Socially Exclusion and Inequality: Opportunities in Agenda 2030

Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs): Their role in ending inequalities in India

A Position Paper on State of Socially Excluded Groups(SEGs)
and
Framework of Action

Researcher: Ranjan K Panda

By

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA), Socially Excluded Task Force (SETF)/NACDAOR, Center for Equity Studies (CES), World Vision and Welthungerhilfe , Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)

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Preface

India, a country of stark contradictions and growing inequalities, now has third highest number of billionaires in the Forbes list but ranks 130 in the Human Development Index (HDI). Ironically, the government's social spending is gradually going down. However, subsidies to rich corporate houses is on an increasing trend. The HDI is not something that makes headlines in the country, nor does the low social spending.

The current debate that dominates the Indian state is about whether the country will be given a member of the elite Nuclear Supply Group or not. The Indian government, that considers itself to be the fastest economy of the world, is pushing through an agenda of growth that opens up all doors for private capital investment – both domestic and forests. In the country, alike many other economies, GDP rates and foreign direct investments are considered to the magic mantras of development.

The fluctuations in the stock market makes bigger news than suicide of farmers and marginalization of the poor at large. That's the reason one of the greatest droughts, that the country faced this year, had the attention of the government drawn via the Supreme Court. The apex court has asked to go beyond knee-jerk responses and address real issues that haunt the drought affected people and regions of the country, something one would normally expect from a welfare state.

Not only in times of natural disasters, but in the course of regular process of governance, the country lacks in protecting and developing the many socially excluded groups and communities. Some are deep rooted problems owing to the social systems that prevail across the country but some are problems created by the economic growth models pursued by governments.

The last couple of years has seen very disturbing events in the country where 'hatred' and 'divisive politics' have overshadowed the economic growth. The government has been trying to project a face of growth through numerous high profile projects such as 'Smart City', 'Bullet Train', 'Interlinking of Rivers' so on and so forth. However, the fact remains that from villages to university campuses, from drought prone areas to flood affected zones; disparities, discrepancies and disturbances are growing in number and spread.

The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2016 has placed India at 141 rank out of 163 countries that were ranked. It means India is less peaceful than countries like Burundi and Burkina Faso. The same report says violence costs 13.3 per cent of World GDP, that's a huge 13.6 trillion USD. It boils down to a cost of 1876 USD per person. The recent caste census of Government of India, that is being disclosed in trenches, reveals that about 90 per cent of rural India lives under 2.5 USD a day. This shows, how violence can outpace growth.

Peace, that is important for growth to be humane, needs to be pursued by governments. And for a government like India, both historic aspects like 'caste system' and current trends

like ‘communal hatred’ needs to be eliminated if the country is serious about growth. Noted economist Nobel laureate Professor Amartya Sen had recently and so rightly said that caste system in India is anti-national and that all such divisions need to be eliminated if a nation has to progress.

At a time when the country commits itself to the Agenda 2030 and attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such records of violence, disturbances and exclusions have every potential to overpower these commitments. Amartya Sen had once said, ‘there can’t be famine in a democracy.’ In this country, where caste and gender are two conditions that determine the status given by accident of birth, we can’t achieve SDGs.

Hunger and destitution is at the heart of the nation and we are looking forward to SDG as one of the tools to reduce poverty. However, SDG goals be attained with so many dimensions of disparity and poverty existing in India? The answer is certainly a big NO.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were not yet met. It includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals with 169 targets, which were adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015. The outcome document describes itself as a transformative plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that all countries and all stakeholders will implement. The SDGs are to be achieved between January 2016 and 2030. India is also a signatory to this SDG framework. People in India are concerned about how this framework will be translated into national development goals.

In this study we try to bring to the fore a situation report of select excluded groups and also discuss about the situation of children in India so as to prepare for our common framework of action to end inequalities and exclusions in the development and governance process. The framework would give us some directions as to how to ensure that the socially excluded communities, especially the Dalits, Adivasis and Minorities are not left behind and excluded from the new development plans and strategies as has been happening in the past. We also focus on the issues of children cutting across all these groups and in general context.

The concept of social exclusion is seen as covering a remarkably wide range of social and economic problems. It is much graver than just being in poverty, a definite violation of basic human rights. Social exclusion (or marginalization) is a social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society, a social phenomenon by which the minority or sub-group is excluded.

In fact, experts and civil society experts involved with us feel that addressing inequality would mean eliminating inequalities. Inequalities that exist in access to public goods that hamper living with dignity should be targeted if we want to attain SDGs. The SDGs as such still have lacunae and would not end such inequality issues just by targeting to end poverty. They neither have a mechanism to deal with the exclusions caused by the market economy, now ensure rights to resources.

However, SDGs provide for tools with which we can engage with at various levels to not only help meet the goals in the country but also bring in a dynamic advocacy framework to make them effective and evolve further to include the purview of ‘Rights.’

This report is an attempt to understand the situation of inequalities that exist in the country in context of five socially excluded groups (SEGs) and suggest a 'Framework of Action' for the organisations involved in the process of preparing this report.

We take this opportunity to thank Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) and European Union for supporting the study. We also thank World Vision, Welthungerhilfe, Centre for Equity Studies for supporting and partnering in the study. The paper has taken several inputs from the case studies and secondary material provided by all these participating organisations. Our sincere thanks also to all friends and colleagues from these organisations and their partner/member groups as well as experts who shared their responses and suggestions to the draft report presented in a workshop at Delhi. This final report tries to incorporate as much of them as possible.

Thanking you again and all and looking forward to work on the Framework of Action!

Thoma Pallithanam and Annie Namala
Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA)/GCAP India

www.wadanatodo.net

E mail: info.wadanatodo@gmail.com

Ashok Bharati
NACDOR/SETF, GCAP

www.nacdaor.org

E mail: akb@nacdor.org.in

Introduction

The concept of social exclusion is seen as covering a remarkably wide range of social and economic problems. It is much graver than just being in poverty, a definite violation of basic human rights. Social exclusion (or marginalization) is a social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society, a social phenomenon by which the minority or sub-group is excluded. Kabeer (2000, p. 84) maintains that social exclusion captures "an important dimension of the experience of *certain groups* of being somehow 'set apart' or 'locked out' of participation in social life". What social exclusion does is to help us, arguably, understand how "the various institutional mechanisms through which resources are allocated …operate in such a way as to systematically deny particular groups of people the resources and recognition which would allow them to participate fully in the life of that society" (Kabeer, 2000, p.86). Seen this way, a thorough examination of social exclusion must necessarily make reference not only to material deprivation, but also to institutions and processes which reproduce that disadvantage or deprivation. Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept and varied dimensions in which people are excluded can be – livelihood, security, employment, income, property, housing, health, education, skills, and cultural capital, citizenship and legal equality, democratic participation, public goods, family and sociability, humanity, respect, fulfillment and understanding (see: Silver, 1995).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), tipped as 'Agenda 2030', are envisaged to address the inequality and crippling conditions existing in the society that put certain social groups into disadvantage and margins. It is a commitment to create a just and egalitarian society. It puts the notion of sustainable development at the center where democracy and people's participation are the vehicles to ensure an all-inclusive society. The SDGs may be enlisted as:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Ensure Healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, sustainable, reliable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The Position Paper adheres itself to the following objectives:

