

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development



Report of the Expert Group Meeting
on
Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration:
Lessons learned from existing policies and practices

Convened in preparation for the 48th session of the Commission for Social Development

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Organized by the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD)
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the meeting

The Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare of the Government of Ghana, and UNDP Accra, organized an Expert Group Meeting on Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration: Lessons learned from existing policies and practices from 17-19 November 2009 in Accra, Ghana. The meeting was convened in the context of ECOSOC resolution 2008/19, in which the Economic and Social Council decided that the priority theme for the 2009-2010 review and policy cycle of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) should be “social integration,” taking into account its relationship with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work for all.

Background: justification and basic concepts

The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) established the concept of social integration to create “a society for all,” as one of the key goals of social development. The Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action saw social integration as both a goal and a dynamic process societies engage in to advance social development. Along with the other main objectives of the Summit – eradication of poverty and creation of productive employment, Member States made a commitment to promote social integration through fostering inclusive societies that are stable, safe and tolerant, and respect diversity, equality of opportunity, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.

The Social Summit recognized that social integration was an important determinant of, and significantly affected by, poverty and unemployment.¹ Likewise, poverty eradication and employment creation are considered to be key areas to achieve the goal of creating an inclusive society. It further viewed that the failures of social integration would lead to “social fragmentation and polarization; widening disparities and inequalities; and strains on individuals, families, communities and institutions as a result of the rapid pace of social change, economic transformation, migration and major dislocations of population, particularly in areas of armed conflict.”²

In spite of these convincing arguments, the concept of “social integration” has not been well understood nor effectively operationalized. Following the Copenhagen Declaration, significant policy commitments were made in the Millennium Declaration (2000), adopted at the Millennium Summit in September 2000, which embody the principles of social inclusion and other objectives and goals set out in the Copenhagen Declaration and subsume social integration in their synthesis of peace, security, development, and human rights.³ The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) forged “poverty eradication” as a major vehicle in advancing development. Following the 2005 World Summit, the goal of achieving full and productive employment and decent work

¹ Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly – E/CN.5/2005/6, para 165

² Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly – E/CN.5/2005/6, para 165

³ A/60/1, para 103

for all was added as a new target under the MDG's Goal 1. However, the remaining goal of the Social Summit, "promoting social integration," has not thus far been effectively integrated, despite the fact that these three goals are inter-related and mutually reinforcing.

The goal of creating a "society for all" remains elusive, with many individuals and social groups remaining invisible, voiceless, and excluded from decision-making processes that affect their lives. The needs, concerns and rights of the socially excluded, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, ethnic and religious minorities, migrant workers, and other marginalized groups are still missing from policy-makers' drawing boards in many countries. It is therefore crucial to move beyond the concept of "social integration"⁴ and develop concrete and practical strategies to promote social integration and inclusion that affect the lives of many on the ground. Such strategies need to be based on realistic and updated information on what types of policies and practices exist across regions, as well as systemic analysis on what has worked/not worked and why.

There are various types of national policies that are conducive to promote social integration and inclusion. Some policies target specific social groups, such as youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, women, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers, etc. Others are more general, but aim to ensure universal coverage; for example, education and public health for all. Other policies and programmes target people with specific conditions; for example, pro-poor policies, social protection, and conditional cash transfer programmes, which aim to protect and/or empower those with temporary or long-term disadvantage(s). In addition, there are anti-discriminatory policies, policies towards more equitable distribution and policies that promote civic participation. More recently, rights-based approaches are often used to identify the root causes of systematic exclusion and to eliminate existing barriers to inclusion within various contexts, so that people can enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in economic, social, cultural, and political life on an equal footing with others. It is important to examine how these various types of policies are interlinked and create a better synergy among them in order to consolidate national efforts and resources.

The existence of policies pertinent to social groups and more general "inclusive policies" alone, however, do not automatically produce expected impacts on the ground. To achieve the goal of social integration and inclusion, genuine, broad-based participation, and engagement of diverse populations in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, and programmes in all social, economic, political, and cultural areas is necessary. Appropriate mechanisms must be in place to promote and ensure this practice. Such mechanisms may be institutional, such as better coordination, creating focal points or working units responsible for social integration, or approaches to transforming existing policy/planning processes to be more inclusive and participatory.

The responsibility of advancing social integration does not lie solely with government, but should be shared by all sectors of the economy and society at large, including the private sector and civil society.⁵ Strengthening the capacity of various stakeholders at multiple levels is necessary. In this sense, creating a global/inter-regional knowledge-base to facilitate information-sharing among policy-makers, planners, and practitioners at the national and local levels could be an

⁴ It is important to understand that social integration: 1) refers to the equal rights and responsibilities of all people; and 2) does not mean achieving a uniformity of society by making people adjust to society. Rather, it aims at accepting people with different backgrounds and still fosters meaningful engagement. In an inclusive society, not only some but all members of society must have a say and a stake. This inclusiveness of society creates and maintains stability, a sense of belonging or inter-connectedness, as well as responsibility and ownership of their common future.

⁵ Commission for Social Development, 47th Session, Chairpersons' summary

important contribution to the efforts in promoting social integration and inclusion, as well as achieving MDGs, as it can help in addressing various capacity-building needs. The value for some may be in the access to user-friendly resource materials, including guidelines that would lay out concrete steps to develop social integration/inclusion strategies in such areas as inclusive policy and planning processes at national and sub-national levels and effective methods of advocacy and awareness-raising. Others may be interested in strengthening their capacities in research and systemic analysis to enable evidence-based policy-making.

The meeting was part of ongoing efforts at UNDESA to clarify the broad meaning and implications of social policy in a contemporary world, including the interconnection of inclusion, participation, rights and justice in building socially integrated societies. Social integration/inclusion, in this context, refers to a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background and economic, social, or political status so that individuals can achieve their full potential in life. It is a multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including, civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as genuine participation in decision-making processes.

Objectives and Methodology

Within the broad objective of creating an inclusive society, “a society for all” in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play,⁶ the meeting aimed to develop practical strategies to promote social integration and social inclusion. , focusing on potential areas where concrete steps could be taken. The interaction among the group of experts stimulated fresh thinking on the development of practical strategies to promote social integration and social inclusion at the national and regional level by focusing on selected potential areas where concrete steps could be taken. By drawing lessons from a selected number of national and regional experiences, the meeting reviewed challenges and opportunities of existing policies, strategies, and practices aimed at promoting social integration and social inclusion; examined national mechanisms effective in implementing such policies, strategies, and practices; identified national capacity gaps in promoting social integration and social inclusion and explored areas for strengthening that capacity.

Experts, researchers and practitioners from thirteen countries in various regions around the world participated in their individual expert capacities as members of the expert group meeting. Participants came from Australia, Barbados, Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, Ghana, India, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, South Africa, United Kingdom, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Vietnam. In addition to representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Social Development Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), representatives of the following international and regional organizations participated in the meeting: the African Union (AU), Department for International Development, (DFID) in Ghana, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR in Ghana, and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). Also in attendance were a number of local participants from the host country of Ghana, including academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

⁶ Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action (1995)

The first two days of the meeting were conducted in plenary sessions that included presentations and dialogue and, on the third day, the participants divided into two working groups to review the policies and strategies that had been discussed and elaborate recommendations. The meeting concluded with a session where participants shared their findings and reached consensus on a set of concrete, action-oriented recommendations on social integration. (See Annexes I through III for the list of participants, technical documents prepared for the meeting and working group assignments.)

The meeting identified areas where progress had been made and made policy recommendations on concrete steps that could be taken at the national, regional and international level to strengthen capacity to promote social integration and inclusion.

Specifically, the meeting:

- Reviewed policies geared towards promoting social integration, such as policies geared at more equitable distribution, social protection, policies to promote civil participation, pro-poor policies, including conditional cash transfers, and drew lessons from their strengths and weaknesses;
- Reviewed policies targeting certain social groups (i.e. youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, women, people living with HIV/AIDS and other excluded or disadvantaged groups), as well as more broad-based approaches, such as universal access to basic services, or rights-based approaches, and explored ways and means to create synergy between them;
- Identified several types of national mechanisms, such as institutional, coordination, planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, that were considered to be effective in mainstreaming social inclusion objectives and principles into sectoral policies and poverty reduction strategies;
- Identified existing barriers that impeded the effective implementation of inclusive policies;
- Explored the potential role of inclusive and participatory planning as a tool to translate social integration and social inclusion policies into practice; and
- Identified the areas where national capacity could be strengthened in order to promote social integration and inclusion.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to compile successful interventions, useful information and resources in this area. In the context of identifying effective strategies to promote social integration, the meeting addressed such areas as the legal and regulatory framework, data collection and analysis, mapping, planning, priority setting, resource allocation, monitoring, and impact assessment. Other contextual aspects were explored, such as social capital, social network, social service delivery and social protection.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OPENING PLENARY

In opening the meeting, Mr. Antwi Boasiako Sekyere, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, Ghana stressed the importance of bringing the disadvantaged into the process of social inclusion.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Gonnot, Acting Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, UNDESA, addressed the participants and pointed out that the expert group had been convened in the context of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/19 in which the Council decided that the priority theme for the 2009-2010 review and policy cycle of the Commission for Social Development should be “social integration,” taking into account its relationship with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work for all.

It was the third in a series of meetings convened by UNDESA, the first having taken place in Paris in 2007 and the second in Helsinki in 2008, as part of its ongoing efforts to clarify the broad meaning and implications of social policy, including the interconnection between inclusion, participation, rights and justice in building socially integrated societies.

The outcomes of the meeting, along with that of a complementary meeting held in New York from 2-4 November 2009, would provide important inputs to the work of the Social Development Commission. The New York meeting of experts focused on how to craft and incorporate social integration policies and principles into broader poverty eradication and employment strategies. In contrast, the main objective of this expert group was to capture the experiences, successes, and challenges of countries in their concrete efforts to promote social integration.

During the review session of the Commission for Social Development held during 2009, Member States began the debate on social integration, focusing on clarifying the content and meaning of the theme. The Commission also provided an opportunity to bring renewed international attention to the important role of social integration in achieving overarching development goals.

At the upcoming policy session, which would take place in February 2010, delegates of the Commission, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Leslie Kojo Christian of Ghana, would negotiate an action-oriented policy outcome in the form of a resolution which would later be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for adoption. In the past fifteen years since the Copenhagen Summit, this was the first time that the United Nations would seek to adopt a resolution on social integration. Considering the current global context, it was critical that this resolution provide the much needed guidance to Member States in their efforts to implement their commitments in promoting social integration – especially with regard to policy formulation and setting goals and targets.

Mr. Gonnot noted that, following two days of presentations and dialogue, the meeting would be expected to produce a set of insightful, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations on social integration. Given this unique opportunity to advance an issue that had long been considered challenging, he urged the experts, in developing their recommendations, to focus on paving a way forward that was evidence-based, could be supported by consensus and achieve long-term goals.

He thanked the experts for taking the time to participate and contribute to this important work to advance social development for all and acknowledged the Government of Ghana, who served as

hosts to the expert group meeting, for their firm commitment to advance social integration and inclusion.

The following persons addressed the opening plenary: the representative of the United Nations Development Programme, who acknowledged Ghana's progress in reducing the number of people in extreme poverty and pledged UNDP support to promoting the stakeholder process; and the Hon. Stephen Amoanor Kwao, Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, who referenced Ghana's national social protection strategy and underscored the need to ensure that countries understand the concept of social integration.

EXISTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES CONDUCIVE TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION

General overview

The participants committed themselves to a review of existing policies and practices conducive to social integration; to learning what had worked, and what had not, with a view to contributing to the policy oriented dialogue for the promotion of social integration. Thus, experts reviewed a number of national and regional policies that had been introduced in order to extract lessons for social integration on what types of policies or combination of policies had proven most effective at the national and local levels.

The expert group meeting noted that, since the World Summit for Social Development, the concept of social integration had become the cornerstone of social development, together with eradication of poverty and creation of productive employment. Thus far, however, the issue of social integration had not received the same level of attention as the other two pillars of social development, even though it was increasingly recognized that these three objectives were interrelated and mutually reinforcing and needed to be pursued simultaneously.

There was consensus that the structural adjustment model and piecemeal, trickle down approaches had not been particularly helpful in dealing with poverty and meeting the needs of marginalized groups. It was further noted that economic growth alone does not reduce inequality. Despite efforts to enhance social protection, huge income inequalities continued to exist within countries and economic growth had slowed or remained volatile. Even where incomes had increased, inequalities had widened. In fact, almost all countries widened the gap between the rich and the poor in recent years, many of them widening the gap even as GDP increased, magnifying the complex relationship between economic and social development. Even in the countries where social protection systems existed, many social groups remained outside the reach of these policies and programmes. The evidence suggested that a mere increase in social expenditures did not necessarily reach the poorest of the poor, if it were not accompanied by careful analysis of which segment of the society benefitted from the increase. In that connection, attention was drawn to the example of Latin America, where there had been a move away from the structural adjustment model, as witnessed in the increasing provision of non-contributory pension.

There was increasing dialogue concerning jobless growth as a major obstacle for the poor to benefit from positive economic growth and performance. There was discussion also as to whether poverty could be more effectively reduced by adhering to growth patterns that favored sectors of the economy in which large segments of the poor were found, such as agriculture, rather than focusing on employment opportunities that disproportionately advanced other sectors of the economy. To further promote social integration and identify patterns of growth conducive to poverty alleviation, it was important to measure factors beyond income growth and to decompose

growth to understand where it was achieved and how. As a result, many countries had made progress in developing an overall framework for social policy interventions.

There was acknowledgement that while it was important to design emergency measures to prevent people from falling into poverty many countries viewed poverty reduction as a long-term strategy to address systemic causes of chronic and inter-generational poverty. There was urgent need to develop long-term strategies based on non-contributory as well as contributory sectors. Moreover, although the state had a fundamental role to play, markets, families and communities also had a responsibility for the provision of social welfare, thereby expanding the number of actors in the social policy arena. For example, between 1990- 2007, countries in the Latin American region had increased social investment by five percentage points of GDP. Many countries in the region had realized the need to move toward inclusion of a non-contributory pillar for those in poverty and socially excluded, financed through government revenues. Examples of such social protection programmes could be found in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Mexico.

It was widely recognized that vision and political leadership were required to move toward more inclusive societies and beyond mere lip service to the concept of social integration. It must include a commitment to sustained action and be shared by the rest of society. Social integration, moreover, was context specific; each society having to define for itself the underlying causes of poverty and the appropriate mix of economic, social and other policies needed to address them.

Experts agreed that United Nations conferences and summits over the past two decades and the Millennium Development Goals had generated a global consensus on a shared vision of development that encompassed an array of interlinked issues including, *inter alia*, social development, poverty eradication, gender equality, racism, sustainable development, issues pertinent to social groups, such as older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, indigenous peoples, etc. Nevertheless, within this panoply of critical development concerns, the goals of social integration had not been explicitly recognized. They noted further that the General Assembly had called for a more integrated and coordinated follow up to major United Nations Conferences and Summits, including the Millennium Development Goals. In that connection, they recommended that additional goals and targets related to social inclusion and integration be effectively addressed.

In light of the above, and within the context of increasing fiscal constraints due to a variety of factors, including global financial, economic, food and energy crises, many governments had sought to develop a vision and the political will to holistically manage a variety of social, economic, political and cultural shocks. There had been a sea change away from relying on market forces as the central provider of goods and services towards the state assuming an increasing role in adjusting market asymmetries.

The African Common Position on Social Integration was Africa's contribution to the 47th Session of the Commission for Social Development held in February 2009. In the Common Position, Member States reaffirmed their commitments to global and continental social development and adhered to the principles of creating a more stable and safe society for all by enumerating concrete actions that needed to be taken to that effect. It also acknowledged that the goals stipulated in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit on Social Development, the Millennium Development Goals and other social development policies and strategies were mutually reinforcing and efforts needed to be intensified to achieve them.

The Common Position called for the reduction of political, economic and social inequalities; closing the gaps between existing exclusion and integration; creating equal opportunities and

recommended actions required at national, regional, continental and international levels to achieve a more stable and safe society for all.

Within that context, the African Union Commission, as the continental organization, was committed promoting the development of human beings, affording them an opportunity to use their potential, ensuring that noticeable improvements were made in the lives of Africans and was all inclusive, based on a human-centered approach where all social groups, including the poor, marginalized and vulnerable were taken on board.

Some experts commented that it was also important to recognize that the social contract was not only at global and national level, but also contained a regional dimension which should be strongly emphasized. Regions and sub-regions should be encouraged to think about best practices and participate in raising the bar on promotion of social integration. Strong partnerships were required to harmonize and coordinate efforts in order to make a significant and sustainable difference. In that connection, the African Common Position on Social Integration and the Social Policy Framework for Africa, as endorsed by the African Heads of States and Governments in 2009, served as an illustration of regional cooperation in the mainstreaming of social integration.

National policies toward social inclusion and equitable distribution

In the case of Ghana, the Government's vision for a major strategy for national social development was aligned with the major themes identified in the Copenhagen Declaration. Within that strategy, Ghana's National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) aimed to create a society in which the citizenry were duly empowered to realize their rights and responsibilities and provided policy direction for a holistic strategy for the protection of persons living in situations of extreme poverty, vulnerability and exclusion.

Measures within the strategy were designed to cover extremely poor individuals, households and communities, including those who needed special care but lacked access to basic social services and social insurance to protect themselves from the risks and consequences of livelihood shocks, social inequities, social exclusion and denial of rights. Social protection thus went beyond income support and included the strengthening of social cohesion, human development, livelihoods and protection of rights and entitlements.

In promoting social integration and inclusion, the Government of Tanzania had formulated a number of inclusive policy frameworks for promoting social inclusion. These could be grouped into five major policy categories, namely : (i) policies targeting specific groups previously excluded, such as women, youth, the disabled, ageing; (ii) general policies to achieve social integration; and policies addressed to the legal and regulatory framework to improve the business environment; (iii) policies to protect those with temporary and long term disabilities, such as pro-poor policies and social protection policies; (iv) policies to promote active civic participation; and (v) policies that give citizens access to rights, including human rights.

