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What it is, why it matters and how to tackle it

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Abstract

This paper begins by outlining what is meant by poverty and inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP), and why tackling child poverty must be central to combating IGTP. It then sets out the reasons why IGTP matters both to children and the wider society. Finally, it makes various recommendations that could usefully be considered to combat IGTP. These cover ensuring adequate income and resources, guaranteeing access to quality essential services (health, nutrition, housing, early childhood education and care, family support, education, as well as sport, culture and leisure) and to integrated delivery of policies and programmes, promoting children's participation and fostering children's aspirations, protecting the right to a family life, and fighting discrimination and stigmatisation.

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1. Introduction ([1])

This paper begins by outlining what is meant by poverty and inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP), and why tackling child poverty must be central to combating IGTP. It then sets out the reasons why IGTP matters both to children and the wider society. Finally, it makes various recommendations that could be considered to combat IGTP – which relate to adequate income and resources, access to essential services, children's participation, fostering aspirations, discrimination and stigmatisation, and integrated delivery of policies and programmes.

1.1 What is poverty

At the outset it is useful to be clear what is meant by poverty in the context of IGTP. Definitions can vary across regions and countries. The most common distinction is between absolute or extreme poverty and relative poverty ([2]).

Absolute or extreme poverty is when people lack the basic necessities for survival. For instance, they may be starving, lack clean water, decent housing, sufficient clothing or medicines and healthcare and be struggling to stay alive. Absolute/extreme poverty is more common in developing countries but it is also a reality for some people living in more developed countries such as in the European Union (EU) and United States.

The World Bank has traditionally used an income measure to gauge extreme poverty which is currently US$1.90-a-Day. However, in 2018 it introduced four additional poverty metrics to capture the changing nature of global poverty. Higher poverty lines at US$3.20 and US$5.50 a day reflect national poverty lines in lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income economies respectively. The societal poverty line, which adjusts to each country's income, captures the increase in basic needs that a person requires to conduct a dignified life as a country becomes richer. The multidimensional poverty measure incorporates deprivations in three indicators of well-being

1. This paper was prepared at the request of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Olivier De Schutter, to inform the preparation of his report (De Schutter 2021) which he presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 October 2021. When discussing inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP) in developing countries, we draw extensively on a very helpful briefing document prepared by Esme Lillywhite (Sciences Po Paris, France) - *Intergenerational transmission of poverty: factors, trends and recommendations (in non-OECD countries)*. The two case studies in Annex 2 were also prepared by Esme Lillywhite. We are grateful to Olivier De Schutter for his very helpful feedback and suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper. We are also grateful to the participants in the on-line 'Dialogue on the inter-generational transmission of poverty' organised on 17-18 December 2020 during which an earlier draft of the paper was presented and discussed. (The meeting was organised with financial support from the Government of Luxembourg and scientific support from LISER.) In addition to the very helpful comments and suggestions made at this on-line meeting, we are particularly grateful for written comments and suggestions of further sources that we received after the meeting from Vegard Iversen (University of Greenwich), Laura Peterson (Save the Children) and Olivier Thévenon (OECD). All errors remain strictly our responsibility.
2. The European Anti-Poverty Network's 'Explainer' on poverty and inequality in the EU contains a useful explanation of the difference between absolute and relative poverty (EAPN 2014).

(monetary poverty, access to education and basic infrastructure), thus giving further insight into the complex nature of poverty ([3]).

Relative poverty is when people's way of life and income is so much worse than the general standard of living in the country or region in which they live, that they struggle to live a normal life and to participate in ordinary economic, social and cultural activities. What this means and how severe the impact is vary significantly from country to country (and across regions), depending on the standard of living enjoyed by the majority. While not generally as extreme as absolute/extreme poverty, relative poverty may still be profoundly serious and harmful for the people excluded from the 'normal' way of life in their society.

In the EU, 'poverty' usually refers to 'income poverty' and is measured by using national relative poverty lines defined on the basis of the country's national income distribution. The lead EU income poverty indicator is the so-called 'At-Risk-of-Poverty' (AROP) indicator, for which the poverty line is set in each country at 60% of the national median equivalised household income. However, recognising the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, the EU uses a large set of poverty and social exclusion indicators ([4]). Among these indicators, material deprivation indicators gained in importance during the last decade and are widely used to complement the income-based approach.

In 2010, as part of the Europe 2020 strategy on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the EU set a specific and time-bound target for the EU as a whole to be achieved by 2020: 'promoting social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty, by aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion in the EU (European Council 2010). This target is measured on the basis of the 'At-Risk-of-Poverty-or-Social-Exclusion' (AROPE) indicator, according to which people are at risk of poverty or social exclusion if they live in a household that is income poor (AROP indicator) and/or severely materially deprived and/or (quasi-)jobless ([5]).

In 2021, as part of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) Action Plan ([6]), three **new headline targets** to be achieved by 2030 were agreed at EU level: i) an employment rate of at

3. The World Bank (2020). See also Atkinson (2017).
4. Social Protection Committee (2015).
5. See Frazer *et al.* (2014) for a discussion of this indicator and European Commission (2019) for an analysis of progress made towards the 2020 target. For these three EU indicators as well as several other poverty and social exclusion indicators included in the EU portfolio of social indicators, the data source is the *EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)*. For more information on EU-SILC, see https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-statistics-on-income-and-living-conditions
6. The EPSR was proclaimed jointly by the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission at the Gothenburg Summit in 2017 (for the full text, see: European Commission 2017). The Action Plan for its implementation was proposed by the European Commission in March 2021 (European

least 78%; ii) at least 60% of adults attending training courses every year; and iii) a reduction of at least 15 million in the number of AROPE people. The latter is of particular importance for the topic of this paper as 'out of the 15 million people to lift out of poverty or social exclusion, at least 5 million should be children' (European Commission 2021). As highlighted by the European Commission, 'the focus on children will allow not only to provide them with access to new opportunities but will also contribute to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, preventing that they become adults at risk of poverty or social exclusion and thus producing long–term systemic effects' (*Op.Cit.*) ([7]).

Children's poverty or deprivation risk is usually measured by breaking down the income poverty or deprivation indicators by age. However, for the first time in March 2018, the EU adopted a child-specific index, measuring children's deprivation which may differ from those of their parents ([8]). Both within and between EU countries, the extent to which there is a correlation between low income and child deprivation varies significantly and many other factors (e.g. parents' education level, single parenthood, (quasi-)joblessness, housing cost burden, provision of in-kind services, general level of affluence in the country…) play a significant role in this regard ([9]). Suffering from material deprivation has serious negative short-term and long-term effects which lead to IGTP.

Commission 2021). On 7 and 8 May 2021, EU leaders met in Porto and adopted the so-called 'Porto declaration' where they reinforce their commitments to the implementation of the EPSR: they 'welcome the new EU headline targets on jobs, skills and poverty reduction and the revised Social Scoreboard proposed in the Action Plan that will help to monitor progress towards the implementation of the Social Pillar principles, taking into account different national circumstances' and they 'stress the importance of closely following, including at the highest level, the progress achieved towards the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the EU headline targets for 2030' (here). In June 2021, the Council of the EU endorsed a revised Social Scoreboard – i.e. a renewed list of headline indicators elaborated jointly by the European Commission and the Member States on the basis of the Commission's proposal included in its EPSR Action Plan (here).

7. In the first half of 2021, the European Commission and the Member States agreed on an amended definition of two of the three indicators included in the AROPE indicator that will be used for the 2030 target - the (quasi-)jobless indicator and the deprivation indicator. Compared with the definition used in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, changes made to the former are quite small; the main one concerns the age group covered by the indicator (0-64 instead of 0-59). By contrast, changes made to the latter are significant: the new indicator is more robust and there has been a shift in the approach followed – from a 'material' to a 'material and social' deprivation measure (see Guio *et al.* 2016 and Guio *et al.* 2017).
8. Children are classed as deprived if they lack at least three items from a 17-item index. These include personal and household items. Personal: some new (not second-hand) clothes; two pairs of properly fitting shoes; fresh fruits and vegetables daily; meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent daily; books at home suitable for the children's age; outdoor leisure equipment; indoor games; regular leisure activities; celebrations on special occasions; invitation of friends to play and eat from time to time; participation in school trips and school events that cost money; holiday; Household: arrears; home adequately warm; access to a car for private use; replace worn-out furniture; access to internet. The child-specific deprivation was developed by Guio *et al.* (2018).
9. Guio *et al.* (2020).

From of all this it is clear that poverty is now recognised as a **multi-dimensional** issue. It is not just about income and material consumption; it is also about people's well-being. For instance, it is stressed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR 2012) that 'Poverty is not solely an economic issue, but rather a multi-dimensional phenomenon that encompasses a lack of both income and the basic capabilities to live in dignity'. Likewise, the European Anti-Poverty Network has stressed that 'the concept of multidimensional poverty is essential in recognising the wider psychological, social and cultural as well as economic effects of poverty and that they are inter-related and cumulative' (EAPN 2020). Thus, addressing IGTP needs to look at a wide range of issues such as health, education, family and social relations, opportunities to participate in society, and the impact of social exclusion, powerlessness, stigmatisation and discrimination. The Institute of Development Studies has argued that the benefit of a well-being lens is that it extends attention from what people can do and be to how people feel about what they can do and be, and thus it is explicitly about agency and considers the relational and subjective domains of life. The well-being lens therefore aligns with a rights-based approach to poverty, which also emphasises agency and a broader understanding of poverty ([10]).

1.2 What is inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP)

IGTP occurs when people remain in poverty over a long period and poverty persists from one generation to another, with parents who are poor having children who are poor, who in turn are more likely to become adults who are poor themselves. The Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) has defined IGTP as 'the private and public transfer of deficits in assets and resources from one generation to another. Poverty is not transferred inter-generationally as a 'package', but as a complex set of positive and negative factors that affect an individual's chances of experiencing poverty in the present or at a future point in their life-course' ([11]).

It is important to note that there are some important differences between studying IGTP in developing and Western settings. For example, factors that are normally considered in literature on IGTP in OECD countries include parental endowments and returns to human capital investments. While these remain important in a developing context, factors beyond these are expected to be even more important. Examples include credit constraints, information constraints, peer and role model effects, and location. Another difference is the more severe consequences of the cycle of poverty in low-income settings, and also the disconnect between educational attainment and occupational mobility that may be more pronounced. Furthermore, there is a clear difference in data availability, and thus in appropriate methodological approaches, when studying

10. Sumner *et al.* (2009). See also EAPN (2016 and 2020).
11. Bird and Higgins (2011).

IGTP in a developing country setting, for example, the usefulness of using standardised occupational classifications that were designed to study social mobility in the developed world ([12]).

'Inter-generational transmission of poverty' or 'Inter-generational persistence of poverty?

It should be noted that, while extensively used, the term IGTP can be problematic as the word 'transmission' risks being misinterpreted as 'blaming' parents for the transmission of poverty to their children. This can lead to an overemphasis on personal factors and an insufficient focus on the underlying structural factors that lead to the persistence of poverty from one generation to the next. It risks underplaying the extent to which the persistence of poverty is a symptom of the persistence of deep-seated inequalities from one generation to the next. Thus, it may be more appropriate to talk about ***inter-generational persistence of poverty***. When we use the term IGTP in this paper it is always in this broader sense of the persistence of poverty from one generation to the next.

1.3 Why combating child and family poverty is key to combating inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP)

While IGTP concerns poverty in any part of the life cycle, poverty during childhood can be particularly impactful upon transmission, especially as early childhood is such a crucial stage in development. Children who grow up in poverty not only have limited opportunities to fulfil their potential; they also have a much higher risk of raising their own children in poverty. Household, community and institutional influences mediate the development of children's capacities and in due course the IGTP, as circumstances in childhood shape later opportunities ([13]). As UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty explain, child poverty is transmitted across generations. First, by becoming adult poverty, and then by being passed on to the next generation of children. Breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty should thus give priority attention to children living in poverty ([14]). Thus to break this vicious cycle, poverty reduction must have a strong focus on policies to end child and family poverty. However, it is important to note that while investing in early childhood is critical and cost effective, essential later treatment and amelioration using evidence-based programmes can also succeed ([15]). This means considering the impact of poverty at all stages of childhood including adolescence and giving particular attention to transitions (e.g. from early childhood education and care [ECEC] to formal schooling, from primary to secondary school and from school to employment). In other words, to counter the dynamic accumulation of

12. Iversen *et al.* (2019).
13. Bird and Higgins (2011).
14. UNICEF and The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
15. Rea and Burton (2019).

disadvantage over the life course it is important to tailor interventions to the appropriate moments and to avoid 'irreversibilities' whenever they may occur.

1.4 Evidence of the extent of inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP) and the link with child poverty

UNICEF and The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty report on research that shows that children growing up in poverty are more likely to be poor as adults ([16]).

- First, they highlight that a study of child poverty in the US found that children who experienced poverty at any point during childhood were more than three times as likely to be poor at age 30 as those who were never poor as children. The longer a child was poor, the greater the risk of being poor in adulthood.
- Secondly, they report that a substantial number of studies document the strong relationship between parent and child incomes as adults, suggesting that although income mobility varies substantially by country, it is much lower than generally thought. Most studies focus on developed countries, due to data limitations, but when estimates are calculated for Latin America and other developing countries, they show even lower levels of inter-generational mobility than most developed countries.
- Thirdly, they emphasise that the evidence shows that inter-generational mobility goes hand in hand with inequality: countries with low mobility tend to have high levels of inequality. In contrast, highly mobile societies are also the ones with the lowest levels of inequality.

Their results are confirmed by other studies.

