

**United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social
Policy and Development**

And

Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Development and NEPAD Division

Expert Group Meeting on Poverty Eradication

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MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Significant poverty reduction has been achieved but much of it was contributed by a few countries. In most cases the pace of poverty reduction falls far behind expectations. While social protection matters, inclusive growth or growth with equity needs to be pursued.
- Economic growth is essential for poverty eradication on average but is not sufficient. Therefore the relationship between growth and the pace of poverty reduction is not linear.
 - o Inequality matters
 - o The specific macroeconomic regime matters, especially inflation and exchange rates
 - o Politics of poverty reduction matter
 - o The initial starting point matters
 - o Addressing rural-urban difference also matter
 - o Social policy matters
 - o Social integration matters
 - o Full employment and decent work matters
- In the specific case of Africa, progress has been made to reduce poverty but challenges remain
 - o Need to maintain macroeconomic stability and finding the right balance between macroeconomic stability and growth

- Raising small holder agricultural productivity is critical
- Reducing vulnerability to macroeconomic and household level shocks
- Global crises
 - Crises worsen inequality and increase poverty even after recovery.
 - Wages might not recover
 - Informality, precariousness of labor markets
 - Women and youth disproportionately impacted by crises in terms of employment opportunities and increased burden of unpaid work
 - The impact of the global financial and economic crisis varied across countries depending on their degree of integration in the global markets.
 - The channels of transmission matter – trade, remittances, FDI, aid, etc.
 - Many countries should expect to see a lagged impact of the crisis in terms of aid and FDI flows, remittances, and social impacts.
 - Countries with some level of social protection managed to blunt the impact of the crisis, hence social protection matters
- Assert building and redistribution are critical for poverty eradication
 - Land rights and redistribution, including the necessary public support institutions
 - Investment in human capital
 - Investment in infrastructure to reduce marginalization and enhance social integration
- State, Civil society, NGOs and self-help groups are critical partners for poverty eradication and protecting vulnerable groups during times of crises, including climate change and natural disasters.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Job creation key to poverty eradication
 - o Generating decent productive employment in the informal economy should be a major employment concern
 - o Focus on social insurance for the working poor
 - o Critical to build a macroeconomic framework for employment growth
- Spending on social protection and education are at risk during crises and need to be protected
- Social protection should be a key priority and should be mainstreamed from the current largely project driven initiatives
 - o Resource constraints remain especially following the global crisis. Poor countries still need donor support to complement local resource mobilization.
 - o Progressive taxation systems to raise additional revenue
- In addition to building state capacity, existing community, faith-based institutions and family support networks should be supported and recognized as important sources of resilience to crises
- Within a universal framework of poverty reduction there is also a need to target specific vulnerable groups that do not usually benefit from public programmes. Specific groups include: Women, Children, Youth, Elderly, Persons with Disabilities, migrants, refugees, IDPs, people living with HIV/AIDS, and other marginalized groups likely to experience chronic poverty and social exclusion.
- To accelerate progress, mainstreaming gender is a key priority- including things that work like gender based budgeting, including increasing the participation of women in decision making
- Policies that will cover the life course and realize the inter-connectedness of life-cycle events and how they affect well being
- Need for data that is sufficiently disaggregated to capture gender and scale differences on a continuous basis.

- Need to use multi-dimensional understanding of poverty and the need for capturing other dimensions often missed by monetary measures
- Reform of global governance structures, particularly those dealing with issues of finance and economic development
- National governance systems should allow accountability to local citizens
- Food security should be a top priority.

We know what needs to be done. Implementation is key to accelerating progress. Political commitment, will, and adequate funding for targeted groups are critical.