Global Thematic Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES

Synthesis Report of Global Public Consultation

THE WORLD WE WANT 2015

Co-led by UNICEF and UN Women
with support from the Government of Denmark and
the Government of Ghana

Disclaimer

This Report is based on and reflects an extensive global public consultation, held from September 2012 – January 2013. Its content and recommendations do not necessarily reflect the views and positions of UNICEF, UN Women, the United Nations, the Government of Denmark or the Government of Ghana.

Table of Contents

Preface

The *Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda* was held under the auspices of the United Nations Development Group in the period from September 2012 to January 2013, using on-line facilities at the home page www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities.

The Consultation process was co-led and facilitated by UNICEF and UN Women and was supported by the Government of Denmark and the Government of Ghana. On-going guidance and extensive contributions were provided by the Advisory Group for the Consultation, drawn from civil society organizations, UN agencies and academic institutions. The members of the Advisory Group are *shown below*.

The Consultation aimed at providing an open and inclusive process that would include a diverse range of voices and perspectives. It was informed by a total of 175 written submissions (as of the end of January 2013). These papers cover a wide range of issues related to inequalities and provide much valuable evidence and analysis. They are available at the home page shown above. The Consultation also benefited greatly from a series of 10 moderated "e-discussions" on key themes that emerged from the written submissions. These e-discussions, each held over 3 – 4 weeks, attracted large numbers of written inputs and comments from members of the public and organisations worldwide. The summaries and conclusions of the individual e-discussions are included as *Annexes* to this Report. The e-discussions were as follows: gender equality (372 inputs and comments); gender-based violence (138); lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (101); persons with disabilities (111); economic inequalities (84); indigenous peoples (109); young people (241); urban inequalities (101); minorities (118). There was also an expert discussion held on the measurement and assessment of inequalities. Some 1,375 responses were received in total.

This Report on the Consultation draws for its analysis and conclusions on the many written submissions, the e-discussions, the inputs and contributions of the Advisory Group, and on comments made by members of the public on the draft Report directly through the website. Special thanks are due to Charlotte Harland-Scott, the main author of the Report; to all members of the Advisory Group; to the organizations and individuals who moderated the e-discussions; and to our colleagues Fatma Gul Unal, Shannon O'Shea and Bethany Donithorn, among many others. Our sincere thanks also go to the Governments of Denmark and Ghana for all their support and to the United Nations Development Programme for their overall coordination and guidance of the series of Thematic Consultations.

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Overview and Key Messages

Among the Key Messages that emerged from the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities are the following:

1. Equality was identified as a fundamental value in the Millennium Declaration, adopted by the UN's Member States at the turn of the century in 2000.

2. The obligation to address inequalities is born from the principles and standards of the international human rights treaties which have been widely adopted in the last several decades, as well as from shared human values.

3. Translating equality and the other fundamental values of the Millennium Declaration more systematically and effectively into practice will be crucial to sustaining progress and improving the wellbeing of both today's and all future generations.

4. Inequalities are a global challenge. They persist both within all countries and between them. Similar kinds of inequalities are faced in common by people across the world.

5. Inequalities are not just problems for the people whose lives are most directly affected – those most disadvantaged and excluded. They have deep consequences for everyone in society. Inequalities harm us all. Among these consequences are: reductions in the pace and sustainability of economic growth; diminishment of the productive potential of all who are harmed and excluded, and the loss of this potential to society; the worsening of existing fragilities and vulnerabilities, including to conflict and disasters; and the weakening of social cohesion and of security for all.

6. Since the Millennium Declaration was adopted, many types of inequalities have worsened, in a period when the Millennium Development Goals did not focus systematically on trends "beneath the averages". Even where human development progress has been rapid in aggregate terms, particular inequalities have often persisted or become more severe.

7. The challenges of unequal access to the natural resources which are essential for survival, wellbeing and economic activities, and of vulnerabilities to environmental degradation and climate change, have also become more severe. These have both exacerbated existing inequalities and have raised new and critical risks for often already-disadvantaged groups of people and countries.

8. Inequalities are often closely associated with and reinforced by specific forms of discrimination, including in the social, legal and cultural spheres. Examples include, and are not limited to: discrimination related to gender, age, caste, race, ethnic and indigenous identity, minority status, (dis)ability, HIV status, sexual orientation.

9. Inequalities are also deeply entrenched by structural drivers and barriers in the economic, social, political, cultural and environmental domains. These drivers intersect and reinforce each other. They can have cumulative, mutually-reinforcing effects that lead to the systematic disadvantage of some social groups and to the perpetuation of poverty and exclusion from generation to generation.

10. These intersections do not just add up to a simple sum of the various dimensions of inequality. Where different forms of inequality overlap, they reinforce each other and create unique forms of discrimination and exclusion. These cannot be addressed on a piecemeal basis.

11. Policies, programmes and interventions which are intended to improve the lives of disadvantaged people often directly address the symptoms of inequalities - such as chronic poverty - but not their causes. Their impact and effectiveness are likely to be undermined by the structural drivers that perpetuate inequalities. And as a result, patterns of disadvantage are often stubbornly persistent over time.

12. Inequalities are commonly "legitimised" by powerful groups using stereotypes and prejudice that justify discrimination and maintain exclusion. For example, poor people are still widely supposed to be lazy or responsible for their own poverty. Ethnic minorities and migrants are deemed to be intruders or "free riders" on the rest of society. The rights of persons with disabilities are dismissed as the expensive demands of unproductive people. Old people are seen as a burden on society and public funds; and children are still often treated as a "residual" group, provisions for whom are a matter of charity or discretion, rather than as the very foundation of future productivity and citizenship.

13. Gender-based discrimination, and the denial of the rights of women and girls, remains the single most widespread driver of inequalities in today's world. Gender-based violence, taking many forms, is a major element of this massive and continuing failure of human rights.

14. A development framework will be needed that is based on the recognition that all people have rights, and that incorporates and reflects the human rights principles of universality and non-discrimination, participation and accountability, if the structural drivers of inequalities are to be fully addressed in future.

15. Efforts to reduce inequalities will require strong consensus at all levels, from the local to the national to the global, including for concerted action to address negative social attitudes and build a universal demand for equality, tolerance and social justice. These efforts will require appropriate policy and legal frameworks, actions to protect people from discrimination, and levelling-up measures to enable those whose capabilities have been harmed by inequalities to claim and realize their rights.

16. Transformative change towards a more equal and inclusive world, and the eradication of poverty in all its forms, will depend on coherent global and national policy action in and across the economic, social, environmental and political domains.

17. Some countries have made progress in addressing the structural drivers of inequalities and reducing their impact, through a range of equity-focused and rights-based policy, legal and programme initiatives which they have kept in place over time. These include: explicit measures to provide for equal access and opportunity for disadvantaged and excluded groups; appropriate redistributive measures, including social protection; provision for the specific needs of women and girls, children, persons with disabilities and minority groups; and measures to increase awareness, widen participation in decision-making and improve the availability and transparency of data and information on inequalities and development progress.

18. The post-2015 international development framework should be universal in nature, in order to tackle the global challenge of inequalities. As part of the new framework, goals that aspire to "getting to zero" - in terms of conditions such as poverty, violence, preventable deaths, malnutrition and denial of basic service access - will assist in moving towards the realization of human rights for all.

19. A self-standing global goal on inequalities should be included in the post-2015 development framework. This should not be limited to economic inequalities but should also address other key dimensions, including gender inequalities and discrimination. A self-standing goal on inequalities should be complemented, across all goal areas of the framework, by targets and indicators that focus on the situation of the most disadvantaged groups, and on the major drivers of inequalities in the economic, social, environmental, cultural and/or political domains. In these ways, success will be gauged by sustainability and by the progress made among all groups and individuals.

20. Addressing inequalities will also depend on measures to strengthen the capacity and coverage of national and sub-national monitoring and evaluation, data collection and analysis. These will need to track the impact of policies, legislation, budgets and programmes among those most disadvantaged and excluded; allow for truly participatory assessment of these measures; enable much more systematic disaggregation of information for equity-focused targets and indicators; and provide mechanisms for locally-led citizen monitoring and feedback on progress and performance. Such components of a new framework, together, will provide the basis for well-informed and transparent policy-making.

21. Last and not least: accountability among decision-makers and public institutions, supported by systems such as those above, will be an essential feature of just and equitable human progress and the realization of human rights. Accountability will be central both to the design and implementation of future policies and actions that address inequalities, and to ensuring a new Development Framework in which people of all social groups, ages and circumstances are truly partners and participants.

Section 1: Why Inequalities?

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"To deny groups the opportunity to flourish, on the basis of their identity (ethnic, religious or other) is to deny the entire human family the intellectual, social and moral benefits that derive from such opportunity."

—Daniel Perell, United States (Contribution to E-discussion on Minorities and Inequalities)

Section 1: Why inequalities?

In 2000, in shared recognition of the unacceptable and degrading conditions that continue to dominate millions of lives, the global community committed to the principles of the Millennium Declaration and outlined the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Declaration highlighted freedom, equality, tolerance and solidarity as fundamental values guiding a united vision for social justice and human rights. In contrast, its accompanying goals were rather differently defined, aiming essentially to improve average outcomes around a range of basic needs. With an admirable unity of purpose towards meeting the agreed targets, the focus of debate, endeavour and tracking of progress shifted away from the values of the Declaration.

The strength of the MDGs lies in their simplicity, the importance of the matters they address, and in the extent to which they form a shared purpose for national Governments, non-state actors and international development agencies. The weakness lies in how the goals and their associated indicators were articulated. The focus on improving average outcomes meant that the importance of tackling entrenched inequalities and the structural causes of prolonged deprivation was overshadowed. It is now evident that the most "efficient" efforts to achieve the MDG targets could focus on the "low-hanging fruit", by passing and even further excluding the poorest and most excluded populations.

Inequalities are much greater than just "difference". Difference, or diversity, is characteristic of human society in the economic, social, civil and political spheres. Indeed, the freedom to make choices that reflect or generate our differences is fundamental to the most powerful articulations of what we mean by development. Difference also creates aspiration and competition, which drives economic as well as political systems in many countries.

Beyond difference, discussion on *inequalities* is often about fairness and social justice. The *Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities* clearly demonstrated that there is great concern around the extreme differences in opportunities and outcomes for people in different families, communities and countries. The scale and magnitude of inequalities across the globe, limiting life-chances and creating significant deprivation, far exceed what might be reasonably considered acceptable.

The lottery of birth – who your parents are, where and when you are born – accounts for the vast majority of variation in the resources and opportunities available for human beings, in all but the most developed welfare states. Milanovic[i] suggests that the simple fact of nationality and the class of one's parents can explain about 80% of an individual's likely income through their lifetime. A study submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* showed that in 32 countries a child in the richest 10% of households had on average 35 times more effective income available to meet their needs than the income of a child in the poorest 10% of households.[ii] Within nations, other influences -- gender, ethnic or racial group, age, disability category, sexual orientation or other such factors -- serve to disadvantage some individuals in many different and often invisible ways, throughout their lives. These patterns of inequality reinforce themselves over generations through the construction of structural barriers, uneven political power and societal arrangements that limit people's potential to flourish as human beings.

Growing unease with social inequality has become a key social and political issue in the last two decades. Prominent social movements across the world – including the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* in Brazil, the Occupy movement and the Arab spring – have all been at least partly driven by the core concern of the perceived illegitimacy of economic and political inequality, including in countries that have demonstrated economic growth and MDG progress; these are only some of the most well-known among many thousands of such actions. Governments across the world seem to be faced with increasingly dissatisfied citizenries who object on various grounds to continuing structural barriers or new patterns of growth that damage their prospects and welfare to the ever-growing benefit of a small number of elites.

This unease is driven by a perception that the gap between privilege and deprivation is growing. Although by some measures this may not be so (see below), this view is born out by many others. Popular books, such as *The Spirit Level*, *The Price of Inequality*, *Indignez-Vous* and *Treasure Islands* have brought powerful evidence on inequalities into the public domain.[iii] In many countries, the income share of the richest has grown significantly in the past 30 years or so – in the USA, the top 1% of wage earners took home 10% of total earnings in 1983, rising to nearly 25% by 2007; between 2002 and 2007, their incomes rose nearly ten times faster than the other 99% of the population. Similar patterns are found in other developed and developing economies, including China, India and South Africa.[iv] At the same time, although progress to address the worst human suffering is undoubtedly being made in many places, the pace of change seems much slower – especially for those who are already worst off – than the spiralling gains of the wealthy. This is so in many countries, and overwhelmingly the case globally.

1.1 Structural inequalities

Inequalities result from structural barriers in economic, social, environmental and political domains, as discussed in section 2. These barriers are mutually reinforcing, and failures in one respect tend to undermine prospects for progress in any other. People experiencing multiple inequalities are prevented from enjoying equal status, dignity and freedoms, and from interacting as equals in society.[v]

These four domains of inequalities are distinct, but strongly intertwined. People experiencing social inequalities are most likely to be poor. Poor people lack access to secure livelihoods, and are more likely to be exposed to poor living conditions. Marginalised families and communities face stigma and exclusion, and are less likely to influence political decision- making than others.

Inequalities are both the cause and consequence of multiple forms of discrimination that tend to reproduce themselves over time and over generations. Low incomes and poor water and sanitation undermine the health and nutrition of a mother; babies are likely to be underweight, and children stunted; learning will be affected, school dropout is more likely, and young women less capable of protecting their own sexual and reproductive health - and the cycle is very likely to be repeated.

Discrimination may be focused on particular population groups (for example on grounds of race, ethnicity, language, migrants, nomadic and indigenous peoples); by age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation and gender identity; by physical or intellectual disability status; according to religious belief or non-belief, political or other opinion; by occupation and social class or caste;

and by place of residence or origin. Moreover, while some of these categories may be mutually exclusive, others are not, resulting in multiple grounds of discrimination.

Structural inequalities lead to the systematic accumulation of insecurity, powerlessness and disadvantage at one end of the scale, and wealth, opportunity and influence at the other. This pattern is reproduced within nations, regionally and globally. **As long as structural inequalities persist, there is a strong risk that development efforts will not reach the people who are least able to lead decent lives, and will fall short of fulfilling the collective vision that inspired the Millennium Declaration.**

1.2 Inequalities and human rights

Contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation* from around the world focused on many aspects of inequalities, providing a rich and diverse set of perspectives and information. The most common feature of the hundreds of papers and other submissions was the clear view that any response to inequalities can and must be guided by human rights, and that the post-2015 development framework must reflect this.[vi]

Human rights offer a useful framework for addressing inequalities, for a number of reasons.

A range of international human rights covenants, adopted by nations in the second half of the twentieth century, provide a comprehensive set of social, economic, civil, cultural and political rights. Together, they **describe collective aspirations for the value, dignity and equality of human life**.[vii] Human rights include an adequate standard of living, health and education, freedom of association and participation in social and political organisation, protection from discrimination, exploitation and violence, and equality in law. The equalities highlighted by international human rights conventions and treaties reflect the areas where countries have agreed that concern about inequalities should be greatest.

The human rights framework also **provides clear standards and guidance on what manifestations of "difference" can be understood as "inequalities"**. It states that all people are entitled to all rights, and no-one must experience discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.[viii] The very particular and specific circumstances in which differential treatment is permissible are clearly described.[ix] The states that have ratified these commitments are obliged to ensure compliance with human rights principles and standards, and are accountable for this.

> The fulfilment of human rights obligations offers a holistic means of addressing inequalities, whilst attempts to address inequalities outside the framework of human rights will necessarily be partial, hence perpetrating discrimination and exclusion.

The analysis and response to human rights failures requires duty bearers to address the root causes of such shortcomings. This supports the idea that progress is dependent on addressing the mutually-reinforcing structural drivers that reproduce inequalities. In most circumstances, this implies not only transformative change to address entrenched patterns of discrimination, but also progressive, "levelling up" measures. The analysis of root causes of inequalities and rights failures is necessary for sustained progress at all levels.

The human rights framework also clarifies the duties and obligations of state and other actors in fulfilling human rights, and hence in addressing inequalities. States as the main duty bearers are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. All non-state actors should respect and promote human rights, and private sector actors should also respect and promote rights-based practice with regards to labour, environmental standards and the legitimate actions of their operations in line with national and international law and standards. Individuals, acting on behalf of states and non-state actors, are also increasingly accountable for human rights abuses, not only within any given state, but are also subject to account to other states, international courts and tribunals.

The *UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights*, adopted by the Human Rights Council in September 2012, spell out the specific implications of human rights obligations in relation to people living in extreme poverty. The Principles identify what States must do to address failures to realise rights for people living in extreme poverty, including the implementation of strategies and policies to address extreme poverty, and provision of accessible basic services. They also highlight the obligations of international assistance and cooperation. The Guiding Principles serve as a guide for international, national and local efforts to eliminate extreme poverty.

The challenge in realising universal human rights is clear. In particular, countries in which the challenges of fulfilling social and economic rights are greatest may lack the human and financial capacities needed to address multiple challenges, including those of the most deprived groups and individuals. The international community is obliged to assist where Governments have insufficient capacity to provide for the fulfilment of rights, directly or through multilateral bodies.

The human rights framework offers a compelling means for putting inequalities at the centre of development policies and practice. It sets out widely agreed commitments to equality, and provides a set of tools and arrangements to achieve these standards. States have an obligation to take proactive measures to ensure equality of access, opportunity and outcomes, and to eliminate discrimination as a determinant of any shortfalls in the achievement of equality. These measures must address the **structural drivers** of entrenched inequalities, that are both the cause and consequence of human rights failures. The achievement of universal human rights and the elimination of inequalities are thus two sides of the same coin, at the centre of what we understand by equitable, just and inclusive human development.

1.3 National, regional and global inequalities

Many of the contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation* discussed inequalities in terms of the distribution of opportunities and outcomes within the boundaries of a country. Amongst the many examples cited by contributors, these include discrimination based on the caste system in India, multiple disadvantages that attach to Roma people in Europe and indigenous peoples in Australia and a number of Latin American countries, racial inequalities and the extreme differences between rich and poor people in the USA, and inequalities based on income or gender in many countries. In practice, however, a range of mutually reinforcing inequalities are found in any given country.

At a national level, the insight into mutually reinforcing inequalities can be rich. The distinctive manifestations of inequalities and specific life cycle events or circumstances that prevent meaningful change for different communities are often well understood, on the basis of local and national data, research and situation analyses. The historical evolution is usually clear. Analyses can utilise a range of data sources, bringing economic data together with sociological research, cross- and sector-based analyses, evidence on the evolution of legal and administrative provisions, household data, community level testimonies, and diverse participatory and other stakeholder contributions.

Meanwhile, other submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* also looked at inequalities across and beyond national boundaries, usually adopting one of two possible approaches. The first was to look at common manifestations of inequalities as they affect particular identifiable groups – persons with disabilities, migrants, or religious and ethnic minorities, for example. There is significant comparable evidence on these and other groups, often focusing on the nature and extent of inequalities as compared with the general population, together with actions necessary to address their common needs (see section 3). The other approach was to use economic data to look at the scale and trends in income inequalities between countries, across regions, and globally. In a more globalised world, with greater awareness of the extent to which our economies and our lives are linked, there is increasing interest in these analyses.[x]

International income inequalities can be measured by comparing average income (per capita GDP) between countries, or between individuals (without using national averages). The choice of approach is important: in the decades leading to the mid-2000s, the difference between countries became much greater, while the difference among their populations reduced somewhat. This effect was due to fast growth in incomes in the populous nations of China and India, with little effect in the poorest countries. For the same period, income inequality between individuals – regardless of country – was much higher, and remained high. Indeed, since the richest tend to under-state their incomes and there are no reliable data from some of the poorest countries, the Gini coefficient[1] for world inequality of 70 is likely to be an underestimate.[xi]

Differences in international incomes and wealth are the cause and consequence of other forms of inequality. As with inequalities within nations, income inequalities at a global level also drive social, environmental and political disparities. The dominance of economically powerful countries in global decision making in virtually all contexts is mirrored by the power and reach of transnational private sector companies. Global corporations enjoy systems that fail to prevent large scale tax evasion, and maintain the privileged interests of markets and capital over jobs and wages. The structure of the global economy is particularly unfavourable to developing countries, where tax revenues and other benefits often fall short of what is necessary and appropriate.[xii] The interests of richer countries also predominate in ownership and control of new knowledge. Rights and opportunities over vital sectors including information technology and pharmaceuticals are concentrated in the richer economies, directed towards corporate

[1] The Gini coefficient measures inequality -- a score of zero indicates perfect equality, where everyone has the same, and a score of 100 indicates complete inequality, where one person or country has everything, and all others have nothing. The highest scoring (most unequal) countries have scores of over 50, while the lowest scores lie between 25 and 30.

profit rather than the needs of people living in poverty. In contrast, poorer countries and their nationals have significantly less influence on regional and global decision making. This is particularly so with regard to environmental negotiations, where poorer countries and their people are increasingly bearing the actual burden of climate change, without power to insist on the changes needed to avert further crisis. Inequalities in power and influence are in some cases institutionalised at the highest level: a good example is the "customary" appointment of citizens of designated countries to lead UN agencies.

1.4 Equalising opportunities or outcomes?

The difference between equal opportunities and equal outcomes is sometimes highlighted, addressing the question of "what should be equalised?".

The pursuit of equal outcomes is sometimes discussed in cautious tones. The argument is that human responsibility, efforts and talents are different, creating conditions for competition, aspiration and achievement that are necessary to drive progress. In this case, neo-liberal arguments are based on the fear that redistribution might create a disincentive to work hard, rewarding those who work less from the pockets of those who do more.[xiii] Nonetheless, the CEDAW and other human rights treaties make the case for 'substantive' equality, or equality of outcome, to take account of historic discrimination

The pursuit of equal opportunities is , creating a level playing field as a basis on which people can create their different outcomes. Any differentials in opportunity might, according to this argument, be thought to be worthy of intervention or compensation.[xiv]

However, in practice opportunities and outcomes are closely interrelated. Basic education, for example, is a fundamental human right, and hence an outcome. At the same time, it is clearly an opportunity that is necessary in order to secure access to diverse other ends. Across generations, children's education is highly affected by the outcomes of their parents, and are is very likely to determine the future opportunities of their own children. *Save the Children* says:

> *…Too often, the income of a child's parents, whether the child is a girl or boy, or the ethnic group that they belong to determines the opportunities they have to learn and thrive. On household income there is clear and consistent evidence that poorer households have worse education outcomes. In Nigeria the poorest young adults aged 17–22 have, on average, experienced less than five years of education; the wealthiest have achieved more than ten. In Rwanda children in the better-off urban areas fare better than in most other parts of the country, no matter which indicator you look at. For example, only 6% of the capital's 17–22-year-olds have less than two years of schooling, compared with a 12% national average. The average 17–22-year-old in Kigali has 6.68 years in school – over a year more than the national average of 5.10 years. Even in a rich country such as Canada, a 1999 study found that low-income children are 3.5 times more likely to have delayed vocabulary development.*[xv]

In any case, equal outcomes are not easy to identify, as equality depends on the realisation of all rights. Just because children have the same opportunity to attend school does not imply that they have the same opportunity to learn, to be safe, to be fairly evaluated, or to thrive—

particularly if one of the children is a girl, has a disability, or is a member of an ethnic or religious minority. Similarly, a skilled woman who earns a good income but faces violence at home or has no control over her fertility cannot be said to maintain the same outcomes as a counterpart who does not. In practice, equality of both opportunities and outcomes are hard to separate.

Since in many countries inequalities are largely inherited, the difference between opportunities and outcomes are more blurred than a "before and after" distinction might suggest. Parents experiencing multiple disadvantages in their own childhood will often achieve poor outcomes, which means they can only offer similarly weak opportunities to their own children. It is hard to identify how to compensate for the inherited inequalities in opportunity for children and young people without addressing some of the disparities in outcomes that simultaneously affect their parents.[xvi]

1.5 Inequalities & the global development framework

Addressing inequalities is fundamental to the realisation of human development goals, human rights and economic stability. This was the case in 2000, and a dozen years later is even more so.

Since the millennium, concern around inequalities has become more prominent. The view that global and national inequalities have grown is widely held, and supported by evidence. The benefits of growth in the early 2000s were not progressively or equitably distributed in most places; rather, new wealth accrued to successful minorities. On average, there is a relatively weak correlation between economic growth and poverty reduction. However, in any particular case the relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction is complex, and it is largely influenced by the nature of economic activities and their employment intensity. National-accounts-based poverty estimates (e.g. from UNCTAD), highlight that in low-income countries, economic growth makes a stronger contribution to poverty reduction than in richer countries, as that growth is more labour-intensive than in the richer countries. However, there are also significant differences between low-income countries. Typically, growth makes the least contribution to poverty reduction where it is based on capital-intensive production in enclave economies (including extractive industries), with few linkages to the rest of the economy. Furthermore, economic growth makes a decreasing contribution to poverty reduction as the share of poor people declines – in effect, poverty reduction becomes more difficult at the margin.

Further, there is greater recognition that a comprehensive development and policy framework is needed to address inequalities. The new framework needs to look beyond poverty in poor countries, and beyond the idea that the main role of the rich countries is to transfer resources to people living in poverty. The international and global dimensions of inequality need also to be addressed, and this must include measures against unequalising forces including international trade, finance and taxation, climate change and representation in global decision making.

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the rising number of social movements and protests against inequalities across the world, and the urgency of addressing these issues. Persistently high levels of inequalities, including those seen as unfair and unjust, are unsustainable - incompatible with the achievement of human rights, and likely to undermine future economic growth, social cohesion, and political stability.

Section 2: Structural Factors that Reproduce Inequalities

"A society that fails its women [and girls] ultimately fails itself."

—Manase Chiweshe, South Africa (Contribution to E-discussion on Gender Equality)

Section 2: Structural factors that reproduce inequalities

Throughout the world, inequalities have a strong tendency to persist, even when circumstances change. Inequalities are not the consequence of any given economic stage of development, an inevitable step on a journey of change; evidence from states that have prioritised equality clearly demonstrate this. Rather, inequalities are the result of structures that maximise the uneven distribution of resources to the greatest extent that can be sustained. In the most equal societies, strong values around social equalities greatly influence the prospects of those in power; more commonly, however, greater tolerance of inequalities allows disproportionate influence in the interests of those who already enjoy greater advantage.

Inequalities are reproduced through the interaction of discriminatory structures in four domains:[xvii]

> In the ***economic*** domain, distributive inequalities create disparities in accessing the resources necessary to participate in society. This can apply to wealth, and to other assets and opportunities.
>
> In the ***social*** domain, status inequalities deny some people or groups equal standing with others. Social stratification is based on a range of characteristics in different contexts, often providing a powerful basis for discrimination and exclusion.
>
> In the ***environmental*** domain, environmental inequalities expose some people or groups to a disproportionate share of environmental hazard, and/or discrimination in securing reasonable access to the natural resources they need to lead a healthy life.
>
> In the ***political*** domain, representational inequalities create disparities in access to opportunities to express claims or to seek resolution of injustices. This happens when discriminatory laws and policies are in place, or when the institutions of Government operate unfairly.

The following section outlines the structural drivers of inequalities in each of these domains.[2]

2.1 Economic Domain

In the last three decades, the global economy has changed substantially. The related and combined effects of globalisation and new technologies bind economies, production, consumption, finance and labour markets together, and forge a close link between the opportunities and incomes available to people across the world.

[2] The *Inequalities Consultation* approached the analysis of inequalities by focusing on structural causes of disparities. This was complemented by many of the contributions to the Consultation, which focused on how these structural inequalities affected diverse groups and individuals. Accordingly, this Consultation has not sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of inequalities by sector, outcome, programmatic instrument or development indicator. As a result, although it recognises such inequalities by way of examples and evidence, it does not systematically discuss inequalities in, for example, health, education, social protection, nutrition or safe water and sanitation. Other Consultations are concurrently addressing these topics; the contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* emphasised the importance of integrating the findings of this report into the more sector-specific analysis of inequalities that form a central part of the work of these related Consultations.

The *Inequalities Consultation* noted that this has resulted in significant inequalities. It concluded that economic inequalities within countries have increased significantly since 1990 with income and consumption gaps between the rich and poor widening even in countries that have experienced rapid economic growth. Today, we live in a world in which the top 20 per cent of the global population enjoys more than 70 per cent of total income and in which the top one per cent owns more than 30 per cent of total wealth and about one quarter of total income. Approximately 50 per cent of children and young people are living below the $2/day international poverty line, with many more not far above.[xviii]

Inequalities are not the inevitable consequence of a changing world. Globalisation and new technologies do not have to result in a shift in income distribution in favour of the rich, or a narrowing of opportunities for people living in poverty and middle-income earners to improve their living standards. On the contrary, globalisation and new technologies combined with appropriate national and international policies could offer unprecedented opportunities for decent job creation, reduced inequality and stability.[xix]

Between 2000 and 2011, 28 countries, including populous China and India, were reclassified from "low income" to "middle income" status by the World Bank, while the number of low-income countries almost halved, from 63 to 35.This has resulted in over 70 percent of the world's poor now living in countries designated middle income.[xx] Notwithstanding the increases in poverty in the existing middle income countries, most of the world's poor are still the same people, living in the same places and doing the same work as they were before their countries "graduated". The changes that are transforming their countries' performance have had very little effect on their immediate livelihoods or well-being – a clear demonstration that growth does not necessarily result in poverty reduction.

People living in poverty lack resources to participate in society, as a result of structural imbalances that favour rich countries, reward capital and/or wealthy people. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* also argued strongly that these structures also shape opportunities and outcomes for women, and are not at all "gender neutral" as is often assumed to be the case.[xxi] Economic inequalities reproduce discrimination and disadvantage through the impact of labour markets, macroeconomic, financial and fiscal policy, and asset ownership.

Labour markets and employment: For the vast majority of individuals and households in the world, income is obtained primarily from work. In many instances, work can also provide social standing, self-determination and dignity. The extent to which widespread, stable and decent employment is available is a major determinant of well-being.

> "Women's participation in business and politics GLOBALLY is sub-standard."
> --Niki, Contributor to e-discussion

Concerns around inequalities and labour markets are focused on four key issues. First is unemployment, and the lack of opportunity for many people (especially women) to utilise their productive capacities or derive incomes from their own labour. Second is wage inequality, especially affecting women. Third is the prevalence of informal labour markets and increasing casualisation of labour, which creates risk and insecurity, and denies access to social security, labour regulation and legal protection. Fourth are the many issues that arise from semi-subsistence production (largely in the agricultural sector), where the majority of the world's

poorest people produce a great proportion of basic food supplies, while exposed to diverse insecurities and hazards.

In recent years, "jobless growth" has characterised labour markets across the world. At the same time, employment has become increasingly informalised, even where growth rates have been high. The informal sector accounts for nearly 90 percent of work worldwide, exposing workers to risky labour contracts, insecurity, and lack of protection or benefits, most acutely amongst women, people living in poverty and unskilled.[xxii] The gap between formal and informal employment drives significant inequalities in both developing and high-income countries.[xxiii]

Access to decent work is especially difficult for some. Women in particular face barriers to equal opportunities, pay and conditions in employment throughout the world. With few exceptions, they are under-represented at top levels, and over-represented at the bottom.[xxiv] In the developing world, women are greatly over-represented in lowest earning, unskilled informal work. Even where labour market institutions are strong, women continue to face particular challenges.[xxv] Throughout the world, "women everywhere tend to earn less than men".[xxvi] Traditionally female occupations, in which some 46 percent of working women are found[xxvii], are less well remunerated and protected. Evidence submitted to the Inequalities Consultation highlighted the fact that even when women achieve higher levels of education and have more skilled and professional jobs, their wages can lag behind men's.[xxviii] Paradoxically, when wage differentials fall, women are pushed out of formal employment into home-based and informal work.[xxix] Workers from traditionally disadvantaged groups – including ethnic and religious minorities, and indigenous groups – face similar barriers.

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the particular barriers to employment faced by the world's estimated 785m-975m persons of working age with disabilities.[xxx] Global data show that unemployment rates are twice as high for disabled men and women in developed economies,[xxxi] whilst un-or under-employment for persons with disabilities in developing countries is over 80 percent.[xxxii] One contributor cited evidence from Bangladesh, where the employment rate of persons with disabilities is less than a quarter of those without a disability.[xxxiii] People with intellectual impairments or psychosocial disabilities are the least likely to be in employment, due to continuing discrimination and prejudice. As well as condemning many persons with disabilities to disproportionate poverty and disadvantage, the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the workforce is estimated to cost developing countries between 3% and 7% of gross domestic product (GDP) each year.[xxxiv]

Migrants in particular are often excluded from the protections afforded to citizens, and lack recourse in the event of job termination or unfair treatment; female migrants in domestic employment are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and sexual abuse. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* pointed out that such inequalities attach not only to new migrants but also to the children of migrants and also indigenous peoples, whose unequal access to education and health provide the basis for future disadvantage in employment.[xxxv]

The *Inequalities Consultation* also reflected increasing concerns about youth unemployment. Youth unemployment is three times that of adult unemployment across the world, with major present and future economic consequences at household, community and national level. Some contributions showed that youth unemployment fuelled illegal migration, trafficking, and xenophobia.[xxxvi] Moreover, evidence submitted shows that in many countries, a mix of high

unemployment, increased inactivity and precarious work could lead to a combustible 'scarred' generation, fuelling social unrest and violence.[xxxvii]

Economic policy: Economic growth and progress, globalisation and changing technology do not cause distributive inequalities, nor do they resolve them. Rather, at all stages and in all contexts, economic policies can either entrench inequalities, or can help to resolve them. In recent decades, however, both before and following the recent financial crisis, increasing income inequalities have been clearly associated with a range of macro-economic and fiscal policies that have dominated the development agenda. In contrast, redistributive and counter-cyclical policies have received much less emphasis. Further, patterns of global trade and international finance have reinforced the entrenchment of inequalities.[xxxviii]

Prevailing policies have in many countries shifted the emphasis from human outcomes – employment, stability and the well-being of the population – to a focus on creating favourable conditions for markets. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* show how this shift is reflected in a change in the functional distribution of income – the balance between returns to capital and returns to labour, or how workers are faring compared to their employers.[xxxix] Between the 1980s and the mid-2000s, an estimated three-quarters of countries experienced a fall in the wage-share of national income, as high as 13 percent in Latin America and 10 percent in the Euro-zone.[xl] Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* also highlighted the dilution of labour standards, regulations and institutions, including the decline in trade union membership and collective negotiation coverage, as key reasons for these trends.[xli]

The set of policy prescriptions known as the Washington Consensus has favoured a strongly market-based approach, but has at the same time undermined some of the key functions of the state and overlooked the human cost of this strategy, particularly for people living in poverty. The elimination of subsidies on basic commodities, trade liberalisation, privatisation of state enterprises and deregulation have, in particular, resulted in down-side costs to the populations of developing countries. New arguments suggest that the removal of agricultural subsidies has exposed small scale farmers to costs and risks that have threatened production and exposed rural households to food insecurity.[xlii] For urban workers, trade liberalisation has allowed free movements of goods but not people, entrenching low wages for workers in developing countries, and creating substantial profits for large corporations. The privatisation of key industries, such as utilities, has provided fertile ground for the emergence of small and wealthy elites, who may actively protect the status quo – which can include high prices and labour exploitation – through political influence. Newly-established independent regulatory agencies are often subject to the same influence, but also to lower levels of accountability and transparency. The interests of business have also tended to influence labour policy, resulting in an erosion of minimum wages, casualisation and informalisation, and diminishing opportunities for collective bargaining.

At the same time, in many countries, fiscal policy has not served the goal of fair distribution. Taxation has tended to be regressive, with substantial concessions awarded to newly privatised companies and foreign investors. Tax holidays attract short-term business that is in any case profitable, and are subject to significant abuse. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the issue of tax justice, pointing out the need to focus on unfair tax systems, capital flight, tax evasion and tax avoidance (including transfer pricing), which deprive Governments all over the world of legitimate tax revenue, as profits are moved to tax havens.[xliii] Tax losses in

developing countries are estimated to be worth many times more than foreign aid transfers, at $160 billion every year.[xliv] In contrast, ordinary workers and citizens contribute significantly, not only through direct taxation but through VAT, user fees for basic services, rates, utility charges and diverse other charges. With depleted revenues, Governments face significant constraints in meeting demand for basic public services. Revenue to GDP ratios remain low in developing countries: if all African countries raised just 15 percent of GDP in revenue, the continent's Governments would have an additional $200 billion at their disposal every year; India is estimated to lose $850 million per year in tax revenue to investments routed through Mauritius.[xlv]

Asset ownership: Access to the assets needed to generate an income is a third factor driving distributive inequalities. Inequalities are widespread in access, tenure and opportunity to utilise moveable and immoveable assets, and in rights over public and private assets.

