



ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 18: Capacity Development and Implementation Support – Policy and Activity

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY

(Presented by Iran (Islamic Republic of))

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted through Resolution A/RES/70/1, provides a framework of 17 Goals and 169 targets—monitored through 234 indicators—built on three dimensions (economic, social, environmental) and five focus areas (people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership). Within this global framework, ICAO has aligned many of its initiatives with 15 of the 17 Goals, yet analysis shows that its actions in the social dimension remain limited compared to the economic and environmental areas. Strengthening social responsibility in aviation is therefore essential to ensure balanced, inclusive progress in line with the 2030 Agenda, and this paper proposes actions for ICAO to enhance its focus on the social dimension.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) Establish a dedicated mechanism, such as a *Committee on Aviation Social Responsibility (CASR)*, to develop international standards and policies on social responsibility in aviation; and
- b) the development of a framework and reporting system on social responsibility, aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda and its indicators, to guide and monitor ICAO's actions.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goals: <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure, Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All</i> as they collectively contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Implementation of the proposed actions may require limited additional resources, primarily for expert meetings, training programmes, and the development of reporting mechanisms, which could be accommodated within existing ICAO budgetary frameworks.

<i>References:</i>	United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1 “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2015) United Nations Resolution A/RES/71/313 “Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2017) ICAO Assembly Resolution A40-WP/45 on Sustainable Development (2019) ISO 26000 Social Responsibility Standard (2010) ICAO Analytical Mapping of SDG Initiatives (https://www.icao.int/about-icao/aviation-development/pages/sdg.aspx)
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sustainable Development

1.1.1 Humanity has always pursued growth and development. The desire of human for development drives them to make the maximum use of the resources around them. Then sometimes this desire cause damage to environment and Human rights are compromised. In this context sustainable development becomes evident. A method that respects human dignity along with development and preserves the resources of future generations. In sustainable development, human well-being and flourishing should be the ultimate aim, not just a means to achieve economic or technological advancement.

1.2 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

1.2.1 The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution adopted Resolution A/RES/70/1, titled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” on 25 September 2015. It outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. In this resolution he General Assembly decided that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, Subsequently according resolution A/RES/71/313(2017), the framework of global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs). The resolution established 234 unique indicators as the official benchmarks for monitoring SDG progress.

1.2.2 According to the preamble of Resolution A/RES/70/, the dimensions of sustainable development include the economic, social and environmental. Additionally, the resolution includes Goals and targets will stimulate action in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet include global plan of action focused on people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.

1.2.3 Additionally, to emphasize the importance of social sustainability, the following international documents can also be referenced:

a) In the preamble of the United Nations Charter, it is stated:

“We the peoples of the United Nations are determined to reaffirm our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”

- b) Article 55(c) of the United Nations Charter states:

“Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion is one of the fundamental duties of the United Nations.”

- c) The preamble of the 1944 Chicago Convention also states:

“It is recognized that the advancement and development of international civil aviation will create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world.”

- d) The United Nations Secretary-General’s 2019 report emphasizes the importance of respecting human rights and stakeholder engagement in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The report stresses that without adequate attention to the social dimension of sustainability, sustainable development cannot be achieved, and that the social dimension is the foundation for success in this path.

1.2.4 These provisions represent foundational norms that guide international legal obligations and are reinforced by customary international law.

1.2.5 Neglecting social sustainability in the aviation industry can worsen social inequalities, and damage public trust, threatening the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

1.3 ICAO’s Actions on Sustainable Development

1.3.1 The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is an official observer on the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the custodian agency of global indicator 9.1.2 Passenger and Freight Volumes (Contained in Resolution A/RES/71/313) by Mode of Transport within the 2030 Agenda framework.

1.3.2 This commitment was formally endorsed by the ICAO Assembly through Resolution A40-WP/45, which highlights the crucial role and contribution of the aviation industry in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In paragraph 2.1.1 of this document, ICAO provides an analytical mapping illustrating how its initiatives, structured around five strategic objectives — Safety, Security, Economic Development, Air Navigation, and Environment — support the achievement of 15 out of the 17 SDGs.

1.3.3 A comprehensive review and analysis of ICAO’s activities, as detailed in the analytical mapping available at <https://www.icao.int/about-icao/aviation-development/pages/sdg.aspx>, and their alignment with the targets outlined in the UN 2030 Agenda and the global SDG indicator framework in the Appendix, have led to the following findings.

- a) ICAO has undertaken actions contributing to the achievement of 15 out of the 17 main Sustainable Development Goals related to the aviation sector. Goals 6 and 14 pertain to oceans and seas, which naturally fall outside ICAO’s scope of work.
- b) The 2030 Agenda includes 169 specific targets, consisting of 122 outcome-oriented targets and 47 means-of-implementation targets. Although ICAO’s reported actions

do not explicitly distinguish between these categories, it has undertaken activities related to 50 outcome-d targets and 16 means of implementation targets.

