

Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020-Policy Analysis and Recommendations

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Executive Summary

A significant threat has been posed by the recent outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic to the well-being and healthy lives of billions of people worldwide. The pandemic has caused economies to lockdown, and cross border trade has died. Although the world is opening up, an unprecedented state of vulnerability is being entered, coined as the 'new normal.' The industries have been hit badly, causing inequality in the health system and a rise in poverty. There have been massive job losses, and government interventions do not seem enough. With this, it is essential to reflect on past learning and revisit the fundamental assumptions to start drafting the way towards creating a sustainable world. Despite the considerable damage caused to human livelihoods and lives, the coronavirus pandemic provides an opportunity for the human race to act in solidarity and turn the crisis into an incentive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) listed by the United Nations (UN) by reassessing the relationship of the health system, nature, policies, and economies. It is necessary to learn from the situation and collect knowledge to fight against the present and future challenges and other SDGs. It cannot be denied that the outlook for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Sustainable Development Goals is on the negative. However, the goals can be achieved by committed efforts to address the spillover effects. In this report, the seventeen relevant development goals and the related topic that need focus have been highlighted along with an analysis of the challenges in the face of Covid-19. The effectiveness of the policy environment matters, and it must be incentivized for the overarching SDG objectives. If various policy actors' functions are discharged by them within their jurisdiction maximally and optimally, including policies that can tackle future pandemics. The document is closed with a set of recommendations that justifies existing policies and add suggestions for betterment of the practice and concept of sustainability such that no sector or no one is left behind. The recommendations are innovative, and the suggestions reevaluate the way business is done the inclusiveness of innovations and the nature of expenditure of living. The need for intense government interventions is high for vulnerable sections of society. Financially, customers require more flexibility and moratorium options for both unsecured and secured debt. In addition to tax waivers, budgetary expenditures on education have to increase. The report focuses on SDGs and how to realize them to be more prosperous, culminating in a sustainable and peaceful society.

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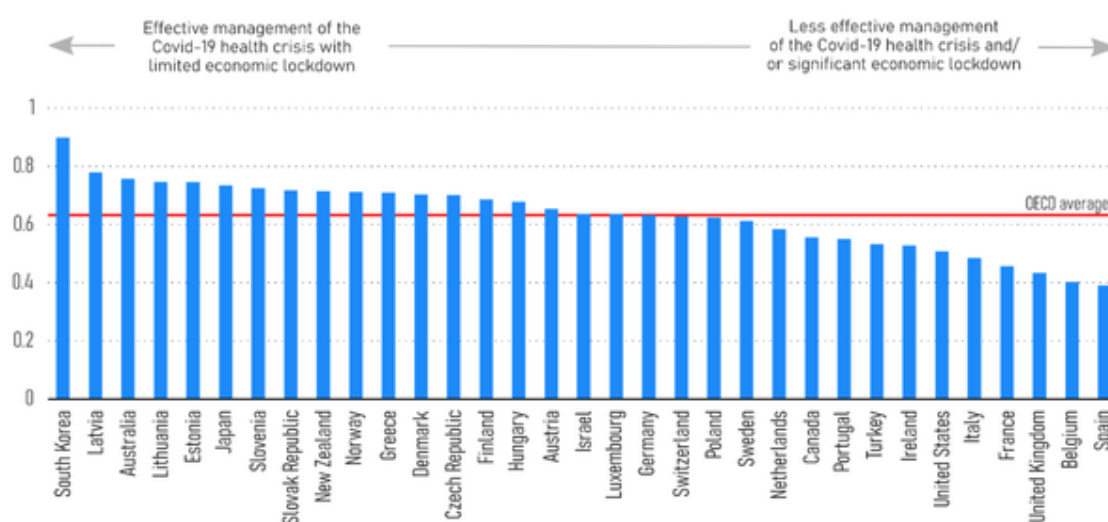
I. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus-caused infectious disease (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020. It has affected about 213 countries, with more than 31.9 million confirmed cases and 976 thousand deaths globally as of September '20. Overcoming a global pandemic that shares the facets of uncertainty, evaluative, and complexity will require sustained and concerted contributions from various disciplines worldwide. There have been changes in many aspects of our lives due to the Covid-19 pandemic in areas such as business models, information behavior, data privacy, and cybersecurity. There is an opportunity to build on the collective knowledge being created to combating the COVID-19 pandemic and swift responses being developed to tackle challenges. While the world deals with the coronavirus, the Sustainable Development Goals need to be grouped under two aggregated dimensions- 'adjusting to a new normal' and 'fighting against a pandemic.' Further, they can be identified with six themes- 'tackling the infodemic,' 'expanding digital surveillance,' 'orchestrating data ecosystems,' 'developing digital workplace,' 'adapting information behaviors,' and 'maintaining social distancing.' The report urges the community to participate actively and invest more time and effort in tackling SDG, which would, in turn, build capabilities in sustainability.

