



General Assembly

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Agenda item 18 (b)

Sustainable development: follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 August 2024

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/78/L.98](#))]

78/322. Multidimensional vulnerability index

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [75/215](#) of 21 December 2020, [76/203](#) of 17 December 2021, [77/245](#) of 30 December 2022 and [78/232](#) of 22 December 2023,

Recognizing that sustainable development is multidimensional and affected by multiple, intersecting, exogenous and endogenous factors, and that vulnerability to adverse exogenous shocks and stressors poses risks for sustainable development,

Recognizing also that income-based measures may not fully reflect all development realities, vulnerabilities and challenges,

Highlighting the need to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems and provide financial and technical support to improve data collection and statistical analysis in developing countries,

Noting the lack of a universally accepted, international quantitative benchmark to measure exogenous structural vulnerability and lack of resilience to exogenous shocks across multiple dimensions of sustainable development at the national level that can be used to complement gross national income per capita,

Recognizing that the Panel and its report were guided by the report of the Secretary-General,¹ including on multidimensionality, universality, exogeneity, availability and readability,

¹ [A/76/211](#) and [A/76/211/Corr.1](#).



Recalling paragraph 10 of resolution 77/245, in which it, inter alia, supported the proposed definitions for structural vulnerability and resilience and the two-level structure outlined in the interim report of the High-level Panel on the Development of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Small Island Developing States as the basis for the Panel's continued work, guiding the selection of appropriate indicators to inform vulnerability across all sectors of sustainable development, the proposed governance structure and the development of the country vulnerability-resilience profiles,

Noting that the multidimensional vulnerability index, developed by the High-level Panel, has a two-tiered structure, comprising a universal-level quantitative assessment of structural vulnerability, understood as exposure to adverse external shocks and stressors and lack of resilience, and vulnerability-resilience country profiles, which can provide a more detailed, tailored and individualized characterization of a country's structural and non-structural vulnerability and resilience,

Recognizing that the multidimensional vulnerability index does not address endogenous factors,

Noting the importance of upholding data ownership, integrity, reliability, accuracy and simplicity in the multidimensional vulnerability index,

Noting also the Panel's finding of a weak correlation between income level and both vulnerability and lack of resilience, and that even for some countries that have sufficient resources to invest in resilience-building and may reach high-income status, their vulnerability remains a threat to their sustainable development, and the importance of measuring and addressing vulnerability even within developing countries with a relatively high national income,

Noting further the Panel's finding that it is difficult to establish any vulnerability threshold or cutoff analogous to income cutoffs,

Noting that the multidimensional vulnerability index provides an assessment of vulnerability by measuring the risk of harm from exposure to adverse external (exogenous) shocks and stressors, was designed to reflect structural challenges, and is not a general measure of development or policy performance,

Acknowledging the various indices produced by the United Nations, including those developed by the Committee for Development Policy, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Acknowledging also that the multidimensional vulnerability index is a living tool that is a complement to, and not a substitute for, existing indices and metrics, and that it can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of development realities,

Recognizing the potential to further improve the multidimensional vulnerability index, inter alia, by considering additional indicators to be included in future iterations of the index as well as indicators for potential refinement or removal, to effectively capture the vulnerabilities of all developing countries,

Recognizing also that the multidimensional vulnerability index may inform future initiatives that go beyond gross domestic product,

Final report

1. *Welcomes* the work of the “High-level Panel on the Development of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Small Island Developing States”, takes note of its final report, and decides to advance the multidimensional vulnerability index;

Scope

2. *Notes* that, although initially proposed by small island developing States, the multidimensional vulnerability index aims to capture exogenous vulnerabilities and lack of resilience to exogenous shocks of all developing countries, so as to ensure credibility and comparability, under the guidance provided in the report of the Secretary-General;

Applicability

3. *Stresses* that the use of the multidimensional vulnerability index is voluntary, guided by the specific needs of the end user and informed by national contexts;

4. *Also stresses* that the multidimensional vulnerability index should not be used directly or indirectly as a criterion to limit or hinder the ability of any developing country to access development cooperation, including through existing arrangements and practices;

5. *Requests* the entities of the United Nations development system, within their respective mandates and where applicable, to consider using the multidimensional vulnerability index, including the vulnerability-resilience country profiles, in their relevant programmes of work and reporting, focusing on the countries interested in its use, as a complement to existing measures;

6. *Encourages* the entities of the United Nations development system to gather data and lessons learned on early implementation of the multidimensional vulnerability index and to share this information, with a view to improving the index;

7. *Notes* the work of the international financial institutions, international organizations and multilateral development banks to consider structural vulnerability, and invites them to consider using the multidimensional vulnerability index, as appropriate, as a complement to their existing practices and policies, in line with their respective mandates;