Bellani and Bia (2017) have carried out an EU analysis on the extent to which poverty in childhood leads to poverty in adulthood; they show a decrease in the equivalised income and an increase in the probability of being at risk of poverty in adulthood, for people who were exposed to financial problems during childhood ([17]).

One US study for the National Centre for Children in Poverty in the US shows that poverty rates for adults who were poor during childhood are much higher, especially for those individuals with high levels of exposure to poverty during childhood. For adults who experienced moderate-to-high levels of poverty during childhood (51 to 100% of childhood years), between 35% and 46% are poor throughout early and middle adulthood ([18]).

16. UNICEF and The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
17. This analysis uses the information provided by the thematic modules on 'intergenerational transmission of disadvantage' included in the 2005 and 2011 waves of EU-SILC. This module was also included in the 2019 EU-SILC wave, whose results will become available in 2021.
18. Wagmiller and Adelman (2009).

Narayan *et al.* (2018) show that both relative and absolute inter-generational mobility is and has been lower in developing countries than in high-income countries. As is most common, this is measured through educational and income mobility. The authors explain that while the gap in absolute mobility between high-income and developing countries has been closing, progress in developing economies has stalled since the 1960s and there is a relatively low educational attainment compared to high-income countries. As for relative inter-generational mobility, they find that developing economies have increasingly fallen behind high-income economies. They also point out that in the current generation, mobility differs across different developing regions, with the lowest mobility happening in the poorest and most fragile states. Educational mobility among low- and middle-income countries varies significantly, being substantially lower in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The differences in inter-generational mobility in different parts of the world is also highlighted in an OECD study showing that in Nordic countries it would take at least four generations for those born in low-income households to reach the mean income in their society, whereas in emerging countries such as Brazil, Colombia or South Africa, this would take up to nine or even more generations ([19]).

The alarming extent of multidimensional child poverty in some areas of the world has been highlighted by UNICEF in 2016 who reported findings from two studies. The first study they refer to was published in 2010; it focused on children in sub-Saharan Africa and showed that in the 30 countries for which comparable data were available, 247 million out of a total of 368 million children under age 18 experienced two to five deprivations that threaten their survival and development. The other study (in 2008–2009) found that 81 million children and adolescents in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were affected by at least one moderate or severe deprivation of their rights to education, nutrition, housing, sanitation, drinking water or access to information ([20]). More recently an OECD working paper has highlighted growing inequalities across families and reported that 'a substantial number of children - on average 1 in 7 children across the OECD in 2018 - live in income-poor families and their numbers have been increasing in many countries since the 2008 financial crisis' ([21]).

While it is too soon to quantify the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child poverty and on IGTP, there is a growing body of evidence that children have been particularly badly affected, that child poverty increased in most countries and that those living in poverty have been the worst

19. OECD (2018).
20. UNICEF (2016).
21. Thévenon *et al.* (2018).

affected by the consequences of the pandemic. UNICEF has reported that 140 million additional children are living in monetary poor households due to COVID-19 and that there has been a 14% rise in wasting or malnutrition that may translate into more than 10,000 additional child deaths per month – mostly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. It has launched a six-point plan to respond, recover and reimagine a post-pandemic world for every child ([22]). Many organisations have reported on how COVID-19 has both highlighted the impact of pre-existing inequalities on children's health and well-being and, in many cases, deepened them further. Without urgent interventions to address these inequalities this is likely to increase the risk of IGTP into the future ([23]). The OECD, in highlighting the impact of COVID-19 on children at risk of poverty, has stressed the need to take measures that strengthen food assistance, provide immediate protection and assistance, mitigate mental health problems, support distance learning and ensure continuity of learning, support children in the digital environment, and curtail the rise in child poverty ([24]). The World Bank has highlighted that in countries eligible for support from the International Development Association COVID-19 has led among other things to particularly high levels of household income losses, increases in food insecurity and severe restrictions in access education ([25]). In an in-depth analysis covering 35 European countries (the 27 EU Member States, the UK and the seven EU candidate and potential candidate countries), the European Social Policy Network (ESPN) highlights many positive initiatives taken by Member States to respond to the COVID-19 crisis but at the same time shows that the pandemic has revealed pre-existing gaps and inequalities across and within countries. The ESPN analysis emphasises the need for sustained and continued efforts to pursue reform agendas which will strengthen social protection systems and social inclusion policies in the longer term ([26]).

2. Why inter-generational transmission of poverty (IGTP) matters

The factors which drive IGTP have an extremely negative impact on both the well-being and well-becoming of children and their families as well as on the economic and social development of the societies they grow up in. The multi-dimensional nature of poverty (i.e. inadequate income and resources, malnutrition, poor health, educational disadvantage, powerlessness and social exclusion) is caused by a number of different factors that are often interconnected and mutually reinforcing. They include inadequate access to decent employment and adequate social protection, poor access to essential services such as ECEC, education, health services, inadequate access to sport, cultural and leisure activities, and poor quality and overcrowded housing and unsafe neighbourhoods. All of these factors can be compounded by discrimination, ghettoisation and

22. UNICEF (2020).
23. See for instance: EU Alliance for Investing in Children (2020b), Eurochild (2020), Frazer (2020) and Peter G Peterson Foundation (2021).
24. OECD (2020) and OECD (2020b).
25. Yoshida *et al.* (2020).
26. Baptista *et al.* (2021).

gender inequality as well as by external shocks such as famine, war or climate change. This section looks first at why IGTP matters for children and their families and some of the factors that drive this. Then it looks at some of the negative impacts on society and the reasons for these.

2.1 Impact on children

First and foremost, combating IGTP matters because of its impact on children's immediate physical, cognitive and social development. Also, as has been well documented by the American Academy of Paediatrics, poverty in childhood continues to have a negative effect on health into adulthood ([27]). Poverty limits access to essential services and results in poor health and educational disadvantage. It means growing up in inadequate housing and unsafe environments that damage health and well-being. It limits access to participation in sport, cultural and leisure activities essential to children's development. It leads to stigma, scapegoating, discrimination and exclusion on the basis of gender, religion and ethnicity, and it undermines children's status, self-confidence and resilience. IGTP results from the fact that children growing up in poverty experience negative consequences such as malnutrition and multiple deprivation. All of this can be further compounded by intra-household dynamics and shocks such as conflict and famine.

2.1.1 A denial of children's fundamental rights

IGTP matters because growing up in poverty is a denial of children's fundamental rights. Although the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) does not contain an explicit right to freedom from poverty, a number of its provisions seek to address the needs of children living in poverty ([28]). As enshrined in the UNCRC, children have a right to an adequate standard of living, and to be free from deprivations across crucial aspects of their lives including their health, education, nutrition, care and protection. Growing up in poverty is a direct violation of these rights ([29]).

Principle 11 of the EPSR recognises that children have the right to protection from poverty and that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the right to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities. The new Strategy on the Rights of the Child issued by the European Commission in March 2021 ([30]) and the European Child Guarantee adopted by the Council of the EU in June 2021 ([31]) are major policy initiatives put forward by the European Commission to

27. Pascoe *et al.* (2016).
28. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
29. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017). See also OHCHR (2012).
30. See https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee_en

encourage Member States to help children fulfil their rights and to operationalise these rights in policy making.

2.1.2 Surviving in low-/ inadequate-income households or in deprived households

Persistent poverty/deprivation means that children grow up in households surviving on very low and inadequate resources for extended periods of time.

Two key factors are usually highlighted as leading to and the perpetuation of a life on inadequate resources: first, parents' lack of access to well-paid and secure employment and dependence on low-paid, insecure on informal work with no or inadequate social safety nets; and, secondly the lack of adequate social protection systems for children and their families. In developing countries, it is also often highlighted how economic poverty can be transmitted through the transmittance of debt, inheritance practices and lack of assets. However, it should be noted that this is also true in rich countries and it is why wealth inequalities are important to address in addition to income inequalities ([32]). Losing assets can lead to downward mobility and lack of assets can be associated with poverty traps and inability to cope with shocks, showing that deficits in assets are important in driving IGTP ([33]). Deficit of assets such as not owning land will have an impact on offspring's life chances.

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31. In 2015, the European Parliament called on the European Commission and EU Member States 'to introduce a Child Guarantee so that every child in poverty can have access to free healthcare, free education, free childcare, decent housing and adequate nutrition, as part of a European integrated plan to combat child poverty'. In 2017, it requested the Commission to explore the feasibility of such a guarantee. Following this request, the Commission launched a preparatory action. The first phase (completed in June 2020) assessed the feasibility, efficiency and overall benefits of a Child Guarantee and made concrete suggestions for improving policies and programmes at EU and (sub)national levels. It focused on access by four groups of children to the five social rights identified by the European Parliament: children with disabilities, children residing in institutions, children with a migrant background (incl. refugee children), and children living in precarious family situations (see Frazer *et al.* 2020). The second phase provided a thorough economic analysis of the design, feasibility, governance and implementation options of a Child Guarantee in all EU Member States (see Guio *et al.* 2021). In March 2021, the European Commission issued its Proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee and in June 2021 the European Child Guarantee was adopted by the Council of the EU (Council of the EU 2021). In this context, it is interesting to note that the European Commission and the Social Protection Committee are currently developing a benchmarking framework to monitor two key aspects of Principle 11 of the EPSR – children's right to affordable ECEC of good quality and children's right to protection from poverty. More specifically, the framework aims to monitor children's adequate access to resources and to quality services. It will consist of a limited number of overall labour market and social outcome indicators, policy performance indicators, policy levers (adequacy of income; impact of parenthood on labour market participation; and accessibility, affordability or quality of childcare) and key contextual information.
32. See OECD (2018a) on the relevance of the distinction between income-based and asset-based approaches.
33. Bird and Higgins (2011).

Households living with insufficient resources are also less able to deal with external shocks, such as a household member dying, environmental disasters causing displacement, or conflict and this can further trap them in poverty and often result in downward mobility. Such emergencies and humanitarian crises disproportionately affect the poorest. For instance, the pandemic has led to a 40% increase in the population in need of assistance, as a result of the wide-ranging impact on education, health and nutrition, livelihoods and protection and food insecurity is rising due to the impact of the pandemic on food production and distribution, as well as substantial reductions in household income and disruption in remittance flows ([34]).

Growing up in households with insufficient resources has serious negative effects on children's nutrition, education, health, self-confidence and access to opportunities and thus on children's physical and cognitive development. Section 2.1.3 focuses on the impact of poverty on nutrition. Other key forms of deprivation that are often linked to IGTP include being unable to access essential services (Section 2.1.4); growing up in substandard housing, unsafe environments or marginalised neighbourhoods (Section 2.1.5); being confronted with discrimination and stigma (Section 2.1.6); or intra-household dynamics, gender inequality and sacrifice (Section 2.1.7).

2.1.3 Malnutrition

Growing up with insufficient resources often leads to inadequate nutrition or malnutrition ([35]). For instance, in the EU, income poverty increases the risk of an enforced lack of nutrients significantly in almost all Member States, except Nordic countries, Austria and Luxembourg, where the occurrence of these problems was low for all children ([36]). This connection between low income and inadequate nutrition has serious consequences as adequate child nutrition is critical to healthy development, particularly at birth and during infancy. Adequate nutrition contributes to achieving or maintaining not only a normal body weight and height, according to age, gender and race, but also a good state of physical and mental health. It consists of a balanced diet, based on the consumption of a variety of foods, containing adequate proportions of carbohydrates, fats and proteins, along with the recommended daily allowances of all essential minerals and vitamins ([37]). If school-age children are hungry they will not learn successfully. Inadequate nutrition and obesity

34. Save the Children (2020a).
35. Inadequate nutrition, or according to the WHO 'malnutrition', can be expressed as three broad groups of conditions: a) undernutrition, which includes wasting (low weight-for-height), stunting (low height for-age), and underweight (low weight-for-age); b) micronutrient-related malnutrition, which includes micronutrient deficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals) or micronutrient excess; and c) overweight, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers).
36. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
37. See also FAO and WHO (2019).

will affect the health and well-being of children and throughout their lives ([38]). A World Health Organisation (WHO) study in 2013-2014 provided information on, among other things, the prevalence of obesity and overweight among girls and boys aged 11 in 42 countries and regions across Europe and North America ([39]). This showed that there was an increased prevalence associated with low family affluence for boys in around half of the countries covered and for girls in about two thirds. As well as the importance of early years UNICEF and WHO have also focused on the nutrition, health and well-being of adolescent girls, as mothers-to-be, recognising that maternal under-nutrition impacts infant's birth weight, and may affect growth and development, perpetuating an inter-generational vicious cycle ([40]).

In addition to living with insufficient resources, other key factors lead to malnutrition amongst children growing up in poverty. These include: the high cost of healthy food; the lack of, or inadequate, meals in schools, ECEC centres and other public services and the lack of such provision during holidays; a lack of awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and food supply; marketing that promotes unhealthy food, leading to the incidence of overweight and obesity; and insufficient policies and programmes to promote mother and child health, in particular breastfeeding ([41]). Conflict and humanitarian crises are also key factors in increasing malnutrition as they greatly increase the level of food insecurity. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), conflict will be the main driver of acute hunger for 77 million people in 22 countries and the number of acutely food insecure people could be 270 million by the end of 2020 ([42]).

2.1.4 Having a poor access to essential services

IGTP means children living in poverty grow up with poor access to essential services and this has serious impacts on their health, well-being and development in both the short, medium and long-term. They especially have inadequate access to health services, experience educational disadvantage, grow up in poor living conditions, have limited opportunities to participate in sport, cultural and leisure activities. Also, as well as having poor access people living in poverty often experience essential services as being of poor quality and as failing to respond to their needs in an appropriate and respectful manner. In addition, they and their families are often blamed/scapegoated for being poor and experience serious gender inequalities.

