

SDG 10.2 Report: Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality



Asia Dalit Rights Forum



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About Asia Dalit Rights Forum

Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF) is a platform of Dalits and those working with Dalits in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka committed to the empowerment and emancipation of communities subjected to descent and work based (caste based) discrimination and violence (DWD&V). ADRF aims at addressing violations of the rights and entitlements of these communities, in particular their women and children, in the respective countries as well as worldwide. It focus on supporting all the communities subjected to DWD&V and systemic discrimination in any part of the world in their noble aspirations and courageous struggles to establish an inclusive society that is marked by equity and equality, dignity and self governance, justice and freedom. ADRF is committed to collaborating with all national, regional and international agencies- civil society organisations and human right agencies, UN bodies and state institutions espousing the cause of eliminating DWD&V and building an inclusive, peaceful and egalitarian society in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

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Introduction

SDG and its relevance to Inclusive Development

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with its focus **Ensuring No One is Left Behind** in the development planning and implementation has captured and gravitated the world attention. SDGs talks about people-centric approach and principles of accountability, transparency and participation, which ensures this developmental methodology as a near perfect model for holistic development. Additionally, theoretically, SDGs are especially useful in countries where there exist inequalities with the traditional structures which perpetuate intergenerational inequalities. With all the positive signs through this paradigm-shifting global developmental agenda, there are concerns in its reach and impact on the traditionally marginalised and socially excluded communities. SDGs combines various aspects such as and not limited to service delivery, development and environment but the rights-based approach has insufficiently addressed. Even after four years since the SDGs are put into place however until now, it has failed to recognise and include exclusionary variables such as discrimination based on work and descent (DWD) within the comprehensive adopted document as a human rights issue.

DWD- forms in various countries

Discrimination based on work and descent (DWD) is terminology used to address various forms of discrimination including caste, work and birth-based discrimination. While DWD is often identified with caste-based discrimination and limited to Indian sub-continent, it is a global phenomenon with various communities around the world has faced similar kind of discrimination and exclusion. Some of the major communities who are identified as victims of DWD are Burakumin (Japan), Roma (Europe), Osu (Nigeria and Cameroon), Quilombo (Brazil), Al Mohamasheen (Yemen) and Dalits (Whole of South Asia specially India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Pakistan).¹The time has come for another paradigm shift **Ensuring No One is Left Behind, and Last One First** to assure inclusion of the most marginalised, discriminated and socio-economically excluded population such as DWD, more specifically the Dalits in South Asia who are discriminated based on their caste hierarchy.





Caste discrimination affects an estimated 260 million people worldwide², with almost 220 million hails from Asia. It involves massive violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Caste systems divide people into unequal and hierarchical social groups. Those at the bottom are considered ‘lesser human beings’, ‘impure’ and ‘polluting’ to other caste groups. They are known to be ‘untouchable’ and subjected to so-called ‘untouchability practices’ in both public and private spheres. ‘Untouchables’ – known in South Asia as Dalits – are often forcibly assigned the dirtiest, menial and hazardous jobs, and many are subjected to forced and bonded labour. Due to exclusion practised by both state and non-state actors, they have limited access to resources, services and development, keeping most Dalits in severe poverty.

They are often de facto excluded from decision making and meaningful participation in public and civil life. Lack of special legislation banning caste discrimination or lack of implementation of legislation, due to dysfunctional systems of justice and caste-bias, have primarily left Dalits without protection. Despite policy development and new legislation in some countries, fundamental challenges remain in all caste-affected countries. The division of society into castes is a global phenomenon not exclusively practised within any particular religion or belief system. In South Asia, caste discrimination is traditionally rooted in the Hindu caste system, according to which Dalits are considered ‘outcasts. However, caste systems and the ensuing discrimination have spread into Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and Sikh communities. They also exist in Africa, other parts of Asia, the Middle East, the Pacific and in Diaspora communities.

The ordering of society into castes and the ensuing caste discrimination exists in several cultures around the world widely known to be communities discriminated based on work and descent. Because caste discrimination involves certain practices prohibited by international human rights instruments, such as the practice of untouchability, the state has a responsibility to protect its citizens against such violations, to punish the perpetrators, and to ensure that they do not take place under its jurisdiction.





Bangladesh
Dalit population: 5 million; 3.5 % of total population
<p>Bangladesh has a Muslim majority (90%) and a Hindu minority (9%). Almost 25% of the Hindu population are Dalits. The Hindu Dalits were known as 'Harijans' and the Muslim Dalits as 'Arzals'. The primarily caste-based system of exclusion takes a complex shape in practice. Class, citizenship, religion, gender intersect with caste to deepen the nature of discrimination. Identities of Dalits defined by their specific caste names associated with their traditional caste-based occupations such as fishers, sweepers, barbers, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, cobblers and oil-pressers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Denied access to public spaces including places of worship, social gatherings, restaurants, movie theatres, burial grounds, cultural events❖ Dalit women face extreme discrimination such as forced labour for cash or food, trafficking and forced migration to Arab nations as domestic help.❖ Discrimination in schools, ranging from admission to segregation in seating. Income inequality: more than 78% of Dalits surviving on an income of less than Tk.5000. Employment in most unsafe conditions in low paying traditional caste occupations such as cleaning, sweeping and manual scavenging. Limited access to public services of water, sanitation and electricity. Absent from public administration services or public decision making bodies. Abject housing conditions, segregated settlements with little or no essential amenities❖ Routinely face severe human rights violation and violence such as abduction, rape, torture, destruction of houses, land grabbing, eviction from land, threats and intimidation
India
Dalit population: 201 million 16.6% of the total population
<p>India is home to the largest population of Dalits in the world. The caste system has the religious sanction and reinforced by cultural customs. Formally termed Scheduled Castes (SC) by the Indian government, over three-quarters (76.4%) of Dalits live in rural areas while less than a quarter (23.6%) live in urban areas. Except for a small minority who have benefited from India's policy of quotas in education and government, Dalits continue to face severe forms of social injustice.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Dalits today continue to be among the poorest of the poor, congregated in the informal sector as landless, daily-wage labourers in farm and non-farm occupations, with deficient levels of education and health.❖ They have relegated to menial tasks due to lack of employment opportunity — Dalit children sold into bondage to pay off debts to dominant caste creditors and unequal





