

WHAT'S ON THE GLOBAL AGENDA?

Insights on Strategic Partnerships and Global Engagement Opportunities on Critical Issues

March 2022



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The war in Ukraine and an unprecedented wave of forcibly displaced people across Europe, the continued battle with COVID-19 in many parts of the world, and numerous pressing issues – from building more diverse and equitable cultures to advancing climate action will continue to increase the momentum, focus and societal expectations from all sectors and stakeholders.

This early 2022 addition of **What's on the Global Agenda** focuses on global issue priorities and critical global-agenda setting moments ahead that will bring key stakeholders together, including heads of states, business, civil society, non-profit leaders and activists. From Davos to UNGA to the G20 and COP-27, there are various cross-cutting themes emerging that present opportunities for strategic engagement, cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration to advance innovative solutions to the pressing issues on the global agenda.



Geopolitical Implications from the War in Ukraine

“The war in Ukraine is causing unimaginable human suffering with a tragic loss of life and the displacement of millions...An alarming economic decline, and the suffering and hardship it will bring to an already traumatized population must now come into sharper focus. There is still time to halt this grim trajectory.”

Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator

Early UN estimates indicate that nearly three in ten people in Ukraine need life-saving humanitarian assistance. Based on the current direction of the fighting, 18 million people will likely become affected, and more than seven million may have to flee their homes. Beyond the humanitarian catastrophe, there are broader and longer-term geopolitical and economic implications from the conflict that will affect global supply chains, energy and food sectors and many other industries directly and indirectly.



‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ blocs are likely to harden with ideological fundamentals and security concerns driving change. The role of international institutions will also come into focus, as information bubbles and information control will accelerate within these respective blocs with control over free movement of ideas, and people, returning to the fore.



Food and energy shortages will be exacerbated. In 2021, Russia and Ukraine together held 25% of the global market share of wheat exports. This conflict and the associated current sanctions will have a devastating impact on the production and export of basic foodstuffs to Western markets, and to the largest wheat importers in MENA, Turkey, Southeast Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. At a time when a global food crisis and severe supply chain disruption already exists due to the impact of COVID-19, this will have a potentially tremendous negative impact.



A realignment in supply and sources of energy is already causing higher prices internationally, again at historic highs. Global prices for crude oil are over \$125 a barrel compared to \$58 per barrel a year ago. New energy suppliers and sources will be needed for the West. We are already seeing opposition to nuclear energy falling back and there are early signs that the crisis might further accelerate the transition to clean energy and renewable sources.



**CROSS CUTTING GLOBAL THEMES
ON THE GLOBAL AGENDA IN 2022**

Climate & Environment

“We are facing a triple planetary crisis: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. The disastrous effects of a changing climate – famine, floods, fires and extreme heat – threaten our very existence.”

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, Secretary-General’s report on “Our Common Agenda”, September 2021

- **Advancing climate diplomacy and negotiations**

There will be an increased momentum that started in 2021 in the run up to COP 26 on cross-sectoral climate mobilization, corporate net zero transition plans and commitments and focus on advancing international climate diplomacy and negotiations through multilateral mechanisms and beyond.

- **Increasing intersectionality of climate issues**

Conversations will continue to focus on the range of issues and fields that profoundly effect, and are affected by, climate change across all SDGs

- **Mobilizing wider audiences**

Through various communities, coalitions, and activations there are significant ways to mobilize critical audiences from consumers to policymakers to take bold climate action.

- **Paying for climate loss and damage**

There will be a stronger focus on just transition, as well as adaptation and migration funding to help poorer nations adapt to global warming and adopt cleaner energy solutions.

- **Phasing out fossil fuel funding**

Governments will be expected to push ahead on phasing out their backing for fossil fuels at home and in developing nations, after agreeing at COP26 to end "inefficient" subsidies for oil, gas and coal.

