

ECESA Plus Cluster on Social Development

Input to Compilation of United Nations System Inputs for Consideration in the Drafting Process of the Outcome Document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Rio de Janeiro, June 2012

Introduction

When world leaders meet in Rio de Janeiro, in June 2012, they will seek an outcome aimed at overcoming the vital challenge of this century that is, ensuring the well-being of more than seven billion people and the billions that will be added to it over the next decades, while protecting the environment. As they undertake this task, the world will still be struggling to recover from the global economic and financial crisis. At the same time climate change and environmental degradation are putting multiple strains on populations. These pressures have had unparalleled negative consequences on social development: the global job crisis still looms large, with unemployment at record highs; poverty reduction has slowed down; and food emergencies are affecting millions of people. But these shortfalls are not new: they compound deficits that already existed before the crisis, and show that no development path leaving millions of people in poverty, hunger, unemployed, uneducated and socially excluded will be sustainable. They also show the paramount need to put people in the centre of economic and social policy, strengthen the social pillar of sustainable development, and to stimulate inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic growth.

More than one billion people continue to suffer from poverty, food insecurity and deprivation. Reducing poverty will require the creation of productive and remunerative employment for a growing labour force. The challenges are particularly pressing in the least developed countries, where the deficit of decent work, incidence of extreme poverty and the rate of population growth are highest.

Although Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Programme of Implementation emphasize poverty eradication as a core issue for the achievement of sustainable development goals, there is a need to further strengthen the social pillar to comprise issues of equity, equality and social inclusion. The persistence of poverty and the continued increase in inequalities are manifestations of the absence of social justice and the resulting lack of equal opportunities, participation and respect for human rights.

A strong social pillar is necessary for healthy economic and environmental pillars. It is only through the promotion of human and social capital, the integration of social and economic policy, as well as the full participation of all members of society in economic, social and political life that economies can achieve their productive potential.

Investments in basic services, including education, health and employment are also necessary to build resilience and ensure that human activity does not compromise or inflict further damage on the environment. The nexus between the social, economic and environmental pillars is inseparably linked to population dynamics. Slower population growth will not only ease social, economic and environmental pressures, but will also open up opportunities for countries to sustain and possibly increase necessary investment in human capital.

Rio+20 offers an opportunity to link the international efforts on advancing social development, including the Millennium Development Goals, with the efforts to promote environmental protection and transition to a green economy, and launch the process of envisioning a new set of parameters for future development, for instance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The inputs prepared by the ECESA Plus Cluster on social development aim at giving recommendations to strengthen the social pillar by focusing on three key areas: (a) green jobs; (b) social protection and transformative social policy; (c) social inclusion and the empowerment of marginalized groups.

The move to a green economy will not be socially fair or sustainable unless productive employment and decent work are put at the centre of sustainable development strategies. With the right policies, a transition to a green economy can lead to gains in employment and benefit particularly those who have been short-changed by the conventional economic growth model.

The transition to a green economy brings opportunities but, as a process of structural change, it also entails challenges. The main challenge is to ensure that this transition is fair and just and inclusive. Investment in social protection and equitable social services alongside the pursuit of active labour market policies is critical to make a green economy feasible and to seize the benefits for sustainable development. Inclusive social protection systems, universal access to basic services such as education and training, the creation of sustainable enterprises and the expansion of green jobs will make the transition beneficial for all.

Increasing social and economic inequalities demonstrate that the challenge of inequality and social inclusion must be emphasized, giving particular attention to the empowerment of the most marginalized groups.

The ECESA Plus inputs aim at bringing people at the centre of sustainable development, so that Rio+20 will indeed be a summit about people's futures. Ensuring a better balance and deeper integration among the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and policy coherence among them will be crucial to this endeavour. If sustainable development goals will be adopted, it will be pivotal to ensure that the social aspects of sustainable development are included and addressed.

