



**Expert Group Meeting on**  
**“Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All”**

United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA, 8-11 May 2017

**Report of the Expert Group Meeting**



## I. Background

The Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) organized an Expert Group Meeting on the priority theme of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development: “Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All”. The Expert Group Meeting was held from 8 to 11 May 2017 in New York, USA.

The meeting was convened in the context of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations resolution E/RES/2016/6, in which ECOSOS decided that the priority theme for the 2017-2018 review and policy cycle of the Commission for Social Development would be “Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All”. The fifty-sixth session of the Commission to be held from 31 January to 9 February 2018, will produce a negotiated policy outcome on the priority theme.

The objective of the EGM was to make specific policy recommendations on effective strategies for eradicating poverty in all its forms, including extreme poverty in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to evaluate the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017). Experts from government, academia, think tanks, civil society, and the UN system participated in the meeting. The EGM had two segments: the first segment examined policies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all and the second segment reviewed the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, including the UN system-wide Plan of Action on the Decade. The experts deliberated on national experiences in eradicating poverty and made recommendations on strategies and policies that could spur poverty eradication efforts in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each substantive session consisted of presentations by experts and a discussion. During the closing session, a short summary of each thematic session was presented by the moderator of each session. This report summarizes the main points from all the sessions and highlights key messages and recommendations.

Materials from the Expert Group Meeting can be accessed at the website of the Division for Social Policy and Development:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/>, at the following location:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2017egms/poverty.html>

## II. Overview

The presentations made by the experts and the discussions held focused on several key questions that included the following:

- i. What kind of social and economic policies and activities have to be central to policy making and programmatic interventions in order to deliver on the new global agenda, particularly the overarching objective of poverty eradication?
- ii. What are the global and regional factors that continue to undermine progress in eradicating poverty?

- iii. What institutional setups or mechanisms are best suited at ensuring policy coherence and coordination to end poverty in all its forms, including extreme poverty, both at the international and national levels?
- iv. What are effective strategies to mobilize resources (both international and domestic) for eradicating poverty? What strategies can be applied to identify innovative sources of financing to fight poverty?
- v. How have countries been addressing the challenge of youth unemployment and what kind of strategies have been implemented to give young people, including young women, everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work?
- vi. How effective have been policies and strategies adopted by countries to address structural constraints faced by women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous groups as economic agents and to remove barriers that prevent these groups from being full participants in the economy?
- vii. To what extent have relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, able to support countries in strengthening their social and macroeconomic policy capacity and national development strategies so as to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Second Decade?
- viii. What have been the main challenges, gaps, opportunities and collaborative actions facing the UN system in its attempt to foster system wide coherence in ensuring that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the objectives of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)?

The meeting noted the remarkable progress that had been made to reduce poverty in both absolute numbers and headcount ratio at the global, regional and national levels. However, efforts to further reduce poverty depend on very rapid growth going forward and a reduction in inequality. Experts underscored that there was no tension between pro-growth policies and redistribution. Countries need to ensure that growth is inclusive and sustained, promote structural transformation through industrialization, combat inequality, invest in human capital formation, agriculture and rural development and infrastructure development, and implement efficient redistributive policies. Furthermore, greater efforts are required to ensure that markets work better for people living in poverty, harness the demographic dividend, foster financial inclusion and the transition from the informal to formal economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, scale up the provision of social protection systems, and strengthening institutions and coordination of social, economic, environmental policies. The national experiences of China, the Philippines, Rwanda, Kenya, and Brazil as well as the regional experiences of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and the Middle East and North Africa helped to enrich the discussion. These national and regional experiences emphasized the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality, redistribution, access, participation, disaggregated data, targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as children, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous groups and migrants. Experts also highlighted the need to harness non-best practices to escape poverty traps, including paying greater attention on graduation programmes that target the ultra-poor.

The key policy messages and recommendations are presented in the following section.

