



Time for talk is over – a decade of action for the global goals starts now

The time to act is now. This message and plea to world leaders sounded loud and clear during an intense UN high-level week that brought together the international community to address critical challenges of our time. Our joint quest to reach the global goals by 2030 along with climate action, universal health coverage, financing sustainable development and addressing the dire challenges of small island nations were the burning issues addressed.

“There is a cost to everything. But the biggest cost is doing nothing,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said as the Climate Action Summit opened on 23 September. Painting a grim picture of the climate crisis the world is facing, Mr. Guterres warned of dire consequences if we do not act now.

Representing a growing global youth movement, climate activist Greta Thunberg echoed this urgency. As she addressed world leaders, her words were candid and her message was clear: “The eyes of all future generations are upon you, and if you choose to fail us, I say, we will never forgive you.”

Many nations heeded the call, using the Climate Summit to announce emission cuts and other measures to fight climate change. Several countries indicated that they would move away from fossil fuels, while others made financial commitments to the Green Climate Fund. The private sector also contributed, with 87 major companies committing to set 1.5°C-aligned emission reduction targets throughout their operations. Over 22,000 climate actions have so far been captured on UNFCCC’s new Global Climate Action Portal.

SDG Summit kickstarts decade to deliver for people and planet

The SDG Summit showed that the commitment to realizing the 2030 Agenda is as strong as ever. It resulted in the adoption of the Political Declaration, “Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.” World leaders called for accelerated action to deliver the SDGs by 2030, while announcing actions they are taking to advance the agenda. “I encourage us as leaders to resolve to make the next 10 years a period of accelerated action; mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into our budgetary and national development plans,” said the President of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad Bande.

At the same time, Mr. Guterres stressed that “We must step up our efforts. And we must do it now”. “We have the best solution in the Agenda 2030, our blueprint for a fair globalization,” he said.

Acceleration actions had begun pouring in to UN DESA’s [SDG Acceleration Action](#) platform before the SDG Summit kicked off, with over 100 acceleration actions registered. Among them were Finland pledging carbon neutrality by 2035; the Maldives partnering with Parley for the Oceans, American Express, ABInBev and Adidas to deliver on many of the goals; Brazil setting to reduce premature mortality caused by non-communicable diseases by one-third by 2030; Mexico to provide internet access for everyone; Greece committing to green growth; the Netherlands doubling the number of people to gain access to justice in parts of Africa and the Middle East; and Project Everyone’s ‘World’s Largest Lesson’ involving more than 500,000 students in Nigeria in learning about the goals.

Time to step up financing for the goals

The fourth high-level meeting of the week saw even more commitment to realizing a sustainable future.

At the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development on 26 September, international actors announced [over 20 new financing initiatives](#) for realizing the world’s development goals. Among them is the 2X Challenge by the Development Finance Institutions of Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which aims to mobilize \$3 billion by 2020 to invest in global women’s economic empowerment.

Other initiatives will focus on doubling climate-relevant official development assistance; investing in areas with large migrant outflows; new initiatives in agriculture and climate change; and a climate information hub for African youth. SDG Advocate Richard Curtis also announced the Make My Money Matter campaign.

“We are demanding global unity for a global crisis”

On 27 September, leaders reviewed the [SAMOA Pathway](#), aimed at achieving sustainable development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). They found that a major increase in investment in these nations is urgently needed, and that the road to stability is threatened by environmental challenges, economic crises and food insecurity. Although improvements are seen when it comes to social inclusion, gender equality, poverty and unemployment, inequality still remains a problem.

To overcome these challenges, the importance of partnerships was underscored by many. The week saw new alliances being forged and captured in the [SIDS Partnership database](#) and as SDG Acceleration Actions. Small Island Developing States themselves also announced a collective commitment to raise the ambition of their Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020, to move to net zero emissions by 2050 and 100 percent renewable energy by 2030.

As the high-level week and the five summits wrapped up, the main message stemming from them all will continue to resonate the world over: The time for words is over, the time to act is now.

As actor and ocean activist Jason Momoa also put it in his powerful message to the SAMOA Pathway event, “We are demanding global unity for a global crisis, to once again bring harmony between man and the natural balance of our world.”

