

## **ESCWA's Role in Advancing the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027)**

### *Introduction: ESCWA's Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Eradication*

ESCWA plays a central role in supporting Arab countries in reducing poverty, advancing inclusive development, and enhancing national capacities through data, knowledge, technical support, and innovative policy tools.

### *Pro-poor fiscal policies:*

The Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) is anchored in the global frameworks of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement.

ESCWA's work contributes to global momentum on SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). As a founding member of the G20 Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, ESCWA has supported six Arab governments in joining and eventually benefiting from the Global Alliance's support. ESCWA will continue to provide direct support for example in poverty measurement, social protection reforms, progressive fiscal policy, and climate finance. Its support is delivered through innovative approaches, including South-South cooperation, knowledge exchange, and machine learning-powered analytical and advisory services.

A significant initiative, the Climate/SDGs Debt Swap–Donor Nexus, has been implemented in Tunisia and Jordan. This initiative mobilizes financial resources by converting debt into investments that align with national climate and development priorities, promoting resilience, climate adaptation, and job creation, particularly in vulnerable communities.

### *Poverty Diagnostics and Policy Integration*

A core part of ESCWA's work is supporting countries in monitoring and reducing both monetary and multidimensional poverty, essential for achieving SDG targets 1.1 and 1.2. ESCWA has developed tools such as the Multidimensional Poverty Assist Tool (MAT) and the Money-Metric Poverty Assist Tool (MPAT) to help governments design and update poverty indices.

Moreover, ESCWA supports governments in integrating poverty diagnostics into national strategies. It has developed an optimization tool that helps policymakers design effective poverty reduction policies using multidimensional poverty indices (MPIs). In the 2023 regional workshop

in Amman, member states were trained on how to utilize this tool. ESCWA's technical support has been instrumental in building national MPIs and formulating targeted poverty-reduction strategies in countries such as Jordan, Iraq, Somalia, Mauritania, and Egypt. For example, ESCWA is assisting Algeria in developing a tool to visualize child poverty using the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA). In Djibouti, a workshop in November 2024 led to a candidate MPI measure to support the development of a national poverty strategy. In Jordan, ESCWA is assisting the Department of Statistics in preparing the national MPI report and held a workshop in January 2024 on optimizing poverty reduction policies. In Egypt, ESCWA and national partners launched the first national MPI and accompanying policy brief in December 2024. In Mauritania, ESCWA supported the development of an MPI-based optimization model and is assisting with a trend analysis covering 2004–2019 to inform future strategies. ESCWA's direct support to these countries highlights the growing demand from member states to institutionalize MPI frameworks, develop national MPIs, and create targeted poverty-reduction strategies.

### *Global Thought Leadership on Money-metric Poverty*

ESCWA also contributes to global thought on money-metric poverty estimation and cross-country comparisons. The upcoming World Poverty Report, set for publication in 2025, will reassess global poverty trends, measurement methodologies, and policy directions. The report reveals that one-third of the world's population remains in poverty, with the Arab region being the only one where poverty has increased since 1995. ESCWA's Arab Poverty Report will address region-specific findings, particularly the rise in poverty in conflict-affected countries and the insufficient impact of economic growth on poverty reduction without redistributive policies.

### *Social Protection and Economic Empowerment*

ESCWA's focus extends to social protection, a crucial component of long-term poverty reduction and poverty prevention. In Tunisia, ESCWA helped to comprehensively review the national social protection system and its reform needs and options, leading to a national social protection profile launched in November 2024. In Jordan, ESCWA supported a review of the social protection system, with a report forthcoming. In July 2024, ESCWA co-organized a workshop promoting economic empowerment for social assistance beneficiaries, featuring asset transfer strategies from Egypt. ESCWA also assisted Mauritania in creating its first social protection profile, launching efforts for universal coverage. Additionally, ESCWA is aiding Morocco and Somalia in self-assessments to enhance social protection efficiency and empower vulnerable groups.

### *Inclusive Development for Marginalized Groups*

ESCWA's efforts extend to promoting the social and economic inclusion of marginalized groups including persons with disabilities and older individuals, advocating for local solutions to development challenges, fostering youth economic empowerment through initiatives like the Josour Initiative, and expanding labor market opportunities through ESCWA's Job Skills Monitor. These efforts all contribute to reducing poverty and deprivation in vulnerable communities. Conclusion: Through its integrated support—from measurement and monitoring to policy design and capacity building—ESCWA has operationalized the goals of the Third UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty in the Arab region.