

ACCELERATE THE PACE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 2030 AT HALF-WAY TO ITS FINISHING LINE

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ABSTRACT

This introductory chapter of Outlook 2024 aims to discuss the key question (practical and theoretical) of how to accelerate the pace of the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SD) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at half-way to the finishing line and achieve SD across the world.

In doing so, the chapter will provide a summary of the key recommendations from the World Association for Sustainable Development's (WASD) 22nd Annual International Sustainability Conference held for the second time at the UN Headquarters, Palais des Nations in Geneva, 22-25 July 2024. It also discusses the official launch of WASD's major Sustainable Development Goals Universities Initiative (SDGsUNi) and Sustainable Development Goals Experts Directory Initiative (SDGsWho'sWho) interactive and smart digital platforms.

The chapter will explore the analysis of the results and findings of selected countries' Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) from the UN high-level political forum (HLPF) database. The research aims to provide an overview of the status of implementation of national commitments by learning lessons from what is presented in countries' VNRs, and identify targeted areas for improvement and resource allocation. More importantly, the chapter will outline the global challenges facing many countries across the world and the need to support national agendas to accelerate progress towards the UN Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs.

CITATION: Ahmed, A. (2024): Accelerate the Pace of the Implementation of Agenda 2030 at Half-Way to its Finishing Line. In Ahmed, A. (Ed.): *World Sustainable Development Outlook 2024*, Vol. 20, pp.1–16. WASD: London, United Kingdom.

RECEIVED: 27 July 2024 / **REVISED:** 14 August 2024 / **ACCEPTED:** 20 August 2024 / **PUBLISHED:** 30 October 2024



Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the public strategic and policy implications of these findings and provides practical recommendations to accelerate the pace of Agenda 2030 and the implementation of its 17 SDGs across the world.

KEYWORDS: *Sustainable Development; United Nations; Agenda 2030; Sustainable Development Goals; Implementation; Accelerate; Universities; Strategy; Public Policy; SDGs; Voluntary National Reviews; VNRs*

INTRODUCTION

The *World Sustainable Development Outlook* series has been developed to provide an overview of Sustainable Development (SD) and why it is important. It also provokes forward thinking on the development of a more coherent approach to solving global problems related to sustainability. In doing so, an holistic approach is used to critically examine the inter-relationship between the natural, the governmental, the economic and the social dimensions of our world and how science and technology can contribute to solutions. A framework for understanding and acting upon these solutions will be presented, taking into account a variety of international, institutional and intellectual perspectives.

The series seeks to address growing concerns for the future of our interlocked ecological, political and economic systems in a highly populated world that is characterised by major social and economic disparities. Sustainable development is not just a concern for developing countries (DCs). The series is intended to explore global viewpoints on the state of business, technology, innovation and SD. All countries, whatever their level of development or past scientific and technological glories, must pay attention to SD. It is important at every level to develop a clear understanding for a consensus on the meaning of SD and the realities of our common future.

OUTLOOK 2024

In addition to the standard submissions, *Outlook 2024* includes a selection of the best papers presented during the World Association for Sustainable Development's (WASD)ⁱ 22nd Annual International Sustainability Conferenceⁱⁱ, held for the second time at the United Nations (UN), Palais des Nations in Geneva, 22–25, July 2024. During the conference, WASD also formally launched its major Sustainable Development Goals Universities Initiative (SDGsUNi)ⁱⁱⁱ and Sustainable Development Goals Who's Who Initiative (SDGsWho'sWho)^{iv} interactive and smart digital platforms.

The main parts of the book are:

Part I	Introduction
Part II	Keynote Statements
Part III	Knowledge and Learning
Part IV	Higher Education
Part V	Artificial Intelligence
Part VI	Innovation Management and Sustainability
Part VIII	Health and Well-being
Part VII	Leadership

Outlook 2024 aims to discuss the key question (*practical and theoretical*) of how to accelerate the pace of the implementation of Agenda 2030 at half-way to its finishing line to achieve SD across the world.