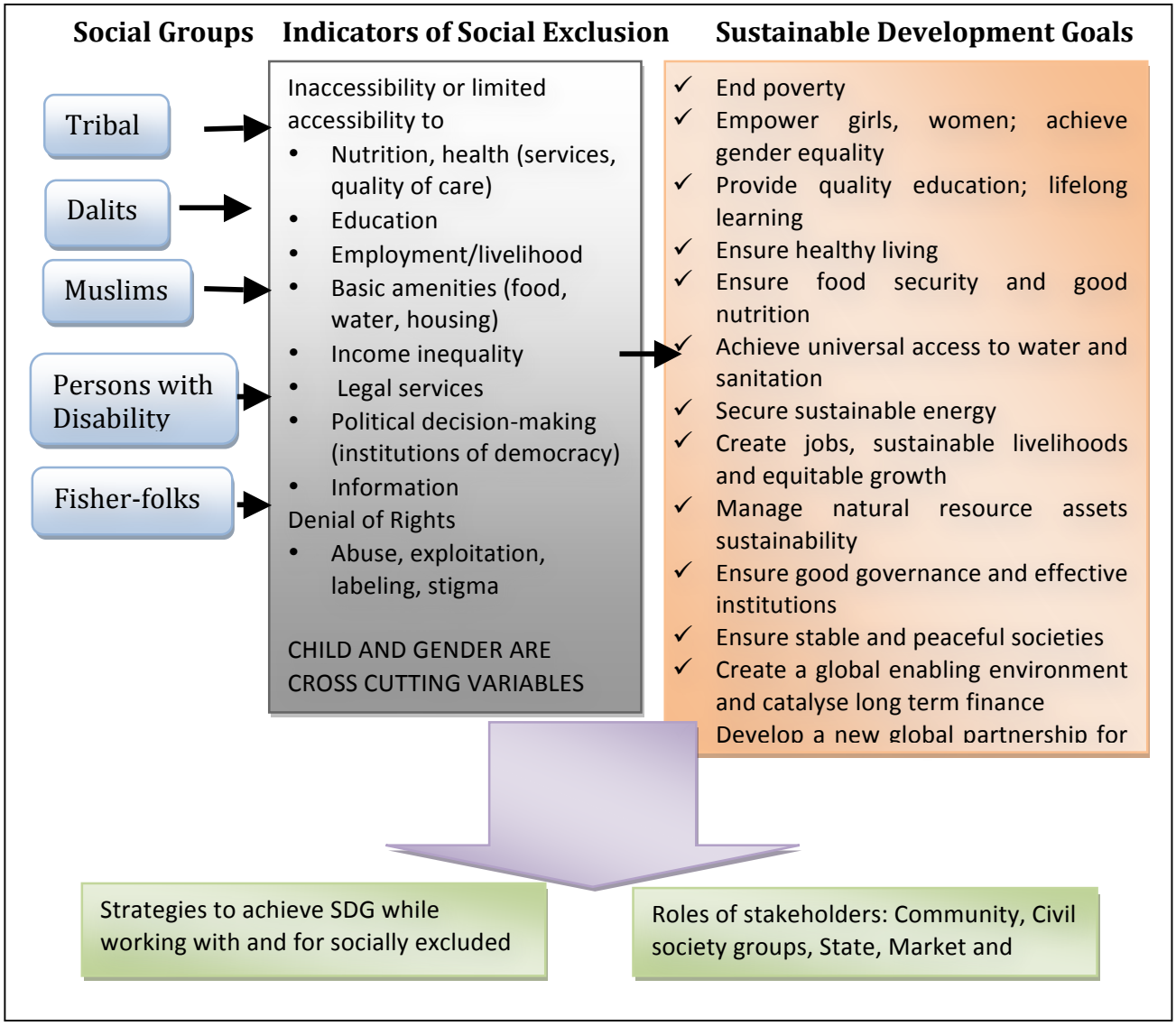
- → To look into the nature, extent and implications of social exclusion among the identified marginalized groups – (a) Tribals
  (b) Dalits
  (c) Persons with Disabilities
  (d) Muslims
  (e) Fisher-folks
  In terms of accessibility to and utilization of
  (1) Basic amenities (food and nutrition security, water, shelter)
  (2) Health and sanitation
  (3) Education and development
  (4) Livelihood and income
  (5) Equality before law/protection against exploitation, abuse and discrimination
- → To discuss the opportunities provided in Agenda 2030 to address various aspects of exclusion
- → To discuss about the existing protective laws and policies which address exclusion and inequality and identify gaps and suggest modifications in existing laws and bring in new policies and legislations.
- → To develop strategies (after examining the existing ones) for inclusive and sustainable development as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- → To chalk out suggestive roles of various stakeholders and related modalities in interventions for inclusive and sustainable development of the socially excluded groups in the light of SDGs.

Methodology: This position paper is based on analysis of secondary literature. It analysis - in an academic perspective - relevant policy documents, census reports, data compiled by the National Sample Survey Organization, evaluation reports of the government, research institutions, NGOs and other competent bodies. The analysis, after giving a general background on exclusion, focuses on five special excluded groups in India to come up with a primary fact sheet on their status in the Indian state. The paper intends to cover various manifestations of social exclusion faced by the tribal groups (adivasi), Dalits, persons with disabilities, Muslims and fisher-folks. It then prepares a special status report on the children of the country in perspective of challenges they face. It looks at the gender angle of exclusion in these communities. Looking at the SDG goals as an opportunity to fight exclusion for the groups in discussion, the paper makes some general recommendations of action that the organizations involved can initiate.

TABLE 1: *Overview of thematic interlinkages in the OWG's proposal for SDGs*

GOAL	INTERLINKAGES (count)
Goal 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Food, health, education, gender, economic growth and employment, infrastructure and industrialisation, inequality, cities, climate, oceans and marine resources, ecosystems and biodiversity (eleven)
Goal 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	Poverty, Women, Inequality, Climate, Ecosystems and Biodiversity (six)
Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Women, Cities, Inequality, Water, SCP, Effective Institutions (six)
Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all	Inequality, Industrialization, SCP, Effective Institutions (four)
Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Inequality, Effective Institutions, Industrialization, Health (five)
Goal 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Inequality, SCP, Health, Women, Infrastructure, Ecosystems and Biodiversity (six)
Goal 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	Infrastructure, Inequality, SCP, Industrialization (four)
Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Inequality, Effective Institutions, SCP, Education, Oceans (five)
Goal 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Water, Industrialization, Inequality, SCP, Climate Change, Water, Energy (seven)
Goal 10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries	Poverty, Effective Institutions, Industrialization (three)
Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Poverty, Infrastructure, Inequality, Health, Effective Institutions, Oceans, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Climate Change, SCP (nine)
Goal 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Industrialization, Women, Water, Infrastructure, Oceans, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Food Security, Health, Education, Effective Institutions (eleven)
Goal 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Water, Infrastructure, SCP, Effective Institutions, Education (five)
Goal 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	SCP, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Climate Change, Industrialization, Effective Institutions (five)
Goal 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Water, Oceans, SCP, Food Security, Effective Institutions (five)
Goal 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Health, Education, Women, Industrialization, Inequality, Cities (six)

Position Paper: Analytical Framework



Children and Social Exclusion

When the policy makers and social planners talk about problems and challenges like poverty, inequality, marginalization and social exclusion, oftentimes, children's problems are addressed inherently assuming that implications and interventions of and for these problems would be the same on children as well as adults. This is the myopic view. The Child needs special attention as he/she has differential needs and effects of these crisis situations. The Child is considered as *tabula rasa*, meaning clean slate. Sufferings and miseries in childhood have long lasting and almost permanent impact. In this context, it is important to analyze the 'child' as a special category that deserves separate analysis too.

The position paper forms the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Children (UNCRC) as the base of framework to analyze the violation of Child Rights manifested in their marginalization and social exclusion. The UNCRC propounded four categories of basic rights – Right to Survival, Right to Development, Right to Protection and Right to Participation.

