

WORLD SOCIAL REPORT 2025

NEWS: The **World Social Report 2025** calls for a **global policy consensus** centered on **equity, economic security, and solidarity** to address rising insecurity, inequality, and declining trust.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

About the World Social Report

1. Flagship Publication on Social Development

- The *World Social Report* is the United Nations' primary document analyzing long-term global social development patterns, emerging challenges, and policy needs.
- It serves as a guiding framework for governments and stakeholders involved in advancing social justice and sustainable development.

2. Produced by UN DESA and UNU-WIDER

- The report is published by the **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)** in collaboration with the **United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER)**.
- It draws from interdisciplinary research and global data sources.

3. Focus of the 2025 Edition

- The 2025 edition addresses the growing threats of **economic insecurity, income inequality, and social fragmentation**.
- It underscores the **urgency of policy reform** to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Key Findings of the 2025 Report

1. Rising Economic Insecurity

- Nearly **60% of the global population** now experiences some form of economic insecurity, such as job precarity, lack of savings, or inadequate safety nets.
- Over **690 million people** still live in extreme poverty, indicating persistent gaps in basic income and resource access.

2. Persistent and Widening Inequality

- **Income inequality** has increased in nearly **two-thirds of countries**, with wealth concentration accelerating.
- The **richest 1%** now control more wealth than the **poorest 95%**, intensifying social and economic divides.

3. Fragile Livelihoods and Informal Employment

- In regions like **Africa and South Asia**, the majority of the workforce remains in **informal, low-wage, and unregulated employment**.
- Such employment provides no social protection, making workers vulnerable to shocks and crises.

4. Erosion of Institutional Trust

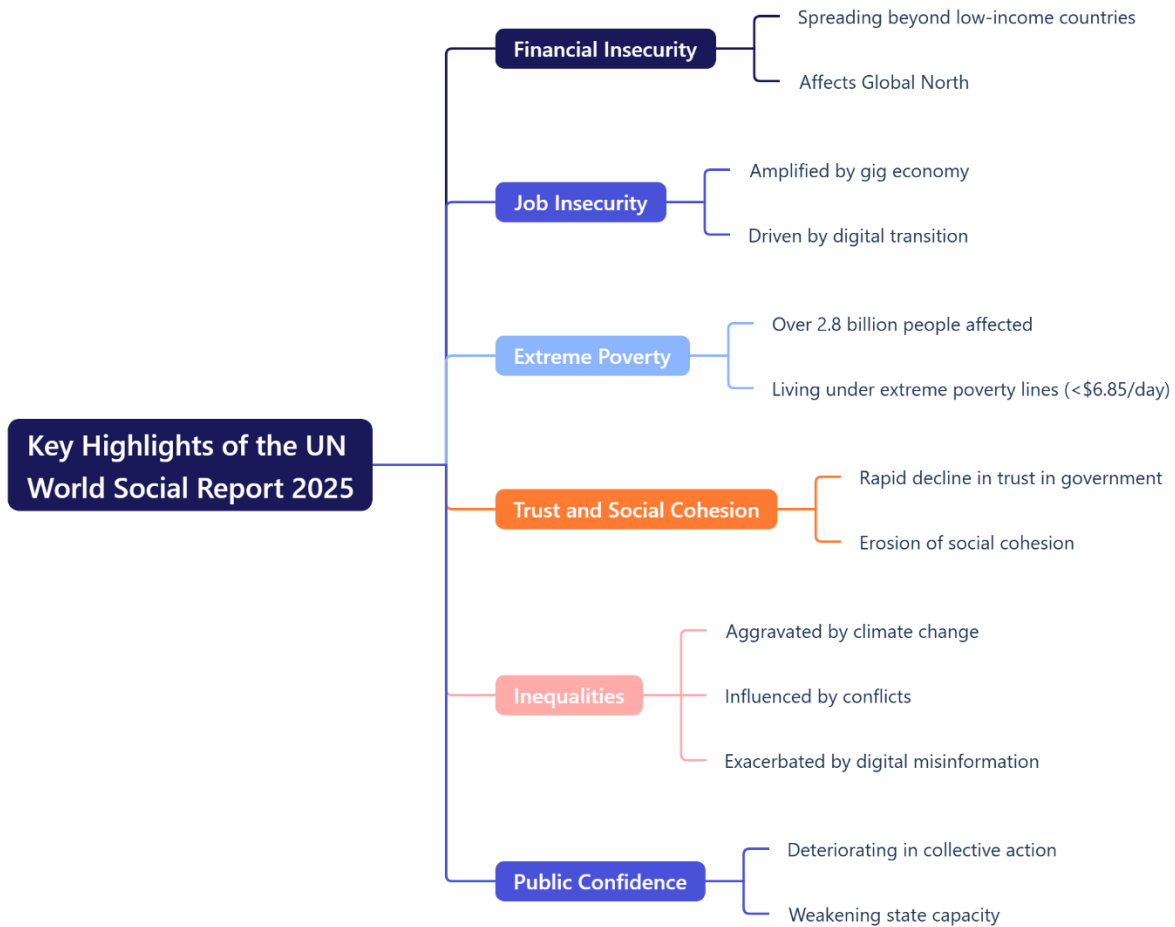
- **More than half of the global population** report **low or no trust** in their national governments.
- This trust deficit is linked to **governance failures**, rising **misinformation**, and growing **digital echo chambers**.