Asset *poverty* is often discussed in terms of wealth differentials, where some people have less money and fewer assets (land, tools, buildings and so on) than others. In contrast, the issue of asset *inequality* goes beyond the value of what may be controlled, and addresses the institutions and processes that create and reproduce disparities in ownership and control.[xlvi]

Asset inequalities tend to amplify disparities over time. Assets provide the opportunity of being able to smooth risks, respond to shocks, and access credit and insurance; asset deprivation leaves individuals, households and even nations unable to anticipate or mitigate the impact of risk and shock. When security or protection is sought from elsewhere, the costs and hazards of dependency are often very high.

An important structural determinant of asset inequalities is the legal right to acquire or own assets, or to inherit them. In many places, discriminatory provisions restrict the rights of women or members of other disadvantaged groups to own property. Persons with disability face discrimination in law, as well as through social norms that deem them unsuitable or incompetent. Such restrictions may also apply to inheritance, threatening significant economic hazard in the event of the death of a family member. Even where ownership is possible, inequalities may also be created through disparities in access to legal or administrative institutions necessary for that ownership to be recognised. Such institutions may have explicitly discriminatory policies and systems, or may reproduce patterns of social exclusion that tend to deter and exclude people living in poverty and disadvantaged groups (for example, in conducting business in official languages only).

Factors that limit access to land are a critical element in asset inequalities. Disparities in access to land have long-standing historical roots in many countries, with women and members of minority ethnic or linguistic groups, castes or clans often lacking equal entitlements compared to advantaged members of the same communities. In addition to this, there are increasing concerns about the increasing number of new external actors obtaining land in developing countries. UNCTAD says:

> *As a result of high food prices and global food security concerns, there has been a rush by foreign investors for large-scale land acquisitions (or leases) in developing countries in the past few years, with potentially negative effects on land distribution and food security. Different actors, such as sovereign wealth funds, investment and pension funds, food*

corporations and large agricultural producers and landowners, have shown an increasing interest in acquiring or leasing land…. According to Oxfam (2011), as many as 227 million hectares of land have been sold or leased in developing countries since 2001. These deals, many of which are in Africa, often take place against payment of very low fees.[xlvii]

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted major violations of indigenous peoples' right to their land, territories and natural resources, such as land grabbing and unfair competition exercised by States and private investors/companies, exploitation of natural resources by extractive industries, resource-based conflicts, and lack of recognition of customary tenure systems. These practices impair indigenous peoples' rights to access and use forests, ancestral lands and natural resources.

While rural livelihoods may very well benefit from a blend of small scale and commercial agriculture, the rapid, large scale and sometimes speculative nature of land acquisition suggests that in some cases, the interests and views of local people have not influenced the process. Moreover, even where transfers may reflect poor governance, rent-seeking or corruption, there is significant pressure not to reverse transactions, provide redress and risk a loss of investor confidence.

Structural inequalities in access to credit create disparities at all levels. The largest and most wealthy have easy access to significant and cheap credit; people living in poverty struggle for access to small, short-term loans at often great cost, and with considerable risk. As returns to capital increasingly exceed returns to labour, unequal access to credit multiplies inequalities further.

2.2 Social Domain

"The gender norms in Spain are not written down as such, they are 'in the air' ".

--Teresa, Contributor to e-discussion

Social inequalities result from structures that deny some people equal standing with others. They create second-class status, undermining the dignity of those affected, and eroding the shared humanity of the society in which discrimination is occurring. Social inequalities may be explicit, codified and vigorously defended as normal, natural or acceptable, or they may be rather more tacit and hidden. Although the characteristics of social stratification vary, social inequalities are to some degree present in all societies.

Patterns of inequalities are often contrasted as being 'horizontal' or 'vertical'. *Horizontal* inequalities most obviously refer to social inequalities between groups, where the characteristics of those groups are primarily hereditary or largely beyond the control of those affected. These include sex, ethnicity, caste, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or place of residence. A great number of submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* focussed on horizontal inequalities, particularly on gender inequalities. Contributors also noted that children, old people, indigenous peoples and LGBTI people are often overlooked, subsumed into the category of "other".[xlviii] Certain livelihoods are also stigmatised, including domestic workers, rag-pickers, night-soil cleaners and others. Discussion of these differences may lean more heavily on social, cultural and historical analysis, identifying patterns of discrimination and exclusion. In contrast, *vertical* inequalities refer to the differences between people within any given frame of reference

– most often within a country, and with regard to income or other quantifiable outcomes. On one scale or another, the analysis of vertical inequalities is concerned with the extent of difference between the top and the bottom, and the pattern of distribution in between. Although vertical inequalities generally refer to individuals rather than groups, it is important to note that those groups subject to horizontal inequalities are very often clustered at the bottom of any given vertical scale. Similarly, group formation based on exposure to the effects of being at the bottom of the scale are also observed, for example amongst the long-term unemployed, street children or homeless people.

Some people experiencing social inequalities are physically co-located, by virtue of language or ethnic group, or by residence. This brings the risk of intensifying inequalities, as whole communities can be denied resources, security, influence or opportunities. Others are more evenly spread across society, notably women but also persons with disabilities, LGBTI people and people living with HIV and AIDS. This creates the opposite risks of isolation, intimidation and abuse. In either case, social standing is diminished and opportunities for voice and participation are undermined.

Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* emphasised the extent to which ethnic and linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples face structural exclusion that limits integration into society. In many countries, health systems do not integrate the traditional knowledge, medicines and practices of indigenous peoples. Similarly, education systems do not integrate local and indigenous languages and cultures; in post-colonial states, formal education still commonly uses the colonial language. Similar barriers exist in the workplace, where language determines access to better opportunities. These barriers may create a permanent and continuing division between minority or local language speakers and the elite, preventing integration and inclusion. Contributors argued that such discrimination also diminishes the incorporation of cultural and linguistic values derived from language into evolving social norms, contributing to loss of culture in many societies.[xlix,l]

Even where legal provisions exist to ban or reverse discrimination based on social status, submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* described powerful social norms that have reduced progress. In India, for example, contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* pointed out that laws to protect and advance the status of scheduled castes and tribes have not eliminated harassment and exclusion.[li] Others highlighted ways in which indigenous peoples commonly face discriminatory attitudes and practices in the workplace, at school, in politics and in the dealings of the police and judiciary, and that laws protecting women and girls from discrimination, violence and abuse are commonly flouted.[lii] Similarly, others pointed out that even where the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS have been established in law, there are still many instances in which prevailing attitudes and norms perpetuate discrimination and prejudice.

Where the law does not protect disadvantaged groups, discrimination may be pervasive. Worse still, some groups may be criminalised, or suffer legal sanction or constraints to their equal participation in society. Examples include LGBTI people, sex workers and migrants, who in many countries are assigned a second-class or illegal status in law. In many countries these groups experience an extreme level of discrimination of access to sexual and reproductive health services, including exclusion from HIV and AIDS prevention and care, despite being high risk populations. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* also highlighted instances where the

absence of legal protection for persons with disabilities has resulted in forced sterilisation, amounting to eugenics.[liii]

High levels of social inequalities are associated with falling aspirations and self-esteem, a loss of hope, and a resultant rise in behaviours that have negative consequences affecting whole populations at individual, community and national level. Alcohol and drug abuse, violence and criminal behaviour have each been researched in this context, all associated with higher levels of inequality.[liv] In both rich and rapidly growing countries, these effects manifest in stark differences in life expectancy. In many countries, disadvantaged young men, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, are particularly vulnerable to homicide and suicide.[lv] Other less sensational effects of social inequalities may still have far reaching effects; a study of inappropriate behaviour by teachers in Tanzania submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* demonstrated that the frustrations associated with perceived low status and inadequate working conditions underpinned practices that affect the learning of all pupils.[lvi]

> 13 year old Kareena and her sister were keenly aware of their household's fragile economy, which they attributed to her father's illness. Her mother could no longer afford to provide nutritious food for the family, who subsisted mainly on diluted 'dal' (lentil stew). Kareena and her sister try to conceal their poverty from other children by sitting apart during school lunches or covering their lunch box with a book while they eat.

Persistent inequalities and the stigma of social inferiority can be internalised by those exposed to prejudice and discrimination. Self-limiting behaviour is evident amongst women, for example, while children in diverse disadvantaged groups express low aspirations and poor self-esteem. Powerful feelings of shame and humiliation around poverty and low social status reduce social participation and drives children away from school.

2.3 Environmental Domain

Environmental inequalities are the result of structural conditions that expose people to disproportionate and unacceptable levels of hazard and damage, and create differential and discriminatory access to the environmental resources necessary to live a health life.

Exposure to environmental harm is a key manifestation of how risk and hazard have increasingly been shunted from the rich to the developing world, from more influential to less powerful countries, and from better off to poorer and less influential communities at a local level.[lvii] On a global scale, activities that would be regulated or even banned in high-income countries are relocated to the developing world, particularly to countries where the regulatory framework remains weak. These include industrial and agricultural production, and also disposal of chemical and industrial waste. Hazardous and toxic electronic equipment is exported from Europe as second-hand equipment, avoiding regulations that govern safe disposal, ending up in toxic dumps in Africa and Asia. At a local level, exposure to unsafe waste, water, air pollution, the harmful effects of high population density, chemical and agricultural hazards and other environmental hazards are differentially distributed, affecting poorer people more than others.

Costs of production fall as standards for waste dumping, maintenance and safety standards, control of air and water pollution and protection of labour forces are kept low, or circumvented. In the event of a disaster, companies are often protected from liability, through networks of subsidiaries that separate responsibility from profits, political protection, or the powerlessness of those affected to seek redress from transnational corporations. A stark example of this is the level of compensation paid after the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy, in which the official immediate death toll was 3,787, with over 10,000 later deaths, thousands of permanent disabilities, hundreds of thousands of injuries and over 1 million claims; the US chemical company involved settled for $470 million after five years negotiation ($870 million at today's values).[lviii,lix] In contrast, following the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, BP established a $20 billion trust fund the same year.[lx]

Inequalities are replicated on a national and local level. The risks of exposure to contaminated water, air and soil, proximity to toxic and other waste dumps, access to adequate sewerage systems and the application of protective regulations are in many countries unequally distributed, to the detriment of people living in poverty and other disadvantaged groups. The limited opportunities for work and housing may offer no safe choices. Children's development is damaged, while their parents' health is compromised by hazardous occupations.

Climate change is also disproportionately affecting poorer parts of the world that have contributed little or nothing to these effects, with developing countries facing the "worst and first" effects of climate related disasters[lxi] (for example, Africa is responsible for just 2.5 percent of carbon emissions).[lxii] Within those regions, climate change poses particular threats to the livelihoods of poor and disadvantaged groups – including small scale farmers, pastoralists and nomads, artisanal fishers, and people living in fragile and low production environments – and to those living in poor quality housing, coastal areas and areas liable to flooding, and urban slums.

Since the early 1990s, developing countries have protested the unfairness of proposed solutions, while more powerful countries refuse to curtail their own excesses without such agreements. The stalemate in negotiations reflects differences in historical carbon emissions, vulnerability to the effects of climate change, and positions on the distribution of responsibility for future emission reductions. Developing countries focus on the historical responsibility of industrialised countries, and their own need for development and for protection from the growing number of climate-related disasters; richer countries cite the growing population in the poor world, together with unregulated development of new polluting industries. Since the 1970s, climate change negotiations have demonstrated unequal power and serious mistrust between the developing and the industrialised world, reinforced by similar patterns in global negotiations on trade, intellectual property rights and international finance. In the absence of measures to reduce underlying inequalities, it appears unlikely that just and sustainable agreements will be reached.[lxiii]

The distribution of impact of climate-related natural disasters shows significant patterns of inequality. Social and economic status, access to information, standards of housing and infrastructure, more accountable and effective governance, and better property rights all have an impact on prevention, mitigation and response to disasters. Even within a small locality, disasters will have the greatest effects on most vulnerable people, especially old people, persons with disabilities, and the sick.[lxiv] Women and girls are particularly disadvantaged in terms of risk to harm from natural disasters, in terms of exposure to danger as well as unequal access to

prevention and mitigation. In a sample of 141 countries over the period of 1981 to 2002, natural disasters reduced the life expectancy of women and girls more than that of men and boys. The gender gap in reduced life expectancy increased with the severity of the disaster, and decreased with the socio-economic status of women.[lxv]

Environmental inequalities are also driven by structures that drive disparities in rights to natural resources. Inequality in rights to use or own resources – including land, water, timber, fish and wildlife – have in many instances been discriminatory, denying access to women and girls, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups. Historical user rights have in recent years been increasingly at risk of erosion, as incoming commercial investment displaces the interests of long-standing residents.[lxvi] As discussed above with regard to asset inequalities, environmental inequalities are reproduced at a local, national and international scale.

Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* drew attention to the major violations affecting indigenous peoples, particularly with regard to land, territories and natural resources. Land grabbing and unfair practices by States and private investors/companies, exploitation of natural resources by extractive industries, resource-based conflicts, and lack of recognition of customary tenure systems were all cited. This leads to the violation of the rights of indigenous peoples to access and use forests, ancestral lands and natural resources. It also exposes indigenous peoples to the effects of climate change, disrupts their social unity and exacerbates their disadvantages.[lxvii]

2.4 Political Domain

Political inequalities are the result of structures that create unfairness in representation and participation, perpetuating disparities in how people can express voice, be listened to, participate in decision making or secure a fair hearing to resolve disputes and conflict.

Playing a part in civic and political life of a society is a critical component of citizenship and personhood. Full participation and fair representation – on equal terms with others – are elementary freedoms, intrinsic to a good quality of life.[lxviii] However, contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation* show that political inequalities are common, driven by a range of factors.[lxix]

In some cases, political inequalities are established by laws and constitutions. The rights of women and girls, minority ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, migrants or LGBTI people may be limited, restricting representation, rights of ownership and participation, or to being heard with regard to civil and domestic affairs. Legal restrictions may be specific in certain instances (concerning women and inheritance, for example), or may ensue from criminalisation or legal exclusions attached to group membership. In many countries, certain religious and/or non-religious groups are subject to political discrimination as a result of being unrecognised in law, and hence excluded from the rights of equal citizenship.

In other cases, political inequalities are the result of more subtle but equally powerful forms of discrimination. Communities and individuals may be unable to participate because of language, or because of cultural conflict with the requirements of participation. Social attitudes may

constrain or discourage participation of LGBTI people, women and girls, persons with disabilities and both young and old people.[lxx] These may be reinforced by administrative, physical and logistical constraints (time of day, for example), that exclude some groups and favour others. Contributions to the *Inequalities consultation* highlighted the exclusion of persons with disabilities, noting that cultural biases define people with disabilities as unequal members of society, unworthy or incapable of contributing.[lxxi] Deep-seated prejudice may portray women as lacking the capacity for leadership, thus limiting their opportunities for political representation and decision-making.

Where those experiencing inequalities are minorities, there is often little incentive for political parties to take their interests into account, and inequalities become entrenched. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* also noted a tendency for indigenous peoples to be excluded, a pattern usually rooted in colonial history and manifested in long-standing failures to guarantee civil and political rights.[lxxii] Even where constitutions or international treaties are in force, which recognize indigenous peoples, full and effective implementation is necessary, including the establishment of positive actions and other mechanisms to ensure the participation of indigenous peoples in policy and decision-making. This often results in deep-seated loss of confidence and trust between excluded groups and Governments. Over time, as uneven development and political exclusion deepen, conflict may emerge. The denial of political voice and influence to socially excluded groups has often been a major driver of violent conflict, as these groups find no other forum to express their voice.[lxxiii]

Not all examples of conflict related to political inequalities are clearly group-based. In some instances, the inequalities are driven by the differences in power and wealth between the elite classes and the majority population. The perception that some are prospering while many struggle for a living, with capture of both economic and political power going hand in hand, is the source of much unrest. Links between inequalities and instability have been amply demonstrated. Across 70 countries over the period 1960 to 1985, political instability was strongly linked to income inequality, with greater levels of violence and public disorder associated with higher levels of inequality.[lxxiv]

Political inequalities may build up over time, but contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation* showed that change can be rapid, as people reach a "tipping point" in their tolerance of inequalities. Submissions on change in the Arab world argued that the rapid growth and modernisation of service provision that began in the 1970s had in recent years given way to autocratic governance, corruption and stagnating attempts to redistribute national resources, leaving whole groups and regions in poverty. While earlier generations had welcomed investments in health services and basic infrastructure, increasing social and political exclusion, entrenched economic hierarchies (often reflecting clan or ethnic divisions), inequality in access to justice and security, and the growing, differential effects of climate change and energy or water shortages created increasing tension. Younger people wanted equal opportunities, democracy, justice and accountability. The social movements that have secured various sorts of change involved not only those who had experienced entrenched financial hardship, but others whose civil and political rights had been curtailed.[lxxv]

2.5 Intersecting inequalities

> "The most disadvantaged girls live with disabilities, live in the poorest communities, or are part of indigenous or minority groups."
> --Noreen, Contributor to e-discussion

There is considerable evidence that inequalities in one structural domain *increase the likelihood* of inequalities in others. In the event of opportunity for improvements in one domain, the chance of progress is often undermined or rendered inaccessible by simultaneous intersecting disadvantage in another. For example, indigenous peoples and minority ethnic groups often have diminished social status, poor access to fertile land and water, low asset holdings and poor living conditions. They also lack effective voice and political representation. This all serves to reduce survival chances, nutritional status and incomes, undermine access to basic services, entrench household poverty, and increase the likelihood that children born to these communities will face similar conditions as adults. These intersecting and mutually reinforcing inequalities are often rooted in historical relationships, and continue to be reproduced through discrimination in social, economic, environmental and political domains.

> Mohamed Bouazizi grew up among the rural poor in Tunisia. His community had experienced years of exclusion from national economic progress, and discrimination by an autocratic state. He was trying to make a living as a vendor on the streets of a small rural town, amidst high levels of unemployment and rampant corruption. On December 16, 2010, he took a small loan to buy fruits and vegetables to sell in the town centre. The next morning he was confronted by local police, demanding bribes. When he refused, his food cart and weighing scales were confiscated. After a brief altercation at the Governor's office where he demanded back his items, he returned to the centre of town. Yelling "how do you expect me to make a living?" he set himself ablaze.

People may also experience discrimination on more than one basis in the social domain. Gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, minority language and ethnic groups, minority and unrecognised religious and/or non-religious groups, HIV status, place of residence and age-based discrimination can overlap in many different ways. These *intersecting* inequalities are not just a simple sum of the various dimensions of exclusion. Rather, where different forms of social inequality overlap, mutual reinforcement occurs creating unique forms of discrimination, that cannot be unpacked and dealt with separately.[lxxvi] For example, in Europe and North America, race and gender inequalities intersect, creating inequalities and disadvantage that are distinct to black women. Further and different forms of discrimination may be directed at black women with disabilities, or from minority faith or non-faith groups. While there may be commonalities, the intersection of race, gender, disability and faith-related discrimination creates circumstances that cannot be understood as the sum of those of "woman", "black person", "person with disabilities" and "faith / non-faith minority".

This is much more than a play on words or theoretical distinction. Multiple risks intersect and create inequalities that are not just deeper, but also distinctive. Intersection also means that multiple structural inequalities tend to persist, as opportunities that address "single-channel" inequalities by-pass and exclude those experiencing multiple discrimination. Hence programmes to address women's needs may inadvertently exclude women from minority ethnic groups, and

those “targeting” single mothers overlook the needs of single mothers with a disability or those who are migrants or speak a minority language. This strongly implies the need for holistic combinations of enabling policies, legal measures and programmes, designed within a human rights framework and recognising individuals as holders of rights, rather than “targets” or “beneficiaries” of other people’s programmes.

Intersecting inequalities also refer to mutually reinforcing effects of economic, environmental and political inequalities on any given social group. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* provided a rich insight into the intersecting inequalities affecting indigenous peoples in this regard. There was clear consensus that economic, social, environmental and political inequalities affecting indigenous peoples are the consequence of colonization. A combination of assimilation policies and economic policies have deprived indigenous peoples of their livelihoods, land and natural resources forcing them to migrate to cities. Contributors underlined that urbanization has brought about greater levels of poverty, and disruption to social cohesion and to indigenous peoples’ food and nutrition systems. Indigenous women and children are exposed to particular risks, suffering not only from disproportionate health impacts, but also from disruption to their local economic and cultural activities and increased levels of sexual violence and sexual exploitation. The result is seen in poor outcomes among indigenous peoples across a wide range of social indicators – health, education, welfare, poverty, crime, gender equality – in many countries.[lxxvii]

Section 3: Unequal Lives

"…inequality goes beyond the problem of unequal access to a building, an institution, a social system. It is also deeply entrenched within the historical treatment of the group."

—Xuan Thuy Nguyen (Contribution to E-discussion on Persons with Disabilities)

Section 3: Unequal lives

This section looks more closely at how inequalities affect the lives of different groups. The groups discussed here, and the issues that they face, were all highlighted in the submissions and contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation*. The disparities discussed all reflect human rights violations and related discriminations.

3.1 Poverty and inequalities

Inequalities in the distribution of wealth, incomes and resources are both the cause and consequence of other inequalities, for example including health and nutritional status, education, food security, and exposure to environmental risk and climate change.[lxxviii] Both income poverty and broader, multidimensional poverty are common among people who belong to groups subject to discrimination and prejudice. While some groups are exposed to prejudice through social and/or political discrimination without experiencing income poverty, in most contexts, the poverty and inequalities – although not the same – are correlated. This is in part due to mutual reinforcement and clustering of income inequalities with most forms of social, environmental and political inequalities. It also stems from the fact that conditions of poverty – homelessness, for example – are in themselves subject to other forms of discrimination.

The importance of income and multidimensional poverty is cannot be overstated. However, **treating poverty and inequalities as equivalent is not helpful or correct**. Inequalities are fundamentally about relational disparities, denial of fair and equivalent enjoyment of rights, and the persistence of arbitrary discrepancies in the worth, status, dignity and freedoms of different people. The resolution of unequal structural relations depends on transformative change. In contrast, efforts to resolve poverty, particularly income poverty, can be made while avoiding issues of structural inequality. Moreover, actions intended to improve the lives of people living in poverty, while highly desirable in themselves, could in some instances be a means of sustaining highly unequal systems.

3.2 Gender inequalities

> "A society that fails its women [and girls] ultimately fails itself."
>
> --Manese, South Africa, Contributor to e-discussion

A great many contributions to the *Inequalities Consultation* focused on gender inequalities. Key areas of analysis and comment included legal and other forms of discrimination, gender-based violence, female poverty, social status and autonomy, access to education and health (including sexual and reproductive health), and women's participation and representation. Women and girls continue to occupy secondary positions throughout the world. Although some progress has been made in some areas, gender equality is a fundamental goal of development, one that cuts across all other areas, and has yet to be achieved[lxxix].

The 2011 UN Progress of Women Report shows a wide range of stark disparities between men and women as well as boys and girls, across a range of domains from health to access to justice, demonstrating a clear pattern of disadvantage across each of the MDGs.[lxxx] Discrimination and

exclusion are not limited to women and girls in poor households or developing countries. In all groups, whether poor or rich, suffering hardships or enjoying secure access to basic needs, in conflict or in peace, women and girls are most likely to endure secondary social status, diminished enjoyment of rights, reduced freedoms, restricted participation, and threats to personal security.[lxxxi]

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* agreed that gender inequalities produce and perpetuate disparities that affect men as well as women, and boys as well as girls, constraining the rights and opportunities of some for the benefit of others. The Consultation concluded that gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women, but about realizing the rights of everyone, and creating conditions where both all have the right and ability to realise their full human potential. The role of men and boys in promoting and indeed benefitting from greater gender equality was widely voiced as a necessary but often neglected area.[lxxxii]

The gender inequalities can be grouped into four categories:

Lower control of social, economic and political resources and opportunities: In most if not all countries, women have lower incomes, lower access to public services, and less opportunity for effective participation and representation at all levels.

Whether in terms of appropriate education or health, livelihoods support, policing or leisure, the design and delivery of public services may discourage or exclude women's participation. The times at which services are available, attitudes of staff, lack of confidentiality or user fees and charges may all serve to reduce the number of women who feel ready to come forward. Services specifically oriented to women may receive fewer resources or lesser priority. With unequal participation in governance, civil affairs and social participation at all levels, women's voices are not heard, and systematic inequalities may persist without comment. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the particular problems of indigenous women who commonly lack of access to culturally appropriate health and education services.

> "We need water every day. If I wake up late and start collecting water later, then I have to miss school. Often when I am sitting inside the classroom, I find it hard to concentrate. I have a headache. I am tired from collecting water. I just want to sleep."
>
> --Paula, Mozambique

Girls and women experience constraints in educational access driven by deeply held social norms about their roles in society. Despite significant progress since the adoption of the MDGs, girls continue to be under-represented in schooling and education in many countries. Disparity tends to be greater at upper secondary education, with girls facing pressure to move from education to domestic life and marriage from puberty onwards.[lxxxiii] At the primary and secondary school level, contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* suggested that social pressures that drive girls out of school may be reinforced by teachers. Evidence submitted showed that in India and Bangladesh, where teaching is adapted to specifically encourage girls to stay in school, rates of drop out have been seen to fall.[lxxxiv]

Girls and women move from a secondary position in education to a secondary position in the workplace. As discussed in section 2, traditionally female occupations tend to be less valued and less well paid, and even in more skilled positions, women earn less than men. Contributors to

the *Consultation* highlighted the importance of ensuring that girls and women develop skills to move outside those areas, into areas where they are significantly underrepresented, including in science and technology-based work.[lxxxv]

The fact that girls and women also carry the burden of unpaid domestic work, usually undiminished by increased participation in paid labour, was observed by a number of contributors to the *Consultation*. They have less autonomy in time allocation, and less free time. Unequal workloads often affect girls from a young age, expected to care for siblings, children, parents and other household dependents. This not only denies them continued education, but also creates an extreme and often unhealthy work load, often exacerbated by inadequate nutrition.[lxxxvi] As they age, women continue to contribute to unpaid care work, even when facing ill-health and disability, their contribution still largely overlooked. The poorest women usually face the most acute time pressures, bearing primary responsibility for unequally distributed household work while also contributing to household income.[lxxxvii]

Cultural and social reproduction of women's and girls' subordinate status: Discriminatory norms often mean that women and girls are defined by their sexual and reproductive functions, with their social standing determined by their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons. In some societies, their freedom to pursue education or work, their participation in choices on marriage, pregnancy and child-rearing, and even their opportunity to go out of their homes is implicitly or explicitly restricted. The persistence of forced and early marriage, honour killings and sex-selective abortions reflect the severe diminution of the perceived humanity of women and girls.

Discrimination that reflects the subordinate status of women is found at all levels.

State-sponsored discrimination includes persistent inequalities in legal, policy and institutional provisions. These may prescribe diverse discriminatory provisions, for example including property rights, access to justice, laws affecting migrant workers, and family law. They may also include observance of diverse institutional practices that violate the rights of women and girls, including for example a reluctance to address prevalent abuse of children and women by school teachers or police officers. A contributor to the *Inequalities Consultation* noted that fact that only 20 percent of the world's parliamentarians are women (a proportion that is likely to be reflected in other senior positions of the world's Governments) is a strong driver of this situation.[lxxxviii]

Women are greatly under-represented in *political institutions* at all levels as a result of deep-rooted discrimination common to societies across the world. While measures to remove more immediate barriers to women's participation are helpful, the very limited progress observed worldwide demonstrates the strength of underlying traditional power structures, and the continued dominance of men in decision making. In many countries, women's voice and participation may be emerging with regards to matters affecting their immediate and day-to-day lives, but their influence on wider issues remains very restricted. The establishment of quotas for women has increased their *presence* in some national parliaments, but nonetheless women's *influence,* and their opportunity to hold leaders to account or to assume leadership positions themselves remains very low in most cases.

Non-state institutions include the private sector, where women often experience discriminatory practices with regard to employment. Many other organisations – social, political, trades unions – also exhibit discrimination.

Kinship and *family* practices that reinforce the secondary status of women, are widespread and diverse. Some, such as required expressions of subservience or unequal distribution of food at household level, are widely prevalent. Many others are highly damaging, sometimes unique to particular countries or cultures, such as genital mutilation in North, West and East Africa, or the practice of force feeding pubescent girls in Mauritania.

Failures of sexual and reproductive health rights: Sexuality and reproductive health rights (SRHR) are the focus for significant discrimination against women and girls who have reached the age of sexual activity in many parts of the world. The root causes of inequalities in SRHR lie in social, cultural and political constraints to women's autonomy and freedom. These serve to limit women's control over their bodies, restrict their life choices, deny them access to adequate services, and pose substantial risks to life and health. The resolution of deep rooted gender inequalities and the achievement of sexual and reproductive health rights are fundamentally interlinked.

Poor women and women from disadvantaged groups often face significant lack of power over their own sexual and reproductive health, especially with regard to family planning. An estimated 220 million girls and women have an unmet need for contraception—a lack that results in about 60 million unintended pregnancies each year.[lxxxix] Evidence from the *Inequalities Consultation* shows that this is particularly concentrated in more vulnerable populations. "In Guatemala, for example, one in five women has an unmet need for contraception, whereas indigenous women experience an unmet need rate of two in five. Poorer women in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, are more likely to exchange sex for money, goods or favours and are also more vulnerable to rape and less likely to use condoms".[xc] A contributor also noted that women with disabilities sometimes face very great difficulties in this regard, perhaps greatest for those with learning disabilities whose sexuality is often regarded as taboo.[xci]

Women and girls often lack access to comprehensive information and services in SRHR. Where services exist, they may be incomplete, or not available to all women (restricted to married or heterosexual women, or inaccessible to disabled women or women from linguistic minorities). Women may need consent from husbands or others to access services, or may face discrimination if they exceed a designated number of pregnancies. Age-based discrimination also frequently undermines access to SRHR for both younger and older women.

Sexual and reproductive health rights are subject to the same level of obligation as other human rights. States have obligations under the treaties they have ratified to create an enabling environment for SRHR, to provide appropriate services, and protect women from coercion, threat or violence. This obligation is not diminished where prevailing ideology and norms seek to restrict SRHR. Where states have weak capacity or unable to provide for SRHR, the international community is obliged to assist.

Gender-based violence: The prevalence of violence against women and girls across the world is a matter of profound importance and concern. gender-based violence, directed against woman and girls because they are female, or affecting them

> "If women are to be considered as equal and responsible members of society, no aspect of their physical, psychological or sexual integrity can be compromised."
>
> --Anonymous, Contributor to e-discussion

disproportionately,[xcii] is perhaps amongst the most universal of deep social ills, representing a systematic pattern of behaviour, characteristic of many societies.

While Gender-based violence is both related to and reinforces a wide range of inequalities, contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* agreed that it is deeply grounded in fundamental inequalities between men and women. established by varying but nonetheless similar norms around gender. They concluded that gender-based violence is due to major structural inequalities in society– unequal power relations between women and men, girls and boys - in the economic, social (including legal) and political spheres. Participants also noted the prevalence of harmful traditional practices and forced early marriage as further contributing factors.[xciii] The vulnerability and high incidence of physical and sexual violence against women with disabilities was also highlighted, together with the lack of adequate protection and response. Contributors argued that gender-based violence, including psychological and sexual abuse, often represents a perverse expression of dissatisfaction with regard to power and self-worth on the part of the perpetrator. It is fuelled by a desire to feel and to appear "like a man", in line with regressive norms of masculinity, and in particular a perceived privilege and entitlement.[xciv,xcv] Contributors to the *Consultation* also presented evidence that in times of conflict, and where lawlessness, stress and violence are rife, gender-based violence can escalate as the result of existing structural biases that justify violence as a tool of subordination. Submissions provided specific evidence of the extent to which sexual violence against women and girls have become a truly shocking weapon of war.[xcvi]

> "The main factors of inequalities are the macho culture 'normalized'; in society and entrenched in public institutions."
>
> --Xenia, Contributor to e-discussion

Many contributors to the *Consultation* noted a lack of laws, lack of awareness of laws, or lack of appropriate institutions and services to implement legal provisions.[xcvii] In these circumstances, with limited action at policy and political levels, gender-based violence persists in many forms: intimate partner violence, harmful practices, violence in public spaces and in the workplace, trafficking and femicide.[xcviii] The fact that much violence happens in homes and families and the level of stigma (or even blame) attached to women who have experienced sexual violence mean accurate data on violence can be hard to obtain.[xcix] In countries where data exist, between 15 and 71 percent of partnered women have been physically or sexually abused by intimate partners.[c] Over 500,000 women are estimated to be trafficked across borders every year, subject to a wide variety of physical threats and abuse.[ci] Further, the immediate trauma of sexual violence is often followed by further and long-lasting harm. A study of rape victims in the DRC submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* indicated that around 92% report lasting mental health and physical impacts.[cii]

Contributors to the *Consultation* pointed out that besides data on incidence, estimates of the socio-economic costs of gender-based violence and the cost-benefits of addressing it are needed, both with regard to measuring impact on families and communities, as well as estimating the cost of service provision and other interventions for the purposes of public budgeting.[ciii]

Evidence submitted to the *Consultation* shows that disabled women and girls are twice as likely to be exposed to gender-based violence, and are likely to experience abuse over a longer period of time and to suffer more severe injuries as a result of the violence. The factors that render women and girls with disabilities more vulnerable to abuse include their dependence on carers

and family, their low status, isolation and lack of credibility if reporting the abuse.[civ] Further evidence reports that among adults who have intellectual disabilities, as many as 83% of females and 32% of males are victims of sexual assault.[cv]

Gender-based violence, and indeed other forms of violence, also affects children. Being witnesses and victims of gender-based violence shapes attitudes and behaviour, perpetuating intergenerational cycles of violent behaviour and abuse.[cvi] This violence is not only gender-based, but also linked to the vulnerability and fragility of children, their dependence on adults, their lack of voice and the lack of adequate systems and mechanisms for their protection. Estimates submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* suggest that every year up to 1.5 billion children are subjected to violence themselves, and 150 million girls and 73 million boys are raped or subject to sexual violence.[cvii] Other contributors reported studies in several countries of Africa found that 70% of all children had experienced physical and/or emotional and/or sexual violence before they reached their 18th birthday[cviii]; as many as 68% of female adolescents with intellectual disabilities have been abused before the age of 18.[cix] Many children encounter sexual and physical violence in their homes, together with emotional and psychological abuse and neglect.[cx] The long-term impact of this level of violence is profoundly detrimental at an individual level, diminishing intellectual and emotional functioning and life chances, *and* across whole societies.

3.3 Minorities and disadvantaged groups

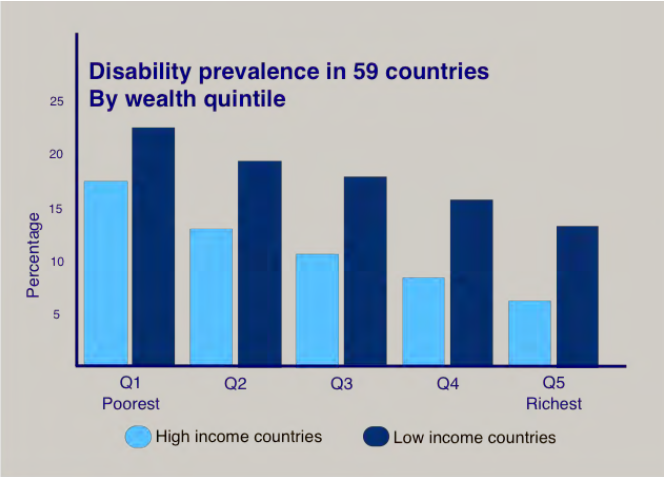
People subject to discrimination are often assigned lesser status on the basis of their identity. Members of disadvantaged groups, defined for example by gender, ethnicity, religion, language, HIV status, culture or caste as well as indigenous peoples and migrants, are found more often than not amongst the poorest and most marginalised in any given state. The hierarchies that define which groups are in a position of dominance, and which ones are excluded from full participation in various aspects of society, can become very entrenched. This exclusion can be underpinned by a combination of legal, political and economic measures, reinforced by widespread social, cultural and even religious devaluation, and perpetuated by limited access to food, healthcare, education, land rights, justice, employment and social protection.

While the identity of disadvantaged groups varies, there are commonalities in patterns of exclusion that are reproduced globally. Discrimination against ethnic minorities, religious or non-religious groups and racial discrimination is a key concern in this respect. In Latin America, some 50 million indigenous people and 120 million people of African descent account for around a third of the population. They are exposed to significant disparities in terms of wealth, land ownership, employment, political representation and civil participation. In East Asia, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities are consistently poorer, with indigenous groups in countries including Vietnam, Indonesia, and China tending to occupy marginal livelihoods in remote locations, largely beyond the reach of otherwise growing economies. The Hindu caste system in India and Nepal imposes explicit restrictions on families deemed "untouchable". In this regard, 17 and 12 percent of the population respectively are largely exiled from mainstream society through complex restrictions on work, housing, education, social interaction and movement.[cxi] From Western Europe through Central Asia, Roma people are exposed to violence, abuse, and stigma, including segregation in access to public services, and restrictions on freedom of movement.[cxii] In North America, African-Americans face diverse forms of

discrimination, with persistent disparities in health, education and incomes, and tenacious barriers to participation in social affairs. In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still fare much worse than the rest of the population in terms of education, employment, health, standard of living and the incidence of family violence. Their life expectancy is 12 years less for males and 10 years less for females as compared to the general population.[cxiii]

Religious and ethnic minorities are often physically co-located. Although this may easily serve to entrench isolation, it also creates space for group solidarity, and opportunities for social participation within the confines of that group. Other minority groups, however, are often more evenly distributed across the whole population.