A. Green Jobs

Proposed Text for the Outcome Document

The promotion of green jobs is central to sustainable development as well as to the transition towards a greener economy and poverty eradication. Productive employment and decent work should be accessible particularly for those most in need, including youth, women, the working poor, and those working in the informal economy or in precarious jobs. In order for the move to a green economy to be socially fair and to promote equity and inclusiveness, a “just transition” strategy should be implemented. Key elements of this strategy are: promoting social dialogue that leads to people’s increased participation and empowerment in governance processes; increasing social protection coverage; ensuring access to education and enabling technologies; facilitating labour market adjustments through technical and vocational education and training, public employment schemes and entrepreneurship development in green sectors and markets; and ensuring access to financial and other incentives for creating enabling conditions for this transition, ensuring full respect for human rights. Recognizing the urgent need to improve opportunities for young people to gain access to productive employment and decent work while creating enabling environments for sustainable development, specific and targeted initiatives are needed to promote green jobs for youth.

Background/Justification

Moving towards a greener, more inclusive economy constitutes a significant policy challenge, particularly for poor countries. It entails generating sufficient productive, decent jobs for a population that is growing rapidly. The promotion of green jobs is central to the transition to a green economy and poverty eradication, since it can contribute to lessen current employment deficits. A transition to a more sustainable economy through the promotion of green jobs can be seen as both necessary i) to avoid massive losses of jobs and livelihoods due risks brought about by climate change and other challenges resulting of unsustainable development paths; and ii) as an opportunity to create employment in greener, more resilient sectors and to advance the goal of sustainable development. Such transition will be smoother if countries address population dynamics through effective policies that fully respect human rights.

Green jobs comply with the pillars of decent work and are provided by economic activities that directly contribute to reduced environmental impact in different sectors of the economy, ultimately reducing such impact to sustainable levels. This includes ‘decent’ jobs that help to reduce consumption of energy and raw materials, de-carbonize the economy, protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity and minimize the production of waste and pollution. Ultimately, given the broad scope of the green jobs concept, individual countries and organisations have to determine the appropriate boundary for green jobs within the economic sectors being analysed.

Both developed and developing economies are experiencing a changing pattern of employment in which green jobs are being generated in many sectors as a result of measures to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and shift towards environmentally friendly societies. There is a strong potential for job creation in sectors that can contribute to reducing environmental impact while boosting economic growth and creating alternative job opportunities. Resilience, in particular, stands out as one of the hallmarks of green jobs. Disaster risk prevention can save both lives and livelihoods.

Long-term sustainability must therefore be based on the ability of jobs and work-related policies in environmentally friendly sectors to leverage opportunities for productive employment, decent work, equality, social equity, welfare, empowerment of vulnerable groups, environmental sustainability and modern technologies. With the right policies, a just transition to a green economy can lead to net gains in employment, especially for women, youth and vulnerable groups. Green job policies can therefore provide a ‘double dividend’.

Green Jobs for Youth

The current levels of youth unemployment pose great challenges. High youth unemployment is a consequence of lack of inclusive and equitable economic growth and, particularly in developing countries, of high population growth. Between now and 2050, about 33,000 young people will enter the labour force each day, looking for decent work. Addressing the youth employment challenges, in developing and developed countries alike, requires adequate investment in education and training systems to equip the younger generations with necessary skills, as well as productive investment in the economy to create employment opportunities for younger generations.

While the potential for green jobs to contribute to sustainable development involves all members of society, young men and women have a pivotal role to play in the transition to a more sustainable economy. Their agency, leadership and participation will power the transition to and sustain the growth of a green economy in the context of sustainable development, while they are also the key beneficiaries of this transition. In order to take advantage of the opportunities given by a green labour market and face its demands, youth must have the skills required. They must be given opportunities to participate – in both green jobs and in the processes of social dialogue that shape the social and economic conditions of those jobs. In this regard, it is critical to invest in young men and women and to ensure that they have access to adequate training, and education beyond primary education and in line with the fast evolving technological changes. But to enable young people, especially girls, to pursue their education and engage in labour markets also require a better health care, including reproductive health care and family planning.