2020 marks the beginning of the decade of Action to fulfill the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. It is a crucial time to accelerate responses and advance a shared vision to the world's most serious challenges- from reversing climate change to eliminating hunger and poverty. However, just in a short period,

the unstoppable spread of novel coronavirus has changed the world and turned public health emergency into one of the gravest international crises. This report mentions SDGs' progress before the pandemic and the negative impacts of COVID-19 on specific targets and goals. Even before the pandemic, the world was not on track to achieve the global goals in just one-third of the way into the journey. The progress was uneven, and most areas lacked focused attention. However, the pandemic turned back decades of progress and abruptly disrupted many of the goals. Covid crisis has touched all sectors of the economy, areas of the world, and population segments. The poorest and most vulnerable people of the world are affected the most. The pandemic has exposed profound and harsh inequalities in our societies and is further revealing the existing disparities among and within countries. It has been forecasted that this year 71 million people will be pushed back into extreme poverty, and this would be the first rise in global poverty since 1998. In the first month of crisis, some countries' economies dropped by 60 %, disrupting the lives of about 1.6 billion workers and their families. The vulnerability of more than one billion slum dwellers who suffer from inadequate housing, with no access to essential services and infrastructure, has also been increased as an impact of COVID-19.

New pilot index for the effectiveness of countries' early response to Covid-19 in OECD countries



Source: Sachs et al., 2020. Based on three key variables: (1) mortality rates, (2) Effective Reproduction rate and (3) Reduced mobility (based on Google mobility measurements, GM(X)). Covers the period from March 4 to May 12, 2020. See detailed methodology in section 1.2 of the report.

<https://www.unsdsn.org/new-report-shows-how-to-use-the-sustainable-development-goals-to-build-back-better-after-covid-19>

Covid-19 is likely to have severe effects on people with disabilities, senior citizens, refugees, and migrants due to socio-economic circumstances and their specific health. The pandemic has also taken a toll on the world's children and women. Limited access to nutrition and food services and disrupted health care can result in thousands of maternal deaths and under 5-deaths in 2020. Since March and April 2020, there have been moderate-to-severe disruptions and even total suspension of child vaccination services in over 70 countries. A rise in the number of domestic violence cases against children and women has also been reported. Due to unavailability and limited access to family planning services and supplies, millions of unintended pregnancies can be expected, which is a liability. This spring, 90 percent of students did not attend school due to lockdown, and over 370 million children missed out on school meals. Prolonged absence from school means poor graduation rates, lower retention, and worsen learning outcomes. This has also adversely affected the behavioral and social development of youth and children. Children in disadvantaged and poor communities are more prone to fall prey to child labor, human trafficking, and child marriages as more and more families fall into extreme poverty. This means, for the first time in 20 years, the global gains in reducing child labor are likely to be reversed. Thus, the crisis has a life-altering impact on millions of children and youth globally.