In Barbados, success in the area of social and human development was due to the mainstreaming of social inclusion into sectoral policies and poverty reduction strategies. This had been done through a number of national mechanisms that had been constantly reviewed and strengthened. Barbados was committed to transformation of its social landscape; and the elimination of poverty, inequality and exclusion were integral parts of the transformation agenda. To that end, it was necessary to provide continuous scanning of the environment through research and analysis, with the ultimate goal of having programmes that lead to the empowerment of the poor, discourage dependency, provide for social integration rather than perpetuate marginalization and exclusion,

permit equal opportunities for participation and stamp out discrimination. An institutional framework that facilitated the seamless implementation of these objectives was critical to their success.

The social mobilizations programme of the Government of Brazil was committed to building citizenship as an essential democratic value. The Rede de Educacao Cidada (Talher Nacional), created in 2003 and linked to the Presidency of the Republic, had as its mission to encourage social mobilization around Zero Hunger and other social programmes.

The Talher Nacional had developed a process of continuous training with families and groups vulnerable to hunger, primarily in social programs, in particular the Bolsa Familia, and increasing their capacity to access public policies in areas including safety, health, and education.

Another major goal was to raise participation levels in cultural, social, political and economic spheres to enable better understand of the functioning of Brazilian society.

Some experts suggested that in order to meaningfully make a dent in poverty and inequality, policy intervention should begin with agriculture. They further proposed that interventions should aim at structural change through land reform, and involve heavy public investment in irrigation, rural roads and technology support to agriculture.

They stated that easy and affordable access to finance, particularly in rural areas, could contribute significantly to alleviating poverty and narrowing the inequality gap. Given low income, underemployment, scattered settlements and a limited credit culture, private banks should also be encouraged to operate in rural areas.

Countries also needed to strike the correct balance in assigning responsibility for planning, financing and management of certain public functions between the central government and lower levels of government where services were being provided. Local governments needed to have adequate revenues and sufficient decision-making authority to carry out their functions effectively.

In addition, more attention needed to be paid to allowing for greater participation by community groups and citizens in the formulation and implementation of the policies that affected them. This would allow for greater political representation of the diverse political, ethnic, religious and cultural groups in the decision making process and highlighted the need for capacity building at all levels.

It was also important that social legislation that was enacted be backed by allocation of budgetary resources. Instances were noted where social policy legislation was passed but budgetary provision for implementation was lacking. Without a budget for implementation, accountability was missing. Therefore, governments should be held accountable to provide the necessary budgetary resources to cover social policies which they enacted.

Moreover, the role of people's rights and their ability to hold governments accountable played a significant role in the extent to which they could influence policy choices and the use of resources. In that connection, the development of human capital was fundamental and underscored the importance of capacity building to ensure that people had the necessary, skills, attitudes and behaviors to successfully participate in the development dialogue.

Social protection and Cash transfer programmes

An increasing number of countries were shifting from social transfers based on emergency needs to more integral policies designed to reduce poverty, expand assets, invest in human capital and develop capacities of the vulnerable segments of the population. Some conditional cash transfer programmes had been designed to address both short- and medium-term needs, by seeking to reduce consumption poverty while encouraging investments in children's health and education. Conditional cash transfer programmes tended to target the family, especially women and children, and sometimes the elderly. Efforts to coordinate such policies could sometimes bring together actors from different sectors, such as health and education, who traditionally had not communicated.

Social policy programmes faced a number of challenges. While cash transfer programmes had been deemed necessary as short-term measures to fight poverty, there was also recognition of the need for medium and long term programmes that addressed human capital accumulation. This called for a multi-dimensional approach that targeted not only cash benefits but also actions in fields such as health, nutrition, and education.

It was noted that despite the use of such conditional cash transfers, even among countries with great financial resources and strong emphasis on provision of central welfare, problems of social exclusion, discrimination and crime continued to exist. Therefore, conditional cash transfers, which increased resources to selected disadvantaged groups in the short term, should not be seen as the end product of social inclusion policy.

Another serious challenge was that of guaranteeing adequate and stable financing to supplement employment based protection with non-contributory, solidarity-based mechanisms. Access to health services based solely on the contributory sector, for example, would exclude large segments of the population especially among the poorest, and those most disadvantaged and in need. Access to health care, therefore, must also be tax financed.

Rights-based approach

Yet another challenge was that of applying a rights-based approach to social policy, whereby every citizen was guaranteed access to a minimum set of entitlements and could hold public policy makers accountable for the delivery of social policy. Such approaches also entailed the availability of mechanisms for citizen redress. One example could be found in Brazil where the new architecture of governance represented a paradigm shift that analyzed public policies through a human rights lens that fostered a relationship of co-responsibility between the state and society.

Some experts felt that, in a society where resources were inadequate, using a rights-based approach to demand services would apply equally to the general population as to any particular disadvantaged groups. Therefore, it was argued that in cases where there was general scarcity of resources, the debate might better be framed in terms of issues of equity and social justice, to avoid competing claims among disadvantaged groups.

Experts concluded there was no way for the process of building inclusive societies to be achieved without public authorities taking primary responsibility for developing a framework that was coherent, participatory and accountable. Such a framework was not a given, but needed to be built and the capacity of various stakeholders strengthened in order for it to succeed. Achieving the goal of social inclusion required broad-based participation and engagement of diverse populations. Non-discrimination, tolerance for diversity and mutual respect were sine qua non. It was necessary to look at the various groups in their respective contexts to remove barriers that prevented them from full participation in society and address issues of discrimination. Capacity

building must take place for government employees, especially as regards the local level, but also for communities and groups.

Reducing the long-term effects of vulnerability

It was felt that the urgency of economic reform should not bypass the basic socioeconomic interest of the poor, deprived and disadvantaged. The state should pursue an inclusive growth strategy where meaningful participation of the poor and disadvantaged was ensured. Targeted interventions leading to an increase in the income and employment of the poor and vulnerable was deemed important to reducing inequality. Encouraging the private sector to generate decent employment was considered a must. The experts agreed that macro-economic policies could not be successfully implemented without considering their social consequences, especially within the context of the fiscal and monetary crisis. In some countries, social protection policies had taken on a greater role and in many instances, the existence of a social protection system had prevented people from falling into poverty, thus preventing an escalation of social tension. There had been some notable successes in rolling out universal social protection schemes, as in the case of national health insurance.

Some countries recognized that social protection strategies were not simply welfare, but were designed to address larger social development concerns. As a result, they had sought to provide social protection coverage for specific groups with the aim of reducing their long term vulnerability, mitigating the effects of shocks to prevent further decline in their well being, and ensuring access to basic social services with the long-term goal of social integration.

In Vietnam, Programme 135 – Socio-economic Development of the Most Vulnerable Communes in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas was established to implement government policies targeting the most vulnerable communes, promoting production and access to basic infrastructure, improving education, training local officials and raising people's awareness for better living standards.

While making efforts to ensure that mainstream economic growth is pro-poor, the government had recognized that additional work was needed to accelerate socio-economic development in the most impoverished ethnic regions, so that the poor in general and poor ethnic minorities in particular could catch up with the majority and actively participate in and benefit from mainstream development.

Also, as part of the Social Transformation Programme of the Western Cape of South Africa, the provincial government targeted a number of the most vulnerable communities and schools with which to build partnerships in order to improve infrastructure and to make schools safer. The aims of the programme included the facilitation of social cohesion in poor and marginalized communities and the fostering of trust between communities and government.

Ghana's National Social Protection Strategy was founded on the philosophy that all Ghanaians, if afforded the opportunity, could contribute towards the process of transforming Ghana into a middle income country. The strategy was aimed at investment in human and physical assets thereby reducing the risk of future poverty.

The Strategy was intended to empower the extreme poor and other vulnerable populations through the implementation of the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Social Grants Programme. LEAP was an innovative and context specific initiative that would provide both conditional and unconditional cash transfers to target populations. The programme was

intended to empower and help targeted populations provide for their basic needs, poise them to access existing government interventions, provide a “spring board” to help them to “Leap” out of extreme poverty, and ultimately empower them to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

A study of the vulnerability of households in Kyrgyzstan concluded that the right to social security should be seen as a necessary policy tool to help tackle financial crisis. Among its findings were that shocks that push individuals and households into poverty were frequent and unpredictable, and recommended consideration be given to wider policy options for non-contributory social protection programmes.

When designing social protection programmes, the expert group concluded that governments should pay particular attention to involving the target groups in programme and other decision making processes to ensure success.

Anti-discrimination policies

Experts declared institutionalized discrimination and social exclusion one of the primary impediments to social integration.

Socially excluded persons and communities suffered from an inadequate standard of living, low labor force participation and were generally denied exercise of their civil and human rights.

Social exclusion and various forms of ethnic, tribal and racial discrimination existed and there were marked differences in levels of poverty and inequality between rural and urban communities, exacerbated by situations of conflict and displaced persons.

Class and caste distinctions were drawn not only on the basis of wage employment versus self-employed labor, but also with regard to asset holding, gender, geography, age, religion, nationality, political or ideological belief, socio-economic status and ethnicity, resulting in increasing inequalities by region, population, etc.

Many different forms of identity-based social exclusion and de facto discrimination existed, and in some cases, particular groups were formally excluded by the legal system, for example, the mentally disabled, as well as women and children excluded from labor laws. Fees for education and health services could also act as an exclusionary measure. Cultural forms of exclusion, shaped by traditional beliefs and practices, overshadowed policies, and generated the perception that the targeted communities had to be helped as charity, rather than acknowledging their right to be included.

There were often distinct differences in the percentage of workers covered by social security between the formal and informal sector. Competition for land and natural resources, even within groups, remained key. Social exclusion and poverty resulted, not only from income disparities, but also due to differences in the level of human capital. The lack of opportunities for education for women and girls resulted in huge discrepancies in the number of women in wage employment versus those working in the low productivity informal sector, which in turn contributed to the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Vast differences existed between policy and practice. Constitutional provisions as well as policies that mandated equitable representation of women in executive and parliamentary bodies had not

always been met. Policies that called for deepening participation at grass roots level had not been fully realized. It was noted that policies to address issues that impacted upon efforts at national social integration and inclusion must always be country-specific as different groups and concerns occupied the attention of particular countries.

The World Summit for Social Development defined an inclusive society as “a society for all”, in which every individual each with rights and responsibilities had an active role to play. Such an inclusive society was equipped with mechanisms which accommodated diversity, and facilitated or enabled people’s active participation in their political, economic and social lives. As such, it over-rode differences of race, gender, class, generation, and geography, and ensured equal opportunities for all to achieve full potential in life, regardless of origin.

Countries, therefore, needed to address discrimination and marginalization as a priority goal. It was important to create an environment for change to enable excluded groups to be represented and participate in decision-making. Societal norms were persistent and special efforts were required, through public education, to change the mindsets of people. Civil society organizations led by excluded communities should be encouraged and supported and anti-discrimination mechanisms put in place that provided access to justice.

Strategies towards social integration and inclusion

A variety of approaches have been utilized by different countries aimed at managing diverse forms of risk faced by their populations and providing opportunities for involvement and participation of formerly excluded communities.

Social protection policies had also been seen as a means of inclusion and a vehicle to encompass the most vulnerable members of society. In such cases, it was important to ensure that good quality services actually reached the intended recipients and those groups that were difficult to reach so that they had an opportunity to provide input into the programmes that were designed.

The Ghanaian National Social Protection Strategy acknowledged the multidimensional nature of poverty and its exacerbating and unique effects on various groups. A variety of risks affected individuals, households and communities, in particular orphans, vulnerable children, people living with HIV/AIDS and women. The strategy presented a distinctive approach to social development aimed at reducing extreme poverty among targeted vulnerable and excluded groups and mitigating the effects of shocks to prevent a decline in socio-economic status.

The Talher Nacional of Brazil brought together volunteer teachers, popular entities, small neighborhood associations and social movements to help formulate and control food and nutritional safety policies encouraged by the Zero Hunger Programme. The engagement of various social organizations in practices directly linked to food security and sustainable nutritional development had grown increasingly.

As part of its strategy to promote active involvement of its communities, the Government of Tanzania had broadened the participation of citizens in policy design and implementation through involving them in national and local planning processes, budgeting and in expenditure tracking and poverty monitoring. In addition, it has worked to empower communities at grass roots levels and to support affirmative action to include women in decision-making.

In India, progressive policies had been put in place through legislation to reserve proportionate representative for women and formerly excluded populations in local governance and statutory bodies.

In South Africa, the social transformation programme entailed, inter alia, programmes for human capital development, infrastructure development, transport management, economic and investment development, economic empowerment and public works programmes. Expansion of social protection was also provided through the safety net including social security, basic services, health services and housing subsidies.

In Latin America, most governments had realized the need to provide assistance for older persons in poverty financed through taxation, as for example in Bolivia the programme called Renta Dignidad with revenues from natural gas. Similarly, Brazil provided assistance for elderly and disabled financed by central government. There had also been some notable successes in rolling out universal social protection schemes in the case of national health insurance. One example was that of Chile, where recent health reforms set forth a list of illnesses for which health insurance would be guaranteed by the public sector.

Social inclusion should not be looked at simply as a supply side phenomenon. Opportunities for communities to organize themselves and to demand greater political control over resources also played a pivotal role. This entailed the issue of greater coordination across government sectors, but also stronger efforts to encourage participation from community based organizations and excluded groups within the population.

One example is found in the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) established in the Republic of Serbia to provide funding and management support to social services projects at the local level. SIF promoted partnerships between state providers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and succeeded in enhancing the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as service providers.

An encouraging trend was noted, in countries such as Vietnam and Barbados, where successful social protection strategies received popular support, obliging those in power to continue them, irrespective of changes in government and shifts in political parties. This emphasized the importance of creating a political agenda supported by the general public to enable well-founded programmes to survive transitions in government.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED AND LESSONS LEARNED FOR PROMOTING SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

Throughout the discussions and based on the technical papers presented, a number of challenges and lessons learned were reviewed.

Coordination, implementation and monitoring

Despite the efforts that had been put forth thus far by governments to establish social integration policies and the necessary legal frameworks to support them, in practical terms, much remained to be achieved.

Efforts to widen and deepen the scope of social policy and programming brought to the fore issues of capacity, including poor use of technology, inadequate staff complements and

underlying uncertainty as to the nature and level of poverty, posing challenges for effective coordination and integration of a variety of social interventions.

One of the greatest challenges may be to determine how to create synergies between universal and targeted policies, reconcile approaches and make them work in practice. Introduction of additional targeting reinforced the need for greater coordination and rationalization of social services and more cohesive and collaborative social programming. It was felt that the mix of targeted and universal approaches within the institutional framework could lead to fragmentation in delivery of social services, duplication of programmes and perpetuation of unclear mandates among agencies.

The findings of a diagnostic study undertaken by Barbados highlighted the fact that poverty was not just about physiological deprivation but about social deprivation as well. This understanding of poverty influenced the type of social integration policy that Barbados pursued and the concomitant adjustments in the institutional framework needed to support it. An examination of the traditional framework supporting the delivery of services led to the decision to create new agencies with more specific mandates.

Experts agreed that coordination with related and complementary programmes should be a central focus for governments in order to ensure maximum impact. They further concluded that, to effectively address issues of social exclusion and poverty, strategies must be multi-sectoral in nature and have clearly defined rules and responsibilities for each sector.

Even in instances where governments recognized the importance of combining economic growth and poverty reduction, the experience was still new and they had not yet succeeded in fully integrating poverty reduction policies into macro-economic policy frameworks.

Another challenge facing many governments was to find ways to address inadequate levels of services. In some instances, access to basic services such as water, health care and primary education, especially at district level, was poor. Furthermore, even in those areas where these services were present, the quality of services often left much to be desired. Even where free education had been provided, quality was not sufficient and exclusion from economic participation could be traced to lack of adequate education.

As far as public health was concerned, there were challenges such as shortages of staff, lack of medicine and inefficiencies at local rural-based health units.

Governments were called upon to play a central role in building a vision for the communities they served and had a critical role to play in providing resources and ensuring inter-agency collaboration towards stated goals. Nevertheless, social integration and inclusion needed be viewed in a larger context in which civil society and all communities had a stake. In that connection, the notion of building local, national, regional and global partnerships was emphasized.

Universalism versus Targeting

Universalism is a social welfare principle by which social protection and social services should be made available to all of a nation's citizens by right and according to need. As a result of the adverse economic and social environment of the late 1970s and 1980s and the introduction of structural adjustment programmes, many developing countries shifted away from broad social

policies which emphasized rights towards an approach which targeted public resources to selected segments of the population deemed most vulnerable or in need.

The aim was to target particular groups of disadvantaged people in an attempt to improve their situation and involve them in national development activities. Targeted interventions had been designed with a variety of goals, including reducing hunger, increasing income and employment, enhancing skills of the poor, providing assistance to migrants, launching labor intensive public works, transforming low yielding self subsistence farming into modern agriculture through investment in irrigation, rural roads and technology, narrowing the gap in living standards among ethnic groups, improving education, increasing the share of women in wage employment, combating gender violence, and involving youth in safety enhancement and community awareness projects. Many of these targeted programmes set specific measurable and outcome oriented objectives and targets in line with both internationally established goals, such as the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the country's own national development goals.

One such example was the programme under implementation by the Government of Vietnam, targeting the most vulnerable communes, designed to help people in ethnic minority and mountainous areas to overcome poverty, and eliminate risks for social instability. The programme involved local needs assessments and widespread consultations with stakeholders, especially local ethnic groups in developing a broad consensus on the design, approval and implementation process. This comprehensive programme merited further study to extract lessons for broader applicability.