For more information:

Climate Action Summit
SDG Summit
High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development
High-level Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway

HIGHLIGHTS



The journey to age equality

Everyone deserves to live with dignity and respect. Yet, this right is anything but guaranteed as we grow older. People’s experiences later in life can differ dramatically, depending on their country of residence, social status, disability and other factors. These inequalities are often the result of poverty, maltreatment, neglect and limited access to basic services throughout a person’s life. And without targeted interventions, inequalities often deepen in old age.

“The journey to age equality” can only be achieved by promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of older persons and ensuring equal opportunities throughout for everyone throughout their lifetimes, as recognized by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By implementing policies that enhance equality, Governments can trigger the necessary changes towards an inclusive society for all ages, where older persons participate fully and without discrimination.

For the first time in history, older persons now outnumber children under five years of age. By 2030, the target date to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), older people are projected to exceed the number of youth.

The recent G20 Summit recognized ageing as one of the megatrends that will define the world’s economic and social development in the years to come. Countries need to plan for population ageing now to ensure the well-being of older persons by protecting their human rights and economic security and by safeguarding access to age-appropriate healthcare services, decent work and lifelong learning opportunities, as well as formal and informal support networks.

We have a duty to champion the role of older persons as active participants in society, especially in an era where they are frequently overlooked and underappreciated.

The International Day of Older Persons

The first day of October will be an opportunity to make ageing a more visible issue, as the world celebrates the International Day of Older Persons. This year, the global event will focus on pathways of coping with existing inequalities to prevent even further disparities in old age.

On 10 October, UN DESA in collaboration with the NGO Committee on Ageing in New York will hold the official commemoration of the United Nations International Day for Older Persons (#UNIDOP).

The event will feature the launch of UN DESA's World Population Ageing 2019 Highlights, which draws on the latest population estimates and projections published to paint a picture of the world's ageing population today and in the years to come.

For more information: [International Day of Older Persons](#)

HIGHLIGHTS



General Assembly – the work continues

The 2019 general debate has officially come to a close, but the work of the General Assembly hardly ends once the world leaders leave. Over the next months, the nitty-gritty debates and negotiations in the General Assembly's six main committees begin. UN DESA is substantively supporting the work of two of them.

Second Committee – Economic and Financial Issues

The Second Committee of the General Assembly addresses a range of issues related to sustainable development, from the macroeconomic situation to poverty eradication.

Chaired by Cheikh Niang, the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the UN, the Committee will kick off its work on 7 October 2019 under the theme “Inclusive societies based on new economic models and sustainable use of natural resources.”

This year, the Committee will consider issues ranging from financing sustainable development to advancing and monitoring the SAMOA Pathway for small island developing States, to reviewing the desertification, biodiversity, and climate change conventions.

It will also deliberate on challenges and solutions for countries in special situations, such as least-developed and landlocked developing countries. In addition, the Second Committee will take a closer look at the double bind of income poverty and time poverty and at emerging economic models, during two special side events organized with UN Women, UN DESA and UNCTAD.

At a joint meeting with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Second Committee will deliberate on the “Ecosystem Approaches for shifting the world onto a sustainable pathway.”

Third Committee – Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues

The Third Committee begins its seventy-fourth session on 1 October, under the chairmanship of Christian Braun, the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the UN. The Committee’s discussions on social development will cover a range of issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities and education for all.

The Committee’s deliberations will be informed by the Secretary-General’s report on the “Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the 24th special session of the General Assembly.”

The report calls for strengthened international cooperation for social development, especially on universal and equitable access to education and health care, and to advance progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report highlights the importance of investing in people, which is essential to develop human capacity and achieve social development.

The report also addresses the special needs of Africa, the least developed countries, and various social groups at risk of being left behind. It recommends the acceleration of progress towards universal health coverage; scaling up social protection, including floors; addressing the specific challenges of disadvantaged groups; and mobilizing additional resources to invest in water and sanitation infrastructure.

The Third Committee will also discuss the forthcoming UN DESA World Social Report, which analyses inequalities based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, migrant status, disability and socioeconomic status.

