

JTMUN 2024



Commission for Social Development

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Equity Disclaimers

Throughout this committee, delegates will be engaging in complex debates and discussions covering a wide array of topics. As UTMUN seeks to provide an enriching educational experience that facilitates understanding of the implications of real-world issues, the content of our committees may involve sensitive or controversial subject matter for the purposes of academia and accuracy. We ask that delegates be respectful, professional, tactful, and diplomatic when engaging with all committee content, representing their assigned country's or character's position in an equitable manner, communicating with staff and other delegates, and responding to opposing viewpoints.

This Background Guide and the Commission for Social Development presents topics that may be distressing to some Delegates, including but not limited to the following: racism, colonialism, xenophobia, sexism, ableism, death, political instability, political violence, economic disaster, and environmental disaster. Great care will be taken by staff in handling any/all of these topics should they arise.

UTMUN recognizes the sensitivity associated with many of our topics, and we encourage you to be aware of and set healthy boundaries that work for you. This may include: preparing yourself before reading this background guide, seeking support after reading the background guide, or filling out the committee switch form beforehand. We ask that all Delegates remain considerate of the boundaries that other Delegates set.

UTMUN expects that all discussions amongst delegates will remain productive and respectful of one another. If you have any equity concerns or need assistance in setting boundaries or navigating sensitive subject matter or have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to reach out to our Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at equity@utmun.org. We want you to feel safe and comfortable at UTMUN.

If you wish to switch committees after having read the content warnings for this committee, please do the following:

a) Fill out the [UTMUN 2024 Committee Switch Request Form](#).

If you have any equity concerns, equity-based questions, or delegate conflicts, please do any of the following:

1. Email equity@utmun.org to reach Harvi Karatha or email deputy.equity@utmun.org to reach Iva Zivaljevic or reach out to me at csocd@utmun.org.
2. Fill out the (Anonymous if preferred) [UTMUN Equity Contact Form](#).
3. Notify/ask any staff member to connect you to Harvi Karatha or Iva Zivaljevic.

Model United Nations at U of T Code of Conduct

The below code of conduct applies to all attendees of UTMUN 2024 for the entire duration of the conference, and any conference-related activities (including but not limited to committee sessions, conference socials, committee breaks, and the opening and closing ceremonies).

1. Harassment and bullying in any form will not be tolerated, the nature of which includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, colour, religion, sex, age, mental and physical disabilities, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression,
 - a. Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, insulting and/or degrading language or remarks; threats and intimidation; and intentional (direct or indirect) discrimination and/or marginalization of a group and/or individual;
 - i. The above prohibition on harassment, bullying, and inappropriate behaviour extends to any and all behaviour as well as written and verbal communication during the conference, including notes, conversation both during and outside committees, and general demeanour at all conference events;
 - ii. UTMUN reserves the right to determine what constitutes bullying and/or inappropriate behaviour toward any individual and/or group;
 - b. Attendees must not engage in any behaviour that constitutes physical violence or the threat of violence against any groups and/or individuals, including sexual violence and harassment, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Unwelcome suggestive or indecent comments about one's appearance;
 - ii. Nonconsensual sexual contact and/or behaviour between any individuals and/or groups of individuals;
 - iii. Sexual contact or behaviour between delegates and staff members is strictly forbidden;
2. UTMUN expects all attendees to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times during the conference. Specific expectations, include, but are not limited to,
 - a. Attendees must, if able, contribute to the general provision of an inclusive conference and refrain from acting in a manner that restricts other attendees' capacity to learn and thrive in an intellectually stimulating environment;
 - b. Attendees must adhere to the dress code, which is Western business attire;
 - i. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the attendees' ability to adhere to the previous sub-clause;
 - ii. Attendees are encouraged to contact Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at equity@utmun.org with questions or concerns about the dress code or conference accessibility;

- c. Attendees must refrain from the use of cultural appropriation to represent their character and/or country, including the use of cultural dress, false accent, and any behaviour that perpetuates a national or personal stereotype;
- d. Delegates must not use music, audio recordings, graphics, or any other media at any time unless approved and requested to be shared by the Dais and/or the Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha at equity@utmun.org;
- e. Attendees must abide by instructions and/or orders given by conference staff, members;
 - i. Attendees are exempt from this above sub-clause only if the instructions and/or orders given are unreasonable or inappropriate;

3. Delegates, staff, and all other conference participants are expected to abide by Ontario and Canadian laws and Toronto by-laws, as well as rules and regulations specific to the University of Toronto. This includes, but is not limited to,

- a. Attendees, regardless of their age, are strictly prohibited from being under the influence and/or engaging in the consumption of illicit substances, such as alcohol or illicit substances for the duration of the conference;
- b. Attendees are prohibited from smoking (cigarettes or e-cigarettes, including vapes) on University of Toronto property;
- c. Attendees must refrain from engaging in vandalism and the intentional and/or reckless destruction of any public or private property, including conference spaces, venues, furniture, resources, equipment, and university buildings;
 - i. Neither UTMUN nor any representatives of UTMUN is responsible for damage inflicted by attendees to property on or off University of Toronto campus;
 - ii. Individuals will be held responsible for any damages.

4. The Secretariat reserves the right to impose restrictions on delegates and/or attendees for not adhering to/violating any of the above stipulations. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to,

- a. Suspension from committee, in its entirety or for a specific period of time;
- b. Removal from the conference and/or conference venue(s);
- c. Disqualification from awards;
- d. Disqualification from participation in future conference-related events.

5. UTMUN reserves the right to the final interpretation of this document.

For further clarification on UTMUN's policies regarding equity or conduct, please see this [form](#). For any questions/concerns, or any equity violations that any attendee(s) would like to raise, please contact UTMUN's Chief Equity Officer, Harvi Karatha, at equity@utmun.org or fill out this anonymous [Equity Contact Form](#).

A Letter From the Director

Dear CSocD delegates,

It is my honour to welcome you all to the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) for UTMUN 2024! My name is Jennifer Vandespyker, and I greatly look forward to meeting you all in February. I have been involved in Model United Nations since Grade 10 of high school, both as a delegate and a dais member. I am currently in my third year at U of T, double majoring in Political Science and Ethics, Society, and Law. I am not alone in directing this committee, as Advaith Shankar will be joining me as your vice director!

This year, CSocD's agenda consists of two major topics: poverty eradication and social inclusion. In the first topic, delegates will discuss the complex nature of poverty and construct dynamic solutions for its eradication, relevant to the needs and circumstances of diverse individuals. The second topic will challenge delegates to explore how social exclusion manifests throughout the world, and what economic, political, and legal actions will facilitate social harmony within pluralistic societies. Both topics will require delegates to critically and creatively think about how to advance sustainable development, while promoting equitable living standards and opportunities for all.

As a reminder on behalf of UTMUN 2024, we ask that delegates please remain professional by only engaging in respectful and equitable discussions throughout the conference. Many sensitive matters are inherent in the topics of CSocD and must be handled with sufficient care. We also encourage delegates to conduct comprehensive research outside of this background guide, not only to aid you in writing position papers and resolutions, but also to grasp the nuanced and tangible nature of those issues addressed by this committee. That said, we look forward to the diverse perspectives each of you will bring to this committee's debates.

The dais is aware of the various levels of experience delegates bring to this committee, and we are here to facilitate an inclusive, supportive, and enjoyable conference experience for all. If you have any questions or concerns surrounding research, citations, position papers, resolutions, or UTMUN rules of procedure, please feel free to reach out via email. Position paper submissions should also be sent to the email address provided below.

Best of luck to all,

Jennifer Vandespyker
Director of the Commission for Social Development
csocd@utmun.org

Abbreviations:

- CSocD: Commission for Social Development
- ECOSOC: Economic and Social Council
- ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
- ILO: International Labour Organization
- IMF: International Monetary Fund
- MPI: Multidimensional Poverty Index
- OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
- OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
- SDG(s): Sustainable Development Goal(s)
- UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- UN: United Nations
- UN DESA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
- UNDRIP: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

Position Paper Policy

At UTMUN 2024, position papers are required to qualify for awards. Each committee will also give out one Best Position Paper award. Only delegates in Ad Hoc are exempt from submitting a position paper. To learn more about position paper writing, formatting and submission, please check out the position paper guidelines. Please read through the guidelines carefully as this page will describe content recommendations, formatting requirements and details on citations. If you have any questions about position paper writing, feel free to contact your Dais via your committee email or reach out to academics@utmun.org.

Introduction:

The Social Commission was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 10 (II) of 21 June 1946.¹ Upon review of its role, the Social Commission was renamed as the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) by ECOSOC resolution 1139 (XLI) of 29 July 1966.² The Commission serves as the primary United Nations (UN) body for monitoring, reviewing, and appraising the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action, as well as for tracking related progress, successes, and issues following the World Summit for Social Development 1995.³ Some of the functions CSocD performs pursuant to this mandate are facilitating information exchange and experience to improve international cohesion on social development policy; integrating considerations of different social groups' issues into relevant United Nations programmes; locating emerging and urgent issues related to social development and making relevant recommendations; generally advising ECOSOC about coordinating activities in the social field and tracking different governments' experience in the development and implementation of social development policies; and elaborating practical initiatives meant to further Summit recommendations.⁴

¹ United Nations, "What Is the Commission for Social Development and What Should It Achieve?," UN.org, 2010, <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ngo/docs/2010/directory/csocd-history.pdf>, 1.

