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# COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York



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Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs



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## 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development

### High-level panel discussion on the priority theme

**“Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda”**

Monday, 7 February 2022, 3:00 – 5:00pm

Virtual

### Draft Concept Note

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#### 1. Background

The Commission for Social Development will convene its sixtieth session from 7 to 16 February 2022 under the priority theme of “Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda”. The theme was decided by ECOSOC in its resolution E/RES/2021/8 on the methods of work of the Commission.

In its decision, ECOSOC also affirmed that the Commission would contribute to the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by supporting the thematic reviews of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The HLPF on sustainable development in 2022 will include a three-day ministerial segment with the theme “*Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*”.

The Council’s decision further reaffirmed that the Commission shall continue to review issues related to the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development and advise the Council thereon. As an integral part of the Commission’s deliberation to assess progress in the implementation of the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), a high-level panel discussion on the priority theme will be held virtually on 7 February 2022 from 3:00 to 5:00

pm, New York Time. Within its mandate, the Commission will provide policy guidance based on discussions and sharing of national experiences to promote inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all. The outcome of this panel discussion, together with that of the general discussion and the expected resolution on the priority theme will contribute to the work of the ECOSOC and the 2022 HLPF.

## **2. Context – Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda**

The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted efforts to achieve many of the SDGs by 2030, especially progress on SDG1 (end poverty) and SDG2 (end hunger). Without decisive action, the number of people living in extreme poverty is expected to reach 600 million (a global poverty rate of 7 %) in 2030. People already living in poverty and vulnerable situations overwhelmingly suffer from multiple forms of deprivations in the fields of education, health, and an array of living standards, including lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation services, electricity, decent housing, and cooking fuel. These deprivations, many of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis, are tightly interwoven and mutually reinforcing. People in rural areas have been particularly hard hit by the crisis. Of the 734 million extreme poor before the COVID-19 crisis, 80 percent live in rural areas.

Global hunger increased in the shadows of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 720 and 811 million people faced hunger in 2020, as many as 161 million more than in 2019. Over three billion people worldwide are unable to afford a healthy diet. A core challenge is not the lack of food, since sufficient food is produced globally, rather it is a matter of inequitable access to food. Falls in incomes combined with an increase in food prices have left many poor households struggling to meet their food needs, particularly nutritious and affordable food. Many rural households are employing harmful coping strategies, including selling their productive assets, such as farming equipment and livestock, to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on their immediate needs, and reducing the quantity, frequency, and nutritional value of meals.

Many countries have instituted emergency measures that have prevented the worst impacts of the pandemic from materializing. As the world moves from temporary measures to long-term recovery strategies, there is a need for putting in place integrated policy frameworks that promote inclusive growth, simultaneously addressing multiple dimensions of poverty, food insecurity, and inequality. Emerging lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic response must be integrated into recovery strategies, economic models, development policies, national disaster risk reduction strategies, and public and private investment decisions in all sectors.

Investing in human capacities and ensuring universal access to basic services and infrastructure is essential for an inclusive and equitable recovery. This includes access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation, quality schools, public transportation, quality health-care services that people can benefit from without incurring financial hardship, affordable housing, and reliable and affordable Internet.

There is a need to foster economic security and strengthen social protection systems, including floors. Recovery from the COVID-19 crisis provides a policy window for countries to address the significant gaps in social protection coverage, comprehensiveness, and adequacy, by building on

crisis response measures to make progress towards universal, adequate, comprehensive, and sustainable social protection systems.

Food systems should be efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable providing nutritious and affordable food for all. Investment in science, technology, and innovation in the field of agricultural development has the potential to increase agricultural productivity, resilience, and sustainability.

Investing in rural areas and inclusive rural transformation can help ensure a more equitable and inclusive recovery. Policy initiatives are needed to help revitalize rural economies and support poverty reduction, including, establishing inclusive social protection systems adapted to rural populations' needs, developing rural non-farm enterprises, addressing multiple dimensions of food security in rural areas, supporting agricultural development, and strengthening the resilience and adaptability of small-scale producers and family farmers, and investing in connectivity infrastructure

Domestic and international efforts must go hand in hand to close financing gaps and to create the fiscal space needed to safeguard development gains and enable a more inclusive and resilient recovery. The principle of solidarity should prevail not only at the national but also at the international level. With national budgets under strain, many low-income countries will be unable to close these financing gaps by relying solely on domestic resource mobilization.