Most countries had tended towards a mix of both universal and targeted initiatives and had met with some success, but had also faced a number of challenges hindering the realization of the overall goal of social integration and inclusion. Gaps sometimes existed between government policy and service provision, whether because of lack of resources or lack of will. Severe income disparities and inequalities continued to exist, as did instances of discrimination against particular groups, based on categories such as gender, age, disability, caste, ethnicity, geography and assets. It was felt that addressing marginalization and institutionalized discrimination should be a priority for all countries.

The consequences of policy choices on target populations and the administrative difficulties of targeting were reviewed with a view to examining whether social protection mechanisms being implemented facilitated social integration and inclusion.

One critical question relating to marginalized groups was how to target them more effectively. There was a gap identified between the rhetoric on respecting marginalized sections of society and the substance of action. There was also sometimes a gap between rights and principles in the legal framework which supported equality and justice for all, and the actual social norms which were often much more prejudicial and discriminatory. This emphasized the gap that remained between socially inclusive policies enacted by government through legislation and long established cultural patterns. Yet another problem identified was how to foster social inclusion in those instances where different sections of society felt in competition for scarce resources.

Programmes directed to marginalized groups focused attention on the choice between universality and services for the general population versus targeted programmes and services directed towards those who fell through the gaps. In many poor countries, there were not sufficient resources for basic services for the general population nor the political will and institutional capacities, including inter-agency cooperation at the national and sub-national level, to deliver adequate services, while marginalized groups faced additional obstacles to accessing the limited

opportunities available. The meeting concluded that both overall service provision and consideration to the problems of the marginalized needed to be tackled simultaneously.

The meeting also noted that the availability of good quality services does not meet the needs of all. Societies with good social protection systems and with high levels of resources still had significant levels of social exclusion and the resultant problems of alienation, crime, etc.

It was important to understand and deal with the barriers that existed which made it difficult for some people to access services or make use of opportunities, and to target those barriers and overcome them, rather than to simply target groups or individuals. Some of the obstacles which existed included lack of access to land, lack of education, physical remoteness, discrimination on grounds of gender, age, disability, ethnicity and race. Procedures to gain access to services and opportunities could also prove humiliating, particularly in the case of targeted services. The importance was highlighted of understanding the situation of families and women and the particular obstacles they faced. With this understanding, it would be possible to determine appropriate policies to ensure that their needs were met.

Despite the government interventions to date, a great deal remained to be done to give the targeted populations a sense of ownership of the programmes and to feel a part of the decision-making process. In the end, what was needed was not just equal opportunity, but positive outcomes that reflected increased participation by affected communities.

It was important to examine closely how appropriate the particular programmes were to the situation of the targeted group and whether it had been conceptualized primarily based on theoretical constructs or whether the beneficiaries had been consulted. Programmes designed at the center were less likely to foster participation since direct representation of the targeted population in the deliberations was limited by financial and other constraints. Certain targeted programmes, such as conditional cash transfers which utilized proxy means tests, were sometimes felt to be disruptive as they could encourage competition between possible recipients of assistance. This situation had been overcome in instances where countries set up community councils to monitor the selection of households.

Other challenges faced in the use of conditional cash transfers included limited fiscal space for social protection, difficulty in sustaining and scaling up programmes without external support, and high demand for skills training, particularly among rural youth.

The multi-dimensionality of social integration and social inclusion programmes and the need for tradeoffs between competing demands was examined, as well as implementation constraints. There was a good deal of support for the importance of a holistic approach, participation by those affected, and transparency in relation to policies. A holistic approach was necessary because the issues were multi-dimensional, and multi-dimensionality was yet another reason why participation by those affected was important. Policies were frequently based on the policy makers' analyses which did not fully take into account the real situation on the ground. The targeted groups could best appreciate the overall nature of the barriers they faced and the reasons they sometimes could not take advantage of programmes being offered, since tackling one aspect of their situation would often create or reinforce other obstacles they were exposed to.

Programmes would be more effective if the people affected felt ownership, which also implied some control over the allocation of the related resources. Recognizing that those affected sometimes had not developed the skills needed to evaluate proposed programmes in advance, it was suggested that, in some instances, it could be more effective if they were involved in the monitoring and evaluation stages.

The experts agreed that the ultimate goal of the state was to provide social protection and social promotion to its citizens, based on universally held principles. Nonetheless, and in light of competing demands on limited resources, targeting should run alongside such overall long term plans in the short to medium term as an instrument to identify those most in need of protection and to provide them with services. The ultimate objective of such targeted interventions should be to raise those persons to the level where they could successfully exist without them.

In Papua New Guinea, the Sports and Youth Engagement Project directly targeted youth in schools and settlements in the most troubled areas. Mobilizing youth into sports had also created sponsorship opportunities for business and a forum for disseminating information to groups which had otherwise remained outside of education and employment-based information channels.

On the other hand, an example of universal social policy could be found in Bolivia and Antigua and Barbuda. Both countries were among those nations providing universal, non-contributory pensions to everyone of eligible age, regardless of income, assets or employment history. Such programmes were preferable to contributory schemes as the latter excluded the poorest and most vulnerable from benefits.

In the end, identification of the appropriate policy mix was contextual and the result of specific socio-economic and historical factors and political choices in a given country based upon their needs assessment.

Ultimately, one could pose the question as to whether any particular set of households or groups that had benefited from a targeted intervention could be said to have been integrated into society. Social inclusion does not relate only to targeted programs and cash transfers, as there were other strategies that needed to be considered such as enhancing coordination among multiple service providers, fostering household and community participation and addressing cultural beliefs and attitudes.

Universalism remained a long-term strategy and further investigation was needed on the cost implications of universal coverage. It was also considered likely that sustaining investment in universal coverage would be difficult in countries reliant on loans or donor aid. In the short-term, targeted strategies for reaching the poor would continue to be needed.

Identification of vulnerable groups

Experts agreed it was important to carefully define the ways in which target populations were defined and described. A number of specific criteria had been used that included population size, remoteness, poverty rates, and various education and health indicators. The importance of developing more qualitative indicators to complement existing quantitative data was stressed by experts as a means to more effectively identify vulnerable groups and improve monitoring and evaluation.

One of the lessons learned was the need for effective and clear targeting strategies and simple and clear development targets. Certain groups were capable of benefiting if an adequate level of services and economic opportunities were provided to them. The question was raised as to how to address those persons who would still be unable to take advantage of such opportunities even if present, due to their physical location or the way in which they were viewed by their society.

A number of vulnerable and marginalized groups faced particular challenges. Efforts to fully integrate women, for example, faced such problems as insufficient laws and regulations against gender violence and lack of sufficient awareness of their rights.

Enhancing participation

For social integration and social inclusion policies to be effective and sustainable, the targeted populations must be directly involved. This raised a number of questions regarding the cultural dimensions of how the targeted communities were viewed and the mechanisms by which their participation could be made more effective.

The discussion on participation emphasized the concepts of empowerment, ownership and trust. It was important to hear from those who needed to be integrated into society rather than simply implementing programmes on their behalf. It was easier to talk about the need for participatory mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation than it was to design effective practices. Local groups were diverse, had different needs and cultures and were often unaccustomed to speak on their own behalf. Also, local communities tended to have difficulty in transcending the here and now and often lacked capacity to make medium term choices to overcome long-term poverty. Policy-makers needed to develop a greater understanding of how to involve communities, engage in dialogue with all stakeholders and encourage them to have a greater role in identifying, articulating and prioritizing the community's needs and contributions. Trust was a necessary element in order to achieve successful involvement of communities in the decision-making processes that shaped their lives. A trust-building approach involved regular interaction among all actors in the society, including government, civil society and the private sector, such that each had a vested interest in communicating with the other, in other words, creating a multi-stakeholder dialogue. Where community groups identified policies they deemed negative, governments should be open to listening to their feedback as to why such policies had not served the intended purposes, and be willing to reflect the communities' voices when amending or reformulating such policy interventions, leading to greater evidence-based policy making.

It was proposed that targeted programmes focus more on the need for inclusion rather than on the provision of goods and services and on the processes by which people were excluded to encourage greater participation of local groups in the design and delivery of appropriate services. In that connection, attention was drawn to the growing number of community based organizations (CBOs) within excluded communities, and state and development agencies were urged to identify and partner with organizations led by the marginalized communities themselves.

Transparency, accountability and the ability to access justice were also important in policy formulation and programme delivery and it was considered essential if there was to be genuine and informed participation. Targeted groups must be able to hold political parties accountable for service delivery and have administrative mechanisms that allow for the registering of anti-discrimination and other complaints. These factors would serve to draw persons into the mainstream of society and result in better policies and reality on the ground.

An example was found in Tanzania, where among the policies, strategies and programmes put in place by the government to give its citizens access to rights was the formation of a Commission of Human Rights and Good Governance which was charged with educating people on their rights and investigating human rights violations.

While it was the responsibility of government to drive the process of social integration and inclusion, it should be viewed as much larger than a project agenda, but rather an agenda for the entire society. In instances where political parties dominated the electoral process, democratically elected representatives' first commitment was often to the party's agenda rather than to the needs of local communities. Local representatives and representatives of minority groups sometimes failed to bring the concerns of their constituencies to the fore for fear of being marginalized in an environment that was less than conducive for such discussions. In light of these factors, it was considered more effective to dialogue directly with the community as a whole, where possible..