Factsheet – 1: The Dalits

Based on the Varna System, Caste is a concept indigenous to India. There are estimated to be 170 million Dalits (literally meaning broken people, understood generally as the 'untouchables'), constituting 17% of the India population at the bottom of the caste system. Punjab registers the highest proportion of Scheduled Castes (SC) at 28.9%, whereas Mizoram has lowest proportion of SC population at 0.03% (Census, 2011). The caste system continues to determine political, social and economic life of the people in Hindu societies. Dalits are typically considered low and impure based on their birth and traditional occupation, thus they face multiple forms of discrimination, violence, and exclusion from the rest of society. One out of every six Indians frequently faces discrimination and violence and is denied of basic human rights and dignity for being 'Dalit'. Caste-based social systems extend beyond India and more than 260 million people worldwide suffer from this 'hidden apartheid' of segregation, exclusion, and discrimination (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

Caste system, in its worst manifestation, is reflected in the form of 'untouchability'. The lower caste *Shudras* are considered untouchables. Though outlawed by the Constitution of India, practicing untouchability is still a stark reality in many parts of the country. Findings of a study conducted in 565 villages of 11 states in India by (Shah, Mander, Thorat, Deshpande and Baviskar, 2006), demonstrate that in 38% of government schools Dalit children are made to sit separately while having mid-day meals and in 20%, they are not even permitted to drink water from the same source. About one-thirds of public health workers refused to visit Dalit homes and nearly a-half of them were denied access to common water sources. In 14.4% of villages, Dalits were not permitted even to enter the panchayat building and in 12% of villages surveyed, they were denied voting rights.

The study (Shah, et al. 2006) further brought out that 35.8% Dalits were denied entry into village shops. After waiting at a distance, the shopkeepers kept the goods they bought on the ground, and accepted their money similarly without direct contact. Almost three-fourths of the Dalits were not permitted to enter non-Dalit homes. With varying proportions, Dalits were not allowed even to wear clean, bright or fashionable clothes or sunglasses. They could not ride their bicycles, unfurl their umbrellas, wear sandals on public roads, smoke or even stand without head bowed. Results show that 64% of Dalits were restricted to enter temple, ranging from 47% in Uttar Pradesh to 94% in Karnataka. About a half of the Dalits were barred from access to cremation grounds. They even live in segregated colonies or ghettos (tolas), which are in Southern part of the village so that upper caste people do not have to breathe in the 'polluted air' coming from the Dalit quarter (south ghetto). Many Dalits are tortured and subjected to humiliation like being garlanded with shoes, their faces blackened or being forced to ride an ass. The practice of untouchability, along with other related social norms, has significantly restricted the social interactions of Dalits with other fellow beings of their village (Raghuvanshi, 2012). NHRC (2012) shows that a crime is committed against a Dalit in every 18 minutes in India; every day three Dalit women are raped; two Dalits are murdered and two Dalits' houses are burnt; and every week: 13 Dalits are murdered; and six Dalits are kidnapped or abducted.

Most Dalits continue to live in extreme poverty, without land or opportunities for better employment or education. With the exception of a small minority who have benefited from

India's policy of quotas in education and government jobs, Dalits are relegated to the most menial of tasks, as manual scavengers, removers of human waste and dead animals, leather workers, street sweepers, and cobblers. Dalit children make up the majority of those sold into bondage to pay off debts to dominant-caste creditors. Dalit women face the triple burden of caste, class, and gender. Dalit girls have been forced to become prostitutes for dominant-caste patrons and village priests. Sexual abuse and other forms of violence against women are used by landlords and the police to inflict political "lessons" and crush dissent within the community. Less than 1% of the perpetrators of crimes against Dalit women are ever convicted (Human Rights Watch, 1999). The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), 2012, brings out that the conviction rate under SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act is merely 15.7% and pendency is as high as 85.4%.

The repercussion of caste based social discrimination is visible in the economic condition of Dalits too. The study by Shah, et al. (2006) further highlights that in 25% of the villages Dalits were paid lower wages than other workers. They were also subjected to much longer working hours, delayed wages and faced verbal and even physical abuse. In 35% of surveyed villages, Dalit producers were barred from selling their produce in local markets. Instead they were forced to sell in the anonymity of distant urban markets where caste identities blur, imposing additional burdens of costs and time, and reducing their profit margins. The NHRC (2012) notes that 37% Dalits are living below poverty line. Dalits are still either landless or own very little land. Only 6% Dalits own land, which may be either too small or infertile to be a source of subsistence (Human Rights Watch, 2000). Findings of Gandhi Peace Foundation and National Labour Institute survey (1979) show that 87% of bonded labourers were from the SC or ST community.

On inaccessibility or restricted accessibility to health services, NHRC (2012) bring out that more than half (54%) of the Dalit children are undernourished, 21% are severely underweight and 12% die before their fifth birthday. Infant Mortality Rate among Dalits is 83 per 1000 live births. Only 27% Dalit women avail institutional deliveries. In 33% of villages, public health workers refused to visit Dalit homes.

The NHRC (2010) brings out that 45% of Dalits in India are illiterate. Dalit women, in rural areas, have an appalling rate of illiteracy – 62.2%. Adding to it, Gandhi Peace Foundation and National Labour Institute survey estimated that between 90-94% of bonded labourers were illiterate. It shows how vulnerability accelerates if Dalits are illiterate. Without education, bonded labourers are often unable to access alternative non-exploitative employment opportunities. Mahadalit Ayog (2007) finds that 91% Musahars are illiterate. And shockingly, 98% of Musahar women are illiterate. The situation is hardly better with their children's education – in comparison of about a-third of Dalit children in the 5 to 14 year age group attending schools, among Musahars, less than 10 percent of children study, while dropout rates are nearly 100%. For this, enduring power of exploitative institutions, particularly caste is largely to be blamed (Mahadalit Ayog, 2007).

Suggested Actions

Thus, other than denial to rights (to livelihood, education, health, decent living), Dalits also face raging discrimination in social interactions and violence. One of the biggest challenges that one foresees in inclusion of Dalits is the caste norms (including caste superiority and caste identity), among the functionaries of administrative service delivery systems, be it health, education, police force or judiciary. Dalits also internalize their inferiority, which is yet another critical challenge. Development administration cannot be achieved until social justice and rights based perspective are ingrained among the functionaries of services. So, institutional reforms are required. For this, sensitization, administrative advocacy, using the tool of RTI Act, social auditing and such other strategies would be effective.

In addition, internalization of caste-inferiority is often seen among the Dalits, which creates hurdles in making them raise their voice against injustice and exploitation. Conscientization and mobilization have been useful strategies.

Factsheet – 2: Tribals/Adivasis

Tribal groups or Adivasis are considered to be the earliest inhabitants of India. Tribes are communities who are basically animists and closer to nature. In India they are seen residing in the interior forests and away from the urban influence. Most of them have a specific dialect and have distinct cultural affairs. The 2011 Census shows that there are 104,281,034 tribals, comprising of 8.6% of the total Indian population. Tribals mostly inhabit in rural areas (11.3%) and only 2.8% have migrated to urban spaces (Census, 2011). Mizoram (94.4%), Nagaland (86.5%), Meghalaya (86.1%), Arunachal Pradesh (68.8%), Manipur (37.2%), Tripura (31.8%), Chhattisgarh (30.6%), Jharkhand (26.2%) and Odisha (22.8%) are some of the states with high proportion of tribal population.

The government recognizes most Adivasis under the Constitutional term "Scheduled Tribes" derived from a schedule in the Constitution Order of 1950. Béteille (1991) claims that the Scheduled Tribes are often conflated with Scheduled Castes in the development literature, although they are completely different social categories. However, both are excluded – while Dalits are segregated socially and ritually, by and from upper caste groups, the adivasis were isolated physically and hence, socially.

The fruits of success in terms of growth and poverty reduction have not been able to reach to the tribal people. While, in the year 2004-05, below poverty line (BPL) population was 27.5%, there were 43.8% adivasis living BPL (NSSO, 2006). Data show that relatively slower decline in poverty among Adivasis means that they are increasingly concentrated in the poorest deciles. Further, more Adivasi households are BPL than the national average. For instance, in Odisha, almost 75% of Adivasi households are below the official poverty line. However, one observes high variability among the tribal groups across the states. In certain north-eastern states Adivasis have gained from education and their status is different from their counterparts in central or western states.

