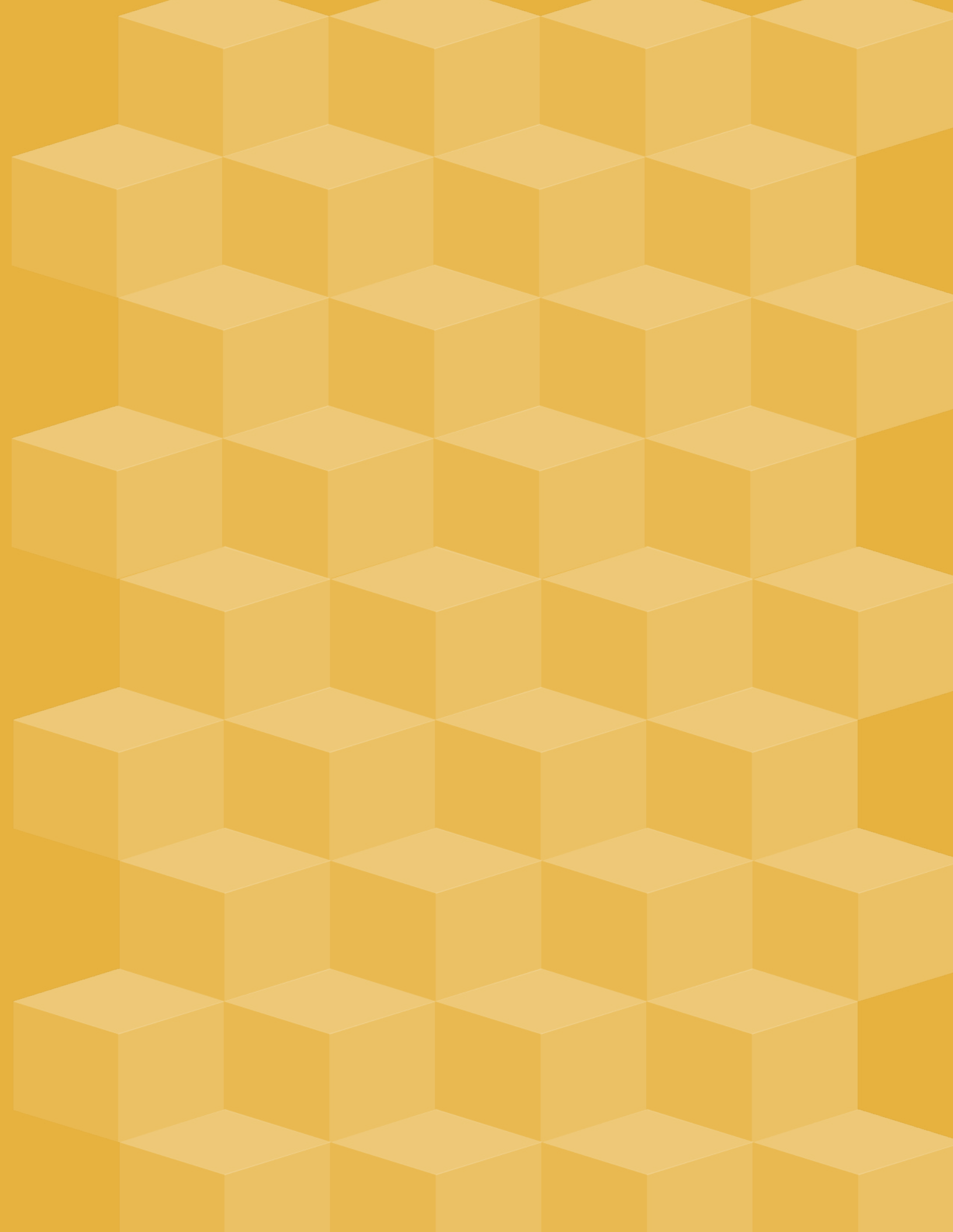




FACILITATING MULTILATERAL ACTIONS AND DECISIONS





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Reimagining equality

In February 2021, the Economic and Social Council put a spotlight on structural racism through its special meeting, Reimagining Equality: Eliminating racism, xenophobia and discrimination for all in the Decade of Action for the SDGs. UN DESA, in collaboration with

OHCHR, led the substantive preparations of the meeting. The meeting underscored the need for an ambitious whole-of-society approach with greater urgency to dismantle biases and systems that perpetuate racism and inequalities. Through a Presidential Statement, the meeting called for inclusion, justice and dignity for all.

