

COALITION FOR THE UN WE NEED

REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS



SUMMARY REPORT 2021

PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS BY NUDHARA YUSUF

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ABSTRACT

The Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN) provides an open forum for civil society, member states and the United Nations to promote the renewal, innovation, and strengthening of the United Nations system. We support and initiate partnerships, activities, campaigns, information-gathering and sharing, progressive ideas, leadership, and advocacy that advance action on the UN75 Political Declaration and the UN75 People's Declaration & Global Plan for Action.

This report synthesizes C4UN's June 2021 regional consultations, conducted in the effort to better understand the priorities and specific needs arising in the various regions of the world, recognizing the diverse purposes and impacts that multilateral cooperation provides. By summarizing, analyzing and contextualizing these consultations, the report aims to both complete the knowledge cycle of the consultations as well as feed into future efforts of the Coalition and its partners.

Prepared by Nudhara Yusuf, in consultation with regional partners, on behalf of The Coalition for the UN We Need, August 2021.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Coalition For The UN We Need

The Coalition for the UN We Need ([C4UN](#)), previously known as the UN2020 campaign, was launched in 2017 at a time when nationalism was on the rise and multilateralism was increasingly called into question by powerful governments. The campaign has focused on using the 75th anniversary of the UN and its follow-up as an opportunity to take stock and strengthen the world body and international cooperation more broadly.

As the campaign's call for a renewal of multilateralism gained traction, and the UN75 Declaration adopted by UN member states mandated the Secretary-General to make recommendations to the General Assembly "to advance our common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges," a process for reforming and strengthening multilateralism became possible. As a follow-up, 50 former world leaders and UN officials signed an [open letter](#) that called for a dedicated intergovernmental process to strengthen and reform the legal and institutional machinery of the UN system.

Last December, the growing constellation of civil society organizations and networks supporting the campaign adopted a [three-year strategic plan](#) to reorganize its governance structure with a nine-member Steering Committee composed of Partner organizations to make it more democratic, inclusive and representative of global civil society.

The regional consultations reported here form an integral part of that dedicated outreach effort, and lay the groundwork for continued partnerships in the months and years ahead, in the pursuit of a more people-centered, inclusive and better-networked multilateralism.

Mapping Consultations

In June 2021, seven consultations took place across five regions, with dedicated youth consultations in the Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. Our regional partners facilitated dialogues on the role of civil society and the United Nations in furthering the 12 commitments made in the [UN75 Declaration](#) and holding member states accountable to the same. Discussions focused on regional priorities, challenges and accelerators across the 12 commitments, resulting in several recommendations that are synthesized regionally, and analyzed cross-sectionally, in the following report.

Consultation Outcomes

Whilst several differences emerged across regions in approach, facilities and urgency of different issues, several common thematic areas of concern came to light. Within such areas, different regions approached both challenges and recommendations through the lens of their particular regional perspectives.

For example, on economic trade and development, civil society advocates from the Asia-Pacific region urged that the UN should play a central role in reforming global financial governance in the fields of taxation, illicit financial flows, external debts and official development assistance to address issues of global economic inequality at the nexus of trade, investment and finance. Advocates called for another UN Conference on Financing for Development in 2022 or 2023 to reshape the global financial and economic architecture.

African civil society partners highlighted the deleterious impact of corruption on democratic governance and rule of law perpetrated by multinationals and corrupt politicians, particularly as it relates to unfair tax systems imposed on domestic constituencies due to illicit tax transfers and tax havens, resulting in a general lack of trust and accountability on the part of governments and multinationals.

Latin American partners noted that increasing economic inequalities in the region greatly damage the prospects for sustainable development and directly impact the lives and freedoms of many people. Moreover, the violence committed against environmental activists and the depredation of fragile ecosystems represent some of the biggest challenges in the region.

Civil society partners from North America and Europe demanded that their governments move towards a more inclusive globalization by adjusting the multilateral system, international trade and finance included, as founders of the system now in place.

Middle East and North Africa Partners emphasised the need to curate a transparent, practical framework to hold Member States accountable for the implementation of the 12 commitments contained in the UN75 Declaration.