economic opportunities due to caste structures; Dalits have failed to access the benefits of globalisation and market liberalisation. Untouchability practices, extreme violence and human rights violation which include being prohibited from public and community spaces such as wells, temples, claiming land that belongs to them legally, segregation of Dalit habitats, made to perform degrading rituals in the name of caste, violent reactions to inter-caste marriages, discrimination of Dalit children in schools.

- ❖ Dalit girls are forced to become prostitutes for dominant caste patrons and village priests under the 'Devadasi' system and face sexual abuse and other forms of violence by landlords and the police to inflict political "lessons" and crush dissent within the community.

Nepal
Dalit population: 3.5 million 13.2% of total population
In Nepal, the National Dalit Commission has listed 26 castes as Dalits, including 7 Hill Dalit castes and 19 Terai Dalit castes. According to the Nepal Human Development Report 2014, Dalits are among the poorest of the poor and one of the most vulnerable social groups in the country, with no security of livelihood or life. Their socio-economic status is consistently lower than the national average. Caste-based discrimination and 'untouchability' are ubiquitous in Nepal, perpetuated through long-held customs and practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 43.6% of Hill Dalits and 38.2% of Terai Dalits are below the poverty line, as compared to the national average of 25.2%. ❖ Hundreds of forms of caste discrimination and 'untouchability' are documented, including the prohibition of inter-caste marriages, denial of access to familiar water sources, temple entry and social boycott. ❖ Segregated settlements in both rural and urban areas; prejudice prevails in urban areas where Dalits fail to find rental housing. ❖ Religious and cultural practices discriminate against Dalit women such as the practice of Badi women forced into prostitution as a caste occupation.

Pakistan
Dalit population: 1.5 million Dalit population
While the word 'Dalit' is not mentioned in any official documents, estimates suggest that Dalits form a large majority of the total Christian and Hindu population in the country, concentrated mainly in Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan provinces. In addition to this, the lower caste within the Muslim community would elevate the number than earlier anticipated.. Such is the exclusion and invisibility of this social group that the dominant caste Hindu minority has moved to erase the words 'scheduled caste' from the gazetteer.





- ❖ Most Dalits live in remote rural areas and face exclusion in all spheres of life, including education, health and employment opportunities.
- ❖ High incidence of poverty, lacks all necessary amenities including toilets.
- ❖ Own no land or are mostly small and marginal landowners.
- ❖ Over 48% of scheduled castes work as agricultural workers and daily wage labourers, drawing lesser wages than the dominant castes.
- ❖ Bonded and child labour is a frequent occurrence; children are often forced to work abject conditions. Dalit women have little or no representation in any political or processes or institutions. Especially in rural areas of Sindh, they face severe challenges in accessing education. Many faces forced into traditional forms of bonded and debt labour in rural areas in both agriculture and the brick kilns and sexually abused. Kidnappings and forced conversions of young Dalit women also occur frequently, reportedly with total impunity for the offenders and with the consent of the authorities.

Sri Lanka


Dalit population: 4 million 20% of the total population

In Sri Lanka, there is no collective identity as 'Dalits' among the 'lower' castes, and it has been difficult for them to organise themselves as a community. These are partly due to the existence of three parallel caste systems practised by the three major ethnic groups of the country, the Sinhals (around 74% of the total population), the Sri Lankan Tamils and the Indian Tamils (together making for around 20% of the total population). Each of these systems is based on the idea of hierarchy and discrimination, while there is no uniformity in the notion of untouchability. The importance of caste has diminished over the years; some pockets of caste discrimination continue to exist. Sri Lanka also has witnessed certain new forms of caste discrimination that have emerged in the plantation economy.

Sinhala society: lower ranks in the caste hierarchy are most excluded from power, land ownership and dignity. Many Dalits continue to perform menial services assigned to them. Living conditions have improved gradually due to opportunities offered by the Sri Lankan welfare state, but have not evenly benefited all caste groups or all members within a specific caste group. Hence, there are many depressed caste pockets where extreme poverty and continued pressure to pursue hereditary caste occupations exist.

Sri Lankan Tamils: Caste system most rigid, especially in Jaffna, with clearly defined patterns of discrimination and social rejection driven by a religiously articulated notion of untouchability. Those at the bottom of the caste system and those internally displaced during the civil war have no land ownership or any other resources to reconstruct their lives. In war and tsunami affected areas of Eastern Sri Lanka too, caste is of considerable importance in identity formation, local politics, and processes of social discrimination.