For more information:

Second Committee of the General Assembly
Third Committee of the General Assembly



Poverty is the denial of children's rights

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As we celebrate three decades of this landmark human rights treaty, our attention turns to the millions of children worldwide who are still denied their right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Poverty hurts children's development, leading to lower income and health levels in adulthood. We should recognize child

poverty for what it is – a denial of children's human rights and a violation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The specific discriminations experienced by the girl child should be top priority in remedying this situation.

To show solidarity with children and young people living in poverty, the United Nations will hold the 2019 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty at UN Headquarters in New York on 17 October. The 2019 theme is "Acting together to empower children, their families and communities to end poverty."

Join the #EndPoverty global campaign

If you believe that every child has a right to grow up free from extreme poverty – join us! You can add your voice to the growing global cry to end extreme poverty once and for all.

Get social: Follow @UNDESA and @UNDESASocial and use #EndPoverty to join the conversation and to help us promote the global call to action to overcome poverty.

Organize an event: The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is happening worldwide. Join an event near you or organize one in your community.

For more information:

2019 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty



Gathering storms and silver linings – what’s holding back SDG progress?

UN Secretary-General António Guterres recently called for the next ten years to become a decade of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But in a rapidly changing world, ten years is a very long time. How can we plan for a future that will be drastically different from the present? UN DESA’s latest report – the Sustainable

Development Outlook – tries to answer this question by analysing the megatrends that will shape our world over the next decade and studying their impact on our chances to achieve the global goals. We talked to the report authors.

In your report, subtitled “Gathering storms and silver linings,” you mention climate change, rising inequalities and economic insecurities as some of the “storms.” Are these the challenges we should address most urgently to achieve the SDGs?

Hamid Rashid: “As we present in the report, SDGs are facing significant headwinds. We cannot afford to ignore them. It is an imperative that we address the mutually reinforcing challenges of inequality and insecurity to address the existential threat of climate change. We need comprehensive approaches, plans and strategies to address high and rising levels of inequality, which is the root of many evils in societies. Inequality – like poverty – is multidimensional.

Our focus should not be just focus on income inequality. We must also address inequality in access and opportunities, which exacerbates economic uncertainties and insecurity. Taming inequality is a must for winning the war against climate change and also for achieving all the SDGs.”

You also discuss the vicious cycle of climate change, violent conflicts, displacement, and nationalism. Can you explain how it works?

Nazrul Islam: “Yes, a vicious cycle may emerge. It may work in the following way. Climate change, either by itself or by causing conflicts, has become a driver of unregulated migration, which is causing political backlash in many developed countries, fomenting nationalism and encouraging withdrawal from multilateral efforts aimed at solving global problems.

However, weakening of the multilateral efforts can only aggravate climate change and conflicts, increasing the pressure for migration, thus leading to a vicious cycle. The danger of such a vicious cycle is real. The Sustainable Development Outlook draws attention to this danger so that it can be prevented.”

On the other hand, you point to new, frontier technologies as the “silver lining.” Can technology really save us?

Hiroshi Kawamura: “Yes, it can. We have accumulated enough scientific knowledge that is backed by a large amount of data. We have developed frontier technologies that transform the knowledge into real-life applications. And we have gained a large pool of experience where these technologies have applied for various purposes in many different situations.

The Sustainable Development Outlook shows several new technologies that have already demonstrated their capabilities, or solid potential, for advancing SDGs in the areas of decent housing, sustainable agriculture, public health and energy security. With stronger political will, greater public support and larger public and private funding, new technologies can be applied in wider geographical areas in many different SDG areas. The silver lining can be even brighter and shield even larger areas when frontier technologies are employed more widely, effectively and efficiently.”

In conclusion, should the findings of your report fill us with hope or with caution?

Hamid Rashid: “The report is a wake-up call for all us. It is also a call to action. What we need is cautious optimism, not complacency. The challenges outlined in the report are looming large. Ignoring – or going about business as usual – will not make them disappear. The report, we believe, makes a compelling case for bold and urgent actions to overcome these existential.”

Access more information and download a preview of the report [here](#). The complete report will be available online on 10 October 2019.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



The number of international migrants reaches 272 million, continuing an upward trend in all world regions

The number of international migrants globally reached an estimated 272 million in 2019, an increase of 51 million since 2010. Currently, international migrants comprise 3.5 per cent of the global

population, compared to 2.8 per cent in the year 2000, according to new estimates released by UN DESA on 17 September 2019.

