



H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands

What is the Special Advocate's mission?

Financial inclusion seeks to unlock economic opportunities and improve lives by providing everyone with the financial tools they need to protect against hardship and invest in their futures. The mission of the UNSGSA is to advance financial inclusion *for development* through strategic and sustained advocacy.

Who is the Special Advocate?

H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands was appointed UNSGSA by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in 2009.

She was trained as an economist and has worked in international finance and emerging markets.

She also serves as honorary patron of the G20's Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPII).

In her own country, she is a member of the Committee for Entrepreneurship and Finance and honorary chair of the Dutch Money Wise Platform.

TIME magazine named her one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2016 for her work on financial inclusion.



How does she advance financial inclusion?

Collaborating with global and national partners, the Special Advocate expands financial inclusion by:

- Accelerating policy adoption at global and national levels;
- Raising the profile of vital issues with key decision-makers;
- Building coalitions between different sectors and inspiring new players;
- Identifying solutions or bottlenecks that need discussion or research;
- Making the case for financial inclusion in an impartial way.

What are her main areas of advocacy?

The UNSGSA engages on inclusive finance for development at global and country levels. Her key thematic priorities are to: (i) make policies and public goods work for financial inclusion; (ii) ensure diverse financial services are used and have a positive impact on peoples' lives; and (iii) encourage conducive policies and practices for difficult-to-reach segments.

Global advocacy—The Special Advocate advances financial inclusion at the UN, in the G20, with the global Standard-setting Bodies (SSBs), at the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, and with national and international leaders, technical experts, thought leaders, and others.

Global impact: The Sustainable Development Goals

Leading up to the adoption of the SDGs, the UNSGSA and UN member-state partners worked to ensure financial inclusion's strong presence within the agenda. As a result it is now referenced in 7 of the 17 goals as a key enabler for fulfilling the SDGs, and the General Assembly has passed a resolution stressing its importance.

Country Advocacy—In multiple country visits each year the Special Advocate identifies priority policy changes for advocacy; discusses these issues with leaders; and supports follow-up with her partners. She also meets with low-income families and business to learn about what works and what doesn't when it comes to financial inclusion.

Country impact: Myanmar and Indonesia

Through her advocacy in Myanmar, the Special Advocate was able to accelerate the adoption of a regulation that enables people to open a financial account when they get their first mobile phone. In Indonesia, the UNSGSA promoted the formalization of the country's national financial inclusion strategy, which the President signed during her visit.

How does she carry out her work?

The Special Advocate advances financial inclusion in multiple contexts, notably during:

Country visits

The Special Advocate has undertaken 60 country trips since 2009, including Nigeria, Viet Nam, Mexico, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, China.

Speeches and panel discussions: During conferences, international gatherings, and country visits, she delivers targeted messages in the form of speeches, video messages, and panel participation. Recent speeches were at a Nigeria financial inclusion workshop, World Bank Spring Meetings, and the Singapore Fintech Festival.



Private/small-group meetings: During her travels and also in the Netherlands, she meets with a wide-spectrum of leaders and decision-makers to discuss financial inclusion, including during the UN General Assembly, the World Bank Annual Meetings, and the World Economic Forum.

A model built on partnerships

The Special Advocate is supported by a small office based at UNDP. As an advocate, she relies on partnerships to leverage her impact. In particular, she collaborates closely with an advisory Reference Group of leading international organizations in financial inclusion to share expertise and suggest strategic opportunities.

The Reference Group is composed of **the Alliance for Financial Inclusion, Better Than Cash Alliance, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, International Finance Corporation, International Monetary Fund, Omidyar Network, UN Capital Development Fund, UN Development Programme, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Bank.**

Financial inclusion: key examples of progress

Over the last five years financial inclusion has made strong strides forward:

- *515 million more people gained access to financial services between 2014 and 2017;*
- *50+ countries have adopted financial inclusion plans and strategies;*
- *The major global regulators—the SSBs—met together for the very first time, under the auspices of the Special Advocate, for the purpose of addressing financial inclusion;*
- *Growing research is showing strong links between financial inclusion and major development goals.*

For more information, please visit www.unsgsa.org