

CHAPTER ONE

Getting Specific to Leave No One Behind on Sustainable Development

Homi Kharas, John W. McArthur, and Izumi Ohno

A Compelling Vision

A world free of extreme poverty. Societies that work for everyone. These are the aspirations embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the commitment to leave no one behind by 2030. The ambition was formalized in the joint agreement by all 193 United Nations (UN) member states, in September 2015, to pursue the SDGs. In paragraph 4 of the SDG Summit declaration, world leaders agreed:

As we embark on this great collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, we wish to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. And we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first.

In a later part of the same declaration, under Goal 10 for reduced inequalities, world leaders further crystallized their commitment to inclusive societies. In target SDG 10.2, all countries made the pledge to “By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age,

We would like to thank Lorenz Noe for the empirical updates presented in this chapter.

sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status.” There is no ambiguity to the promise of sustainable development for all people.

Since 2015, the spirit of “leave no one behind” (LNOB) has garnered increasing traction across a growing number of constituencies. It might not be surprising that UN agencies have prominently adopted the LNOB slogan (e.g., UNDP 2018), but the concept has also started to take hold more broadly. Among national governments, sixteen described detailed LNOB efforts in their SDG voluntary national reviews presented at the UN in 2018.¹ Prominent G-7 economies, such as Canada, Japan, and the United Kingdom, have made their own specific public commitments to leaving no one behind.² Leading intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations outside the UN have also published major LNOB reports (e.g., OECD 2018; Samman and others, 2018) and respective alliances of civil society organizations launched both the Leave No One Behind Partnership in 2016 and the Leave No One Behind Project in 2017. At a more technical level, the Leave No One Behind Data Collaborative focuses on promoting citizen-generated data and an “inclusive data charter.” Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, even has its own SDG-focused Leave No One Behind program in partnership with Grameen Australia, teaching social business and entrepreneurship.

Nonetheless, despite the growing resonance around the LNOB phrasing, it is not yet clear the world is implementing relevant policies with corresponding seriousness. For example, estimated numbers of chronically undernourished people have been rising for four years in a row, as of 2018.³ Aggregate official development assistance to the least developed countries has been declining.⁴ Meanwhile, challenges of absolute deprivation and exclusion persist in high-income countries too.⁵ And even though the rise of anti-elite political movements in many countries has heightened policy interest in ensuring all societies work for everyone, there are still too few signs of decisive gains in addressing the concerns of people feeling marginalized or left behind.

This edited volume represents an effort to treat LNOB as a serious commitment, with a special emphasis on problems of absolute deprivation and basic needs. Ultimately, LNOB requires clarity on the task at hand—a commitment to supporting specific *people* facing specific *problems* in specific *places*. In this chapter, we provide an overview of the empirical nature of the challenge. We

1. Kindornay (2019).

2. Government of Canada (2018), Government of Japan (2016), UK Department for International Development (2019).

3. FAO and others (2019).

4. OECD (2019)

5. See, for example, figure 11 on OECD country performance in Kharas and others (2018).

then describe key insights generated by each chapter in focusing on many of the specific people, problems, and places that will define whether the world continues to leave large numbers of people behind in 2030.

The Empirical Nature of the Challenge

There is no single answer to the question of “how is the world doing on the SDGs?” The world shows too much variation across too many issues, indicators, and geographies for there to be any simplistic diagnosis of current status. Instead, any effort to leave no one behind needs to begin with an assessment of which people are facing which problems in which places. At a minimum, the scale and geographic distribution of each problem need to be considered.

To that end, a 2018 analysis by Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen considers country-level trend assessment of two dozen people-focused SDG indicators with adequate data for analysis. The study estimates the number of people slated to be left behind in each country on relevant SDG targets out to 2030. Here we draw from the same methods to present a summary assessment, in some cases drawing from more recent updates to underlying data sources, including the World Poverty Clock.^{6,7} To stress, our emphasis on people-focused economic and social indicators is only meant to drill down on the human dimensions of the LNOB challenge. It is not meant to detract in any way from other important SDG priorities focused on the environment or large-scale issues measured in terms of countries or international aggregates.

In this chapter, we follow the approach first laid out in McArthur and Rasmussen (2018) by distinguishing between two general categories of being left behind. The starkest form is premature death itself, so we group some indicators under a “life and death” category. The second form entails various forms of basic human needs—ranging from income to education to nutrition to equal access to opportunity across genders—that are essential for active and dignity-driven participation in society.

6. World Data Lab (2019).

7. Compared to the original results in Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen (2018), source data have been updated using more recent data releases from GBD (2017) for violence against women, stunting, wasting, children overweight, and family planning, and from World Bank (2019) for child mortality, primary school completion, pre-primary enrollment, undernourishment, tuberculosis infections, and air pollution. For HIV infections, we also now use World Bank (2019). We exclude indicators for Hepatitis B and malaria infections from this analysis because of substantial revisions to underlying historical country time-series data sources, which prompts uncertainty regarding the robustness of the underlying data estimates.