### III. Key Policy Messages and Recommendations

- ❖ A quarter century of remarkable progress under high globalization has seen a billion people being lifted out of poverty. The explosion in global inequality has also been arrested. However, efforts to further reduce poverty depend on very rapid growth going forward and a reduction in inequality. In particular, greater effort at fostering inclusive growth must be made. Achieving SDG1 is not necessarily automatic as the remaining poverty is less responsive to growth and hardest to reach. Growth can contribute to poverty reduction if the benefits of the growth can reach everyone in society in an equitable manner. GDP growth should also be associated with household income growth. Hence, economic, social and environmental policy interventions, including social protection must make growth more inclusive by generating decent jobs for all in the sectors in which people living in poverty are engaged in, including for women living in poverty. Successful structural transformation and inter-sectoral shifts to high productivity can also play a significant role.
- ❖ There is no tension between pro-growth policies and redistribution; hence it is important to look at both public policy and market-based mechanisms to reduce inequalities that are driven by inequalities in opportunities in access to employment, infrastructure and services. Efficient redistribution policies can promote faster growth at the bottom at little cost higher up the distribution. This includes investing in better teachers, public employment programmes, cash transfers and rural infrastructure such as irrigation, roads and electricity.
- ❖ International community needs to pay more attention to perceptions of inequality, potentially political responses and explore new approaches to measure inequalities. It is important to address both income and wealth inequality. Also, inequality is further being exacerbated by the potential impacts from climate change, protracted conflicts and increasing technological advances which will change the future of work.
- ❖ Sustainable approaches to addressing inequality require not only technically sound approaches, but also need to be part of and constitute social contracts. Priority may be given to better understand how economic growth is produced, what patterns of growth reduce poverty and inequalities and how countries can keep inequalities low without large public transfers or how to use public investments more efficiently creating better multipliers in the local economy.
- ❖ National governments are already stepping in to fill the important role of employer of last resort especially in situations of structural unemployment. Yet at the same time the potential for using public investments as a catalyst - not only to create more jobs, but also to create integrated approaches to implement sectoral strategies (e.g. agriculture, environment, and infrastructure) which together can create better synergies - are not sufficiently being used to absorb the excess labour.
- ❖ Recent progress against inequality indicates that it can be reduced both globally, when integrated markets allow the movement of people and goods and nationally, when countries pursue equitable policies. The damaging effects of inequality on poverty should be mitigated, through efficient redistribution policies, which enable sustained income growth for all segments of population but with faster than average growth rate for the bottom 40 per cent and promoting social and financial inclusion of vulnerable population.

- ❖ Income growth among the poor is highly correlated with mean growth. Hence, it is important to get the basics right, viz; good institutions and policies, macroeconomic stability, openness, savings and investment, good business climate (regulate the right things, not the wrong ones). Efficiency in the provision of public services to the poor must be promoted. Countries can promote good governance and better delivery of public services by ensuring that decentralization is both technical, but also financial, developing accountability mechanisms especially at provincial and local municipal level. Overall, there is no single or easy recipe and national context matters.
- ❖ Among the factors preventing the poor from escaping poverty, some can be broad in nature and can only be resolved by taking public or collective actions at a sufficiently large geographical scale. This requires administrative units suitable to be entrusted with the responsibility for planning, mobilizing resources, overseeing and managing investments in public goods and services at a sufficiently large geographical scale. Besides factors which are best tackled at such a large geographical scale, there are also factors which are best addressed at the local/village level such as building and managing a local irrigation system and farm road network, engaging in farmland consolidation, investing in and managing local schools and health clinics, and promoting local technical extensions. Lastly, there are also personal or household-specific factors preventing people from escaping poverty such as education and health status. These are best tackled at the household level through “accurate targeting”.
- ❖ Countries should pursue “forward-looking” macroeconomic policies that promote sustainable development and lead to sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, increase productive employment opportunities and promote agricultural and industrial development. That is, macroeconomic policies should balance short-term stabilization and long-term socio-economic development goals, and not focus narrowly on debt stabilization and curbing inflation, but should ultimately be supportive of growth of real output and employment. It is often necessary, therefore, to relax unnecessarily stringent fiscal and monetary restrictions and to use countercyclical fiscal and monetary policies to boost employment and incomes and to minimize the impact of external and other shocks on poverty.
- ❖ Countries must strengthen their domestic resource mobilization efforts by broadening tax base, ensuring progressivity of tax structure, avoiding tax competition and improving tax administration in order to stem corruption, tax evasion and illicit transfer of funds. This is particularly important in light of dwindling flows of foreign aid, lopsided nature of foreign direct investment and crisis prone volatile short-term capital flows.
- ❖ An enhanced role of the United Nations is needed for ensuring greater international cooperation in particular for capacity building of less developed countries and for combating illicit transfer of funds and stemming harmful tax competition. Enhanced international cooperation to strengthen tax revenue collection and increase sovereign debt sustainability can greatly buttress the fiscal capacities of all Governments so that they are able to consistently pursue countercyclical macroeconomic policies with strengthened social protection measures.
- ❖ Poverty and hunger are concentrated in rural areas: 767 million people are extreme poor and 795 million are undernourished (SOFI 2015); most of them living in fragile contexts and relying on agriculture for their livelihoods. Furthermore, about 8 out of 10 working poor live in rural areas and are engaged in vulnerable employment in the informal economy, mainly agriculture.

