Expert Group Meeting on Understanding Solidarity, Trust and the Social Contract in the context of Social Development in Asia and the Pacific

16 December 2021
Opening Remarks

Mr. Patrik Andersson
Chief,
Sustainable Socioeconomic Transformation Section,
Social Development Division, ESCAP
Self-Introduction of participants
From Concepts to Indicators

Measuring Solidarity, Trust and the Social Contract in Asia and the Pacific

Moderator:
Ms. Ermina Sokou, Social Development Division, ESCAP
EGM Session 2.1

How can solidarity, trust and the social contract be measured?

Featured Remarks
Dr. Markus Quandt, GESIS (ISSP)
Mr. Chayanun Saransomrurtai, Research, Asia (Gallup)

Interactive Dialogue
What are some examples of indices to measure these concepts?

Featured Remarks
Dr. Katharina Lima de Miranda, Global Solutions Initiative Foundation

Interactive Dialogue
What are possible pitfalls to avoid in selecting indicators and interpreting results from opinion surveys?

Perspectives from ISSP, WVS and Gallup

Interactive Dialogue
Virtual Break
From Measurement to Analysis

Analysing solidarity, trust and the social contract in the context of social development in Asia and the Pacific

Moderator:
Mr. Selsah Pasali, Social Development Division, ESCAP
What empirical tools are available to analyze solidarity, trust and the social contract?

Experience from ESCAP
Mr. Selsah Pasali, Social Development Division
Social Development Research at ESCAP

- Undertake empirical research to support evidence-based policies in Asia and the Pacific

- Thematic areas: Inequality, Social Protection, Gender Equality, Disability, Aging and Migration

- Diverse set of knowledge products including flagship reports as well as policy papers and briefs.

- Increasingly make use of data-driven web-based interactive tools
Research on Social Protection and Inequality

Empirical research at micro and macro level entailing household-level as well as country-level analysis

- **Social Outlook and Theme Studies**

- **Social Protection Simulator**
  [https://www.socialprotection-toolbox.org/simulation-tool](https://www.socialprotection-toolbox.org/simulation-tool)

- **Leaving No One Behind**
  [https://lnob.unescap.org/](https://lnob.unescap.org/)
Preliminary Work on Solidarity, Trust and the Social Contract

• Identify data sources that collect nationally representative cross-country data in Asia and the Pacific

• Identify proxy variables for solidarity, trust and the social contract based on “Our Common Agenda”

• Produce descriptive statistics at sub-national, national and regional levels

• Disaggregate indicators based on demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (e.g., sex, age, location, income, education, labor force status)
Preliminary Work on Solidarity, Trust and the Social Contract

- Carry out OLS, logistical and ordinal logistical regressions at regional and national level controlling for a wider range of factors.

- Estimate marginal effects following regressions for key variables of interest.

- Estimate the dissimilarity index to see how different groups in a given country think about or act upon the three core concepts.
Data Sources

• **World Values Survey**
  Available for 24 countries in Asia-Pacific over seven waves since early 1980s. Latest data from 2017-2020 period. Sample: 35,000+

• **International Social Survey Programme**
  Social Inequality (2009) – 5 countries in Asia-Pacific. Sample 10,000+

• **Gallup (publicly not accessible)**
  35 countries in Asia and the Pacific – annually collected data with sample size of 40,000+
Preliminary Selection: Indicators on Solidarity

- Incomes should be more equal vs. larger income differences are acceptable?

- Cheating on taxes is never justifiable vs. always justifiable.

- Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled is never justifiable vs. always justifiable.

- Corruption Frequency of ordinary people to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favor to local officials to access services?

- Income differences are too large in my country.

- High income people should pay higher taxes.

- Generally, would you describe taxes for high income people are much too high, high, about right, low, much too low.
Preliminary Selection: Indicators on Solidarity

• Is it just or unjust – right or wrong – that people with higher incomes can buy better healthcare (and education) than people with lower incomes?

• Some people feel angry about differences in wealth between the rich and the poor, while others do not. How do you feel when you think about differences in wealth between the rich and the poor?

• How often do you have any contact with people who are a lot poorer (and richer) than you when you are out and about? This might be in the street, on public transport, in shops, in your neighborhood, or at your workplace. How often do you have any contact with people who are a lot poorer than you when you are out and about?

• Have you donated money to charity in the past month?
  • Have you volunteered your time to an organization in the past month?
  • Have you helped a stranger or someone you didn’t know who needed help in the past month?
  • Do you have relative and friends that you can count on when you are in trouble?
Preliminary Selection: Indicators on Trust

- Most people can be trusted. Measured as an ordinal variable: completely, somewhat, not very much and not at all.
  - In-group trust family, neighbors and acquaintances:
  - Out-group Trust: Stranger, from different nationality or religion.

- Confidence in institutions (e.g., government, civil service, parliament, political parties, elections, justice system, police, military press, TV labor unions).

- Corruption
  - Frequency of ordinary people pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favor to local officials to access services? Never vs. Rarely, Frequently and Always
  - Are Civil Service Providers involved in Corruption? None and Few as (0) | Most and all.
Preliminary Selection: Indicators on Social Contract

• The government should take more responsibility to provide for people vs. individuals themselves should have more responsibility.

• It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.

• Who should have the greatest responsibility in reducing income differences? Government, Private Sector, Trade Unions, High-income individuals, Low-income individuals, no action needed.

• The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.
Preliminary Selection: Indicators on Social Contract (Cont’d)

• Most politicians in my country do not care about reducing income differences between high income and low-income people.

• How successful is the government in your country nowadays in reducing differences in income between people with high incomes and people with low incomes?

• Confidence in institutions (i.e., government, civil service, parliament, political parties, elections, justice system, police, military press, TV labor unions).
Preliminary Results on Solidarity: Donate, Volunteer or Help
Preliminary Results on Trust: Generalized trust

Australia: 49%
Bangladesh: 13%
Myanmar: 15%
Hong Kong, SAR: 64%
China: 37%
Indonesia: 5%
Iran: 15%
Japan: 36%
Kazakhstan: 24%
South Korea: 32%
Kyrgyzstan: 12%
Macau, SAR: 44%
Malaysia: 60%
New Zealand: 5%
Pakistan: 23%
Philippines: 22%
Russia: 24%
Singapore: 34%
Vietnam: 28%
Tajikistan: 21%
Thailand: 31%
Turkey: 14%
Asia-Pacific: 41%
Social Contract: Who should take more responsibility in providing for people?

The government should take more responsibility

People should take more responsibility themselves
Social Contract: Should the government support the unemployed?
How confident are people in key institutions in their countries in the region?
How dissimilar are people (within their countries) in having confidence on the executive?
How dissimilar are people within their countries in Asia-Pacific on solidarity indicators?

![Chart showing dissimilarity index for different countries in Asia-Pacific on solidarity indicators. The x-axis represents countries including Bangladesh, China, Japan, Turkey, Myanmar, Iran, Australia, Thailand, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, and Tajikistan. The y-axis represents the dissimilarity index ranging from 0.00 to 0.35. The chart uses bars in different colors to indicate the levels of agreement on solidarity indicators: blue for "Incomes Should Be More Equal," orange for "Cheating on Taxes Never Justified," and gray for "Claiming Benefits Not Entitled Never Justified."]
Next Steps

• Investigate associations between three core concepts and
  
  • **Social Development Outcomes** in the areas of healthcare, decent employment and social protection
  • **Social Development Policies**: Coverage and access to basic services, government expenditures on healthcare, decent employment and social protection

• Identify patterns and group countries

• Carry out country-specific analysis if relevant reforms/policies are implemented.
EGM Session 2.2

Good practices in cross-country or panel research on social development in relation to solidarity, trust and the social contract

Featured Remarks
Professor Franziska Gassman, UNU-MERIT
Dr. Isabel Kempf, UNRSID

Interactive Dialogue
Closing Remarks

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