

**Workshop on**  
**“Innovative Social Assistance Strategies in Poverty Alleviation”**  
**Ankara, Turkey, 12-14 December 2011**

**Recommendations**

In the light of the general discussions and deliberations made during the working sessions of the workshop, the participants made the following recommendations for developing and enhancing technical cooperation among OIC Member Countries in the area of poverty alleviation strategies at both national and OIC level:

**A. At National Level**

**1.** Member Countries are recommended to develop effective methods and approaches to monitor and follow up the status of poverty. They should enhance their knowledge about the roots of poverty, social economic conditions of poor; the assets they command; as well as economic opportunities available to them. This can be achieved through:

- Identifying and building on a comprehensive definition of poverty that emanates from socio-economic and political realities of the country,
- Monitoring the status of poverty through developing accurate, complete and regular data and information on poverty in the country (e.g., household surveys) segregated by location and other thematic areas. This would serve to build a framework for identifying areas requiring intervention by the government at each stage of development,
- Identifying and prioritising issues of relevance to poverty alleviation policies in the areas of employment generation in order to design well perceived policies on these issues.

**2.** In applying these measures, it should be noted that poverty alleviation is not merely the provision of a mechanism whereby the poor are helped to cross a given threshold of income or consumption, but rather involves a sustained increase in productivity and an inclusiveness of the poor into the process of growth. Therefore, understanding the causes of poverty and the mechanism of impoverishment and poverty perpetuation is what will eventually determine the policies to address the problem.

**3.** In order to guide anti-poverty policies effectively, further attention should be given to specific aspects concerning the issue of governing the inter-linkages between macro-policies and poverty. In this context, there is widespread fear that the structural adjustment and economic reform programmes that are being implemented now in many OIC Least Developed Low-Income Countries would have severe negative social impacts, especially on the poor.

Therefore, additional corrective measures must be undertaken to alleviate these adverse impacts on the poorest and marginalised groups.

4. Social assistance strategies and safety nets should put emphasis on job creation for the poor people and enhancing their primary education, occupational training and basic health care through accurate policies and programs.

5. National poverty alleviation policies and programmes should include two equally important elements. The first is to promote the productive use of the poor's most abundant asset, labour. This calls for policies that harness market incentives, social and political institutions, infrastructure, and technology to that end. The second is to provide basic social services to the poor such as primary education, health care and nutrition.

6. Efforts should be made, particularly in the OIC Least Developed Low-Income Countries to promote and encourage the productive use of labour by providing job opportunities for their poor people and by investing in health and education programmes to enable them taking full advantage of the new possibilities.

7. Efforts should be made to develop special programmes for supporting self-employment through establishment and expansion of small enterprise sectors by increasing access to financial services and market, including Islamic microcredit, improving infrastructure and the equity of access to productive inputs such as land and sites for enterprises, and increasing the accessibility of information and advisory services.

9. Further measures should be taken by the OIC member countries to accelerate the achievement towards MDGs and concrete actions.

## **B. At OIC Level**

1. A special Capacity Building Programme is recommended to be developed by the IDB and SESRIC, in collaboration with the relevant national, regional and international institutions, with a view to support the efforts of the Member Countries towards enhancing their institutional capacities and to improve the effectiveness of their national poverty alleviation strategies, and to explore methods and approaches to face with future global crisis and natural disasters through facilitating the transfer of expertise and best practices among the Member Countries. IDB and OIC Member Countries are invited to finance projects in the fields of education especially introducing new initiatives within Islamic education institutions such as vocational training

2. All OIC Member Countries are recommended to actively participate in the implementation of the various activities of the Programme through their relevant Ministries

and institutions, non-governmental organizations and to designate their National Focal Points (NFPs) for the Programme in close cooperation and collaboration with SESRIC and IDB.

**3.** An Online OIC Network on “Innovative Social Assistance Strategies for Poverty Alleviation” is recommended to be established by SESRIC with a view to facilitate and exchange information and knowledge sharing on best practices and success stories among the Member Countries in this important area.

**4.** A country profile on poverty alleviation strategies and practices in OIC Member Countries is recommended to be developed and made available online to be filled and updated by all the Member Countries.

**5.** IDB and OIC are invited to finance projects such as vocational training, Islamic education institution.