

Webinar

Ensuring Resilience, Accelerating Progress – Examining the Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals

Date: 10 June 2020
10:00 am (Republic of Korea), 7:00 am (Bangladesh), 1:00 pm (Fiji)
9:00 pm (9 June - New York)

Registration: <https://bit.ly/2XLwuSF>

Concept Note

“We need to turn the recovery into a real opportunity to do things right for the future.”
– *United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres*

Background information:

The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the United Nations while the world enters an unprecedented global crisis with severe impacts across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. With ten years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda in this *Decade of Action*, the COVID-19 pandemic compels a dual focus on ensuring a resilient recovery and accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Today, more than ever, a focus must be placed on realizing synergies and investing in a recovery that will ‘build back better’. Member States must take stock of the impacts that the current global pandemic is having across the SDGs, particularly from national to local levels, and adopt disaster risk reduction strategies¹ that address all hazards - including biological, with integrated risk governance systems. The Covid-19 pandemic is evidence that risk is systemic. In addition, further discussion is needed to identify the differentiated impacts the pandemic is having on the most vulnerable populations by exacerbating poverty, hunger, malnutrition, inequalities, exclusion, violence, and discrimination.

Current [ministerial](#) preparations for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) reaffirm the 2030 Agenda’s role as our ‘*first line of defence against COVID-19*’. The impacts from the pandemic are fast evolving and cut across the SDGs, underscoring the need for an “*SDG-sensitive response to COVID-19 and rebuilding better to deliver on the Decade of Action*”.²

¹ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction global Target E, shared with SDGs 1, 11 and 13, calls to substantially increase the number of countries with disaster risk reduction strategies. The Sendai Framework was the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda and provides Member States with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of disaster, including biological hazard such as pandemic and epidemic.
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

²The current preparations for the 2020 HLPF Ministerial Declaration note a focus on “Recovering better, transformative pathway with strong institutions, decoupling growth from environmental degradation, integrated approach and leveraging interlinkages and synergies of SDGs, and minimize tradeoffs among the SDGs.”

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26114HLPF_declaration_Remarks_26_April_2020.pdf

The urgency for action is now two-fold: to protect development gains and to accelerate action to achieve the SDGs by 2030.³ We need to take accelerated action for SDG targets on human well-being, as well as biodiversity, disaster risk reduction, and climate change, through coherent, coordinated and risk-informed responses. Furthermore, 2020 is expected to be one of the warmest years on record, underscoring the continued challenges that climate change brings in combination with the global pandemic, the [UN Secretary-General announced six climate actions](#) to shape a more resilient recovery from COVID-19, which should guide recovery efforts.⁴

We should seize the opportunity to “build back better” by creating more sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies. With this in mind, the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) through its Global Education and Training Institute are organizing a webinar to engage national SDG focal points and coordinating agencies, along with national focal points of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in a dialogue on how national governments are assessing the impact of the pandemic on key SDGs.

The UN has recognized country responses that are combining the pandemic response and recovery efforts that simultaneously address climate change like that of the Republic of Korea. These national responses are showing that combating the novel coronavirus can be coupled with an environmentally friendly, socially inclusive economic recovery.

Objective and Content

The webinar will examine how national responses are reducing the impacts of COVID-19, especially socio-economic impacts, to sustain the gains realized on the 2030 Agenda. It will also showcase how national responses can achieve synergies to accelerate a resilient recovery for the SDGs in the Decade of Action.

The webinar will discuss the road ahead to 2030 and how current government responses can integrate disaster risk reduction measures that respond to double or triple challenges many now face as a result of climate change and COVID-19 socio-economic impacts.

Target Audience

This webinar aims to engage national SDG focal point institutions across the UN Member States, as well as national government focal points of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The webinar will also be open to government representatives and non-government experts working in the areas of SDG implementation, resilience, and climate change to ensure a coherent and integrated discussion on the SDGs and the Decade of Action.

