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Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027)

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/218](#), provides a review of the progress made and the gaps and challenges in implementing the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027), including the socioeconomic impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine, as well as the responses thereto. Policies for an inclusive and sustainable recovery from these crises are discussed and recommendations made.

* [A/77/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The objective of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) and its inter-agency, system-wide plan of action was to accelerate global actions for a world without poverty. Four years into implementation, the world is facing unprecedented challenges brought about by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine and climate change. This report provides an examination of the gaps, challenges and progress made in the implementation of the Third Decade, and the activities carried out by the United Nations system under the plan of action are presented. It also presents social policies for inclusive and sustainable recovery and building forward better and concludes with recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

II. Progress in eradicating poverty and reducing inequality

A. Income poverty¹

1. World

2. Beyond causing significant health casualties, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a worldwide economic fallout owing to the stringent measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease. By disrupting income-generating activities, these measures resulted in massive job and income losses.

3. The resulting decline in income has translated into increases in poverty in every region. The world's extreme poverty rate – the proportion of the population living on less than \$1.90 a day – increased from 8.3 per cent in 2019 to 9.2 per cent in 2020, instead of decreasing to a previously projected 7.8 per cent had the pandemic not happened. This increase in extreme poverty – the first since 1998 and the largest since 1990 – pushed an additional 77 million into extreme poverty in 2020. Progress toward ending extreme poverty has been reversed by 3 to 4 years at the global level and by 8 to 9 years in low-income countries.

4. The conflict in Ukraine is another major shock that has exacerbated the global economic slowdown. It triggered a devastating humanitarian crisis and aggravated the pandemic-induced strains of supply disruptions and worsening financial conditions, leading to soaring prices and volatility in energy markets. It has also resulted in significant price hikes for grains, fertilizers and other agricultural commodities, particularly those exported by the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

5. All these factors have slowed economic growth in the world's largest economies and the majority of developing economies, exacerbating inflationary pressures worldwide. The conflict has exacerbated food insecurity and extreme poverty in many countries, particularly in countries reliant on food imports and among people living in poverty and in vulnerable situations. The combined effects of the lingering pandemic and the conflict are expected to lead to a net increase of 75 million people in extreme poverty by the end of 2022 compared to pre-pandemic projections.

¹ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022* (United Nations publication, 2022); report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals ([E/2022/55](#)); *Global Economic Prospects, June 2022* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2022); and United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "World economic situation and prospects as of mid-2022" ([E/2022/60](#)).

2. Africa, least developed countries and small island developing States²

6. Already the continent with the highest level of poverty, Africa experienced a significant increase in extreme poverty due to the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The extreme poverty rate for 2021 is estimated to be 3 percentage points higher than pre-pandemic estimates for 2021. While 478 million people lived in extreme poverty in Africa in 2019, an estimated 490 million people did so in 2021, 37 million more than projected before the pandemic.

7. The conflict in Ukraine is also expected to further deepen poverty and worsen food insecurity in Africa and the least developed countries as a result of disruptions to wheat imports together with surging global food prices that are expected to sharply reduce food affordability and real incomes. The majority of sub-Saharan African countries and all the least developed countries are most at risk of food insecurity, given their reliance on cereal imports to meet the food needs of their rapidly growing populations while agricultural productivity stagnates. For instance, imports of wheat from the Russian Federation and Ukraine account for about 14 per cent of total caloric intake in the least developed countries, compared to just 3 per cent in other developing countries.

8. The increase in poverty is particularly concerning in countries where large shares of the population are already experiencing food insecurity or are at a high risk of falling into food insecurity, namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and South Sudan. In 2022, 58 million Africans living just above the poverty line are at risk of falling into poverty owing to the combined effects of the pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine.

9. The small island developing States are recognized as some of the most vulnerable to climate change and the continuing effects of the pandemic. Their economies, which are heavily reliant on tourism and services exports, have been severely hit by the pandemic. Many of them are also severely exposed to the increases in food and fuel prices resulting from the conflict in Ukraine.

B. Non-income poverty³

10. An estimated 1.3 billion people (22 per cent of the population) in the 109 developing countries examined lived in multidimensional poverty in 2021. Children were more likely to be multidimensionally poor (one in three, compared with one in six adults). The great majority (around 84 per cent) of the multidimensionally poor lived in the rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Two-thirds lived in middle-income countries. Furthermore, one sixth of multidimensionally poor people

² The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: *Economic Development in Africa Report 2021: Reaping the Potential Benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area for Inclusive Growth* (United Nations publication, 2021); *Global Economic Prospects, June 2022*; and United Nations, “Global impact of the war in Ukraine: billions of people face the greatest cost-of-living crisis in a generation”, Global Crisis Response Group Brief, No. 2 (New York, 2022).

³ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2021: Unmasking Disparities by Ethnicity, Caste and Gender* (2021); United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), “Don’t let children be the hidden victims of COVID-19 pandemic”, 9 April 2020, available at www.unicef.org/press-releases/dont-let-children-be-hidden-victims-covid-19-pandemic; and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and others, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022: Repurposing Food and Agricultural Policies to Make Healthy Diets More Affordable* (Rome, 2022).

lived in female-headed households, which were, on average, poorer than male-headed households.

11. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on multidimensionally poor people is expected to have been particularly severe, resulting in shortages of food and water and an increase in children dropping out of school. The disruption to livelihoods and food supply chains pushed around 155 million people across 55 countries into acute food insecurity in 2020.