38. Bradshaw and Rees (2019).
39. Inchley *et al.* (2016).
40. Dornan and Woodhead (2015).
41. Bradshaw and Rees (2019) and Frazer *et al.* (2020).
42. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2020).

2.1.4.1 Poor health and inadequate access to health services

Children growing up in poverty often have poorer health than other children and have worse access to health services.

Poor physical health: According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty, mostly from preventable conditions and diseases ([43]). Early childhood is a major driver of inequalities in health. As EuroHealthNet has pointed out, this is because adversity at this early stage of life tends to have a negative effect on all the different domains of child development – cognitive, communication and language, social and emotional skills. Inadequate development of these skills has a profound effect on outcomes across the remainder of the life course ([44]) There is now extensive evidence on the extent to which a healthy childhood determines health outcomes later in life. For instance, a WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission has highlighted that evidence from longitudinal studies reports that the benefits of healthy childhood development extend to older ages: birth weight, infant growth, and peak physical and cognitive capacities in childhood are associated with or predictive of older adults' physical and cognitive capacities, muscle strength, bone mass, lens opacity, hearing capacity, skin thickness and life expectancy ([45]). In developing countries stunting and wasting are often serious issues resulting from inadequate nutrition during childhood and have dire consequences for IGTP as the negative effects of poor health in childhood resulting from growing up in poverty can cause long-term damage to people's health later in life and lead to lower productivity and earnings over a life-time ([46]).

Poor mental health: A key dimension of growing up in economic poverty is the negative impact on mental health of the daily struggle to survive. Suffering includes negative thoughts and emotions, including stress, fear, anxiety and shame, among others ([47]). Children in particular deal with stress and are affected by their parents' stress ([48]). This undermining of mental health and feeling of stress can have an especially negative effect on children and influence IGTP, as it can have impacts on cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and there is evidence of a biological transmission of stress ([49]). Evidence shows that when babies and children experience strong, frequent and/or extended periods of stress due to social conditions such as poverty or even abusive treatment or mental illness, they can experience toxic stress which has long-term

43. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
44. Goldblatt *et al.* (2015)
45. The Lancet (2020).
46. See also the case study in Annex 2 on Health in South Africa on some of the challenges facing developing countries, especially parity in health services, child and maternal nutrition, and mental health.
47. Bray *et al.* (2019).
48. Khan *et al.* (2020).
49. Bowers and Yehuda (2016).

consequences for learning, behaviour, and both physical and mental health which in turn will likely be consequential for later educational and occupational attainment ([50]).

Poor access to health services: While the risk of poor health is greatly increased by growing up on an inadequate income and a range of other social determinants this is often compounded by poor children having poorer access to essential health services. For instance, in 2017 1.6% of all children in the (then) EU-28 suffered from unmet medical needs and when focusing on low-income households, the extent of the problem was even greater in a number of Member States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal and Romania. At EU level, 2.5% of children in 2017 lived in a household where there was at least one child with an unmet need for dental care. This proportion reached 6.7% for those living in a low-income household. There was clearly a major increase in risk for low-income household children in most Member States ([51])

2.1.4.2 Educational disadvantage and inadequate access to quality ECEC and schools

Growing up in poverty greatly increases the risk of educational disadvantage. Save the Children sums this up well when stating that 'poverty has an impact on children's educational achievements. It impairs their performance at school, hinders development of their talents and limits their aspirations. Child poverty not only affects early childhood, it also jeopardises children's futures' ([52]). There is clear evidence that student performance differs significantly by socio-economic status. In the EU the available data show that education partly reproduces existing social inequalities. The OECD's 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) tests, which are taken every three years, indicated in 2018 that pupils aged 15 from less privileged social backgrounds performed less well at school than their better-off peers. There are significant gaps in reading performance between the most-advantaged and least-advantaged students and some of the most marginalised groups such as Roma children and children from a migrant background and who experience a culmination of disadvantages (e.g. extreme deprivation, cultural and language barriers and discrimination) have particularly low educational outcomes ([53]). UNICEF have highlighted the critical role played by preschool and school in the IGTP ([54]) and stressed that 'Without quality education, disadvantaged children are far more likely to be trapped as adults in low-skilled, poorly paid and insecure employment, preventing them from breaking inter-

50. McEwen and McEwen (2017).
51. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
52. Save the Children (2016).
53. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
54. Dornan and Woodhead (2015).

generational cycles of disadvantage' ([55]). In some countries an important factor in increasing educational disadvantage is the impact of conflict. For instance, research on Africa points to substantive educational mobility setbacks in countries either vulnerable to or experiencing conflict ([56]).

Despite the growing recognition of its importance and the robust evidence that ECEC can have a direct beneficial influence on children's development (both cognitive and other developmental domains), as well as on parents' employment, income and support and that it can also benefit children and communities (inclusion and cohesion) indirectly through enhancing and supporting parenting behaviour ([57]) ECEC tends to be one of the last priorities in education and health spending in many developing countries. For example, nearly half of all three- to six-year-olds are deprived of access to pre-primary education. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 80% are not enrolled in pre-primary programs, while 45% are deprived of access in South Asia ([58]).

2.1.4.3 Inadequate access to sport, cultural and leisure activities

IGTP often means children growing up with poor access to sport, cultural and leisure activities. The lack of such access has negative effects on children's well-being and development as it deprives children of safe facilities and informal learning opportunities. EAPN and Eurochild have reported that where there is inadequate provision of good quality play, recreation, sporting and cultural facilities or where access is expensive then children and their families from low-income backgrounds are likely to be excluded from opportunities to participate' ([59]). The European Commission have stressed the importance of supporting the participation of all children in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities and the need to address barriers such as cost, access and cultural differences to ensure that all children can participate in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities outside ([60]). The European Child Guarantee reiterates the importance of such access. In the UK the Child Poverty Action Group documented the significant difference that sport makes to young lives: it contributes to young people's health and, therefore, their development; it involves engaging with other young people in a positive way, thereby helping to avoid trouble; and it encourages concentration, motivation and other learning skills that help their education, as well as their working and social lives. However, they go on to highlight that young people living in disadvantaged areas face many barriers to participating in sport. These include poor health among

55. UNICEF (2016).
56. Alesina *et al.* (2019).
57. Guio *et al.* (2021).
58. World Bank (2016).
59. Eurochild and EAPN (2013).
60. European Commission (2013).

low-income households which inhibits exercise, few free or affordable sporting opportunities exist outside school, lack of safe spaces in which to play and poorer local environments with fewer open spaces and lower controls over conditions ([61]).

2.1.5 Growing up in substandard housing, unsafe environments or marginalised neighbourhoods and experiencing environmental shocks

Children in poverty are more likely to: a) grow up in low quality, overcrowded and often damp and poorly insulated housing lacking adequate facilities such as clean water and heating; b) live in polluted and unsafe environments; and c) live in ghettoised neighbourhoods lacking essential services which are in effect spatial poverty traps. They are also especially vulnerable to the effects of environmental shocks and climate change. This has extremely negative impacts on children's health and development which can be further compounded when children grow up in areas affected by conflict or insecurity.

Substandard housing: The American Academy of Paediatrics have documented that housing inadequacies have been proven to have negative impacts, particularly on children, that include for instance ill-health or accidents, low educational outcomes, lack of general well-being (such as lack of light or space to play), and an increased risk of perpetuating the inter-generational poverty cycle (with profound and long-term effects on children's life chances) ([62]). Similarly another study of substandard housing in the United States reports evidence that inadequate housing may contribute to undermining positive development and perpetuate disadvantage from one generation to another ([63]). A report from the United Kingdom charity Shelter shows how overcrowding can harm family relationships, negatively affecting children's education and causing depression, stress and anxiety ([64]) and it is striking that in the EU suffering from income poverty, living in single-adult households or having a migrant background increases the risk of overcrowding and severe housing deprivation in most Member States ([65]). Similarly, the ability of a household to keep its home adequately warm is an indicator of energy poverty and is often linked with low household income, high energy costs, and homes with low energy efficiency. In the EU data show that children in income-poor households are more heavily affected ([66]). Also the cost of housing puts greater pressure on those on low incomes. The OECD finds that in nearly all countries, housing costs as a

61. Power (2015).
62. Pascoe *et al.* (2016).
63. Bartlett (1998).
64. Reynolds and Robinson (2005).
65. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
66. Frazer *et al.* (2020).

share of income are highest for households in the bottom quintile of the income distribution regardless of whether the household is a tenant or services an outstanding mortgage ([67]).

Environmental hazards and shocks: The impact of environmental factors on children's health is often especially serious in developing countries. Environmental shocks can destroy water and sanitation infrastructure, exposing people to raw sewage, floods leaving behind stagnant water and exposing people to cholera and malaria, and food shortages which are associated with lower levels of consumption and nutrition, also violating the right to water and sanitation. Exposure to air pollution is a major cause of ill-health, particularly for people in poverty in developing countries who cannot afford safer and more modern fuel sources, or where there are less stringent standards on air pollution ([68]). Moreover, there is an increased chance of those living in poverty to lose their places of shelter and other assets as a result of environmental hazards, which further violates their rights to an adequate standard of living ([69]). This in turn can be related to inadequate housing, which can also affect health through overcrowding, poor insulation and toxic building materials.

Climate change: The risk of environmental shocks is being greatly increased with climate change. A paper prepared for the OECD highlights the negative effects of climate change on public infrastructure, socio-economic and demographic inequality and physical and mental health outcomes and stresses that children in poverty are at highest risk of experiencing these outcomes. Climate change increases natural disasters – such as wildfires, flooding and drought – which disproportionately harm poor children's material conditions by damaging the built environment and vital infrastructure. It exacerbates existing socioeconomic disparities in impoverished communities by impeding educational attainment, increasing poverty rates and reducing income stability. It impairs the physical and mental health of children as in the aftermath of climate change-related events, low-income children are more likely to suffer from malnutrition, vector-borne diseases, stress-induced mental illnesses, and diseases stemming from air pollution and extreme heat. The paper also highlights that 'while mitigation measures designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can benefit poor children by improving health, boosting economic activity, and creating jobs, other measures can result in regressive distributional effects that disproportionately harm poor children and low-income communities' ([70]).

Poor neighbourhoods: The effect of growing up in poor areas experiencing multiple disadvantages increases the risk of children and their families being trapped in poverty and unable

67. OECD (2020a).
68. Scott (2006).
69. Nguyen (2016) and Akter and Mallick (2013).
70. Adrian *et al.* (2020).

to escape. In the EU Eurochild and EAPN have highlighted that children growing up in areas with very high concentrations of poverty and disadvantage, such as decaying areas of industrial cities or isolated rural communities, are likely to have poorer access to services and facilities and may be more at risk of violence and abuse ([71]). The American Academy of Paediatrics has noted that poor neighbourhoods expose families to a variety of barriers and harms and areas of concentrated poverty also may lack quality schools, sustainable jobs, healthcare facilities, safe recreation spaces, and other resources that support healthy community activities ([72]). Furthermore, children growing up in deprived communities often lack access to green spaces. For instance, a study in Dublin has shown that the inner city has significantly less green open spaces than other parts of Dublin ([73]). Less green space around homes is compounded by the fact that many families live in small flats, apartments or houses with no gardens. Therefore, families who are less likely to have gardens are also less likely to have open, green public spaces near them. Thus, the historic physical neglect of more disadvantaged communities in Dublin in terms of the provision of quality outdoor space for recreational use has fundamentally exacerbated the stress and tension of an already difficult situation for these communities and families ([74]). This is important given the growing body of literature on 'nature deficit disorder' ([75]) and the contribution that a relationship with nature can play in reducing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) ([76]).

There is also an emerging body of literature on IGTP on what is known as the 'neighbourhood effect' in Western countries ([77]), which provides growing evidence of the spatial element of IGTP. It is not limited to parent-to-child interactions but includes neighbourhood interactions as well. Generally, researchers have identified four mechanisms working behind the pattern of the neighbourhood effect on IGTP, and they include: isolation from supportive social networks; loss of mutual trust and control over youth behaviour; inadequate public and school resources; and harm from environmental hazards ([78]). Research in the US has shown that intergenerational mobility varies substantially across areas within the United States. Chetty *et al.* estimate the likelihood that a child from a household in the bottom quintile of the (national) income distribution will make into the top quintile: this likelihood varies by a factor of about 2.8 across the country (from about one in 25 in Charlotte, N. C. to around one in 8 in San Jose, Silicon Valley). The local characteristics conducive to long distance upward mobility are: a) less residential segregation; b) less income

71. Eurochild and EAPN (2013).
72. Pascoe *et al.* (2016).
73. Kelly (2016).
74. Frazer (2020).
75. See for instance Louv (2009) and Richardson and Hallam (2013).
76. See for instance Amoly *et al.* (2014).
77. de Vuijst *et al.* (2017).
78. McEwen and McEwen (2017).

inequality; c) better primary schools; d) greater social capital; and e) greater family stability ([79]). Some evidence on the impact of neighbourhoods on mobility is highlighted by an experiment in the United States which offered randomly selected families housing vouchers to move from high-poverty areas to better off neighbourhoods. This increased the long term college attendance and earnings for children of the families who moved, especially for children who were exposed to better off neighbourhoods before the age of 13 ([80]).