8. *Invites* development partners to explore using the multidimensional vulnerability index, as a complement to existing policies, to inform their development cooperation policies and practices, taking into account the priorities of those countries interested in its use;

Custodianship and governance

9. *Decides* that the multidimensional vulnerability index will be maintained by:

(a) A relevant existing United Nations entity, which will act as the secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index, and which will compute the index on a periodic basis, and fulfil other duties and responsibilities necessary and appropriate for the upkeep, maintenance, improvement of and reporting on the index, including the provision of capacity-building support to Member States;

(b) An Independent Expert Advisory Panel, which will prepare recommendations on future technical updates to the multidimensional vulnerability

index to reflect new and emerging concepts of structural vulnerability and lack of structural resilience and their associated indicators, as well as new data;

(c) The Statistical Commission, which will provide technical reviews of future technical improvements to the multidimensional vulnerability index;

10. *Also decides* that the secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index will present a triennial report to the General Assembly, commencing at its eightieth session, under the relevant agenda sub-item, on future improvements to the index, informed by timely technical input and recommendations from the Independent Expert Advisory Panel and the Statistical Commission, respectively;

11. *Further decides* that the relevant existing United Nations entity, which will act as the secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index, and the members of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel will be appointed by the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, by no later than the end of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly;

12. *Decides* that the Independent Expert Advisory Panel will:

(a) Comprise 15 independent experts, including a minimum of 5 from Member States, who will serve in their personal capacity, without remuneration, with a good mix of expertise, who are to be drawn from the fields of economic development, social development and environmental protection, in order to avoid the need to engage the assistance of consultants and so as to reflect an adequate geographical and gender balance;

(b) Conduct its work virtually, as appropriate;

(c) Comprise members who are appointed for a four-year term and are eligible for reappointment;

13. *Also decides* that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the Secretariat, within their respective mandates, should continue to act as interim secretariat for the multidimensional vulnerability index, until a relevant existing United Nations entity is appointed to act as the secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index by the Secretary-General;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the work on the multidimensional vulnerability index, including its periodic review, in particular for travel for the members of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel who are from developing countries, especially from least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, when in-person meetings are needed;

15. *Requests* all entities involved with the multidimensional vulnerability index to ensure consistency and complementarity with existing intergovernmentally agreed arrangements for data, indicators, indices and metrics, and, as appropriate, those related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;²

Ways to further improve the multidimensional vulnerability index

16. *Requests* the Independent Expert Advisory Panel to recommend future improvements to the multidimensional vulnerability index triennially to ensure continued relevance, robustness and accessibility, and ensure that indicators for potential addition or removal adhere to the criteria for data sources recommended in

² Resolution 70/1.

the report of the High-level Panel to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the index;

17. *Requests* the Statistical Commission to advance technical reviews on the future improvements to the multidimensional vulnerability index, including on the potential addition or removal of indicators, and to present recommendations triennially as needed;

18. *Requests* the Independent Expert Advisory Panel to also consider the data and lessons learned from the utilization of the vulnerability-resilience country profiles, as well as the initial application of the multidimensional vulnerability index within the United Nations system;

19. *Invites* the United Nations system to promote improved understanding of vulnerability and share data and lessons learned from the implementation of the multidimensional vulnerability index among stakeholders, encompassing the international financial institutions, including multilateral development banks, international organizations, research institutions, think tanks, civil society and the private sector, through specialized events, workshops, training sessions and online presentations;

20. *Also invites* the United Nations system to scale up capacity-building programmes for developing countries to improve their national statistical systems, including the ability to collect quality, accessible, timely, reliable, comparable data, including disaggregated data;

Vulnerability-resilience country profiles

21. *Stresses* that the vulnerability-resilience country profiles should be country-led and strictly voluntary;

22. *Also stresses* that the vulnerability-resilience country profiles may be taken into account to enhance, inform and contribute to national development plans and processes, including the development of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, as appropriate;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To develop an electronic handbook with guidance for developing vulnerability-resilience country profiles, based on the principles set out in the report of the High-level Panel, including a standard structure for the profiles to ensure consistency and comparability between them;

(b) To pilot test the vulnerability-resilience country profiles in at least four interested developing countries from different regions with different contexts and features;

(c) To conduct online workshops to familiarize developing countries with the development of vulnerability-resilience country profiles;

Multidimensional vulnerability index reporting

24. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session, under the item entitled “Sustainable development”, a sub-item entitled “Multidimensional vulnerability index”, which will be considered triennially.

*103rd plenary meeting
13 August 2024*