

## **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): UNECE, June 2019**

### Statistics

UNECE is actively involved in the measurement of poverty, which is understood as a multidimensional concept. Sufficiently disaggregated data is required to design appropriately targeted policies that fulfil the promise of leaving no-one behind. UNECE has been working on a number of critical methodological issues and collecting and analysing good practices to improve the understanding of poverty.

Disaggregated data requires coverage at the subnational level and innovative strategies and survey designs to cover hard-to-reach populations. Different population sub-groups, such as children, older people or those with a disability have different consumption needs and this should be taken into account when analysing poverty.

Intra-household inequality is especially relevant from the point of view of gender relations – the few studies available on partners in a couple find that when differences in deprivation occur, they are more often to the disadvantage of women than of men. In addition, relations between the generations, for instance in multi-family or multigenerational households, have also an impact on individual poverty. Although the importance of intra-household inequality is well recognized, there is little information available about income or consumption at the individual level.

International comparability of poverty measures is particularly important in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Countries use a variety of approaches involving different data sources, sampling methods, classifications and definitions. The degree of harmonization by applying international standards also varies. To assess progress, it is necessary to achieve measures that are comparable across countries by applying universal definitions and harmonized methodologies. UNECE has been supporting the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) in developing harmonized poverty indicators. The objective is to strengthen the statistical capacity in these countries for producing comparable and reliable poverty indicators, including those necessary for monitoring SDGs.

### Structural transformation, productive employment and decent work in the context of a changing global scenario

Greening the economy provides new employment opportunities that can reconcile economic, social and environmental targets in support of sustainable development. The Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy (2016-2030) was developed by the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy with support from UNECE and UNEP, and in cooperation with other key players. One of the objectives of this framework is the improvement of human well-being and social equity. The Framework is complemented by the Batumi Initiative on the Green Economy, which encompasses voluntary commitments by governments and other actors. A review of these commitments in January 2019 found a high degree of implementation.

Greening the economy and supporting growing economic prosperity requires appropriate infrastructure. UNECE has been developing new public-private partnerships (PPPs) models that ensure their alignment with social goals, so they can make an effective contribution to reduce poverty. The work has focussed on the creation of appropriate standards and guidelines in a variety of sectors and the development of impacts assessment tools to score projects taking into account their contribution to social ends.

### Addressing non-income forms of poverty

Access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities is an essential requirement to address health issues that harm wellbeing and prevent escaping from poverty. The Protocol on Water and Health to the UNECE Water Convention stipulates that "equitable access to water, adequate in terms both of quantity and of quality, should be provided for all members of the population, especially those who suffer a disadvantage or social exclusion". UNECE has developed guidance documents to better understand and address existing challenges to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation. It also supports countries in their efforts in this direction. One of the lessons drawn from the assessment of the existing situation is that current governance frameworks are often "equity blind". Ensuring equitable access requires a results-oriented action plan, building on country situation analysis and context specific indicators.

### The future of food and sustainable agriculture

Providing new export opportunities for agricultural producers contributes to increase rural prosperity and reduce poverty. The adoption of quality standards is pivotal to the establishment of sustainable trading relationships, the creation of employment and revenue.

UNECE carries out capacity building activities and provides expert advice on the adoption of its agricultural quality standards to improve food exports. One of the lessons learnt from this work is the importance of the collaboration between the private and public sectors to improve the country's export capacities through quality assurance.

### Reducing inequalities

Population ageing has significant implications for poverty and inequalities in the UNECE region. Discrimination, marginalization and exclusion are major causes of poverty which can place old people at disadvantage. Public programmes should be designed having in mind the need to promote social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age and other considerations.

Population ageing has implications for intergenerational equity, as in most countries relatively small generations of young people will shoulder higher per capita support for older generations. On the other hand, older persons are increasingly being recognized as important assets to contribute to economic prosperity and social inclusion. However, this potential remains largely untapped. UNECE work on ageing underlines that policy responses to population ageing should focus not only on adapting welfare systems to the challenges of demographic change but also on the opportunities that living longer offers for individuals, economies and society at large.