Life and Death Indicators

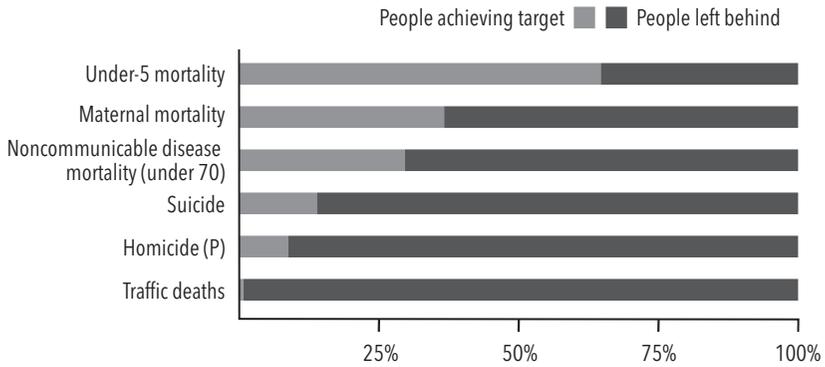
Figure 1-1 shows how the world is doing on a cross-section of life-and-death SDG targets, if current trends continue out to the deadline, generally 2030.⁸ A complete horizontal bar represents, at the 100 percent level, complete SDG success, meaning the full number of lives saved if all countries register the required rate of progress to meet the relevant target. The lighter shaded portion on the left side of the horizontal bar reflects the share of the target the world is currently on course to achieve. In the top bar, for example, the world is on course to save nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the relevant number of lives for under-five child mortality. The second bar shows that maternal mortality is only on track to achieve slightly more than one-third (37 percent) of the agreed outcome. On both issues, the world is carrying forward targets that update global ambitions since those included under the predecessor Millennium Development Goals.

The remaining indicators of figure 1-1 are all part of the SDGs' distinctive contributions to the international policy agenda. Target 3.4, for example, aims to reduce premature noncommunicable disease mortality rates by one-third compared to 2015. The world is currently on track to save only 30 percent of the lives required to meet that objective. Recent prospects are even worse for cutting suicide, another part of target 3.4, by the same amount. For traffic deaths, SDG target 3.6 aims at a 50 percent global reduction by 2020. When this objective is applied at the country level, figure 1-1 shows just how little progress the world has so far been on course to make.

Each SDG target embedded in figure 1-1 represents a different type of issue faced by a different range of people. In that regard, figure 1-2 shows the cumulative number of lives at stake on each of the same indicators, from 2019 through to 2030 or corresponding deadline year. "Lives at stake" is defined as the cumulative difference, in each country, between the number of people who will, under current trends, die by 2030, and the number of people who will die if each country achieves the relevant SDG target. When added up, the figure shows that approximately 44 million lives are at stake overall. Nearly two-thirds of these lives—more than 29 million—are estimated as premature deaths due to noncommunicable diseases. The second largest number of lives, at more than 9 million, is composed of children under five. Challenges of suicide, homicide, maternal mortality, and traffic deaths each account for between 1 and 2 million lives at stake.

8. In some instances, SDG targets have an earlier deadline, such as the target 3.6 to cut traffic deaths by half by 2020.

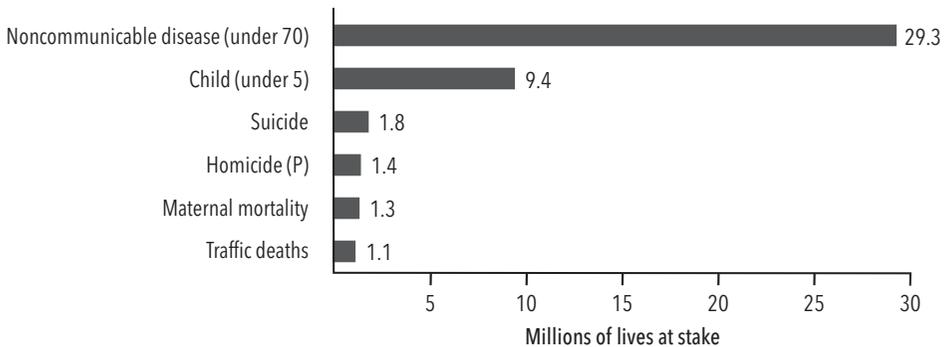
Figure 1-1. World Performance on SDG Life-and-Death Targets under Current Trend Out to 2030



Notes: (P) indicates proxy target used as 50 percent reduction for homicide. Traffic deaths are cumulative 2016 to 2020; maternal mortality applies the global target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births to each country.

Source: Results update those previously presented in Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen (2018). Underlying data are from UN-DESA (2017), UN Statistics Division (2018), World Bank (2019), WHO (2018).

