

United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Terms of Reference

Thematic Working Group on Inclusive Development and Poverty Eradication (TWG-IDPE) August 2016

Objective

To support the regional implementation of those elements of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10 and 16, that relate to inequality (focusing on multiple dimensions beyond income inequality only), poverty, food security, health and well-being, inclusive growth, decent work, and governance, with a focus on macro and micro level policy issues and priorities, by:

1. Supporting the efforts of decision makers, UN agencies, and civil society organizations in the region by producing policy-oriented research and analysis on specific topics in inclusive development and poverty eradication, in the form of policy briefs. The TWG will draw from the resources and expertise of its members by integrating and synthesizing available research and policy analysis rather than by commissioning new primary research.
2. Encouraging regional/sub-regional initiatives in specific areas which require coordinated effort by multiple agencies, with a specific focus on ASEAN, SAARC and Pacific sub-regions.
3. Assisting UN agencies, Government counterparts and civil society organizations in exchanging good practices, lessons and strategies for developing more robust and comprehensive interventions and policies aimed at reducing poverty and inequality, and eradicating hunger.
4. Selecting and implementing regionally oriented activities that will have the greatest impact toward moving forward the 2030 Agenda at country level and will work with the regional UNDG Peer Support Group for integration of common global and regional priorities, commitments and good practices in national and UN country team planning processes including UNDAFs, as may apply or be requested.

Functions

5. The main functions that may be undertaken by the TWGs are: regional analyses and knowledge products that can be used for policy and advocacy work at the global,

regional and country levels; information sharing and mapping of programmes and activities across the region; joint programming, including support to regional sectoral coordination mechanisms and organization of regional meetings; mobilize partners, including at the country level, in the development of and support to countries for utilization of regional analytical, normative and advocacy products as appropriate.¹

6. The core functions of the TWG-IDPE will be:
 - a. Identifying regional issues and priority areas for inter-agency cooperation and collaboration;
 - b. Mapping of studies and interventions of the TWG-IDPE member agencies on issues such as poverty, food security, wellbeing, decent work, income inequality, governance, etc. to identify linkages and opportunities for collaboration;
 - c. Synthesizing and sharing analysis on policy and programme interventions and experiences relating to the themes of the TWG, including on cross-cutting issues such as the impact of taxation, public expenditure management and social protection interventions on reducing poverty and promoting inclusive development.
 - d. Preparing policy briefs on critical issues as agreed amongst the membership, including for instance issues such as the appropriateness of non-income indicators for measuring inequality and exclusion, and methodological differences in measurement;
 - e. Collecting information and disseminating innovative ideas, good practices and lessons learnt, including through the use of social media and other outreach channels;

Organization

7. UNDP and FAO will serve as Co-Chairs, and act as the joint secretariat to the TWG-IDPE. The Co-chairs will chair the TWG meetings in rotation. The Co-chairs can make decisions on behalf of the TWG-IDPE if required, within the parameters of this Terms of Reference, summary record of previous meetings, and the TWG-IDPE Annual Work Plan [Annex 1].
8. The core members/participants of the TWG-IDPE include: FAO, UNDP, ESCAP, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNCRD, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women and WHO. The TWG may decide to open participation to representatives of other concerned UN agencies, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral agencies,

