



ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

ECOSOC Informal Briefing

Joining Forces: Effective Policy Solutions for Covid-19 Response

11 May 2020, 10:00 - 12:00

The world is witnessing an unprecedented global emergency. Urgent action is needed to contain COVID-19, to save lives and to put countries back on track towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN Secretary-General, in his recent report "[Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19](#)" is sounding the alarm and calling on everyone to act together to address this impact and lessen the blow to people.

The General Assembly, in its resolution on *Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) (A/74/270)*, recognized that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic and that the impact of the crisis will reverse hard-won development gains and hamper progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Member States also reaffirmed their full commitment to the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development and underlined the need for the United Nations system to work as one to support all Governments.

The Economic and Social Council is addressing and complementing the ongoing efforts to mobilize a coordinated and coherent global response to the pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on societies.

While stopping the pandemic and saving lives must be the priority for all, Member States face policy options and tradeoffs in response and recovery. They also need to ensure that their immediate response to the pandemic is mindful of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and paves the way for relaunching and accelerating progress towards the SDGs. We have learned lessons through COVID-19 about the shortcomings of our social systems and their impact on inequality. We have also tried out new solutions such as the widespread use of information technology in education or other areas. Those lessons must enrich our accelerated efforts to reach the SDGs.

Through this informal briefing, the Council will bring together the leadership and expertise of the wider UN system, including the normative and analytical work of the UN specialized agencies, to discuss policy solutions that countries can use to combat the pandemic, preserve advances made and get back on track towards the SDGs. The briefing is convened based on ECOSOC's role to guide and coordinate the UN system in line with its Charter mandate.

The briefing will focus on:

- (i) the development of an enhanced and effective multilateral response to COVID-19 and paving the way for resuming progress towards the SDGs.
- (ii) calling attention to policy choices and integrated approaches that can help ensure no one is left behind, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, refugees, migrants, and minorities, in the response to COVID-19 at all levels.
- (iii) ensuring urgent international support for preparedness, response and recovery to countries in special situations.

Going forward, the July 2020 HLPF and future ECOSOC meetings, segments and forums will address responses to Covid-19. The Financing for Development Forum addressed the challenges of financing of the Covid-19 response in April 2020, and another financing forum meeting is planned for early June.

This briefing will have as a framework the recommendations contained in the [report of the Secretary-General](#). It will have the format of a moderated roundtable with short interventions of heads of UN entities. It will be organized with virtual participation of Member States and other stakeholders. The briefing will last two hours and will be chaired by the President of ECOSOC.

The briefing will be webcast live at webtv.un.org.