While there is less research on the neighbourhood effect and its part in IGTP in a developing country context, it is likely that the effect is more pronounced in developing countries as there are larger within-country differences in public goods, quality of schools and marginalisation of groups ([81]). As in the US research in Africa ([82]) and India ([83]) on intergenerational mobility points to stark variation across locations, and often within small areas (e.g. the Delhi neighbourhoods). In India, upward mobility is higher in areas that are southern, urban, with high average education levels and manufacturing employment. Land inequality and caste segregation correlate negatively with upward mobility. There is also evidence of the positive impact of community networks and social status in developing countries for IGTP ([84]), and of the fact that people in poverty can often miss out on positive spill-over effects from peer groups and role models based on their location. Also, access to and quality of services such as healthcare and education can heavily depend on location. This idea is also related to discrimination, given that depending on the neighbourhood there may be varying levels of discrimination based on caste, ethnicity, religion, or social status, among others. There is also a well-documented difference in poverty and IGTP based on an urban-rural divide, due to many of the other factors mentioned, and demonstrating the importance of the neighbourhood ([85]).

2.1.6 Being confronted by scapegoating, discrimination and racism

Children living in poverty grow up in environments where poor households are blamed and scapegoated for their poverty and experience discrimination, sectarianism and racism. This can lead to IGTP as it undermines children's resilience, self-esteem and self-confidence and induces a sense of political powerlessness and marginalisation because of feeling excluded, not being listened to and not being consulted. This can reduce children's expectations for their own lives. As

79. Chetty *et al.* (2014).
80. Chetty *et al.* (2016).
81. Iversen *et al.* (2019).
82. Alesina *et al.* (2019).
83. Asher *et al.* (2021).
84. Munshi (2011).
85. Iversen *et al.* (2019).

a result, children can become demotivated and lose any aspirations, hopes and dreams for a better life.

UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty report that social stigma and discrimination is one of the most fundamental and often deeply-rooted causes of child poverty. While forms of discrimination vary by country, examples of widely prevalent forms of discrimination that children experience are based on caste, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, HIV status, disability, refugee and migrant status, among many other context-specific factors ([86]).

Eurochild and EAPN note that, in the EU, children (and their parents) coming from an ethnic minority (especially Roma and Traveller children) or migrants are more likely to experience discrimination and racism and are at higher risk of experiencing poverty. They also may have difficulties getting equal access to services and facilities because their social and cultural needs are not sufficiently taken into account; or due to practical and administrative barriers or legal and structural discrimination on the basis of residence status ([87]). The poor access of Roma and children with a migrant background to essential services is also highlighted in different EU countries ([88]).

As shown by Wagmiller and Adelman (2009), the link between poverty and discrimination is also evident in the US. They explain that: 'Nearly one-quarter of African-American children live in poverty for more than three-fourths of their childhood and more than one-third are poor for at least half of their childhood. On average, a white child spends only 8.9 percent of childhood living in poverty. By contrast, an African-American child is poor for nearly two-fifths of childhood on average'. They conclude that 'individuals who were poor during childhood are more likely to be poor as adults than are those who were never poor, and this is especially true for African-Americans', and also that 'racial disadvantages mean that mobility out of poverty for African Americans is far more difficult than it is for whites'.

The effect of being marginalised and excluded can also mean that children's access and that of their parents to a broad range of social networks are more limited than for other children and parents and this further reduces opportunities to move out of poverty and reduces social mobility. The loss of social contacts can be worst for those young people living in poverty who do not live with their families and are not able to do so. For some young people who have fled due to

86. UNICEF and The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
87. Eurochild and EAPN (2013).
88. Frazer *et al.* (2020).

violence and/or abuse, the family home is an unsafe environment. The alternative for some is a childhood of poverty, homelessness and insecurity ([89]).

2.1.7 Intra-household dynamics, gender inequality and sacrifice

One of the factors linked to IGTP is gender which needs to be considered in all contexts of IGTP, particularly as women tend to be disproportionately affected by poverty, and mothers also tend to play an influential role in inter-generational transmissions. As UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty point out in most contexts, girls' experience of poverty will differ to that of boys. Traditional child poverty measures, however, often do not effectively identify these differentiated experiences and impacts. Bringing in other analysis, listening to children, and specific indicators and indices (for example the Adolescent Girls Index in Uganda) can help identify specific gendered vulnerabilities and policy responses ([90]).

2.1.7.1 Intra-household dynamics

The Chronic Poverty Research Centre have emphasised that the extent to which children are impacted on by growing up in households living in poverty is significantly affected by intra-household dynamics. They emphasise that gender is a key issue. They highlight the significance of different levels of women's agency (i.e. empowerment) on both women's own nutrition, health and well-being and the effect this has on child nutrition and well-being. This highlights the negative impact that a culture of patriarchy can have on addressing IGTP. They have also emphasised that household composition is important. There is a correlation between the number of siblings and IGTP, because it affects the material and other resources available and distributed to individuals. Differences in resource allocation and access to nutrition and services within households can be explained by age, relationship to household head, gender or other forms of social difference such as sexuality or occupation ([91]).

2.1.7.2 Gender inequality

The impact of gender inequality on poverty in the EU has been well documented in a report by the European Parliament. This shows that children growing up in lone-parent households are particularly at risk of poverty, that women who live in rural areas are particularly affected by poverty, and that the gender pay gap and the fact that women are disproportionately represented in atypical and uncertain forms of work contracts (zero-hours contracts, temporary work, interim jobs, part-time working) put women at greater risk of poverty. It concludes that given the inter-

89. Eurochild and EAPN (2013).
90. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
91. Bird and Higgins (2011).

generational dimensions of poverty, addressing the situation of girls and young women who are facing social exclusion and poverty is key to tackling the feminisation of poverty ([92]).

A key element that can contribute to IGTP is child marriage as it takes away girls' fundamental rights and steals their childhoods. UNICEF stresses that ending child marriage would mean that girls and women will have higher chances of making the most of their lives and giving their best to their households, communities and societies – which will go a long way towards breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty and strengthening communities and nations. Ending child marriage unlocks possibilities that can transform life for girls and yield benefits for us all ([93]).

2.1.7.3 Sacrifice

Children living in poverty often make sacrifices to support their households such as dropping out of school early to begin to work or to care for household members. ATD Fourth World emphasises the extent that such sacrifices damage their development and limit their opportunities to escape poverty. Children prioritise their household's needs (e.g. by accepting to leave school or earning independently) while knowing the costs to their reputation and for their future. Missing school or falling behind in their studies is painful for children because they feel helpless in the face of low-quality teaching, parental workloads and discrimination. They also feel angry and frightened about their future because they see a good education as necessary to move out of poverty. Children also bear an extra burden of suffering on behalf of their parents who they love and see are not coping. They experience related disempowerment ([94]).

2.2 Impact on society

IGTP matters not only because of the damage it does to children but also for the damage it does to society. There are serious social and economic costs to society that result from a failure to address IGTP. As UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty point out child poverty results in lower skills and productivity, lower levels of health and educational achievement, increased likelihood of unemployment, and lower social cohesion. These have societal and economic impacts ([95]). In the UK, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has estimated that through a combination of public spending to deal with the fallout of child poverty on personal social services, school education and police and criminal justice and the annual cost of below-average employment rates and earnings levels among adults who grew up in poverty child poverty costs the country at

92. European Parliament (2016).
93. UNICEF (2016).
94. Bray *et al.* (2019).
95. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).

least £25 billion a year, including £17 billion that could accrue to the Exchequer if child poverty were eradicated ([96]).

2.2.1 Social solidarity and cohesion undermined

One of the negative effects of IGTP is that social solidarity and cohesion are undermined, which leads to persistent inequality. People are trapped in their low-income status and feel unable to improve their lives. When people know that they have the opportunity to improve the lot of their family compared to previous generations this has a positive influence on life satisfaction and well-being and enhances a sense of social solidarity.

2.2.2 High economic costs, reduced economic productivity and increased social costs

Child poverty has damaging economic and social impacts on society. In a 2017 report, UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty refer to a study which estimates that poverty and associated health, nutrition and social factors prevent at least 200 million children in developing countries from attaining their development potential, with long-term implications for economies and societies. Economic productivity is reduced as a result of economic inefficiency and waste of human resources/potential. Child poverty results in unrealised human potential and the misallocation of resources, as people's talents are wasted or not developed and disadvantaged households are excluded from opportunities that favour those born in greater privilege. In the US, McLaughlin and Rank (2018) have estimated that the economic cost of child poverty was 5.4% of GDP in 2015. These costs are clustered around the loss of economic productivity, increased health and crime costs, and increased costs because of child homelessness and maltreatment. In addition, they estimate that for every dollar spent on reducing childhood poverty, the country would save at least seven dollars with respect to the economic costs of poverty. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty stress that the economic costs of child poverty are high. They point out that while there is no research on this area in all regions, an estimate of the economic costs of child poverty in the US finds that the lost productivity and extra health and crime costs stemming from child poverty add up to roughly 500 billion US dollars a year, or 3.8% of GDP. A different estimate in the UK, finds that the total annual cost of child poverty in the UK is £25 billion per year, equivalent to about 2% of GDP ([97]).

96. Hirsch (2008).
97. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).

One of the channels that reduces economic productivity is the impact of poverty on education inequalities. In EU countries, a study ([98]) quantifies the economic benefits of educational improvement for low-performing students (as measured by the OECD's PISA survey ([99])). The results show that bringing all low-performing students up to the basic skill requirements (level 2 on the PISA tests) would boost average GDP over the 21st century by nearly 4% at EU level (with larger improvements in Member States with more low-skilled students).

Social costs increase as a result of increased demands on public services (especially health and social welfare and social protection services) due to long-term effects of child poverty (i.e. poor health, higher levels of unemployment, more low paid/insecure work etc.). More positively, the evidence in the US shows that the return to spending on children is high and that direct investment in low income children's health and education is particularly effective ([100]). Similarly, cost/benefit analyses show that providing secure housing to homeless people is generally cheaper than the absence of intervention, as homelessness has a large public cost in terms of health assistance, emergency support and complex interventions ([101]).

2.2.3 Rise in family insecurity

Bringing up children while living in poverty increases stress on families. As Eurochild and EAPN have documented, parents living in poverty face the daily struggle for survival for their families and are forced to make sacrifices to protect their children from the worst effects of poverty ([102]). The stresses associated with poverty can be a key factor in increased family insecurity and break up. Also, the pressure on families living in severe poverty increases the risk of families being split up and children being brought up in institutions or of families feeling forced to entrust their children to others. As is emphasised by the UNCRC, children have the right to grow up in families and there is now clear evidence of the damage done by bringing up children in institutional settings and not in strong family and community settings ([103]). This means that a key element in supporting children in poverty is supporting the security and well-being of their families as has been well emphasised in Europe by COFACE and globally by ATD Fourth World ([104]).

98. Hanushek and Woessmann (2019).
99. https://www.oecd.org/pisa/
100. Hendren and Sprung-Keyser (2020).
101. Guio *et al.* (2021).
102. Eurochild and European Anti-Poverty Network (2013).
103. See for instance Lerch and Nordenmark Severinsson (2019).
104. See for instance COFACE (2020b) and ATD Fourth World (2004).

3. Recommendations

3.1 General principles

Drawing on the earlier analysis, it is evident that several important principles should underpin approaches to ending child poverty and IGTP and inform the policies and programmes necessary to break the cycle of exclusion. These include the following:

Invest in raising public and political awareness and commitment to combating IGTP: In developing effective approaches to combat IGTP and tackle child poverty it will be important first to raise public and political awareness of the positive benefits for children and society of tackling IGTP and the costs of not doing so. No one action will do this but rather a combination of moral and utilitarian arguments and evidence will be needed to build political will. These can include showing that combating child poverty and tackling IGTP: is part of building more social cohesion and more resilient societies; is an issue of children's fundamental rights; is good for fostering the well-being of children and their families; strengthens democracies and increases their credibility; strengthens economies; is cost effective; and is good for sustainability. This awareness should then be turned into a clear national commitment to end child poverty and thus reduce IGTP. Ideally targets and timescales for reducing IGTP would also be set. To achieve this, UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty have stressed the importance of measuring child poverty and that 'Broad child poverty advocacy and communication of the results of child poverty measurement can raise the issue up national political agendas, as well as raise awareness in specific and influential audience groups. Crucially it can begin the conversation on policy and programmatic solutions' ([105]).

Develop comprehensive, multidimensional strategies: Countries should develop integrated packages of policies and programmes to tackle IGTP and child poverty that link cash supports and access to services. The importance of political commitment and developing integrated strategies to end child poverty are highlighted by both UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty's advocacy ([106]) and the work on child poverty in the EU under the Social Open Method of Coordination ([107]) and more recently in the context of the European Child Guarantee ([108]). The evidence across the EU is that those countries which have the lowest rates of poverty and social exclusion among children are generally those who have the most comprehensive packages of policies and programmes to support children which are inclusive and reach out to children from

105. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
106. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).
107. See, for instance, Frazer *et al.* (2010).
108. Frazer *et al.* (2020); Guio *et al.* (2021) and https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1428&langId=en

disadvantaged backgrounds ([109]). This means adopting a multidimensional and integrated approach which covers access to adequate income, access to good quality essential services and the participation of children in sport, recreation and cultural activities and involving children and their families in the decisions that affect them. Such an approach has been well set out in the 2013 EU Recommendation on *Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage* (hereafter: 2013 EU Recommendation), is strongly advocated by a wide range of EU civil society organisations working with children and is evident in academic reports ([110]).

Put promoting children's rights at the heart of strategies to end IGTP: The importance of adopting a children's rights approach to tackling child poverty from early childhood is key and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is central in this regard, as it encompasses a comprehensive approach. For instance, Article 24 of the UNCRC recognises a child's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health ([111]). This covers children's right to healthcare, nutrition, water, and a healthy environment safe from pollution. Article 27 recognises that children have the right to a standard of living adequate for their development. Article 29 recognises the right to education. Article 32 emphasises protecting children from economic and other forms of exploitation. Article 31 addresses children's right to play and to recreational and cultural activities. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its 2005 General Comment on Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, emphasised that young children are holders of all rights enshrined in the Convention and that early childhood is a critical period for the realisation of these rights ([112]).