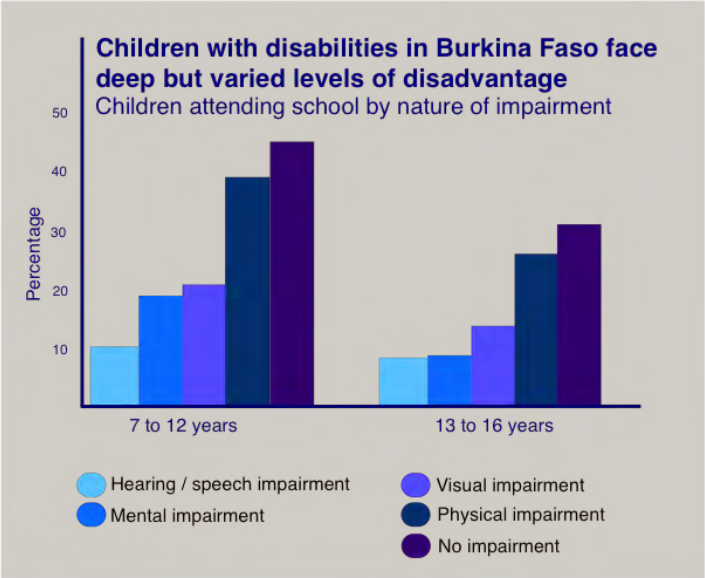
An important group in this regard are persons with disabilities. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* agreed that persons with disabilities, and in particular children with disabilities, face inequalities in all areas of life, not only leading to exclusion and discrimination but, combined with the frequent absence of adequate social protection measures, almost unavoidably resulting in poverty, extreme poverty and threats to the survival of persons with disabilities and their families.[cxiv] Persons with disabilities frequently face barriers to participation in society worldwide. Submissions highlighted deficits including access to development programmes and funds, education, employment, health care and transportation.



The *Inequalities Consultation* noted that persons with disabilities comprise some 12 to 18 percent of the world population, around 1 billion people, of whom around a fifth have a severe disability.[cxv] Around 80 percent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries,[cxvi] and in both rich and poor countries, disability rates are twice as high for people living in poverty compared to those who are well-off[cxvii] Conflict is also a leading cause of disability, exacerbated where those affected have low access to medical and other care, and in circumstances where civilians are most greatly affected by war, including through sexual violence against women.

The *Inequalities Consultation* found that poverty is both a cause and a consequence of disability. As a cause of disability, people living in poverty are more likely to suffer the consequences of poor maternal health or inadequate conditions around delivery, to lack access to health care that could reduce disability, and to suffer the consequences of unsafe living conditions, means of transportation and hazardous work. As a consequence, families may have to spend additional money to meet the needs of the disabled person, or to divert time from work in order to provide care and support. Persons with disabilities may have unmet needs for education, either through lack of appropriate services, or as a consequence of stigma in the home or the community. People with disabilities have the least access to safe water and sanitation facilities and this contributes to keeping them poor and unable to improve their livelihoods.[cxviii] On a range of indicators, persons with disabilities experience more deprivations, with greater severity, than persons without disabilities.[cxix]

Even as aggregate progress towards development goals is achieved, there is often little evidence of policy, programming or results that are adequately inclusive of persons with disabilities. One contributor highlighted the fact that many risk factors associated with HIV are increased for persons with disabilities (including sexual activity, rape, substance abuse), yet they are less likely to be included in outreach or treatment activities.[cxx] Many others raised the issue of education for persons with disabilities. Children with disabilities are often denied access to education, are placed in the "special education" system which is often a prevailing option in many countries, or have to leave schools prematurely because of inaccessibility, inadequate trained teachers, or lack of awareness among parents and school staff. As school attendance rises, there has been little or no increase in attendance amongst children with disabilities, and the means adopted to extend access have not specifically addressed either the supply or the demand constraints they face. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the fact that the majority of children with disabilities in Africa do not attend school, and an estimated one-third of children who remain out of school are disabled.[cxxi] Contributors noted that children with intellectual disabilities are particularly likely to be excluded.



Detailed national level analyses of inequalities affecting persons with disabilities are hampered by a widespread lack of data – usually excluded from sampling strategies on the grounds that the additional costs are not merited. One estimate from Bangladesh puts the cost of disability due to forgone income from a lack of schooling and employment, both of people with disabilities and their caregivers, at US$ 1.2 billion annually, or 1.7% of gross domestic product.[cxxii] Despite the scarcity of data, however, the reality of disparities and deprivation for persons with disabilities is in most cases patently obvious.

LGBTI people also live throughout society, and are often exposed to inequalities in households, communities and workplaces. Far from enjoying equality of rights with heterosexual people, the *Inequalities Consultation* found that LGBTI people very often instead face violence and discrimination that result from prejudice, negative stereotypes and intolerance. Participants from around the world highlighted the extent of discriminatory homophobic norms, legitimised and made respectable by political and religious leaders, and people in authority including teachers and health workers. Discrimination against LGBTI people is particularly widespread and virulent, manifested as violence, stigma, persecution, threats and bullying .[cxxiii] Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* made particular note of the discrimination and abuse that often faces young LGBTI people.[cxxiv] Where LGBTI people are subject to criminal sanction, they may be unable to seek appropriate support and redress. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* pointed out the severe physical and psychological consequences that arise. LGBTI people may

face restrictions in access to housing, health care, education and employment, and suicide has been reported as a consequence of these circumstances in many instances.[cxxv]

LGBTI people, men who have sex with men, as well as sex workers are, in many countries outlawed; in five countries and parts of two more, homosexuality carries a death penalty. In a further 78, same sex acts are criminalized.[cxxvi] Only 52 countries outlaw discrimination on grounds of sexuality, while just six embrace this in their constitution. These legal restrictions also widely serve to exclude these individuals from access to social services, including sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, treatment and care. The e-consultation on LGBTI and inequalities also observed that legal censure often extends to any activity associated with LGBTI activism or identity, including public mentioning of homosexuality or "propaganda". This amounts to further violation of rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, restricts the ability to raise awareness about LGBTI people, and limits the possibility for LGBTI people to enjoy an equal and adequate level of development.[cxxvii]

Even where the rights of LGBTI people are protected in law, social attitudes may continue to be explicitly hostile, in places creating considerable threat. In South Africa, for example, despite very comprehensive constitutional and legal guarantees for LGBTI people, the lives of many are characterize by abuse, threats, violence and discrimination. Rigid social and cultural norms in society do not reflect the aspirations of the post-apartheid constitution. Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted incidences of "corrective rape" of lesbians, which have been widely documented, and this is just one manifestation of the diverse forms of violence and abuse that affect LGBTI people.[cxxviii]

Migrants are another group that commonly faces legal discrimination. While many richer and middle income countries depend significantly on in-migration to maintain their economies, migrants are often exposed to multiple inequalities and lack of protection of rights. The burden of these problems often falls on women and children. Access to social services may be formally restricted, or undermined by institutional constraints, including language and social stigma. Civil and political rights are also often curtailed. For children of migrants, whose continued stay in the host country is important in the context of falling birthrates, a second-class status in the education system undermines prospects for social and economic mobility. The *Inequalities Consultation* received submissions that focused on the particular issue of women who migrate alone for domestic work, facing particular risks as a result of being required to live with their employers, with little or no means of responding to abuse or exploitation. Migrant domestic workers in the Middle East in particular report multiple forms of abuse, such as lack of adequate living conditions, food deprivation, long working hours, no rest days, low or no payment, restrictions of movement, and confiscation of passports. They are subject to physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual abuse. Since these women accumulate debt for overseas employment, they are often reluctant to leave and lose their jobs. Resorting to the legal system for redress is impossible.[cxxix]

Prolonged chronic poverty can render any sector of a society vulnerable to diverse and enduring inequalities in all domains. The long-term unemployed in developed countries are one such example. Communities that have been reliant on an industry that has closed are likely to have high levels of unemployment, falling standards in schools and health indicators, and a lack of social and economic mobility that is reproduced across generations. Further, discrimination,

stigma and negative social stereotypes may attach to such communities, reducing social participation, opportunities for employment and political support for targeted measures.

3.4 Inequalities and age: Population dynamics, children and old people

Discrimination on grounds of age affect children, young adults and older people. These patterns of inequalities affect not just individual well-being, but entire populations. Further, population dynamics – changes in the size, age structure and location of populations – have strong direct effects as both the cause and consequences of inequalities.

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* emphasised the fact that population dynamics[3] affect the size of the labour force, migration and urbanisation patterns, and the requirements needed to meet the needs of older and younger people. This has very important implications for employment, income distribution and poverty, as the implications of both increasingly young populations as well as aging populations are significant for national, regional and global economies. The need for investment in education and training, growing numbers of new entrants to the labour market, and the changing need for housing and infrastructure are seen in relations to younger populations, whilst also taking note of migration patterns, urbanisation and fertility rates.

For aging populations, age distributions affect the make-up of workforces, and requirements for social security, pensions and health care. Each has a direct effect on demand and supply, and on social and economic development. At a national level, population dynamics challenge States' abilities to ensure universal access to health, education and other essential services, and they influence environmental sustainability, climate change, and water, food and energy security.[cxxx]

Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of inequalities. Children in any disadvantaged group will be exposed to the same risks as adults, and to additional risks that threaten both their immediate and long term well-being.[cxxxi]

Children are more exposed to economic inequalities than adults, simply by virtue of being over-represented in the poorest sectors of society. There are more children on average in the poorest households, and fewer in the richer households. In the poorest groups, where there are likely to be fewer adults and more children (and more elderly people and more persons with disabilities), the struggle to balance household resources is very significantly played out by compromising children's needs. Living conditions surveys in different countries show that expenditure in poor households is largely allocated to food, health and education – areas where insecurity and inadequacy will damage children, with long term or even irreversible effects. Where income is insufficient and provision for basic needs is tenuous, any shock to income will invariably affect children. In some countries, son-preference behaviours mean that girls carry the greatest share of risk, whilst in others, mortality rates and lack of access to health services among children with disabilities strongly suggest further inequalities at household level.[cxxxii]

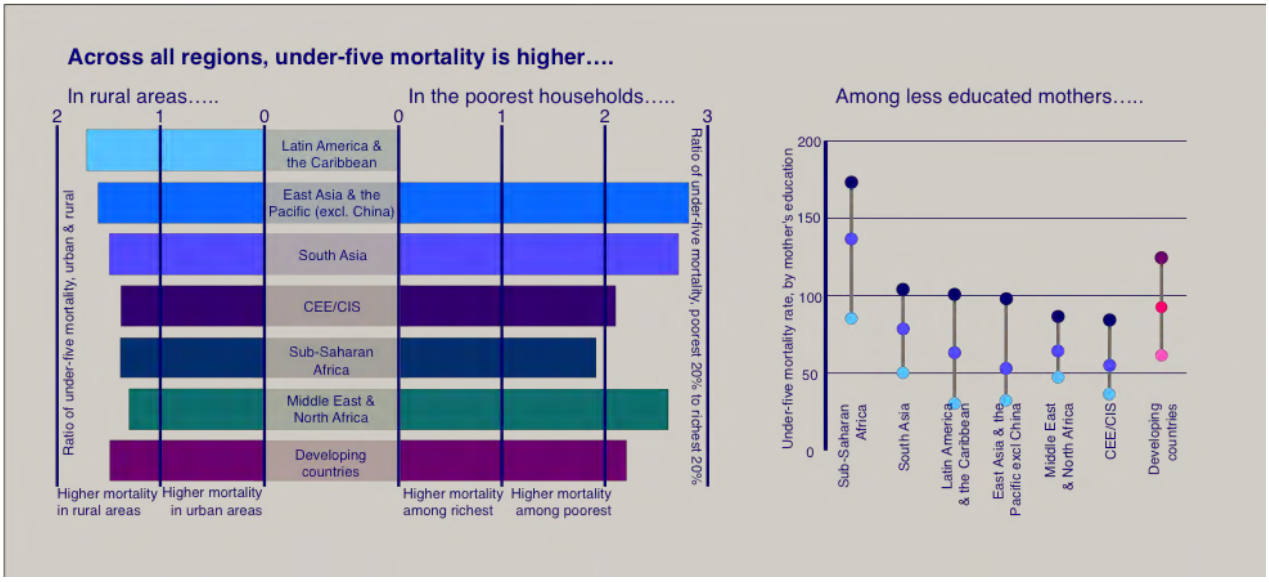
The impact of economic crisis has disproportionately affected people living in poverty around the world. While the wealth of the richest people has been protected or even grown, people

[3] See also the consultation on population dynamics, at http://www.worldwewant2015.org/population

living in poverty have been more likely to be exposed to unemployment, falling incomes, and rising food and fuel prices. With children more likely to be in poorer households, where competition for scant resources is greatest, analyses of the income available specifically for children's needs shows an amplified pattern of inequality – with children being estimated to face twice as much income inequality as adults. Research on a sample of 32 low- and middle-income countries submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* by *Save the Children*, showed that in two-thirds of these countries, the income effectively available to children in the poorest groups grew more slowly than the richer groups between the 1990s and 2012. In 12 countries, the rate of growth available to children in the richest decile was at least double that for the poorest, while in six countries, the incomes available to the poorest children fell.[cxxxiii]

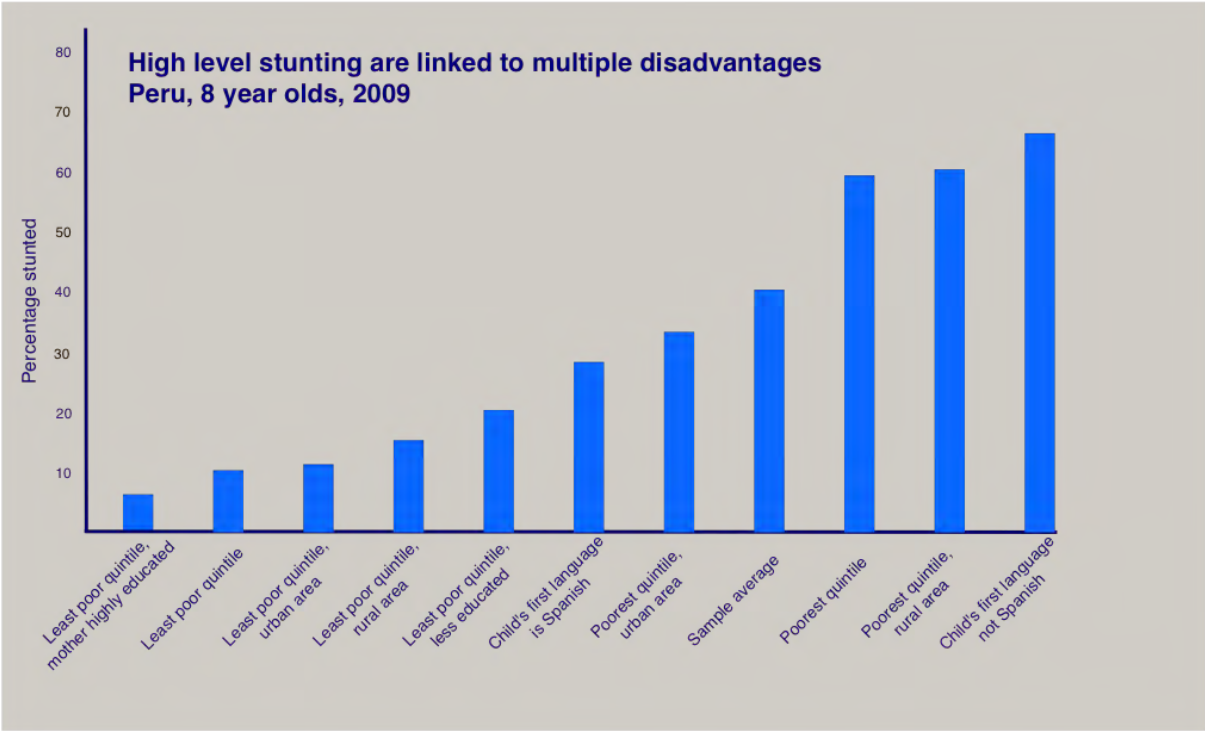
In the USA, one-fifth of children live in poverty, the second worst among rich nations. Nobel-prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz attributes this to falling incomes amongst the middle classes. This results in reduced investment in education and less resources available to meet the needs of children at household level, and a weakening tax base for public provision of services to meet the shorter and longer term needs of children. Stiglitz notes that children born to parents of limited means in the US have less chance of doing better than their parents than their peers in Canada, France, Germany or Sweden.[cxxxiv]

The consequences of inequalities for children are profound. Besides the diminished capacities that are carried into adulthood as a result of poor health and education, children are simply more likely to die. In all regions of the world, under-5 mortality rates are substantially higher in rural areas, amongst poorest households, and for children of less educated mothers.[cxxxv]

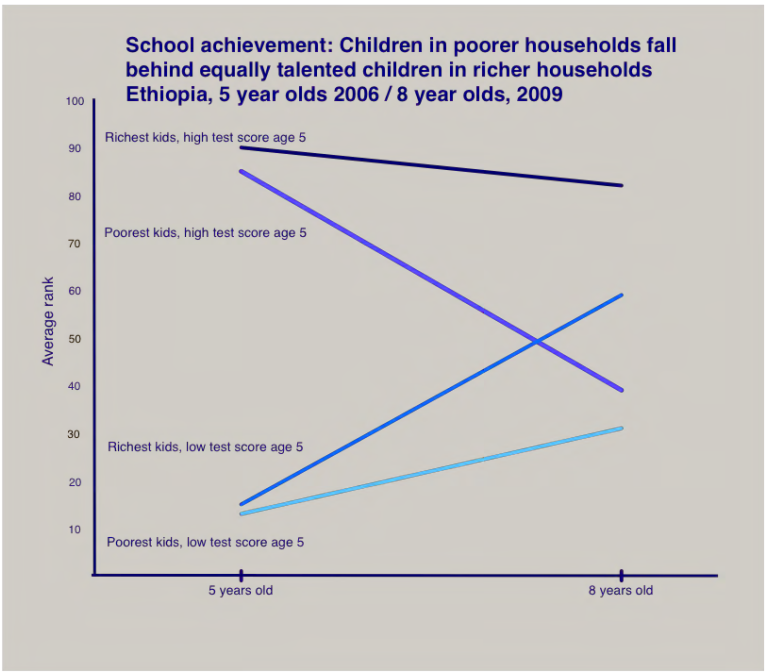


The *Young Lives Project at Oxford University* is generating evidence on the complex interaction and longitudinal effects of inequalities on children, through long term study of cohorts of children in four countries. The results show how deficits in nutrition, health, education and social inclusion have mutually reinforcing consequences. Risks of enduring and damaging outcomes rise sharply as children are exposed to more than one manifestation of disadvantage, and to more frequent and damaging adverse events. Notably, this detailed analysis demonstrates how the true extent of inequalities can be masked by simple analyses of single indicators of

disadvantage (rural/urban, poor/not poor, mother tongue and so on). Datasets that support detailed disaggregation by various forms of disadvantage as well as income provide a better insight in the extent of the disparities accruing to those exposed to multiple disadvantages.[cxxxvi]



Malnutrition amongst mothers and children is in most circumstances closely linked, and is itself an indicator of diverse forms of disadvantage. Mothers' education, age and status within the family and community all interact with more commonly examined "objective" measures such as household income or distance to health services. Malnutrition, especially stunting, in the early years can have irreversible effects on physical and cognitive development, embedding inequalities through effects that manifest in future years, although there is some evidence that recovery is possible.[cxxxvii] Well documented evidence of diminished language development and learning resulting from early childhood deprivation was submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation*,[cxxxviii] together with new research that further links childhood nutrition deficits to depleted self-esteem, aspirations and social functioning.[cxxxix] Maternal mortality also affects the normal development of children physically and emotionally, with the scarring effects of being orphaned continuing into adulthood.



As children move into primary school, the pathways through which multiple inequalities damage their progress diversify

rapidly. Stigma, discrimination and self-worth, the competing demands of household chores and economic activities, home support for learning, and the effects of a minority mother tongue all contribute to dwindling performance of disadvantaged children compared to others. The graph above shows remarkably similar evidence from Young Lives research in Ethiopia: within just a few years, school performance rapidly reflects socio-economic status, as the performance of initially promising poor-household children falls, and that of low-performing richer-household children improves.

Gender disparities are significant for children of all ages, with particularly intensive effects at later stages of development, as new manifestations of gender differences open. Gender disadvantage usually affects girls, but boys are often also disadvantaged. Significant differences in the level of care given to girls and boys are an enduring feature of some societies. In South Asia, for every 100 male child deaths, the number of female child deaths rose from 137 in 1990 to 143 in 2008.[cxl]

Evidence presented to the *Inequalities Consultation* shows that 71 million young adolescents are still not in school, and less than a quarter of young people complete secondary school. Girls of primary-school age from the poorest 60% of households are three times more likely to be out of school as those from the wealthiest households, and twice as many girls of secondary-school age are out of school compared to their wealthier peers.[cxli]

As children grow, different expectations of young men and women affects caregivers' decision-making and views. Decision-making about girls is increasingly directed towards fulfilling prevailing social expectations of marriage and/or child bearing. Child marriage and/or pregnancy rapidly reproduces the cycle of risk for children, as outcomes for teenage mothers and their children are again exposed to multiple inequalities. Participants in the *Inequalities Consultation* gave examples of young people are often denied sexual and reproductive health services and information, provided with inaccurate information, stigmatized and discriminated against due to their age, cultural or religious backgrounds, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or gender identity, or marital status, suffering diverse harm as a consequence.[cxlii]

Prospects for boys are more likely to be influenced by economic prospects, and are more straightforward: boys from poorer backgrounds finish school earlier, foregoing opportunities that would increase future incomes with the likelihood of immediate entry into lower-income activities. There are also many examples of disadvantaged boys having to follow their fathers into hazardous occupations, making up for falling incomes that result from their fathers' prematurely failing health.

Older people are also affected by inequalities. As people age, they are often perceived to be dependent and no longer capable. Their continuing economic and social contribution is largely ignored. Older people are routinely denied access to resources and services as a result of their age. A submission to the *Inequalities Consultation* quotes an older person in Tanzania saying "Some staff in hospitals are not treating older people well. They claim we are only old but not sick".[cxliii]

Many older people are exposed to poverty due to their reducing capacity to earn a personal income as a result of declining functional capacity or disability. This is exacerbated where older people who had been anticipating support from family members, instead find themselves caring

for young grandchildren whose parents are absent because of economic migration, or who have died as a result of conflict, HIV/AIDS and other illnesses. As a result, evidence submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* shows that households including both older people and children are, on average, the poorest households in Africa.[cxliv] In some cases older people also lose land and other capital assets needed for production, either because they have had to sell them to meet immediate living and health expenditures (for themselves and dependents), or because they have been taken over by their adult children and other younger relatives. In these situations, older people often find it difficult to defend themselves because of physical and social isolation, lack of confidence and knowledge of their rights, and lack of legal protection or support within existing legal systems. This is particularly so in the case of older women and widows, where their inheritance rights are not supported by local or national law.

Contributors also highlighted the fact that older people with disabilities experience double discrimination relating to their age and disability status.[cxlv] Older people are no more homogenous than any other age group – growing old does not necessarily mean becoming disabled, older people experience a range of different forms of impairment and their experience of disability will vary according to environmental factors. However, older people are more likely to have impairments than younger people because the factors which cause impairment accumulate through the life course and are often aggravated by poverty. These factors include illness or injury relating to high risk work or lifestyle, combined with poor health and safety provision, poor living conditions, poor nutrition and lack of access to health services and information. Added to these in some cases are injuries relating to conflict, civil unrest and domestic violence. Non-communicable diseases play an increasing role as a cause of disabilities among older people, through ischaemic heart disease, diabetes, chronic lung disease and osteoarthritis. Older people in developing countries tend to be disproportionately affected by non-communicable disease - for example, older people carry three times the burden of visual impairment as those in the developed world.[cxlvi]

Dementia also has a significant impact on the quality of life for older people, and is a significant and growing factor in age-related disability across the world. For people over 60, it is the main cause of disability worldwide. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* cite evidence that, as the number of older people increases, the total number of people with dementia worldwide is set to nearly double every 20 years, to 65.7 million in 2030 and 115.4 million in 2050.[cxlvii] These increases will be more evident in countries where the population is ageing rapidly.

The submissions also pointed out that older people who have had mental health conditions affecting them throughout their lives can experience more disabling factors when in older age. Depression, for example, is too often seen as a natural consequence of ageing, bereavement and physical illness, and is therefore not diagnosed or treated. This is likely to be associated with poor health and economic status, isolation and lack of community support, feelings of worthlessness and fear of becoming a burden. As a result, old age is one of the major risk factors for suicide.[cxlviii]

3.5 Spatial inequalities

Inequalities have a strong spatial dimension. Communities in some geographical locations tend to do worse than those in other areas, with the extent of disparities often as marked as that shown by any other measure.

Spatial inequalities are often associated with rural populations, particularly those in more remote, hard to access and underserved areas. Rural areas are often subject to simultaneous inequalities in the economic, social, environmental and political domains. In many countries, including some industrialised countries, economic inequalities result from the marginalisation of small scale agriculture as a priority for investment and development. Whether for national sales or export, small scale producers face significant and perhaps increasing shocks as a result of macroeconomic policies and shocks, price instability and climate change. In the social domain, rural areas may be home to minority ethnic or language groups, indigenous peoples, or communities held to be "different" or even "backward"by virtue of their culture. These factors, together with disparities in education levels, may be the source of discrimination against people living in rural areas, deemed unequal to their urban peers. In the environmental domain, rural people are more likely to depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, and hence most likely to face problems in securing access and tenure over those resources. In the political domain, the lack of information and communication has in many places long been marked, and is perhaps more so now when telephones and the internet fail to reach remote areas. Lack of information and communications undermines rural participation and the expression of voice, and serves to reduce access to means of resolving disputes.

Remoteness can be both a cause and consequence of inequalities. In physically hard to reach areas, populations may have fewer services (especially health, clean water and education), poor transportation, low access to information and to markets, and diminished opportunities for participation and representation. Where populations are sparse, these inequalities are more acute. However, not all remoteness is the consequence of intrinsically difficult terrain. Ethnic groups have sometimes remained in far-off areas over generations as a result of historical conflict with others, undermining present day relationships and political influence. Other places may simply be rendered remote by virtue of policy neglect and lack of investment in infrastructure – which may be a consequence of political inequalities, rather than a cause.

Disparities between urban and rural areas are often taken as a proxy for spatial inequalities, and there is often considerable justification for this approach. However, there was significant concern expressed by contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* that, even where average outcomes favour urban populations, closer analysis suggests that disparities *within* urban areas are becoming increasingly significant. One example of this was evidence from Peru, where child stunting is lower in urban than rural areas. However, the poorest children in urban areas are four times more likely to be stunted than the least poor urban children, and nearly twice as likely to be stunted as least poor rural children.[cxlix]

With growing urbanisation and the disproportionate accumulation of wealth by a few, the gap between the urban rich and the rising numbers of urban poor is growing. Contributors to the *Consultation* cited poor housing conditions, vastly inadequate sanitation, and the high costs of food and transport, as well as poor quality services in education and health, as contributing to entrenching poverty, while weak social networks reduce the capacity of poor urban families to

invest in better livelihoods or to cope with shocks.[cl] Another submission to the *Consultation* presented detailed arguments on why the extent of urban poverty and the conditions of the most deprived may not be adequately measured or understood. Homeless people, street dwellers and residents of informal settlements, illegal tenants, people accommodated in workplaces and multiple-occupancy households usually lack a legal address, which besides restricting access to social services and other opportunities such as voter registration, will also almost certainly lead to their omission from poverty estimates and household surveys.[cli]

Further, disadvantaged urban groups largely depend on the informal sector, beyond the reach of regulation concerning either wages or safety. Microenterprises may be undermined by the need to pay bribes, with people in authority, including police, using their power to threaten rather than protect people living in poverty. People engaging in illegal activities and sex work face particular risks, but may have little or no opportunity to move into safer work.

Rapidly growing urban areas often lack social cohesion, networks and community organisation. Mobile and diverse populations, lack of secure tenure and informal settlements mean that relations at neighbourhood level are often weaker than in other urban and rural locations. This undermines mutuality and the development of informal safety nets, with individuals and families less able to invest in social capital or depend on it in difficult times. At a political level, these factors diminish opportunities for local participation, consultation and dialogue with local authorities and service providers.

Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the particular issues facing indigenous peoples as part of a global trend towards urbanization. Indigenous peoples in urban areas encounter substantial difficulties, including unemployment, racism, limited access to services and severe housing needs. Indigenous youth are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, resulting in exclusion and poverty. Indigenous migrant frequently become the slum dwellers of the cities. They are prone to disease, more at risk of HIV and AIDS and suffer as much from hunger and malnutrition as rural indigenous peoples.[clii]

Section 4: Tackling Inequalities

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"As we strive towards a post-2015 agenda and positively changing the societies we live in, we need to address the overall lack of the key catalysts of change that are critical for young people: Communication, Education and Civic participation."

— Rob Rass (Contribution to E-discussion on Inequalities and Young People)

Section 4: Tackling inequalities

There are many good examples of actions that have been taken to address inequalities. Many of the submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* were about these actions, giving rich insight into the diverse efforts of individuals, communities, civil society, Governments and international actors around the world. Some of the examples in this Section are drawn directly from the papers submitted, while others were identified through suggestions made by contributors to the e-discussions, with further information derived from other sources.

Doing more for disadvantaged people is not the same as addressing inequalities. Doing more may result in improvements in line with development indicators, but won't necessarily tackle or change the structural barriers that limit freedom, dignity and social standing for many. *Addressing inequalities depends on tackling those structural barriers*, creating conditions in all countries where all people are able to enjoy equality of rights and opportunity.

Many of the actions highlighted in this section will not bring about transformative change by themselves. They are reported here as building blocks that have the potential to contribute to tackling inequalities. Significant and lasting progress in addressing inequalities requires broad, multi-faceted and more strategic action at several levels. Some examples of this are discussed at the end of the Section.

4.1 Framework for transformative change

Tackling inequalities depends on action at four levels. These are drawn from the human rights framework, reflecting the obligation of duty bearers (primarily the State), to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, and the concurrent need for rights holders to have increased capacity to claim rights. The four levels of action, *together,* are both necessary and sufficient for transformative change. A partial or lesser combination may alleviate the effects of disparities and disadvantage, but will not address underlying structural inequalities.

1. **Entitlements to equality and non-discrimination need to be established in law**, guided by the human rights framework, and implemented through non-discriminatory and pro-equality **economic and social policy.** These actions to respect people's human rights are the primary responsibility of the state.

2. States also need to take action to ***protect*** **citizens and others from discrimination, violence, exploitation and harm** by others. Safeguards are needed against threats at family and community level, at work, from gender-based violence, environmental hazards, harmful impacts of business activity and from unfair economic and financial systems.

3. **Levelling up measures** are needed to offer progressive support to individuals and groups whose capabilities have been diminished or constrained by inequalities.

4. Strengthening the capacity of **rights holders to make valid claims on others** is integral to all actions to tackle inequalities.

Each of these four sets of action need to encompass the economic, social, environmental and political domains, providing a comprehensive set of measures needed to tackle structural inequalities.

The table below provides a framework of necessary actions in each of the four domains, summarised from the conclusions of each of the e-consultations conducted as part of the *Inequalities Consultation*. Although the framework does not mention each recommendation specifically – there are over fifty, which can be found in the Annexes – each of them can be accommodated within the framework, under the summary actions indicated.

	ACTION TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES				
STRUCTURAL DOMAIN OF INEQUALITIES		**Legal, social & economic policy**	**Protection from discrimination, exploitation & harm**	**Levelling up measures**	**Capacity to claim**
	Economic	Inclusive and pro-equality economic policy, including employment and expenditure measures	International financial systems & tax justice Protection at work, labour standards and institutions	Social protection floor Targeted expenditures Special measures to address special needs of disadvantaged groups	Training, skills development, engagement with labour institutions
	Social	Inclusive and pro-equality social policy, health, nutrition, SRHR and education	Combat gender-based and other forms of violence, abuse and exploitation.	Affirmative action Address discriminatory social norms and practices.	Opportunities for participation at community level, for all disadvantaged groups
	Environmental	Inclusive environment, land, natural resources, housing policies	Global action against climate change, its negative impacts	Climate change resilience and participation in adaptive social protection / disaster risk reduction	
	Political	Equality in constitution & laws, guided by human rights / prohibited grounds of discrimination.	Tackle institutionalised inequalities, discrimination at all levels. Development systems of accountability at all levels.	Better data systems and analysis, shared information, monitoring for accountability.	Decentralised and accessible participatory governance, political representation, systems of accountability.

The nature, extent and distribution of inequalities guides the priorities and strategy for action in any particular context.

The following sub-sections focus on examples of measures to address inequalities across each of the four structural domains. The specific examples are drawn from the wide range of

submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation*, demonstrating the diversity of the papers and other contributions from around the world.

4.2 Tackling economic inequalities

Inclusive economic policies

Economic policy is often seen as the core business of Government, *inter alia* influencing the patterns of availability of jobs and livelihoods, the availability of social services, and provisions for redistribution. It is important, therefore, that economic policy goals integrate and clearly express interventions to reduce inequalities. Beyond aggregate targets for growth, the aim of economic policy should be understood in terms of reducing inequalities and building equitable opportunities for economic participation, both immediately and through investment in human capabilities. If inequalities are to be reduced, the fair distribution of wealth and opportunity should become the core business of economists and decision-makers. Where concern about the lives of economically marginalised groups is limited to the social sectors alone, change will inevitably be limited.

Inclusive economic policies combine a focus on work with progressive taxation, provision for pro-poor social policy, and social protection.

Improved access to decent work is necessary to address inequality world-wide. To do so, labour market policies that were intended to promote growth by loosening "rigidities" and "inefficiencies" in labour markets by lifting the perceived binding constraints of labour laws would need to be revisited.[cliii] Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* highlighted the need for labour market institutions, weakened in recent decades by policies that have favoured employers, to be strengthened.[cliv] Increased minimum wages, collective bargaining and stronger employment law have significant benefits for inequality. Fears that strengthening minimum wage legislation will create unemployment have been shown to be unfounded, with only small effects, or in some cases non-existent or even positive effects.[clv] In **Latin America,** policy frameworks have simultaneously supported the creation of formal jobs and strengthened labour market institutions and collective bargaining in the past decade, serving as a key instrument for reducing inequality.[clvi]

If expanding decent work is going to contribute to reduced inequality, a special focus on fair and equitable access is required. Female workers, young people and persons with disabilities commonly face barriers, disadvantage and discrimination, along with ethnic minority and indigenous peoples, religious and language groups. Necessary measures include enhancing skills and readiness for work, as well as protection against wage and other forms of discrimination. In **Latin America**, moves to offer greater protection to domestic workers has reached many women working in the informal sector. Expanding the scope and scale of labour protection, improving income opportunities, upgrading skills and expanding the availability of jobs are key to combating the pervasive inequalities in employment.[clvii]

Many disadvantaged and poor people are found in the informal sector, self-employed or as employees, particularly at the low end where skills and capital are scarce. Measures are needed to extend both regulation and support into the informal sector, reduce the gap in wages between the formal and informal sectors, and ensure the inclusion of informal workers in social security

systems. A paper submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* describes a programme in **Indonesia**, in which efforts to reach out to the informal sector with financial and non-financial services have improved efficiency, creating greater security and upgrading the skills of employees.[clviii]

In many countries, an emphasis on attracting foreign direct investment has had higher priority than agricultural policy, particularly in the small scale sector. The resources invested (or foregone in concessions) to promote new manufacturing in some instances far exceed those directed towards small scale farming, despite the much greater numbers of women and men engaged in agriculture. In developing countries, investment in on-and off-farm infrastructure, skills, and working capital are essential for agricultural growth, together with institutions that protect farmers from dumping and unfair markets, prevent exploitation by local or national monopolies, insure against risks and facilitate collective voice.[clix]

Progressive fiscal policies are essential for tackling inequalities. Regressive tax regimes are common in many countries, with the poorest facing a significant tax burden, the richest enjoying modest tax rates (whether *de jure* or *de facto*), and national and international business paying the least through the exploitation of opportunities for tax avoidance. At country level, tax policies that will address inequalities need to be firmly progressive. At a global level, regulation is needed to eliminate transfer pricing and other means by which resources are moved into tax havens (see below).