Gender Equality

“There is no better predictor of our ability to advance gender equality or reduce violence against women than the strength of the women’s movement. We cannot expect women’s organizations to perform miracles if they do not have enough funds to keep their lights on and their leaders are under constant threat.”

Sima Bahous, UN Women Executive Director

New care economy and reverting the roll-back on women equality

- Women made 54 percent of global job losses during the COVID-19 pandemic, setting back years of progress across markets and sectors towards gender equality. Reversing the *She-Cession*, creating mechanisms that bring women back to the workforce and addressing deep root causes on inequality through reforming approach to elderly and childcare, training, skills and education are among critical global priorities.

Increased production, analysis and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data

Quality gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data, and knowledge on gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential for the achievement of the gender equality agenda. Initiatives and conversations will focus on what is needed to enable the environment for the increased production of, and improved access to, gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data.

Women’s voice, leadership and agency

True gender equality requires women and LGBTQ voices and agency in decision-making at all levels, sectors and contexts, including by protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Supporting global sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The international community will seek to convene and discuss the importance of repairing, restoring, and reconstructing global sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice around the world

Gender equality is not just a women’s issue

Equality is relational. Inequities are rooted in uneven dynamics that give disproportionate power to one group versus another. Irrespective of the amount we invest in women, men also need to be willing participants to ensure that equity is inclusive of all gender and non-binary identities.

Global Health

“In 2022, all countries must invest in stronger primary health care, as the foundation of universal health coverage. COVID-19 has demonstrated that when health is at risk, everything is at risk.”

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director-General, World Health
Organization

● Strengthening health systems

Key global initiatives will continue to explore new methods to align resources to improve global and national health systems – critical building block underpinning all other health investments and leading factor for greater resilience and global health security.

● Enhancing private sector support

For transformative impact, the private sector must be integrated across the health system – health financing, service delivery, policy and regulations, and health information systems, among others. More than ever, global health stakeholders from policymakers to the WHO are looking to enhance private sector engagement and support.

● Mental health

COVID-19 has pushed mental and behavioral health up on the political and business agendas, while also highlighting the lack of timely access to quality and affordable services worldwide.

● Environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies are needed for resilience

Healthcare leaders aim to build resilience into their infrastructure, supply chain and workforce to withstand future natural disasters and other climate change-induced health issues. Increasingly, we are seeing healthcare companies at the forefront of health & climate debate.

● Digital transformation in healthcare

Digital transformation across all sectors, but particularly in healthcare will have the potential to unlock new delivery and services mechanisms to more vulnerable consumers, but also bring to the forefront new issues of privacy, data and digital ethics & responsibility

Education, Future of Work & Youth

“The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history at 1.8 billion people, close to 90 per cent of whom live in developing countries. Young people have never been more educated or more connected, yet they continue to face significant obstacles to achieving their full potential...”

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General,
Secretary-General’s report on “Our
Common Agenda”, September 2021”

- **Ensuring quality education and lifelong learning**

The world is experiencing a global learning crisis that is depriving hundreds of millions of children and young people of their right to quality education, leaving many of the education-related targets of the SDGs well off track. This trend will be further exacerbated by war and conflict raging from Ukraine to Syria. New strategies and initiatives will be shaped and advanced on the global agenda, culminating with Transforming Education special summit convened by UN Secretary General in NY in September.

- **Making room for inter-generational perspectives at the decision-making tables**

Educational priorities will often be shaped by, with and for youth. Special events from One Young World Summit to Transforming Education Summit are moving the needle in global perception shift – increasing an active role and voice for young leaders in shaping policy, education, skills and employment priorities for the next decade.

- **Creating aligned education and workforce systems**

Stakeholders from all sectors have an opportunity to look holistically across K-12 education, postsecondary, workforce development and economic development systems to eliminate barriers, and to align goals and collaborate to create inclusive, supportive opportunities for people to develop skills, earn credentials and enter careers.

