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NGO COMMITTEE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Review of the Resolution on *"Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all"* **(E/CN.5/2021/L.6)**

UN Commission for Social Development Fifty-ninth session
8–17 February 2021

❖ The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role of digital connectivity and access. (OP.13)

❖ Information and communications technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization and the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. (OP.21)

❖ All stakeholders, including the United Nations system and civil society organizations, must continue to exchange information and good practices that reduce inequality in all its dimensions. (OP.38)

❖ The international community is encouraged to intensify development cooperation on national capacity-building for science, technology and innovation for social development. (OP.37)

❖ There is a need to address challenges faced by those working in informal jobs, by investing in the creation of more decent work opportunities and jobs in the formal sector. (OP.10)

❖ The principle of national ownership is underscored, supplemented by international assistance. (OP.31)

❖ Reaffirms:
   a. Addis Ababa Action Agenda, recognizing the need to increase investment on public-private partnerships and international resource mobilization. (OP.32)

   b. International cooperation is essential for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries, in strengthening their technological capacity. (OP.33)

   c. South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development as a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation. (OP.35)

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    d. The commitment to ensuring women's full participation in decision-making processes related to information and communications technologies. (OP.28)

❖ Recognizes:

    a. Economic development has led to rising inequalities. (OP.5)

    b. Social protection systems for all address multiple and complex causes of poverty and inequality. (OP.14)

    c. Social protection systems contribute to the realization of human rights for all, including people living in poverty and homelessness. (OP.15)

    d. Families' role in combating social exclusion and the need for family orientated policies to break intergenerational poverty. (OP.17)

    e. Information and communications technologies offer potential solutions to development challenges. (OP.21)

    f. Information and communications technologies present challenges to least developed countries, urging all stakeholders to ensure financing of digital development. (OP.30)

❖ A call to governments' action:

    a. Calls upon Member States to ensure the promotion and protection of all human rights. (OP.4)

    b. Encourages Member States to promote affordable and equitable access to basic services, in particular quality formal and non-formal education, health-care services, affordable housing, food, employment and decent work, information and communications technology and infrastructure, through advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. (OP.7)

    c. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to harness scientific research, focusing on, inter alia, the individual, social, educational and health implications of ageing in developing countries. (OP.27)

    d. Invites Member States to consider adopting labour market policies that protect all workers, including through minimum wage policies. (OP.9)

Social protection systems

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e. Encourages Member States to provide universal age-, disability-, gender- responsive and family-oriented social protection systems. (OP.18)

f. Encourages Member States to promote inclusive economic transformation in rural areas while ensuring productive employment, access to quality public services, appropriate social protection systems, quality and resilient infrastructure, roads and telecommunications. (OP.13)

g. Encourages Member States to ensure gender mainstreaming when designing, implementing, and evaluating social protection programmes for social development. (OP.16)

h. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to enhance efficiency, accountability and transparency of social protection systems through the use of information and communications technologies for the benefit of all women and girls. (OP.28)

i. Invites Member States to formulate and implement national strategies to extend social security and essential social services to all, focusing on those furthest below the poverty line and negatively affected by climate change and human-made disasters. (OP.20)

Digital divide

j. Calls upon Member States to implement policies to close the digital divide, as a measure to attain the social inclusion of all, especially children, youth, women, persons with disabilities and older persons. (OP. 21)

k. Urges Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to close the digital divides and promote digital inclusion, by addressing the challenges associated with access, affordability, digital literacy and digital skills, and by ensuring that the benefits of new technologies are available to all. (OP.22)

l. Urges Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to promote digital inclusion, by, where appropriate, considering providing targeted subsidies, proportionate taxation or the provision of a basic digital basket, as well as engage in multi-stakeholder cooperation, national and regional broadband strategies, and facilitate public-private partnerships to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet. (OP.23)

m. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to achieve universal connectivity and affordable access to quality broadband Internet by 2030. (OP.25)