² United Nations, "What is the Commission," 1.

³ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Mandate and Terms of Reference – CSocD," UN.org (United Nations), accessed September 7, 2023, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csocd-social-policy-and-development-division/mandate-and-terms-of-reference-csocd.html>.

⁴ UN DESA, "Mandate".

For each of its sessions, CSocD focuses on a priority theme that revolves around one of the Summit's three core issues: poverty eradication, productive employment, and social integration.⁵ This year's priority theme for CSocD's 62nd session is "Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty," involving the objectives of no poverty (SDG 1), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).⁶

⁵ United Nations, "What is the Commission," 2.

⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "62nd Session Of The Commission For Social Development – CSocD62," social.desa.un.org (United Nations), accessed September 7, 2023, <https://social.desa.un.org/csocd/62nd-commission-for-social-development-csocd62>.

Topic A: Poverty Eradication

Historical Background

Poverty refers to lacking access to basic necessities for living a quality life such as food, water, shelter and productive resources like capital, labour, and land.⁷ The United Nations designates hunger and malnutrition, educational and service deprivation, social discrimination and exclusion, and limited participation in the political process as clear and common manifestations of poverty.⁸ Poverty eradication, then, refers to efforts aimed at addressing the root causes of poverty, distribution of essential resources, and increasing access to productive resources.⁹



Source: United Nations, “Goal 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere.”

⁷ “Ending Poverty,” United Nations, 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ending-poverty>.

⁸ “Ending Poverty”.

⁹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Poverty Eradication,” Un.org, 2015, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/poverty-eradication.html>.

The 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development marked the beginning of a concerted global effort towards democratic and sustainable social development. Within the context of rapidly increasing wealth polarization, globalization, unsustainable consumption, and intensifying vulnerability to poverty, unemployment and social disintegration,¹⁰ the Copenhagen Declaration was drafted to “allow everyone, especially those in poverty, to exercise rights, use resources, and share livelihood-dependent responsibilities to increase individual, familial, communal, and global well-being.”¹¹ Drafters emphasized the need for continuous coordinated efforts, at both the regional and international levels, to those “conditions that pose severe threats to the health, safety, peace, security and well-being of...people,” including “chronic hunger; malnutrition; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; foreign occupation; armed conflicts; illicit arms trafficking, terrorism, intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases.”¹² Accordingly, the Copenhagen Declaration established 10 commitments, divided into national- and international-scope policy objectives and guidelines, surrounding the promotion of development-enabling economic, political, social, cultural, and legal environments; the eradication poverty through full employment and resource allocation; and the establishment of universal and equitable access to education, healthcare, and social participation.¹³

Since then, the United Nations General Assembly has facilitated the Implementation of United Nations Decades for the Eradication of Poverty. Each decade outlines specific policy priorities, selected issues, and governance recommendations required for the implementation of poverty eradication solutions. We are currently in the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty – from 2018 to 2027 – which aims to eradicate poverty by 2030.¹⁴ Such a feat will require reducing “by about 110 million every year the number of people living on less than \$1.90 a day,” in line with population growth trends.¹⁵ Emphasis has also been placed on local, national, and regional governing bodies’ role in implementing integrated poverty eradication policies.¹⁶ The five key policy areas for this decade are capacity-building for statistics, related to the 2030 Agenda; accelerating global actions towards decent work for all; promoting structural transformation through industrialization and regulatory standards; supporting the rural farm and non-farm economy; and enhancing national productive capacities for job growth and poverty eradication.¹⁷

¹⁰ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development – Introduction,” Un.org (United Nations), accessed December 2, 2023, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/world-summit-for-social-development-1995/wssd-1995-agreements/cdosd-introduction.html>.

¹¹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “CDOSD Part A,” un.org (United Nations), accessed December 2, 2023, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/world-summit-for-social-development-1995/wssd-1995-agreements/cdosd-part-a.html>.

¹² UN DESA, “CDOSD Part A”.

¹³ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “CDOSD Part C,” Un.org (United Nations), accessed December 2, 2023, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/world-summit-for-social-development-1995/wssd-1995-agreements/cdosd-part-c.html>.

¹⁴ United Nations, General Assembly, Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027): Report of the Secretary-General, A/73/298 (6 August 2018), available from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N18/250/39/PDF/N1825039.pdf?OpenElement>, 3.

¹⁵ UNGA, Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, 3.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ UNGA, Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, 3-5.

Integrating Poverty Eradication Into the Achievement of SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 interrelated objectives created by the United Nations to provide “a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.”¹⁸ They represent a universal call to action to end poverty, tackle climate change, and ensure equitable access to peace and prosperity by 2030, requiring integrated solutions that recognize the interdependency of these goals. As such, it is imperative that policymakers understand the types of interactions between social and environmental SDGs. That is, SDGs may cancel each other out, meaning achieving one makes achieving another impossible.¹⁹ Conversely, SDGs may be indivisible from one another, meaning their success is mutually contingent.²⁰

For example, low-income countries require poverty eradication (SDG 1) and reduced inequality (SDG 10) to reach the same level of development, security, and prosperity as higher-income countries. However, equitably expanding access to basic needs and rights requires an abundance of resource consumption that inevitably transgresses or inhibits the objectives of responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), and climate action (SDG 13).²¹ Under these circumstances, high-income countries that are most responsible for environmental degradation must contribute more to climate action and supplement sustainable development processes in low- and middle-income countries. Thus, a nuanced understanding of the nature of these interactions is key to creating policies that balance social well-being and environmental priorities, making progress across all SDGs.²²

¹⁸ United Nations, “The 17 Sustainable Development Goals,” United Nations, 2015, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

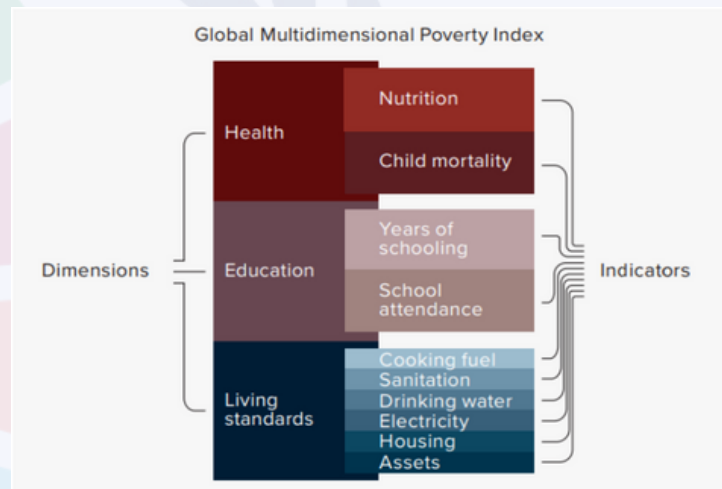
¹⁹ Laura Scherer et al., “Trade-Offs between Social and Environmental Sustainable Development Goals,” *Environmental Science & Policy* 90 (December 2018): 65–72, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2018.10.002>, 65.

²⁰ Laura Scherer et al., “Trade-Offs,” 65.

²¹ Laura Scherer et al., “Trade-Offs,” 70

²² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Integrated Policies Can Reduce Inequality, End Poverty and the War on Nature,” United Nations, 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/desa/integrated-policies-can-reduce-inequality-end-poverty-and-war-nature#:~:text=The%20UN%20Secretary%2DGeneral%20has>.

One crucial strategy for ensuring harmony between social and environmental SDGs is utilizing multidimensional poverty data for policy development and implementation. Multidimensional poverty data collection aims at clarifying priorities for addressing poverty in a holistic manner, going beyond monetary deprivations alone.²³ The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) represents interlinking deprivations in health, education, and standard of living that directly detriment one’s well-being for 1200 subnational regions, offering key insights for SDG 1 in relation to SDGs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 11.²⁴ It constructs a “deprivation profile” across ten indicators spanning the dimensions of health, education, and living standards.²⁵



Source: UNDP and OPHDI 2023.²⁶

Calculated MPI values represent the incidence of poverty (proportion of people living multidimensional poverty) multiplied by the intensity of poverty (the average deprivation score among multidimensionally poor people), and the global MPI declines when fewer people are poor and poor people are less deprived.²⁷ MPI data provides invaluable information on (1) where poor people reside and how widespread poverty is within regional, national, and subnational borders and among population groups; (2) the severity of people’s poverty and levels of poverty amongst the poor; and (3) what kind of deprivations poor people experience.²⁸ The MPI clarifies which choice of poverty reduction interventions achieve the greatest impacts within specific areas and for specific groups. More investment in statistical resources would enable evidence-rich interventions that include the well-being of historically marginalized groups and the environment, supplementing interventions aimed at economic growth.²⁹

²³ United Nations Development Programme and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, “Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023: Unstacking Global Poverty: Data for High Impact Action,” United Nations Development Programme: Human Development Reports (United Nations Development Programme, 2023), <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi#/indices/MPI>, 1.