Public expenditures need to support basic services and programmes that are non-discriminatory, pro-poor in distribution and impact, and that ensure universal access to a comprehensive set of services (see below).

Policies on redistribution and particularly on pro-poor subsidies are a third important element of fiscal policy. In different contexts, the appropriate balance between universal and targeted subsidies will vary. A combination of targeted transfers and the public provision of social services can be powerful tools for reducing income inequality. In **Argentina**, public spending on subsidies and transfers increased from a 3-year average of 8.2 percent of GDP in 1990–1992 to 14.8 per cent in 2007–2009, contributing substantially to falling inequalities; in **Venezuela** the same expenditures rose from 7 per cent to 13.9 percent during the same period.[clx] Even where comprehensive transfers and subsidies are not in place, food subsidies, if properly designed and applied to commodities used predominantly by poorer families, may play an important role in addressing inequalities. In the poorest countries, food accounts for up to 80 percent of household expenditure. Rising food prices can result in a reduction in nutritional intakes, as well as asset sales and cuts in other basic expenditures, including health and education.[clxiclxii]

International financial systems and tax justice

The inequalities that stem from international financial systems, including tax avoidance and evasion, are increasingly identified as drivers of disparities both within and between rich and poor countries. Practices of transfer pricing, shifting profits into tax havens away from both countries of production and of markets, reduces the revenue available to Governments throughout the world, with particularly significant effects in low- and middle-income countries.

The power to address this serious matter lies very largely with rich industrialised countries. With increasing awareness that these countries are themselves losing substantial revenue, and

increasing public anger, consensus is rapidly growing that action must be taken. Measures to curtail tax avoidance and evasion depend on the regulations that rich nations apply to companies operating in their jurisdiction, and should focus on requirements to publish accounts for each of the countries they work in. Transparency requirements would show what companies are doing in each of the countries in which they operation, and would help ensure that tax avoidance becomes politically and publically unacceptable.[clxiii]

In developing countries, tax authorities are often weak. Measures to strengthen authorities, to increase domestic tax compliance and to address the operations of multinational companies are all important, and should be supported through international cooperation where necessary.

Protection at work

People subjected to discrimination are particularly vulnerable to hazardous, exploitative work, or to abuse. They may have little choice but to accept work or pursue livelihoods that threaten life and health, and migrants in particular are often made additionally vulnerable through discriminatory legal provisions.

International labour standards provide for the enhancement of safe work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity. Although the vast majority of work is in the private sector, the state has primary responsibility to ensure that people enjoy these protections. Responsibility extends to the informal sector, to family businesses and to protect all people, regardless of age, legal status or any other characteristic. In **Moldova, Morocco** and **Benin**, for example measures to support expanded provisions for maternity leave, including provisions for payments, to protect part-time workers and to expand the entitlements of fathers, have all protected women from having to choose between safe motherhood and work.[clxiv]

Social protection

Social protection offers a powerful means to redistribute wealth, reaching excluded communities and disadvantaged groups. Whether intended as productive in the shorter term, or focused on longer term human capital development, or both, evidence from many places shows that social protection offers not only positive immediate effects but also broader developmental impacts. These result, for example, in widespread improved access to schooling, improved health and nutrition, and a stimulus to local trade. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* argued that social protection is not only affordable but also an essential and cost-effective means of tackling poverty, protecting and investing in human capital, and assisting individuals and families to manage risks and shocks.[clxv] In **Mexico** and **Brazil**, evidence shows significant effects for marginalised indigenous peoples with progressive rates of inclusion in both the *Opportunidades* and *Bolsa Familia* programmes.[clxvi] In **India**, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme shows high levels of participation amongst women, *dalits* and scheduled tribes, and provides an opportunity for engagement with otherwise marginalized groups.[clxvii] As reported by contributors in other countries, social protection has helped improve social cohesion, building participation and engagement in support of economic and social development at community level.[clxviii] Where rights to social protection have been formally articulated, as in **South Africa**, **Thailand** and **Brazil**, the fulfilment of rights to social security, after many years of multiple exclusions, has helped in expanding both individual and collective citizenship. In these countries and many others, social pensions are a particularly important element of social protection provision, offering a powerful means of reducing the income inequalities that – by

age – are commonly most significant amongst older people, while also supporting many vulnerable children who depend on them.[clxix]

Targeted expenditure

There are different views on where poverty-focused expenditures are best directed. Some say that scarce resources should be directed to where they will reach the largest number of people at the lowest cost, achieving quick wins. The argument is that there are many people who face deprivation and lack freedom, whose lives can be improved through a relatively efficient application of resources; a quick-wins approach can move national statistics relatively easily. Others say that such approaches tend to improve outcomes strictly within existing structural relationships, without addressing the factors that determine and reproduce inequalities for disadvantaged groups. Outcomes for the most greatly marginalised, and the extent of disparity between the most and least privileged groups, may not show significant change.

More recently, however, the basic premises of this debate have been challenged. UNICEF analyses suggest that focusing on the worst-off children and households can in fact achieve much greater cost-effectiveness. Excluded communities tend to have large numbers of children, who are exposed to high levels of preventable or treatable infectious disease. Despite the additional costs of reaching remote areas, extending basic services to these populations using cost-effective programme designs and technologies, is expected to have a very high level of impact, so much so that results compare favourably in terms of cost-effectiveness. The scope to improve key indicators in health – maternal and child mortality, access to PMTCT, nutritional status - is potentially very substantial, and it would be likely that investment in other basic services such as education would show similar results.[clxx]

Investment in regional development initiatives is an important means for making these investments. Regional and area-focused investments in places where populations have been exposed to long-standing deprivations can give rise to more inclusive participation in the economy, and to a range of social benefits. In **Vietnam**, the Northern Mountains Community Development Project assists 1 million people in a very poor area of the country, most of whom belong to disadvantaged minority groups. By employing people to work on social projects as well as transport links, and creating irrigation and economic infrastructure to support improved livelihoods, average household incomes are reported to have doubled in the three years to 2007.[clxxi]

4.3 Tackling social inequalities

Inclusive social policy

Inclusive social policy refers to a set of provisions that facilitate a fair distribution of well-being outcomes in accordance with the principles of universality and non-discrimination. Making appropriate social services available to disadvantaged populations depends on providing accessible and affordable services, in an environment that is conducive and enables effective interaction, together with measures that address barriers to participation based on poverty, social stigma and discriminatory practices. In any given environment, constraints to achieving any one of these conditions will undermine equal access to services. Most effective approaches therefore depend on context-specific analysis, and holistic responses. The possible scope of

these policies is very broad; in the *Inequalities Consultation*, particular emphasis was placed on making provision for services that enable women to realize their sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) and on education.

Inequalities in both health and education are strongly related to persistent inequalities in social norms and attitudes, particularly with regards to gender. Measures to address discriminatory social norms and related practices are important for the success of any attempt to address inequalities, and will have to address sometimes tenacious attitudes in families and communities, amongst services providers, and amongst decision makers and leaders.

Tacking SRHR inequalities requires a comprehensive health policy, providing universal access to all necessary services . This includes measures to help women to make choices over their sexual and reproductive health, necessary services to enable them to access the highest standards of health care, and protection of both women and girls against violence, coercion and gender-based practices including female genital mutilation. Investment in services is required, particularly in ensuring readily available access to trained health staff at all levels. Evidence submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* from **Malawi** suggests that the expansion of skilled birth attendance services has proven to be a critical intervention in reducing inequality in sexual and reproductive health outcomes.[clxxii] Universal access to SRHR requires special provisions for women with disabilities, women from linguistic minorities, and women who are discouraged or prevented from accessing SRHR information and services.

> "When our rights are guaranteed, including our sexual and reproductive rights, we are better positioned to make free and informed decisions regarding our health, well-being and futures."
>
> --Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

The improvement of access to services is strongly underpinned by increased participation among women, particularly those from groups that are exposed to social inequalities. In **Bolivia**, training of women's organisations led to improvements in the numbers of women seeking prenatal care, and was associated with a decline in peri-natal mortality. In **India** and **Nepal**, similar programmes had dramatic effects on neonatal and maternal mortality amongst disadvantaged groups.[clxxiii]

Addressing inequalities in education requires measures to improve service delivery, regulation, participation and achievement, from pre-school to tertiary level. Educational policies should affirm and protect language and cultural diversity. In many countries, investment in early childhood development programmes has been shown to be highly effective, improving cognitive development and long-term education outcomes for children, and using parenting skills curriculum to extend benefits through the family.[clxxiv,clxxv] At primary and secondary school level, access for girls and marginalised groups can be improved through targeted interventions. A contribution to the *Inequalities Consultation* showed how, in **Bangladesh** and **India,** more gender-sensitive teaching has encouraged girls to remain in school.[clxxvi]

Other submissions suggested that adapting services to meet the particular needs of marginalised people can have significant results in terms of uptake and effectiveness. The Life-Wide learning approach developed in **Ethiopia**, **Peru**, **Bangladesh** and **Pakistan** promotes early childhood development strategies that incorporate local knowledge and extend learning beyond the

classroom through the mobilisation of other family and community members. By increasing access to materials and giving parents the skills to supplement school-based learning, significant improvements have been demonstrated in the performance of girls, children from linguistic minorities and those from a low-literacy family background.[clxxvii] Persons with disabilities, especially those who also belong to other disadvantaged groups and/or are living in deprived regions, are also vulnerable to shortcomings in access to public services. Efforts to extend appropriate services to unreached communities may take into account issues of gender, language and social barriers, but may often overlook the needs of persons with disabilities. In **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, a significant investment by the Government has built a network of 539 specialised schools spread across all districts, teaching children with disabilities together with their peers. This has promoted inclusive learning and greatly increased participation and attainment amongst children with disabilities, even where resources are not sufficient to yet fulfil policy commitments to extend inclusive education to all schools.[clxxviii]

In **India** and **South Africa,** affirmative action policies in education have been introduced to redress entrenched historical patterns of discrimination.[clxxix] Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* also discussed experiences with education quotas for indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in some Latin America countries, which reportedly initially favoured men from these groups, requiring further measures to expand coverage more equally to women.

The trend towards levying fees for basic services that was observed as part of the structural adjustment period of the 1980s-90s has largely been reversed. The danger that fees tend to often exclude the poorest and most vulnerable people have led many countries to lift them. However, cost barriers at the family level remain a significant concern among contributors to the *Consultation*. Out of 93 countries surveyed in 2005, only 16 had genuinely free basic education, while the majority were nominally free while in fact requiring informal fees, PTA payments and other costs that are beyond the reach of poor households.[clxxx] In **Cambodia**, transfers targeted to secondary school girls have had significant and progressive effects. Attendance among girls from the poorest 20 percent of households rose by 50 percent, compared with 15 percent for girls in the richer two quintiles.[clxxxi] A similar programme in **Bangladesh**, which specifically requires girls to be unmarried and still in school at the age of 18, has also shown significant results.[clxxxii]

New concern about payments for basic services have emerged in recent years, with the growth of lower-cost private sector provision for health and education. Evidence submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* from **India** suggests a doubling of children enrolled in private sector schools, from 22 to 44 percent in a decade. This enrolment may be in addition to government school, and may indeed be provided by government teachers and even use government facilities, but is largely unregulated. The emerging impact of this unregulated dual provision is likely to be diminishing quality in public provision, as resources are directed into a system that focuses on urban children, boys and the non-poor.[clxxxiii] Similar trends may emerge in health service provision.

> "Private schools established by Government officials as in some parts of Nigeria should be illegal."
>
> --Joseph, Contributor to e-discussion

In developed and developing countries, the number of trained health and education staff is often lower in deprived areas than others. Measures to combat this pattern have included payment of

hardship bonuses. In the **Gambia,** 24 percent of teachers have sought transfers to hardship posts in response to a 30 to 40 percent salary bonus.[clxxxiv] In **Ecuador**, teachers in remote areas receive additional pay as well as priority in being granted tenure, resulting in a significant reduction in disparities.[clxxxv] Other measures that have had similar effects have instated periods of compulsory service for people trained at public expense or being recruited into Government service. In **Indonesia**, newly qualified doctors have to serve five years in rural areas, or shorter periods in the most remote regions – a measure that raised staffing in rural areas by 97 percent, and by 200 percent in the most remote regions, in the nine years to 1994.[clxxxvi] **Eritrea** and the **Philippines** have similar approaches for teachers, and **Botswana** for civil servants.

The right to basic services is not waived in circumstances of emergencies, and indeed special and additional requirements may arise at that time. Provision of services needs to take into account the special needs of all groups, including persons with disabilities, and additional measures may be necessary to protect people including girls and women and LGBTI people who are vulnerable to abuse or to being excluded from access as a result of stigma.

Protection from violence and abuse

Gender-based violence and violence against children, LGBTI people, ethnic minorities and others require integrated efforts to ensure full legal protection, properly implemented protection and response services, and measures to reduce the incidence of violence. Manifestations of violence in any given society is often reinforced by social norms, perpetuating stigmatisation, discrimination and unfair practices. Social norms can be reproduced at family, community and national level, shaping interaction between disadvantaged people and other actors at all levels. Private sector and civil society organisations may too be responsible for reproducing inequalities – one example submitted to the *Inequalities Consultation* mentioned examples of private housing associations, which in some instances may be discriminatory[clxxxvii]. National leaders and officials in state institutions (police, teachers, health workers) are just as likely to be influenced by social norms as others, and may have a particular interest in being seen to conform with them.

Efforts to address high levels of violence against women and girls in **South Africa** have focused on addressing the social environment, combining the improvement of legal provisions and policing[clxxxviii] with engagement at community level. Community engagement is built on the idea that social change must be brought about as a partnership between all sectors of society, men, boys, girls and women, and groups within the community. Success has depended not on blaming men and boys for violence against women and girls, but on seeking greater understanding of the underlying gender and social relations that perpetuate violence, abuse and discrimination. From schools, to workplaces, churches and social venues, prevention programmes aim to understand how underlying factors influence behaviour at home, in the community and in society at large, and to build more just and fairer attitudes and behaviour across society, including among men and boys.[clxxxix]

Challenging discriminatory norms concerning widowhood and inheritance in **Ghana** has involved a combination of legal, institutional and social change, attempting to affect long standing customary practices that disinherit women. While constitutional law has provided for the inheritance of property for many years, parallel systems of customary law have allowed property to be taken by the husband's family, and lower courts regularly overlook governing legal precedent. Training of specialised police officers and community advocates, together with

many years of public information and education, has greatly reduced this practice, changing social norms on the dispossession of widows.[cxc]

Tackling discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS

HIV infection has persistently been associated with various forms of social disparity. People have been discriminated against or stigmatized on the basis of issues such as age, gender, economic status, residence, education, mobility and citizenship, disability, occupation, marginalized sexual orientation and drug use behaviour, over and beyond their HIV status. This has made the movement for social justice, participation, equality and security central to the global AIDS response.[cxci,cxcii]

The AIDS movement helped to break the silences around sexuality, around gender and sexual norms that can oppress women and girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and around sexuality among young people. The movement has worked to overcome stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV, and to hold men and boys accountable for actual or threatened gender-based violence.

Although research on social factors has been too limited,[cxciii] *Anti*-AIDS programmes have shown that harmful social norms can be changed through education, strategic, social and behaviour change communication and removing punitive laws and policies[cxciv].

Asserting leadership and resisting discrimination or neglect, people living with and vulnerable to HIV have formed networks of activism. Global networks of sex workers, men who have sex with men, transgender people and people who use drugs, women and girls, young people and other vulnerable groups have redefined community mobilization and strategic advocacy and won major improvements in policies and programmes in both the public and private sectors[cxcv],[cxcvi].

In 2010, advocates secured a landmark common agenda to address the HIV-related needs and rights of women and girls.[cxcvii] More than 100 national programmes committed themselves to a set of actions to secure better evidence, end gender-based violence, engage men and boys, empower and women and girls and provide universal access to sexual and reproductive health, including sexuality education. Such approaches are fundamental, not only to achieving HIV goals but to broader health rights and economic and social development.

Gender equality, community leadership, inclusion of the most vulnerable people and recognition of the social determinants of health are themes in all efforts to address health disparities.[cxcviii] Engaging young people in HIV responses builds on and aligns with global efforts to promote and protect the rights of children and young people and to leverage the experience and energy of youth in working for social justice.

Social protection is increasingly recognized as a holistic framework for promoting capacity and access to the health, social, educational and economic resources for health for all. HIV and human rights advocates promote HIV-sensitive social protection—policies that address the needs of key populations at higher risk and marginalized groups.[cxcix] For many countries, expanded social protection is an important enabler of progress on *other* development goals. For example, cash transfers have played a significant role in achieving Millennium Development Goals related to health and education while social safety nets contribute to mitigating poverty.[cc]

Affirmative action

Human rights treaties, including the CEDAW, specifically stipulate that temporary special measures may be taken to address historic inequalities. Progressive actions, levelling up entrenched disadvantages that might otherwise be seen as violating the principle of non-discrimination, are thus permissible under certain conditions.

Positive legislation and policies seeking to address entrenched inequalities through affirmative action have been established in a number of countries.

Affirmative action is most successful when it is driven by efforts for broader social and political change, and where it encompasses the education, work and political domains. The most comprehensive affirmative action programmes are established through constitutional and legal provisions. **India** and **South Africa**, both with significant histories of entrenched discrimination, have both instituted broad based actions aimed at counteracting the effects that built up by many generations of overt and statutory discrimination. In **India**, *dalits* and scheduled tribes have for many years had reserved quotas in education and employment, as well as guaranteed political representation. A contributor to the *Inequalities Consultation* reports that other scheduled castes have more recently been included in an expanded quota, now totalling 49 percent of government jobs and educational places.[cci] Although discriminatory social attitudes still exist, the extent of disparities and exclusion is falling. In **South Africa**, provisions to address the legacy of apartheid have included many measures in economic policy, ensuring that black people are more adequately represented not only in the labour force, but also in corporate management and ownership. The Employment Equity Act (1998) stipulates that a lack of relevant experience is not an adequate reason for not hiring if people have the "capacity to acquire, within a reasonable time, the ability to do the job." Meanwhile, temporary special measures have increased the political representation of women in countries such as Senegal and Mexico, and in local elections in India.

Contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* from other countries highlighted the finding that quota systems do not guarantee equality. One concern is that employees or students in reserved or quota places may have more junior positions or face other constraints to working, learning or progressing. Others suggested that, over time, remaining barriers tend to diminish.

Affirmative action remains controversial in some contexts, and evidence of elite capture is sometimes a focus of debate. The practice of establishing different requirements for entrance to schools and colleges for girls and boys or different social or ethnic groups is subject to fierce debate in many countries. The establishment of employment quotas without proactive measures to develop capacity amongst potential applicants may result in stigmatisation and tokenism. Evidence suggests that affirmative action works best where targets are quantified and time-bound, and accompany other measures to address historical inequalities.[ccii]

Participation in the community

Decentralisation at provincial, municipal, district and other levels can expand opportunities for partnership and collaboration between Governments and people on local matters as well as issues of broader concern. Decentralisation that is founded on a commitment to ending

inequalities is an important measure to drive transformative change, including for disadvantaged regions.

> "Before, I never wanted to talk because I was afraid that if I spoke, I'd make a mistake. But when I started to work with the Federation, slowly I began to think that if others can speak out, why can't I?
>
> --Ofelia, the Philippines, Contributor to e-discussion

People who remain exposed to negative social norms, discrimination and prejudice may lack the confidence and capacity to participate in local and national affairs. Women and girls in particular may lack the time or resources to participate, while cultural and social norms may discourage them from doing so. In such cases, local or externally driven initiatives based on specific development issues, cultural and sports activities have encouraged group formation, building confidence and solidarity among people with common experiences. In **Zambia**, the "Kicking out AIDS" movement has brought HIV education to girls and boys in deprived communities, creating an opportunity for them to share problems and seek guidance on a range of social and health issues. In **Guatemala**, "Play for Peace" clubs bring young people together for sports, arts and community activities, integrating training against community violence, gangs and early pregnancy into these activities. In **South Africa**, Camp Sizanani has hosted more than 4600 children from disadvantaged townships at residential camps, providing lifeskills, building teamwork and working on confidence and respect for others.[cciii]

Changing social attitudes

Many manifestations of inequalities are underpinned and perpetuated by negative social attitudes that tolerate discrimination and prejudice. Until prejudicial, harmful, or stereotyped attitudes held by individuals and communities are addressed, and by their leaders, discrimination will continue to manifest in the structures and institutions of society.

In order for the root causes of inequality to be addressed, change has to happen at the most fundamental level of social norms, values and attitudes. One way to conceive of this transformation is through the lens of relationships. The challenge of inequality concerns itself, in essence, with the quality of relationships between individuals, communities and nations. Relationships of domination and/or exploitation that characterise much of present-day society can be analysed, and used to identify means by which more equitable arrangements can be established.

Efforts to address discriminatory attitudes and behaviour have often been focused at community level. The *Inequalities Consultation* received reports on measures intended to address Gender-based violence through work to change the attitudes and norms around masculinity and gender relations.[cciv] This and other examples show how intensive intervention has had significant effects through work with small groups, including men and boys (for example through school and youth groups, and with male perpetrators of violence). These strategies offer a very valuable opportunity to include boys and men in work to address gender inequalities, including gender violence. However, much greater efforts are needed to bring about more broad-based change in social attitudes in many societies, not only at grass-roots level but also among leaders, police, magistrates, health workers and teachers, religious leaders, employers, media practitioners, and other influential groups.

4.4 Tackling environmental inequalities

Global action against climate change

The people and nations exposed to the "first and worst" impacts of climate change are not those that are historically responsible for the problem, and neither are they those who have the power to address the underlying and continuing drivers of global warming. Both these factors relate to their comparative poverty, and to their unequal positions of power in global decision making. The process of negotiation around climate change has a unique history, but the sense of unfairness common in developing countries has been reinforced by the similarities with other areas of global negotiations in terms of imbalances of power and influence.

Many would argue that efforts to negotiate a path towards more equal as well as sustainable human development could be undermined by failure to reach an ambitious global agreement on climate change. In the absence of an agreement, present patterns of inequality are likely to be greatly entrenched.

Inclusive environmental policy

Pro-equality social policy extends beyond the provision of social services, into the domain of environment, lands, natural resources and housing / shelter.

Formulating policies to promote equality in these policy areas requires similar provisions to other areas of social policy. Measures need to be sensitised to prevailing patterns of inequalities, and strategies are needed for inclusive and protective environmental management. Issues of gender, marginalised populations, cost-barriers, tenure and access need to be prioritised, with policy goals expressed in terms of holistic human development. This implies a comprehensive examination of the differential costs, benefits, impacts and trade-offs of any policy choice. For example, land policy needs to take into account the welfare of people who depend on land, and to identify the best and most sustainable means of utilising that land in the interests of those people.

Climate change resilience & participation

In the context of a global agreement and enabling policy framework at national level, a special focus on the needs of people most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change is required. Simultaneously, measures to promote climate change resilience and develop strengthened and sustainable strategies for adaptation are also necessary.

Climate change resilience and sustainable natural resource management are both contingent on empowering people to participate in decision making, particularly people most vulnerable to environmental risks and shocks. Success in this regard is contingent not only on the delivery of assets or training, but on expanding choices through developing collaborative and participatory local institutions, building local capacity to lead the adaptive process. For this to be successful, participation is not limited to local leaders, but should involve children, young people, women and others who are often peripheral to change processes. Through engagement with those who have practical need to balance short term survival with long term benefits, innovative and practical solutions can be found.[ccv]

4.5 Tackling political inequalities

Equality in constitution and legal frameworks

The state is at the core of any measures intended to address inequalities. Even where the leadership or machinery of the state is weak or ill-intended, it remains the case that inequalities cannot be resolved without the state embracing its responsibilities to the people who form that state, both citizens and others. Any attempt to alleviate suffering or deprivation that falls outside the provisions of state administration or regulation would in most cases necessarily be partial, temporary and ultimately inadequate. The resolution of inequalities depends on a fair configuration of relationships of power and resources, and fair distribution of well-being, opportunity and freedom. These cannot be achieved unless based on enduring and just relationships between people and the state.

State obligations to addressing inequalities start by ensuring that citizens have equal status in constitution and law. Discriminatory provisions, entrenching the exclusion of women, ethnic groups, LGBTI people and others, exist in many countries. This commonly affects property rights, labour law, and various aspects of civil and family law, including inheritance. Even where statutory provisions provide for equality in law, systems of customary or religious law (whether constitutional or not), govern the lives of many, women and girls in particular, offering no such guarantees. In **Kenya**, efforts to domesticate the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child addressed both statutory and customary practice. The Child Act of 2001 brought together and streamlined various elements of law providing for children, while community based interventions have sought to promote adaptations to customary practices to protect girls from female genital mutilation and early marriage.[ccvi]

Revisions to legal frameworks need to be based on the human rights framework, which provides normative standards for the elimination of inequalities. Equality and access to justice must be guaranteed in all legal systems, state, non-state, customary and religious. The achievement of universal and comprehensive human rights requires urgent actions to address inequalities, and any measure to address inequalities is inherently concerned with fulfilment of human rights. Many manifestations of inequalities discussed in this report are contrary to the provisions of international human rights, many explicitly so. Ratifying, domesticating, and striving to achieve these standards, against relevant benchmarks and indicators, provides a sure basis for tacking inequalities. Transparent public monitoring and review mechanisms also provide important means to support the realisation and implementation of legal reform.

The commitment to human rights, the requirements to monitor and report on their fulfilment of rights, and outstanding challenges in delivering on commitments, are not limited to developing countries. There are many examples of rights failures and major inequalities in some of the richest countries in the world, and some of the actions of rich countries directly perpetuate inequalities and rights failures both domestically and in poorer countries. In the context of discussion of the post-2015 development framework, this creates a significant contrast with the MDGs, where the anticipated actions and outcomes were focused on poorer countries, with support and partnership from rich countries. A meaningful focus on inequalities implies not only actions *by* all countries, but also seeks a range of progress and changes *in* all countries.

Better data systems

In the absence of relevant information, the magnitude of inequalities is often underestimated.[ccvii] Efforts to combat inequalities depend upon the availability of adequate and appropriate data.[4]

Better data support public awareness and debate, better planning, and monitoring of change. Better data enable equalities-focussed targets to be explicitly incorporated in all areas of national development plans. When adequately disaggregated data are available, Governments have the option of using tailored or weighted targets for improving service delivery. For example, this could include the approach adopted by UNESCO in *Reaching the Marginalized,* which monitors progress in improving education levels of socially excluded groups using adjusted indicators, giving weight to results that include the poorest and most disadvantaged people. In **Cameroon**, the Government's Inequality Action Plan provides time-bound measurable targets to combat major disparities.[ccviii]

Data cast light on inequalities that are usually hidden. For example, measuring progress on the attainment of women's reproductive rights, including how women carry a pregnancy to term and deliver it safely, is challenging. A combination of social constraints, which may consider death and disability during pregnancy and childbirth normal, and underinvestment in the conditions necessary to avert these deaths and disabilities, have long meant that reproductive health and maternal mortality are greatly underestimated. The development of better monitoring systems reveals the scale of harm caused by reproductive health failures, and spurs political and social commitment to addressing this problem.

Decentralisation & participation in Government

The resolution of inequalities is contingent on the engagement, participation and empowerment of people who, perhaps for generations, have lacked the opportunity, freedom or capacity to engage. This is necessary for practical reasons, in order to understand the needs and priorities of those whose interests have previously been overlooked. More importantly, without voice, excluded groups cannot play an integral role in society, remaining apart from mainstream citizenry.

The powerful "*nothing about us without us*" slogan, brought into the mainstream by persons with disabilities' organisations, strikes a powerful note for many groups struggling for greater engagement in matters that concern them. Disadvantaged people have struggled to play a greater role in leading their own development, moving away from being the "targets" of programmes designed by others. Beyond that, however, it is even more important to recognise the need for genuine voice and participation of disadvantaged people in the broader affairs of a community or a nation. Women's participation needs to extend beyond 'women's issues'; disadvantaged ethnic groups should be represented in national parliaments, not just regional bodies or tribal councils.

Lessons from smaller scale initiatives to increase community participation in monitoring are starting to inform greatly expanded programmes in some countries, using new communications technology to engage with communities at low cost. Submissions to the *Inequalities Consultation* argued that local level monitoring can provide a means both of empowerment for people in the

[4] See further discussion on data and measurement in section 5, *Indicators and Measurement of inequalities*, for further discussion on the improved use of data to monitor inequalities.

development process to articulate their priorities, and also taking greater decision-making control over their lives, and for them to hold duty bearers, such as providers of basic services in local government and the private sector, more greatly to account for delivery and performance. Participatory monitoring of locally-relevant development indicators, within national frameworks of targets and standards, and of public sector performance in meeting basic obligations can take various forms. At its core, it should be a culture and practice, embedded in both social norms and public policy. It is about people - working together in some organized way - identifying and tracking the priority issues that affect their communities, so that barriers to progress can be addressed and solved, with support as necessary from public sector and other accountable agencies. Locally-relevant issues might concern, for example, unstable local water supply conditions, school access and quality, epidemic disease control, and difficulties - ranging from hidden fees, poor information and discrimination - in obtaining social welfare entitlements. Questions to be monitored, and information transmitted to public sector duty-bearers, could, for example, include: has the water pump been working continuously this week, and, if not, how long has it remained unrepaired?; are seeds available from local traders?; what is the retail price of staple food?; does the health post currently have anti-retroviral and anti-malarial drugs?; how many young children were weighed at the health post this month?; have child grant and pension payments been transmitted to all those eligible?[ccix]

In **Uganda,** the U Report programme uses SMSs and mobile phones to engage people - particularly young people - to voice their opinions on issues that they care about. Users can register for free and are then asked a series of questions during the registration process by which responses can be analyzed and messages refined. Topics discussed since the launch of U Report in 2011 include: female genital mutilation, outbreaks of disease, safe water, early marriage, education, health and inflation. There are now over 124,000 U-reporters in Uganda, with 300 to 500 members joining the network daily. The average age is 24, some 51% are female and U-reporters are represented in all 112 districts in Uganda. Results are publicized through national media channels and within parliament to present decision-makers with information regarding their districts or ministerial portfolios. Moreover, besides bringing rapid up-to-date information to the national level, recent evidence also shows that when monitoring is combined with the provision of information on what services should be expected and what is being delivered, there is clear improvement in health seeking behavior and health outcomes – including reduced child mortality and increased child weight – that compare favorably to other examples of successful community-based health interventions.[ccx]

Social movements representing groups experiencing multiple inequalities can engage with Governments for change, or can bring about change in governance. Some social movements are long-standing, able to demonstrate progress towards their objectives over many years and adapting to new challenges and circumstances. Other social movements emerge very rapidly, as excluded people reach a "tipping point" in their tolerance of inequalities. In the **Arab world**, the rapid growth and modernisation of service provision that began in the 1970s had in recent years given way to autocratic governance, corruption and stagnating attempts to redistribute national resources, leaving whole groups and regions in poverty. While older generations had welcomed investments in health services and basic infrastructure, younger people wanted equal opportunities, democracy, justice and accountability. The social movements that have secured various sorts of change involved not only those who have been exposed to entrenched financial hardship, but others whose civil and political rights had been curtailed.[ccxi]

Including people in the process of governance, especially in setting priorities for policy and budgeting, can have diverse benefits in reducing inequalities. The actions of Government may better meet the needs of disadvantaged groups, while greater involvement improves the capacity of excluded people to articulate voice. Participatory engagement will also increase political and financial accountability and governance. In **Kerala State** in India, the People's Campaign for Decentralised Planning aimed to devolve significant resources and authority to the *panchayats* (village councils) and municipalities, mandating village assemblies and citizen committees to plan and budget local development expenditures. Nearly one in four households attended village assemblies in the first two years of the campaign, and the assemblies continue to draw large numbers.[ccxii]

4.6 Policies that work: Examples from national level

Many countries all over the world have taken deliberate steps to address inequalities, often focusing on the disparities that are most important in their national or sub-national context. This section gives some examples of strategic policies and initiatives that are tackling inequalities in different contexts.

Bangladesh

In the past, Bangladesh had widespread poverty and food insecurity. Although income inequality was comparatively low, the status of women indicated very substantial gender inequalities. Over the past 20 years, however, Bangladesh has made significant gains in human development. Between 1990 and 2010, life expectancy rose by 10 years, from 59 to 69 years, with equal gains for the poor as the rich, and greater gains for women compared to men. Over the same period, infant mortality has more than halved, child mortality fell by two-thirds and maternal mortality fell by three-quarters.

These improvements are not simply the result of increases in people's income (which have increased largely through increasing the productivity of rice farmers), but are also associated with focused investments in improving women's health and education, pro-poor social spending, and intensive efforts by civil society in social development and the extension of microcredit.

Women's lives have improved as a result of greatly expanded access to informed choice on family planning, supported by the greater participation of girls in education, and in work. Women have greater autonomy, better health, more money, and more confidence and opportunity to express voice. Despite political changes, successive Governments have maintained progressive social programmes, and Bangladesh spends more than most low-income countries on transfers to the poor. About 12% of public spending (1.8% of GDP) goes on social safety-nets to protect the poorest: food for work, cash transfers and direct feeding programmes. Government spending has also for many years favoured women's programmes, greatly supplemented by the social development and microcredit programmes of very large civil society organisations. BRAC (formerly Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) has a network of health programmes, schools, clinics and legal aid centres, as well as dairies, textile producers, and seed plants. Programmes depend on extensive community participation, especially by women, and there are some 100,000 health volunteers. Grameen Bank has 2,500 branches, reaching 8.4m borrowers, 95 percent of whom are women.

Bangladesh still faces significant challenges in nutrition, quality of education, and infrastructure. The threat of climate change is severe. However, the development path of the past 20 years has shown substantial progress in addressing inequalities.[ccxiii]

Cambodia

The Cambodian Government National Strategic Development Plan for 2000-2010 explicitly aims to tackle inequality across all key sectors. Although the challenges remain significant, the country has achieved the fastest rate of improvement on the Human Development Index in East Asia, and the 5th fastest progress towards the MDGs globally. Progress over the period of the plan saw a drop of 1 percent in poverty rates annually to 25.8 percent in 2010, achieving the 4th fastest progress globally in poverty reduction. The Gini coefficient measure of inequality has fallen substantially too, from 41 in 2007 to 31 in 2010.

This progress in addressing income inequalities is associated with policy choices made during the period of very high growth, between 2004 and 2009. Growth served to reduce poverty largely because investment in the economy was strongly focused on the sector where 70 percent of people living in poverty are found – rice farming. Improvements in production, yields and markets for rice were significant. Policy provisions also provided for increased access for poor and marginalised groups in other areas of the economy. As revenue increased and poverty levels fell, health and education outcomes have also started to improve.[ccxiv]

China

China's unprecedented levels of growth are well-known. One of the effects of this growth, however, was a widening of inequalities, particularly between the eastern coastal towns and cities and the extensive rural hinterlands. The Gini coefficient rose from 33 in 1980 to 41.5 in 2008. Inequalities between regions and more broadly between urban and rural areas rose rapidly, with the ratio of per capita household disposable income in urban and rural households rising from 2.20 in 1990 to 3.33 in 2009. Since 2010, however, the trend has started to reverse. By the end of 2011, it was 3.13, close to the ratio in 2002.

The Chinese government has recognised the economic and other risks associated with rising inequalities, and has taken substantial steps to address the situation. China has launched large scale regional development strategies, aimed at helping the disadvantaged western, central and north-eastern regions to catch up in economic terms, and to address significant disparities in child mortality and stunting. Programmes to address rural poverty have been introduced, with particular emphasis on agricultural development. Measures at community level are supported by fiscal policy – the elimination of agricultural taxes and introduction of price subsidies have increased production, ensured greater security in rural incomes and reduced rural–urban inequalities. Economic development is supplemented by social investments, with targeted spending on education and health, together with the allocation of significant numbers of additional trained staff. China is expanding a rural pension scheme which now covers 125 million older people, around 80% of the total, meaning it is probably the biggest social protection scheme in the world. These measures are improving outcomes for marginalised groups, including girls and children of migrant families.[ccxv]

Brazil

Through the 1980s and 1990s, levels of inequality in Brazil were amongst the highest in the world. Income inequality was very largely determined by gender and by ethnicity, mirrored by social inequalities and lower human development outcomes. The intersection of ethnic and

spatial inequalities has long been marked in Brazil: eight of the ten poorest states are in the north east, which has the highest concentrations of Afro-descendants, while three of the four states in the south east are among the five richest in the country. In addition, the intersection of ethnicity, gender and class inequalities means that white men generally earn the highest wages for any given level of education, while black women earn the least. Race, gender and location were among the key predictors of poverty in 1981, and remained so in 2001. These inequalities were underpinned by long-standing patterns of social stratification, and reproduced by policies including regressive public transfers and taxation policies, considerable inequalities in education, and an excessive "skills premium" in wages, favouring those with more education.[ccxvi]

The Brazilian government recognised the diverse threats posed by such high levels of inequality, introducing an ambitious set of social and economic programmes from the late 1990s. Employment creation, minimum wage legislation, a universal pension (equivalent to the minimum wage) and the *Bolsa Familia* cash transfers are all linked with progressive effects on income inequality, with incomes of the bottom quintile growing at an average annual rate of 6% compared to 2% for the top quintile. Between 2000 and the present, the ratio of incomes of the top 10 percent and bottom 40 percent fell from six times greater to just over four time greater, bringing inequality to similar levels as found in Canada and the UK.[ccxvii] The universal pension and Bolsa Familia payments were jointly responsible for an estimated 28% of the fall in income inequality between 1995 and 2004 (7% from the pension and 21% from *Bolsa Família).*[ccxviii] A universal healthcare scheme has further helped reduce inequalities in infant mortality rates, and other social investments have led to substantial improvements in child well-being.

