



PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Secretary-General launches plan to address the potentially devastating socio-economic impacts of COVID-19

Establishes global fund to support low- and middle-income countries

NEW YORK, 31 MARCH 2020—The new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is attacking societies at their core, claiming lives and people’s livelihoods. The potential longer-term effects on the global economy and those of individual countries are dire.

In a new report, the United Nations Secretary-General calls on everyone to act together to address this impact and lessen the blow to people.

The report describes the speed and scale of the outbreak, the severity of cases, and the societal and economic impacts on 204 countries, areas and territories¹.

“COVID-19 is a global health emergency that is a threat to the lives and livelihoods of billions of people,” António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations. “This human crisis demands coordinated, decisive, and immediate international support for the poorest and most vulnerable people and countries.”

The report comes after the IMF has announced that the world has entered into a recession as bad or worse than in 2009. The report calls for a large-scale, coordinated and comprehensive multilateral response amounting to at least 10 percent of global GDP.

Peace, human rights, sustainable development and humanitarian action, will support all governments and partners through the response and recovery.

To that end, the Secretary-General has established a dedicated **COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund** to support efforts in low- and middle-income countries. Its approach underpins the reformed UN with a coordinated multi-agency, multi-sectoral response for priority national and local actions to address the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. It will count on the country leadership of Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in swiftly supporting and enabling governments in this crisis, and recovery.

¹ World Health Organization 31 March 2020

NOTES TO EDITORS

The shared responsibility and global solidarity roadmap calls for:

- Suppressing the transmission of the virus to control the pandemic.
- Safeguarding people's lives and their livelihoods.
- Learning from this human crisis to build back better.

Suppressing the transmission of the virus to control the pandemic

The report warns that there is no time to lose in mounting the most robust and cooperative health response the world has ever seen. The strongest support must be provided to the multilateral effort to suppress transmission and stop the pandemic, led by the World Health Organization.

peutics. This must be matched with assurances of universal access to vaccines and treatment.

Throughout the report a people-centred approach is promoted that calls for engaging communities affected by COVID-19, respect for human rights and inclusion, gender equality and dignity for all.

Safeguarding people's lives and their livelihoods

3 National solidarity is crucial to leave no one behind

The pandemic is hitting an already weak and fragile world economy. Global growth in 2019 was already the slowest since the 1930s, with an estimated 100 million and 25 million jobs.

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- Protect Human Rights and focus on inclusion.
- Support to Small and Medium sized Enterprises.
- Support decent work.
- Support education.
- Prioritize social cohesion measures.

COVID-19 socio-economic estimates for 2020 as of March 2020

5 - 25 million jobs lost (ILO)