The NSSO (2009-10) data bring out that literacy[1] rate among ST is 63.1%, almost 10% lower than the national average (72.8%). Statistics of School Education 2010-2011 reports that the dropout rate of the ST students in class I-X is 70.6% which is much higher than the average of all the categories that stands at 50.4%.

A stark marker of tribal deprivation is high child mortality. An average Indian child has a 25% lower likelihood of dying under the age of five compared to an Adivasi child. Under-five mortality rates among tribal children remain high (at about 96 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005 compared with 74 among all children). In rural areas, where the majority of Adivasi children live, they made up about 11% of all births but 23% of all deaths in the five years (National Family Heath Survey, 2005-06).

Malnutrition among Indian children has remained a critical issue of concern and Adivasi children show even worse levels of malnutrition. The rise in severe wasting among Adivasi children during the first 10 months of life is particularly alarming. Micro-studies on food

[1] Literacy, as defined in Census operations, is the ability to read and write with understanding in any language. A person who can merely read but cannot write is not classified as literate.

insecurity among Adivasi households provide a contextual picture of the causes of chronic malnutrition.

Access to healthcare is poorer among tribals. For instance, only 56% of ST children were taken to a health facility for treatment of fever and cough in 2005 compared with 67% of non-ST children. Mothers of tribal children are also less likely to obtain antenatal or prenatal care from doctors or have an institutional delivery. Also, generally, absenteeism of doctors is a perpetual problem in rural and particularly tribal areas. In fact, in most states in India, Scheduled Tribes live in physically isolated hamlets, in remote regions and districts and in hilly and forested areas with poorly staffed health centers. Limited coverage of all-weather roads makes transportation in emergencies virtually impossible, even if health centers were attended by medical personnel. Moreover, there is also a deep-rooted cultural chasm and mistrust between the largely nontribal health providers and tribal residents. While administrators realize the value of recruiting local residents as field level medical personnel, it is often impossible to find even secondary educated tribal women who can fill the positions of nurses or female health workers. As a result, the positions either remain vacant or are filled by non-tribal, non-resident providers.

Land and forests are the mainstay of tribal livelihoods but the relationship of tribals to land is not restricted merely to subsistence cultivation. It extends to their dependence on natural resources for livelihoods and for food security. Over time, the average landholding has declined more rapidly among Adivasis than among other groups. This reflects the 'alienation' of Adivasis from their traditional lands largely through displacement (by infrastructure projects) or fraudulent private transactions. The government's 10th Five-Year Plan noted that between 1951 and 1990, 21.3 million people were displaced; 40% of them—or 8.5 million—were tribal people. This alienation explains, to a large extent, the poor outcomes among tribals. The loss of control over their water, forest, and land resources has alienated Adivasis from public schemes, affected their traditional food practices and forced them to migrate to cities to work under harsh conditions.

Growing problems of Left Wing Extremism in tribal areas has been an issue of grave concern. A Planning Commission report links such naxal activities squarely with the underdevelopment of Scheduled Tribes (Government of India 2008). There is growing recognition among policymakers that increasing militancy in tribal areas is not merely a "law and order" problem, but rather the causes lie in the marginalization—spatial, economic and political—that tribal groups have experienced over years (Singh, 2009).

Suggested Actions –

The table below provides the overview of suggestive strategies to deal with challenges to inclusion of tribal communities.

Locating challenges	**Suggestive Interventions**	**SDGs**
Extreme poverty, malnutrition, Inefficient Healthcare facilities	Institutional reforms and administrative advocacy: increasing efficacy of service delivery systems: health,	End poverty in all its forms everywhere End hunger, achieve food security and improved

Educational backwardness Livelihood Displacement Bearing brunt of LWE State's apathy towards developmental needs of the tribals	education Awareness of general and specific programmes Mobilization of tribal community to stand for their rights.	nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture Ensure Healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

Fact Sheet 3: People with Disabilities

It is estimated that there are around 40-50 million people with disabilities (PWD) in India, comprising of 4-8% of the total population. Though official estimates (Census, 2001; NSSO, 2002) of disability are low (around 2%), alternative calculations, using better methods suggest a higher incidence of disability. However, the bulk of disabled people in India have mild to moderate disabilities.

Trend analysis predicts that between 1990 and 2020, disability due to communicable diseases to be halved, disability due to accidents to be doubled and 40% increase in disability due to non-communicable diseases. It implies that though public health programmes, especially immunization, have been able to curb disability, but factors like population ageing, increased road accidents, poor workplace safety practices, life style diseases, need serious attention.

Education is the road to empowerment. However, disabled people have high illiteracy rate (52%) in contrast to general population (35%). Likewise, children with disabilities (CwD) have very high out of school rates compared to other children. Illiteracy is high across all categories of disability, and extremely so for children with visual, multiple and mental disabilities (and for severely disabled children of all categories). Equally, the share of disabled children who are out of school is around five and a half times the general rate and around four times even that of the ST population. Research studies demonstrate that CwD remain perhaps the most difficult group to bring into the educational net even where overall enrollments are very high (SRI survey for MHRD, 2005). Across all levels of severity, CwD very rarely progress beyond primary school. This underlines the importance of getting CwD into school if India is to achieve the education MDGs.

The differently abled people also have significantly lower employment rates than average, and this gap has been increasing over the past 15 years – there is a decline in the employment rate of working age differently abled people, from 42.7% in 1991 to 37.6% in 2002. The large majority of PwDs in India are capable of productive work. Despite this fact, the employment rate of them is lower (about 60% on average) than the general population. Having a disability reduces the probability of being employed. Moreover, the presence of a differently abled member also has impacts on the labour supply of other adult household members. Around 45% of households in UP and TN with a PwD report an adult missing work to care for PwD member, the bulk of every day and on average for 2.5 hours. However, other adult men are more likely to be working in households with differently abled members, due to the need to compensate for lost income.

Evidences bring out that PwDs themselves, their families and communities bear negative attitudes towards disability. That disability happens due to the ‘sins’ of disabled people or their parents, is a prevalent belief. Communities also have poor assessments of the capacities of PwDs and that hamper their participation in key aspects of life. This internalization of negative attitudes reinforces social marginalization. Changing societal attitudes - in families, service providers, and PwDs, and the community at large - will be critical if the differently abled people are to realize their full social and economic potential.

Several studies bring out that low educational attainment, poor employment prospects and stigma mean that PwDs and their households are notably worse off than average. The households with differently abled members are poorer and more vulnerable than the general population. In addition, Amartya Sen notes the "conversion handicap", whereby PwDs derive a lower level of welfare from a given level of income than the rest of the population, due to additional costs incurred in converting income into well-being.

Though public health system in India has improved and we have almost eliminated diseases like leprosy and polio, still considerable challenges are ahead as most disabilities in India are preventable. India has to yet ensure full immunization and address disabilities arising out of malnutrition and micro-nutrient deficiencies. A survey report of the NSSO (2002) shows that those disabled from birth are much less likely to seek care as compared to those who afflicted disability later in life. In addition, women with disabilities are less likely to seek care and even less frequently have assistive appliances.

Locating challenges to inclusion of PWD:

- PwDs have very limited accessibility to: Education; Employment; Skill development; Livelihood; Healthcare system
- Disability adds to marginalization and poverty
- Cultural biases and attitudes: PwDs are not considered capable and productive
- Children and women are all the more marginalized

Existing systems, services and the gaps:

While Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is responsible for 'inclusive education', 'Disability' comes under the work purview of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE). There is lack of coordination between Ministries and Departments and District Information System for Education (DISE), which severely affects inclusive education of CwDs.

Official records underestimate magnitude of disability

Poor identification and access of CwDs to education system

Functionaries under various programmes and schemes are not aware and sensitive to the needs of PwDs

Public sector provides reservation to PwDs but often seats remain vacant. Private sector organizations hardly recruit PwDs.

Special Employment Exchanges for PwDs exist in state capitals, but their linkage is poor. Job placement was 0.7 in the year 2003 through these Employment Exchanges.