Indian Tamils: Among the most deprived communities, adding to their social marginality, with lowest life expectancy and poorest quality of life. In urban areas, the sanitary labour communities are Dalits of Indian origin.

Yemen

DWD population: 1.5 million population

In Yemen Al-Muhamasheen community which translates into "the servants" is a minority community and is regarded as 'untouchable' outcaste group. Tracing back to the 5th and 6th century of Yemeni history, they are the descendants of Christian African warriors. With the advent of Islam, the Christian African warrior was defeated and subsequently exiled. Some of the African army that was left behind came to be collectively recognised as "Al-Akhdam" to become an "untouchable" caste. However, there has been a large number of parallel popular belief in terms of the origin of this community. Their total population varies, with many inconsistencies between the official and unofficial data. The government data of 2004 the total number is 153,133, but unofficial sources claim that between 500,000-3.5 million persons belong to this minority group

Need for the inclusion of DWD in SDG framework- SDG 10.2

The theme of High-Level Political Forum 2019 (HLPF)- 'Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality' could be possible through countries commitment to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of the resources and services. To be true to the motto of 'Leave No One Behind' the SDG implementation should ensure the inclusion and participation of the all marginalised communities including women, youth and children, migrants, scheduled caste, indigenous people, people with disabilities, sexual minorities among others.

Reducing inequalities within the countries is a strong statement which categorically points out towards socio-economic and political equity and erasing of any discriminatory mechanisms which propel inequality among the people.

Excluded communities are most marginalised groups with their social, economic, political and cultural segregation, withstanding compared to others are impuissant. The inequalities exist invarious services like education, hunger, health, water and sanitation, employment, land and housing, disaster risk reduction among others, which represents in SDGs through specific goals. Gender and peace and justice other determinants which propel inequalities within the countries.





SDG 10 is a prism for the development of other goals. Without reducing inequalities, it questions the true nature of the implementation of the other goals, especially for the discriminated and marginalised communities. The intersectionalities of the marginalisation need to be at the forefront of the SDG debate and programme implementation at the national level, as well as regional and global level.


For SDG10, the measure of inequalities perceives the economic variables; thus indicators for national implementation often targets the economic development indicators. However, it is clear that social, political, legal and economic development is directly proportional to each other and as one under development can spill over to other forms, thus increasing the probability of inequalities. Thus towards reducing inequalities needs to be seen from all forms of development, not from just economic perspective.

The key SDGs in a line of review this year should intersect with the SDG10 for ensuring inclusion of all. The SDG4 (quality education) is seen as a vehicle of inequality, with most marginalised communities are often unable to complete their school and higher education, because of the financial and social standing in the society. They further face discriminatory treatment from the authorities and often is segregated in sitting from the other communities. On the question of quality education, these communities often depend on public schools, without much resources allocated for human and infrastructural resources.

Gender equality is within the developmental frameworks tends to concentrate on generalised terminologies, while the intersectionalities of gender with youth and children, migrants, scheduled caste, indigenous people, people with disabilities, sexual minorities provided with nominal importance. Women within these intersectional communities face multi-folded discrimination, which makes them marginalised within the marginalised communities. These communities face various forms of atrocities including physical and sexual violence daily and don't get represented or included in the developmental debates.

SDG10 and its relation to SDG8 (Decent Employment) have correlated effect, with the most backward (lowest 40%) are forced into indecent forms of employment. Various forms of discrimination and prejudices exist in the society; these communities have to engage in various forms of employment which are without fair pay or minimum wages. Thus, these communities forced into modern slavery including debt bondage and forced labour. SDG8.7 talks about





eliminating all forms of modern slavery and child labour, while these communities have to target to achieve such forms of discriminatory practices individually.

SDG 10 and 16 are two goals which go hand in hand, with these goals talks about fundamental principles of human rights, non-discrimination, equality, peaceful societies and access to justice. These four terms are the key challenges faced by the excluded communities. These communities face various forms of violence and atrocities, especially among women and children. However, their path towards justice hindered by the social and descent-based status they stamped with and thus faced exclusion and discrimination in the legal and political justice. These communities have also been left behind by the developmental programmes and mechanisms and thus faced the status quo and poverty trap for generations.





Inclusion in SDG 4 (Quality Education)

Quality and inclusive education is the yardstick to measure the impact of sustainable development in the society or state. While on the one hand, the people are becoming more and more knowledgeable through various tools of information, while on the other hand, the limitation or barriers of its reach resulted in a lopsided transfer of information. Most of the states has positively acted upon the primary education for all, but have failed to address the many exclusionary factors in the secondary and higher educational levels.

South Asia has always been considered as a backward region because of the poor quality of education in the region, with a few numbers of universities comes under the top 100 in various surveys. World Bank report (2014) states that ‘the poor quality of education in South Asia, as reflected in low learning levels, traps many of its young people in poverty and prevents faster economic growth and more broadly shared prosperity’.¹ While UNICEF South Asia Headline Report states ‘an estimated 11.3 million children of primary school age (5.8 million girls and 5.5 million boys), and 20.6 million children of lower-secondary school age (8.9 million girls and 11.6 million boys) in South Asia do not go to school’.²

Similarly, in Yemen, the quality of education is below par to the decent level, with US Aid reporting the status of education very bad and stating that ‘Yemen suffers from low-quality teaching and facilities and high absenteeism rates at schools. Just 63 per cent of school-aged youth in Yemen completed primary school in 2010, and one in four third-graders cannot read at all’.³

Primary education in most of the Asian countries is inclusive because of their universal access nature. However, most marginalised and vulnerable communities face a challenge in access to post-primary education. DWD communities, like Dalits in South Asia, Burakumin in Japan and Al Muhamasheen in Yemen does have high drop out ration in accessing post-primary education and especially in higher education.