In addition to the papers included in this volume, *Outlook 2024* also include summaries of the different presentations from the four days and 11 sessions of the conference^v. *Outlook 2024* provides an overview and a summary of the key recommendations of the various topics discussed during the conference. These include but are not limited to:

DAY ONE

Session 1: Official opening and keynote statements

- Official opening remarks
- UN perspectives on the progress so far
- Country-specific perspectives on the progress so far
- The importance of Youth and our responsibility towards change

Session 2: Accelerate the pace of the Agenda 2030 implementation

- SDGsUNi Initiatives (Live Demo)
- SDGs Experts Directory – explanation and collaboration (Live Demo)
- AI vs a Human Touch – what are the biggest challenges that face us?
- Issues such as the informal market, growing national/global debt and global conflict were persistent themes

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Session 3: Reconnecting universities with the discourse of the UN SDGs

- Reconnecting universities
- Themes of integration, collaboration and expansion were persistent
- A Multi-Helix System

DAY TWO

Session 4: Higher Education: New models and frameworks for the future

- Online and traditional education and the path towards new models and frameworks
- The need for online education to be taken seriously as it is the only feasible and sustainable way to expand quality education across the globe
- AI as a beneficial tool to advance a framework of expansive and improved quality of education
- AI data collection as a means of bridging the vivid gap in many nation's VNRs as many nations have evident gaps in their data

Session 5: Universities Global Ranking – Reality or Myth?

- Roundtable discussion regarding universities rankings:
 - Rankings determine university strategies – forced in a framework
 - Universities should prioritise their students and not the finances
 - Rankings require regulations – misinformation, bias, etc.
 - One singular, standardised and universal system for rankings
 - Rankings should also consider the number of exported students as DCs' students go abroad to maximise employment opportunities

Session 6: Business, entrepreneurship and leadership for sustainability

- Business, entrepreneurship and leadership
- The importance of the private sector in driving SDGs implementation
 - Red Sea Global example

- Sustainability and leadership go hand in hand – business leaders to lead by example in order for their employees to follow
- The significance of digitalisation across DCs and SMEs
 - A shift to circular economics – prioritising the world over currency
 - Long-term thinking > short-term thinking

DAY THREE

Session 7: Empowering women to accelerate implementation of Agenda 2030

- Empowering women (SDG 5)
- The history of women’s fight for equality and their growing influence in modern society
- No Women No SDGs – 51%
 - Female representation in influential roles has increased, with 41% of MPs in the British House of Commons being women as of the 2024 General Election (GE) – a 6% increase from the 2019 GE
- The Triple Shift and the growing violence towards women across the globe

Session 8: Engaging youth to accelerate implementation of Agenda 2030

- Engaging youth to accelerate implementation of the SDGs
- The role of sports in strengthening youth and it acting as a long-term investment
 - This is current especially with the ongoing Olympics
- A study that focused on children with unique learning needs – STAMP & STOMP
- Pakistan’s youth programme and schemes

Session 9: Challenges, success and lessons learned to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2030

- Challenges, successes and lessons learned to accelerate progress
- The need to reform the timing and criteria of the SDGs due to global setbacks as a result of the geo-political climate, with conflicts like the Russian invasion of Ukraine hindering global development

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- Innovative sustainable development cities – Markaz Knowledge City
- The necessity of challenging counterfeit medicines in West Africa

DAY FOUR

Session 10: Transformation of higher education: country-specific case studies

- The necessity of E-Learning in Sudan, a war-torn nation, to ensure no students are left behind
- The development of Rajuk in Bangladesh, similar to Markaz Knowledge City
- The implementation of sustainability in curriculum and community engagement as per the case study of Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE

Session 11: What is next for the UN 2030 Agenda and SDGs – concluding remarks

- Enhancing the partnerships between the United Nations system organisations and the SDGs universities
- Mastering public policy for the implementation of the UN SDGs
- Concluding remarks from the Rapporteurs

This introductory chapter of *Outlook 2024* will discuss the results and findings of a team of young researchers^{vi} who analysed more than 30 selected Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) from the UN's high-level political forum (HLPF)^{vii} database. In the next part, this chapter therefore aims to provide the results of the analysis of these selected countries' VNRs regarding the status of the implementation of national commitments by learning lessons from what is presented in these reports.

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS (VNRs)

The overarching objective of the UN Agenda 2030 for SD is the transformation of the world. Governments across the world are under increasing pressure to rise to the current challenges of improving performance and accelerating the pace of the UN's Agenda 2030 for SD and the implementation of its 17 SDGs, currently half-way to its finishing line. It is therefore very important to create an enabling environment for all stakeholders (individuals and institutions) within countries to accelerate the pace of achieving Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs.

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, Agenda 2030 encourages member states to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven”. These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the UN Agenda 2030; regular reviews are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders.

The Voluntary Rational Reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of Agenda 2030. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilise multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs.

Many countries have expressed interest in carrying out VNRs of their implementation of Agenda 2030 for the 2024 UN meeting.

VNRs selection criteria

In selecting the sample countries’ VNRs for this research analysis, we ensured that we had good representation from all the regional groups of the UN General Assembly, which are the following:

- African states;
- Asia-Pacific states;
- Eastern European states;
- Latin American and Caribbean states;
- Western European; and
- Other states.

We also considered the regional groups as members of the regional economic commissions of ECOSOC, which are the following:

- UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), hosted by Addis Ababa;
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, hosted by Bangkok;
- UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), hosted by Geneva;
- UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), hosted by Santiago de Chile; and
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Africa (ESCWA), hosted by Beirut.

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VNRs research aims and objectives

This research aims to provide an analysis of selected (based on the regional structuring of the UN membership or on selected sub-regional groups of country) VNRs and consider the following questions/objectives:

- An overview of the country VNR and the researchers' sense of how the country is progressing towards implementing Agenda 2030;
- Is it possible to determine the progress of the country from the report and if yes, is it possible to find a way to measure the country's performance whether on-track or off-track (moderate or seriously off-track) from achieving the targets in 2023;
- What are the problems that seem to be the major challenges facing the country in meeting the goals;
- What are the lessons that can be learned from each country's VNR for other countries to accelerate their progress towards achieving Agenda 2030;
- Identify any key dates and figures mentioned in these VNRs around the 17 SDGs; and
- Provide an overall concluding remarks.

SDGs PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

“SDGs represented a promise of a better future to hundreds of millions of people across the world. Halfway to the 2030 deadline, the SDGs were in trouble. Today, just 17 per cent of the targets are on-track. Future generations deserve more than 17 per cent of a sustainable future.”

António Guterres^{VIII}

*Secretary-General
United Nations*

15 July 2024

Researchers have faced several methodological challenges during the research analysis on the selected countries' VNRs, mostly relating to data gaps with several countries having incomplete data for some SDGs. These incomplete data hinder a comprehensive assessment of these countries' performance. There are other situations where data are also likely to be underestimated.

The overall research analysis reveals the following regarding the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and the implementation of its 17 SDGs:

- The varied scores across the different SDGs show diverse performance; for example, **SDG 1** (Eradicate Poverty), while few countries report high achievements in this particular goal, other countries report significant implementation challenges.
- **SDG 13** (Climate Action) consistently shows the highest-achieving goal among the selected countries studied, suggesting effective initiatives in this area have been implemented by these selected countries.
- In addition to SDG 13, high achievement in other goals across multiple countries include: **SDG 10** (Reduced Inequalities); **SDG 11** (Sustainable Cities and Communities); and **SDG 14** (Life Below Water).
- Persistent challenges remain for **SDG 2** (Zero Hunger), consistently the lowest-achieving goal across the selected countries. These low scores for SDG 2 indicate the urgent need for more robust interventions to address hunger and food security issues.
- Most countries show moderate progress in SDGs related to Health and Well-being (**SDG 3**), Clean Water and Sanitation (**SDG 6**), Affordable and Clean Energy (**SDG 7**), and Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (**SDG 9**).
- Other significant challenges remain in Improving Education (**SDG 4**) and Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth (**SDG 8**).

Global challenges

The different chapters in this book explore global viewpoints and countries' latest thinking in attempting to achieve the different SDGs of Agenda 2030. However, among the selected countries' VNRs, the impact of COVID-19, wars and conflicts clearly influence most, if not all, SDGs of Agenda 2030, particularly in DCs. The analysis clearly reveals that all sectors are affected. This is irrespective of distinction such as economic issues; this is a large umbrella term that ranges from funding, inflation to currency devaluation. We are cognizant of the growing concerns for the impact of the current downturn on other global issues such as deteriorating environmental conditions, energy, wars and conflicts, obesity and climate change.

Poor governance with regards to mismanagement of public services, corruption and weak public sector budgets, climate change and environmental crises, as well as growing regionalism within nations and the long journey towards social inclusion across the board; all serve as hurdles that must be tackled immediately to fast track the implementation of Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs.

The economic state of the world and its nations are arguably the largest stumbling block in the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Categorical worldwide inflation as a result

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of COVID-19 and the subsequent geo-political conflicts, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, have caused inflation rates to jump from 4.7% in 2021 to 8.8% in 2022 (IMF, 2024)^x. There are also other war and conflict zones such as the Palestine-Israeli conflict and Sudanese civil war.

The rising cost of living across the world has constrained both citizens and their governments, especially in its spending commitments to schemes that would aid the implementation of the 17 SDGs. An additional economic issue that faces our international cohort is the growing budget deficit, with more and more nations falling increasingly behind in managing, let alone paying off their debts, as borrowing becomes a necessity rather than a luxury. Much of this pressure on government loans has been the informal economy, a feature primarily proficient in DCs where governments are unable to retain a tax income - reducing their fiscal budget for the nation's social schemes such as healthcare, etc.

Unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is also a shared feature of DCs; this can have its ties to the growing need and focus of nations in their attempts to diversify their respective economies - from one-sector dominated economies to more green, sustainable and successful sectors inspiring growth.

Meanwhile, the issue of poor governance or disillusionment with one's government has grown internationally, irrespective of a nation's wealth. This has complemented the rise of populists globally with growing discontent for trust in politicians due to suspicion of corruption and morally dubious decisions. A growing proportion of people has given up with politics and therefore lacks any awareness or even interest in the SDGs. The lack of constitutional checks and balances in matters such as public funding, public budgets and public spending cause the path towards achieving the 17 SDGs much more rocky and tedious as millions of citizens across the globe are deprived of the necessary funding to improve their quality of life as a result of government corruption or mismanagement.

The subsequent lack of public sector funding, a common theme amongst many of the selected countries in this research, have paved the way for private sector-led social programmes. While these contributions are more than welcomed, countries must take the lead in achieving the SDGs and the eventual improvement of its citizens' conditions. Countries need to continue all necessary schemes to achieve Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs.

Another persistent and urgent issue is climate change. Climate change and the various relating environmental issues need to be addressed urgently to ensure achieving the necessary SDGs, such as SDGs 13, 14 and 15. Many countries, particularly the islands, face the real possibility of being submerged under water due to rising sea levels, the destruction of entire ecosystems, the decay of biodiversity and the gradual increase of the Earth's temperature, all of which will have detrimental effects on the future of not only individual citizens but entire populations.

Another prevalent aspect from the analysis amongst nearly all countries is the growing sense of regionalism. Entire areas of respective nations are being ‘left behind’ in favour of urbanisation and the subsequent economic growth that it entails. Rural regions lack access to key services such as adequate healthcare, high quality education, safe water and sanitation - let alone matters such as electricity and modern infrastructure. Naturally, governments have given more attention to the economic producer in their respective nations with investment, infrastructure and resources, but the SDGs clearly outline a commitment to not leave anyone behind – a feat that we as an international community are failing at quite significantly across the board.

Last but definitely not least, we have the matter of social inclusion (SDG 10). Many countries are trailing with regards to reduced inequalities across social characteristics and minority groups such as Women, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and LGBTQ+ communities, to name a few. Many of these groups, together with others, face discrimination across nearly all sectors such as employment, opportunities, education, social stereotypes and basic human rights. For instance, millions of PWDs do not have access to the necessary wash facilities or adequate care to assist their lives. There are no SDGs without equality of opportunity, yet nations have neglected the rights of minorities to opportunity by rejecting social inclusion legislation/schemes. In some instances, nations have legislated *de jure* change regarding minority rights, but there remains very little *de facto* change when you look below the surface.

Lessons learned from selected countries' VNRs

To accelerate progress towards achieving the UN Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs, there are several vital lessons to be learned from each country's experience.

- Several countries emphasised the importance of strengthening *collaboration and partnerships* with other countries across the world. For Canada and Singapore, collaboration and partnerships can enhance governance, policy cohesion, and inclusivity, ensuring a more unified approach towards SD.
- Other countries, such as Cambodia and Namibia, state that *integration* of SDGs into national policies and frameworks helps to maintain a consistent focus on sustainability across all sectors and promotes comprehensive progress.
- Robust *data collection* is very important for any public policy implementation; therefore, strengthening data capabilities allows for more precise assessments and identification of areas needing improvement. As an example, Cambodia and Namibia consider the quality of data collected essential for accurately tracking progress and making informed policy decisions.