Promoting vaccine equity

Vaccine equity was at the top of the Economic and Social Council's agenda in April 2021. The Special Meeting of the Council on *A Vaccine for All* revealed deep concerns about vaccine nationalism and restrictions on exports, intellectual property rights, lack of resources and capacities. UN DESA mobilized high-level Member State and UN system participation, and convened key stakeholders to address various dimensions of vaccine equity. A clear message from the meeting was that the response to the pandemic provides an opportunity to strengthen health systems and advance towards universal health coverage to help countries be better prepared and become more resilient against future pandemics.



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Fostering global consensus to finance a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive recovery - 2021 ECOSOC FfD Forum and its outcome

UN DESA provided analytical and advisory support to Member States discussions at the 2021 ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum. The Forum broke new ground in the area of Financing for Development and was unprecedented in its reach and level of engagement. The Special Segment on Financing the COVID-19 recovery of the Forum, convened by the President of ECOSOC in consultation with the President of the General Assembly, garnered significant interest at the highest political level.

The Forum engaged Heads of State and Government as well as a Ministers and Vice-Ministers from over 50 countries. Unprecedented online interaction saw over 25,000 engagements being registered on social media in relation to the Forum, leading to a potential reach of around 4 billion users.

During the Forum, countries called for urgent global action to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had devastating effects on the lives and livelihoods of millions across the world.

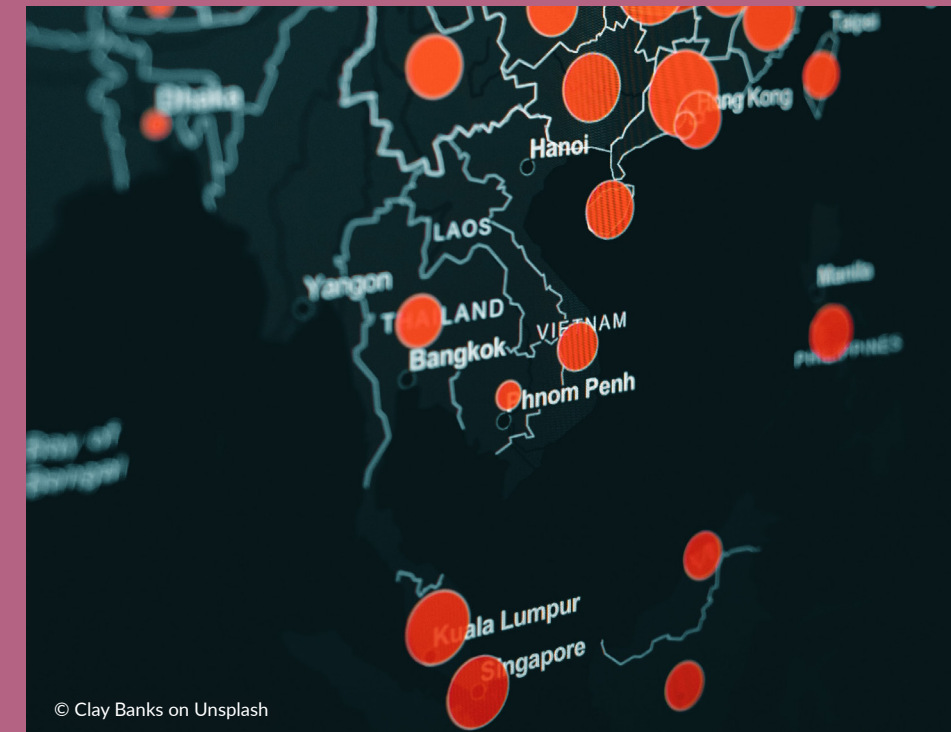
The outcome document of the 2021 FfD Forum, agreed by consensus, represents a significant milestone for Financing for Development. It is the most ambitious since the Forum's inception, reinforcing the commitment of the international community to jointly tackle the COVID-19 crisis and commit to bold new actions that can set the world on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Leveraging digital technologies for social inclusion