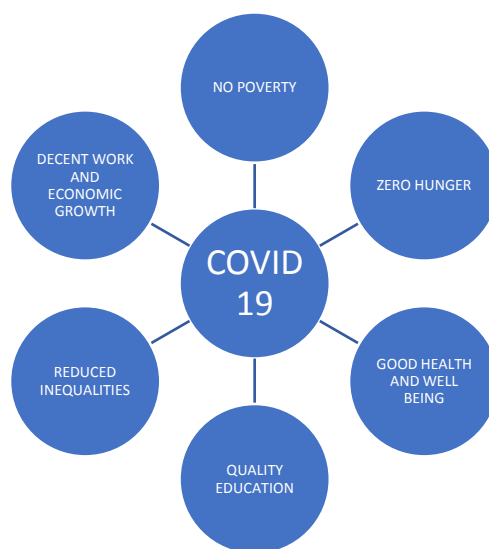
The economic impacts of the crisis are equally concerned as the world faces one of the worst recession generations. Even the most developed countries, such as the United States of America and Italy, with advanced healthcare systems, struggle to cope with the pandemic's social, health, and economic fallout. The disadvantaged and poorest countries like Yemen definitely will be hit the hardest. Yemen's humanitarian crisis is at its worst stage with conflict escalation, tattered economy, famine on the horizon, and out of control Covid-19 situation. There is limited testing, shortage of medical supplies, and scarcity of healthcare centers. The

internal conflict has led to obstruction of Aid such as PPE kits in Yemen. All such nations that depend on international aid are crippling. It is estimated that the foreign direct investment will reduce by up to 40 percent, and world trade will experience a 32 percent plunge. In 2020, the remittance to middle –and low- income countries will decrease by 20 percent. The vulnerabilities have been aggravated by job losses, insufficient essential services, fragile health systems, low coverage of social protection systems, and external shocks. The crisis can completely destabilize economies of impoverished nations without the support of the international community.

Although there are no two ways that the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda has been shaken to the very core by the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the convictions must be held, and hopes and ambitions should not be derailed. In the post-COVID-19 recovery, the principles on which SDGs were established can act as the key to build back better. To keep Governments focused on growth, equity, sustainability, and inclusion, the Universal Goals need continued pursuit. The pandemic can serve as the base for our preparedness to prevent even bigger crises like global climate change. Businesses and Governments can learn many lessons from the situation and translate towards a more resilient, healthier, and sustainable world. Equitable and effective policies and measures can be shaped by using disaggregated statistics and data. September 2020 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Amidst extraordinary global challenges, the principles and purpose of the 2030 Agenda remain strong. COVID-19 is an excellent reminder of global solidarity and cooperation. To create a more livable world, the strength and efforts must be combined for forging the transformative pathways.

Construct Alternative Policy Responses

The United Nations adopted Sustainable Development Goals following the UN Millennium Development Goals. There are 17 independent SDGs, and there has been a significant impact of Covid-19 on SDG goals 1,2,4,8,3 and 10.



As mentioned, the goals are to be divided into two- Adjusting to a new routine and fighting against a pandemic. The long-term goals come under adjusting to a new normal, and others include:

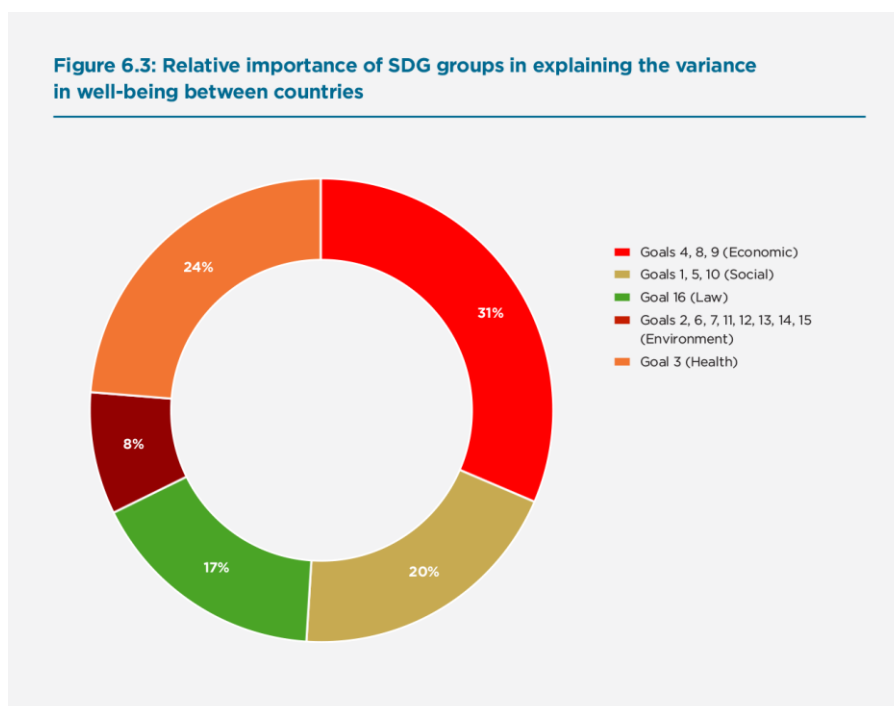
Covid-19 and Poverty Eradication: In February 2020, as per Halpern-Meekin, one in five had lost their jobs within a short period. The Covid-19 pandemic implies that many families fell below the poverty line. The number of families facing the dilemma depends on the policy response from governments at all levels. To lift more people out of poverty rather than allowing them to stay below the poverty line, a well-planned anti-poverty policy is essential. The SDG goal 1 complies with the United Nations’ goal to reduce poverty in all forms. It is all about promoting equal access rights to appropriate social protection systems and economic resources for all using the right policy framework. The United Nations uses resource mobilization and enhanced development cooperation from various sources to reduce the poverty gap, especially for the people living in the Third World Countries and vulnerable ones in middle economies. The advent of Covid-19 has led the developed and rich countries to assist their citizens; however, it is not the same in underdeveloped and least developed countries. Then, for the UN to maintain its trajectory regarding goal 1 of SDG, a link has to exist between the goal 3- healthy living and goal 1; otherwise, poverty eradication would be a mirage.

