



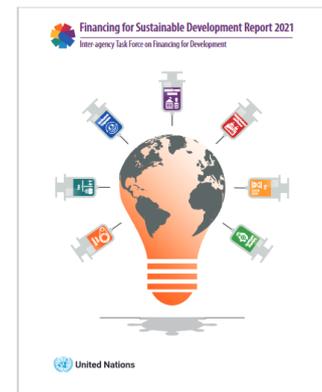
## New UN websites & publications

### UN in General

#### Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2021

<https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2021>

The COVID-19 pandemic has reversed development gains for millions in poor countries, creating an even more sharply unequal world, according to a new UN report released on 25 March 2021. "The global economy has experienced "the worst recession in 90 years, with the most vulnerable segments of societies disproportionately affected", said the [Inter-agency Task Force on Financing](#) in their *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2021*, pointing out that some 114 million jobs have been lost, and about 120 million people have been plunged back into extreme poverty. The highly uneven response to the pandemic has "widened the already yawning disparities and inequities within and between countries and peoples", according to the 60 international agencies that authored the report. And while an historic \$16 trillion in stimulus and recovery funds released by governments worldwide have helped to stave off the worst effects, less than 20 per cent of it was spent in developing countries. By January, all but nine of the 38 States rolling out vaccines were developed countries. Before COVID-19, around half of least developed and other low-income countries were under threat of, or already experiencing, debt distress. Coupled with falling tax revenues, that has subsequently sent debt levels soaring. In the world's poorest countries, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could be pushed back another 10 years, warns the report. The report says that immediate action is needed to address widening inequalities, rebuild better, and prevent the development reversal.



#### UN Catch-Up Dateline Geneva: a new podcast from the UN News team + UN Geneva Information Service

<https://news.un.org/en/audio-hub>



Published every Friday morning, UN Catch-Up Dateline Geneva is a weekly 15-minute news podcast from the UN News team, covering the week's headlines from UN agencies and their partners in the Swiss city and beyond. Available on the [UN News audio platform](#), [SoundCloud](#) and [UN Geneva](#).

Regular features also include a short interview with UN experts on key topics making the news + input and insight from Latin America and the African continent from guests Solange Behoteguy Cortes and Alpha Diallo from UN Geneva.

## Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



### #OnlyTogether supports global vaccine equity call

<https://www.onlytogether.art>

The United Nations has launched a new global campaign, *Only Together* to support its call for fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines around the world. More than 2.5 million people around the world have died from COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccines will stop people from dying, prevent new variants from emerging, reignite economies and offer the best hope to end the pandemic. The biggest vaccine roll out in history is now underway with millions of doses being delivered around the world, through the efforts of [COVAX](#), the global vaccine equity mechanism.

see also: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1087072>

### Policy Brief: Liquidity and Debt Solutions to Invest in the SDGs: The Time to Act is Now (March 2021)

<https://bit.ly/3u5x3oL>

The purpose of this policy brief is to take stock of the global policy response since April 2020, assess remaining gaps and challenges for their implementation, and propose updates to the original recommendations in light of developments over the last year.

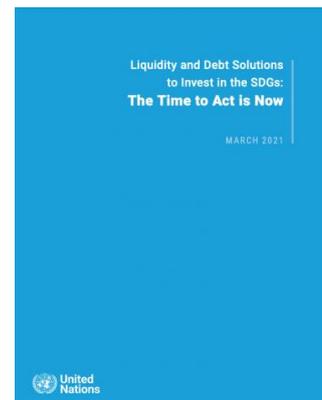
see also:

English – <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1088502>

French – <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2021/03/1092842>

Spanish – <https://news.un.org/es/story/2021/03/1490212>

Portuguese [BR] – <https://news.un.org/pt/story/2021/03/1745962>



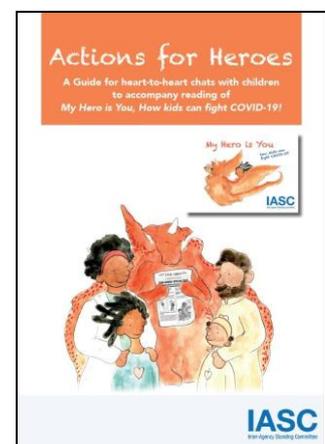
### Actions for Heroes, A Guide for heart-to-heart chats with Children to accompany reading of My Hero is You, How kids can fight COVID-19!

<https://bit.ly/2Oneu04>

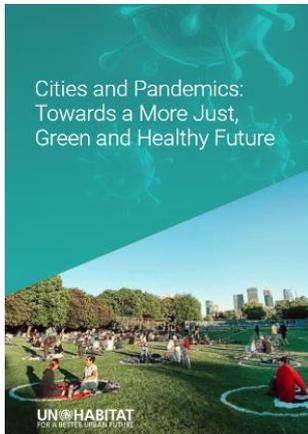
The *Actions for Heroes Guide* is developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings ([IASC MHPSS RG](#)) to accompany reading the children's storybook [My Hero is You, How kids can fight COVID-19!](#)

The storybook *My Hero is You* explains how children can protect themselves, their families and their friends from the coronavirus and how to manage difficult emotions when confronted with our new and rapidly changing reality. The storybook has been translated into [135+ languages](#) and multimedia [adaptations](#) have been made.

It is recommended that adults read the storybook WITH children. As they read the storybook, *Actions for Heroes* directs adults about how to have heart-to-heart chats with children and educates them about coping with COVID-19 related stressors and changes. It explains



how adults can create safe spaces for children to openly share their feelings, including their fears and worries, about the coronavirus and frustrations at their changed daily lives. The Guide also directs adults on how to promote positive actions that children can take to protect themselves and others.



### **Cities and Pandemics: Towards a more just, green and healthy future (UN-Habitat)**

<https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-report-on-cities-and-pandemics-towards-a-more-just-green-and-healthy-future>

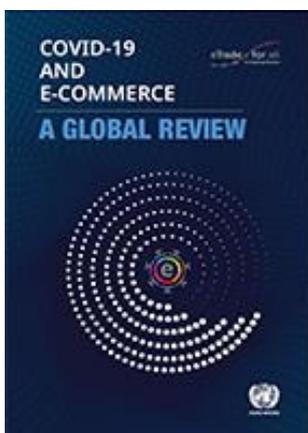
UN-Habitat's new report demonstrates how cities can reduce the impact of future pandemics and become more equitable, healthy and environmentally friendly. Urban areas have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis, with 95 per cent of all cases recorded in cities in the first months. Urban areas were faced with a rapidly changing public health crisis, along with challenges in safe public transport, increased water and sanitation needs, use of public spaces and the economic consequences of lockdowns. Despite these pressures, many local governments and community leaders responded quickly and effectively to prevent the spread of the pandemic and mitigate

its effects, taking the first steps towards an accelerate recovery. Based on the documentation of more than 1,700 cities and well-founded policy analysis, the UN-Habitat Report provides both empirical evidence on the state of cities and recommendations for actions for a sustainable recovery.