The International Migrant Stock 2019, a dataset released by the department’s Population Division, provides the latest estimates of the number of international migrants by age, sex and origin for all countries and areas of the world.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General, said that “These data are critical for understanding the important role of migrants and migration in the development of both countries of origin and destination. Facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible

migration and mobility of people will contribute much to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.”

In 2019, regionally, Europe hosts the largest number of international migrants (82 million), followed by Northern America (59 million) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (49 million).

At the country level, about half of all international migrants reside in just 10 countries, with the United States of America hosting the largest number of international migrants (51 million), equal to about 19 per cent of the world's total. Germany and Saudi Arabia host the second and third largest numbers of migrants (13 million each), followed by the Russian Federation (12 million), the United Kingdom (10 million), the United Arab Emirates (9 million), France, Canada and Australia (around 8 million each) and Italy (6 million).

Concerning their place of birth, one-third of all international migrants originate from only ten countries, with India as the lead country of origin, accounting for about 18 million persons living abroad. Migrants from Mexico constituted the second largest “diaspora” (12 million), followed by China (11 million), the Russian Federation (10 million) and the Syrian Arab Republic (8 million).

The share of international migrants in total population varies considerably across geographic regions with the highest proportions recorded in Oceania (including Australia and New Zealand) (21.2%) and Northern America (16.0%) and the lowest in Latin America and the Caribbean (1.8%), Central and Southern Asia (1.0%) and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (0.8%).

Most international migrants move between countries located within the same region. A majority of international migrants in sub-Saharan Africa (89%), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (83%), Latin America and the Caribbean (73%), and Central and Southern Asia (63 %) originated from the region in which they reside. By contrast, most of the international migrants that lived in Northern America (98%), Oceania (88%) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (59%) were born outside their region of residence.

Forced displacements across international borders continues to rise. Between 2010 and 2017, the global number of refugees and asylum seekers increased by about 13 million, accounting for close to a quarter of the increase in the number of all international migrants. Northern Africa and Western Asia hosted around 46 per cent of the global number of refugees and asylum seekers, followed by sub-Saharan Africa (21%).

Turning to the gender composition, women comprise slightly less than half of all international migrants in 2019. The share of women and girls in the global number of international migrants fell slightly, from 49 per cent in 2000 to 48 per cent in 2019. The share of migrant women was highest in Northern America (52%) and Europe (51%), and lowest in sub-Saharan Africa (47%) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (36%).

In terms of age, one out of every seven international migrants is below the age of 20 years. In 2019, the dataset showed that 38 million international migrants, equivalent to 14 per cent of global migrant population, were under 20 years of age. Sub-Saharan Africa hosted the highest proportion of young persons among all international migrants (27%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern Africa and Western Asia (about 22% each).

Three out of every four international migrants are of working age (20-64 years). In 2019, 202 million international migrants, equivalent to 74 per cent of the global migrant population, were between the ages of 20 and 64. More than three quarters of international migrants were of working age in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Europe and Northern America.

For more information: [The 2019 revision of the International Migrant Stock](#)

How new data challenges perceptions of ‘rich’ and ‘poor’

SDG BLOG



Achim Steiner, Administrator
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By Achim Steiner, Administrator of the UN Development Programme

Development is working. There has been a massive drop in global extreme poverty rates — from 36 per cent in 1990 to 8.6 per cent in 2018 — vastly increasing the economic and social opportunities for so many across the world. Yet, in describing poverty, the standard still refers to income — a line that sits on US \$1.90 per day. Above and below this line, people are categorized as not poor or poor.

That arbitrary international poverty line does not fully describe how people experience poverty in multiple and simultaneous ways in their daily lives. In response to this gap in knowledge, the *Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)* tries to capture how people experience poverty and does not include income at all. For instance, MPI indicators examine whether a household has access to drinking water, sanitation facilities or electricity; whether a household member has completed five years of schooling; or whether there is severe undernourishment of any adult in the household.

