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A Joint Media Project of  
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## SDGs for All Newsletter - July 2020 In Retrospect

### "Target Women in All Aspects of Economic Recovery and Stimulus Plans in Southeast Asia"



Viewpoint by António Guterres

*Following is the text of remarks by UN Secretary-General on the occasion of his latest policy brief titled [The Impact of COVID-19 on South-East Asia](#). It examines how the eleven countries of South-East Asia are addressing the immediate impacts of COVID-19, focusing on the subregion's*

*socio-economic response.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – As in other parts of the world, the health, economic and political impact of COVID-19 has been significant across Southeast Asia — hitting the most vulnerable the hardest.

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### HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 Require Global Solidarity



Kester Kenn Klomegah\* Talks to UNAIDS Expert

MOSCOW (IDN) – For over three decades, Africa has fought HIV/AIDS and is now battling another pandemic, COVID-19, that has shattered the continent's economies.

While adequate measures have been taken to halt the spread of the pandemic, Coronavirus has increased the financial burden. But HIV/AIDS experts say strengthening health institutions and commitment by political leaders (African governments) as well as development and international institutions could help to achieve adequate solutions especially in developing countries such as those in Africa.

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### Indigenous Communities of Guyana and Women in Togo Fight

## Forest Degradation

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Viewpoint by P.I. Gomes\*

*The writer, Dr Patrick I Gomes, was Secretary-General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States for five years until February 29, 2020. The 79-nation inter-regional body officially became the Organisation of African, Caribbean and*

*Pacific States (OACPS) on April 5, 2020. Dr Gomes was previously Ambassador of the Republic of Guyana, to the EU in Brussels.*

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad and Tobago (IDN) – The discussion on “Income Opportunities for Women” in the Togolese Republic in West Africa, [reported in IDN on July 6](#), provides an opportunity to share some aspects of the experiences by Indigenous women and community loggers in the Iwokrama Forest area in Guyana, where sustainable forest management and income-generating activities are being pursued.

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## ESCAP, UNDP and ADB Determined to Achieve SDGs in 2030 Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Viewpoint by Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana (ESCAP), Kanni Wignaraja (UNDP) and Bambang Susantono (ADB)\*

BANGKOK (IDN) – As lockdowns ease in countries across Asia and the Pacific in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, one thing is clear—a return to business as usual is unimaginable in a region that was already off track to meet the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). The virtual *High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development* recently convened governments and stakeholders across the globe to focus on the imperative to build back better while keeping an eye on the Global Goals.

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## UNDP Favours Temporary Basic Income to Protect the World's Poorest from The Impact of COVID-19

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By Caroline Mwangi

NEW YORK (IDN) – A new report by the United Nations is pleading for the immediate introduction of a Temporary Basic Income for the world’s poorest people, arguing that this could slow the current surge in COVID-19 pandemic cases by enabling nearly three billion people to stay at home.

A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report estimates that it would cost from \$199 billion per month to provide a time-bound, guaranteed basic income to the 2.7 billion people living below or just above the poverty line in 132 developing countries. [JAPANESE](#)

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## Africa's Largest Hydro Dam Held Hostage as Horn of Africa Countries Wage 'Water War'



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – Three neighbouring countries locked in a bitter dispute over rights to the precious waters of the Nile River may provide a preview of water wars around the world as global temperatures rise and droughts leave populations with

insufficient water to drink or for farms.

The three countries – Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan – are all claiming rights to Africa's most fabled river but Ethiopia has already laid claim to the water at the source and has begun siphoning it into a \$4.5 billion hydroelectric dam to the dismay of Egypt which relies on the Nile for 90 percent of its water.

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## UN Chief Makes an Impassioned Plea for Discarding Fallacies and Falsehoods



### The Rich and Poor are Not Sailing in the Same Boat

By Jaya Ramachandran

NEW YORK (IDN) – UN Secretary-General António Guterres has in a surprise dramatic move, castigated a series of "fallacies and falsehoods" perpetrated particularly on the

deprived of the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed all lies such as the lie that free markets can deliver healthcare for all; the fiction that unpaid care work is not work; the delusion that we live in a post-racist world; the myth that we are all in the same boat".

Exposing this misleading myth, he says: *"While we are all floating on the same sea, it's clear that some are in superyachts while others are clinging to the floating debris."* (P12) [ARABIC](#) | [HINDI](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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## UN Gathering To Call for Robust and Urgent Actions to Advance Gender Equality



By Caroline Mwanga

NEW YORK (IDN) – Twenty-five years after its adoption the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), member states and observers, civil society organizations,

gender equality leaders, CEOs, and heads of academia will gather virtually on July 21 in a multi-stakeholder hearing. The purpose is to bolster priority actions at the global and national level that will address the challenges that threaten the bold vision of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#).