### **COVID-19: How Will European Banks Fare? (IMF)**

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Departmental-Papers-Policy-Papers/Issues/2021/03/24/COVID-19-How-Will-European-Banks-Fare-50214>

A robust post-COVID-19 recovery will depend on banks having sufficient capital to provide credit. While most European banks entered the pandemic with strong capital levels, they are highly exposed to economic sectors hit hard by the pandemic. A new IMF study assesses the impact of the pandemic on European banks' capital through its effect on profitability, asset quality, and risk exposures. The approach differs from other recent studies—by the European Central Bank and European Banking Authority—because it incorporates policy support provided to banks and borrowers. It also incorporates granular estimates of corporate sector distress, and examines a larger number of European countries and banks.



### **COVID-19 and E-Commerce: A Global Review (UNCTAD)**

<https://unctad.org/webflyer/covid-19-and-e-commerce-global-review>

In years to come, we will look back at 2020 as the moment that changed everything. Nowhere else has unprecedented and unforeseen growth occurred as in the digital and e-commerce sectors, which have boomed amid the COVID-19 crisis. Amid slowing economic activity, COVID-19 has led to a surge in e-commerce and accelerated digital transformation. As lockdowns became the new normal, businesses and consumers increasingly "went digital", providing and purchasing more goods and services online, raising e-commerce's share of global retail trade from 14% in 2019 to about 17% in 2020. These and other findings are showcased in a new report, released on 15 March 2021, by UNCTAD and eTrade for all partners, reflecting on the powerful global and regional industry transformations recorded throughout 2020.

## COVID-19 and the Looming Debt Crisis (UNICEF-IRC)

<https://bit.ly/3mmysVn>

Around one in eight nations spends more on debt than on social services, according to a new report from the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched on 1 April 2021, calling for debt service relief and restructuring to enable countries to bounce back from the pandemic. The report notes that in 2019, 25 mostly poverty-stricken countries spent a higher proportion of government expenditures on debt services than they did on education, health and social protection combined.



## COVID-19 Global Education Recovery Tracker

<https://equityschoolplus.jhu.edu/global-tracker/>

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted education for 1.6 billion children worldwide over the past year. To help measure the ongoing global response, Johns Hopkins University, the World Bank, and UNICEF have partnered to create a [COVID-19 - Global Education Recovery Tracker](https://equityschoolplus.jhu.edu/global-tracker/). Launched on 26 March 2021, the tool assists countries' decision-making by tracking reopening and recovery planning efforts in more than 200 countries and territories.

## COVID-19, Posts and Direct Marketing (UPU)

[https://upu.int/UPU/media/upu/news/UPU-DMAB-COVID19-report\\_1.pdf](https://upu.int/UPU/media/upu/news/UPU-DMAB-COVID19-report_1.pdf)

"As shown by a study led by Royal Mail, with more people at home, direct mail matters more and is driving online transactions more than ever," the UPU Direct Marketing Advisory Board (DMAB) wrote in its new report titled, "COVID-19, Posts and Direct Marketing." The DMAB is comprised of postal operators, private-sector companies and industry associations. Building on exclusive insights from direct marketing markets players, including among the biggest postal stakeholders in the world (The United States Postal Service and China Post) and leading industry associations, the UPU report provides an in-depth analysis, the way forward and highlights opportunities for direct marketing during and after the pandemic. Similar to global mail volumes, direct marketing saw a downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But, as with the 2008 financial crisis, posts may help revive direct marketing as economies recover, according to the report. The report shows that physical direct mail remains a core business for Posts (80 per cent of designated Operators provide the service), while the current pandemic and the growth of E-commerce have accelerated the need for Posts to position themselves as the consolidators of physical and digital services in the direct marketing space.



## COVID-19 surveillance bulletin

<https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19/joint-ecdc-who-euro-weekly-surveillance-report-current-issue>

The first joint COVID-19 weekly surveillance bulletin was released on 19 March 2021 by WHO/Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). For the first time both surveillance and vaccination data on COVID-19 in all WHO European Region countries and territories are accessible on one platform.

The bulletin incorporates visualization of data on COVID-19 cases, deaths and vaccine uptake by age group, and hospitalizations. The COVID-19 surveillance bulletin will be published on a weekly basis, presenting data reported by country for the week prior to each publication.

## **The Covid-19 Vaccine Production Club: Will Value Chains Temper Nationalism? (World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9565)**

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35244>

In the first two months of 2021, the production of COVID-19 vaccines has suffered setbacks delaying the implementation of national inoculation strategies. These delays have revealed the concentration of vaccine manufacture in a small club of producer nations, which in turn has implications for the degree to which cross-border value chains can deter more aggressive forms of Vaccine Nationalism, such as export curbs. This paper documents the existence of this club, taking account of not just the production of final vaccines but also the ingredients of and items needed to manufacture and distribute COVID-19 vaccines. During 2017–19, vaccine producing nations sourced 88 percent of their key vaccine ingredients from other vaccine producing trading partners. Combined with the growing number of mutations of COVID-19 and the realization that this coronavirus is likely to become a permanent endemic global health threat, this finding calls for a rethink of the policy calculus towards ramping up the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, its ingredients, and the various items needed to deliver them. The more approved vaccines that are safely produced, the smaller will be the temptation to succumb to zero-sum Vaccine Nationalism.

## **A First Report of the WMO COVID-19 Task Team: Review on Meteorological and Air Quality Factors Affecting the COVID-19 Pandemic (WMO-No. 1262)**

[https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice\\_display&id=21857](https://library.wmo.int/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=21857)

World Meteorological Organization Task Team has issued its first report on Meteorological and Air Quality factors affecting the COVID-19 pandemic. It cautions that weather and climate conditions, including the onset of higher temperatures in the northern hemisphere spring, should not be used as a trigger to relax measures to halt the spread of the virus.

COVID-19 transmission dynamics in 2020 and early 2021 appear to have been influenced primarily by government interventions such as mask mandates and travel restrictions rather than meteorological factors, according to the 16-member panel of experts in earth and medical sciences and public health. Other relevant drivers include changes in human behavior and demographics of affected populations, and more recently, virus mutations.

