



## UNGA CONFERENCE 2021

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of the UN General Assembly  
**UNGA Conference 2021**  
**Transforming Our World:**  
**Partnerships for the SDGs**  
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## DECLARATION & RESOLUTIONS

### UNGA CONFERENCE 2021 TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE SDGs 22 September 2021

The Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF), Global Partners, and panelists reaffirmed that on the occasion of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, the international community came together to reflect on Transforming Our World. Acknowledging the existing global partnerships, the Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF) created three distinct but mutually connected panels of experts assembled virtually to deliberate, reflect and contribute to the declaration and resolutions. Panel 1 addressed the *Progress of SDG 17: Partnerships for the SDGs*, Panel 2 on *Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability* and Panel 3 discussed *Quality Education in the Post-Covid Era and Digital Technologies*. The Panelists reviewed together with the successful implementation of SDG #17: Partnerships for the Goals remains a global challenge. The experts, Global Partners, JWF and Conference Organizers, then, reaffirmed their commitment by selecting best practices, which are people-centered and suggesting policy to propel this achievement in line with the UN Development Agenda 2030.

Recognizing of outstanding civil society leaders and organizations contributing to sustainable peace and development while promoting the culture of peace, diversity, human rights, women, and youth empowerment at the local, national, and global levels.

Recalling multiple stakeholders to work in collaboration and partnership by sharing financial and human resources, including their knowledge, skills, and experience for best practices.

Promoting the right to access inclusive and equitable quality education for all in the post-COVID-19 Era to resolve the substantial setbacks of the pandemic and increase high levels of human capital through digital technologies.

Reiterating the need in developing local, national, global strategies and gender-sensitive policies to combat the crisis posed by climate change and ecological threats.

Strengthening inclusive policies for diverse societies by promoting and protecting human rights laws, democracy, and the rule of law, and respecting the religious, social, and cultural norms.

Enhancing the meaningful participation of civil society in the well-functioning of the UN Member States for the political stability and the rule of law.

### **PANEL 1 – PROGRESS OF SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE SDGs**

**Panel Session 1** discussing the Progress of SDG 17: Partnerships for the SDGs, noted with concern that COVID-19 impacted the whole world when all stakeholders, including UN Agencies, Member States, the private sector, civil society actors, and experts were working towards building bridges to close the gap between policy and knowledge to achieving UN Development Agenda 2030.

Bearing in mind the challenges posed by this global health crisis the international community had to redefine the economic and social development agenda by refining better strategies for policy implementation.

Emphasizing that action-oriented UN Global Agenda 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires creating a vibrant civil society platform to debate and come up with after Conference implementation targets.

Recognizing that sharing inclusive policies to enable diverse societies promote formal laws and informal social and cultural norms which protect not only human rights of all but other biocentrism rights.

Reaffirming that with COVID-19 embedded in every household, the right to access inclusive and equitable quality education for all in the post-COVID-19 Era should be promoted. This reaffirmation would resolve the substantial setbacks of the pandemic and increase high levels of human capital through digital technologies.

Expressing concern that the international community disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, may deviate from implementing SDG 17 “Partnerships for the Goals”, focusing on the developing local, national, global strategies, and gender-sensitive policy recommendations to combat the crisis posed by climate change and ecological threats.

Therefore, the JWF, Global Partners, and panelists consider:

1. Advocating for social policies that respect citizens in each country, especially in countries across the globe exercising punitive and repressive mechanisms on their citizens.
2. Enhancing efforts to address, promote and consider rights of children affected by education internet connectivity gap and removing the laptop ownership inequality in recognition of principles of SDG 17. Making sure all households have internet connectivity for free and developed nations to assist developing countries to acquire free technological devices with internet connectivity at home and in school.
3. Scaling up and accelerating the investment in marginalized persons like refugees entering a new culture and strengthening the capacity of marginalized persons to access the right technology used in laptops, to address language barrier in the delivery of education in line with SDG 4 “Quality Education”.
4. Adopting education delivery strategies among migrant and refugee children with teachers themselves who are refugees and can interpret the new technology and language applied to achieve education for sustainable development.
5. Recognizing solidarity among the global family to achieve common goals requires reinventing the past for a better future, adapting thinking and behaviors to transform a focus on positive change benefitting all humanity. Then the business community, multinational corporations (MNCs), local companies, need to engage in initiatives that address environmental catastrophes like wildfires, floods, which not only displace families but affect education in every society in developed and developing countries.
6. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists direct that scaling up gender-sensitive education with a focus on girls’ education and women's advancement, brings great intersectionality between gender equality and human rights. The conference stakeholders recognize the importance of educating a girl to create transformative effects to convert an entire community. Therefore, peace and stability are essential to foster quality education, especially for girls, as the recent humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan imposed, which has fueled gender inequality.

7. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists encourage concerted efforts to address vaccine nationalism and share medical supplies with developing countries. When one part of the world is vaccinated, the coronavirus is not conquered. When all are vaccinated then humanity is safe.

8. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists acknowledge the important role of SDG 17 in serving as a medium to achieve the rest of the Global Goals. They call for partnerships, collaboration, the interconnectivity of systems of communication to all Member States to develop national policy mechanisms to educate their citizens on all SDGs and their transformative role.

## **PANEL 2 – CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECOLOGICAL THREATS**

**Panel Session 2** on Climate Change and Ecological Threats, considering that climate change crisis and ecological threats unequally impact women and children, especially in situations of poverty and limited access to scarce resources.

Reaffirming that women and girls are still included in the world's poorest and most vulnerable groups, continue to encounter the environmental, economic, and social costs of climate change.

Recalling that the negative effects of climate change are currently increasing and enforcing people to migrate from their natural habitation, the panelists expressed their deep concerns about the number of displaced people across the globe due to climate change and stressed the importance of leadership in respective countries.

Acknowledging statistics from the UNHCR Global Trends Report 2018, the last two years had experienced over 70.8 million people forcibly displaced worldwide due to persecution, conflict, and violation of human rights.

Adding that post-disaster vulnerability has increased, with loss of control over natural resources and localized extractive industry to MNCs.

Expressing grave concern about natural disasters which result in more deaths of women than men. Concerned that the global low socioeconomic status has a greater proportion of women than men.

Expressing particular concern that trends in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Americas indicate more women trying to escape from earthquakes, floods and collapsed buildings.

Recognizing that with the global population of over 7 billion people, there is unsustainable and insatiable over-production to endure short-term income which has led to greed for quick money with the displacement of indigenous communities in the Amazons, Congo Forests, and other continents.

Therefore, the JWF, Global Partners, and panelists recommend:

1. A global strategy for collective engagement with all stakeholders to address ecological threats which inevitably impact the peacefulness of the states, enforce mass displacement, trigger migration wave factors and extreme poverty which contributes to already existing regional conflicts.
2. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists support the free movement of people across borders because migration can be an important peaceful way to adapt to climate change if enabled by the smart policy; it can act as a pressure relief. Where there is overpopulation, people can be moved to the least populated areas even across borders.
3. Recognizing solidarity among nations on climate change, not only affecting humans but also animals and ecosystems, where the rate of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> has increased over the past two decades 100 times the maximum rate during the last deglaciation. The panelists call for steps to scale down the emissions to zero in the next two decades to save our planet.
4. Enhancing efforts to counter climate change that continue to exacerbate underlying vulnerabilities set in place by the social construction of gender, where women suffer most in this circumstance, there is a call for the strengthening of local opportunities for improved community wide disaster planning and climate change forced migration and adaptation strategies.
5. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists call for urgent action to explore measures to address accountability ensuring the role of gender to be incorporated into new and existing partnerships in the development of policy.
6. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists support adopting institutional and administrative measures, as well as partnerships, at the national, regional, and international level, affirming stronger systems to be in action to collectively address and monitor domestic violence and mental health crisis in families, especially in relevant situations posed by the COVID-19 crisis.
7. To enhance coherence and cross-cutting focus on women, there should be action to uncover characteristics that define the ideal type of leadership needed to exercise the transition into a neutral carbon economy.
8. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists discern key strategies developed by different well-meaning initiatives for women, such as Ecomujeres Foundations, with a commitment to promote sustainable consumption and production, education on being conscious citizens, raise awareness about individual environments impacts with the personal carbon footprint tool.

9. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists, nor forgetting the upcoming Glasgow United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP26, call for more scientific research that collectively answers part of the causes and finding quick solutions to the global disasters.

### **PANEL 3 – QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE POST-COVID ERA AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

**Panel Session 3:** Quality Education in Post-Covid Era and Digital Technologies, considering the long-term implications of unequal access to education during the pandemic as a “generational catastrophe”.

Acknowledging the impact of the pandemic on education, where being crowded in public places, social distancing, schools were among the institutions that are closed for in-person access all around the world.

Recalling this health precaution created unprecedented consequences for the social wellbeing of children and impacted their learning trends.

Reaffirming the obvious challenge of an increased number of children who may never have a chance of returning to school as they are forced into child labor or child marriage.

Additionally, agreeing with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on sustainable development progress report indicating that “an additional 101 million children and youth (from grades 1 to 9) fell below the minimum reading proficiency level due to COVID-19 in 2020, which wiped out the education gains achieved over the last 20 years”.

The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists commit therefore to consider:

1. “The Role of Digital Technologies on Social Development and Well-being of All”, to enhance global unity and collaboration in using digital technologies as COVID-19 reversed a decade of action.
2. Advocating for global efforts to lower the disparities among the most vulnerable, by closing the digital gender inequalities to ensure that women and girls benefit equally from the opportunities available online.
3. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists call for global partnerships that can oversee the sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A globally coordinated action to suppress the

pandemic, by supporting the upgrading of health systems in countries that are most at risk, is essential.

4. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists promote comprehensive responses to tackle the devastating socio-economic consequences faced by vulnerable people in the most low-income countries, which not only ensures sustainability and but resilience too.

5. While encouraging the gap in education connectivity, there is a call to monitor working towards equity in education, identifying visible and invisible barriers to be removed and allowing accessibility of education at home by all school-going children.

6. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists direct global access to technology and devote time to important stages of accessing education through motivational, physical, skills, and usage access mechanisms.

7. Requests for a comprehensive review of innovations, improved innovation in technology to reduce the existing gaps in education access and cut barriers to equity in education.

8. By ensuring that women are part of innovation not to be perpetually marginalized, the JWF, Global Partners, and panelists support women to achieve their dreams through education for all, women as mentors and providers of financial support to their children and breaking through glass ceiling now than ever.

9. Underscoring and underlining that girls and women in every society should be involved in programs for their social and economic empowerment while promoting women`s and girls` access to social justice.

10. The JWF, Global Partners, and panelists call for value-based education which is elusive to girls and women in countries where repression is high. Abduction, imprisonment, denial to accessing education and at times forced out of their home comfort.

11. The Panelists affirm a *better self for a good life* and stress that 2021 and beyond should not be identified as the period when education ended but instead a time when society was transformed to embrace SDG 4 and accord everyone chances to access education.

12. By implication, the JWF, Global Partners, and panelists make SDG 4 implementable by calling on the international community to add more resources into education, for the youth, especially for girls and women.

13. By scaling up and accelerating reforms in cultural and religiously motivated obstacles to accessing education, the call is for innovative and creative ways of advancing girls in countries where they cannot go to school, by making home-based learning mandatory as the stakeholders negotiate.

