

Press release

Poverty eradication is possible with existing resources, but not with present policies, argues civil society at the UN

Global Spotlight Report says that the Agenda 2030 proposal to eradicate poverty by 2030 is achievable but tax policies need to change.

New York, 11 July 2017: “The promise made by governments to eradicate poverty by 2030 is doable if countries cooperate to fight tax evasion and capital flights” argues an independent report submitted to the High Level Political Forum of the United Nations as an input to its debate today around the first of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDG 1 envisages to “end poverty in all its forms everywhere” and the global Spotlight report, a comprehensive independent assessment launched here yesterday claims that this is achievable within existing resources.

The first target of SDG 1 is to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, using the international poverty line currently set by the World Bank as a consumption equivalent to \$ 1.90 a day. This poverty benchmark is so low, according to the Spotlight report, that the poverty gap (the total amount of money required to lift everybody up above the poverty line) for 2017 has been estimated at 66 billion US dollars, roughly half the budgeted official development assistance to be provided this year by donor countries.

“These figures show that the magnitude of the problem is not the biggest obstacle, but we do not argue that friction free cash transfers would solve it” explained Roberto Bissio, coordinator of Social Watch and one of the authors of the report: “Poverty is not mainly about money, but about rights: access to essential services like water, health and electricity, employment social protection”.

While the previous development commitment only dealt with poverty under the international line, now the second target of SDG 1 promises to reduce poverty by half according to national definitions in all countries (including Europe, Japan and the US, where poverty has been rising since the crisis of 2008). And the third target requests ““nationally appropriate social protection systems”.

Different studies have shown that a social protection floor is affordable in practically all countries within their existing resources. But the Spotlight report argues that “governments need to be able to raise taxes and control illicit outflows so that they can provide the cash, the basic services and the social protection that will raise their people out of poverty and in a sustainable way”. This requires international tax cooperation and strengthening of domestic revenue services, but current World Bank policies favour lower taxes while liberalized financial flows stimulate tax heavens and an uncontrolled offshore economy.

The Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2017 Report is published by the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Global Policy Forum (GPF), Public Services International (PSI), Social Watch, Society for International Development (SID), and Third World Network (TWN), supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. It provides the most comprehensive independent assessment of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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Beirut/Bonn/Ferney-Voltaire/Montevideo/New York/Penang/Rome/Suva, July 2017

www.2030spotlight.org

#SpotlightSDGs



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