

Country: Kenya

Committee: International Labor Organization (ILO)

Topic: Achieving Global Economic Convergence through an Economic and Social Recovery Plan

Poverty, as defined by the UN, is living on less than \$1.90 a day. When observing international poverty, 1.3 billion people in 107 developing countries are multidimensionally poor, and their governments aren't able to provide solid economic recovery plans. Achieving global economic convergence in developing and fully developed nations entails resolving this debt, poverty, and other forms of financial insecurity. In 2019, Covid-19 began to take its toll, shutting down airports, educational institutions, the agriculture plus mining industry, local markets, and multinational trade. Thus, low income countries have been set back the most, as approximately 30 years of national progress has been lost, as their sources of income, with no way to go virtual, shut down during the pandemic. In these low income countries, a need for economic growth through job opportunities, sustainable communities and increased health-care is essential. With access to the internet and enhanced infrastructure, low income countries could reopen online schools and businesses just like high income countries, and implement pre-placed recovery plans. Yet in these low income countries, instances of domestic violence, cyber attacks, proliferation of weapons, child labor, selling of personal assets, mental illness, and black markets have increased by millions. All the while, the socio-economic gap between nations and peoples steadily increases.

Kenya is a country in Sub Saharan Africa with a fast growing population that has been seriously impacted by the global Covid-19 pandemic. From 1975, frequent high-intensity terrorist attacks occurred in Kenya injuring and killing thousands of Kenyans and tourists alike, along with the destruction of property, leading to eventual military intervention in Somalia in 2011. Since then, Kenya has been in conflict with the Somali military, flooding the eastern border with refugees, not to mention the skirmishes over land, livestock, and water since 1987. The Kenyan government is \$123 billion USD in debt, which is 54.2% of their GDP. The average Kenyan mother has 3 to 4 children throughout her life, leading to the population having increased by 7.4% in the past 10 years (equivalent to 22.7 million people). More people are being born, but there are fewer job opportunities for Kenyans to make money, thus more people will dip below the national poverty line. Furthermore, shortage of supplies has led hundreds to join terrorist groups and gangs like the Mungiki who murder and take advantage of other Kenyans in tightly packed slums, only furthering poverty. As a countermeasure, the USAID works with Kenya to increase trade among East African countries and globally, thus strengthening government capacity. Yet due to health issues like HIV, AIDS, and Malaria along with limited medical supplies, Kenyans struggle to cope with sickness leading to inevitable death. Although as of March 24, 2022, Kenya has fully vaccinated roughly 15.2% of the population against COVID-19 (about 8.17 million people), the pandemic has placed major stress on an already stressed healthcare system.

In terms of international involvement, a new \$750 million credit from the International Development Association (IDA) and a further \$250 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have been initiated in Kenya from the World Bank in the hopes of rebuilding Kenya's economy back to how it was before the Coronavirus hit. Furthermore, with a \$150 million program to strengthen durability against climate change, the International Development Association (IDA) will also enhance the collaboration between Kenya and other nations and facilitate national oversight on climate change, as 87.5% of the program's resources will go directly towards Kenya. Funded by the government of Japan, anti-epidemic robots have been sent to help reduce the spread of Covid-19 and help prevent future pandemics by preventing direct contact with health workers. The developers hope to support socio-economic development and industrial growth and recovery, as added to by the Kitui County Textile Center (KICOTEC), which now makes masks and personal protective equipment (PPEs) to meet rapidly rising demand in Kenya. Kenya aims to attract more than USD \$30 billion in manufacturing investments over the next 5 years.

To achieve global economic convergence, Kenya recommends combatting overpopulation and an increasing growth rate with birth control products and enhanced sexual/health literacy from the UNFPA, which would slow down impoverished countries' population growth rate enough for more job opportunities to open. Post-Covid social workers should be provided as an economic recovery plan, and more unemployment systems also could be introduced to combat poverty and build infrastructure. Shipments of medical supplies from the World Health Organization could be dispatched to these remote places, and further multitudes of vaccines could be distributed among high density areas. Distribution of vaccines across low income countries would enable physical jobs to reopen, a quick way to boost their economies back up to how they were before Covid-19 hit.

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