

[HOME](#) | [COALITION](#) | [CONFERENCE](#) | [2020](#) | [COMPENDIUM](#)

# Eliminating Racism through the 2030 SDGs

Eliminating Racism through the 2030 SDGs



Author: Chitra Balakrishnan

## Participants

1. Theresa Harris (Moderator), Project Director, American Association for the Advancement of Science Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program
2. Corann Okorodudu, Professor Emerita in the Department of Psychology, Rowan University, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Representative to the United Nations, Founding President of the Psychology Coalition of Accredited NGOs at the UN
3. David Livert, Associate Professor, Psychology, Penn State University, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Main Representative to the United Nations

## Session Summary

In September 2020, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) called for the United Nations (UN) to improve upon its efforts to combat systemic racism and racial/ethnic discrimination through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this session, SPSSI Representatives to the UN presented the contents of their statement and responded to questions about opportunities for psychologists and social scientists to advocate for robust research in global social policy and work to eliminate racism.

## Themes

1. **Racial and Ethnic Inequality:** The goals, targets, and indicators set forth by the SDGs do not sufficiently express commitment to racial and ethnic equality. In the United States, the murder of George Floyd and widespread demonstrations against police brutality are a reminder that racism is a persistent force that hinders social progress and leads to oppression. Due to the SDGs' inadequate approach to combating racism, member states are unlikely to achieve the SDGs' aim of "leaving no one behind" by 2030.
2. **Data Disaggregation:** The SDGs' targets and global indicators were created as benchmarks for member states' progress in achieving initiatives. However, few to none of these metrics require disaggregation of data by race or ethnicity. Seeing as race and ethnicity are not the focus of any of the 17 SDGs, disaggregation of data is a crucial tool for member states, UN staff/agencies, and NGOs to ensure that minorities are not left behind in pursuit of the SDGs.
3. **SPSSI's Recommendations:** The SPSSI recommends that the SDGs include disaggregation of many categories that can represent minority status (race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, national origin, etc.). In addition, it believes that the SDGs should recognize intersecting forms of oppression when reporting (for example, linking gender or age to race and ethnicity). Finally, the SPSSI advises that member states' Voluntary National Reviews on their progress in achieving SDGs comply with preexisting international human rights standards. To achieve these objectives, it would benefit member states and UN bodies to form partnerships in civil society and the private sector.

## Takeaways

1. Moving forward, SPSSI plans to collaborate on a campaign with civil society organizations at the United Nations to gain traction on their initiative.
2. Scientists and civil society have a role in continuing to pressure nations to be data driven and to properly analyze data. For example, scientists familiar with statistical methods can help advise member states on disaggregated data, which categories of data to create, modes of data collection, etc.
3. Scientists can get involved in this type of advocacy by looking at professional associations and seeing who has a UN presence and staying openminded to find an opportunity or connection in a field beyond theirs. The SPSSI's reach extends beyond psychology into social and behavioral science in its work with the UN.

## Key Words

1. United Nations
2. Sustainable Development Goals
3. Data disaggregation
4. Racism
5. Ethnicity
6. Discrimination
7. Social science
8. Psychology
9. Evidence-based policy
10. Methodology

## Other Resources

1. SPSSI's Beyond the Human Rights Rhetoric on "Leaving No One Behind:" Integrating the Elimination of Systemic Racism, and Racial and Ethnic Discrimination, into the Implementation of the SDGs
2. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

## **Related Programs:**

### **Science and Human Rights Coalition**

## Related Focus Areas

**Human Rights, Law & Ethics**

## Related Scientific Disciplines

**Social sciences/Philosophy/Ethics/Human rights**

# Support Us

## Give to AAAS

Our ability to provide a voice for scientists and engineers and to advance science depends on the support from individuals like you.

GIVE

## Become a Member

Whether you're a scientist, engineer, teacher, or science advocate, together we can be a united voice for scientific progress.

JOIN

## EXTERNAL SITES

**AAAS COMMUNITIES**

**SCIENCE CAREERS**

**SCIENCE FAMILY OF JOURNALS**

**MORE AAAS SITES**

1200 New York Ave NW,

Washington, DC 20005

202-326-6400

Contact Us

About Us



# The World's Largest General Scientific Society

## Useful Links

- Membership
- Careers at AAAS
- AAAS Community
- Privacy Policy
- Terms of Use

## Focus Areas

- Science Education
- Science Diplomacy
- Public Engagement
- Careers in STEM
- Shaping Science Policy
- Advocacy for Evidence
- R&D Budget Analysis
- Human Rights, Ethics & Law