There are many benefits to a rights-based approach to breaking the cycle of poverty. The approach sees poverty reduction not as charity, but as a legal obligation from governments as duty-bearers towards people in poverty as rights-holders, and it ensures principles of universality and indivisibility, empowerment and transparency, accountability, and participation according to the well-established doctrine of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Eurochild and EAPN have highlighted 7 advantages to a rights-based approach to tackling child poverty and promoting well-being: if all children's rights are respected and enabled then children are unlikely to live in poverty; it puts the needs of the child at the centre of policy-making and addressing children's needs becomes a core political obligation; it puts the focus on addressing the specific

109. See Frazer and Marlier (2013 and 2017), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021) for detailed analysis of Member States' policies in relation to children at risk of poverty and social exclusion.
110. See European Commission (2013), EU Alliance for investing in children (2020a), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).
111. In its 2013 General Comment developing Article 24, the Committee on Rights of the Child elaborated that this includes care for mental health issues, and that a key determinant of children's health, nutrition and development are the realisation of the mother's right to health too. UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013).
112. UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2006).

needs of the child here and now, as well as improving the position of their families and the communities in which they live; it provides a useful framework for developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent and reduce child poverty; it links the well-being of children with the well-being of parents and families and puts support for families at the heart of policies to tackle child poverty; it puts a focus on the importance of adopting and enforcing strong anti-discrimination legislation; and it emphasises the right of the children to be heard and to participate ([113]).

It is noticeable that children's rights have been at the heart of recent approaches by the EU to combating child poverty and promoting child well-being. For instance the 2013 EU Recommendation makes it a core principle to 'Address child poverty and social exclusion from a children's rights approach, in particular by referring to the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, making sure that these rights are respected, protected and fulfilled' ([114]). A child rights approach has been reiterated in the *Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee* ([115]). The importance of adopting a children's rights approach is repeatedly stressed by a broad range of organisations working with children such as the EU Alliance for Investing in Children ([116]).

***Prioritise early intervention*:** As the WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission has reported, follow-up studies of children exposed to poverty, from a wide range of countries, show the beneficial effects of early childhood interventions for adult earnings, cognitive and educational achievement, health biomarkers, reductions in violence, reduction of depressive symptoms and social inhibition, and growth (e.g., increasing birthweight and head circumference) in the subsequent generation. In Jamaica, 2 years of psychosocial stimulation to growth-stunted toddlers increased earnings by 25% 20 years later, sufficient to catch up with individuals who were not stunted as children. In the USA, the HighScope Perry Preschool programme had estimated annual social rates of return of 7–12% meaning that every dollar invested resulted in $7–12 benefit per person ([117]). Save the Children have emphasised that the first 1,000 days of a child's life is crucial to a child's development, and is the most formative time for health, growth and cognitive development that set the path for adulthood. This first 1,000 days is the period where the return on investment in children is highest, be it in health, early child development, or nutrition, and will allow them to reach their full potential and maximise their contribution to society ([118]). In this regard nurse-

113. Eurochild and EAPN (2013).
114. European Commission (2013).
115. It is a key recommendation of Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021) in the context of the preparatory action for the Child Guarantee.
116. EU Alliance for investing in children (2020a).
117. The Lancet (2020).
118. Save the Children (2020c).

family partnerships delivered in a universal way can play a key role. Evidence shows that support to children and families at risk of poverty or social exclusion and in vulnerable situations when children are at a very early age is one of the keys to preventing barriers developing which hinder children's development. It can help to ensure a positive trajectory which reduces problems of poor health and increases children's ability to participate in education and access other services ([119]).

The importance of investing in Early Childhood Development services which ensure children's optimal physical, social, emotional and cognitive development between conception and age 8 is particularly evident in humanitarian crises and conflict situations. As the Moving Minds Alliance has pointed out 'Interventions focused on the early years of a child's life that are known to deliver short-term and long term positive outcomes are more relevant than ever in a world increasingly characterised by protracted conflict and displacement. Crises today displace more people and last longer. Between 2014 and 2018, the average length of crises nearly doubled to more than nine years, and nearly three quarters of people now targeted for humanitarian assistance are in countries impacted by humanitarian crisis for seven years or more.' They go on to emphasise that 'Early childhood development in emergency settings sits at the nexus of humanitarian and development assistance, as these programmes address the acute needs of very young children and caregivers, while also contributing to improved individual and societal outcomes in the longer term' ([120]).

Support families: As has been stressed by ATD Fourth World there is no doubt that the parents' role is key for the well-being of their children. The well-being of children depends in large part on the support to the parents (and beyond income support) ([121]). This is also very well expressed by COFACE Families Europe who stress that 'Targeting children requires a two-generation approach providing support both to children and their family or kinship carers, namely with a family support stream focused on prevention and early intervention reaching out to families before they enter situations of vulnerability' ([122]). An important element in strengthening the family and home environment is combating the risk of early trauma from interpersonal issues such as domestic violence and abuse.

Promote gender equality: Promoting gender equality and strengthening women's agency and well-being should be an integral element in tackling IGTP. The European Parliament has concluded that gender equality provides a tool for combating poverty among women, as it has a positive impact on productivity and economic growth and leads to greater participation of women in the

119. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
120. Moving Minds Alliance (2019).
121. ATD Fourth World (2020).
122. COFACE (2020a).

labour market, which in turn has numerous social and economic benefits ([123]). As well as measures to support and strengthen mothers' roles in supporting their children it will also be important to ensure a gender sensitive approach which recognises that women and girls experience IGTP differently. This will also involve countering discrimination against girls such as ending child marriage.

Combat stigmatisation, discrimination and racism: Given the extent to which people experiencing IGTP experience stigmatisation, discrimination and racism and are denied opportunities to break the cycle of poverty it is essential that policies to combat discrimination and racism are an integral part of strategies to combat IGTP.

Combine universal and targeted policies: Effective strategies to tackle child poverty and reduce IGTP need to combine universal policies with additional policies aimed at children and households in vulnerable situations – also referred to as 'progressive' or 'tailored' universalism. At a policy level it is essential to recognise that ensuring children in vulnerable situations have access to essential services needs to combine two approaches. First, every effort needs to be made to ensure that universal services for all children are developed in as inclusive a way as possible. This is essential to addressing inequalities between children, to ensure that all children have a decent standard of living and to ensure that children in vulnerable situations have access to the same quality of services and the same opportunities as other children. Good-quality universal public services play a key role in ensuring all children have access to safety, opportunity and participation. They also avoid the risk that services only targeted at the poor become poor services. A universal approach also has the advantage that is can be easier to build political support for such services. Second, to enable some children to access universal services, specific additional or complementary policies may be needed to meet their specific needs. Such specific policies should be seen not as an alternative to accessing mainstream provision but as complementary and enabling ([124]). This is likely to be especially important when trying to break the cycle of poverty and level the playing field for those children and households experiencing IGTP.

Count every child and leave no one behind: To be consistent with the Social Development Goals it will be important to put at the heart of strategies to tackle IGTP the commitment to 'leave no one behind' and endeavour 'to reach the furthest behind first' first ([125]). This will ensure that those experiencing IGTP will be prioritised. A key first step in this regard is to ensure that every child is registered as you cannot make every child count until every child is counted. At a policy level, leaving no child behind will mean proofing and monitoring policies in areas such as

123. European Parliament (2016).
124. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
125. United Nations (2015).

education, health and leisure to ensure they are designed and delivered in ways which reach the most disadvantaged children. This could, for instance, involve prioritising access to ECEC provision for children from disadvantaged backgrounds when provision is scarce or ensuring that additional resources are allocated to ECEC facilities and schools in disadvantaged areas or prioritising the provision of leisure facilities for such areas or developing special outreach health programmes to disadvantaged communities and families. It can also involve addressing specific barriers such as costs by subsidising or removing costs for children from low-income households. Thus, depending on the issue, sometimes it will be best to develop a neighbourhood or territorial approach targeting the most disadvantaged communities and in other instances an approach targeting low-income households will be more appropriate. Often a combination of the two approaches will be most effective ([126]). However, as pointed out by Frazer *et al.* (2020), there are three important elements to keep in mind when implementing a strategy that focuses on children experiencing the severest disadvantage. First, it is important to ensure that these children have access to the same universal services as those that are available to all children. Secondly, it is important to avoid underinvestment in prevention measures and in policies aimed at ensuring that vulnerability does not worsen. Thirdly, some services need to be provided to all/most children, where this is the only way to avoid stigmatisation ([127]). A major political advantage of focusing on ensuring access of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to universal provision is that middle class/taxpayers whose own children attend this provision will have a vested interest in ensuring that this provision is of a high quality and will thus be more inclined to support it.

Promote inclusive growth: At the heart of any strategy to combat IGTP must be a commitment to inclusive and sustainable growth; otherwise, new barriers will be set up which perpetuate the cycle of disadvantage and exclusion. As UNICEF has pointed out, where policies, programmes and public spending priorities are equitable, targeting those in greatest need, they can lead to good results for the most disadvantaged children. Where they are inequitable, they effectively preselect children for heightened risks of disease, hunger, illiteracy and poverty based on their country, community or family of origin, their gender, race or ethnicity and other factors. This can perpetuate inter-generational cycles of disadvantage, harming individual children and undermining the strength of their societies as inequality deepens ([128]).

126. An example of such a dual approach can be seen in relation to education in Ireland, where the additional costs of education are addressed through the *Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance (BTSCFA)* which is aimed at low-income households with children while at the same time there is also a neighbourhood approach targeting schools in disadvantaged areas, the *Delivering Opportunities in Schools (DEIS)* programme.
127. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
128. UNICEF (2016).

Improve research and data collection, promote child mainstreaming and enhance monitoring and reporting: Critical to developing effective strategies is to improve the understanding of IGTP. In this regard there is a need for increased effort in researching IGTP, especially in the developing context. Research must continue to be through a multidimensional approach, and into lesser researched areas such as mental health and neighbourhood effects.

There is a need to emphasise non-material transfers in a developing context and to explore the mechanisms more closely. Also important is the collection of good quality data to ensure better mapping of child poverty and IGTP, to enhance evidence-based policy development and to ensure effective monitoring and reporting on progress. In relation to children this should be informed by a **child mainstreaming** approach. As Atkinson and Marlier (2010) point out 'This approach should be not simply to disaggregate by age but to ask 'what indicators would best serve the needs of children?'. There is, for example, a good case to be made for considering measures of child health, child development or, more broadly 'child well-being'.' They also stress that 'In considering child-focused indicators, it is important to recognise that there may be differences between the interests of children and the interests of the parents who often make choices on their behalf.'

Establishing effective monitoring and accountability systems are important so that that when policies/ services are in place to combat IGTP and child poverty they are monitored regularly to ensure that they are efficiently and effectively delivered and to ensure that they are of a high quality and are effective in ensuring access to them by children in vulnerable situations ([129]).

3.2 Ensuring adequate income and resources

Given the negative impact on children's well-being and development of growing up in households with low resources, a key element in breaking the cycle of poverty must be developing a range of policies to enhance access to adequate income and resources for these households. The key elements of such an approach are well set out in the 2013 EU Recommendation. Pillar one of the Recommendation focusses on access to adequate resources and this covers both supporting parents' participation in the labour market and providing for adequate living standards through a combination of benefits ([130]). Also important are ensuring effective tax policies that redistribute resources and reduce inequalities across society and policies that support households with insufficient resources to build assets.

129. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
130. European Commission (2013).

3.2.1 Enhancing labour market participation

Enabling parents to access well-paid and secure employment is vital to help households to move out of poverty. The range of policies that are important here include:

- policies to address in-work poverty and ensure that work pays and provides an adequate income ([131]);
- policies that promote family-friendly working conditions (e.g. parental leave, workplace support and flexible working arrangements);
- policies promoting access of disadvantaged groups to affordable quality childcare;
- policies that combat insecure, low paid and exploitative work;
- policies that promote gender equality in the labour market and in family responsibilities;
- life-long learning and training policies which support parents' access to the labour market; and
- policies that outlaw child labour.

3.2.2 Developing effective income support systems

Adequate and effective income support systems, both in cash and in-kind, are a key element in combating family and child poverty. This is well reflected by UNICEF who stress that 'social protection mechanisms such as pensions, fee waivers, child support grants and cash transfers are an effective approach that can reduce vulnerability to poverty and deprivation, strengthen families' capacity to care for their children and overcome barriers to accessing essential services. Cash transfers can work as a 'safety net' to keep the poorest, most vulnerable households out of destitution in all settings, including humanitarian emergencies. At the same time, they offer families a ladder out of poverty by boosting incomes, increasing school attendance, improving nutrition, encouraging the use of health services and providing job opportunities. By one estimate, social protection initiatives keep some 150 million people out of poverty, and they make a positive impact on children's lives across a range of indicators (…). Cash transfers work by putting more money into the hands of the poor, strengthening local markets and creating a stream of social benefits that come with poverty reduction. As households spend the transfers they receive, their impact is multiplied in the local economy and the benefits transmitted to others in society' ([132]).