¹ From RCM Chapeau text for TWGs, date

which should be decided at the TWG meeting

9. Each member agency will designate a focal point and an alternate, ideally an expert on issues such as (but not limited to) inclusive development, poverty reduction, health, gender, governance, social protection, food security or related issues within the inclusive development sphere. The focal points represent their agency and are responsible for providing updates on their inclusive development and poverty eradication related activities and plans. The focal point is also responsible for keeping their colleagues in the respective agencies informed on the activities of TWG-IDPE.
10. The TWG-IDPE will meet as deemed necessary, but at least two times a year. The agenda of each meeting will be circulated to members in advance by the TWG secretariat, including relevant background documents. A summary record of each TWG-IDPE meeting, reflecting recommended actions and outcomes, will be prepared by the secretariat, endorsed by the members and submitted to the RCM Secretariat for centralized records.
11. The TWG-IDPE will prepare an Annual Work Plan [Annex 1], with responsibilities, success indicators and projected timelines for activities, at the first quarter of each calendar year. The AWP will identify a set of existing collaborations among TWG member agencies which can be built upon by mobilizing additional technical support and capacities from other TWG members. The enhanced partnership through the TWG mechanism may allow these initiatives to expand in terms of scale and coverage, or by linking these initiatives with related issues and streams of work within the broad ambit of inclusive development and poverty eradication. The Annual Work Plan will be revisited regularly as additional activities and opportunities to collaborate are identified. The TWG-IDPE Co-chairs will report on implementation of planned activities at the meetings of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) as required.
12. The TWG-IDPE could decide to establish mechanisms such as Working Groups and Task Forces, drawing on its members, to focus on longer term areas of shared work as well as time-bound specific tasks. These mechanisms will report on their work, including recommendations for consideration where appropriate, to the TWG-IDPE on a regular basis. Reports may also be made available to the Co-chairs between TWG-IDPE meetings as required. Cost of participation will be met by each participating agency.

Monitoring and Evaluation

13. The TWG-IDPE will regularly assess its organization and functioning, including the mandates, relevance and responsibilities of its task forces and working groups. The TWG will prepare an annual work plan at the beginning of each year with the identification of a specific agenda for discussion at each TWG meeting. Implementation of the annual work plan will be monitored through meetings and reporting. Towards this end, the TWG will produce a summary record of each TWG meeting (prepared by the agency chairing the meeting) which will be circulated to RCM members. A detailed assessment of the TWG's relevance and effectiveness will be conducted after two years.

Thematic Working Group on Inclusive Development and Poverty Eradication (TWG-IDPE)

Work plan 2016-17 (DRAFT)

	Activity Description	Success Indicators	Responsible Lead Agency	Delivery time line	Resources/Budget
1	<p><i>Policy Syntheses and Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-poor food and agricultural policies in Asia and the Pacific, and the link to food security and nutrition <i>FAO is preparing an overview of pro-poor food and agricultural policies in the region in collaboration with IFA, based on country case studies in Lao, Cambodia, Vietnam and Nepal. Discussions with partner agencies identified the potential to broaden the governance, nutrition and/or social protection dimensions of this analysis in line with SDG2, and develop a product in collaboration with the TWG.</i> • Assessing the role of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) in strengthening the Poverty-Environment Link. <i>UNDP and UNEP are working jointly through the Asia-Pacific Poverty-Environment Initiative to develop a regional assessment of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting. Using this analysis as a starting-point, the TWO proposes to assess the feasibility of undertaking a broader analysis of poverty-environment integration approaches, potentially in collaboration with TWG members such as ESCAP (EDD and Statistics), FAO and other members working on the link between poverty eradication and natural resource management.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Publication of synth volume with contributions by the TWG</i> • <i>Published report</i> 	<p>FAO</p> <p>UNDP (with UNEP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 • 2017 	

	Activity Description	Success Indicators	Responsible Lead Agency	Delivery time line	Resources/ Budget
2	<p><i>Policy Briefs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy note on inclusion in the context of rural-urban migration This policy note will assess the issue of rural-urban migration in Asia, and identify some of the implications of this phenomenon for inclusive development, particularly in the context of rapidly-growing Asian cities. The policy note is being developed in consultation with other UN Agencies including UN-Habitat, IOM and UNESCO. Given the focus on urbanization issues in the lead-up to Habitat-III, this initiative provides a starting point for broader joint analysis of urbanization, migration and inclusion issues, potentially linking with work streams under other TWGs. UNAIDS, UN-Women, ESCAP (SDD and EDD) and FAO have expressed preliminary interest in contributing to the analysis through the TWG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online publication of note 	UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2017 	

Note: the above mentioned activities are subject to revision following clarifications on the type and scope of activities that are to be considered under the TWGs. The criteria for inclusion of activities under the POA will need to be circulated to all members to ensure clarity and coherence among TWG members.