²⁴ UNDP and OPHDI, “Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023,” 1.

²⁵ UNDP and OPHDI, “Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023,” 4.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ UNDP and OPHDI, “Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023,” 16.

²⁹ Delia Paul, “Merging the Poverty and Environment Agendas,” Iisd.org (International Institute for Sustainable Development, February 2021), <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2021-02/still-one-earth-poverty-and-environment.pdf>, 8.

Ending Homelessness

Despite being a pervasive and urgent threat to the global achievement of human rights, there is no universal definition for the phenomenon of homelessness. As noted by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “international agencies, governments, researchers or civil society have adopted different definitions of homelessness depending on language, socioeconomic conditions, cultural norms, the groups affected and the purpose for which homelessness is being defined.”³⁰ At the most basic level, “lacking access to minimally adequate housing” constitutes homelessness.³¹ However, richer definitions capture the social exclusion and structural inequalities faced by unhoused people. Different countries and cities can construct homelessness intervention frameworks informed by local conditions and needs, but it’s important there be common understanding about what homelessness looks like to effect coherent solutions internationally.³²

People without accommodation	People living in temporary or crisis accommodation	People living in severely inadequate and insecure accommodation
<p>1A People sleeping in the streets or in other open spaces (such as parks, railway embankments, under bridges, on pavement, on river banks, in forests, etc.)</p> <p>1B People sleeping in public roofed spaces or buildings not intended for human habitation (such as bus and railway stations, taxi ranks, derelict buildings, public buildings, etc.)</p> <p>1C People sleeping in their cars, rickshaws, open fishing boats and other forms of transport</p> <p>1D ‘Pavement dwellers’ - individuals or households who live on the street in a regular spot, usually with some form of makeshift cover</p>	<p>2A People staying in night shelters (where occupants have to renegotiate their accommodation nightly)</p> <p>2B People living in homeless hostels and other types of temporary accommodation for homeless people (where occupants have a designated bed or room)</p> <p>2C Women and children living in refuges for those fleeing domestic violence</p> <p>2D People living in camps provided for ‘internally displaced people’ i.e. those who have fled their homes as a result of armed conflict, natural or human-made disasters, human rights violations, development projects, etc. but have not crossed international borders</p> <p>2E People living in camps or reception centres/temporary accommodation for asylum seekers, refugees and other immigrants</p>	<p>3A People sharing with friends and relatives on a temporary basis</p> <p>3B People living under threat of violence</p> <p>3C People living in cheap hotels, bed and breakfasts and similar</p> <p>3D People squatting in conventional housing</p> <p>3E People living in conventional housing that is unfit for human habitation</p> <p>3F People living in trailers, caravans and tents</p> <p>3G People living in extremely overcrowded conditions</p> <p>3H People living in non-conventional buildings and temporary structures, including those living in slums/informal settlements</p>
IGH FOCUS AREA IN BOLD		

Source: Institute of Global Homelessness 2019.

³⁰ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Homelessness and Human Rights: Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing,” OHCHR, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/homelessness-and-human-rights>.

³¹ Institute of Global Homelessness, “A Global Framework for Understanding Homelessness,” Ighomelessness.org (Institute of Global Homelessness, 2019), <http://ighomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/globalframeworkforunderstanding.pdf>, 1.

³² Institute of Global Homelessness, “Understanding Homelessness,” 1-2.

The diversity of homeless populations correlates with the many drivers of homelessness, such as changes in available budgets for social/affordable housing, a lack of affordable housing, rising real-estate costs, and loss of permanent employment.³⁴ As well, there are many pathways into homelessness that differ based on life stage. For example, in 2016, 18-24% of unhoused Canadians aged 14-64 reported addiction and substance abuse as a main contributor to their housing status.³⁵ Only 10% of those over 65 cited addiction and substance abuse as a main contributor to their housing status, with eviction due to inability to pay rent being the main pathway cited by 24% of respondents in this age group.³⁶ Generally, however, homelessness results from complex interactions between structural and individual and relational factors, as well as inadequate policy and service delivery.³⁷ As a result, the picture of the homeless community is dynamic, and people's experience of homelessness can be chronic or episodic, depending on the factors listed above.³⁸ Without comprehensive, routine data collection and sharing on the amount and depth of current homelessness, then, service providers risk neglecting a portion of those in need, perpetuating hidden homelessness.³⁹

Gathering disaggregated data, reflective of how “experiences of homelessness intersect with forms of exclusion that unevenly impact certain groups over others,” is only one step to offering unhoused persons real choice and opportunities for housing and recovery.⁴⁰ Governments should further focus on developing homelessness prevention strategies that “eliminate or minimize the harm of being [vulnerable to] or experiencing homelessness.”⁴¹ That is, many countries' current approaches to “solving” homelessness are management-based, focusing on the provision of emergency services after people are already experiencing homelessness.⁴² Primary prevention frameworks can be broken down into three categories: universal, selected, and indicated prevention. Universal homelessness prevention encompasses social protection services and programmes available to the entire population, such as old-age pensions and subsidized housing programs.⁴³ Selected prevention is aimed at people at risk to homelessness due to membership in a particular group.⁴⁴ Membership in said group is the only requirement for participation in selected homelessness prevention programs. Lastly, indicated, population-level, or high-risk prevention frameworks are directed at people at risk due to individual or group characteristics, such as mental illness or substance abuse.⁴⁵ Thus, indicated prevention constitutes targeted and prioritized support, applied at different scales and levels of intensity based on varying levels of disadvantage.⁴⁶ These three models of prevention are ultimately complementary, as they help to reach all portions of the homeless population, in all circumstances.

³⁴ Esther Benjamin and Ian Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” Housing Research Collaborative (UBC School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), 2019), <https://housingresearchcollaborative.scarp.ubc.ca/files/2019/06/Best-practices-in-Addressing-Homelessness-2019PLAN530-BCH.pdf>, 2.

³⁵ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 2-3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Stephen Gaetz and Erin Dej, “A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention,” Homelesshub.ca (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press, 2017), https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/COHPreventionFramework_1.pdf, 17.

³⁸ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 2.

³⁹ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 4.

⁴⁰ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 5.

⁴¹ Gaetz and Dej, “A Framework for Homelessness Prevention,” 9.

⁴² Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 13.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Gaetz and Dej, “A Framework for Homelessness Prevention,” 14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

For those already experiencing homelessness, the Housing First model has developed to secure temporary accommodation for homeless individuals, until they can find permanent housing.⁴⁷ The model is based around the right to accommodation, which asserts housing to be a human right and necessary to exercising many other human and civil rights. Housing First programs therefore do not wait for people to be “ready for housing,” unlike homelessness reduction efforts reliant on emergency shelter services.⁴⁸ By providing individuals or families with stable environment for recovery from substance use, unemployment, and other factors that contributed to their homelessness, Housing First programmes (1) cost less than emergency service provision in the long-term; (2) increase the capacity of other emergency and housing services by opening space for those in need of more intensive support; and (3) reduce individuals’ need for emergency services over time, helping them to build social relationships through community-oriented services.⁴⁹

Income Security

As outlined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), economic security is crucial to the universal right to “security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond one’s control.”⁵⁰ Disproportionate exposure, vulnerability, and capacity to respond to COVID-19 has demonstrated the fragility of gains in human development, as significant inequalities in education, health, and employment continue to leave some groups more economically insecure than others.⁵¹ As such, economic insecurity presents a large threat to SDG achievement, posing high personal and social costs such as material hardship, poorer health, lower productivity, and inability to invest in child education and health.⁵²

⁴⁷ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 15.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Benjamin and Flock, “Best Practices in Addressing Homelessness,” 15-16.

⁵⁰ UN DESA, “Economic Insecurity.”

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “What Triggers Economic Insecurity and Who Is Most at Risk?,” United Nations, April 8, 2021, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2021/04/economic-insecurity/>.

Unemployment and underemployment are different but related phenomena that cause large drops in household incomes, whether those drops be temporary, episodic, or persistent. Unemployment protection schemes, including insurance, public employment programmes, and minimum income guarantees, are generally not widely accessible, providing low coverage for self-employed or inexperienced workers.⁵³ As well, “distinctions based on individual attributes that should have no bearing on job opportunities, including age, ethnicity and gender” continue to hinder some people’s ability to achieve economic security through work.⁵⁴ Such labour discrimination can cause “labour market scarring,” meaning labour discrimination faced earlier in one’s life can affect lifetime employment and income prospects. Underemployment refers to people being overqualified for their jobs, but having to still settle for these positions due to a lack of other job opportunities.⁵⁵ Health shocks and high out-of-pocket medical expenses related to sickness and disability also drive economic insecurity, particularly in areas without adequate healthcare services and insurance.⁵⁶ Persons with disabilities face high costs of living due to their conditions while also subject to physical and social barriers that hinder their access to services and employment. What’s more, inequality has a cumulative effect over one’s lifetime. That is, those suffering from disparities in education, employment, and health – due to gender, race and ethnicity – are more at risk of economic insecurity in old age.⁵⁷

Expansive and diverse social protection schemes are therefore essential to promoting economic stability. Social security and social protection refer to “a range of policies and programs premised on the principle that everyone should enjoy all their economic, social, and cultural rights at all stages of their lives, no matter the circumstances into which they are born or the crises or challenges they may face.”⁵⁸ Article 22 of the UDHR entitles every person to a right to social security, including “the economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for [their] dignity and the free development of [their] personality.”⁵⁹ These rights would include rights to education, health, and an adequate standard of living ensured by rights to food, housing, water, and sanitation.⁶⁰ According to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the right to social security – at the least – encompasses support for health care, sickness, old age, unemployment, employment injury, family and child support, maternity, disability, and survivors and orphans.⁶¹ Social protection then refers to a set of policies and programs that governments need to put in place to fulfill their obligations to realize a range of economic, social and cultural rights under all circumstances.”⁶²

⁵³ UN DESA, “Economic Insecurity.”