- c) ICAO has not established specific indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of its activities in achieving the agenda's goals, which in turn might lead to weakening the ICAO's accountability framework. It considers the completion of any activity related to a sub-target (whether outcome or means of implementation) as evidence of fulfilling the corresponding main goal, such as Goals 4 and 5. However, United Nations Resolution A/RES/71/313 defines 234 unique indicators for monitoring the sub-targets, and ICAO was expected to use these indicators to assess the extent of progress toward both the sub-targets and the main goals of the UN Agenda.
- d) Based on a review of ICAO's actions and data, the following findings are obtained:
- e) ICAO's actions are related to 68 targets out of 151 targets under 15 Goals, as follows:

ICAO's actions related to 3 dimensions are as follows:

- Social dimension 33%:
- Economic dimension: 51%
- Environmental: dimension: 42%

ICAO's actions related to the 5p focus area are as follows:

- People: 36%
- Planet: 36%
- Prosperity: 41%
- Peace: 36%
- Partnership: 68%

- f) This evaluation clearly indicates that ICAO's actions in the social dimension of sustainable development are the least among the three dimensions:

- ICAO has not taken any actions regarding the following important Goals:
- Target 4.7: All learners to acquire knowledge and skills for sustainable development (including sustainability education, rights, equality, peace, and cultural diversity).
- Target 10.2: Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- Target 10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.
- Target 10.6: Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions.
- Target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.
- Target 8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

1.4 ISO 26000 Standard in Advancing Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development

1.4.1 One of the valuable global experiences in achieving sustainable development is the development of the ISO 26000 standard. This standard is the result of one of the most extensive and participatory standard-setting processes in the history of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The process began in 2005 and continued until 2010, involving the participation of more than 90 countries, 400 experts, and 40 international organizations.

1.4.2 ISO 26000 addresses seven core subjects of social responsibility, including organizational governance, human rights, labor practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, and community involvement and development.

1.4.3 In ISO 26000, social responsibility is defined as an organization's accountability for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that contributes to sustainable development, health, and the well-being of society.

1.4.4 This standard, as a non-certifiable guidance document, provides practical principles and frameworks for organizations, industries, governments, and service providers to integrate social responsibility into their values and operations.

1.4.5 In addition to these core subjects, ISO 26000 introduces seven fundamental principles of social responsibility that help organizations effectively fulfil their responsibilities:

- a) Accountability
- b) Transparency
- c) Ethical behavior
- d) Respect for stakeholder interests
- e) Respect for the rule of law
- f) Respect for international norms of behavior
- g) Respect for human rights

1.4.6 Given the critical importance of the social dimension of sustainable development, it appears that ICAO can make use of this standard and adhere to these seven principles to strengthen its focus on social sustainability and expand its social initiatives, particularly with respect to human rights and stakeholders' rights.

1.4.7 By embracing its social responsibility in the development process, ICAO can help protect the rights of personnel in critical roles—such as flight crews, air traffic controllers, and maintenance staff.

1.4.8 Furthermore, ICAO can foster a form of development that ensures equal and non-discriminatory access to air transport for all communities. In addition, it can go beyond holding conferences to implement concrete and effective actions aimed at eliminating gender discrimination in aviation professions—an area that ICAO has commendably addressed in recent years.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To ensure that civil aviation activities address all dimensions of sustainability and all focused areas of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a) It is recommended that ICAO establish a “Committee on Aviation Social Responsibility (CASR)” under the Air Navigation Commission, similar to the existing Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP), in order to develop international standards and policies on social responsibility in aviation.
 - b) It is recommended that a framework document titled “Social Responsibility” be prepared by CASR and submitted to the Air Navigation Commission for approval.
 - c) It is recommended that, in cooperation with the United Nations and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), specialized training programs and events on human rights, social responsibility, and sustainable development in aviation should be developed and implemented.
 - d) It is recommended that the CASR assess ICAO’s alignment with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets of the United Nations 2030 Agenda by using the 234 indicators provided in Resolution A/RES/70/313.
 - e) It is recommended that ICAO establish a reporting system for social responsibility practices within the aviation industry, like existing environmental reporting mechanisms, to ensure transparency and accountability regarding social issues such as labour rights, non-discrimination, and stakeholder engagement.
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APPENDIX

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ICAO'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This Annex provides a comparative analysis between the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) reported activities and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The analysis evaluates ICAO's alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on the three dimensions of sustainability—social, economic, and environmental—as well as the five thematic focus areas: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. The results offer an overview of the status of ICAO's contributions and highlight opportunities for enhanced engagement, especially in the social dimension of sustainable development.

Dimension	No. UN SDG	No. UN SDG - (SDG 6,14)	No. of ICAO activities related to SDG	Percentage
Social	91	84	28	33%
Economic	91	84	43	51%
Environment	48	36	15	42%

5p focus area	No. UN SDG	No. UN SDG - (SDG 6,14)	No. of ICAO activities related to SDG	Percentage
People	82	77	28	36%
Planet	52	39	14	36%
Prosperity	86	80	33	41%
Peace	15	14	5	36%
Partnership	27	25	17	68%

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