The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) offers financial assistance to entrepreneurs with disabilities, but its coverage is very narrow.

There are Vocational Rehabilitation Centres (VRCs) run by Government of India based on Public Private Partnership PPP model, but its efficacy is hardly visible.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) does not have special provisions for reservation. It is only due to constant lobby and advocacy of civil society groups that the PwDs get engaged in the works under MNREGA.

Social pension is one of the salient schemes under Social Safety Net, but cash transfer schemes have poor coverage, including those for the PwDs. Insurance coverage is also disheartening. Low awareness and apathetic functioning of administrative systems limit the effectiveness of Safety Net programmes.

Suggested Actions:

PwDs suffer from multi-layered exclusion and are not able to enjoy benefits of programmes meant for the poor in general. For their integration into the mainstream society, certain specific issues need to be addressed. Policy reforms as well as Institutional reforms are required to ensure their equitable rights in the society. Multi-sectoral and integrated approach should be developed.

Training of functionaries of service delivery systems like healthcare (ANM, nurses, doctors) and education (teachers) is needed. Existing healthcare and education systems need to be more responsive and sensitive to the specific needs of the PwDs. Through school curriculum, awareness and sensitization should be created among children. NGOs/CSOs can mobilize media to create a positive and empowering attitude of the general public towards the PwDs.

Improving identification and certification of disability is the primary step. Better coordination between ministries and departments is required. Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies need to be activated to ensure provision of services to the PwDs in their villages/localities. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) should be promoted as it is cost-effective and sustainable.

For enhancing employment, private sector may be provided with incentives for hiring PwDs.

NGOs/CSOs should take up awareness and Rights based advocacy programmes to address the general cultural stereotyping. They need to act as watch dogs, ensuring accountability from the existing service delivery systems to improving quality of care for the PwDs. Needs of children and women are to be highlighted.

Preventive screening should be a part of NRHM and NUHM.

Through administrative advocacy and institutional reforms civil society organizations should ensure that PwDs get their due in general programmes (such as poverty alleviation schemes, MNREGA, IAY, etc.) and in specific programmes (NHFDC, VRC, Disability Pension, etc.).

Fact Sheet – 4: Muslims

In India, Muslims form the largest religious minority group, constituting 14.2% of the total population (Census, 2011). Nationally, the proportion of Muslims to the total population rose from 13.4% in 2001 to 14.2% in 2011 to the total population. Assam recorded highest increase in share of Muslims, from 30.9% of the state's population to 34.2%. Several studies have brought out various expressions of denial of rights, marginalization and social exclusion of Muslims in the country.

There are disproportionately large numbers of Muslims amidst poverty. Sachar Committee report calculates that almost one-third (31%) of the Indian Muslims are living below poverty line. Similarly, National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) notes that three out of every ten urban Muslims are poor (that is, living on a monthly income of Rs.550 and less). And, one in five rural Muslims are below poverty line with an average monthly income of Rs.338 throughout the year.

The Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) reflects the living standard of a family. National Sample Survey Organization examines that in 2009-10, at all-India level, the average monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) of a Muslim household was Rs. 980 while that of a Sikh household was Rs. 1,659. The average MPCE for Hindus and Christians amounted to 1,125 Rupees and 1,543 Rupees, respectively. Pew Research (2014) shows that Muslims' average per capita spending a day is Rs. 32.7 ($0.52), while it is Rs. 37.5 for Hindus, Rs. 51.4 for Christians and Rs. 55.3 for Sikhs. In addition, impact of poverty alleviation programmes is minimal on Muslims. Human Development Report (2011) of India cites that compared to SC/STs and other social and religious groups, poverty levels are highest amongst Muslims, in both rural and urban areas. Similar situation is articulated by the Sachar Committee report. These data imply that India's Muslims have the lowest living standard in the country.

Looking at employment in formal sectors, Muslims, in general, trail behind the national average by 60% and OBC Muslims by 80%. Even in landholdings, Muslims are far below the national average: general Muslims 40% and Muslim OBCs 60%, whereas Hindu OBCs are approximately 20% below the national average (Sachar Committee Report). Further, in no state of the country is the level of Muslim employment proportionate to their percentage in the population. For instance, in West Bengal where Muslims constitute 25% of the population, the representation in government jobs is as low as 4%. They have a considerably lower representation in government jobs, PSUs and management cadres in the private sector. Their participation in police and Army services is nearly 4%. Other figures on Muslim representation in civil services, state public service commissions, railways, department of education, etc., are equally appalling (also see: Sachar Committee report; Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission Report, 2007).

Data on educational status among Muslims are quite disheartening. Sachar Committee finds that 25% of Muslim children in the 6-14 years' age-group either never went to school or else dropped out at some stage. The report shows that up to the matriculation level, Hindu OBCs trail behind the national average by 5%, while the figures for Muslims in general and OBC Muslims is 20% and 40% respectively. And up to graduation level, general and OBC Muslims lag behind the national average by 40% and 60% respectively. While literacy rate has

improved for all the social groups, among Muslims it is the lowest – urban literacy in the SC group has increased by 8.7 points and among the ST group by 8 points, among Muslims, it has increased only by 5.3 points (NSSO, 2005). Healthcare functionaries like ASHA, Anganwadi workers, practice 'untouchability' and do not 'touch' Dalit Muslim women and children so as to avoid being 'impure'. This hampers institutional deliveries and immunization of children (Singh, 2013).

Marginalization of Muslims is also reflected in health indicators. The decrease in the under-5 mortality rate for Muslims between 1998-9 and 2005-6 is 12.7 points whereas it is 31.2 for SCs and 30.9 for STs.

Many studies (Khanam, 2009; Singh, 2013; Hasan, 1996, Mander, 2007) have, beyond doubt, proved that majority of poor Muslims are the prime victims of custodial torture and deaths. Similarly, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (2012) observes that 36% of the Jail inmates are Muslims while the population of Muslims in the state is close to 10.6%. The findings of the report are in conformity with the Sachar Committee report and general observation of Human Rights activists.

Centre for Equity Studies (2011), during evaluation of flagship programmes for minority development, documents ample evidences to show government's biases and apathy against Muslims in planning, selection of beneficiaries and implementation of schemes and programmes. Consequently, Muslims remain in deplorable conditions of poverty and victimization. Likewise, Sachar Committee report (2006) and Ranganath Mishra Commission Report (2007) affirm that the nodal institutions and systems such as National Commission for Minorities and Ministry of Minority Affairs have not effectively taken up 'hardcore' issues of undue violence, discrimination of Muslims and thereby failed to ensure justice and equality.

Suggested Actions:

Sustainable Development Goals	Locating Challenges	Role of the State	Role of Civil Society Bodies
End poverty in all its forms everywhere Reduce inequality Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all Ensure inclusive and	Denial of equal access to resources (poverty alleviation initiatives) Illiteracy and educational backwardness Social stigma and discrimination	Greater accountability and transparency Sensitization and training of police and other functionaries	Awareness generation Legislative advocacy Administrative advocacy Mobilizing community for social action Stringent action against perpetrators

equitable quality education			

Fact Sheet – 5: Fisher folks:

India is the world's fourth largest fishing nation, accounting for over 4.39% of the global output. The country with the long coastline of 8,118 Km has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) for the fisher folks who constitute nearly 0.6% of the total population (Census, 2011). The majority of India's fisher-folks (over 95%), as those of other developing nations, are involved in small and medium scale enterprises. Fisheries activities, whether fish catching, processing or trading and assets, are usually managed by individuals and households rather than by firms.