SDG4: Quality Education	
	SDG4.5: By 2030 eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDG and 7th Five-year plan by Vision 2021 has elaborated the various policies towards ensuring the education of the vulnerable communities; however, without a specific focus on Dalits/Harijans, it is a step back. • Less than 1 per cent of Dalits/Harijans has access to higher education, even with quota provided in few universities in the country
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India is the only country with a specific plan for ensuring the reach of educational benefit targeted to Dalit/DWD communities. • The plans like reservations in higher education and post-matric scholarships ensuring proper facilities for reaching the community has been a positive step. However, the implementation of these plans and the budget provided often doesn't match the aspirations of the laws provides. • Low amount of children in tertiary education, because of high school dropouts. • Need to focus on targeted population thus need to have disaggregated data on all sphere.
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of Burakumin communities in primary and secondary education, but lacks in tertiary education.
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While gender is a significant focus, other inequities and forms of discrimination like Dalits and DWD are seldom addressed in policies and budgets or through disaggregated data. • No province/ area monitors exclusions to capture a range of vulnerabilities. • No systems exist to monitor education frameworks through a gender and human rights lens.⁶
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepal has introduced various new policies with the adoption of the new constitution in 2016, including the rights of Dalits • The major problem is the lack of focus on tertiary education has left most Dalits without proper and quality education. • Less than 7 per cent of Dalit girls have access to secondary education, and less than 2 per cent of Dalit girls have access to tertiary education
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plantation population have seen much of the challenge in Sri Lanka's developmental aspirations. • Less than 0.5 per cent of the Plantation girls access tertiary education, and a high amount of drop out rates shows a minimal number complete their education
Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Yemen, the primary, secondary and tertiary education is a challenge for the Al Mohamasheen communities.





Dalits have historically and systematically face exclusion from education. The socio-cultural exclusions and discrimination stamped upon them have often resulted in forcing them into the poverty trap. Despite strong policy measures such as the Right to Education Act in India and an overall improvement in the achievement of universal primary education across the region, Dalit children continue to face oppressive conditions at school forcing them to drop out. The goal of education does not take into account realities such as violence and extreme harassment targeted against children from the marginalised communities by peers as well as teachers. “Safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all” is to be achieved through upgraded education facilities, as outlined in Means of Implementation 4.a. We are concerned at this weak interpretation of what constitutes structural barriers emanating from deeply embedded prejudices, cultural norms among others. No means of protection provided for victims of caste-based discrimination who undergo significant trauma as well as abuse. The focus of the targets seems to centre primarily on the tangibles of education – teacher qualification, vocational skills, gender disparity, scholarships.

DWD children do not find the adequate representation of their community and culture in the curriculum further alienating them from education. The curriculum and textbook lack inspirations stories and adequate ensuring of representation and diversity. Teachers need special support to build an inclusive and supportive environment for Dalit and other marginalised children in the school and classrooms. Private education increasing the inequalities in education is a worrying trend and needs strict state measures to regulate private education and promote inclusion even there. Early childhood care and education are recognised to be essential for education and development. Majority of Dalit children do not access this service despite universal coverage mandated in India.





Inclusion in SDG 8 (Decent Work)

The Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced labour and forced marriages¹ and The Global Estimates of Child Labour² states that globally there are more than 40 million people in modern slavery and 152 million people under child labour. The reports Asia as the second most prevalent region for both modern slavery and child labour with 6.1 (out of 1000) and 7 per cent (of all children) respectively are forced into it. While taking of forced labour Asia Pacific region exceeds another region with 4 out of 1000 or 16550 people, which is almost 4 times increase in the other regions.

South Asia is one of the core subregions which has recorded a high number of people under modern slavery. Modern slavery includes forced marriages and forced labour. Forced labour is further categorised into State-imposed forced labour; Forced labour exploitation, and Forced sexual exploitation of adults and commercial sexual exploitation of children. According to the Walk Free Foundation report (2016), India alone has more than 18.3 million people under modern slavery³. The same report also states that Pakistan as one of the 10 countries with a high prevalence of modern slavery with 16.8 per 1000. Nepal also positioned high in the prevalence (out of 1000) with 6.0 people are living under modern slavery. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka ranked better than its South Asian counterparts with the prevalence at 3.7 and 2.1 respectively.

The Global estimates state that approximately 12 million people are living under modern slavery from these 5 countries. However, other reports state that it might be more than 25 million with 18 million in India and 4 million in Pakistan alone comes under modern slavery.

Debt bondage is one of the important categories in modern slavery in South Asia. With India, despite having Bonded Labour System (**Abolition**) Act 1976, has reportedly had more than 6 million people under debt bondage. UNESCO studies set the number of slaves in bonded labour in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal combined at 15-20 million (UNESCO 2008:46). Anti-Slavery International points to an estimated 20 million bonded labourers in South Asia





(ASI 2000). There is a broad consensus that bonded labour is on the rise globally, and that there is a need for developing measures and providing accurate figures.⁴


Caste and untouchability are one of the primary factors for bonded labour in South Asia. Anti-Slavery International estimates that the vast majority of bonded labourers (80%-98%) are either from communities Dalit communities (also known as untouchable communities) or from indigenous communities.