## **How Covid-19 is changing the world: a statistical perspective, Volume III**

<https://data.unicef.org/resources/how-covid-19-is-changing-the-world-a-statistical-perspective-volume-iii/>

Since the release of the first volume in May 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to rage around the world. By mid-March 2021, countries around the globe had reported over 123 million cases—a nearly five-fold increase since this report's previous volume—and over 2.7 million deaths attributed to the disease. And while new case loads are currently on the rise again, the global health community has already administered almost 400 million doses of vaccines, at last offering some signs of hope and progress. The pandemic continues to present daunting challenges for governments and international organizations. More than ever, the world needs reliable and trustworthy data and statistics to inform these important decisions. This report updates some of the global and regional trends presented in the first and second volumes and offers a snapshot of how COVID-19 continues to affect the world today across multiple domains.

Volume I: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/documents/covid19-report-ccsa.pdf>

Volume II: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/documents/covid19-report-ccsa\\_vol2.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/documents/covid19-report-ccsa_vol2.pdf)



## **Impact of coronavirus disease on different manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation of children (A/HRC/46/31, 22 January 2021)**

English, French & Spanish: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/46/31>

Violence against children, as well as new forms of sexual exploitation and abuse both online and offline, have been surging as a consequence of COVID-19 lockdowns, according to a new report. The report, by the UN Special Rapporteur on sale and sexual exploitation of children, Mama Fatima Singhateh, was presented to the 46th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. This increase in violence and abuse “threatens to erode further the situation of millions of children worldwide who are already in a precarious socio-economic situation,” said Singhateh, when presenting the report. Children may well be among the biggest victims of the crisis in the long term, says the report, because their education, nutrition, safety and health will be significantly impacted. The pandemic has left the lives of millions hanging in the balance. UNICEF notes for example that the number of children living in multidimensional poverty has soared to 1.2 billion, a 15 percent increase since the pandemic hit in early 2020.

## **Jurisprudence Relating to COVID-19**

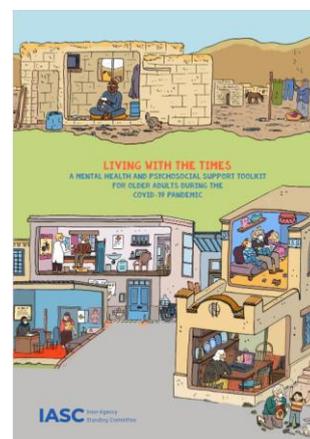
<https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/updates/2021/03/jurisprudence-relating-to-covid-19/>

In partnership with UNESCO, Columbia University’s Global Freedom of Expression initiative published an online collection of case law related to COVID-19 from across the world, in English, French and Spanish. These decisions highlight the essential role of judicial actors in upholding the rule of law and human rights, especially in exceptional states of emergency.

## **Living with the Times, A Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Toolkit for Older Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic (IASC)**

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-reference-group-mental-health-and-psycho-social-support-emergency-settings/living-times-mental-health-and-psycho-social-support-toolkit-older-adults-during-covid-19-pandemic>

This toolkit has been developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC MHPSS RG). This resource includes posters with key messages for older adults on how to take care of their well-being and how they can provide support to those around them during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. It includes instructions for facilitators of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) on how to conduct guided conversations with older adults using these posters. The posters build upon the guidance sections for older adults in the [IASC Interim Briefing Note Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak](#), and the [IASC Guidance on Operational Considerations for Multisectoral Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Programmes during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).



The production of this toolkit involved an iterative and participatory development process, which began with pilot-testing to understand what style of illustrations and designs worked best for older adults. A total of 199 older adults aged between 60 and 90 years, from 51 countries, provided inputs to the design and content via an online survey and a number of focus group consultations. Based on this feedback, the IASC MHPSS RG revised the posters and developed this facilitator guide through a thematic ad hoc steering group, in close collaboration with agencies specializing in the well-being of older adults, including colleagues from the International Federation on Ageing, HelpAge International and Alzheimer’s Disease International. The process was a unique inter-agency collaboration between experts from different disciplines, including dementia, MHPSS in humanitarian settings, and ageing and disability. Through a network of country-level MHPSS Technical Working Groups, the posters were then tested with 80 older adults from a wide range of countries, based on geographical

location and different income groups and contexts. This testing phase included older adults living in humanitarian settings from a total of 10 countries. The facilitator guide was reviewed based on inputs from Member Agencies of the IASC MHPSS RG. The posters with key messages require minimal reading skills, are culturally diverse and aim to engage older adults in conversations and activities. The IASC MHPSS RG collected feedback on different designs for the posters to arrive at the style you will find in this IASC product. Our sincere appreciation goes to all the older adults who guided and informed the development of this toolkit. This is a tool to be used by all COVID-19 and humanitarian responders to help treat the mental health and psychosocial well-being of older adults as a priority.

### **Social media & COVID-19: A global study of digital crisis interaction among Gen Z and Millennials**

Key insights: [https://covid19-infodemic.com/assets/download/Social\\_Media\\_COVID19\\_Key\\_Insights\\_Document.pdf](https://covid19-infodemic.com/assets/download/Social_Media_COVID19_Key_Insights_Document.pdf)

Interactive dashboard: <https://covid19-infodemic.com/#about-study>

The unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how the spread of misinformation, amplified on social media and other digital platforms, is proving to be as much a threat to global public health as the virus itself. Technology advancements and social media create opportunities to keep people safe, informed and connected. However, the same tools also enable and amplify the current infodemic that continues to undermine the global response and jeopardizes measures to control the pandemic. Although young people are less at risk of severe disease from COVID-19, they are a key group in the context of this pandemic and share in the collective responsibility to help us stop transmission. They are also the most active online, interacting with an average number of 5 digital platforms (such as, Twitter, TikTok, WeChat and Instagram) daily. To better understand how young adults are engaging with technology during this global communication crisis, an international study was conducted, covering approximately 23,500 respondents, aged 18-40 years, in 24 countries across five continents. This project was a collaboration between the World Health Organization (WHO), Wunderman Thompson, the University of Melbourne and Pollfish. With data collected from late October 2020 to early January 2021, the outcomes provide key insights on where Gen Z and Millennials seek COVID-19 information, who they trust as credible sources, their awareness and actions around false news, and what their concerns are.

