Eradication of poverty: current challenges & opportunities

Presented at the 4th Southeast Asia Multi-stakeholder Forum on Implementation of the SDGs

Bishwa Nath Tiwari, PhD
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub
bishwa.tiwari@undp.org
bishwa.Tiwari@gmail.com

Bangkok
28 – 29 October 2020
Three Messages

• Southeast Asia was not on track in attaining the SDGs even before the Covid-19.

• Covid-19 will increase poverty – both income and multidimensional.

• Covid-19 provides opportunities for doing things differently.
Key findings

1. Asia-Pacific was not on track to achieve any of the 17 SDGs by 2030.

2. Progress is uneven across the five subregions.

3. The region lacks progress on environmental sustainability.

4. Lack of data undermines the monitoring of the SDGs.
Sub-regional Progress on SDGs before COVID-19

- **On-track**
  - East and North-East Asia
  - North and Central Asia
  - Pacific
  - South East Asia
  - South and South West Asia

- **Stagnant**
  - 6 Clean Water and Sanitation
  - 10 Reduced Inequalities
  - 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
  - 13 Climate Action
  - 15 Life on Land

- **Regressed**
  - 10 Reduced Inequalities
  - 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Sub-regional Progress:
- East and North-East Asia
- North and Central Asia
- Pacific
- South East Asia
- South and South West Asia
Poverty trends in Southeast Asia before COVID-19

Poverty headcount PPP$/day in Southeast Asia (%)

Source: World Bank
Will the global MPI halve 2015–2030?

- Of the 1.3 billion MPI poor, almost half are in Asia-Pacific.
- 47 of 75 countries were ‘on track’ to halve global MPI 2015–30.
- 18 are off track – including the poorest, but none of them from SEA.

Source: OPHI and UNDP
COVID-19 impact: Southeast Asia

• Despite strong economic growth in pre-Covid era, SEA has high inequality, low social protection and a large informal sector.
• SEA has 218 million informal workers.
• 34 million could be pushed back to poverty line below $3.2 a day in East Asia-Pacific including SEA

• Source: ESCAP 2020; ILO 2020
COVID-19: Challenges

• Economic growth decreases in all regions in 2020.
• Poverty will increase in all regions including Southeast Asia.
• Education has been affected due to long school closure, disproportionally with higher impact in developing countries.
• Health is affected — decrease in nutrition and increase in mortality. This will also reduce average life expectancy.
• Thus, there is impact on both income poverty and multidimensional poverty.
COVID-19: How are Trends Impacted?

Source: OPHI
COVID-19: Opportunities

• Rapid growth in investment in health sector and digital connectivity

• Creation of jobs in health and education sectors while scaling up care services for children, older and disabled

• Increased use of digitization and technologies in providing services including financial services

• Time for moving towards universal social protection coverage

• Opportunity for integrating informal enterprises — treating them like formal firms using digital platforms for registration and integration
Thank you