Another important aspect of participation and social inclusion was to encourage civic engagement by democratizing access to information and engaging marginalized groups in public, parliamentary and civil society fora. Inclusive and participatory planning was being used as a tool by the Government of Brazil, and civil society had a key role to play in monitoring social policies through a series of councils, conferences and public meetings. Between 2003 and 2009, four million Brazilians had participated in 57 national conferences to debate and participate in creating public policy. In addition, monthly descriptions of all social policies were widely distributed and available on the internet.

In Thailand, the Baan Mankong ('secure housing') programme encouraged community-based environmental management. Initiated by the government and facilitated through the Community Organizing Development Initiative (CODI), a government-NGO collaborative partnership, it served as a forum between local government, government departments, the municipality and the poor to bring about improved shelter, living standards and more secure tenure.

In the case of India, efforts to enhance participation were grounded in the legal provisions made by government for the right to information and proportional budgeting for formerly excluded groups.

Capacity building

Countries had been hampered in their efforts to address the goals of poverty eradication, full employment and promotion of social integration by limitations in a number of areas, including inadequate funding and the need for capacity building. The gap between policy and practice had been magnified by insufficient technical skills. Further attention should be paid to the training of government officials at national and local levels to strengthen their capacity to design and implement effective strategies for social inclusion, and to underscore the centrality of social integration for socio-economic development. Among the areas meriting special mention were capacity building for personnel engaged in analyzing and utilizing statistical data to encourage improved methods of measuring social integration needs and outcomes, and enhancing capacity to undertake research and analysis for evidence-based policy formulation

Equally important, community capacity building should be recognized as an important strategy for stimulating local participation and enhancing the ability of local groups to respond to local problems and share responsibilities in devising appropriate solutions. Such programmes should be designed to reach various categories of people, including women, youth, older persons, people living in poverty and other disadvantaged and marginalized populations to assist in skills building, for example, in areas such as consensus building, monitoring and tracking budget allocations and in creating a development mindset.

Best practices of successful participation by local communities were identified and it was strongly recommended that such examples be shared widely.

HelpAge in Ghana, designed to enable older people to access cash transfers and other government services, developed mechanisms that allowed older citizens to develop their own tools for programme monitoring.

Similarly, within the framework of the HelpAge project in Kyrgyzstan, needs assessment was conducted with older people and they were encouraged to offer ideas and solutions to the problems they faced.

The poverty reduction and development scheme for ethnic minorities in Vietnam included a capacity-building component to provide training to commune and village officials to strengthen the knowledge and skills they needed to manage and implement programme activities. Training was also provided to grassroot communities and funds allocated for provinces to design their own training activities to meet local needs.

Conflict situations and migrant workers

Particular challenges of exclusion and inequality were exacerbated in countries which had undergone periods of conflict. Access to higher income generating opportunities varied both at individual and household level and was determined by several factors, including initial income levels, asset ownership, education and access to capital.

Conflict and instability also drove money away from social investment. While this might appear to be a separate issue, experts agreed it had the potential to divert money from social protection.

In the case of Nepal, which had emerged from a period of conflict, innovative attempts had been proposed by government to raise the capability of and provide new opportunities for the disadvantaged section of the population. The programme included, inter alia, provision of allowances to senior citizens, particular groups in designated remote areas, single women and the disabled. In addition, it provided for debt relief to small borrowers, local construction initiatives, goals in literacy, maternity health, youth employment and intensive poverty alleviation programmes.

Another significant factor to be further studied was that of the role of international migration and remittances in poverty alleviation and social integration. Remittances helped reduce poverty, but differences in earnings also contributed to widening inequality

The expert group discussed the need to address the marginalization and social exclusion of migrant workers, bearing in mind the positive impact of remittances on poverty reduction. While some suggested the need for government policy to facilitate the mobility of migrants, others pointed out the danger of increased social disintegration at the level of communities and families left behind.

A WAY FORWARD

Understanding the concept of social integration and inclusion

Experts agreed that social integration and social inclusion were concepts that were not yet fully understood by all, yet exclusion of disadvantaged communities had serious social consequences

for society as a whole. They noted that governments placed priority on the need to mobilize the financial and institutional means necessary to deal with selected crises such as the recent financial-economic crisis, severe energy and food shortages and the growing global environmental crisis. Yet, most societies had not yet placed the potential crisis of social disintegration on an equal footing with the former.

For policy interventions to be successful and sustainable, the concepts of social integration and inclusion must be more fully understood by government policy-makers and civil society. A more comprehensive understanding of social integration would enable policy-makers to better manage trade-offs among social, economic and environmental imperatives. This would aid in bringing social policy issues on par with economic and political agendas that still dominated over social policy concerns that tended to be framed in terms of a drain on scarce resources rather than investment for the future.

The first step was to ensure that the concept of social integration was fully understood and promoted at all levels of society. The building of inclusive societies could not be achieved without public authorities who had primary responsibility for developing a framework that was coherent, participatory and accountable. Such a framework, however, was not a given, but needed to be developed, along with capacity building for government, in particular at local level, but also for communities, groups and individuals.

Under such a scenario, macro-economic and other policies could not be adopted without considering their social impact and the process of investing in human resources would be deepened. The challenge was for government to elevate social integration on a par with poverty eradication and the creation of productive employment. People want productive employment and equitable access to basic social services but they also seek dignity. They want their rights respected, their voices heard and control over the decisions that affect their daily lives. Ultimately, social integration is a challenge not only for governments, but for all segments of the society.

Creating a common vision for government and civil society

A central principle for achieving social integration was the building of partnerships among key stakeholders. Although state institutions had a key role to play in driving social integration, results had proven more resilient and successful when they met the felt needs of communities. It was critical, therefore, to create a common vision for social integration between government and civil society leading to national ownership of the development agenda.

Need for deliberate action to ensure commitment at the highest level for the goal of social integration and inclusion

Many developing countries had been struggling to protect certain segments of their population even before the most recent economic crises exacerbated the deepening instability. Some had successfully targeted programmes designed to protect selected groups and members of the community, but the goal of creating a “society for all” had remained out of reach. Despite the existence of modern policies and institutions, governments were experiencing difficulty in translating the agreed principle of social integration into practice, highlighting the need to promote new and innovative mechanisms to achieve social integration. The consequences of not bringing all

disadvantaged groups and persons into the process of social development were grave. Ultimately, exclusion would lead to serious difficulty even for those who were comparatively better off. Failure to create socially cohesive societies would lead to further fragmentation, strains on families and institutions, dislocations especially in areas of armed conflict, polarization, and restless youth unable to find the wherewithal of life.

In that connection, it was deemed imperative for government to adopt a social development approach across key ministries and to build capacity of ministries and departments to deliver and implement social development objectives that promote social integration and inclusion in accordance with the principles of a human rights-based approach.

Experts concluded that social policy should not be seen only through the traditional lens of sectoral policies. Policy problems which many developing countries faced, among them, poverty, asset holding, work, wages, housing, discrimination, domestic violence, and youth at risk, were issues which in fact transcended sector. More dynamic policy development was called for that gave due credit to the complexity of the issues being dealt with

Experts concluded that there was a real need to address social integration and social inclusion from a transformative perspective rooted in social, economic and political realities, rather than to develop ever more elaborate but more technical tool kits. Systems approaches were needed, but rather than being seen as overwhelming structures which cannot be changed, there was a need to look at spaces and opportunities for progressive change. There were no quick fixes in terms of short term interventions; rather long-term relations of trust needed to be built.

Sharing good practices and lessons learned

To lend support to the achievement of the goals put forward, it was critical to strengthen and support social research in social integration and inclusion and to share best practices, experiences and models nationally, regionally and internationally.

In the search for answers to the myriad inter-related, global problems faced by nation states, the concept of social integration and how to achieve it needed to occupy a central position. Given this background, the expert group assessed current policies, practices and lessons learned and set forth the recommendations which follow.

Recommendations

In search for answers to the myriad inter-related, global problems faced by nation states, the concept of social integration and how to achieve it needed to occupy a central position. Given this background, the expert group assessed current policies, practices and lessons learned and set forth the recommendations that follow.

- 1 Social integration has been recognized as a necessary precondition for creating a safe, stable and just society for all – an inclusive society, which is crucial for enabling sustainable social and economic development. Many societies are struggling with persistent poverty and inequality resulting in exclusion, in spite of their commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development (1995) towards poverty eradication, social integration and full employment. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action recognized social integration as one of the pillars of social development; however implementation is lagging behind. Member States should recommit themselves to social integration and social inclusion as a fundamental principle, process and objective of both social and economic development.
- 2 Social exclusion is a threat to national and international human security; is an impediment to meeting key development goals and targets; and a violation of human rights. Social exclusion is also an obstacle to the social and economic participation of citizens.
- 3 Social inclusion requires respect for and recognition of the identities and contributions of all social groups and individuals regardless of their backgrounds, and providing equal opportunities for all. Social inclusion is a positive driver of social transformation and change. Social inclusion should be not only a mechanism for integration into existing norms and structures, but an opportunity for greater diversity and well-being which ultimately enriches social and economic life and leads to a more equitable and representative society.
- 4 Participation goes beyond mere representation and consultation to embrace active voices in decision-making, and create an environment conducive to equal partnership and shared ownership among all social actors, in particular groups and individuals who are marginalized, excluded or disadvantaged. Participation fosters collaboration and promotes consensus building and solidarity.
- 5 Inclusion, participation and justice are inter-related and the core principles of social integration. Social integration should be assessed by its impact on equitable development outcomes and social justice.
- 6 The multidimensionality of social integration, encompassing social, economic, political, and cultural aspects necessitates a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of States' priorities, making social integration an over-arching goal of all policies. Member States should explicitly articulate social integration in their political vision and be capable of incorporating its dimensions in their development plans and policies. Social development and inclusion should be a key policy goal on an equal footing with economic development goals and targets.