### **WHO-convened Global Study of Origins of SARS-CoV-2: China Part**

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus/origins-of-the-virus>

The report of the international team on their Wuhan field visit, from 14 January -10 February 2021, was published on 30 March 2021 as WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for further studies. The report stems from a Member State resolution adopted by consensus at the World Health Assembly in May 2020 and calling on WHO "to identify the zoonotic source of the virus and the route of introduction to the human population, including the possible role of intermediate hosts, including through efforts such as scientific and collaborative field missions."

## Economic Growth and Sustainable Development

### 1.5 Degrees: A Climate Action Blog

<https://unfccc.int/blog>

UN Climate Change has launched a new and exciting blog, which will highlight climate action being taken around the world. 1.5 Degrees: A Climate Action Blog, will showcase the work undertaken by the UN Climate Change secretariat and its stakeholders, ultimately aiming to inspire greater climate action. To support the implementation of the [Paris Agreement](#), the blog will feature stories from actors ranging from football teams and fashion brands to young people, NGOs and cities taking climate action.

### Are We Building Back Better? Evidence from 2020 and Pathways for Inclusive Green Recovery Spending

*Report in English, Executive Summary in English, French & Spanish:*

<https://bit.ly/3w7GhCS>

COVID-19 has led to a global crisis threatening the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable by increasing poverty, exacerbating inequalities, and damaging long-term economic growth prospects. The report provides an analysis of over 3500 fiscal policies announced by leading economies in 2020 and calls for governments to invest more sustainably and tackle inequalities as they stimulate growth in the wake of the devastation wrought by the pandemic. The report draws evidence collected up to February 2021 on The Global Recovery Observatory is an initiative led by the Oxford University Economic Recovery Project (OUERP) and supported by UNEP, the International Monetary Fund and GIZ through the Green Fiscal Policy Network (GFPN). As of February 2021, the Observatory contains more than 3,500 policies across the world's 50 largest economies. It is updated weekly. The database itself will be hosted on the Oxford SSEE, GFPN, and UNDP Data Futures websites. Explore the data visualization of the findings on UNDP's Data Futures Platform.



### Forest governance by indigenous and tribal peoples. An opportunity for climate action in Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO / FILAC)

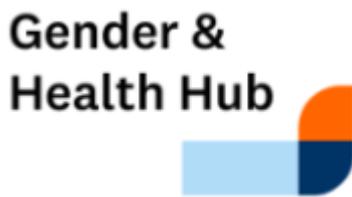
*English:* <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb2953en>

*Spanish:* <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CB2953ES>



Deforestation rates are significantly lower in Indigenous and Tribal territories where governments have formally recognized collective land rights, according to a new report launched on 25 March 2021. Jointly published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), the report also shows that improving the tenure security of these territories is an efficient and cost-effective way to reduce carbon emissions. Based on a review of more than 300 studies published in the last two decades, the new report reveals for the first time the extent to which Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean are the best guardians of their forests when compared to those responsible for the region's other forests. The research also suggests that their protective role is increasingly at risk, at a time

when the Amazon is nearing a tipping point, with worrisome impacts on rainfall and temperature, and eventual repercussions for food production and the global climate.



## Gender & Health Hub

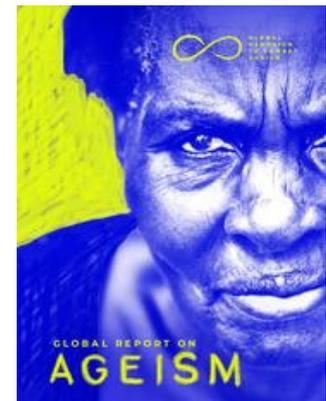
<https://www.genderhealthhub.org/>

Coordinated by the United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH), the Gender & Health Hub is here to bridge the gap between knowledge, policy and action. The GHH is a unique global platform established to consolidate the best, policy-relevant evidence on gender integration in health policies and programmes, generated through research and practice at the global, regional, and country level.

## Global Report on Ageism

*Report in English, Executive Summary in English, French & Spanish:*  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240016866>

Every second person in the world is believed to hold ageist attitudes – leading to poorer physical and mental health and reduced quality of life for older persons, costing societies billions of dollars each year, according to a new United Nations report on ageism. The report released on 18 March 2021 by WHO, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), calls for urgent action to combat ageism and better measurement and reporting to expose ageism for what it is – an insidious scourge on society. The response to control the COVID-19 pandemic has unveiled just how widespread ageism is – older and younger people have been stereotyped in public discourse and on social media. In some contexts, age has been used as the sole criterion for access to medical care, lifesaving therapies and for physical isolation.



## Guidelines for Mainstreaming Ageing (UNECE)

<https://unece.org/population/publications/guidelines-mainstreaming-ageing>

The Guidelines launched on 17 March 2021 by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) call for the development of a Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing to ensure its systematic consideration and integration in public policies. By 2050, about one in every four persons in the UNECE region will be over the age of 65. Population ageing affects almost all aspects of society. The transformative change required to adapt societies to the implications of population ageing and living longer cannot be achieved without a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort. For this reason, mainstreaming ageing - the systematic integration of ageing issues across all relevant policy fields and at all policy levels - is recommended by the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) adopted in 2002.

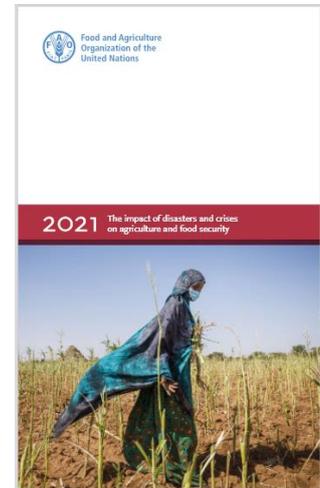


## The impact of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security: 2021

Report: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb3673en>

Interactive story: <http://www.fao.org/home/digital-reports/disasters-in-agriculture/en/>

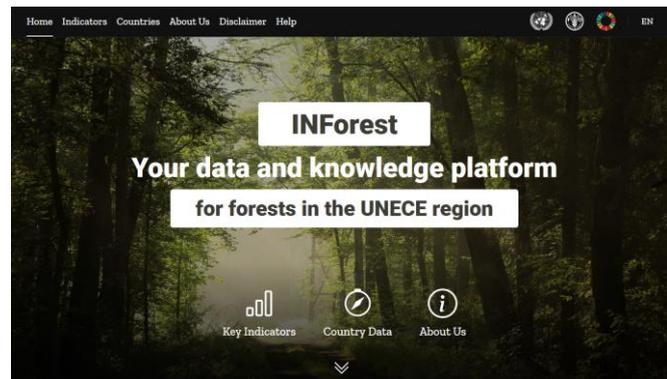
New and unprecedented forms of natural disasters are most heavily felt in the agricultural industry, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on 18 March 2021. At no other point in history have agri-food systems faced more hazards such as megafires, extreme weather, unusually large desert locust swarms, and emerging biological threats, as during the past year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nor have they been seen at such frequency, intensity, and complexity, the agency said in this new report. These disasters devastate agricultural livelihoods, inflicting cascading negative economic consequences from household to national levels, that could potentially endure for generations. According to FAO, disasters happen three times more often today, than in the 1970s and 1980s. Agriculture absorbs a disproportionate 63 per cent share of their impact, compared to other sectors, such as tourism, commerce and industry.



