BUILDING INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Nagesh Kumar,
Director, Social Development Division, ESCAP

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Asia and the Pacific is the fastest growing region in the world

Real GDP growth in developing Asia-Pacific, advanced economies and the world, 2006-2017
A-P has also led the world in poverty reduction
Yet over 500 million people living in extreme poverty

Population in poverty, by region (1990 - 2012)

Inequalities increased in many countries

- Richest 10% have almost twice the income of poorest 40%
- Inequalities have increased in most countries over the past two decades
- Concentration of wealth is even sharper with top 20% up to 80% of wealth

Source: ESCAP, based on World Bank, World Development Indicators
A-P is lagging behind in terms of women’s economic empowerment.

Increased gender parity in education and economic growth have not translated into higher Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) rates.
Asia-Pacific also lags behind in women’s political representation

- Asia-Pacific has very low parliamentary representation in 2016 compared with other regions.
- In Asia Pacific, only 19% of all seats in national parliament were held by women.
- Women below global average of ministerial representation.
- Women are also less likely to move up the corporate ladder.

![Graph showing women's representation in various regions](image)

**World Average: 23%**
Vulnerability characterises the work of women in Asia and the Pacific

- The predominant forms of work for women are in vulnerable, low- and middle-skilled jobs.
- As economies shift to higher-skills based economies, women are more likely to lose jobs.
- The lack of social protection will further entrench women in cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

Share of male and female vulnerable employment in 2015 (as % of working men and women), by ESCAP sub-region (excluding Australia and New Zealand), based on ESCAP Statistical Database.
Youth exclusion is a serious concern that starts with education and higher youth unemployment rates.

![Variations in net secondary education attendance ratios](chart)

**Source:** UNICEF online statistical database. Secondary net attendance ratio data were disaggregated by wealth quintiles and location.
Rising proportion of older persons who risk being left behind
Low coverage of pensions and other types of social security for the working-age population
Coverage of women generally even less
Over 650 million persons with disabilities in A-P at higherrisk of exclusion

- Persons with disabilities are likely to be less employed
- Employment gaps become higher in higher income countries
- When employed, persons with disabilities tend to work in the informal sector, self-employed
- There is double discrimination of women with disabilities
- 1 to 7% GDP loss because of exclusion of persons with disabilities
A-P is a major source as well as the destination of migrants who remain highly vulnerable

- Migrants from Asia-Pacific: 98 mln
- Migrants to Asia-Pacific: 60 mln
- Lack of legal and social protection leads to vulnerability and unequal treatment:
  - Women migrants are particularly vulnerable, given demand for female labour is typically in jobs with lower levels of protection, such as domestic work
  - Regulatory constraints often prevent family reunification

*Source: UN DESA, 2015*
UN-ESCAP’s interventions for building inclusive societies in Asia-Pacific
ESCAP advocates for social protection and policies for equality

Increased spending on social protection

Percentage change in spending on social protection as a share of total government expenditures, selected countries, earliest and latest available year

- Azerbaijan: -10.7%
- Bhutan: -6.6%
- Sri Lanka: -4.0%
- Kiribati: -3.1%
- Vanuatu: -1.3%
- Kyrgyzstan: 0.3%
- Malaysia: 1.5%
- Fiji: 1.8%
- Brunei Darussalam: 1.9%
- Bangladesh: 2.1%
- Nepal: 2.5%
- Timor-Leste: 4.3%
- China: 5.0%
- India: 5.0%
- Samoa: 5.6%
- Philippines: 6.2%
- Hong Kong, China: 6.4%
- Georgia: 7.2%
- Thailand: 7.3%
- Cambodia: 7.8%
- Mongolia: 8.5%
- Singapore: 8.8%
- Maldives: 9.5%
- Republic of Korea: 15.3%
- Tajikistan: 18.3%
- Armenia: 21.8%

for Asia and the Pacific, 2014
ESCAP supports inclusion for women by

- Promoting women’s entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic empowerment.
- Promoting women’s economic empowerment through gender responsive budgeting.
- Examining how women’s leadership can make transformative change to achieve the 2030 Agenda.
- Strengthening role of ICTs as an enabler for women’s empowerment in e-government and entrepreneurship (ESCAP WIFI Programme)
- The Asia-Pacific Gender Equality Portal (www.asiapacificgender.org)
- Fostering intergovernmental consensus and partnerships
ESCAP advocates for greater investments in young people and promoting youth participation

- Undertaking research on school to work transitions
- Assisting Governments to develop comprehensive national youth policies
- Working closely with youth organizations and other stakeholders
ESCAP supports addressing population ageing by

Supporting the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, particularly

- Periodic review of progress in implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (3rd regional review in 2017)
- Data and research on population ageing
- Research and training on the design of income security systems for older persons
- Research and capacity-building on long-term care for older persons
ESCAP supports inclusion for persons with disabilities by

- Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to ‘Make the Right Real’ for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific
- Forging regional consensus and partnership to promote disability: High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Incheon Strategy (27 Nov - 1 Dec 2017), Beijing.
- Research on good practices on accessibility at a policy and practical level to promote Disability-inclusive development.
- Building capacity to mainstream disability perspectives
Providing regional forum for Global Compact on Migration

• 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a comprehensive roadmap for gender-focused policy responses to the issues of migration and human rights

• A number of national, bilateral and regional initiatives are underway to promote international cooperation for the rights and empowerment of migrants in sending, transit and receiving countries:

• Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
  – 2018 Intergovernmental Conference that follows up from New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants
  – Throughout 2017 UNESCAP will facilitate a forum for discussion of the Global Compact as an open and inclusive dialogue, involving governments and civil society
Thank you

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