And the results are startling. The 2019 MPI data shows that 1.3 billion people around the world are *multidimensionally poor*. Astonishingly, one in three children worldwide is multidimensionally poor, compared to one in six adults. A further 879 million people are at risk of falling into multidimensional poverty, which could happen rapidly if they suffer setbacks such as conflict, drought, sickness or unemployment.

The MPI also shows that there are poor people outside of poor countries, outside of poor regions and outside of poor households. Surprisingly, two-thirds of the multidimensionally poor — 886 million people — actually live in middle-income countries. National averages can also hide enormous inequality in patterns of poverty within countries. Look for instance at Uganda where Kampala has an MPI rate of six per cent but outside of the capital, the MPI soars to 96 per cent, a similar rate to Sub-Saharan Africa. There is even inequality under the same roof. In South Asia, for example, almost one quarter of children under the age of five live in households where at least one child in the household is malnourished and at least one child is not.

Worryingly, the pace of poverty reduction is starting to slow down and current forecasts project that six per cent of the global population will still live in extreme poverty by 2030, missing the target of ending poverty. If people are still suffering from poverty, how can we expect them to help us reach the other ambitious targets set by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? Indeed, it is no coincidence that eradicating poverty is the first Goal — given its impact upon the other 16 SDGs.

As SDG 1 tasks us with eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere, by the year 2030, we need more detailed information on where the poor live to ensure that no one is left behind. That is, data that goes beyond income as a measurement of poverty is vital to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality. Complementing the MPI, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) upcoming Human Development Report (HDR) will specifically examine the inequalities in human development — inequalities that can also deepen poverty for many. The generation of more comprehensive data by sources like the MPI and the HDR has profound policy implications. They feed further into the recognition that eliminating poverty is not only about ensuring people have enough income to pull people over a one-dimensional income poverty line. Rather, it is about empowering people with access to services such as health, education and energy — much of which depend on a wide range of policies, including the provision of public goods — so that people can fully exercise their human agency.

For UNDP, helping people to get out and stay out of poverty remains a primary focus. Our use of more wide-ranging data on poverty and inequality helps us to provide better and more targeted support to the poor and marginalized. And there are reasons for hope. In India alone, some 271 million people have escaped poverty in the space of just ten years. Poverty is not permanent.

However, poverty is still pervasive. And to fight poverty, we need to know where poor people live. They are not evenly spread across a country, not even within a household. The wider recognition of this fact is crucial as the world works to eradicate poverty in all its forms by 2030.

**The views expressed in this blog are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UN DESA.*

Commodity price shock – a setback to poverty eradication



Are we on track to end poverty worldwide by the year 2030? That depends. If we look at global poverty rates measured as the proportion of people living on less than \$1.90 per day, we will see impressive progress. According to The Sustainable Development Goals

Report 2019, 8.6 per cent of the world's population was living in extreme poverty in 2018, down from about 28 per cent in 2000.

But if we dive deeper into these numbers, we will see that most of the progress has come from East and South Asia while more than two in five people in sub-Saharan Africa continue to live in extreme poverty. The total number of people suffering extreme poverty in that region is higher today than it was two decades ago.

What is even more worrying, the pace of progress has slowed down notably in recent years. In several countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people experiencing extreme poverty has, in fact, risen since 2014. What is pushing those countries behind?

For many of them, it is weak macroeconomic performance. To better understand it, we have to go back to the years 2014-2016. As the global economy was slowly recovering from years of financial crises and recession, a sharp downturn in commodity prices spelled trouble for developing countries, many of whom highly depend on commodities for income.

What initially appeared to be a temporary terms of trade shock for the commodity exporters, has in many cases morphed into a fundamental and longer lasting economic slump. Often, countries have not only failed to recover the output losses but have also experienced a marked downward shift in trend growth. In almost one third of commodity-dependent countries, average real per capita incomes are lower today than they were in 2014.

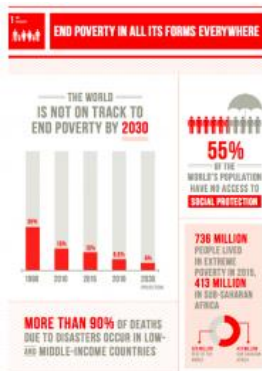
What was it about the commodity price downturn that caused such profound and lasting economic slumps? While the specific dynamics varied between countries, there was a common thread. Rather than simply causing a deterioration of the terms of the trade, the commodity price decline exposed major weaknesses in the economic structures of countries.