Studies show that cash incomes from fishing are often higher than earnings from agriculture, but vulnerability and insecurity are higher too. Dependence on uncertain production systems, as well as the risky nature of many fishing operations make fisher folks vulnerable. Indian fisher folks are vulnerable to cyclones, floods and such natural calamities, which have frequent occurrences in the recent past. Their livelihood systems are sensitive to those risks; and their marginalization makes it difficult to adapt to the impacts of 'shocks' and adverse trends in the natural environment and the economy, or to policy and governance failures. Fisher folks usually lack economic and social resources to help them cope with such disasters and they are usually rendered in impoverishment and destitution.

Further, modern technological inputs have changed the fishing practices in India, which are now characterized by motorized boats, synthetic gears. These devices have adverse influence on marine life. Traditional fishing devices have not given any ill-effects to the marine eco-system and they also have the potential to ensure livelihood to a large section of fisher folks. Moreover, the economically backward population of fisher folks cannot afford the costly modern fishing equipments. So, the modern fishing equipments are adding to the vulnerability and exclusion of fisher folks by snatching the existing and potential marine resources. Where fisheries resources are diminishing incomes are also declining.

Fishers in India are not homogeneous – a number of critical factors distinguish one group from another. And yet they share two important features: they are all heavily dependent on fishing as a livelihood and a large majority of them are poor, suggesting that most of the troubles that afflict fishing communities are directly attributable to the poor conditions of their livelihoods.

Older people and single women are vulnerable groups in fishing communities. With growing modernization and pressure on incomes, nuclearisation of families is the norm in coastal fishing communities in countries like India (Tietze, 1985; Salagrama, 2006d) and the lack of social security leaves the older people without a dependable income. Single women constitute a sizeable proportion of households (Bavinck, 2001) whose poverty results from limited access to different livelihood-related assets. Children in fishing communities drop out of school as they earn working on the beach.

Next, being an open access (or common property) resource, fisher folks' rights of access to the sea or to the coastal areas are frequently challenged by businesses' interests and the poor fisher-people lose out.

There is high variability in the income among the fisher folks with motorized boat and gear owners and larger-scale traders are wealthier. Incomes of small and marginal fisher folks are often uncertain and seasonal.

Fisher folks are often excluded from access to other employment opportunities, from equitable access to land and from social services such as health and education. They may have weak political representation. They may also be poorly served by roads, markets and other infrastructure. Though not related to fishing activities directly, but the factors that make the poor more vulnerable in general also affect the fisher folks. Factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of social security net, limited access to civic and social services, infrastructure, public resources and markets add to the marginalization and social exclusion of fisher community.

Moreover, malaria, HIV/AIDS, waterborne diseases, drowning and accidents are very high in many fishing communities. Fishing requires good health as illness results in diminished ability to work. Lack of medical and social services for disease prevention, treatment and care, lack of savings and other assets to cope with illness often accentuate vulnerability of fisher-community.

Small-scale fisher folks are often excluded from processes of development planning, either because they are mobile (including unregistered international migrants), living in marginal and remote areas, or simply because their role and contribution to the economy is poorly known and underappreciated. Lack of rights to land, no insurance, limited assets to assist in finding alternative occupations create further challenges for poor fisher folks.

The overall outcome is that, because of their continuing vulnerability and social exclusion, many fisher folks currently lack both the incentive and capacity to claim and defend their rightful share over resources and services. They lack motivation to opt for alternate income generating activities. They may not have the ability to defend against more powerful interests. In essence, increased rights over fish resources can only benefit fisher folks if their basic human rights are guaranteed and their entitlement to a decent standard of living is secured. Fisher folks will not escape poverty and vulnerability merely by being granted fishing right

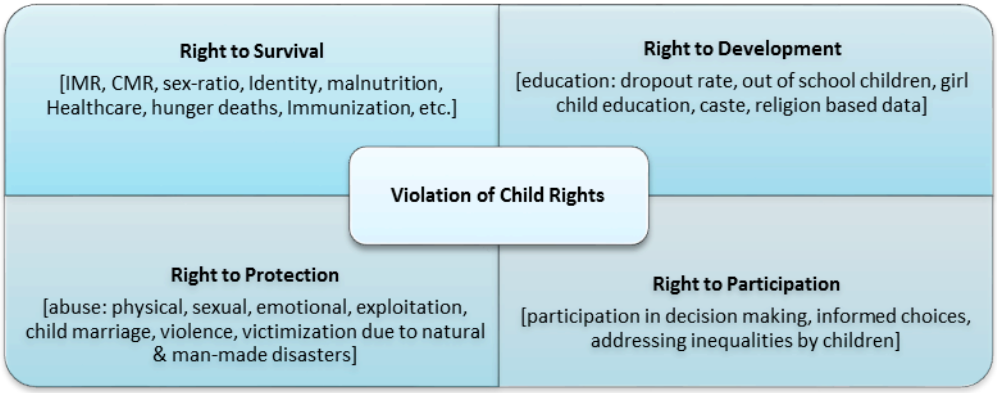
To address these issues, a two-way approach is needed – one, poor fisher folks should be covered with general ambit of poverty alleviation programmes and guaranteed equal access to public services such as education, housing, water, sanitation, income security, food security, social assistance, infrastructure, etc. Numerous schemes and programmes meant for poverty reduction have been initiated by the Indian government from time to time. For efficient functioning of these programmes and services, social auditing, advocacy, accountability and other aspects of good governance are required.

Two, specific needs and risk factors related to fishing occupation are to be addressed. Disaster risk reduction and the active participation of fisher-community in the risk reduction plan should be done. Protection of poor marginalized fisher folks from the powerful business establishments in the Market is needed.

REDUCING SOCIAL EXCLUSION AMONG CHILDREN THROUGH ALIGNING WITH SUATAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

India is home to nearly 400 million children. Every sixth child in the world lives in India (MoSPI, 2012). Out of the total population of 1210.2 million, the proportion of child population in the country is 13.1% (13.3% males and 12.9% females). Every year, an estimated 26 million children are born in India. As per the latest census figures of 2011, total number of children in the age group 0-6 years in the country is 158.8 million.

The position paper forms the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Children (UNCRC) as the base of framework to analyze the violation of Child Rights manifested in their marginalization and social exclusion. The UNCRC propounded four categories of basic rights – Right to Survival, Right to Development, Right to Protection and Right to Participation. The schema below presents the analytical framework for studying children and social exclusion.



Right to Survival

Child survival entails their basic right of being born in a safe and nondiscriminatory environment and grows in a healthy and dignified way. Adverse sex ratio at birth, high infant and child mortality rates, malnutrition, hunger deaths, etc., are some of the areas of concern.

In India, 50 infants out of 1000 live births die before their first birthday (SRS, 2009). The IMR is higher among female infants (52) as compared to males (49). Drastic regional difference is seen with highest IMR in Madhya Pradesh (67) and lowest in Kerala (12). Assam (61), Bihar (52), Chhattisgarh (54), Haryana (51), Madhya Pradesh (67), Orissa (65), Rajasthan (59) and Uttar Pradesh (63) recorded higher IMR as compared to the national average. The IMR is very high in rural areas (55 per 1000 live births) as compared to urban areas (34). Similarly, Child Mortality Rate (0-4 years) is 14.1 in 2009. The CMR is almost double in proportion in rural areas (15.7) in contrast to urban areas (8.7). Girls in India have 61% higher mortality than boys at age 1-4 years (National Family Health Survey III - NFHS).

Further, the SCs constitute about 17% of India's population and almost 80% live in rural areas. According to NFHS-II, the IMR for Dalits or Scheduled Castes (88.1) is higher than that of Scheduled Tribes (86.9) and OBC (82.2) and least among the general caste (69.3). The Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) in India is 88.1% for Schedule Caste and 95.7% for Schedule Tribe children, against the national average of 59.2% (National Family Health Survey III - NFHS).

The latest trend in child sex ratio and sex ratio at birth indicate a continuing preference for boys in society, despite laws to prevent female foeticide and schemes to encourage families to have girl child. As per Census 2011, the State/ UTs with alarmingly low (<900) child sex ratio are Haryana (830), Punjab (846), Jammu & Kashmir (859), Delhi (866), Chandigarh (867), Rajasthan (883), Maharashtra (883), Uttrakhand (886), Gujarat (886), and Uttar Pradesh (899). The national average is 940. In India the child sex ratio is at the lowest it has ever been with just 914 girls for every 1000 boys (Census, 2011).