COVID-19 and Hunger Eradication: Lockdown and pandemic meant plummeting incomes, mass unemployment, humanitarian aid decline, and food production disruption. More and more of the world’s poorest

people have been pushed into poverty and hunger, causing a rise in hunger mortality figures. Food insecurity has increased in the United States also because of the Covid-19 outbreak rendering many children hungry. These assertions show how big a threat Covid-19 is to the UN Sustainable Development Goal, goal two, aiming to achieve zero hunger by 2020. Hunger and food security are fundamental to all governments, countries, and large organizations. There is an existence of trade restrictions on almost all commodities, including agricultural products and the dysfunctional food commodities market. While some countries have shortages, others have outright ban too. This restriction regarding food security and hunger has caused an existential challenge to arise. On the bright side, this has bought about homegrown and local consumption patterns. Time will tell how sustainable this is.

COVID-19 and Healthy Lives and Well-Being for all: Public health is continuously being harmed by Covid-19, whose reach is widespread. However, behavioral changes are relatively slow and frustrating. The direct impact of Covid-19 is that it has worsened the well-being and health whereas, the indirect impact on well-being is by dropping physical activities and social interactions as it makes people more prone to the complications of Covid-19. The number of deaths and infected people is rising exponentially, causing acute shortages of equipment, hospital spaces, inadequate hospital personnel, and uninsured citizens being exposed to healthcare systems' fragility everywhere. Lockdown and social distancing have helped in flattening the curve, but the concerted effort of finding a vaccine must continue globally. The next step will be to have contingency plans against pandemics to help in faster, effective, and efficient responses in terms of equipment, medical supplies, and personnel. An insurance policy should cover private healthcare systems for all citizens while promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Figure 6.3: Relative importance of SDG groups in explaining the variance in well-being between countries



<https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2020/sustainable-development-and-human-well-being/>

Covid-19 and Inclusive Education: The global lockdown of schools and other educational institutions has caused a significant interruption in students' learning and internal assessments, cancellation of public assessments, etc. The direct impact of Covid-19 on education has been experienced by an estimated 1.25 billion students globally and the inequality thereof. Educational institutions have been shut; examinations have been postponed or canceled, reduction in international student enrolment, cancellation of conferences locally and globally, disruption of the academic calendar, loss of educational workforce due to educational budget cut, and therefore, a comprehensive teaching and learning gap has been created. E-learning has gained popularity, but children lack access to basic amenities like clothing and shelter, left alone the internet. The financial mess due to student loans is hanging on many students affecting them mentally and emotionally. Governments need to increase educational funding, ensure financial institutions restructure loans in more flexible ways, take care of emotionally and mentally afflicted students, and develop non-traditional ways of learning that will lead to the democratization of access to knowledge.

