



# The UN & You

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## 60th Session: Commission for Social Development

The priority theme of the [60th Session of the Commission for Social Development](#) (CSocD60) is “Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 to sustainable livelihood, well-being and dignity for all: Eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve 2030 Agenda.” Our hope to participate in person in the proceedings of the Commission from Feb. 7-16 will not be possible this year. Member States will gather in person for the opening and closing sessions. All the rest will be in virtual format, and it will be available for all on [UN Web TV](#).

The Commission for Social Development has a mandate to follow up and implement the [1995 Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action](#). The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen called on the world to “place **people at the center of development and direct our economies to meet human needs more effectively.**” The summit pledged, “to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and foster social integration and inclusion to achieve safe and just societies for all.” Since “social development is central to the needs and aspirations of people throughout the world,” as members of civil society, it is our role to advocate and demand our governments to place their resources for an inclusive and resilient recovery that will not only eradicate poverty and hunger, but will provide sustainable livelihood, and restore their dignity and well-being.

In this context, it is important to take a look at the [report of the UN Secretary-General](#), which provides an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty and hunger at the global, regional and national levels. The pandemic has brought in worst recession, impacted people’s jobs and livelihoods – loss of 125 million full time jobs. The slowing down of the economy has impacted poverty eradication – the pandemic has created “new poor” and further impoverished those already living in poverty. Many of the working

poor and many of the world’s 2 billion informal workers have fallen into poverty. “People who are income poor are suffering from multiple forms of deprivations in the fields of education, health, access to drinking water, sanitation, electricity, housing, credits and cooking fuel.” Rural populations have been hit hard by the pandemic, because of the informal nature of their employment and exclusion from social protection, health insurance and unemployment benefits.

The pandemic brought about an increase in hunger and food insecurity, not due to lack of global food availability, but because of the inequitable access to food and the rise in food prices due to the disruption of global and national food supply chains. Increased incidence of conflicts and an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters have contributed to rising food insecurity. Globally, 3 billion people are unable to afford a healthy diet. Almost one-third of women of reproductive age suffer from anemia due to nutrition deficiencies, and millions of children under the age of 5 suffer from malnutrition leading to stunting and wasting.

Here are some of the effective strategies proposed by the Secretary-General to eradicate poverty and hunger in all forms and dimensions to recover better.

- Securing sustainable livelihoods to address economic insecurities experienced by low-income individuals and families who are highly vulnerable.
- Promoting well-being and enabling people to live with dignity through participation and empowerment of the most vulnerable in decisions that directly affect their lives.
- Improving data, new measurement tools better grounded in multidimensional deprivation and vulnerability that reflect a better understanding

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of the processes through which people move in and out of poverty. Effective poverty reduction policies require partnerships between national and local governments and civil society organizations. Civil society organizations can valuably represent community interests in fighting poverty and hunger.

- Investing in human capacities and basic infrastructure—essential to eradicate poverty and hunger and to provide access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation, quality schools, public transport, quality healthcare services, affordable housing and reliable and affordable internet without incurring financial hardships.
- Fostering economic security and strengthening social protection systems including floors to prevent and tackle poverty, hunger and inequality across the life cycle. (Only 46.9 per cent of the global population are covered by at least one social protection benefit and 4 billion people are unprotected.) Social protection should cover all populations irrespective of their employment status (employed, self-employed, unemployed or outside the labor market) and types and forms of employment (formal, informal, gig economy workers, etc.).
- Addressing food insecurity and transforming agri-food systems by governments increasing investment in science, technology and innovation.
- Investing in rural areas, focusing on basic infrastructure, social protection and inclusive rural transformation, through inclusive social protection systems adapted to rural populations' needs; innovative tools to provide access to credits, grants and low interest loans to support rural non-farm sector.
- Closing financing gaps—there is underinvestment in social protection systems, and the gap for establishing social protection floors has increased by 30 percent since the onset of COVID-19. Though access to healthcare increased, further investments are needed to overcome remaining barriers like high cost of out-of-pocket payments, physical distance to healthcare facilities and shortfalls in the range and quality of services. The pandemic has also increased the financing gap to achieve universal access to education.

In conclusion, the UN Member States are encouraged to develop long-term, risk-informed and prevention-oriented recovery plans that will improve people's

capacities and well-being, through investing in social services and infrastructure. Service delivery should be aimed at progressively achieving universal access; specific attention should be paid to the needs to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and communities. They need to address multiple causes of poverty, hunger and inequality by creating decent work and other income-generating opportunities. In addition, accelerate efforts to build nationally appropriate universal social protection systems that are adequate, comprehensive and sustainable, to guarantee at least a basic level of social security for all to address vulnerabilities throughout the lifetime.

### **Civil Society Response at the Commission for Social Development**

The [NGO Committee for Social Development](#) has prepared a [Civil Society Declaration](#), which calls for a New Social Contract to Build Forward Better, with the following asks:

1. End Discrimination and invest in human dignity and wellbeing;
2. End hunger by building resilience for food security everywhere;
3. Invest in decent and sustainable jobs, and
4. Bridge the digital divide to access fundamental rights.

The **Call to Action** urges Member States to:

- Invest in national floors of social protection comprising social security guarantees and ensuring all have access to essential health and to basic income security, thus eradication poverty and preventing vulnerability and social exclusion.
- Establish a Global Fund for Social Protection to provide capacity to Least Developed Countries' to be able to maintain social protection floors in place.
- Expand availability of adequate housing, with special attention to the need of individuals and families experiencing homelessness for supportive services.
- Ensure persons living in poverty are equal before and under the law and are entitled, without discrimination to the equal protection and benefit of the law; and take appropriate measures to eliminating social stigma attached to the conditions of poverty, especially in the fields of education and work.

# JCoR Guide to CSocD60



## COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



United Nations Headquarters, New York



Department of Economic and Social Affairs



#CSocD #SDGs #GlobalGoals WEBSITE: [social.un.org/csocd](http://social.un.org/csocd)

*For your meaningful participation in CSocD60, the Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR) at the UN has prepared the [JCoR Guide to CSocD60](#), which has schedules for the UN events, Civil Society Forum, side events, links to the UN website and a social media guide for Twitter.*

- Scale up climate resilience across food systems, inclusive of the knowledge of the native environment, crops and farming practices held by indigenous peoples; intervene along the food supply chains to lower the cost of nutritious food, and improve sustainable practices to promote better dietary patterns with positive impacts on human health and the environment.
- Strive for coherence between climate, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development goals, with the support of public work programs in green sectors; including investment in renewable energy production.
- Promote decent work, education and upskilling for sustainable livelihoods for all, with a focus on women; and ensure that unpaid care work is supported through social protections to recognize, reduce and redistribute the nature of the work.
- Eliminate discrimination and other barriers to decent and sustainable work, ensuring an inclusive, rights-based world of work for all, including the informal sector and promoting social dialogue and workers' representation in decision-making.
- Promote universal access to the internet as a

right; and ensure access to digital technology and digital literacy for all people and nations.

- Support North/South technology transfer, strengthening science and technology cooperation, promoting sustainable global and domestic investments in infrastructure capabilities.

Do keep in mind that you can take up the **Call to Action** issues in your advocacy at the national and local levels.

[View/download](#) the **Civil Society Declaration**. This declaration is open to public signatures until February 1, 2022. [Sign to support the Declaration](#)

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[View/download](#) the **Copenhagen Declaration**