

**CLIMATE SECURITY**  
page 3

**ENERGY SECURITY**  
page 3

**FOOD SECURITY**  
page 4

**HEALTH SECURITY**  
page 5

**HUMANITARIAN ASSIS-  
TANCE AND DISASTER  
RELIEF**  
page 5

**MIGRATION**  
page 6

## The Final Countdown – Ten Years to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals



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In September 2019, New York will host the SDG Summit and the Climate Action Summit, which provide leaders and experts a platform to engage and negotiate ways forward to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. As we enter the final decade to reach these goals, it is important to reflect upon the achievements to date and build upon them.

This NTS Bulletin commentary focuses specifically on migration and the related Sustainable Development Goals – Health (Goal 3), Education (Goal 4), Gender Equality (Goal 5), Decent Work (Goal 8), Sustainable Cities (Goal 11), Climate Action (Goal 13), Peaceful Societies (Goal 16) and Partnerships (Goal 17) – the achievements and challenges to date as we enter the final stretch to 2030.

Since the International Health Regulations came into effect in 2010, coun-

tries are now better in detection with all 196 state parties submitting reports to the World Health Organisation (WHO) on their capacity to implement the regulations. However, this has not translated equally to emergency preparedness and response with bigger gaps observed at points of entry (e.g., ports and ground crossings) and in chemical safety and radiological emergencies.

Across the world, women and girls still perform a disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work averaging triple the amount of time that men do each. The most disadvantaged women and girls face the compounded effects of gender and other forms of discrimination especially those particularly faced by migrant women and girls such as vulnerability to trafficking and gender-based violence. Progress over the past decade was made where most countries had policies and programmes

in place to address gender gaps but a minority of them reported adequate resources to implement them.

When considering the state of work in the world, informal employment remains dominant in three quarters of developing countries. The share of informal employment is higher for women than for men. Ethical recruitment, decent working conditions and safe migration amplify the impact of migrant workers on development. Providing educational opportunities to the children of migrants and facilitating study abroad programs to enhance student mobility are part of the quality education commitment and the central reference in the Sustainable Development Goals to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people through planned and managed migration.

Rapid urbanisation has drawn many people to migrate into cities and has resulted in an increasing number of slums. While the proportion of people in slums declined by 20 per cent between 2000 and

2014, this trend has reversed with 23.8 per cent living in slums in 2018, adding an extra 1 billion people living in slums the world over. The greatest absolute number of 370 million people living in such conditions is now found in Eastern and South-East Asia. The integration of climate adaptation into national development planning is a necessary step underway to achieve sustainable development in both urban and rural areas. These will need to address slums which are in the poorest and most exposed areas to the effects of climate change.

The greatest and most visible threat to human security is the absence or deterioration of peace, justice and strong institutions across Eastern and South-East Asia, a core element needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Simply put, without peace there cannot be sustainable development. In 2018, the number of people fleeing war, conflict and persecution exceeded 70 million, the highest the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has seen in almost 70 years. All of

them are particularly vulnerable to various abuses from trafficking to additional violence and non-inclusive decision-making. Overcoming these challenges through protection is a baseline requirement to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

As September fast approaches, it is important for leaders to reconcile the plans made for each Sustainable Development Goal with adequate resources. While the investment in action plans is a necessary step forward, they must be followed by sustainable policy implementation without which rhetoric cannot be turned into reality.

## Suggested Readings

- United Nations, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 2019.
- 'Sustainable Development Goals', United Nations Statistics Division, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>. Accessed 17 July, 2019.
- Kaewkamol Pitakdumrongkit, 2019, 'RSIS-WTO Parliamentary Workshop – Trade and Sustainable Development: Achieving the UN's 2030 Agenda,' *RSIS Commentaries* No. 19-113.
- United Nations. *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2019: Ambitions beyond growth*. Bangkok: United Nations Economic and Social Council of Asia and the Pacific, (UNESCAP).