Section 5: Equalities and the Post-2015 Framework

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"Extreme inequality in the distribution of the world should make us question the current development model."

—Jose Tortajada, International Federation of Associations for Social, Ecological and Cultural Aid (FIADASEC) (Contribution to E-discussion on Economic Inequalities)

Section 5: Equalities and the post-2015 framework

The Millennium Declaration of year 2000 was based on a set of fundamental values that included freedom, equality, tolerance and solidarity. This firm commitment to social justice was intended to bring together and guide all efforts for the achievement of shared human well-being. In practice, however, the articulation of the MDGs, their targets and indicators did not reflect the values of the Declaration. The focus on equality was lost in the expression of targets and indicators in terms of simple averages. This gave rise to what is perhaps the most common criticism of the MDGs: that the fundamental values were not integrated into practical implementation.

In discussing how equality can be reflected in the new development framework, this experience is relevant. Equality is not a new priority, and indeed it is even more important now than it was at the turn of the millennium. Equality, and the accompanying values of social justice, must be at the centre of the post-2015 framework, not only in its framing aspiration and vision, but extended into practice. This time around, the expression of goals, targets and indicators, and the design of practical actions, must better reflect this aim.

5.1 A global framework

Inequalities exist within countries and between them. Neither their causes or consequences are limited to specific places, institutions or people. We are all affected by the persistence of inequalities. Furthermore, equality is not a commodity that is achieved by some, but not by others. Equality can be said to mean that everyone can lead productive lives, with dignity, and realise their rights; it also means that we fulfil our obligations to relate fairly and respectfully to others, and that we share planetary resources responsibly.[ccxix]

> "Ultimately, there is no 'us' and 'them'…We have divided ourselves into 'developed' and 'developing' countries, into 'benefactors' and 'recipients,' into 'North' and 'South'…We must come to see ourselves as 'we'".
>
> --Beyond 2015 Coalition

All countries have an obligation to address inequalities that occur in their own territory, and to contribute to the resolution of global inequalities. The priorities and goals may vary. Richer nations in particular have responsibilities that go well beyond the transfer of resources: they face the significant challenge of addressing important ways in which their actions may deepen global inequalities. The common goal of equality depends on the appropriate action of all. A development framework that encompasses equality applies to all countries.

5.2 Getting to zero, Getting to universal

From the perspective of equality and inclusion, a further criticism of the MDGs is the extent to which the targets were expressed in terms of partial achievements. More than half of the targets which were expressed in specific quantified form established less than complete aims – to halve the number of people in extreme poverty or reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds for example.

These global goals were undoubtedly ambitious, anticipating a substantial improvement in the lives of many millions of people. However, translated to a country level there was a risk that these targets could simply reinforce structural inequalities and social exclusion – achieving a statistical victory in aggregate terms, but a moral failure "beneath the averages". In poor countries especially, partial targets provide room for choice about where to direct efforts. Pressure to reach targets means that interventions may be directed to easy-to-reach people and places, perpetuating patterns of exclusion. Enduring inequalities can be overlooked by all as a targets are deemed to have been met.[ccxx]

It is therefore important that the post-2015 development framework is not articulated in a manner that accommodates disparities and inequalities. The human rights framework is founded on principles of universality and non-discrimination, and these provide normative standards to guide us. Targets should therefore be reflected in these terms – universal access to basic needs, zero exposure to the worst forms of risk and hazard, and so on. Aiming to achieve universal outcomes is not by itself a means of addressing structural inequalities – it is just one element of what is needed – but it is an essential feature of any framework that seeks to address inequalities.

5.3 Principles for the post-2015 framework

The contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* concurred with the recommendations of the UN Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that the new framework should be based on the principles of equality, human rights, and sustainability. Furthermore, great emphasis was placed on the need to integrate effective systems of accountability into the new framework.

Adopting a framework based on **equality, human rights and sustainability** implies a prioritisation on improving the life chances of the poorest and most vulnerable, extending to marginalised people in all countries. It frames expected results in universal terms, which can be achieved through incorporating special measures to reduce disparities. It does so through addressing structural causes of inequalities, seeking change towards fair and sustainable human development.[ccxxi]

> "The disrespectful use of the land and its resources is inextricably linked to the human rights abuses of women and the perpetuation of poverty."
>
> --Lobi Redhawk, Gray Panthers, Contributor to e-discussion

Equality, human rights and sustainability are interlinked. The *Inequalities Consultation* has examined in detail how the post-2015 development framework can address inequalities, and these principles have remained at the heart of the discussions and submissions. For the realisation of genuine results, however, it is also necessary to ensure that equality, human rights and sustainability be fully integrated throughout the new framework.

The human rights framework offers a comprehensive means of addressing inequalities in the new development framework, building upon a broad range of solemn and legally binding international treaty commitments and accountability mechanisms, and strengthening the basis for international cooperation. It frames results in universal terms, and requires immediate

action to dismantle discrimination and special measures to reduce disparities. Human rights obligations – and scope for improvement in the realisation of human rights – are shared by all nations. Although the profound rights failures affecting the world's poor are of particular concern, the world's richer countries also have outstanding obligations. Human rights frameworks mean that all countries must fulfil universal and non-discriminatory rights for their own populations, and also recognise obligations to other countries and people. This requires all countries, regardless of economic status, to halt actions and policies that result in rights failures and weaken the circumstances of people in other countries. For richer countries, particularly in the context of economic globalisation and climate change, this means that their obligations go much further than the provision of aid and other forms of assistance.

The principle of **accountability** should also be central to the post-2015 development framework. As stressed by contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation*, accountability is vital as a means of holding Governments and other duty bearers to account for the implementation of their commitments. Systems for national accountability can include parliamentary oversight and national human rights institutions, in interaction with civil society and community based monitoring. Regional bodies are one level at which Governments can hold each other to account, feeding into global systems of accountability. Besides national Governments, there is urgent need to require much greater accountability by other actors, including the private sector, international organizations, and social and civic leadership.

5.4 Options for integrating inequalities into the post-2015 development framework

Most contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* recommended that the post-2015 development framework should contain:

> A **specific goal** on inequalities, highlighting process and results necessary to monitor and address key manifestations of inequality and discrimination
>
> *And*
>
> **All other goals** should be articulated in terms that specifically seek equality in outcomes; together with *targets* focused on the most important priorities for reducing structural inequalities; and supported by *indicators* that most accurately track progress towards reducing the predominant inequalities.

Both parts of this recommendation are critical – one or the other is not sufficient. A specific goal on inequalities will highlight the normative importance of this area, and provide a focus for accountability for reducing inequalities (and hence improved monitoring of both processes and results, built on improved data of both quantitative and qualitative kinds). The integration of inequalities into other goals is essential for the realisation of structural change, and to ensure that the framework is – in practice – truly guided by its founding principles.

The MDGs contained a specific goal on gender equality. Some contributors to the *Inequalities Consultation* strongly felt that a separate goal on gender was still required, with or without another specific inequalities goal. As a further option, an overall goal on inequalities could and

should incorporate specific reference to gender inequalities, together with other major forms of inequalities.

Contributors also noted that the post-2015 development framework needs to be concise. The diversity of groups, inequalities and injustices discussed during the *Inequalities Consultation* cannot all be reflected in the goals, targets and indicators of the new framework, which cannot be the instrument through which all inequalities are addressed. The framework must therefore address those processes and results that (i) most require collective focus and commitment, (ii) serve to increase the commitment of Governments and other actors at all levels to addressing all forms of inequality, (iii) require the special attention of each and every country.

5.5 Indicators and measurement of inequalities

If inequalities are to be integrated across the post-2015 framework, it will be important to consider how to address measurement, and how to articulate indicators.

It is likely that the best approach to framing inequalities will include inclusive and pro-poor economic development, sustainable development and universal/getting to zero targets, which all provide broadly acceptable approaches to tackling inequality.[ccxxii] In this regard, a mix of a) global goals; with b) regionally, nationally or sub-nationally set and contextualized targets; and c) a core set of shared global indicators with additional national ones[ccxxiii] might offer a useful way to accommodate the unique issues and priorities of different states/regions. A promising option in this regard could be variable targets appropriate to national contexts, combined with a core set of standard indicators on which all countries would report. This approach would increase focus on more localized progress, and track progress for the most disadvantaged within countries, without becoming too complicated or potentially losing the simplicity and common aspirations that have made the MDGs so appealing.

A broad inequality goal which (i) identifies key dimensions of inequality, both economic and social; and (ii) highlights, but is not limited to, the need to address and measure economic inequalities has been proposed. It is also proposed that appropriate inequality dimensions are attached to each target or associated indicator across goals, in order to establish priorities and monitor progress in reducing inequality across all objectives.

The Equity and Non-Discrimination Working Group of the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation has spent over a year considering how inequalities and non-discrimination could be reflected in any future water and sanitation goals, targets and indicators.[5] A summarization of recommendations from this process, which demonstrates how inequalities can be integrated into targets and indicators in this goal area and provides an example useful to others, includes:

[5] The END Working Group recommended the adoption of a stand-alone goal on equality and non-discrimination in the overall architecture of post-2015 development goals, in addition to the integration of non-discrimination in all sectors.

1) Language in each target requiring that "inequalities" be "eliminated" (for absolute targets) or "progressively reduced" (for all other targets);
2) Address spatial inequalities (e.g. rural/urban and informal urban/formal urban);
3) Focus on inequalities that shine a light on the poorest of the poor – disaggregation by wealth quintile, but also targets and indicators that *in practice* are relevant mostly to the poorest;
4) Disaggregation by disadvantaged groups. These should be globally monitored but would be determined by each country through nationally participatory processes, which take into account which groups suffer discrimination in which contexts;
5) Focus on the impacts of individual-related inequalities that are relevant in every country, such as those based on sex/gender, age, disability and health conditions imposing access constraints – as they are experienced both within and outside the household.

As mentioned in point 3, above, other potential targets and indicators that in practice are relevant mostly to the poorest could include issues such as nutritional stunting or maternal mortality[ccxxiv].

An important recommendation of the *Inequalities Consultation* is the development of better data systems at country level, better able to describe and monitor change in the circumstances of different population groups. One important tool in strengthening these systems is a Multidimensional Poverty Index, which shows the deprivations a household (or child) experiences simultaneously, highlighting the poorest of the poor as those experiencing a large set of simultaneous deprivations at the same time. This approach not only highlights changes in multidimensional poverty but also illustrates trends in social exclusion and marginalization. Different approaches to measuring change in inequalities over time have been reviewed as part of the *Inequalities Consultation*. There is consensus that the most effective approaches is to establish targets for and monitor the annual rate of change for any given indicator for the disadvantaged group (be it the poorest 5%, 10%, or 20%, an ethnic group, girls, persons with disabilities etc) to reach an absolute level within a given timeframe.

The commonly used concentration curve is less useful, as it requires classifying populations in equal groups along a continuum, which is not sensitive to changing outcomes for smaller disadvantaged groups, or for groups defined by non-ordered attributes rather than quantified scale.

Setting equality-related targets and indicators

A range of commentators have suggested how to measure inequality in other goals:

- One option is to focus on dominant inequalities across individual human development indicators such as child mortality, nutrition, maternal mortality, education, access to water & sanitation, etc. and establish sub-national targets, which should include sex, income/wealth, and rural/urban disaggregation for all indicators and targets. In addition, disaggregation of reported data could capture all other factors, including ethnicity and disability, depending on the inequalities that are most prevalent in each area.[ccxxv]
- Another methodology calls for equity-weighting indicators. That is, to weigh values of each variable of concern by income quintile, according more importance to progress in the lower quintiles. In this scenario, progress would be measured not just in absolute

numbers, but with a specific focus on and prioritization of those who are most excluded. A similar method could be applied to weigh progress across different social groups or through different regions.[ccxxvi]

- A further option to have specific targets for progress among the poorest or most excluded. That is, progress among the poorest (or most excluded) is measured and reported separately, to ensure that they are benefitting from overall progress.[ccxxvii]
- A four approach is to frame goals and targets in terms of universal coverage or access, or through problem elimination. That is, none of the goals – whether on education, poverty, hunger, mortality, or other – could be considered met without reaching zero or near zero targets. This approach, however, does not provide insight into the distribution of progress, and would hence not provide information on whether the worst-off were being "left to the last."[ccxxviii]

The following is suggested for setting equality-related targets and indicators:

a) For targets that theoretically tend towards a limiting level of zero, such as mortality ratios or hunger or stunting or unemployment, or of 100%, such as for immunisation, education enrolment or access to water and sanitation or electricity, the post-2015 target should be worded in terms of improvement targets for those with the currently worst outcomes, whether wealth quintiles or category identifiers (ethnic, locational, gender, age, particularly youth and elderly, disability, immigrant, pastoralist) or combinations of these in any given context. The implication here is that indicators will be set nationally.
b) Where achievement of zero or 100% is clearly over-ambitious in the time-frame, such as for malaria or infant mortality, percentage reductions/increases for groups experiencing worst outcomes can be used.
c) For targets that theoretically increase without measurable limits, such as educational achievements, income, life expectancy, comparisons between low-outcome and high-outcome social categories and proxy groups is recommended.
d) For governance issues – very significant in the specific case of the inequalities goal – process indicators of legislation and systems of redress can be used to assess progress towards the framework for equality to be realised. In this regard, qualitative perceptions, quality of life responses and sense of wellbeing are as important as quantitative measures of outcomes. New technologies such as SMS messaging and crowd-sourcing, as well as participant/service user surveys and focus groups, provide diverse options for qualitative, participatory assessment by disadvantaged groups.

Another option is to combine both floor and relative gain indicators. For example, for any given outcome, the ratio between the top decile (10%) and the bottom four deciles (40%) is a simple way of broadening the focus on the bottom of the distribution away from the bottom 20% (and hence away from narrow targeting). Other possible combinations include a combination of geographic "floors" (e.g. at least 90% school completion in every district) with wealth quintile ratios.

The *Inequalities Consultation* has placed significant emphasis on intersecting inequalities, and it is important to consider how these can be assessed. One approach is to do careful statistical and situational analysis to identify factors contributing to inequality (say factors that explain 80% to 90% of disparities) and use these as the criteria for measuring intersecting inequalities. This should be done at the national and sub-national levels, because factors contributing to inequality

are different in different contexts. A review of different methodologies for measuring inequality highlighted the fact that while measurement of inequality in ordered attributes such as income has a long history, measurement of inequalities unordered attributes (such as educational level or political participation) is less developed. Whatever the methodologies to be used, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of the intersecting and multidimensional nature of prevailing inequalities, such that the use of "simple" or proxy indicators does not serve to distract policy attention from the inherent complexities, or from the need for comprehensive, multi-sectoral policy responses.

5.6 Recommendations on addressing structural inequalities in the post-2015 framework

Inequalities goal

The inequalities goal should aim to **eliminate all forms of discrimination and achieve gender equality.**

The targets for this goal should include:

(1) State accountability for the repeal of all existing forms of discrimination in constitution, laws and policies.
(2) State accountability for provision of stated minimum standards of basic services and social protection, including special measures for excluded groups.
(3) State accountability for implementation of country-specific action plans actions to protect women and girls and all other groups from violence, exploitation, stigma and abuse.
(4) State accountability for implementation of country-specific action plans to implement special measures to build the capacities and ensure access to basic services (including health, SRHR and education) for women, children, older people, persons with disabilities and all groups subject to discrimination.

These targets refer to the areas of critical need, that require attention in all countries of the world. They can accommodate diverse realities in different countries. By focusing on creating accountabilities for progress, they support the establishment of a process that will *inter alia* require the identification of priorities, the improvement of data systems, the engagement of all relevant stakeholders, and the engagement of communities. This approach cuts across sectoral policies and programmes, creating overarching and strategic accountability for equality.

In support of this goal, the *Inequalities Consultation* also suggests provisions to build partnerships to eliminate all forms of discrimination and achieve gender equality, bringing together citizens, grassroots organisations, civil society, NGOs and other organisations that can contribute to the achievement of this goal. The partnerships should focus on:

(1) Building capacity of girls, women and other groups subject to discrimination to make valid claims on all relevant duty bearers for appropriate and accessible services (including SRHR), protection, access to justice, and opportunities for decent work.
(2) Building local and national coalitions against all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, violence against children, and harmful social norms, based on changing attitudes and norms through broad-based engagement, including men and boys.

(3) Building individual and community-level engagement with girls, women and other groups subject to discrimination to claim their rights through inclusion in community-based development and the monitoring of basic service provision.
(4) Engaging at all levels to promote social change through addressing discriminatory attitudes and norms against women and girls, persons with disabilities, older people, people living with HIV and AIDS, LGBTI people, indigenous peoples, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and other groups.

Other goals

The focus and discussion of the *Inequalities Consultation* was oriented towards structural domains of inequalities, and particularly towards the structural drivers of income inequalities and discrimination against a range of groups. The e-discussions, summarised in the Annexes, focused respectively on gender, gender-based violence, LGBTI people, persons with disabilities, economic inequalities, indigenous peoples, youth, minority groups, and urban inequalities.

This *Consultation* was intended to give voice to and focus on people who experience discrimination and prejudice, and whose capabilities are restricted by inequalities. The quantity and nature of contributions that have formed the basis of this report suggest that this was successful. However, the consultation process did not provide for systematic sectoral review of inequalities. The results of the consultation therefore provide a fairly comprehensive analysis of the structural drivers of inequalities, but a somewhat uneven distribution of focus in different sectoral areas.

The following recommendations for priorities for inclusion in other goal areas should therefore be taken as outputs of the *Inequalities Consultation* process, not as the results of comprehensive sector reviews. The *Inequalities Consultation* urges other teams to review these recommendations and to incorporate them into their own more detailed analyses, alongside other relevant measures of inequality.

Growth and employment

The *Inequalities Consultation* found that income inequalities acted as a critical constraint to progress and well-being at all levels.

It is strongly recommended that reducing inequality needs to be incorporated at goal level, as the explicit purpose of national and international economic policies and strategies.

Targets for growth and employment should include:

(1) Time-bound obligations for the provision of special measures to provide for non-discriminatory, fair and equal participation in the economy for women, persons with disabilities, youth and other economically disadvantaged groups.
(2) State accountability for special measures to reduce hazardous and exploitative work, increase protection and security for informal sector workers and small scale farmers
(3) Time-bound targets for strengthening of labour institutions, and for the expansion of representative and regulatory functions to cover the informal sector.
(4) Time-bound obligation for all countries to require all companies within their jurisdiction to publish accounts for activities in all countries of operation.

(5) State accountability for implementation of country-specific social protection floor policies and programmes.

Governance

The *Inequalities Consultation* found that political inequalities, including deficits in opportunities for participation at community level, are a significant cause of persistent structural inequalities, reinforcing inequalities in all other domains.

It is critical that equality in participation and representation in governance is reflected at goal level, as a fundamental condition for strengthening accountable good governance and rule of law.

Targets for governance should include:

(1) State accountability for the implementation of special measures for the informed participation of marginalised people at all levels of the administration, including at decentralised level, including but not limited to social and economic development, health, education and family welfare, management of land and natural resources, and security, legal and political affairs.
(2) State accountability for legal, policy and institutional guarantees for equal access to justice, and for the implementation of special measures to address shortcomings.
(3) Implementation of legislation providing for transparent corporate governance and accountability, including but not limited to transparency in revenue payments and in collection and publication of relevant environmental information.
(4) Time-bound requirements for the strengthening of data collection and dissemination of disaggregated information.

Environmental sustainability

The *Inequalities Consultation* found that addressing environmental inequalities is essential to combat discriminatory norms, and to safeguard prospects for sustainable environmental management, progress and development worldwide.

The importance of addressing inequalities should be reflected at goal level, as a prerequisite for environmental sustainability.

Targets for environmental sustainability should include:

(1) Time-bound requirements for the strengthening of measurement and reporting of environmental outcomes, including status and tenure of land, water, other natural resources and housing.
(2) State accountability for introduction of special measures to promote participatory climate change adaptation and community-based environmental management in urban and rural areas.
(3) Time-bound targets for more equitable representation of disadvantaged countries in accessing finance and determining global goals for climate change adaptation.

Other goals
The findings of *Inequalities Consultation* provide many examples of what actions are needed to address inequalities in different sectors. The summaries of the e-consultations, Annexed to this report, provide rich insight into the diverse needs of a range of groups.

The recommended actions all fall within the provisions of the framework for transformative change, generated from the discussions held under the *Inequalities Consultation*, and presented in Section 4 of this report.

The *Inequalities Consultation* therefore recommends that the development of goals in the areas of health, education, food security and nutrition, energy, water, conflict and fragility, and population dynamics take account of the framework as follows:

- Entitlements to equality and non-discrimination need to be established in law, guided by the human rights framework, and implemented through non-discriminatory and pro-equality economic and social policy. These actions to respect people's human rights are the primary responsibility of the state.

- States also need to take action to protect citizens and others from discrimination, violence, exploitation and harm by others. Safeguards are needed against threats at family and community level, at work, from gender-based violence, environmental hazards, harmful impacts of business activity and from unfair economic and financial systems.

- Levelling up measures are needed to offer progressive support to individuals and groups whose capabilities have been diminished or constrained by inequalities.

- Strengthening the capacity of rights holders to make valid claims on others is integral to all actions to tackle disparities.

Central to the recommendations and the framework above is the understanding that *the rights and needs of highly disadvantaged and excluded individuals, families and groups will be considered and prioritized, in actions taken by Governments and their partners to implement the new Development Agenda*. Who and where these people are will vary from one society to another, depending on the patterns and drivers of inequalities and discrimination in each context. As detailed in Section 3, groups and individuals who commonly experience *Unequal Lives* in different contexts include, and are not limited to, women and girls, children and older people, persons with disabilities, linguistic and ethnic minorities, indigenous persons, LGBTI people, migrants and religious and non-religious minorities .

Recommendations from the e-discussions call for specific measures to promote universal access, provide special measures and opportunities, build capacities and ensure voice, justice, representation and equal rights in law for such widely-disadvantaged groups and individuals are contained in the *Annexes* to this Report.

Note on terms

The term lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex are used throughout the report, abbreviated to LGBTI. These terms have global resonance, although across cultures other terms (such as hijra, meti, kuchu, kawein, lala, skesana, motsoalle, mithli, travesti, fakaleiti, hamjensgara and two-spirit) are used to describe same-sex behaviour, identities, relationships and non-binary gender identities.

Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
GDP	Gross domestic product
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer
MDG	Millennium development goal
PMTCT	Prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV
PTA	Parent-teacher association
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health rights
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAT	Value-added tax

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Page 26 Woodhead M, Dornan P, and Murray H. 2012. *What inequality means for children: Evidence from Young Lives*. Young Lives Project, University of Oxford Department of International Development.

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All other boxes containing quotations are drawn from contributions to the e-discussions found on the *Addressing Inequalities* e-space: www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities

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Annexes: Summaries of e-discussions

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"Previous approaches to improve urban life have treated their rich and their poor differently. There is a certain mind-set which has become the determining factor for development for poor communities. The application of this mind-set has now created two worlds: one of the rich and the other of the poor."

—Arif Hasan (Contribution to E-discussion on Urban Inequalities)

Gender Equality

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: UN Women, DAWN*, Womankind Worldwide, GCAP Feminist Task Force, Amnesty International and Third World Network.**

"***A society that fails its women [and girls] ultimately fails itself.*" *Manase Chiweshe, South Africa****

Executive summary As we approach the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) it becomes clear that while progress has been made in some areas, it has not occurred evenly or equitably. Gender equality, a fundamental goal of development, and one that cuts across all other areas, is yet to be achieved. A firm commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls must therefore be central to the post-2015 development agenda – but this time around the focus must be on addressing the structural factors at the root of gender-based inequality, including societal norms and attitudes that discriminate against women. In concrete terms this will require action in six priority areas (see Box 1).[i] Gender equality can be achieved: together we can work to eliminate prevailing inequalities in rich and poor societies alike, and build a future where all human beings benefit equally from development.

Box 1: Priority Areas for Gender Equality

1. Combat all forms of gender-based violence;
2. Ensure women's sexual and reproductive rights and access to quality healthcare;
3. Enact and enforce laws that promote gender equality and eliminate laws, policies and practices that are harmful to women and girls;
4. Prioritize access to quality education and skills development for all women and girls, especially those from socially excluded groups;
5. Ensure women's full participation in society, including in the economic, legal, social and political life of their communities;
6. Enact economic and social policies that contribute to achieving gender equality and align with human rights principles.

Introduction As part of the Addressing Inequalities thematic consultation, UN Women and UNICEF, in partnership with civil society, co-convened a global e-discussion on gender equality. The consultation aimed to capture the voices of people from around the world, asking that they, through the forum, share their thoughts and ideas for envisioning a world free from inequalities. At the time of writing, over 2,600 people had joined the forum, with hundreds contributing directly to the gender equality e-discussion.[ii] The most salient issues and key messages arising from this vibrant exchange which took place from 3 October to 2 November 2012 are summarized below.

The voices and the issues[iii]

"if women are to be considered as equal and responsible members of society, no aspect of their physical, psychological or sexual integrity can be compromised" Anonymous. This was one of the most widely voiced issues, with nearly four in 10 comments received in the first week making at least one reference to gender-based violence or violence against women and girls specifically. Several contributors described situations in their home countries and pointed out how violence and intimidation are used systematically against women and girls in a deliberate manner to disempower and keep them from realizing equal rights and opportunities. Penalties are often inadequate and imposed without uniformity, and the victims are routinely marginalized. There was a clear consensus among the contributors – unless the issues around gender-based violence are addressed, gender equality will not be achieved.

"...women's participation in business and politics GLOBALLY is sub-standard." Niki of Irise. A second area of consensus is the importance of women's full and equal participation in society – including in the economic, legal, social and political life of their communities. Commentators drew attention to some of the most significant barriers to women's full participation in society

** Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era*
*** The Feminist Task Force (FTF) of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty*
**** E-discussion participant, October 2012*

and called for policies and programmes, including targeted interventions to promote and increase women's control over assets and access to economic opportunities, and temporary special measures (e.g. quotas) to increase the number of women in leadership positions.

"The main factors of inequalities are the macho culture 'normalized' in society and entrenched in public institutions." Xenia Diaz. Numerous examples were given of the powerful role that social norms play in justifying and sustaining gender inequality and upholding social hierarchies. Contributors described how social norms that prescribe subordinate positions for women create barriers to their full participation in societies; how social norms act to condone violence against women and support impunity; how they drive and legitimate discriminatory practices such as forced and early marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and son preference; and how they are used to support the stereotyping of certain tasks as 'men's work' or 'women's work', particularly the prevailing assumptions that care work is the domain of women and not of men. Contributors pointed to the education of women and girls about their rights and their worth, and programmes targeted directly at men and boys as important strategies for tackling discriminatory norms and practices. Legal structures that protect and promote women's rights must also be strengthened, and resources to fund these efforts mobilized. Laws and practices that are harmful to women and girls must be abolished.

"As a 12 year old, I feel that education is a key driving factor for the girl child. It's her birthright to obtain education and she shouldn't have to campaign for it." Kehkashan Basu. Gender equality in education, a key target in the current MDGs framework, was widely discussed as an ongoing priority area. Greater efforts are needed to reach those left behind, especially girls from socially excluded groups. The right to quality education must be guaranteed irrespective of income, sex, race/ethnicity, religion, or place of birth or residence. Many also voiced the need for greater participation of girls in areas where they are significantly underrepresented, especially in the field of science and technology. Others emphasized the need for gender norms, relations and structures to be a central component of school curricula to challenge and change negative gender stereotyping and ensure principles of gender equality are instilled in girls and boys early in life.

"Too often men think that the gains of women come at their expense; this simply is not true and such thinking is a real barrier to genuine progress. The case for gender equality needs to be a mutually beneficial story." Anonymous. Another important point made repeatedly is the need to understand gender equality as a process of expansion of rights and opportunities for both women and men and not a zero sum game, where the rights and opportunities of one group are constrained for the benefit of another. Gender equality is about creating conditions where both women and men have the right and ability to realize their full human potential. The role of men and boys in promoting gender equality was widely voiced as a necessary but often neglected area; programmes that effectively engage men and boys must be supported and expanded.

"We know the social and the economic are not separate. […] We know that the working of the economy has gender 'impacts'…" Valeria Esquivel. This quote and others like it emphasized the interdependence between the 'social' and the 'economic' and cautioned against viewing women's issues as separate from the workings of the economy. Some argued that the new agenda should encourage efforts to measure unpaid care work and challenge perceptions that this work is not productive. Related to this idea, many commentators wrote compellingly about the need to influence the broad macroeconomic policy framework and in particular fiscal, trade, monetary and development policies. These are often assumed to be 'gender-neutral' but, in effect, perpetuate inequality within and across societies, including gender inequalities.

"…we have to understand that we have a paradigm that will continue to create exclusion and poverty […] We need to work not so much for the world we want or need, but on how to create the world needed by all present and future generations and a healthy and peaceful planet." Marta Benavides, El Salvador. Growth strategies that deplete environmental resources and make living conditions more risky and vulnerable must be challenged. We can no longer ignore the impact these policies have on the sustainability of the ecosystem and our collective responsibility for the next generation. As one commentator put it, the post-2015 development framework must aim to resolve the tension between "ever-expanding material consumption on the one hand, and the ability of societies to care for their people and for the ecosystems upon which they live, on the other".

"The MDGs are not grounded in a rights-based approach. They have failed to adequately address inequalities that are often masked by a focus on national aggregate targets." Bethan, Marie Stopes International. Several contributors to the discussion stressed the need for a strong human rights-based approach to the post-2015 development framework. The post-2015 framework, it was argued, should bring forth a new narrative, one that brings out the linkages between economic and social policies, emphasizes states' obligations to human rights and goes

beyond the limited approach that characterized the MDGs. The new agenda should reveal where targeted efforts are needed, so that all individuals benefit from development.

"When our rights are guaranteed, including our sexual and reproductive rights, we are better positioned to make free and informed decisions regarding our health, well-being and futures." Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights. The need to realize the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women was a recurring theme. Contributors called for the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), especially provisions related to universal access to quality, comprehensive and integrated healthcare services, including access to modern contraception; eradication of infant, child and maternal mortality; prevention and control of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and comprehensive sexuality education for all young people.

"The most disadvantaged girls live with disabilities, live in the poorest communities, are part of indigenous or minority groups." Noreen. The specific barriers faced by women from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including women and girls with disabilities, older women, migrant women, indigenous women and those from poor rural communities came across strongly in the discussions. Consensus emerged around the need for a deeper understanding and examination of how multiple forms of discrimination against women and girls manifest themselves across and within countries and of the structural factors underpinning them. A holistic set of disaggregated data is required to uncover the root causes that constrain the rights of women and girls from specific groups.

"The respectful use of the land and its resources is inextricably linked to the human rights abuses of [against] women and the perpetuation of poverty." Lobi RedHawk, Gray Panthers. It was clear from the remarks made by forum participants that issues around land and inheritance rights are of paramount importance to women, especially women in rural areas and women from indigenous communities. Increase women's participation and representation in land-use planning and policymaking; invest in social and financial services (including through women-led cooperatives); develop and enforce legal frameworks for equal access to land, and support grassroots women's productivity and innovation were just some of the recommendations made to address the barriers to development faced by women and girls in poor rural communities and women who traditionally have been denied control and access to land.

Recommendations and conclusion

While many issues were covered during the month long discussion, some areas dominated the discourse. The six priority areas gleaned from the inputs received are summarized in Box 1. But gender equality cannot be limited to these areas; an overhaul of the structures that produce and perpetuate gender inequality is needed. Transformational change requires a new approach, one that is grounded in the human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination, but also one that recognizes that gender equality can only be achieved if both women *and* men are involved and their rights fully realized.

There was a clear demand for a process that is transparent, inclusive and participatory, where the genuine participation of women and men is facilitated and where mechanisms exist at the local, national and global levels for setting priorities, monitoring progress and holding governments accountable.

Finally, while some questioned the goal setting approach, there was overall support among participants for 1) a specific goal that focuses on addressing the most widespread and fundamental forms of gender-based inequalities; and 2) the full integration of gender equality throughout the post-2015 development framework, with targets and indicators that capture not only national averages, but also inequalities in outcomes by sex and by the intersection of gender with other forms of inequality.

The overall message gender equality remains unfinished business across all societies, rich and poor; it is a necessary condition for sustainable development; and without it broader development goals will remain unrealized.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Ginette Azcona, UN Women, Nicole Bidegain, DAWN, Emily Esplen, Womankind Worldwide, Rosa G. Lizarde, GCAP Feminist Task Force, Kate McInturff, Amnesty International, and Ranja Sengupta, Third World Network.

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[i] Priority areas were identified by a tally of key word mentions and a qualitative analysis of all responses to the discussion. The exchange however was rich and diverse, thus this is by no means comprehensive but aims to highlight some of the most widely voiced issues/areas.

[ii] At the time of writing, 2,697 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 372 comments were posted to the discussion. 56% of these were posted by female participants, 38% from male participants.

[iii] Note: Brackets indicate where a change or insertion was made within a quote.

Gender-based Violence and Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: UN Women, UNDP, Imkaan, UK, IWRAW Asia Pacific and the League of Displaced Women, Colombia.

"We can no longer continue to accept complacency in the face of any form of gender-based violence" – Mabel White, FEIM*

Executive Summary

Despite their successes, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have not fully addressed the values and principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration, particularly in relation to human rights and equality. Gender-based violence, in particular, is inadequately addressed in the current framework, therefore, as the 2015 target date for achieving the MDGs approaches, it is crucial to engage in the dialogues to make gender-based violence prevention and response central to the post-2015 development agenda. Only by addressing the structural factors that create unequal power relations between men and women and striking at the root of gender inequality, can gender-based violence be eliminated. Principles of transformative change are further bolstered by training and education, access to services and resources, and mechanisms that ensure greater accountability, such as better data collection.

Box 1: Priority Areas for Gender-based Violence

1. Address structural inequalities and unequal power relations as a transformative response to bring about mindset change.
2. Examine masculinities and engage men and boys in violence prevention.
3. Address developmental inequalities, such as deepening poverty, lack of access to education and no access to resources, as these compound the structural inequalities.
4. Ensure that State and non-State actors are made accountable for ending gender-based violence (GBV) through monitoring and evaluation.
5. Improve data collection, including data disaggregated by age and sex.
6. Undertake analysis of the socio-economic costs of GBV and cost-benefit of addressing GBV.
7. Address the high correlation between conflict and insecurity and GBV.

Introduction

Held in partnership between the consultations on 'Addressing Inequalities' and 'Conflict, Violence and Disaster', the online discussion on gender-based violence ran from 17 October – 21 November 2012, stimulating a wide-ranging conversation on the issue and its underlying causes, and eliciting a diverse set of recommendations and good practices for addressing gender-based violence (Box 1). The main findings from this discussion informed the Regional Thematic Consultation on Violence, held in Liberia in December 2012, part of the Conflict, Violence and Disaster Consultation.[i]

Key Issues

"One of the key obstacles to addressing structural causes of GBV is changing the deeply embedded assumptions that allow it to take place. We need to create cultures where social and structural 'permission' given to men to violate women and girls is eliminated."- Dickie Chester-James.

Structural Inequalities

There was consensus among participants is that gender-based violence is due to major structural inequalities in society – unequal power relations between genders and men, girls and boys – in the economic, social (including legal) and political spheres. Participants noted the prevalence of harmful traditional practices and forced early marriage as further contributing factors. There was a call for systemic institutional change through policy research studies, and to cultivate political will to make the change as "policies stay on paper if they cannot be enforced". Participants also highlighted the need for a transformative response with a "standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment" with transformative targets that address unequal power relations and a dedicated target on violence against women and girls, together with indicators on social norms and practices, in order to monitor mindset change.

Development inequalities

There was an underlying acknowledgement that these structural inequalities are exacerbated by wider developmental inequalities, including deepening poverty, lack of access to a broad range of resources and services,

**e-discussion participant, 2012*

from sanitation to education, as well as drug and human trafficking and crime.

