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Feature Articles

Forests – sustaining livelihoods of people worldwide

On 8-19 April, the UN Forum on Forest 10 (UNFF) will gather the world community to focus on some of the pressing issues at stake to secure healthy forests worldwide. Jan McAlpine, Director of the UN Forum on Forest Secretariat, shared some of her hopes for this major event and beyond, in an exclusive DESA News interview.



Forests cover one third of the Earth's land mass, performing vital functions across the globe. Around 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood and they are the most biologically-diverse ecosystems on land.

As her team in the UN Forum on Forest Secretariat is getting ready for this major event, Jan McAlpine spoke with DESA News about some of the results she hopes will come out from the Forum in Istanbul, as well as some of the main opportunities and challenges at hand.

“I have a lot of confidence in the countries of the United Nations Forum on Forests,” said Ms. McAlpine, pointing out that 197 countries now belong to this universal body, which this year will focus on economic development and forests. “I fully expect that the forum will come out highlighting key, very important points, that economic development and forests are closely intertwined,” she added.

Understanding vital role of forests

Ms. McAlpine also discussed the extent to which forests are managed, and issues related to financing that is available for forests. “Financing for forests has been on the decline now for 22 years,” she said, stating that that this has not so much to do with the economic downturn, but is rather related to the fact that people around the world do not truly understand what forests contribute.

“Once it is understood, for example, that most of the clean water of the world results from forests cleaning that water so that it is potable, drinkable, then we have a shot at starting to see some pricing go in, where it is understood that there is a direct connection with gross domestic product, exports and income,” Ms. McAlpine underscored.

Ms. McAlpine also put spotlight on the role of women, who in some parts of the world make up for 70 percent of the work

force, and how they collect and make use of non-timber products like shea butter, fruits and nuts. “Forests are the pantry, the local grocery store for many parts of the world,” she said, adding that these are issues also expected to be addressed by the forum and to be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly.

Opportunities and challenges promoting healthy forests

Ms. McAlpine outlined the opportunities at hand, also emphasizing the progress made since the UN Forum on Forests was established. “We have improved an understanding, that there are the three elements – the economic, social and environmental aspects of forests,” she said.

“The biggest challenge is that forests are managed and impacted by many, many sectors and by many, many institutions and they do not work together,” she explained. She described how many governments house forests management in the agriculture ministry, where forests often become a small area of attention.

“Environment ministries are usually separate from forests,” she said, adding that these different offices then tend to simply look at their own areas of objectives.

“They are not incorporating the sustainable use of forests and forest products and how to balance that out economically,” Ms. McAlpine said, outlining a situation where forests are addressed in silos.

Need for integrated forest data

Ms. McAlpine also pointed to the need to address existing data gaps caused by how different aspects related to forests are captured in isolation. For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity addresses the biodiversity issues relevant to forests, while the Climate Change Convention looks at the carbon issues related to forests and so on.

“This is mirrored in the private sector,” Ms. McAlpine added, “social institutions, statistics, governments, do not integrate this data”.

“How do we as the United Nations working as one with partners, start to identify these data areas which we need to better understand? And how do we integrate it with the policy level. Because ultimately, the United Nations Forum on Forests was developed to look at forest policy comprehensively, everything directly related to and impacting on forests.”

Role of forests makes strong impact

When we talked about memories of forests and what they mean for her, Ms. McAlpine shared her personal story. Her family moved to Africa when she was only three months old and she lived in different countries in southern and central Africa until the age of 19.

Following years in Rwanda and Burundi, the family moved to Northern Congo where they settled in an area with beautiful tropical rain forests. “I remember as a 15-year-old, a vivid moment

of trekking on a long, long, walk in an area I couldn’t believe we would ever find,” she said, describing the walk with a guide, who took her to where the local tribe was living.

“They got everything for their living from the forests (...). Seeing how these people depended, interrelated to and interacted with forests appealed to me,” Ms. McAlpine explained, also referring to a book by anthropologist Collin Turnbull, which made a huge impact on her. It portrayed the death of an entire tribe of people who were forced to move from the forests and told to become farmers. “They could not survive the transition from their cultural heritage to living in a very unfamiliar managed environment. And it destroyed their society. They were gone.”

As a nine-year-old in Rwanda, Ms. McAlpine also witnessed the country’s first genocide. She saw first-hand what can happen when more and more pressure is put on the land. “People had gradually gotten rid of most of the trees and then you have soil erosion, you have a lack of soil richness to be able to grow the kind of food you need. The domino starts to fall, leading to chaos and anarchy.”

Ms. McAlpine described how these experiences have shaped her professional life. “My whole career track, I can point back to that experience and that part of the world and seeing the interconnectedness between forests, trees and people”. At the same time, she also expressed thankfulness for now being in a position as the Director of the Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests, where she can actually make a difference for forests and people worldwide.

“I’m looking forward to the UN Forum on Forests 10 coming up from 8 to 19 April in Istanbul,” she said. Decision-makers will then gather to tackle challenges and, as Ms. McAlpine described it with an analogy to forests, “to see what low hanging fruit can be picked and what needs to be grown and developed over time so that eventually we are on a real trajectory to addressing the synergy needed between economic, social and environmental issues”.

For more information:

[Watch the video interview with Ms. McAlpine](#)

[UN Forum on Forests](#)

Focusing on new trends in migration

The past 10 years have seen a steady increase in the number of international migrants across the globe, now totaling 214 million people. Ahead of the upcoming Commission on Population and Development, which is set to focus on new trends in migration, John Wilmoth, Director of DESA's Population Division, highlighted the issues at hand as well as other demographic trends affecting development beyond 2015.



Gathering representatives and experts from a large number of UN Member States, the Commission on Population and Development will meet in New York from 22 to 26 of April. “It is a very important year at the United Nations, for the discussion on international migration in particular, because we’re planning also for the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development”, said Mr. Wilmoth, referring to another high profile event scheduled to take place in October this year as part of the 68th session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Wilmoth also affirmed the importance of migration as part of the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. “Migratory movements both within countries and across international borders are very important examples of population dynamics and illustrate the role of population dynamics in development processes more generally,” he explained.

Increased complexity in size and movements

Mr. Wilmoth described the work preparing for the upcoming Commission, where they intend to start off the meeting by featuring a more general discussion on some of the current patterns and trends, helping Member States to understand the overall situation.

“We work on documenting the size of the migratory flows around the world, the shape and the direction of the trends, and what we observe is that there has been an increase in the complexity, size and changes in the direction of these flows over time,” Mr. Wilmoth explained. He also pointed to the increase in the number of international migrants from around 155 million in 1990, to about 214 million in 2010.

Mr. Wilmoth also highlighted that even though international migrants represent about 3 per cent of the world’s population, the total number of migrants is most likely higher. “If we count internal migrants by any definition, any reasonable definition, we would be at over 10 percent of the world’s population,” he said.

Contributor to social and economic development

“What we have observed over the last decades, is that migration when governed fairly, can make a very important contribution to social and economic development and that is true both in the countries of origin and in the countries of destination,” Mr. Wilmoth said. “I am almost certain that countries would want to consider the relationships between migration and development in particular,” he added.

“In countries of destination, immigrants increase the productive capacity of the economy and contribute to economic growth. In their countries of origin, migration can help to alleviate problems of underemployment and through remittances can contribute to the economic and human development of those areas of the world,” Mr. Wilmoth said.

He also shared his hope that the Commission will encourage countries to think about practical measures to harness the various benefits of migration and to address challenges. “I think it is possible that countries could institute measures that would lower some of the costs of migration,” he said, giving the example of allowing people to have multiple entry visas. This would make it possible for people to migrate in circular patterns or return to their countries of origin without fear of not being able to come back to the host country.

“I hope that countries will find an opportunity to focus on the importance of protecting the human rights of migrants as part of the upcoming Commission,” Mr. Wilmoth added. “Migrants whose rights are well respected are best able to participate in the broader process of social and economic development in their host and origin societies,” he said. “On the other hand, migrants who have an irregular legal status are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and I hope that the Commission will address this issue as well”.

New patterns of population flows

When discussing new trends in migration, Mr. Wilmoth pointed to the fact that there has been a large increase in the number of migrants who move from less to more developed countries. “In many of the more developed countries, the per cent of the population that is foreign born has increased very significantly in recent decades,” Mr. Wilmoth said, also referring to some of the challenges that this presents for the integration process in hosts societies.

Mr. Wilmoth also described movements taking place between countries of the so-called global South. “There are these new poles of economic activity in the various countries that are growing very rapidly, for example China, Brazil, India,

providing an attraction for migrants from other countries of the global South,” he explained. “So there are new patterns taking place in countries that don’t have the same experience of mass immigration as some of the Northern countries,” Mr. Wilmoth added. “For them it’s a particular challenge how to establish a set of migration policies that enables and encourages that movement.”

Population dynamics beyond 2015

As the world community prepares for the development agenda to succeed the MDG framework beyond 2015, Mr. Wilmoth shared some of the important population aspects that need to be secured. “The issues that really matter first are the issues related to population health, which have been well reflected in the MDGs framework that exists,” he explained, also suggesting a broader focus on health spanning the entire life course.

“But we’ve also been talking a lot about population dynamics,” he added. This includes migration, urbanization, population growth, and population ageing, which are often referred to as population megatrends. “These are the big mass movements of population that have very important implications for social and economic development and for human well being across the board,” he said.

“All of these present important opportunities for development, but also challenges to countries as they try to find ways to manage these flows of people,” he added. “In all cases we need to be thinking about policies that focus on managing those trends and possibly affecting them in a desirable way, but also on policies that allow us to adapt to those changes,” Mr. Wilmoth concluded.

For more information:

[Watch the video interview with Mr. Wilmoth](#)

[DESA’s Population Division](#)

[46th Session of the Commission on Population and Development](#)

Responsive and accountable public governance

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) will meet from 15 to 19 April for the twelfth annual session. The twenty-four CEPA experts on public administration will focus on the role of responsive and accountable public governance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda.



CEPA was established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to support the Council’s work promoting and developing public administration and governance among Member States in connection with the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs). This year, the Committee will focus on the areas of making public governance work for the post-2015 development agenda; stakeholders’ accountability in public governance for development; and creating an enabling environment for development beyond 2015.

To facilitate the discussion, observers of CEPA, academia and NGOs in public administration will be responding to DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), which is calling for inputs. The collection of inputs will be presented to CEPA for consideration in deliberation and report in its recommendation to ECOSOC. This is part of the ongoing discussion on the preparation of the post-2015 development framework in the UN system.

Public governance beyond 2015 and stakeholder accountability
CEPA Members Margaret Saner, Hyam Nashash, and Rowena G. Bethel will present their paper that focuses on the challenges ahead for public administrations in relation to the MDGs and other development goals beyond 2015. It examines how the emphasis on governance over the past few years has been interpreted at the local level. The paper focuses on the successes along with areas for improvement.

Another report by CEPA members Jan Ziekow and Francisco Longo will highlight the important role of accountability as an indicator of democratic governance and as an instrument to improve the performance of institutions and the delivery of services. Accountability plays a dual role in both public and

private collaborations. Resources in such collaborative ventures should be well-managed and efficiently used.

Creating an enabling environment

CEPA members Bin Hao and Siripurapu Kesava Rao identified key components in their report, which will address the steps towards a successful post-2015 development agenda. The report underscores the need for an enabling environment, including human capital development in the public sector and performance reporting, monitoring and evaluation of public service delivery.

This need is also reaffirmed by Wu Hongbo, DESA's Under-Secretary-General, who states, "in the recent Rio+20 Summit, democracy, good governance and the rule of law, at the national and international levels, as well as an enabling environment, were deemed essential for sustainable development. The Rio+20 Summit affirmed that to achieve sustainable development, we need institutions at all levels that are effective, transparent, accountable and democratic."

Additionally, a conference paper by CEPA member Walter Fust on public-private partnerships in sustainable development and for social networking will be included in the discussion.

The meeting is also assisted by the PaperSmart initiative aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of the organization, and managed by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).

For more information:

[12th Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration \(CEPA\)](#)

[Call for inputs: 12th Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration \(CEPA\)](#)

[PaperSmart](#)

Global Dialogue on Development

Innovate your future

A major online campaign has been launched asking youth to share their ideas and thoughts on how science, technology, innovation and culture can help shape a sustainable world



Aimed at bringing the voices of youth into the important discussions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) ahead of its annual meeting in July, and to engage young people on how STI and culture can

facilitate change, ECOSOC gathered youth representatives, young corporate leaders and opinion leaders for a Youth Forum Event on 27 March.

A few days prior to this event, the Council kicked off a major online campaign, “Innovate Your Future”, by creating a forum on Facebook to gather input from all over the world. Hashem Bajwa, CEO of DE-DE, the company behind Thunderclap, on 27 March also announced a brand new ECOSOC page on their platform launched to seek worldwide support to help empower youth and shape future innovators.

Featuring a number of planned online and offline activities highlighting this year’s main theme on “Science, technology and innovation (STI), and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the MDGs”, the campaign on Facebook and Thunderclap will run through 1 July when world leaders come together for the ECOSOC annual meeting in Geneva. The goal is to help shape decisions and include the voices of youth at this important event.

By signing up on Thunderclap, the online community can show that they believe that all young people should get a solid foundation in the sciences and that they want to help give youth the power to transform societies, improve economies and sustain the planet.

The Thunderclap message will be released on 1 July, asking Member States at ECOSOC to help empower youth to accomplish this.

Sign up on Thunderclap today. Innovate your future. Be part of the now.

Show your support on Thunderclap:

<https://www.thunderclap.it/InnovateYourFuture>

Share your ideas on ECOSOC’s Facebook Forum:

<http://bit.ly/InnovateYourFuture>

Follow @UNECOSOC and #InnovateYourFuture on Twitter

The role of forests for economic development

The tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF10) will take place in Istanbul on 8-19 April



Focusing this year on economic development and forests, the meeting will assess the overall progress made on the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all types of Forests as well as the achievement of its four Global Objectives on Forests, which are critical components of the work of the UNFF.

Being instrumental in providing leadership on sustainable forest management policies and practices, the Forum will in addition to technical and political deliberations on the many important issues on the agenda, also feature the winners of the 2013 Forest Heroes Award, the International Forest Film Festival, and the International Forest Photograph Awards.

For more information:

[DESA News feature article "Forests - sustaining livelihoods of people worldwide"](#)

[United Nations Forum on Forests 10](#)

Exploring the dynamics of international migration

The Commission on Population and Development will meet in New York on 22-26 April



The Population Commission was established by the Economic and Social Council in 1946 and later renamed to the Commission on Population and Development in 1994. Its primary role is to follow-up on the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and as a functional Commission assisting the Council, to monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels.

The Commission is composed of 47 Member States elected by the Economic and Social Council for a period of four years on the basis of geographic distribution. Since 1994, the Commission meets once a year.

The theme this year will focus on “New trends in migration: demographic aspects”.

For more information:

[DESA News feature article - "Focusing on new trends in migration"](#)

[46th Session of the Commission on Population and Development](#)

Global festivities celebrates life-sustaining role of forests

The first-ever International Day of Forests was celebrated worldwide on 21 March



For centuries forests have been a source of food, fibre, livelihoods, resources and water. They are also central to combating climate change, but until today, and despite a multitude of special days honouring or commemorating key elements of human life, there has never been a globally recognized day for paying homage to the world's forests.

That has changed now that the United Nations General Assembly has designated 21 March as the International Day of Forests "to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests".

In a message for the new International Day, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "By proclaiming the International Day of Forests, the United Nations has created a new platform to raise awareness about the importance of all types of forest ecosystems to sustainable development."

"On this first International Day of Forests," he continued, "I urge Governments, businesses and all sectors of society to commit to reducing deforestation, preventing forest degradation, reducing poverty and promoting sustainable livelihoods for all forest-dependent peoples."

Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, notes that "forests are inextricably linked to our social and economic value, to our bonds with nature and the health of ecosystems. Hence, we cannot think of them in isolation. It is up to us to make these connections and establish the policies, laws and institutions required. It is up to us to implement sustainable forest management."

Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat, says: "The first United Nations International Day of Forests is a tremendous opportunity to celebrate our unique relationship to forests and trees." She continues: "This is the day for the whole world to celebrate not only the gifts that forests and trees provide us, but also to unsung heroes, those who make a difference for your forests, your trees and your communities. Find them among you and thank them."

The International Day of Forests comes a little more than two weeks before national ministers convene in Istanbul, Turkey, from

8-19 April for the tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The Forum has been instrumental in providing leadership on sustainable forest management policies and practices. In addition to technical and political deliberations on the many important issues on the agenda, the session will also feature the winners of the 2013 Forest Heroes Award, the International Forest Film Festival, and the International Forest Photograph Awards.

For more information:

[International Day of Forests](#)

Peace Bell chimes for people and planet

To mark the 43rd anniversary of Earth Day and the moment of the Equinox, Nikhil Seth, Director of DESA's Division for Sustainable Development, rang the Peace Bell at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 March



The Equinox is the time when the Northern and Southern Hemispheres get the same amount of sunlight and days and nights are equal in duration. "It conjures a vision of equality and balance in nature," said Mr Seth. "We

need this equilibrium between human economic and social aspirations as well as the Earth's carrying capacity and ecological boundaries," he stressed.

He sounded the bell at precisely 7:02 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time, when the Sun started to cross directly over the Earth's equator, and described the moment of the Equinox as a time for reflection and introspection.

"It reminds us to care for our people and our planet – both under severe stress. Awareness of these pressures and a determination to act to alleviate pain and suffering, to address human deprivation and the environmental crisis, have never been greater," he said.

"The greatest challenge that humankind is facing is how to build an equitable and balanced economy in a world of finite resources," he added.

The Japanese Peace Bell was presented to the United Nations in June 1954 by the United Nations Association of Japan. It was cast from coins collected by people from 60 different countries including children, and housed in a typically Japanese structure, resembling a Shinto shrine, made of cypress wood.

It has become a tradition to ring the bell twice a year: on the first day of Spring, at the Vernal Equinox, and on 21 September to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. In 2002, the General Assembly set 21 September as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace.

For more information:

[UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](#)

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals holds first session

The intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) on sustainable development goals (SDGs) called for in the Rio+20 Outcome Document convened its first meeting in the UN General Assembly Hall in New York on 14-15 March



The meeting commenced with opening remarks by General Assembly President Vuk Jeremić and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The Secretary-General stressed the urgency of the OWG's task.

“The MDGs have united the world and inspired action, Mr. Ban said. “We must do our utmost to focus attention and accelerate progress.” He said that the focus of the Goals, the eradication of poverty and promotion of health, education, as well as economic and social development, would retain their prime importance and would need to be addressed in the sustainable development goals. “But the sustainable development goals must go further to integrate more comprehensively environmental sustainability, he pointed out, because, “Humanity is pressing hard against the planet’s ecological boundaries.”

He expressed the hope that the multiple strands of the post-2015 process would come together and culminate in 2015 in the adoption of a unified and coherent global agenda: “One balanced, aspirational set of sustainable development goals should lie at the core of such a development agenda.”

The OWG is mandated to submit a report, containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action to the 68th Session of the General Assembly, which would start in September 2013. By late 2014, General Assembly President Vuk Jeremić said, “Member States should be in a position to promulgate the Sustainable Development Goals—the single-most important element of the post-2015 agenda.”

Various Member States expressed their views on different aspects of the OWG and SDGs. Many underlined that the process of developing SDGs should be an open and transparent one, and most stressed the importance of integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Their statements can be found on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (SDKP).

Representatives from major groups also took the floor, emphasizing that the Rio+20 Conference highlighted the importance of engaging all stakeholders and major groups in the sustainable development process going forward. Members of the

OWG were called on to design multi-stakeholder mechanisms to ensure participation, transparency and accountability.

The meeting was webcast and a recording of it can be viewed on the SDKP.

For more information:

[Statements on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform \(SDKP\)](#)

[Recording of webcasts available on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](#)

Trends and Analysis

A renewed global partnership for development

The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda just released its second report 'A renewed global partnership for development' and a Facebook chat will be arranged on 4 April, providing an opportunity to discuss and engage with the authors of the report



Following its first report 'Realizing the future we want for all', which provided initial thinking on potential dimensions and contours of a renewed global development agenda, the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda just published its second report.

Focusing on the global partnership, the report 'A renewed global partnership for development', provides a set of recommendations on the potential format and dimensions of a global partnership for the post-2015 era, including the establishment of robust mutual accountability systems.

The global partnership for development, as crystallized in Millennium Development Goal 8 has played a crucial role in galvanizing international support for development. But the world is not the same as it was in 2000. Many pressing issues of a global nature have emerged in recent years, which require true collective action from all countries to create an enabling environment for development.

Such a renewed global partnership for development to underpin any post-2015 development agenda must be broader in scope and deeper than the current one. While existing commitments, as reflected in MDG 8 remain highly relevant, new thinking is needed on how to reflect pressing development challenges and the increasing importance of a large array of stakeholders engaged in development cooperation. In order to ensure coherence and effective coordination a robust mutual accountability mechanism will be needed all levels.

A Facebook chat on 4 April will offer the opportunity to discuss key findings of the report directly with the authors. It will also provide a chance to learn more about the future global partnership for development. Ask UN experts your questions and sign up to join the event on 4 April from 9:00 – 11:00 am EDT.

For more information:
[Sign up to join Facebook chat!](#)

The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda report 'A renewed global partnership for development'

Promoting public administration worldwide

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) will meet in New York on 15-19 April



Established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Committee is comprised of 24 members who meet annually at UN Headquarters in New York. It is responsible for supporting the work of ECOSOC

concerning the promotion and development of public administration and governance among Member States, in connection with the UN Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, the Committee also provides programmatic guidance to DESA's Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), including the annual review of its work programme.

Since its conversion from a Group into a full-fledged Committee in 2001, CEPA has been meeting annually to provide guidelines on public administration issues related to the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

It has also reported to ECOSOC on the governance and public administration dimensions of sustainable socio-economic development, particularly focusing on the themes of human capital development, participatory governance, capacity development in crisis and post-conflict countries, and innovations in public administration and governance, among others.

For more information:
[12th session of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration](#)

Role of philanthropic organizations beyond 2015

A Development Cooperation Forum Special Policy Dialogue will take place on 23 April to discuss how the post-2015 development agenda can best draw upon the important contributions of philanthropic organizations to development



In collaboration with UNDP, the OECD Global Network of Foundations Working for Development (netFWD) and the Worldwide Initiative for Grantmaker Support (WINGS), DESA is organizing this special ECOSOC

event on the role of philanthropy in development cooperation.

Building on the first such meeting held in preparation for the 2012 DCF, the Dialogue will identify ways to scale up innovative approaches to philanthropic engagement in development cooperation through strategic partnerships with governments and other development actors.

The one-day meeting aims to generate inputs for the ongoing preparations for a post-2015 development agenda and for the 2014 Development Cooperation Forum. It will specifically inform DCF High-level Symposia on the renewed global partnership for development and on the future of international development cooperation in the post-2015 setting. A global e-discussion will precede the event.

The policy dialogue will bring practitioners from philanthropic organizations together with senior representatives from United Nations Member States, as part of an ongoing effort to encourage strategic partnerships and collaboration. All are invited to participate on 23 April.

The Special Policy Dialogue will take place one the day prior to the ECOSOC Partnerships event on “Partnering for innovation solutions for sustainable development” on 24 April, geared towards the theme of the 2013 annual ministerial review.

For more information:

[DCF Special Policy Dialogue](#)

[Special Policy Dialogue for the 2012 DCF on: “Private philanthropic organizations in international development cooperation: New opportunities and specific challenges”](#)
[2013 Ethiopia High-Level Symposium on “A renewed global partnership for development for a post-2015 era” – 6 to 7 June 2013](#)

[Global e-discussion preceding event on 23 April](#)
[ECOSOC Partnerships event on “Partnering for innovation solutions for sustainable development” on 24 April](#)

Preparing for UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

In preparation for its 12th session, members and the Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues met in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo on 11 – 15 March



Hosted by the Government of Congo and opened with a statement from the President, H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, delivered by the State Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, the meeting provided an opportunity for

Permanent Forum members to meet with local ministries, diplomatic missions, the UN Country Team, as well as indigenous peoples organizations and civil society organizations.

During their consultations with indigenous peoples, Forum members were informed on the continuing problems of discrimination and marginalization. Indigenous representatives described the problems they face in accessing schools and universities and getting jobs. Indigenous women spoke of the lack of maternal and child care, and difficulties encountered while giving birth in forests.

The Forum members met with parliamentarians, and with government officials, including the Minister of Forests, and offered different examples to overcome the persistent challenges faced by the indigenous peoples.

They also met with UN agencies and other partners who provided information on various projects and programmes developed within the framework of the national action plan on the improvement of the quality of life of indigenous peoples.

The Forum members also highlighted the upcoming World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to be organized by the UN General Assembly in September 2014, as an opportunity to define a global action plan to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. They encouraged the Republic of Congo to be engaged in this process.

“The Republic of Congo has taken a key step in adopting Law No 5-2011 on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Populations”, said Grand Chief Edward John, UNPFII Chair, “your country is a leader in Africa on indigenous peoples’ rights. We hope other countries will be inspired to follow this good practice.” The key challenge now is to implement the law, he added.

The 12th session will take place on 20 – 31 May 2013.

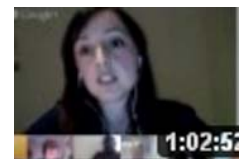
For more information:

[United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#)

Google+ Hangout puts spotlight on youth migration

As part of the 2013 UN World Youth Report consultation process, the UN Focal Point on Youth organized a Google+ Hangout on 6 March with a panel of experts and youth representatives to discuss the theme of “Youth Migration and Development: Towards Sustainable Solutions”

The Hangout explored practical strategies on realizing youth migrants’ potential, protecting their human rights, and promoting their social inclusion — and how these can be achieved through collaborative efforts with youth organizations and other relevant stakeholders.



[Harnessing the human development potential of youth migrants](#)

Migrants can be productive members of transit and destination countries as well as contribute to the sustainable development of their countries of origin. They can provide financial as well as social remittances, including innovative ideas, practices, identities and social capital.

Young migrants, especially those in irregular situations and females face multiple challenges throughout the migration process – from pre-departure, in transit, post-arrival and then also in return and reintegration. They are often ill-advised and susceptible to abuse and exploitation. “Information is protection,” remarked Jo Rispoli of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who stated that migrant youth and youth organizations need to be involved in the three “E’s – engagement by giving them a voice/platform at meetings; enablement through skills and vocation training; and empowerment.”

Youth participation in addressing migration’s challenges can be extremely important. Another panelist, Dynka Amorim, a young migrant himself and coordinator of Bué Fixe, described his organization’s initiative in promoting young migrants access to health care in Portugal. “Regular and irregular migrants are sometimes unaware of their right to health, so we work to inform and engage them on a wide range of HIV/AIDS and sexual reproductive health issues using media platforms like radio and social media,” Dynka added.

Partnerships: From grassroot level to the global arena

In addition to grassroots projects, the panel emphasized the importance of collaboration amongst relevant state and non-state actors to promote the social inclusion and rights of migrants.

Social inclusion is critical to promoting community cohesion and integration of young migrants. “The Swedish government works with civil society partners to promote young migrants’ access to health care and social services for youth. Activities are undertaken to combat racism, xenophobia and social exclusion,” stated Daniel Pettersson of the Swedish Mission to the United Nations.

As migration affects all countries, a Global Forum on Migration and Development has been created for policymakers to understand and discuss migration’s multiple dimensions, its complex impact on global development, and how challenges can be mitigated. Bela Hovy, Chief of DESA’s Population Division, encouraged youth to participate in civil society consultations that are scheduled to take place in July 2013 prior to the 2nd High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development.

Youth civil society representatives can provide contributions during global and national level consultation processes, where they will be able to voice their most pressing issues, priorities and diverse experiences. “Migrant is such a broad concept. We have all different backgrounds and different reasons and ways to migrate. Our needs are different. So it is not going to be a standard success formula for all the migrants,” stated Lonke van Zundert, a youth representative panelist.

Migration and the post-2015 agenda

With a lot more evidence on the scope, scale and impact of migration on development, there was also discussion on whether migration should be included in the post 2015 agenda.

Migration is seen as an enabler of equitable and sustainable development. The question remains as to how the issue can be integrated into the post 2015 agenda. Reducing the cost of remittances and recruitment fees as well as reducing barriers to migration and protecting the rights of migrants are some of the ways of considering migration within the post 2015 agenda. “We have to think collectively in terms of how these will be phrased, either in terms of goals or as an enabler of the development goals,” remarked Bela Hovy.

For more information:

[UN World Youth Report website](#)

Discussing audit and advisory activities

In collaboration with the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institution (INTOSAI), DPADM organized the 22nd UN/INTOSAI Symposium in Vienna, Austria from 5 to 7 March



The theme of the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) was “Audit and Advisory Activities by Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs): Risks and Opportunities, as well as Possibilities for Engaging Citizens”.

In attendance were more than 150 participants, including more than 40 heads of SAIs, from more than 60 countries and representatives from international organizations. Mr. Wu, DESA’s Under-Secretary-General, made an opening statement on citizen engagement in public accountability in the post-2015 UN development framework. He emphasized the importance of good governance as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, which is the core of the post-2015 development agenda:

“The United Nations and the international community recognize that economic growth, social development and environmental protection form the three pillars of sustainable development. Cross-cutting, effective and efficient public administration is also critical in supporting the three pillars. Some experts suggest that good governance is the fourth pillar of sustainable development. I agree. Good governance strengthens and reinforces the inter-linkages of the social, economic and environmental pillars, and ensures that the future we want is translated into reality.”

The meeting concluded that by using advisory approaches in addition to traditional government audits, SAIs can contribute to the effective and efficient achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and influence the post-2015 Development Agenda. The participants recommended that INTOSAI, through a working group, monitor measures to mitigate the risks of waste and loss of public funds in order to give technical advice to the international community.

They also encouraged UN Member States and relevant UN agencies to implement the resolution on Promoting the efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of public administration by strengthening Supreme Audit Institutions (A/RES/66/209).

For more information:

[Expert Group Meeting – 22nd UN/INTOSAI Symposium](#)

Promoting Innovation in Public Governance for Effective Service Delivery: A Global Perspective

Leading government services

DPADM and the Government of the United Arab Emirates co-organized the Government Summit, the first meeting on governance held in the Gulf Region, on 11-12 February in Dubai under the overall theme “Leading Government Services”



The Summit included a Ministerial Roundtable on “Innovation in Public Governance, a Ministerial Perspective” and three parallel workshops focusing on “Innovation in Public Governance:

Perspectives from United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) Winners” and on the sub themes of; (i) innovation in regulatory reform and administrative simplification for effective service delivery; (ii) innovation in public governance through networks and partnerships; and (iii) innovation in e-services. Each workshop featured a speaker from DPADM and a past UNPSA winner.

Prior to the Summit, which was attended by over 2500 government officials from the Arabic Region, both parties organized a capacity-building workshop on Innovation in Public Governance to showcase and discuss the work and ideas of the Division on the United Nations E-Government Survey, United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS) and the UNPSA. The pre-Summit workshop was attended by over 250 government officials from the UAE.

At the close of the summit, the DPADM team, led by Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief of the eGovernment Branch, was invited to meet with the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office of the Government of the UAE who expressed appreciation for their substantive contribution towards the overall organization of the event, and requested further support from DESA and DPADM in upcoming activities.

For more information:

Capacity development

Building capacities in gender statistics

Workshop on improving the integration of a gender perspective into official statistics will be arranged in Chiba, Japan on 16-19 April



DESA's Statistics Division and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) are organizing jointly a capacity building workshop on gender statistics, in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications,

Government of Japan.

The purpose of the workshop is to train national statisticians on the production and use of gender statistics, as well as discuss the newly developed UN manual: Manual for Integrating a Gender Perspective into Statistics.

For more information:

[Calendar of events of DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Assessing population and housing censuses in Africa

Conference on Assessment of 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa will take place in Pretoria, South Africa, on 29 April – 1 May



The event will be organized by DESA's Statistics Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank, African Union Commission and UNFPA.

The Conference will aim at taking stock of the population and housing censuses in Africa in the period 2005-2014 and provide a regional input for a global assessment of the census round.

For more information:

[Calendar of events of DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Improving public service delivery in LDCs

DPADM convened an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) titled "Transfer and adaptation of innovative practices for improved public service delivery in Least Developed Countries (LDCs)", from 25 to 26 February in New York



Experts discussed the implementation strategy for a new project launched by DPADM in early 2013 that aims to build the capacity of the public sector in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) so as to deliver quality services

equitably through the transfer and adaptation of innovative public administration practices.

The experts recommended that DESA and its implementing United Nations partners, namely, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), implement the project by using a collaborative governance approach.

This approach proposes to involve actors from the government, private and civil sectors of LDCs that will be benefiting from the project while prioritizing those innovations in public service delivery that are best suited to assist the recipient LDCs to achieve the MDG targets.

They further recommended that, in identifying relevant innovations, specific attention should be paid to simplicity, cost effectiveness and sustainability of recommended innovations, as well as those innovations that have enhanced potential to employ local human capital and encourage ownership on the part of the local counterparts.

For more information:

[EGM "Transfer and Adaptation of Innovative Practices for Improved Public Service Delivery in LDCs"](#)

Publications and Websites

Technical reports

A renewed global partnership for development



The second report of the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development is now available on the UN System Task Team Website. Titled “A renewed global partnership for development”, the report assesses MDG8 and provides an overview of lessons learnt, including the Monterrey Consensus. It reviews new challenges and trends in the international development landscape and suggests possible contours, alternative formats and a robust accountability mechanism for a renewed global partnership.

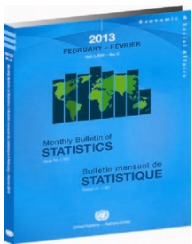
Established by the Secretary-General in January 2012, the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda assembles more than 60 UN agencies and international organizations under its umbrella to provide analytical inputs to the post-2015 process. It is co-chaired by UN DESA and UNDP.

To download:

[A renewed global partnership for development](#)

Statistical compilations

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online



The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or bimonthly, quarterly and annual data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings,

energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

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In addition to the regular recurrent monthly tables, this issue includes the quarterly and bimonthly tables: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; Earnings in manufacturing, by sex; Total exports and imports by regions: quantum and unit value indices and terms of trade in US dollars.

For more information:

[Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online](#)

2009 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles



The 2009 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles contains energy balances for about 115 developing countries, showing production, trade, conversion and consumption in energy units for all energy products; and electricity profiles for about 190 countries, providing detailed information on production, trade and consumption of electricity, net installed capacity and thermal

power plant input for selected developing and developed countries.

For more information:

[2009 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles](#)

Outreach material

DESA NGO News

Information about the global plan adopted by the CSW57 to end gender-based violence and the fourth meeting of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda held in Bali, are featured in the March issue. The online monthly newsletter is published by DESA’s NGO Branch, providing the most up-to-date information on news and upcoming events of interest to civil society at UN headquarters in New York, Geneva and elsewhere.

Read full issue: [DESA NGO News](#)

Sustainable Development in Action – Issue 3, Volume 1

The latest issue is now available online. Published by DESA’s Division for Sustainable Development, the newsletter aims to highlight the work carried out by Member States, the UN, Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders in implementing sustainable development and leading the way to the Future We Want.

View full issue: [Sustainable Development in Action](#)

Youth Flash Newsletter

March issue is now available featuring an article entitled “Google+ Hangout with Youth Representatives and Expert Panelists Puts a Spotlight on Youth Migration”. The newsletter is published by DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development Focal Point on Youth to keep the public informed

about the work of the UN on youth issues. It is prepared with input from UN offices, agencies, and from youth organizations around the world.

View full issue at: [Youth Flash Newsletter](#)

Enable Newsletter

Prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) within DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, the February issue is now available highlighting the upcoming High-level Meeting on Disability and Development to be held in September. The newsletter features input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes and civil society.

Read full issue: [United Nations ENABLE newsletter](#)

Open Government Data for Citizen Engagement in Managing Development Guidance Toolkit (OGDCE Toolkit)

DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) has released the Open Government Data for Citizen Engagement in Managing Development Toolkit (OGDCE toolkit). The toolkit is a practical, easy-to-understand and easy-to-use set of guidelines for government decision makers to implement, evaluate and sustain open government data initiatives for citizen engagement.

The Toolkit introduces the concept of open government data, strategies for designing open data programs, steps for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the related programs, and ideas for sustaining the open data ecosystem. The Toolkit also provides checklists for assessing open government data readiness, options for open data platforms and information on open data formats.

Since open government data is a fast moving field, the Division welcomes contributions to the Toolkit from stakeholders and has released a working version on 27 February 2013 alongside the first edition.

For more information: [OGDCE Toolkit](#)

Online Survey on Promoting Empowerment of People

DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development conducted, from 8 August to 5 September 2012, a global online survey to gather inputs for consideration by the 51st session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD), which took place from 6 to 15 February 2013.

The survey enabled the public worldwide to respond to a set of questions that were related to the priority theme of CSocD on "Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all".

The responses collected and selected from the first question "Empowerment: What does it mean to you?" was published in a separate booklet.

The ten questions were the following:

1. When you hear the term "empowerment" what does it mean to you?
2. How would empowering people help achieve poverty eradication?
3. How would empowering people improve social integration, especially of people living in poverty, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples?
4. How could empowering people help achieve full employment and decent work?
5. What do you consider would be main barriers to the economic, social and political empowerment of people and social groups including people living in poverty, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous people?
6. Do you have any examples of successful empowerment of people, including specific social groups? Please indicate them.
7. What policies do you consider would further promote social, economic, political and legal empowerment of people, including social groups?
8. Do you consider that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), especially the Internet has an impact on empowerment? Can you give some examples?
9. How is empowerment related to inequality in societies?
10. Please provide any additional comments.

To download the full survey:

[Online Survey on Promoting Empowerment of People](#)

Discussion papers

Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 52

Published by DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, the March issue sheds light on the US automatic spending cuts referred to as the "sequester". The briefing also states that while China is setting out a GDP target of 7.5 per cent, India is boosting its budget spending.

Download:

[Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects](#)

Websites

Redesign of DESA's Population Division website



The new redesign of DESA's Population Division website, launched on 20 March, includes news, events and exciting features, through which both existing users and new visitors can gain a greater understanding of the Division's activities and achievements.

“We are very excited to launch the redesigned website. Now it will be much easier for users throughout the global community to find the information they need, whether it is Member States seeking policy-relevant analysis or fact sheets, or members of the general public looking for data about population trends in their home countries,” said Mr. John Wilmoth, Director of the Population Division.

To browse: [Website of DESA's Population Division](#)

Comings and Goings

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in March:

Oleg K. Serezhin, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Jianqun Wang, Information Systems Officer, Communications and Information Management Service

Calendar

April

Facebook chat on global partnership for development

4 April at 9 – 11am EDT
<http://on.fb.me/16W8yvp>

10th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF10)

8-19 April, Istanbul
<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>

12th session of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration

New York, 15-19 April
<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/CEPA/12thSession/tabid/1544/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Workshop on Improving the Integration of a Gender Perspective into Official Statistics

Chiba, Japan, 16-19 April
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

46th Session of the Commission on Population and Development

New York, 22 - 26 April
<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2013/cpd46.htm>

The role of philanthropic organizations in the post-2015 setting Special Policy Dialogue of the UN Development Cooperation Forum

New York, 23 April
<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/dcfphilanthropic2013.shtml>

ECOSOC Event on “Partnering for innovative solutions for sustainable development”

New York, 24 April
<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/philanthropy2/>

Conference on Assessment of 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa

Pretoria, South Africa, 29 April - 1 May
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

May

Commission on Sustainable Development, twentieth session

New York, 6-17 May
<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1211>

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, twelfth session

New York, 20-31 May
<http://social.un.org/index/IndigenousPeoples.aspx>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. DESA News is issued every month. Please click [here](#) to send inquiries.