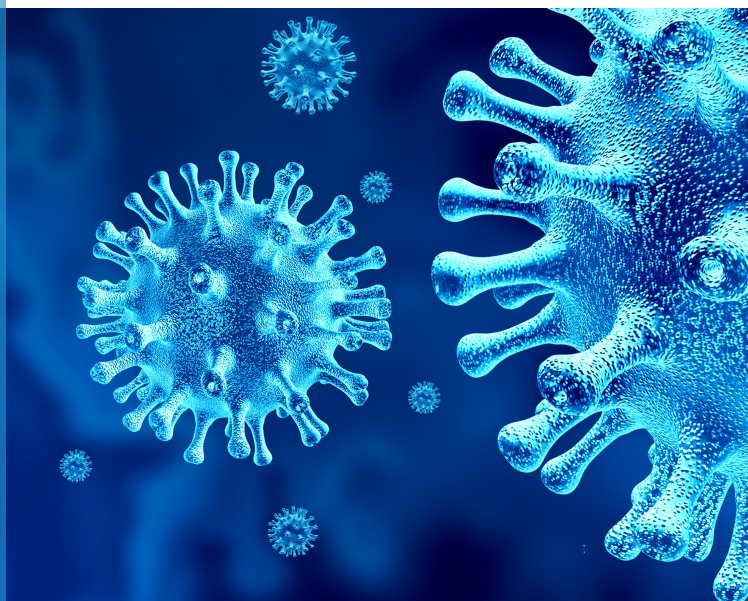


# UN COVID-19 RESPONSE IN ACTION

## UN RESPONSE TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF COVID-19



A PUBLICATION BY UNDP-UNDCO

## GLOBAL SNAPSHOT



70 countries now have a national response in place, 83 countries have at least one impact assessment and 120 countries have a response plan developed by the UN country teams.



### NATIONAL RESPONSE

70 countries have put in place a government national response plan. Many countries received UNCT technical support.



### IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

83 countries now have at least one UN socio-economic impact assessment. The total number of impact assessments recorded is 117.

Many countries started conducting deep-dive assessments focusing on a specific sector, theme or on a vulnerable group.



### RESPONSE PLANS

104 UNCT socio-economic response plans are finalized, covering 120 countries. This includes sub-regional response plans from the Barbados and Fiji MCOs covering 18 countries.

Some UN country teams have indicated they might not develop a separate socio-economic response plan. The majority of those with a response in the pipeline report that it should be finalized in coming weeks.



### ENGAGEMENT OF IFIs

About two thirds of UNCTs reported direct engagement of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) – mostly the World Bank, IMF, and Regional Development Banks – and/or the UN Regional Economic Commissions in the preparation of impact assessments and socio-economic response plans.



**United  
Nations**

The United Nations has mobilized the full capacity of the UN system through its 131 UN country teams (UNCTs) serving 162 countries and territories to support national authorities in developing socio-economic impact assessments and response plans to the COVID-19. Over June 2020–December 2021, the UN's support will be delivered through the UN global framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19. This newsletter – by the UN Development Programme and the UN Development Coordination Office – provides a snapshot of the UN action on the ground across the five thematic pillars of the UN Framework (protecting health services and systems; protecting people; economic response and recovery; macroeconomic response; and social cohesion and community resilience).

# ISSUE IN FOCUS

## RECOVERING BETTER: TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE AND CONNECTED FUTURE

The world is going through an unprecedented traumatic socio-economic crisis in modern times. Whether in growth or decline in human development, nearly all countries have been affected by the pandemic forcing them to make hard choices that affect lives and livelihoods.

Beyond the immediate response to the crisis, countries are already thinking about recovery and are realizing the devastating limits of current development practices. Indeed, “recovering better” is a central tenet of the Global Socioeconomic Response Framework.

In over 135 countries, the UN is conducting assessments of impact, and helping to formulate response plans. In terms of looking at a better recovery, two encouraging patterns are emerging: (1) willingness of countries to address pre-existing and underlying conditions (e.g. inequalities both horizontal and vertical), which is a *sine qua non* condition for sustained and sustainable recovery; and (2) the need to build in ‘accelerators’ – innovations that, with sufficient investment and capacities, can help fast-track solutions towards a more inclusive and sustainable society and economy (e.g. leveraging the opportunity for digital transformation).

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC INSIGHTS

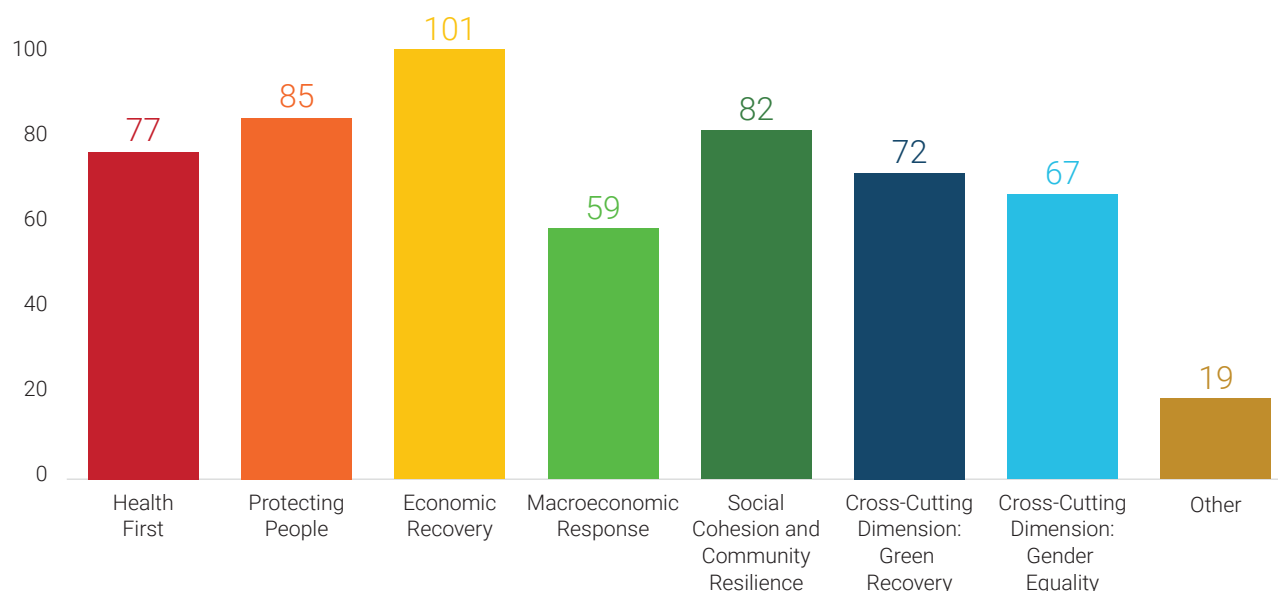
The health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19 across countries continue to evolve with more than 27 million confirmed cases and 891 thousand deaths globally (as of 8 September). Two out of three COVID-19 deaths happened in developing countries. While the impact of the pandemic has been felt across all countries, the intensity of the impact depends on the diverse coping ability of countries, societies and economies.

Multifaceted crises have affected the context the UN system is operating globally by directly reversing the hard gains made by countries against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), requiring different sets of policies and solutions to respond, impacting severely the existing infrastructure and services. The socio-economic impact assessments (SEIAs) are expected to position the UN in the policy dialogue with the governments and to eventually inform the development of National Response/Recovery Plans and UNCT Response Plans.

The objective of impact assessments are many fold, including understanding the impact of COVID-19 across the five pillars of the UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, with a special focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups. Most assessments include micro household surveys, and a focus on livelihoods and MSMEs. For some countries, a micro survey will be repeated over time to monitor and assess the impact on MSMEs throughout the year. Impact assessments have moved beyond forecasting and scenario analyses to needs assessments that will feed a future development portfolio. This is important because it sets the course for response and recovery, focusing on issues that are context specific.

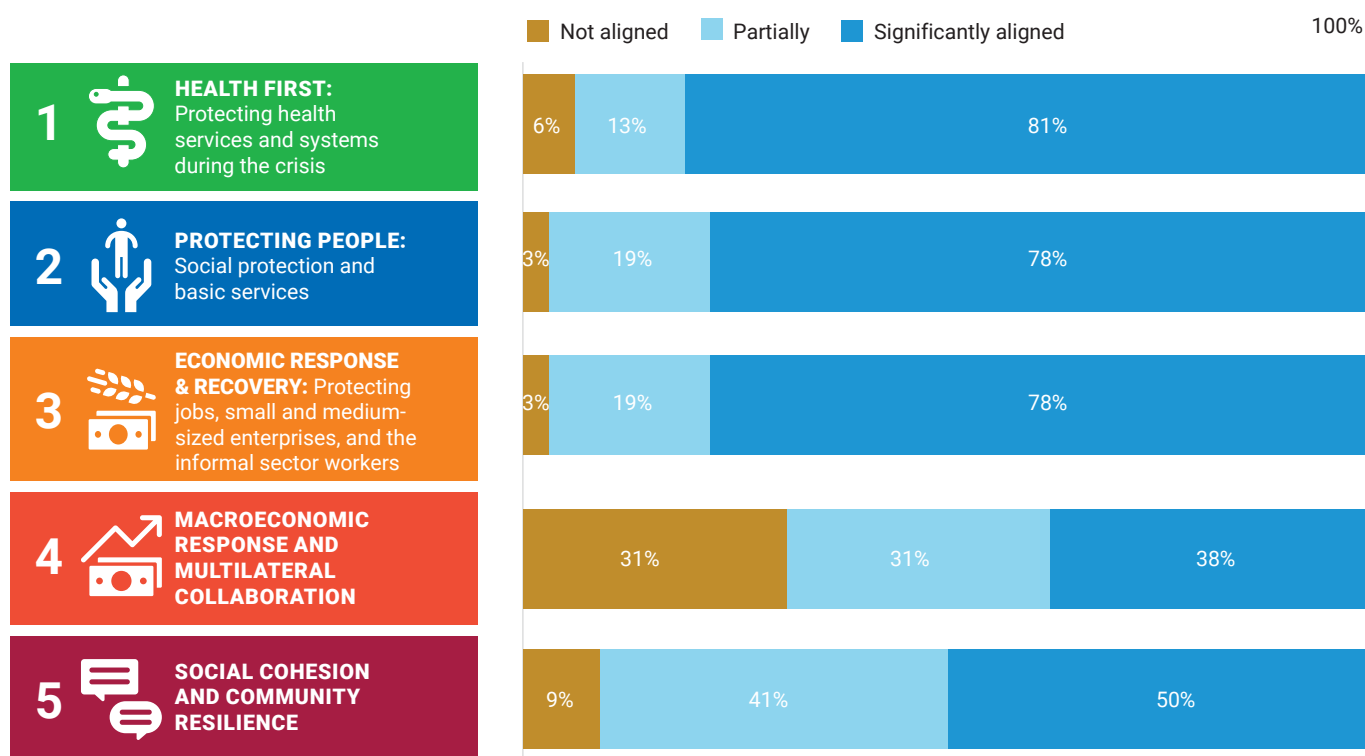
Below is the focus of impact assessment across the five pillars of the UN Framework (protecting health, protecting people, economic recovery, macroeconomic response, social cohesion and community resilience) and the cross-cutting dimensions of green recovery and gender equality.

## FOCUS OF SEIAs ACROSS THE FIVE PILLARS AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES OF THE UN FRAMEWORK



# SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSE PLANS

Overall, response plans are increasingly aligned to the global UN socio-economic response framework, providing a more comprehensive and integrated UN offer to the country.



The majority of response plans have a timeline until 31 December 2021. Some of the first wave plans are expected to conclude in 2020, followed by an updated and second socio-economic response plan. All of the response plans are expected to be reviewed on a regular basis through joint work/implementation plans.

