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SDGs for All Newsletter - April 2021 In Retrospect

COVID-19 Exposes Fault Lines on Protecting Vulnerable Workers



By Mahinda Seneviratne*

SYDNEY (IDN) — As twilight approaches, Rakesh (not his real name) mounts his bicycle with a large thermal backpack over his narrow shoulders. He lost his regular job at a small suburban restaurant when the family business could not sustain itself during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. With the recent shocking road deaths of three food delivery riders heavily on his mind, Rakesh pedals cautiously into the growing traffic lanes to commence his first home delivery gig.

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Top Economists Urge Solidarity to Avert Worsening of the COVID-19 Impacts



By Radwan Jakeem

NEW YORK (IDN) — Eminent thought leaders in economic and social fields have called for fundamental change in the multilateral system in the spirit of international solidarity to combat the severe impacts of COVID-19. They comprise the United Nations High-level Advisory Board on Economic and Social Affairs, convened by the [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(DESA\)](#).

In their two-day meeting middle of April, twenty Advisory Board members explored various approaches to confront the once-in-a-century crisis, with inequalities, climate change and lack of access to COVID vaccines topping the priority list.

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World Bank-IMF Pledge Support for Pandemic Affected Countries



By Caroline Mwanga

WASHINGTON (IDN) — While planning to rebuild economies after the COVID-19 pandemic, countries would do well to lay the foundation for a green, resilient, and inclusive future. This

was the message of the [World Bank-International Monetary Fund \(IMF\) virtual Spring Meetings](#) from April 5 to 11, 2021. [World Bank Group President David Malpass](#) outlined the major challenges facing the world, including COVID, climate change, rising poverty and inequality, and growing fragility and violence as a part of the focus on [Economic Recovery: Toward a Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Future](#). (P03) [CHINESE](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#)

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UN Forum Highlights New Initiatives to Tackle Inequalities Exacerbated by Pandemic



By Radwan Jakeem

NEW YORK (IDN) — With many economies reeling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as inequalities continue to widen, world leaders discussed options to unlock concrete investments to support a

sustainable and resilient recovery at the [Forum on Financing for Development \(FfD Forum\)](#) from April 12-15.

The four-day Forum, held under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#)), took place as many countries are facing increased financial debt and liquidity pressures because of the pandemic. The FfD Forum was held virtually, with selected in-person sessions.

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Global Pandemic Hits the World's Poorest the Hardest



By J Natranis

NEW YORK (IDN) — The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a deeply troubling situation in the world's poorest countries. It threatens to push the achievement of the [Sustainable](#)

[Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) another ten years further into the future, warns the [Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2021](#) by more than 60 United Nations Agencies and international organizations. Because of the pandemic, the global economy has experienced the worst recession in 90 years. (P01) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [THAI](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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27 Million in the Sahel and West Africa Facing Unprecedented Food and Nutrition Crisis



By Jaya Ramachandaran

PARIS (IDN) — The Sahel and West Africa are facing a major food and nutrition crisis for the second consecutive year and 27.1 million people will be at risk during the 2021 lean season, according to experts. A

swift and co-ordinated response, they say, is needed alongside a strengthened political commitment to finding more sustainable ways of addressing recurrent crises and the growing need for food assistance across the region.

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African Free Trade Area Expected to Lift Millions out of Extreme Poverty and Boost Growth



By Busani Bafana

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe (IDN) — The long-awaited African Continental Free Trade Area ([AfCFTA](#))—set to be the world’s biggest free-trade zone by size—which entered into force on January 1, 2021, promises a new era for African trade.

An Africa-wide free-trade pact could bolster the region’s income by \$450 billion and lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035, if accompanied by significant policy reforms and trade-facilitation measures, according to the World Bank. When fully operational, the Free Trade area will create a market of 1.2 billion and drive a combined GDP of \$2.5 trillion. (P02) [GERMAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT](#) [VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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IMF and World Bank Decision to Tackle COVID-Related Debt Crisis Greeted



By Radwan Jakeem

NEW YORK (IDN) — The UN Secretary-General has [welcomed](#) steps announced by the International Monetary and Finance Committee (IMFC) and the World Bank Group

Development Committee, to address debt crises and other financial anguish to economies arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, “as a sign of hope and renewed multilateralism”.

In a [statement](#) issued through his Spokesperson on April 9, António Guterres said developing economies had struggled to secure enough financial resources to cope with the onset of the [coronavirus](#) crisis. “Let

financial resources to cope with the onset of the coronavirus crisis, let alone to recover from it”.

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The Menace of Human Trafficking—A Canadian Perspective



Viewpoint by Anusha Jaura-Sindhvani*

Human trafficking is one of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets

endorsed by the international community in 2015. Goal 8.7 aims at "immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms". Anusha's Canadian perspective is based on 20 years of experience in the child welfare sector. She is also on the Human Trafficking Committee which looks at prevention and supporting youth at risk of trafficking.

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UN Striving to Ensure Media and Information Literacy



By Ramu Damodaran

The writer is Chief, United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) hosted in the Department of Global Communications. This OpEd was first published in [the latest](#) #WhyWeCare. It highlights efforts of the UN to

combat the "infodemic" — misinformation or disinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic that is having a disastrous social and economic impact on societies around the globe. The efforts include a proposal for declaring October 24-31 as a Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week. — The Editor.

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