THE WORLD WE WANT:
LOOKING BEYOND 2015
VOICES FROM INDIA

WADA NA TODO

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FOREWORD

India's role in relation to the MDG effort has a dual significance: one the on hand it is seen as a key contributor to the achievement of specific goals, but on the other – and perhaps more importantly – it is directly responsible for the well-being of over one-third of the world's poor, thus implying an added responsibility to provide both moral and political leadership to the global effort to end poverty.

India has a rich tradition of social and political movements. In the past these efforts have largely been directed towards ensuring the governance accountability towards nationally relevant goals and priorities. However, India's emergence in recent years as a global economic power puts an onus on civil society within to look beyond its geographic boundaries and play a more active role in the global debates on poverty and development. One hopes that this effort will enrich the international development discourse and strengthen the global movement for rights and justice through the experiences and innovations of groups who are directly involved in the struggles and achievements of communities experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

This report is an effort to bring together insights from institutions and networks whose work has been rooted in inter-ventions against systemic poverty and inequality across the Indian sub-continent. While it does not claim to represent or speak on behalf of the poor, we believe that this is a significant first step in ensuring that the debate on the post 2015 agenda is more inclusive of the global south not just in terms of participation but also in terms of generating ideas and content for the new vision of global development.

We trust that these inputs will be of value to the discussions of the High Level Panel and other relevant processes of post 2015 development agenda. We also hope that this effort will inspire many more national and regional groups to articulate their priorities and recommendations – thereby ensuring that the new global agenda is rooted in the lessons and ambi-tions that exist at national and sub-national levels.
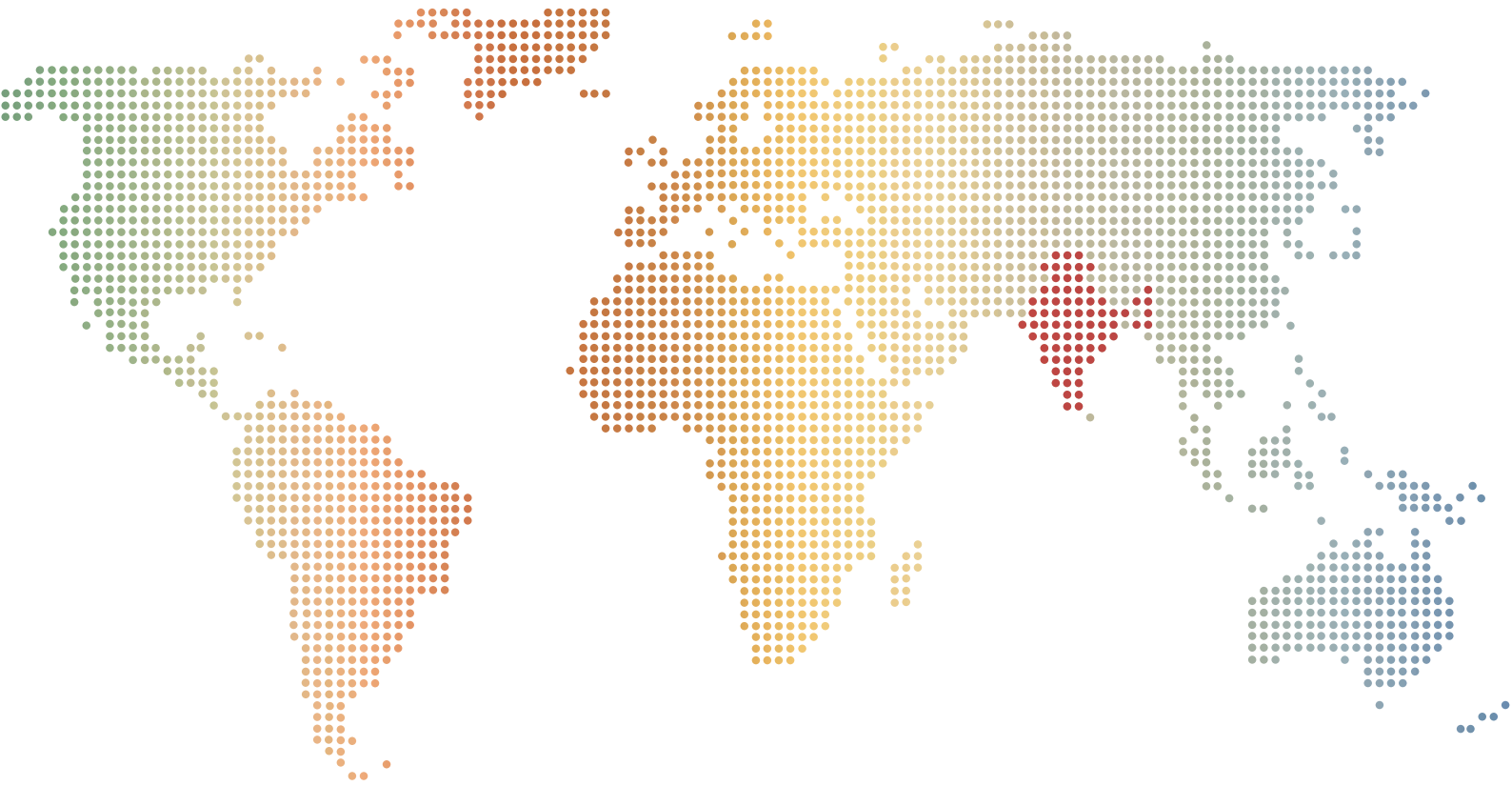
CONTENTS

RENEWING THE PROMISE:

Defining India's Priorities for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015

The global dialogue on the development agenda that could replace the MDG framework after it reaches its deadline in 2015 is quickly gathering momentum. This debate provides an opportunity to engage governments on the lessons available from the efforts undertaken in the last decade, while also reflecting the new challenges faced by vulnerable and excluded communities across the world today. In the context of India, there is a need for a greater dialogue on the process that will define the post 2015 framework; and a proactive, collective effort to frame the priorities that will shape the new development agenda in India and at the global level.

