

**2022 ECOSOC Partnership Forum**  
**2 February 2022**

**Statement delivered by Ms. Kehkashan Basu, Green Hope Foundation**

Thank you. Your excellencies, distinguished guests and colleagues, my name is Kehkashan. I am the Founder-President of Green Hope Foundation, a youth-led global social innovation enterprise that works across 26 countries with over 225,000 people to ensure that our world's most vulnerable communities are not left behind.

As grassroots stakeholders, we have noticed some very worrying trends during this pandemic, the foremost being that we live in a world where digital dividends coexist with digital divides. One of the greatest manifestations of this divide has been to push millions out of the education system, particularly girls, simply because of the technological barrier that prevents them from digitally reconnecting to a distance learning system.

Additionally, as we try to rebuild better, we must remember to consider data gaps, which can lead to these same vulnerable communities being forgotten and the continued amplification of the existing inequalities. When collecting and reporting data, we tend to take a generalized view, more often than not, based on the developed world and then extrapolate it to the rest of the world. Just as an example, since the onset of the pandemic my team and I have been working with COVID impacted communities in several of the LDCs, who are completely isolated.

It is as if they don't exist - not only do they not have any vaccines, they are completely excluded from any kind of data on pandemic impacts. Thus, to build forward better from the COVID-19 pandemic, the only way we can advance the full implementation of the SDGs is if we address the digital divide and the tremendous data gaps that currently exist so that we truly leave no one behind and so that we can ensure a life of dignity for all.

I thank you.