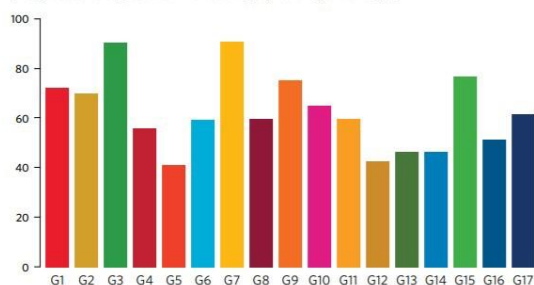
Covid-19 and Employment and Decent Work for all: The resultant changes in the society occasioned by social distancing has exposed the inequalities in the labor market. Individuals have been affected due to marginalization. A vast number of the population is not able to access decent work and are experiencing inequalities. This can take the form of discriminations to individuals, mostly women, and children, with low-income backgrounds and colored races in many ways. As enunciated in the Sustainability Development Goal (SDG), goal 8, the United Nations aims to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The Covid-19 pandemic, however, is distorting the plan. As per The International Labor Organization (ILO), due to the Covid-19 induced economic and labor crisis, approximately 25million people worldwide could lose their jobs. Economic activities have slowed down in every country that went into lockdown. Tourism and aviation were dead. Economies are still in recession, and it is predicted that it would take at least three years for economies to recover completely. The continuous stimulus packages by governments to assist households, enterprises and individuals are encouraged as a way out. Thus, the production and consumption rules must be incentivized sustainably by authorities.

Covid-19 and Inequality reduction: The most vulnerable workers, such as delivery workers, are most exposed to Covid-19 risks. The socio-economic groups suffer from a greater risk than financial exposure, such as health risks and poor housing conditions during the lockdown period, thus surging inequalities. The inequality gap has been widening by Covid-19. This is poised to be addressed by the United Nations Sustainability Development Goal 10. The use and implementation of the right wage, fiscal, and social protection measures can create equality in economic, social, or political spheres. Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the total absence and presence with the fragility of such policies. In sub-Saharan Africa, the poor are affected the most and are living in minimum hygienic conditions. Countries where refugees seek asylum, are at risk of being stranded because of huge constraints on the government’s capacity due to increasing debts. It is worth noting that people working from home are being continuously paid. However, those in informal sectors do not receive government benefits, as most of them are not registered for social security. At the SME level, there is a challenge to entrepreneurial skills. Lending institutions must become more flexible with moratoriums. Majorly, solidarity to people in most need of food and medical supplies is critical this time.

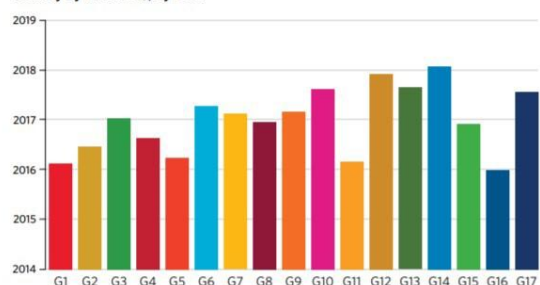
Assemble Evidence/Research – Building a narrative

The novel coronavirus has affected every community and person, but not equally. Instead, it has exacerbated and exposed existing injustices and inequalities. Fatality rates are highest among marginalized groups in advanced economies. In developing countries, older people, employees of the informal economy, people with disabilities, children, migrants, indigenous people, and refugees are most vulnerable and at the risk of being hit harder. The youngsters have been disproportionately affected around the globe, particularly in terms of work. Girls and women face new threats and new barriers, ranging from additional burdens of unpaid care work to a shadow pandemic of violence.