An estimated 11.6 lakh children die every year within one year of their birth due to lack of immunisation (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India). As per Coverage Evaluation Survey (CES-2009), only 61% of children aged 12-23 months in the country are Fully Immunized with all vaccines. Nearly 8% children in the same age group did not receive a single vaccine in 2009. A slight gender differential noted, with 62% of the male children having received full immunization, as against 60% of females (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), 2012. Sadana (2009) observes that Dalit children are least covered under immunization programmes.

Out of the 400 million children in India, every second child is malnourished and 22% babies are born with low birth weight (National Family Health Survey III - NFHS). About 55% of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children under 3 years of age are underweight compared to about 37% of children from the general population of 400 million children. Further, 79% children (6-35 months) are anaemic and 56% adolescent girls (15-19 years) in India are anaemic, as against 30% adolescent boys (National Family Health Survey III - NFHS). Deficiency diseases lead to disabilities among children (Jacob, 2009).

The Sentinel surveillance rounds, in 2009, note that the number of HIV infections has decreased from 24.42 lakhs in 2008 to 23.95 lakhs in 2009. However, the percent distribution of HIV infections for the age group 0- 15 years has increased from 4.20% in 2008 to 4.36% in 2009, indicating increased number of HIV infected children in 2009.

Based on the literature review, the table below enlists the categories of children that are most marginalized and excluded. It provides broad challenges and outlines the action plans in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals.

Indicators	**Most excluded/ vulnerable**	**Locating causes/challenges**	**Aligning with SDG**	**Action plan: stakeholders & strategies**
IMR, CMR Child sex	Poor, SC, ST, Minorities Rural areas,	Gender discrimination Caste discrimination (health functionaries do	End poverty in all its forms End hunger,	Enhancing functioning of: MGNREGA, Self employment schemes,

ratio Malnutrition/ hunger deaths Immunization	urban poor Girl child Children with Disabilities HIV positive	not 'touch' women and children of lower caste), Lack of awareness, Government apathy, no accountability, corruption, structural and functional lacunae with food security programmes and Supplementary Nutrition Programmes	achieve food security and improved nutrition Ensure Healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	promoting agriculture, etc. Targeted Public Distribution System, ICDS, NRHM, Awareness generation, Capacity building, Ensuring people's participation, Citizen collective to ensure accountability through social auditing, advocacy

Right to Development

Denial of free and quality education is considered as the violation of child right to development. In India, still many are deprived of education mainly due to poverty and less accessibility educational services. The lack of education, adds to the vulnerability of children for forcing them into social evils of child labour and crime.

Literacy rate, according to Census 2011, in India is 74.0%, with 82.1% among males and 65.5% among females. National Human Rights Commission (2010) brings out that 45% of Dalits in India are illiterate. Dalit women, in rural areas, have an appalling rate of illiteracy – 62.2%.

Specific to children, the Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) at the Upper Primary Elementary Level in government schools in India is only 58.3% (MoSPI, 2012). Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) at the Secondary Level in government schools in India is below 50% and about 35% children in India with disabilities remain out of Elementary school (DISE, 2011-12). School dropout rate amongst adolescent girls in India is as high as 63.5% (MoSPI, 2012).

In education, SCs have suffered from exclusion and discrimination which has resulted in wide gaps in literacy rates and level of education between them and the 'others'. Data show that in 2000, literacy rates among the male SCs was 52% compared to 76% among the 'others' social group. The literacy rates were particularly low among the females (24%), two times less as compared to women from 'other' social group. The general level of education is also lower among the SCs as compared to 'others'. For instance, in 2000, among the SCs the proportion of illiterate and literate up to primary level together constitute 73% and only one-third of them possess education beyond the middle school level.

There are rampant empirical evidences on caste-based exclusion and discrimination faced by Dalit children in the school system. Baviskar (2006) demonstrate that in 38% of government schools Dalit children are made to sit separately while having mid-day meals and in 20% schools, they are not even permitted to drink water from the same source. Studies show that children infected and affected with HIV are thrown out of the school.

The table below provides details of vulnerable children denied access to right to education, locating challenges and aligning with Sustainable Development Goals.

Indicators	Most excluded/ vulnerable	Locating causes/challenges	Aligning with SDG	Action plan: stakeholders & strategies
Literacy rate Net enrolment rate Gross enrolment rate Discriminatory practices in education system	Children belonging to Dalit and tribal families, Girl child Children with disabilities Children with Disabilities HIV positive children Children in poverty, street children	Access denied due to caste discrimination, gender discrimination, schools do not provide conducive learning environment, discrimination and abuse faced by children of lower caste, sexual abuse, Children used to take care of younger siblings or as economic beings (child labour), no toilets esp. for girls in schools	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all	Making schools accessible to all children Realizing Right to Education Strict action against perpetrators of discriminatory practices against Dalit, tribal children and those with disabilities and HIV. Community Monitoring of schools, Advocacy and social action

Right to Protection

The scope of child right to protection is vast and encompasses guarding children against abuse, exploitation, violence and oppression. A wide range of situations such as children working in varied industries, brick kilns, agricultural fields, taking care of their siblings, dying of starvation, being sold, trafficked, physically, sexually abused, married off at tender age, etc., are evidences of violation of their right to protection.

India has 10.12 million child labourers aged between 5 to 14 years (Census, 2011). Roughly 50% of all working children are girls (data from government reports). The major occupations engaging child labour are Pan, Bidi & Cigarettes (21%), Construction (17%), Domestic workers (15%) and Spinning & weaving (11%). As per the NFHS -3 (2005-06), nearly 11.8% children age 5-14 years works either for their own household or for somebody else. The very young children (age 5-7 years), both boys and girls, are mainly doing unpaid work for someone who is not a member of their household. The older boys age 12-14 are mainly engaged in paid work or family work, whereas girls in this age group are involved mainly in household chores or family work. According to the International labour Organisation (ILO) "Born to parents who themselves were uneducated child workers, many child worker are forced to continue a tradition that leaves them chained to a life of poverty" (ILO, United States Policies to Address Child labour Globally, 2010).

Nearly 45% girls in India get married before the age of eighteen years (NFHS-III). This has serious repercussions on Maternal Mortality Rates.

It is alarming that, in 2011, the Crimes against children reported a 24% increase from the previous year with a total of 33,098 cases of crimes against Children reported in the country during 2011 as compared to 26,694 cases during 2010. In 2011, among the IPC crimes, an increase of 43% was registered in Kidnapping and Abduction, while rape cases were increased by 30%, Procuration of minor girls recorded an increase of 27% and Foeticide reported an increase of 19% over 2010. In 2011, Buying of girls for Prostitution showed a decline of 65%, and selling of girls for Prostitution reported decline of 13% compared to 2010. Infanticide showed a decline of 37 points during this period.

The table below gives an overview of violation of Child Right to Protection, reasons and action plan to ensure the Right in relation to Sustainable Development Goals.