The weak economic status of Dalits and a lack of access to resources increase their dependence on wage labour. Extreme poverty forces Dalits to take up loans and they hold no other assets to lever their debt other than their labour. In addition to poverty, practices of social exclusion of Dalits push them into bondage. When Dalits try to exercise their rights or resist abuse and exploitation, they face with extraordinarily hostile and sometimes brutal resistance by the higher caste villagers that uphold the hierarchy. Consequently, when Dalits resist oppression, they risk complete boycott, cutting them off from their land and employment. Other forms of retaliation against Dalit assertion include killings, gang rapes, and looting.

Forced or bonded labour conjoined with caste in the form of caste-based occupations. Two of the most degrading forms of caste-based and forced labour occupations in India are manual scavengings and the systems of forced prostitution. While the governments of India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have enacted their legal framework to eradicate bonded labour, implementation remains weak, and access to remedies for victims is lacking. Caste-based slavery is a form of bondage based on work and descent, which is carried on for generations by members of the same occupational caste. In South Asia, this form of slavery affects Dalits as a social group and is closely linked to religious, cultural, and caste-based social relationships, as well as skewed land-ownership patterns. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, Ms Gulnara Shahinian, these old forms of slavery are embedded in traditional beliefs and customs as a result of long-standing discrimination against the most vulnerable groups in societies such as those regarded as being of low caste, tribal minorities and indigenous peoples. (A/HRC/9/20)

A range of ILO studies on bonded labour relations reveals the link between the social hierarchies of caste and relationships of bondage, which leaves Dalits, tribal groups, women and children the primary targets of exploitation. Bondvage is





usually passed on from one generation to another and Dalits are often deprived of other options. Other reports by Anti-Slavery International show how caste-based occupations include degrading practices such as manual scavenging and individual systems of forced prostitution, especially in India and Nepal. Dalits risk discrimination, abuse and economic and social ostracism if they refuse to subjugate. The debt bondage, for Dalits, is an entrapment with seldom chances to escape.

The UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery referred to these links in a 2009 report to the Human Rights Council stating that “ILO research shows a clear link in Asian countries between forced labour and long-standing patterns of discrimination. In India, the overwhelming majority of bonded labour victims in agriculture, brick making, mining and other sectors are from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes”. (A/HRC/12/21)

Sustainable Development Goals and its aims to provide developers with human rights and dignity, enriched the SDG8.7 to end all forms of modern slavery and forced labour. The partnership created towards achieving these goals through Alliance 8.7 has raised this issue into the world platform. The primary focus of modern slavery has been towards eliminating slavery for all, however giving little details to the causal factors of slavery. Thus, issues like caste and ethnicity have not highlighted as the primary root cause of modern slavery.





SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	
	SDG 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh government has targeted policies for ensuring government employment for the Harijans/DWD in the 5th level jobs. • Many Harijans still are doing menial and indecent jobs; many are still under the debt bondage and caste-based occupations
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India is the only country that currently provides reservations for the SC/ST in government Jobs. • In India, many of the Dalits are often limited to caste-based jobs and debt bondage. Manual Scavenging and other indecent jobs still exist within the community even after having laws to abolish it. • Child labour within the community is very high compared to other communities because of the social and economic conditions of the community
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of high amount of Dalit people in debt bondage and child labour exist from Pakistan • No significant policies to ensure decent work for these communities
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high amount of debt bondage and child labour has reported from the Dalit communities. • The Dalit community also has seen many girls trafficked for sex work and forced labour
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plantation population are often paralleled with debt bondage and forced labour, with no significant rights provided to them.
Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Yemen, the Al Mohamasheen communities seen as servants of others, thus are forced to do services to the other communities.





Inclusion in SDG 10 (Reducing Inequalities)

Reducing inequalities within the countries is a strong statement which categorically points out towards socio-economic and political equity and erasing of any discriminatory mechanisms which propel inequality among the people.

Excluded communities are most marginalised groups with their social, economic, political and cultural segregation, withstanding compared to others are impuissant. The inequalities exist in various services like education, hunger, health, water and sanitation, employment, land and housing, disaster risk reduction among others, which represents in SDGs through specific goals. Gender and peace and justice other determinants which propel inequalities within the countries.

The caste system has been such an instrument which has divided the people according to their birth and parental occupation, which is deep-rooted and considered as the most discriminatory practices in the world. Dalits are one of the most marginalised groups with their social, economic, political and cultural standing compared to others are impuissant. They are distinguished based on their occupation, which is seen to be of low status; live in segregated spaces, and are severely discriminated and restricted in accessing social-economic and political resources and opportunities. According to Socio-Economic Caste Census, almost 65 per cent of the Dalit live in poverty; they lack essential services like safe drinking water, health services, food security, decent jobs, and housing as well as land rights. Women constitute almost half of the total SC populations, face further discrimination which could state as three folded discriminations, based on their class, gender and caste. They are often targeted to humiliate the community, which undermines not only their dignity and self-respect but also their rights to equality and development. The nature of violence against Dalit women accompanied by equally systemic patterns of impunity for the perpetrators’

SDG 10 is a prism for the development of other goals. Without reducing inequalities, it questions the true nature of the implementation of the other goals, especially for the discriminated and marginalised communities. The intersectionalities of the marginalisation need to be at the forefront of the SDG debate and programme implementation at the national level, as well as regional and global level.