We "need to enhance and expand the work being done with boys and younger men to address rape and shift the underlying social norms and notions of masculinity that lead to intimate partner and sexual violence" – Emma Fulu, Partners for Prevention.

Investigating masculinities – The theme of the structural basis for GBV segued into a discussion about the need to examine masculinity and engage men and boys in violence prevention. Co-moderator Marai Larasi emphasized that "a critique of structural factors should explore issues such as dominant masculinities, privilege and entitlement." Engaging men and boys through education and awareness, addressing 'male sexual entitlement' and ensuring early intervention were seen by as key solutions for prevention. Interventions included mainstreaming gender sensitivity into school curricula and building capacity of key institutions across different sectors, youth volunteer projects and campaigns targeting youth and male groups.

"There is a lack of proper support system for women, lack of proper laws or lack of awareness of the laws. These are the reasons why most of the cases of violence against women go unreported" – Kavita Chandhok.

Impunity and legal recourse – Many participants urged the need for stronger legal systems and a commitment to the implementation of existing legislation to bring perpetrators to justice as well as for prevention efforts. Many felt strongly about the lack of urgency on the part of law enforcement to seriously address cases of gender-based violence, and others implicated members of law enforcement as systematic perpetrators of GBV as well. According to Ruben Reyes Jiron from Nicaragua, "the judicial system and the police are quite far from becoming effective institutions to make sure justice is available to the women and girls who are victims of GBV."

"Women are the biggest victims of sexual violence and forced displacement, crimes that have historically remained in impunity" – Patricia Guerrero.

Crises and armed conflict - Several participants noted the high correlation between conflict and insecurity and GBV, including in drug trafficking, dispossession of land, internal displacement of people and gang wars. There was agreement that gender-based violence during conflict is not merely a matter of circumstance but a result of existing structural biases in patriarchal cultures that justify violence as a tool of subordination exacerbated by socio-economic and political situations.

"There is increasing recognition of the need for States to underpin their work … with national action plans, in order to provide the institutional mechanisms, resourcing and monitoring necessary to effectively address such a deeply-entrenched problem" – Felogene Anumo, FEMNET.

Accountability – There was a call for greater accountability from State and non-State actors alike. The Secretariat of the High-Level Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) outlined the need for accountability mechanisms "at political, programmatic and financial levels, from local to global levels, with a focus on addressing inequities." There was general consensus that the desired outcome was 'mindset change', that state authorities need to take ownership of monitoring and evaluation to improve implementation of the law, and that reviews must be institutionalized. Examples of promising mechanisms for reviewing and evaluating impact of legislation were cited, such as Singapore and South Korea.

"There is a need to expand national prevalence data on VAW/G, as we have regional evidence to show that where such data exists, it can have a positive policy impact." Anna-Karin Jatfors, Campaign Manager, Asia Pacific UNITE Campaign.

Data collection - The need to greatly improve data collection on gender-based violence was repeated several times, calling for capacity building for national statistics offices, including data on prevalence, perception and access to services, among others. The absence of an indicator on violence against women in Goal 3 because of the lack of reliable data was regarded as "a missed opportunity" for action on the issue. One participant called for mainstreaming gender across any future goals, "including data collection that is disaggregated by sex, and gender sensitive targets and indicators." Some participants highlighted specific data needs, such as the need to expand data on the socio-economic costs of gender-based violence and the cost-benefit of addressing it – both with regard to measuring its impact on families and communities, as well as measuring the cost of service provision for the purposes of public budgeting.

Intersectionality - Several participants highlighted the importance of addressing the intersection of GBV with other factors. These included:

- Violence against children, as witnessing or experiencing domestic violence has been shown to influence attitudes and behavior and "perpetuate intergenerational cycles of violent behaviors and abuse" (Devashis Dutta, UNICEF) but also becuase children and women often experience gender-based violence for similar reasons.

- Caste-based violence, which is often not integrated in policies, budgets and advocacy on gender equality, despite its intersection with gender-based violence - International Dalit Solidarity Network.
- HIV prevalence, as gender inequalities increase women's risk of experiencing violence and therefore of contracting HIV and limit their ability to seek help and treatment - Sexual Violence Research Initiative.
- Violence against women with disabilities, who are at higher risk of experiencing violence and lack of social protection and for whom impairment and structural barriers increase vulnerability - Handicap International.

Recommendations and Conclusions

"The lessons from the MDGs are clear and the post-2015 framework must avoid repeating them: violence against women and girls was 'missing' in the MDGs."- The Secretariat of the High-Level Task Force for ICPD.

In the discussion on the way forward, there was consensus on many aspects, mainly on the need to urgently address gender-based violence in the post-2015 agenda. However, the current modalities of the MDGs were also questioned, including the separation of gender issues into one goal, as opposed to mainstreaming gender across the framework.

Transformative Response – Perhaps the strongest call was to strike at the root of gender-based violence for the most viable real solution for lasting change. The importance of male involvement and of women as change agents was repeated, as was the need to integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights into the response, given the relationship between violence and health.

Monitoring and accountability – In order to ensure greater accountability by the state in adequately addressing gender-based violence, participants stressed the need for monitoring mechanisms to be included in the post-2015 development framework, through oversight by external development partners, including installing Special Rapporteurs on violence against women within countries.

Participants offered specific examples of measuring progress on addressing gender-based violence in the post-2015 framework, including:

- Fewer practitioners of harmful traditional practices with more seeking alternative sources of livelihood;
- More states have fully-funded National Action Plans integrated into national budgets;
- Data disaggregated by sex, age, impairment, ethnic group or caste;
- Number of reported cases (multiple participants);
- Number of cases followed by police and prosecuted by justice (multiple participants);
- Policy reforms that ensure zero tolerance of gender-based violence through a transformed security, legislative and health provisioning system;
- Gender equality and violence prevention integrated in school curriculums from early childhood level;
- Full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes including in early warning mechanisms to prevent violence against women and girls in conflict situations.

Service Delivery – Participants emphasized the need for scaling up effective programming, ensuring fully-funded state support for survivors and their children and establishing minimum standards of services provision. The post-2015 framework must also include a provision for sustainability of existing programmes (Coalition of NGOs and Community Based Organizations of Cameroon) and data collection on access to services must be undertaken (OECD).

Women-led efforts – Participants agreed on the importance of women-led efforts in building initiatives that address women's real needs, given the evidence that state action on gender-based violence policy and legislation is driven by autonomous women's movements (APWLD). Moreover, strengthening women's voice and participation in decision-making at all levels, including their economic empowerment, was seen as underpinning the more explicit strategies to address gender-based violence.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Tania Farha and Mika Mansukhani, UN Women, Roma Bhattacharjea, UNDP, Marai Larasian, Imkaan, UK, Ivy Josiah, Women's Aid Organization, Malaysia and IWRAW Asia Pacific, and Patricia Guerrero, League of Displaced Women, Colombia.

[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 138 comments were posted on the Gender-based Violence discussion.

This online discussion is a collaboration of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities (co-led by UNICEF and UN Women) and the Global Thematic Consultation on the Impact of Conflict, Violence and Disaster in the Post-2015 Development Agenda (co-led by UNDP, PBSO, UNICEF and ISDR).
The weekly summaries can be downloaded here:
1: http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/304765
2-3: http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/292556
Final: http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/304766

Inequalities and LGBTI People

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and ARC International.

"The discussion of development and rights of LGBTI should start with the understanding that [LGBTI rights] are basic human rights, inseparable from the rights of other humans, and [that human rights are] merely a privilege if not enjoyed by all" **- Fran Luke***

Synopsis Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are susceptible to a range of human rights violations, including violations of their rights to life, to privacy and to freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention. Many experience discrimination in accessing housing, health care, education and employment. These and related abuses contribute to the marginalization and impoverishment of LGBTI people, depriving them of opportunities to contribute to social and economic development. Tackling violence and discrimination against LGBTI people is integral not ancillary to the goal of equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

Box 1: Key Recommendations to States

- **Repeal** all discriminatory laws and policies that affect the enjoyment of human rights by LGBTI people. These include laws that criminalize adult consensual same-sex relationships, as well as laws that attach onerous conditions to sex reassignment surgery or to the issuance of identity documents that reflect a person's preferred gender.
- **Enact** comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity among prohibited grounds.
- **Include** a commitment to address discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, in the post-2015 development agenda.
- **Establish** a United Nations human rights mechanism to monitor and report systematically on violence, discrimination and related human rights violations affecting individuals on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Introduction As part of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities, UN Women and UNICEF convened a global e-discussion on development and rights of LGBTI people, in collaboration with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human rights (OHCHR) and the LGBTI equality network ARC International from 5 November – 7 December 2012. With nearly 1,700 people joining the forum, and hundreds engaging actively from all over the world, the e-discussion marked a significant moment: the first time an open UN-hosted debate of this kind had been held on inequalities affecting LGBTI people and the associated impact on development opportunities.[i]

The e-discussion confirmed that the **widespread discrimination experienced by LGBTI people is an obstacle to development** overall, and that LGBTI perspectives should be integrated into any future international development goals. As Ricardo Baruch of YouthCoalition.org wrote: *"…LGBT issues could and should be included as a cross-cutting issue for the Post-2015 agenda in aspects such as education (including information about sexual orientation and gender identity in school curricula), employment (non-discrimination on grounds of [sexual orientation and gender identity]), health (access to services and health promotion for LGBT people) and participation (enabling an environment where LGBT organizations can exist and promote their human rights)."*

Inequalities faced by LGBTI people[ii]

Violence and discriminatory attitudes

"Violence resulting from homophobia and transphobia is a daily reality and ongoing fear for many LGBTQ people across the world" - Anna Penner. A large number of e-discussion participants identified physical violence as one of the most serious and widespread forms of rights violation faced by LGBTI people, leading to increased inequalities. Lesbian and bisexual women and trans people are particularly exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, with bisexual and gay men also at risk. The use of so-called "corrective rape" of lesbian women, in which

**e-discussion participant, 2012*

women are raped in the belief it would 'turn them heterosexual', sometimes with the complicity of family-members, is one such egregious example.

Verbal and psychological violence, as well as bullying and threats, was also pinpointed as a significant problem. More structured forms of psychological violence were also mentioned, such as therapy attempting to turn homosexuals into heterosexuals, which can be especially harmful for young people. Suicide was mentioned as another consequence of bullying and violence.

Discriminatory laws

"Change the laws that criminalize me and punish the real criminals who harass me, beat me, discriminate against me, and those who treat me as second a class citizen."- **Bedayaa Organization for LGBTIQ, Egypt**. The legal frameworks regarding sexual orientation and gender identity vary widely from country to country. In the best cases, countries protect the rights of LGBTI people through anti-discrimination laws that expressly include sexual orientation and gender identity, and laws that facilitate gender recognition without imposing other forms of rights violations on trans people. In the worst cases, national legislations consider same-sex relations a criminal offence, even punishable by death in a few countries. In some cases, transgender persons are subject to sterilization or other requirements as a prerequisite to government recognition of their gender identity. The censorship of any activity associated with LGBTI activism or identity, including public mentioning of homosexuality, or "propaganda" of homosexuality as some laws and bills call it, also leads to the denial and violation of a range of human rights, including freedom of expression, association and assembly. This restricts the ability to raise awareness about LGBTI people in the media and other fora and it limits the possibility for LGBTI people to enjoy an equal and adequate level of development.

There are a number of countries where laws are ambiguous and implemented according to the discretion of a judiciary that often has little or no knowledge of sexual orientation or gender identity issues, and who may base their judgments on misconceptions and prejudice. This is why same-sex relations do not only have to be decriminalized, but laws which proactively protect and promote the rights of LGBTI people need to be adopted.

National anti-discrimination laws that are compliant with international human rights standards are necessary but insufficient. *"We must change laws, obviously, but we must also build societies that acknowledge and welcome difference" (Alli Jernow)*. Implementation of legal protection is essential to translate the policies into practice to make a difference in the lives of LGBTI people.

Discrimination in access to education, health and basic services

"The most notable forms of inequality hindering development particularly with regard to the trans/gender community globally are limited access to housing, health care, education, employment, even water. These are basic human rights." **- Fran Luke.** Discriminatory attitudes and laws create insecurity, marginalization and often lead to LGBTI people falling out of school and the labour market, and receiving limited access to basic services and healthcare. *"When people face stigma and discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity they are forced 'out of sight', limiting the opportunities to participate and contribute to society" (A Nielsen).* This also limits their voice, participation and agency, and their access to political and other decision-making fora. Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity often leads to higher rates of illiteracy, unemployment and forced prostitution for LGBTI people, leading to denial of other rights, opportunities, resources and development.

These human rights violations also deny LGBTI people the possibility to be an active part in development by being kept out of education, of the work force or even forcing them to leave their country altogether. This can result in a brain drain in communities that sorely need all capacities at hand to boost both social and economic development.

Sexual and reproductive health was mentioned as an area where LGBTI people experience an extreme level of discrimination in access to services, including exclusion from HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Participants also noted that healthcare needs vary widely between lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people, which is why a greater understanding and information is needed among care providers. Transgender, lesbian and bisexual women in particular have reproductive and sexual health needs that are often unmet in relation to issues such as sexual violence and reproduction. *"There is a global culture of silence that seeks to enforce ignorance about sex, sexuality and sexual and reproductive health among women – this remains true in the case of [women who have sex with women]" (Susana Fried, UNDP).*

Participants underlined the situation of trans persons and harmful medical practices in regard to intersex people, especially children who are particularly vulnerable to non-consensual medical treatment such as genital-normalizing surgery. The limited access to sexual education was also pointed out as especially harmful for the LGBTI community.

Culture, religion and tradition

Although many people of faith support equality for LGBTI people, and many LGBTI people themselves hold sincere religious beliefs, religion and tradition were specifically identified as potential obstacles to the realization of LGBTI rights. Homosexuality is a taboo in some societies, and religion and religious texts are often invoked as pretexts for homophobia.

The e-discussion focused particularly on how to counter these arguments, representing two main lines of thought: to the value of appealing to broader messages reflected in most religions such as love, respect and justice, and the importance of examining religious texts from a progressive perspective to illustrate that there are alternative interpretations which do not disapprove of homosexuality and transgender identities.

The global culture of patriarchy and hetero-normativity was mentioned by many participants as a root cause of homophobia and transphobia. It was also pointed out that the term "traditional values" is increasingly being used to justifying the denial of many rights, especially of women (irrespective of their sexual orientation) and of LGBTI people.

Several participants pointed out that culture and traditions are dynamic and changeable. Some of the countries that are now at the forefront of LGBTI rights at the international level were previously exporters of anti-homosexuality laws through *"the huge role that colonialism and the imposition of values has played in perpetuating homophobia, transphobia, hatred and violence" (Anna Penner).* A strong civil society for LGBTI rights was underlined as a resource to influence culture, as well as the important forces of change constituted by the internet and social media. *"LGBTI people across Africa have increased access to resources and community support, with help from improved technology and social media" (Kate Muwoki, IGLHRC Africa).*

Comments highlighted that religious practices and views depend on socio-cultural contexts, and that there is a need for greater visibility of religious scholars who believe in the principles of human rights and who can provide inclusive interpretations of Holy texts. *"…the vast majority of humankind in every tradition, culture or religion values fraternity, respect, dignity and equality as foundational. The discourse on LGBT issues should be framed and made to appeal on these bases for the development agenda to progress beyond mere aspirations" (Vivek Divan, UNDP).*

Strategies, policies and initiatives designed to address inequalities experienced by LGBTI people

Decriminalization and legal protection

"For any development agenda to be effective, anti-discrimination and anti-violence efforts must be well integrated." - Cynthia Rothschild. Systematic problems need systematic solutions – this was a clear conclusion for action of the e-discussion. This means to repeal laws that have a discriminatory impact on LGBTI people, such as laws that criminalize individuals for engaging in adult, consensual same-sex sexual conduct, withhold legal recognition of same-sex relationships, or attach onerous and unjustified conditions to the issuance of identity documents that reflect a person's preferred gender. States also need to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity among prohibited grounds.

Where there is a clash between human rights laws and the local culture, it is essential that LGBTI people receive the protection they are entitled to. No State should be able to hide behind customary law or "traditional values" to avoid protecting minority rights.

Education and awareness-raising

"I think one clear step forward for everywhere is awareness-raising and education. As we all know, it is much harder to break down already formed prejudice than to raise open-minded people." - Kathryn Tobin. The discussion repeatedly pointed to the need for awareness-raising and education as a means to create visibility and greater acceptance of LGBTI people among the general public. Specific sectors that were highlighted for the beneficial effects such education would have included law enforcement, judiciary, penitentiary and other security sector institutions, and government officials and diplomats working with regional and international human rights mechanisms. The media was also pinpointed as a sector that has enormous influence in relation to how LGBTI people are portrayed, by either reaffirming stereotypes and hence maintaining structural discrimination, or by providing positive role models. For this reason, LGBTI awareness-raising for journalists and other media professionals was identified as an area where education and training could have tangible positive effects.

In addition, participants felt that school curricula should include gender and sexualities education that provides information on LGBTI in an inclusive and objective manner. Information pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity should be integrated in other parts of the curriculum where relevant, and human rights education should include non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. "Teaching children, adolescents and young people about [sexual orientation and gender identity] does not mean "promoting" homosexuality, instead that it is a part of human sexuality that is natural and must be respected" (Suzy, Youth Coalition, Zambia). Politicians have an essential role in

ensuring access to funding for such awareness-raising and for including LGBTI perspectives in development more broadly.

Gathering data and monitoring hate crimes

"Specifically, we call on the United Nations to appoint a special rapporteur to regularly report LGBT human rights protection progress and to document discrimination across all nations." Aibai Culture & Education Center, China. The vulnerable and marginalized situation of LGBTI people in many countries, whether due to penalizing laws, ostracizing attitudes or both, make hate crimes against LGBTI people less visible than violent crimes against other targeted groups. LGBTI people may refrain from reporting assaults, and ignorance and/or homophobia and transphobia may result in under-reporting of such crimes.

Data on hate crimes against LGBTI people is very sketchy and calculated on the basis of too little existing data. Considering the many testimonials of hate crimes against LGBTI people, there is a clear need to start monitoring hate crimes and human rights violations against LGBTI people internationally, in a structured and more consistent manner, to better understand the situation globally and identify what measures are needed in countries across the world. Participants stated that there is a need for more disaggregated data on violence against both men and women with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity, and called for the creation of a new UN human rights mechanism, such as a Special Rapporteur, with the mandate to monitor the human rights situation of LGBTI people.

Key Recommendations to States

- **Repeal** all discriminatory laws and policies that affect the enjoyment of human rights by LGBTI people. These include laws that criminalize adult consensual same-sex relationships, as well as laws that attach onerous conditions to sex reassignment surgery or to the issuance of identity documents that reflect a person's preferred gender.
- **Enact** comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity among prohibited grounds.
- **Include** a commitment to address discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, in the post-2015 development agenda.
- **Establish** a United Nations human rights mechanism to monitor and report systematically on violence, discrimination and related human rights violations affecting individuals on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Toiko Kleppe, OHCHR and John Fisher and Kimberly Vance from ARC International.

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[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 101 comments were posted on the LGBTI discussion.

[ii] Note: Brackets indicate where a change or insertion was made within a quote.

Persons with Disabilities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: UNICEF and International Disability Alliance

"…inequality goes beyond the problem of unequal access to a building, an institution, a social system. It is also deeply entrenched within the historical treatment of the group."
- Xuan Thuy Nguyen*

Synopsis The MDGs have not addressed the rights of persons with disabilities, which led to deepening of poverty, wider developmental inequalities and challenges. Inequality affects all countries, rich and poor. International agencies, donors, governments, other development actors and society overall have, on the whole, not yet adequately recognized disability, rights and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations within a cross-cutting framework. Instead, these issues have been accorded minimal priority in national and regional development debates.

Persons with disabilities represent 15% of the world's population. Inequalities faced by persons with disabilities result from a large number of barriers, including physical and institutional communicational barriers as well as attitudinal barriers and stigma, which often lead to persons with disabilities being invisible and considered as unable to participate in society, and in particular in decision-making processes.

In order to address these widespread and deeply rooted inequalities, and ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities, the seven recommendations for the post-MDG framework which emerged from the online discussion focus on establishing disability as a cross-cutting theme, ensuring that the post-2015 framework is based on a human rights approach and facilitating the participation of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of the post-2015 agenda, to ensure that the new development framework cannot ignore the rights of persons with disabilities.

Box 1: Key Recommendations for the post-2015 development framework

1. The new framework must be based on a human rights approach, in **compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**.
2. Agree a **specific goal focusing on equality and combatting discrimination**, to include persons with disabilities.
3. Include equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities as a **cross-cutting issue** throughout the framework.
4. **Disability disaggregated data** are required to establish targets and indicators related to persons with disabilities in all areas and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in reporting and monitoring activities.
5. **Participation of persons with disabilities**, including organizations of persons with disabilities, in all decision-making processes to develop the new framework.
6. **International co-operation** should be inclusive of persons with disabilities, with both disability-specific projects and ensuring that all projects are inclusive of persons with disabilities.
7. Persons with disabilities should be central to all **global partnerships** under the new framework, with disability-targeted multi-stakeholder partnerships established to ensure this.

Introduction As part of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities, UN Women and UNICEF convened a global e-discussion on how to address inequalities facing persons with disabilities in the post-2015 development agenda, in collaboration with the International Disability Alliance. Nearly 1,700 people joined the forum, with hundreds engaging actively from all over the world.[i]

Overall, the e-discussion found that persons with disabilities face inequalities in all areas of life, throughout the whole life cycle, and these inequalities not only lead to their exclusion and discrimination but, combined with the general absence of social protection measures, almost

** E-discussion contributor, 19 November 2012*

unavoidably lead persons with disabilities (and their families) to situations of poverty and extreme poverty, which can even result in risk to their lives.

Persons with disabilities regularly encounter disability specific barriers, are particularly exposed to situations of multiple discrimination and also face increased vulnerability compared to the general population in situations including conflict, natural disasters and other humanitarian crises, environmental degradation, austerity measures imposed by multilateral institutions and other macroeconomic policies, uneven distribution of wealth between North and South, etc.

Women and girls with disabilities are particularly at risk of being victims of violence, including sexual violence, but existing mechanisms to prevent violence do not usually take them into account.

During the course of the e-discussion the areas most often mentioned, in which the inequalities are especially alarming were: education (Education For All has not become a reality for children with disabilities who form a significant proportion of children not in school); employment and access to livelihoods; access to water and sanitation; access to healthcare services including sexual and reproductive health services (due to prejudice and stigma regarding persons with disabilities as asexual); exclusion from participation and community life; stigma and discrimination.

Inequalities faced by Persons with Disabilities[ii]

"As full citizens, people with disabilities are entitled to equal rights. In their daily lives, they continuously battle exclusion and restrictions to their full participation in society, facing discrimination, abuse, denial of their rights and poverty." - Asabe Shehu Yar'Adua Foundation. Regarding disability, participants have highlighted that, because disability is a cross-cutting issue, it is often a combination of elements that result in marginalization, disempowerment, dehumanization and the systemic denial of the rights of persons with disabilities. Most participants agreed that the problem is pervasive, world-wide and entrenched. Further, inequalities that persons with disabilities face multiply when disability intersects with gender, geographical location, age or ethnicity. Finally, all too often the voices of young people with disabilities are not heard in the process of designing legislation/development frameworks that affects their lives, despite the fact that in many developing countries, people under the age of 25 make up over half the population.

Exclusion from participation and community life

Participants were of the opinion that one of the most significant barriers for persons with disabilities is the lack of equal opportunities to participate in society and to make informed decisions. This can be caused by inaccessible mainstream services, often leading to persons with disabilities being confined in segregated institutions, separating children from their families. ***"Participation and full inclusion of persons with disabilities is both a general principle of the CRPD, cutting across all issues, and a specific obligation of States parties anchored in article 4, paragraph 3 of the Convention. States parties must also ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are involved and participate fully in monitoring the implementation of the Convention at the national level." - Krista Orama.*** Persons with disabilities often lack political, legal and financial influence. There is a greater need for a unified voice and stronger representation through organisations of persons with disabilities.

Stigma and Discrimination

Prejudices held by society, family and individuals can act as a barrier to people with disabilities exercising their right to full participation in society. One participant argued that cultural biases define people with disabilities as not equal participants in society, powerless and incapable of contributing. They are subjected to violence, in particular women and girls, and there is a history of eugenics. According to another participant, this comes from lack of understanding of the social model of disability.

Access to support services and resources

- **Access to quality education**

"Children with disabilities are often denied access to education, are placed in the special education system which is often a prevailing option in many countries, or have to leave schools prematurely because of inaccessibility, inadequately trained teachers, and lack of awareness among parents and school staff." - Vladimir Cuk. Most participants agreed that education is a key for building an inclusive society. Inequalities related to literacy remain among the most neglected of all education goals under the MDGs. UNESCO and Human Rights Watch confirm that one third of the 67 million children who are still not in school are children with disabilities. Inclusive education brings a great opportunity to change attitudes, cultures and open minds about the benefits of living in an inclusive society.

- **Access to employment and livelihood**

The majority of people with disabilities have faced inequality in terms of unequal access to employment, compared to those without disabilities. According to the World Report on Disability the unemployment rate among people with disabilities is twice the level of the non-disabled population in developed countries, while in

developing countries more than 80% of people with disabilities are estimated to be un- or underemployed. Further, it also indicates that unemployment rates for people with disabilities are also affected by gender, ethnicity, age, types of impairment, geographical location and cultures. Participants agreed that major contributing factors include ignorance and failure to provide reasonable accommodations that would allow qualified individuals to perform the essential functions of their job. Furthermore, persons with disabilities face stereotypes, marginalization and often patronizing responses from managers, colleagues and employers. Ignorance levels within workplaces can also be attributed to the absence of monitoring of compliance to existing legislation. On the other hand, people with disabilities are often successful when they have small business development opportunities and, when employed, often have higher retention rates, as well as lower absenteeism.

- **Access to water and sanitation**

"Disabled people are often overlooked in decision-making on water and sanitation services, are not represented on water user committees, on WASH forums, or in policy-making. As a result service design and provision are not accessible for all, presenting physical barriers (such as steps and narrow doors) that can result in loss of dignity." **- *Louisa Gosling.***

Access to safe and clean water and sanitation facilities is a basic right of all people, including people with disabilities, the denial of which can have serious implications on their well-being. For example, inaccessible toilet and water facilities are major contributing factors for school dropout among children with disabilities, especially girls.

Access to clean water and basic sanitation is a right also guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 28 in the CRPD focuses on the right of persons with disabilities "to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families; this includes State Parties' duty to ensure equal access to clean water services".

- **Access to healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services**

"Women and girls with disability are especially vulnerable to sexual violence, with people with learning difficulties and in institutions at especially high risk." – Anonymous. Persons with disabilities experience higher levels of unmet health needs than people without disabilities. Participants agreed that having a disability leads to incurring more expenses in daily life – expenses seldom supported by the state or society at large. The lack of resources often results in the inability of persons with disabilities to meet basic human needs. The standard of living of persons with disabilities often determines access to health and other services. Children and people with disabilities are frequently removed from their families and forced to live in institutions, where they may not be able to access mainstream services and may be neglected, which in turn impacts on their ability to participate fully and contribute to the life of their community. In addition, inequalities exist between persons with disabilities depending on whether they live in rural or urban environments; persons living in rural environments have less access to services and support.

Key recommendations for the post-2015 development framework

"The way forward is to firmly establish disability as a cross-cutting theme, so that no development framework on any theme, be it gender, education, employment, health, etc. can afford to exclude disability." – Javed Abidi. In order to address these widespread and deeply rooted inequalities, and ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities, the 7 recommendations for the post-MDG framework include:

1. Human-rights based post-2015 framework

The need for the new framework to be based on a human rights approach, which for persons with disabilities means that the new framework be in compliance with the CRPD and all the other human rights treaties, which also apply to persons with disabilities. The Social Protection Floor initiative adopted by the ILO is also of particular relevance for persons with disabilities in view of their overrepresentation amongst the most poor in society.

2. Standalone Equality Goal

The need to have a specific goal focusing on equality and combatting discrimination which would include, among others, persons with disabilities.

3. Disabilities as a cross-cutting issue throughout

Equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities should also be mainstreamed as a cross-cutting issue throughout the whole post-2015 framework, with disability specific targets and indicators. The interconnectedness of disability must also be underscored in order to make programmes or policies that address inequality more successful. ***"For example, making a government building accessible would not necessarily translate into increase in the number of persons with disabilities using/ benefiting from the services. This is because the barriers such as access to water and sanitation, public transport, appropriate assistive devices and attitudinal barriers continue to exist." - Mahesh Chandrasekar.***

4. Disability disaggregated data, targets and indicators

In order to support this cross-cutting approach, disability disaggregated data are required for all areas to enable the establishment of targets and indicators related to persons with disabilities and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all reporting and monitoring activities. Special efforts need to be made to produce new datasets, both by including persons with disabilities in national censuses and other mainstream statistical tools, as well by undertaking periodic national disability surveys.

5. Participation in global policy-making

Participation of persons with disabilities in all decision-making processes, starting from the negotiation phase of the new framework, is also seen as a key issue to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas. The role of representative organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) is of particular relevance here. In order for DPOs to be effective partners, targeted capacity-building activities are often required. This should also include family organizations of persons with intellectual disabilities.

6. International cooperation fully inclusive of persons with disabilities

International co-operation should be inclusive of persons with disabilities, as mandated in article 32 of the CRPD, using a twin-track approach including disability-specific projects, including initiatives in the area of deinstitutionalization, and ensuring, through the adequate establishment of safeguards and other similar policies also in the area of procurement, that all projects financed by bilateral and multilateral agencies are inclusive of persons with disabilities. UN entities and the World Bank should provide an example of good practice in this regard. Equally important is that partner countries and countries that are both donors and partners, commit to the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all co-operation efforts, including South-South co-operation.

7. Disability-targeted partnerships to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in the post-2015 framework

Persons with disabilities should be central to all global partnerships to be established within the post-MDG framework, as well as having disability-targeted multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all dimensions of the new framework, ensuring the effective participation of representative organizations of persons with disabilities in all these processes.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Lieve Sabbe, UNICEF and Vladimir Cuk, International Disability Alliance.

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[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 111 comments were posted on the discussion on persons with disabilities.

[ii] Note: Brackets indicate where a change or insertion was made within a quote.

Economic Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: Save the Children, UNICEF, International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

"Extreme inequality in the distribution of the world should make us question the current development model." Jose Tortajada, FIADASEC*

Economic inequalities within countries have increased significantly since 1990 with income and consumption gaps between the rich and poor widening even in countries that have experienced rapid economic growth. Today, we live in a world in which the top 20% of the global population enjoys more than 70% of total income and in which the top one per cent owns more than 30% of total wealth and about one quarter of total income.

Approximately 50% of children and young people are living below the $2 per day international poverty line. While to a certain extent, economic inequality may reflect rewards for education, innovation and risk taking, fast growing economic inequality harms growth and hinders progress towards poverty eradication and social stability. Indeed, income inequality often goes hand-in-hand with disparities in health, education and other dimensions of human development, reflecting unequal access to basic social services and making it even harder for poor people to break the poverty cycle.

Highly unequal societies tend to grow more slowly than those with low income inequalities, are less successful in sustaining growth over long periods of time, and recover more slowly from economic downturns.

Overall, the extreme inequality in the distribution of the world's income should make us question the current development model, to understand in particular the root causes of economic inequality and their evolution over the past decades, as well as defining new methods to measure inequalities. In concrete terms this will require action in eight priority areas (see Box 1).

Box 1: Priority Areas against Economic Inequalities

1. Prioritize the right of all girls and boys to **quality education**, with particular attention to getting the most vulnerable through secondary school;
2. Enhance **social protection**;
3. Strengthen **labour standards**, regulations and institutions, including unions so as to correct power imbalances and reduce earning inequality;
4. Increase **people's participation** in development policies;
5. End **discrimination against women and any minorities**;
6. Ensure effective **accountability mechanisms** that track and monitor progress against economic inequality;
7. Build NGO and institutional capacity to assist **empowerment of poor and marginalized** in society;
8. Design and enforce **improved regulation** for transparency and taxation of **international financial flows**.

Introduction As part of the Addressing Inequalities thematic consultation, Save the Children and UNICEF, in partnership with civil society, co-convened a global e-discussion on economic inequality. The consultation aimed to capture the voices of people globally, asking that they use the forum to share their thoughts and ideas for envisioning a world free from inequalities. At the time of writing, over 3,000 people had joined the forum. The most salient issues and key messages arising from this vibrant exchange, held from 19 November to 19 December 2012, are summarized below.[i]

The root causes of economic inequality

***"Achieving equity in education is fundamental for improving the prosperity of individuals and societies" -* Kate Redman, UNESCO**. Lack of education was one of the most widely voiced root causes of economic inequality, with nearly seven in ten comments received in the first week making at least one reference to both quality of and equitable access to education. Contributors emphasized that these education failures are jeopardizing equitable growth and social cohesion and are preventing many countries from reaping the potential benefits of their

** International Federation of Associations for Social, Ecological and Cultural Aid, e-discussion participant, 2012*

growing youth populations. Evidence from the 2012 Education for All Monitoring Report shows that funds spent on education generate ten to fifteen times as much in economic growth over a person's lifetime. There was a clear consensus among the contributors that access to quality education should be equitable, although policy actions should not focus on education alone, as poverty and inequality are multi-dimensional.

"Economic inequalities are reinforced by overlapping causes like global political and economic dependencies, unaccountable financial systems and unfair provisions of natural resources and global public goods" **- Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.** A second area of consensus is that corruption and illicit financial flows negatively impact the services people depend on – from the construction of infrastructure to health centres. Corruption hits poor people hardest with devastating consequences – e.g. bribes or additional illicit fees may mean that a family cannot afford education or health services. Effective tax systems are also important to generate revenue and allow redistribution to curtail inequality; however contributors have highlighted a lack of transparency in the national tax systems, as well as tax losses due to illicit financial flows out of developing countries. The Tax Justice Network has estimated that about US$ 250 billion is lost each year by governments worldwide due to individuals holding their assets offshore.

"Discrimination in general and particularly gender inequality affect economic inequality, through labour segregation, gender wage **gaps" - Sylvia Maria Booth.** Numerous examples of discrimination (e.g. gender, ethnic, religious) play a key role in inequality and poverty. Some segments of the population face discrimination based on any distinguishing characteristics from the majority group, resulting in higher rates of unemployment or a difference of treatment. Gender discrimination was specifically highlighted by a number of contributors, emphasizing that women's access to education, health services and information, land rights, as well as economic opportunities need to be improved.

"Increased emphasis on sustainable development further highlights the need to look beyond the rate of growth towards what this achieves in jobs, poverty reduction and human development" **- Paul Dornan.** Market failures, deregulated markets, institutional failures and public expenses cuts were highlighted by contributors as causes for the decrease in service provision (education and health), as well as reduced opportunities. Contributors agreed that growth is not equal in its impact on human development. The current concept of economic development and growth undermines pro-poor human development. The 'financialization' of economies has driven greater inequality, especially at the very top end, and contributed to the imbalances that preceded the global financial crisis. Failures of public policies in wealth redistribution, as well as discontinuity in political and economic reforms have contributed to exacerbate economic inequality. Many discussants called for a new development model prioritizing human development against economic development, as well as better regulation of the financial market, including the question of the role that the international community should play.

How has economic inequality changed in recent decades?

"For a sample of 32 low- and middle-income countries, we find that children face twice the income inequality of the general population. Specifically, we compare household incomes and household income per child, for the top and bottom deciles. This ratio has grown by around a third (from 27) since the 1990s" **- Alex Cobham, Save the Children.** Disposable income, market income and wealth have increased within a majority of countries since 1990. However, there is growing evidence that inequalities have risen because wealth has only been concentrated in a minority population, while the poor population did not benefit from it and have been stagnating for the last twenty years. The contrasting experiences of the large middle-income countries, namely Brazil, where inequalities remain very high but have declined in the past twenty years, versus China and India, where disparities have grown, have been widely discussed. Different trends and outcomes were observed between countries, even between countries with a similar level of income. Contributors noted that inequalities do not decline systematically as countries develop. Income inequalities have declined in Turkey since 1990, while they have increased in Costa Rica - two countries with similar income per capita and comparable growth rates. Similarly, disparities have increased faster in English-speaking countries (USA, UK, Australia) than in continental Europe. Consensus was found among contributors that inequalities in the distribution of the world's wealth should make us question the current development model.

How to measure inequalities?

"Like for most medical assessment, diagnoses are not just examining the superficiality of a disease; it is doing tests to get to the root cause of an illness. Similarly, evaluating poverty and income disparity […] without examining their origins and believing that GDP per capita is an indicative to measure wealth and development is foolish" **- Rula Qalyoubi.** This quote and others like it emphasized that there is a need to revise the current understanding and

definition of poverty, progress and development beyond material living standards alone (income, consumption and wealth). Non-economic aspects and indicators should be taken into consideration, such as education, health, social connections, housing, political participation, governance, environment, personal security, economic insecurity, etc.

