

Holistic Approaches for a Sustainable Future: Centering Individual, Collective, and Planetary Well-being

- Concept Note -

The first ever United Nations Sustainability Week is organized for April 15-19, 2024, building on the momentum from the SDG Summit in September 2023 and contributing to the Summit for the Future in September 2024. The UNGA President is calling for all stakeholders to #ChooseSustainability, highlighting that “impactful transformation remains central to the ongoing efforts to advance all three dimensions of sustainable development - social, economic, and environmental - to achieve peace, prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all.”

In order to Choose Sustainability, Member States, civil society, UN agencies, and other stakeholders need to adopt initiatives which reflect the complexity and interconnectedness of individual, collective, and planetary well-being. On the occasion of UNGA Sustainability Week 2024, the goals of this parallel event are to 1) provide a space for UN stakeholders and representatives to reflect on their own well-being and mental health in the context of their work; 2) explore the connections between climate, health, sustainable development, and global resilience; and 3) advocate for holistic approaches which center and optimize the health and well-being of people and the environment.

This event will be composed of two panel discussions and a concluding plenary discussion between panelists and attendees. The first panel will provide a space for advocates and representatives to reflect on their own well-being and mental health in the context of their roles at the UN, and will discuss strategies for incorporating advocacy priorities (such as holistic approaches to sustainable development) into the workplace. With the deadline for the 2030 Agenda rapidly approaching, it is vital to take into consideration the sustainability of the work done within and around the UN to achieve those goals and drive progress on the SDGs. The second panel will be centered on advocacy for holistic approaches to global policymaking which prioritize well-being. Panelists will reflect on the intersections of physical, mental, social, and environmental well-being, and will discuss best practices for integrating well-being considerations into global processes and policies for sustainability.

Effective and equitable sustainability initiatives must place people and the planet’s well-being at the center of decision-making and implementation. Embracing holistic well-being as a central tenet of sustainable development is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity. By prioritizing the health and well-being of individuals and the planet, and incorporating these principles into policy and practice, we can unlock new pathways to achieving the SDGs and building a more resilient, equitable, and prosperous future for all.

Modality

Hybrid panel held at the Baha'i International Community in New York, with the opportunity for both in-person and virtual questions, answers, and discussion. A recording will be available following the session. Hosted by UNANIMA International.

When: Tuesday, April 16, 1:00-3:00pm ET

Where: Baha'i International Community | 866 UN Plaza Suite 120, NY, NY 10017

Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/uisustainability>

Speakers

Panel 1: Correlations between the Improvement of Individual Well-being and the Well-being of Other Members of Society and the Natural Environment

- Blair Nelsen, Executive Director at Waterspirit
- Sabita Geer, NGO Representative to the UN at the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
- Kati Garrison, Associate Coordinator at the Justice Coalition of Religious

Panel 2: Holistic Well-Being and Sustainability - an Integrative Policy Approach

- Dr. Alan Shapiro, Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer at Terra Firma National
- Sri Sofjan, Senior Program Advisor & Strategist at the Huairou Commission
- Winifred Doherty, Main NGO Representative to the UN at the Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office

Moderator: Liana Almony, Executive Assistant/Assistant Representative to the UN at UNANIMA International