12. Food insecurity remains alarmingly high. The number of people affected by hunger globally rose as high as 828 million in 2021, representing an increase of about 46 million since 2020 and 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eight per cent of the world population is projected to still be facing hunger in 2030. Hunger continues to rise in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2021, 12 per cent of the world population faced severe food insecurity. An estimated 45 million children under the age of five suffered from wasting, the deadliest form of malnutrition, which increases children's risk of death by up to 12 times. Global and local food systems have faced multiple challenges, including extreme weather, the COVID-19 crisis, conflict and insecurity, and rising inflation. Rising commodity prices have worsened existing inflationary pressures and global food insecurity, undermining efforts to eradicate poverty.

13. The conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated the situation faced by millions of acutely food-insecure people globally. Severe grain and fertilizer export shortfalls following the outbreak of the conflict are estimated to increase the number of undernourished people by up to 13 million in 2022 and by 19 million more in 2023. As the Russian Federation and Ukraine were among the top exporters of cereals and fertilizers, the conflict has disproportionately impacted countries that are highly dependent on the import of these agricultural commodities. While this disruption of food exports has produced an increase in food prices and demand for substitute commodities, approximately 20 countries have imposed restrictions on food exports (as at May 2022), further reducing food supplies on the global market. Also, since the required agricultural inputs are not reaching many food producers, the impact of current market disruptions may be felt through 2023, jeopardizing global food security, especially in low-income, food import-dependent countries and for people in vulnerable situations.

C. Inequality⁴

14. The pandemic has reversed progress made in reducing global inequality. While the world's economy had started to bounce back from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, this recovery was not experienced equally, and low-income countries are grappling with greater negative socioeconomic impacts on households than high-income countries. As a result, between-country income inequality is estimated to have increased for the first time in a generation.

15. Inequalities are also expected to widen within countries, owing to increasing inequality in access to quality education, health services, decent work, social protection and information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure, with poor and vulnerable populations being affected disproportionately. If not addressed, the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income and vulnerable households will continue in the long run. Vulnerable households are less able to cope with economic and

⁴ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022*; and Nishant Yonzan and others, "The impact of COVID-19 on poverty and inequality: Evidence from phone surveys", World Bank Blogs, 18 January 2022, available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/impact-covid-19-poverty-and-inequality-evidence-phone-surveys>.

food insecurities, as they have had to sell productive assets or deplete savings to meet their basic needs after many workers, usually low-skilled, lost their jobs and income. Their children will face negative long-term consequences in terms of cognitive and physical development, because their households were more likely to experience undernutrition and hunger. Those households also face an aggregate loss of learning, and their children will have lower future prospects because they lost learning opportunities for extended periods as a result of school closures or remote learning.

D. Productive capacities⁵

16. Productive capacities are crucial for structural transformation and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. They are also vital for building socioeconomic resilience to external shocks such as the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, fostering the productive capacities of developing countries, especially least developed countries, supports efforts towards eradicating poverty.

17. The productive capacities index (PCI) showed that the majority of least developed countries have low productive capacities, with an average PCI level of 40 per cent below that of other developing countries over the period 2011–2018. The number of least developed countries with a higher PCI score decreased from 11 in 2001 to 6 in 2018, while the number of those with a lower score increased from 18 to 26. Developed economies in Europe outperformed the other regions, followed by North America, and the highest median score among the rest of the regions was in Latin America, followed by Asia and Oceania. The PCI score of Africa remained the lowest amongst all the regions.

18. The development of productive capacities requires bold policies that constitute a key pillar of sustainable recovery from the pandemic and a long-term development strategy, promote investments in infrastructure and employment creation, and strengthen and develop the technological capabilities of producers across all sectors. It also requires lifting binding constraints such as those related to infrastructure, access to inputs and credit markets. The international community should support developing countries with financial resources, sufficient policy space and effective international support measures, particularly in the areas of technology transfer and debt management.

III. Gaps and challenges in implementing the objectives of the Third Decade

A. Data and technology⁶

19. The pandemic has exposed the divide in statistical capacity that exists between developed and developing countries. Only about 60 countries had data on COVID-19 infection and death rates disaggregated by age and sex that were publicly accessible in

⁵ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: FAO, “Impact of the Ukraine-Russia conflict on global food security and related matters under the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations”, document CL 169/3, available at <https://www.fao.org/3/ni734en/ni734en.pdf>; *The Least Developed Countries Report 2021: The Least Developed Countries in the Post-COVID World – Learning from 50 Years of Experience* (United Nations publication, 2021); *The Least Developed Countries Report 2020: Productive Capacities for the New Decade* (United Nations publication, 2020); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index: Methodological Approach and Results* (Geneva, 2021); and UNCTAD, *UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index: Focus on Landlocked Developing Countries* (Geneva, 2020).

⁶ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022* (United Nations publication, 2022); and *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022* (United Nations publication, 2022).

2020. Such data are required to make time-sensitive decisions in order to save lives. Major data gaps also exist in other areas. For instance, 74 per cent of child-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators either have insufficient data or show insufficient progress for the global targets to be met by 2030. Only about one in six countries have data available for Goal 13 (climate action). Timeliness is also an issue for those that have data, for example the latest available data points for Goals 1 and 13 are 2016 and 2015, respectively.

20. The COVID-19 crisis has boosted Internet usage, especially in middle-income countries. It has also exposed and exacerbated the digital divide, as affordable and universal access to the Internet and digital skills have become a precondition for participating in the digitized economy. The proportion of Internet users remained low, at 27 per cent, in least developed countries, compared to 57 per cent in developing countries as a whole and 90 per cent in developed countries. Within countries, rural and low-income communities usually lack reliable and affordable access.

B. Employment creation⁷

21. The pandemic continues to undermine a full and balanced recovery of labour markets. Global unemployment is estimated to have increased from 186 million in 2019 to 207 million in 2022. Total hours worked globally in 2022 are also projected to remain below their pre-pandemic level, resulting in an equivalent loss of 52 million full-time jobs. The proportion of workers living in extreme poverty increased from 6.7 per cent in 2019 to 7.2 per cent in 2020, adding 8 million people to the ranks of the working poor. The overall impact on employment is much more than the estimates indicate, since many people have left the labour force.

22. A full recovery of the labour market seems out of reach for all regions in 2023, and recovery will likely be uneven across the globe. As a result of vaccine inequities and constrained fiscal space, low- and middle-income countries are recovering much more slowly than developed countries. The fastest recovery is in high-income countries, constituting 20 per cent of the global labour force, and accounts for about 50 per cent of the global unemployment decline between 2020 and 2022. Working women have been disproportionately affected by the labour market crisis. They accounted for 39 per cent of total employment in 2019 but made up nearly 45 per cent of global employment losses in 2020.

23. The unpredictability of the pandemic and the impact of the conflict in Ukraine make the labour market outlook fragile. If either is prolonged, further disruptions to the labour market and additional job and income losses will follow. However, recovery efforts from these crises also present an opportunity to invest in decent jobs that could yield long-term development dividends, including in the green, care and digital sectors.

C. Education⁸

24. Access to the basic learning offered by schools helps break the cycle of poverty. However, it is anticipated that it will take several years for pre-pandemic levels of

⁷ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: International Labour Organization (ILO), *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2022* (Geneva, 2022); and [E/2022/55](#).

⁸ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: World Bank, UNICEF and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery* (Washington D.C., 2021); UNICEF, *Are Children Really Learning? Exploring Foundational Skills in the Midst of a Learning Crisis* (New York, 2022); UNICEF, *Where Are We on Education Recovery?* (New York, 2022); and UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2021/2: Non-State Actors in Education – Who Chooses? Who Loses?* (Paris, 2021).

access and quality to be restored. About 147 million children missed more than 50 per cent of their in-class instruction over the past two years. An estimated 10 million children may have fallen off-track in early childhood development in the first 11 months of the pandemic. In terms of economic value, the present generation of learners could lose up to \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings. School closures have had the greatest impact on those in vulnerable situations, including girls, children in rural areas and children with disabilities.

25. Worryingly, about 24 million students from pre-primary to tertiary levels are estimated to be at risk of not going back to school owing to the pandemic-driven disruptions. They are located mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, already the region with the highest rates of education exclusion in the world.

D. Health care and services⁹

26. The pandemic has disrupted essential health services in all countries and laid bare inequities within and between countries. It has become clear that sustained recovery will require more than reinvesting in existing health services and systems. The world is at a critical juncture, where it has the opportunity to reinvent and invest in national health systems.

27. Trends in catastrophic health spending were already worsening before the pandemic, with at least 1.4 billion people facing catastrophic or impoverishing health spending. Almost 1 billion people spent in excess of 10 per cent of their household budget on health. Even when people are devoting less than 10 per cent of their household budget to health, out-of-pocket health spending can be a source of financial hardship, particularly for the near-poor and the poor. As the pandemic forced millions of people into poverty, households had fewer resources to pay for health care. Such health and economic pressures lead to increases in overall government expenditure. This raises concerns about long-term financial sustainability and causes uncertainty with regard to financial protection, particularly for the increased number of poor households, given the protective role of public spending.

28. Three years into the pandemic, COVID-19 continues to disrupt health services in almost all countries, for people at all income levels. Increased disruptions to potentially life-saving emergency care were reported, which likely resulted in substantial increases in morbidity and mortality from both COVID-19 and other underlying health conditions. Estimates indicate that the full death toll associated directly or indirectly with the COVID-19 pandemic, described as “excess mortality”, was approximately 14.9 million between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2021.

29. In addition, almost half of countries reported disruptions to both routine facility-based immunization and outreach immunization services. Increased backlogs were also reported in multiple essential health services, including care for cancer; care for noncommunicable diseases; nutrition services; health and support services for persons with disabilities; sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services; and mental, neurological and substance use disorders.

⁹ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: WHO and World Bank, *Global Monitoring Report on Financial Protection in Health 2021* (Geneva, 2021); WHO, “Global excess deaths associated with COVID-19, January 2020–December 2021”, available at <https://www.who.int/data/stories/global-excess-deaths-associated-with-covid-19-january-2020-december-2021>; WHO, *Third Round of the Global Pulse Survey on Continuity of Essential Health Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic: November–December 2021* (Geneva, 2021); and WHO, *The Impact of COVID-19 on Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Services: Results of a Rapid Assessment* (Geneva, 2020).

E. Gender equality¹⁰

30. In most countries, women's socioeconomic opportunities and outcomes are limited by unequal access to education, health services, economic assets, paid work, information and communications technology and representation. As a result, women constitute a majority of the population living in poverty in most regions.

31. The social and economic fallouts from the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine are also gendered, with women and girls being more likely to suffer adverse consequences as a result of the disease, disease control measures and the conflict. Therefore, these two crises are threatening to worsen gender poverty gaps. In 2021, there were an estimated 118 women per 100 men living in extreme poverty. This ratio could rise to 121 women per 100 men in 2030, with sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia being the most affected.

32. Closing the gender poverty gap must be a vital part of a broader poverty eradication strategy. A comprehensive strategy will require substantial institutional and cultural change. It should be aimed at improving female access to education and lifelong learning opportunities, information and communications technology, family planning and formal employment through investment in quality public services, basic infrastructure and social protection systems.

F. Social protection¹¹

33. Social protection potentially mitigates poverty by providing means to people living in poverty and vulnerable situations in order to ensure their economic security and promote their human development. Worldwide, higher social protection expenditure is associated with lower poverty levels, yet less than half of the world's population (46.9 per cent) was effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, from child and family benefits to old-age pensions, in 2020. Coverage was particularly low in Africa (18 per cent) and least developed countries (14 per cent), and among children (26 per cent) and the unemployed (19 per cent). Those social protection gaps are the results of significant underinvestment in social protection systems, especially in low-income countries. Least developed countries spent on average only 1.14 percent of their GDP on social protection, excluding healthcare, compared to 16.4 percent in advanced economies, owing to the limited capacity of Governments to mobilize sufficient resources amidst low levels of productivity and high levels of informality.

¹⁰ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), *From Insights to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19* (New York, 2020), available at <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2020/Gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf>; Maja Gavrilovic and others, "Gender-responsive social protection post-COVID-19", *Science*, vol. 375, No. 658510 (March 2022); and UN-Women and CARE International, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine: Secondary Data Review* (2022), available at <https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/RGA%20of%20Ukraine.pdf>.

¹¹ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: Christina Behrendt, "Gaps, challenges and progress towards universal access to social protection", paper presented at the Inter-Agency Expert Group Meeting on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027), 16–18 May 2022; and ILO, *Present and Future of Work in the Least Developed Countries* (Geneva, 2022), available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_844025.pdf.

34. Least developed countries are unable to offset their high levels of poverty because of their low levels of social protection expenditure. Social protection has also played a key role in the COVID-19 policy response as stabilizer to protect people's health, jobs and incomes. Countries with solid national social protection systems were able to respond faster and better than others to the negative impacts of the pandemic. These countries demonstrated higher resilience at both the macro and the micro levels. Their responses included extending coverage to uncovered groups through means such as the expansion of existing mechanisms and the introduction of new benefits, which they achieved by mobilizing additional resources – mostly in advanced economies, where around \$17–19 trillion was mobilized from domestic and international sources – and by harnessing important innovations, including digital technologies. However, many of the measures taken were temporary or ad hoc in nature, requiring urgent efforts to mobilize sufficient financing and policies to ensure that they are not rolled back, while expanding universal, adaptive and shock-responsive social protection systems. As articulated through the main objective of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for a Just Transition, an integrated approach to expanding social protection and creating decent job opportunities is needed to bolster resilience against future shocks, while bolstering inclusive growth and sustainable development.

G. Climate change and natural disasters¹²

35. Climate change and natural disasters are destroying livelihoods, driving displacement, widening inequalities and undermining sustainable development. In particular, climate change increases mortality, poverty and food insecurity. Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress. Unless it is curbed, climate change will drive up to 130 million people into poverty over the next 10 years, reversing development gains. A global surface temperature rise is threatening the production of food, decreasing harvests, increasing food prices and leaving millions of people who depend on agriculture hungry nightly.

36. There is a vicious cycle between climate change and poverty. While climate change increases poverty, poverty also makes people highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In addition, developed countries are more responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, but the costs of climate change are disproportionately faced by poorer countries. Seventy-four of the world's poorest countries suffer the most from climate change, having been hit by nearly eight times as many natural disasters over the past decade as compared with the 1980s. Yet they account for less than one tenth of global greenhouse gas emissions.

37. In general, countries with low human development, violent conflict and high levels of climate-sensitive livelihoods are the most vulnerable to climatic hazards. They are located mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, Southern and South-Eastern Asia, Central and South America, small island developing States and the Himalayan region.

¹² The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: Akihiko Nishio, "When poverty meets climate change: A critical challenge that demands cross-cutting solutions", World Bank Blogs, 5 November 2021, available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/climatechange/when-poverty-meets-climate-change-critical-challenge-demands-cross-cutting-solutions>; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability – Summary for Policymakers* (Geneva, 2022); E/2022/55; Moumita Ghorai and Heriberto Tapia, "Climate change, food insecurity, and poverty: a turning point?", paper presented at the Inter-Agency Expert Group Meeting on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

Between 2010 and 2020, mortality from floods, droughts and storms was 15 times higher in these regions than in regions with very low vulnerability.

38. Efforts to curb climate change should be a priority, in order to save lives and reduce poverty and inequality. Such efforts concern not only mitigation and adaptation but also global solidarity with the most climate-vulnerable people, communities and countries, in support of a just energy transition. They also include investing in the green and blue economy.

IV. Financing poverty eradication efforts¹³

39. The crippling cost of debt financing for many developing countries and the exclusion of many vulnerable middle-income countries, including small island developing States, have undermined their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, despite the added fiscal constraints posed by the ongoing pandemic, the escalating climate emergency and the impacts of the war in Ukraine, the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, which offered debt relief to International Development Association-eligible countries, expired in 2021, while its successor, the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, has not been effective in providing large-scale relief and has only been taken up by three countries to date. Consequently, many of these countries are confronted with cutbacks in development and social spending and have limited ability to respond to current crises, let alone respond to further shocks. Unlike developed countries that supported their pandemic recovery with record sums borrowed at very low interest rates, the fiscal space of the least developed countries was especially undermined by high debt servicing costs, preventing them from investing in sustainable development.