## "INForest"

<https://forest-data.unece.org/>

According to the most recent Forest Resources Assessment report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([FRA2020](#)), the UNECE region has been one of few regions where forest area has increased over the last three decades, up by 33.5 million hectares. This puts countries in the UNECE region at the forefront of the global race to achieve one of the key indicators of Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land, pertaining to the overall increase of forest area. However, this is only one of a few hundred forest features that are monitored, assessed and reported by countries and organizations. Much more information about conditions, dynamics, and the use of over 1.7 billion ha of forests in the UNECE region is regularly collected by different agencies. But until now, such data has often been dispersed over various online platforms and publications; not easy to find and difficult to access and interpret. Together, UNECE and FAO are aiming to change this with the new online platform, "[INForest](#)", that gathers key information on forests and the forest-based sector in the UNECE region in one place, provides a user-friendly interface and highlights the wealth of information that is already available. The platform offers the most up-to-date source of information about the size of the forest area and how it has changed over decades, the structure of forests, the goods and services forests provide, as well as their contribution to the health of our economies, societies and the environment.



## LCD chart of the month – new UNCTAD series

<https://unctad.org/topic/least-developed-countries/chart-april-2021>

The first edition shows the extent of the technological divide plaguing the economies of least developed countries.



## Is the UNECE region on track for 2030? Assessment, stories and insights

<https://unece.org/statistics/publications/unece-region-track-2030>

If the [UNECE region](#) follows current trends, by 2030 it will achieve only 23 of the 169 SDG targets. However, only 89 targets can be assessed while for the remaining 80, no assessment can be made due to insufficient data. For 57 targets, progress needs to accelerate if we are to achieve the targets, and for another 9 the current trend needs to be reversed. These are the main conclusions of UNECE's annual report on achieving the SDGs in the region.

## MIL and Climate Change – Visual resources to download and share (UNESCO)

<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/communication/informationresponse/visualresources>

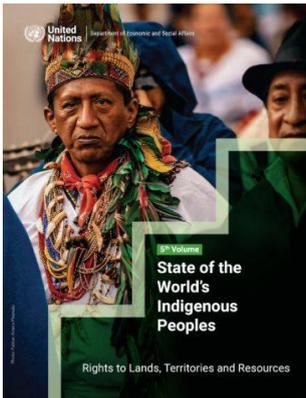
While the world combats the COVID-19 disinfodemic, another wave of climate-related disinformation that has existed for a long time should not be forgotten. Understanding the basic science of climate, one's influence on the climate and climate's influence on the society at large requires information, media and technological competencies. This is especially so in the digital age. Policy making, awareness raising and other levels of intervention against climate change cannot be done outside of the information and media spheres. Media and information literacy (MIL) is an antecedent of science literacy. When MIL is combined with science literacy, they can empower ordinary citizens to contribute to the fight against climate change. UNESCO has created a set of graphics providing knowledge and practical tips on fighting climate change in daily life through MIL. The materials are centered around different topics, such as greenwashing, carbon footprint of the internet, and eco-messaging.



## Sanitation, Wastewater Management and Sustainability: From Waste Disposal to Resource Recovery (SEI / UNEP)

<https://www.sei.org/publications/sanitation-wastewater-management-and-sustainability/>

A book by Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), launched on 22 March 2021, World Water Day, reports that the sanitation waste of 50% of the global population is still disposed of without having been treated – posing enormous risks to both public health and the environment. At the same time, this disposal means opportunities are being flushed away; instead, this waste could be used to provide more than 50 million tons of fertilizer nutrient, which would account for 25% of the current global demand. The second edition of *Sanitation, Wastewater Management and Sustainability: From Waste Disposal to Resource Recovery* aims to bring about change by showing how improved sanitation and wastewater management can benefit both humans and the environment. The book looks beyond human health, marine environment protection and resource recovery to the many other ways that sustainable sanitation and wastewater systems can contribute to meeting the social, environmental and economic goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It highlights job opportunities along the entire sanitation and wastewater value chain of the circular economy, as well as potential gains for education, economic productivity and gender equality.



## State of the World's Indigenous Peoples - Volume V: Rights to Lands, Territories and Resources (UN/DESA)

<https://bit.ly/3bMCSkD>

Although the world's indigenous peoples live in areas that contain around 80 per cent of the planet's biodiversity, many still struggle to maintain their legal rights to lands, territories and resources, according to a new UN report published on 12 March 2021.

The latest edition of the *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* report examines challenges communities face in asserting their rights to lands, whether in the context of agribusiness, extractive industries, development, conservation and tourism.

## System of Environmental-Economic Accounting—Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA)

<https://seea.un.org/ecosystem-accounting>

In a move that may reshape decision and policy-making towards sustainable development, the United Nations adopted a new framework in March 2021 that includes the contributions of nature when measuring economic prosperity and human well-being. The new framework — the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting—Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) — was adopted by the UN Statistical Commission and marks a major step forward that goes beyond the commonly used statistic of gross domestic product (GDP) that has dominated economic reporting since the end of World War II. This measure would ensure that natural capital—forests, wetlands and other ecosystems—are recognized in economic reporting.

## Trade and Development Report 2020 Update (March 2020): Out of the frying pan ... into the fire?

[https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/gdsinf2021d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/gdsinf2021d1_en.pdf)

The global economy is expected to grow by 4.7% this year, faster than predicted in September (4.3%), thanks, in part, to a stronger recovery in the United States, where progress in distributing vaccines and a fresh fiscal stimulus of \$1.9 trillion are expected to boost consumer spending, says a new UNCTAD analysis released on 18 March 2021. But this will still leave the global economy over \$10 trillion short of where it could have been by the end of 2021 if it had stayed on the pre-pandemic trend and with persistent worries about the reality behind the rhetoric of a more resilient future.