Building on the momentum generated in 2020 by the UN75 Declaration, C4UN believes it is critical that the Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda" report this September sustains the spirit for change, by calling for a comprehensive, multilateral, and multi-stakeholder negotiation for more inclusive, networked, and effective global governance, leading to a proposed World Summit on Inclusive Global Governance. By creatively mobilizing diverse actors worldwide, the summit and the preparations for it could look to equip our common institutions with the tools, structures and connectivity needed both to rebuild institutional trust and competence, and to face with greater confidence humanity's perilous next quarter century.

Upcoming

In October, we will be hosting our second annual C4UN's People's Forum. In 2020, we adopted the [UN75 People's Declaration and Plan for Global Action](#). At this year's forum, we will have an opportunity to consider civil society responses to the outcomes of the Secretary-General's report and related follow up to the UN75 commitments made last year. We will further interrogate the proposition that a World Summit on Inclusive Global Governance would be an appropriate vehicle to mobilize diverse actors worldwide, to upgrade and equip the global governance system to better address major issues confronting the international community, and to usher in a new global compact with citizens to enhance and rebuild confidence in their multilateral institutions.

Next Steps

This report aims to serve three key purposes. Firstly, as a ***node of collective intelligence***. Whilst specific thematic priorities and challenges may exist in each region, and this report highlights them, it also identifies the many common themes and brings together the collective knowledge, perspectives and recommendations of diverse participants from around the world. Both through our own cross-regional analysis, and by providing the foundational mappings for further exploration, we hope this collation of regional discussions will serve as qualitative data in collective intelligence for furthering the UN75 agenda.

Secondly, as a ***knowledge reservoir to aid future consultations***. Supported by the more pragmatic 'Key Learnings' section of the [Annex](#) we hope this report will minimize process duplication as members and partners take forth their own consultations.

Thirdly, to ***broaden the representation of perspectives in the wider efforts of C4UN***. As was presented in the June 2021 Global Town Hall, and expected to transpire in the October 2021 People's Forum and future efforts of C4UN, the synthesis of these regional consultations will serve as a consistent and constant reminder that these are Civil Society Partnerships For The UN We **ALL** Need.

2. REGIONAL CONSULTATION SUMMARIES

2.1 Africa



For an oral presentation on the details of this consultation, please see [this video](#) [from 01:35:00].

Civil society stakeholders across the African Subcontinent were invited to discuss priorities for the region both internally, and as the region stands relative to the rest of the world, keeping in mind the timeline of recovery from the global pandemic. It was made clear that the people in the region were being left behind on the 2030 Agenda even prior to the pandemic. It now, therefore, becomes paramount that the UN not only work with Africa to 'build back' but to build forward into a better version of reality for its peoples. This consultation focused on three key thematic priorities: climate action; peace, security and humanitarian action; and democratic governance and the rule of law.



Regional Priorities

- Climate action - Climate agenda and SDG 13 must be a regional priority. While the NDCs of the Paris agreement and the VNRs of the Agenda 2030 are implemented as parallel frameworks, there is a general lack of coordination and integration across the work of the UN in the region.
- Democratic governance and rule of law - unfair tax systems due to illicit tax transfers and tax havens, results in a general lack of trust and accountability on the part of governments and multinationals. The UN system must be more integrated, foster trust and be inclusive of all, especially women and youth.
- The multilateral system is still governed by "might makes right." The very structures of the multilateral architecture reflect a past world, and one that does not have the mechanisms in place for Africa and its peoples to reach their full potential and have their voices and concerns heard.

Challenges

- Corruption; specifically, the issue of corporations that often influence policy through proxy votes by financial influence.
- Aside from the pandemic, Africa also has a rising number of climate refugees.
- The pandemic has led to the collapse of global oil and gas prices, therefore, jobs vanished overnight.
- Covid -19 cases increases by 40% but vaccine access remains at 13%.
- Through International Financial Institutions, multinational corporations have asymmetric control over the structure of debt in the global economy where there exist few checks and balances. This creates further obstacles for an inclusive and democratic system.