"The very poorest households do worst on most indicators, but they are closely followed by the following quintile. Targeting is important in many circumstances, though it may run into issues of complexity and political sustainability" **- Paul Dohan.** Targeting methodologies are insufficient when it comes to measuring economic inequality. Inequality is a broader problem than simply tracking the experience of the poorest, as it affects all strata of the population. This needs to be addressed and reflected in the measures used within the new framework.

Policy responses to combat economic inequality

"Universal and free education is necessary to reduce inequalities" **- Jose Tortajada.** Most contributors agreed that to tackle economic inequality and poverty it is important not only to increase access to education, but also the quality of such education. There was also a consensus on the significant benefit to expanding both the quantity and the quality of female education. Increasing enrolment requires dealing with both demand factors and supply factors. On the demand side, this can be achieved through reductions in the costs of schooling (for example, abolishing school fees) or subsidies to attend school. On the supply side, it is important to build enough schools, especially in rural areas, to provide adequate resources and to prevent a rapid expansion of demand from completely swamping supply, which could be experienced after abolishing fees.

"Policies to combat economic inequality will have to correct power imbalances in the labour market" **- Frank Hoffer.** Growing inequalities can be partly attributed to growing unemployment, growth of the low waged informal sector and a decline in the share of wages in total income. One of the reasons for these trends is the dilution of labour standards, regulations and institutions, including the decline in trade union membership and collective negotiation coverage. Measures need to be taken to encourage employers in engaging in collective bargaining and International Labour Standards need to be implemented in this respect. Where they were effective, the expansion of decent employment in the formal sector and the development of minimum wage regulations have played a key role in reducing inequalities.

"Social Protection is critical for ensuring that those who cannot and should not work are not economically disadvantaged and can still contribute to the economy and the common good" **- Bernadette Fischler.** Social Protection systems can build human capital and ensure access to essential services. They can be affordable, including in low-income countries, and efficiently tackle poverty. Where possible, a set of interventions should be encouraged to improve or protect human capital, such as labour market interventions (labour law and wage setting), social insurance (pension, unemployment support, family benefits, sick-pay) and social assistance (cash transfer and subsidies, disability insurance or specific support to marginalized groups) with the aim of assisting individuals and families to better manage risks during an economic crisis. Donors can play a critical role in supporting national social protection initiatives, particularly through capacity building and predictable funding aimed at leveraging sustainable government finance in the longer-term.

"[..] States are adopting laws, regulations and practices that punish, segregate, control and undermine the autonomy of persons living in poverty" **- Anonymous.** Empowerment and participation are other key elements that contributors highlighted. Governments should actively engage individuals and groups, particularly those living in poverty, in policy design and implementation. Several contributions also strongly emphasized the importance of addressing gender equality and women's empowerment, emphasizing it is vital to tackling the root causes of poverty in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Gender equality is a basic human right that can only be achieved by creating a supportive legal environment and by empowering women to exercise their rights in their daily lives, including their access to health, especially sexual and reproductive health.

Recommendations and conclusion

While many issues were covered during the month-long discussion, some areas dominated the discourse. The eight priority areas gleaned from the inputs received are summarized in Box 1. However, economic inequality cannot be limited to these areas; the large disparities across people, groups and countries pose massive policy challenges. Taking the debate further entails bold thinking, especially at the dawn of the post-2015 era.

There was a clear demand for a new vision for promoting human development through the joint lens of sustainability and equity. Traditional methods of assessing development and growth fall short and non-income dimensions of well-being need to be considered. This should be accompanied by the revision of the current understanding and definition of poverty, progress and development, beyond material living standards such as income, consumption and wealth.

Finally, growth-oriented policies seek to increase gross national product, not to ameliorate poverty and thus have

to consider redistribution of income, consumption and wealth in approaches to reduce economic inequality and poverty.

About this discussion Moderated by Alex Cobham, Save the Children, Janine Berg, International Labour Organization (ILO), Marta Roig, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Martin C Evans and Xavier R Sire, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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[i] At the time of writing, over 3,000 people had registered to the Inequalities site, 84 comments were posted to this discussion.

Indigenous Peoples and Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and experts from indigenous peoples' organizations*

Introduction As part of the Addressing Inequalities thematic consultation, UNICEF, UN Women and the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in partnership with civil society, co-convened a global e-discussion on indigenous peoples and inequality. The consultation aimed to capture the voices of indigenous peoples from around the world. Online participants were asked to share their thoughts and ideas for envisioning a world free from inequalities. At the time of writing, over a hundred people contributed to the e-discussion on indigenous peoples and inequality.[i] The most salient issues and key messages arising from this vibrant exchange which took place between 27 November to 19 December 2012 are summarized below.

Box 1: Priority Areas for Indigenous Peoples

1. Recognition of indigenous peoples at national and international levels;
2. Recognition of indigenous peoples' collective rights, in particular the right to land, territories and natural resources;
3. Enactment of intercultural and cultural-sensitive policies at the national level, especially in the areas of education and health;
4. Prioritization of the special conditions and needs of indigenous women, children, youth and indigenous persons with disabilities;
5. Recognition of culture as the 4th pillar of sustainable development, and the inclusion of the indigenous view of development with culture and identity;
6. Enactment of the right to free, prior and informed consent in all matters affecting indigenous peoples;
7. Establishment of partnerships for development issues relating to indigenous peoples.

The voices and the issues[ii]

"I believe the first inequality faced by indigenous peoples is the right to exist" - Katarina Gray-Sharp. One of the most widely voiced issues was the lack of recognition of indigenous peoples at both national and international levels. The views expressed were about their marginalization, exclusion and denial as indigenous peoples by the State, and exclusion in the Millennium Development Goals and related MDGs reports. There was also concern that indigenous peoples have been overlooked by governments and their partners in the pursuance of MDG 8 – Global Partnership for Development. Their exclusion from key processes was identified as a major cause of inequalities. Some contributors cited the 'invisibility' of indigenous peoples as another major cause. Many States argue that they do not have indigenous peoples, only minorities, and therefore do not qualify to be part of the UN's/international community's debate on "indigenous peoples". Several contributors emphasized the need to recognize and protect indigenous peoples' collective rights, including their customary laws, community governance institutions and forms of representation, land tenure systems and productive activities, all of which have been customary practices.

"When big financial issues are at stake, as is the case with mineral resources, indigenous rights are easily put aside" - Gerard Willemsen. A second area of consensus is the essential importance of recognizing indigenous peoples' right to their land, territories and natural resources. Contributors drew attention to major violations, such as land grabbing and unfair competition exercised by States and private investors/companies, exploitation of natural resources by extractive industries, resource-based conflicts, and lack of recognition of customary tenure systems. This impairs indigenous peoples' rights to access and use forests, ancestral lands and natural resources. It also exposes indigenous peoples to the effects of climate

**NGO Committee on the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, United Confederation of Taino People, Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism, Indigenous ICT Task Force (IITF), International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), Front Siwa-Lima, Alliance of Indigenous Women of Central America and Mexico.*

change, disrupts their social unity and exacerbates their situation.

"Maori in New Zealand are over represented in all the worst social indicators - health, welfare, justice/corrections etc. Much of this can be traced as the consequences of colonization inclusive of loss of land, self-government, culture, language and economic capacity. Other factors include the urban drift away from cultural roots and more recent neo liberal economic policies which have helped greater levels of poverty" - Ian Hutson. The historical past of colonization, assimilation and dispossession was widely discussed as the key determinant of inequalities for indigenous peoples. There was consensus in tracing inequalities in income, health, education, justice, etc. to colonization, as well as assimilation policies and economic policies that have negative impacts on indigenous peoples and are forcing indigenous peoples to migrate to cities. Contributors underlined that urbanization has brought about greater levels of poverty, disruption to social cohesion as well as disruption to indigenous peoples' food and nutrition systems, due to lack of access to forests, lands and to traditional income-generating activities. Several contributors called upon development planners and policy-makers to take into account multiculturalism, to capture the heterogeneous realities of indigenous peoples, in order to aim at national integration, instead of assimilation.

"It is necessary to create mechanisms for full and effective participation of indigenous youth in decision-making spaces, taking into account the digital divide, and we have to be in the areas of analysis, debate and generation of proposals which have to do with indigenous peoples […] such as post-2015 agenda." - Dali Angel. Participants identified specific situations related to certain groups within indigenous communities. Systemic poverty exacerbates inequality, especially for indigenous women, children and youth, who are particularly affected by the lack of access to health services, housing and revenues, due to their marginalization and vulnerability to high rates of different forms of violence. Non-sustainable development, extractive industries, policies originating from colonial and patriarchal systems and doctrines, including, among others, environmental, sexual and physical violence, have particularly negative impacts on indigenous women and children. They suffer not only from disproportionate health impacts, but also from disruption to their local economic and cultural activities. Extractive industries such as mining and oil drilling also increase levels of sexual violence and sexual exploitation of women and girls in indigenous communities around the world. They often pay the greatest consequences for environment degradation and for conflicts within their own countries. Indigenous women are particularly marginalized in addition to being vulnerable to sexual violence as well as having lack of access to culturally appropriate health and education services. They suffer from a double-discrimination, discrimination as women in their own communities and being indigenous women in the larger non-indigenous society. Contributors agreed that some indigenous peoples, such as pastoralist communities have traditional lifestyles and needs that cannot be met by standard service delivery models. However, research for alternative solutions that are in harmony with such livelihood systems is still lacking. This exclusion is compounded by widespread discrimination against pastoralists from the majority population. Indigenous youth called upon States to create effective mechanisms that ensure their significant participation in decision-making processes, at local, national and international level, including the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

"[Indigenous peoples'] right to health can only be realized when the social, political and economic determinants of health are tackled" - Sarah Edwards and Corinna Heineke. Inequality in health was widely discussed. Contributors highlighted the fact that indigenous peoples experience the worst health outcomes both nationally and globally, for example in maternal and infant mortality, malnutrition, mortality, alcoholism and suicide. Participants pointed out that there is lack of adequate health policies to adopt a culturally sensitive approach to indigenous peoples as well as the lack of access to health centers and hospitals. There was consensus on the need to focus attention on indigenous peoples with disabilities, whose living conditions have not been adequately studied and addressed in many countries. Contributors pointed out that the MDGs have set average health goals which are fragmented into compartments, in contrast with indigenous peoples' holistic understanding of health and well-being. In addition, the MDGs do not capture the structural causes of health inequality for indigenous peoples, mainly due to socio-economic determinants, such as forced displacement; degradation of indigenous lands and waters; cultural discrimination; poor access to education, employment and social services; decline of socio-political structures and poor access to healthcare, due to barriers often caused by poverty, geography or cultural factors such as language, compounded by discrimination, racism and a lack of cultural understanding and sensitivity. Other contributors emphasized that current environmental factors, such as the decline of traditional food sources and industrial activity on indigenous peoples' lands has increased urbanization, changed lifestyles, and led to greater reliance on unhealthy and imported processed foods in indigenous communities, which increases risk factors.

There was consensus on some recommendations for new development agenda which emphasized the need for a human rights-based approach to health, addressing the determinants of poor health in indigenous peoples and tackling structural barriers to health care with culturally appropriate programmes and policies that fully involve indigenous peoples to reduce health inequalities. Suggestions also included use of indigenous languages in health centres, mobile clinics to reach remote communities, participation of indigenous peoples in the health workforce and in decision-making processes about their health and integration of traditional knowledge, medicines and practices into the broader health systems. Data must be disaggregated along the major fault lines of inequity, including ethnicity. Data is also needed on indigenous peoples with disability and their living conditions.

"In order that helpful educational policies can be implemented, there is a need for increasingly supportive and non-conflicting language and education policies that affirm and protect language diversity"- Matthew Wisbey. A key point made repeatedly was the importance of education as the cornerstone of development and the need for investment in education and preservation of language diversity for indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples face inequality in access to education in general, due to their geographic and politically marginalized status, as well as in terms of respect for their diverse cultures and languages. Gaps exist in access to primary, secondary, technical and university levels for indigenous children, youth and women. Families are often not in a position to pay for school fees and other operating costs, which often leads to high drop-out rates. The lack of public policies to promote an intercultural, bilingual education system has to be tackled urgently as structural obstacles to its full and effective implementation still persist. Indigenous languages should be recognized officially and the right to be educated in indigenous languages should be put into practice. The majority of contributors agreed that unless indigenous peoples are provided with satisfactory opportunities to learn and use a national/international language alongside their first language, they are very often unable to access development opportunities and are restricted from fully contributing to the national economy.

"Maintaining my Buryat identity in today's globalised world is not only about preserving the traditions, retaining the religion and being respectful towards my homeland, my family and the environment; to me, it is also about remaining loyal to myself, my values and principles formed on the basis of this heritage. I believe […] it is these values that are vital to a sustainable future."- Esuna Dugarova. This quote and others emphasizes the interconnection between culture and identity in indigenous peoples' view of development. Contributors argued that far too often a 'one size fits all' approach to development is harmful to indigenous peoples. For example, current poverty indicators do not capture the specificities of indigenous peoples' perceptions of poverty and well-being, which are often closely linked to the recognition and implementation of their collective rights, such as access to land. The importance of the spiritual aspects of indigenous cultures and their harmony with nature should not be underestimated. Furthermore, the various forms of inequality experienced by indigenous peoples can be attributed to structural factors of socio-cultural injustices. There was consensus on placing culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. This would assist in securing the implementation of a human rights-based approach to development that is inclusive of cultural rights. Contributors argued that traditional knowledge is closely interconnected with and inter-dependent on bio-resources, landscapes, cultural and spiritual values and customary laws. They also felt that customary law is considered weaker than formal law and therefore respectful links are needed between the legal structures of different cultures to allow different legal systems to recognize one another without one dominating. Cultural diversity in the evolving information society and also within internet governance is one of the main concerns for indigenous peoples. Contributors emphasized the need for meaningful inclusion in decision-making and public discussions on processes such as the recognition of indigenous historical and sacred sites as heritage sites.

"development or whatever activities carried out in indigenous peoples land and territory should be based in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the right to free prior and informed consent must be respected". - BM Damai. The majority of participants highlighted the low representation and political participation of indigenous men and women in State institutions. Where constitutions or international treaties which recognize indigenous peoples exist, full and effective implementation is necessary, including the establishment of positive actions and other mechanisms to ensure their participation in policy and decision-making processes. Contributors also argued that the lack of definition, implementation and consultation by national courts, as well as the lack of access to justice, often perpetuates the marginalization of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples should not only be consulted, but also be able to express their consent or non-consent over industrial, infrastructural and extractive projects. In addition, corporations should also be held accountable for addressing environmental, health and socio-cultural impacts or jurisdictional issues linked to their projects.

There was general consensus on the urgent need for corporations to work with indigenous peoples in a trustful relationship, where the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples is sought and respected. Indigenous peoples need to be included in decision-making and distributions of resource revenues, especially when it concerns their lives and how they will be affected today and for future generations. Participants pointed to the need to conceive free, prior and informed consent not as a one-time yes or no vote, but as an on-going, interactive process, whereby indigenous peoples establish the rules of investment within their territories, and select and invite corporations they want to partner with in developing their land and resources. The process should start from the earliest stages of project conception and design. Doing so would allow the knowledge of indigenous peoples to be utilized in the development process. This would entail a shift from indigenous peoples reacting to plans developed by corporations and governments, to indigenous peoples taking the lead in planning, managing and monitoring economic development, and having the right to say "no". This, in turn, would maximize the achievement of an equitable distribution of economic activity and revenues. Education on free, prior and informed consent and the development of clear guidelines for implementation and monitoring are of key importance. Numerous examples were provided of the failure of the global market economy and State structures to recognize and capture the value and importance of indigenous peoples' traditional economic activities and systems of collective ownership, which are often part of the informal economy. This has impaired indigenous peoples' ability to obtain credit from national financial institutions and from global banks, further limiting their possibilities of finding ways out of poverty.

"Partnerships could increase the capacity of indigenous peoples to engage in local and national planning processes, including at city and national level and in regional and global policy advocacy." - Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues. There was unanimous agreement that many indigenous peoples live in contexts that are still challenged by militarization, human rights violations, broad impunity, atrocity and armed conflict, where implementation of the UN Declaration is unlikely unless stronger international commitment is reached. Stronger engagement between indigenous leaders and States is required to allow UN Declaration to be a powerful tool for opening up critical realities and truths about spatial, social, gender, inter-tribal, inter-ethnic, inter-cultural and inter-economic-political inequalities.

Recommendations and conclusion

While many issues were covered during the three-week long discussion, some areas dominated the discourse. From inputs received, the following recommendations can be identified for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

- The implementation of a human rights-based approach to development should take into account issues of equality and sustainability, and endorse the fundamental concept of development with culture and identity.

- The UN system should reach out and engage in partnerships with indigenous peoples to ensure their effective participation in the post-2015 development agenda and any emerging sustainable development goals. The inputs should be guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination and include voices from indigenous women, youth and children and persons with disabilities.

- The post-2015 development agenda process is a unique opportunity to ensure indigenous peoples' participation, whereby the partnership between the United Nations and indigenous peoples' organizations should be further strengthened. The creation of networks among indigenous peoples should be encouraged and supported.

- Such partnerships should build on the human rights-based approach to development that is followed by the United Nations. This approach emphasizes universality, equality, participation and accountability. It should also aim to empower indigenous peoples' institutions, while building on indigenous knowledge practices and systems and strengthening indigenous peoples' economies and societies.

- Partnerships at the international and national levels should increase efforts to support and build on indigenous peoples' articulation of their own path for development, and should make every effort to provide adequate funding, technical and institutional support and training to assist those development efforts.

- At the local and national levels, there is a need to strengthen the institutionalized mechanisms for consultation and participation of indigenous peoples, building on the fundamental principles of free, prior and informed consent and full participation in the development process. The role of the United Nations Country Teams in this respect is crucial. Particularly in cities and countries where indigenous peoples have weak institutional capacity, Country Teams should proactively engage in dialogue with indigenous representatives, both men and women.

- The collection of disaggregated data by gender, age, ethnic identity and other factors, e.g. disability, is necessary to gain an accurate understanding of indigenous peoples' poverty, to qualify policies, and to develop

appropriate programmes and monitor impact on all members of indigenous communities.

- Governments, aid agencies and business entities should commit themselves to being held accountable for their actions and policies for indigenous peoples and to ensure that future development policies are aligned with, and do not contradict indigenous peoples' civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

- Recognition of indigenous peoples' collective rights and adoption of culturally-sensitive education and health programmes, security through international law and implementing accountability on crimes against humanity is essential for eradicating poverty.

- Elaboration of appropriate indicators should be a key priority for governments and the UN System, as it is often difficult to monitor the specific conditions of indigenous peoples. The development of special censuses for indigenous peoples should also be considered.

- Recognition of indigenous peoples' contribution to the economy through their own systems of economic development, including their identity, cultures and interests, cultural heritage, practices and traditional knowledge, preserving and respecting non-market approaches, so that indigenous peoples can be supported in finding solutions for the eradication of poverty.

- Full and effective implementation of a human rights-based approach to health which encompasses an intercultural and holistic approach to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples, including indigenous persons with disabilities. Similarly, education policies should affirm and protect language and cultural diversity.

- Governments are called upon to engage indigenous peoples in policy and decision-making processes to promote transparency in the management of public affairs and the equitable redistribution of resources and wealth within national societies. Truth and reconciliation commissions could also play a decisive role in bringing peace and dialogue to societies which have been in conflict.

- Meaningful participation of indigenous peoples should be implemented in all political, juridical, economic, social and cultural decisions that affect them, via the recognition of indigenous representatives and organizations, through adequate funding, and with involvement of indigenous women. The specific needs and solutions advanced by communities and by indigenous women in particular, should be taken into account. The various forms of organization for indigenous peoples should be duly considered as forms of political interaction.

- States are called upon to fully implement and uphold the UN Declaration, including Article 29 on indigenous peoples' right to the protection of their environments and the State obligation to ensure free, prior and informed consent regarding hazardous materials. States should also fully implement Articles 23 and 24 affirming the collective right to health and use of traditional medicines.

- Implementation of culturally relevant and gender-based analysis in all impact statements regarding mining and other extractive industries. There is also a need to encourage the right to free, prior and informed consent.

- States, UN agencies and indigenous peoples' internal processes must respect the traditional knowledge of indigenous women regarding sustainable development, environmental protection, cultural practices, food production and health. There is also a need to include indigenous women's full and effective participation as leaders and experts in all levels of decision-making on these matters.

About this discussion

This discussion was moderated by Mirna Cunningham Kain, member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; Nilla Bernardi, Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; Roberto Mukaro Borrero**,** Chair of the NGO Committee on the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, United States; United Confederation of Taino People, Caribbean; Debra Harry, Executive Director, Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism, United States**;** Malia Nobrega-Olivera**,** Pacific Board Member, Indigenous ICT Task Force (IITF) and President, Waikiki Hawaiian Civic Club, United States; Andrea Carmen, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), United States; Ghazali Ohorella, Front Siwa-Lima, International representative for Maluku and the Pacific representative to the GCG for the WCIP 2014 and Silvia Dali Angel, Alliance of Indigenous Women of Central America and Mexico.

[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 109 comments were posted on the indigenous peoples discussion.

[ii] Note: Brackets indicate where a change or insertion was made within a quote.

Young People and Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: Restless Development, World Vision International, United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and Canadian Crossroads International.

"As we strive towards post-2015 agenda and positively changing the societies we live in, we need to address the overall lack of the key catalysts of change that are critical for young people: Communication, Education and Civic participation."- Rob Rass*

Introduction As part of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities, UN Women and UNICEF convened a global, online discussion on how to address inequalities faced by children and young people. The discussion was jointly moderated by four organizations: Restless Development, World Vision International, United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and Canadian Crossroads International, together with four youth co-moderators**. With nearly 9,500 individuals visiting the forum between 17 December and 18 January 2013, and hundreds engaging actively from all over the world, the discussion marked one of the first opportunities for young people globally to engage virtually in the process to design the post-2015 development agenda.[i]

Through the course of the discussion participants shared examples of inequalities faced by children and young people and underlined the need to address the particular inequalities faced by girls and young women. Participants shared actions that have been successful in challenging inequalities and proposed suggestions for a post-2015 agenda covering a broad range of key themes and issues outlined below.

Box 1: Key Recommendations for the post-2015 agenda

1. Increase access to quality **education** for both girls and boys, with particular attention to girls' completion of secondary education and access to non-formal education opportunities.
2. Ensure equal access to non-biased **sexual and reproductive health** information and services.
3. Protect **human rights of girls** and advance gender equality, especially from all forms of child abuse, violence, exploitation, trafficking, and work towards the elimination of harmful practices.
4. Create **decent employment and livelihood opportunities** for young people, with attention to equal opportunities for young women and young people with disabilities.
5. Address the **root causes of discrimination** against young people, including women, those with disabilities and LGBTI youth through education campaigns.
6. Mainstream the needs of children and young people with **disabilities** into development goals, as well as with specific targets and indicators.
7. Ensure young peoples' **participation in decision-making** and in transparent accountability mechanisms to ensure states, development partners, donors and INGOs meet their obligations and commitments.
8. Facilitate meaningful **participation** of children, young people and youth-led organizations in developing the new agenda at global, regional and national levels, and ensure their voices are reflected in the new development goals.
9. Recognize that **climate change** is one of the biggest challenges facing young people this generation and ensure that a sustainable development agenda (including integrating the SDGs**) is central to the new development goals.

The discussion looked at both initiatives at the grassroots level as well as national and global policy changes. Particular emphasis was placed on how to ensure better access for young people to decision-making on policies, particularly ensuring that the post-2015 agenda listens and responds to the needs of children and young people.

Finally, participants proposed recommendations (Box 1) to address inequalities faced by children and young people in the post-2015 development agenda focusing on addressing discrimination and root causes of inequalities, increasing participation of young people in decision-making and adopting rights-based approaches.

** E-discussion contributor, 18 January 2013*

*** Michelle Alvarez from the Philippines, Bahaa Atallah from Palestine, Liana Enli from Armenia and Esther Eshiet from Nigeria*

****Sustainable Development Goals*

Inequalities faced by Young People[ii]

Discrimination in access to education

"Despite progress, 71 million young adolescents are still not in school, and less than a quarter of young people complete secondary school. Girls of primary-school age from the poorest 60% of households are three times more likely to be out of school as those from the wealthiest households, and twice as many girls of secondary-school age are out of school compared to their wealthier peers." **Sarah Green, High-Level Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), New York.** Increasing access to education was cited as key – focusing specifically on improving access for girls and young women, and ensuring other key target groups – such as minorities and those from low income families and rural areas have the same opportunities. As important is improving the quality of education delivered. There was also recognition of non-formal education and learning that takes place outside the classroom as also crucially important, particularly the role of peer education to inform young people of their rights.

Recommendations: Encourage skills-based and practical skills by establishing internship schemes as part of secondary education; establish new targets for closing the gender gap in secondary education to build on the gains of MDG3; establish an Education Fund targeting young people in slums, with special consideration for female education to reduce future income disparity.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

"most of the people designing policies in the area of adolescent reproductive health do not have an understanding of the problem and lack access to evidence. with advocacy and presentation of evidence based information to policymakers, we were able to get the Edo-State Government in Nigeria to sign a bill into law to abolish the act of female genital mutilation." Nurudeen, WHARC. Access for young people to sexual and reproductive health rights was a key theme. Participants gave examples where, due to age, culture, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or gender identity, young people are often denied services and information, provided with inaccurate information, stigmatized and discriminated against.

The right to sexual and reproductive health services needs to be recognised and global policy should also acknowledge the link between population, climate change and reproductive health. At a national level it was emphasised that laws which create barriers to young people accessing sexual and reproductive health (such as requiring parental consent) should be removed. There also needs to be a link made between advocacy for sexual and reproductive health rights and laws and the research that supports this.

Recommendations: The new development agenda should ensure sustained action and accountability for universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrated sexual and reproductive health services, counseling and information, with respect for human rights and emphasising equality, equity and respect for diversity.

Girls, Young Women and Gender Equality

After three weeks of discussion, UNV and Canadian Crossroads International closed the forum with a week of discussion dedicated to inequalities experienced by girls.

"Girls are less likely to be literate and to have completed secondary schooling, and they are less likely to have the means to defend their rights and access justice." German Foundation for World Population (DSW). Inequalities faced by girls and young women was also a cross-cutting theme throughout the main discussion – it was highlighted that girls and young women across the world face violence, unequal access to education, and even challenges accessing basic services such as adequate sanitation facilities. A number of participants shared examples of inequalities faced by young women in the form of forced or early marriage, child labour or sexual abuse. These inequalities deny girls their right to education and put them at high risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and gender-based violence.

Recommendations: Investing in young people and gender is a social justice imperative but also a key strategy for poverty reduction and socio-economic progress; Looking beyond 2015, governments, UN agencies, civil society and all stakeholders must adopt a zero-tolerance approach to all cases of violence, discrimination and stigma committed against young women and girls; Reflecting on the MDGs, there is a need to move beyond solely focusing on maternal health, to a comprehensive and integrated approach to healthcare. Young women and adolescent girls need the protection and promotion of their right to bodily autonomy by guaranteeing their right to make free and informed choices regarding their sexuality and reproductive health.

Unemployment

"Employable skills are an important factor to be considered by the government, schools, the private sector, communities and municipals. It is essential that youths are provided with skills that are suited to the local economy." - UN Habitat. In the current economic climate

young people are finding it harder to access jobs and opportunities, leading to wider inequalities and divides. Participants emphasized the role of the education system in empowering young people to think creatively about creating opportunities and becoming employers after they leave school. Schools, NGOs, businesses and governments all have a role to play in ensuring that young people are given the skills needed to enter the job market, and that opportunities are there and accessible to all.

Recommendations: Improve **access to credit** for young people to establish their own business opportunities; Promote the **social responsibility of large companies and multinationals** including offering internships to new graduates, and by ensuring that a percentage of those internships result in paid opportunities; Include **youth employment targets** in national development frameworks; Support young people transitioning from institutional living with training schemes, internships and on-the-job support.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Ensuring access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities can help to address inequalities. Lack of access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities poses particular challenges for girls and young women who often spend significant amounts of time collecting water or finding safe spaces to defecate.

Recommendations: Prioritize increased access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for health, dignity and safety in the new agenda; Speak out about the importance of providing facilities for girls and women to manage their menstruation hygienically and with dignity; Ensure young people, particularly girls, are involved in water and sanitation and hygiene programmes so that their perspective and needs are addressed; Raise awareness of the importance of water, sanitation and hygiene among young people so they understand the connections with their health, wellbeing and dignity, and can demand better services; Campaign with governments, donors, service providers, education and health authorities to prioritise the provision of safe drinking water, safe sanitation and good hygiene.

Disabilities

Inequalities faced by children and young people with disabilities were another key theme. The Young Voices global statement asks that, ***"persons with disabilities around the world enjoy full educational opportunities, gainful employment, political representation, social security entitlements, access to public spaces, health services and are living free from torture, abuse and discrimination."*** The range of recommendations for reducing inequalities faced by children and young people with disabilities covered many areas: education, health, political participation and challenging discrimination. As with gender inequalities, there was a clear call for disabilities to be mainstreamed into development goals, as well as for specific indicators and targets.

Inequalities faced by LGBTI young people

"LGBTIQ young people's rights are often neglected because they are considered against the traditional values, cultures, religions, or laws." **- Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights.** A number of participants mentioned that one of the most challenging inequalities faced by young people is prejudice against LGBTI people. An example was shared from Brazil of bullying of LGBTI young people and hate crimes committed against them. Participants felt that, while there are different causes of inequalities in different societies, prejudice against LGBTI people is experienced worldwide. Public policies are needed at national level to target both the causes and the consequences of prejudice.

Recommendations: Address the root causes of discrimination against young people, including women, those with disabilities and LGBTI youth through education campaigns; Mainstream the needs of children and young people with disabilities into development goals, as well as with specific targets and indicators.

Inequalities in participation and governance

"Unfortunately, young people experience many challenges when attempting to have their voices heard in formal decision-making spaces, at local, national, regional and international levels." **- Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights.** Participants felt that these challenges occur due to decision-makers' unwillingness to engage young people, persisting levels of stigma and discrimination (particularly among the most marginalized groups of young people, including young sex-workers, LGBTI youth, migrant youth and others), and other biases against young people. Young people are too often seen only as beneficiaries or vulnerable groups, rather than partners or leaders in providing effective solutions.

Recommendations: Recognize young people as active (rather than passive) actors in development; Youth participation matters - systematic inclusion of young people and girls as a cross-cutting issue in the post-2015 framework is essential to integrating human rights principles into the global development agenda and strengthening poverty reduction policies.

Violence and Conflict Resolution

Young people across the world, particularly girls and young women, face violence on a daily basis. Several inputs to the consultation gave examples of ways to work with young people to address violence in their communities. For example, PIDT (People's Institute for Development and Training), a grassroots intervention in India, runs programmes "catalysing consistent non-violent participatory conflict resolution at the local level" with the aim of building a "culture of zero-tolerance for violence and active experience of non-violent resolution". They describe their approach to change and reconciliation as "a kind of social engineering process, which though slow is steady and sustainable."

Climate Change and Sustainable Development

"[Young people] must be given a formal place in the UN climate negotiations from now on. It is their human right. This is their Earth" - Dr Peter Carter, Climate Emergency Institute. Inequalities faced by young people are exacerbated by climate change. Participants argued that links should be made between the post-2015 process and other global processes addressing sustainable development and climate change.

Recommendations: Recognize that climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing young people of this generation, and ensure that a sustainable development agenda (including integrating the sustainable development goals) is central to the post-2015 development agenda.

Recommendations and Conclusion[iii]

Addressing Root Causes and Discrimination

Many contributors spoke about the need to tackle the discriminations inherent in society through methods such as public education campaigns. Contributors emphasized that change starts with education and removing the barriers that make inequalities possible. One example shared demonstrated campaigns to highlight the positive contributions that young people make to society.

Rights-based Framework

Human rights and the protection of those rights was another thread that ran through many of the responses, particularly ensuring that the rights of all to education, sexual and reproductive health, work, and water and sanitation, were fulfilled. An enabling environment to exercise those rights needs to be created, including full participation of young people in parliamentary and policy-making processes.

Youth Participation and Access to Post-2015 Process

"The UN needs to know that Africa still grapples with the question of corruption, war, poverty etc that can't be solved in workshops and seminars. We need to build a network with the communities and create practical dialogues with the common people" – **Morris Chris Ongom**. A repeated theme was providing a space for young people to access and participate in decision-making processes, including the creation of the post-2015 agenda. It was emphasised that the UN needs to consider the best ways to reach young people – online discussions such as these are a good platform for some to contribute but still exclude many. The UN must look at how to conduct effective consultations within local communities, including establishing mechanisms for consultations with children.

It was also highlighted that creating the space is not sufficient - views need to be listened to and then acted upon. Crucially, young people facing inequalities in their daily lives need to hear their voices reflected in a new development framework, ***"Unless young people are mobilized, [sensitized] and empowered to demand accountability and participate in decision-making, youth will continue to be marginalized and suffer the consequences of inequality."*** **- Awal Ahmed.**

It was also highlighted that it is key to recognise 'youth invented traditions' (for example the use of art for social activism), ***"by recognizing youth invented traditions, youth may be reconceptualized as peacebuilders while also serving as catalysts for identifying inequalities or local issues that affect them and the society of which they are a part." - Kathryn Moore, Columbia University, USA.***

Crucially, young people should participate in all decision-making processes that affect their lives. The need for self-advocacy was highlighted – equipping young people, particularly those who face the most discrimination, such as young people with disabilities and young women – with the skills to articulate and advocate for their own needs.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Katy Chadwick, Restless Development, Arelys Bellorini, World Vision International, UN Volunteers' Gender Equality team and Canadian Crossroads International, together with youth co-moderators: Michelle Alvarez, the Philippines, Bahaa Atallah, Palestine, Liana Enli, Armenia and Esther Eshiet, Nigeria.

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[i] At the time of writing, 4,400 people had registered to the Inequalities site, 241 comments were posted to the Young People discussion.

[ii] Note: Brackets indicate where a change was made to a quote.

Minorities and Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Minority Rights Group and Experts from the Universities of Oxford and Middlesex, UK*.

"To deny groups the opportunity to flourish, on the basis of their identity (ethnic, religious or other) is to deny the entire human family the intellectual, social and moral benefits that derive from such opportunity" - Daniel Perell, United States*

Synopsis Minorities globally experience high and disproportionate levels of poverty. Many of the policies and strategies set up to achieve the MDGs have not improved the lives of disadvantaged minorities. Minorities experience unique circumstances of discrimination and social and economic marginalization which must be taken into account in the new development agenda.

The inequalities experienced by minorities exist in every society and manifest themselves not only in terms of income or wealth, but also in terms of lack of opportunity, poor access to services or land, or the absence of power to influence decisions or policy. These inequalities cover the full spectrum of human rights issues and must be addressed directly in the new development framework. For example, in all regions there are minorities that experience high and persistent levels of poverty, the root causes of which frequently lie in discrimination, marginalization and exclusion.

To effectively address the situations of the poorest and most excluded, it is essential to better understand who is poor and disadvantaged, where and why; frequently it is ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

The new agenda must increase efforts, not only to address inequalities from a victim perspective, but to promote equality and non-discrimination throughout all societies through such measures as human rights education, awareness raising and promoting dialogue and debate. Development goals and initiatives must be designed to be inclusive of minorities. In concrete terms, this will require action in nine priority areas (see box 1).

Box 1: Key Recommendations for Post-2015

- Base the post-2015 framework on human rights and the principles of **equality, non-discrimination and participation** to ensure the inclusion of minorities and indigenous peoples.
- Include specific targets for states on the **inclusion of minorities**, and on anti-discrimination and human rights protection, including minority rights.
- **Increase participation** of minorities including in negotiations to develop the new framework and build their capacity to do so.
- Enact and enforce **national and international non-discrimination and equality legislation** to address conditions that, intentionally or otherwise, disenfranchise minorities.
- Strengthen collection of **disaggregated data** on ethnicity, religion, language, etc. and intersectional discrimination, to enable monitoring of minorities' progress in the new framework.
- Specific national-level measures, such as **support** minorities with education, skills and business development support; **protect** minority cultures, including through support to minority languages; **engage the media** to end discrimination towards minorities and give a voice to those experiencing inequality;
- **Affirmative action** policies to increase minorities' participation in decision-making, including the consideration of quotas.
- **Establish** national institutions to promote equality.
- **Ensure** development initiatives are inclusive of minorities, including minorities' participation in design and implementation.