Data coverage: proportion of countries or areas with available data (weighted average across indicators), by Goal (percentage)



Data timeliness: the most recent year available (weighted average of the median country by indicator), by Goal



<https://medium.com/sdg-counting/how-covid-19-is-affecting-the-global-goals-sdg-report-summary-2d7b540bfc0e>

The uneven impacts and root causes of COVID-19, though far from undermining the SDGs case, demonstrate clearly why there is a need for the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement on climate change along with underscoring the urgency of their implementation. For maintenance of international peace and security or SDGs, a coordinated and comprehensive international recovery effort and

response, based on science and sound data and guided by the Sustainable Development Goals are consistently called for. Below is the background for the thematic question at hand, the dimensions and parameters of the problems and the goals and objectives of the policy options are supposed to achieve:

1. No poverty- SDG Goal 1 aims at ending poverty in all forms everywhere. Before Covid-19, the world was off track to end poverty by 2030. 4 billion people did not benefit from any form of social protection in 2016. Natural disasters exacerbate poverty so much that there were 23.6 billion dollars of direct economic losses from 63 countries up to 2018. In 2019, young workers were twice as likely to live in extreme poverty as adult workers. Covid-19 has caused the first increase in global poverty in decades, pushing more than 71 million people into extreme poverty this year.

2. Zero Hunger- SDG Goal 2 aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. Food insecurity was already surging before Covid-19 affecting 25.9 % population by moderate or severe food insecurity. This indicates, at the worse situation, odd wasting and stunting among children. The pandemic is an additional threat to food systems because of the locust crisis, internal conflict, and climate shocks that followed the pandemic. Small scale food producers are struck by the crisis comprising 40%-85% of all food producers in developing regions.

3. Good Health and well-being: SDG goal 3 ensures healthy lives and promotes well-being for all ages. Before Covid-19, progress in many health areas continued but needed acceleration. In 2017, less than half of the global population was covered by essential health services. Apart from the virus's apparent impact, the pandemic has interrupted childhood immunization programs in around 70 countries. The healthcare disruption can reverse decades of improvements causing hundreds of thousands of additional Under-5 deaths in 2020. Deaths and illness from communicable diseases will spike, and service cancellations will lead to a 100 % increase in Malaria deaths in Sub-Saharan Africa.

4. Quality Education- The SDG goal 4 ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Before the pandemic, progress towards equitable and inclusive quality education was too slow. This means that over 200 million children will still not be able to go to school in 2030. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, 90% of all students were kept out of school. Inequalities in education are exacerbated as remote learning remains out of reach for at least 500 million students. Even today, only 65% of primary schools have necessary hygiene facilities critical for the 'new normal.'

5. Gender Equality- The fifth goal of SDG aims at achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls. Despite improvements, full gender equality remains unreachd. Before the crisis, more women were in leadership roles, and fewer girls were forced into early marriage. Lockdown has increased the risk of physical, sexual, and psychological violence against women and girls. The cases of domestic violence have seen a 30% spike. Also, women have to bear additional household burdens during the pandemic. The highlight is that women account for 70% of health and social workers. Thus, they must be represented fairly in pandemic-related leadership roles.

6. Clean Water and Sanitation- The sixth SDG goal ensures availability and sustainable water and sanitation management for all. Despite progress, millions still lack sanitation and water services. Some countries experience a funding gap of 61% for achieving the targets, and by 2030, water scarcity can displace 700 million people. Healthcare facilities also lack soap and water facilities, and so do 3 billion people worldwide. Sanitation is the need of the hour for Covid-19 prevention.

7. Affordable and Clean Energy- Goal 7 is about ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. In 2018, 789 million people lacked electricity. Financial flows to developing countries for renewable energy are increasing, but only 12% goes to LDC. Stepped-up efforts are needed as affordable and reliable energy is critical for health facilities in the pandemic.

8. Decent Work and Economic Growth- This goal promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Before Covid-19, global economic growth was slowing down. Due to the pandemic, the world is facing the worst recession since the great depression. In the second quarter of 2020, there would be 400 million job losses, whereas more than 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy have already risked their livelihoods.

9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure- This goal focuses on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Due to tariff and trade tensions, manufacturing growth was declining. The aviation industry is the worst hit in the pandemic. Small scale industries need finance for survival through the crisis. Fewer than 1 in 5 people have internet access in LDCs, and investment in R&D is needed.

10. Reduced Inequalities- The 10th SDG goal aims to reduce inequality within and among countries. Before Covid, income inequality was falling in some countries, the Global recession could squeeze development aid to developing countries, but the vulnerable groups are being hit hardest in the pandemic.

