The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development centered on well-being

Its call to “leave no one behind” and “to reach those furthest behind first” explicitly expresses the Sustainable Development Goal 10’s priority of reducing inequality within and among countries.

The search for greater equality is integral not only to goal 10, but the entire 2030 Agenda.

For example, it is present in the first and second goals, which project a life free of poverty and hunger for all people.

Goal five aims to achieve gender equality and empower all girls and women.

Other objectives are focused on achieving equal access for all people to basic conditions in matters of health, energy, clean water and sanitation services, along with decent work and justice.
The 2030 Agenda is a transformative one that centers on inequality reduction in all its dimensions, and all of its other objectives can be grouped by thematic focus.

For instance, goals one through five deal with social issues; eight, nine and twelve economic ones; thirteen, fourteen and fifteen environmental concerns; and 16 and 17 institutional matters.

Some goals are also related with more than one of these groups. Goal six, on clean water and sanitation, is a case in point given that the environment is our source of potable water that in turn is a social benefit.

Goals seven and eight constitute another example as energy is drawn from the environment and is economically beneficial in relation to equality, which intersects with economic and social issues on the level of incomes and from the social to the economic spheres through productivity.
The 2030 Agenda recognizes the role of equality as the cornerstone of development that can only be achieved by striving to recognize and overcome the gaps prevalent in the social development levels of different countries and communities.

Equality viewed from a rights-based perspective

Public policies for closing inequality gaps should also be designed and administered from a human rights-based perspective.

That outlook centers public policies on people and not simply as beneficiaries with needs to be attended to, but also as “rights holders” to whom the State is obligated.

An understanding of equality that is grounded in a rights-based perspective necessarily draws inspiration from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which spells out the different economic, social, cultural, environmental, civil and political rights that must be guaranteed to every person.

Those rights include a standard of living adequate for providing access to food, health, clothing, housing, work, and social security.
This document contributes to the activities of the project “Leaving no one behind in Latin America and the Caribbean: strengthening institutions and social policy coherence and integration at the country level to foster equality and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, financed by the eleventh tranche of the United Nations Development Account, and its implementation was coordinated by Simone Cecchini, Senior Social Affairs Officer of the Social Development Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Raúl Holz, Consultant of the same Division, and Humberto Soto de la Rosa, Social Affairs Officer of ECLAC’s subregional headquarters in Mexico. More information on the project, including other relevant materials, can be found at: igualdad.cepal.org/en

Based on the text: S. Cecchini, R. Holz and H. Soto de la Rosa (coords.), A toolkit for promoting equality: the contribution of social policies in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/TS.2021/55), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2021.

ECLAC staff members Humberto Soto, Elsa Gutiérrez and Mustafa Al Gamal, with the support of consultants Susan Skinner, Gabriela Ibarra and Ericka Arambarri, participated in the preparation of the document. The support of the Documents and Publications Division for their guidance is gratefully acknowledged. Icons from “The Noun Project” platform and photographs from the Adobe Stock platform were used in the preparation of the contents, with the proper authorizations. Photographs from the United Nations have also been used.

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