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- **Inclusivity** remains a critical component, with Romania’s focus on regional development and inclusive social policies, together with Qatar’s and Iceland’s emphasis on equitable development, showcasing the importance of addressing social inequalities and ensuring marginalised groups are not left behind.
- **Environmental prioritisation** is another crucial lesson, underscored by the experiences of Romania, Iceland, and Kenya. Strict enforcement of environmental laws, investment in green technologies, and a focus on renewable energy are necessary steps for SD.
- **Economic diversification**, as demonstrated by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, is vital for reducing dependency on limited resources and enhancing economic resilience.
- Countries facing economic challenges, such as Austria and Zimbabwe, illustrate the importance of **effective financial management and innovative economic strategies** to fund SDG-related projects. Learning from Qatar’s proactive **crisis management** during COVID-19 can help nations develop resilient systems to withstand future shocks.

UNIVERSITIES’ ROLE IN ACCELERATING THE PACE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 2030

“I am particularly pleased to see on the agenda of the conference the emphasis on the vital role of educational institutions in driving forward the implementation of Agenda 2030. Universities and academic institutions are not only centers of learning but also hubs of innovation, research, and community engagement. They play a pivotal role in equipping the next generation with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve sustainable development.”

Tatiana Valovaya^{XI}

Director-General

United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)

22 July 2024

Outlook 2024 aims to introduce a variety of new perspectives for universities to accelerate their role in helping countries accelerate the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 for SD. By integrating SD into curricula, fostering a culture of innovation, and nurturing socially responsible citizens, educational institutions can act as catalysts for change.

Universities are considered by many scholars as very important for the achievement of the UN SDGs and different chapters in this volume critically address the question

of how universities can accelerate the implementation of the UN 17 SDGs of Agenda 2030, and embed the 17 SDGs on developing new methods and approaches to suit the challenges and opportunities of this new era of digital revolution, particularly after the COVID-19 global pandemic. These new approaches call for actions to create different appropriate ways of doing things, and of doing new things that will be essential to solve our future problems and help in the implementation of the 17 SDGs of Agenda 2030.

Universities serve as vessels of knowledge, shaping the minds of future leaders, entrepreneurs, and advocates for SD. Through an holistic approach that includes not only academic instruction but also extracurricular activities, partnerships, and community engagement, education institutions can shape individuals who are not only well-versed in the challenges posed by the SDGs but are also equipped with the skills and mindset needed to address them.

Furthermore, educational institutions function as laboratories of experimentation and innovation, where new ideas and solutions to global challenges can be developed and tested. By encouraging research and fostering a collaborative environment, these institutions contribute directly to the creation of actionable strategies for the implementation of SDGs. Moreover, they act as hubs that connect academia, industry, and government, facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge transfer to accelerate progress towards the realisation of SDGs and accelerate implementation of the UN Agenda 2030.

Policy-makers and higher education leaders need to consider creative and innovative approaches to cost saving and performance management. Most countries across the world have embarked on several major transformation and restructuring initiatives towards re-connecting their universities with the discourse of SD.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from the different chapters presented in this volume and the research on the selected countries, the overall implementation of the goals remains not very satisfactory overall, and it varies from country to country. Therefore, all countries are encouraged to evaluate and analyse their own VNRs to identify targeted areas for improvement and resource allocation to accelerate progress towards the UN Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs.

While there are areas of commendable progress, substantial challenges remain. The varied performance across different SDGs emphasises the necessity for targeted interventions and strategic allocation of resources to accelerate progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. Although the available data might lack precise details, they still provide a functional framework to track achievements.

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When taking all of the above into account, it is conspicuous that there is a commonality of challenges facing the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs. To list a few of these common challenges; the compound shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent geo-political conflicts, economic roadblocks and stagnation, poor governance, climate change, environmental crises, growing regionalism in favour of urbanisation, and the necessity of social inclusion and ‘not leaving anyone behind’.

There is an urgent need for improvements for those countries with consistently low scores across multiple SDGs. These countries require significant support and policy changes to accelerate their progress. The priorities for these countries should be on SDGs such as Zero Hunger and No Poverty by implementing robust policies and programmes.

Countries with incomplete data must act swiftly to enhance their process of data collection by filling the data gaps to ensure a complete and accurate assessment of progress.

There is also an urgent need to promote, increase awareness, and engagements around SDGs to foster collective efforts towards achieving Agenda 2030 and its 17 SDGs. In doing so, countries must create an enabling environment for all stakeholders to play their part in helping countries to achieve Agenda 2030.

By adopting these strategies emphasising partnerships, integrating SDGs into national policies, enhancing data collection, promoting inclusivity, prioritising environmental sustainability, and ensuring economic resilience, countries can better navigate their unique challenges and significantly accelerate their progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

FINAL REMARKS

The papers selected for this volume had tremendous scope in both focus and source, covering a broad geographical spectrum including Africa, America, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Middle East. We hope that these chapters will help to stimulate debate amongst scholars, researchers and policy-makers, and that you will find this volume interesting and thought-provoking.

We would like to congratulate the authors for their valuable contributions, and we are grateful to our track chairs and many reviewers for graciously offering their invaluable comments that have enriched the quality of the papers in this conference and its related publications, and for making available to us their valuable time and efforts.

We would like to acknowledge the fantastic research work by our volunteer researchers from across the world particularly the team leader, You Li (Hainan University – China), and the editors of results’ summaries, Mosaab Alabassi and Lina Suliman (Queen Mary University of London - UK) and Nahid Nouri (Imperial College London - UK).



We also highly appreciate the generosity and full support of Her Excellency Dr Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and her teams in different departments and units from the UNOG including but not limited to the Meetings Management Section; Information and Communication Technology Service; Audio-visual Services; and the UN Restaurant.

We are very grateful for the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar at the UNOG for their full support in facilitating this conference with the different departments at the UNOG. We also very much appreciate the full support provided to the conference by Her Excellency Dr Hend Abdalrahman Al-Muftah, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UNOG and other international organisations in Geneva. We are very grateful for the endless support we received from Mr Elobaid Elamin, Ms Johara Abdulaziz Al-Suwaidi, Mr Abdulla Al-Sowaidi, Hajar and their colleagues from the Permanent Mission of Qatar to UNOG.

Finally, we would like also to thank all the members of WASD organising committee, particularly Mrs Janet Snow (International Co-ordinator and Editor), Kumar Gaurav (Webmaster), Souheil Zaied (Lead Graphic Designer), N. Joseph Navinraj (Director of ePublishing), Dr Samar Ahmed (WASD Executive), Lena Alam (Youth Champion), and all the volunteers from across the world for their continuous and endless assistance and support to the conference.

We hope that you will find this volume informative and engaging. Any feedback you can provide will be greatly appreciated as we are always looking at ways in which we can improve your experience.

END NOTES

- i www.wasd.org.uk/
- ii www.wasd.org.uk/listing/accelerate-sdgs-2030/
- iii www.sdgsuniversities.org/
- iv www.sdgswhoswho.org/
- v www.wasd.org.uk/listing/accelerate-sdgs-2030/
- vi For the purpose of this research, WASD attracted more than 37 young researchers (undergraduates and postgraduates) from across the world. Researchers include: Jeffery Kofi Asare (Central University of Punjab, India); Ahmed Khalid (Arcadis, UK); Adam Yahia Saleh (University of East London, UK); Samuel K. C. Kyire (Central University of Punjab, India); Lina Yagoub (King's College London, UK); Eyad Khalid (London Metropolitan University, UK); Josephine Amponsah (Central University of Kerala, India); Wang Ning

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(China University of Petroleum, China); Yang Fengrui (Shanghai University, China) Zhang Ruoliu (Hefei University of Technology, China) Xing Zhuojun (Northwest A & F University, China).

The team was led by You Li (Hainan University, China) and the summaries of results completed by Mosaab Alabassi and Lina Suliman (Queen Mary University of London, UK) and Nahid Nouri (Imperial College London, UK).

vii www.hlpf.un.org/2024/vnrs

viii <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2024-07-15/secretary-generals-remarks-the-opening-of-the-ministerial-segment-of-the-high-level-political-forum-delivered>

ix Austria, Romania, Iceland, Ireland, Azerbaijan, Singapore, Nepal, Qatar, Sudan, Brazil, Vietnam, China, Uganda, Barbados, Armenia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Cambodia, Namibia, Eritrea, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Uganda, Peru, Serbia, Ghana, Soloman Islands and the EU.

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