Recommendations

1. Participants worry that the AU has become a union of the elite and not the people. The UN is therefore one of the only institutions that can provide avenues for the interests of civil society to be heard multilaterally. To this end, the UN needs to operate above the national self-interest of member states to truly make a difference in health, climate action, democracy and peace.
2. There needs to be far more youth initiatives at UN and AU levels.
3. The UN needs to engage with civil society directly to understand the reality of the peoples.
4. Africa causes the least emissions as a region but bears the brunt of climate change volatility, so participants recommend that there be a focus on adaptation measures because they believe the responsibility of mitigation efforts should be assumed by the nations of the north that have caused the most emissions.

2.2.1 Asia-Pacific



For a detailed summary of this consultation please see [here](#).

This consultation was divided into three parts, Part A focused on youth, the Pacific and public health/Covid-19. Part B looked at the economy, finance and inequality. Part C discussed democracy, human rights and civic space. For an overview of the discussion on and by youth in this region, please see [here](#).

Regional Priorities

- The secondary shock of environmental dimensions of the COVID-19: biodiversity, climate, urbanization, over consumption and production, etc.
- There exists a major and unequal financing for R&D gap on public health in the developing countries.
- There is a need for [Social Solidarity Economy \(SSE\)](#) as an alternative economic model, which is recognised as a grassroots movement, including by UN agencies through the UN Taskforce on SSE.
- There needs to be clearer acknowledgement and targeting of the interlinkages between inter-national and intra-national inequalities.



Challenges

- Colonialism in the post-colonial era: the ongoing impact of military bases, nuclear tests, etc.
- Deep-sea mining by multinational corporations in the Pacific.
- Climate threat to security and sovereignty and survival (e.g. environmental refugees).
- Worsened intranational (domestic) inequalities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, vaccine nationalism and inequality / discrimination against vulnerable groups (e.g. Dalits).

Recommendations

1. The UN needs to work more closely with marginalized people and civil society 'beyond and behind' the government. ("We the Peoples" vs. "We the Governments").
2. Address effectively the human rights violations by the transnational companies (extra-territorial obligations (ETO) of the states).
3. "Glo-cal" dialogue on the UN We Need to be continued in the Asia Pacific - both top-down and bottom-up processes specially at the sub-regional (South Asia, Central Asia, etc.) national and sub-national level.
4. People's voices from the Global South need to be heard clearly and systematically through South-South Cooperation.
5. Independent and sustainable financing for civic space nationally and internationally are crucial in the response and recovery from the pandemic.
6. The UN needs to play a central role in reforming global financial governance in the fields of taxation, illicit financial flows, external debts, and ODA to address issues of global economic inequality at the nexus of trade, investment and finance. Advocates called for a UN conference on FfD in 2022 or 2023 to reshape the global financial and economic architecture.
7. The UN's mandate and function needs to be redefined in terms of democracy promotion, utilizing new approaches to the global democracy agenda qua localizing democracy through integration with the 2030 Agenda and fostering democracy from the bottom-up by engaging with grassroot communities.
8. Focus on human rights-based approaches to the SDGs, beginning with vulnerable and marginalized groups. To this end, recommends that the HRC, currently a subsidiary organ of the GA, be made a principal body of the UN akin to ECOSOC and UN Security Council.
9. Citizen-generated data needs to be prioritized to truly understand and mend gaps in both data and literacy.

2.2.2 Asia-Pacific Youth (Recommendations)

For a detailed summary of this consultation please see [here](#).

For this consultation, young leaders from the region were invited to participate in the discussion representing Young ASIA Voices on the "United Nations We Need". Voices, concerns and suggestions of young leaders on reshaping the multilateral system to better conform to today's challenges were collected and conveyed. The discussions focused on five key thematic areas: *the environment; gender; the economy; social/poverty & inequality; and justice, governance & human rights.*

Recommendations

1. Decolonise the systems and approaches of the UN. Young people of this region feel that the status quo is Western-centric. Decolonising the system therefore involves overcoming intergenerational trauma, having clearer geographic and cultural understanding, and including indigenous people.
2. Hold member states accountable, including the consideration of historical issues, greenhouse gas emissions and human rights principles and mechanisms.
3. Include youth in decision-making.
4. Leverage the UN Global Compact as a platform to advance the digital economy and cross-sector collaboration for economic empowerment pursuing the SDGs and Covid-19 recovery.
5. Break the silos among UN bodies through cooperation, collaboration and transparency.
6. Develop skills-based training and invest in capacity building for member states and youths to be involved in UN processes.
7. Provide Human Rights education as a core capacity-building priority.
8. Enable youth for peacebuilding in geopolitically tense areas and areas affected by climate change.
9. Enable avenues for youths to participate in the implementation of the SDGs and climate action.
10. Promote awareness of human rights approaches through UN bodies - UNFCCC, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, WHO etc.



