



Enhancing Knowledge for Renewed Policies against Poverty



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Defining scenarios of future poverty: A prospective assessment – Regional priorities and main concerns in fighting against poverty

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Defining scenarios of future poverty: A prospective assessment

WORK IN PROGRESS

Regional priorities and main concerns in fighting against poverty

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East Asia and Pacific Prospective Assessment

Introduction

Southeast Asia is one of the most economically and politically diverse regions in the world and includes some of the richest, fastest-growing economies, as well as some of the planet's poorest people (Transparency International, 2015).

Recent years have signified in tremendous changes in the East Asia and Pacific Region. Important actions, specifically in terms of education, demography, development and poverty topics are some of the ways this big region into a modern evolved society. Nevertheless several authors argue there are still big challenges to overcome.

"The East Asian and Pacific region has achieved tremendous progress in poverty reduction in recent years." (World Bank, 2012). However, this measure could be misleading. Two thirds out of the four billion people living in this place lives in extreme poverty, and four thirds out of this quantity of poor people lives with less than two dollars a day. World Bank data states that even though poverty has been declining faster than other regions, its population density makes it still the region with the biggest concentration of poverty.

Current situation of poverty related indicators

The proportion of people living in poverty in the region has steadily declined over the past 25 years. However, nearly 140 million (7%) of the region's 2 billion people still live on less than \$1.25 a day and another 300 million (15%) live on incomes between \$1.25 and \$2.00 a day, and vulnerable employment indicator, which accounts unpaid family workers and own account workers, has increased in about 4 percent. This shows that even when the amount people living under the poverty line has shrunk, the workers' confidence in having a permanent long term job has been harmed.

When analyzing health indicators, there has been found a great performance in the reduction of unhealthy positions. When comparing the current life expectancy indicator to the world's one (71 years), East Asia region lays 3.5 years and a half above this mean. This situation and also other improvements are reflected in areas such as prenatal healthcare, in which the indicator moved from 89.8 to 95.0, nearly reaching a total coverage for births in this region. Also, infant mortality rate, which accounts the number of infants who die before reaching one year of age per a thousand live births has reduced from 23.2 to 20.2. All these indicators are proof of the great efforts that have been made in the health care area in this region, however there is still a necessity for better action.

The region faces huge infrastructure needs and rapid urbanization. As many as 130 million people have no access to power, and 600 million lack access to adequate sanitation. Rapid migration to cities is putting pressure on service delivery and leading to large urban slums, pollution, and

environmental degradation. More than 70% of the world's natural disasters occur in this region, making it the most disaster-stricken region in the world.

Examining governance and political indicators, East Asia region has experienced opposite directional changes. Even when corruption levels have dropped (control of corruption indicator raised in about 6.5% from 3.1 to 3.3), political stability and absence of violence decreased in comparison with the previous examined period from 6.9 to 6.6. However, every region in the world have experienced the same order in terms of political strength.

Other wealth measures were explored with infrastructure indicators. In this specific area, every indicator shows positive results. While electricity access, sanitation and improved water source have shown a modest improvement, internet users triplicated in about 300% from its previous measure. This because of the great technological changes that have taken place all over the world, and in which some of East Asian countries highly contribute in technology production progress.

All these indicators revised are deeply interconnected. Health care indicators would not have raised if there was not a correct development in terms of infrastructure. Specifically, having a correct water source supply and improving sanitation facilities has a positive effect in terms of hygiene which leads into a better situation in terms of health, life expectancy and reduction of the mortality rate. Also, the reduction in corruption leads into better public policies in addition to poverty reduction and so the diminishment of headcount poverty ratio.

In this context, the challenges upfront for EAP region are related with ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth that will require raising productivity, managing the effects of climate change and disaster risk, rapid urbanization, improving governance and institutions, and encouraging private-sector led growth to create jobs in order to reduce poverty. Countries also need to prepare for volatility and shocks, by expanding safety nets to protect the poor and vulnerable.

Which is the most likely future for this region?

In order to identify the main issues towards 2030, that let it draw the most likely and consolidated trends for this region, the topics, ranked by the group of Nopoor experts at Hanoi meeting during the general assembly at 2015, were prioritized and organized by impact, likelihood and Pace of progress. The prospective analysis to be presented for the region will focus on those topics, getting deeper on their evolution and impact.

The first group of topics referred to significant trends, since presents the greatest impact and likelihood (Topics 1, 14, 19 and 20). They are considered trends because if there is not a wildcard event they will continue their actual path. Some of them could be a threat and others could be considered as developments with high impact on poverty reduction. The pace of progress refers to how fast the topics would be evolving over time and the experts agreed on a medium rank, so the effects are expected over five to ten years.

The second group is integrated by those topics with high impact, but with a lower likelihood of occurrence (Topics 15 and 21). As the previous one, some of them would need to foster due their positive impact and lower likelihood, and others would require a close follow up since their negative impact on poverty.

The last category is integrated by just one topic (Topic 3) but truly relevant since its great impact and its lower likelihood of occurrence. In this case the topic is considered a pivotal one since its outcome has a great impact but its development is uncertain.

The following section presents a summarized analysis for each topic according the previous organization. A comprehensive one is compiled at the full report.

Predictable evolutions of significant trends: keep going by stay alert

The following topics have a high impact on reducing poverty and their trend will continue so it is important to pay attention to some events that could arise and jeopardize their development.

(T1) Progress in the development of sustainable energy and promotion of environmental awareness

Over the past three decades, **oil and gas have been dominating the energy mix in EAP countries**, leading to a twin energy challenges in the region: **environmental sustainability and energy security**. These challenges will entail an international diversification of the energy consumption structure, and an impulse to counties' self-production, reducing the external energy dependence.

A **change** in the **energy technologies** will have a direct and clear **impact** in the energy markets, and then, this networks and systems that maintain high levels of poverty in these countries might break, or at least change somehow. Shifting to a sustainable energy path requires **EAP governments take immediate action on major policy and institutional reforms to transform the energy sector toward much higher energy efficiency** and more widespread use of low-carbon technologies.

There, **by 2030, energy costs may approach 5 percent of the income of households in the lowest quintile**. In areas or communities that experience slower income growth than the national average, more limited access to energy efficiency improvements, or more rapid increases in prices for energy supplies to poorer customers in remote areas, affordability is likely to remain a concern.

(T14) Improve health and reduce hunger

A tremendous **improvement** has been done in order to **reduce infant mortality rate** and **increase life expectancy at birth** as well as pregnant women receiving prenatal care in EAP region. But among sub regions, South-East Asian countries **spent the smallest share of their GDP on health** in 2012, with the share being about 3.9%, despite having recorded the fastest rate of economic growth in the region.

The **demand for healthcare** in the region is **rising rapidly** due to increasing populations and increasing affluence but the health expenditure per capita in South East Asia countries is around 4 percent of GDP, where the OECD average, in comparison, is around 12 percent. In terms of public healthcare, **spending is generally low** in the countries of this region.

In the years ahead special attention must be addressed to **other diseases** since an increase in type-2 diabetes, obesity and an epidemic of HIV/AIDs is expected. But also the region are also facing rising levels of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes. It has been projected that **by 2020 the Asia-Pacific region will account for the world's greatest number of NCD deaths.**

About Hunger, the progress in the countries of EAP has been remarkable since the **Global Hunger Index** had a **reduction of 53%** and the prevalence of undernourishment dropped to 10.8%. Even though this tremendous efforts against hunger, the countries of this region **must pay attention to food security** in order not just to sustain the trend but avoid the effect of external economic crises and the impacts of the global raw materials markets.

Another **problem** that is **increasing** nowadays is **hidden hunger**. It is related, more than the quality of food ingested, with the quantity, and is known as the “triple burden” of malnutrition—undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity.

For the risk agenda

The following topics have a high impact on increasing poverty and their trend will continue so it is important to focus on them in the short term to diminishing their impact.

(T19) Increase of natural disasters

The effects of climate change or global warming are happening now, and the East Asia Pacific region remains **the region with the highest number of natural disasters**. During the period between 1994 and 2013, **over 40% of the world's reported natural disasters occurred in the region**. Among the East Asia Pacific sub regions, South-East Asia, predominantly Indonesia and the Philippines, was hardest hit by natural disasters with the total report of 527 incidences and 354,293 deaths between 2004 and 2013.

The impact of natural disasters **arises multiple consequences on macro and micro economy**. Disasters trap people into poverty since **poor and marginalized households tend to be less resilient** and face greater difficulties in dealing and recovering from disaster impacts. To have an idea of the greater risk people of this region is facing now, more than **60% of population were affected** by natural disasters and the greatest economic damages were suffered by low income people.

In **coming decades** new or accentuated **risk drivers** such as -population and economic growth in exposed locations, pressure on land and water resources, badly planned and managed urban

development, increasingly unequal income distribution and economic opportunities- **will increasing dramatically the natural disaster risk** at the region so in order to minimize their damage and impact some policies, **more oriented to tackle the causes than the effects**, must be addressed since the lack of resources and preparedness require by such natural disasters.

(T20) Spread of epidemics or emergence of new diseases

East and Southeast Asia retain a **reputation as a hot spot of emerging infectious diseases** since the emergence of SAR twelve years ago but, since then, **surveillance and response capacities have improved** in the last decade, and Southeast Asia is far **better prepared to detect and respond** to emerging infectious diseases.

But the **socioeconomic and environmental changes** the region are facing right now (e.g., urbanization and agricultural intensification) **could increase the probability of emerging infectious diseases** by the greater concentration and connectivity of livestock, persons, and products.

Since **there are still lacking the tools and methodologies** to produce a sufficiently refined assessment of the distribution and profile of disease emergence risks that encompasses geographic heterogeneity, it is vital that capabilities for predicting, identifying, and controlling biologic threats do not stagnate.

Understanding threats and fostering the opportunities

The following topics have a high impact either on reduction or increase poverty. Since their likelihood is rated as medium it is important to have them under the radar in order to anticipate the risks and foster the opportunities.