The key SDGs in the line of review this year should intersect with the SDG10 for ensuring inclusion of all. The SDG4 (quality education) targets as a vehicle of inequality, with most marginalised communities, are often unable to complete their school and higher education, because of the financial and social standing in the society. They further face discriminatory treatment from the authorities and often is segregated in sitting from the other communities. On the question of quality education, these communities often depend on public schools, without much resources allocated for human and infrastructural resources.


Gender equality is within the developmental frameworks tends to concentrate on generalised terminologies, while the intersectionalities of gender with youth and children, migrants, scheduled caste, indigenous people, people with disabilities, sexual minorities given nominal importance. Women within these intersectional communities face multi-folded discrimination, which makes them marginalised within the marginalised communities. These communities face various forms of atrocities including physical and sexual violence daily and don't get represented or included in the developmental debates.

SDG10 and its relation to SDG8 (Decent Employment) have correlated effect, with the most backward (lowest 40%) are forced into indecent forms of employment. Various forms of discrimination and prejudices exist in the society; these communities have to engage in various forms of employment which are without fair pay or minimum wages. Thus, force these communities into modern slavery including debt bondage and forced labour. SDG8.7 talks about eliminating all forms of modern slavery and child labour, while these communities have to specifically targeted to achieve such forms of discriminatory practices.

The economic inequality has widespread social manifestations including its power to exhort unequal gender relations. Income inequality leads to higher gender inequality both at macro and micro levels. Gaps in labour force participation rates between men and women, gender wage gaps which result in inequality of earnings directly contribute to income inequality between sexes, thus socioeconomic dependence. The economic dependence of one gender on other directly contributes to disparities in gender roles, the inferior status of women in household decision making, limiting their access to social opportunities such as health and education that again result in low human capital which further exacerbates income inequality.

The gender, caste, disability, sexuality intersectionalities have played a crucial role in redefining socio-cultural inequalities to economic inequalities, thus making the most marginalised and vulnerable communities on the wrong side of the inequalities. Thus these communities constitute the significant share of the bottom 40 per cent.





Discrimination based on caste status is a root cause of the high poverty levels that caste-affected people experience. Most Dalits, live below the poverty line, earn less than the minimum wage, have no access to education, experience segregation in access to housing and suffer from numerous diseases, not least because of lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. This inequality exacerbates by the lack of implementation of existing laws to protect the Dalits.

Internationally, The UN draft Principles and Guidelines on Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent and UN OHCHR Guidance Tool on Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent has highlighted the impact on under development and engaged poverty. Nationally there are various progressive actions like constitutional provisions and safeguards, SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities (PoA) Act, Targeted budgeting through SCSP and TSP.

10.1 One third of the 1.4 billion people who are considered bottom 20% lives in India and a significant share of these population is consist of Dalits as more than 55% of Dalits are living in poverty. When talking about the bottom 40 % in other countries, almost 65-70 per cent of the Dalit comes under this subdivision. Almost 70 % of Dalits live in rural areas. In India, 2008-09 only 19.12% of all SC households cultivated land as (independent) self-employment worker whereas among the Other (i.e. non-SC/ST) the percentage was more than double, 42.12%. While only 24.08% of total SC urban households were self-employed, as compared to 35.05% for Others.

10.2 The socio-economic inclusion has been limited because of the monopoly by the dominant caste; the political inclusion has been smoother than expected. In India, 81 SC MPs in Lok Sabha and similarly adequate representation in state and local assemblies. These are because of the reservation in the seats, where others cannot contest. In Nepal also, the participation is on the behest of their representing parties. Thus, their impact on political decision making and raising the issues has been questionable. The other countries have very limited representatives to make decisive actions and decisions for the communities. In socio-economic inclusion, especially in the education and employment the reservation also provides seats for the Dalits, but there is a gap in the seats and appointments of the candidates.

10.3 According to Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011, only 4% of SC is in government services, while the unemployment rate among these communities is significantly higher than the other communities. The higher unemployment rate of SC worker (which is twice that of others) indicates a possible existence of caste-based discrimination against SC workers in hiring.





SDG10: Reducing Inequalities within and among Countries

	SDG 10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of constitutional and legislative recognition for ensuring the protection and promotion of the laws and policies for the empowerment of the community
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India has constitutionally, and legal recognition of these communities and thus have proper policies and provisions to eliminate discriminatory laws. The actions and implementation is a problem; this state needs to ensure inclusive and participatory implementation of the policies to promote and empower the people from the community.
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burakumin community are given recognition but lacks policies and implementations to ensure non-discriminatory practices.
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of constitutional and legislative recognition for ensuring the protection and promotion of the laws and policies for the empowerment of the community
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dalits need to protect with further policy amendments and legislatures towards the development of the communities
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plantation population needs to protect by ensuring the rights provided by the constitutional benefits
Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Yemen, the Al Mohamasheen communities face a wide range of discrimination. These need addressing through the non-discriminatory laws and policies.



Inclusion in SDG16 (Peace and Access to Justice)

SDG 10 and 16 are two goals which go hand in hand, with these goals talks about fundamental principles of human rights, non-discrimination, equality, peaceful societies and access to justice. These four terms are the key challenges faced by the excluded communities. These communities face various forms of violence and atrocities, especially among women and children. However, their path towards justice hinder by the standard and descent-based status they are stamped with and thus faces exclusion and discrimination in the legal and political justice. These communities have also been left behind by the developmental programmes and mechanisms and thus faced the status quo and poverty trap for generations.

