

Basic income for poor could slow COVID-19 spread

24th July, 2020



Creative Commons 2.0
via Charles LeBlanc on flickr.com

The United Nations has come up with a plan to help slow the spread of COVID-19. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said the world's poorest people should get a basic income. It said the introduction of a "Temporary Basic Income" for the world's

poorest people could slow the current surge in coronavirus cases. The money would allow around 2.7 billion people to stay at home. This would reduce the chances of them spreading the virus. The UNDP suggested giving the money to poor people in 132 developing countries. The cost of this would be around \$199 billion per month. It said: "Unprecedented times call for unprecedented social and economic measures."

The UNDP said the basic income would mean directing money to people instead of economies. It said: "Bailouts and recovery plans cannot only focus on big markets and big business. A Temporary Basic Income would allow governments to give people in lockdown a financial lifeline, inject cash back into local economies to help keep small businesses afloat, and slow the devastating spread of COVID-19." It pointed out that the poor are the hardest hit by the pandemic. There are huge numbers of people without social insurance and many workers without contracts. There are also many low-waged women and young people. It also said refugees, migrants, and people with disabilities need financial help.

Sources: undp.org / japantoday.com / time.com /

Writing

Governments should give all poor people income paid for by companies. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

United Nations / plan / spread / basic / income / surge / money / developing countries / people / economies / lockdown / financial / pandemic / social / insurance / refugee

True / False

- a) The UN said giving money to the poor would slow down COVID-19. T / F
- b) The UN said the basic income should be a temporary measure. T / F
- c) A basic income would let over 2.5bn people stay at home. T / F
- d) A basic income would cost \$199bn a year. T / F
- e) The UN said it is more important to give money to businesses. T / F
- f) The UN said the basic income would inject money into local economies. T / F
- g) The article says there are very few people without social insurance. T / F
- h) The article said migrants and refugees did not need the basic income. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1. come up with | a. push |
| 2. temporary | b. unheard of |
| 3. surge | c. assistance |
| 4. suggested | d. highlighted |
| 5. unprecedented | e. short-term |
| 6. allow | f. large |
| 7. inject | g. recommended |
| 8. pointed out | h. thought of |
| 9. huge | i. let |
| 10. help | j. rise |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What does the United Nations do?
- c) Is it better to give money to help companies or people?
- d) Why have many bailouts focused on big companies?
- e) Why are the poor the hardest hit in the pandemic?
- f) How has the pandemic affected refugees and migrants?
- g) How has your government coped with the pandemic?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the UNDP?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. The United Nations has come up | a. financial lifeline |
| 2. the world's poorest people | b. times |
| 3. slow the current surge | c. spreading the virus |
| 4. reduce the chances of them | d. people with disabilities |
| 5. unprecedented | e. with a plan to help |
| 6. directing money to people instead | f. hardest hit |
| 7. Bailouts and | g. in coronavirus cases |
| 8. give people in lockdown a | h. recovery plans |
| 9. It pointed out that the poor are the | i. should get a basic income |
| 10. refugees, migrants, and | j. of economies |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the United Nations?
- How would you slow the spread of COVID-19?
- What do you think of giving poor people a basic income?
- Why might a basic income slow the spread of COVID-19?
- What do you do to reduce the spread of COVID-19?
- What do you think the pandemic will be like at the end of this year?
- In what other ways could the UN help developing countries?
- Why are these "unprecedented times"?

Spelling

- It said the ndotctiunior of...
- slow the current erusg
- This would cerude the chances
- spreading the vsuir
- 132 ovipnedegl countries
- economic ausemres
- crryeevo plans
- a financial nleelifi
- keep small businesses tlofaa
- slow the gsdtnaaitev spread
- people without oasicl insurance
- need ailcnifna help

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. g	5. b
6. i	7. a	8. d	9. f	10. c

Role Play

Role A – The Low-Paid

You think the low-paid should be the first to get a basic income. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people should not be first. Also, tell the others which of these should not get a basic income (and why): the aged, refugees or single parents.

Role B – The Aged

You think the aged should be the first to get a basic income. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people should not be first. Also, tell the others which of these should not get a basic income (and why): the low-paid, refugees or single parents.

Role C – Refugees

You think refugees should be the first to get a basic income. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people should not be first. Also, tell the others which of these should not get a basic income (and why): the aged, the low-paid or single parents.

Role D – Single Parents

You think single parents should be the first to get a basic income. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people should not be first. Also, tell the others which of these should not get a basic income (and why): the aged, refugees or the low-paid.

Speaking – In Need

Rank these with your partner. Put the people most in need at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| • the low-paid | • migrants |
| • the young | • the disabled |
| • the aged | • single parents |
| • refugees | • the homeless |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.