11. Sustainable Cities and Communities- SDG goal 11 wishes to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Before Covid, 24% of the urban population was living in slums. Air pollution caused premature deaths, and public transport was not accessible to half the population. Now, 90% of covid cases are in urban areas.

12. Responsible consumption and production- This goal ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. Natural resources continue being used unsustainably, leading to rising subsidies and food losses. The pandemic offers an opportunity to develop recovery plans to build a more sustainable future.

13. Climate Action- 13th SDG goal urges to combat climate change and its impacts. Before Covid, global temperatures rose and affected more than 39 million people. There can be a 6% drop in greenhouse gas emissions for 2020, still 7.6% short of the annual reduction limit.

14. Life below water- To conserve and sustainably use the oceans, sea, and marine resources. Ocean acidification has been a constant threat, and 97 countries signed against it. Sustainable fisheries contribute to GDP, and COVID-19 may be a chance for oceans to recuperate

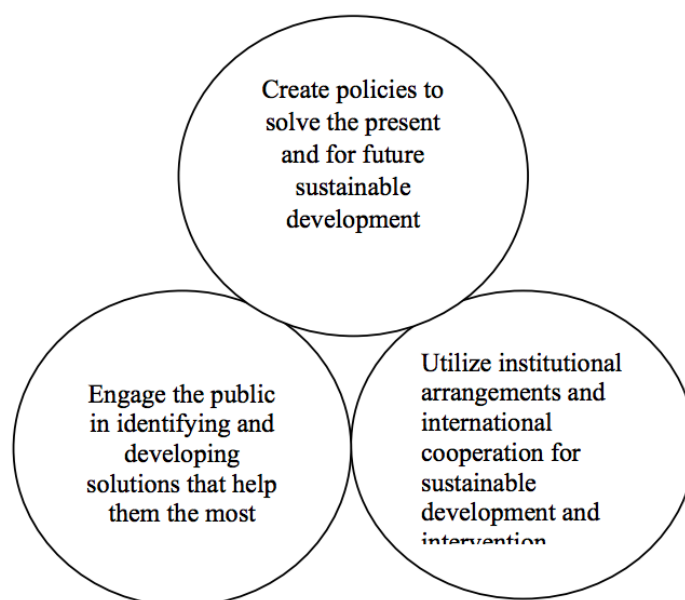
15. Life on Land- The goal is to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Wildlife trafficking can contribute to the spread of infectious diseases.

16. Peace, justice, and strong institutions- Every day, 100 civilians are killed in the armed conflict despite international laws, and Covid-19 further threatens global peace and security. Prison overcrowding is risking the spread in 60 % of countries.

17. Partnerships for the goals- The final goal is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Covid-19 can cause remittances to fall.

List Specific Criteria Used in Making Evaluation

For drafting out criteria used in making an evaluation, there is a huge need for data innovation in Covid-19. The importance of quality, timely, disaggregated, and available statistics and data need not be emphasized during the COVID-19 crisis. This data is crucial for managing, understanding, and mitigating the pandemic's social, economic, and human effects. It is also essential for accelerated actions and designing short-term responses to put countries back on track of achieving the SDGs. During the first five years of SDG implementation, the encountered data challenges are limiting Covid-19 responses. This is inclusive of social, economic, and primary health data. What makes the crisis worse is the disruption of routine operations throughout the global data and statistical system with delays in planned surveys, censuses, and other data programs.



https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3670330

As a response, the statistical community members set up mechanisms to ensure operational continuity by innovating and adapting data production processes and methods. Support and investments for data innovations are urgently required as per the assessment of statistical operations worldwide. These will help to both support SDG acceleration efforts and inform policy responses to the crisis over the coming decade. The investments in statistics and data are needed to guarantee the internal consistency, overall quality, and comparability of data produced to advance the 2030 Agenda implementation and maintain adequate coverage of all population groups. Instead of using traditional paper-based methods, some countries can benefit from fully digitizing their data collection, including web and telephone-based surveys and administrative data, and more innovative data sources that can produce official statistics.