Need for a Just Transition

While the transformation into a green economy will mean job opportunities for many, it must also be recognized that green job policies will have economic costs in the short run (e.g. higher investment or operational costs). Some sectors will see much slower growth

or even downsizing with a loss of employment. This will require addressing both the demand for green jobs and their supply. Therefore, mechanisms to smooth the transition and to offset these costs by maximizing synergies and mitigating trade-offs are needed:

- Identify sectors with potential for green jobs creation and poverty eradication, including sustainable infrastructure, construction and green buildings, renewable energy, energy efficiency, “smart” transport systems, waste management and recycling, sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry, eco-tourism, eco-industries, and cultural and creative industries.
- Identify entrepreneurship development programmes beneficial for green jobs creation. National policies and other programmes in the context of green growth strategies should provide incentives and support to young people and SMEs. To that end, it is important to ensure that the requisite enabling conditions are in place, such as full and low-cost access to education, skill development and technical know-how, and discounted and preferential access to credit and financial instruments.
- Identify synergies/benefits (e.g. increase in production factors, enhanced efficiency with existing technology, increased resilience with existing technology, moving towards more equitable growth through employment creation and poverty reduction, promote inclusive development).
- Address the current bottlenecks, including the need to adjust skills development to meet the new demands of a greener economy, especially through education for sustainable development and reorienting and intensifying technical and vocational education and training; the need to target education and training programmes towards women in order to promote women’s voice, agency and economic empowerment, recognizing that a majority of green jobs are expected to be in the secondary sectors, such as construction, manufacturing and energy production, in which women are under-represented; the need to create enabling conditions for skills development, such as employee incentives, industry discounts, individual incentive mechanisms, that are all critical for creating these propitious conditions.
- Promote more sustainable patterns of consumption and production – which are at the heart of green economies – and address population dynamics.
- Ensure universal access to social protection, including to education and health services.

Social Dialogue and Governance for Green Jobs

Ensuring participation and giving a voice to all stakeholders at finance decision-making bodies as well as in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is critical for good environmental governance. This entails building public oversight and social accountability mechanisms to help citizens to hold governments and businesses accountable of the way climate finance and other forms of public investment are spent. In this regard, gender-responsive budgeting is a tool that has shown success in helping governments ensure their funds are accountable to the needs of both women and men, and can be readily applied to sustainable development budgets. Participation and social dialogue must be ensured at the regional, national and sectoral levels, and in the workplace where the voice of workers is needed to help design new sustainable production systems and work practices.

B. Social Protection and Transformative Social Policy

Proposed Text for the Outcome Document

Recognizing that sound social policies enable societies to advance the well-being, capabilities and security of their citizens, including the poorest and most marginalized, it is critical to develop and expand comprehensive social protection systems to ensure universal access to essential social services, investments in human capital, and the realization of human rights. At the same time, decent work is central to efforts to reduce poverty and inequality and is a means for achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. Sound social policies – including social protection, promotion of income generating opportunities and active labour market policies – and opportunities for decent work should therefore be expanded to ensure a just transition to a green economy. Sound social policies need to be part of an integrated approach to sustainable development and poverty reduction that incorporates and builds upon the Social Protection Floor initiative and the Decent Work Agenda. Promoting universal access to essential social services through providing social protection floors is essential.

Background/Justification

Previous crises have proven that sound social policies serve as powerful economic and social stabilizers, helping to alleviate the negative consequences of social and economic changes. Yet, nearly 80 per cent of the world's population lives without any access to social protection and social services, including health services, education, income generating opportunities, unemployment support, and pensions.

The lack of social protection and social services can place considerable burdens on households and reinforce poverty traps. Insofar as social protection offers protection against the financial consequences of unemployment, sickness and other life-cycle contingencies, provides cash transfers to those in need and ensures basic standards for decent work, it is essential to reduce vulnerability and prevent the deterioration in living conditions. In the long-term, social protection can help individuals and families build human capital and improve their livelihood prospects, thereby addressing the underlying causes of poverty.

A broader set of social policies is also necessary to adjust to other processes of economic transformation, such as changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns, addressing new disease patterns, migration or regulating the fair allocation of scarce resources such as water or energy and accounting for the social and economic costs of transition. Sound social policies, including social protection, are therefore, at the core of a just transition and a key factor for poverty eradication as they link the economy with social equity and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Long-term sustainability cannot, however, be achieved based on social transfers alone. It must be based on the ability of policies to leverage opportunities for productive employment and decent work for all. Policies that focus on the promotion of decent work and extension of social protection while preventing the erosion of respect for workers' rights and strengthening social dialogue are necessary. Investment in social protection and social services alongside the pursuit of active labour market policies is critical to make a green economy feasible and to seize the benefits for sustainable development.