Introduction As part of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities, UN Women and UNICEF convened a global e-discussion on inequalities facing minorities and how to address them in the post-2015 development agenda, in collaboration with Minority Rights Group, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human rights (OHCHR) and experts from the Universities of Oxford and Middlesex, UK, from 7-18 January 2013. [i]

The discussion looked at the forms of inequality faced by ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. Some contributors

** E-discussion contributor, 16 January 2013*

***Dr. Nazila Ghanea, University of Oxford, UK and Prof. Joshua Castellino, University of Middlesex, UK.*

also raised issues of the rights of people with disabilities and LGBTI people.

Participants shared insights from their own work, personal experience and academic analysis on the types of inequalities faced by minorities globally. Suggestions were proposed on practical ideas for the future, looking at the ways in which different stakeholders, including civil society, as well as those facing discrimination themselves can be enabled to take concrete steps to counter inequality. This can empower minorities not only to reject marginalization but to also enable others to do so. Finally, the discussion looked at how these steps can be imbedded in an inclusive and equal, global post-2015 development agenda.

Inequalities faced by minorities[ii]

Participants raised impacts of discrimination against minorities across all sectors of society, including employment, housing, financial lending, education and healthcare. Examples were given from both developing and industrialized countries. Many emphasized the self-perpetuating nature of inequalities minorities face and suggested that only targeted policies to address them will be effective to break the cycle of inequality and exclusion.

Lack of access to resources

"The most important forms of inequality are: inequality before the law, [created by] certain individuals who believe human being are not equal (creating social attitudes), inequality in access to land, education, health, social services and justice as well as violation of their human rights. The Land is currently a big issue in Botswana as people are evicted from their ancestral land and defined as illegal occupants." **- Lydia Saleshando, Botswana.**

"Yet more secure land rights for women is fundamental to ensuring sustainable development. Research […] demonstrates that strengthening land rights for women goes hand in hand with realizing other development objectives related to poverty alleviation, food security, and environmental sustainability […] In this way, insecure land rights for minority women are an obstacle to improved standards of living for minority communities." **- D. Hien Tran.**

Lack of access to justice

Participants shared examples of minorities suffering oppression due to lack of access to justice. They suggested that support should be provided to minorities who require assistance to bring issues to court at local or national levels.

Access to education

"Illiteracy is widespread among Dalit people. [...] Exact numbers of Dalits who are illiterate remain unclear but sample studies indicate this is around 96%." **- Dr. Md. Shahid Uz Zaman, Bangladesh.** Participants highlighted the importance of ensuring not only access to education for minorities but also quality education. Many also raised the issue of the majority language, as often those who do not learn the majority language in their country often have less opportunity to participate in public life, access higher education, influence political decisions and embrace economic opportunities. Hence different forms of inequality – exclusion on social, political and economic terms – can be linked to the root cause of an exclusionary language and education policy in relation to linguistic minorities.

Labour market access

"In the case of linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural or other minorities (incl., indigenous peoples), stereotypes often play a key role in excluding them from the labour market due to long lasting beliefs about them. […]. Measures such as awareness raising campaigns, exchange programs among majority-minority youngsters/children, etc., could help." **- Alexandra Tomaselli, EURAC Bolzano/Bozen Institute for Minority Rights, Italy.** In key areas linked to poverty such as education, employment and housing, disadvantaged minorities frequently fare the worst in society, with relatively poor access to education and higher levels of unemployment for example. Several participants cited the exclusion of Dalits in South Asia from the mainstream labour market and of religious minorities in the Middle East, for example, the Bahá'ís in Iran from all governmental posts. Denial of full citizenship impacts on the equality of certain minorities in all regions.

Heath Inequalities

"Women of minority groups in all countries are disproportionately affected by lack of access to sexual and reproductive health information, services and care and are most likely to have their sexual and reproductive rights violated or unmet." **- Vanessa B.** Marginalization means that minorities often lack access to healthcare. The example was shared of the UK where evidence suggests that people from minority ethnic groups experience poorer health than the overall UK population, due to influences including the environment, housing, educational achievement, income, discrimination and lifestyle. Similar statistics were shared from the United States and from Cambodia, where in the Ratanakiri and Mondol Kiri provinces – with high concentrations of ethnic groups – only 38% of women have a doctor, nurse or midwife present during childbirth, compared to 71% nationally. It was suggested that service provision should recognize the particular needs and way of life of minorities, for example, health clinics may need to be mobile to reach pastoralist communities.

Gender equality, discriminatory attitudes and violence

"Including women's secure land rights in the post-2015 development framework, can serve two objectives: (1) ensuring that efforts to protect minority identity do not unintentionally disenfranchise minority women; and (2) ensuring sustainable development for minority groups by leveraging the critical role that women play in poverty alleviation, food security, and environmental sustainability." **- D. Hien Tran.** Many participants gave examples where different forms of discrimination can overlap and produce an even worse form of inequality as some members of a marginalized group are excluded even by their fellow community members. A case in point is gender-based violence experienced by some women of ethnic minority background who do not have access to protection by state institutions due to their cultural identity. Minority women and girls are particularly vulnerable and face sexual harassment and violence. This is referred to as **intersectional discrimination**.

Lack of economic and political participation and power

In terms of their participation in public, economic and political life, minorities are frequently under-represented or excluded, lacking a voice in decision-making processes, including those relating to development.

Structural Causes of Inequalities facing Minorities

"The government needs to be neutral to the diversity of its constituents to avoid marginalizing minority/non-dominant groups. Government policy misrepresents equality as that which applies to those only within the jurisdiction of citizenship, but we are all members of the human race … When diverse identities intersect, they can compound marginalization, which festers along the fringes of society." **- Rebecca Cardone.** Addressing these inequalities requires better understanding of their causes, which may be complex and based on historical, geopolitical as well as social, economic and culture factors. As to the root causes of inequalities, **structural and institutional discrimination** is frequently a key element driving and perpetuating exclusion and inequality in both public and private spheres and institutions. It serves to limit the opportunities available to some, often on the basis of their ethnicity, religion, or colour. Frequently it goes unrecognized and un-addressed. Some minority groups are affected more deeply and some face particularly egregious forms of discrimination and stigmatization, such as the Roma, Afro-descendants and Dalits. Yet racism and discrimination are still extremely widespread and infect many societies. Participants shared the following examples of structural causes of inequalities, many of which are themselves caused and perpetuated by discrimination.

Loss of identities and cultural rights

Underlying structural factors cited include the non-recognition of certain ethnic and language groups in policies and laws, including national constitutions, often as a result of colonial legacies. An example was shared from Botswana where tribes in the Okavango Delta – mainly the Wayeyi, Hambukushu and the San, which are not recognized by the Botswana constitution – have lost their historical rights to their farmland and homes, resulting in poverty, homelessness and state dependence.

Lack of Political Will

"In the Middle East in general the term 'minorities' itself is controversial. In Egypt in particular majority of people view it as a political issue rather than a religious or ethnic one. … Right now unfortunately among the issues that have been stressed in Egypt with the 'approval' of a new constitution is that UN documents, declarations and conventions do not count if they are perceived to be contrary to 'Islam'. I think in the post-2015 development agenda there needs to be a stress on equality not only based on religion but also based on gender, race etc." **- Saeed Khan Falahi.** Good governance is essential to break down inequalities, however, participants highlighted that often there is often a deficit of political will and a tendency to govern by and for the majority. A recurring root cause of the persistence of inequalities is the lack of political will to change. For laws against discrimination to be enacted and for policy to be changed there has to be political will; for laws to be enforced sometimes institutional reform is required.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Overall, the discussion highlighted the need for a post-2015 development agenda to be responsive to the needs of those facing additional and persistent obstacles to participation in socio-economic development such as barriers to socio-political participation and intersectional discrimination. Only if new development goals are framed in such a way that minorities cannot be excluded from their impact, and take into account how precarious livelihoods experienced by minorities are currently perpetuated, can they be successful for all. It is therefore essential to formulate goals that are in their design and implementation explicitly inclusive, as well as responsive to input and improvement by communities that are intended to benefit from them.

Human Rights-based Approach

Participants called for the new development framework to take a human rights-based approach, including promoting concrete implementation of the standards of the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National

or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, as well as implementing minority-specific obligations under the Conventions on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Participation

"current decision-making structures exclude the majority of the world's population and reinforce the marginalization of those whose views should be most appreciated. […] people have not only the right to benefit from a materially and spiritually prosperous society, but also the obligation to participate in its construction. If consultation is to be effective, it must promote the participation of the people affected in determining the direction of their communities" **– Daniel Perell, USA.** Throughout the discussion contributors emphasized the need for minorities to be consulted regarding policy and decision-making that affects their lives and communities, as well as capacity building – particularly of leaders - and affirmative action to enable minorities access to political participation, at local, national and global levels.

Community Mobilization

"minorities have to start challenging each other and their acceptance of the status quo…[…] There are leaders and activists in all minority groups who need to build those connections within and outside the community. […] inequality may play out on minority groups but is an issue that effects everyone and only holistic solutions, and larger recognition of it can lead to sustainable solutions." **– Manivillie Kanagasabapathy, Canada.** In terms of the role of those who experience inequalities in addressing them, an example was given from Canada where it was suggested that minorities should raise awareness of the benefits they bring to society, the economy and the culture. Another example came from the United States where an organization of first generation immigrants in Los Angeles, Thai Health and Information Services, coordinates affordable health services with other ethnic communities locally, strengthening community cohesiveness, raising local awareness of diversity and providing free resources for marginalized ethnic minorities.

Empowerment

"Strong measures should be taken to allow indigenous/tribal peoples to participate, more actively sharing their specific experience, knowledge and concerns […] a comparative research, exchange and advocacy programme should be set up to contribute to the understanding of minority rights and their organization-strengthening, and to sensitize decision-making regarding the necessary legal and policy changes" **- Anonymous.** The discussion highlighted the need to provide support to minorities through education, training and support to start small and medium-sized businesses. Participants also suggested the public sector should set an example by hiring minorities, with a view to changing social attitudes over time. Similarly, development project funding should be contingent on recruiting minorities; a positive example was shared from Nepal where UNDP's new 'Workforce Diversity Policy' resulted in increased Dalit representation from 4% in 2007 to 7% in 2011.

Protection of native languages

"funding and expertise for language development is critical. This process has high impact on minorities – as they see their language written and song and dance on the radio, their self-esteem is raised. I heard over the past Christmas holidays the Wayeyi calling me, telling me to listen to the radio as the Wayeyi songs were being sung at intervals during the President's Christmas message speech" **– Lydia Saleshando, Botswana.** Another example was shared from the Philippines where mother tongue based, multi-lingual education has been incorporated into the primary school curriculum.

Inclusive Development Framework and initiatives

"It is critical to take a holistic approach to programme identification and solution finding given the complexities at the local levels concerning overlapping identities, marginalization with identified groups as well as political sensitivities. The UN should see minorities very much as partners, rather than purely as beneficiaries." **– Belen Rodriguez de Alba, OHCHR.** Participants emphasized that development initiatives should work more with local, often minority-based organizations with extensive knowledge of communities' cultures and language. Donors should require minorities' involvement in project planning to help shape the appropriateness of interventions for their communities and for their interaction with the majority culture.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Graham Fox, OHCHR, Nazila Ghanea, University of Oxford, UK, Joshua Castellino, University of Middlesex, UK and Mark Lattimer and Luca Gefäller, Minority Rights Group.

[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had registered to the Inequalities site, 118 comments were posted to the minorities discussion.

Urban Inequalities

Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: UNICEF and the International Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development (IIED).

"Previous approaches to improve urban life have treated their rich and their poor differently. There is a certain mind-set which has become the determining factor for development for poor communities. The application of this mind-set has now created two worlds: one of the rich and the other of the poor." - Arif Hasan*

Synopsis

While cities have long been associated with employment, development and economic growth, hundreds of millions in the world's urban areas live amid scarcity and deprivation. According to UNICEF's "The State of the World's Children: Children in an Urban World," the world's urban population increases by about 60 million annually. By 2050, seven in 10 people will live in cities and towns and one in seven will live in informal urban settlements without adequate tenure and/or access to basic services. As a result of a rapidly increasing urban population, many are denied such essentials as clean water, electricity and healthcare even though they may live close to these services. Thus, investment in addressing the needs of those living in urban areas is the cornerstone for healthy societies with more sustainable and inclusive economic growth and shared prosperity. People living in urban areas – as creators of innovative solutions and as stakeholders in both present and future progress – should be highly involved, as a matter of course, in the discussions, design and eventual implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda.

Box 1: Recommendations to States for the Post-2015 Agenda

- Prioritize **sub-regional data gathering and analysis**. Ensure that data on slums is incorporated into municipal and national surveys;
- Improve **access to basic services**: water and sanitation, health, education and energy for those living in the most deprived urban areas;
- Develop **equitable economic and financial rules and tools** to protect the most marginalized urban poor;
- Advance policies and programmes that **prepare cities for increasing disaster risk and worsening environmental pressures** (i.e. solid waste and air pollution), in particular to protect communities living in slums and marginal areas;
- Ensure the **political participation** of cities' most marginalised urban dwellers at a decentralised level, including on natural resource management, social and economic development and political affairs.
- Emphasize importance of **pro-poor focus of local governments**, urban planners and private sector stakeholders engaged in urban development and investments (i.e. infrastructure, housing, ICT).

Introduction As part of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities, UN Women and UNICEF convened a global e-discussion on urban inequalities, in collaboration with IIED, UN HABITAT and Slum Dwellers International from 4-18 January 2013. With nearly 3,200 people joining the forum and actively engaging from 76 countries, the e-discussion emphasized the need to address the unique inequalities facing our increasingly urban world.[i]

Respondents emphasised their concerns about a growth in urban inequalities and frequently noted the differential impacts of inequalities, with women and young people being highlighted as those most affected. Many of the posts proposed solutions to address these inequities and stressed that interventions must be multifaceted and led by urban communities themselves.

Over 3.3 billion city dwellers are affected by social, economic, spatial and political inequalities and these issues should be addressed in the Post-2015 agenda to develop stronger and more sustainable cities globally and address poverty and inequality. There is a need to recognise that urban inequalities are not just present in the larger cities and that the particular challenges of smaller centres also need to be addressed.

** E-discussion contributor, 15 January 2013*

Inequalities faced within cities

Insufficient emphasis on informal settlements and communities

More than one billion people live in slums across all continents, living in overcrowded, unstable dwellings that often breed violence and increase susceptibility to disease. Slum dwellers are often undocumented, rendering them vulnerable to arbitrary eviction and affording them little rights and political voice.

Although often overlooked, people who live in informal settlements make integral contributions to cities' development. Discussion participant **Mtafu Manda writes: "In terms of social status we know at least from the experience in Malawi that some of the most powerful traditional leaders are to be found in informal settlements that were annexed as the urban areas expanded. In addition the mere large numbers and strength of such settlements makes them a strong political force - as voters. In my view to make progress the simple approach to reduce inequality is to target the informal /slum areas with negotiated and planned infrastructure and services. But this requires some trust in local governance structures. With time some convergence ought to be observable."** Manda suggests leveraging the human capital of slum dwellers to affect change, but stresses the importance of building trust between under-served urban communities and local governments – something that was frequently mentioned in the online discussion.

Participants also identified the need for disaggregated slum data, increased basic service provision, and incorporation of informal settlement communities in decision making as ways to ensure better outcomes for those living in these areas.

Planners ill-equipped to plan for the urban poor

There is "an inbuilt anti-poor bias in planning and policy." – Arif Hasan. There was consensus that urban planners do not have a pro-poor focus and historically urban development has focused on capacity building of local communities and/or general approaches to municipalities, without sufficient engagement of professional planners (inside and outside of government) and private sector investors.

"One of the key needs is to find ways for poor people living in informal or illegal settlements to engage with the planning process." - Lucy Stevens. Planners need to understand how to plan for and with the lowest-income communities and particularly how to physically connect slum communities to higher-income areas, adequate service hubs and public transport. As argued by United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), there is a need to create a citywide strategic planning process that involves all stakeholders in the city. This process must create opportunities to re-imagine and then re-plan the city in a much more holistic and comprehensive way than has been seen to date. Beth Chitekewe-Biti, drawing on research and experiences from Windhoek, Namibia, argues that it is important that the urban poor are involved in discussions about all areas of the city, not just the informal and low-income settlements, to enable the development of more integrated forms of urban development.

"Planners need to pay close attention to the interaction of macroeconomic policies of regularisation and formal development in rapidly urbanising cities experiencing both formal and informal growth." - Melanie Lombard.

Michael Drinkwater of IIED argues that a substantive re-imagining of urban development is required that goes beyond planning as we know it. This has to include greater recognition of the rights of some of the most marginalized and disadvantaged urban citizens and the creation of a process of urban development that acknowledges their legitimate presence and offers them a stake in an urban future for all.

Services and service delivery do not meet population demands

Many cities lack the capacity and infrastructure to deliver basic services to their most marginalized urban communities. This exclusion is further reinforced by discrimination on economic and social grounds. Even in the absence of fees or physical barriers to accessing vital services such as access to safe drinking water and sanitation, healthcare, basic education, housing and infrastructure to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, many of the most marginalized urban populations are also excluded on grounds of race, gender or social status.

A. Nielson discussed gender discrimination in urban slums, sharing that, **"Urban women living in poverty tend to hold a lower social status in their communities, their families and their relationships. They face a higher risk of gender-based violence, sexual abuse, unintended pregnancies and contracting sexually transmissible infections, and in addition face numerous challenges to accessing sexual and reproductive health services. Improving access for women in poverty has generally not been high on government agendas or in urban planning."** Many participants echoed that support for local grassroots organisations who work towards the

empowerment of women including the inclusion of women's needs and rights in local government policies.

Furthermore, many municipalities are reluctant to invest in vital sanitation and other basic services for the fear that their provision would 'legitimize' informal settlements. Ross Bailey highlights this saying, **"Although citywide sanitation is the single development intervention that guarantees the greatest public health returns, there is a consistent failure to accord sanitation adequate attention and investment in towns and cities, particularly urban slums and informal communities."**

In addition, **"many urban poor do not enroll their children in school. There should be enforcement and monitoring to ensure children of school going age are in school, not earning an income for the family through peddling bananas, eggs and mangoes or fetching water among others." - Pricilla Nakyazze.** Lack of access to educational opportunities was a common theme in the discussion, often citing a lack of incentive for parents to send their children to school.

Lack of Employment Opportunities

Lack of adequate employment opportunities, especially for adolescents and young people in the most disadvantaged urban areas, was frequently cited during the discussion. Participants shared that young people often turn to drugs or violence when faced with a lack of alternatives. Furthermore, this is a further example of discrimination against women as many work within the informal sector and are not provided any legal protection.

Thoa Tran of the ILO writes that it is important to **"foster the social dialogue and participatory processes between governments, employers and workers as a way to empower the workers in their united quest for equal treatment, labor rights respect and social protection."** One recommendation emphasises investment in forums for street traders to enable them to work together to negotiate with city authorities to improve access to workplaces and secure legal and social protection. Improved infrastructure in low-income, informal and under-serviced settlements was also recommended to reduce income inequalities in the sector as such investments generally increase the demand for goods and services. On a national level, the UCLG recommends the development of policies that include an expansion of decent work options and access to financial services, as well as the provision of a basic social protection floor.

Prof. Abdou Maliq Simone of University College London argues for the importance of recognising the complexity of some urban neighbourhoods such as Jembatan Lima in Jakarta, Indonesia. There, mixed economies provide opportunities for workers and potential alignments of political interests that enable the acquisition of resources from local authorities. Policy interventions to further equity may be well-intentioned but may do little in the longer term due to the dependency of the urban poor on their local economy. He cautions against generalized conclusions and highlights the need for locally determined interventions that are attuned to the local context.

Lack of inclusion in local governance

"The first step is for poor people to learn to trust themselves. Because we're poor and because we live in slums, nobody trusts us, nobody believes in us. We don't have money, our jobs are illegal, our communities are illegal, our connections to electricity and water are illegal. We are the city's big headache. This is the entire perception of people outside the communities. But we are human beings too and we have lives in this city. If we are given space to be part of the decisions and plans, we also can be part of the solution." - Ruby Papeleras, community leader in the Homeless People's Federation Philippines Inc., in conversation with Somsook Boonyabancha from the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. Environment and Urbanization (24(2)).

Participants discussed the 'political invisibility' of the urban poor, especially those who lack documentation in informal settlements, as they are often excluded from budgeting and decision-making processes. However, Melanie Walker cautioned against discounting the power of those in informal settlements, saying **"Perhaps it is easy to overlook an individual living in a slum, but local governments can't ignore the political clout of a slum – especially when that slum is organized, mobilized, and contributing more than their fair share to the local economy."** According to recommendations from the UCLG, special measures should be identified for the participation of marginalised people on a decentralized level including natural resource management, social and economic development, health, education, family welfare, security and legal affairs.

Recommendations for strategies, policies and initiatives in the post-2015 agenda

The consultation was rich with discussion about solutions to alleviate urban inequalities in the post-2015 agenda. Throughout, participants acknowledged that cities and the poorest communities living within them were underrepresented in the Millennium Development Goals. As the world rapidly urbanizes, it will be critical for the next development agenda to specifically plan for the

poorest and most marginalized living in cities, and devise a concrete role for mayors and municipal governments which acknowledges their increasing importance in the world.

The following six recommendations for the post-2015 agenda received the most prominence:

1. Prioritize sub-regional data gathering and analysis.

One of the most proactive ways to plan for improvements to foster equitable and inclusive urban development is through disaggregated data. Communities living in slums are notoriously under-counted in national surveys, thereby limiting an understanding of their living conditions and challenges. Currently, the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and many national governments do not collect data on what are considered 'illegal settlements', which rules out a majority of the slums in the developing world. One of the primary reasons for this omission results from the numerous definitions of urban areas and/or slums/informal settlements used by different stakeholders. International donors, national governments, local communities and civil society all differ in what aspects they emphasise – from legality to shelter conditions, from tenure status to sanitation concerns, from durability to citizenship issues. If we are to understand the extent and magnitude of the problem, then arriving at a mutually agreed definition of slum is a critical first step.

In addition, on many occasions informal settlement dwellers are not accurately included in either national censuses or household surveys. In the Philippines, for example, Jason Rayos explained that although many live in high risk areas with repeated flooding, there is no record of these populations except in the population census. Even when they are included, this data may be too aggregated to assist in plans to address inequalities.

The post-2015 agenda must therefore incorporate three key elements in its goals for urban data:

1. Provide structure for a globally understood definition of urban areas and slums, to enable adequate inclusion in national and global surveys;
2. Ensure that informal settlements are sufficiently covered in census and household surveys and;
3. Enable communities living in slums and informal settlements to conduct their own self-enumeration and mapping processes.

2. Improve access to basic services

In recognition of the fact that basic service delivery is not meeting population growth in cities, discussants consistently recommended that municipalities and private sector institutions involved in urban planning ensure that access to basic services is provided to cities' poorest communities. Access to educational and vocational opportunities for children and young people in marginalised areas is crucial to ensure that urban inequalities do not continue to grow. In addition, non-discrimination policies must be mainstreamed in local government WASH initiatives to ensure service delivery to the most under-resourced communities. National governments must put safe sanitation and water for poor communities at the centre of integrated city-wide plans for urban basic services.

Globally, communities themselves are mobilizing to provide themselves with adequate services - discussants highlighted that such community-led solutions should be emphasized in any global scale-up of services to cities' poorest areas.

3. Develop equitable economic and financial rules and tools to protect the most marginalized urban poor

Improved access to public services and improved infrastructure will alleviate urban inequities and yield income benefits, as the cost of living falls and health improves as public services replace informal provision. However, as argued by Ben Bradlow, Slum Dwellers International, Ross Bailey, WaterAid and others, there has been too little investment in informal settlements. In the absence of resources, politicians offer partial services in return for votes, often playing one settlement organization off another.

In the absence of municipal capacity to invest, households do whatever they can. Melanie Walker argues for the importance of the provision of meta-finance, access to loan capital that can help to scale up provision. This recognises people's passion and commitment to improving infrastructure in their own locality and enables local government to support more inclusive cities and realize an aspiration for universal access to basic services.

4. Advance policies and programmes that prepare cities for increasing disaster risk and worsening environmental pressures (i.e. solid waste and air pollution), in particular to protect communities living in slums and marginal areas

Urbanization rates are increasing in tandem with climatic changes and increasing environmental degradation.

Therefore, the urban poor are facing multiple deprivations - inadequate service delivery, discrimination, coupled with extreme vulnerability to natural disasters and worsening pollution in cities. National governments, private sector and multilateral partners must work with local governments to build resilience to these pressures in cities. This will be is dependent on local competence and capacity, and strengthened partnerships between those most at risk and local governments. Finance systems that support on-the-ground knowledge and the capacity to act will need to be developed and implemented.

5. Ensure the political participation of cities' most marginalised urban dwellers at a decentralised level

The importance of community organizations and/or networks at both the neighbourhood and the city level was recognized. Such networks help to facilitate local improvements and to establish a capacity for organized citizens to engage with local authorities, national government departments and other agencies that are important for inclusive urban development at the city-scale.

As the most basic level, as explained by Katana Goretti, National Slum Dwellers' Federation of Uganda, such networks can help deal with eviction threats. Women's groups, as elaborated by Carolina Pinheiro, Groots, have helped to identify problems in their neighbourhoods and present these to local government. Involving organized informal sector workers in planning for improved access to infrastructure and alternative trading locations can also improve their opportunities.

6. Emphasize importance of pro-poor focus of local governments, urban planners and private sector stakeholders engaged in urban development and investments (i.e. infrastructure, housing, ICT)

There is an urgent need to refocus on and reassess the responses to urban needs and to equip urban leaders globally across all sectors. The international community must prioritise the urban poor in governance, planning and private sector. To alleviate urban inequalities, the post-2015 agenda must include all influential urban players (municipalities and private sector investors) in its poverty alleviation and sustainability goals.

About this discussion The discussion was moderated by Diana Mitlin, University of Manchester, UK and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and Kerry Constabile, UNICEF.

[i] At the time of writing, 4,500 people had signed up to the Addressing Inequalities site, 102 comments were posted on the Urban Inequalities discussion.

Measurement and Assessment of Inequalities

Expert Online Discussion Synopsis

Moderated by: UNICEF, UN Women, Save the Children and ODI*

Introduction

The issue of inequalities has been a major theme of the post-2015 discussions thus far, and this bodes well for its more comprehensive integration in the next development agenda. At the same time, there should be a focus on the options for and feasibility of approaches to measurement and assessment of various inequalities, and on the quality of indicators – from a technical but also political perspective (e.g. those that will have political traction). It is also important to keep in mind some common perceptions of (assumed) trade-offs between growth and inequality which can create a political barrier. Framing *addressing inequalities* around inclusive /pro-poor economic growth and linking these with the Rio Agenda/sustainable development might improve the feasibility of political support for specific targets and indicators. Also, as pointed out in the report *Putting Inequality in the Post-2015 Picture*, setting universal/getting to zero targets can get around the sometimes difficult politics of tackling inequality more explicitly.[i]

Options for Inequality-related Goals, Targets and Indicators

The "one size fits all" approach of the MDGs has often been criticized for its focus on global aggregate and national-level progress and perhaps implying or imposing an unfair burden for countries beginning from a lower starting point[ii]. Some have also suggested that this focus on national and global averages has provided a – perhaps unintended – incentive to overlook inequalities and to focus on 'quick wins,' meaning giving priority in practice to reaching those that are closest to basic services or to the MDG minimum thresholds.[iii] A mix of a) **global aspirational goals**; with b) regionally, nationally or sub-nationally set and **contextualized targets**; and c) a **common core set of global indicators**, with additional nationally-contextualized ones, might be a way to better address unique issues of different states/regions and put greater focus on the collection and analysis of data at the subnational level where disparities and inequalities within countries become more apparent.

A set of four options have been outlined in the draft report of the OHCHR/UNDP Expert Consultation; *Governance and Human Rights: Criteria and Measurement Proposals for a Post-2015 Development Agenda.*[iv]

- Global goals, targets and indicators (similar to existing MDGs);
- Global goals and targets, national indicators;
- Global goals, regional targets and regional or national indicators;
- Global goals, national targets and indicators.

As mentioned, it would seem that an option which includes a mix of global goals and regional, national and/or sub-national targets would, by definition, place increased focus on more localized progress, and would need to track progress for the most disadvantaged within countries. At the same time, a potential drawback to this is if individual countries set both their own goals and targets, there is a risk of them being too watered down and potentially losing the appeal of the current MDGs which is their simplicity and the fact that common aspirations can be easily monitored and communicated. **A compromise could be a "menu" of targets within each goal area**

**Overseas Development Institute, UK*

The discussion took place online from 10 December 2012 – 18 January 2013

from which countries could draw, depending on national contexts, combined with a core set of standard indicators on which all countries would report.

Participants in the discussion also highlighted the importance of the **political economy of inclusion** and addressing inequalities, citing the particular example of Brazil, and the relationship between equality and development, not simply measured as reductionist economic growth.

Should there be a specific 'Equality' goal?

On this question, the following differing positions and options on goal-setting were proposed:

- A specific (i.e. self-standing) goal on inequalities/inclusion, capturing different key dimensions of inequality;
- A specific goal on inequalities, focusing on the economic/income dimension;
- Systematic disaggregation of targets and indicators, according to the dominant inequality(ies) in each goal area;
- A combination of two or all of the above.

The e-discussion drew towards consensus around the option of a stand-alone "equality" goal. Firstly, due to its normative power – one of the successes of the MDGs is viewed as their value in terms of norm-setting – in providing a monitoring framework for normative priorities. A specific global goal on equalities/inclusion would confirm and/or support the establishment of consensus post-2015 on the need to tackle horizontal and vertical inequalities for social and human development. "A dedicated MDG could incarnate the will for a paradigm shift in development, a focus on inclusive growth that if well supported by targets and indicators would bring about a significant – and very visible – new character to the MDGs." Similarly, it was argued that one of the main purposes of global goals as policy tools is as a communications device; a global goal on inequalities/inclusion would communicate the ethical value of equality as a developmental priority. Thirdly, it was argued that global goals should be limited in number, focusing on only those issues which require collective support and focus or the special attention of every country, hence the justification for a single goal on equalities/inclusion.

An argument was made for a goal on income inequality, with indicators of percentage of income or wealth. However, others argued that this would be too controversial and would grossly simplify the multi-dimensional nature of inequalities. In addition, although useful for advocacy purposes, highlighting rich/poor disparities is not useful for tracking progress towards levelling up, where a rate of change metric is more useful. Instead, a proposal was made for a **broad inequality goal** which (i) identifies key dimensions of inequality, both economic and social; and (ii) which highlights, but is not limited to, the need to address and measure economic inequalities.

Several discussants argued for <u>also</u> incorporating an appropriate inequality dimension to each target or associated indicator across any future post-2015 goals, as proposed in Save the Children's vision for a post-2015 framework[v], in order to monitor progress in reducing inequality across all objectives. However, there is a risk that this could be cut in the final political deliberations of each of the targets.

Another suggestion is that of an "inclusive growth MDG" or iMDG[vi] which would be a standalone goal supported by two main sets of targets and indicators – on individual inclusion (e.g. disparities between rich and poor, financial inclusion) and territorial inclusion (e.g. rural/urban).

In a more specific example, the Equity and Non-Discrimination (END) Working Group of the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation has been considering how inequalities and non-discrimination could be reflected in future WASH goal(s), targets and indicators (GTIs). A summary of recommendations from this process, that could be applicable for other goal areas, include:

1) Language in each target requiring that "inequalities" be "eliminated" (for absolute targets) or "progressively reduced" (for all other targets);
2) Address spatial inequalities (e.g. rural/urban and informal urban/formal urban);
3) Focus on inequalities that shine a light on the poorest of the poor – disaggregation by wealth quintile, but also targets and indicators that *in practice* are relevant mostly to the poorest (e.g. in the case of WASH, open defecation);
4) Disaggregation by disadvantaged groups. These should be globally monitored but would be determined by each country through nationally participatory processes, which take into account which groups suffer discrimination in which contexts;
5) Focus on the impacts of individual-related inequalities that are relevant in every country, such as those based on sex/gender, age, disability and health conditions imposing access constraints – as they are experienced both within and outside the household.

Finally, the END Working Group recommended the adoption of a stand-alone goal on equality and non-discrimination in the overall architecture of post-2015 development goals, **in addition to** the integration of non-discrimination in all sectors.

As mentioned in point number three, other potential targets and indicators that in practice are relevant mostly to the poorest could include issues such as nutritional stunting or maternal mortality[vii].

Measuring and Assessing Inequalities

In order to focus on inequalities that highlight the poorest of the poor, and to disaggregate by disadvantaged groups, discussants proposed using a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which shows the deprivations a household (or child) experiences simultaneously, highlighting the poorest of the poor as those experiencing a large set of simultaneous deprivations at the same time.

Participants emphasised the importance of tracking changes in the profiles of simultaneous deprivations over time by disadvantaged groups, as this highlights not only poverty reduction but also trends in social exclusion and marginalization. To measure changes in inequalities over time, it was suggested in the e-discussion to use the metric of an **annual rate of change** required by the disadvantaged group (be it the poorest 5%, 10%, or 20%, an ethnic group, girls, persons with disabilities, etc.) to reach an absolute level within a given timeframe.

It was argued against using a concentration curve to measure changes in inequalities, as this requires classifying populations in equal groups along a continuum, which is not useful when comparing smaller disadvantaged groups with the majority.

Setting equality-related targets and indicators

The following was suggested for setting equality-related targets and indicators:

a) For **targets that theoretically tend towards a limiting level of zero**, such as mortality ratios or hunger or stunting or unemployment, **or of 100%,** such as for immunisation, education enrolment or access to water and sanitation or electricity, the post-2015 target **should be worded in terms of improvement targets for those with the currently worst outcomes**, whether wealth quintiles or category identifiers (ethnic, locational, gender, age, particularly youth and elderly, disability, immigrant, pastoralist) or combinations of these that identify the social group(s) with the worst outcomes (described by any convincing analysis of the data for each country).

b) **Where achievement of zero or 100% is clearly over-ambitious in the time-frame**, such as for malaria or infant mortality, **using percentage reductions/increases for the worst outcomes was suggested.**

c) For **targets that theoretically increase without measurable limits**, such as educational achievements, income, life expectancy, **comparisons between low-outcome and high-outcome social categories and proxy groups may be best.**

d) For **governance issues**, such as gender equality and inclusion in decision-making and resource management, and for accountability and responsiveness, **process indicators of legislation and systems of redress can be used to assess progress towards the framework for equality to be realised.** In this regard, qualitative perceptions, quality of life responses and sense of wellbeing are as important as quantitative measures of outcomes. New technologies such as SMS messaging and crowd-sourcing, as well as participant/service user surveys and focus groups, provide extensive options for qualitative, participatory assessment by disadvantage groups.

Also suggested in the e-discussion was to have some kind of combination of floor and relative gain indicators. The idea of, for example, a ratio between deciles, the top decile (10%) and the bottom four deciles (40%) would be relatively simple and could also broaden the focus on the bottom of the distribution away from the bottom 20% (and so away from narrow targeting, and recognize that inequalities affect more than the bottom fifth). Other possible combinations include geographic "floors" (e.g. at least 90% school completion in every district) with wealth quintile ratios.

Another important issue raised was the intersecting nature of inequalities and how to best assess or measure these. One proposal is to do careful statistical and situational analysis to identify factors contributing to inequality (say factors that explain 80% to 90% of disparities) and use these as the criteria for measuring intersecting inequalities. This should be done at the national and sub-national levels, because factors contributing to inequality are different in different contexts. In a review of different methodologies for measuring inequality, (commissioned by UN Women for this consultation), author Arjun Dayadev[viii] explains that while inequality in ordered cardinal attributes such as income have a long history, measurement of inequalities in ordinal or unordered attributes (such as educational level or political participation) is less developed and he describes some of the current approaches to the problem.

Whatever the methodologies to be used, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of the intersecting and multidimensional nature of prevailing inequalities, such that the use of "simple" or proxy indicators does not serve to distract policy attention from the inherent complexities, and the need for comprehensive, multi-sectoral policy responses.

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[i] Melamed, C. (2012). *Putting Inequality in the Post-2015 Picture*. Overseas Development Institute (ODI).
[ii] Easterly, W. (2009). *How the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair to Africa*. World Development, 37(1), 26-35.
[iii] Crosta, N. (2012). *How the Millennium Goals could (finally) address inequality*; United Nations Capital Development Fund.
[iv] OHCHR/UNDP Expert Consultation; Governance *and Human Rights: Criteria and Measurement Proposals for a Post-2015 Development Agenda;* 13-14 November 2012, New York (Draft Report).
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[v] Save the Children (2012). *Ending Poverty in our Generation: Save the Children's vision for a post-2015 framework*
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[vii] Bianco, M. and Moore, S. (2012). *Maternal Mortality: An Indicator of Intersecting Inequalities*.
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Inequalities e-space: www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities