

UDEMUN

2021 | RISE FOR PEACE. UNITE FOR HUMANITY



Topic: Evaluating the Regression in the Process of Achieving the SDGs due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Adapting the International Cooperation for the Goals for the Prevention of a Future Relapse.

Committee: United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a cross-border organization that contributes to the UN system for its vitality in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These are 17 interconnected goals incorporated in 2015 to improve the quality of life on the planet by dismantling inequalities, working towards peace, and protecting the planet.

The committee was established in November of 1965 because of the merger of two UN organs, the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund. These bodies were executing matching functions, which gave formation to what is currently the United Nations Development Programme.

The UNDP works along with 177 countries and territories to develop institutional capabilities, creating resilience, establishing policies, and building leadership and partnering abilities. It creates efforts to achieve sustainable development, raise equal democratic governance, and build resilience for crisis and disaster scenarios. While working in these areas, the UNDP responsibly seeks for the wellbeing of the most vulnerable and their protection by creating solutions that encourage the applicability of Human Rights.

To provide aid, it works along with a five-year Country Programme in which it introduces modern technologies, finances projects to attract capital investment, forms skilled employees, and makes experts available who promote the capability of a good government to developing countries. This committee also implements the use of a resident representative, whose purpose is to help organize the local work of other UN programs and agencies as well as those of the non-governmental organizations.

The United Nations Development Programme plays an important advisory role in accomplishing the sustainable development agenda, a task that it achieves while keeping in mind the Member State's priorities and the country's context. It works at a country level to foster coordination with the UN structure to provide system-wide services and State support programs that accomplish the 2030 Agenda SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). By taking part in 66 "Delivering as One" initiatives along with the Standard Operating Procedures, it authorizes the utilization of UN Country Teams that work in a more coherent, effective, and

efficient way that minimizes transaction charges, reduces duplication and amplifies common proposals and initiatives.

Moreover, its work is possible because of its network of 40 bodies from the UN system including funds, programs, specialized agencies, among others which work to fulfill the SDGs. Additionally, it partnered with governments and international financial institutions such as the World Bank, Islamic finance, the private sector, foundations, civil society organizations, goodwill ambassadors, and advocates to not only finance its activities but expand their strategies.

Besides this, the UNDP works with the appropriate Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as partners after the program weighs the strengths and weaknesses of the given body to ensure that both entities will benefit from the strategies they will be applying. These NGOs may help in the work of concrete SDGs, specifically through distinct initiatives such as Caribbean Energy Efficiency Lighting Project, Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, among others. In addition, the committee has a well-established promise of transparency, annually publishing programs, financial, and procurement data on websites, seen through the creation of the Aid Transparency Initiative in 2008. (United Nations Development Programme, 2020)

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I. History of the Topic

The Sustainable Development Goals, as previously mentioned, are a focus point for the United Nations Development Programme. Still, the UN organ describes the advancement of the goals as “uneven and needs more focused attention in most areas” (The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2020). Still, their emphasis on global health helped reach efforts to end infectious diseases such as HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, hepatitis, and neglected tropical diseases, and the epidemics of SARS, influenza, Ebola, and Zika (Raviglione, M., Maher, D., 2017). Many of these health matters received UN attention, yet they didn’t affect the international strategies towards the SDGs because of their limited repercussions on a global scale. Still, mutation, rising resistance to antimicrobial

drugs and weak health systems are all factors that make past infections continue to pose a threat to the international system.

Because of the interrelation between the goals, it should be noted that these diseases and the formation of others will impact not only the third SDG “good health and well-being” (UNDP, n.d.) but also the other 16 goals the UNDP expects to achieve by 2030. It will affect marginalized communities, placing them in a disadvantaged position and at the risk of falling into poverty. For goal #4, it will be causing children to have to detain their education for their own wellbeing and health. Jobs will be disrupted, affecting international economies, as well as the actions for the achievement of innovation, excelling climate measures, protecting the environment, and efforts for justice. Another goal that will be affected by the current global pandemic is #5, in which the progress for equality and empowerment for women and girls could be compromised professionally, socially, and economically.

II. Current Issues

According to the United Nations Development Programme’s 2020 data, since the COVID-19 pandemic started, the establishment of actions towards the SDGs has been disrupted. It comes so far as to say that it has turned back decades of progress, showing this through the newborn vulnerability of people in situations of extreme poverty (around 71 million people) and rising inequalities in housing, socioeconomic, and health status. Besides, education has been greatly affected, reporting that 1.57 billion students have had to be kept out of school due to their closures. This caused 370 million children to stop receiving school meals, the development of children to decrease, and a higher amount of child trafficking, child marriage, and child labor. Additionally, the interruption of vaccination and immunization initiatives is expected to lead to deaths on account of communicable diseases, such as malaria and salmonella.

Three reasons factor in, such as the speed at which a disease can travel across borders due to air travel, the availability of time to track the source and how it progresses, and the difficulty of acquiring the correct drugs in the right place at the right time (Global Agenda, 2020).