14. Considering the young people, individuals in need in an oppressed society who can easily fall prey to false hope through tokenism mentality, it requires transformation and support to be given to the youth to avoid being vulnerable to the lures of quid pro quo situations.

15. By accepting to fight against violation of human rights, people should be accepted as they are, embraced and provided with every opportunity to become true transformers.

Therefore, Tennessee Williams was right when he said, *“I suppose I have found it easier to identify with the characters who verge upon hysteria, who were frightened of life, who were desperate to reach out to another person. But these seemingly fragile people are the strong people really.”*

In conclusion, the JWF, Global Partners, and panelists encourage the international community to build hope in every individual, with unwavering attention to the youth, the girls, the women, refugees, and migrants.

Picking on the words of G.K Chesterton, *“Hope is the power of being cheerful in circumstances that we know to be desperate.”*

*It means to accelerate the Progress of SDG 17, there is a need to build partnerships for the SDGs to achieve the goals and objectives of the UN Development Agenda 2030.*

### **PIONEERS IN SDGS AWARDS CEREMONY 2021**

The Pioneers in SDGs Awards Ceremony was held on Wednesday, 15 September 2021, virtually at 11:00 a.m. EST. In 2021, 47 individuals and organizations participated in the project competition with 30 amazing projects from 20 different countries. The international jury members evaluated these projects and their outcomes based on four criteria: innovation, stakeholders, scope, and impact. The winners were announced during the virtual Pioneers in SDGs Awards Ceremony on 15 September 2021.

The Journalists and Writers Foundation and its Global Partners recognize outstanding individuals and organizations as "Pioneers" in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals where participating organizations are required (encouraged) to implement at least one of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in their projects. The project representatives showcased their innovative and creative projects on how they contributed to the society at the local, national, and global levels. The winners were selected by an international jury, who



evaluated the projects' contributions based on four criteria: innovation, stakeholders, scope, and impact besides community service, philanthropy, and their dedication to society.

After reviewing the projects, the international jury selected the first, second, and third place winners from 30 projects submitted from 20 different countries worldwide. The awards in different categories were presented to the winners during the Pioneers in SDGs Awards Ceremony on 15 September 2021.

**2021 Award Winners<sup>1</sup> are as follows:**

**1st Place Winner 2021** - “Global Goals at Home: project by the United Nations Association of the National Capital Area (USA) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$2,000 cash award*)

**2nd Place Winner 2021** - “Honey & Banana Connect Platform” project by Deep K. Tyagi Foundation (Nigeria) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$1,000 cash award*)

**3rd Place Winner 2021** - “ODYSSEAS: Crisis Management Center & Blood Donation Lab” project by The Smile of the Child (Greece) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$500 cash award*)

**Innovation Award 2021** - “Vocational Training for Young People in Brazil” project by Dream Learn Work (Brazil) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$250 cash award*)

**Stakeholders Award 2021** - (1) Ilitha Labantu Clinical Project by Ilitha Labantu (South Africa) and (2) “*Cuidando de Todos - Cuidando do seu Coração - Better Hearts Better Cities*” project by the Municipal Health Secretariat of São Paulo, Tellus Institute, and Novartis Foundation (Brazil) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$250 cash award*)

**Scope Award 2021** - “Liberian Youth Empowerment Program” project by Liberian Youth Foundation (Liberia) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$250 cash award*)

**Impact Award 2021** - “*Generation WOW: A Generation W Platform for Girls*” project by Generation W (USA) (*Certificate of Recognition and \$250 cash award*)

**Changemakers Award 2021** - (1) “*Extremely EUnited Project*” by Intercultural Dialogue Platform (Belgium), (2) “*Clean Cooking Kenya*” project by CIST East Africa Industries (Kenya) and (3) “*Breaking Barriers Building Dreams*” project by Green Hope Foundation (Bangladesh). (*Certificate of Recognition and \$100 cash award*)

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<sup>1</sup> Award Winners are available at <https://unga-conference.org/2021-sdgs-awards/>