In India, there is a sharp rise in recorded crimes and crime rate, against Dalits since 2012 simultaneous with a decrease in conviction rates from 39% in 2010, 31% in 2011 to 19% in 2012 and 16% in 2015. (The conviction rates for other crimes remain largely the same. It is only the convictions rates for crimes against SCs and STs that have sharply decreased).¹

Even in mechanisms²directly under the administrative control of the Chief Ministers the reviews are not conducted regularly in any state, with some compliances being in the single digits—meaning even at the highest political levels there is over 90% impunity, and the laws remain only on paper.**(Endnotes)**

Crimes against SCs (registered under POA)			
	2013	2014	2015
Cases registered ⁱⁱⁱ	39,408	47,064	45,003
Murder	676	704	707
Attempt to murder		420	547
Rape	2,073	2,233	2,326
Pending trial	118,773	127,341	140,340
Trial Completed	18,202	17,712	17,012
Convictions	4,334	5,102	4702
Acquittals	13,868	12,610	12,310
Conviction rate	23.8	28.8	27.6
Pendency rate	84.7	85.3	86.9

Source: Crime in India (various years) National Crime Records Bureau





There was a spurt in crimes against Dalits in 2014, possibly due to the general elections. However, despite the reduction in the number of crimes registered, the number of heinous crimes (murder, attempt to murder, rape, attempt to rape) have gone up, strongly suggesting underreporting and intensifying violence.

Of all the crimes against Dalits and Adivasi, 35% of crimes against SCs STs and pending trial charged under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (PoA). Of the 46,510 cases registered under PoA and pending trial, 5,181 (11%) were acquitted, and conviction resulted in only 1133 cases (2%). At the end of 2013, 39,392 cases (85%) were the pending trial. A similar situation existed in 2010, were the cases registered under the PoA Act and pending trial (including pending cases from the previous year) was 45,247. Of these, 5,748 (13%) got acquitted, and conviction resulted in only 3430 cases (8%). At the end of the year, 37,768 (79%) cases were the pending trial. In sum, there are serious issues of a delayed trail and low conviction rates that work against very purpose for which special courts were set up¹


The record for crimes against Dalit women is equally staggering, if not worse. In 40.4% of the cases, the women did not even attempt to obtain justice. In 26.6% of the cases, the survivors prevent from filing cases. In 1.6% of the cases, the women were able to obtain natural justice. In 17.5% of incidents, the violence reached the notice of the police, but cases were left unaddressed. Only in 13.9% of cases was appropriate police or judicial action taken. A mere 3.6% of cases have ever reached the courts while less than one% have ended in conviction.²

National Dalit Election Watch reported several incidents of electoral violence of which 32% were threats/ intimidation/ violence by dominant caste groups, 22% SCs were not allowed to vote by members of various political parties and due to clashes between political parties and 20% SCs got deliberately excluded from voters' lists in 2009.

In Bangladesh, in the absence of more recent disaggregated data, the number of Dalits is approximately 330,000 (as of 1998), but according to researchers, the real figure may be as high as two million. However, this data does not include 'lower castes' within the Muslim community, living under similarly depressed conditions and facing similar forms of discrimination. In Bangladesh, caste discrimination affects both the Hindu and the Muslim population and perpetuates the poverty trap that these communities forced.

Majority of Dalit community lives below the poverty line with minimal access to health services, education and employment. They live in colonies with inadequate housing and work opportunities, almost exclusively employed in





menial jobs. A large number of child labourers in Bangladesh are Dalits. Members of minorities, most of whom are Dalits, hold almost no official positions. 'Untouchability' is rampant. The estimates of the number of Dalits in Bangladesh vary from 3.5 to 5.5 million. They have been overlooked in the development and rights discourse and have only recently been able to raise their voices. Having started to engage with government and international donors, Dalit organisations working for Dalit rights and entitlements have now managed to place the issue of caste discrimination on the state agenda.

In Nepal, Dalits are mostly still confined to their traditionally assigned roles and unskilled, menial labour occupations that restrict their access to other employment opportunities. Around 79 per cent of Dalits is engaged in unskilled work. Few Dalits have access to employment in government and public corporations, still face discrimination. (SAMATA foundation 2015). In Nepal, according to media reports from April 2013 to August 2014, there were 60 cases of caste-based discrimination and violence.

In most cases, FIR is not lodged. In many cases, state actors have failed to investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators of violence. One estimate is that about 49 per cent Dalit women in Nepal encounter violence and only 4 per cent of cases report to the police.

In Pakistan, Dalit women have little or no representation in any political or processes or institutions. Especially in rural areas of Sindh, they face severe challenges in accessing education. Many forced into traditional forms of bonded and debt labour in rural areas in both agriculture and the brick kilns and sexually abused. Kidnappings and forced conversions of young Dalit women also occur frequently, reportedly with total impunity for the offenders and with the consent of the authorities. There has also disputed in counting the number of Dalits or scheduled caste people because at the time census the high caste Hindu people do prohibit others from mention them as Scheduled Caste.