Save the Children have produced a useful summary of the evidence on the effectiveness of cash transfers as a means of giving people money to meet critical needs, invest in their livelihood and in

131. See Peña-Casas *et al.* (2019) to find out what policies are used in EU Members to tackle in-work poverty and for a discussion on the range of policies needed.
132. UNICEF (2016).

the their children's future, especially if provided with complementary support and argue that cash is 'one of the best evidenced anti-poverty tools available'. In particular they stress that cash transfers can: increase the uptake of healthcare; improve nutrition through increased spending on food; improve school enrolment, reduce school dropout and increase girls' school attendance; reduce violence; reduce child marriage; and recue child labour ([133]). Young Lives, an international study of childhood poverty has found clear evidence that well-designed social protection policies can have a real impact on children. For instance, in India a unique evaluation of the Government's midday-meal scheme found that it improved nutrition and learning and in Ethiopia the productive safety net policy improved nutrition ([134]). In rural Bangladesh an initiative to empower girls through conditional incentives for families of adolescent girls led to substantial reductions in child marriage and teenage childbearing in a setting with high rates of underage marriage and had positive effects on educational attainment for girls in school ([135]). Income support can also play an important role in countering mental health problems. One study finds that the transmission of mental health issues from parents to children in South Africa can be effectively disrupted by cash transfers ([136]).

The importance of income support systems is also emphasised in the EU. The 2013 EU Recommendation stresses the importance of children enjoying adequate living standards that are compatible with a life in dignity, through an optimal combination of cash and in-kind benefits. In particular the recommendation highlights the need to support household incomes through adequate, coherent and efficient benefits, including fiscal incentives, family and child benefits, housing benefits and minimum income schemes and to complement cash income support schemes with in-kind benefits related in particular to nutrition, childcare, education, health, housing, transport and access to sports or socio-cultural activities. It highlights the importance of adequate redistribution across income groups, ensuring easy take up, avoiding stigmatisation and ensuring regular and responsive delivery mechanisms ([137]).

In the EU, the evidence shows that most of the countries with a low rate of child poverty or social exclusion provide fairly adequate, coherent and efficient benefits (including through an adequate balance of universal and targeted schemes, by avoiding inactivity traps, by reflecting the evolution of household types and ensuring redistribution across income groups). The most effective systems limit conditionality and thus reduce problems of non-take-up ([138]).

133. Save the Children (2020b).
134. Young Lives (2008).
135. Buchmann *et al.* (2018).
136. Eyal and Burns (2016).
137. European Commission (2013).
138. Frazer and Marlier (2013).

It is important to recognise that not all developing countries are in a position to immediately move to a comprehensive social protection system and there is a need to put an emphasis on progressively strengthening weak systems. Where systems are lacking developing an unconditional basic child benefit can be a good place to start. To ensure all children are reached a key first step is to ensure that all children are registered - indeed such a benefit can be an incentive to registration. As well as emphasising mainline benefits it can also be useful to complement these by using cash incentives to encourage positive developments such as school completion and to counter child marriage and child labour. However, such schemes need to be carefully tailored to take account of local circumstances (e.g. conditions of families and local markets), to be evidence-based and to be carefully evaluated.

3.2.3 Using taxation policies to reduce inequalities

Given that IGTP is underpinned by very unequal distribution of resources in society a key element in ensuring a more equitable access to resources is a progressive tax system that effectively redistributes resources to and thus empowers those most marginalised groups in society.

3.3 Ensuring access to good quality essential services

Income support systems are only one element in the struggle to end IGTP. On their own they are not sufficient to break the cycle of poverty. It is also vital to ensure that children in poverty have access to essential services that will support their well-being and development so that they are healthy and can achieve their full potential. In this regard key areas are access to: quality health services, adequate nutrition, quality family support/social services/child protection services, good quality and inclusive ECEC and education, decent housing and safe living environments, and sport, culture and leisure activities. These are elaborated on in more detail in the ensuing sections. However, it is important to acknowledge that countries are at different stages of development and some states lack the capacity or resources to immediately ensure quality services in every area. Thus, it is important to establish a long-term ambition to put in place the services needed and then establish a set of steps or bridges to achieve it. It is also important to note that, in addition to services discussed in this section, access to other essential services such as water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications is also crucial for children and families in poverty ([139]).

139. This is highlighted in Principle 20 of the EPSR and in the European Commission's Action Plan for its implementation (European Commission 2021). See also the ESPN analysis on access to essential services for people on low incomes covering 35 European countries (Baptista and Marlier 2020).

3.3.1 Access to quality health services

While children's health depends on many factors such as adequate nutrition and decent housing it is also essential to ensure access to good quality health services and too often children growing up in poverty face barriers to accessing health services. The 2013 EU Recommendation stresses the need to:

- improve the responsiveness of health systems to address the needs of disadvantaged children;
- ensure that all children can make full use of their universal right to healthcare, including through disease prevention and health promotion as well as access to quality health services;
- address the obstacles to accessing healthcare faced by children and households in vulnerable situations, including costs, cultural and linguistic barriers, lack of information;
- invest in prevention particularly during early childhood years, by putting in place comprehensive policies that combine nutrition, health, education and social measures;
- tackle the social gradient in unhealthy lifestyles and substance abuse by giving all children access to balanced diets and physical activity; and
- devote special attention to children with disabilities or mental health problems, undocumented or non-registered children, pregnant teenagers and children from families with a history of substance abuse ([140]).

Some of the key priorities to ensure that all children at risk of poverty have access to free health services that have been identified in the context of the European Child Guarantee include:

- improving the collection of statistics on children's access to healthcare;
- increasing investment to strengthen health services for children in areas of weakness;
- putting in place universal free regular health examinations and follow-up treatment for children at successive growth stages, especially during the first years of life and regularly at school;
- introducing exemption or reimbursement schemes for children in vulnerable situations to cover co-payments for healthcare and medication;
- investing in and improving (mental) health and rehabilitation services for children;
- investing in health literacy for all children (and their parents), including the most vulnerable, to foster healthy behaviours;
- developing multi-service or extended schools ([141]), aimed at offering integrated services (including healthcare and dental care);

140. European Commission (2013).

- putting more emphasis on prevention and outreach, especially to mothers and babies;
- enhancing professional training in relation to health services for children;
- exploring the potential role of nurses in strengthening the care delivery team;
- developing unique record identification and thus the tracking of a child's history and needs across service providers;
- enhancing child-based public health electronic record systems covering areas such as immunisation information, health screening and other key data; and
- encouraging home-based records (parent-held records) that enable parents to keep a record of vaccination and other key health and developmental events ([142]).

A recurring theme in relation to health services is the importance of early intervention. For instance, the Drivers for Health Equity project on improving health equity through action across the life course emphasises the importance of identifying households at risk of poorer health early on, referring them to appropriate services and making special efforts to foster the social inclusion of children who are most vulnerable and at risk of exclusion ([143]). In South Africa the government has recognised that health, and particularly the health of mothers and children, is of particular importance to disrupting the transmission of poverty. They are addressing these issues through policies such as the National Integrated Policy for Early Childhood Development, which prioritises essential services such as healthcare, nutrition, social protection, parent support programmes, and opportunities for early learning and childcare, targeting primary caregivers and pregnant women ([144]). Another important area to ensure access to quality health services in the context of IGTP is adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to contraception to unmarried adolescents, targeting also newlyweds (under pressure to conceive).

Another important factor in children's health is prenatal/maternal health and this is a key issue in many developing countries. Health risks experienced during pregnancy and childbirth can limit children's chances of survival at birth, as well as risk the mother's life. Maternal health is a key determinant of a child's health at birth, and the deprivations suffered in utero can reduce the

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141. Extended schools aim to raise standards of achievement and allow children to realise their full potential, ensuring the provision of services depending on the particular pupil, family and community needs, including (but not limited to): activities, skills classes and additional learning support to children; access to specialist support services; parenting and family support; community access to school facilities; and local adult learning and career development opportunities. Most extended schools provide children with services before, during and after the normal school day and they also support the parents, families and the local community.
142. Rigby M. (2019), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).
143. Goldblatt *et al.* (2015).
144. ARC-CRSA (2016). See also the case study in Annex 2 on Health in South Africa.

effectiveness of postnatal investments ([145]). This means that prenatal health is crucial to a child's health and life chances. Maternal orphanhood has detrimental effects on the IGTP, evidence showing that maternal orphanhood can result in stunting and lower educational attainment ([146]). Thus improving maternal health is a key element in improving the health and life chances of children and reducing IGTP.

3.3.2 Access to adequate nutrition

Adequate income support systems for households with children are a key element in combating malnutrition among children (see 3.2 above). However, many other policies can also play an important role in ensuring adequate children. Some of these other key priorities to ensure that all children at risk of poverty have access to adequate nutrition that have been identified in the context of the European Child Guarantee include:

- develop policies to mitigate inadequate nutrition, such as the provision of universal or targeted free nutritious healthy full meals in ECEC provision and primary and secondary schools;
- develop educational activities on healthy food, such as school breakfasts that empower children to act as advocates for better nutrition in their families and communities;
- complement healthy nutrition programmes with programmes encouraging exercise (with adequate facilities);
- develop schemes that can reach children in their home environments, such as food banks or meal-at-home programmes to support households lacking sufficient food;
- monitor children's health and nutritional status on a regular basis so as to identify problems arising from inadequate nutrition (e.g. through social restaurants or food banks);
- promote mother and child health through programmes to promote breastfeeding;
- promote healthy food and healthy eating habits; and
- encourage 'no fry' zones round schools to limit the availability of high-fat fast food ([147]).

145. Narayan *et al.* (2018).
146. Bird and Higgins (2011).
147. Bradshaw and Rees (2019) and Frazer *et al.* (2020).

3.3.3 Access to quality family support/social services/child protection services

Developing effective and well-resourced family support and social/child protection services can play a key role in supporting children in vulnerable situations. An OECD working paper stresses that 'A crucial element to effectively combat poverty and its effects is to provide services that meet the needs of children and parents, to prevent and/or repair the possible consequences of poverty on children's well-being and development. For instance, family services play a crucial role in improving children's material living environment, to reduce parental stress and create a supportive home learning environment.' The report stresses the importance of such services being 'orientated towards 'evidence-based' practices that have proven to have a positive impact on families' ([148]) Similarly Frazer *et al.* (2020) have documented that countries with well-developed social services and child protection services tend to be better placed to identify early on children and households at risk and in need of additional support to help them access the services they need. Such services thus play a key role in both preventing problems arising and helping those children already in vulnerable situations to access the support they need. Also, local public social services are often the agency best placed to ensure coordination and cooperation between different services so that individualised and tailored packages of support can be developed ([149]). The important role played by social services in many European countries in combating child poverty and ensuring coordinated and integrated responses to the needs of children and households in vulnerable situations is well highlighted by the European Social Network, the network for local public social services in Europe ([150]). One of the challenges in developing social services for families is that social workers are often not trusted as they could be responsible for children being removed. Thus, it is important to invest in professional training to foster an approach that is seen as supportive and transformational rather than controlling, to increase representation of minorities among social workers, to foster a holistic approach built around integrated community services, to emphasise prevention and to promote parental advocacy.

3.3.4 Access to good quality and inclusive early childhood education and care (ECEC)

Early intervention is vital to breaking the cycle of poverty and thus ensuring access to good quality and inclusive ECEC is essential. As UNICEF has emphasised, for education to fulfil its role as a catalyst for equity, it must begin with early childhood interventions that help mitigate the disadvantages faced by children born into poor and non-literate environments. Investment in quality early childhood care and education produces a double benefit: it is both fair and

148. Acquah and Thévenon (2020, p.8).
149. Frazer *et al.* (2020).
150. Montero (2016).

efficient ([151]). Similarly, the 2013 EU Recommendation stresses the need to reduce inequality at a young age by investing in early childhood education and care and emphasises that it is a social investment to address inequality and challenges faced by disadvantaged children through early intervention. It goes on to stress the need to provide access, to ensure high-quality and affordable educational services and to adapt provision to the needs of families. It also stresses the need to incentivise the participation of children from a disadvantaged background (especially those below the age of three years), regardless of their parents' labour market situation, whilst avoiding stigmatisation and segregation, to support parents and raise their awareness of the benefits of participation in ECEC programmes for their children and themselves. It also recommends using ECEC as an early-warning system to identify family- or school-related physical or psychological problems, special needs or abuse.

Vandenbroeck (2019) found that in general, those ECEC policies that are most successful in reaching vulnerable children are structural policies that include legal entitlements for all children; policies with free or means-tested fees and alleviation of indirect costs; policies with local responsibilities, embedded in clear national quantitative and qualitative frameworks; and policies of 'progressive' universalism, which include additional means and facilities within structural and universal frameworks.

Some of the key priorities to ensure that all children at risk of poverty have access to ECEC that have been identified in the context of the European Child Guarantee include to:

- better monitor the numbers of children in vulnerable situations in ECEC as a starting point for improving access;
- have a long-term vision of guaranteeing universal access and a legal entitlement to quality ECEC;
- prioritise increasing investment in the youngest children under 3;
- invest in increasing the availability of provision and in doing so address geographic disparities in the lack of places;
- put in place quality standards to ensure that children in vulnerable situations do not end up in lower-quality provision;
- develop a well-trained and paid workforce;
- reduce fees and subsidise related costs, or provide wholly funded ECEC, for children in vulnerable situations especially those in low-income households;
- legislate to make ECEC an entitlement for all parents and their children;

151. UNICEF (2016).

- where there is a shortage of ECEC provision, develop priority enrolment for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- introduce priority funding for ECEC provision in disadvantaged areas;
- promote inclusion and counter spatial segregation by allocating more resources to day-care centres in deprived areas;
- increase the flexibility of provision to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life;
- reach out to parents from disadvantaged groups who are suspicious of leaving their youngest children in the care of 'strangers';
- improve knowledge of the barriers faced by specific communities or cultural minorities and ensure intercultural competences of staff working with them;
- address non-take-up of rights through ensuring legal entitlements are clear and transparent and are accompanied by outreach and information to parents from vulnerable backgrounds and by simplifying administrative barriers; and
- welcome and encourage parental participation in ECEC and combine ECEC with home visits and other types of household/parenting support ([152]).