Figure 1-2. Number of Lives at Stake under SDG Life-and-Death Targets—Cumulative 2019-2030



Notes: (P) indicates proxy target used as 50 percent reduction for homicide. Traffic deaths are cumulative over 2019 and 2020; maternal mortality applies the global target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births to each country.

Source: Results update those previously presented in Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen (2018). Underlying data are from UN-DESA (2017), UN Statistics Division (2018), World Bank (2019), WHO (2018).

Basic Needs Indicators

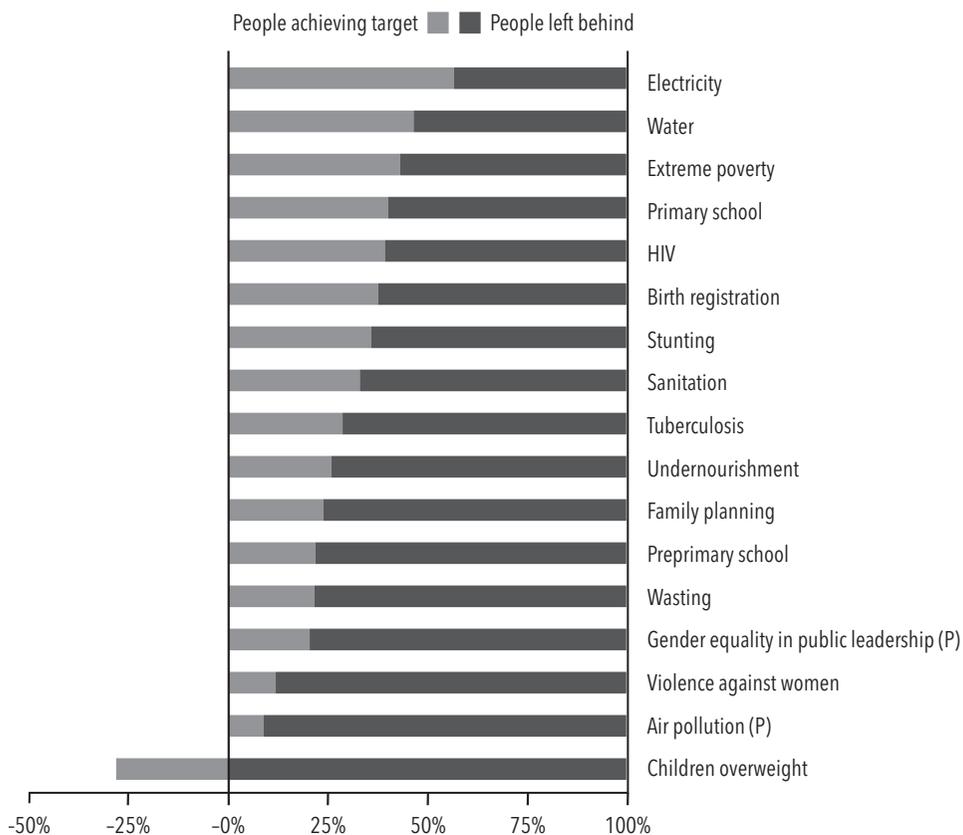
Figure 1-3 presents success ratios corresponding to those in figure 1-1, but now for a range of basic needs indicators. Note that here the number of people left behind is generally estimated only for the final target year, 2030, in order to avoid double-counting. The exception is for HIV infections and tuberculosis infections, which are reported as cumulative gaps from 2016 through 2030. Overall, the estimates in figure 1-3 suggest the world is on course to meet the needs of half the relevant population on only one of the indicators assessed: access to electricity. On the other sixteen indicators, the world is on course to cover less than half the needed ground. Extreme poverty, for example, is on trend to see only 43 percent of the relevant population have their incomes grow above the threshold of US\$1.90 per day (in 2011 purchasing power parity dollars). The bottom horizontal bar, for children overweight, shows that the world is actually moving in the wrong direction, since underlying numbers are growing in the vast majority of countries.

Figure 1-4 translates the percentage gaps from figure 1-3 into estimates of the numbers of people grappling with the specific problems reflected by each indicator. For most indicators, the figure again represents a snapshot of the estimated population size still grappling with an issue as of the year 2030. Note that the population reference group differs by indicator, and some individuals might struggle with multiple dimensions of basic needs, so numbers here are not strictly additive or comparable across rows. Sanitation and undernourishment, for example, are measured relative to total population, while children overweight is measured in terms of the much smaller number of children aged two to four years old.

The top bar in figure 1-4 indicates 3.6 billion people suffering from mortality-augmenting air pollution. That number is calculated based on a proxy target of cutting each country's share of people living with air pollution by 50 percent by 2030, so it represents only around half the number of people on trajectory to suffer from the problem that year. The next bar, based on women's representation in government, suggests a gap of nearly 2 billion women and girls still subjected to a lack of equal leadership opportunities in society. This is based on a very coarse assumption that lack of opportunities for women in political leadership reflects a generalized proportionate lack of life opportunities for all women and girls. Meanwhile, an estimated 470 million women aged fifteen to forty-nine will lack access to family planning, and more than 380 million women aged fifteen and older will still be victims of intimate partner violence.

The figure also shows that nearly 2 billion people are on track to be left without sanitation by 2030. More than 650 million people will still be undernourished;

Figure 1-3. World Performance on Basic SDG Needs
Targets by 2030, under Current Trends

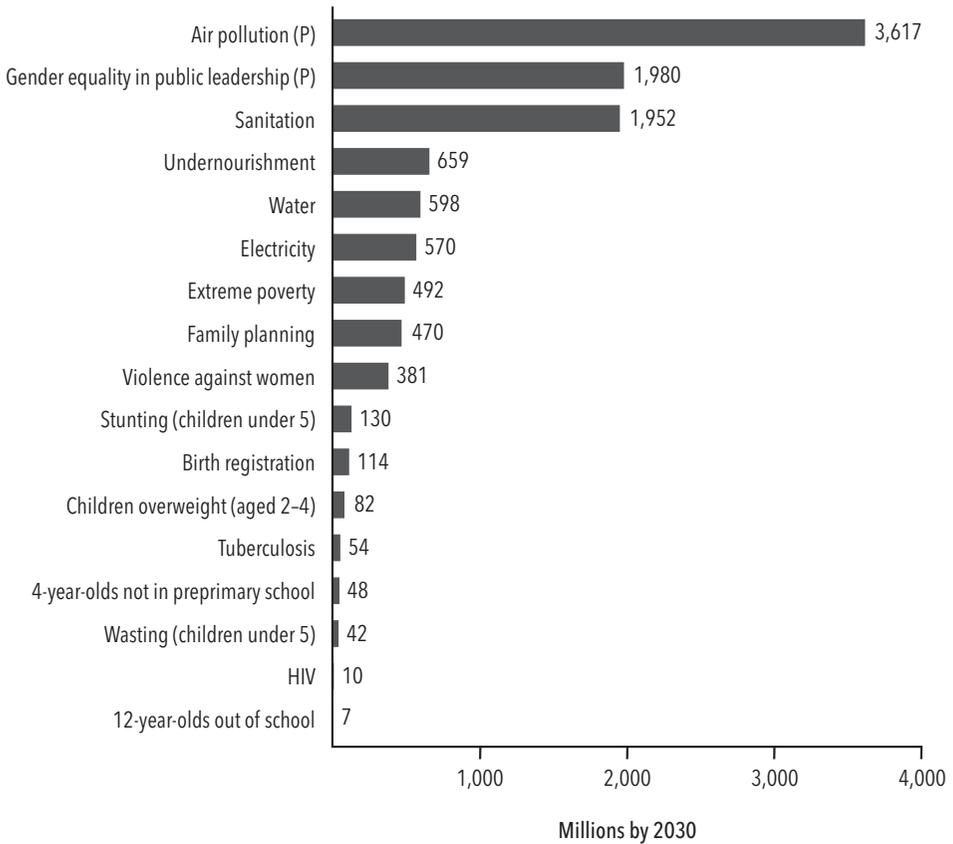


Notes: (P) indicates proxy target used: 50 percent reduction for air pollutions; WHO (2015) target of 90 percent reduction applied to each country for malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV infections; parity for gender representation in public leadership. Figures are for 2030 except HIV and tuberculosis, for which figures are cumulative over 2016 to 2030.

Source: Results update those previously presented in Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen (2018). Underlying data are from GBD (2017), UN-DESA (2017), World Bank (2019), World Data Lab (2019).

nearly 600 million people will lack access to drinking water; more than 570 million people will lack access to electricity; and more than 490 million people will still live in extreme income poverty. Meanwhile, unless trends improve, by 2030 more than 10 million people will be newly infected with HIV and more than 54 million with tuberculosis. An estimated 114 million people will not even have had their births registered—a troubling administrative variant of lives not being counted equally.

Figure 1-4. People Left Behind on Basic Needs SDG Targets by 2030, under Current Trends



Notes: (P) indicates proxy target used: 50 percent reduction for air pollution; WHO (2015) target of 90 percent reduction applied to each country for malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV infections; parity for gender representation in public leadership. Figures are for 2030 except HIV and tuberculosis, for which figures are cumulative over 2019 to 2030.

Source: Results update those previously presented in Kharas, McArthur, and Rasmussen (2018). Underlying data are from GBD (2017), UN-DESA (2017), World Bank (2019), World Data Lab (2019).