### **3. Objectives**

Drawing on research and national experiences, the high-level panel discussion will seek to identify effective policies for an inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all. Discussions will focus on policies and strategies that have proven to be successful in eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda, at the global, regional, and national levels.

With this in mind, the key objective of the high-level panel discussion include:

- a. Share knowledge and experiences on how countries can design and implement integrated policy frameworks that promote inclusive growth, simultaneously addressing multiple dimensions of poverty, food insecurity, and inequality.
- b. Draw lessons learned from the impact of emergency measures taken by governments to extend social protection coverage in response to the COVID-19 crisis and examine how these (often) temporary measures could form the basis for strengthening national social protection systems in the longer term.
- c. Share examples of measures taken to support food security during the crisis and strategies that are being put in place to strengthen food systems to be efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable, providing nutritious and affordable food for all.
- d. Examine the differentiated impacts of COVID-19 on those experiencing poverty and food insecurity (including people living in rural and remote areas, women and children, older persons, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities) and discuss how to identify and address multiple dimensions of poverty and food insecurity, so that they can move out of poverty and enjoying nutritious and diversified diets.

#### **4. Structure and format of the panel discussion**

The high-level panel discussion on the priority theme will be chaired by the Chair of the Commission. The Chair will open the session with brief remarks and introduce the keynote speaker. The keynote speaker will deliver an address on the priority theme. After the keynote address, the Chair will introduce the panellists and invite them to make presentations, followed by questions directly related to the presentations from the audience/participants. After this short question and answer session, the Chair will open the floor for interactive dialogue.

Panellists are expected to structure their presentations around concrete policies and strategies in addressing poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to ensure an inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19. They are invited to highlight innovative approaches and lessons learned.

The outcomes of the discussions will be reflected in the Chair's summary, which will be one of the key inputs of the Commission for Social Development to the ECOSOC and the 2022 HLPF.

#### **Guiding questions**

- i. What are the main lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic response? How can they be integrated into recovery strategies, economic models, development policies, national disaster risk reduction strategies, and public and private investment decisions in all sectors?
- ii. What policies and measures are necessary to ensure equal access to essential services and basic infrastructure – including education, health-care services, internet connectivity safe, drinking water and sanitation, affordable housing, ensuring decent employment, and adequate social protection coverage – for the wellbeing of all people in the recovery from COVID-19 pandemic?
- iii. What policies and measures are needed to accelerate efforts to build nationally appropriate universal social protection systems that are adequate, comprehensive, and sustainable, including nationally-defined social protection floors that guarantee at least a basic level of social security for all, so as to address vulnerabilities throughout the lifetime, improve food security and nutrition outcomes as well as universal health coverage, and increase resilience to shocks and stressors? How can we ensure that those who are most vulnerable are covered by social protection systems?
- iv. Building on the UN Food System Summit, how can we strengthen food systems so that they become more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable, delivering healthy diets to end hunger and improve food security and nutrition?
- v. What global, regional, and national policies and strategies are required to address the impacts of COVID-19 on people living in rural areas and tackle the long-term structural challenges they face?
- vi. How can governments, the international community, and development partners strengthen their cooperation to close financing gaps to ensure adequate financial investment in basic public services and social protection systems?

**The time allocation for the panel discussion is as follows:**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Suggested Time</b>
Chair: Opening remarks and the introduction of the keynote speaker	5 minutes
Keynote speaker	10 minutes
Moderator/Chair: introduction/context-setting	5 minutes
Panellists (5): Presentations	7 minutes per panellist
Moderated interactive discussion	Q&A and open dialogue with participants of the Commission (Interventions limited to 3 minutes per speaker) (40 minutes)
Concluding remarks and Closing by the Chair	3 minutes
	Total: 2 hours