Investing in Social Protection

Investing in national social protection systems has positive economic effects as societies are able to move towards developing their full productive potential. These investments help to create a population that is sufficiently healthy, well nourished, educated, informed and better employable in the formal economy. However, investment in human capital can only help to strengthen the employability of the labor force; productive investment in the economy is necessary to create employment opportunities.

The Social Protection Floor Initiative

The Social Protection Floor Initiative¹ promotes nationally defined strategies that protect a minimum level of access to essential services and income security for all. It underpins a broader social security system that caters to citizens of all levels of income. A basic SPF should comprise a basic set of essential, context-appropriate social transfers and access to essential services, including health care, education and adequate nutrition. This basic set of transfers or social protection floor is affordable, even in the poorest countries, if implemented progressively.

Active Labour Market Policies

Active labour market policies support broader social protection by helping to ensure inclusive social outcomes stemming from the changes in the structure of production brought about by the transition to a green economy. Such policies are intended to facilitate the reintegration of the unemployed into the labour market as well as the reallocation of labour resulting from structural changes or geographical, occupational and skill mismatches. Such measures include retraining schemes for displaced workers, job-search assistance, direct employment creation programmes, training programmes, and employment subsidies to promote the hiring of vulnerable groups such as low-skilled workers and new entrants to the labour force. The combination of active and gender-responsive labour market policies, which focus on the supply-side of labour markets, and growth and employment-oriented economic policies, which focus on the demand-side, can, if properly designed and implemented, help raise the overall employment rate, thereby boosting the employment intensity of the green economy and generating the triple dividends of social, economic and environmental progress.

¹ International Labour Organization, *Social Protection Floor for a Fair and Inclusive Globalization. Report of the Advisory Group*, (Geneva, 2011).

C. Social Inclusion and Empowerment of Marginalized Groups

Proposed Text for the Outcome Document

Ensuring the well-being of all people is necessary to achieve sustainable development. No development path leaving millions of people in poverty, hunger and socially marginalized will be sustainable. Therefore, people need to be at the centre of all policies geared towards achieving sustainable development. Acknowledging that a reduction of social and economic inequalities is key to sustainable development, particular attention should be given to the empowerment of women, youth, indigenous peoples and other social groups as well as local communities who are at risk of marginalization, in order to ensure that all people can actively participate and contribute to the green transition. Policies aimed at empowering marginalized groups and strengthening the resilience of local communities must be based on the respect of human rights, inclusive participation and non-discrimination. Concrete measures should include scaling up investments in human capital; promoting gender equality; improving the access to and quality of education and health at all levels; improving the legal environment and ensuring access to justice, making new job opportunities accessible to all, and building capacity of the communities to influence, implement and evaluate development programmes and policies.

Background/Justification

A people-centred approach to sustainable development must ensure social equity, equality, inclusiveness and protection of human rights for all, including people who are marginalized. Reducing social inequalities requires a strong focus on building enabling legal and policy environments to develop people's resilience, protecting them against shocks and creating opportunities for the most marginalized. It also requires that the most marginalized have their voices heard in green economy debates, and in shaping social, economic and environmental policies for sustainable development.

The empowerment of marginalized groups is essential to achieve an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. Empowering requires enabling them to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives, and building their capacity to cope with transitions and contribute to sustainable development. Participation of all members of society in social, economic and political life is also important to ensure that Governments respond to social needs, including those of the most marginalized. The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 highlight particularly the need to include indigenous peoples, women and youth in decision-making processes.

While policies aimed at empowering marginalized groups should address the specific barriers to inclusion faced by each group, all groups share common concerns. Their concerns focus on issues such as equity and equality, inclusion and participation; for most groups, discrimination, the persistence of societal biases and stereotypes remain major

obstacles to social inclusion. These groups also share more specific concerns, such as access to quality education and health care and to decent work.

Therefore, effective policies aimed at empowering marginalized groups include promoting universal access to basic services such as quality education and healthcare, ensuring access to information and equal employment and remuneration, enhancing inclusive participation, creating an enabling environment for social movements, enabling gender equality and taking action against discrimination.