- ❖ Rural poor are affected by market failures which halt their ability to move out of poverty (even in contexts of economic growth): limited access to employment, financial services, innovative technologies and practices.
- ❖ Consumption and production decisions are interdependent: low risk/low return livelihood strategies
- ❖ Even if poverty is normally measured at the household level, rural women may be poorer than men if broader measures of poverty are considered, such as access to productive resources. However, recent evidence shows how the gender productivity gap disappears altogether when access to productive inputs is taken into account, making it paramount to close the gender gap in agriculture for sustainable development.
- ❖ Countries need to maximize the impact of macroeconomic, employment and social policies on poverty by ensuring policy coherence and more coordination across sectors and identifying incentives for ministries for better policy coordination and coherence in line with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Coordination at the local, regional and national levels and among all stakeholders would require strong implementation capacity.
- ❖ To reduce child poverty, greater attention should be accorded to understanding multidimensional poverty as it relates to children and not just focus on income poverty. In some regions, housing conditions and nutrition are the main sources of child deprivation. The poorest families are so cut off from market opportunities; hence non-labour income is the only escape from poverty.
- ❖ Structural transformation, driven by growth in sustainable and inclusive industrialization, is the most effective driver of poverty reduction and economic growth in developing countries. This occurs through backward linkages (the demand-side connections a firm has with other existing firms in the region) and forward linkages (the supply-side connections a firm has with other existing firms in the region) which facilitate high job creation and productivity spillovers. These factors make growth in the manufacturing sector particularly effective at sustaining inclusive poverty reduction in sharp contrast to other sectors which create fewer jobs and technology upgrading, and less stable growth over time.
- ❖ There are several unknowns concerning the future of work which may present risk to future structural transformation in developing countries. Technology change and globalization must be considered when creating industrial policy for poverty reduction. Facilitating transformation that is dynamic and encourages a shift into a diversity of sectors is necessary.
- ❖ Urbanization's rapid rise is occurring without structural transformation in many countries and joblessness in cities is on the rise. Facilitating industrial growth is a proven mitigant for reducing urban unemployment and the potential tensions that may arise. Spillovers to agroindustry and via remittances also help to reduce rural-urban inequality.
- ❖ In promoting industrial growth, focus on small enterprises and industrial sub-sectors that are employment intensive can help generate employment and reduce poverty.
- ❖ Shifting the pattern of growth also has significant implications for women workers. In many countries the shift to export-oriented production went hand in hand with significant gender wage differentials.
- ❖ It needs to be recognized that there is a limit to the extent to which general economic development or specific development oriented interventions can help the poor or other low-income classes today to improve their circumstances. Much of their problem may not have to

do with a lack of employment and income opportunities, but a lack of their ability to take advantage of these. In these cases, nothing short of adequate levels of social protection can help improve their living immediately and their human capital stock over time.

- ❖ The synergies between social protection and employment should be strengthened, including where complementarities between multi sectoral public employment and cash transfers are proven to be effective in reducing income and non-income poverty and inequalities. They have long-term positive effects as they enable sustained poverty escape by allowing beneficiaries to invest in human capital formation and raise their ability to earn higher incomes in the long run, in addition to creating needed infrastructure, community assets and services. However, cash transfers alone are not likely to decrease inequality or produce large impacts on income unless quality of health and education services is improved. The effectiveness of public employment as part of social protection, depends on how they are designed, targeted and delivered. Moreover, social protection generates important social and economic impacts; but by itself it will not be able to sustainably move people out of poverty. There is a need for an integrated approach, linking social protection with other programmes, including agriculture, employment, financial inclusion, etc.
- ❖ Social protection advances sustainable and inclusive development by reducing poverty and inequality; promoting decent work; improving health and education outcomes; increasing consumption and aggregate demand, and improving access to food and better nutrition.
- ❖ The social welfare systems in developed countries are no longer fit for purpose. There should be an adjustment of the paradigm including promotion, and openness to study new ideas around a new social contract that is more appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This may entail moving towards a universal basic income system, supporting a living wage rather than a minimum wage, recognizing all work (not just paid employment) as meaningful, and ensuring that all government decisions are subjected to a poverty-proofing process. While the centrality of employment and decent jobs to eradicate poverty is well recognized, employment growth has not been sufficient to absorb the growing labour force, particularly in those countries and regions with large youth populations. Further, there has been a divergence between productivity and wages growth, as well as growing employment insecurity and casualization in all countries.
- ❖ Efforts to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality should take demographic processes into account. Demography is not just about population growth or population size. Other demographic processes and variables such as migration, age structure change, fertility rates, age at marriage, differentials in fertility by socio-economic status, family nucleation, and assortative mating can all contribute to increasing poverty and inequality. Easier cross-border labor migration from labor surplus to labor short economies can be mutually beneficial and help reduce poverty and policies to facilitate such movements including welfare of migrants should be promoted.
- ❖ Learning adapting and innovation are also central to poverty reduction. Innovation is not the exclusive domain of wealthy countries. Poor countries require policy, social, and economic innovation to escape poverty. Civil society organizations play an important role in supporting poverty reduction at national levels, as well as contribute to SDGs, by testing, developing and promoting the scale up of cost-effective and contextualized solutions. To innovate, countries

should use existing local institutions to kick-start development, rather than import “best practices” templates from wealthy countries.