(T15) Enhance the opportunities through a better educational system

Progress towards **education access** through several initiatives have had a great impact in education at East Asia Pacific region, amidst a greatly diverse as well as complex regional and educational landscape. The regional averages of **adult literacy** rates by sub-regions reveal that EAP **has already achieved the goal** with an overall literacy rate of 95%.

Although **more women than men move on to tertiary education**, in 2008, **less than 20%** of graduates in engineering, manufacturing and construction throughout East Asia and the Pacific **were female**. An effort to alter gendered perceptions of skills and professions among all people involved in the education system is contingent upon eliminating gender stereotyping and questioning normative gender roles. Through this process, **gender equality in education can become a means for achieving gender equality through education**.

Other **challenges** that were identified through a comprehensive diagnostic process are the following:

- **Significant disparities**, both between and within countries, in enrolment, retention, progression and learning outcomes.
- Rapidly **increasing demands** for post-basic education and pre-primary education, hence the urgent need to increase equitable access to all levels of education from early childhood to higher education and adult learning.
- **Poor and opaque governance** of education, including non-transparency, weak accountability, corruption and malpractices

The **priority areas** that were define after diagnosis that will **enhance the opportunities through a better educational system towards the next 15 years** are related with: access, equity, quality, relevance, lifelong learning and governance and financing.

(T21) Emergence and propagation of military conflicts

The interconnection between poverty and military conflicts make this topic truly relevant. The World Bank provide a summary of interconnections that shows that, although poverty itself is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for conflict, **poverty factors increase the likelihood of violent conflict.**

On the region's agenda, one of the **potential military conflicts** at East Asia Pacific region comes from a **dispute between China and a Southeast Asian nations**, particularly, Vietnam and the Philippines but including Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

The ascendancy of China in the 1990s has had a major impact on the international political situation in modern East Asia. Nowadays **China has embarked on a military modernization** program which emphasizes an offensive power projection capability. This capability increases the level of anxiety among China's East-Asia neighbors and specifically poses a **potential future threat to Taiwan.**

The South China Sea region sits astride crucial sea-lanes of communication from the Persian Gulf and Africa to the Pacific Ocean and is also emerging as possible major source of oil and gas for the countries in the region. The area is currently underexploited because of territorial disputes and lack of technological or commercial feasibility. As can be seen, this is a **natural resources endowments conflict** that will require the support of other international instances.

Other potential military conflicts at the East Asia and Pacific region are related with Myanmar's democratic challenge (Fragility Index 19), Thailand's democratic deficit (Fragility Index 7) and Indonesia's democratic consolidation (Fragility Index 9).

The pivotal uncertainty

This is one of the most critical topics since the great impact and the lower likelihood of occurrence and the effect it has in others. Is considered a pivotal one since its outcome has a great impact but its development is uncertain.

(T3) Increase in governance

Basic societal systems analysis takes into account the **interconnectedness** of three fundamental dimensions of societal-systems: **governance, conflict, and development**.

Thus, it is required that **governing regimes** to exhibit both effectiveness and legitimacy in its performance of those tasks. That is, to achieve maximum stability a regime must both carry out the tasks expected of a competent government, and maintain legitimacy by being perceived as just and fair in the manner it carries out those tasks.

The East Asia region **shows some cautious progress in democratization** since 1989, with Taiwan and Mongolia making solid strides, Bangladesh and Thailand fluctuating between more and less open governance, Indonesia pushing through a democratic transition in the late 1990s, and Malaysia moving tentatively toward multi-party competition.

Public sector corruption remains a major problem for many EAP countries. Only Malaysia and Singapore score above 50 out of 100 (where 100 is very clean and 0 highly corrupt) in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

In most of EAP countries Public **institutions lack transparency and accountability**, key anti-corruption laws are absent, and civil society engagement is restricted. The good news is that in terms of governance, the ASEAN¹ member states have made explicit their interest towards a **better governance** subscribing Anti-corruption and good governance as main principles of regional integration.

Policy recommendations

Although the picture differs slightly from country to country, both financial and physical asset holdings are among the major determining factors as to which households will suffer either of these aspects of poverty. Events such as natural disasters, internal and external wars, and disease can promote the continuance of chronic poverty and transform transient poverty into chronic poverty. On the other hand, basic education turns out to be an important part of a general antipoverty strategy.

As can be seen, most of the topics must be part of an endogenous agenda of each country at the region so the recommendations must be addressed in that sense. Others are exogenous, but a

¹ ASEAN is the acronym of Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

good governance could foster regional agreements in order to learn from best practices and close the gaps between developed and developing countries at East Asia Pacific.

National and international efforts should focus on providing the needed resources to the geographical areas where the chronically poor are located. Thus the spatial dimension of poverty must be recognized as an important strategic variable in thinking about poverty reduction strategies. A set of policy recommendations are presented below.

- ✓ The most important factors needed **to scale up renewable energy** market penetration are to (1) guarantee mandatory grid access, (2) set sufficient tariff levels, and (3) clarify rules to pass through incremental costs for renewable energy. Consumer education can promote lifestyle changes and more informed choices, where campaigns are most effective in conjunction with regulations and financial incentives.
- ✓ Two of the major goals of **health policy** are (a) minimizing costs, subject to the attainment of specified health outcomes (or using the optimal mix of inputs to achieve these outcomes) and (b) pursuing equity in terms of both financial protection against unpredictable, catastrophic medical care costs and access to health services. About hunger, a range of interventions are needed to solve the complex problem of hidden hunger as well as non-communicable diseases. To sustainably tackle the underlying causes it will require a multisectoral approach at the national and international levels.
- ✓ Deaths and damage resulting from **natural disasters** expose the cumulative implications of human decisions. Prevention is possible and often less costly than disaster relief and response. **Disaster risk can be reduced** by strengthening resilience: the ability of societies to resist, cope with, and recover from shocks. Change the emphasis from reducing or compensating disaster losses and damage to transforming the underlying drivers that generate risk in the first place.
- ✓ Coordinate and harmonize the diversity of initiatives towards a common framework and regional partnership for strengthening national and regional surveillance and response capacity for emerging infectious diseases in the 48 countries of the Asia Pacific Region could help to reduce the risk of **spread of epidemics or emergence of new diseases**. In this agenda, it must be included as well an initiative to foster the development of tools and methodologies to produce a sufficiently refined assessment of the distribution and profile of disease emergence risks that encompasses geographic heterogeneity.
- ✓ Work on the priority areas that will enhance the **opportunities through a better educational system** towards the next 15 years: access, equity, quality, relevance, lifelong learning and governance and financing. It will require to foster collaboration amongst UNESCO, respective ministries of education, NGOs, CSOs, and other educational partners in order to increase and sustain enrolment; provide alternative educational opportunities; lead discussions and knowledge-sharing among relevant actors and stakeholders; as well as promote and defend the right to education for all in the Asia-Pacific.

- ✓ While the substance of integration with Southeast Asia remains primarily on economics, it is important to **move into a more comprehensive political and security-level integration**. Clear commitment and leadership from governments, the business sector and civil society is critical.
- ✓ The community will be tasked with leading the **strengthening of regional cooperation** in the **fight against corruption**, collaboratively defining specific annual indicators and assessing their implementation, such as achieving effective anti-corruption policies, legislation and strategies.

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North African countries Prospective Assessment

Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt Arab Republic, Libya, and Mauritania

Current situation of poverty indicators in the region

Using the medical argot and in the context of poverty alleviation, we might say that this area is not characterised by an emergency situation, but by the necessity for an urgent action.

Reviewing some of the indicators selected to monitor the poverty topics in this investigation, we started by looking at the Wealth per capita (measured in terms of GDP per capita in PPP), indicator that situates this area in a medium-low position in the world ranking, with an average of around 13,000 USD per capita (over the last 5 years). During the 2000's decade, the area experienced high rates of growth (more than 5% per year), and the world economic crisis just slightly affected the region during its first years (reducing this increase two percent points or less, but maintaining a moderate dynamism). Following the IMF forecasts, new recovered growth is expected for the next years (with a fitted rate of growth of around 5% again).

In this context, North African countries considered have developed and caught up almost a half the EURO-15 average GDP per capita,, having experienced an important increase over the last years (during the first years of 2000's this ratio was around 33% and, at the end of two decades, it could be of around 46%). So, in two decades the evolution has been positive, but not enough to radically accelerate the rhythm of convergence with the more developed neighbours in the north. In short, albeit a maintained rate of growth of around 5% that can seem important, it is not enough to resolutely reduce the wealth gap with the richer countries.

Attending to another usual poverty indicator, the percentage of persons living with less than 2 USD per day (in PPP terms) is close to the 9%, showing an excellent evolution in last years (with a continuous decrease from a 15% just 10 years ago). Although this record being good news, probably the bad quality of statistics in rural areas could be hiding a part of the problem.

Exploring in depth these macro-magnitudes, the area continues to show an important inequality gap. Just 1% of income is owned by the poorest decile of population (three times less than in other poor regions around the globe). So, the society fracture can be considered as a crucial point to solve over the next years. This circumstance is linked with the extreme differences between the rural and urban areas.

In this region, poverty is especially dramatic in rural areas. Therefore, unequal level of development can be highlighted not just using the income spread between the first and the last decile or revenues, but also using geographical comparisons driven by the inhabitant size. Following IFDA (2007), this type of poverty is based on three elements: *(i) scarcity and vulnerability of natural resources, (ii) major limitations and challenges of the agricultural sector*

that influence the livelihoods of vulnerable rural populations; and (iii) major institutional and policy constraints to rural poverty reduction.

Attending to some infrastructure indicators, the area has a relative positive situation compared with the rest of the poorest areas in the world. Electricity access considerably improved since 2000 and, now, more than 85% of population can use electricity devices normally. Obviously, it opens the door for a faster evolution in the percentage of ICT users even in less developed rural areas. Concerning this indicator, the area exhibits record levels among developing regions. As it is well-known, some of the causes of the recent expansion of the “Arab awakening” have been tightly linked to this phenomenon of, to some extent, free access to social media, mobiles apps, international press accessibility etc.