Green economy policies

Economic participation is critical to social inclusion. Green economy policies and measures should include explicit attention to human rights and gender equality in order to avoid negative impacts, particularly on marginalised communities. Green economy policies should address the differentiated needs of those most affected by specific social, economic and environmental problems at the country, region and community level, including indigenous peoples, persons living with disabilities, women, young people, older persons, refugees and internally displaced persons, migrants, persons living in poverty or slums, people living with or at high risk of HIV, and persons belonging to minorities. Such policies need to support the livelihoods and income security of the most affected and include investment in basic services such as health, education and training – especially for girls and women – as well as investment in open access resources, improved access to modern enabling technologies (e.g. broadband infrastructure and services) and strengthening of the media. It is also critical to strengthen resilience of communities under pressure due to environmental and climatic changes *inter alia* through facilitating the role of migration as an adaptation strategy.

Harnessing knowledge of marginalized people

Many marginalized groups already have green practices and policies that can contribute in a positive way to a green economy transition serving as examples. In particular, the knowledge and expertise of local communities and indigenous peoples are invaluable contributions towards sustainable development. These practices and policies need to be recognized, espoused and scaled up.

ANNEX Resources - Outputs and activities by ECESA Plus Cluster agencies in each of the three key areas

A. Green jobs for youth

Relevant reports and documents

ILO and UNEP, together with ITUC and IOE, launched the first *Green Jobs Report* in 2008² and are working on its second edition (to be released in the fall of 2011).

An ILO report entitled “*Skills for Green Jobs: A global view*” examines the experience of 21 developed and developing countries in adjusting their training programmes to meet the new demands of a greener economy.³

UNEP and UNFPA are preparing a paper on “*Youth and the Green Economy*”. The paper should be released before the end of 2011.

UNESCO published a report “*From Green Economies to Green Societies – UNESCO’s Commitment to Sustainable Development*” in 2011.

Employment is also addressed under the chapter on the social dimensions of the joint UN system report on the green economy being prepared by the Environment Management Group (EMG).⁴

The report *Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication* (UNEP, 2011)⁵, shows that green investments contribute to reduce environmental damage while creating jobs. The ILO has prepared a background note that articulates the social dimension of a transition towards a green and sustainable economy.⁶

The World Bank is developing a *Green Growth strategy paper*.

UNRISD has collaborated with UNCTAD in the preparation of the book *Road to Rio+20*, released in March 2011. The book is intended to highlight critical topics and focus global discussion in advance of the Conference.

²http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_098503.pdf

³http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_156220.pdf

⁴A note on the forthcoming report can be found here:
http://www.unemg.org/Portals/27/Documents/IMG/GreenEconomy/fifthmeeting/Progress_report_to_First_Intersessional_rev_5_Jan.pdf

⁵<http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/GreenEconomyReport/tabid/29846/Default.aspx>

⁶http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_152065.pdf

ESCAP serves as the chair of the Asia-Pacific Interagency Group on Youth, which works on a variety of youth issues with several stakeholders. The Asia-Pacific Interagency Group on Youth has developed a publication “*Investing in Youth Policy: The case for developing policies for young people in the Asia-Pacific region*”, which covers a wide variety of issues including employment and environmental concerns.

ESCWA is finalising a study on Business Opportunities for the SMEs in the Environmental Goods and Services Sectors. Considering that the SMEs in the region are the biggest provider of employment amongst the young generation, the study is assessing the possible impact of the EGS sector development on Youth Green Jobs. (The Report will be uploaded on ESCWA website shortly.)

FAO has carried out studies on Greening the Economy with Agriculture, and these are available on the FAO website, as well as linked to the Rio+20 website.

UN-Habitat has drafted the working paper *Urban Patterns for Sustainable Development: Towards a Green Economy*.⁷

UN Women aims to publish a compilation of innovative practices on women in green economy in time for Rio+20, which will bring attention to good practices that can be up-scaled and replicated post Rio, as well as include recommendations to create an enabling environment for their uptake and success.

Cooperation and capacity-building

The World Bank has launched a *knowledge platform on Green Growth*. In March 2008, it also launched the *Global Fund for Youth Investment*, a trust fund that provides grants to address the needs of youth in violent and post-conflict situations.