Inclusive Economic Growth

“The path to recovery should invest in a more resilient economy, one that is greener, smarter, more inclusive, more dynamic.”

Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

• Focus on Displaced People

Forced displacement remains a long-term development challenge, not only a humanitarian one. Around 76 percent of refugees have been displaced for more than five years. The UN estimates more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees may need protection and assistance in neighboring countries in the coming months. As part of a global effort, the international community must focus on addressing longer term, social and economic challenges that will help both the displaced and their hosts.

• Financial Inclusion and Digitization

Many countries across the developing world are grappling with financial inclusion challenges, including weak regulatory environments, lack of digital payment infrastructure (e.g., ID systems, credit information, internet, and mobile access), financial illiteracy, consumer protection, and security and integrity of digital financial services. There are increasing opportunities for the public and private sectors to work together to invest in digital payment and ID infrastructure that can help communities unlock their full economic potential.

• New Momentum in ESG

There is a paradigm shift in expectations from regulators, investors, consumers and employees from business to lead on societal issues and embed ESG-driven practices and solutions into their business strategies, products, operations and workforce. In this ESG revolution, market leadership, brand and enterprise value are at stake. Today's challenges are complex and interconnected, and are ever-changing. From climate action and environmental sustainability to matters of equity and justice, advancing progress requires transformation across entire systems.



IMPACT-MULTIPLYING PARTNERSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE A COMMON AGENDA

Our team is proud to spotlight organizations we collaborate with closely who advance innovative solutions and partnerships across these global challenges



The UN Foundation is an independent charitable organization created to work closely across all United Nations agencies to address humanity's greatest challenges, build initiatives across sectors to solve problems at scale, and drive global progress. They focus on issues at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), build initiatives and campaigns across sectors to solve problems at scale, and engage influencers and citizens who seek action.



MIT Solve is a marketplace for social impact innovation with a mission to drive innovation to solve world challenges.

Solve is an initiative of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that advances lasting solutions from tech entrepreneurs to address the world's most pressing problems. Each year, Solve issues Global Challenges to find the most promising Solver teams who will drive transformational change. Solve then builds and convenes a community of leaders and changemakers to form partnerships these Solver teams need to scale their impact.



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is a multilateral environmental agreement whose central role is to support Parties and non-Party stakeholders in implementing the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement and in enhancing climate action towards 2020 and beyond.

The scale of the responsibilities arising from the implementation of the Paris Agreement matches the magnitude of opportunity for the secretariat to establish new partnerships to act on climate change. The secretariat is always looking for partnerships that directly or indirectly support the activities of the secretariat, and help it to leverage skills, expertise and other resources that will support and advance its mandate.

Marrakech Partnership



RACE TO ZERO



About APCO Worldwide

APCO Worldwide is an advisory and advocacy communications consultancy. We partner with public and private sector organizations to help them catalyze progress, act with agility and build reputations, relationships and solutions that enable success. APCO is an independent and majority women-owned business.

• APCO'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT TEAM

APCO's strategic partnerships & global engagement team helps shape cross-sectoral collaborations across the private sector, multilateral organizations, global technology platforms & incubators, academic institutions and more. Over the past years, we helped create and expand numerous strategic impact initiatives, helping:

- Global Fortune 500 companies build strategic engagement initiatives on climate action, youth and gender equality agendas, global health, food security, AI for SDGs and other key topics on a global stage – from the UN General Assembly Week to Davos and COP-26.
- Foundations and family-owned businesses expand a network of global strategic partners – from UN agencies to global NGOs
- Technology disruptors and start-ups connect to a global ecosystem of progressive mayors, multilateral development organizations and cutting-edge academic institutions

Interested to learn more? Contact us at:

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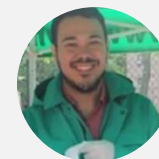
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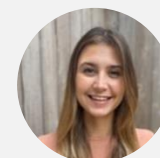
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