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SDGs for All Newsletter - October 2020 In Retrospect

New Research Raises Alarm for Our Most Precious Buffer to Climate Change: Groundwater



Viewpoint by Vincent Casey

The writer is Senior WASH Manager – Water, WaterAid UK

LONDON (IDN) – WaterAid's newly released water security [research](#) has uncovered an alarming lack of global governance and grave mismanagement of the world's precious groundwater reserves,

needlessly putting millions of lives at risk.

Hundreds of millions of people rely on groundwater for their daily water needs. As global populations continue to grow and climate change threatens water security, groundwater extraction seems the obvious answer to boosting food production and industry.

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The Need to Engage Youth Social Entrepreneurs to Accelerate the SDGs



Viewpoint by Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana

Ms. Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was Professor of Economics at Universitas Padjadjaran in Bandung, Indonesia.

BANGKOK (IDN) – This year, the United Nations is marking its 75th anniversary – a milestone of extraordinary economic and social progress in Asia and the Pacific. While the Organization enjoys a lifespan almost equal to the world's improved average life expectancy, the future lies with those who have recently embarked on theirs: our young people.

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Financing and Political Will Critical to Avert A ‘Generational Crisis’ Triggered by COVID-19



By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK (IDN) – The world is at risk of suffering “a generational catastrophe”, as [COVID-19](#) wreaks havoc on the education of students globally, the Secretary-General António Guterres has warned.

In a video [message](#) to the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Global Education Meeting (GEM), on October 22, he reminded delegates that the pandemic had had a “disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable and marginalized children and youth”.

GEM was sponsored by Norway, Britain and Ghana.

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COVID-19: Europeans Can Learn from Developing Countries



Developed Countries Should Change Their Mindset

Viewpoint by Maru Mormina and Ifeanyi M. Nsofor*

OXFORD | WASHINGTON (IDN) – Nine months into the pandemic, Europe remains one of the regions worst affected by COVID-19. Ten of the 20 countries with the [highest death count](#) per million people are European. The other ten are in the Americas. This includes the US, which has the highest number of confirmed cases and deaths in the world.

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Migrants Face “Double Threat” Amid Coronavirus Pandemic



By Jacqueline Skalski-Fouts*

This article discusses the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic with a particular focus on refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers.

VIRGINIA, USA (IDN) – Migrant workers have been at the forefront of the world economy during the COVID-19 pandemic, as essential workers. And this with enormous risk to themselves. They are facing what the [International Rescue Committee](#) refers to as an “unimaginable double emergency”. (P20)
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UN Concerned About Corruption in The Midst of COVID-19



By Caroline Mwanga

NEW YORK (IDN) – The United Nations is concerned about corruption in the midst of the **COVID-19** pandemic, which it says is proving "to be even more damaging in its impact on the most vulnerable".

UN **Secretary-General António Guterres** described corruption as "criminal, immoral and the ultimate betrayal of public trust. It is even more damaging in times of crisis – as the world is experiencing now with the **COVID-19** pandemic".

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African Teens on World Stage Demand Action on Climate Change



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg has at least two African partners stepping up on the global stage and telling world leaders to “wake up” and recognize the dangers to women and

girls of climate change.

In a speech broadcast as part of the Desmond Tutu International Peace Lecture, Ugandan activist Vanessa Nakate tied climate change to poverty, hunger, disease, conflict and violence.

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Bringing Poverty to Heel



Viewpoint by Yossef Ben-Meir

Dr Yossef Ben-Meir is president of the High Atlas Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to sustainable development in Morocco.

MARRAKECH (IDN) – October 17 marks the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The commemoration of this day suggests that the way to end poverty is not a matter shrouded in mystery. In fact, its celebration denotes that, at a minimum, the manner to end poverty is most likely established knowledge. While it could withstand further evaluation, its people-centred methodology is tested as plain as day, and it is as well understood as the brutality of en masse denial of the potential of our humanity.

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UN Survey Finds COVID-19 Has Enhanced Online Shopping



By Jamshed Baruah

GENEVA (IDN) – "The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift towards a more digital world. The changes we make now will have lasting effects as the world economy begins to recover," says Mukhisa Kitui, Secretary General of the UN



Kituyi, Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development

(UNCTAD).

The acceleration of online shopping globally underscores the urgency of ensuring all countries can seize the opportunities offered by digitalization as the world moves from pandemic response to recovery, he adds. (P19) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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UN Agency Points to Linkages Between Human Trafficking and Forced Marriage



By Richard Jacobsen

VIENNA (IDN) – A new UN report has documented the interlinkages between trafficking in persons and marriage, and specified steps for governments and other authorities to strike back. Published by the

UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the [report](#) points out that across the world, girls as young as 12 are being forced or tricked into marrying men who exploit them for sex and domestic work, in what the UNODC has called an "under-reported, global form of human trafficking".

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COVID-19 Highlights the Global Structural Dependence on Exploitable Labour



Viewpoint by Randall Hansen*

TORONTO (IDN) – In November 2019, a federal government official visited the University of Toronto's Munk School and asked its faculty to delineate coming global threats. We spoke of inequality, hunger, climate change, sanitation, and plastic

pollution, among others. No one mentioned a microbe; a discussion of the threat of immunity to antibiotics was as close as we got.

Four months later, everyone in that room was under lockdown. COVID-19 hit the world as a freight train hits a car stalled at a railroad crossing. The virus has shredded the rhythm of our daily lives, and it will reconfigure our economies and politics.

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Three Women: Stories of Indian Trafficked Brides



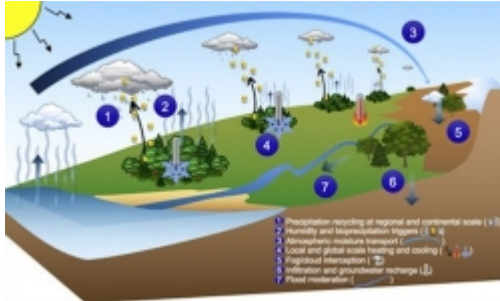
Viewpoint by Sreya Banerjea*

LONDON (IDN) – "I tried to escape in the middle of the night," Mahira** recalled. "With a small packed bag, I tiptoed towards the door thinking that he was asleep. Suddenly, he grabbed me from behind and attacked with a cutlass." I sat, stunned, as she lifted her saree and revealed a wide scar below her knee

In north India, there is a particular history of purchasing brides from other states due to the “male marriage squeeze”: there is an excess of eligible men but not enough local women for marriage. This is caused by an imbalanced child sex ratio caused by sex-selective abortion and female foeticide.

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Cool News in a Warming World: Why Invest in Future Forests



Viewpoint by Finn Grundmann *

GÖTTINGEN, Germany (IDN) – Forests capture more than carbon! While plants are experts at retrieving carbon dioxide from the air, they have also perfected strategies to retain water in their natural surroundings. When thinking of the benefits of future forests, it is crucial to think beyond the tree

level.

Tree roots loosen the soil, and by creating macropores, they drastically increase infiltration rates and help recharge groundwater levels. The effect of just one tree on those soil properties can be measured within a radius of 25 meters around the tree crown. Therefore, by planting just a hundred trees, an area as big as 32 full-size football fields can be restored.

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