APPGM-SDG supports the Sustainable Development Goals



YOUTH PEACE AMBASSADOR



2.3.1 Latin America and the Caribbean



For a detailed summary of this consultation, please see [this video](#) [from 02:07:00]

"This is not us begging anyone to promote sustainable development, this is us asking the UN and Member States to fulfill their commitments. These are very different things. We have urgent challenges that need to be faced now. This is no longer a marathon, it's a sprint."

Regional Priorities

- Elites lead countries and take decisions without considering the views of the population. This relates to a broader issue of deep and increasing inequalities in and across the region, further challenged by a shrinking civil space.
- A development model based on the massive consumption of natural resources is not sustainable and affects vulnerable groups such as people living in poverty, peasants, indigenous peoples, women, and children.



Challenges

- Increasing inequalities in the region greatly damage prospects for sustainable development and directly impact the lives and freedoms of many people.
- Acknowledging marginalized groups beyond women and youth.
- The lack of representation of, or respect for, civil society in consultations.
- Climate change and the climate agenda.
- Moving from a development model prioritizing economics to an approach that balances economic, social and environmental development.
- More and better data will be necessary to follow up and monitor economic, social and environmental policies.

Recommendations

1. Women and youth agency needs to be mainstreamed into the core UN agenda so that it is not forgotten as yet another temporary movement.
2. Institutions must create mechanisms to be inclusive of many and all voices, including not only women and youth, but of the Afro-descendants, the indigenous people, the LGBTQI communities, and essentially be far more comprehensive in its dialogue.
3. If we can respect and hear the diversity of voices, this will be a big step in reducing inequalities. These challenges must therefore be addressed in tandem.
4. Social and environmental spheres of sustainable development should be strengthened in public policies planning and implementation. In addition, public decision making processes should be increasingly transparent and accountable.
5. Developed countries should fulfil the promise made in the 2030 Agenda Global Partnership target 17.18 of increasing international support to statistical systems development in the developing world by 2020.
6. The UN cannot pursue enabling environments for civil society in countries if the UN itself does not have an enabling environment. After nearly 30 years following the first Rio conference we still need to fight to hear the civil society voice in the UN. More avenues must be opened for the UN to hear directly from the people, transcending silos created by the elite.

2.3.2 Latin America and the Caribbean Youth

For a detailed summary of this consultation please see [here](#).

"We need a UN that is decolonized and inclusive for peoples, understanding inclusion with a universal scope considering especially the language gaps, cultures, ages, genders and that works from the territories. We need a UN that promotes intergenerational approaches, where young people and their diverse voices are heard and carried out. For this we need to deconstruct and build back the UN to be effective to address the current challenges in the region.

The UN needs to regain the trust of many young people from the region and across the world by integrating inclusive approaches into day-to-day activities."



Regional Priorities and Challenges

- Opening spaces for youth engagement from the LAC region is necessary for a better understanding on how the UN and its processes work so that young people can act as participants, not just beneficiaries.
- Regional priorities include the implementation of an intergenerational approach, decreasing violence, food security, corruption, climate change and intergenerational justice, human rights violations and inequality.
- There is a lack of communication between grassroot and Governments and the United Nations, leading to a gap between the reality of problems on the ground and the centralized policies that attempt to address them.
- The Latin American ecosystem and wealth of natural resources is both an opportunity and a challenge. Violence against environmental activists and the depredation of our ecosystems represent some of the biggest challenges in the region.

