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ECOSOC

Tackling global poverty and income inequality in the post pandemic era



ECOSOC is the United Nations main venue for the discussion of economic and social issues and concerns. ECOSOCs main agenda is to promote collective action for a sustainable world. They are responsible for promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress through creating solutions and facilitating change. ECOSOC, oversee economic and social issues, are responsible for addressing increasing poverty rates and increasing income inequalities after pandemics due to mass 'layoffs' (firing of employees), inability to work, and increasing costs of living.

Background/ extra info on the topic

Wealth inequalities in the post-pandemic era have been driven by an uneven economic recovery, job market disparities, and the concentration of corporate wealth. High-income nations, with strong fiscal policies and stimulus measures, rebounded more quickly, while developing countries, burdened by debt and weaker social protections, struggled to regain stability. Job losses disproportionately affected low-wage and informal sector workers, while wealthier individuals benefited from remote work opportunities and financial investments. Meanwhile, major corporations, particularly in technology, e-commerce, and pharmaceuticals, experienced record profits, further widening the gap between the rich and the poor. Inflation and the rising cost of living have also disproportionately impacted low- and middle-income households, as they spend a larger share of their earnings on essentials like food, housing, and healthcare. The digital divide has further reinforced inequality, as those with access to technology and education adapted more easily to the changing job market, while marginalized communities fell behind.

Additionally, many governments, facing rising debt, have implemented austerity measures that reduce social protections, further exacerbating economic disparities. Addressing these inequalities requires global financial reforms, progressive taxation, stronger labor protections,

and investments in education, healthcare, and digital infrastructure to ensure a more equitable recovery.

Income inequality has widened significantly as wealth distribution has become more uneven. While many low-wage workers faced job losses and reduced income, wealthier individuals and large corporations saw record profits, particularly in the technology and pharmaceutical industries. Reports from Oxfam indicate that the world's richest 1% captured nearly two-thirds of all new wealth generated since 2020. The lack of access to healthcare, digital infrastructure, and social protection mechanisms has further deepened disparities between developed and developing nations.

In response, governments and international organizations have implemented various relief measures, including direct cash transfers, economic stimulus packages, and debt relief programs. However, these solutions have been unevenly distributed, and many low-income nations continue to struggle with high debt burdens and inflation, limiting their ability to invest in poverty alleviation. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have emphasized the need for structural reforms, such as progressive taxation, investment in education, and labor protections, to promote long-term economic recovery and equitable growth.

Key issues to debate

1. Economic Recovery & Debt Relief
2. Taxation & Wealth Redistribution
3. Labor Rights & Wages
4. Access to Education
5. Social Safety Nets & Universal Basic Income (UBI)
6. Role of International Cooperation & Sustainable Development
7. Social attitudes and norms post pandemic

Past International actions

African union and debt relief initiatives looks at several African nations, struggling with debt and economic instability, they implemented the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), which temporarily paused debt payments for low-income countries. Governments in **Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria** also expanded social protection programs, including food assistance and youth employment schemes. They continue their efforts through: direct financial aid, progressive taxation, digital welfare systems, and structural economic reforms.

China's poverty eradication and rural development- in 2020 China declared an official end to extreme poverty, they did this through rural development programmes, infrastructure investment and direct aid to low income households. China has also focused on common prosperity policies, and aims to reduce income gaps by regulating high corporate profits and increasing social spending.

European union social welfare and worker protection is an agreement with the countries of the EU that help strengthen safety nets. For example nations like **France** and **Germany** executed job retention schemes that prevent mass layoffs. The EU has also issued a Recovery and Resilience Facility that allocates €750 billion to support economic recovery in particularly hardest hit member states

In **Australia** a 'JobKeeper wage subsidy program' was introduced, this provided businesses with financial aid to keep employees during the pandemic. Australia also expanded unemployment benefits through 'JobSeeker programs' offering individuals temporary increased payments. But as pandemic relief measures ended, concerns about rising living costs and housing affordability continued. Efforts continue to focus on minimum wage increases and social welfare reforms.

Conclusion

Addressing global poverty and income inequality in the post-pandemic era requires a multifaceted approach that includes economic recovery strategies, social welfare policies, and international cooperation. The pandemic has exacerbated existing disparities, making it essential for governments, international organizations, and private sectors to work together in fostering inclusive growth, sustainable development, and social protection mechanisms. While various countries have implemented stimulus programs, job recovery initiatives, and social support systems, ongoing efforts must focus on ensuring equitable access to resources, education, and employment opportunities. As delegates deliberate on potential solutions, it is crucial to emphasize policies that promote long-term resilience, financial stability, and a fairer global economic system.

Questions to consider

- Should international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank) cancel or restructure debt for developing nations?
- How can governments balance economic recovery with rising inflation and national debt?
- Should there be a global wealth tax on billionaires and multinational corporations to reduce inequality?
- How can tax policies be reformed to ensure fairer wealth distribution while maintaining economic growth?
- Should there be a push for a universal living wage or stronger labor protections worldwide?
- How can informal and gig economy workers be better integrated into social protection systems?
- What policies can ensure equal access to education in low-income and rural areas?
- Should countries implement universal basic income (UBI) as a long-term solution to poverty?
- What role should governments play in strengthening healthcare, unemployment benefits, and food security programs?
- How can international organizations like the UN, WTO, and WHO coordinate efforts to reduce post-pandemic poverty?
- What policies should be prioritized to ensure economic recovery aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
- How have people's attitudes to working and being in public changed (new types of jobs, fear- of illnesses and public interactions post pandemic, changing lifestyles, lack of money coming out of quarantine)?
- What policies can be put in place to make working and education more accessible and reduce income inequalities to everyone and ensure that people can meet the cost of living?

Countries list

Armenia

Australia

Austria

Canada

China

Costa Rica

E. Guinea

Finland

France

Haiti

Italy

Japan

Kenya

Laos

Nepal

Netherlands

Poland

Qatar

Tanzania