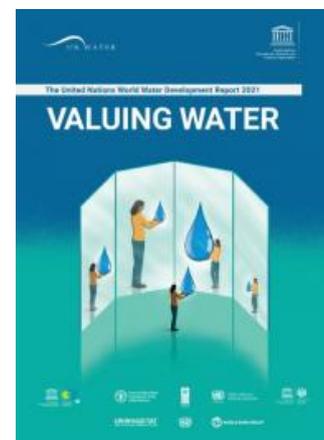
## The United Nations World Water Development Report 2021: Valuing Water

English: <http://www.unesco.org/reports/wwdr/2021/en>

French: <http://www.unesco.org/reports/wwdr/2021/fr>

German – Executive Summary: <https://bit.ly/3rletr0>

The United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR) 2021, published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water, shows that the inability to recognize the value of water is the main cause of water waste and misuse. Despite the difficulty of attributing an objective and indisputable value to a resource which is fundamental to life, it seems necessary to examine water's various dimensions in order to understand the various aspects of its "value". This is especially true in times of growing scarcity and against the backdrop of population growth and climate change.



## Urban Matters - UNECE launches podcast series on sustainable cities

Cities are growing fast. Half the world's population already lives in urban areas and another 2.5 billion are expected to be living in cities by 2050. In 2015, the international community set the goal of making cities "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" by 2030 (Sustainable Development Goal 11). Many cities are already well down the road of thinking about how to transform themselves, piloting projects that aim to make life greener and safer, more sustainable and happier. They have a decade to deliver. As the world gets back on its feet after the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are going to need to think differently about how we solve some of the major problems facing the planet. How we will recover from its effects will depend, in large part, upon the vision of cities. In a new podcast series, "URBAN Matters", UNECE will explore with mayors and urban experts how cities are rising to the challenge, and how they can join forces to share ideas and address city challenges related to the pandemic. In the first episode find out about cities' role in global efforts to tackle poverty and climate change, and why the UN convened a ["Forum of Mayors"](#) in Geneva in October 2020. Tune in to URBAN Matters on your regular podcast platform every Wednesday. The podcast is available in English at:

Podbean: <https://urbanmatters.podbean.com/>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/5H0ZXUC9ToujQnHxQ7SEiM>

Coming soon on Apple & Google Podcasts



## The Value of Surface-based Meteorological Observation Data

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35178>

Behind every weather forecast, every early warning of life-threatening hazards, and every long-term climate change projection are observational data. A new report published by the World Bank, produced in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization and the Met Office (UK), estimates improving the collection and international exchange of surface-based observational data will deliver additional socioeconomic benefits worth more than US \$5 billion a year. This is a conservative estimate and does not include the huge non-monetary benefits such as potential lives saved and improvements to well-being, particularly for developing countries.

## Women in Politics 2021 (IPU / UN Women)

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/03/women-in-politics-map-2021>

Despite increases in the number of women at the highest levels of political power, widespread gender inequalities persist, according to the 2021 edition of the IPU-UN Women "Women in politics map".

The IPU-UN Women map presents new data for women in executive, government, and parliamentary positions as of 1 January 2021. The data shows all-time highs for the number of countries with women Heads of State and/or Heads of Government, as well as for the global share of women ministers.



## Water and Climate Coalition

<https://www.water-climate-coalition.org/>

A new *Water and Climate Coalition* has been launched to achieve more effective integrated policy-making in an era when climate change, environmental degradation and population growth has exacerbated water-related hazards and scarcity. The coalition was announced at a high-level General Assembly event on 18 March to speed up lagging progress towards the water-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular SDG6 on clean water and sanitation for all. It comes just ahead of [World Water Day](#) on 22 March.



## World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives

Interactive website: <https://wdr2021.worldbank.org/>

Report in English, Overview in English, French, Spanish &

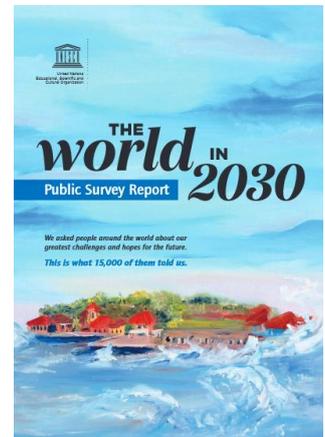
Portuguese: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2021>

The World Bank is calling for strengthened national data systems in order to realize the full potential of the data revolution to transform the lives of poor people. From information gathered in household surveys to pixels captured by satellite images, data can inform policies and spur economic activity, serving as a powerful weapon in the fight against poverty. More data is available today than ever before, yet its value is largely untapped, according to the new *World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives*. Data is also a double-edged sword, requiring a social contract that builds trust by protecting people against misuse and harm, and works toward equal access and representation.

## The World in 2030: Public Survey Report (UNESCO)

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375950.locale=en>

Climate change and loss of biodiversity is seen as the most pressing challenge over the decade, according to the *World in 2030 Survey report* published on 31 March 2021 by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). More than 15,000 people worldwide contributed to the survey, which was held online between May and September 2020, and made available in 25 languages. Respondents were mainly young people, with 57 per cent under age 35, and 35 per cent under 25. Results also were analyzed along regional, gender, age and other demographic lines.



## Your Guide to Music and the SDGs

<https://www.centerformusicecosystems.com/sdgs>

Covering each of the 17 Global Goals, this guide offers examples, guidance & a new framework that merges our global language – music – with the global language of sustainability. Written by the Center for Music Ecosystems in concert with a number of UN agencies and private sector partners, it offers a new model to think about the impact music can have on our world and how we can meet the Global Goals by 2030. The guide was launched at the SDG Global Festival of Action in March 2021.

## International Peace and Security

### **Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme “Mine action and sustaining peace: stronger partnerships for better delivery”**

English, French & Spanish: <https://undocs.org/S/2021/284>

The Security Council will hold an open debate on the theme “Mine action and sustaining peace: stronger partnerships for better delivery”, under the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security” on 8 April 2021. The Security Council President for April, Viet Nam, has prepared this concept note in order to guide the discussions on the topic.

### **Concept note for the Security Council high-level open debate on the theme “Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution”**

English, French & Spanish: <http://undocs.org/S/2021/297>

The Security Council will hold an open debate on the theme “Enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in enhancing confidence-building and dialogue in conflict prevention and resolution”, under the agenda item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security” on 19 April 2021. The Security Council President for April, Viet Nam, has prepared this concept note in order to guide the discussions on the topic.

### **The Security Council and Conflict Prevention: Entry Points for Diplomatic Action (UNU-CPR)**

[http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7963/UNSC\\_ConflictPrevention.pdf](http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7963/UNSC_ConflictPrevention.pdf)

This paper explores how members of the Security Council can design and implement preventive diplomatic strategies in response to emerging, escalating and acute crises. The Council’s behaviour in crisis situations is often reactive and far from strategic. Council members regularly struggle with (i) uncertainty over conflict dynamics; (ii) divergent national interests; and (iii) the lack of clear policy options for managing a situation. These limitations reflect not only the inherently chancy nature of conflict prevention – which is always an uncertain business – but also the political limitations of the Council as a factious intergovernmental body. These limits mean that the Council is often only a supporting player, or not a player at all, in preventive efforts led by States or regional organizations. The paper provides options for building a degree of diplomatic coherence around a set of goals within the Council and with other actors, and how the Council can engage directly with actors in a conflict.

### **“She Stands for Peace”: UNOAU partners to launch new podcast series**

The United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), in partnership with Sweden in Ethiopia, has just launched a podcast series titled, ‘[She Stands for Peace](#)’. The series follows on the flagship publication of the same name jointly produced by UNOAU and the AU last year (see the [English](#) and [French](#) versions). The series explores the state of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (UNSCR 1325) in Africa through conversations with key actors/partners. Four episodes are now available. All episodes are accessible collectively [here](#) and app specific episodes as listed here [Apple podcasts](#), [Audible](#), [Spotify](#), [Stitcher](#), [Deezer](#), [SoundCloud](#) and [Tune In](#).



## The UN Security Council and Transitional Justice (UNU-CPR)

[http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7965/UNU\\_TransitionalJustice\\_FINAL\\_WEB.pdf](http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7965/UNU_TransitionalJustice_FINAL_WEB.pdf)

Over the past 30 years, the UN Security Council has played an increasingly far-reaching role on questions of transitional justice, including with respect to serious human rights violations, accountability, institutional reform and conflict transformation. Despite decades of experience, however, the relationship between Security Council practice and impact in post-conflict transitional justice settings is poorly understood. As a result, there is little evidence to demonstrate whether particular Council approaches are more effective than others and what impact these approaches have on the ground. How does Security Council language reflect the Council's approach to transitional justice? What is the impact of the Security Council's transitional justice approach across different settings? In addressing these questions, this project aimed to understand both the evolution and the effectiveness of the Security Council's approach to



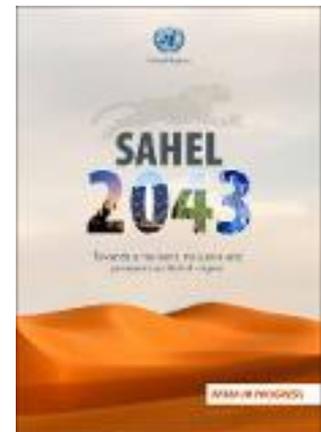
transitional justice, with the goal of informing more impactful practice in the future. The completed volume, *The UN Security Council and Transitional Justice*, seeks to provide a preliminary look across five case studies (Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and South Sudan, completed in August 2020) on the conditions under which support from the Security Council can positively impact transitional justice efforts on the ground. A number of overarching recommendations are outlined for the Council, the UN Secretariat, and transitional justice advocates as they think through whether, when and how to engage Council members on these issues going forward.

## Development of Africa

### Sahel 2043: towards a resilient, inclusive and prosperous Sahel region (UNECA)

<https://repository.unece.org/handle/10855/43654>

The Sahel is one of the poorest regions in Africa and in the world. The Sahel comprises a semi-arid region of Africa extending from Senegal eastward to The Sudan – or from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. However, based on common development challenges, the United Nations (UN) limits the Sahel to ten (10) countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, The Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Chad. The structural characteristic of lack of diversification of Sahel countries' economies, contributes to low productivity and competitiveness, and reinforces the concentration of limited employment in low value-added primary and tertiary sectors. The economic model of the Sahel countries, based on their significant dependency on agricultural and mining proceeds as well as official development



assistance (ODA1), poses structural limitations. The Sahel is a resilient region, with several domestic resources for building its future. It is endowed with abundant natural resources and workforce. The State and non-State actors (civil society organizations and the private sector), are the two main actors susceptible to unleash the potential of the region to bring the needed transformation changes.

## Human Rights

### Armed Violence involving Community-based Militias in Greater Jonglei, January – August 2020

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SS/Jonglei-report.pdf>

The UN issued [a report](#) on 15 March 2021 calling on the South Sudanese authorities to hold accountable the military and political figures who are supporting community-based militias in the Greater Jonglei region, in order to prevent further violence. Organised and heavily-armed community-based militias from the Dinka, Nuer and Murle communities carried out a wave of planned and co-ordinated attacks on villages across Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) between January and August 2020, according to a new human rights report jointly issued by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### Frequently Asked Questions on Human Rights and Climate Change

[https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FSheet38\\_FAQ\\_HR\\_CC\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FSheet38_FAQ_HR_CC_EN.pdf)

Climate change poses the biggest existential threat to humankind and indeed to the survival of our shared world. So what can be done? What should States do? Businesses? To help answer these questions and promote better policies for people and the planet, the UN Human Rights Office has just published a fact sheet addressing human rights and climate change. The fact sheet describes the links between climate change and human rights. It highlights the obligations of States and businesses under international human rights law - both to mitigate climate change to prevent its adverse impact on human rights and to ensure that everyone is able to adapt to the negative effects of climate change.

### General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment (CRC/C/GC/25, 2 March 2021)

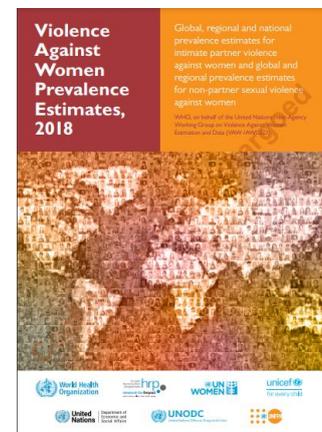
<http://undocs.org/CRC/C/GC/25>

The [Child Rights Committee](#) published on 24 March 2021 its legal guidance note on how States should protect children's rights with regard to the digital environment. The guidance note, also known as general comment, is the result of a two-year consultation with States parties, inter-governmental organizations, civil society, national human rights institutions and children. Over 700 children and young people, aged between nine and 22 years old in 27 countries, were asked how digital technology impacts their rights, and what actions they want to see taken to protect them.

### Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/violence-against-women-prevalence-estimates>

Violence against women remains devastatingly pervasive and starts alarmingly young, shows new data from WHO and partners. Across their lifetime, 1 in 3 women, around 736 million, are subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner – a number that has remained largely unchanged over the past decade. This violence starts early: 1 in 4 young women (aged 15-24 years) who have been in a relationship will have already experienced violence by an intimate partner by the time they reach their mid-twenties. This report presents data from the largest ever study of the prevalence of violence against women, conducted by WHO on behalf of a special working group of the United Nations. Based on data from 2000 to 2018, it updates previous estimates released in 2013. It was developed by WHO and the UNDP-UNFPA-UNICEF-WHO-World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) for the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women Estimation and Data.



## Humanitarian Affairs

### Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity, March to July 2021 outlook

<https://bit.ly/39NiZZj>

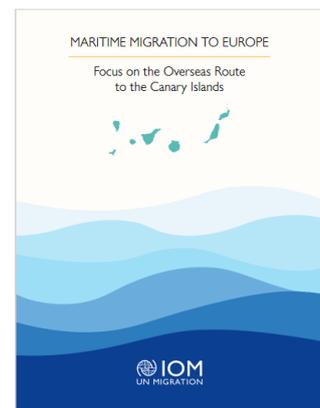
Acute hunger is set to soar in over 20 countries in the coming months without urgent and scaled-up assistance, warn the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) in a new report issued on 23 March 2021. Yemen, South Sudan and northern Nigeria top the list and face catastrophic levels of acute hunger, with families in pockets of South Sudan and Yemen already in the grip of or at risk of starvation and death according to the Hunger Hotspots report. Although the majority of the affected countries are in Africa, acute hunger is due to rise steeply in most world regions - from Afghanistan in Asia, Syria and Lebanon in the Middle East, to Haiti in Latin America and the Caribbean. Already, over 34 million people are grappling with emergency levels of acute hunger (IPC4) - meaning they are one step away from starvation - across the world.



### Maritime Migration to Europe: Focus on the Overseas Route to the Canary Islands (IOM)

<https://publications.iom.int/books/maritime-migration-europe-focus-overseas-route-canary-islands>

More than 2,000 people lost their lives at sea attempting to reach Europe in 2020, despite the extensive mobility restrictions imposed last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new report, released on 26 March 2021, from the International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s Missing Migrants Project. Another 300 deaths already have been documented thus far in 2021. The new report highlights key facts and figures on four main overseas irregular routes to Europe, along which over 22,000 lives have been lost since 2014. This figure likely does not capture all deaths en route to Europe during this time. As the report discusses, better migration data can help to support lifesaving policy and programmes. of particular concern is the maritime route to the Canary Islands, which saw a marked increase in attempted crossings and deaths in 2020, despite The COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing travel restrictions. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that the coronavirus acted as a multiplier of existing factors motivating migration on this route. Many of those attempting the Canary Islands crossing worked in fishing or agriculture, two sectors that have been particularly hard-hit by COVID-19.



### Migration Network Hub

<https://migrationnetwork.un.org/hub>

The United Nations Network on Migration launches on 18 March 2021 the Migration Network Hub. It is the first knowledge platform and connection hub that supports UN Member

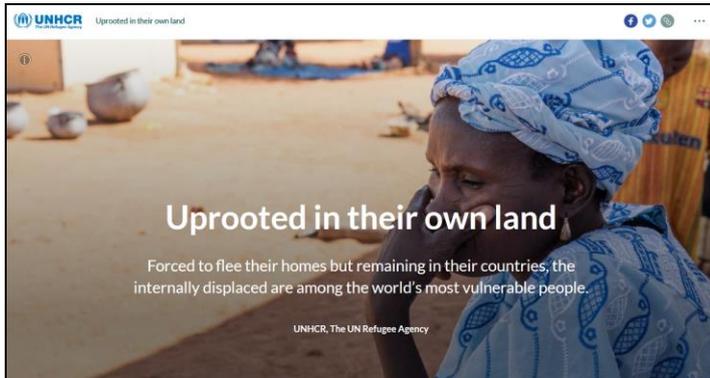
States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). This tool is intended to share migration knowledge, expertise, good practices and initiatives related to the GCM among Member States, practitioners and the UN system. Through a community of practice, users can participate in online discussions with peers, attend webinars, share resources and publications and showcase flagship initiatives. Later this year, via the platform, governments will have access to migration-related services and support.



United Nations  
Network on Migration  
*Working Better Together*

## Uprooted in their own land: the internal displacement crisis (UNHCR)

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f290ffd49b934ff8b865be79d6c34dd0>



With a record 80 million people forcibly displaced worldwide, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is highlighting the plight of those who have fled their homes but have remained inside their own countries. Known as internally displaced people (IDPs), they account for more than half of all forcibly displaced people globally. Unlike refugees, IDPs have not crossed an internationally recognized border to find safety, and their protection remains the primary responsibility of national

authorities, even if their own government's actions may be the reason for their displacement. 'Uprooted in their own land' is a new data visualization that sets out the scale and challenge of internal displacement due to conflict and violence, which currently affects at least 45.9 million people worldwide. It charts the steep rise in IDP numbers over the past decade, driven by prolonged crises including in Syria, Yemen and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as by new emergencies in countries such as Burkina Faso and Mozambique.

## Drug Control, Crime Prevention and Counter-terrorism

### Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2020

English, French & Spanish: <http://www.incb.org/incb/en/publications/annual-reports/annual-report.html>

At a time of increased demand for controlled medicines due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) warns of 'a hidden epidemic: drug use among older persons' and the harm the pandemic has caused to the health and well-being of this population group. In its Annual Report published on 25 March 2021, INCB highlights that as the world population ages, there is an increased vulnerability to drug use and drug dependence for older people. Substance use and related disorders among the older population have risen over the past years, but this demographic has been largely overlooked. INCB calls on governments to focus on drug use among older persons and extend and integrate support to help reverse this alarming trend. INCB expresses concern over the negative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global supply chain of medicines. Government measures intended to curb the spread of the virus led to shortages of some controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. Increased demand for the treatment of patients with COVID-19 have created further shortages and disrupted treatment and other health-related services. INCB stresses that people with mental health and substance use disorders have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mobility restrictions and social isolation have imposed greater strain on people with mental health and substance use problems and worsened disorders at times.