UNESCO supports Member States to mainstream education for sustainable development in their national curricula. It also supports the mainstreaming of green technical and vocational education and training into education and training reforms.

UNESCO publishes annually the Education for All Global Monitoring Report.

UNESCO published the report “Engineering: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities for Development, 2010.

UNESCO published “Learning for a Sustainable World: Review of Contexts and Structures for Education for Sustainable Development”, 2009.

By supporting universal access sexual and reproductive health care and family planning, UNFPA contributes to a decrease in unwanted pregnancies and teenage pregnancies. Thereby, UNFPA helps young women to pursue their education.

⁷ http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/9539_39812_3077_alt.pdf

In addition, UNFPA, together with partner agencies, actively promotes the participation of young people in political life and the consideration of their concerns in decision-making processes.

UN-Habitat is developing a series of ‘quick guides’ that will assist urban managers and practitioners with city-regional planning in the transition to a green economy; one of these guides will focus on job creation, local governance and green industry.

UN-Habitat’s next *State of the World Cities Report* will examine urban prosperity and its link to the green economy transition.

The IMF is collaborating directly with the ILO on issues related to the social protection floor, the linkages between macroeconomic policies and policies for employment creation and labour market institutions, and deepening the social dialogue, consistent with the outcomes of the joint ILO/IMF conference at Oslo in September 2010.

The Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs) is a joint initiative between UN Women and the UN Global Compact with the objective of integrating a gender perspective into corporate social responsibility– businesses can advance gender equality in lock-step with sustainable economic growth. The private sector can have a powerful contribution in promoting gender responsive and environmentally-, economically- and socially-sustainable business practices and investments by way of their corporate social responsibility, of which, the integration of “corporate gender responsibility” is key to the process.

Other activities

UNRISD is organizing a conference on ‘*Green Economy and Sustainable Development: Bringing Back the Social Dimension*’, 10-11 October 2011, Geneva.

UNESCO has organized a Future Forum on “Moving towards a Green Economy and Green Jobs” held 22-23 August 2009 and on “Mitigating Climate Change – Building a Global Green Society” held on 26 October 2009.⁸

ECLAC has coordinated the elaboration of an interagency document assessing sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean since 1992: *Sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean 20 years on from the Earth Summit: progress, gaps and strategic guidelines*. The preliminary version of this document is available for comments at www.cepal.org/rio20, along with information on the regional preparatory process for Rio+20. The final version will be published in 2012.

⁸ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001925/192543e.pdf>

ESCWA has organized a Workshop on Green Jobs in Lebanon on the 29-30 July 2011 in cooperation with ILO and UNDP. The Workshop presented the assessment reports for Green Jobs in the following sectors: Waste Management, Constructions, Agriculture and Energy. The youth dimension was discussed and the major findings published in relevant websites.

Other information on regional preparations of ESCWA for Rio+20 can be found on the following webpage:

<http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1570E>

UN-Habitat Opportunities Fund for urban youth-led development.⁹

UN Women co-sponsored the first ever SEED Gender Equality Award by the SEED initiative in 2011— as part of an annual SEED initiative lead by UNEP, UNDP and IUCN. The SEED Gender Equality Award will highlight a women-lead innovative pilot project that advances sustainable development and gender equality. The recipient receives a grant, training and networking opportunities.

UNITAR New York Office is holding a series of briefings and workshops to advance awareness and provide greater scope of information and ideas to the drafting and negotiations for the Rio+20 conference, the schedule is Special Briefing 25 October, 15 December, side event; 20 January, holistic perspective; 28 February Green Economy; and 6 April, inter-disciplinary discussion and presentations.

B. Social Protection and Transformative Social Policy

Reports and documents

The World Bank has recently updated its Social Development Strategy and a new Social Protection Strategy.

In the aftermath of the global recession of 2008-2009, ECLAC proposed governments a new regional development agenda, linking closely economic and productive challenges, and fiscal and public spending insufficiencies with the need to address the reproduction of poverty and inequality. Such agenda and, in particular, the expansion of social protection systems and the analysis of the fiscal space required are analyzed in detail in the two following reports:

-ECLAC (2010), *Time for Equality. Closing gaps, opening trails*, LC/G.2432(SES.33/3), Santiago, May.¹⁰

-ECLAC (2011), *2010 Social Panorama of Latin America*, LC/G.2481-P, Santiago, March¹¹

⁹ <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=531&cid=5695>

¹⁰ <http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/1/39711/P39711.xml&xsl=/ps33/tpl-i/p9f.xsl&base=/tpl-i/top-bottom.xsl>

¹¹ <http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/1/41801/P41801.xml&xsl=/dds/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/dds/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>

ESCWA is completing a study on labour market structures and challenges in the region, looking at labour market regulation and active labour market policies.¹²

ESCAP launched a theme study, “*The Promise of Protection*”, at the 67th Commission session during May 2011.

FAO has carried out studies on Greening the Economy with Agriculture, and these are available on the FAO website, as well as linked to the Rio+20 website.¹³

UNESCO World Social Sciences Report, 2010.¹⁴

WFP has published Occasional Paper no. 20, “Unveiling Social Safety Nets,” outlining the core areas of social protection and safety nets and laying out the key issues underpinning them at the analytical, policy, institutional, and implementation level; WFP and the World Bank’s “Rethinking School Feeding - Social Safety Nets, Child Development and the Education Sector” explores how food procurement may help local economies, and emphasizes the centrality of the education sector in the policy dialogue on school feeding; and *Home-grown school feeding: a Framework to Link School Feeding with Local Agricultural Production* focuses on home-grown school feeding (HGSF) as a safety net that can help small-scale farmers increase productivity, produce better-quality crops, manage natural resources, and mitigate risks sustainably.

Cooperation and capacity-building

The World Bank has, over the last decade, supported a number of country-based programmes that provide social protection to vulnerable groups. Examples: China Loess Plateau rehabilitation; Ethiopia Productive Safety Nets Programme; Rwanda Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme.

UNFPA promotes universal access to essential and integrated health care services. UNFPA promotes free access to essential health care services and supplies in order to enable all households to make use of these services even if their income deteriorates and they slip into poverty. Free access to essential health care services and supplies is an important element in social protection strategies, which complements other social transfers.

ESCAP is implementing projects on social protection that are collecting evidence on good practices regarding social protection schemes and developing policy tools to build capacity.

UN-Habitat’s *Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI)* gives technical assistance to fast-growing cities in developing countries as they map the risks posed to their most vulnerable urban populations and devise adaptation strategies to strengthen their resilience.¹⁵

¹² <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/teams.asp?teams=Social%20Policy&division=SDD>

¹³ http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/sustainability/papers/Executive_Summaries_engl.pdf

¹⁴ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188333e.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://www.unhabitat.org/ccci>

Through the Livelihoods, Early Assessment and Protection (LEAP) project, WFP is currently supporting the Government of Ethiopia to improve its capacity to manage drought and flood risk by developing an integrated national risk management framework that allows for a timely scale-up of the Productive Safety Net Programme in case of a major drought or flood.

In addition, WFP reaches on average 30 million people every year through safety nets that transfer food and cash in return for natural resource management and other resilience building activities. Each year WFP provides school meals to around 22 million children in more than 60 countries.

UNESCO works towards universal access to education by coordinating the international Education for All (EFA) efforts.

UNESCO promotes cultural and creative industries as strategic outlets for jobs and income generation and as levers for economic development, social cohesion, and environmental protection (ref “The Power of Culture for Development”, UNESCO 2010: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001893/189382e.pdf> and UNESCO World Report on “Investing Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue”).¹⁶

Other activities

ESCWA will hold a major regional expert group meeting on *Social Security in Western Asia*, in Beirut on 8-9 September 2011.¹⁷

UN-Habitat International Expert Group Meeting on *Forced Evictions and Housing Rights*, Nairobi, 20-23 September.¹⁸

C. Social Inclusion and Empowerment of Marginalized Groups

Reports and documents

ESCWA has completed initial studies on the prevalence of disability in the region, the incidence of poverty among people with disabilities and their employment status.¹⁹

UN-Habitat’s *Global Report on Human Settlements: The Challenge of Slums* comprehensively surveys and analyses the urbanisation of poverty and identifies how cities’ inherent capacities can tackle this issue.²⁰

¹⁶ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001852/185202e.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/main.asp?division=sdd>

¹⁸ http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/10124_1_594035.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/teams.asp?teams=Social%20Policy&division=SDD>

²⁰ <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1156>

FAO has carried out studies on Greening the Economy with Agriculture, and these are available on the FAO website, as well as linked to the Rio+20 website.

OHCHR has produced numerous reports, studies and methodological tools that pay particular attention to racial discrimination, women's rights and gender issues, minorities and indigenous people. OHCHR's work ranges from mapping emerging trends in human rights, addressing problems and documenting good practices, to developing tools and learning packages. OHCHR's Report 2010, comprehensively outlines its work in this area.²¹

Cooperation and capacity-building

A growing number of World Bank *community driven development (CDD) and rural livelihoods support* programmes are combining the social protection/ job-creation and environmental co-benefits of such approaches with much greater emphasis on empowerment of poor and marginalized people.

The World Bank is also helping empower marginalized people through increasing voice of marginalized groups and increasing social accountability in the use of public finance for low-carbon growth and the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation and mitigation in national and sub-national planning and budgeting.

The World Bank's use of tools for ex ante impact assessment, including through *Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA)* has been instrumental in how the Bank has approached the distributional, social and poverty implications of climate change and green growth-related development policy lending operations.

The World Food Programme reaches on average over 100 million people every year in the most vulnerable and at risk areas of the world, in most cases through food and cash based safety nets.

Together with its partner agencies, UNFPA makes a special effort to help women gain access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care and family planning.

ESCAP works in the fields of gender, disability, HIV and AIDS, ageing, youth and migration to empower those who are most vulnerable and at risk of poverty and exclusion.

Since 2000, more than 500 projects have been funded in the context of IOM's response to environmental migration, demonstrating that creative solutions exist for communities affected by environmental degradation and climate change. In 2009 alone, activities related to migration, climate change and the environment have been implemented in more than 20 countries across four continents.

From 2005 to 2008 funding received for responding to displacement induced by natural disasters reached almost USD 300 million. Of IOM projects related to natural disasters in

²¹ http://www2.ohchr.org/english/ohchrreport2010/web_version/ohchr_report2010_web/index.html#/home

2007 and 2008, emergency and immediate assistance responses represented 54 per cent of the total number of projects endorsed. 46 per cent of projects were addressing longer-term recovery.

WFP works to improve women's access to food and sustainable livelihoods by implementing Food for Work and Food for Training programmes that take into consideration their distinct needs and priorities.

OHCHR works to ensure the integration of a human rights perspective into development, humanitarian, peace and security, governance and rule of law programmes of the United Nations system. This approach is based on respect for all human rights of individuals and is particularly protective of those who have been victims of, or are most at risk of human rights violations, namely, marginalized people. OHCHR develops methodological tools and learning packages and provides technical assistance at country and regional levels, provides substantive and technical support to human rights mechanisms, and awareness raising activities. Support and outreach is provided to multiple stakeholders, including Member States, individual rights-holders, civil society, national and regional human rights institutions.²²

UNESCO has promoted Education for All (EFA) as a fundamental right for over six decades, working towards the improvement of the quality of education. The Organization coordinates global Education for All efforts and is the lead agency for the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012), as well as the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

Through its recently launched Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education, UNESCO is joining forces with Hillary Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, and Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to step up efforts to reduce female drop-out rates in the transition from primary to secondary education and to support women's literacy programmes in Africa and Asia

UNESCO's Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme works to build dialogue amongst traditional knowledge holders, natural and social scientists, resource managers and decision-makers to enhance the use of traditional green knowledge and secure an active and equitable role for local communities in resource governance. It also works to strengthen knowledge transmission between elders and youth, and explores pathways to balance community-based knowledge with global knowledge in formal and non-formal education. Details at www.unesco.org/links

UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Programme contributes towards the promotion of gender equality by promoting policy-oriented research, capacity-building, training and advocacy for gender equality and women's rights worldwide.

²² http://www2.ohchr.org/english/ohchrreport2010/web_version/ohchr_report2010_web/index.html#/home

The objective of UNESCO's programme on Youth is to help empower young people, reaching out to them, responding to their expectations and ideas, fostering useful and long-lasting skills.

Freedom of expression, access to information and empowerment of people, UNESCO, 2009.