

The implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027)

Progress in implementing the inter-agency system-wide plan of action for eradicating poverty

I Key activities, assessment of results and impact (2024)

ECA supported the governments of Ghana, Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda in 2023 to better assess poverty, inequality, and vulnerability in the absence of recent household data with a view to formulating robust policies aimed at reducing poverty and inequality and to build resilience in countries. Capacity-building workshops were held for policymakers in September 2023 in Namibia and Tanzania, and in October 2023 in Ghana and Uganda. Policymakers in these countries were trained on the imputed elasticity methodology and equipped with knowledge, skills and tools to enable them to estimate poverty, vulnerability and inequality. **The estimates generated from the training will enable Namibia's National Planning Commission (NPC) to update their data and establish a baseline for targets for the National Development Plan (NDP) 6 whose priorities are to tackle poverty, inequality, and unemployment.**

ECA and UNICEF organised a high-level session on SDG 1 on No Poverty during the Tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). An in-depth review of progress made in achieving SDG 1 highlighted the gradual but slow decline in poverty, noting that Africa accounts for the largest share of global poverty. The effects of climate change, insecurity arising from terrorism, internal conflicts and the influx of refugees fleeing their countries as well as health crises are impeding countries' poverty reduction efforts. Investment in quality education, health, social protection and access to water and sanitation as well as economic growth were identified as key actions that can help alleviate poverty.

ECA developed and applied the multidimensional poverty index for Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. **The index will help these countries to better identify the poorest groups in their populations in order to formulate robust policies aimed at reducing poverty.**

ECA prepared a policy brief - *Renewing the social contract to reduce poverty and inequality in Africa* - which examined growing poverty and inequality following recent crises and highlighted actions that governments can take to reduce poverty and inequality in countries. **The brief aims to inform policymakers of the developments and trends in poverty and inequality and actions that can be taken to address these challenges.**

ECA is collaborating with ESCWA to support Djibouti, Ghana, and Morocco to generate knowledge for improved social protection policies in order to accelerate inclusive, equitable, and sustainable social protection systems in Africa. ESCWA's self-assessment template for establishing Comprehensive National Social Protection Systems and Reforms Country Profile Reports will be adapted for use in the African region.

ECA is partnering with DESA, ESCAP and ILO on "Strengthening Capacity for evidence-based Social Protection Policies for Responding to the Triple Global Crisis in fuel, food, and finance" project that is supporting Namibia, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia to strengthen these countries' social protection systems and programmes' capacities to build robust, sustainable, inclusive and crisis responsive policies by identifying the groups left furthest behind and understanding the dynamics that compound the triple crises.

As part of the AU-led initiative on the Common Africa Agro-Parks Programme (CAAPs), ECA developed the Guidelines for Developing Agro-poles in Africa that provide guidance for developing and

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-Additional details on the index and the policy brief are provided in the document

implementing policies to create inclusive, sustainable agro-poles that can promote diversification and industrialization.

ECA conducted several studies in Zambia and Zimbabwe on cross-border maize and dairy value chains, which aim to promote diversification and trade that can support employment creation and poverty eradication.

Access to land is critical for poverty reduction. ECA, in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), organised a conference on “Promoting Sustainable Land Governance in Africa for Accelerated Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area” to strengthen the capacity for land policy development, implementation and monitoring in Africa through improved access to knowledge and information on land governance and intra-Africa trade. ECA also strengthened the capacity of African countries, regional organizations and institutions of higher learning to implement the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa.

II Progress made

Poverty in Africa is declining but at a slow pace. Global poverty is concentrated in Africa, with 55% of the global population living below the international poverty line in 2022 residing on the continent. Nearly one-third of the continent’s population (or, 476 million) is currently living under the international poverty line. Alarming, 40% of children in Africa live in extreme poverty and extreme child poverty is largely an African phenomenon. Only Algeria, Mauritius, Seychelles and Tunisia are fully on track to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030.

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III Gaps and challenges

The effects of ongoing crises continue to adversely affect poverty reduction efforts in Africa. Climate change has significant impacts on agriculture – a crucial sector for revenues, jobs, livelihoods, food security and export earnings particularly in poor countries. Increasing food prices at global and country levels have led to inflation of food import bills in net food importing countries in Africa. High inflation and deepened debt distress in many countries are shrinking fiscal space and constraining governments’ capacities to effectively address poverty. In Africa, crop yield losses could lead to an average 12 per cent increase in food prices by 2030, severely straining poor households which generally spend up to 60 per cent of their income on food. Due to the slow progress in achieving SDG 1 and other interlinked goals, the prospects for attaining the 2030 Agenda seem unlikely.

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IV Key policy messages and recommendations

A number of key actions are required for sustained poverty reduction in Africa:

- accelerating the reform of the international financial architecture in order to mobilize the timely, affordable resources at scale and enable governments to create the fiscal space needed to support social programmes that tackle poverty;
- tackling inflation, prioritizing and allocating sufficient budgetary resources for poverty reduction;
- addressing gender inequalities;
- promoting industrialization and the development of sustainable value chains that can create decent jobs and boost productivity and raise competitiveness;
- empowering youth to gain access to economic resources, and

- improving access to education and healthcare and integrating nutrition in national development policies and programmes to reduce multidimensional poverty.

To tackle unemployment, gaps between labour demand and supply need to be addressed. On the demand side, governments need to implement fiscal policies, reduce taxes for employers and lower interest rates while on the supply side policies that target individuals and skills training are needed. These actions will require an effective governance, infrastructure development and tailored social protection programmes.

V Efforts made to foster greater inter-agency convergence and collaboration in sharing knowledge, promoting policy dialogue, facilitating synergies, mobilizing funds, and providing technical assistance in the key areas of policy focus contained in the system-wide plan of action.

The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions initiative, which was launched in September 2021, aims to fast-track the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1 in Africa by tackling the root causes of poverty. Investments in green, digital and care economies are being mobilized to create millions of decent jobs for vulnerable groups, boost incomes, extend social protection and build resilience against shocks. The Accelerator will establish national financing frameworks and mobilize public and private resources – both domestically and internationally – to expand social protection to 4 billion people and create 400 million new, decent jobs by 2030.

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is supporting governments to develop or update national social protection policies, strategies and programmes to ensure that they include consideration of the rights and needs of children, including those living in poverty.

ECA, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the African Union Commission (AUC) & the World Food Programme (WFP), annually publishes the Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition report to monitor progress and highlight key issues for addressing hunger in Africa.