Excessive reliance on commodity revenues has forced dramatic fiscal adjustments. Sharp declines in investment is weighing on current growth, while constraining future productivity. In many cases, these economic challenges have been exacerbated by political factors.

These weaknesses can only be remediated with difficult structural reforms, which are even harder to enact in today's increasingly uncertain global environment. However, without reforms, the growing economic woes of some developing countries might not only cloud their growth outlook, but also hamper progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially poverty eradication.

For more details, read the [October Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects](#)

SDGs 1 and 2 in numbers



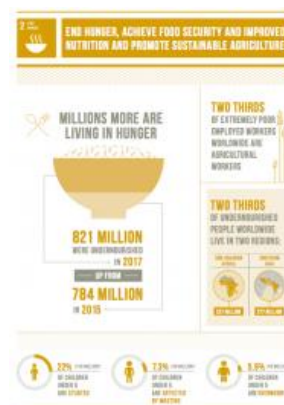
The decline of extreme poverty continues, but the pace has slowed, jeopardizing the achievement of goal 1 to eradicate poverty by 2030. Extreme poverty today is concentrated and overwhelmingly affects rural populations. It is increasingly also exacerbated by violent conflicts and climate change.

Tackling the remaining pockets of extreme poverty will be challenging due to their persistence and complexity—often involving the interplay of social, political and economic factors. Effective social protection schemes and policies, along with government spending on key services, can help those left behind get back on their feet and find a way out of poverty.

Despite earlier extended progress, the number of people suffering from hunger has been on the rise since 2014. Stunting affects the growth and cognitive development of millions of children and while it has declined, it is not fast enough to meet the SDG targets.

In addition, the prevalence of overweight—the other face of malnutrition—is increasing in all age groups. In the wake of conflicts, climate-induced shocks and economic slowdowns worldwide, intensified efforts are needed to implement and scale up interventions to improve access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all.

Specifically, attention needs to be given to increasing the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, implementing resilient agricultural practices, and ensuring the proper functioning of markets. Finally, in ensuring that no one is left behind on the road towards zero hunger, the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition must be broken.



Access the latest data on SDG 1, SDG 2 and the complete SDG Progress Report 2019.

Are we drowning in plastic?



Plastic pollution has emerged as the second most dire threat to the global environment, after climate change. The annual production of plastic has increased from 1.7 million metric tons in 1950 to 322 million metric tons in 2015. More than eight billion tons of plastic have accumulated on earth, polluting land, water, and air. Some have even characterized the current stage of human history as the “Plastics Age.”

Urgent measures are needed to confront the threat of plastics. Interventions have to be made at all five different stages of the plastics life cycle, namely production; its use in producing goods and services; consumption of these plastics-using goods and services; disposal of plastics-containing goods; and collection of improperly-disposed plastics litter.

New and frontier technologies can be helpful in interventions at all these five stages. The current issue of *Frontier Technology Quarterly* reviews some of the ways in which these technologies can help in the interventions at the first stage. It shows that new technologies can help in both enhancing the use of natural substitutes of plastics and in making plastics more biodegradable, for use in cases where plastics are unavoidable.

For example, nanotechnology can be used to coat cardboards to make them water resistant and leakproof, thus enhancing their use as substitutes of plastics in packaging. Genetic engineering, on the other hand, can help to widen the use of natural fibers, such as jute, flax, and hemp as substitutes for plastic. Genetic engineering can also be used to overcome the limitations of starch and cellulose in producing biodegradable plastics. Similarly, nanotechnology can be used to create a new range of biomaterials, which can be processed into biodegradable plastics.

Actual utilization of these potentials of new technologies, however, will require appropriate policies, including government support for research and for overcoming the infant-industry barriers.

Access the latest issue of the *Frontier Technology Quarterly*

UPCOMING EVENTS

1 Oct – 21 Nov, New York	General Assembly, Third Committee, Seventy-fourth session
1 October	International Day of Older Persons
7 Oct - 27 Nov, New York	General Assembly, Second Committee, Seventy-fourth session
15-18 October, Geneva	19th Session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters
17 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

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