Recommendations

1. The UN needs to connect with key actors of the community from different religions, ethnicities, cultures, ages, academic backgrounds and more. In order to really address people's needs it is important that the UN not only perceive reality from a position of power but also from the position of people.
2. The UN must actively work to overcome language barriers across different regions and platforms so as to inclusively engage young people, especially from diverse backgrounds and those usually excluded.
3. Bureaucratic tape and siloed mandates slow down a region with vast growing potential. There must thus be a reinvigorated focus on integrated policy and promoting regional and south-south cooperation.
4. The region calls for a UN that empowers peoples with the tools to take the lead in transformational systems change so as to replace a beneficiary-based approach where interventions are delivered only till the end of the budgetary timeline. The UN needs to provide to people and national / local governments training and tools as well as promote spaces for discussions where different stakeholders can actively voice their concerns and be the ones leading their own development processes.
5. The UN should create spaces to establish coherent connections with young people from different regions to understand common causes but also the differentiated ways in which to engage with these needs.
6. The UN needs to promote more regional instruments and agreements such as the Escazú Agreement, to promote stronger regional dialogue, collective actions and multilateralism from the region and beyond to global governance.

2.4 Middle East and North Africa



For a detailed summary of this consultation please see [here](#).

Participants were divided into working groups to thematically engage with specific commitments from the UN75 Political Declaration. Discussions of challenges and regional priorities occurred in plenary and recommendations came from these working groups. Overall “*the participants emphasized the importance of developing an effective and inclusive multilateral system to address the challenges facing our world today.*”

Regional Priorities

- Concern that the UN, in many cases, gives legitimacy to illegitimate regimes.
- Strengthening the framework of the responsibility to protect, especially in the region, as many governmental regimes have committed atrocity crimes, and unfortunately, the international community failed to intervene and protect civilians such as in the cases of Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Palestine.
- Conducting a serious review for the 2030 Agenda and its alignment within the context of the Arab region in collaboration with independent civil society organizations in the region; as many of the participants believed that the SDGs benefit dictatorial regimes rather than the people.



Challenges

- The 12 UN75 commitments are important, but they are not new and the challenge is the lack of a practical tool to ensure their implementation.
- The weak commitment of member states to the binding agreements and international norms issued by GA, UN Security Council, and Human Rights Council.
- The power asymmetry between member states and “We the Peoples” in the UN system.

Recommendations

1. Develop a practical framework that guarantees the implementation of the 12 commitments contained in the UN75 Declaration, including a time frame and new mechanisms that ensure conversion of commitments from text to reality.
2. Ensure the participation of grassroots organizations, marginalized groups, youth and women, in the implementation of these commitments and “our common agenda” to ensure accountability and effectiveness.
3. Focus on specific marginalized groups, such as detainees and victims of enforced disappearance, in the “our common agenda” program.
4. Recognize the role of youth in discussions currently taking place on the development of the United Nations.
5. Increase accessibility of United Nations programs, especially to marginalized and poor communities through review of the internal governance systems of the UN and increased flexibility of decision-making mechanisms.
6. Activate the resolutions and norms issued by the UNSC, especially the resolutions related to youth, peace and security, women, and peace-building activists and develop effective mechanisms to protect such groups.
7. Create mechanisms that ensure communication between CSOs, Human Rights Defenders and United Nations bodies to enable them to convey their voices without fear.
8. Advance peacebuilding operations in Syria through the implementation of the UNSCR 2254 along with accountability and justice.
9. Activate the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on Palestine to carry out its responsibilities towards the Palestinian people.

2.5 Europe and North America



For a detailed summary of this consultation please see [here](#).

This dialogue of regional experts and civil society leaders discussed overarching challenges faced by the region in plenary discussion and then worked in thematic groups to get to the crux of specific UN75 Declaration commitments pertinent to the region. The region decided to focus on the following commitments: #2 – We will protect the planet; #4- We will abide by international law and ensure justice; #7- We will improve digital cooperation; #8- We will upgrade the United Nations and #9- We will ensure sustainable financing.

Regional Priorities

- Increase trust in the multilateral system, especially for an increasingly disincentivized youth.
- Address the climate agenda beyond the narrow focus on renewable energy sources and emissions reduction. Moreover, political attention needs to be paid to other ecological challenges too, including plastic pollution and biodiversity loss.
- Modernize the global governance systems and processes to reflect the current state of global affairs, not what it was 75 years ago; be this in communications technology, international law, the UN system, financial systems and more.