Moderator and Speakers

- Moderator: Mr. Sanjaya Bhatia, Head, UNDRR Office for Northeast Asia (ONEA) and Global Education and Training Institute (GETI)
- Opening Speaker: Mr. Jean D’Aragon, Officer in Charge, UN Office for Sustainable Development, UN DESA – *Introducing the Webinar and Current trends on Pandemic’s Impact on the SDGs*
- Mr. Moon Tae Hoon, Chairman, National Council for Sustainable Development, Republic of Korea - *Lessons learned in assessing the Pandemic impacts on the SDGs and in combining SDGs and COVID-19 responses for resilient recovery and ‘Green New Deal.’*

³ https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/qcpr/DCO_report-24-April-2020.pdf

⁴ Six Climate Actions to Build Back Better from the Secretary-General: First, financing in recovery should focus on jobs and businesses through clean, green transition. Second, where taxpayers’ money to rescue businesses, should achieve green jobs and sustainable growth. Third, fiscal firepower must drive a shift to green economy, empowering resilience. Fourth, public funds should invest in sustainable sectors and climate projects. Fossil fuel subsidies must end, and polluter pay principle activated. Fifth, climate risks and opportunities are integrated into financial system, public policy making and infrastructure. Sixth, this should be done by working together. <https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/un-urges-countries-%E2%80%98%E2%80%98build-back-better%E2%80%99>

- Ms. Mia Seppo, UN Resident Coordinator, Bangladesh – *Coordinating UN country responses to accelerate recovery and SDG progress in the Decade of Action*
- Mr. David Smith, Co-Author, United Nations Global Sustainable Development Report 2019 and Professor, University of the West Indies - *On resilience of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda in the context of the pandemic and lessons for SIDS and countries in special situations*

Key Questions

- What have the impacts been thus far across the Sustainable Development Goals and how can these be mitigated through more risk-informed national responses?
- How can government responses integrate risk-reduction measures and preparedness that respond to double or triple challenges many now face as a result of climate change and COVID-19 socio-economic impacts?
- How does the Sendai Framework for DRR play a role in mitigating the impacts of future Pandemics so that we can continue advancing with the 2030 Agenda?
- What are the lessons learned thus far in achieving synergies where national responses combat the pandemic's impacts while also accelerating progress to still achieve the 2030 Agenda?

Organizers

The United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Global Education and Training Institute (GETI)

Agenda

The webinar will last for 1 hour:

- Opening – UNOSD and UNDRR (5 mins)
- Presentations (30 mins)
 - Mr. Moon Tae Hoon, Chairman, Republic of Korea
 - Ms. Mia Seppo, UN Resident Coordinator, Bangladesh
 - Mr. David Smith, Co-Author, United Nations Global Sustainable Development Report 2019 and Professor, University of the West Indies
- Q&A (20 mins)
- final reflections – UNOSD
- Wrap up – Moderator

For more information

Ana Cristina Thorlund, UNDRR Office for Northeast Asia and Global Education and Training Institute (UNDRR ONEA & GETI) at undrr-incheon@un.org and Sara Castro Hallgren, sara.castrohallgren@un.org at UNOSD, UN DESA



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Metropolitan City

Speakers Biography



Mr. Tae Hoon Moon
Chairman
National Council for Sustainable
Development, Republic of Korea

Tae Hoon Moon has been serving as a steering committee member of the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development and now the Chairman of the National Council for Sustainable Development for the Republic of Korea. He also serves as the President of the Korea Environment Policy and Administration Society and the Co-Chairperson of the Council for Sustainable Development in the Gyeonggi-Do province.

His major areas of research include environmental policy, sustainable development, urban growth management, and system dynamics. He is currently a Professor, Department of Urban Planning & Real Estate at Chung Ang University, Korea. He obtained his Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany.