UN DESA supported deliberations at the 59th session of the Commission for Social Development, addressing *Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all*. The Department undertook analytical work, which helped inform deliberations, that addressed the role of the pandemic in accelerating the pace of digital transformation, opening the opportunities for advancing social progress and fostering social inclusion, while simultaneously exacerbating the risk of increased inequalities and exclusion of those who are not digitally connected. The outcome of the Commission, adopted by consensus, highlighted the need for a whole-of-government and whole-of society approach to close the digital divides and promote digital inclusion, by addressing the challenges associated with access, affordability, digital literacy and digital skills in national and regional contexts to ensure that new technologies benefit all.

Strengthening the science-policy-society interface

The 2021 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) included a dedicated session on mobilizing science, technology and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface. The 2021 session built on the outcomes of the 2021 STI Forum, to explore measures to ensure that science and technology support the realization of the SDGs for all and bridge the digital divide.



Integrating statistical and geospatial information in decision-making

UN DESA in 2020-2021 provided secretariat support to four data-related intergovernmental processes: The Statistical Commission, the UN Committee of Experts for Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), the UN Group of Experts for Geographical Names (UNGEGN), and the Commission on Population and Development.

The substantive work of these bodies enables the development of statistical standards, norms and data processes to support the collection, production, and management of sound data for policy-making. The National Statistical Offices and National Geospatial Information Agencies were represented in these intergovernmental bodies and collaborated to integrate statistical and geospatial information and had a commensurate impact in responding to COVID-19 by informing decision-makers and communicating to people on necessary actions.



Drawing high-level attention to biodiversity

The first United Nations Summit on Biodiversity at the level of Heads of State and Government was convened by the President of the General Assembly on 30 September 2020 under the theme of *Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development*. UN DESA as part of the Secretariat provided substantive support to the Summit.

At the Summit, Member States and other actors demonstrated strong commitment and highlighted the need for urgent action at the highest levels in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and moves the world toward the goal of the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, *Living in harmony with nature*.



Building Member State capacity for an effective QCPR

UN DESA partnered with UNITAR to provide a training series for delegations in preparation for the General Assembly's 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of UN system operational activities (QCPR) .

The training covered the QCPR content and the repositioning of the UN development system as well as key issues related to the role of the QCPR in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while responding to the crisis during the Decade of Action. Over 170 delegates participated.



Examining risk-informed, climate-smart development cooperation

UN DESA stimulated and shaped a reimagined understanding of development cooperation – informed by risk, designed to build resilience, and strongly linked with climate action – through its support to the 2021 Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). Held virtually on 6-7 May 2021, discussions at the DCF stressed the need for governments to fulfil ODA commitments and provide fresh concessional finance for developing countries, especially for LDCs and SIDS, with emphasis on grants rather than loans. The availability of concessional resources for Middle Income

Countries (MICs) was also stressed as imperative for recovery. Participants identified ways that development cooperation should do more to support recovery efforts, including to strengthen health systems in vulnerable countries, while also promoting solidarity and coordination to advance the production, supply, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. The resurgent interest and expanded engagement in the work of the DCF, as the UN platform that brings the diversity and dynamism of development cooperation into action-oriented policy discussion, underscored the essential role of development cooperation in pandemic recovery in the Decade of Action.