One of the issues that arises in considering how best to ensure access to ECEC (and to other essential services) for children from disadvantaged backgrounds is the extent to which a universal or targeted approach works best. Frazer *et al.* (2020) argue that social policies related to children as well as to other areas should be driven by the principle of 'progressive' (or 'tailored') universalism, meaning that welfare states should be inclusive, and that people at the bottom of the distribution should benefit at the same time as others in society. In practical terms, this approach, which combines both universal and targeted polices, means that those in need should receive more support than other population segments to compensate for disadvantages. From the perspective of progressive universalism, targeting and mainstream can coexist; they are compatible and, in fact, mutually reinforcing concepts. However, effective progressive universalism for children requires information systems that – during the planning and implementation processes – identify and prioritise the children most in need of additional support. It also requires the identification of targets to be achieved as well as adequate systems of monitoring and reporting ([153]).

152. Vandenbroeck (2019), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).
153. Frazer *et al.* (2020).

3.3.5 Access to good quality and inclusive education

One of the keys to breaking the cycle of poverty is ensuring that children growing up in poverty have access to high quality inclusive education that enables them to reach their full potential and to positively influence aspirations and attitudes. As UNICEF has stated 'Good quality and equitable education serves to unlock opportunity and undo intergenerational cycles of inequity: On average, each additional year of education a child receives increases her or his adult earnings by about 10 per cent. And for each additional year of schooling completed, on average, by young adults in a country, that country's poverty rate falls by 9 per cent. The returns on education are highest in low-income and lower-middle-income countries' ([154]). Education makes people resilient to shocks such as conflict, and it is a 'portable' asset of great value ([155]).

UNICEF also stresses the especial importance of education for girls in breaking the cycle of poverty as education empowers girls later in life to seek better healthcare during pregnancy, in childbirth and during their children's early years. The results are reflected in lower levels of under-five mortality, reduced fertility, improved health-care practices and later marriage and childbearing. Children – especially girls – born to educated mothers are more likely to attend school, resulting in a cycle of opportunity that extends across generations ([156]).

The key role of education in breaking the cycle of disadvantage is also emphasised in the 2013 EU Recommendation as high-quality education promotes children's emotional, social, cognitive and physical development. It goes on to emphasise the need to target resources and opportunities towards the more disadvantaged, to recognise and address spatial disparities in the availability and quality of educational provision, to create an inclusive learning environment, to address barriers which stop or seriously hinder children from attending or completing school, to improve the performance of students with low basic skills, to develop and implement comprehensive policies to reduce early school leaving, to strengthen equality legislation, to prepare teachers for social diversity and deploy special cultural mediators and role models to facilitate the integration of Roma and children with an immigrant background ([157]).

154. UNICEF (2016).
155. Bird, Higgins and McKay (2010).
156. UNICEF (2016). See also the case study in Annex 2 on Education in Bangladesh which highlights well the importance of access to education in combating IGTP.
157. European Commission (2013).

Some of the key priorities that have been identified in the context of the European Child Guarantee to ensure that children in vulnerable situations have access to inclusive high-quality education include:

- reducing financial barriers to accessing education and going beyond the concept of free tuition so that free education extends to the most basic elements of access and participation: tuition, transport, textbooks, all-school activities and meals;
- developing equity funding strategies for disadvantaged students in order to equalise educational outcomes through measures such as ensuring smaller class sizes in primary schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, channelling additional funds to disadvantaged schools to improve material conditions, transforming disadvantaged/ghetto schools into 'magnet schools', and developing multi-service or extended schools aimed at offering integrated services (covering healthcare, social care, language stimulation, cultural enrichment and psychological support);
- providing targeted support and outreach activities for specific target groups who face additional barriers to access education;
- investing in teacher training and staff incentives for more inclusive schooling;
- fostering the desegregation of schools and classes by promoting inclusive education;
- ensuring a truly intercultural education system;
- ensuring that support provided at the regional and/or local level does not contribute to widening inequality between more prosperous and poorer regions or urban and rural areas;
- developing partnership programmes between schools, parents, local communities and social services; and
- developing schools as hubs for the provision of integrated services; and developing all-day schools where children, especially those from economically disadvantaged households, receive free education services ([158]).

It is important to acknowledge that it is not just the quality and inclusiveness of schools that determine educational outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are many other factors that also affect how these children get on in school. For instance, children's educational performance can be adversely affected by growing up in overcrowded and substandard housing and unsafe environments, having inadequate nutrition, suffering from poor health and lack of access to health services, financial barriers to participation in education, or having few informal learning opportunities due to lack of sport, recreational and cultural activities. Limited access to play, books and materials or, increasingly, to digital equipment and media can

158. Nicaise *et al.* (2019), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).

also be barriers. The level of education of parents, especially mothers, is a key factor in children's educational progress and thus support to parents to help them contribute best to their children's development is very important. Also, the extent of stability and security of the households where children are living is an important factor. In addition, the negative impact of domestic violence and its harmful impact on children's development has been strongly highlighted during the COVID-19 crisis. So, to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds participate in and benefit as fully as possible from education it is essential to address the other barriers that can affect their participation. A comprehensive approach to combating child poverty is an essential part of tackling educational disadvantage and inequality.

Another important factor that has an extremely negative impact on children's education and development in some developing countries is **child labour** which can be an important reason for poor school performance and school dropout ([159]). The OECD has reported that in 2016 about one-in-ten children aged 5 to 17 years were engaged in child labour worldwide. Of these one-third do not attend school at all; the others go to school, but not all the time. Children in child labour are more likely to leave school early, before grade completion, and underperform in tests ([160]). Enforcing laws and regulations prohibiting child labour and strengthening child protection systems can play a crucial role in reducing levels of child labour ([161]).

3.3.6 Access to decent housing and safe living environments

Ensuring that children grow up in decent housing and safe living environments is a key factor in determining children's health and well-being and strongly affects their development and learning needs. In the EU the importance of a safe, adequate housing and child-friendly living environment is emphasised in the 2013 EU Recommendation. This emphasises the need to ensure households with children can live in affordable quality housing and to address situations of exposure to environmental hazards, overcrowding and energy poverty; to support households and children at risk of homelessness; to pay attention to children's best interests in local planning and avoid 'ghettoisation' and segregation; and to reduce children's harmful exposure to a deteriorating living and social environment to prevent them from falling victim to violence and abuse ([162]). The growing evidence on the neighbourhood effect on social mobility (see section 2.1.4) reinforces the importance of improving the quality of housing, the environment and public services in high poverty areas.

159. See case study on Bangladesh in Annex 2.
160. OECD (2019).
161. Thévenon and Edmonds (2019).
162. European Commission (2013).

Some of the key priorities that have been identified in the context of the European Child Guarantee to ensure that children in vulnerable situations have access to adequate housing and a safe environment include:

- ensuring that the right to access adequate housing is established in law;
- developing a comprehensive strategy on access to housing and a strategy for fighting homelessness that gives particular attention to access by children in vulnerable situations and their families to decent-quality affordable housing;
- developing preventive and early intervention services for homeless families and children which aim at permanent (re)housing solutions which are based on demonstrably effective evidence-based approaches;
- increasing the supply of affordable and social housing;
- providing support for utility (water and electricity) access and affordability, and mediation mechanisms for managing payment default, as well as debt management; and
- introducing targeted exemption from house-ownership taxes or council tax as a means for municipal government to reduce financial pressures on owners with children ([163]).

Adequate housing also needs to be accompanied by measures that create a safe environment for children and thus policies are needed to ensure safe drinking water and sanitation, clean air and policies to end ghettoisation, reduce violence and drugs and foster social networking.

3.3.7 Access to sport, culture and leisure activities

Participation in sport, culture and leisure activities play a key role in promoting the well-being and development of children, fostering resilience and broadening social networks and thus breaking the cycle of disadvantage. The 2013 EU Recommendation emphasises the importance that such activities play and thus the importance of providing opportunities to participate in informal learning activities that take place outside the home and after regular school hours. To reach children experiencing disadvantage this requires addressing barriers such as cost, access and cultural differences, providing safe spaces in children's environment and supporting disadvantaged communities by means of specific incentives, encouraging the creation of better after-school activities and enabling all households to participate in social activities that boost their parental skills and foster positive family communication ([164]).

163. Clark-Foulquier and Spinnewijn (2019), Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).
164. European Commission (2013).

3.4 Enhancing participation of children, parents and local communities

In the EU, the importance of promoting the participation of children and their parents in decision-making that affects their lives is seen as a key element in empowering children and parents experiencing poverty and social exclusion in developing more effective responses to poverty and social exclusion. This a feature of the 2013 EU Recommendation and is also strongly emphasised by organisations working with families and children. Eurochild and EAPN emphasise the right of children to be heard and argue that just as children's participation is crucial, so too is involving their parents. Only by talking to parents living in poverty can the real obstacles and challenges on how to improve living conditions be understood, service deliverers be held to account and more effective solutions be developed. Parents should be involved directly in the decisions that are made over their lives and in developing their own solutions – through personalised, tailored support approaches and integrated services, but also as a collective in shaping the principal policy solutions ([165]).

Many stakeholders and studies has stressed the importance of putting in place mechanisms and procedures to ensure that children and their parents, particularly those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, are consulted and involved in the development, delivery and monitoring of policies/services and emphasised that their views are important in identifying blocks to access and participation and suggesting improvements ([166]). Among the things that contribute to enabling participation are: training of professionals to adopt a community development approach and see children, parents and local community organisations as partners; ensuring sufficient time and space and building trust over time; using accessible language; working with organisations specialising in supporting participation; involving peers or well-trained adults to facilitate participation; and assuring participants that their voices are being taken seriously.

In its resource guide on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 12, Save the Children emphasises that children's participation is important because it contributes to personal development, leads to better decision-making and outcomes, serves to protect children, contributes to preparation for civil society development, encourages tolerance and respect for others, and strengthens accountability. It sets out what is needed in different settings: in the family, in alternative care, in healthcare, in education, in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities, in the media, in the workplace and in situations of violence ([167]). An example of the positive impact of increased community participation can be seen in an experiment to promote community-based monitoring of public primary health care providers in Uganda which led to large

165. European Commission (2013) and Eurochild and EAPN (2013). See also ATD Fourth World (2020) and COFACE (2020a).
166. See for example Frazer *et al.* (2020) and Guio *et al.* (2021).
167. Lansdown (2011).

increases in utilisation and improved health outcomes—reduced child mortality and increased child weight ([168]).

ATD Fourth World emphasises the importance of parents, children and communities as active participants and stresses that all members of a family should have the opportunity to express themselves and play an active role in shaping their destiny. Children depend for their well-being on one another and on their communities. The rights of one member of the family cannot be protected effectively without protecting the rights of the others ([169]). ATD Fourth World also emphasises the importance of a long-term approach and supporting the participation of families and communities over time.

An interesting example of a national strategy to promote child participation can be found in the Irish Government's National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020 whose goal is to ensure that children and young people have a voice in their individual and collective everyday lives across five national outcome areas set out in the government's national policy framework for children and youth, namely: to be active and healthy; to be achieving in all areas of learning and development; to be safe and protected from harm; to enjoy economic security and opportunity; and to be connected, respected and contributing ([170]).

3.5 Fostering aspirations, visions and pathways out of poverty

Given the extent to which growing up in persistent poverty undermines self-confidence, reduces a sense that there are pathways out of poverty, leads to a lack of positive role models and thus undermines aspirations, initiatives which help to build self-confidence and resilience, foster aspirations, provide positive role models and support and encourage children and young people to find pathways out of poverty can make an important contribution. Krishna and Agarwal (2017) have identified five types of social mobility promoting organisations in India which through coaching, mentorship, guidance, information provision and other means help smart and hard-working children with backgrounds in poverty to aspire, and to achieve, superior career options and outcomes. Examining rural Ethiopia Bernard *et al.* (2014) highlight the positive potential of peer effects. They suggest that the viewing of documentaries of people – of similar background as the viewers and who achieved agriculture and small business success – may foster and inspire important progress and change. Krishnan and Krutikova (2013) highlight the impacts of a long-term intervention by the NGO Akanksha to inculcate a sense of agency, control (self-efficacy) and aspirations (non-cognitive skills) among slum dweller children and adolescents in Bombay: Akanksha use workshops, mentoring, drama, art and story-telling for these purposes. They find

168. Björkman and Svensson (2009).
169. ATD Fourth World (2004).
170. Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2019).

evidence of substantial impacts on both self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as evidence of a smaller impact on life evaluation and aspirations. Furthermore, in line with the literature, both self-esteem and self-efficacy are positively related to success in school-leaving examinations and initial labour market outcomes.

3.6 Protection from discrimination and stigmatisation

Effective strategies to counter IGTP and combat child poverty need to be underpinned by strong policies and programmes to counter racism and discrimination and the stigmatisation of children and their families experiencing poverty (especially children from migrant, ethnic minority or indigenous backgrounds). UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty have identified several policies and programmes to address social stigma and discrimination. These include: anti-discriminatory laws and regulations (such as equal pay legislation and employment non-discrimination laws complemented by compliance mechanisms or implementation support); affirmative action to provide more opportunities for disadvantaged groups, typically in employment and education; social mobilisation initiatives which can play a major role in pushing both decision makers and individuals to act (specific activities may vary across different contexts and objectives, from individual outreach, social media campaigns to mass media outreach ([171]); and trainings or workshops to change social norms and behaviours, and ensuring programmes are delivered in ways that do not stigmatise recipients (e.g. free school meals) ([172]).