Child-focused indicators show the number of people on trend to be left behind at initial life stages, unless progress accelerates. More than 130 million children under five will be subject to stunting due to poor nutrition and more than 40 million will be subject to wasting. At the same time, more than 80 million children aged two to four will be classified as overweight, highlighting the double-barreled nature of the global nutrition challenge. Meanwhile, more than 48 million four-year-old children will lack access to preprimary education and

7 million twelve-year-olds will not have finished primary school. These age-specific educational gaps can be considered in the context of the 2016 global Education Commission's concern that nearly 900 million children and young adults will not be on track to achieve basic secondary-level skills by 2030.

Where Are People Being Left Behind?

The results presented above highlight the absolute numbers of people who will face the consequences of being left behind on a cross-section of SDG issues. All of these people live somewhere, and there is often considerable geographic concentration to the challenge. On child mortality, for example, three countries—Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Pakistan—account for more than half of the lives at stake. On extreme income poverty, five countries—Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, South Sudan, and Mozambique—are on course to be home to more than half of the remaining global challenge in 2030. It is not always the same countries that account for the majority of the global problem on a particular issue, but countries with widespread poverty challenges often face high absolute levels of deprivation on multiple dimensions of people being left behind.

At the same time, many countries facing the deepest problems of people left behind have smaller total populations. These countries might not account for a large share of the global challenge, but their local LNOB task is profound. To that end, Kharas and colleagues presented an approach to identifying the most “severely off-track countries” as a more refined multidimensional method for benchmarking the income-focused concept originally introduced in Gertz and Kharas (2018). By considering a cross section of people-focused SDG indicators anchored in absolute targets—for example eliminating extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates to no more than 25 deaths per 1,000 live births—it is possible to conduct a synthesis assessment of which countries are facing the deepest challenges across issues.

Such an assessment draws attention to Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Papua New Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Zambia, and Niger as the ten countries with the greatest remaining challenge as of 2030 on absolute measures of deprivation. It is important to note that these countries are all on course to make overall progress between 2015 and 2030, so the situation is far from hopeless, but they are starting in such a challenging position that, even with the progress, large shares of their population are still on course to be left behind. For international partners aiming to fulfill the SDG commitment to leave no one behind, a careful balance of efforts is required to support both the countries with large absolute numbers

of people being left behind and the countries with large proportionate shares of people being left behind.

Crucially, the challenges of people being left behind are not, by any stretch, exclusive to low-income countries. No OECD country is yet fully on track to ensure no one is left behind across the SDGs (Kharas and others, 2018). Even high-income countries—for example, Canada, with its reputation for strong public institutions—still face gaps in access to basic services like clean drinking water, including for indigenous people, and is not yet on track for any SDG indicators of gender equality (Biggs and McArthur, 2018). More broadly, most countries still face significant challenges of relative domestic poverty and food insecurity, in addition to problems like universal achievement of basic learning outcomes. And almost all countries need to grapple with problems like obesity, violence against women, and people being subjected to air pollution. Every society faces its own form of imperatives in order to leave no one behind.

Ideas for a Way Forward

In line with this volume's emphasis on getting specific on LNOB, a cross section of distinguished researchers and practitioners have contributed twelve separate chapters focusing on a range of pertinent challenges. No two chapters take the same exact approach, which reflects the diversity of topics, backgrounds, and perspectives involved in this collective analysis. It is important to note that the contributions do not pretend to address all dimensions of the LNOB imperative. Rather they represent a group of insightful voices aiming to treat LNOB as a serious objective. To that end, we have organized the contributions under three respective headings: those focused on specific people; those focused on specific problems; and those focused on specific places. This is followed by a final chapter on the political economy of power.

Specific People

Chapter 2 focuses on people left behind because of gender inequality, with emphasis on the most vulnerable women and girls—especially those who lack skills, opportunities, and a sense of self-efficacy. According to Hilary Mathews and Michelle Nunn, SDG 5—for gender equality—has an explicit focus on structural change, as expressed in targets for nondiscrimination in political institutions; addressing employment barriers, such as in unpaid care; and eliminating gendered forms of social control, including harmful traditional practices and violence against women. Gender dimensions also cut across all sixteen of the other SDGs. The authors are leaders at CARE, the prominent nongovernmental

organization with several decades of experience in development and humanitarian work. Based on the organization's operational insights, the authors argue that policymakers and aid practitioners have tended to misinterpret the problem of gender inequality and, as a result, have been applying solutions that fall short of what is needed. They propose two levels of action. The first level falls within the existing paradigm of international assistance: tackling the data gaps that hinder our understanding of what even works where and for whom. The second level focuses on structural changes that strengthen and diversify local, national, and international coalitions for gender equality. This ultimately requires transforming traditional power dynamics, leading the authors to call for an explicitly feminist approach to international development.

Chapter 3 focuses on the “ultra-poor,” a subset of the people living in extreme poverty who are defined by both severe material destitution and psychological despair. Lindsay Coates and Scott MacMillan suggest scalable, evidence-based solutions that can break the trap of ultra-poverty, drawing from a growing body of evidence on the “graduation approach” that their own organization, BRAC, has piloted in Bangladesh and other countries. A development organization founded and based in Bangladesh, BRAC is known for running adaptive, hands-on programs on a massive scale. To tackle ultra-poor people's complex and heterogeneous needs, the graduation approach emphasizes a sequence of interventions tailored to each culture, context, and population. In focusing on social protection, livelihood promotion, financial inclusion, and social empowerment at the same time, the approach includes a focus on nonmaterial factors like activating people's sense of self-worth and injecting well-founded hope and optimism into their lives. The authors stress the need to strengthen evidence on how well different approaches address ultra-poverty while also arguing for the need to think beyond purely economic support strategies, such as unconditional cash transfers or universal basic income. Based on growing evidence on the “science of hope,” Coates and MacMillan believe development agencies that espouse a belief in LNOB need to deepen their understanding of, and investments in, tackling the special human attributes of ultra-poverty.

Among the world's poorest people, a majority are smallholder farmers, most of whom produce staple food crops that are consumed on-farm or sold in nearby markets, often with little formality. For these households, one important way to boost incomes is to become part of formal value chains linking food suppliers, distributors, retailers, and customers. In chapter 4, Jane Nelson describes how inclusive business models and alliances can support smallholders to become more commercially viable in this regard. For smallholders, the obstacles to value chain connections tend to be multifaceted, so—although data remain too scarce on the current reach of inclusive business models—success typically requires public

sector, private sector, and civil society actors to collaborate in a systemic manner. There are many practical challenges to implementing multi-stakeholder strategies in cooperation with farmers themselves, but individual interventions, such as contract farming, savings groups, and producer collectives, have all demonstrated evidence of a considerable positive impact. For the hundreds of millions of smallholder households still struggling to convert their farms into sustainable enterprises, governments, companies, and nongovernmental actors all have a role to play.

Migrants and refugees form an entirely different category of people at risk of being left behind. In chapter 5, Dany Bahar and Meagan Dooley document the rapid recent rise in refugees worldwide, from about 15 million in 2005 to over 25 million today. They note that over 85 percent of refugees are hosted in developing countries, which frequently struggle to provide support and services to these guests while also dealing with the needs of their own vulnerable populations. Often the barriers faced by refugees also affect all migrants, a much larger population (migrants comprise 3.3 percent of the world's population, an estimated 266 million people). Despite common rhetoric to the contrary, Bahar and Dooley argue the cross-border movement of people is a significant long-term positive for those who move, as well as for both the host and the sending countries. They recommend increased action to integrate migrants and refugees into inbound labor markets by providing work permits, freedom of movement, and job-matching programs. Migration's benefits can also be increased through policies that facilitate entrepreneurship, an activity in which migrants tend to engage in higher proportions than natives. At the same time, the authors stress the importance of investing in infrastructure and public services in communities experiencing fast and large influxes of refugees. Based on the reviewed evidence, the chapter argues for human mobility to be viewed not as a risk but as an opportunity for expanding growth and human capital accumulation.

Specific Problems

In considering the component problems of LNOB, one of the most salient aspects of the 2030 SDG time horizon will be quickly evolving industry skill requirements around the globe, alongside rapid population growth in many low-income countries with weak national education systems. In that context, Rebecca Winthrop and Lauren Ziegler focus on a crucial dual educational component of the LNOB challenge in chapter 6. First, millions of children who are excluded from formal education systems still require basic access. Second, education systems themselves need to ensure all participating young people are empowered with quality twenty-first-century skills that are relevant to the world they will enter

upon graduation. Winthrop and Ziegler argue that the double task can only be addressed if policymakers shift mindsets. Instead of the traditional step-wise thought process of promoting access first, then quality, then relevance, education systems need an innovation-based “leapfrog” mindset of promoting access, quality, and relevance all at once. The core of a leapfrog pathway is to transform teaching and learning to be more student-centered while also transforming the recognition of learning to be more individualized. In many contexts, leapfrogging can be further scaled up by diversifying the people and places that foster learning and by leveraging data and technology to provide continuous feedback on the quality of teaching and learning. Despite the enormity of the challenge, a cross section of practical examples from some of the world’s most remote and marginalized communities show the broader viability of leapfrogging.

As another crucial element of fostering both human capital and well-being, health is a precondition for achieving economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is also a universal human right. In chapter 7, Krishna D. Rao, Saeda Makimoto, Michael A. Peters, Gabriel Leung, Gerald Bloom, and Yasushi Katsuma focus on the challenge of achieving universal health coverage (UHC) for vulnerable and marginalized populations who are at risk of poor health and healthcare disparities, with inadequate financial protection. After discussing the intersectionality between different forms of vulnerability in relation to health, the authors analyze the existing disparities in service coverage and financial hardships faced by vulnerable populations. They then propose policy options to address such UHC gaps. The authors suggest progressive universalism as a key principle to achieving UHC, by first targeting the health needs and financial protection of the most vulnerable populations, including migrants. At the same time, operationalizing this principle requires better information on vulnerable populations; health systems oriented toward primary healthcare while ensuring quality of care; strong linkages with secondary and tertiary care levels; adequate financing for health; and the adoption of innovative technologies. Development partners can play an important role in providing necessary financial resources, creating networks for knowledge exchange, and promoting the scaling up of innovations, including new technologies to make affordable, quality health services accessible to the neediest people.

Chapter 8 addresses the challenge of narrowing the gender gap in financial inclusion, based on the analysis of cross-country data drawn from the World Bank’s Global Findex Database and rural Philippines survey data collected by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Research Institute. Authors Eiji Yamada, Erica Paula Sioson, Enerelt Murakami, and Akira Murata point out that access to affordable and useful financial services is one of the basic requirements that help people to secure their economic stability and healthy life. But overall

recent global progress in financial inclusion, measured by formal and mobile money account ownership, has not automatically improved the gender gap in access. Some countries—such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nigeria—face even worsening disparities. The authors conduct an in-depth analysis of the Philippines as a case study of relevant issues. This reveals considerable heterogeneity of gender-equitable financial inclusion across the country and also within municipalities. Based on JICA's project experiences and broader findings in relevant literature, the authors suggest possible measures to address demand- and supply-side barriers to equity, ranging from material to social constraints. Given the diversity of situations present within and across countries, the authors further recommend mutual policy-learning efforts spanning both developed and developing countries.

In broader debates around financing the SDGs, there is much discussion about the role of domestic resource mobilization as a source of funding for various LNOB policies and programs. In chapter 9, Nora Lustig, Jon Jellema, and Valentina Martinez examine how viable this might be in practice. They ask a seemingly simple question: could one eradicate poverty by reallocating all subsidies to the poor and then filling the remaining income gap with tax-financed transfers? At least for nine sub-Saharan African countries in the authors' sample, the answer is a resounding no across nearly all the scenarios they consider, based on a variety of different poverty lines and technical approaches. To understand the constraints, the intuition follows not from theory but from a close examination of what is practical. Lustig and colleagues start by acknowledging that subsidies largely go to the relatively well-off (think petrol subsidies that only go to those rich enough to own cars), but in low- and lower-middle income countries they are generally too small to make a material dent in country-wide poverty even if redistributed to the poor. That leaves taxes as a funding source for transfers, but it turns out that most tax systems rely heavily on consumption taxes. So when taxes are raised in order to finance transfers, prices go up and the poor are hurt. The net impact, then, depends on whether the poor are hurt more by the price increases than they benefit from the transfers. The authors find that in most of their scenarios, exploring interventions like universal or targeted income supplements, the tax levels required to make a substantial dent in poverty in low- and lower-middle income countries are simply too high to be feasible within the sample of modern market-oriented economies. They therefore caution against getting too excited by the idea of tax mobilization as a source of funding anti-poverty programs.

Specific Places

The book's final section focuses on topics pertinent to the geography of LNOB. In chapter 10, Jennifer Cohen, Raj M. Desai, and Homi Kharas stress that for too many people living in poverty the place where they are born determines their life opportunities. In the development community's common discourse, "place" has usually implied "country," but there is growing recognition that many low-income countries have their own regions of relative prosperity while many middle-income countries have regions of poverty. This understanding has been deepened by new data sets that make use of satellite-based imagery and can be used to define problems at a more granular level than the country. In their chapter, Cohen and colleagues look at the world's 3,609 subnational districts and provinces and ask what income levels are likely to be in these areas in 2030, if recent trends persist. Areas below a 2030 average income threshold of \$4,900 per capita (in 2011 purchasing power parity terms) are dubbed "poverty hotspots," meaning places where there are likely to be substantial concentrations of extreme poverty in 2030. The authors then consider whether there are policy levers that can accelerate growth in these places, and find several candidates—investment in human capital, investment in physical connectivity, investment in resilience to environmental and conflict-related shocks, and national policies to improve governance. For each of these policy levers, the authors provide examples of how governments have actually used spatial targeting to good effect. At the same time, Cohen and colleagues note that, for at least one major multilateral institution, aid does not seem to have been prioritized toward poverty hotspots. They call for greater use of spatial information and targeting to accelerate growth and poverty reduction where it is needed most.

Among the varying geographies confronting the LNOB challenge, the fraction of people living in extreme poverty in fragile states is growing steadily and projected to reach at least 50 percent by 2030. This is a result of both the difficulties in reducing poverty in fragile states and the rapid fall in poverty in non-fragile states. Addressing the fragile state-based concentration of poverty is, therefore, at the heart of the LNOB agenda. As Landry Signé outlines in chapter 11, this requires addressing fragility itself, which is not an easy problem to solve, since many countries' fragility has persisted for decades and little foreign investment flows inward to these places. Conflict, low-level violence, gender inequality, low domestic resource mobilization, limited aid, poor governance, weak connectivity, and low human capital complicate any interventions. Signé nonetheless offers some practical ideas for making progress. First, he unpacks fragility and suggests what kind of interventions should be prioritized in individual country contexts to bridge the gap between policy goals and implementation outcomes.

Second, he emphasizes two approaches that offer promise: support for private business and a greater focus on cities. On the private sector side, Signé points not just to the job creating benefits of private investments, but also to the role of sound business practices, especially in resource extraction, and the much broader feelings of inclusion that a vibrant private sector can bring. He also emphasizes the need to tackle fragility at the local level, especially in cities where levels of violence are high. At this level, transparency and accountability are critical elements of improved governance.

Tony Pipa and Caroline Conroy further stress the importance of cities in chapter 12. In the SDG framework, municipal issues were given prominence through Goal 11 for sustainable cities and communities. But as Pipa and Conroy explain, Goal 11 on its own is not enough to tackle the urban LNOB challenge. The world's fastest growing cities are in low-income countries grappling with intense poverty problems, and too little is known about how many extremely poor people even live in these urban areas. National governments at all income levels have a particular responsibility to ensure "no city is left behind" in national SDG processes, including in their voluntary national reviews presented at the UN. At the same time, urban governments often form the frontlines confronting the daily societal realities spanning all seventeen SDGs, even if they typically only have direct jurisdiction and administrative capacities to take on a subset of the challenges. Bridging this gap forms a pivotal task for LNOB. Fortunately, a growing number of cities of varying income levels are undertaking "voluntary local reviews" to demonstrate their strategies to advance the SDGs. Local governments are commonly finding it most useful to boil the seventeen goals down to their three-part essence of integrating economic, social, and environmental problem-solving. In this respect, many local leaders are pioneering some of the most innovative approaches to SDG implementation. Pipa and Conroy argue that they can only succeed at scale through support from both national policy-makers above and engaged community members below.

The Political Economy of Power

All of the preceding insights and recommendations—whom to target, on what issues, and in which places—will not be of much use if, in the final analysis, power imbalances within countries prevent effective implementation. In this volume's final chapter, Paul O'Brien argues that people are not being "left behind" so much as "pushed behind." Addressing this challenge, he argues, requires a discussion about power—what it means, who holds it or doesn't, and how it might be redistributed. According to O'Brien, historical theories of power, from Hobbes to Foucault, discussed power exclusively as a finite relationship (if one

person holds it, another cannot). Around the turn of this century, feminist and development thinkers opened up an analysis of power as ability that is not so zero sum (power as ability can be grown in one person without another person losing out). While O'Brien believes that feminist thinking on power has been transformative for development practice, he also argues that not enough attention has been given to relative power. For the SDGs to succeed, he argues that zero sum relational power over economic resources and political choice must not only be redistributed away from those who have too much, but also can and should be held by those left behind. O'Brien lays out two proposals for doing so. First, political power should be redistributed away from autocrats who suppress political freedoms and oppress those frontline human rights defenders of the SDGs. When this happens, relational (democratic) power will return to active citizens. Second, economic power should be redistributed away from the extreme wealthy and shared more broadly by more people on an increasingly stressed planet. Feminism, O'Brien concludes, can take us beyond the false choice between amplifying power as ability and redistributing zero sum relational power. He closes by calling on us to understand power in both its forms—as a relationship and as ability—as they manifest in the world, in our organizations, and in ourselves.

Conclusion

This volume's dozen distinct contributions draw attention to the broad range of issues that underpin the LNOB challenge, while not professing to form anything like a comprehensive review of the problems that need to be addressed to shift LNOB from slogan to specifics. A number of chapters draw attention to the intersectionality through which some individuals confront multiple LNOB issues at once—for example, a migrant woman in a fragile poverty hotspot with weak systems for health and education. A call for specificity on LNOB should not generate faulty policy segmentation. A human being can be left behind for many reasons.

Many of the chapters also draw attention to data gaps. Whether considering issues of gender, geography, poverty, or even financial inclusion, the world needs better information to understand exactly who is getting left behind, where, and why. National governments need to prioritize these issues in their SDG voluntary national reviews to the United Nations. They could usefully all commit to present, by the end of 2020, their own domestic estimates of who is getting left behind on each issue in each community.

The calendar for bringing LNOB to life is crucial. At the time of writing, in mid-2019, it is not yet clear whether any country in the world has yet internalized the relevant practical questions for action. With little more than a decade

remaining to deliver on the 2030 SDG promise, governments and international partners need to implement much more comprehensive approaches to targeted, outcome-oriented, and innovation-based policies and budgets. As many of the chapters in this volume demonstrate, the challenges are significant. But they are not insurmountable. For the SDGs, if the world acts quickly, there is still time to help the many millions of specific people facing specific problems in specific places. There is still time to ensure societies work for everyone.

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