5. Climate Shocks and Armed Conflicts

- In 2024 alone, **1 in 5 people globally** were affected by **climate-related disasters** like floods and droughts.
- Simultaneously, **1 in 7 people** lived in **conflict-affected areas**, leading to widespread displacement and economic setbacks.

6. Policy Gaps Widening Global Divide

- Inadequate **social protection systems**, **regressive tax structures**, and **underfunded public services** are fueling the development gap between wealthier and poorer nations.
- Many developing countries are unable to provide minimum guarantees of health, education, or income security.



Achievements in the Social Sector (SDGs Impacted)

1. Poverty Reduction Progress (SDG 1)

- Over **1 billion people** have escaped **extreme poverty** since 1995 due to global economic growth and targeted poverty alleviation strategies.
- However, recent setbacks threaten to reverse these gains without renewed interventions.

2. Improvements in Health and Education (SDGs 3 and 4)

- Major strides in **life expectancy**, **child survival**, and **literacy rates** have improved human development indicators.
- Access to **essential healthcare** and **primary education** has expanded in many low-income nations.

3. Social Inclusion and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10)

- Global efforts to **reduce discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, location, or income status** have yielded measurable results.

- Legislative reforms and community initiatives have enhanced social participation and equity.

4. Recognition of Interconnected Challenges

- The report emphasises the **interlinkages among economic, social, and environmental crises**, reinforcing the integrated nature of the **SDG framework**.
- Policy fragmentation undermines the capacity to deliver meaningful, cross-sectoral solutions.

Challenges in the Social Sector

1. Persistent and Deepening Inequality

- Economic growth has not been evenly shared, as rising inequality reflects a failure in **wealth redistribution** and **inclusive development policies**.
- The **wealth gap** is now a key source of political and social instability.

2. Employment Insecurity and Job Vulnerability

- A large segment of the workforce faces **job losses, underemployment, and informal contracts** without benefits.
- This instability undermines social cohesion and deters long-term investments in education or health.

3. Declining Trust and Digital Misinformation

- **Misinformation and disinformation campaigns**—often spread via unregulated digital platforms—are eroding public trust in science, democracy, and governance.
- This poses a direct threat to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

4. Reversal of Development Gains due to Climate and Conflict

- Climate-induced displacement and violent conflicts are pushing millions back into **poverty, hunger, and illiteracy**.
- These crises disproportionately affect **marginalised and vulnerable communities**.

Way Forward: Strategic Recommendations

1. Rebuild Social Contracts

- Governments must prioritize **universal access to education, healthcare, decent work, and social protection**.
- Such investments are essential to restoring **economic security, public trust, and intergenerational equity**.

2. Promote Fair and Progressive Taxation

- Reforming tax systems to ensure **wealth redistribution and closing tax loopholes** is crucial.
- Equitable taxation can finance public services and reduce dependency on external aid.

3. Strengthen Institutions and Governance Systems

- Promote **inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance** to rebuild citizen confidence.
- Empower local communities in decision-making and ensure legal protections for human rights.

4. Enhance Global Cooperation and Multilateralism

- Global challenges require **coordinated international responses**, particularly through platforms like the **Second World Summit for Social Development (November 2025)**.
- Stronger **North-South cooperation**, technology transfer, and debt relief are essential for developing nations.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/desa/new-un-report-warns-global-social-crisis-driven-insecurity-inequality-and-distrust>