

Collaboration with the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty

To the RC presidents and officers,
To the ISA members,

Dear colleagues,

As announced during the Research Council meeting, the ISA is setting up new collaborations with the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, Olivier de Schutter.

The UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Olivier de Schutter, is preparing a report on the "working poor" that he will present at the UN General Assembly in October 2023. This report aims at documenting this phenomenon and providing a rigorous assessment of the rise of this "precariat". This assessment will notably include a gender dimension that will identify why women are more affected than men and a generational dimension, focusing on the specific vulnerabilities facing young workers and the sub-standard forms of employment they are assigned to. Finally, it will address legal obligations and solutions.

From this perspective, **we are collecting reports and academic papers that may contribute to a better understanding of this issue in different continents**, with a particular but non-exclusive interest in the Global South.

The team of the UN Special Rapporteur is particularly interested in articles, reports and analyses that ***gather relevant evidence, recent empirical material, and well-documented case studies on this issue that should contribute to defining a "living wage"***, one that realistically allows the worker and his or her family to enjoy an adequate standard of living.

It is also interested in contributions on the following topics:

1. Research to explain the phenomenon of the emergence of the precariat, such as the growth of various forms of precarious work and the pressure on wages resulting from automation and globalization; the increase of inflation for basic commodities, as well as speculation on housing leading to high levels of rents, resulting in the emergence of a class of underpaid workers whose wages are insufficient to allow them to achieve a decent standard of living for themselves and their families.
2. Experiences to analyze what can be expected from governments and employers to diminish in-work poverty.
3. Case studies around wage-setting policies of transnational corporations.

4. Empirical studies assessing how the respective bargaining powers of corporations, employers, and unions are influenced by factors such as unionization rate, threats to outsource production or to call upon other suppliers.

ISA members and RC/WG/TGs who have published relevant contributions to these specific topics based on recent data should send their papers by April 1st to Carlos Cortés Zea (Office of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty): carlos.cortes-zea@srpoverty.org

The report, article or chapter should be sent with an abstract, a short biographical note and a short statement explaining to which specific item (among those listed above) this contribution connects and in what way.

RC/WG/TGs directly connected to the report's topic may propose collective ways to collaborate in selecting papers. RC/WG/TG interested in this specific initiative may organize or propose other forms of collective contributions (e.g. a collective discussion, feedback on the early version of the report, or an ISA conference on the topic). We may also set up an online meeting on specific issues on which an RC proposes a specific contribution.

Please remember that only papers directly connected to the above topics and based on recent data will be considered. Other collaborations between the ISA and the UN are listed on the ISA webpage under the "UN and You" initiative, chaired by Jan Fritz <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/about-isa/internal-organization/acting-globally/united-nations>.

More information about the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty activities and previous reports are available on this website: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-poverty>

I hope this call will be the first one of a long series and that it will pave the way for other collaborations with the UN Special Rapporteurs on extreme poverty and, in future developments, with other Special Rapporteurs.

Best regards,

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