

SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS:

CONSULTATION WITH SOUTHERN-BASED THINKTANKS FOR THE 2020 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

21 May 2020, 8:30am-10:30am (New York time)

Join consultation via Zoom link: <https://undp.zoom.us/j/95942820082>

BACKGROUND

The year 2020 will mark the 30th anniversary of the first Human Development Report (HDR). This year's report (HDR 2020) will focus on the links between People – human development, freedoms and capabilities – and Planet – nature, the environment and climate change. It will look at the need to update our thinking about human development – both conceptually and in terms of some of its metrics, including the Human Development Index (HDI) – in light of the daunting environmental challenges that we face today. The report will also look at sustainability more broadly, and explore pathways which can make human development more sustainable, beyond just protecting the environment. Given the current threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, the report will also analyze the implications of such public health threats to sustaining human development.

In preparation for the 2020 HDR, the Human Development Report Office (HDRO) and the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) held an e-discussion on Sustainable Human Development Pathways for HDR 2020. This virtual consultation took place from 11 March until 30 April on the South-South Global Thinkers network, and focused on re-evaluating human development today – both conceptually and in terms of measurement – given how people's aspirations have changed since 1990, as well as the fact that environmental degradation and the occurrence of natural disasters of increasing intensity and frequency, are becoming hard to ignore.

This reassessment is an urgent task if we are to avoid reaching a stage of inevitable tradeoffs and tragic choices. On top of direct consequences of environmental backlash, an ill-managed climate crisis could jeopardize many of the hard-fought human achievements up to this point.

Inputs from the e-discussion from the South-South Global Thinkers community have brought forward diverse and important perspectives. These range from suggested indicators for greening the HDI to ways of leveraging SSC and TrC for addressing climate related risks. Some have reflected on evolution of development cooperation from the usual dominance of economic issues to emergence of non-economic issues such as climate, peace, governance and inequality. Many have emphasized role of SSC & TrC and pathways for inclusive and sustainable human development, with examples and policy solutions from the developing countries. Some have commented on the current context of COVID-19, where the impact is also felt on new patterns and dynamics of cooperation for sustainable development. A summary of the main points raised in the e-discussion is attached, and includes contributions from 29 experts or think-tanks from 22 countries in the global South.

Against this background, HDRO and UNOSSC are jointly organising a webinar consultation for HDR 2020 on the topic of Sustainable Human Development Pathways building on the e-discussion.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the webinar is maximizing stakeholder engagement and ensuring inclusive preparation of the HDR 2020. It will also help in enriching and sharpening the focus of the report and ensure that it represents diverse views from the South.

It is recognized that countries in the South are some of the most impacted by climate change and overshooting of other planetary boundaries. Moreover, developing countries are at the forefront of domestic policy making, and global coordination efforts, to find solutions to the challenges in achieving sustainable development.

This consultation will specifically aim to: (i) hear stakeholder's perspectives and experiences from Southern-based think tanks relating to sustainable development pathways, climate change and related sub-themes, identify broad contours, and scope on the specific issues; and (ii) discuss key policy options among the stakeholders, including both national and cross-border cooperation through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.

STRUCTURE

The session will start with introductory presentations on the HDR 2020, to introduce the general themes of the Report. This will be followed by presentations from select think tank representatives showcasing their current work and analyses on sustainability (5-7 mins), followed by another round of open discussion and Q&A with the audience.

AGENDA:

8:30-8:40 am	Welcome Remarks Mr. Jorge Chediek <i>Director of UNOSSC and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation</i> Mr. Pedro Conceição <i>Director of the Human Development Report Office, UNDP</i>
8:40-9:00 am	Presentation on the Human Development Report 2020 on Sustainable Human Development Pathways Mr. Heriberto Tapia <i>Policy Specialist, Human Development Report Office, UNDP</i>
9:00-9:50 am	Presentations by Think Tank representatives
9:50-10:20 am	Interactive Discussion with Think Tank Representatives Moderated by Ms. Xiaojun Grace Wang, Deputy Director, UNOSSC
10:20-10:30 am	Session wrap-up & Concluding remarks Ms. Xiaojun Grace Wang, Deputy Director, UNOSSC