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## Poverty and inequality Get worse in Latin America as COVID-19 Infections Surge



By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK (IDN) —Latin America is scrambling to contain surging COVID-19 infections while confronting near-certain recession and related impacts. But policies that prioritize poor and vulnerable people can help mitigate the region's already extreme poverty and inequality, says a new study by the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP).

Before the pandemic, the [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#) projected only 1.6 percent economic growth for the region in 2020, with recessions in several countries. In April, it projected a contraction of 5.2 percent, with almost every country in recession. However, tourism-dependent Caribbean nations could see GDP plunge between 5 and 10 percent—worsening the region's chronic poverty, inequality, and insecurity.

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## Africa's Livestock Sector is Key to its Covid-19 Response & Recovery



Viewpoint by Rhoda Peace Tumusiime

*The writer is a member of the [Malabo Montpellier Panel](#) and former AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the [African Union Commission \(AUC\)](#).*

ENTEBBE, Uganda (IDN) – Livestock have long been the insurance policy of Africa's poorest, with even a single goat or a chicken providing a buffer against economic hardship and hunger.

But as Covid-19 forces many to fall back on these safety nets, the need for more long-term support of the continent's livestock sector is laid bare.

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## The Path Forward for Higher Education After COVID-19



UN Academic Impact Talks to Students from Several Countries

By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK (IDN) – COVID-19 pandemic has forced more than 1.5 billion students in 165 countries out of school, enforcing the global academic community to explore new

ways of teaching and learning, including distance and online education, according to [UNESCO](#) estimates.

This has proven challenging for both students and educators, who have to deal with the emotional, physical and economic difficulties posed by the illness while doing their part to help curb the spread of the virus, notes United Nations

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## Black Lives Matter' Continues to Spur Changes in Africa

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By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – As Americans explore the renaming of army bases, statues, streets, and schools that honour racist slave-holders or portray demeaning relationships between whites and Black, Brown and Latinx citizens, similar efforts are underway in Senegal and Liberia most

recently.

Goree, an island in Senegal linked closely with slave trade, has decided to rename one of its main squares in response to the anti-racist movements around the world.

The island's municipal council unanimously agreed to rename Europe Square as "Liberty and Human Dignity Square."

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## A Landmark Project Aims at Reforestation in Togo - Income Opportunities for Women

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By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN | TOKYO (IDN) – Togo in West Africa is the venue of a milestone project between [Soka Gakkai](#), a global community-based Buddhist organization and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). The two have signed a memorandum to launch a [reforestation project](#) offering income opportunities for

women's groups in two rural areas of Togo.

The memorandum involving a donation of 10 million yen (US\$93,300) for the initial one-year phase of the project was signed on July 1 at the Soka Gakkai (SG) headquarters in Tokyo. The project will kick off on September 1. (P10) [GERMAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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## ARCTIC: Protecting the Sacred Place Where Life Begins

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Viewpoint by Nick Engelfried\*

BELLINGHAM, Washington (IDN) – As the Trump administration neared the end of its first year in office in 2017, it seemed environmental activists had lost one of the most hard-fought battles in the movement's history. Thanks to a last-minute manoeuvre



by Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Congressional Republicans succeeded in passing legislation allowing oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). Some of the worst fears of environmental and Indigenous rights groups for what might happen under the administration appeared to be coming true.

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## What the EU's Corona Fundraising Tells us about Global Solidarity



Viewpoint by Inge Kaul

*The writer, Dr Inge Kaul, is Senior Fellow, Hertie School, Berlin and Non-resident Senior Fellow, Center for Global Development, Washington, DC.*

BERLIN (IDN) – European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen organized two spectacular fund-raising events, one on May 4 and the other on June 27, 2020. The first drive collected €9.8 billion and the second €6.15 billion, including €4.9 billion announced together by the EU and the European Investment Bank.

According to official pronouncements, the funds will be used to make coronavirus vaccines, testing and treatments available worldwide, notably in low and middle-income countries.

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## COVID-19: How Brazil Became the World's 2nd Worst Hit Country



Viewpoint by Alfredo Saad Filho\*

LONDON (IDN) – The COVID-19 pandemic has stress-tested countries, economies and political systems like never before. Nowhere has the outcome been more devastating than in Brazil, arguably the country with the worst pandemic response in the world.

Brazil's vulnerabilities are visible in the mass graves in São Paulo and Manaus. The country is competing with the USA for the largest number of diagnosed COVID-19 cases (more than one million) and the highest number of fatalities (above 50,000 – but likely to be a vast undercount). Disturbingly, there is [no sign](#) that Brazil's cases or deaths have peaked yet.

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