Linked to this last comment, the political situation in the region is one of the most important concerns in the short-term. The ranking in the indicator of “political stability and absence of violence” has clearly worsened in last years. The suppression of several authoritarian regimes in the region has produced an expected transitional period where some difficulties arise. Obviously, previous dictatorships in Egypt, Libya or, even Tunisia, have produced a large period of “stability” in these countries (of course, paying a high cost in terms of freedom and absence of civil rights respect). Currently, the “change of regime” is doubly involved in the creation of new rules of coexistence and some dangers of religious radicalization. In this sense, the future of some countries in the area is totally uncertain, depending on the evolution of the reconstruction of the states or, even, the danger of becoming in a “failed state” (especially in the case of Libya).

Attending to some indicators about health, the area is relatively close to some of the more developed countries and, to some extent, the health system can be considered a case of partial success, showing good indicators in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality, reduced malnutrition prevalence, prenatal care for women, reduced HIV prevalence etc. It is necessary to point out the important increase in the government expenditure in health per capita (25% of increase in last years).

Regarding some infrastructure basics as “improved water access and sanitation facilities”, the percentage is close to 90% of access for the entire population. Here, the problem of distant and bad communicated settlements in their vast geography produce a complicated solution for this problem in order to achieve larger coverage in next years.

(Reduction or alleviation) “Axes of poverty” in the region and more likely scenario for the next 20-30 years

Trying to draw the most likely and consolidated trends for this region, we take into consideration the “poverty topics” that experts have selected producing a higher impact (against poverty) and a higher probability of occurrence. Of course, it does not mean that there are not more issues to pay

attention to in the future in order to tackle poverty. However, these topics must be taken into account for sure.

Observing the results, we can highlight the following aspects:

- ✓ Issues related with **“bad health” won’t be a decisive dimension** in this area. It is expected that North African countries will quickly achieve performances very close to their northern neighbours in this topic.
- ✓ Some aspects linked to demographic evolution (specifically **infant mortality and fertility rate**) will converge to the more developed countries marks. So, a slower increase of the population of this area could be expected.
- ✓ One of the most important warnings in the area is the potential involvement in **epidemics and health emergencies**. The geographical proximity to some areas where these diseases can arise provokes this structural vulnerability in the North African countries.
- ✓ **ICT better accession and emergence of new technologies** is seen as a sure and important driver in the area in terms of poverty reduction. Probably, the fast “electrification” of the area (in some countries as Morocco is almost of 100% yet and it was achieved in just 10 years) is behind this promising continuous and fast evolution.

NOPOOR experts consider that the current trends showed by the indicators previously analysed will continue enhancing the possibilities of poverty reduction in this area. In this scenario, some basic drivers in poverty reduction are foreseen as almost sure in the next years.

Poverty topics that would deserve more attention to change the future

Attending now to the topics that have been marked as “having high importance (impact in term of poverty) but with a low probability of occurrence”, the NOPOOR experts have highlighted the following issues:

- ✓ The actual deployment of commercial exchanges between the two shores of the Mediterranean is seen as an unavoidable pillar to advance in the poverty alleviation in the region. Unfortunately, the experts expressed some **doubts about the occurrence of large equitable trade agreements** with this area.
- ✓ Related with of human mobility and decent conditions of labour, the experts consider that the **absence of liberalisation and support of balanced human mobility** will continue being a problem in the area.
- ✓ The possibility of **labour conditions precarization** is observed as a very high risk in this area.
- ✓ In some way linked to the previous aspect but now in a wider spectrum, the **lack of improvement in societal and ethical values** remains as an important obstacle to reduce multidimensional poverty in the region.

- ✓ As an important criticism to the communication between scientists and policy-makers, the practically **absence of policies based in scientific findings** is seen as an important problem to definitely advance in poverty reduction in this area.

About market fragility

Going further in assessing which are the final causes of labour market fragility in North African Countries, experts highlighted the low degree of labour organization in the sense that trade unions are not common (except in the case of Tunisia). However, they pointed out the notable differences within the region. Probably, the post-colonial history has determined very different habits, separating clearly two clusters: Morocco - Tunisia - Algeria and Egypt – Libya.

Even taking into account these differences, the informal sector is predominant or, at least, widely extended and, then, the actual labour conditions are very fuzzy.

Another aspect pointed out by the experts is that the area supports an important conditionality coming from the South-South migration, with great pressure of new incomers on wages. This situation produces additional huge distortions in these countries, producing a “push effect” between the native population, now more motivated to migrate to the North searching better labour conditions.

The social fracture is considered as an important obstacle too. To some extent, the tribal issues and ethnical conflicts play a big obstacle in developing a secure and steady market.

About emergence and propagation of military conflicts

The area is currently facing an enormous fragility of the state structures after the “Arab Spring”. Nowadays, the political stability has not yet been achieved and there is a danger of geographical disintegration in some countries, mostly in those where the political division of the geography was the result of the allies’ agreement after the Second World War, mixing (or separating) very different cultures and ethnicities.

There is a secular rivalry between several countries in the area (Morocco – Algeria predominantly), producing some constraints in the expansion of trade agreements and capital and goods movements in the area.

The experts consider as a priority enhancing a wide spectrum of relationships between both shores of the Mediterranean basin to efficiently combat the eruption of conflicts.

About human balance mobility

Regarding the possibility to facilitate the human mobility, the experts consider that the erratic EU policy in this aspect is not aiding. The regional conflicts boost migration for economic and security reasons (asylum). This situation will be maintained during some years and the push effect will continue boosting migration pressures.

In the medium-term, the ageing path in EU could raise the necessity of human flows from the Southern countries. The problem here is to define “a balanced” human mobility, even more when youth is at the center of both this topic and that of poverty alleviation.

In the domestic sphere, the rural-urban migration seems an unstoppable phenomenon. Inequalities and severe differences in opportunities are substantial and unavoidable problems that will produce this continuous exodus. Of course, the problem of marginalization in suburbs emerges as well.

About policies based in scientific results

Measuring the efficiency of policies based on this knowledge is difficult. There is a clear problem of connexion between institutions (payers), researchers, and policy-makers (theoretically, end-users of these studies).

There is a lack of confidence in results coming for social sciences. Conflicts and different results produce distrust in these studies. In basic or applied sciences, the problem arises from the copyrights held by research funders.

Dynamics of poverty in the region and policy recommendations

Summarizing the main aspects of the experts’ considerations enounced above, some priorities arise:

Although an important sub-set of the multidimensional poverty indicators for this area can place it in a good rank in terms of poverty reduction, the positive trends showed in last years should be continued since the **fragility of these advances could be easily reverted**.

Health improvement, more balanced population growth, rural and urban electrification, new ICT accession... are **necessary conditions to achieve a faster progress in the future, but they are not enough to ensure it**. Educational improvement, professional capacitation, public and private stimulus to innovative start-ups, modernisation of the economy structures... are urgent in order to definitely achieve the status of the more developed countries.

Combating the social fracture represents one of the more important challenges of the region in the next years. Military conflicts, terrorism and danger of religious radicalization are top problem to be faced in terms of urgency, but a **decisive advance in spreading societal and ethical values is crucial** in order to build a solid base for the future of these societies.

In a mutual relationship with the previous aspect, the **regulation of a labour market from a fluid dialogue** between policy-makers, workers and entrepreneurs should be at the basis of the new labour framework for the next years.

Producing **conditions for a generalised decent life** in these territories (in terms of personal and community security, equal access to health and education, social protection, infrastructure

facilities, sanitation, electricity...) can be considered as the pillar to stabilise a sustainable growth of the area, having beneficial effects in society integration and more balanced human mobility.

Free Trade Areas as a driver of economic growth (and global poverty alleviation) should be **boosted in the area**. In this context, non-generalist approaches must be proposed, **taking into account the scientific findings**. In the past, well-intentioned measures were implemented, producing undesirable effects in terms of poverty alleviation. Better financial regulation is seen as a fundamental aspect in order to boost these agreements.

As all these countries are imports-dependent, specifically in terms of raw materials and energy sources, the international instability in the exchange rates plays a crucial role in achieving a sustainable path in developing. In the following years, the emergence of multipolar growth drivers supported by the emergence of some emergent countries (Russia, India, China, South Korea, Brazil...) can produce a steadier scenario. Using different currencies and satisfying more than a “foreign customer” (diversifying the demand) is seen as a driver of stability of the external markets (see World Bank, 2011, pg. 10).

In the domestic domain, more equally distributed wealth and fewer incentives to rural-urban migration could lead to developing regional industrial poles. However, some experts did not consider the concentration around cities as a fundamental problem if they are considered as a natural change in rural areas, developing more medium size (“human size”) cities, trying to avoid desertification process. To some extent, a kind of urbanization of the rural areas could be considered.

The idea of a positive “ripple effect” is underlying all of these proposals. **Creating building capacities in a wider way in terms of social and geographical inclusion** could derive in solving human conflicts (undesired mobility and violent events), inequality in resources and wealth distribution, access to welfare state benefits...

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South Asia Prospective Assessment

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan

Current State of Poverty Indicators in the Region

According to the World Bank (2015), South Asia has experienced a robust and steady growth rate in the last 20 years, averaging at around six percent a year. These growth rates translate into declining poverty, as well as an improvement in many critical sectors of development. Nonetheless, South Asia remains one of the most vulnerable regions of the world and still records the largest number of people living in extreme poverty.

To get a better picture of overall regional development, we first examine some specific poverty indicators. In terms of GDP per capita, South Asia experienced a steady growth rate beginning in 2000 until the years of the global economic crisis (2007-2008), where a moderate slowdown occurred. In the following years, the South Asian region was able to slowly pick up former growth rates, mostly driven by a strong expansion in India and favourable oil prices, as stated by the World Bank (2015). It is expected that cheaper oil imports helped to reduce subsidy bills, thus easing inflationary pressure. These favourable external conditions, coupled with a robust consumption growth in India, helped South Asia to become the fastest growing region in the world by the end of 2014.

Taking a closer look at another practical and commonly-used poverty indicator, the percent of people living with less than 2 USD per day (in PPP terms), draws our attention to more critical areas concerning the region. Even with a significant decrease of almost 23 percent in just 10 years, South Asia remains one of most exposed regions in this area, with 37 percent of the population living with less than 2 USD per day.

A frequent difficulty with this indicator is poor quality and low availability of data for rural areas, which can make results misleading. The actual number of people living in poverty is expected to be higher. In greater detail, we can identify two concerning developments. First, we can see an increasing inequality gap; the income share held by the poorest decile of the population dropped under three percent by 2015. Second, over 50 percent of the population still finds themselves under very dramatic and vulnerable employment conditions, which makes South Asia the worst-ranking region worldwide in this category.

As noted by a World Bank report in 2015, inter-regional inequality is a rising concern, meaning that poverty in South Asia is not endemic, but increasingly concentrated in particular areas. It is important to note that growing inequality, in combination with high growth rates, may stall future poverty reduction, potentially leading to economic distortion and unequal power relations (Rama, M., Bételle, T., et. al. 2015). This alarming trend is also apparent when taking a closer look at political stability and corruption indicators, where South Asia again remains one of the most

exposed regions. All these factors point relate to the region's concerning labour and social conditions, and should be considered as crucial points to address in the coming years.

Turning to some infrastructural indicators, we can make the following assessments. In the case of access to electricity, South Asia remains relatively unimpressive compared to other developing regions, with five percent growth since 2000. Water accessibility and access to sanitation facilities experienced relatively low improvements, with a 15-year gain of seven percent and six percent, respectively.

In comparison with other developing regions, South Asia fares relatively poorly in terms of health indicators, particularly related to women and children. While the prevalence of malnutrition in children under five years of age decreased slightly between 2010 and 2015 (from 32.1 percent to 30.2 percent), this figure still remains much higher than the average for the five other regions considered (9.3 percent). The infant mortality rate for South Asia has decreased notably in the last five years, from 47.5 percent to 34.2 percent, but still remains higher than the rates of all other developing regions, aside from Sub Saharan Africa. Health expenditures per capita have indeed increased in recent years, almost doubling to 57.1 USD, but again remain far lower in comparison to regions like Latin America and North Africa, where expenditures are estimated to be 638.5 and 475.2 USD, respectively. The percent of pregnant women receiving prenatal care actually decreased between 2010 and 2015 from 62.2 percent to 55.9 percent. This figure is also much lower than the average for other developing regions (93.5 percent).

Likely Trends and Scenarios for the Near Future (20 years)

In the following section, we will take a closer look at the topics which the experts identified as "high impact" and "high probability of occurrence" in order to draw a more detailed picture of likely future trends and scenarios. While we focus here on issues specifically noted by the experts, this does not suggest that there are no other influencing factors that warrant attention in the future.

- ✓ **The reductions of infant mortality and average fertility:** These are two of the most important positive trends identified, and experts predicted continued progress, and continued impact on poverty reduction for the future.
- ✓ **Improving educational systems:** This measure is considered to have a high impact on poverty reduction by increasing access to better livelihood opportunities. This is another positive trend where experts predicted growth for the near future.
- ✓ **The fear of the emergence and propagation of military conflict:** One of the more alarming developments identified by experts for the region, this is point is highly associated with a second concern, the fear of:
- ✓ **The growing influence of China as a global economic power:** Tensions are reportedly rising in the region, due to China's comparatively significant nuclear and military power, and recent economic growth. In comparison with other regions, countries within South Asia are not highly economically integrated, which has allowed China to become an

increasingly important trading partner. Experts noted the potential for military or economic conflicts in the long-term future as a result of resource shortages in the region (water, oil, etc.), but there is no consensus on the real probability of this occurring.

Poverty Topics that Require More Attention to Change Future Prospects

In this section, we will attend to the topics marked by the experts as “high impact” and “low probability of occurrence”. This category draws attention to issues that should be more highly prioritized to achieve greater poverty reduction.

- ✓ **Liberalisation and support of balanced human mobility:** This was identified as one of the most important topics in this category. More specifically, this concern refers to limitations on migration related to socioeconomic inequality. Expert opinions varied on the question of probability, with some expecting protective policies to continue in developed countries, and others predicting that certain countries in South Asia will release controls to promote migration to increase labour force inflows. Generally, coordinated policies need to be implemented to ensure that migration has an overall positive influence on sending and receiving countries.
- ✓ **Improving the state of labour conditions:** Again, the probability of improvement is difficult to generalize across the region; experts tended to believe that this issue was more likely to receive attention in India. Regarding other South Asian countries, it was the general sentiment that labour conditions were not likely to be addressed, due to factors like excess labour supply, lack of unions, and lack of interest by the government in making changes favouring workers, which is strongly related to the aspiration of governments to stay competitive and to keep FDI inflows stable. Child labour and working conditions for women were thought to be even less likely to improve.
- ✓ **Increasing investments in scientific research:** This measure was identified as having a high impact on poverty reduction, but a low likelihood of occurrence. This is linked with a second poverty reduction measure--**increasing the number of policies based on scientific results**--which was also identified as “high impact” and “low probability”.
- ✓ **Environmental degradation and awareness:** This topic was identified by experts as very important, but uncertain. There were a variety of opinions on the topic of progress in development of sustainable energy. Some participants believed progress was certain, while others, in reference to Pakistan and India, questioned access to other energy sources, insinuating that continued reliance on oil and coal was likely. There is a general sense that environmental protection is secondary to the need to continue developing. Regarding climate change, there was a general consensus among experts that it will occur, but varying degrees of urgency for future action to address it.

Policy Recommendations

To summarizing the main aspects of the points expanded upon above, the following results and priorities arise:

- ✓ **Fertility rates** are often a focus in this realm of improvement of health, though the effectiveness of this approach for South Asia has been called into question by experts. However, research in South Asia has suggested that infant mortality rates are associated with high fertility rates for young mothers, meaning that a reduction in fertility rates may have a positive impact on infant mortality rates (Raj, A., McDougal, L., Rusch, M. 2013)
- ✓ According to the World Bank, 23 percent of the people who are routinely hungry in the world live in South Asia (The World Bank, 2015). **Hunger and malnutrition** are concerns that can be intricately connected to other indicators, for example as both contributing to and resulting from low GDP. For this reason, they should be prioritized for any poverty reduction strategy to achieve maximum impact. As it stands poverty is a multidimensional problem which on the very basis leads to malnutrition and hunger. In the case of South Asia one of the main concerns is the rising inequality gap between rich and poor which can be directly correlated to the poor labor conditions despite the high growth rates. One key aspect pointed out by the experts could be the formalization of measures strengthening an inclusive economic system by trying to introduce a social security system. In addition, an effort should be made to facilitate a discussion on a global level about the drivers of hunger and malnutrition inherent in the international system, and ways to transition to a more equitable future.
- ✓ **Formalization of the improvement of labour conditions** is a possibility. This could involve training for employees, but also creating standards with international firms that are often associated with poor working conditions in developing countries. As suggested by the experts, international firms should take an active role in creating suitable working conditions for employees in South Asian countries, if only to avoid the stigma of perpetuating negative working experiences.
- ✓ Political instability and corruption must be addressed as part of the trend of growing inter-regional inequality. Most countries experienced colonization before becoming independent sovereign states, leaving them in very fragile states of governance which often led to a pursuit of national security through a destructive military apparatuses rather than security for citizens by enhancing government structures (Kumar Nepali, R. 2009). In addition to **targeting increasing income disparities** as a source of political and social instability, **education and civic engagement** could play a critical role in shifting governance structures in the future.
- ✓ The tensions emerging as a result of the influence of China in the region are related not only to China's growing presence as a trade partner, but also in part to China's propensity in recent years to contribute aid (Anderson, A., Ayres, A. 2015). Some of this tension may be allayed by **cooperation between China and South Asian countries** in development initiatives and infrastructure projects, for example. In addition to facilitating increased

connectivity, this may open up opportunities for trade and investment, and could benefit the entire region.

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Latin America Prospective Assessment

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Jamaica, México, Panamá, Perú, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, Guatemala, Bolivia, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, El Salvador and Haití

Current situation of poverty indicators in the region

This section describes the evolution of a set of indicators that has occurred in the last 15 years, with the aim of describing the current situation, in terms of poverty, of the Latin American area in relation to that recorded in the rest of the underdeveloped areas considered here (Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and South Asia). The first thing to note about the comparison by areas is that the Latin American area is situated in a privileged level being, along with Middle East, the one that recorded the best performances for almost all indicators.

Concerning per capita income, an indicator that measures the economic wealth of a country or area, it reached \$ 13,000 (measured in PPP terms) in the Latin American area on average in recent years. While this indicator is placed in a medium-high level compared to other less developed areas (second only to East Asia and Middle East), it is worth noting that is three times lower than in the countries of the euro area same period. Future trends indicate some acceleration in the evolution of this indicator over the next five years (growth of 2.7% per year according to the International Monetary Fund). However growth rates are similar to those recorded in the euro area countries, not predicting in this sense a process of convergence with more developed areas.

Regarding poverty indicators, the levels of population living on less than \$ 2 a day have been reduced by half since the beginning of the XXI century to the present. In 2015, this figure stood at 8.6% well below those recorded in other underdeveloped areas. However, the high inequality in area results in the data not being homogeneous for the entire population. Thus, if the analysis is distinguishing between urban and rural areas, very high levels of poverty are found in rural areas. Specifically, the rate of rural poverty is, in 2015, almost 50% of the population. This fact becomes even more negative when compared with that of other less developed areas, where lower percentages were recorded in all cases, except in the case of sub-Saharan Africa (57%).

In terms of governance it has experienced a positive development in recent years. The indicators of corruption control, political stability and absence of violence recorded, for the whole of Latin America, the highest levels compared to other areas, only matched by Middle East. Moreover, in some countries, efforts of improvement in this area are above average, some dispersion being observed within the area. Thus, while the average value for the control of corruption indicator is 3.8 (on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 corresponds to the most positive value) there are countries within the area where the indicator reaches 6.7.

