Beyond the Pandemic

Building back better from crises in Asia and the Pacific

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COVID-19 – a multidimensional crisis

- The COVID-19 pandemic and its unprecedented impacts on health, societies and economies in Asia and the Pacific.
- “Beyond the Pandemic: Building back better from crises in Asia and the Pacific” analyzes multiple sectors and proposes a 5-point action plan for Covid-19 recovery.

Four critical interconnected policy areas
- broadening social protection
- investing in a sustained recovery
- keeping trade and information flowing
- mending broken relationship with nature
Broadening social protection

• Pandemic stressed gaps in social protection across the region
• These gaps had negative impacts on informal workers
• Countries that benefit from social protection were less affected
• Social protection is wise investment
• ESCAP member States launched the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific
Investing in a sustained recovery

- Trillions of dollars deployed for emergency health responses in the region
- A rebound is expected in the region’s GDP growth rates in 2021.
- Recovery plans need to be aligned with the SDGs
- Financing pandemic recovery and SDGs requires multiple measures
- Cooperation is crucial to avoid tax avoidance and evasion and harmful tax competition
COVID-19 has increased complexity of international trade and transport links, but also gaps in digitalization.

Restrictions led to border closures and compromised trade.

Pandemic stressed the digital divide across the region.

Cross-border connectivity enhanced by regional and subregional approaches.
Keeping trade and information flowing

To make supply chains more resilient, countries through various measures such as the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade, the digitalization of regional transport networks and sustainable freight and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative.

Figure 4-6: Fixed broadband speed in Asia and the Pacific
Protecting environmental health

- COVID-19 is zoonotic, an infectious disease type that increases as humans, domestics animals and wild animals get closer.
- Comprehension of these dynamics and protection of the environment can decrease the risk of pandemics.
- Planetary health ensures the health of civilizations and natural systems.
- To ensure planetary health, countries must tackle the issues of biodiversity, pollution, and legislation.

Regional cooperation is necessary to approach a more circular economy, by enhancing climate ambition, biodiversity and ecosystems measures and better manage consumption of wild animals and the wildlife trade.
Beyond the pandemic – a five-point policy agenda

1. Enhance regional cooperation
2. Build universal social protection along the life course
3. Promote trade facilitation, digitalization, and harmonization, and fully embed social and environmental concerns into global supply chains
4. Ensure sufficient fiscal space
5. Protect environmental health
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