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UNDP Statement

**Third intersessional meeting on human rights and the 2030 Agenda
'Building back better: Integrating human rights in sustainable and resilient
recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic'**

15:00 – 17:00 (CET), 14 January 2021

Word count: 319 words (time suggested: 2 minutes)

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global human development is on course to decline for the first time since 1990. A recent UNDP [study](#) found that the pandemic could push the total number of people living in extreme poverty to over one billion by 2030¹.

The pandemic curtailed a wide range of basic human rights. Whilst many measures were necessary to tackle the pandemic head-on, the pandemic has exacerbated exclusion and highlighted inequalities and there is a disproportionate impact on certain groups who are [affected differently](#).

[Responses to the pandemic that respect human rights](#) will result in *better outcomes* in beating COVID-19. Working with UN Country Teams, UNDP is co-leading the socio-economic response to COVID-19 and is taking a [human rights-based approach to COVID-19 response](#) that puts people at the centre of the recovery. It is based on the principles of participation and inclusion; accountability and the rule of law; as well as non-discrimination and equality. In doing so it is critical that we limit backsliding on progress toward both SDG 10 on addressing inequalities and SDG 16 on supporting peaceful, just and inclusive institutions which are both central to build forward better.

¹ [Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals | SDG Integration \(undp.org\)](#)

Our support includes everything from helping to [reduce prison overcrowding in Mali](#) to supporting media outlets and youth with the [dissemination of accurate information in Cambodia](#). UNDP also continues to support National Human Rights Institutions that are playing a pivotal part in providing rights-based responses to the COVID-19 pandemic --from Bangladesh to Sierra Leone and beyond.

We must ensure that the provision of a “people’s vaccine” is a global public good. UNDP is committed to stand up for human rights to help the world to beat the pandemic and drive forward progress on the Sustainable Development Goals -- ultimately helping the world to emerge from this crisis with more sustainable and more equal societies.