



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development

Social Inclusion, Inequalities and Multidimensional Poverty

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Today's Discussion Topics

1. What do we mean by social inclusion?
2. What is social protection?
3. How do we understand inequalities?
4. What are the interlinkages between social inclusion, inequalities and poverty eradication?
5. How is poverty eradication addressed in the 2030 Agenda?
6. What do we mean by multidimensional poverty?
7. What are the challenges for middle-income countries?



1. What is social inclusion?

- Social inclusion enables all citizens to participate in decision-making of policies and programs that affect their lives.
- Social inclusion improves the opportunity and ability of marginalized groups to participate in society.
- Social inclusion represents the vision of “a society for all” in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play.





2. What is an inclusive society?

- An inclusive society includes:
 - Equality and equity for all
 - Respect for human rights
 - Respect for cultural diversity
 - The exercise of democratic governance
 - Access to social justice for all
- An inclusive society eliminates all forms of discrimination, inequalities and exclusions; promotes the achievement of social cohesion for all.



3. What is unfavorable inclusion?

Unfavorable inclusion depicts coercive or adverse inclusion.

Like social exclusion, unfavorable inclusion promotes discrimination, inequalities and poverty deprivations through hostile terms of inclusion and participation.



4. What strategies to consider for devising positive forms of inclusion?

- inclusion *of whom?*
 - individuals, social groups or communities
- inclusion *of what?*
 - goods, services, resources
- inclusion *into what?*
 - labor markets, welfare systems, political spaces
- inclusion *how?*
 - equally, fairly, voluntarily or involuntarily
- inclusion *for what purpose?*
- Inclusion *on what terms?*



5. How can social inclusion be achieved?

- Social policy allows for social inclusion to be achieved.
- Social policy - a “collective framework to facilitate the creation of better conditions of life and well-being for all”
- Social policy aims to improve people’s well-being
- Social policy is especially concerned with the welfare of those who are disadvantaged or feel excluded.
- Social policy involves processes to address the challenges that affect the well-being of people. **Social Protection** is a regime of social policy.



6. What is social protection?



- Social protection consists of policies and programs to protect the poor and vulnerable.
- Social protection enhances the capacity of the poor to manage economic and social risks
- Effective public policies need to focus not just on reducing poverty and vulnerabilities, but also on reducing social inequalities.



7. How do we understand inequalities?

- Inequalities are caused by political and socio-economic factors that result in unequal opportunities and access, unequal power relations, exclusion, oppression and domination.
 - ‘Vertical’ inequalities: social class, levels of education etc.
 - ‘Horizontal’ inequalities: identity, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, disability and sexual orientation.
 - The intersections between vertical and horizontal inequalities create vicious cycles that traps people in poverty and socio-economic exclusion - giving rise to prejudice and social stigma.
 - inequality of opportunity condemns those born into the bottom of the economic pyramid to remain there.
- Addressing inequalities is fundamental - not as a by-product of the fight against poverty but as a key ingredient in building more inclusive and peaceful societies.



8. What are the interlinkages between social inclusion, inequalities and poverty eradication?

- Social inclusion, inequalities and poverty are interrelated
- Poverty is not only about income or material deprivations, it also interferes with human development and full participation in society.
- Persons with disabilities, indigenous Peoples, the elderly, youth and other vulnerable groups often face multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion and they are also amongst the most affected by poverty
- Social exclusion, inequalities and poverty do not result just from the behavior of the 'poor', but are intrinsically tied to fundamental structural factors in socio-economic and political relations.



9. How is poverty eradication addressed in the 2030 Agenda?

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents a holistic approach poverty eradication.
- The Agenda addresses poverty eradication intertwined within the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental
- The Agenda's overriding objective is to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Thus, it is fundamental to address poverty from a multidimensional perspective.





10. What do we mean by multidimensional poverty?

- Multidimensional poverty - is more than economics; involves aspects of a social, cultural, political and environmental nature.
- Poverty is multifaceted with multiple deprivations - such as: poor health, shortened lifespan, limited access to education, knowledge and information and powerlessness.
- Deprivations affect individuals differently. Important to know who is affected and how.
- Multidimensional poverty approaches address the diverse forms of deprivations and identifies those affected
- It is aimed at breaking the vicious cycles of poverty.



11. How to measure multidimensional poverty?

- Multidimensional poverty approaches seek to capture the correlations between the different dimensions of poverty in different contexts and over time.
- A major challenge has been how best to measure information about the extent of these various deprivations.
- Several approaches have been developed on the basis of academic research and intergovernmental processes.





12. What are the approaches to multidimensional poverty?

Capabilities Approach

- Aims at enhancing the capabilities of people; help to remove social, cultural or political barriers and expand their opportunities.
- Deprivations in capabilities limit people's choices and undermine human development;
- Poverty is as capability deprivation.

Human Rights-based Approach

- The fulfilment of fundamental economic and social rights, especially the right to food, health care and education is a basic need
- Basic needs are a right, not charity.
- Governments have legal obligations to advance people's rights and sustainable development.



13. How to operationalize these approaches?

- Several tools and techniques have been developed to operationalize these approaches to multidimensional poverty.
 - The Single ‘multidimensional index’
 - The “dashboard approach” of multiple indices, one for each dimension.
- Several countries have introduced multidimensional poverty strategies into national development plans
- Diversity of approaches across countries regarding: (i) dimensions of poverty considered; (ii) policy priorities; and (iii) institutional responsibility to measure, analyze and address multidimensional poverty.



14. How to harmonize the diverse approaches to measure multidimensional poverty?

- It is important to harmonize the broad diversity of views on the definitions and the multifaceted dimensions of poverty.
- There is ample scope for countries to develop, reformulate and adapt existing approaches.
- It is critical to develop intergovernmental and regional discussions and exchanges of experiences.

Discussions should involve multiple stakeholders – government, civil society, academic research institutions and the private sector.



15. What are the challenges for middle-income countries?

- Middle-income countries still face significant challenges to achieve the SDGs along economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- Widespread stagnation or decline in productivity growth heightens the risks of slowing progress in poverty eradication.
- Challenges in social inclusion and high levels of inequality remain pervasive, even in economies with high economic growth.



Therefore, there is need for a **collective approaches** on how multidimensional poverty can better be analyzed, measured and addressed in the context of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in middle-income countries...