Needless to say, the international concern for epidemics and pandemics is rising since three reasons factor in:

The speed at which a disease can travel across borders

Due to air travel, virus movement is facilitated across borders. Adding to the fact that viruses are a danger to society for how quickly they emerge, according to O'Dowd, approximately 2 billion people are carried by airlines. This number is expected to grow due to the increasing affordability and flying ease, making this a pathway to the surge and spread of pandemics. Guidelines provided by airlines and health officials show the responsibility held by the flight crew, and public health officials and professionals. (Mangili, Gendreau). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, countries held restrictions on border movement, yet reports found that they quickly took away travel bans and required no tests or quarantine for the economy to proceed.

The availability of time to track the source and how it progresses

Epidemiologists are responsible for finding disease outbreaks and their source. Varying methods exist for them to carry on this investigation and be able to find a cure or treatment for the illness. Though these methods have been proven to be effective, the time epidemiologists have to conduct this is limiting, considering the speed at which it spreads towards the population. Because of this time limit, it becomes hard to inform the public without communicating false information. (Helft, Willingham, 2014)

The difficulty of acquiring the correct drugs in the right place at the right time

Usually, vaccines cannot be available early during a pandemic. Monto (2006) explains that "only vaccines and antiviral drugs are clearly efficacious in preventing infection or treating illness." Such has been the case for the coronavirus pandemic, where the phenomenon hits in waves and different ways depending on the location. Still, their creation and implementation are not simple. Viruses can mutate and affect in different ways, making vaccines and treatment hard to guarantee to the general population, making this a challenge to the process of preventing, diagnosing, and treating infectious diseases. (Sample, 2020)

Furthermore, climate change influences greatly the formation and transmission of new diseases. As the UN World Health Organization puts it, "changes in infectious disease transmission patterns are a likely major consequence of climate change." E. Gould (2009), explains that climate change allows the ecological

conditions for animals that transmit viruses such as arthropods to survive.

In addition, the indirect change of this phenomenon affects the contamination of water and foods by bacteria, increase in number and activity of vectors, and the expansion of infected areas. Because of this, there is an increase in water, food, or mosquito-borne infectious diseases, resulting in the start and expansion of new illnesses. Therefore, as climate change continues to lead the world's condition, the probability of pandemics emerging and disorganizing the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

III. UN Actions

As of immediate response, the United Nations' priority is the health of the globe. As previously mentioned, even before the pandemic, accessibility to good health and well-being was defined as a 'progressing path', which can be further described as one of the hardest goals to achieve. Through the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN has worked to relieve the impact that COVID-19 has and will take on health manners around the world. It has applied "The Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan" (World Health Organization, 2020), which outlines public health measures that the international community has taken to respond and prepare for the ongoing pandemic.

Additionally, the World Health Organization (2020) has also created the "COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund", which aims to support the organization's resource distribution, research, and understanding of the virus and accelerate the creation of a vaccine. To achieve greater compliance in the efficient performance of these actions, the organization has also published information documents and action proposals such as the "COVID-19 Strategy Update", a text published in April 2020 that includes different types of response and data which seeks to help States and the development of the pandemic inside them.

In April of 2020, the "UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19" was released, a document in which the protection of health services and personal, the maintenance of jobs and businesses, the impartation of social services, the strengthening of multinational and regional policies and promotions of community-resilience are defined as the main focuses for the development of the globe (United Nations Sustainable Development Group, 2020). Due to the growth of domestic violence and gender inequalities in the pandemic,

several efforts have been created by bodies such as UN Women, which have distinctly reached out to support actions to resolve educational regressions, gender-based violence/discrimination, and lack of jobs for women.

IV. Conclusions

Finally, having the COVID-19 pandemic as an example of the risk the United Nations has of having their strategies disturbed, UDEMUN 2021's United Nations Development Programme will be expected to address the critical condition the Sustainable Development Goals are under. Through academic, diplomatic, and organized dialogue, the delegates will be expected to propose courses of action the SDGs should take moving forward in a world where pandemics become common.

Considering the UN's previous actions, delegates must submit solutions that are innovative, realistic, and relevant to the topic at hand. Delegates shall also acknowledge the information specified in this background paper for the creation of their resolutions, clearly identifying the differences that will be made to the management of the Goals for the prevention of future recessions.

V. Guiding Questions

1. What actions has your country previously taken to achieve the SDGs?
2. How has your delegation's progress of the SDGs been affected by epidemics and pandemics?
3. Which SDGs have been impacted by the regression in your country?
4. What aspects of the SDGs' strategy does your delegation believe should be addressed by the committee?
5. To what extent can the SDG strategies change for this new worldwide necessity?
6. How can the committee make sure the prevention of SDG regression is possible in developing countries?

7. How can the global community measure and report their progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals during times of crisis?
8. How can the way the world acts toward health crises change for the benefit of the Goals?

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