Ms. Mia Seppo
United Nations
Resident Coordinator,
Bangladesh

Mia Seppo joined the United Nations Country Team in Bangladesh as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in October 2017. With broad expertise and experience including in post-conflict and peace keeping contexts, with managing support for complex elections and in humanitarian crises and responses, Mia has served the majority of her career in senior managerial roles within the UN - working in Tajikistan, Sierra Leone and Malawi as well as in UN HQ in New York with the UNDP Regional Bureaus for Africa and for Europe & CIS. Mia launched her UN career in 1996 with a focus on governance and human rights issues. Prior to joining the UN, Mia worked for civil society and think tanks, including the Finnish Committee for European Security. Mia is a Finnish national and holds a master's degree in Social Sciences from the University of Helsinki, Finland.



Mr. David Smith
United Nations Global
Sustainable Development Report
2019, Jamaica
Co-author and Member of the
International Panel of Scientists

Director, Centre for Environmental
Management,
Coordinator, Institute for
Sustainable Development

David Smith (Jamaica) is Coordinator of the Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of the West Indies (UWI) and Director of the Centre for Environmental Management, and the Caribbean Chair for the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The institute focuses on research in Sustainable Development Governance and Policy, Disaster Management and Environmental Management. Dr Smith was an expert reviewer for the IPCC Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events (SREX). He served on the Board of the Caribbean Conservation Association for five years and was President in 1995. From 1994 to 2000 he was a Regional Councilor of IUCN-The World Conservation Union and the Chair of the Business Committee of IUCN's Council as well as a member of the steering committees of the IUCN commissions on Species Survival, Protected Areas, and Communications and Education. He oversaw the development of the Jamaican Protected Areas System Plan and contributed to the National Forestry Management Plan. He has consulted on small business management and the design of environmental financing mechanisms in Jamaica, Uganda, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.



Mr. Jean D'Aragnon
Officer-in-charge

United Nations Office for
Sustainable Development

Jean D'Aragnon has 20 years of international development experience in research, policy capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation related to sustainable development in America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. He worked at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya and the UN DESA United Nations Centre for Regional Development in Nagoya, Japan on climate change, natural disaster risk and vulnerability reduction, urban planning and governance. Jean has also been called upon to undertake assignments as Early Recovery Advisor and Early Recovery National Coordinator with the same and other UN agencies such as UNDP, in various geographical contexts, including disaster-hit regions of the Philippines and Vanuatu or in Cameroon, where he developed and coordinated programmes combining food security and poverty reduction with youth job creation and empowerment, particularly in the Far North Region of Cameroon, which is severely affected by Boko Haram's insurgency, not to mention land use agro-pastoral conflicts, which are exacerbated by increases in drought and flooding associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Prior to joining the UN, Jean worked as the Senior Programme Officer at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC - Canada), leading research on the interlinkages between urban poverty reduction, livelihood and food security, environmental protection and resilience building, supporting their integration into territorial planning policies, codes, regulations, plans, and he also taught and lectured in different universities in Brazil, Portugal, France and in Canada, particularly at McGill University, where he has earned his Ph.D.



Mr. Sanjaya Bhatia
Head
UNDRR Office for Northeast Asia
and Global Education and
Training Institute
(UNDRR ONEA &GETI)

Sanjaya Bhatia is the Head of the Office of UNDRR Office for Northeast Asia (ONEA) and Global Education and Training Institute (GETI) for Disaster Risk Reduction in Incheon, Republic of Korea, where over the past two years he has guided the training of over 2000 government officials. Before taking this position Sanjaya Bhatia worked as a head of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) - Secretariat at Kobe, Japan where he led the development of the Guidance Notes on Recovery and supervised a capacity building program for national and local governments, along with other knowledge management functions. He trained over 850 government officials in that period. Earlier as the Focal Point Disaster Resilient Schools and Hospitals with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) of the World Bank he was instrumental in development of the "Guidance Notes on Safer School Construction" and the "Guidance Notes on Integrating DRR in Health Sector Projects" and financing of projects on safe schools and hospitals. He has worked with the Government of India, the World Bank, and the United Nations in the field of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation for over 25 years.