- 7 Commitments made in the Millennium Declaration (2000) subsumed social integration in their synthesis of peace, security, development, and human rights. However, the Millennium Development Goals have not explicitly recognized social integration as a goal. Additional goals and/or targets, such as the inclusion of people with disabilities; social protection; income inequalities; and the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants, should be effectively addressed. Governments are encouraged to review international and national goals and targets to be achieved beyond 2015 in order to ensure the broadest participation of all groups in society, recognising the benefits of social integration.
- 8 Member States should review existing laws, policies and mechanisms, and amend them to ensure non-discrimination. Comprehensive anti-discrimination laws, policies and institutional mechanisms should be created or strengthened based on the respect for human rights, dignity and freedom.
- 9 Discriminatory beliefs and practices, stereotyping and stigma should be combated through all means, including public education, mass media, awareness raising and capacity-building both in the state mechanism and within the civil society.
- 10 The design and implementation of social integration policies face a number of challenges. These include competition for financial resources; an ascendancy of economic policy goals; coordination of multiple national and international actors; institutional capacity; and development of sustainable alliances and partnerships that support social inclusion policies which result in a shared ownership of both process and outcome. Member States are encouraged to make all policy and planning processes inclusive and participatory, ensuring active and consistent engagement of communities and social groups, in particular those who are marginalized.
- 11 Governments are urged to formulate time-bound national strategies and targets towards the goals of social integration and inclusion. The entire planning process should be holistic, involving active participation of all stakeholders at each stage, ensuring their perspectives and inputs are duly incorporated. Ensuring the budgetary process is participatory, inclusive and responsive to the needs and concerns of excluded individuals and groups, is crucial to enhance transparency and accountability.
- 12 Monitoring and evaluation are critical components in creating ownership and building trust among stakeholders. Institutions and mechanisms for people's active participation should be put in place to ensure transparent and accountable monitoring and evaluation. This includes the development of more effective and participatory monitoring and data gathering processes that identify forms and drivers of exclusion. Such processes, using a broad range of indicators, especially enhanced qualitative indicators, could lead to greater identification and monitoring of individuals and communities vulnerable to exclusion. This ultimately requires institutional strengthening and greater capacity to develop inclusive policy and monitor outcomes.
- 13 Governments and the United Nations system are urged to develop qualitative and quantitative indicators on social inclusion, and incorporate them into national and regional human development reports.
- 14 Member States should ensure the right to information including setting up mechanisms to ensure timely access and redress. Qualitative and quantitative data with necessary

disaggregated information should be made available in order to formulate evidence-based policies, strategies and programmes.

- 15 Social policy can be a powerful tool to promote more inclusive societies. Universal policies have proved a progressive instrument in ensuring adequate collective access to social services. However, universalism may ignore structural inequalities based on individual or collective characteristics. In combination with universal policies, targeting may therefore provide an additional tool. Targeted initiatives tailored to the needs and demands of individuals and groups at risk of exclusion can be useful complements to universal programmes, rather than substitutes for them. Such universal policies, combined with specific or targeted policies, need to be flexible to address short-term needs; respond to emerging risks and achieve long-term strategic goals that eliminate exclusion and marginalization.
- 16 Comprehensive social protection policies and practices should be adopted as a tool to achieve social integration. Governments should have in place comprehensive social service provisioning and social protection systems. Key areas for policy include social insurance, strengthening solidarity-based mechanisms as well as social assistance programmes and labour market policies.
- 17 There must be greater coordination of social and economic policies with special concern for the rights of and impact on identified vulnerable groups. This should ultimately result in the progressive integration of communities through greater opportunity for youth, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities, among others. Such strategies should be coordinated across stakeholders, including the targeted communities.
- 18 In order to promote the social integration of women, governments are encouraged to strengthen social services that positively impact on women's development, allow for greater labour force participation and alleviate the care burden.
- 19 Specific efforts need to be made towards the inclusion of youth. To promote the inclusion of youth and contribute to breaking the inter-generational reproduction of poverty, it is fundamentally important to invest in high-quality education and health services, as well as facilitate youth access to the labour market. Innovative practices must be developed with an emphasis on cultural, sporting and educational opportunities and exchange.
- 20 A lack of capacity provides a serious constraint to evidence-based policy development and implementation. Capacity-building needs to include the compilation of good practices; information sharing; developing financial capability; creating a knowledge base and strengthening relationships across local, national, regional and international agencies.
- 21 Capacity of the state, including policy makers and administrative personnel at all levels, should be oriented towards facilitating participation and engagement of all people. The role and capacity of non-governmental and community-based organizations, especially in partnership with government and the private sector, should be encouraged.
- 22 Social integration requires adequate and sustained resource mobilization, including human, financial and organizational resources and adequate resources for preparing local communities to participate in the policy and development processes.
- 23 Member States are encouraged to share practices which demonstrate the mainstreaming of social inclusion principles in both social and economic policy. Good practices and models should be shared at the national, regional and global levels, and adapted or tailored to the

local context through the participatory approach. A number of examples exist such as the Right to Information and Proportional Budgeting in India, the participatory mechanisms in Brazil (i.e., Network Citizen Education - Talher Nacional and appointment of the Special Advisor to the President in the area of social mobilization), the National Social Protection Strategy of Ghana, and the mainstreaming of social inclusion in sectoral policies and poverty reduction strategies in Barbados,

- 24 Member States are urged to implement international frameworks on social development and social integration, and to develop regional frameworks that can serve as a guide in the formulation and implementation of social integration policies/more integrated social policies at the national level. The African Common position on social integration and the social policy framework for Africa, endorsed by the African Heads of States and Governments in February 2009, serves as an example.

Annexes

I. AGENDA

Tuesday, 17 November 2009

8:30-9:00 **Registration**

9:00-9:30 **Opening session**

Welcome and Opening Remarks:

Hon. Stephen Amoanor-Kwao, Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, Government of Ghana

Mr. Daouda Toure, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Ghana

Mr. Jean-Pierre Gonnot, Acting Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

9:30-10:00 **Introductory Session: Objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting and introductions of the participants**

10:00-10:15 **Break**

10:15-12:15 **Session I: Existing policies and practices conducive to social integration (Part I):** Policies toward more equitable distribution, social protection, and policies to promote civic participation (pro-poor policies, conditional cash transfer, social floor, more coordinated economic and social policies, taxation, etc.)

Moderator: **Mr. Ebrahim Rasool**, Member of Parliament of South Africa and Founder of the World for All Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa

Introductory Remarks:

Dr. Stephen Ayidiya, Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Ghana

Mr. Simone Cecchini, Senior Officer, Social Development Division, Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC)

Dr. Shiva Sharma, Executive Director, National Labour Academy, Nepal

Roundtable discussion: Lessons learned from their challenges and opportunities

Guiding questions:

- Among the policies that have been introduced to achieve more equitable distribution, social protection and to promote civic participation, what types of policies or combination of policies have proven most effective at the national and local levels?
- What are the necessary elements or conditions that enabled these policy interventions to be successful and sustainable?
- What are the foci of these interventions, and what additional foci may serve to strengthen similar approaches?
- Bearing in mind that social integration and inclusion are multidimensional, what are trade-offs and/or implementation constraints policy makers should consider?
- What lessons have we learned?

12:30-14:00

Lunch Break

14:00-15:30

Session II: Existing policies and practices conducive to social integration (Part II): Targeted vs. mainstreaming approaches to address the needs and concerns of social groups (youth, older persons, persons with disabilities indigenous peoples, women, children, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrants, etc.)

Moderator: **Dr. Nana Apt**, Professor of Sociology and Dean of Academic Affairs, Ashesi University, Ghana

Introductory Remarks:

Mr. Ha Viet Quan, Deputy Director, P135-2 Coordination Office, the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, Viet Nam

Mr. Nurdin Satarov, HelpAge International, Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Ebenezer Adjetsey-Sorsey, Executive Director, HelpAge Ghana

Ms. Annie Namala, Director, Centre for Programming Inclusion and Equity, India

Roundtable discussion: Lessons learned from their challenges and opportunities

Guiding questions:

- What are the benefits and setbacks of anti-discriminatory policies, including temporary/special measures?
- How to create a synergy between policies pertinent to certain social groups and more broad-based approaches, such as rights-based approach?