96 out of 104 socio-economic response plans are fully costed (amounting to funding needs of approx. \$31.9bn). Out of the costed plans, 85 indicate funding gap (amounting to \$11bn in funding gap). The ten

largest plans account for approximately. \$20.5bn: many of these identify the Government as an implementing partner - Venezuela (\$7.42bn USD), Pakistan (\$3.89bn), Uzbekistan (\$3.37bn), Iraq (\$1.3bn), and Somalia (\$887mn).

124 UNCTs have repurposed existing funding. 95 UNCTs provided the figure for the amount repurposed. On average, \$29.9mn was repurposed per UNCT – totaling \$2.79bn for the current programming cycle of each country.

# FINANCING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

## UN RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FUND

The UN Response and Recovery Fund was established by the UN Secretary-General in April 2020. It completed its first round of investments, worth \$46million in 47 countries at the end of May. In June, the Fund mobilized an additional \$19.7 million in pledges during the Recovery Better Action Forum hosted by the UN Deputy Secretary-General. A second online-based call for proposals for around US\$ 20 million was launched on 17 August with a deadline to submit concept notes by 31 August. It focuses on strategic unfunded priorities from the UNCT socio-economic response plans. Beyond its own investments, the objective of the call is also to develop a pipeline of solutions that UN leadership can present to other sources of funding, with an emphasis on green and/or digital solutions that enable a response to the immediate crisis and strengthen prospects for SDG achievement. An interagency review team is currently reviewing the proposals and will inform the UN country teams in the next few weeks.



# WHAT'S NEW?

## AVAILABLE GUIDANCE FOR UNCTs

**UN Info monitoring of programmatic results from implementing the UN framework for the immediate response to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.** The UN Info platform managed by UNDCO hosts – in addition to the online versions of the Cooperation Frameworks and Joint Workplans – the programmatic COVID-19 socioeconomic response indicators developed by the inter-agency task team. It is not meant to be a comprehensive account of all UN activities on the socio-economic response, but a selection of critical indicators. These indicators complement other entity-specific COVID-19 related data collection efforts. Under the leadership of UNDP and DCO, agencies have developed methodological

notes for each indicator, which specify lead agencies, methodology and frequency of data collection at the country level. The programmatic indicators and Joint workplans will be on the new COVID-19 Data portal: <https://data.uninfo.org>. [Methodological notes are now available [here](#)] [[Video tutorial](#) to use UNINFO]

### **Checklist for a Human Rights-Based Approach to Socio-Economic Country Responses to COVID-19.**

This checklist provides a list of potential actions, tools, and resources to ensure a human rights-based approach to socio-economic country responses to COVID-19, with a focus on at-risk groups. This checklist was developed by OHCHR and UNDP, in collaboration with UN DCO. [Available [here](#)]

## LATEST READINGS, DATA AND ANALYTICS

- FAO (2 September 2020): [Policy Brief COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme](#) - Trade and food safety standards: Facilitating and accelerating food and agricultural trade during COVID-19 and beyond.
- UN Secretary-General [Policy Brief](#) (21 August 2020): 'COVID-19 and Transforming Tourism' highlights that tourism is one of the sectors most impact by the pandemic, and advocates for enhanced coordination and partnerships for recovery.
- ILO (19 August 2020): [Report](#) on social protection responses to COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific - The story so far and future considerations.
- UNICEF (27 August 2020): [Report](#): COVID-19: Are children able to continue learning during school closures? A global analysis of the potential reach of remote learning policies.
- UNICEF (17 August 2020): [Report](#) on Recover, Rebound, Reimagine - UNICEF predicts that an additional 22 million children in Southeast Asia and the Pacific could fall into poverty in 2020 because of the pandemic.
- UNDP (23 July 2020): [Report](#) on 'Temporary Basic Income: Protecting Poor and Vulnerable People in Developing Countries' notes that a TBI is within reach for many countries and can increase the resilient of the poor and the near poor.
- WFP: [Hunger Map](#) Live - WFP's hunger monitoring system features daily and weekly hunger and COVID19 snapshots; and key data collected remotely every day.



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This Information Bulletin was prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO).