

**Social Development Link** is an online Newsletter published quarterly by the NGO Unit of the Division for Social Policy and Development. It aims at providing a sharp and synthetic summary of major activities carried out by DSPD. It also intends to highlight some aspects of the work of DSPD that do not fall under a specific cluster and are, therefore, left in the dark. As its title shows, this publication will serve as a link between DSPD and its major partners, from civil society actors to social development practitioners and scholars.

Social Development Link Newsletter can also be read on-line at: http://social.un.org/newsletter

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## **Feature Articles**

## **Overview of the World Social Situation 2009**



Although considerable progress has been made in reducing levels of absolute poverty, overall, the world is not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals of halving levels of extreme poverty by 2015. According to the World Bank, the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day in developing countries declined from 1.9 billion to 1.4 billion between 1981 and 2005 at 2005 purchasing power parity. Improvements in overall poverty levels have depended, to a large extent, on growth. Countries or regions that have experienced strong growth during the last two decades have managed to reduce poverty levels, particularly in urban areas. This includes

countries such as China and India. It is the success of these countries that has largely driven global poverty trends downward. However, not every region or country has recorded such remarkable progress. The absolute number of poor people has gone up in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in Central Asia.

The overview begins by considering global and regional poverty trends over the period 1981-2005 (sect. II).2 It continues with a description of macroeconomic policies and their effect on growth and poverty reduction (sect. III). This is followed by an examination of some labour market policies and other social policies and their efficacy in reducing poverty (sect. IV). The final section proposes a number of policy recommendations in the fight against poverty (sect. V).

## Policy recommendations

As the line between poor and non-poor people is becoming less clear and less significant, the economic crisis is a reminder that poverty is not an attribute of a set group of individuals but rather a situation that everyone is at risk to experience at some point in their lives. Rather than waiting for economic recovery before focusing attention on poor people, it would be wise to formulate policies and allocate resources to ensure the basic well-being of all individuals, those already experiencing poverty and those at risk of experiencing it, as a strategy to stimulate recovery. Ensuring that the world's people are healthy, educated, and well housed and fed is essential so that they can be productive and contribute to making the economic recovery a reality. Therefore, the approach to poverty reduction should be developmental and holistic, integrating economic and social policies to achieve people-centred development outcomes.

With rising inequality, promoting social integration will become more elusive. Social cohesion and solidarity are fundamental conditions of development and social progress, and efforts to develop and reinforce institutions and mechanisms encouraging social integration must be sustained. A well-educated, healthy, suitably employed, socially protected citizenry contributes to the social cohesion of a country and imparts dynamism to all aspects of life and culture. By promoting inclusion and reducing deprivation, social development strengthens democratic institutions and processes, makes social and economic relations more harmonious, and provides a firm foundation for achieving long-term development and prosperity

Finally, reducing poverty requires efforts not only at the national level but also an explicit commitment of the international community, in terms of accepting, promoting and demanding that priority be given to more effective social investment efforts to promote solidarity and equity. In the case of the richest countries, such commitment should also be reflected in the channelling of aid, in accordance with the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product, and in opening up markets to products from developing countries.

For more information on the overview of the 2009 issue of the Report on the World Social Situation, please visit the following website: <u>http://social.un.org/rwss</u>



## The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

Eighth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 18-29 May 2009

The Eighth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) took place from 18 - 29 May 2009. There were 1800 participants from indigenous peoples'

organizations, NGOs and academia as well as 36 United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, 70 Member States and 15 indigenous parliamentarians from around the world.

There were more that <u>60 side events</u> that took place during the session, organized by Member States, UN entities, other intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, the secretariat of the UNPFII and others. The opening of the indigenous exhibit and the cultural event took place on the first Tuesday evening in the GA Lobby.

Two press conferences were organized, one at the beginning of the session and one towards the end of the second week. Various media packages were prepared by DPI in cooperation with the secretariat of the UNPFII.

The overall atmosphere of the eighth session was one of increased engagement and dialogue on the part of all stakeholders such as States, indigenous peoples' organizations and the UN and other inter-governmental organizations. This is largely due to the new impetus provided by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Permanent Forum's new methods of work.

#### **Review of Previous Recommendations**

The eighth session was a review year of previous recommendations on economic and social development; indigenous women; and the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

#### Economic and Social Development

In regards to economic and social development, the Permanent Forum found that of the 150 recommendations it has previously issued on economic and social development, more than half of them are being implemented. Other matters that were raised under this issue included the Permanent Forum's attention to the significant increase in the infrastructure budget of the World Bank, from 15 billion to 45 billion in 2009, for the primary economies of developing states. The Forum noted that the implications of this development such as respecting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples have to be clearly understood and the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples affected by infrastructure projects, has to be guaranteed.

The Forum also heard a statement by the Secretary-General's Special Representative on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises and recommended that states be urged to ensure that such business practices comply with the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

#### Indigenous Women

In regards to indigenous women, the Permanent Forum made further recommendations for workshops on a) indigenous peoples and health, with special emphasis on reproductive health, and b) on indicators of well-being of indigenous peoples to be used in implementing and monitoring the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Permanent Forum also asked the UN system and states to conduct assessments on the implementation of the Permanent Forum's recommendations on women, using the framework of the Declaration and also recommended a study on the situation of indigenous women migrants.

The Permanent Forum also recommended the full participation of indigenous women at the 15th anniversary of Beijing as well as taking indigenous women's issues into account in the new gender architecture reform.

#### Second International Decade on the World's Indigenous People

In regards to the Second International Decade on the World's Indigenous People, the Permanent Forum called for the full engagement of states, the UN system and indigenous peoples' organizations in the mid-term evaluation of the Decade at the national level and called for support for the Trust Fund for the Decade. The Forum also commended Australia and Colombia for their recent endorsement of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

## In-depth dialogues with six UN system entities

The Permanent Forum launched a new methodology by organizing in-depth dialogues with six UN system entities: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Fund for Development (IFAD); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The Permanent Forum considered the indepth dialogues to be a positive experience. Agencies sent high-level delegations and a considerable number of staff to participate in these dialogues. The Forum will adopt statements on each of the six UN system entities after the session. This new method of work will further evolve and improve for the 2010 Session.

## Indigenous Peoples and the Arctic Region

The special regional focus was on indigenous peoples of the Arctic region. The challenges identified focused mainly on the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples as well as highlighting the impact of pollution and vector-borne diseases on indigenous peoples' health, education and culture in Alaska, northern Canada and Greenland. The Permanent Forum welcomed a number of positive institutional developments, namely in Greenland and in Norway and also urged states to provide financial resources to Arctic communities to develop their cultures and adapt to climate change.

The Forum also appointed some of its members to conduct a) a study on the impact of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures on reindeer herding, and b)a study on indigenous peoples' fishing rights in the seas, lakes and rivers.

## Human Rights

The Permanent Forum placed a major focus on discussing how it will discharge its mandate under the Article 42 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which mentions the Permanent Forum explicitly as a body to follow up and promote the implementation of the Declaration.

The Permanent Forum also welcomed as good practice, the mission it conducted to Bolivia and Paraguay on the slavery situation of the Guarani peoples and urged the UN country teams as well as the two governments to follow up on the recommendations contained in the reports of the mission.

## The Economic Crisis

Discussions on the economic crisis was also held as part of the eighth session. As one of the panel members, Mr. Jomo Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General, DESA, said the global financial crisis had created major challenges and serious social consequences. For example, it is expected the number of working poor to increase by 200 million, and those formally unemployed to rise by more than 50 million. Government social spending was at risk and there was growing unrest, as living standards and social protections declined, and extreme poverty rose. Indigenous peoples will face an uphill battle over protection of their natural resources, particularly water. The UNPFII Chairperson, Ms Tauli-Corpuz, and Mr. Nicolas Ticum of Guatemala, also participated in the panel. Following the panel, the Forum decided to request one of its members to conduct a study on the impacts of the global economic crisis on indigenous peoples and to identify measures and proposals for governments and the UN system to address these impacts.

In her closing remarks, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, said each agenda item during the eighth session had provided important insights and an opportunity for participants to hear and learn from one another. At the national, regional, local and community levels, challenges remained. "We must be strongly committed," she stressed. "We need to work towards developing close cooperation with United Nations agencies and Governments to realize our self-determined rights."

The Eighth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Website, 18-29 May 2009.

## Programme of Work

#### Documents

## **Expert Group Meetings**

#### 27-29 March 2009

International Expert Workshop on Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Corporate Accountability and the Extractive Industries in Manila, Philippines.

The International Expert Group Workshop was organized by Tebtebba Foundation in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The workshop provided the opportunity for dialogues among participants with the aim of improving the situation of indigenous peoples in relation to extractive industries.

## 14-16 April 2009

"Family policy in a changing world: Promoting social protection and intergenerational solidarity" in Doha, Qatar. The Meeting was organized by the Division for Social Policy and Development of UN DESA in cooperation with the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development.

#### 14-16 April 2009

"Mainstreaming Disability in MDG Policies, Processes and Mechanisms: Development for All". The Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) organized the "Expert Group Meeting on Mainstreaming Disability in MDG Policies, Processes and Mechanisms: Development for All". The meeting was be held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland on 14-16 April 2009.

Eleven experts with experience in MDG policies, programmes, monitoring and evaluation and disability, in their individual capacity, were invited by the Division for Social Policy and Development in close collaboration with the World Health Organization. Selected United Nations agencies and organizations, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations participated as observers (See Annex I: List of experts).

The meeting reviewed existing policy frameworks, resource and tools, and mechanisms for mainstreaming disability in MDG processes. After reviewing the MDG process and entry points for disability the experts provided policy recommendations, linking the MDG processes with reference to other internationally agreed development goals. More specifically, the experts recommendations, future agreed of the inclusion of disability—points of entry, specific recommendations, future work in MDG processes, and made proposals for (a) the development of a specific road map and (b) a set of policy recommendations for mainstreaming disability in MDG processes, mechanisms and institutions.

For more information about the meeting, please visit this website: <a href="http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1470">http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1470</a>

#### 28-30 April 2009

"Cooperatives in a world in crisis" organized by the Division for Social Policy and Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in coordination with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in New York. The EGM will discussed broadly the role of cooperatives in a world in crisis. Specific objectives of the meeting:

1. Assess the contributions of cooperatives to socio-economic development especially in poverty reduction, employment creation and safety net provision, focusing in particular, on the role of agricultural and financial cooperatives in light of the current food and financial crisis;

2. Provide the forum for the sharing of national and regional experiences and lessons learned on

strengthening cooperatives and to identify policy measures to enhance and scale up the impact of cooperatives on socio-economic development;

3. Discuss the proposed International Year of Cooperatives, and lay the groundwork for setting objectives, desired outcomes, programs and activities, resource requirements and partnerships.

- Aide Memoire
- Agenda
- List of Participants

#### Background Papers

Notes for the brainstorming session by Ghislain Paradis

Agricultural Cooperatives and Farmers Organizations: Role in rural development and poverty reduction by Armando Costa Pinto

Community Participation through Cooperatives in addressing Basic Services: The Philippine Experience by V.A.Teodosio

Global Cooperative linkages? - The Challenge To Harmonize local with global economies by Markus Hanisch

Financial Cooperatives in Rwanda - Historical Background and Regulation by Angelique Kantengwa

- Enhancing the Global Linkages of Cooperatives: The Fairtrade Option by Tomy Mathews
- Discussion paper by Johnston Birchall
- European co-operative banks in financial and economic turmoil by EACB Secretariat

Agricultural Cooperatives: Role in Food Security and Rural Development by Suleman Adam Chambo

- Cooperatives, Crisis, Cooperative Law by Hagen Henry
- Cooperative Banks, Credit Unions and the Financial Crisis by Pete Crear

Regulation and Legislation of Cooperative Banks and Credit Unions by Andrew Poprawa, DICO

#### 5-7 May 2009

"**Rights of Older Persons**" organized by the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in Bonn, Germany. Specific objectives of the meeting:

1. Identify and evaluate good national practices regarding protecting and promoting the rights of older persons, including measures to prevent discrimination, neglect, abuse and violence

2. Select innovative approaches to widening and deepening the rights of older persons nationally and internationally 3. Identify capacity tools that are required and could be recommended to policy makers when addressing the rights of older persons

4. Elaborate recommendations on how to promote the rights of older persons at the level of member states and the United Nations

5. Explore feasibility and possible approaches to elaborating an international legal framework on the rights of older persons, including

- (a) declaration on the rights of older persons,
- (b) enhanced UN Principles for older persons,
- (c) convention on the rights of older persons,
- (d) special rapporteur on the rights of older persons
- Aide Memoire
- Annotated Agenda
- List of Participants
- Report of the Meeting

## **Technical Cooperation**



"Regional Workshop to Support National Responses to the Issues of Ageing", 7-9 April 2009, Yerevan Armenia

- Workshop Report
- List of Participants

## Presentations by:

- DSPD-DESA [English]
- Armenia: Pilot Survey on Ageing [English]
- Armenia: Ageing Survey Analysis [Russian]
- Armenia: Survey Metodology [Russian]
- Belorussia [Russian]
- Georgia [Russian]
- Kazakhstan [Russian]
- Moldova 1 [Russian]
- Moldova 2 [Russian]
- Russia [Russian]
- Tajikistan [Russian]
- Ukraine 1 [Russian]
- Ukraine 2 [Russian]

## **Publications and Outreach**



Sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly: Reports of the Secretary-General prepared by DSPD.



#### **Updated United Nations Website**

The redesigned United Nations website, <u>www.un.org</u>, is now online. Some new features include a link to the United Nations RSS news feeds; links to current and upcoming conferences; information on recent additions to the site; and an "In Focus" section highlighting current important issues.

UN Social Development Website: http://www.un.org/en/development/progareas/socdev.shtml

(undata



**United Nations System data** and metadata are now at the fingertips of internet users around the globe thanks to UNdata, a portal linking to various UN databases covering domains from global poverty to internet usage for a specific country. The single entry point and friendly layout allows users to search for and download relevant information for free, without subscription or registration.



The report on the economic situation in 2008-2009 in the Economic Commission for Europe region: Europe, North America and the Commonwealth of Independent States has been issued (E/2009/16). The report noted that "the region entered into what has been forecasted to be the worst economic downturn since the second world war".



The Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has released **The Economic Report on Africa 2009.** The report highlights the recent economic trends and prospects in Africa. It is jointly published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union Commission. The theme of this year's report is: "Developing African Agriculture through Regional Value Chain".



The report on Latin America and the Caribbean: economic situation and outlook, 2008-2009 has been issued (E/2009/19). The report noted that economic activity in the region grew by 4.2 per cent in 2008, marking the sixth consective year of per capita gross domestic product (GDP) expansion averaging 3 percent per year. These results will not be repeated in 2009, however, with a fall in activity to minus 0.3 per cent expected.

Africa economic and social conditions 2009: The report on the Overview of the economic and social conditions in Africa 2009 has been issued (E/2009/17).



**UNDP annual report 2009:** United Nations Development Programme (<u>UNDP</u>) has released its annual 2009 report - Living up to commitments. The 2009 report can be **downloaded** from the UNDP web site.



Tackling the global jobs crisis: Recovery through decent work policies - Report of the Director-General (pdf 331 KB). This report is about action today – to respond to people's concerns; to abate the fears and looming threats of tomorrow. It is about what the ILO tripartite community can do to respond with the urgency and commitment required by the depth and duration of the global jobs crisis.



The Global Monitoring Report 2009: A Development Emergency notes that the global financial crisis is imperiling attainment of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and creating an emergency for development.



## Integrated Civil Society Organizations System (iCSO)

This consolidated database of civil society information in economic and social affairs provides online participation and facilitates the application procedure for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Accredited NGOs with ECOSOC can also submit their quadrennial reports and designate representatives to international conferences convened by the United Nations.

Users can search and browse more than 12.000 organizations to find out more about their activities, meeting participation and accreditation status in the areas of sustainable and social development, advancement of women, financing for development, forests and public administration.



The NGO Section of DESA has created a new online **Calendar of Events**, providing information on events and meetings related to economic and social development, taking place at, and around, United Nations headquarters.

The system provides online pre-registration to United Nations meetings and conferences open for civil society participation.

# Social Development Related Activities undertaken by UN Regional Commissions and UN Specialized Agencies

The Links displayed under this section are related to the activities in social development undertaken by United Nations Regional Commissions and UN Specialized Agencies listed below:

- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA): Gender and Social Development Programme <u>http://www.uneca.org/eca\_programmes/acgd/default.htm</u>
- World Health Organization (WHO): Social determinants of health <u>http://www.who.int/social\_determinants/en/</u>
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): Rural & Social Development <u>http://www.fao.org/corp/topics/topics\_result/en/?lang=en&main\_id=14</u>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): Social and Human Sciences <u>http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-</u> URL\_ID=1396&URL\_DO=DO\_TOPIC&URL\_SECTION=201.html
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD): Social Policy and Development - <u>http://www.unrisd.org</u>

## **Calendar of Events**

Commission for Social Development 48th Session, New York 3-12 February 2010 64th session of the General Assembly September – December

Summit on Climate Change convened by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon 22 September

**2nd Committee and 3rd Committee of the General Assembly** 5 October - December

UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 19 October 2009

UN International Day of Older Persons, 1 October 2009

The Second Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, New York, 2-4 September 2009. The Conference of States Parties is serviced by DESA, while the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is serviced by OHCHR.

Third Meeting of the World Climate Conference, 31 August-4 September 2009

Global Model UN Conference, 5-7 August 2009: 1st Annual Conference

**UN International Youth Day, 12 August 2009.** The theme for this year is Sustainability: Our Challenge, Our Future.

International Day of the World's Indigenous People, 9 August 2009.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Substantive Session of 2009, 6-31 July 2009, United Nations Office at Geneva.

**UN International Day of Cooperatives,** 4 July 2009. The theme this year is: "Driving Global Recovery through Cooperatives".

Conference at the Highest level on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, New York, 24-26 June 2009.

## Multimedia



**10 August 2009** Observance of the <u>International Day of the World's Indigenous People</u> (Welcome ceremony, cultural performance and a panel discussion on this year's theme - indigenous peoples and HIV/AIDS).

[ 🔤 Video -- 2 hours and 25 minutes]



**12 August 2009** Commemoration of <u>International Youth Day "Sustainability: Our Challenge, Our Future"</u>. Message of the Secretary General

| English | Français | Español | Русский | يربى | 汉语 [ '''' Video -- 1 hour and 27 minutes ] Summary of the Day



**30 July 2009 Special Event:** H.E. Ms. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States, accompanied by Senior White House Advisor Valerie B. Jarrett, sign the <u>United Nations</u> <u>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</u> and deliver remarks. [<u>Video</u> - 9 minutes]



#### 22 June 2009

**Daily Noon Press Briefing:** By the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and the Spokesperson for the President of the General Assembly. **Guest at noon**: Mr. Paul Oquist, Senior Advisor in the Office of the President of the General Assembly on the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, to be held 24-26 June. [Video - 37 minutes]



## 27 May 2009

**Daily Noon Press Briefing:** By the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and the Spokesperson for the President of the General Assembly. **Guests at noon**: Guest: Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, to brief on 8th **Session of the Forum** (18-29 May). [Video - 45 minutes]



## 18 May2009

At the 8th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues from 18-29 May, the **Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro** said that the Forum was meeting at a crucial time, as the world grappled with a "swarm of crises", including intensified hunger, poverty, global warming and security threats.

[Video - 8 minutes]



**18 May 2009** Opening meeting of the eight session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. [Video - 1 hour and 29 minutes] [Video - 1 hour and 29 minutes]

Statement by Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly.
[Video - English: 18 minutes]
[Video - Spanish / English: 18 minutes]



8 May 2009

**Press Conference:** President of the General Assembly Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann to brief on the draft outcome document of the upcoming UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development (1-3 June 2009). [Video - 17 minutes]



## 27 March 2009

General Assembly: Interactive thematic dialogue on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development.

[Video - English: 2 hours and 48 minutes]

[Video - Original Language: 2 hours and 48 minutes]

 Closing statement by Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly [Video - 8 minutes]

## 26 March 2009

General Assembly: Interactive thematic dialogue on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development.

## **Morning Meeting:**

[Video - English: 2 hours and 56 minutes] [Video - Original Language: 2 hours and 56 minutes]

## Afternoon Meeting:

[Video - English: 2 hours and 35 minutes] [Video - Original Language: 2 hours and 35 minutes]

## 25 March

General Assembly: Interactive thematic dialogue on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development.

## Morning Meeting:

[Video - English: 2 hours and 54 minutes] [Video - Original Language: 2 hours and 54 minutes]

 Opening statement by Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly [Video - 11 minutes]

## Afternoon Meeting:

[Video - English: 3 hours and 6 minutes] [Video - Original Language: 3 hours and 6 minutes]