Challenges

- Tension between supranational and national arenas of governance that leads to democratic backsliding and the rise of nationalism.
- Lack of mechanisms to deal with non-compliance or inadequate compliance with commitments made, for example, with the NDCs on climate action under the Paris Agreement.
- Lack of a proper regulatory framework governing the digital world, partial access and inability to distinguish between real and fake news.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to reconfirm universal values in rhetoric and practice to reduce tension between supranational and national arenas of governance that leads to democratic backsliding and rise of nationalism.
2. Don't let climate push out all other concerns and challenges related to our planet's and humanity's well-being, from biodiversity to desertification, plastic pollution, etc. And do not turn a blind eye on the inadequacies of the climate change regime, like ensuring accountability and dealing with non-compliance.
3. Upgrade the UN by improving the structure and functioning of existing bodies like the Security Council, ECOSOC and the International Court of Justice, as well as by creating new entities like:
 - a. 'Global Resilience Council'
 - b. 'UN Parliamentary Assembly'
 - c. 'World Citizens' Initiative'
 - d. 'Global Sustainable Development Council'
 - e. 'UN Civil Society Envoy'
4. Use the multilateral experience that has been gained at regional level through the European Union to bring about the necessary changes at the global level.
5. Make the UN attractive for the European and North American youth who are increasingly skeptical of bureaucratic organisations.
6. Standardize digital access and cooperation with the UN as norm producer.
7. Move towards inclusive globalisation by adjusting the multilateral system, international trade and finance included, with responsible leadership from North America and Europe that helped create the current system. This would also help manage increasing geopolitical frictions that could prove particularly disruptive.

3. OUTCOMES

Comparing Across Regional Consultations

Whilst each region had different priorities for its vision of the United Nations and some regions stood out from others in their approach to different thematic areas, several commonalities emerged across the consultations.



Figure 3.1 word cloud on regional consultation summaries [Note: 'region' was omitted from count]

Across all five regions and seven dialogues common issues that were raised included the withering trust in governments and the multilateral system, the deleterious impact of climate change, and the lack of avenues for civil society, especially marginalized groups, to engage directly in policy making processes that have profound impacts on their lives.

On the increasing inequalities between and among nations at the nexus of trade, investment and finance, all regions emphasised that the UN remains the only hope for a multilateral space where the systemic barriers causing global economic inequality can be properly addressed. Interestingly, however, whilst these issues are commonly acknowledged, their prioritization and impacts vary across regions. For example, whilst the Asia-Pacific region called for another UN Summit on Financing for Development, African civil-society partners focused on the impact of corruption on democratic governance and the rule of law, and Middle East and North African partners discussed the pressing need for a transparent and practical framework to hold Member States accountable. Moreover, whilst the Latin American consultation raised concern and recommendations for internal inequalities due to trade systems and processes, the Europe and North American consultation discussed cross-national inequalities and restructuring the global economy to be more inclusive.

This singular thematic area that was discussed in the consultation showcases a prime example of the two key takeaways, beyond the resultant recommendations, that this exercise revealed.

Firstly, the way a region perceives a problem is patently dependent on the position of this region relative to the issue at hand. Farrell and Newman (2014)[1] note in their New Interdependence Approach to understanding globalisation, that the jurisdictional overlaps caused by expanding global remits of nations, in which the policies and choices by one region or government directly affect another, leads to an iterative and interdependent model of institutions. In other words, how a nation reacts to a problem is dependent on its positionality relative to other regions in an interdependent network of actors, but this reaction also directly feeds into similar reactions of other agents within this nodal space. When we analyze the thematic discussions above through this lens, it becomes clearer as to where there are synchronous and asynchronous perspectives on an issue, what one must do is identify the dimensions on which different regions are proximal to each other. On the dimension of rule of law, we see that the Africa and MENA regions exist in similar proximity to the problem and thus prioritise its impact on trade and finance, as well as other issues such as climate governance. However, on the dimension of intra-national versus inter-national solutions, we see that the MENA region, Europe and North America and the Asia-Pacific tend to view recommendations through the inter-national lens, prioritizing discussions about the responsibilities of other nations and governments relative to themselves. Whereas the African and Latin American and Caribbean regions tend to prioritise discussions on intra-regional policies.

1. Farrell, Henry, and Abraham L. Newman. 2014. "Domestic Institutions beyond the Nation-State: Charting the New Interdependence Approach." *World Politics* 66 (02): 331–63.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887114000057>.