- ❖ In some countries, the eradication of poverty and combating inequality also requires comprehensive land policies that include land redistribution, the institutionalization of democratic land control, the removal of forms of exclusion (such as gender, generational, ethnic and economic exclusion), and the development of fair, responsive land administration systems. It is essential to develop rights-based public policies with an integrated perspective to overcome social inequalities and exclusion. It is also vital to reduce the incidence of landlessness, moderate the tendency towards greater land concentration, and exert much greater control over ‘land grabs’.
- ❖ Investing in agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural areas promotes food security and improved nutrition and also boosts income of rural poor households, increase consumption and aggregate demand in local areas. Transforming rural areas as a source of productive employment will also contribute to curbing rural-urban migration. This has to be supported by investing in local public infrastructure and social services to increase productivity, improve market access and reduce food waste. Creating quality jobs in natural resources management will protect/rehabilitate the environment and enhance local climate resilience. On the job training through labour-based schemes can also contribute to local capacity building and sensitize local communities on issues such as health and environmental protection and building climate resilience through building public infrastructure at the same time.
- ❖ Creating basic infrastructure focused on the needs of the poor such as rural roads, irrigation, and electrification and urban housing and mass transit systems can have significant poverty reduction impact. The necessary policy environment to allow better access to such infrastructure by the poor should also be created.
- ❖ Harness the potential of innovative and inclusive finance through mobile phones to increase access to financial services by the poor, uneducated, rural dwellers and women. Low-income households and vulnerable groups are increasingly using money transfer platforms to expand their social networks and diversify risk, enhancing their resilience to unexpected negative shocks.
- ❖ Realizing the full potential of inclusive finance requires innovative and proactive leadership, coordination and sustained effort from governments, the private sector, development partners and consumers. Working together achieves much.
- ❖ Regulators must proactively seek to understand emerging innovations, potential risks and how to regulate them. This way they are able to carefully consider new approaches to regulating technology and ensure the necessary safeguards are applied to mitigate the potential risks of innovative financial models and solutions without stifling them. Through this, they are able to appreciate the innovations targeting the poor and work towards facilitating rather than stifling them.
- ❖ All players within the financial inclusion space need to have a deep understanding of the financial lives of the poor and low income people, including how they acquire, manage and use their money. This way they will be able to design appropriate frameworks and products that fit their unique needs and empower them to better manage their finances.
- ❖ Poverty, in and of itself, is a multifaceted challenge that needs a multiplicity of solutions to combat it. Innovative and inclusive finance, is not a “silver bullet” to get people out of poverty,



but by creating employment, additional income and savings buffers, it can play a role in reducing poverty and the impact thereof, as well as boosting wellbeing.

- ❖ Sustained poverty eradication requires that the current generation of children and youth acquire the necessary skills that would prevent them to fall into poverty in the future. This requires a strong educational system that guarantees access to good quality education to all, particularly for vulnerable children and youth.
- ❖ To develop human capital, countries need to tackle the lack of equal opportunities, address cultural biases against the girl child, improve the quality of education, build education infrastructure and invest in teachers. Educational systems should provide young people with the right mix of knowledge and experience to prepare for active citizenship. In addition to acquiring specific skills needed by the private sector, a combination of general and “ soft” skills are also very important as they allow people to learn new skills and adapt to new technologies. Some “general skills” may actually be more important as they guarantee that individuals can have the ability to learn and engage in new activities. Specific training can actually happen on the job. Countries also need to harness a demographic dividend by investing in education and skills development, health and enlarging job quality opportunities for young women and men, who are facing an unprecedented set of difficulties in transitioning from school to work.
- ❖ For countries that are vulnerable to natural disasters it is difficult to sustain economic growth, much less continuously accelerate the growth, for a prolonged period. Hence, there is the need to set aside resources for prevention, response, reconstruction and recovery, building resilience and scaling up the provision of employment opportunities and social protection. Eradicating poverty and leaving no one behind also requires understanding risk and vulnerability and reducing risks for low-income and disadvantaged communities in urban areas. Risks associated with living in dense urban poor neighborhoods include higher levels of morbidity and mortality, exposure to infections and parasitic diseases, violence, serious injury and impoverishment.
- ❖ Countries should improve investments in risk-reducing services, such as safe water and sanitation, affordable electricity, rule of law, as well as enhance the capacity of local governments, including for effectively responding to the effects of the scale of disasters, including floods.
- ❖ Integrating adaptation strategies to climate change into development plans and poverty eradication strategies, including social protection will address vulnerability and build resilience. Countries need to conduct vulnerability assessment to identify the needs of poor, socially marginalized and vulnerable people, integrate uncertainty into resilience planning, and scale adaptation options that benefit many people. Vulnerability can be reduced and resilience can be built by, and collaborate with multiple partners at various scales.
- ❖ Climate change is likely to affect many developing countries and adversely impact on agricultural production and the livelihood of the poor. Counter measures need to be adopted including agricultural research into weather resistant crops and crop insurance that encompasses smaller farmers.
- ❖ A right combination of cross-sectoral policies and programmes towards eliminating hunger and malnutrition needs to be identified. Development of innovative resource mobilization from a broad set of public and private sector actors and financial instruments is essential.

- ❖ As the magnitude and impact of crises and disasters increase, aggravated by the overexploitation of natural resources and climate change, more and more households, communities and governments are less able to absorb, recover and adapt, making them increasingly vulnerable to future shocks. Governments must intensify their efforts to ensure that years of gradual agricultural development gains are not wiped out by recurrent shocks, by increasing the resilience of agricultural livelihoods and promoting and financing climate smart agricultural practices.
- ❖ Policies, including government interventions are required to protect the rural poor who are disproportionately affected by market failures. Countries should foster inclusive structural transformation and growth that enables rural communities to participate in and benefit from economic activity. Rural cooperatives and institutions should also contribute to poverty eradication.
- ❖ Poor countries need to use what they already have as resources. Existing practices, norms, and structures may be repurposed to mitigate constraints and build markets. There is need to question the normative assumption that only the best practices found in wealthy economies are the best and everything else that deviates from them is inferior. In designing policies and measures, countries should focus on institutional fit, knowing that so-called good institutions can come in many local forms. Understanding this possibility will expand the toolbox of development assistance beyond one set of conventional best practices. It also calls for more on-the-ground research in and inputs from poor countries on non-conventional practices that work.
- ❖ It must be emphasized that the institutions and strategies for escaping poverty are not the same as those needed to sustain development. In other words, building markets is not the same as preserving markets. Countries must apply different bundles of strategies that fit different stages of development.
- ❖ Countries should foster the transition from the informal to the formal economy in order to promote decent work for all and inclusive development. Transition from the informal to the formal economy should be considered as an effective path to both eradication of poverty and reduction in inequality and as a core objective of national development strategies.
- ❖ Countries need to implement an integrated approach towards formalization of informal economies by simultaneously facilitating the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy; promoting the creation, preservation and sustainability of enterprises and decent jobs in the formal economy and by promoting the coherence of macroeconomic, employment, social protection and other social policies. Efforts should be made to prevent the informalization of formal economy jobs.
- ❖ The new international standard, ILO Recommendation No 204, adopted in 2015, concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy, provides guidance on this integrated strategy that joins developmental perspective with improved governance of labour market institutions.
- ❖ Countries need to find more effective ways to respond to the employment challenge of youth through multi-pronged approaches that address both the quality and quantity of employment opportunities that combine macroeconomic policies, skills and employability, active labour market policies, entrepreneurship and promote the rights of young people. Promoting youth entrepreneurship can provide a pathway for self-employment and entry into formal markets and

hence contributes to addressing youth unemployment and poverty but only for a small number of highly educated youth that are the most likely to become successful entrepreneurs. Lessons learnt from impact evaluation should be used to inform new interventions and support programmes.

- ❖ For the large number of out-of-school and poorly educated youth in developing countries, a more promising approach is to support local SMEs as they are the drivers of job creation combined with skills development programmes addressing the specific needs of the out of school and poorly educated youth.
- ❖ Countries need to target skills development through improving the quality of education and training systems. Further, there is a need for better vocational training programmes and partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations to support skills development for youth, women and marginalized groups and to improve their employability. This entails working more closely with the private sector and civil society to support programs to disseminate entrepreneurship skills and to assist marginalized people to become entrepreneurs and creating incentives for the private sector to integrate youth entrepreneurs into value chains. Public, private collaboration and partnership to expand quality apprenticeships programmes are effective means for addressing skills gaps and job opportunities for youth.
- ❖ For inclusive, equitable and sustained growth, countries need to harness the productive potential of gender equality by tackling gender-based discrimination in education and healthcare, the labour market, access to productive assets such as land and credit and in social institutions.
- ❖ The majority of women workers find themselves in vulnerable employment and in working poverty, therefore any strategy towards inclusive growth and poverty eradication for all must address gender inequalities in labor markets explicitly. In many countries, this will require addressing the pattern of growth – as some countries moved to labor-intensive, export-oriented production, many women entered such sectors/firms but at very low wages. Gender wage gaps are prevalent even in these sectors so important to ensure that international competitiveness of firms is not based on or built on perpetuating gender wage gaps.
- ❖ The gender gap in unpaid care work has also significant implications for women’s ability to actively take part in the labour market and the type/quality of employment opportunities available to them.
- ❖ To improve and accelerate gender equality in the labour market and poverty reduction, countries should develop an integrated approach to women’s empowerment, which has multiplying effects, making the outcomes of development strategies more far-reaching or sustainable. These interventions should aim at removing the structural barriers to women’s engagement in economic activities and on freeing up women’s time to take advantage of new employment opportunities. This includes strengthening women’s employability capacity and skills, promoting access to finance, but also facilitating more equitable household relationships and developing policies in all sectors (not only social sectors) that looks at women’s specific needs and priorities, especially in rural areas.
- ❖ Women should also be encouraged and supported to develop new skills focusing on non-traditional and off farm jobs and in their participation in the formal economy. It is important that women and girls are pulled out of the shadow of the informal economy, subsistence agriculture and from unpaid care work. Unpaid care work that women are disproportionately responsible

for is a critical constraint that significantly impacts women's labor force participation. Public investments in social care and physical infrastructure can both create decent jobs for women while also reducing their unpaid work burden. It is also important to improve the business policy environment by offering specific incentives or affirmative initiatives for business start-ups especially for women owned SMEs. Women can also benefit from enhancing public-private partnerships that have the potential to increase decent job creation and employment for women and youth.

- ❖ Large-scale investment programmes that operate in job-intensive areas could assist growth and address social and infrastructural deficits. The focus would need to be tailored to each individual country/region but might include development of renewable energy sources, health and social care infrastructure, housing, education, life-long learning and early childhood care infrastructure. Inappropriate rules currently blocking required viable investment need to be adjusted.
- ❖ Extreme poverty eradication requires simplifying poverty targeting mechanisms for social protection through the lens of social cohesion. Governments need to introduce social protection schemes that are more resilient and that tackle inequalities within the present systems, ensuring equal access to services and to strengthen social cohesion. There is also a strong need to reconcile fiscal policy with equity and poverty reduction. Social inclusion perspective on social assistance- reducing errors of exclusion even at the cost of errors of inclusion.
- ❖ Governments need to engage with key stakeholders to ensure that groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and unemployed people can influence policy-direction and implementation, and that their experiences become part of the dialogue with government institutions to try and restore social cohesion and political legitimacy. Fostering a social cohesion agenda in society can act as an effective and sustainable means for poverty reduction. Social cohesion impacts on poverty reduction by sustaining long-term growth (growth sustainability) and by ensuring greater equity in the distribution of its benefits (growth with equity).
- ❖ Broad based rapid economic growth, which is widely participated in by all segments of the population, generates quality employment and improves the livelihood of the poor, is essential for eradicating poverty. Attempts to promote economic growth towards inclusive patterns need to be supplemented by proactive public action at inclusion such as by the government acting as direct provider of basic services for the poor, employer of the poor in social protection programs, including public work programmes and facilitator in livelihood generation activities of the poor. To perform this function, Governments must have access to larger fiscal and policy space. And while public works programmes are effective at creating employment and reducing poverty, most programmes are not being evaluated correctly. In times of crisis or where there is structural unemployment, the State should be employer of last resort.
- ❖ Governments need to improve the efficiency of public services such as education, health, transport and employment generation serving people living in poverty and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups. The identity of who is left behind is changing a significantly, hence it is imperative to understand the constraints keeping people behind such as child care burden faced by women. Policies should not just target people but conditions that keep people behind.
- ❖ Partnerships with civil society and the private can also facilitate the implementation of big push approaches targeting the ultra-poor. By implementing smart and targeted interventions tailored

to meet local needs, such programmes have led to sustained results in improving incomes and self-employment, increasing assets and savings, job placement rates, school enrolment and graduation, and lowering the prevalence of child marriages.

- ❖ Sustained poverty eradication and combating inequality require structural changes in the education system: one that guarantees access to good quality education to all, particularly for vulnerable children and youth.
- ❖ Countries should invest in producing poverty and social development indicators with greater regularity than now. Better use should be made of administrative data, and harnessing big data to inform policy making, planning and implementation of programmes and strategies to eradicate poverty, including precision poverty reduction that pins down the poor and designing specific policies targeting them. Data on poverty and social indicators should be produced on a regular and timely basis.
- ❖ Countries also need multidimensional measures of poverty that include vulnerability, food insecurity and inequality as well as a multidimensional approach to solutions to poverty eradication (not only income but also components that foster human capital accumulation and prevent future poverty). There is also a need for national poverty lines that facilitate comparisons to the international poverty line. National policy objectives should guide the choice of national poverty lines which can then be adjusted upwards as improvements are made. Further, efforts should be made to launch regional poverty surveys that facilitate the computation of regional poverty thresholds. Countries will need to adopt the same methodology in order to implement a regional poverty line.
- ❖ As countries implement different policies and strategies to promote inclusive growth, eradicate poverty and protect the environment, it has become increasingly important to share development experiences and learn from others. Policies makers should be brave enough to blaze the trail and be the ones that try innovative solutions first, make mistakes and share these lessons with others.
- ❖ Social protection should not be seen as a stand-alone, auxiliary program, but as an integral part of poverty reduction programmes. It is the moment to consolidate the social and economic base and explore what is the best combination of social protection approaches based on populations' income status, life-cycle and livelihood profiles.
- ❖ While considering expanding and scale-up of social protection, inclusiveness is key, including ensuring the rural, small-scale farmers are effectively reached and their multiple vulnerabilities are specifically addressed. More than 70% of the global population does not have access to SP, and most of them live in rural areas and/or depend on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods.
- ❖ When promoting poverty reduction policies and programmes, it is essential to enhance coordination among social sectors, but also between social sectors and other, such as agriculture- given their contribution to creation of employment, social protection and economic growth. (Agricultural growth in low-income countries is three times more effective in reducing extreme poverty compared with other sectors).

## Annex 1



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Division for Social Policy and Development

### Agenda

#### STRATEGIES FOR ERADICATING POVERTY TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

United Nations Headquarters • New York  
Conference Room A

8-11 May 2017

#### SEGMENT ONE - 8 & 9 May 2017

#### Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to achieve Sustainable Development for All

DAY 1 – Monday, 8 May 2017

9:15 - 9:45	Registration
<b>Opening Session</b>	
10:00 – 10:15	<b>Welcome and Introductory Statements</b> <b>Ms. Daniela Bas</b> , Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA <b>Ms. Wenyan Yang</b> , Social Perspective on Development Branch, DSPD/DESA
<b>Session 1</b>	
10:15 – 11:00	<b>Impacts of global mega trends on poverty eradication</b> <u>Facilitator:</u> <b>Ms. Wenyan Yang</b> , DSPD/DESA <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Francisco Ferreira</b>, World Bank – <i>Trends in global and within-country inequality and poverty and their inter-relationships</i></li><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Daouda Sembene</b>, International Monetary Fund – <i>African strategies to boost growth and combat poverty and inequality</i></li><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Parfait Eloundou-Enyegue</b>, Cornell University – <i>Impacts of demographic changes on inclusive growth and poverty reduction</i></li></ul>
11:00 – 11:30	Interactive Discussion
11:30 – 11:45	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>Session 2</b>	
11:45 – 12:30	<b>Policies for shared prosperity and inclusive growth</b> <u>Facilitator:</u> <b>Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro</b> , International Labour Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Arjan de Haan</b>, International Development Research Centre – <i>Inclusive growth beyond safety nets</i></li><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Minquan Liu</b>, School of Economics Peking University – <i>Inclusive growth and poverty eradication policies in China</i></li><li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Anis Chowdhury</b>, Australian National University – <i>Social protection for shared prosperity and inclusive growth</i></li></ul>
12:30 – 13:00	Interactive Discussion

13:00 – 15:00 **LUNCH BREAK**

**Session 3** **Labour market policies and institutions for sustained poverty escapes**

15:00 – 16:00 Facilitator: **Ms. Azzurra Chiarini**, World Food Programme

- Presentation: **Ms. Yuen Yuen Ang**, University of Michigan – *Employment policies and institutions fostering sustained escapes from poverty*
- Presentation: **Ms. Azita Berar Awad**, International Labour Organization – *Informality and transitions to formality: linking growth to poverty reduction*
- Presentation: **Ms. Lamia Rashid**, BRAC International – *Enhancing decent employment opportunities for women and marginalised groups in growth sectors*

16:00 – 17:00 Interactive Discussion

17:00 – 17:15 Wrap-up and close

**DAY 2 – Tuesday, 9 May 2017**

**Session 4** **Policies to reach those left furthest behind first**

10:00 – 10:45 Facilitator: **Mr. Shantanu Mukherjee**, DSD/DESA

- Presentation: **Ms. Rose Rwabuhiri** (video conference), Gender Monitoring Office, Rwanda – *Labour market policies, gender and poverty eradication: the experience of Rwanda*
- Presentation: **Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon**, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippines – *Universalism vs targeting social policy: Philippines' experience in addressing the challenges facing the poor and disadvantaged and marginalized groups*
- Presentation: **Mr. Laurence Chandy**, UNICEF – *Policies targeting child poverty and deprivation*

10:45 – 11:15 Interactive Discussion

11:15 – 11:30 **BREAK**

**Session 5** **Agriculture and rural development policies for poverty eradication**

11:30 – 12:30 Facilitator: **Mr. Parfait Eloundou-Enyegue**, Cornell University

- Presentation: **Mr. Benedict McKay**, University of Calgary – *Redistributive land policies for inclusive growth and poverty eradication*
- Presentation: **Ms. Azzurra Chiarini**, World Food Programme – *Enhancing opportunities for rural women's employment and poverty reduction*
- Presentation: **Mr. Michael Aliber**, University of Fort Hare – *Reducing poverty and inequality through redistributing assets, securing rights and democratising decision-making in rural areas*

12:30 – 13:00 Interactive Discussion

13:00 – 15:00 **LUNCH BREAK**

**Session 6** **Addressing vulnerabilities and enhancing resilience of poor communities**

15:00 – 17:00 Facilitator: **Ms. Yuen Yuen Ang**, University of Michigan

- Presentation: **Ms. Diana Mitlin**, University of Manchester and International Institute for Environment and Development – *Mitigating risks for poor communities in urban areas*

- Presentation: **Ms. Moushumi Chaudhury**, World Resources Institute – *Strategies for reducing vulnerability and building resilience to environmental and natural disasters in developing countries*
- Presentation: **Ms. Sithembile Mwamakamba**, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) – *Policies for building resilience for food and nutrition security*

17:00 – 17:15

Wrap-up and close

**SEGMENT TWO - 10 & 11 May 2017**

**Evaluating the Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008 – 2017)**

**DAY 3 – Wednesday, 10 May 2017**

9:15 - 9:45

Registration

**Session 7**

**Policy approaches to eradicate poverty: what has changed over the course of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, from norms to results**