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Human Rights Watch, “Questions and Answers on the Right to Social Security,” Human Rights Watch, May 25, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/25/questions-and-answers-right-social-security>.

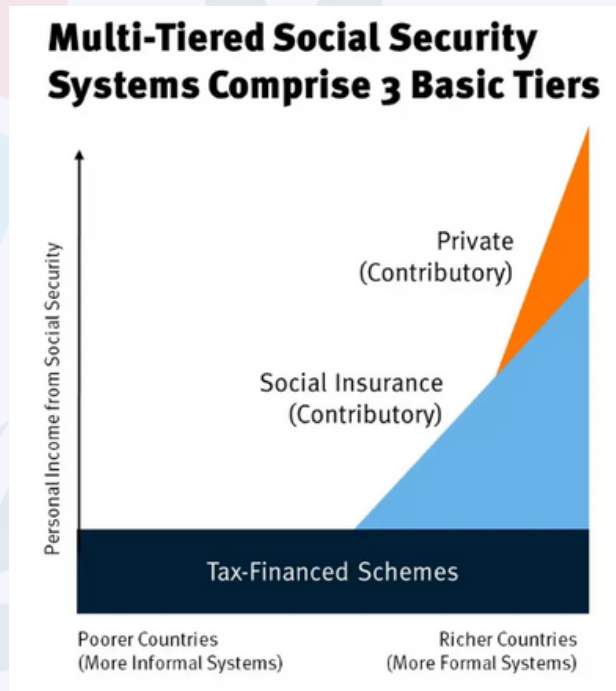
⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch, “Right to Social Security.”

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Based on these definitions of social security and protection, the ILO and Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights suggest social protection floors include (1) a nationally defined set of available, accessible, acceptable, and quality goods and services; (2) basic income security for children that makes necessary goods and services like nutrition and education accessible; (3) basic income security for working-age individuals unable to secure sufficient income, particularly because of unemployment, sickness, disability and maternity leave; and (4) basic income for older people.⁶³ Governments can therefore secure social security through different social protection programs, such as poverty-targeted programs, multi-tiered systems, and universal programs. Human rights groups advocate for universal and multi-tiered systems as individual income and assets dictate eligibility for poverty-targeted programs, thereby ignoring people’s dynamic socioeconomic situations, excluding deserving beneficiaries, and undermining the general realization of rights to social security and protection.⁶⁴ Universal programs, however, base eligibility on group membership rather than income or wealth, effectively encompassing the many life stages that pose serious risks to individuals’ economic, social, and cultural rights. Multi-tiered systems further supplement universal programs with state-managed social insurance systems backed by greater resources and formalized institutions, and private, voluntary contributory programs.⁶⁵



Source: Kidd, Axelsson, and Seglah 2023 in Human Rights Watch 2023.⁶⁶

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Environmental Impact of Poverty

The 1992 Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 provide the first comprehensive plan of action and set of principles for sustainable development in the 21st century. They emphasized that (1) environmental policies concerned with resource conservation necessitates consideration of those populations who derive their livelihoods from said resources; (2) policies without such considerations would detriment poor people and the environment greatly; and (3) development policy that addresses sustainable resource use in the production of goods actually increases productivity and benefits the poor most.⁶⁷ Though various actors dispute the actual content of the concept of “sustainable development,” the term and process generally refers to “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” and development that improves human living standards while respecting the capacity of supporting ecosystems.⁶⁸

The relationship between poverty and environmental degradation has often been conceptualized as follows: poverty and unsustainable consumption and production patterns greatly drive environmental degradation, while environmental and climate change exacerbate existing poverty or drive vulnerable people into poverty.⁶⁹ What informs this view is the reality that poor populations lack the productive and human resources to partake in sustainable development practices. For example, unsustainable or poor farming practices can cause land degradation, thereby exacerbating rural communities’ vulnerability to climate disasters.⁷⁰ Additionally, low-income populations and economies often rely on climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture and fishing, meaning climate change and related environmental catastrophes threaten poor people’s livelihoods and living standards.⁷¹ That is, loss of consumable water due to climate-change-driven pollution causes decreased sanitation, which increases disease rates and inhibits people from working.

⁶⁷ Paul, “Merging Agendas,” 4.

⁶⁸ Nathaniel O. Agola and Joseph Awange, “Poverty: Environmental Link,” in *Globalized Poverty and Environment* (Springer Berlin/Heidelberg, 2013), 3–25, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-39733-2_1, 18.

⁶⁹ Paul, “Merging Agendas,” 2.

⁷⁰ Agola and Awange, “Poverty: Environmental Link,” 14-15.

⁷¹ Agola and Awange, “Poverty: Environmental Link,” 15.

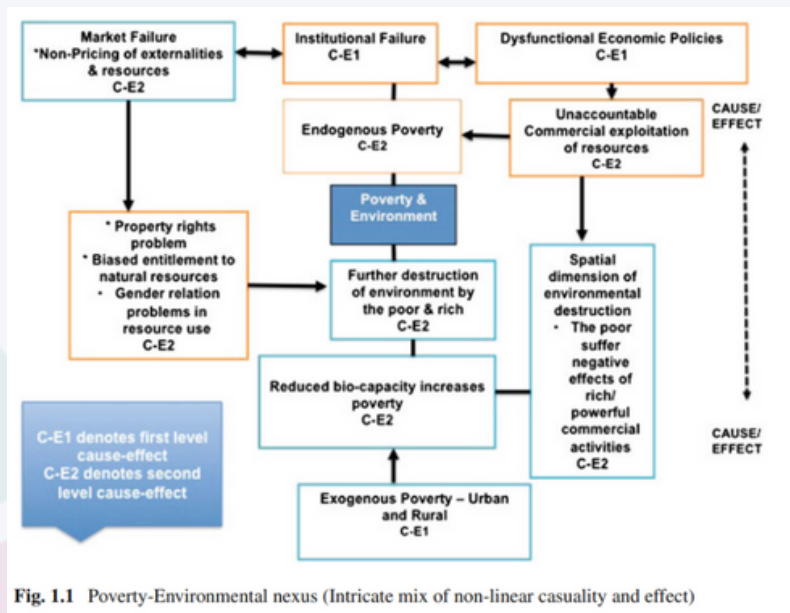


Fig. 1.1 Poverty-Environmental nexus (Intricate mix of non-linear causality and effect)

Source: Agola and Awange 2014.⁷²

Despite these realities, causal relationships between climate change and poverty are not easy to draw, as institutional, socioeconomic, and cultural factors mediate their relationship, relevant to different regions.⁷³ Even in countries with increased gross domestic product (GDP), people remain poor, meaning climate solutions must extend beyond increased technological and economic development. Deprivations in basic necessities, exacerbated by climate change and climate disasters, are symptomatic of deep systemic inequalities between the global North and South.⁷⁴ As laid out in the Paris Agreement, countries have “common but differentiated responsibilities,” meaning those who contribute more to global emissions – wealthier countries – must assume greater responsibility for solving climate change and its related consequences.⁷⁵ As such, the United Nations urges six financing actions to promote environmental, social, and economic justice. These include fulfilling and redistributing the \$100 billion annual promise to developing countries for climate action through bilateral, regional, and multilateral channels, as well as private funds generated by public intervention; doubling financing to help adaptation to climate impacts, up to \$300 billion annually by 2030; reforming the World Bank and other development banks to provide an annual SDG stimulus, and to make climate and development finance more affordable and less restricted; replenishing the Green Climate Fund (GCF) by 2023 to lower costs of adaptation finance grants; and to operationalize the new loss and damage fund to define where and how money should be distributed.⁷⁶

⁷² Agola and Awange, “Poverty: Environmental Link,” 10.

⁷³ Agola and Awange, “Poverty: Environmental Link,” 13.

⁷⁴ Paul, “Merging Agendas,” 2, 6.

⁷⁵ United Nations, “Finance & Justice,” United Nations, 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/raising-ambition/climate-finance>.

⁷⁶ United Nations, “Finance and Justice.”

The United Nations Environment Programme similarly outlines five priority areas for adapting to climate change in the coming decades. First, countries can invest in early warning systems. These systems provide 24-hour warnings for storms, floods, and droughts, providing people with time to barricade, stockpile, or evacuate.⁷⁷ Another adaptation strategy, called ecosystem restoration, includes restoring urban forests to cool air and reduce heat waves; protecting or proliferating coastal mangrove forests, which reduce the height and strength of storm surges; and re-greening mountain slopes to provide protection from landslides and avalanches by delaying erosion and increasing water and nutrient retention in soil.⁷⁸ Additionally, building climate-resilient infrastructure will be a key strategy of adaptation. The World Bank found that “climate-resilient infrastructure investments in low- and middle-income countries could produce roughly US\$4.2 trillion in total benefits, – around US\$4 for each dollar invested,” because “more resilient infrastructure assets pay for themselves as their life-cycle is extended and their services are more reliable.”⁷⁹ The UNEP also calls for increasing integrated water resource management and investment in rainwater harvesting systems like solar-powered wells, boreholes, micro-irrigation technology, water reuse systems, and rooftop guttering with large water storage tanks.⁸⁰ Finally, long-term national adaptation plans can help with strategically prioritizing adaptation needs. These plans include actions like examining future climate scenarios, vulnerability assessments for various sectors, planning government investment, regulatory and fiscal framework changes while raising public awareness of climate action, and improving adaptation elements in the Paris Agreement’s Nationally Determined Contributions.⁸¹

⁷⁷ United Nations Environmental Programme, “5 Ways Countries Can Adapt to the Climate Crisis,” UNEP, October 12, 2022, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/5-ways-countries-can-adapt-climate-crisis>.

⁷⁸ UNEP, “Adapt to the Climate Crisis.”

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

Economic and Institutional Reforms

Since 1990, global extreme poverty has decreased by more than half, though COVID-19 has halted this progress as well as global economic growth. Nevertheless, trade has and can importantly ensure inclusive global economic growth that reduces poverty, wherein developing countries have more quality jobs and higher productivity.⁸² For poorer populations and economies to fully capitalize on trade's benefits, trade-based poverty intervention must be sensitive to four characteristics within poorer regions. For one, the poorest areas are often rural, meaning they face significant trade and internal market barriers such as poor or unsafe transport routes and general disconnection from market opportunities.⁸³ Additionally, many poorer countries have informal economics and workers, making them more vulnerable to sudden economic shocks.⁸⁴ Informal economic activity is of particular issue as it undermines government revenue collections, stunts productivity, hinders industry investment, and traps vulnerable workers in low-paying, unproductive employment.⁸⁵ Moreover, civil interstate conflict inevitably slows commerce, calling for alternative means of livelihood to get out of conflict, such as export diversification strategies to reduce uncertainties and disruptions for businesses in international trade.⁸⁶ Finally, women often face household and public constraints that limit their participation in trade opportunities, urging trade solutions that empower women.⁸⁷

The World Bank highlights specific areas for action to ensure inclusive and sustainable global economic growth through trade. Trade facilitation helps integrate low-income economies into international markets by simplifying, standardizing, and coordinating those technical and legal procedures involved in the movement of goods and services across international borders.⁸⁸ By removing policy and infrastructural barriers to trade, market integration costs less for low-income nations. Open, lower-cost trade policies also help to create a global commercial environment that enables gains for poorer populations. Cooperation across market sectors, coordination between governmental bodies, and a diversity of stakeholders must collaborate to consult the poor in this process to deliver on their socioeconomic needs.⁸⁹ As well, trade integration policies must reach the sub-national, rural level to address inhibited economic activity amongst poor populations and small traders caused by the associated costs of remoteness from markets. Improved data and data analysis are essential to increasing global understanding of poverty, the nature of underdeveloped financial systems, women's role in trade, and infrastructure and policy constraints on trade.⁹⁰

⁸² World Bank, "The Role of Trade in Ending Poverty," World Bank, 2017, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/the-role-of-trade-in-ending-poverty>.

⁸³ World Bank, "The Role of Trade".

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Salvatore Capasso, Franziska Ohnsorge, and Shu Yu, "Financial Development to Formalize Economies," Brookings, September 30, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/financial-development-to-formalize-economies/>.

⁸⁶ World Bank, "The Role of Trade".

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ OECD, "Trade Facilitation: Why Trade Facilitation Is Key to the Operation of Global Supply Chains," Oecd.org, 2013, <https://www.oecd.org/trade/topics/trade-facilitation/>.

⁸⁹ World Bank, "The Role of Trade".

⁹⁰ Ibid.

However, sound economic policymaking cannot come without competent, transparent governance. “Good governance” refers to governance systems and institutions strongly predicated on participation, inclusion, non-discrimination, equality, rule of law, and accountability.⁹¹ Furthermore, governments who apply these principles to strengthen their performance, adaptability, and stability ultimately provide responsive, inclusive, and effective governmental systems. Transparent and accountable systems enable representative and inclusive policy making processes, such as participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting (PB) is “a form of citizen participation in which citizens are involved in the process of deciding how public money is spent.”⁹² Additionally, local citizens often evaluate and monitor the implementation and allocation of budgets, increasing the likelihood of policy implementation.⁹³ PB focuses on shifting policy priorities to support the poorest regions, improving services and infrastructure, and increasing citizen participation, particularly those typically outside of the political process.⁹⁴ Many PB use “quality of life” indices to allocate greater resources on a per capita basis to poorer neighbourhoods, and therefore incentivize poor populations’ involvement in the policy making process.⁹⁵ By giving citizens real control over budgetary spendings, participatory budgeting delivers policies that better address the concerns, needs, and goals of the population. Additionally, citizens gain technical skills and political knowledge that allow for an active role in formulating policies and overseeing politics.⁹⁶

⁹¹ United Nations Development Programme, “Governance and Peacebuilding: Responsible and Accountable Institutions,” UNDP, n.d., <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/our-focus/governance-and-peacebuilding/responsible-and-accountable-institutions>.

⁹² Local Government Association, “Participatory Budgeting,” www.local.gov.uk, n.d., <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/devolution/devolution-online-hub/public-service-reform-tools/engaging-citizens-devolution-5>.

⁹³ Local Government Association, “Participatory Budgeting”.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Michael Touchton and Brian Wampler, “Improving Social Well-Being through New Democratic Institutions,” *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 10 (December 27, 2013): 1442–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414013512601>.

⁹⁶ Touchton and Wampler, “Improving Social Well-Being”.

Case Study: Social Safety Nets Project for Burundi

The Merankabandi Social Safety Nets project was a cash transfer program with complementary human capital training activities aimed at the most vulnerable rural households in Burundi from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2022.⁹⁷ At the project's initiation, 65% of Burundians were poor, with 69% of children aged 0 to 17 living in poverty, 54% of children under 5 suffered from malnutrition, and 78.2% of children lived in multidimensional poverty, suffering from 4.1 out of 7 deprivations.⁹⁸ As such, women and children were the main beneficiaries within the targeted households.

The Merabanki project cycle began with the selection of areas for intervention and beneficiaries. The provinces of Gitega, Karuzi, Kirundo, and Ruyigi were selected due to their degree of monetary vulnerability and prevalent rates of chronic malnutrition. Within each of these provinces, 4 communes were identified, and 247 collines within these communes were further identified. Then, all households within these collines with children aged 0 to 12 were surveyed to determine their degree of vulnerability and provisional allocation lists were formed. From here, surrounding community members helped validate the vulnerability of the households on these lists, and 56,090 direct beneficiary households were registered into the Merankabandi beneficiary database.⁹⁹

The main components of the project included cash transfers and complementary activities to promote and generate change in beneficiary households. Every 2 months for 30 months, beneficiary households were wire transferred 40,000 Burundian Francs (BIF) (around USD 24 at the time) through a freely provided cell phone.¹⁰⁰ To complement the monetary aid, beneficiaries participated in support activities aimed at developing positive behaviours and human capital for 36 months.¹⁰¹ Complementary activities included peer education, wherein members of model and struggling households visited each other's homes continuously over the project period; demonstration of good nutrition, agriculture, hygiene, and exclusive breastfeeding practices; and "awareness sessions" on five behaviour change learning modules, each done for two months, twice a month. These modules educated beneficiaries on the process and objectives of Merankabandi, family planning and health, child feeding, financial education, and early childhood development.¹⁰² Awareness-raising modules also served to (1) help beneficiaries to undertake income-generating activities (IGAs), build solidarity groups, and connect them with existing social services, and (2) evaluate beneficiaries' progress and circumstances throughout the project, ensuring the sustainability of the intervention.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ World Bank Group, "Development Projects: BI-Social Safety Nets (Merankabandi) - P151835," World Bank (The World Bank Group, n.d.), <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P151835>.

⁹⁸ UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI: Overview of the Social Protection Nets Project in Burundi," UNICEF.org (UNICEF, 2021), <https://www.unicef.org/burundi/reports/project-brief-merankabandi>, 1.

⁹⁹ UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI," 2.

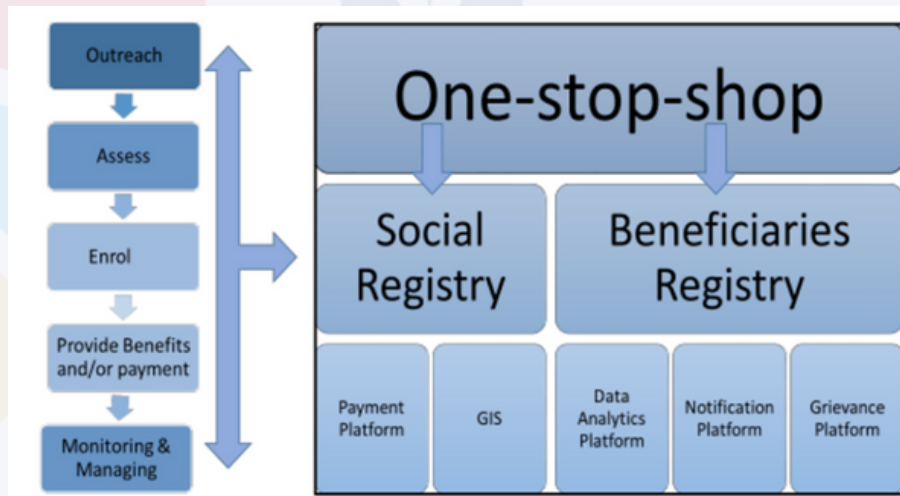
¹⁰⁰ UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI," 3.

¹⁰¹ UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI," 3, 5.

¹⁰² UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI," 5.

¹⁰³ UNICEF Burundi, "MERANKABANDI," 6.

Social safety nets like Merankabandi effectively reduce poverty, protect families from consequences of economic and environmental crises, and provide a foundation of social protection for the most vulnerable. The project enabled beneficiary households to increase their consumption, invest in their children’s human capital, strengthen cohesion within their families and return their children to school, undertake IGAs, and improve children’s and mothers’ health.¹⁰⁴ However, social protection coverage remains limited in Burundi. Institutional solutions such as the Unified Social Registry posed by the 2015 National Social Protection Strategy could increase social protection coverage in Burundi by ensuring harmonized local social protection programming and coordinated service delivery to eliminate gaps and redundancies in social protection.¹⁰⁵ Unified social registries aim “to collect, record, and store updated and historical information on individual and household characteristics and circumstances, to determine eligibility for certain programmes. The information is usually compiled and unified from one large data collection drive via one programme, which is then used by several others in the social protection sector.”¹⁰⁶ In doing so, unified registries can harmonize steps like targeted population intake and registration for multiple social protection programmes at once, keep registration in programmes continuous using frequently updated information, and actively manage the cases of low-income households as their circumstances change.¹⁰⁷



Source: Grunfeld and Ruggia-Frick 2022¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ UNICEF Burundi, “MERANKABANDI,” 6.

¹⁰⁵ Anaïs Vibranovski, “Setting up a Unified Social Registry in Burundi: Moving towards Better Coordination within Social Protection,” Ipcig.org (International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth, 2022), https://ipcig.org/sites/default/files/pub/en/PRB93_Setting_up_a_Unified_Social_Registry_in_Burundi.pdf, 1.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations Development Programme, “Issue Brief: Unified Social Registry: Towards an Efficient Social Protection System,” Undp.org (United Nations Development Programme, 2021), <https://www.undp.org/malaysia/publications/issue-brief-unified-social-registry-towards-efficient-social-protection-system>, 2.

¹⁰⁷ UNDP, “Issue Brief: Unified Social Registry,” 2-3.

¹⁰⁸ Krista Joosep Alvarenga, “Digitalisation of Registries and Social Protection Service Delivery Chain,” socialprotection.org, 2022, <https://socialprotection.org/discover/blog/digitalisation-registries-and-social-protection-service-delivery-chain>.

Questions to Consider:

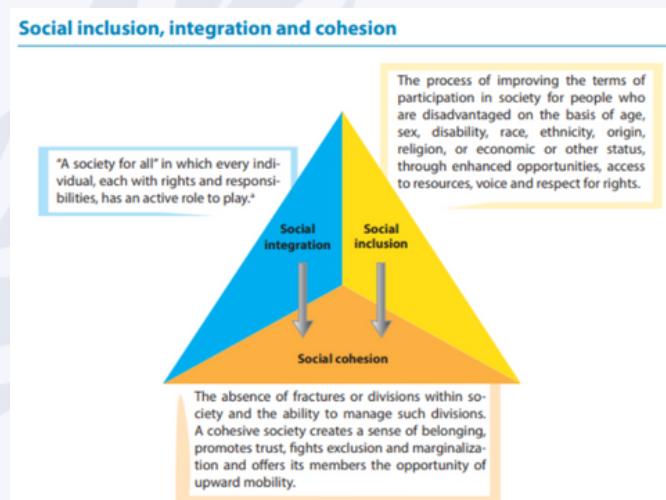
- How does data shape our understanding of manifestations of poverty, and how can CSocD members invest in statistical infrastructure for the creation of evidence-based policies?
- What gaps exist in current social protection schemes, based on misunderstandings of the triggers and nature of economic insecurity? Which policies will be most effective in fostering socioeconomic stability and mobility, as well as equality of opportunity?
- How can CSocD members synchronize efforts towards sustainable development and poverty eradication? Where does equity fit into the promotion of decent work in the era of climate change?
- Will new democratic institutions meaningfully involve citizens in decision-making processes? What other institutional reforms are needed to promote government transparency and accountability, to the benefit of sustainable economic development?

Topic B: Social Inclusion

Historical Background

Facilitating meaningful social inclusion for everyone is closely linked to poverty eradication, in that people face exclusion on not only economic grounds, but also on political and cultural grounds. As explained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), “The 2030 Agenda envisages peaceful, just and inclusive societies where all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality. The fight against inequality is linked to and interdependent with the ambitions to eradicate poverty, preserve the planet and achieve sustained economic growth.”¹⁰⁹ The 1995 Copenhagen Declaration is a guiding source for achieving these objectives, just as it is within the context of poverty eradication.

UN DESA has described social inclusion as a goal and a process, encompassing “[the improvement of] the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights.”¹¹⁰ Thus, social inclusion aims at delivering prosperity and quality of life to all, regardless of group membership or identity. Social inclusion processes are required to tackle the root causes of all social exclusion, such as institutional structures, government policies, and prejudice and discrimination, as these shape the nature of “social interactions and the distribution of power, status and control over resources.”¹¹¹ The image below describes the relationship between social integration, social inclusion, and social cohesion, towards the creation of societies designed for all:



Source: UN DESA “2016 Report on the World Social Situation,” 21.

¹⁰⁹ UNESCO, “Thematic Factsheet | Social Inclusion,” en.unesco.org (UNESCO), accessed December 2, 2023, <https://en.unesco.org/culture-development/transversal-approaches/social-inclusion>.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “2016 Report on the World Social Situation,” Un.org (New York: United Nations, 2016), <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/2016/full-report.pdf>, 20.

¹¹¹ UN DESA, “2016 Report on the World Social Situation,” 22.

Intersectionality in Promoting Equity

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework used to identify and understand the interconnectedness between different identities, helping to uncover compounding experiences and systems of discrimination and oppression.¹¹² In other words, intersectional perspectives pinpoint every aspect of one's social identity – race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, caste, and so on – that leaves them open to marginalization. Research data from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) reveals “that the most vulnerable and marginalized groups face intersecting economic and social inequalities and political marginalization.” Therefore, those who are both women and informal sector workers, for example, are more disadvantaged by restricted access to employment and education, low income, and exposure to violence in the absence of robust social protection systems.¹¹³

Intersectional perspectives in policymaking draw attention to (1) social and structural enforcements of discrimination, marginalization, and inequality; (2) the diversity of experiences and needs not only across vulnerable and marginalized communities, but within them; and (3) centering the experiences of those facing intersectional discrimination, thereby facilitating their autonomy and empowerment through public policy.¹¹⁴ These areas of focus follow a human-rights-based approach to policy development and implementation, in line with the guiding principle of the UN's SDGs: “leave no one behind” in the process of modern, sustainable development. Furthermore, the Declaration on the Right to Development (DRTD) requires that any and all social development efforts fully realize the rights and fundamental freedoms of all. The Declaration urges an approach to social, economic, and cultural development that secures equal opportunity and equitable access to or distribution of basic necessities, education, health services, housing, income and wealth.¹¹⁵

¹¹² United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination, and the Protection of Minorities,” OHCHR (Human Rights Council, 2022), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/minorities/30th-anniversary/2022-09-22/GuidanceNoteonIntersectionality.pdf>, 11.

¹¹³ United Nations, Human Rights Council (UNHRC), *Inequality, social protection and the right to development: Study by the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development*, A/HRC/EMRTD/7/CRP.4 (21 March 2023), available from https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/development/emd/session7/A_HRC_EMRTD_7_CRP.4.pdf, 2-3.

¹¹⁴ United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Guidance Note,” 11.

¹¹⁵ UNHRC, *Inequality, social protection, and the right to development*, 5-6.

Accordingly, policies must strive to ensure special attention and action for those most vulnerable to human rights violations.¹¹⁶ Relatedly, policymakers should guarantee visibility, active participation, and an equal voice for historically marginalized groups in the development, implementation, and monitoring of policies and programmes affecting them.¹¹⁷ Intersectionality perspectives also facilitate policy making that is sensitive to intra-group diversity, producing comprehensive solutions that respect, protect, and deliver on the myriad of needs and human rights required by large social groups.¹¹⁸ As well, policies should address structural causes of inequities that are associated with intersecting forms of discrimination. Policymakers must review and reform those laws, policies and institutions, and sociocultural norms or stereotypes that perpetuate the exclusion of specific individuals, groups, and communities.¹¹⁹ Lastly, policy development and programming strategies like those outlined above require access to and analysis of disaggregated data – that is, data that details different circumstances within social categories – to be most effective.¹²⁰

Application of an intersectionality perspective: getting started	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the intersectional dimensions of discrimination and minority exclusion and document the experiences of those affected by it. 2. Practice solidarity and build empathy to enable the inclusion and full participation of all, without stigmatizing individuals or communities. 3. Advance a holistic and structural approach in efforts to eliminate racial discrimination and protect minorities. 4. Adopt and apply a survivor-centred approach. 		
Participation of affected individuals and communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Create spaces in which the voices of individuals affected by intersectional discrimination can be heard and amplified. 6. Take action to increase the participation of individuals affected by intersectional discrimination, oppression and marginalization. 		
Development and implementation of tailored and responsive policies and programmes in key strategic areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Collect, analyse and publish disaggregated data on who is left behind in order to clarify the inequalities experienced by people affected by racial and intersectional discrimination. 8. Support the development of responsive and tailored policies and interventions in strategic areas such as education, employment, health and criminal justice based on the needs and concerns of those affected. 9. Support efforts to enhance the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality (AAAQ Framework) of basic infrastructure, goods and services. 10. Apply an intersectionality perspective at all stages of programmes and projects (design, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation). 	Collaboration and engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Seize opportunities for cooperation across the United Nations system, and particularly with United Nations country teams, in the collaborative, coherent application of an intersectionality perspective. 15. Seize opportunities for cooperation with regional human rights mechanisms in applying an intersectionality perspective. 16. Build partnerships with national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies. 17. Engage and collaborate with representatives of communities and groups that face intersectional discrimination, violence and marginalization. 18. Engage and collaborate with universities, research centres, civil society organizations and workers' and employers' organizations with experience and expertise in the areas of intersectionality and the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.
Development of appropriate legal and institutional frameworks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Support legal and institutional reforms that address structural discrimination and inequality, including by challenging the underlying social norms. 12. Advance accountability and ensure access to justice, remedy and recourses to all. 13. Support efforts to prevent, punish and eliminate hate speech and harmful stereotypes. 	Awareness-raising, advocacy and education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Participate in and support advocacy and awareness-raising on human rights issues, including racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and related forms of intolerance, stereotyping and harmful cultural norms and practices. 20. Support efforts to educate and train the relevant stakeholders in non-discrimination, intersectional discrimination and strategies for equality and inclusion.

Source: United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities 2023.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Guidance Note,” 4.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Guidance Note,” 4-5.

¹²¹ United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, “Guidance Note,” 5.

Indigenous Peoples

Amongst the international political and legal community, there exists no authoritative definition on what constitutes an Indigenous people, however multiple criteria exist, including but not limited to:¹²²

- “Historical continuity with pre-invasion and/or pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories”;
- “A determination to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and identity as peoples in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system”;
- A strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Having distinct social, economic, or political systems; and
- Having distinct languages, cultures and beliefs.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 September 2007, enshrining the cultural, social, political, and economic rights of peoples with the characteristics laid out above.¹²³ Notably, Indigenous rights are collective, rather than strictly individual, rights.¹²⁴ Accordingly, Indigenous peoples should be conceptualized and treated as political communities, entitled to formal jurisdictional authority. Such an understanding enables the realization of robust political, economic, cultural, and social rights for Indigenous groups, rights that are distinct from those minority protections afforded under many liberal democratic constitutions.

¹²² Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” Ohchr.org (New York and Geneva: United Nations, 2013), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/fs9Rev.2.pdf>, 2-3.

¹²³ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” 4.

¹²⁴ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” 7.

The most important guarantee of UNDRIP is that of self-determination, which is the right of Indigenous peoples to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.¹²⁵ Self-determination informs and contextualizes all other rights within UNDRIP, which are deeply interrelated. For example, the right to governmental autonomy flows from the right to self-determination, in that autonomous governance over internal and local affairs, institutional structures, customs and traditions, and juridical practices is an expression of self-determination.¹²⁶ Therefore, Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination simultaneously affords them independent political and legal authority, while also compelling States to include Indigenous peoples' in governance and decision-making matters.¹²⁷ In particular, State governments must, at the least, acquire free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) from Indigenous governments and communities when developing and implementing policies that would affect Indigenous peoples' access and relationship to their traditional unceded territories and resources.¹²⁸

Furthermore, land rights are central to the realization of Indigenous self-determination,¹²⁹ as land provides a fundamental basis for the cultures, economic survival, and systems of governance of Indigenous peoples.¹³⁰ Article 26 of UNDRIP enshrines Indigenous peoples' "rights to the lands, territories and resources that they have traditionally owned, occupied, or otherwise used...under Indigenous customary conceptions of 'ownership.'"¹³¹ States must then legally protect these lands, territories, and resources by establishing and implementing processes that recognize and adjudicate Indigenous peoples' land rights.¹³² According to the OECD, however, "Indigenous peoples...disproportionately continue to have a small, fragmented land base, with limited commercial and residential use, limited natural resources, far from urban centres and with limited ability to expand."¹³³ As such, the OECD recommends States, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, develop comprehensive land claims policies, such as (1) premising land agreements on Indigenous peoples inherent rights or treaty claims to sovereignty; (2) building Indigenous peoples' negotiating capacities; and (3) developing "independent and ongoing monitoring mechanisms" that ensure comprehensive land claim commitments are "met in a timely and effective manner."¹³⁴ From here, Indigenous peoples will gain meaningful access to and use of their lands, to the benefit of the continuity and inclusion of their cultures for generations to come.

¹²² Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System," Ohchr.org (New York and Geneva: United Nations, 2013), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/fs9Rev.2.pdf>, 2-3.

¹²³ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System," 4.

¹²⁴ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System," 7.

National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities was adopted on 18 December 1992, which “stresses the rights of individual human beings who see themselves as members of minorities,” particularly through the following provisions.¹³⁵ Article 1 of the Declaration outlines that “States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.”¹³⁶ States shall accordingly take positive measures – legislatively, judicially, and/or administratively – to protect minorities’ enjoyment of their cultures, practice of their religions, and use of their languages, throughout society and without discrimination.¹³⁷ Similarly, States are responsible for creating an enabling environment for those belonging to minority groups to express their distinctiveness and “to develop their culture, language, religion, tradition and customs,” so long as these expressions and developments align with national and international legal standards.¹³⁸ Lastly, article 5 of the Declaration dictates that States should reasonably consider the legitimate interests of minority groups and individuals in planning and implementing national policies and undertaking international relations.¹³⁹ Thus, specialized agencies and international organization within the UN system must also aid in realizing the rights of persons belonging to minorities, specific to their technical expertise and operational mandates.¹⁴⁰

Since the adoption and development of the guarantees within the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, the UN Secretary-General has recently outlined several key areas of action for the promotion of minorities’ rights. Pursuant to Article 2, paragraph 2, of the Declaration, States must empower minority groups to effectively participate in economic and public life.¹⁴¹ Germany, for example, has enhanced the inclusion of minorities in decision-making by establishing its Secretariat for Minorities, which works to represent national minorities interests within their Federal government and legislative branch.¹⁴² Other actions member States have taken include erecting consultative bodies, which consist of nongovernmental experts who conduct studies and make recommendations on issues and actions relevant to the economic and political inclusion of minority groups.¹⁴³ The Secretary-General has also emphasized the role of collecting disaggregated data in implementing and monitoring the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as well as in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁴⁴ Such statistical data affords insights into the lived experiences of minorities, specific to their ethnicity, language, nationality, religious affiliation, age, and gender.¹⁴⁵ From here, anti-discrimination efforts can be developed and enforced to improve the situation of those excluded on the basis of their intersecting identities.¹⁴⁶

¹³² Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” Ohchr.org (New York and Geneva: United Nations, 2013), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/fs9Rev.2.pdf>, 2-3.

¹³³ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” 4.

¹³⁴ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System,” 7.

Furthermore, States should prioritize the comprehensive protection of human rights through constitutional and legislative guarantees aimed at non-discrimination and full inclusion and participation. For example, various States have involved minority groups in constitutional reform processes, resulting in the creation of national minority seats in parliaments, and “legal and institutional guarantees for equality and non-discrimination.”¹⁴⁷ Non-discrimination standards therefore can extend into the fields of healthcare, education, law enforcement, housing, and employment.¹⁴⁸ Lastly, interfaith, human-rights based dialogue between communities can work to reduce intolerance and hostility towards religious minorities.¹⁴⁹ Notably, national human rights institutions work to track and report on communication issues surrounding religious minorities.¹⁵⁰ Upon designating such issues, States can facilitate or partake in regional or national meetings with religious leaders on the prevention of violence and hate towards their groups.¹⁵¹

Persons with Disabilities

UN DESA defines accessible environments as spaces that persons with disabilities can make sense of and use; that are “capable of accommodating the needs of all users, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities; and [that are] compliant with national and international technical standards, such as those for universal design and inclusive urban development.”¹⁵² In this way, “spatial accessibility is a precondition for ‘enjoyment of human rights and is a means for economic, social, cultural and political empowerment, participation and inclusion.’¹⁵³” Universal design then refers to a set of technical standards aimed at “promoting the equitable use of products and services” by people with diverse abilities.¹⁵⁴ As such, universal design extinguishes the need for specialized solutions for persons with disabilities to access and use spaces, and creates spaces that anyone can access and use in an adaptable and inclusive way.¹⁵⁵ Accessible environments ultimately facilitate social inclusion and participation by providing persons with disabilities with access to all necessary services for daily living, as well as opportunities for spontaneous and repeated social connections. The seven principles of universal design for environments, therefore, include:¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁷ United Nations Secretary-General, *Effective promotion of the Declaration*, paras. 17-18.

¹⁴⁸ United Nations Secretary-General, *Effective promotion of the Declaration*, para. 21.

¹⁴⁹ United Nations Secretary-General, *Effective promotion of the Declaration*, para. 25.

¹⁵⁰ United Nations Secretary-General, *Effective promotion of the Declaration*, para. 27.

¹⁵¹ United Nations Secretary-General, *Effective promotion of the Declaration*, para. 26.

¹⁵² Shimelis Tesemma and Susanna Coetzee, “Manifestations of Spatial Exclusion and Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Africa,” *Disability & Society* 38, no. 10 (2023): 1936, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2065463>.

¹⁵³ Tesemma and Coetzee, “Manifestations of Spatial Exclusion and Inclusion,” 1936.

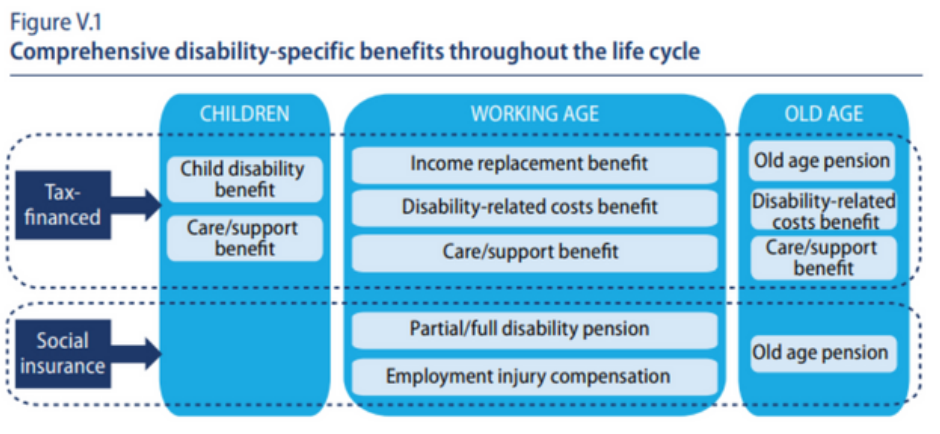
¹⁵⁴ Tesemma and Coetzee, “Manifestations of Spatial Exclusion and Inclusion,” 1937.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Dagmara Kociuba and Małgorzata Maj, “Walkable City and Universal Design in Theory and Practice in Poland,” *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-Economic Series*, no. 50 (2020): 115, <https://doi.org/10.2478/bog-2020-0036>.

- “Equitable Use”: making structures and products equally available and useful to everyone;
- “Flexibility in Use”: providing options for users of all abilities to access the built environment;
- “Simple and Intuitive Use”: designing easily understandable environments to accommodate all abilities;
- “Perceptible Information”: making information accessible to users of all sensory abilities, allowing for structures to be used for their intended purposes;
- “Tolerance for Error”: minimizing hazards caused by unforeseen incidents through built-in features;
- “Low Physical Effort”: minimizing user fatigue; and
- “Size and Space for Approach and User”: enabling everyone to approach and use the built environment.

Furthermore, Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities enshrines the “right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability.”¹⁵⁷ To this end, quality social protection schemes ensure economic security for and promote the active participation of persons with disabilities in society.¹⁵⁸ National governments everywhere provide cash benefits for persons with disabilities, through tax-financed and/or contributory (social insurance) schemes. These benefits are further classified by life-cycle stages, namely childhood, working-age, and old age.¹⁵⁹



Source: UN DESA, “Report on the World Social Situation 2018,” 67.

¹⁵⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Social Situation 2018,” UN.org (New York: United Nations, 2018), <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/07/1-1.pdf>, 67.

¹⁵⁸ UN DESA, “Report on the World Social Situation 2018,” 66.

¹⁵⁹ UN DESA, “Report on the World Social Situation 2018,” 67.

Disability-related costs benefits refer to cash benefits put towards specific needs such as assistive devices, accessible transportation, and support services, all of which help enable the employment and education of persons of disabilities.¹⁶⁰ These benefits are offered regardless of one's employment status. Income replacement benefits, on the other hand, offer a disability pension to those designated unable to work.¹⁶¹ Caretaker benefits aim to support family members who have had to give up work in order to care for someone with a disability.¹⁶²

It is important to address the adequacy of disability benefits; currently, disability benefits in most countries fail to replace employment income.¹⁶³ Contributory benefits are often lower than contributory old-age pensions for those who can work.¹⁶⁴ What's more, tax-financed schemes tend to provide lower benefits than contributory schemes.¹⁶⁵ In the U.S., for example, the benefits received through the Social Security Disability Insurance scheme and the Supplemental Security Income programmes were 25% and 12% of the average full-time wage in 2006, respectively.¹⁶⁶ Many countries intentionally set disability benefit values under minimum wage to "avoid any potential negative impact on the employment of persons with disabilities."¹⁶⁷ That is, governments fear that disability benefits tied to employment capacity for working-age individuals may disincentivize working.¹⁶⁸

However, schemes designed this way are often insufficient to guarantee income security by discounting the increased costs of living associated with having a disability, such as greater healthcare expenses.¹⁶⁹ Accordingly, social protection schemes should incentivize employers to hire persons with disabilities, which would support their transition into the labour market while simultaneously promoting their social inclusion.¹⁷⁰ For instance, Australia's Disability Support Pension allows recipients to work for up to 30 hours weekly while still receiving the full benefit.¹⁷¹ Alongside this benefit, the Australian Government offers employment services and financial incentives to employers to hire persons with disabilities.¹⁷² In all, efforts to restrict eligibility for disability benefits to the severest of limitations and conditions risks further entrenching inequities experienced by those with disabilities.¹⁷³ Thus, the receipt of benefits while employed should not be overly conditional, as such benefits are necessary for additional living costs. These benefits also do not disincentivize working as (1) they do not come close to replacing full-time income, as previously stated; and (2) do not provide the same social benefits of working, such as soft, interpersonal skills, regular social interaction, and community.

¹⁶⁰ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 67.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 70.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 71.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 74.

¹⁶⁹ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 71.

¹⁷⁰ UN DESA, "Report on the World Social Situation 2018," 75.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

Questions to Consider:

- How can CSocD members effectively balance recognizing, protecting, and accommodating diversity with social integration and cohesion? In what ways do ethnocultural differences drive exclusion, and how can sociocultural protections lower the costs of integration for persons belonging to minority groups?
- How effective has UNDRIP been in realizing self-determination for Indigenous peoples? What national, regional, and international policies, legislation, and adjudication are required to enhance Indigenous peoples' political autonomy and ensure their social, economic, and cultural prosperity?
- How is the expansion of social protection networks relevant to facilitating social inclusion? How can CSocD members construct comprehensive solutions aimed at these goals?
- What would a society “designed for all” look like? How can governments involve persons with disabilities in creating societies that facilitate their independence and socioeconomic participation?

Tips for Research

The purpose of this background guide is to introduce delegates to key information related to the committee's topics of discussion. Delegates should gain a general understanding of the committee's goals by reading through the topics and subtopics within the background guide. However, this document is not meant to be a comprehensive source of information. Delegates are advised to conduct independent research to better understand the topics presented and their country's positions towards them, using the background guide as guidance. Such research is required to write an informed position paper that outlines the topics, your country's position, and proposed solutions.

Begin by researching general details about your country, such as their internal state of affairs and position within the international community. Pay attention to the broad-based interests of the government you will be representing so that you can portray their foreign policy accurately during the conference.

From here, read through the background guide and the key resources provided below, noting any aspects or perspectives relevant to your assigned country. Note: some of the key resources are long, so you are not expected to read them entirely! Just pick out parts relevant to the subtopics and your positions.

After becoming comfortable with the topics, go deeper into your country's positions on relevant issues. Using the subtopics as guides, determine what your country's national and international response are/would be towards the highlighted issues and concepts. Consider as well any contextual factors relevant to understanding your country's policies and situation, such as current world events, historical development, relationships to other States/regions, and domestic social and economic conditions.

Having established a comprehensive understanding of the topics and your country's positions, explore or formulate solutions to issues presented throughout the background guide. These solutions should be from the perspective of your country's government, and should exclude personal opinions. If at any time you are confused, the "Questions to Consider" are there to direct your research further.

Good luck, and reach out to the Director if you have any questions about the background guide or position papers!

Topic A Key Resources:

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