

In the wake of COVID-19, UN DESA undertook a range of immediate actions to support and advise the Secretary-General and help Member States to respond to the pandemic and navigate the policy choices ahead. Led by the COVID-19 response task team established in March 2020, the Department's experts have been closely monitoring the situation and the impact of the crisis on economic, social and sustainable development. The findings and related recommendations were shared through analytical reports, policy briefs, webinars, data and information hubs, enabling the international community to make informed decisions.

### Supporting the Secretary-General's initiatives in response to COVID-19

UN DESA has actively supported the Secretary-General's initiatives to counter COVID-19, contributing analysis to help policy makers take informed decisions. The Department supported the development of the United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response, which provides practical guidance to Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams. UN DESA also provided direct input to several policy papers and calls to action. The Department has contributed insights, and shared policy recommendations, on various socioeconomic challenges.



Photo Credit: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

### Policy brief and webinar series on the economic and social impact of COVID-19



UN DESA launched a special policy brief series on the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on 1 April 2020. The 23 thematic briefs, released from April to June 2020, highlighted a number of critical issues – including designing inclusive stimulus packages; preventing a global debt crisis; supporting countries in special situations; protecting the most vulnerable groups of people; strengthening the role of science, technology and institutions for an effective response; and working together to recover better and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The series was made available as a compilation volume **Responding to COVID-19 and Recovering Better**.

Looking ahead, the Department continues to provide updated analyses, policy recommendations and practical tools to support countries in recovering better from the pandemic and advancing the Decade of Action for sustainable development.

### Online dialogue: launch of the compilation of the High-level Advisory Board for Economic and Social Development (HLAB)

UN DESA convened 14 world renowned experts for a high-level panel event **Recover Better: Economic and Social Challenges and Opportunities** on 22 July 2020. The event launched a compilation of essays by HLAB members. The Volume reflects a wide range of development trends and issues of critical importance to the achievement of the SDGs and the recovery from COVID-19.



### COVID-19 response databases

UN DESA established the UN COVID-19 Data Hub and a COVID-19 resources portal for national statistical offices. This rapid response to the need for accurate, real-time data has been a welcome assistance to Member States, helping to guide informed decision-making amid the global pandemic.



COVID-19 Data



Healthcare Resources



Economy



Population

### Sustainable Development Outlook 2020

UN DESA released a special in-depth analysis focused on presenting scenarios for policy makers to shape action for achieving the SDGs in the wake of COVID-19.

The recommendations of the report revolve around three key messages:

1. The setbacks caused by COVID-19 need not be permanent.
2. Our recovery from the COVID-19 crisis must direct investment towards realization of the SDGs.
3. While the lockdowns and other measures taken during the crisis negatively impacted economies and livelihoods, many planet-related SDGs have benefited, a vivid revelation that the current ways of achieving prosperity conflict with the health of the planet.