## CLIMATE SECURITY

## NEWS &amp; COMMENTARIES

**A major Indian city has nearly run out of water, and no one is talking about it**

Carly Cassella,  
*Science Alert*  
21 June 2019

**Here's how climate change is viewed around the world**

Alan Crawford,  
*Bloomberg*  
26 June 2019

**Climate crisis: Words of warning**

Claire Baker-Munton,  
*Globe*  
2 July 2019

**Climate change probably added 4°C to Europe's June heat-wave: Study**

Reuters,  
*Today*  
3 July 2019

**Combating marine debris: What after the Bangkok Declaration?**

Julius Trajano and Lina Gong,  
*RSIS Commentary*  
8 July 2019

**Unprecedented climate conditions resulting in intense droughts projected for tropical cities like Singapore, KL by 2050**

AFP,  
*The Straits Times*  
11 July 2019

**Academic world launches plan to tackle climate change**

AFP,  
*Channel News Asia*  
11 July 2019

**Bonn conference urges more gender-responsive climate action**

UN Climate Change News,  
11 July 2019

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

**Tackling East Asia's new environmental challenge – marine plastic pollution**

Lina Gong and Julius Cesar Trajano,  
*RSIS Policy Report*,  
Singapore: RSIS  
2019

**Global waste trade chaos: Rising environmentalism or cost-benefit analysis?**

Margareth Sembiring,  
*NTS Insight IN19-02*,  
Singapore: RSIS  
2019

## EVENTS &amp; ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Climate Change 2019**

7 October 2019  
London, UK

**4th International Conference on Climate Change and Environmental Disasters**

21–22 October 2019  
Las Vegas, USA



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## ENERGY SECURITY

## NEWS AND COMMENTARIES

**Does the Philippines need nuclear plants? DOE, advocacy group weigh in**

ABSCBN News  
27 June 2019

**Russia plans to tow a nuclear power station to the Arctic. Critics dub it a 'floating Chernobyl'**

Mary Ilyushina,  
*CNN*  
30 June 2019

**Southeast Asia's nuclear energy future in the spotlight with Philippines debate revival**

Prashanth Parameswaran,  
*The Diplomat*  
3 July 2019

**China lender urged to stop financing coal projects**

*Inquirer.net*  
13 July 2019

**Russia looks for Asia LNG buyers to blunt Western sanctions' bite**

Tomoyo Ogawa,  
*Nikkei Asian Review*,  
14 July 2019

**King coal rules for power utilities in Japan**

Aaron Sheldrick and Yuri Harada,  
*Japan Today*  
14 July 2019



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## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

**Preventive measures for nuclear and other radioactive material out of regulatory control**

*International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna: IAEA 2019*

**Nuclear disarmament, nuclear energy, and climate change: Exploring the linkages.**

*Matthew Bunn, In Nuclear Disarmament: A Critical Assessment, Bård Nikolas Vik Steen and Olav Njølstad, eds., pp. 185-204, Oxon, England: Routledge 2019*

## EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Asia Clean Energy Summit**

30 October-1 November 2019  
Singapore

**International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power**

7-11 October 2019  
Vienna, Austria

## FOOD SECURITY



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## NEWS &amp; COMMENTARIES

**Chinese pork prices risk 70% surge as African swine fever rages**

*Shin Watanabe, Nikkei Asian Review 17 June 2019*

**Thailand bans pig imports from Laos after African swine fever outbreak**

*Reuters, Nikkei Asian Review 22 June 2019*

**To handle water crisis, overhaul irrigation**

*Joydeep Gupta, India Climate Dialogue 1 July 2019*

**Australian gulls found to carry antibiotic-resistant superbugs**

*Narelle Towie, The Guardian 9 July 2019*

**Aquaculture a new focus between UAE Food Security Ministry, Australia's JCU**

*Emirates News Agency 11 July 2019*

**Agroecology as innovation**

*FoodTank 9 July 2019*

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**The state of food security and nutrition in the world: Safeguarding against economic slowdowns and downturns**

*Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN FAO) et al., Rome: UN FAO 2019*

**Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition: Summary and recommendations (extract)**

*High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, Rome, Italy: UN Committee on Food Security 2019*

## EVENTS &amp; ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Call for Abstracts: Modeling and Monitoring the Carbon-Water-Nutrient Nexus for Agroecosystems**

31 July 2019  
San Francisco, California

**Forty Sixth Session of the Committee on World Food Security**

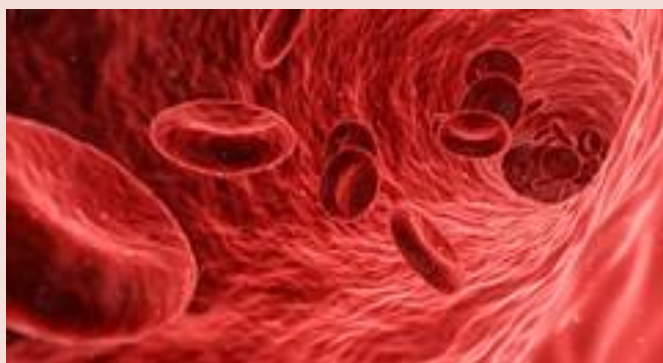
14-18 October 2019  
Rome, Italy



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## HEALTH SECURITY



Courtesy of Flickr account of SciTechTrend and used under a creative commons license.

### SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

#### Health workers' strikes in low-income countries: The available evidence

Giuliano Russo et al.,  
*Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*, Vol. 97, No. 7  
2019

#### Gender balance in WHO panels for guidelines published from 2008 to 2018

Meghan A Bohren, Dena Javadi, and Joshua P Vogel,  
*Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*, Vol. 97, No. 7  
2019

### NEWS & COMMENTARIES

#### Meet CrAssphage, the virus that you're probably carrying

Linh Anh Cat,  
*Forbes*  
8 July 2019

#### Bacteria in 2015 GBS outbreak is widespread in Southeast Asia: Researchers

Nazurah Razali,  
*Channel News Asia*  
10 July 2019

#### Half of babies affected by Zika virus are developing normally by age 2

Chelsea Whyte,  
*New Scientist*  
8 July 2019

#### Study finds possible link between sugary drinks and cancer

Reuters,  
*AsiaOne*  
11 July 2019

#### Digital health is growing fast - but at what cost?

Chris Hogg,  
*Tech Crunch*  
10 July 2019

#### Are mental health diagnoses 'scientifically meaningless'?

Catherine Paddock,  
*MedicalNewsToday*  
12 July 2019

### EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### International Science Symposium on HIV & Infectious Diseases 2019

12-14 October 2019  
Chennai, India

#### 23rd International Conference on Research in Life - Sciences & Healthcare (ICRLSH)

16-17 November 2019  
Singapore



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## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF

### NEWS & COMMENTARIES

#### Humanitarian policy: The highs and lows of 2019 so far

Ben Parker,  
*The New Humanitarian*  
27 June 2019

#### Ericsson implements disaster-resilient core network in Bhutan

Ericsson,  
*PreventionWeb.net*  
29 June 2019



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### Eight reports from UN humanitarian week you ought to know about

*The New Humanitarian*

01 July 2019

### Raising women up: UNDP and Action Aid Cambodia partner to empower women in climate action and disaster management

*UNDP*

03 July 2019

### Accelerating disaster risk reduction in South Asia to keep up with development

*UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction,*

*PreventionWeb.net*

12 July 2019

### Philippines: Promoting a culture of disaster preparedness in schools

*Michelle Catap Lacson,*  
*Sun Star*

10 July 2019

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as a vehicle for conflict prevention: Attainable or tenuous?

*Katie Peters et al.,*  
*Geneva, Switzerland: UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction*  
2019

### Making cities sustainable and resilient: Lessons learned from the Disaster Resilience Scorecard assessment and DRR action planning

*Holly Schofield & John Twigg,*  
*Geneva, Switzerland: UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction*

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Risk & Resilience Conference 2019 (ARRC 2019)

28-30 August 2019  
Singapore

### Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2019

28-29 August 2019  
Melbourne, Australia

## MIGRATION



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## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### ASEAN must not turn a blind eye to Rohingya crisis: Rights groups

*Al-Jazeera*  
19 June 2019

### China's migrant workers worried by dwindling jobs, low pay, as US trade war impact runs deep

*He Huifeng,*  
*South China Morning Post*  
21 June 2019

### UN: More than 70 million people displaced worldwide

*Al-Jazeera*  
19 Jun 2019

### Hong Kongers emigrate as freedoms and living standards slide

*AFP,*  
*The Straits Times*  
21 June 2019

### Saudi Arabia charges foreigners \$213,000 for permanent residency

*Bloomberg,*  
*The Straits Times*  
23 June 2019

### Open most hours: The labour woes of Japan's convenience stores

*Michael Penn,*  
*Al-Jazeera*  
1 July 2019

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### World Bank financing to support refugees and their hosts: Recommendations for IDA19

*Lauren Post, Cindy Huang and Sarah Charles,*  
*Centre for Global Development*  
2019

### Migration in the Asia-Pacific region

*Stephen Castles, Mark J. Miller,*  
*Migration Policy Institute*  
2019

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Dialogue on the GCM Implementation

12 September 2019  
Geneva, Switzerland

### Migration and Development in the 'Global South': Research Challenges and Policy Implications

24-25 October 2019  
Istanbul, Turkey