Concerning health indicators, Latin America again recorded the highest levels, along with the Middle East area. Life expectancy stands at 74.5 years; the percentage of children under age 5 suffering from malnutrition is 4%; the percentage of women receiving care during pregnancy is 97.2%; the fertility rate stands at 2.2 births per woman; and the infant mortality rate is 14 children per 1000 births. It is worth noting that all these indicators have evolved positively since 2000, being expected that this trend will continue in the future. Finally also worth noting that while health spending has almost doubled since 2000, reaching today \$ 475 per person, its level of spread within the area is still very high. Thus, the range of variation is between countries where health spending is only of \$ 300 to health spending reaching over \$ 850 per person.

Regarding education indicators, they reflect the efforts made in recent years in this area by Latin American governments. Spending on education (4.5% of GDP) is the highest compared with other areas (surpassed only by 6% in North Africa), while the percentage of people who complete primary education is 96%.

On labor market, although unemployment rates are not very high in the area, jobs are characterized by low quality and poor working conditions. Thus, the percentage of people in vulnerable employment (37.4%) is very high compared to that in higher level areas (very close to the figure recorded in Asia and far higher than in Africa). In addition the data is even more negative if one takes into account that this indicator registered a decline since in 2000 the percentage of people in vulnerable employment stood at 30.8%.

In short, and considering that the Latin American area is still far from the more developed areas, poverty is lower than that recorded in other developing areas. Thus, the best performances are recorded in the indicators related to per capita income, poverty, governance and education, indicators which in turn have underwent positive developments in recent years. However, the main weaknesses relate to the high heterogeneity that still exists in the area and poor working conditions that increase vulnerability in employment and thus the risk of falling into poverty. However, future actions should be oriented in this direction to facilitate progress and the elimination of inequalities.

“Axes of poverty” in the region and more likely scenario for the next 20-30 years

This section describes the vision that the NOPOOR panel has for the future of the Latin American region. Thus, from the 25 topics analyzed, the following table shows those, being the most important in reducing poverty levels, have a high probability of occurrence in the next 20-30 years.

Highest impact and highest likelihood of occurrence

T6	Reduction in infant mortality and in average fertility in developing countries
T1	Progress in the development of sustainable energy and promotion of environmental awareness
T14	Improve health and reduce hunger
T22	Increase of human rights violation

Medium impact and highest likelihood of occurrence

T8	Emerging of new communication technologies facilitating people's life
T9	Increase the access to ICT in developing economies
T18	Degradation of the environment due to climate change
T21	Emergence and propagation of military conflicts

Highest impact and medium likelihood of occurrence

T3	Increase in governance
T4	Improvement of the labour conditions
T15	Enhance the opportunities through a better educational system
T16	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
T19	Increase of natural disasters
T10	Increase investment on scientific research
T13	Balance urban-rural migration
T23	Worsening of global economic conditions
T24	Corruption increase

The overall conclusion is that the NOPOOR experts expect a positive development for the Latin American area in the coming years. Many of the drivers that reduce poverty recorded an evolution in this direction, thereby reducing levels of poverty and misery in the area. Thus, the scenario that is assigned a higher probability of occurrence is characterized by:

- ✓ An improvement in **governance** and institutions of Latin American countries will create an atmosphere of greater trust between citizens, increasing the level of commitment and participation. In this context it is easier to apply the necessary measures to boost economies and develop these countries.
- ✓ Important advances in the **education system** will increase the opportunities for entering the job market for young Latin Americans. However, although access to education has increased considerably in Latin America in recent years, the quality has not followed. In this sense it is a priority to improve the quality of education, especially in the initial stages

of the process. For achieving the elimination of corruption and elite systems that prevent certain reforms being implemented, especially during election periods, it is crucial.

- ✓ In turn it is also expected an improvement in **working conditions**, which will allow a better access to suitable positions according to workers' training, thus avoiding the loss of human capital and encouraging innovation and development in more productive sectors that will further boost growth. While the improvement of working conditions is linked to a context of economic growth, it does not quite materialize in these contexts if there is not a real interest from governments to promote welfare policies. In this sense the historical problem that has had the Latin American area is that in countries with higher economic growth this support lacked from the government; while in those countries that had this additional support, the economic environment was not right for the improvement of working conditions to materialize. To address this issue one of the main focuses of attention in Latin America should be the informal economy, often fueled by heavy bureaucratic and administrative systems and high tax rates, which could easily be changed. The improvement in the informal sector in turn ensures the improvement in the formal sector due to interactions between them. A work of communication from the part of governments is also necessary to make citizens understand the benefits of formal versus informal economy.
- ✓ In this context of sustained development, an improvement of **health conditions** is possible, along with increased access to water, a basic element for a country to ensure minimum levels of health of its citizens. To improve health levels is necessary to promote good nutrition (resume traditional nutrition), reduce pollution levels, increase preventive actions and promote the universality of health access among other measures. In support of this trend plays the fact that by improving education levels and the development of communication technologies, people increasingly have access to better information about their health and how to combat diseases. However, playing against are the competing interests of pharmaceutical, which governments should curb.
- ✓ In turn, higher educational levels and improved sanitary conditions allow a change in demographic trends towards systems with **lower rates of infant mortality and fertility**, allowing the improvement of women's conditions in Latin American societies.
- ✓ All this occurs in a context in which the development of **communication technologies** will be constant. Increased access to these technologies will improve the lives of citizens.

However, this scenario will not be without certain risks that are also assigned a high probability of occurrence and some of them are listed here below:

- ✓ **Increase in corruption**
- ✓ **Increase in the violation of human rights**
- ✓ **State of emergency and spread of military conflicts**
- ✓ **Environmental degradation due to climate change**
- ✓ **Increase in the occurrence of natural disasters**

While the last two go beyond the management capacity of a nation, to the extent that they should be considered as targets of global dimension, increased corruption, violation of human rights and the spread of military conflict should see their evolution slowed thus allowing improved governance and better institutional to be implemented in the countries of the area.

In this sense, in relation to the **violation of human rights** in the Latin American area it is necessary to pay attention to:

- ✓ Strong persecution experienced by indigenous peoples who defend the land in which they live and, in many cases, is used as a business object by governments supporting extractive policies. While the recognition of indigenous peoples was a change in politics, today these advances are threatened by extractive actions.
- ✓ Other forms of human rights violations in Latin America are the high levels of violence in the demonstrations and the generalization of a sector of very corrupt police task. Both aspects also require special attention in order to advance in this issue.

Regarding **corruption**, in Latin America, the main problem in fighting against it is that it is socially accepted. Moreover, court systems are not independent in all cases, so many cases of corruption go unpunished. The fight against corruption should be encouraged to promote measures to ensure more control and greater transparency in the institutions.

Finally, regarding **military conflicts**, their slowdown is linked to the roots of its origin: inequality and the existence of democratic systems that are malfunctioning. In Latin America these internal conflicts are characterized by a high military intervention that seeks to counter the high corruption within the police. For example, in Brazil, the favelas are occupied by the military and not only by the police.

Poverty topics that will deserve more attention to change the future

Despite this relatively optimistic view on the future of Latin America, improving certain aspects that would promote further development of the area or increase the speed at which it can reduce its poverty levels is still pending.

In this sense it is interesting to analyze the topics to which the NOPOOR experts assigned a low probability of occurrence, despite having a high impact on reducing poverty in the area. These topics are shown in the following table:

Highest impact and lowest likelihood of occurrence

T7	Promotion of ethical and societal values
T2	Global agreement on the fair distribution of wealth derived from natural resources
T17	Liberalise and support balanced human mobility
T12	Policies based on scientific results
T5	Large diffusion of equitable trade agreements

In a scenario to which is assigned a low probability of occurrence, the fight against poverty would be driven by the following triggers:

- ✓ The **promotion of ethical and social values** as a basis for more just and equitable societies. The promotion of ethical values is important to change the perception of people about the policies of redistribution and poverty reduction and facilitate their implementation. In this regard it should be favored the support of universal public policy and avoid situations where public coexists with private, generating inequality to the extent that access to private systems is restricted people with a high level of income.
- ✓ **Development of global agreements to ensure the fair distribution of wealth** derived from natural resources, avoiding situations of exploitation and domination in many cases leading to the violation of human rights.
- ✓ Support for **human mobility** in decent conditions that will lead to the personal and professional development of individuals who are limited in their countries of origin.
- ✓ **Spread of trade agreements** that will facilitate the development of products more competitive in international markets and encourage diversification in the basket of exported products, reducing the weight of raw materials and the increase of manufactured products.
- ✓ Coordination of policies and search of coherence through **scientific analysis** to avoid the loss of resources and inconsistency that often characterizes the achievement of opposite goals in the applied policies.

Priorities in the fight against poverty in the region

Among the most urgent priorities that must be addressed in the Latin American region to fight poverty, NOPOOR experts emphasize two of the topics included in the most likely scenario:

- ✓ Enhance the opportunities through a better educational system
- ✓ Improve health and reduce hunger

This figure can again be optimistic when thinking about managing the Latin American area within the next few years in its fight against poverty, to the extent that the most important priorities will

foreseeable that be addressed, in all likelihood. Still, NOPOOR experts highlight the need for governments in the area to implement certain actions aiming to increase the speed in the pace of poverty reduction. In this sense, the NOPOOR experts stress the need for:

- ✓ A change in the **archaic model of development in Latin America**. This is characterized by a high concentration of ownership, low support for entrepreneurs and generalization of an oligarchic strain of thought in which the elites are the ones in control.
- ✓ Another big problem to eradicate poverty is represented by the **financialization** processes which we are witnessing in recent years and the increasing debt of households and families. These processes increase vulnerability and a return to poverty.
- ✓ It is very important to promote **social protection systems** that are experiencing a decline in recent years, in which we see a commercialization of many dimensions of well-being. One example of how social protection systems fight poverty occurs in Brazil, where social protection gives the right to receive a minimum wage without contributions throughout life. Several empirical studies have shown how this measure, which began with the 1988 Constitution, has helped reduce poverty. It is also necessary that measures are maintained over time and, in this regard, the minimum wage applied in Brazil has increased by 100% over the past 15 years.
- ✓ Finally, one needs to keep in mind that it is not foreseeable that the changes be promoted from the middle classes through social movements, as has happened in other geographical areas of the world, since, in Latin America, there is a high level of discontent among the middle classes. But they may come from the **younger generation who, thanks to a higher educational level**, will change the behavior habits very common in Latin American society (violence, racism, corruption ...). Although for these new generations to be heard a breakthrough in the democratic system is necessary, which will seek to implement a real democracy that will increase confidence in its institutions. However, the hope is on the educational improvement of society and the political changes promoted by social movements, both being long-term trends.

Policy recommendations

Although the Latin American region has made significant progress in recent years in terms of poverty, ranking it one of the developing areas closer to the standards of more developed countries, it is still pending progress on certain topics in order to increase social welfare among citizens, the possibilities of access to decent work as well as the political and civic participation, all of which promote the creation of more just, peaceful and egalitarian societies. In particular the following improvements are proposed:

- ✓ While there has been significant progress in achieving greater access to **education** this is not universal. In this sense, the region should focus its efforts on extending access to

secondary education, minimum educational level for the population to obtain the necessary income to escape poverty. In turn, this expansion of coverage must be accompanied by a quality educational offer, for which investment in education is a key element. In this sense, it is necessary to increase investment levels, which are still far below those recorded in other more developed areas, and prevent their concentration in the areas of higher incomes. Reforms of the education system in this direction, which would allow increasing opportunities for access to the labor market for young Latin Americans, require the elimination of corruption and elite systems.

- ✓ In turn, an improvement of **working conditions** will allow access to more suitable positions with the training of workers avoiding the loss of human capital and encouraging innovation and development in more productive sectors that help boost the country's growth. To address this issue one of the main focuses of attention in Latin America should be the informal economy, often fueled by heavy bureaucratic and administrative systems and high tax rates, which could easily be changed. The improvement in the informal sector in turn ensures the improvement in the formal sector due to interactions between the two sectors.
- ✓ All these reforms would benefit from a favorable economic environment, for which is necessary the development of **economic structures less dependent on the international economy** and, thus, less vulnerable to the presence of external shocks. In this sense, the pursuit of economic systems that base their growth more on domestic demand and less on commodity export sector, reduce countries' exposure to shocks in international markets and reduce the dependence that the current tax systems Latin Americans have on the export sector.
- ✓ A major drag in the area, in the fight against poverty, it is associated with a high level of **corruption** that is socially acceptable. The fight against corruption should be encouraged to promote measures ensuring more control and greater transparency in the institutions, and greater involvement of civil society. The development of a policy of transparency of institutions involves ensuring citizens' access to information, encouraging their participation in government systems and promoting greater control by the civil society of governance and the fulfillment of obligations of their authorities. The use of new technologies could help create a more open government, to facilitate access and transmission of information and the participation of citizens in political systems. At the same time, attention should refocus on the fight against corruption in local governments, where there is less transparency and accountability at the national level.
- ✓ At the same time, **violence** is a serious problem in Latin America that has an impact on the health, welfare, economic development and security of the region. To assist the fight against violence and military conflicts, characterized by a military intervention that seeks to counter the high corruption within the police, it is necessary to work on the roots of its origin: first, along the lines of consolidation of more democratic institutions and the development of public security policies; and secondly in reducing inequalities between areas and social classes.

- ✓ In this vein, it is also worth noting that one of the major threats on the fight against poverty in the area is linked to the increase of human rights violation. In this sense, extractive policies that seek the exploitation of natural resources increase the persecution of indigenous peoples and dispossession of their lands. Progress on policy matters, concerning the rights already recognized in the past, of indigenous populations should also be among the priorities of governments in their agendas to fight against poverty.
- ✓ Finally it is necessary to bear in mind the deeply rooted **inequalities** in Latin American society, which must be taken into account by policy makers when developing and implementing public policies, whose effectiveness will be closely associated with these targeting the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

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Sub-Saharan African countries Prospective Assessment

Introduction

In Sub-Saharan Africa are situated six out of the world's ten most unequal countries (African Development Bank, 2012). This area has a relative negative situation compared to the rest of the poorest areas in the world (Latin America, Middle East, South Asia...). The region comprises 49 countries, all aligned in the Southern part of the Sahara and all having a tremendous cultural, linguistically and religious diversity. We are aware that one of the main failures of the development policies has been indeed the one-size-fits-all strategy, which does not take into account the country-specific constraints. Hence, we do not pretend to give a comprehensive overview of the region, but to draw a holistic picture in terms of the most important issues related to poverty. Some case studies shall illustrate the diversity of the region.

Even though significant progress has been made in several areas, Sub-Saharan Africa remains behind many other developing regions of the world with respect to most of the MDG (Millennium Development Goals). According to the last MDG report (United Nations, 2015), this region improved the fastest with regards to education and health. More girls are now in school and women are being represented in parliament. However, Sub-Saharan Africa faces big challenges, with rapid growth of population, high levels of poverty and conflict, lack of good governance, and degradation of the environment due to climate change. Around 40 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa still lives in extreme poverty in 2015² and the fast change in demography raises the issue of sustainability.

Across the region as a whole, child mortality rates fell from 72% between 2001 and 2010 to 56.8% between 2011 and 2015³. However, average child mortality rates remain high, reaching 63 deaths per 1000 live births in 2013, representing 2.8 million lives lost per year⁴. Therefore, the region still detains the highest rate of child mortality in the world.

Health expenditure per capita attained 50 US\$ per person in 2015.. At a first glance, this could be interpreted as very low compared to other developing countries like Latin America (638.5 US\$ per person), or even its neighbors in North African countries (475.2 US\$ per person). Nevertheless, in relation with its own GDP per capita, we can see that some improvements have been made. Hence, having relatively high expenditure in this area is quite normal. However, HIV is very widespread among people aged 15-49 (2.4 compared to a range of 0.1 in Latin America, Middle East and South Asia).

² United Nations. (2015). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015.

³ World Development Indicators, The World Bank; World Health Organization

⁴ Save the Children. (2013). Post-2015 briefing: Getting to zero in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Fertility rate is high, 5 births per woman. Malnutrition prevalence shows that a lot of children are still starving. Even though, the fertility rate is high and children are still considered as a labor source and as insurance for aged people (to take care of them). An explanation to this issue could be that households need to make sure that they have enough survivors (mortality rate) in order to ensure its continuity.

Electricity access has slightly improved: in 2015 only 30% of the share of population had access to electricity compared to 20% in 2010. By contrast, only 15% of the Sub-Saharan African rural population benefits from electricity. With regards to the internet use, only 5.7% of the population has access to Internet⁵. Therefore we can say that the impact on ICT users is negative in this area. The continent sorely lacks important infrastructure investments. In the next years to come, Sub-Saharan Africa will need to create jobs (the ILO's concept of "decent work") in order to tackle poverty.

⁵ World Development Indicators, The World Bank; World Health Organization

1. Which is the most likely future for this region? Predictable evolutions of significant trends

TABLE 1: topics ranked by impact

T19	Increase of natural disasters
T3	Increase in governance
T16	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
T18	Degradation of the environment due to climate change
T23	Worsening of global economic conditions
T24	Corruption increase
T15	Enhance the opportunities through a better educational system
T14	Improve health and reduce hunger
T21	Emergence and propagation of military conflicts
T6	Reduction in infant mortality and in average fertility in developing countries

Our program aims at building scenarios of the future of poverty, trying to answer the following question: what are the key drivers (trends) that will have an impact on poverty in the future ? Following the Nopoor’s project 2015 General Assembly meeting (Hanoi, Vietnam, 10-12 June 2015), a list of topics was prioritized and organized by impact, likelihood and pace of progress. The topics discussed can be ranked in two categories: factors that could reduce or alleviate poverty and factors which could inhibit its alleviation (Table 1). The Nopoor experts highlighted some of the hot topics linked to poverty in the region as having a higher impact (against poverty) and a higher probability of occurrence and topics which have high impact, but low probability of occurrence. Out of this analysis, we are seeking to formulate scenarios about the future of the region in the next two-three decades. The following topics have a high impact on poverty and poverty reduction and their trend will continue in Sub-Saharan region in the next years to come.

(T 19) Increase of natural disasters

Environmental sustainability is a core-pillar of the post-2015 agenda and a requisite for poverty alleviation. Natural disasters have a significant impact on poverty and poverty reduction. Epidemics, storms and droughts increase significantly the incidence of poverty. But the impact of drought on the incidence of poverty is more pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions of the developing world. The international community acknowledges that risks posed by natural and human-induced hazards and disasters are rapidly increasing worldwide. The frequency of natural disasters has increased during the last century in all parts of the world.

Several factors contribute to Africa's high vulnerability of disasters, including the rate of population growth, food insecurity, high levels of poverty, inappropriate use of natural resources, and failures of policy and institutional frameworks (ICSU Regional Office for Africa, 2007). Sub-Saharan Africa still face major challenges, in particular related to its vulnerability to external shocks and natural disasters. Looking at the regional distribution of disaster occurrence worldwide, Asia is the region that is most often struck by natural disasters (47.3%), followed by the Americas (22.4%), Europe (13.6%), Africa (13.3%) and Oceania (3.3%). In 2013, the distribution of disaster frequency in Africa was characterized as follows: hydrological disasters (77.3%), meteorological disasters (13.6%) and climatological disasters (9.1%). However, the number of victims continued to reduce during the years, mainly due to the number of victims of climatological disasters. Hydrological disasters are the second contributors to the total numbers of victims and are affecting more than 1.5 million people (Guha-Sapir, Hoyois, & Below, 2013).

The damages caused by the natural disasters in Africa remain extremely challenging, thus influencing people's lives. Studies show that droughts and combinations of droughts are the main causes of mortality and economic losses in sub-Saharan Africa. Droughts appear to be extremely severe in the region, much more than in the other regions of the world.

(T3) Increase in governance

Several interpretations have been given to the concept of governance until nowadays. The World Bank describes governance as "the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes (a) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; (b) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and (c) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them" (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2010).

The democratization of Sub-Saharan Africa is not yet completed, because of internal conflicts, political instability and vulnerability. African regimes are considered largely anocratic as a result⁶ and very much corrupted. The consequence of this trend over time was that the regimes showed no concern for transparency and accountability. In most countries, this has led to a high level of political instability and social alienation that has impaired both development efforts and environmental protection. There is a growing realization that economic reforms cannot be achieved without a much greater degree of decentralization and democratization in the political process. (African Technology Forum, vol 8, n° 1).

Improving local governance by asking more accountability, transparency of public affairs and involving the community in the decision making process is a prerequisite of poverty reduction.

⁶ Global report 2014

Most African countries now hold elections to determine their leaders. However, the majority of these elections are neither free nor fair. The run up to the elections is marred by illegal practices such as restricting voter registration, campaigning is limited, vote buying and intimidation are frequently observed. On the election day many ballot boxes are rigged and the counting of votes is incorrect. In some elections there is also violence before the elections and immediately after. Research by Bishop and Hoeffler (2014) suggests that the most commonly used malpractices take place in the run up to the election and not on the election day. However, most election observer organizations concentrate on the Election Day. In order to improve transparency, political practices and accountability, more resources should be provided to local and international organizations to monitor the entire election process and not just the Election Day. Hoeffler & Bishop suggest that most observer organizations concentrate on the election as an event, i.e. whether the election was fair. They therefore recommend that international organisations should put more emphasis on monitoring the run up to the elections, i.e. whether the elections were free⁷.

Findings from a Nopoor survey report⁸ reveal that there are huge discrepancies among Ghanaian population regarding the assessment of the economic situation; the majority (52%) reports the economic situation as fairly or very bad as against 34% fairly or very good. With regards to the interest in politics and political participation, the Ghanaians show a very high interest in public affairs. 44 % say they are 'very interested' and an additional share of 29 % describes itself as 'somewhat interested'. In obtaining political information the radio is by far the most important source for Ghanaians.

People in Africa enjoy unprecedented opportunities to vote and may have begun to transform themselves from "subjects" of past authoritarian systems into active "voters" under the present dispensation. However, they do not appear to fully grasp their political rights as "citizens," notably to regularly demand accountability from leaders. Even though policy-issues rank high on the priority list of the Ghanaian voters, they compete with the expectation that the MP has to 'buy' votes by 'supporting' voters to meet their personal needs. As such, Ghana, like most African political regimes, is yet to meet the minimum requirements of representative democracy. Elections can serve as conduit to give the poor a 'voice' but if the above findings in Ghana is anything to go by the poor most likely will be left speaking in a void (Bratton & Logan, 2006).⁹

Governance is a major issue in the discussion about the Post 2015 Development Agenda, as it is stipulated by the proposed 16th SDG: 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and

⁷ Bishop, S and Hoeffler, A (2014) Free and Fair Elections – A New Database, CSAE Working Paper WPS/2014-14 <http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/pdfs/csae-wps-2014-14.pdf>

⁸ The Voice of the Poor and Democracy: the case of Ghana, CDD-Ghana, <http://www.nopoor.eu/publication/voice-poor-ghana>

⁹ Logan, C. and Bratton, M. (2006) Voters But not Yet Citizens: the Weak Demand for Vertical Accountability in Africa's Unclaimed Democracies at www.afrobarometer.org

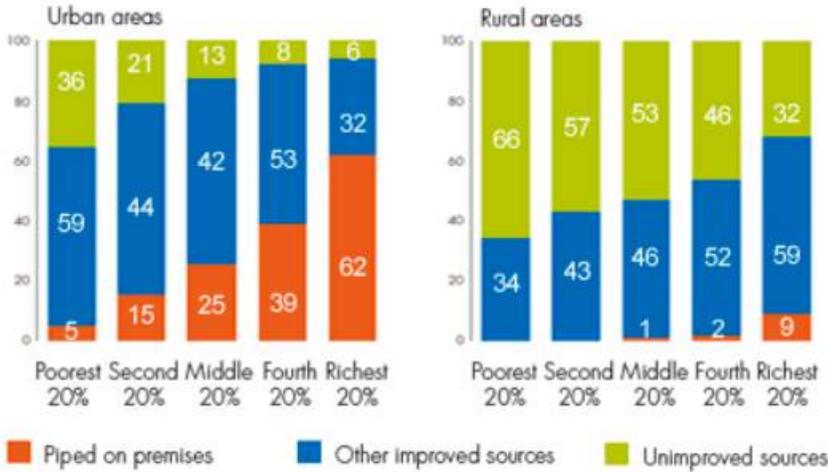
inclusive institutions at all levels'. The main challenge is to define adequate indicators to monitor progress in this domain. In order to do that first it is needed to develop statistical tools to improve the methods used to monitor and evaluate democracy and governance in the developing countries. Research conducted by the Nopoor project on the population's perception of governance in different African countries has consolidated the survey instruments used to monitor governance indicators. More globally, the analysis shows the relevance of survey-based indicators to monitor governance issue (Orkin, Razafindrakoto, & Roubaud). Sound statistical surveys of citizens' own experiences and perceptions bring insightful and policy-relevant results. The findings have been disseminated in the countries concerned (Burundi, Mali, Uganda) and among the different stakeholders involved in the ongoing process to define targets and indicators for SDG 16 on peace, justice and accountable institutions.

(T 16) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation

The region is facing a situation of **economic water scarcity**, and the current **institutional, financial and human capacities** for managing water are lacking in these countries. Access to water is crucial in Sub-Saharan Africa, in order to prevail the development of the region.

Sub-Saharan Africa experiences a contrasting case with 40% of the 783 million people without access to an improved source of drinking water from the region.

Access to water : **Drinking water coverage by wealth quintiles, urban and rural residence, sub-Saharan Africa, based on population-weight averages from 35 countries (percentage).**



(T18) Degradation of the environment due to climate change

The fast changing environmental challenges will force people to adapt and the most vulnerable are the poor. Local and regional impacts of climate change, such as droughts or floods inevitably affect the lives of the poor and make them fall even deeper into poverty. **Over 60% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa depends on agriculture for their livelihood.** Sub-Saharan Africa is the most vulnerable region in the world to climate change. The principal threats to biodiversity in Africa include land use and land cover change, mainly through conversion of natural ecosystems, particularly forests and grasslands, to agricultural land and urban areas (IAASTD, 2009).

Sub-Saharan Africa suffers from serious environmental problems, such as: deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, insect infestation. Three factors strongly increase the threat of environmental degradation: its demographics, its burden of foreign debt, and the lack of democracy.

The phenomenon of deforestation is occurring globally, in different types of forests, and for different reasons. **In other parts of the world, deforestation is mainly caused by commercial activities, while in Africa is associated with human activity.** Hence, due to population pressure and poverty, the deforestation in the region is likely to foster environmental degradation. Climate change has a strong impact on agriculture production.

SSA is a weak bargaining power with investors concerning production conditions. The weakness of budgetary resources facing the enormous needs of population push many African governments to easily accept the terms of contracts prepared by foreign investors. The only motivation of the African policy makers is the extraction and export of mineral resources or soil. These contracts are often designed to overcome foreign investors of any serious commitment to environmental compliance (relocation of trees destroyed in the mines, health conditions related to the use of certain chemicals).

SSA fails to tackle the management of environmental issues. In some countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the different departments of the national administration responsible for the design, implementation and monitoring of environmental policies are very weak. Civil servants do not have a critical mass of skills. Moreover, the external mobility of the most qualified officials is very high. Following a change of Minister, there are frequent changes of ministries. Another cause of poor management of environmental issues is the low salaries of civil servants that strongly expose them to corruption.

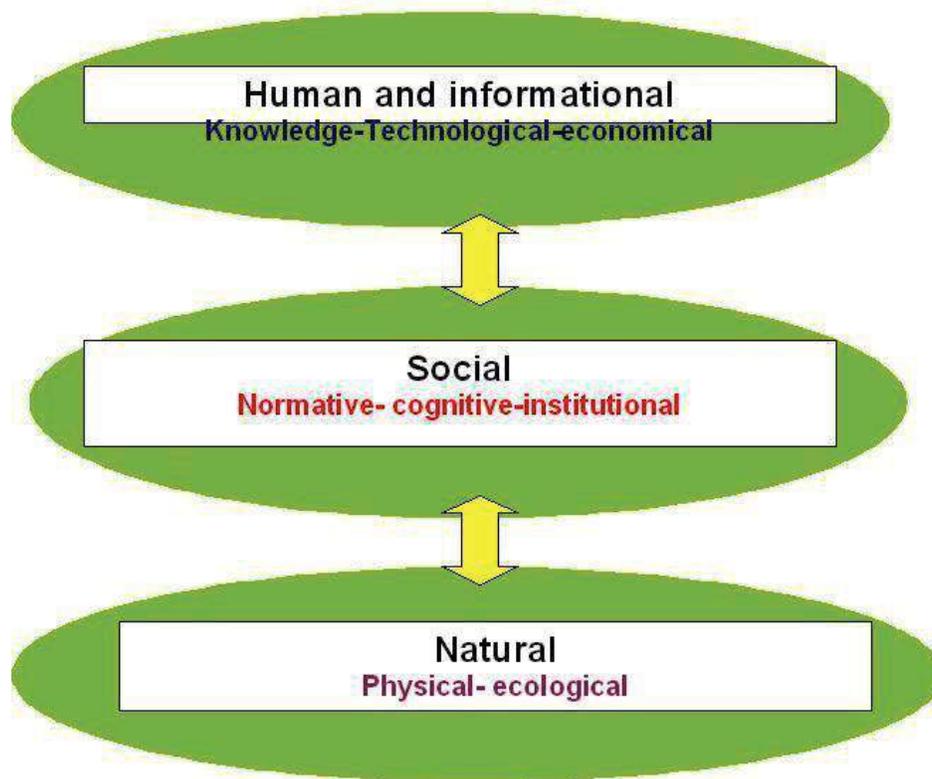
One of the main issues is the **low involvement of African countries in the definition of climate change.** The institutions and the governments are fairly involved in the definition of sustainable development issues due to climate change challenges. One explanation to this could be the fact that SSA countries lack the knowledge on environmental matters necessary to make it available for making decisions. Current knowledge about the climate change dangers is still rudimentary and there is need to fill the gaps. Thus, policymakers rarely rely on solid evidence that could give them great policy relevance. The low investment in the production of knowledge on environmental issues is also affecting the good management of the environment. National governments invest

little budget on research on flooding, coastal erosion, adaptation strategies to climate change, or even on the collection and processing of garbage.

Taking into account its vulnerability to potential impact of climate change, training actions and awareness should be targeted in order to make sure that the population will adapt to the natural impacts and shocks. In order to do so, some barriers to adaptation have been identified, like suggested in the table below:

Table 2: Conceptual grouping of limits and barriers to adaptation

Conceptual grouping of limits and barriers to adaptation



Source: AMCEN, 2011: Addressing Climate Change Challenges in Africa; A Practical Guide Towards Sustainable

(T 23) Worsening of global economic conditions

Multiple factors that restrict economic growth have been identified: lack of investment, lack of quality of the principal determinants of human capital (education and health), bad institutional quality, lack of commercial opening, very restricted technological diffusion and inequality (Artadi & Sala-i-Martin, 2003).

Despite a decade of positive economic growth, little progress has been made in terms of inequality. Wealth generated in Africa has not spread to the millions that still remain stuck in poverty. In many countries, where economic growth has been mostly driven by natural resources exports, inequality may seem to have been exacerbated and wealth generated has not improved, as much as it should, poverty, child mortality and wellbeing in general.

In the case of oil exporters, first, before 2014, high commodity prices sustained for some years strong economic growth but also may have exacerbated inequality. Then, the sharp decreases in oil prices witnessed after 2014 implied difficulties and increased in particular fiscal vulnerability (The World Bank, 2015). Several countries have started to adjust cutting expenditure, including public investment projects and subsidies, which without doubt has an impact on the poor.

The first issue that needs to be addressed is the disconnection between wealth creation, derived from natural resources, and population wellbeing. The second one is to reduce the vulnerability of African economies, and poor households in particular, in relation to price shocks in natural resources. Some actions that could potentially mean improvements in both directions include economic diversification, including the promotion of the agricultural sector (Africa Progress Panel, 2014), and the promotion of technological diffusion. In addition, well-designed social welfare programs should provide health and education, and protect the most vulnerable households from economic shocks, in particular those derived from the mining sector.

A recent initiative aiming to counteract some of these factors, particularly lack of commercial opening, is the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). EPAs aims to create a Free Trade Area (FTA) between the European Union (EU) and West Africa (WA); thus economies in the later region are expected to open their domestic market to EU products over a period of 20 years. Simulation results done by Nopoor researchers indicate that, without any support programs, WA economy faces pressure when the liberalization reaches 75 percent of imports from the EU, leading to a slower growth rate and an increase of poverty compared to the non-FTA scenario. The deterioration of the trade balance comes and the loss of Government revenue appears as an important contributor of the counter performance of the economies. This general picture of the FTA scenarios impacts hides significant disparities among economies in the sub-region. The growth rate accelerates in four countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, and Benin; it slows down in five other countries: Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Cape Verde, and Guinea-Bissau. Nigeria's economy paid the highest price for a greater opening up of the WA's market to the EU products. Which a

accompanying Policies on building energy production and transport show better impacts in term of growth and poverty reduction in all the countries(Cisse & Fofana, 2014).

(T24) Corruption increase

Control of corruption is one of the six dimensions of governance and aims at capturing perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as “capture” of the state by elites and private interests. There is no doubt that corruption is a factor which inhibits the transformation of the economic growth and prevents citizen to enjoy livelihood and living conditions.

The concept of participation gives to the general public and to the poor in particular, the chance to influence policies, in order to improve their living conditions. According to Transparency International Corruption Perception index (2014), the average score for Sub-Saharan Africa is 30/100 (100 is very clean and 0 highly corrupt). Public sector corruption is very widespread and notions as governance, empowerment, transparency, accountability and participation are still in its incipient stage. These are only a few challenges faced by new democracies. The democratic process through the development of democratic institutions and free and fair elections is often obstructed by remnants of the past authoritarian systems. Free and fair election is one of the most pro-accountability mechanisms in existence, giving the poor in particular, a chance to influence policies that affect their living conditions by improving the definition and consideration of their problems and expectations (Herrera, Razafindrakoto, & Roubaud, 2007)¹⁰.

However, countries like Ghana began serious reforms since 1980s and adopted a democratic regime in 1992. Research conducted in the frame of the Nopoor project by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD) gives an overview of the challenges faced by young democracies, mainly by conducting surveys on specific topics dealing with the perception of the population towards condemnable practices or misallocation of public goods. Related to the perception of corruption and quality of public services, 84% of health service facility users (as against 13%) indicated that they were not informed of the amount they had to pay for medical services they received before they paid for such services. Moreover, 90% of respondents (against 5%) indicated that they had not paid any unapproved or authorized fee to receive services. Of the respondents who admitted to paying unapproved fees, 3% indicated it was demanded from them while 2% said they paid voluntarily¹¹.

¹⁰ Herrera, J., Razafindrakoto, M., & Roubaud, F. (2007). Governance, Democracy and Poverty Reduction: Lessons Drawn from Household Surveys in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

¹¹ Perception of corruption and Quality of Public Services: A Case Study of Health Services Delivery, Report CDD-Ghana

(T15) Enhance the opportunities through a better educational system

Many efforts have been done by sub-Saharan African States in terms of children's schooling. But the slow growth of public resources for education in relation to the rapid increase of the needs due to population pressure has led to a lower quality of the educational services. This deficiency in the quality of educational services discourages households to send their children to school, preferring to involve them in paid or non-paid work. Moreover, political conflicts that characterize this area are an additional obstacle to the education of children while promoting the enlistment of many children in armed conflicts.

Education has long been considered as an important factor in poverty reduction. However, the relationship has changed. Even globally, education remains a powerful driver out of poverty, primary education no longer has that ability, nor prevent from falling into poverty. While putting emphasis on quality in primary education remains a priority for educative policies. The large capacity of this type of education to fight poverty fully justifies strong support from the international community.

(T14) Improve health and reduce hunger

The health care system lacks material, skill health personnel, health service coverage, which can cause the death of numerous people.

(T21) About emergence and propagation of military conflicts

Since most of sub-Saharan countries gained independence in the second half of the XX century, the area has been facing several civil conflicts and a high level of political instability. Although some countries have reached a certain level of peace and stability (particularly in the southernmost part of the continent), there are still many ongoing conflicts that hinder growth and development. Experts believe that the high proportion of non-educated, non-trained and non-employed youths present in the area favors their involvement in military conflicts of this kind. Lack of education and economic opportunities favor ignorance and deprivation, which in turn fuel political conflict and violence.

The emergent security threats around the world will probably continue to have a role, and a niche to proliferate, in sub Saharan countries as long as poverty, lack of social cohesion, and deprivation continue to preponderate in certain areas of the region, allowing the vicious circle of violence, instability and poverty to remain. Weak institutions will add to this situation.

(T6) Reduction in infant mortality and in average fertility in developing countries

Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest child mortality rate. Substantial progress in reducing child mortality has been made over the last years, but the rates still remain high in the region. As the MDG report 2015 states, "*the dramatic decline in preventable child deaths over the past quarter of century is one of the most significant achievements in human history*". Tackling child

mortality remains one of the most important goal to achieve in SSA countries and it is seen by the Nopoor experts as having a high probability of occurrence.

2. Which could be the policy recommendations for the policy makers of this region?

What future trends in multidimensional poverty might look like in sub-Saharan Africa, and what will need to be done to eradicate extreme poverty in the region by 2030?

In order to show the policy implications for this region, it is necessary to see what policies at the regional and local level are needed to help people getting out of poverty. For sure, in the next decades to come, Sub-Saharan Africa has many challenges to overcome. Massive demographic changes, combined with increasing droughts induced by climate change, unemployment, armed conflicts within countries, inequality, poor education, mistrust in governments and thus lack of good governance are some factors which could be taken into consideration to accelerate rates of poverty reduction. With this respect, some measures regarding poverty alleviation are suggested (of course many more measures are to be taken into account).

With respect to **natural disasters**, some implications for economic policy can be highlighted. **Official development assistance** should particularly target the fight against drought in sub-Saharan Africa, including the **promotion of greater water control** in countries facing sudden rainfall variations, and facilitating to the producers the access to short cycle seeds that are more resistant to water stress. Policies to greater stability of the remittance flows and greater efficiency in the use of resources would accelerate the reduction of poverty and inequality in developing countries.

Accurate documentation of disasters, large or small scale, is necessary in any country. Knowing the frequency of each type of disaster, the categories of populations affected, the nature and extent of the damages, the effects of transmission mechanisms, should allow the definition of a policy of prevention and mitigation of impacts. Given the importance of human and material resources that requires monitoring natural events (storms, earthquakes, droughts, etc.), increased cooperation at both regional and international levels would facilitate the collection and analysis of information needed for the definition, monitoring and implementation of quality policies for the prevention, management and disaster resilience. Poverty prevalence makes people even more vulnerable and exposed to disaster risks. Therefore, it is very important that countries adopt cost-effective policies to tackle this phenomenon.

Africa is the youngest continent in the world and for the next decades, millions of youths will enter the job market. Hence, people must acquire skills and benefit from training. By bringing more **quality in the production of educational services**, the poverty gap can be limited. In order to do so, incentives and **training for teachers** should be put into place by local governments. Another

measure to be taken into account is **improving the quality of the management** in the educational system. **Training facilities and vocational training** should focus in particular on the young people entering the labor markets. Increased employment opportunities will support productivity gains and thus economic growth. In this region, too little electricity remains the main obstacle to developing ICT infrastructure. Therefore, the transition to the “knowledge economy” is very challenging.

Concerning the health, a better, well-financed health system is a key priority for this region. In order to do so, **agricultural productivity** should increase, using **technological innovations** adapted to climate change. **Birth control programs** should be established and population should be provided with information on these means. All these measures can be easily taken if more **resources** were allocated for the **health sector**.

Promoting **equity in the distribution of resources** between regional and between rural and urban areas, **promoting inclusive growth** and change on consumption habits of the people can help alleviate poverty in the region.

As we can see, poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon and all the trends listed above should be tackled in relation on to another.

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