

SDG10 Expert Group Meeting
Reducing Inequalities: Progress and Prospects
Geneva, 2-3 April 2019
Agenda

Description:

This event will take stock of the progress toward achieving SDG 10 and will particularly focus on issues related to within-country inequalities. Participants will share knowledge about success stories, good practices, and challenges, and identify areas of concern. The meeting, jointly organized by the World Bank and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), will help inform the 2019 UN High Level Political Forum to be held in July and serve to influence collaboration and programmes on inequality going forward from 2019.

Day 1: 2 April 2019

9 AM – 10:30 AM (Rooms 3+4) | Session 1: Opening Panel

Description: The main objective of this panel will be to set the context for the two-day discussion. The speakers will take stock of where we are in terms of progress towards SDG 10 – Reducing inequality; and identify areas of concern and challenges to action.

Critical areas to be addressed by panelists include:

- Key trends and drivers in inequality in multiple dimensions within and among countries
- Differences in inequalities across regions, between developed and developing countries
- Defining characteristics of groups who are being left behind – rurality, gender, religion, ethnicity, income, origin, age, and others
- Ways that inequality is linked to different forms of discrimination
- Linkages between income inequality and other dimensions like nutrition, health, education, access to land and other natural resources like water
- Key emerging areas of inequality that require attention – e.g. gaps in technology access and advanced skills, gaps in the quality of education and healthcare, access and adequacy of social protection for non-formal sectors, quality of jobs, gaps in empowerment and opportunities for political participation, differences in resilience, vulnerability linked to conflict and climate change
- Data and evidence gaps that stand in the way of further progress and what countries are doing to address inequalities in the context of the SDGs and national development/growth
- Impacts of rising inequalities including social tensions, unrest and conflict

10:30 AM – 10:45 AM: COFFEE BREAK

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM: Session 2: Progress and Challenges: Country Experiences (parallel sessions)

Parallel Session 2a: Income and Wealth Inequality (Room 15)

This session will shed light on the trends and drivers of income and wealth inequality within individual countries and discuss the progress toward SDG 10.1.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Recent trends and patterns of income and wealth inequality in their respective countries, and implications for achieving SDG 10.1
- Main drivers of rising or falling inequality
- Challenges in measuring and reducing income and wealth inequality, and ways to address them
- Citizens' perceptions about inequality and their impact on social cohesion and redistribution
- Ways in which pressures like conflict and climate extremes are likely to impact inequality trends

Parallel Session 2b: Inclusion (Room 16)

This session will assess the progress and challenges to reducing inequalities across groups and persistent patterns of discrimination – e.g. women, vulnerable migrants, refugees/IDPs, LGBT, indigenous peoples, rural people, people with disabilities. Speakers will (i) assess the extent and trends in these inequalities; including challenges to their measurement and analysis; (ii) take stock of barriers to reducing these inequalities for particular groups; and (iii) identify needs for intervention toward building inclusion and social cohesion; and eliminating discrimination in laws, policies and social practices.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Groups most likely to be systematically excluded or marginalized from economic, social and political spaces including through intersecting/compounding sources of disadvantage and means of perpetuating exclusion
- Innovative methods of identifying and measuring groups who are being left behind based on gender, religion, ethnicity, income, origin, age, physical distance and lack of connectivity, and other group characteristics including measurement of intersecting inequalities, deprivations and vulnerabilities
- Progress being made on developing data and reporting on indicator 10.3.1 which measures the proportion of people feeling discriminated against
- Most promising areas for action including social, legal, and economic interventions and the effect of broader global trends like technology, globalization and migration on inclusion

- Approaches to trade-offs and prioritizing interventions that will have maximum synergistic or sequential impacts on different SDGs linked to inequality. This would include a forward-looking perspective that accounts for new inequalities generated around technology, climate change or conflict, for example
- Progress made on target 10.3 in relation to eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate non-discriminatory policies and action

Parallel Session 2c: Inequalities in Opportunities and Outcomes (Room 17)

This session will reflect on the key dimensions of inequality of opportunities and outcomes that are most important to address in a country, and the things that are needed to be done to achieve SDG 10.3.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Key dimensions of inequality of opportunity in a country that are likely to affect inclusion and social mobility and effects on inequalities in outcomes
- Key drivers of inequality of opportunity influenced by domestic conditions, or affected positively or negatively by broader global trends including technological developments including the effects on marginalized and excluded populations
- Most important priorities for “leveling the playing field” in human capital development in a country including its different territories
- Perceptions of fairness and their role in building social consensus on policy priorities
- Relationship between rising inequalities and rising distrust in national and global governance and multilateralism

Parallel Session 2d: Cross-cutting Issue: Institutions and Governance (Room 7+8)

This session will assess how institutions and governance can become more effective at reducing inequalities. Speakers will (i) take stock of the main institutional challenges to reducing inequalities in different contexts; and ways to circumvent them (ii) think about how non-government actors can contribute to reducing inequalities; and (iii) identify how social contracts may need to evolve to incorporate new actors and fit new realities to reduce inequality.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Practical examples of country experiences where the level of inequalities has been addressed and fallen in recent years
- Key features of institutions and governance structures that promote inclusion and equity and empowerment
- Practical steps to making governance and institutional structures more responsive to inequality and to enhancing outcomes for the bottom 40 percent of the population
- Ways actors inside and outside government are contributing to reducing/increasing inequalities

- Lessons that can be used from the past in terms of concrete progress made in changing institutions and reducing inequalities
- Ways social contracts can better align with the human rights commitments of States and principles of equality and non-discrimination
- Challenges to the nature of social contracts particularly from technological changes and changing work structures; and examples of approaches that ensure economic gains are spread more evenly

12:15 PM – 2:00 PM LUNCH BREAK // Consultation on the Human Development Report 2019: Inequality in Human Development

The 2019 Human Development Report will focus on the many dimensions of inequality – old and new – that are most important to people’s well-being, and what is behind them. In this context, the Human Development Report Office is convening a lunchtime meeting with global experts to discuss inequality in human development. What does inequality look like today? Do we have the right measures of inequality? How is it changing? And what might this mean for societies worldwide for the rest of the 21st Century?

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM (Room 3+4) | Session 3: Reporting Back and Perspectives of Civil Society

Reporting back: Facilitator will ask the moderators of each of the four parallel sessions (2a-2d) to give a brief readout from their respective sessions, then invite comments and questions for discussion.

Perspectives of Civil Society: Representatives from select civil society organizations will be invited to give a five-minute talk about how they have worked to reduce inequality in their countries or internationally.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM COFFEE BREAK

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM (Room 3+4) | Session 4: Cross-country Inequalities: Progress to Date and Challenges

This panel session will assess progress and challenges on meeting the SDG 10 targets that focus on reducing inequality among countries. These include regulating financial markets; enhancing representation at global institutions; facilitating safe migration; making trade and technology work for least developed countries (LDCs) and developing countries; increasing official development assistance and foreign direct investment to countries with the greatest needs; and reducing the cost of remittances.

Critical areas to be addressed by panelists include:

- Trends in reducing inequalities among countries with a special focus on migration and remittances, trade, financial systems and institutional voice

- Key barriers to growth in different developing regions and ways to spur progress toward convergence
- Ways emerging and cross-cutting issues at the global level – trade, climate change and disasters, food security, conflict, rapid technological shifts and the digital revolution, and demographic change – can affect inequality among countries
- Ways global policies and international agreements are building mutual accountability and greater policy coherence around inequalities within and between countries

Day 2: 3 April 2019

9:00 AM – 10:45 AM (Room 3+4) | Session 5: Policies and Partnerships

This panel will focus on the implementation of SDG 10 – reducing inequalities; highlighting concrete steps for attaining greater equality and reducing exclusion and discrimination. The speakers will assess the types of policies, partnerships and coordinated actions needed to reduce inequalities moving forward; and share knowledge about success stories and good practices.

Critical areas to be addressed by panelists include:

- Practical steps to making governance and institutional structures more responsive to the reduction of inequality
- Examples of policies and actions (such as financial innovations) that have successfully reduced inequalities between individuals, households, regions, or communities within a country
- Incentives in the private sector for inclusive policies about wages, taxation, non-wage benefits (such as parental leave, childcare, and retirement), and global production systems
- Ways fiscal policies can address the needs of both “pre-distribution” – the prevention of inequalities - and redistribution, balancing with the objectives of resource mobilization and economic efficiency
- Universal and targeted interventions including social protection
- Ways collective action can be strengthened to enhance negotiating power at the bottom of distributions
- Actions to reduce elite capture among economic and political institutions
- Innovative partnerships that are reducing inequalities in opportunities and effects on outcomes
- Advances in anti-discrimination legislation and effects on inequality

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM – COFFEE BREAK

11:00 AM – 12:30 AM – Session 6: Designing and Implementing Successful Policies: Country Experiences (parallel sessions)

Parallel Session 6a: Fiscal Redistribution (Room 15)

This session will discuss fiscal, wage and social protection policies that are successful in promoting greater equality and economic and political stability while minimizing tradeoffs, and the impediments to designing and implementing such policies.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Types of fiscal and other redistribution policies that tend to be most effective in promoting greater equality of outcomes and/or opportunities
- Key principles for designing a progressive fiscal (tax and spending) system that strikes the right balance between promoting equity and efficiency (or growth) and stability
- Ways to increase the impact of remittances on reducing inequality and building resilience
- Impacts of austerity and expansive monetary policies on inequality and redistribution
- Trends on social protection coverage and spending with inequalities across age groups, rural/urban, gender and ethnic dimensions
- Trends in access to decent work and minimum wage and social protection, particularly in non-formal sectors (e.g. agriculture and care work)
- Key recurring political, capacity, data and other impediments to designing and implementing progressive fiscal policies and ways countries are addressing these impediments
- Ideas to monitor and evaluate redistributive policies to improve effectiveness including ways to leverage data and technology

Parallel Session 6b: Human Capital and Elimination of Discrimination (Room 16)

This session will put forward policies and actions that will eliminate discrimination and help enable all individuals to achieve their life potential. Speakers will (i) share knowledge of policy designs and engagement strategies that make resources and services more accessible, especially for groups that have been historically marginalized; (ii) share success stories in building new partnerships toward policy implementation; and (iii) identify ways to monitor policy impacts toward building human capital and inclusive behavior.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Examples of policies and engagement strategies that can enhance access to quality education, healthcare, food, nutrition and livelihoods
- Advantages and risks in terms of both effectiveness and political sustainability of universal and targeted interventions for reaching marginalized groups and ways to maximize policy synergies across SDGs and populations
- Concrete experiences that show progress in eliminating discriminatory laws and policies
- Practical application of policies that support equal opportunities across different social and political contexts

- Ideas to empower disadvantaged groups to increase awareness about laws and policies that enhance access to services
- Ways to accurately assess long-term impacts of equal opportunity policies and anti-discrimination laws on upward mobility including through disaggregated data to track the relative progress of groups based on gender, race/ethnicity, etc.

Parallel Session 6c: Economic Opportunities (Room 17)

This session will discuss progress in and impediments to designing and implementing effective laws, regulations, and policies to promote economic opportunities that are equitable.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Key factors to limiting economic opportunities – such as access to education, quality jobs, decent work, labour rights, labour markets, social protection, assets, information, finance and infrastructure – among disadvantaged groups and lagging regions; as well as gender inequalities around unpaid care work
- Policies and investments that are found to be most effective in enhancing economic opportunities among lagging groups, regions and territories
- Ways macroeconomic policies can be designed to avoid exacerbating inequalities
- Laws and regulations to effectively address discrimination and market distortions like monopoly power
- Policies that have spurred the creation of good quality and decent jobs – particularly for women and youth, given the low employment rate among women in some countries and a rising number of unemployed youth due to demographic trends
- Approaches to laying the ground for growth, employment and opportunities in disadvantaged localities and communities including rural areas
- Types of policies that are most effective at addressing and preventing the emergence of new economic inequalities resulting from rapid technological developments

Session 6d: Equality Through Empowerment (Room 7+8)

This session will provide examples of how different actors and groups are being empowered to shape policy to promote greater equity considering that tackling inequality is not the same as poverty reduction. Curbing inequality requires addressing disproportionate access to power and resources by elites; bringing transparency to disparities in relative capabilities and opportunities; and countering discrimination and stigma through advocacy and coalition building. Speakers will: (i) think about ways that non-government actors and different areas of government are being empowered to contribute to reducing inequalities; (ii) discuss innovative partnerships and approaches among civil society, private sector, and governments in reducing inequalities; (iii) identify examples where institutions and social contracts are being adjusted to incorporate new actors and fit new realities; (iv) discuss the role of interactive governance in reducing inequalities.

Critical areas to be addressed by participants include:

- Practical steps – both in social and political contexts – to making governance and institutional structures more responsive to inequality and inclusive of marginalized populations
- Ways to spur the private sector (including financial institutions), donor community and civil society to take greater action against inequality and share ideas on adopting more inclusive practices
- Share examples of new forms of collective action and emerging institutions that can be scaled up toward building greater equity
- Share lessons to improve multi-stakeholder consultations to enable the meaningful participation and influence of marginalized, poor and excluded populations including through participatory processes and community feedback mechanisms

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM – LUNCH BREAK

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM (Room 3+4) | Contribution to Communiqué – An Interactive Session to Gather Individual Takeaways/Inputs

Reporting back: Facilitator will ask the moderators of each of the parallel sessions to give a brief readout from their session, then invite comments and questions for discussion.

Inputs toward communiqué: The facilitator will guide participants through an interactive exercise to elicit key points that should be made in the communiqué. This will include breaking into small groups, using flipcharts and sticky notes to vote on the most important points to make the session dynamic and engaging.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM – COFFEE BREAK

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM – Closing and Main Takeaways