40. Least developed countries spend 14 per cent of their revenue on interest on their debt while developed countries spend only 3.5 per cent, even though least developed countries have a much lower level of debt. Around 60 per cent of least developed countries and other low-income countries are at a high risk of or already in debt distress, compared with 30 per cent in 2015. Meanwhile, many developing countries cannot access low-cost, concessional finance to fund recovery efforts, while pledges from developed countries to rechannel special drawing rights to countries in need remain largely unfulfilled. This great finance divide is leaving developing countries unable to respond to and recover from the crises.

41. The cost of energy, food and other commodities has been increasing, further undermining the ability of countries to invest in sustainable development. The decline in tax revenues further compounds the situation, particularly in the poorest countries and in small island developing States.

42. Official development assistance (ODA) increased to \$178.9 billion in 2021, rising by 4.4 per cent in real terms from 2020. The increase was mostly due to support provided by donors to developing countries for COVID-19 vaccines. ODA amounted to 0.33 per cent of the gross national income of donor countries in 2021, which was the same as in 2020 and below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent. Net bilateral ODA flows from Development Assistance Committee countries to least developed

¹³ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022*; United Nations, Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development, “UN: ‘Great finance divide’ amid COVID-19 poses major setback for sustainable development”, press release, 12 April 2022, available at <https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2022-pressrelease>; and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), “ODA levels in 2021: preliminary data – detailed summary note”, 12 April 2022, available at <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/ODA-2021-summary.pdf>.

countries increased in real terms by 2.5 per cent, to \$33 billion, in 2021 compared with 2020. Those to Africa increased by 3.4 per cent, to \$35 billion. However, in recent months, several countries have announced cuts to ODA spending or diversions away from spending on cross-border international aid efforts to support donor refugee costs in the country, in response to the war in Ukraine. ODA needs to be scaled up and the commitments fulfilled, in addition to (rather than instead of) support to refugees in receiving countries, since the financing gap for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has also increased.

43. Other sources of financing, such as foreign direct investment, rebounded strongly, by 77 per cent, in 2021, after falling by 30 per cent in 2020. However, close to three quarters of the increase was in developed countries, while developing economies experienced an increase of 30 per cent and the least developed countries an increase of 19 per cent. Remittances dropped by 1.7 per cent in 2020 but were projected to increase by 7.3 per cent in 2021.

V. Inclusive policies to build back better¹⁴

44. The conflict in Ukraine imperils the world's socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which was under way. The conflict has led to many challenges that policymakers must tackle, including a humanitarian crisis, an economic crisis and a social crisis. Food and energy insecurity, fragility, extreme poverty and lack of progress towards development goals come on top of a climate crisis. At least 40 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty by the current global spike in food and energy prices. Food insecurity and fragile contexts are concentrated in Africa. As with the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the conflict in Ukraine necessitates urgent measures to minimize the social and economic consequences.

45. To promote inclusive recovery from the adverse impacts of COVID-19 and the conflict in Ukraine, Governments should build on pandemic responses to provide assistance, including cash transfers, fuel and food price subsidies, and consumption tax cuts on necessary items for those most vulnerable to rising food and energy inflation, given that inflation erodes real income, savings and purchasing power, which negatively affects low-income households in particular, worsening inequality. More broadly, countries should strengthen social safety nets to attenuate the impact of rising food and energy prices on the poor.

46. Fiscal positions, which had already deteriorated in many economies during the pandemic, need to be strong in order to provide socioeconomic assistance to vulnerable populations. Countries should urgently explore viable fiscal and financing policy options to boost fiscal space and maintain public debt sustainability. Countries could, for instance, ameliorate tax administration to reduce loopholes, improve their capacity to tax the digital economy, establish a more progressive tax system and enhance public spending efficiency.

47. The international community should strive to avoid a food crisis by ensuring that food is distributed to consumers at affordable prices, in particular in low-income and emerging-market economies. More international aid and cooperation in the distribution of food to countries in need may be required to avoid repeating the flaws in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, which has led to a global vaccine inequity – a

¹⁴ The information presented herein has been drawn from the following sources: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Inter-Agency EGM on the Implementation of the Third UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027)", available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2022egms/3undecadepoverty.html>; and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "The war in Ukraine: impacts, exposure and policy issues in Asia and the Pacific", policy brief, May 2022.

health hazard for all. To support recovery efforts, the United Nations, together with several champion Member States, also launched the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance in March 2022 to address the impacts of the war in Ukraine on food, energy and finance.

48. Beyond these short-term measures, some medium- to long-term measures should be taken simultaneously. Countries need to diversify their sources of food imports, including through regional agreements, in order to be resilient to food shocks (price spikes and shortages). They should also boost food self-sufficiency by enhancing agricultural productivity, reducing food waste and leveraging regional cooperation on matters such as food stockpiles.

49. Energy security and climate change mitigation are intertwined. Recovery from the pandemic and the conflict provides a crucial opportunity to fight climate change and protect the environment. If countries accelerate the transition towards greener energy, they can not only reduce their dependence on imported fossil fuels but also support commitments to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

50. ODA and support for debt relief must be targeted and scaled up, especially for the least developed countries. For instance, the financing gap for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator should be closed. Multilateral development partners, including the United Nations, should support affected economies by providing affordable financial assistance through, for instance, the rechannelling of unused special drawing rights, technical assistance and debt relief.

51. In addition to investing in emergency measures, countries should continue or increase investment in basic needs such as health and education. They should increase investment in decent and green employment and in infrastructure, including digitalization, data collection and trade routes, in order to reduce extreme poverty and make sustained progress towards the achievement of development goals.

VI. United Nations system action to build forward together and accelerate the implementation of the system-wide plan of action¹⁵

52. This section presents the progress made by the United Nations system in implementing the system-wide plan of action, which is focused on issues on which strengthened operational and policy integration could yield improved support to Member States in relation to their priorities and their capacity to pursue institutional and policy coherence.

53. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to produce action-oriented policy briefs providing timely analysis and policy advice to Member States, with a view to supporting better recovery strategies that also contribute to many of the priorities of the system-wide plan of action. The Department also continued to support the Commission for Social Development, including by holding a high-level panel discussion on its priority theme, “Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda” in February 2022.

¹⁵ For detailed interventions by the United Nations system and further information on the plan of action, see www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/united-nations-decade-for-the-eradication-of-poverty/swap3rd.html.

A. Supporting structural transformation, productive employment and decent work

54. The International Labour Organization (ILO) supported 34 member countries in the ratification of all eight conventions on fundamental principles and rights at work.

55. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) provided support to least developed countries on their paths towards industrialization and technology-enabled structural transformation. The UNIDO country programme is a strategic instrument that provides a practical guide for UNIDO interventions in countries. The Programme for Country Partnership is the Organization's innovative model for accelerating inclusive and sustainable industrial development and thereby eradicating poverty. In 2021, UNIDO helped implement or formulate country programmes in 35 countries and Programmes for Country Partnership in 12 countries. As the lead implementing agency for the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (2016–2025), UNIDO, together with more than 30 United Nations agencies, coordinated the acceleration of the Decade's implementation through various projects and programmes.

56. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and ILO developed an applied policy tool to assess the gendered employment impacts of COVID-19 and support a gender-responsive recovery. In 2021, the policy tool was implemented in Argentina, Jordan, Morocco and Nepal. To promote women's entrepreneurship in the current global scenario, UN-Women continued to promote decent work and poverty eradication. Between 2018 and 2021, UN-Women supported 1,008 Governments, companies and international organizations in developing or implementing gender-responsive procurement policies.

57. The joint "Working for Health" programme of the World Health Organization (WHO), ILO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has contributed to the implementation of universal health coverage and Sustainable Development Goals 3, 4, 5 and 8 by engaging multisectoral partners and stakeholders on interventions to expand and transform health workforce education, skills and jobs. Through the Working for Health action plan and multi-partner trust fund, support on multisectoral evidence-based policy and investment decision-making was provided to 34 countries as well as two regional economic areas.

B. Expanding social protection systems to underpin inclusive poverty-reducing development

58. ILO is proactively working to steer consensus on social protection concepts within the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board and the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to promote alignment between multilateral institutions with regard to the need to respect ILO standards. ILO has also engaged with the international financial institutions to assess national social protection needs and priorities and options for extending the fiscal space for social protection based on the principles established in ILO social security standards. In September 2021, ILO, together with the Secretary-General, also launched the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for a Just Transition to promote a job-rich recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as just ecological, technological and societal transitions to more sustainable and inclusive economies and societies. The Global Accelerator aims to expand social protection to the 4 billion people who currently remain unprotected, and to create at least 400 million new decent jobs in the care, green and digital economies, in support of a just transition for all. As envisioned in the report of the Secretary-General on Our

Common Agenda ([A/75/982](#)), the Global Accelerator is also supported by an inter-agency task team aimed at promoting collaboration as one United Nations and delivering concrete results on the ground.

59. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) worked actively with other development agencies to distil lessons from the response to COVID-19. FAO partnered with ILO, the World Bank and the European Union to identify approaches for extending social protection to rural populations, leveraging social protection systems to foster economic inclusion of the rural poor and strengthening the preparedness and shock responsiveness of social protection systems. FAO also trained government officials from countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America on the development of social protection systems that foster inclusive climate action and are tailored to the needs and specificities of rural populations.

60. UN-Women has taken a global leadership role in promoting gender-responsive social protection systems, given the little attention paid to gender in national social protection measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. UN-Women provides technical support to United Nations country teams by delivering training on gender and social protection in the context of COVID-19, sharing knowledge and good practices and participating in the production of articles for scientific journals.

61. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has worked alongside Governments in over 115 countries to develop social protection systems that are inclusive and shock-responsive. UNICEF-supported cash transfers reached nearly 133 million children in 2021, including over 19 million children in humanitarian settings and over 1 million children with disabilities.

62. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has revamped its Social Protection Toolbox into an online one-stop-shop platform on social protection that will host intergovernmental information, knowledge and information products, capacity development resources and the Social Protection Simulator. Through the system-wide plan of action, ESCAP has also supported and collaborated with resident coordinators, country teams and its member States to further the social protection agenda.

63. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has continued to maintain and improve the Observatory on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean by providing detailed data on social protection initiatives implemented by the countries of the region and in coordination with the COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC has provided technical assistance to several countries on issues related to social protection.

64. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to advocate universal social protection, including nationally-determined floors, as a policy platform to promote policy integration and synergy for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It collaborated with the ILO to support developing countries in improving national social protection systems.

C. Human capability development: addressing non-income forms of poverty

65. ECLAC has continued to work in an internal technical group on multidimensional poverty indices to develop regionally comparable estimates for Latin America. ESCAP provided technical assistance to several member States in setting up one-stop portals and hubs to address gender gaps in accessing information and services concerning starting, registering and growing businesses. It also conducted a range of activities to support its members and associate members in

developing disability-inclusive COVID-19 responses. The United Nations Development Programme, together with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, conducted a massive open online course on designing a multidimensional poverty index.

66. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia is in the process of launching an online Multidimensional Poverty Index Assist Tool as a state-of-the-art user-friendly platform. In collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, it procured technical work on knowledge production related to multidimensional and money-metric poverty measurement, projection and policy responses.

67. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) supports the regional exchange of experiences and good practices in promoting access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing as countries seek to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. ECE has been promoting the mobilization of resources to be invested in road safety in the communities and regions of the world with the greatest road crash tolls. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) supported 24 countries in developing national policies and strategies on media and information literacy and 395 youth organizations worldwide in integrating media and information literacy into their policies and operations. In 2020, it developed a low-cost innovative tool for teaching skills related to artificial intelligence, robotics and 3D printing to primary-, secondary- and tertiary-level students.

68. UNICEF conducted several studies on the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic on children. In 2021, its support made it possible to provide education to 48.6 million out-of-school children, half of them girls, bringing the total number to 126 million since 2018. In 2021, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation trust funds were used to support 20 countries in rehabilitating health centres, procuring medical equipment and supplies, training health workers or expanding social protection to vulnerable households. The Office partnered with the International Telecommunication Union to implement a COVID-19 digital innovation challenge on identifying scalable and innovative digital solutions from the global South.

69. Through its human capital development portfolio, the World Food Programme has provided digital and soft-skills training to more than 13,500 young refugees and vulnerable youth globally. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development played an active role in the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance to ensure high-level political leadership for effectively addressing the consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

D. Future of food and sustainable agriculture

70. ECLAC and the World Food Programme (WFP) continued the implementation of studies on the Cost of the Double Burden of Malnutrition in countries of the region, providing technical cooperation and policy advice to fight hunger and poverty. FAO convened and supported the Ad-hoc Working Group on Territorial Governance, which shared information and drafted inputs on territorial governance. The Capacity Building in Rural Finance Partnership, a collaboration between FAO, the German Agency for International Cooperation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Capital Development Fund, WFP and the World Bank, successfully concluded in 2021, having trained over 996 professionals and practitioners and developed 12 knowledge products in the past four years.

71. Having launched its food and agricultural commodities systems practice in 2020, the United Nations Development Programme now carries out work on such

systems in 140 countries and close to 500 landscapes, representing over \$1.2 billion in grants. Through its Climate Promise, the Programme, in partnership with 35 United Nations entities and global organizations, supported countries in increasing their emissions reduction and adaptation targets and measures related to agriculture and land use. The Programme is supporting the Global Crisis Response Group through data gathering and analysis.

72. ECE is supporting the five Central Asian nations – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – along with Azerbaijan and Afghanistan in strengthening sustainable regional trade. UNESCO has developed dedicated actions aimed at improving and promoting the management of traditional foodways, ecosystem services, biodiversity and integrated water resources. UNESCO is leading the UN-Water campaign and is active in ensuring that groundwater is recognized as essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal targets.

73. The flagship initiative of UN-Women on climate-resilient agriculture has developed most notably in West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa, with a few country programmes in other regions. Together with FAO, IFAD and WFP, UN-Women implemented the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women, a global initiative with the overarching goal of securing rural women's livelihoods, rights and resilience in the context of sustainable development. WFP developed a new policy on local and regional food procurement at the end of 2019 to ensure reliable supplies of food for the operations it assists.

74. In 2021, WFP implemented school feeding and other school health and nutrition activities in 75 countries. WFP was at the forefront of treating and preventing malnutrition in 2021, reaching 11.3 million children under 5 through programmes to prevent and treat malnutrition, 5.3 million pregnant and nursing women through malnutrition treatment and prevention programmes and over 51 million people through activities concerning social behaviour change communication.

E. Reducing inequalities

75. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and other partners continue to advocate for equitable access to health technologies under the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool mechanism (C-TAP). This advocacy resulted in a licensing agreement between the High Council of Scientific Research of Spain and the Medicines Patent Pool on sharing knowledge, technology and intellectual property rights in the fight against COVID-19, which represents a huge step towards ending the inequalities that have prolonged the AIDS and COVID-19 pandemics.

76. UNESCO continued expanding the Interactive Atlas of Girls' and Women's Right to Education (Her Atlas), which is a reference monitoring and advocacy tool containing data and analysis regarding legislative protections to advance girls' and women's education, now covering 196 countries. In 2021, seven countries were supported in reviewing their legal, policy and planning frameworks in order to guarantee gender equality and prohibit discriminatory practices in education, in the light of analysis by UNESCO.

77. In 2021, UNESCO continued to expand the global understanding of the gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closures by ensuring sex-disaggregated monitoring of COVID-19 school closures and publishing *When Schools Shut: Gendered Impacts of COVID-19 School Closure*, the first global study on the gendered impacts of school closures, drawing on a review of published research, a large-scale survey of organizations working globally on gender equality in education, and in-depth data collection in Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali and Pakistan.

78. UNIDO helps boost industrial modernization, digital transformation and innovation by building the capacities of local industries and small and medium-sized enterprises, including in the agrifood sector, to generate higher value-added and enable them to compete in global value chains. Efforts have been made to reduce inequalities in marginalized communities through, inter alia, inclusive policy dialogues involving women, girls and youth at all levels.

79. In 2021, WHO, FAO and IFAD led the production of a policy brief focused on tackling rural inequalities in public service coverage. WHO has contributed to the launch by Oxford University and FAO of a rural multidimensional poverty index, and WHO recently partnered with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative to publish a scientific journal article on a new measure of socioeconomic deprivation status to monitor health inequality.

F. Addressing climate change and the intensification of natural hazards

80. The United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme continued to collaborate on the Poverty-Environment Action for Sustainable Development Goals (2018–2022) initiative, which is aimed at mainstreaming environmental sustainability and climate objectives for poverty eradication into development planning, budgeting and monitoring systems, public and private finance, and investment. Eight countries are being supported through the joint initiative. Support is also being provided for two additional technical assistance projects at the country level and four at the regional level.

81. In 2021, WFP worked with governments and humanitarian partners on the front line of the global climate crisis, responding to an increasing number of climate-related disasters and taking pre-emptive actions to enable vulnerable communities to be prepared for, respond to and, therefore, limit climate change-related impacts and damage. 1.5 million people were covered by the Programme's anticipatory action plans, which link extreme weather forecasts to prearranged financing and the delivery of predefined anticipatory actions to prevent climate-related shocks from becoming humanitarian crises. In this context, the work of WFP on anticipatory action currently supports capacity-building in relation to early warning systems and also the development of anticipatory action plans in 19 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2021, WFP protected over 2.7 million food insecure people in 18 countries through climate risk insurance, which brought it closer to reaching its target of protecting 4 million people by 2026. In 2022, WFP will continue to scale up sovereign climate risk insurance by investing over \$6.5 million globally in order to assist 1.5 million people.

82. WHO supports countries in building climate-resilient health systems and tracking national progress in protecting health from climate change, as well as in assessing the health gains that would result from the implementation of the existing nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, and the potential for larger gains from more ambitious climate action. In this context, WHO implements a broad range of advocacy and partnership activities; provides technical support to member States; coordinates reviews of the scientific evidence on the links between climate change and health and helps to shape a global research agenda; and builds technical and institutional capacity in relation to climate change and human health.

G. Fighting poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts

83. FAO collaborates with the European Union and WFP to better understand food crises, strengthen the quality of data and analysis, and leverage strategic investments and social protection systems to anticipate and manage food crises. In the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, FAO is implementing a rapid response plan focused on addressing the basic needs of affected populations in the short term and supporting agricultural livelihood rehabilitation in the medium term. The International Organization for Migration is coordinating United Nations system-wide efforts to advance the achievement of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

84. While lockdowns and travel restrictions were in place, UNAIDS encouraged and supported community resilience in terms of identifying and working with measures necessary in the face of emerging pandemics. UNAIDS provided about \$0.23 million in initial support to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to maintain services, improve coordination and ensure that people living with HIV in Ukraine and neighbouring countries are identified and linked to HIV services. In 2021, the United Nations Development Programme worked in 28 countries to ensure that 1.4 million women gained access to jobs and improved livelihoods in crisis or post-crisis settings.

85. UNESCO is supporting the right to education of all Ukrainian citizens by supporting online learning in and outside Ukraine and the integration of refugee students and teachers into the education systems of host countries. UNESCO has designed a media development project intended to support Ukrainian refugees in five neighbouring countries. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) continues to contribute to tackling poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts, including through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, which serves as the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination relating to humanitarian assistance.

86. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in collaboration with United Nations organizations and partners, works on enhancing poverty measurement for both refugees and host communities, in accordance with the multi-dimensional approach at the centre of the plan of action of the Third United Nations Decade. To make data, including poverty measurements, on forcibly displaced and stateless populations accessible to researchers and practitioners, UNHCR disseminates anonymized and documented microdata sets in the Microdata Library.

VII. Conclusion and recommendations

87. **The growing negative social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine and climate change call for policies focusing on integrated, inclusive and sustainable measures that leave no one behind for a rapid, better and sustainable recovery. The General Assembly and Member States may wish to consider the following recommendations:**

(a) **Implement inclusive economic policies that promote sustainable growth to reduce poverty and inequality. Such policies include promoting economic diversification, industrialization and the structural transformation of the economy, and investing in sustainable green economies and oceans economies;**

(b) **Build stronger health systems, aiming at achieving universal health coverage and health security, by investing in health infrastructure, with**

particular attention paid to emergency preparedness. Countries can build resilience by investing in primary health care as the foundation for addressing essential health needs, while protecting the population from emergencies;

(c) Increase investment in human capital in order to strengthen their wage-based comparative advantages and strengthen their positions as major hubs of the global value chain. Policies include investing in inclusive social protection, quality education and training, including digital skills training, and decent job creation, by allocating sufficient national budget resources for the education sector, especially for young people, women and persons with disabilities;

(d) Develop labour market and employment policies and regulation for decent and productive employment, especially in the green, care and digital economies, in order to support hard-hit groups and sectors, including women, youth, persons with disabilities and those in the informal economy;

(e) Build or strengthen nationally appropriate universal social protection systems, including floors, that provide adequate social protection for all, throughout their life cycle, including workers in all types of employment and those in vulnerable situations, through a combination of contributory and non-contributory schemes, and close coverage and adequacy gaps, especially for women and workers in informal and precarious work. It will be essential for the international community to support low-income countries in building their social protection systems;

(f) Combat climate change in order to save lives and reduce poverty and inequality. The international community must foster global solidarity with the most climate-vulnerable communities and countries. Countries with the highest greenhouse gas emissions should take responsibility for mitigating the causes of climate change by honouring their commitments under the Paris Agreement to drastically cut such emissions. Enhancing adaptation capacities in developing countries and across the most vulnerable regions within countries will be critical;

(g) Increase investment in building gender- and disability-sensitive infrastructure, including information and communications technology infrastructure, and in ensuring reliable and disaggregated data, in order to ensure that no one is left behind;

(h) Strengthen multilateral cooperation for universal progress and resilience by providing affordable development assistance and debt relief to countries most affected by crises, especially low-income countries.