



**Commission for Social Development
Fifty-sixth session**



Draft Concept Note

**High-level panel discussion on the priority theme
“Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development
for All”**

Monday, 29 January 2018, 3:00pm – 6:00 pm
United Nations headquarters, New York
Conference Room 4

1. Background

The Commission for Social Development will hold its fifty-sixth session from 29 January to 7 February 2018. This is the policy session of the two-year cycle under the priority theme of “Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”, which was decided by ECOSOC in its resolution E/RES/2016/6. The meeting will seek to analyse the key policies that have been effective at eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere, including extreme poverty. It will particularly focus on identifying strategies and policy options to spur further progress in eradicating poverty and leaving no one behind.

In its resolution, ECOSOC also affirmed that the Commission will contribute to the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ within its existing mandate, by supporting the thematic reviews of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The theme of HLPF 2018 will be: ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies’. The Council further reaffirmed that the Commission shall continue to review issues related to the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development, and advise the Council thereon. The high-level panel discussion on the priority theme: “*Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all*” will be held on Monday, 29 January 2018 from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm and is organized by the Commission in the context of this ECOSOC resolution to lead off its deliberations on the priority theme.

2. Poverty and the 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is transformative in its universality, complexity and integrated approach to sustainable development that considers all three dimensions – social, economic and environmental. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Globally, 1.1 billion people were lifted out of extreme poverty between 1990 and 2013. Yet, in 2013, an estimated 768.5 million people or 10.7 per cent of the global population still lived below \$1.90 per day. Of these, 390.2 million people live in sub-Saharan Africa and 249.1 million in South Asia.

The 2030 Agenda also builds upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeks to address their unfinished business. By placing poverty eradication at the centre of global development, the Agenda pledges to “leave no one behind” and to “reach the furthest behind first”. This principle ensures that all people, regardless of their background, can fulfil their potential in life, and lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives in a healthy environment.

Strategies and Policy Actions to eradicate poverty at the national and regional level

Poverty is a challenge faced by all countries – the least developed, middle-income and developed countries alike. Hence, poverty is a universal challenge. The depth and severity of poverty are affected by specific national contexts as well as by regional and global policy making. Countries that have succeeded in reducing poverty have been able to do so by pursuing a mix of strategies, policies and measures that include fostering structural transformation; investing in productive capacities; investing in education and healthcare; creating full employment and decent work opportunities for all; fostering social integration; promoting the empowerment of the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons; combating inequality in income, wealth and opportunities; expanding social protection schemes, including floors; promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment; investing in agriculture, rural development and infrastructure; climate change adaptation and mitigation; and promoting regional integration, interconnectivity, trade and foreign direct investment. Hence, effective strategies to eradicate poverty in all its forms requires policy innovation and integration, combining the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development.

For these strategies and policies to be effective, there is broad consensus that each country should have the primary responsibility for its own social and economic development. The primacy of national ownership and responsibility cannot be overemphasized when it comes to formulating national development strategies and policies for the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Strategies and Policy Actions to eradicate poverty at the global level

For national poverty eradication efforts to succeed, policy actions at the global level that include an enabling international environment are essential. Such an environment must be complemented by concrete, effective and supportive international programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing countries, while taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership of development priorities and policy space. Without global policy actions, progress towards eradicating will remain uneven between and among countries. Hence, global policy actions in the pursuit of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty must pay attention to the most vulnerable countries, in particular African countries, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict countries. There is also a need to address the challenges faced by middle-income countries.

Key policy actions at the global level include ensuring that all countries benefit from globalization. Further, enhanced development cooperation and partnerships, and increased mobilization of financial and non-financial resources and adequate means for developing countries to implement policies and programmes should remain top priorities if these countries are to eradicate poverty and pursue inclusive sustainable development. These efforts should also include bolstering North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

3. Objectives

The high-level panel discussion will emphasize the imperative for ending poverty in all its forms everywhere through the provisions of SDG-1. This goal and its related targets will form the basis for discussing strategies and policies that have proven to be effective in various national contexts. The discussions will also build upon the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals related to extreme poverty and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action that was agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development.

With this in view, the key objectives of the high-level panel discussion include:

- a. consider policy actions and recommendations on ways to effectively address the root causes of poverty within countries;
- b. share knowledge, experiences and innovative approaches and strategies that have proven to be effective at eradicating poverty in all its forms at the national, regional and international levels, especially those that promote the principle of leaving no one behind and have lifted people out of poverty and have sustained poverty escapes, particularly among women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and indigenous populations;
- c. identify evidence-based innovative approaches to eradicate poverty that can leverage the interlinkages between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development;
- d. address additional issues related to poverty eradication, including inequality, resource mobilization, the use of disaggregated data and effective and accountable public institutions;
- e. highlight emerging issues likely to affect the eradication of poverty and accelerating sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development.

4. Structure and format of the panel discussion

The high-level panel discussion will be chaired by the Chair of the Commission for Social Development. The Chair will open the session with brief remarks and introduction of moderator and panellists. The Chair will then invite the keynote speaker to deliver an address on the topic of the session (about 20 minutes). After the keynote address, further policy insights will be given by high-level policymakers (5-10 minutes presentations, addressing the guiding questions). Following their presentations, the moderator will facilitate an interactive dialogue among panellists, then open the discussion and invite questions and comments from the floor. Invited panellists will include high-level government officials, subject experts from academia and think tanks, as well as from civil society, taking into consideration of gender and geographical balance.

Panellists are expected to structure their presentations around concrete strategies that have proven to be successful in eradicating poverty, and to highlight innovative approaches and lessons learned at the national level.

The outcomes of the discussions will be reflected in the Chair’s summary, which will be one of the key inputs of the Commission for Social Development to the ECOSOC, in particular, its high-level segment, and the 2018 High-Level Political Forum to be convened under the theme: ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies’.

5. Guiding questions

The Commission for Social Development may wish to consider the following questions in its deliberations on the priority theme at its fifty-sixth session:

- i. What strategies have proved to be effective at significantly reducing poverty and keeping people out of poverty? What are the contextual factors that led to successful poverty eradication efforts?
- ii. To ensure that no one is left behind, what policies and strategies have proven to be effective, and what additional measures need to be taken?
- iii. What are the critical emerging issues and challenges that policy makers need to pay attention to in order to eradicate poverty, create decent jobs and combat inequality?
- iv. How can countries improve resource mobilization from all sources in order to finance poverty eradication strategies and measures?

6. Time allocation

Speaker	Suggested speaking time
Chair: Opening remarks and the introduction of panellists	5 minutes
Moderator: introduction/context-setting	5 minutes
Keynote speaker	20 minutes
Panellists (4-6): Presentations	5 - 10 minutes per panellist
Moderated interactive discussion	--Dialogue among panellists (15-20 minutes)
	--Open discussion with questions and comments from participants of the Commission (Interventions limited to 3 minutes, followed by responses from panellists)
Concluding remarks by moderator Closing by the Chair	10 minutes
	Total duration: 3 hours