In Sri Lanka, those at the bottom of the caste system and those internally displaced during the civil war have no land ownership or any other resources to reconstruct their lives. In war and tsunami affected areas of Eastern Sri Lanka too, caste appears to be of considerable importance in identity formation, local politics as well as in processes of social discrimination. Indian Tamils working in the plantations in Sri Lanka are from the Dalit castes of South India. They are among the most deprived communities, adding to their social marginality. They have the lowest life expectancy and the most inferior quality of life. In urban areas, the sanitary labour communities are Dalits of Indian origin.





SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	
	SDG 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of constitutional and legislative recognition for ensuring the protection and promotion of the laws and policies for the empowerment of the community
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• India has constitutionally, and legal recognition of these communities and thus have proper policies and provisions to eliminate discriminatory laws.• The actions and implementation is a problem; this state needs to ensure inclusive and participatory implementation of the policies to promote and empower the people from the community.
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of constitutional and legislative recognition for ensuring the protection and promotion of the laws and policies for the empowerment of the community
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dalits need to be protected with further policy amendments and legislatures towards the development of the communities
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plantation population needs to be protected by ensuring the rights provided by the constitutional benefits
Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Yemen, the Al Mohamasheen communities face a wide range of discrimination. These needs addressing through non-discriminatory laws and policies.

Recommendation

1. Ensure police and judicial reforms with a particular focus on the responsiveness to marginalised communities, speedy redress of the complaints and appeal, and prevent all unlawful torture.
2. Allocate special funds for women within targeted budgeting.
3. Create effective mechanisms for tracking atrocities against Dalits in each country.





Conclusions and Recommendations

The SDGs propose a clear agenda of active inclusion of all and planning and implementation of the programme through an accountable, transparent and participatory process. India has accepted the SDG implementation and correlated it with the national programmes. While there were certain attempts to inclusive and transparent process through indicator setting, the majority of the planning process and even consultations were behind the closed doors for marginalised communities.

However, there is a concern for marginalised and vulnerable communities on the actual legitimacy and impact of this new global policies national implementation. On the one hand, the SDGs could be a catalyst to bring innovations towards a new developmental threshold but, on the other, it could be diluted down to the status quo of systemic mechanisms which hinder holistic development.

On this basis, we have three specific recommendations to the Governments, and other stakeholders to adopt for successfully achieving the targets. Implementation of these recommendations reflects on the commitment of the government for a genuine partnership to fulfil the SDGs and the seriousness with which it approaches the fulfilment of targets:

Accountability and Peace

- Introduce DWD sensitive indicators to ensure their inclusion and participation in the effective implementation of SDGs at the national level.
- All constitutions should ensure equality for all and recognise non-discrimination based on caste, inclusive of gender, religion, ethnicity and other intersectionalities
- Specific policies should ensure the non-practice of Untouchability and other intergenerational and cultural discriminatory practices in all countries.
- Ensure the translations of Sustainable Development Goals are from socio-economic, political and legal availability and participation of excluded communities, especially Dalits and Adivasis.






Gender and Social Justice

- Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable
- End hunger by ensuring access to nutritious, sufficient, healthy, safe, affordable and culturally sensitive food to all persons all including Dalits, Adivasi and members of excluded and vulnerable communities, all year round Ensure reduction of level of violence especially violence against women and children, and socially excluded groups and related death rates everywhere.
- Ensure police and judicial reforms with a particular focus on the responsiveness to marginalised communities, speedy redress of the complaints and appeal, and prevent all unlawful torture.
- Allocate special funds for women within targeted budgeting.
- Ensure free access to life-long education by all children irrespective of their caste locations.
- State to formulate policies and laws for a safe and enabling environment for children ensuring them access to education, health care, nutrition and freedom from sexual, physical, economic, and social abuse.
- National education policies should focus on ensuring primary, secondary and higher education for all especially for Dalits; remove social disparities; and equalise educational opportunity irrespective of caste.

Economic Justice

- Outlaw caste discrimination in all sectors of employment, public and private.
- National laws should ensure decent job opportunities to all especially Dalits and elimination of the degrading, customary, intergenerational and unclean employments like manual scavenging, Devadasi system.
- Legally binding guidelines and frameworks to the formulation of basic parameters to ensure access to essential public services irrespective of race, caste, gender, region, ethnicity, language and disability.
- Strengthen targeted budget allocation for the discriminated communities, to enhance access to development, at both macro (sectoral) level and





micro (individual, family) level. These policies need to take the form of entitlements and rights, thus ensuring access and internal mechanisms to redress and follow-up.

- Eliminate customary, traditional, inter-generational and unclean employment like manual scavenging, Devadasi system, and bonded labour.
- Recognise and value unpaid care work done by Dalit community especially women, to ensure fair and equal compensation of work done.
- Eliminate child labour.
- Implement rehabilitation schemes for bonded labourers, Devadasis, manual scavengers, and child labourers in hazardous industries, a disproportionate number of whom are Dalits.
- Affirmative action in employment for encouraging Dalits to have proper opportunities in the public and private sector.

Ecological Justice

- Create guidelines to ensure and monitoring of equal access to disaster risk reduction and disaster response to Dalits and other excluded and high-risk population.
- Build the resilience of the poor and excluded including Dalits, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.
- Recognise the reliance of disadvantaged communities on natural resources; ensure their inclusion in planning and policy-making for the external usage of these resources.

Data

- Create effective mechanisms for tracking atrocities against Dalits in each country.
- Mandate caste- and gender-disaggregated data collected by all government bodies that produce national and state-level data on socio-economic and political situations of different social groups.





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