10:00 – 11:00

Facilitator: **Ms. Wenyang Yang**, DSPD/DESA

- Presentation: **Mr. Guanghua Wan** (video conference), Asian Development Bank – *The Asian ‘poverty miracle’: impact on approaches/strategies to eradicate poverty in other developing countries*
- Presentation: **Mr. Anis Chowdhury**, Australian National University – *How global food and energy, and financial and economic crises changed approaches to eradicate poverty and generate employment*
- Presentation: **Ms. Lamia Rashid**, BRAC International – *Policy approaches to achieve large scale positive changes through economic and social programmes targeting people living in poverty: the BRAC experience*
- Presentation: **Mr. Alexandre Kolev**, OECD – *Enhancing social cohesion as a means of sustainable poverty reduction*

11:00 – 11:25

Interactive Discussion

11:25 – 11:35

**BREAK**

**Session 8**

**Regional approaches to poverty eradication and employment creation**

11:35 – 12:35

Facilitator: **Mr. Amson Sibanda**, DSPD/DESA

- Presentation: **Mr. Seán Healy**, Social Justice Ireland – *Strategies to combat poverty and generate decent employment in the European Union*
- Presentation: **Mr. Shiladitya Chatterjee**, Government of Assam, India – *Strategies to combat poverty and generate decent employment in the Asia-Pacific region*
- Presentation: **Ms. Sandra Garcia**, University of Los Andes – *Strategies to combat inequality and eradicate poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*

12:35 – 13:00

**Interactive Discussion**

13:00 – 15:00

**LUNCH BREAK**

**Session 9**

**Evaluating the implementation of the objectives of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty: national experiences**

15:00– 15:45

Facilitator: **Ms. Sandra Garcia**, University of Los Andes

- Presentation: **Mr. Liu Minquan**, School of Economics Peking University – *Evaluating the implementation of employment generating policies and strategies in China*



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Natália G. D. Sátyro</b>, Federal University of Minas Gerais – <i>Evaluating the implementation of social protection programmes in Brazil</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon</b>, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippines – <i>From global norms to national implementation: tackling poverty through human capital formation, the case of the Philippines</i></li> </ul>
15:45 – 16:15	Interactive Discussion
16:15 – 16:30	<b>BREAK</b>
16:30 – 17:00	<u>Facilitator:</u> <b>Mr. Shiladitya Chatterjee</b> , Centre for Sustainable Development Goals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Matu Mugo</b>, Central Bank of Kenya – <i>Community-level impacts of financial inclusion in Kenya, with particular focus on poverty eradication and employment creation</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Imed Drine</b>, Islamic Development Bank, Saudi Arabia – <i>Education and Entrepreneurship for Decent Employment and Poverty Eradication</i></li> </ul>
17:00 – 17:20	Interactive Discussion
17:20 – 17:30	Wrap-up and close

**DAY 4 – Thursday, 11 May 2017**

<b>Session 10</b>	<b>United Nations system coordination for poverty eradication -- implementation of the objectives of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty</b>
10:00 – 11:15	<u>Facilitator:</u> <b>Ms. Wenyan Yang</b> , DSPD/DESA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Nagesh Kumar</b> (video conference), ESCAP – <i>National ownership and supportive international programmes, measures and policies for the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication: lessons from Asia and the Pacific</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Mito Tsukamoto</b>, ILO – <i>Evaluating public investments in implementing employment and social protection policies and strategies for poverty eradication and employment creation</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Natalia Winder Rossi</b>, FAO – <i>Rural employment and social protection policies and strategies for poverty eradication and employment creation: successes and challenges</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Paul Maseli</b>, UNIDO – <i>Evaluating efforts to eradicate poverty through productive activities - lessons learned</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Michael Herrmann</b>, UNFPA – <i>Enhancing opportunities for youth employment: lessons from UNFPA's programmes on harnessing the demographic dividend</i></li> </ul>
11:15 – 11:30	<b>BREAK</b>
11:30 – 12:45	<u>Facilitator:</u> <b>Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro</b> , International Labour Organization
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Anuradha Seth</b>, UN Women – <i>Promoting the active participation of women living in poverty in the design and implementation of programmes and policies which affect them: lessons learned</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Ms. Jennifer Yablonski</b>, UNICEF – <i>Evaluating efforts to tackle child poverty - lessons learned</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Khalid Abu-Ismaïl</b>, ESCWA – <i>Reducing poverty amidst peace and security challenges: lessons from the Middle East</i></li> <li>▪ Presentation: <b>Mr. Simone Cecchini</b>, ECLAC – <i>Reducing poverty amidst high levels of inequality: lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean</i></li> </ul>
12:45 – 13:45	Interactive discussion and summary of key policy messages
13:45 – 14:00	Closing of the meeting: <b>Ms. Wenyan Yang</b> , DSPD/DESA

## Annex 2



# United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Social Policy and Development

## List of Participants

### Expert Group Meeting on Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All

8-11 May 2017

#### Conference Room A

United Nations Headquarters • New York

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