

**Building back better to realize the SDGs in LDCs: Accelerating action to achieve
inclusive, sustainable, resilient recovery –**

approaches on the road to the LDC5 conference in Doha

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Virtual side event

14 July 2021, 2:30pm Doha time (7:30am NYC, 8:30 pm Seoul)

Background:

Most of the LDCs have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, reversing much of the progress achieved towards the SDGs under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and further exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities and challenges faced by these countries. The pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery. The Report of the UN Secretary General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals 2021 indicates that the pandemic has had a very significant impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, undermining decades of development efforts. This is particularly evident in SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8 and 10 where the progress has been clearly reversed due to COVID-19. For instance, the pandemic-related economic downturn has pushed an additional ~120 million people into extreme poverty in 2020, further compounding poverty eradication challenges such as conflict, climate change and natural disasters. SDG8 also saw considerable downturn as equivalent of 255 million full time jobs were lost and an additional 101 million children and youth fell below the minimum reading proficiency level, wiping out the education gains achieved over the last two decades.

The coronavirus crisis is pushing critical economic, social and environmental development targets beyond reach, most of which are most pronounced in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), where the socio-economic consequences are severe. This in addition to significant drops in revenues and high pre-existing debt burdens, compounded with a significant drop in funding flows, has made many of the least developed countries unable to implement recovery efforts.

Against this backdrop, and as we approach the LDC5 conference to be hosted in Doha by the State of Qatar, the panel discussion aims to bring together representatives from LDCs, International Organizations and other stakeholders to discuss how best the international community can respond to the needs of LDCs in accelerating action for a sustainable and resilience post-COVID19 recovery with a focus on SDGs 2, 3, 8, 13.. The

outcomes of the discussion will feed into the Fifth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) to be hosted by the State of Qatar in early 2022.

This event will serve as an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the international support measures, national policies needed to build back better and restore and accelerate SDG progress for the next decade.

The side event will address the following key questions:

- What are the needs and priorities of the LDCs in the context of achieving the SDGs and against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What is the role of the international community in bringing about Innovative partnerships and institutional mechanisms to finance economic resilience to future shocks such as COVID-19 and build diversified economies in LDCs? How can we ensure to put in place measures that are carefully designed to the specific need of LDCs?
- What are good practices and lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic for resilience building that can be used to enhance the response to climate change?
- How can the lessons learned from COVID-19 pandemic be harnessed to enable building a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future for the LDCs?