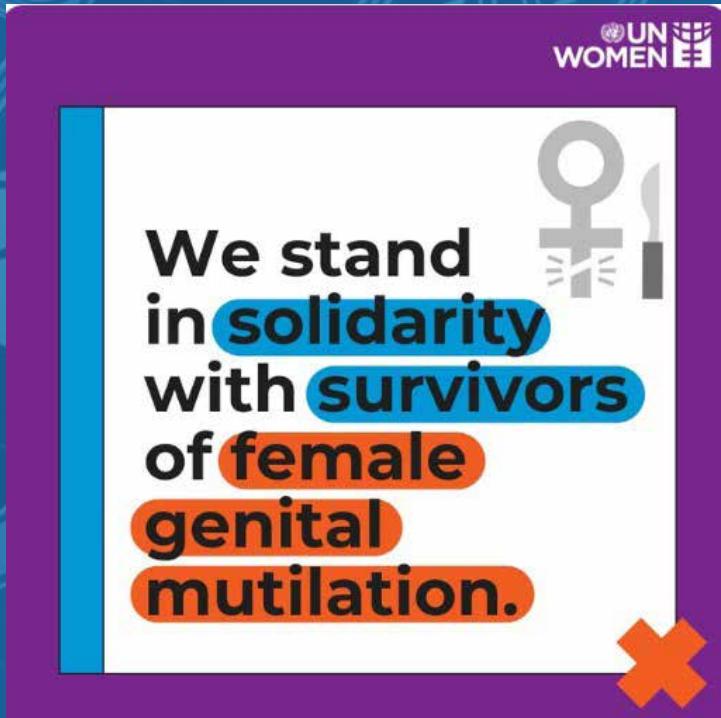
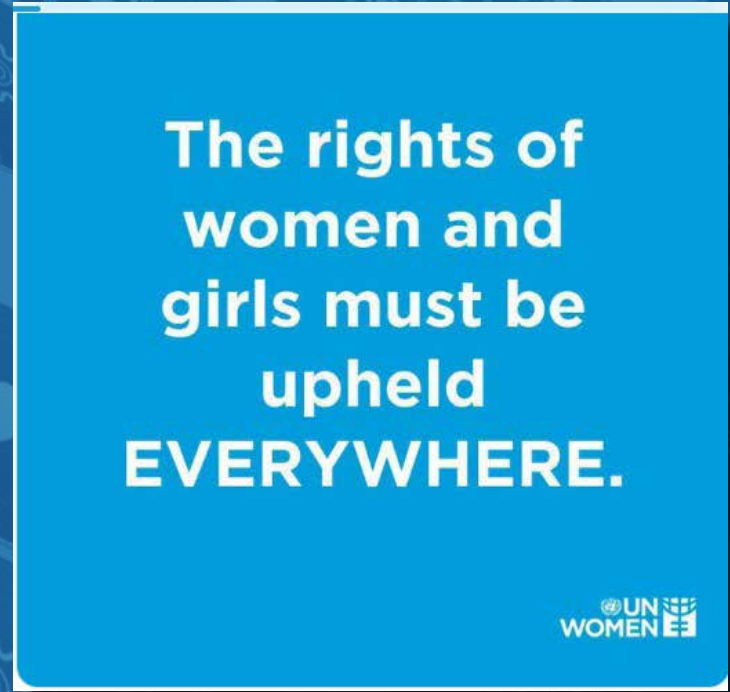
## Pakistan Humanitarian Forum

The pivotal workshop convened by the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum, in collaboration with member organizations at the Acted Office in Islamabad, focused on reviewing the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the [hashtag#Disaster](#) [hashtag#Risk](#) [hashtag#Reduction](#) ([hashtag#DRR](#)) Technical Working Group. Key stakeholders, including the National Disaster Management Authority Pakistan (Official), UN Agencies, and various national and international organizations, participated in the workshop. The primary objective was to deepen understanding and develop effective strategies for

[hashtag#climatechange](#) mitigation in Pakistan. The workshop aimed to draft preliminary outlines for the National Action Plan for the fiscal year 2024-25. Emphasis was placed on enhancing collaboration with academic institutions to grasp changing climatic patterns and promote climate-smart [hashtag#agricultural](#) practices, especially during severe crises. This collaborative platform facilitated meaningful dialogue and highlighted a shared commitment to tackling climate-related challenges and enhancing resilience in the country.

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7192073666958884865/>

# Tweets of Social Good



# Your Story, Our Platform: The NGO World Welcomes Your Contributions

## Unleash Your Impact: The NGO World Awaits Your Input

At "The NGO World" magazine, we believe in the power of collective knowledge and shared experiences. We invite our valued readers to become contributors and actively participate in shaping the content of our magazine. Your insights, stories, and perspectives are essential in fostering a sense of community and driving positive change.

If you have a compelling story related to humanitarian work, development initiatives, or social impact that aligns with the diverse sections we cover, we encourage you to share it with us. Whether it's a firsthand account of your involvement in an NGO project, an innovative solution you've come across, or an issue you're passionate about, we want to hear from you.

By actively engaging with "The NGO World," you play a crucial role in expanding our community's knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and solutions within the humanitarian and development sectors.

Together, we can amplify the voices of those working toward positive change and inspire others to make a difference. We look forward to receiving your contributions and continuing our shared mission of creating a better world.

Please send your content submissions via email:

[editor@thengoworld.com](mailto:editor@thengoworld.com)

ensuring that your submission aligns with one of the sections provided below.

### Sections of Magazine:

Here's an expanded list of potential sections for the magazine "The NGO World" to cover a wide range of topics related to humanitarian work, development, and social impact:

**Featured NGO Spotlight:** Highlighting the work of a specific NGO, sharing their success stories, challenges, and impact.

**Global Development News:** Covering the latest developments in international development, policy changes, and global issues.

**Local Initiatives:** Showcasing grassroots projects and initiatives making a difference in local communities

**NGO Innovations:** Exploring innovative approaches and technologies used by NGOs to address pressing issues.

**Humanitarian Crises:** In-depth coverage of ongoing humanitarian crises and the response efforts.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Articles focusing on progress and challenges related to achieving the UN's SDGs.

**Women Empowerment:** Stories of women-led initiatives and efforts to empower women and girls

**Youth Engagement:** Highlighting the role of youth in driving social change and their involvement in NGOs.

**Environment and Conservation:** Covering environmental issues, conservation efforts, and climate change initiatives.

**Education for All:** Articles on educational programs, access to quality education, and innovative teaching methods.

**Health and Well-being:** Discussing healthcare initiatives, disease prevention, and public health campaigns.

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Examining the CSR efforts of businesses and their impact on communities.

**Refugee and Migration Issues:** Coverage of refugee crises, resettlement programs, and the experiences of displaced people.

**Tech for Good:** Exploring how technology is used for humanitarian purposes, from apps to drones.

**NGO Profiles:** Brief profiles of various NGOs, their missions, and achievements.

**Volunteer Stories:** Personal accounts from volunteers who have contributed to NGOs and their experiences.

**Funding and Grants:** Updates on available funding opportunities for NGOs and how to apply.

**Policy and Advocacy:** Discussions on policy changes affecting NGOs and their advocacy efforts.

**Impact Assessment:** Articles on measuring and evaluating the impact of NGO projects and programs.

**Partnerships and Collaborations:** Exploring successful partnerships between NGOs, governments, and businesses.

**Disaster Response and Preparedness:** Coverage of disaster relief efforts, preparedness strategies, and recovery stories.

**Microfinance and Economic Empowerment:** Exploring initiatives that empower communities economically.

**Indigenous Rights and Cultural Preservation:** Articles on efforts to protect and preserve indigenous cultures and traditions.

**Human Rights and Social Justice:** Discussions on human rights issues, social justice movements, and advocacy work.

**Arts and Culture for Change:** Showcasing how art and culture are used as tools for social change and awareness.

**Inspirational Interviews:** Exclusive interviews with prominent figures in the humanitarian and development sectors, sharing their insights, experiences, and visions for positive change.

**Philanthropy and Impactful Giving:** Exploring the impact of philanthropic efforts, featuring interviews with philanthropists and discussions on effective giving strategies.

**NGO Leadership and Management:** Articles on leadership skills, management practices, and organizational development within the NGO sector, providing insights for NGO professionals and leaders

These sections offer a comprehensive view of the multifaceted work being done in the realm of humanitarianism, development, and social impact.

Submit your stories for upcoming edition & for queries, suggestion, feedback

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# LIVE FOR OTHERS



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for queries, suggestion, feedback

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