

## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Digital Exclusion: Reconsidering Sustainable Development and Digital Poverty in the Post- Pandemic World

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**Abstract :** This paper explores the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs) alongside digital poverty and proposes that digital poverty should be a new SDG. The SDGs concentrate on 17 key areas, including economic growth, reducing inequalities, climate action, ending poverty, gender equality, and quality education. Many of the plans to fulfill these goals involve the creation and adaptation of new technologies. As we have seen with COVID-19, access to these technologies has determined communities and societies' ability to respond to these challenges in both developed and developing nations. For example, the transition to online education due to the lockdowns had a detrimental effect on children who did not have access to technology to provide continuity in their educational development. Digitalization and emerging technologies, especially information and communication technologies (ICTs), can help address each goal. Digital poverty and exclusion exacerbate the gap between rich and poor within our societies and internationally, and COVID-19 has further highlighted these issues. Closing this gap can support achieving the SDGs. If access to digital technologies measure society's response and resilience in addressing the challenges the SDGs seek to resolve, should reducing digital poverty be an SDG of its own? This paper will explore this question, arguing that digital poverty should be an independent SDG working alongside and supporting the achievement of the other 17 SDGs.

**Keywords :** digital poverty, digital exclusion, United Nations sustainable development goals, information and communication technologies

**Conference Title :** ICSIP 2021 : International Conference on Social Inequality and Poverty

**Conference Location :** Vancouver, Canada

**Conference Dates :** May 20-21, 2021