

Progress in accelerating global actions for a world without poverty and implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027): ESCAP, June 2019

On social protection:

Deliverables

A key deliverable is the strengthening of national capacities of ESCAP members and associate members to develop comprehensive social protection systems that provide coverage for all, including those furthest behind, through the development of analytical products and the implementation of capacity building initiatives. A second core deliverable is the strengthening of regional cooperation in the area of social protection to accelerate progress towards the achievement of universal social protection and the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Action steps

ESCAP is continuously developing new knowledge and advocacy products on social protection to support policymakers in Asia and the Pacific. These include the Social Protection Toolbox, a platform containing more than 120 good practices in social protection around the world, videos, infographics, animations and online games on topics such as the importance of social protection; a series of modules on designing, implementing and financing social protection; and a forthcoming social protection simulation tool, which will enable policymakers to estimate the impact of social protection policy options on poverty and inequality, while measuring the financial costs affordability of these options. ESCAP has also established a Group of Experts, consisting of officially nominated representatives from ESCAP member States, to develop a modality to strengthen regional cooperation on social protection in Asia and the Pacific.

On reducing inequalities:

Deliverables

Based on original research and new methodologies, a key deliverable is the strengthening of the knowledge base of policymakers on inequality trends and recommendations to reduce inequalities; ESCAP specifically supports its member States in enhancing capacities to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as migrants and older persons. ESCAP has developed and refined innovative methodologies to measure inequality of opportunity in order to more accurately identify the furthest behind; it has notably pioneered the wider application of the dissimilarity index (D-Index), classification tree analysis and latent class analysis to identify inequality gaps and facilitate profiling of deprived population groups.

Action Steps

ESCAP is continuously developing knowledge and advocacy products on poverty and inequality of opportunity to support policymakers in Asia and the Pacific. Notable examples include: ESCAP's biannual flagship publication, *Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific*, that aims to take stock of the state of social development in the region and to showcase best practices and policy recommendations relevant to ESCAP member States; and the *ESCAP Inequality of Opportunity policy papers* that analyse the extent of inequality in Asia-Pacific countries in accessing a range of different basic needs and services.

ESCAP is also developing an online platform on inequality that will host an interactive online assessment tool on multiple dimensions of inequality and its drivers, as well as a database of good practices, from both the public and private sectors, to reduce multidimensional inequality. ESCAP also organizes national and subregional workshops to further strengthen the capacity of policymakers using its knowledge products and tools on inequality of opportunity and social protection.

ESCAP supports the poverty-reducing impacts of safe, orderly and regular migration through promoting dialogue, cooperation and capacity-building to its member States to implement the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe,

Orderly and Regular Migration adopted in December 2018. ESCAP is also promoting active ageing over the life course and is supporting member States in revising their policies and programmes for older persons. ESCAP, in close collaboration with DESA, is also developing capacities of member States on data on older persons. Working closely with ILO and OECD, ESCAP assists countries in developing their pensions systems further and is supporting follow-up and review of the Madrid International Programme of Action on Ageing.

On decent work and women's economic empowerment

Deliverables

A key deliverable is supporting countries in strengthening policies that lead to advancing women's economic empowerment, inclusive and sustainable employment creation and poverty reduction. The barriers to starting and conducting business tend to be higher for women than men. They include legislative frameworks that discriminate against women, limited access to finance, or discriminatory socio-cultural norms and beliefs. Overcoming these challenges is essential to unlocking women's potential to manifest their full economic aspirations and capacities for building better livelihoods, prosperous communities and thriving societies.

Action Steps

ESCAP actively supports its member States in efforts to enhance women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship as a strategy for poverty reduction, social wellbeing and sustainable economic growth, towards the progressive realization of SDG 5 on Gender Equality and other related goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As part of its support, ESCAP is implementing a five year (2018-2023) regional programme on "*Catalyzing Women's Entrepreneurship - Creating a Gender-Responsive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem*". The initiative endeavors to advance women's economic empowerment and contribute to poverty reduction in the Asia-Pacific region. It aims to increase women entrepreneurs' access to capital through innovative financing mechanisms, increase women entrepreneurs' use of business development services and financial technologies, and support the development of gender-responsive business development and investment policies and programs in six target countries, including Cambodia, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Nepal, Fiji and Samoa. Beyond the six countries, the good practices generated through the project will be shared through subregional and regional forums, with a view to promoting effective policies and practices widely among Asia-Pacific countries.