15:30-15:45

Break

15:45-17:30

Session III: Discussions on Session I & II

Moderator: **Dr. Katja Hujo**, Research coordinator of UNRISD Social Policy and Development Programme

17:30-18:00

Wrap-up by the Rapporteur of day one

Wednesday, 18 November 2009

9:00-10:30

Session IV: National mechanisms to implement policies, strategies, and practices geared towards social integration and inclusion: What have worked – lessons learned from good practices.

Moderator: **Ms. Annie Namala**, Director, Centre for Programming Inclusion and Equity, India

Introductory Remarks:

Ms. Sadequa Rahim, Policy Officer, Social Welfare Division, African Union

Mr. Hamilton Lashley, Advisor to the Government of Barbados on Social Policy

Roundtable discussion: Lessons learned from their challenges and opportunities

Guiding question:

- What types of institutional mechanisms (focal points, social integration unit, etc.) are more likely to effectively mainstream social integration/inclusion objectives into existing policies and programmes?
- How to coordinate formulation, implementation and monitoring of sectoral policies to promote social integration and inclusion?
- Are there any other ways to ensure the effective implementation of inclusive policies, strategies and practices?

10:30-10:45

Break

10:45-12:30

Session V: Translating social integration/inclusion policies into practice: Inclusive and participatory planning as a potential tool

Moderator: **Dr. Paul Stubbs**, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Economics, Croatia

Introductory Remarks:

Ms. Meiry Andrea Borges David, Special Advisor to the Minister of Social Mobilization, Brazil

Dr. Donovan Storey, Lecturer in Development Planning, University of Queensland, Australia

Roundtable discussion: Lessons learned from their challenges and opportunities

Guiding question:

- How the national and sectoral policy, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes become more inclusive by mainstreaming the needs and concerns of all, in particular those who are traditionally marginalized and/or disadvantaged?
- How can broad-based multi-stakeholder participation be undertaken in a practical and effective manner in the design and implementation of the national development agenda?
- How can monitoring and evaluation move beyond the current framework to capture and analyze the differentiated impacts of the programmes and projects to various populations?

12:30-14:00

Lunch break

14:00-15:30

Session VI: Building capacity to promote social integration and inclusion: What needs to be done for social integration/inclusion policies and strategies to take effect on the grounds? (What is lacking? In which area(s) should we focus?)

Moderator: **Mr. Essam Ali**, Independent Research Consultant

Introductory Remarks:

Dr. Paul Stubbs, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Economics, Croatia

Mr. Ebrahim Rasool, Advisor to the Minister in the Presidency, South Africa

Ms. Dorah Semkwiji, Senior Researcher, Economic and Social Research Foundation, United Republic of Tanzania

Roundtable discussion: Lessons learned from their challenges and opportunities

Guiding Questions

- What impedes the effective implementation of inclusive policies, and how to address these obstacles?
- What are the priority areas where national capacity needs to be strengthened?
- How to strengthen social institutions that promote social integration/inclusion?
- How to strengthen the capacities of national and local government to promote inclusive and participatory processes?
- What are the tools needed to effectively advocate and raise awareness on the promotion of social integration and inclusion (campaign, mass media, set objectives, etc.)?

- How to strengthen national capacity in the area of research and systemic analysis to enable evidence-based policy formulation?

15:30-15:45

Break

15:45-17:30

Session VII: Discussions on Session IV, V and VI

Moderator: Dr. Katja Hujo, Research coordinator of UNRISD Social Policy and Development Programme

17:30-18:00

Wrap-up by the Rapporteur of day two

Thursday, 19 November, 2009

9:00-10:30

Session VIII: Discussion in the working groups

Topics for discussion in the groups

- Policies and practices conducive to social integration
- National mechanisms to implement policies, strategies, and practices geared towards social integration and inclusion:
- Areas for capacity building at national, regional and international levels (i.e., guidelines, compilation of good practices, information sharing, creating a knowledge base, training, etc.)

Preparation of draft recommendations

Working group A

Working group B

10:30-10:45

Break

10:45-12:30

Preparation of draft recommendations

12:30-14:00

Lunch break

14:00-15:30

Session IX: Presentation of the Working Groups by the Rapporteurs

Discussion

15:30-15:45

Break

15:45-16:45

Finalization of draft recommendations

16:45-17:00

Adoption of recommendations by experts

17:00 -17:30

Concluding remarks and closing

17:45

Departure

II. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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III. LIST OF TECHNICAL DOCUMENT

Background Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration by DSPD-DESA■ Inclusive Planning for Social Integration: A Short Note by Syed Zahir Sadeque, Interregional Adviser, DSPD-DESA■ African Common Position on Social Integration by the African Union■ Social Policy Framework for Africa by the African Union■ 2009 Report of the Secretary-General on the Follow-up to the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, UN, A/64/157■ Chairperson's Summary: 47th Session of the Commission for Social Development■ Compilation of existing approaches to capture, analyze and measure the multiple dimensions of Social Inclusion and other related concepts by DSPD-DESA■ Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Social Integration, 8-10 July 2008, Helsinki, Finland by DSPD-DESA■ Final Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration, 10 – 13 September 2007 in Paris by DSPD-DESA■ World Summit for Social Development Copenhagen 1995 , UN
Expert Papers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ National Mechanisms and the Mainstreaming of Social Inclusion in Sectoral Policies and Poverty Reduction Strategies: The Case of Barbados by Hamilton Lashley, Advisor to the Government of Barbados on Social Policy Member of Parliament■ Inclusive Planning as a Tool for Social Integration: Case studies from Asia and the Pacific by Donovan Storey, The University of Queensland, Australia■ Building Capacity to Promote Social Integration and Social Inclusion in the Western Balkans by Dr. Paul Stubbs, Sociologist/Senior Research Fellow, The Institute of Economics, Zagreb, Croatia■ Poverty, Growth and Economic Inclusion in Nepal by Shiva Sharma, Executive Director, National Labour Academy, Kathumandu, Nepal■ Policies and Practices of Promoting Social Inclusion in Brazil by Andréa Borges David, Special

Advisor to the President of the Republic of Brazil in the area of Social Mobilization - Network Citizen Education - Talher Nacional, Brazil

■ [The African Common Position on Social Integration and the Social Policy Framework for Africa](#) by Sadequa Rahim, Policy Officer, Social Welfare Division, Department of Social Affairs, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa - Ethiopia

■ [Review of policies, strategies and practices geared at more equitable distribution, social protection, policies to promote civic participation, pro-poor policies, including conditional cash transfers, social floor, lessons from their strengths and weaknesses](#) by Katja Hujo, UNRISD, Geneva

■ [Challenges and Opportunities Towards Social Integration and Inclusion: The Tanzania Experience](#) by Dora Semkwiji, Assistant Research Fellow, Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF)

■ [Sharing lessons on poverty reduction and development schemes for ethnic minorities in Vietnam](#) by Ha Viet Quan

■ [Lessons learned from Policies to address Caste based Exclusion in India](#) by Annie Namala

■ [Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration: Lessons learned from existing policies and practices](#) by Essam Ali

Statements

■ [Opening remarks by Mr. Jean-Pierre Gonnot, Acting Director, Division for Social Policy and Development](#), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development (UNDESA)

■ [Welcome Address by Hon. Stephen Amoanor Kwao, Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, Ghana](#) at the Opening Ceremony of the Expert Group Meeting

Expert Presentations

■ [Building Capacity to Promote Social Integration and Social Inclusion in the Western Balkans](#) by Dr. Paul Stubbs The Institute of Economics, Zagreb

■ [Programme 135 - Sharing Lessons on Poverty Reduction and Development Schemes for Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam](#) by Ha Viet Quan Deputy Director, P.135 Coordination Office Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs of Vietnam

■ [Constant Crisis Perceptions of vulnerability and social protection in the Kyrgyz Republic](#) by Nurdin Satarov, HelpAge International, Bishkek

■ [Socio-Economic Challenges and Policies to promote Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) by Simone Cecchini Social Development Division Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) United Nations

■ [Inclusive Planning as a Tool for Social Integration: Asia & the Pacific](#) by Donovan Storey, University of Queensland, Australia

■ [Existing Policies and Practices Conducive to Social Integration: Targeted vs Mainstreaming Approaches to Address the Needs and Concerns of Social Groups \(Older Persons In Ghana\)](#) by Ebenezer Adjetey-Sorsey, Executive Director, HelpAge Ghana

■ [Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration: Lessons from India on CBD](#), by Annie Namala, Centre for Social Equity & Inclusion, New Delhi, India

■ [Poverty, Growth and Economic Inclusion in Nepal](#) by Shiva Sharma, Executive Director, National Labour Academy, Kathumandu, Nepal

■ [Building Capacity to Promote Social Integration and Inclusion](#) by Dora Semkwiji, Assistant Research Fellow, Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), Tanzania

■ [Translating social integration/inclusion policies into practice: Social participation in the implementation and social control of public policies - Brazil](#) by Andréa Borges David, Special Advisor to the President of the Republic of Brazil in the area of Social Mobilization - Network Citizen Education - Talher Nacional, Brazil