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n. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to increase women's and girls' access to digital technologies and enhance their digital skills towards closing the gender digital divide. (OP.28)

o. Invites Member States to support the digital entrepreneurship of women. (OP.12)

p. Invites Member States to develop a holistic approach and targeted strategies to address specific barriers to digital inclusion and close the digital divides, in collaboration with the international community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders, including civil society organizations and representatives of those who face barriers to digital inclusion. (OP.26)

Gender equality

q. Encourages Member States to implement policies that ensure women's economic empowerment and promote equal pay for equal work, equal shared caregiving responsibilities and access to childcare facilities. (OP.11)

r. Encourages Member States to ensure gender mainstreaming when designing, implementing, and evaluating social protection programmes for social development. (OP.16)

s. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to enhance efficiency, accountability and transparency of social protection systems through the use of information and communications technologies for the benefit of all women and girls. (OP.28)

t. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to increase women's and girls' access to digital technologies and enhance their digital skills towards closing the gender digital divide. (OP.28)

u. Invites Member States to support the digital entrepreneurship of women. (OP.12)

v. Encourages Member States, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to enhance the productivity and mobility of women in the labour market. (OP.28)

❖ No reference was included regarding:
    1. Access to digital technology as a human right.
    2. Artificial Intelligence (AI).
    3. Privacy as an issue (especially around safety net government benefits).

Priority Areas and Key Recommendations by the NGO Committee for Social Development
Civil Society Resolution for

Socially Just Transition towards Sustainable Development
and the
Role of Digital Technologies on Social development and Well-Being of All

January 2021

Socially Just Transition and Human Rights

- Maintain a human rights approach while ensuring human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity. (OP2)

- Ensure the participation of those impacted by policies and programs in every decision-making process from development, to implementation, to evaluation. (OP 13*)*

- Establish universal social protection systems and floors accessible to all without distinction. (OP7,12)

- Adopt a holistic approach of human beings and nature to harness the potential of digitalization for the benefit of disadvantaged groups; Protect persons and lands negatively affected in transition towards green economy. (OP1)

Role of digital technology in eradicating poverty and building an inclusive digital society.

- Reduce the digital divide by eradicating poverty, reducing inequality and social exclusions as we accelerate in the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs. (OP 10 **but you may want to add SDGs it only says agenda 2030 and capitalize Agenda*)

- Promote universal access to the internet as a right; Ensure access to digital technology for all people and nations. Digital technology is the *new public good.* (OP14,19)

- Provide affordable broadband internet service in urban and rural areas for all marginalized groups. (OP17)

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- Develop and strengthen essential monitoring and regulating policies for digital technology based on privacy, ethics, transparency, security, human rights and dignity. (OP19)

- Establish cooperation with private industries and corporations to ensure affordable broadband internet service to areas and for people who cannot always afford market dynamics. (OP 11,12,17)

- Create legal standards and tools to ensure private sector's accountability in the field of Artificial Intelligence, so that the algorithms in social protection systems and floors are based on data that is socially inclusive and non-discriminatory and users are not subject to arbitrary decisions made by automated robots without human agency, and with no possibility for appeal. (OP18)

- Define and demand "social impact" statements on all digital technology applications for licenses, patents, and research. (OP22)

- Establish a multi-stakeholder coalition on digital inclusion and literacy to encourage the collection of disaggregated data and the establishment of metrics to measure inclusion and literacy. (OP19, 23)

- Build upon the importance of digital technologies in education, science, medicine, social protections and global cooperation, as the COVID-19 pandemic has globally demonstrated. (OP24)

Digital Technology and Good Governance: Creating a Legal Environment that Protects Human Rights, Respects Privacy and Prevents Abuses.

- Build digital identity programs based on a foundation of user agency and choice, informed consent, recognition of multiple forms of identity, space for anonymity and respect for privacy and safety. (OP25)

- Stabilize and institutionalize national investments and stimulus spending to advance security and stable economies during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. (OP24)

- Develop clear guidelines to promote cyber security and model legislation to address cyber attacks and cyber crime, ransomware attacks, disinformation campaigns. (OP26)

- Establish an international Artificial Intelligence ethical code and standards for national oversight and governance. (OP27)

- Build a UN financing platform, including the taxation of technology companies' revenue, to address the "affordability" needs of people and nations who lack access to digital technology. (OP28)