Indicators	**Most excluded/ vulnerable**	**Locating causes/challenges**	**Aligning with SDG**	**Action plan: stakeholders & strategies**
Child Labour Child Marriage Crime against children Child abuse Children in difficult circumstances	Children from poor families, which invariably are Dalit and tribal families, religious minorities, girl children, HIV positive children, street children	Structural barriers leading to perpetual poverty, gender and caste discrimination and subordination, violence against victims while perpetrators enjoy impunity, government apathy, failure of adequate implementation of legislations to protect children	End poverty in all its forms everywhere Achieve gender equality, Promote sustained, inclusive, sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment (for adults)	Strict enforcement of legislations to protect children against abuse and exploitation with zero tolerance Awareness generation and advocacy Community participation Empowerment of marginalized communities and elimination of barriers to poverty and discrimination

Right to Participation

Child Right to Participation is one of the most contentious and yet potentially powerful domains of child rights. However, there are many precipitating factors that act as barriers to child rights. Traditionally, Indian culture primarily does not subscribe to the 'rights based approach'. This is particularly true for the child. 'Conformity' to group and family norms has been the rule. As against the western cultural norms, individuality of a child has hardly been appreciated in Indian society. Concept of child rights has, in effect, been unconceivable for most. In a common parlance, children are viewed as – dependent and vulnerable, devoid of maturity and sense to take suitable decisions for their life; they need protection and support of adult guardians; their parents and guardians only know what is best for them; and they need to confirm to family's rules, norms and wishes.

It is quite ironical that children are considered vulnerable, dependent and immature. However, they can be sold as property or put into labour bondage, when needed. At times, children become saviours, as only earning members, when the family is in poverty. Girl children can be easily burdened off by getting them married and then expected to shoulder entire household and motherhood responsibilities. Seemingly, the prevailing hypocrisy in Indian culture treats children on utilitarian bases – as asset when in poverty and otherwise as liability.

In Dalit and deprived families, children, as equal partners, bear the brunt of caste based discrimination. When the family is excluded and marginalized and denied access to basic civic amenities, children turn into labourers and struggle hard for survival and they are the first ones to die in starvation. More often than not, they quickly imbibe the caste imposed inferiority and throughout their life adhere to expected caste-norms and practices.

Most cultures, including that of India provide diverse reasons for excluding children from participation in matters that affect them. Some of the frequently used excuses are – children lack competence; they lack knowledge and judgement; involving them in decisions is to place too heavy a burden on them; parents know what is best for their children; giving children a voice will lead to excessive demands, bad behaviour, disrespect for elders; participation will expose children to risk of harm (see Lansdown, 2011). However, in the past two decades no research evidence has shown any truth in these concerns by parents and guardians. On the contrary, ample experiences across the world demonstrate that children's critical analysis of the reality, their maturity and precision in making decisions, have time and again, pleasantly surprised the adults.

In addition to this, it is often observed that socio-cultural norms and values lag behind the policy deliberations. In India too, policies and legislations related to children give due recognition to child rights while in the society, there is no acceptance of the children's right to participate or being heard on decisions influencing their lives.

Despite these challenges, empirical evidences show that wherever child right to participation is ensured through creating systems like bal-panchayat, bal sadan (child-parliament), remarkable results have been observed. Children have raised voice against evil practices like child labour, child marriage and even caste and gender based practices (Kaushik and Nagvanshi, 2016).

Thus, investing on child rights and ensuring a conducive environment where every child enjoys rights would lead to a more democratic and just social order.

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FRAMEWORK OF ACTION

End Inequalities to End Poverty: Agenda 2030 for India

The following goals of Agenda 2030 deals with various forms of inequality:

1. Goal 10 deals with reducing inequality within and among the countries
2. Goals 1 and 2 on poverty and hunger respectively
3. Goal 4 addressing equitable and inclusive quality education
4. Goal 5 dealing with gender equality and empowerment of women and girls
5. Goals 6 and 7 provides for access to water and energy for all respectively
6. Goal 16 provides for the institutional environment and framework under which the SDGs will address inequalities. These are: peaceful and inclusive societies, accountable and inclusive institutions and access to justice for all.

Strategy:

A four-year strategy is suggested for engagement with SDGs to end inequalities and reduce poverty.

Tags:

- Put SDG at core of development to leave no one behind.
- Make the states accountable for public service delivery.
- Make Dignity central to debate on Exclusion
- Bring in all likeminded groups to one platform.
- Youth, Gender and Children to be considered as crosscutting issues.

Year 1 (2016): *Institutional strengthening, research, benchmarking and networking/coalition building*

- All networks and institutions involved with CADAM, NACDOR, WNTA need to strengthen their in-house capacities on SDGs: through orientations, meetings, re-grouping of priorities, etc.
- Compile all available data into benchmarking sheets so as to be able to monitor the progress.
- Create a pool of experts/members on few specific sectors of exclusion and give responsibility to monitor.
- Start discussing with state level organisations, networks and others to increase presence and advocacy at the state level.
- Start engaging with legislatures, judiciary, media and bureaucracy.

Year 2 (2017): *Monitoring: Review reports on some specific themes*

- Groups responsible for respective goals/SEGs should start preparing issue briefs/fact sheets.

- Such issue briefs/factsheets should be shared with legislatures, judiciary, media and bureaucracy based on the continuous monitoring done and organize interactions/dialogues/orientations as required.
- A group be formed to assess, analyze and collate a set of Exclusion Indicators (based on the above factsheets) that we would want the government to consider for easy monitoring of the SDG progress.
- Successful case studies on initiatives (partners and others) be documented, compiled and shared. E.g. WelthHungerFilfe (PDS, Food Security, Livelihood), World Vision (Children, nutrition, etc.), Water Initiatives Odisha (Water Security, Livelihood, Climate Adaptation) and more.
- Start dialoguing with important stakeholders such as PMO, Niti Ayog, etc.
- Start engaging with different Judicial Commissions responsible for dealing with issues of SEGs. Working with mandated organisations such as like ST/ST Commission, Women's Commission to come without with understanding of their achievements.
- From this year, a special initiative could be started to monitor status of SEGs during disasters.
- An e-bulletin may be initiated to share news, analysis and other reports affecting SEGs and progress of SDGs among all concerned and involved in the process.
- Monitoring food security entitlements.
- A policy analysis drive should also be started by the network that analyzes all the relevant policies related to SEGs. MNREGA, NFSA, Youth Policies, Women Policies, Children Policies, PwD related policies, Water Policies, Climate Change Action Plans, FRA, Environmental Policies, Mining Policies, are some of the policies that need to be analyzed and their implementation monitored.
- Budgetary Allocation and Spending (health, education, WATSAN, etc.) analysis done for select policies/SEGs

Year 3 (2018): *Mass action to mount pressure for delivering on Agenda 2030*

- While most of the above actions would continue, the following additions may be done this year on.
- State level actions should be accelerated this year.
- Community mobilization, testimonies from the fields and regional conventions may be planned.
- Poster, Signature, Petition campaigns may be started.
- We need to go to Gram Panchayat levels for mass mobilisation activities.
- Shadow Reports could be prepared based on the monitoring and factsheets developed earlier. This will then be a regular yearly feature of our action.
- Map out vulnerable areas and sectors and use them in campaign/advocacy.
- Start studies and dialogues on the mass exodus from rural areas to urban areas and idenfity the inequities that exist in this process; start advocating for suitable policy changes.
- Push for Diversity Policies in both pubic sectors and private sectors. (Youth and Employment including reservations in private sector)

Year 4 (2019): *"Quadrennial review of Agenda 2030" and engagement with UN HLPF and UNGA*

A comprehensive report on SDGs for the country especially focusing on SEGs that is outcome of the three years of research, advocacy and action.

Engagement with key SDG positions:

Some key issues that need to be addressed while working on the above framework. All these are needed to strengthen the current SDG goals and targets.

- SDGs do not have a clear position on private sector's role. In fact, on natural resource management, there are conflicting interests. We need to work towards making it clarified. Currently, it is tilted towards Privatisation. More public ownership of processes needed.
- SDGs do not address the ownership of natural resources. We need to work towards ensuring community rights over resources. Livelihood rights need to be recognised. Fundamental changes in ownership rights over resources must be brought into SDGs.
- SDGs are seen as a poverty reduction framework. We need to work towards getting justice and dignity into the priority list.
- Being largely a developmental intervention, the Human Rights Framework is missing and thus needs to be incorporated.
- Our position in SDGs should go beyond 'robust institutions' to include 'just governance.'
- There is need to strengthen the Gender Justice Framework by bringing sexual and reproductive rights.

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