Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Social Development in Asia and the Pacific

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Asia and the Pacific is the fastest growing region in the world

Real GDP growth in developing Asia-Pacific, advanced economies and the world, 2006-2017
Asia-Pacific has also led the world in poverty reduction

Yet nearly 400 million people living in extreme poverty

Poverty is concentrated in Select Countries


Note: Data was used for the earliest available year between 1990 and 1995, and for the latest available year between 2010 and 2014, for all countries in Asia-Pacific for which data was available.

Key factors explaining persistence of poverty

- Rising inequalities and inequalities of opportunities such as health and education
- Lack of decent work opportunities
- Poor coverage of social protection
- Social exclusion
- Rural-urban divide

Inequalities have increased across many countries in the region

- Richest 10% have almost twice the income of poorest 40%
- Inequalities have increased in most countries over the past two decades
- Concentration of wealth is even sharper with top 20% upto 80% of wealth
Inequalities are driven by inequalities in opportunities such as access to education and health care and basic services such as water and sanitation and electricity.

Rural-urban and income divide in terms of access to secondary education

Variations in net secondary education attendance ratios

- Total
- Urban
- Rural
- Poorest
- Richest
Unequal Access to health care

Rural-Urban Divide in access to electricity, Asia and the Pacific, 2014
Asia and Pacific has lagged behind in terms of Women’s economic empowerment

Increased gender parity in education and economic growth have not translated into higher Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) rates

Women LFPR in Asia has actually declined

Pace and quality of job creation has suffered

Percentage change in labour force participation, 1990 to 2016

GDP Growth (2011 PPP)

Total Employment Growth (%)
Low coverage of pensions and other types of social security for the working-age population
Coverage of women generally even less

Rising proportion of older persons who risk being left behind
Over 650 million persons with disabilities in Asia-Pacific face exclusion

- Persons with disabilities are likely to be less employed
- Employment gaps become higher in higher income countries
- When employed, persons with disabilities tend to work in the informal sector, self-employed
- There is double discrimination of women with disabilities
- 1 to 7% GDP loss because of exclusion of persons with disabilities

Asia-Pacific is a major source as well as the destination of migrants who remain highly vulnerable

- Migrants from Asia-Pacific: 98 mln
- Migrants to Asia-Pacific: 60 mln
- Lack of legal and social protection leads to vulnerability and unequal treatment:
  - Women migrants are particularly vulnerable, given demand for female labour is typically in jobs with lower levels of protection, such as domestic work
  - Regulatory constraints often prevent family reunification

Main Countries of Origin in the Region

India 15.6 mln
Russian Federation 10.6 mln
China 9.5 mln
Bangladesh 7.2 mln
Pakistan 5.9 mln

Main Countries of Destination in the Region

Russian Federation 6.8 mln
India 5.1 mln
Thailand 3.9 mln
Pakistan 3.6 mln
Australia 1.2 mln
Policy Agenda for Poverty Alleviation in Asia Pacific

Harness the job creating potential of economic growth

- Growth Acceleration alone will not be adequate
- Job creating structural transformation holds the key
- For South Asia, structural transformation towards greater focus on manufacturing would create 143 million additional jobs by 2030
Broaden the coverage of Social Protection and universal education and health care

- Policy simulations suggest that in South Asian countries, even with manufacturing oriented structural transformation, poverty will not vanish by 2030
- Broadening the coverage of social protection and universal health and education will be needed to eliminate poverty

Harness the productive potential of gender equality

[Graph showing the productive potential of gender equality across different regions]
Enhance financial inclusion

Social Inclusion of vulnerable groups

Special programmes for inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Older people
- Persons with disability
- Migrant workers
- Indigenous people
Among others
Thank you

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