For example, we see these dimensions cross-cuttingly reflected through the discussion on the climate crisis. The African regional consultation discussed their adaptive mechanisms and mentioned the mitigative responsibilities of other states through a normative international justice lens. Additionally, whilst many regions spoke of the role of technology in development, Africa, MENA and Latin America focused on increasing access across the board; the Asia-Pacific and Europe/North America further considered regulation and standardization.

This last point leads to the second key takeaway. Civil society recommendations reflect the power dynamics of different regions. It is interesting to note that the expectations different regions placed, through recommendations, on upholding the UN75 Declaration commitments and the multilateral system at large, were reflective of how they, as a specific region, engaged with global governance systems and the United Nations. Thus we see recommendations from the global North focus on standardisation, multilateral equity, and institutional restructuring, whereas recommendations from the global South focused on accountability mechanisms, both within their own government but also keenly to the multilateral system and its member states at large.

Therefore, whilst, as suggested above, governments may undertake policy preferences based on their position in the multilateral architecture across different dimensions, one must also consider the impact of civil society discourses on decision-making. The mirroring of civil society priorities and government policy choices may suggest that collective discourses of civil society are aggregated at institutional levels and are then reflected in national policy choices and preferences (see Kuo, Jason and Megumi Nao, 2015) [2]. Either way, it is clear that some channels of communication exist between the multilateral narrative and civil society preferences. The question then becomes, how might we best capitalise on these channels of influence to have representative voices of civil society and the grassroots in multilateral decision-making.

This leads us to further analyse recommendations. Many consultations addressed the need for concrete lines of communication between civil society and the United Nations' member states. If these channels already somewhat exist, one might consider that a discussion of recommendations needs to focus more on methods and mechanisms to amplify the voice and priorities of civil society and have it be a channel of two way communication. For example, we see discussions of a special envoy for civil society, or a youth parliament.

2. Kuo, Jason and Megumi Naoi. 2015. "Individual Attitudes." In *The Oxford Handbook on the Political Economy of International Trade*, Lisa Martin, ed.

In general, whilst recommendations tended to compliment the regional priorities as characterised above by the positionality of a state within different dimensions of the multilateral architecture, several common recommendations emerged. These include:

- Increasing avenues for young people to engage with the UN.
- Creating more permanent multi-stakeholder platforms, aside from the HLPF, for civil society to engage directly with policy-making through the UN. Additionally, seeing more concrete outcomes as a result of discussions through those platforms that do exist.
- Taking a more human rights-based approach across UN agencies, their practices and their programs.
- Re-emphasising Secretary General Guterres' goals on integration. Ensuring UN agencies and complimentary bodies work in integrated and coordinated ways to achieve the 2030 Agenda.
- Recognizing that both the UN and civil society must live up to the ideals that we set.