An area that highly requires innovation is the integration of statistical and geospatial information. The integrated visualization and analysis of geospatially enable data on SDG indicators to promote the public's ability and the policymakers to respond to post-understanding local needs and circumstances across geographic time and space. It also offers insights into relationships and data connection that can be explored in the future by combining the non-traditional and traditional sources of statistics, information, and data. A policy formed, keeping the actual situation in mind goes a long way in terms of results than that which is based on trial and error and past incidents.

Apply Criteria

Covid-19 crisis has left companies, nations, and households in precarious situations. Job losses are surging, exposing more families to poverty, and inequality is on the rise. Globalization is threatened, travels, cross border trades, and tourism are on a standstill. The health sector is understaffed, and it is evident that the current policies are not capable of managing emergencies and pandemics as Covid-19. There exist several criteria that need to be applied for emphasizing on the SDG goals. Before the application, the following messages need to be kept in mind at all levels:

1. Covid-19 has deleterious effects on both the underdeveloped and developed, unindustrialized, and industrialized economies alike. The main areas of focus are inequality, employment, health, poverty, and hunger eradication.
2. Faulty contingency plans can increase inefficiency, create uncertainty, and slower responses, which can exacerbate the pandemic's global effects on achieving the SDG goals.
3. Hunger persistence, poverty increment, gaps in healthcare, and an increase in inequality have all transcended from the global economy's lockdown.
4. Reducing inequality between and within countries is a pressing challenge, and domestic inequality is a critical sustainable development obstacle.



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/719098265492432023/>

1. Building Economy

Though uneven, countries worldwide have taken up recovery measures that amount to 10 percent of their GDPs. To ensure that post-COVID 19 growth of economy and employment are more sustainable development-oriented, resources have to be spent in a calculated fashion. Monetary policies that insert liquidity in the financial system need to be employed to support income and employment. However, much of these measures would not have the desired effects in the absence of complementary measures. Thus, targeted fiscal measures that boost immediate consumption are required. To carry out such policies, developing countries will require external assistance, such as debt relief.

2. Healthcare

Even low-income countries cannot ignore establishing social protection systems and universal healthcare systems for achieving future goals. The urgent task is to build upon the emergency measures taken during the Covid crisis. In developed countries, social protection and healthcare have acquired a more universal character than employment-driven. Under these situations, developing countries need to accomplish an institutional jump from very little to universal healthcare.

3. Protecting the planet

The downward trend in greenhouse gas emissions observed during the pandemic must be maintained for achieving the Paris Climate change targets. The current low fuel prices may introduce carbon taxes that generate more revenues and discourage GHG emissions. The zoonotic nature of the epidemic has made it urgent to reduce human pressure on nature and biodiversity. The positive indications during the crisis need to be sustained and expanded to meet Aichi biodiversity targets.

4. Better governance

With efficient governance systems, even low-income level countries can effectively confront emergencies such as the pandemic. To improve governance, transparency, stakeholder engagement, accountability, anti-corruption, and effective coordination between different levels are required.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Everything we do during and after the Covid-19 crisis must be with a strong focus on building more inclusive, sustainable, and equal economies that are more resilient in the face of climate change, pandemics, and the many other global challenges we face. Here are a few recommendations that summarize the policy options or alternatives or justify the existing policy with a suggestion to make it better in no particular order.

1. Putting social protection measures that serve as automatic stabilizers in place to avoid economic downturns. To prepare for future COVID-19 waves, firmer footings in terms of achieving sustainable development is required that can be achieved by adopting policies that promote a more equitable distribution of income.

2. Public spending on the health sector (primary and preventive) needs to be increased, shock-proofing of healthcare systems against pandemics is needed, more use of telemedicine and technologies for affordable healthcare, and hygienic housing for all should be primary goals.

3. A three-pronged strategy for social protection- shock-proofing, adapting to the new digital economy, and accelerating efforts to achieve social protection floors.

4. For sustainable recovery, renewable energy sources and smart grids need to be employed. New clean fuel development is required, direct public investment in low-lying countries, clean power investments, and public mobilization is needed.

With the onset of COVID-19, the world has become integrated with public healthcare, lacking in the global community. To deal with the pandemic and its effects further, national governments and stakeholders need to take responsibility—a more significant partnership within and across countries for confronting future health crises and achieving the SDGs.

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