

Call for Article Submissions

Financing a Just and Inclusive Recovery

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) invites submission of articles on the theme: ***“Financing a Just and Inclusive Recovery”*** which is the focus of the 14th issue of its Economic and Social Rights Advocacy (ESRA) Brief to be published in August 2022. The ESRA Brief focuses on Economic and Social Rights (ESRs) advocacy in Uganda and draws on key lessons from the broader East African Community and beyond. The Brief provides insight into the debates and steps currently being undertaken towards the full realization of ESRs in Uganda.

Background to the 14th Issue of the ESRA Brief

It is uncontested that the COVID – 19 pandemic has not only affected health, education but also the livelihoods of many Ugandans and the economy following the imposed restriction measures and protracted lock downs. This has even been further worsened by the current surge in basic commodity prices at both the national and global levels following the ongoing war in Ukraine. Even with the country fully reopening this year, many citizens are still bearing the brunt of this pandemic. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has actually anticipated a slower recovery of 3.8 percent down from 4.3 percent than had been earlier projected for this year. It is equally concerning that the Country still has to deal with a looming policy trilemma of meeting its growing spending needs amidst very difficult collection of revenues and rising debt.

Right from the onset of this crisis, the Ministry of Finance noted that over 2.6 million Ugandans would be pushed into extreme poverty. It is evident that vulnerable sections of the population including the elderly, persons with disabilities, children, women and other marginalized individuals have been the most affected given the weak social protection system in place. Underfinancing of key public services like health and education over the years found the country unprepared. Faced with such high out-of-pocket payments to private hospitals and the lack thereof of public alternatives, many individuals were pushed further into poverty. This situation got even more concerning with the full re-opening of schools as many parents were no longer in position to meet fees requirements for their children. Many of them in turn opted for public schools which however, were yet to be facilitated to accommodate such huge numbers of learners.

Realizing the impact that the pandemic had exerted onto households, Government responded with a number of fiscal measures including social support through food distribution and direct cash transfers; support for businesses through tax relief measures and loan facilities; and most recently financial support for households to engage in productive income generating activities under what has been dubbed the Parish Development Model. However, without strong public social services in place, it remains to be seen if the earlier identified support measures would exclusively drive the much desired “just and inclusive recovery”.

This thereby raises a number of questions which are the focus of this call for article submissions. ISER thus welcomes ARTICLE submissions that address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- An assessment of Government responses like Parish Development Model to transform communities from a subsistence to a monetary economy
- How progressive taxation can be leveraged to fund a just recovery
- How SDR resources (Special Drawing Rights) can be best put to use for a just recovery
- How state funded public services could support an inclusive recovery
- Social protection amidst the current crisis: How should Government best respond?
- Public debt, Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and their impact on Government funding
- Maximizing revenues from the oil sector
- Monetary finance as an instrument to fill Government's spending deficits?

The deadline for submission of articles is **15th July 2022**. Contributions should be 800 – 1000 words in length. Please direct all article submissions and inquiries regarding this call for articles to the editors at info@iser-uganda.org