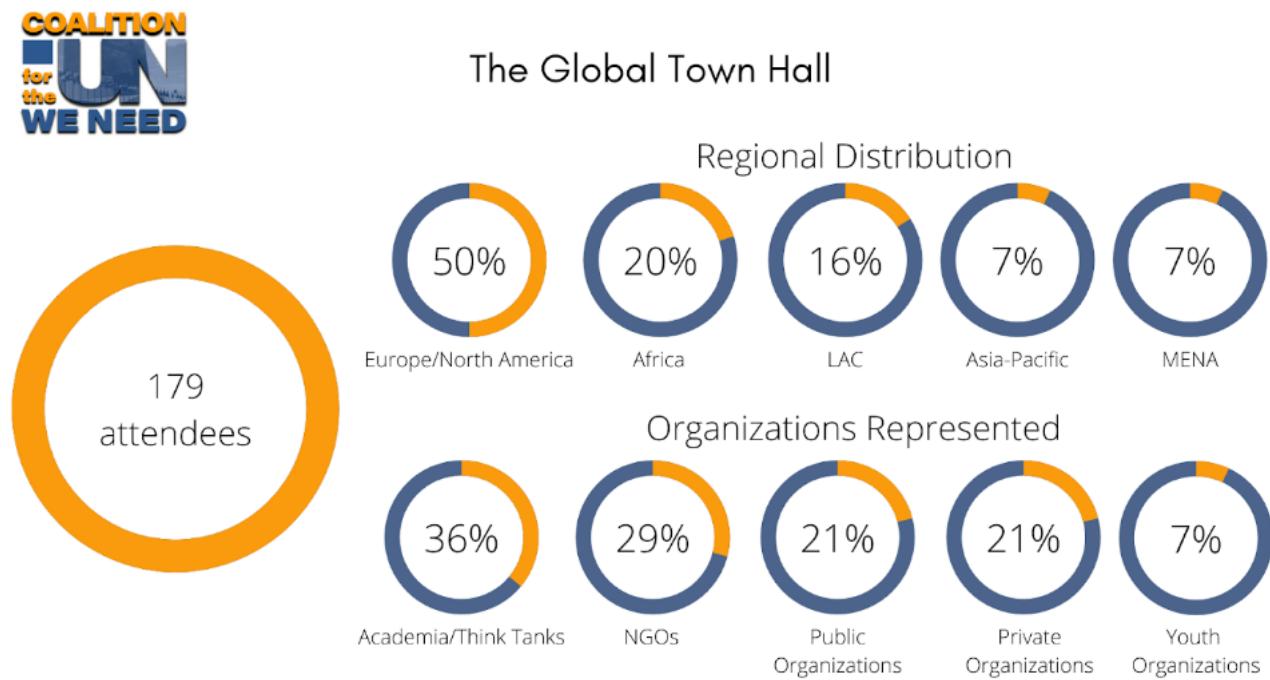
As we anticipate the [Our Common Agenda](#) report in September 2021, these regional consultations help us position our global and local priorities going forward, and what we must look out for in the years to come.

Lessons Learned

- Latin America has to deal with regional integration obstacles. There are lessons that the region could learn from the European Union and African Union experiences.
- To listen and work with regional partners matters, which can make the UN more effective and stronger. Establishing a UN institutional space for dialogues among regions would be a clear message from the Organization in this sense, and a contribution to turn the 2030 Agenda universality principle into reality.
- Even if each region is unique, there are many lines of communication and areas of common interests among all or some of them. This is an opportunity for increasing region-to-region cooperation and inter-regional partnerships.
- The accountability of the UNDS regional to the public, from states to citizens, should be strengthened.

The C4UN Global Town Hall

On June 22nd in advance of UN Charter Day, the Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN) hosted a virtual [Global Town Hall](#) which considered alternative institutional, policy, and normative measures for taking forward the UN75 Declaration, inspired by both the regional consultations and the findings of a six-part “Fulfilling the UN75 Declaration’s Promise” expert roundtable series. The Global Town Hall also considered reform ideas arising from the “We the People’s” digital consultation (April 23rd – May 21st), that is part of the Secretary-General’s “Our Common Agenda” outreach program, as well as consideration of a possible follow-on intergovernmental process as recommended in the Eminent Persons Open Letter signed by 50 former world leaders and UN officials.



Each regional consultation was presented and discussed at this event which was a nodal juncture in bringing together the collective intelligence of the C4UN Campaign. The recording of this event can be viewed [here](#).

4. ANNEX

KEY LESSONS

- It is important to consider language barriers in designing and analyzing consultations - whilst we try to be representative of as diverse a voice as possible, more resources should be invested in strengthening the breadth of languages that consultations can be facilitated in.
- The C4UN Global Town Hall and this report served as crucial junctures in cross-case analysis of regions to understand common agendas of the global community as understood through inclusive consultation. It is therefore imperative to break the silos of separate consultations and facilitate 'meta-plenary' sessions.
- The impacts of Covid-19 were multifold. On the one hand, more people had taken to internet technologies and therefore could tap into the consultation than would usually be the case. However, on the other hand, at this stage there was a general case of 'Zoom-fatigue' which may have decreased attendance when compared to the 2020 virtual UN2020 Global Town Hall. Still, it was better to have such events before HLPF than after.
- Creating 'sub-coalitions' of regional lead organizations for each consultation will be a major strength in both increasing the Coalition's relationship with partners and reaching newer perspectives.
- It was important not to be off-putting in communications material through the overuse of UN jargon. This specifically affected youth attendance.



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