3.7 Protection of the right to a family life

In too many situations, separation from the family is still seen as an appropriate protection measure for children in poverty. The right of children to be cared for by their parents and not to be separated from them is nevertheless protected by different international instruments (e.g. Article 9 of the UNCRC and Article 24 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights).

Developing a range of policies to prevent the separation of children in vulnerable situations from their families is therefore essential. A broad range of policies are relevant: investing in family support services and home visiting programmes; training programmes on positive discipline and parenting skills; or housing support or other measures to alleviate the material poverty of families. A gatekeeping mechanism which is capable of ensuring that children are only placed in alternative

171. See for example: 1) UNESCO's 'Say no to discrimination in education! - #RightToEducation campaign' at https://en.unesco.org/themes/right-to-education/campaign; 2) To sensitise its citizens, the City of Barcelona (Spain), member of UNESCO's European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) and UNESCO's International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR), launched a social media campaign using the hashtag #StopRacism (#StopRacisme in Catalan) on 21 March 2020, coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; 3) The Council of Europe's 'Speak out against discrimination' Campaign focused on the role of the media in a multicultural Europe (https://www.coe.int/t/DG4/ANTI-DISCRIMINATION-CAMPAIGN/).
172. UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017).

care if all possible means of keeping them with their parents or extended family have been examined is also vital ([173]).

In cases where alternative care is deemed necessary and in the child's best interests, the UN Guidelines encourage all States to ensure that: there is a range of alternative care options; that the care placements are taken on a case-by-case basis; and that the period spent in alternative care, and the care received, are suitable to the needs of that individual child. When placed into care, children have the right to be in contact with their family if it is in their best interests. International child rights standards call for children under the age of 3 not to be cared for in residential care under any circumstances ([174]).

3.8 Integrated delivery of policies and programmes at local level

The OECD have highlighted how integrated forms of service delivery are often the most effective way of reaching vulnerable families with the highest service needs. However, they stress that for horizontal integration to be effective disincentives to integration between different levels of governance must be effectively addressed and that embedding integrated services delivery at the local level requires a 'whole system approach' ([175]). Evidence across the EU shows that countries that tend to do best in combating child poverty and social exclusion foster an integrated approach whereby policies and programmes are delivered in an integrated way at local level so that services are mutually reinforcing (Frazer *et al.* 2020). This highlights the importance of developing national (and where appropriate regional and local) strategies which emphasise a multidimensional, holistic approach – with a strong focus on coordination and cooperation between services and effective outreach to those children in particularly vulnerable situations. It also highlights the importance of enhancing inter-agency coordination, improving synergies and integration between different policy areas and services for children, and improving coordination at all levels of governance between national, regional and local child policies. Child-centred approaches and mutual flexibility between agencies on budgets can facilitate this. Also important is that services at a local level reach out to the most disadvantaged children and households, emphasise early intervention and promote the empowerment and involvement of children, parents and local communities through a community-development approach ([176]). When developing an integrated approach, it is important to include counselling services and respite services (for families exposed to chronic stress) given that poverty exposes families to high levels of stress.

173. Lerch and Nordenmark Severinsson (2019) and Frazer *et al.* (2020).
174. Lerch and Nordenmark Severinsson (2019).
175. OECD (2015).
176. Frazer *et al.* (2020).

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Annex 2: Case studies

This section has two case studies looking into two of the themes of IGTP - education and health. They look at the issues in a developing country context and highlight policies and interventions as well as challenges in these themes.

A. Education in Bangladesh

As mentioned, education is a crucial chance to disrupt IGTP. Not only is participation in education important, but it should also be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. Across the world, particularly across developing countries, levels of participation in education vary greatly. The case study of education in Bangladesh demonstrates some of the progress and remaining challenges in the field of education as a means to disrupting IGTP.

Bangladesh has made significant improvements in education over the past few decades, as well as huge leaps in poverty alleviation, and it has dedicated policy programmes to improving education. Since 1990, primary education has been made mandatory between the ages of six and ten, and it is free. Between 1977 and 2011, enrolment rates went from 73% of the primary school age population to achieving Universal Primary Education in line with the target of development goals. Primary education completion also saw impressive leaps from 31% up to 73% in 2011. Perhaps most impressive is the achievement of gender parity in primary and secondary education enrolment by 2005 ([177]). However there are still many challenges remaining from high dropout rates, quality of education, and early childhood education ([178]).

The Bangladesh government pledged a new education policy, adopted in 2010. The Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2011-16) and a perspective plan for ten years up to 2021 were formulated and a National Skill Development Policy was adopted in 2011 that recognises the importance of skills and capacity building related to employment and all of this in the light of livelihood in fighting poverty. The Government of Bangladesh recognises education as a means of reducing poverty, breaking the cycle of poverty, and improving the quality of life for children ([179]).

Education is both a measure of poverty and an effect of poverty, both of which have been reduced as a result of various policies and programmes implemented in the education sector since 1990,

177. The World Bank EdStats. https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/education-statistics (accessed 18 October 2020).
178. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF Bangladesh (2017), *An assessment report on the coverage of basic social services in Bangladesh, UNICEF,* July 2017: https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/reports/assessment-report-coverage-basic-social-services-bangladesh
179. Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2011), 'Sixth five-year plan FY2011-FY2015: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty', July 2011: https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr1363.pdf

particularly when the Primary Education Act was adopted guaranteeing a child's right to education. Since then, through Education for All, the country has addressed the issue of the excluded and hard-to-reach children in primary education as well ([180]). Evidence from a UNICEF national report on Bangladesh shows how crucial education is to IGTP in Bangladesh. They found that the more education the head of household has, the less likely it is that children from that household will face at least one severe deprivation. For example, 74% of households where the household head has no education are likely to suffer from at least one deprivation compared to 29% where the household head has secondary plus education. This evidence also showed that the maternal education in particular had an impact on child health and malnutrition, child labour, child marriage, and child education. Furthermore, poverty levels fall as educational attainment of parents rises. This, as well as the fact that children from the poorest households are twice as likely to suffer education deprivation than those from the wealthiest households, demonstrates the significance of education and its chance to disrupt the cycle of poverty in Bangladesh ([181]).

However, there are still remaining challenges to the education sector in Bangladesh. Primarily these include differences in quality and access to education. For example, Dalit children are often excluded from education and are more likely to go into child labour ([182]), and while enrolment of girls has achieved parity with boys, girls still face inequality in quality of education for example through harassment, and there are still fewer women enrolled in tertiary education ([183]). Finally, dropout rates remain high, with the major reason for dropping out being child labour ([184]).

B. Health in South Africa

Across the world, countries are beginning to recognise the importance of early childhood and maternal health and nutrition, and its role in combating the cycle of poverty. There is also a growing recognition of the mental health aspects of poverty. This case study focuses on the example of South Africa, a country with a recent history of stark inequality, and one that is trying to improve the health of its population.

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180. Barkat A. *et al.* (2009), 'Child Poverty and Disparities in BANGLADESH', *A research study towards Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities. Human Research Development Centre. UNICEF*, November 2009: https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/child-poverty-and-disparities-bangladesh-research-study-towards-global-study-child
181. Barkat A. *et al.* (2009), *Op. Cit*.
182. Asia Dalit Rights Forum & South Asia Equity working Group (2015), *Submission to the Committee of the Rights of the Child in relation to the review of 5th periodic report of Bangladesh*, January 2015: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CRC/Shared%20Documents/BGD/INT_CRC_NGO_BGD_19466_E.pdf (accessed 20 October 2020)
183. Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh (2014), *An Alternative Report to the Fifth State Party Periodic Report to UNCRC*, October 2014: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CRC/Shared%20Documents/BGD/INT_CRC_NGO_BGD_19467_E.pdf (accessed 20 October 2020).
184. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF Bangladesh (2017), *Op. Cit.*

When apartheid ended in South Africa in the early 1990s, there was promises of equality and increased social mobility. While the country has made significant progress since then towards achieving development goals and protecting children and youth, it still faces significant challenges. It is estimated that 62% of children in South Africa are in multidimensional poverty ([185]) and these tend to be along lines of rural/urban divides and ethnicity. As for inter-generational mobility, data show that there has been positive educational mobility across gender, ethnicity, and location; however, occupational mobility has remained limited, with children likely to occupy the same jobs as their parents ([186]). As for the health dimensions that have an impact on IGTP, they are extremely worrying in South Africa, with 26% of children experiencing stunting in 2016, 2% wasting and 13% experiencing obesity ([187]).

The government of South Africa has recognised that health, and particularly the health of mothers and children, is of particular importance to disrupting the transmission of poverty. They are addressing these issues through policies such as the National Integrated Policy for Early Childhood Development, which prioritises essential services such as healthcare, nutrition, social protection, parent support programmes, and opportunities for early learning and childcare, targeting primary caregivers and pregnant women ([188]). Along with this intervention, one of the most important policies helping IGTP is the South African Child Support Grant (CSG). Having been introduced in 1998, it has evolved to be one of the most comprehensive social protection systems in the developing world, reaching over 10 million children a month with evidence showing a positive impact on the health of recipients ([189]). Child hunger rates in 2018 were 19 percentage points lower than they were in 2002, and one of the contributing factors to this is the expansion of CSG ([190]).

185. Maluleke R. (2020), 'Child poverty in South Africa: A Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis', UNICEF, July 2020: https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/media/4241/file/ZAF-multidimensional-child-poverty-analysis-policy-brief-07July-2020.pdf
186. Girdwood S. and Leibbrandt M. (2009). 'Intergenerational mobility: Analysis of the NIDS wave 1 dataset'. *National Income Dynamics Study Discussion Paper* 15, July 2009, 1-26: http://www.nids.uct.ac.za/publications/discussion-papers/wave-1-papers/106-nids-discussion-paper-no15/file
187. UNICEF South Africa (2020), 'Nutrition Brief 2020', UNICEF, July 2020: https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/reports/nutrition-brief-2020
188. ARC-CRSA (2016), *Alternate Report Coalition – Children's Rights South Africa*, August 2016: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CRC/Shared%20Documents/ZAF/INT_CRC_NGO_ZAF_24898_E.pdf
189. UNICEF (2014). 'The South African Child Support Grant Impact Assessment: Evidence from a survey of children, adolescents and their households': https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/The_South_African_Child_Support_Grant_Impact_Assessment.pdf
190. Hall K. and Sambu W. (2019), *Child Hunger. Children Count website*, Children's Institute, University of Cape Town: http://childrencount.uct.ac.za (accessed 25 October 2020).

South Africa has made significant strides in several areas, including maternal and child health, however there are many serious remaining challenges to health and nutrition in South Africa. These challenges include parity in health services, child and maternal nutrition, and mental health. Many of the nutrition policies are on target to reach full coverage by 2025, however child stunting is getting worse by the year ([191]). Policies need to prioritise tackling malnutrition of mothers and young children, especially as this intervention is most cost-effective in this stage of life. Health is one of the major contributors to the poverty situation of children, as well as housing and child development dimensions, demonstrating the importance and impact of health in IGTP. In fact, nearly 1 in 4 children face deprivation in all three dimensions in South Africa, which also demonstrates the overlap of health, housing and ECEC ([192]). Furthermore, some of the biggest disparities in health and poverty are found between rural and urban areas, with the majority of children experiencing poverty residing in rural areas. The difference in health is striking, with approximately twice the proportion of rural children affected by health deprivation in comparison to urban areas. This is largely due to long distances to healthcare services in rural areas, the quality of those services and bad housing conditions ([193]).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child also lists its concerns with the state of housing for children and disparity of healthcare services between urban and rural areas, with children living in poverty and underserviced areas most likely to be excluded from any existing services ([194]). The major social determinants of bad health in children continue to be poverty, food insecurity, inadequate housing, and living in rural areas ([195]).

Finally, mental health is relatively undiscussed, but has important links to the IGTP that have been researched. There is a high prevalence of mental health issues in South Africa, paired with poor access to appropriate care. One study finds that the transmission of mental health issues from parents to children in South Africa can be effectively disrupted by cash transfers ([196]). Using data from the National Income Dynamics Study, a national household panel study in South Africa, they found that if a parent suffers from depression, it raises their children's probability of being depressed by 32%, representing an almost tripling risk of depression for teens. When considering

191. UNICEF South Africa (2020), *Op. Cit.*
192. Maluleke R. (2020) *Op. Cit*.
193. Maluleke R. (2020) *Op. Cit*.
194. UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) (2016), *Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee: South Africa*, 27 October 2016, CCPR/C/NLD/CO/4: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fZAF%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en
195. ARC-CRSA (2016), *Op. Cit.*
196. Eyal K. and Burns J. (2016). *Up or Down? Intergenerational Mental Health Transmission and Cash Transfers in South Africa*. No. 165. Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town: https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/ldrwpaper/165.htm

receipt of CSG, they find that although receipt itself does not have an impact on teen depression, there is a strong interaction effect between CSG receipt and parental depression, with CSG reducing maternal inter-generational transmission of depression by 19%.

Another study looks at the idea of toxic stress in the context of South Africa, and highlights the number of children that are vulnerable to toxic stress, from the prevalence of income poverty, child homicide rates, children with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and experience violence within their household ([197]). This is a serious threat to child development and future cognitive abilities. The underlying point however is that more attention needs to be paid to mental health in South Africa, and in particular its link to poverty, inequality, and the IGTP.

197. Morgan B. (2013), 'Biological embedding of early childhood adversity: Toxic stress and the vicious cycle of poverty in South Africa', *Research and Policy Brief Series* 2 (2013), 1-11: https://ilifalabantwana.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ResearchPolicy-Brief_Toxic-stress_WebFinal.pdf