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**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Policy Addressing Poverty

1. Introduction to Poverty and Policy-Making

Introduction

This political essay theorizes and delineates explicitly political dimensions of poverty and policy-making. Anti-poverty policy is about striving for justice; and, in the context of massive poverty in a world of abundance, wealth, and wastefulness, it is also about demanding and cultivating such morality and love. Anti-poverty policy, on both accounts, overlays, intersects, and at times collides with an overabundance of other policies and of policy regimes. A policy regime itself is not merely a big or expanded or coherently packaged and easily identifiable policy. It is a complex entity. Policy-making and the effects of policy-making are multi-leveled and multi-registered.

This fact has contributed to the variety and, at times, effectiveness of policy interventions to protect and improve the 'quality of life' – and, at other times, the failure, inconsistencies, and counterproductive results of concerted anti-poverty policy. Ontologically, multiple social entities interact with each other regarding poverty and policy in diverse ways, but can still be subject to the same analytic magnifying glass/political activist hammer. This does not add up to an argument about anti-poverty 'policy convergence', at either one level or across all, but no less an argument is made here for anti-poverty 'policy coherence'.

1.1. Defining Poverty and its Dimensions

Poverty has many faces and many different definitions, each of them shedding light on a different albeit interconnected facet of this multifaceted phenomenon. According to UNDP, poverty is the deprivation of well-being and is classified as human poverty, which refers to the absence of capabilities expansion; income poverty, which refers to the insufficiency of resources; and the absence of basic needs, which refers to the insufficiency of selected goods and services. These classifications resonate with the concepts of poverty proposed by Sen, who claims that poverty has to be perceived as a result of the layered intersecting deprivations. Focusing on the list of basic needs, Dreze and Sen have classified poverty into three groups based on different levels of individuals' development - physical, social, and intellectual.

Moreover, there is another intentionally exclusionary general definition of poverty in order to institutionalize the Eurocentric norms of quality of life and development in international policies: countries were categorized into developing and developed according to various economic and social indicators; country-level development binary influenced the UN to classify the level of deprivation into poverty and extreme poverty. Poverty is an exclusionary diagnosis and also a pathologization fact of its agents and their conditions of existence that have been continuously negatively pathologized. Poverty in the following considerations reverts to its core: an imposed policy coup d'état by the international financial institution in the countries of the Global South from so-called bilateral to technical cooperation with certain countries.

1.2. Importance of Policy-Making in Poverty Alleviation

A significant number of people are poor or at risk of poverty in a rich, yet unequal, Union. While individual and social factors are fundamental, from a social policy standpoint, this situation involves a strong interrogative concerning whether the adopted policies are doing enough for those who are in need. The compositional, cross-sectional nature of the study, however, holds the conclusions to be generalizable with caution. Simultaneously, the causality between innovations and poverty reduction is uncertain. The role of public services is thus crucial when talking about effective intervention. Still today, public income support provides effective help to the poorest of the poor, and the role of social policies is fundamental, *inter alia*, in protecting those who are on the edge of poverty and those who, in general, are at a higher risk.

Consequently, a relevant and non-trivial relevance is played by policies aimed at fighting poverty and social exclusion, and by the extent and quality of

cooperation between the various levels of governance and territorial and social actors. Inequalities are an explicative view of poverty, and they are largely gendered, deriving from gendered processes in the labor market. To sum up, the present situation shows that an anti-poverty policy still needs to be difficult, be able to deal with new and more complex vulnerabilities, and guarantee the sufficiency of interventions where and when they are necessary. Finally, these interpretations of multi-level governance, emphasizing the increasing importance of an integrated approach to combating poverty and social exclusion, certainly tend to support the European strategies of authentically facilitating the development of nation-specific processes, but they also call for carrying out some examinations on the modes of organization of the different actors.

2. Local Level Policy-Making

One of the levels of policy-making is at the local level, where the problems of poverty and deprivation are unique, reflecting the structures of these areas. Local control of the policy formation is a decentralized form of governance aiming to empower and involve the engagement of the local groups in line with the principle of solidarity. Moreover, in the current context with states' increased indebtedness and international financial interventions (bailout) in national economic life, the role of local governance grows. Though the "local" approach is not rising, in fact scholars and practitioners promote the facilitation of the only governance that can secure sustainability. However, it has been a way of governance that was constructed and promoted with different names and definitions before the world nations started to be under the control of supranational organizations.

As the differences in the process of poverty and deprivation alleviation between people and societies point to local specifics, one should not ignore the specificity of local realization of dealing with these problems-consuming part of the policy for the overcoming of poverty should aim at local work. Similarly, public institutions with authority over the local area may have data on the local problem of the population under poverty and act as mediators to national authorities and experts who have the ability to develop policy at the level of the locality. Communities themselves are also seen more in charge of their local poverty problems, especially in remote rural areas or mountainous areas because they know the problems and behaviors of collection, transportation, and distribution of edible resources. Thus, the level of policy-making on the regional-local level represents the reception of a particular approach, an approach that reminds, through methods and policies, the specific character of this level. The response must be organized by observing these limits for local governance. This means that in the set of policies for overcoming poverty, specific measures can and must be taken at that level. Thus,

local level policy-making refers to having a legacy in the practice of poverty and deprivation overcoming, but it also gives up some of the specific practices. It is necessary, therefore, a comprehensive approach to the upward reaching of the levels of policy interventions. In this way, a scientific approach will make more holistic in view to consider, respect, and negotiate with priorities suggested by local authorities based on the particularities of their cultural anthropology.

2.1. Role of Local Governments

Local government leaders and their agencies have important responsibilities in poverty alleviation efforts. First, numerous social policies are shaped and financed at the local level, for example, policies related to public health, social services, job training, and education. These policies, in turn, can directly or indirectly influence the development of community-based programs and initiatives aimed at assisting the poor. Second, local governments have the power to affect social and economic conditions through other policy interventions, for example, the operation, management, and regulation of public transportation, police and fire departments, and local housing authorities, among other responsibilities. Many of these policy interventions focus on the quality of life within a community, and some have a more direct or material effect on residents who are poor. Poor residents rely upon these local programs and services to confront their day-to-day challenges. We focus upon the city context because changes in the welfare state policy context are occurring at many levels, including cities. In sum, myriad opportunities exist for local policy change to influence poverty.

Example of Local Efforts in Implementing Poverty Reduction Strategies One powerful federal poverty reduction policy is the provision of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Despite the credit, evaluations indicate that more than 5.6 million households worked but remained poor. In 2002, the Iowa General Assembly indicated that it wanted to "restore" EITC benefits to their pre-1993 level. House File 507 increased payments to families with a very low-wage income and increased income eligibility to families with at least 2 children. Also, the Iowa Legislature sought to increase awareness about the EITC program and to suggest ways to use the credit to move out of poverty. The Iowa Workforce Development workforce centers worked with the Iowa Department of Revenue to promote the EITC contribution to community-based services. In 2002, 676 households received Iowa's EITC, up from 660 in 2001. These multi-level policy changes are designed to improve work and incomes and to decrease poverty. In sum, many community leaders have a variety of resources they can enlist to help alleviate poverty.

2.2. Community-Based Approaches

Understanding poverty as one of the multiple dimensions of social exclusion demands policy answers at the level of the European polity, or even at a worldwide level, given the relevance and scale of the problem. It is precisely at this kind of multilevel governance that the implementation of both the flagship initiatives of the European Employment Strategy and the Social Open Method of Coordination is aimed. Given the difficulties associated with such objectives, it is important not to lose hope, though, nor sight of local policy experiences in the field of poverty.

The call for policy-making out of poverty goes hand in hand with a call for the capacity of territories to deal with the situation by governing themselves. The various forms of community-driven initiatives across the globe are testimony to a great human ability to find potential and create room for new prospects out of wasted spaces. More and more signs, from various quarters, are pointing to the potential of "local wealth" driven by what is inside territories. However, aside from any "inevitability" of the increasing importance of the local scale, the underlying rationale is that there must be localities where the poor are, so there should naturally be a local interest in poverty by definition. The primary argument for focusing on poverty reduction at the local level is that we should expect local responses to draw on a more informed view of the local situation compared to policies developed at the national or regional level.

3. Regional Level Policy-Making

Regional development has become the focus of interest for a number of social scientists, due to some extent, to the increasing transfer of resources from national to subregional entities. A series of "pillars of regional advantages" - locational, technology, and human resource dominated - prevail in regional settings where a large number of activities take place in a relatively integrated environment. In marginal settings, some parts of the regional space are marginalized by national and/or regional patterns of investment of these resources, by adjusting policies, or by demanding policies that tackle national patterns.

It is widely acknowledged that policy making in rural areas is difficult. Rural development is hampered by uncertainties of all kinds, rarely allowing a blueprint approach to be appropriate. Rural areas are dynamic and are in constant need of adaptation. It has to rely on constantly learning, in the face of non-repeatable experience, rather than consulting a straightforward recipe. Features such as minor income, bad infrastructure/communication systems, social backwardness, low level of education, anemic economic development that has hardly been realized, damage of environment and physical infrastructures because of war, floods and terrorism,

etc. are together making people poorer. Considering a high potential poverty reduction in rural areas due to the fact that relative to other problem areas, such as inner cities, intervention in rural areas offers better chances of success to decision makers. The increasing focus of decentralization policies emphasizes the benefits of local and regional participation in policy making, although in some peripheral settings, important social actors and leaders can turn insubordinate. In these cases, however, and also due to the distribution of power, traditional hierarchic top-down approaches, in accordance with traditional behaviorist theory, become far more applicable than bottom-up projects.

A policy based on location factors suggests that regional actors should be encouraged to collaborate and work together in order to address and/or demand changes in national allocation of resources, mainly investment in infrastructure and communication systems, technology, human resources development and adaptation, as well as access to national markets and trade policies. A regional policy aim is to increase national strategic investment in these localized factors (or beneficiaries of these factors), so as to encourage internalization of the regional economies and encourage increased economic engagement. Poor regions, with the help of national and/or regional special opportunities in these factors, should work more on collaboration in order to access resources following the location-based strategy. The work of collaboration, which predominantly takes place against the expected impact of national/regional scenery, may also question such perspectives. Thus, people living in the marginal settings might want to have people from the center included in the decision-making bodies, in order to be comfortable and to demand attention for, for example, global impact of policies prior to adoption.

3.1. Collaboration Among Regional Actors

Regional diversity is a typical characteristic of countries such as Brazil and South Africa. Regional policy documents from the countries underline the importance of collaboration among actors working at different levels of the multilevel governance (MLG) array. Instead of acting mainly through hierarchical vertical relationships, agencies at both provincial and district levels are expected to "engage in the building of multi-sectoral partnerships at transversal and horizontal levels that function across the vertical plane" (Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Agency 2018). Such an arrangement is especially important if a focus on poverty response would dwell on region-specific policies as indicated in the NDP vision and many other policies in both countries. As a result, a collaborative ethos comes through as an essential feature underlying poverty reduction policy in all the USPALEM countries, regardless of where the responsibility for coordinating the actions rest.

The involvement of multiple role-players - including government departments, parastatal agencies, and non-state actors - is therefore viewed as being at the base of the development process. Thus, the involvement of the state, the market, civil society and community levels becomes a critical feature underpinning the development process. Recognition is given to the complex multilevel politics that extrude the provision of a sustainable developmental fabric and the need for political-economic institutions that work across levels, based on functional, rather than juridico-political criteria. According to Turok (2017), urban governance in South Africa is a complex and fast-changing field. He believes that the "geographical and cross-sectoral scale" at which public policy and provision in South Africa operate, as chosen by relevant authorities, itself needs to be more effectively managed than currently in a rights-based framework.

3.2. Regional Economic Development Strategies

On the level of regional economics, a huge variety of possible strategies may be appropriate for the development of a region, the conditions in which they are most likely to be appropriate, the reasons for this, and the mechanism through which the reduction of poverty may occur under regional policy. The basis for strategic selection between these different policies and the allocation of funds involves a clear understanding of the basis of regional poverty and the timeframes in which the achievement of poverty reduction objectives can be accomplished.

A fair proportion of regional economic analysis, especially that guided by prescriptions from outside the region, would, for example, be concerned with the expansion or attraction of 'industry'. The expected anti-poverty impact of such moves might be mediated through the demand for unskilled labour, if by merely expanding existing sites the type of output produced is largely unaltered. Some economic development strategies, therefore, clearly have no direct rationale for their impact on regional poverty but may be expected to have such an effect dependent on the type of industry and skill levels. The generation of unskilled jobs, therefore, may well be an aim in itself in either the attraction of new industry or the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. Proactive action can be taken towards these objectives, although, as noted above, because 'unskilled' is primarily defined as much by a lack of particular vocational skill in a particular situation as a certain ascribed socio-economic group, these would be particularly policies likely to be most successful in conjunction with active labour market measures.

4. National Level Policy-Making

In Sri Lanka, the major responsibility of poverty alleviation is in the hands of the government, and particularly, is the subject of governmental programs and

legislative frameworks as points of interest for regional planners. Therefore, governments - whether at the central, provincial, regional, or municipal level - try to introduce policies and programs, focusing on the underprivileged communities, depending on the development strategies used and the economic policies adopted, in relation to poverty and for poverty reduction. Policy planning, program formulation, and implementation practices are operating with various objectives. Most of the projects or programs have a main objective, namely, economic, fiscal policies or social policies, including direct reductions in poverty, like housing, various social insurance and unemployment benefits, and free health services, etc.

In many countries having frameworks for anti-poverty policy and strategic direction and planning for regional development, a trend of including allocations on poverty and social welfare as required under the national programs on poverty alleviation in addressing the areas of higher poverty headcount by targeting indicators of such nature. Most of the present initiatives for poverty reduction fall into these categories. Moreover, additional attempts are already made by countries, trying to design anti-poverty legislations, policies, and strategies made compatible with the national states, formulating a vision, mission, and goals to combat poverty and guiding poverty strategies through specific policies and maintaining the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of such activities. The modules utilize a multilevel approach in developing the politico-administrator-citizens relation on the basis of the orientation of the economic development policy-making, human development policy-making, and protection policy-making at community, societal, and global levels. In the governance aspects, one module would focus on rural poverty, while the other would focus on overcoming urban poverty.

4.1. Governmental Programs and Initiatives

One domain of governmental initiatives to cope with the challenges of poverty concerns the development and implementation of programs specifically designated to fight the different aspects of poverty. These programs may comprise direct immediate help, but also include long-term investments regarding support in education, training, and job market programs, assets policies, and health protection activities. Poverty reduction is part of the overall socioeconomic ongoing activities of the governments, that address several purposes other than the sole diminution of the poverty rate (e.g. rise in gross national product, reduction of low poverty rates, increase of the general standard of living, etc.). As the national states are the principal addressees of the indicators launched at international levels, the common attitudes are the measures of absolute poverty standing and procedures based on national poverty rate changes over time.

Four key results of research on poverty policies have been identified: First, there is a wide fragmentation of policies in this area, ranging from low-level income thresholds to the support of vulnerable groups with high needs. Different programs for single targeted groups are framed by the governments such as social assistance, early childhood services, public housing financial support, and health care or public feeding programs; these are sometimes additional to basic income support of poor people and address individuals from younger ages onwards. Other attention is paid to the development of specific improvement proposals that appear to be part and equivalent to a general policy investment. Many other efforts have mainly a policy commonality objective rather than directly address poverty, for example, non-parental childcare policy and family leave policy appear designed to make it easier for parents with young children to work, but the initial focus is on family.

This aspect is particularly present in social policies, and those aiming to support human capital formation of younger adults (education and employment related), to supply families in their caregiving function in relation to their members, and to secure individuals from old age. The mentioned policies are addressed to the larger society, with the ancillary effect on particular groups such as poor people. Other critics also draw attention to the national limitations that produce the harmonization of the poverty measures range created at international levels. The international community adopts common steps at the same base statistics, and a common anti-poverty policy cannot not be adopted with diverse country attitudes, capacities, and social demands. Descriptive accounts available in the publication library of the authors of this manuscript have shown the social challenges in 25 typified countries in the 2009-2012 period, here it was revealed that the commonly targeted social issues during that period were related to work activity policies and welfare-to-work programs, youth employment, and low income.

4.2. Legislative Frameworks

Legal Approaches

As is emphasized in the introduction, over the centuries, the above-presented moral approaches have been reflected in legal legislations. At the same time, the legal dimension has always been affected by practical, political interests. As analyzed in Section 4.1, human rights and social defense are two main dimensions of law with an impact on poverty issues. Nonetheless, regulations and elaborations deriving from these two dimensions, as well as any other legal document, can be very different in every country, too.

Most countries have a president (vice-president, prime minister, minister) responsible for social and family affairs or social affairs and labor. Sometimes, the

term "poverty" does not exist in the official title, limiting the actions to social issues—namely, social care, social assistance, and social protection. Sometimes, the agenda for families exceeds the official social or social and labor area. Official governmental websites contain detailed information on the responsibilities of central bodies (ministries) and on the services they offer. They also provide general information, laws, and programs. A review of such materials shows the explicit or implicit relationship between laws, policies, and their practical implementations. The CSR report gives better insights on the situation in only a few countries. The attention of authorities is still on the numbers and programs related to people in need. Very rarely is this revealed to be the consequence of a certain social, economic policy. The accessibility of the policy framework when discussing poverty in general is fortunately high in the documentsuality.

5. Global Level Policy-Making

Global Level Policy Making

At the international level, there are numerous initiatives aiming at policy making for poverty reduction and development. First and foremost, it is international cooperation that signals the global effort to help reduce poverty in the developing countries and the other vulnerable groups around the world. In this sphere, it is possible to refer to the alignment of policy strategies in poverty reduction countries with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through a common framework. In 2013, a new network of development agencies came together to agree on a common approach to the priorities for the post-Millennium Development Goals that have been named the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Their main objective is to remove inequalities and make poverty history globally.

Another general policy guide at the global level discusses broader approaches to social and economic development that are driven by improving human well-being rather than just increasing wealth. The DAC has developed its own approach. These approaches argue that development should be seen as an approach that puts people at the center, reflecting on the whole range of people's desired outcomes, including choices about how they live and options they have in that overall context. Based on this synthesis of people-centered development, various agreements have been reached at the global level regarding the factors that lead to well-being and, of those, the issue of poverty.

5.1. International Cooperation and Agreements

International cooperation and agreements have emerged as an important aspect of poverty alleviation, as is evident through a number of international agreements such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, etc. Several international organizations like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), etc., are extensively engaged in addressing the issues pertinent to poverty through the implementation of different policies and programmes. Briefly, different bilateral, multilateral and regional agencies, organizations and countries are engaged in addressing poverty either individually or collectively.

In the first instance, national income and various other socio-economic and environmental indicators of development are useful in evoking international attention towards the issue of poverty through international comparisons. Similarly, different international agreements have directed their member countries, especially those with comparatively better developmental indicators, to support less developed countries morally as well as materially in order to assist them in overcoming poverty and attaining better socio-economic status. Likewise, different sectors like education, health, trade, investment, transfer of technology, industry, labour, etc., at the international level are guided with the central objective of poverty alleviation in favour of less developed countries, which accounts for a significant proportion of the global poor population.

5.2. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, mark one of the most recent significant structural shifts in this respect and have oriented the international policy scene for the next decade and a half. This has put increasing weight and urgency on the need to design, implement, and evaluate national and international policies addressing multidimensional aspects of poverty and foster sustainable development. The agenda follows the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a series of 17 SDGs and 169 associated targets integrated approach. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs have a universal reach and hence binding orientations for all countries, whether classified as high, medium, or low income. Importantly, the SDGs reflect recognition of the multidimensional nature of poverty and incorporate well-known deprivation areas,

such as income, education, health, and mortality, but also social indicators of deprivation and other non-material aspects. As Table 5.1 briefly highlights, many SDGs and targets include topical and currently active poverty-related fields (e.g., Agenda 2030 repeatedly refers to climate, environment, and ecosystems, and inclusion of women, youth, and disabled people). This broad coverage suggests the consensual nature and the broad integrative goals that were addressed and recognized by the world community.

In turn, throughout the world, countries have been adopting National Voluntary Reviews (NVRs) to monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Preliminary evidence, based on the limited number of reports and papers, indicates a wide acceptance of the multidimensional nature of poverty, with a recurrent emphasis on closing the 'gaps' (or 'divides' or 'disparities') and enhancing inclusion ('leave no one behind' is a major slogan). In the NVRs, countries tend to acknowledge a set of structural issues that bring constraints to poverty alleviation, including economic informality, low productivity, slow economic growth, income inequalities, access to employment, and decent work. They also noted local disparities, a need for inclusive social transformation, and local empowerment of people living in poverty, as well as measures to support resilience and inclusion of poor population groups in vulnerable situations, such as women, youth, the elderly, disabled, displaced, and refugees. Moreover, the periodic ESPs and Planning Policies of the EU, African Union, and national governments and regional states follow the current 'mainstream' policy propositions. These include an integration of the economic and environmental dimensions of the SDGs, as well as mainstreaming gender equality, inclusion, and social justice. The ESPs are structural in nature and reflect efforts to further develop the socio-economic situation and attain the SDGs. They also express recognition of challenges inherent to the policy strategies and neoliberal economy of Ethiopia. Such challenges include consideration of the inclusion capacity to attain human-centered locally adaptable inclusive outcomes and the pathways for inclusive developmental growth. Political instability and the ongoing effect of the social sphere on overall economies are expected to impact the direction of the SDGs in the years to come. Only once these targets and strategies reveal the extent to which the countries' cumulative output affects the core pillars of the SDGs will they be able to evaluate adverse policy impact leading to intensification of social issues in the economy on the way to safeguarding humankind.

6. Challenges and Opportunities in Policy Implementation

Challenges

Moving from the design of a general poverty strategy to the elaboration of concrete policies needs to take into account several challenges. First, although the causal link between poverty and social exclusion would suggest that the basic causes are the same across Member States, low income and thus poverty would also be the result of the adequacy of social protection systems and the availability of supportive services, which differ between countries. Second, the needs of the poor and the ways policies are organized show similarities at the EU level, but no common solutions have been developed. Third, the difficulties involved in the integration of policy areas go far beyond the public administration: they are consequences of complex political games based on the objective of more spending power. Fourth, the supranational level can mainly support actions and initiatives that are delegated by MSs according to Treaty rules. As the fight against poverty is not mentioned in the Treaties, it is not a priority such as employment, the internal market, etc. Fifth, because most policies are addressed not only to poor people, but also to the rest of the population, the identification of budget lines that are effectively turning into transfers and services to the poor has not always to do with evaluations. Finally, best practice examples could not be usable in other countries with different socio-economic context or with just different social traditions. Indeed, some opportunities are available, such as EU legal starting points, GDP objectives, Records of Employment, etc.

Opportunities

The period characterized by low growth and rising unemployment, when social policies mainly ground on economic policies, led to the belief that "social" as an integrated field did not exist. No universalist social policies do exist at the EU level, although universalist social rights do, while EU legislative powers cover only a minority of existing policy lines. A number of actions are being carried out in the well-being of animals and normal employment legislation is being discussed, but concrete anti-poverty EU laws are lacking. Conclusions should be reached by taking into account the position of all actors. In a perfect world, all actors' opinions should be weighted and empirical measures of policy effectiveness should be used. Puzzle-solving approaches could be useful (each of the many social actors has a piece of the puzzle, and everybody sees the whole of the puzzle when these pieces are aggregated) and should be complementary. Local governments are already today in action and they have developed their bottom-up strategies, which democracy

tends to improve and generalize. A concrete opportunity starting from EU primary law provisions was the 2000 OMC warning all MSs to adopt an integrated approach to fight poverty. In Lisbon, all MSs also shifted the policy point of reference from what they did for unemployment over the last 70 years. Obviously, all these opportunities are consequences of the design of the text offered in Section 6.6.C.1.2. to the reader. In this context, indicators are cross-checked. Either the full set of indicators available in each of the lines is added here or a selection of indicators is proposed to be developed. The only pitfall is to have occasionally small samples and therefore misleading figures. The budget lines could be important when agreements including specific norms are signed.

6.1. Resource Allocation and Budgeting

Resource allocation and budget making are two of the key tools of development planning for national governments and international agencies in developing countries. At this point, it has to be acknowledged that since socio-economic and health services intended by any poverty-based policies are likely to be implemented by several agent-principals, these allocation tools' effectiveness and efficacy are contingent on agreement between the vision framed by poverty-focused policies (constituent elements and priorities for the concept of poverty alleviation) and sector or beneficiary plans. That is, what poverty-focused policies contain and prioritize should agree with and be commensurate to financial management capacities, budget proposals, and economic sectors' plans for specific policy objectives to be met from the lowest to the highest level.

In this connection, it is the assessment made by Fund utilization task forces, budgetary departments, or the finance ministries as to whether the available financial resources have been commensurate for the implementation of developmental policies, sector and beneficiaries-service delivery objectives, and strategies which are outlined in the framed of poverty-focused policies and plans at each level. Consequently, the resource allocation and budgeting tools according to needs are effective management means and can be employed to equilibrate the resource gaps.

In various countries, large budget deficits and the proportion of the share of recurrent budgets (administrative instruments used in respect of goods, services, and salary) to the overall national budget of over 20% indicate financial resource gaps in the face of scarcity. For instance, in Ethiopia, 66.8% of the total national budget is allocated to recurrent expenditures. The decreasing trend of international aid and financial assistance from government sources, concessionary bilateral aid, and multinational and at the same time multiple and large-scale natural disasters

have increased the financial resource gap and necessitated increased budget financing from deficit financing and own state budget sources.

Failing to mitigate this gap will deter the implementation of different poverty-oriented policies and beneficiaries-targeted plans and strategies at different levels by prone and inert agents and result in an increased number of poor people. For example, prior to starting the implementation of PRSP, over US\$259.8 million were quoted by the World Bank and IMF. The given syndicate shortfall did not incline up to the above financial requirement in the given proposal, which would have necessitated an increase in the exchequer deficit without need.

In the absence of a complete understanding between developmental policies, sector, and beneficiaries-targeted strategies and annual work plans to reach various agreed-on poverty reduction policy objectives, a large gap in financial resources can and would be allegedly likely to deviate beneficiary targets and is lead by human inters competition-shaped stagnant performance spirit effects.

6.2. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms are an inherent part of a policy as these help in assessing whether the policy is successful in affecting poverty. They help assess whether and how the policy has worked and provide information to policy makers that can be used for future policy design. A lack of robust monitoring and evaluation can mean that we are uncertain about the impact of policies, let alone the influence of institutions in determining that impact. Moreover, the more robust our evaluation frameworks, the more likely our clients will be able to use the information back for policy developments and future work.

Monitoring & Evaluation Reports document the process of the monitoring and evaluation of study of project/programme interventions and assess their value and quality as well as the extent to which expected outcomes and impacts are being or likely to be achieved ultimately. One of the aims of monitoring and evaluation is to assess the contribution of policy and project interventions to sustainable rural and agricultural development. A summary of the key monitoring indicators, targets and process indicators in relation to a set of poverty-related policy interventions is presented below. In this chapter, we will focus on responses related to the White Paper Brief. Key results with respect to the Policy Monitor Brief and the Post Construction Brief will be highlighted separately. As such, this chapter details: (i) the appropriateness of and content of the assessment goals and objectives to which the White Paper Brief pertains and (ii) impacts of the White Paper Brief that are intended or otherwise were deemed useful by stakeholders, for example in terms of informing future works.

7. Case Studies and Best Practices

Case studies and best practices provide valuable insights for policy making. Therefore, this part of the 'Multilevel Approach to Overcome Poverty' focuses on positive and proven practical experiences. We are treating successful initiatives, but also highlight fiascoes in order to learn from failed practices. Moreover, we have listed recommendations based on both case studies and best practices in order to make the way forward easier for policy-makers. The thirteen successful initiatives are to be found in the six practitioners' guides broken down by level.

- Case studies One of the German federal states merged traditional companies with social businesses. The result was an increased quality of services offered, economic success, and three spin-offs. One lesson learned is that a common mission (better labor market chances for disadvantaged people) is the key for success. In the future, the common mission and strategic goals need to be formulated in a way to allow better segmentation. It is also crucial to allocate responsibilities to all stakeholders involved. Therefore, all today's remarks result from this insight.

- Best practices The 'New Start Programme' of Shropshire County Council is generally regarded as very successful while there has been little or no investment from the 'public purse' and has delivered a return to the 'public purse'. Due to program evaluation, it is considered that one-to-one coaching and training has the most impact on success with both the disaffected and long-term NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). The satisfaction levels for young people and employers are very high. Some areas that require improvements and development have been highlighted.

7.1. Successful Policy Interventions

Successful policy interventions, that is, government interventions that have significantly contributed to the reduction of incidence of poverty, have only been a focus of poverty research during the last decade or so. Nevertheless, the outcome of these studies is a growing interest in effective mechanisms to overcome challenges. In addition, the results of these studies also provide a catalogue of the measures that have contributed to poverty reduction as well as the success factors. Based on this research, conducted a meta-analysis, which serves as the foundation of this overview. The following contributions present policy implications, explanations for the success factors identified, and strategies for the scalability of the approach. Furthermore, the studies interrogated the potential of ISO 9000 fieldwork and the increase of food energy intakes respectively as pathways for poverty reduction. Better access to credit and decentralized control over natural resources are

examined as poverty alleviating factors, which, however, are less suitable as interventions.

From an action-oriented point of view, the most evident findings of these studies are the following: Seven studies examined the outcome of efforts to improve productivity for the poor. The approach included, in five cases, a case-study analysis. In general, the studies found that these policy components improved production and increased incomes. The studies' success factors were the link to support bag services as well as the capacity of the farmers' organizations to provide access to key requirements for food producers (inputs, knowledge, influence), and their management and provision of market information. Furthermore, the need for a well-defined partnership between the different stakeholders was stressed, a need that, indeed, arises at all levels of policy development, to involve those who are going to be affected by it, and in particular to involve the people living in poverty directly. The need for such a praxis is stressed in all the studies.

7.2. Lessons Learned from Failed Initiatives

In contrast to the highly successful initiatives presented in the first part of this chapter, this second section briefly sketches the outcomes and impacts of a variety of failed policy attempts in poverty alleviation, some of which took place in South Africa.

The case of South Africa is, in fact, that it has at least sub-goals or sub-targets for many, if not all, of the MDGs or poverty reduction goal. When disaggregating within those levels, one finds statistically significant disparities for all the development indicators and targets as associated with race and sex. In both of the area-based conditional welfare policy experiments in South Africa, local governments were responsible for the running of the experiments (although one delegated this to a third party via a media campaign) and disbursed stipends to the treatment group. In both these cases, the pilots were part of more comprehensive area-based regeneration efforts, including housing and infrastructure, and were universal in that all children in the two areas were invited to participate. Yet in both cases, there were attrition and selection issues prior to random assignment. In both cases, too, the constant threat of apartheid-style forced removals from these areas by local government ultimately caused the pilots to face untimely and violent closure. These failed poverty interventions, although they form *prima facie* powerful case studies for influence on policymaking, have not turned out to be so. In fact, they were not even published – until now – because they were not considered suitable for targeting a professional audience.

8. Future Directions in Policy-Making for Poverty Alleviation

Looking at the future, the trend in policy-making for poverty alleviation will be oriented towards innovative strategies and best practices in this regard, based on the engagement of different trends which ensure the support and cooperation of various national and international bodies involved in social welfare. This largely focuses on the introduction of ICT, the effect of innovative economic environments, and the quality of services.

In particular, most of the underlying contributions highlighted the importance of downtrending the key causes and effects of forced extreme poverty from a multilevel approach, from local to global. Several references were made to the intriguing trade-off between legitimacy in terms of coordination processes at various levels of governments (e.g., local, national, international) to guarantee coherence in several strategies, and effectiveness in relation to best practices and the most effective tools in the short, medium, and long run.

In the following scenario, some of the future directions in policy-making for poverty alleviation have been discussed, proposing potential approaches and concrete solutions that involve a multilevel vision able to tackle the idea of governing poverty. Submissions revolve around these two main approaches. First, we have discussed those papers proposing emerging trends and innovative strategies capable of overcoming poverty at different levels of governance: Supra-national, National, Inter-agency, Local, and Individual. The remaining part of the chapter has tried to link these various levels of intervention operating on poverty reduction strategies by using the dichotomy of smallest coherent sets as an innovative tool to estimate and evaluate innovative multilevel action addressing poverty eradication. Based on these considerations, two extensive technical documents were discussed. The first document analyzed the "smallest coherent set" (SCS) parameter in relation to poverty reduction while a socio-psychological approach was used as the transfer function, where justice and, particularly, retributive justice, were considered an exogenous parameter.

8.1. Innovative Approaches

Considerable innovative thinking is already underway in the international community, developing new approaches that, if effectively integrated with others, could change the policy environment and transform the nature of policymaking to tackle poverty in the future. Some of these approaches are more technical and address better ways of doing things, such as adjusting the way of calculating income

and poverty. However, it is these technical, high precision issues about justice and distributive equity that politically experienced policymakers have often pleaded with researchers not to inquire into. Nonetheless, if the promised deliverables are sustained, these approaches are potentially powerful and, if well handled, have the potential to make a significant impact on the policymaking environment. Other approaches are more strategic and are driven more by a consideration of the direction in which to push the policy agenda and places where careful political exploration should uncover solid constituency and appeal.

In terms of transforming the nature of policymaking, it is in these latter, strategic, policy debate-oriented fields where the most work could be, and should be done in the future. It is, however, important to stress that most of these approaches, like all new policy paradigms, could be open to the criticism of selling old wine in new bottles, bringing recycled, sometimes high-brow ideas back to the policy table. Indeed, some are the direct return of words, sentiments, and analysis which were common in previous decades, such as Sen's capability approach, the local development approaches promoted by the World Bank in the 1980s, and so forth, and which many will hesitate to promote as innovative ideas were unqualifiedly rejected by policymakers. The following highlights 6 innovative policy approaches, combining scientific progress and new policy-paradigm building, which are in various degrees of testing and development: Multidimensional strategies: measuring, assessing, and policymaking.

8.2. Technological Solutions

Because today's chapter emphasizes exclusively the policy sector, some technophiles may dub it as a prematurely narrow technological vision that focuses only on policy interventions. In fact, many are so hopeful about cutting-edge technology, such as the mobile phone, that they feel the primary goal of development policy today should be to ensure that at least one copy of every item of information is known by at least one hundred adults per developing country. Without minimizing the importance of such techno-optimism, we believe that the broad outlines of M-PESA and its ilk provide many grounds for pessimism. The long-run challenge for development policy will be to fashion regulatory and corporate schemes to enhance human feedback loops over our effect on the planet, and hence overcome the poverty of awareness. As we have pointed out, one could have made a similar argument almost 2500 years ago, predicting that faster than foot-speed horses, consecutively chariots and camels were one key to alleviate poverty. Today, as throughout history, the appropriate social-institutional change that ultimately determines the impact on people's lives of any improvement in technology, as well as in transportation, be it Sam-jasmine and railways, or even planes—whether

passenger or to communicate quickly and cheaply, is also the same social change that determines the success of policy initiatives. Focusing today on the policy sector, then, is for a combination of expediency and intellectual agnosticism.

Given the state of our knowledge, and our admitted aim to make a practical difference, we cannot today depend on technological innovations to provide the key entry points for poverty reduction. At the same time, we cannot preclude that, in combination with changed institutions and investment, new information technology like mobile phones in SA or wireless internet in India's slums, etc. may themselves come to play an extremely important role with rapidity and apparent ease that we do not currently anticipate. In fact, we suspect this is not unlikely. On the one hand, technologies like electronic tokens for replication, whether they be mobile phones that transfer airtime (or MPESA) or via internet linkages COST REMITTANCE SYSTEM. The argument for mobile-phone usage, and now internet-based remittance systems, is that it is easy to implement this technology if it is there. In general, then, we are optimistic about technological solutions. What is the theoretical basis of our pessimism? Technology does play an important role in growth and poverty-alleviating trade, but this is canopied in decades-when not century-long changes in the nature of production in large parts of the world. The role of technology in directly shaping the effectiveness of today's policy interventions is less clear, except in two cases.

9. Conclusion and Key Takeaways

In this essay, we argue for a multilevel approach to policy-making that should inform the process of policy-making aimed at overcoming poverty. At the meso-level, where it has often been thought we need to work in order to "make poverty history", our theoretical and empirical findings suggest that we need to see the workings of policy intervention and the power-knowledge distributions in place as a formative force in the individuation of (those deemed as) poor people. Poverty policy should thus prioritize the amelioration of these socio-political processes of misunderstandings in poverty determination. We also argue that criticism against a declared partiality and short-sightedness in using a cultural and anthropological focus for policy-making are overdrawn, as each of our three skill sets suggest that attention to the local details and meanings of policy interventions is crucial. Yiftachel argues that the intersection of the meso and macro levels is important in policy, as it is where security becomes embedded, yet there was little more in our findings to support this place in policy detail. At the macro-level, where our work suggests policy infra-structuring takes place, emphasis should be placed on longer-term measures that reconnect poverty "imaginary" and infrastructure.

There is a growing realization that many of the reasons why anti-poverty initiatives regularly fail is because they are ignorant of the expectations of the target population. We have argued that such information can be gathered in order to ameliorate policy interventions through both individual inquests and explanatory, ethnographic studies. While such work tends to highlight the everyday realities of "the poor", it should not be taken as an end in itself but must connect to possible actions/programmes aimed at social change, i.e. a "ways forward" has to be inbuilt so that the research contributes to constructive goals. The essay concludes with a commitment to place further emphasis on these ways forward in engaging with the inhabitants of the research sites in question.