A Time for Change

The Millennium Development Goals, derived from the UN Millennium Declaration, have dominated the global development discourse since its inception in 2003. The framework of eight goals and associated targets has contributed significantly to shaping the policy and program initiatives at the national and regional levels, and has played a crucial role in putting the agenda of poverty at the heart of the development discourse in the last decade. On the other hand, analysts have also pointed to the disadvantages that the target-oriented framework has reinforced. The apparent failure of the MDGs to address the structural causes of poverty and inequality has been a cause for serious concern, particularly in the aftermath of the financial crisis and the resultant economic and political upheavals that we have seen around the world in the last four years.

India has, at the policy level, wholeheartedly embraced the MDG framework in the past decade. The National Development Goals (2005) were adapted to correspond with the global development targets, and the MDGs were also referenced in the National Common Minimum Program (NCMP) — the governance charter of the United Progressive Alliance that formed the government in 2004. India

has in this period been credited with several contributions to the achievement of the MDGs, including the fulfillment of MDG.1 — the aim of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty. India has also been noted for taking initiatives such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and the National Rural Health Mission, which are among the most wide-reaching and ambitious social programs that the world has seen in this period.

Yet, India too has also struggled to deal with more complex issues of inequality and gender equity. According to the OECD report of December 2011, income inequality has doubled in the last 20 years, since the economic reforms were unleashed in 1991, making it the worst performer on this count of all emerging economies. The top 10 percent of wage earners now make 12 times more than the bottom 10 percent; up from a ratio of six in the 1990s. The Country Report on the MDGs (2011) indicates that women's share in wage employment in non-agricultural sector stands at 18.6 percent in 2009 and has increased only by 2 percent in five years. Clearly, the challenge of poverty has not been mitigated and we are facing, instead, with a crisis of rising inequity that calls for a plan of action, which addresses fundamental challenges related to the governance, growth and social protection.

Rethinking the Global Development Framework

A number of strategic initiatives have been launched at the level of the United Nations (UN) to enable wide-reaching consultations on the 'post-2015 agenda,' which includes the creation of a 26-member expert group or **High Level Panel (HLP)** chaired by the President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; the President of Indonesia, SusiloBambangYodhoyono and the Prime Minister of UK, David Cameron. The High Level Panel is expected to advise the UN Secretary General on the possibilities for the post-2015 agenda ahead of the next UN General Assembly and is due to submit its recommendations in the first quarter of 2013.

The UN system will also facilitate **national consultations** in 50+ countries, including India; and will also anchor **thematic consultations** on the key issues of 2009 — including inequalities, growth, governance and environmental sustainability. Public outreach initiatives such as a 'crowd-sourcing' project and a digital conversation on the post 2015 agenda have also been planned. In addition to this, a UN Task Team (UNTT) has also been put in place to coordinate system-wide preparations in over 60 UN entities, agencies and international organizations. The Task Team presented its recommendations to the content and process of the post 2015 agenda through a report — **Realizing the Future We Want for All (May 2012)** — which will serve as the basis for future consultation.

> The report of the Task Team sets out a vision for such an agenda, guided by the three fundamental principles of human rights, equality and sustainability.
>
> It also proposes four interconnected core dimensions that can serve as the basis for the definition of goals and targets: (a) Inclusive social development; (b) Environmental sustainability; (c) Inclusive economic development; (d) Peace and security.
>
> Annual Report of the Secretary General, Sep 2012

Against this backdrop, civil society coalitions working on the MDG agenda have called for a strong consultative process to be put in place to define the post 2015 agenda. The civil society led by **'Montreal Declaration and Plan of Action on Post-2015'** (2012) calls for 'the multilateral process on the post-2015 development agenda must be open, inclusive, transparent, consultative, and take the aspirations of people most affected by poverty and climate change, as expressed by those people themselves, as a starting point.' The Declaration also stresses the importance of linking the environmental sustainability, human rights and anti-poverty agenda, with the objective of producing a 'coherent framework' that links the post-2015 process with the outcomes of the Rio+20 Summit.

India and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Within India, the discourse on the post-2015 agenda is quickly gaining momentum. The debate on the global development framework provides an opportunity to engage governments on the lessons learnt from the implementation of the MDG framework in the last decade, while also reflecting the new challenges faced by vulnerable communities across the world. The debate also provides a window to reinforce the insights and demands that were framed by civil society in relation to the recently concluded consultations on the Twelfth Five Year Plan, and enable a broader public engagement with the next phase of National Development Goals. In addition to this, India's role as a country that hosts one-third of the world's poor on one hand, but one that is also recognized as a global economic power, with growing influence in forums as the BRICS and G20, puts an additional onus on civil society in the country to play a proactive role in shaping the agenda and structure of the debate on the post 2015 agenda.

Priorities for Engagement

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA) has been at the forefront of mobilizing public and political engagement with the Millennium Development Goals in India, and in relation to global initiatives undertaken through alliances, such as the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP). We recognize that India faces the dual challenge of re-

sponding decisively to the internal challenge of poverty and inequality within, while also making a substantive contribution to the contours of the global development agenda. In this context, we believe that the process undertaken to shape the new development agenda must be organized around the following priorities:

1. **Integrating Community Experiences and Expectations**

   Community insights and aspirations must be at the heart of the post 2015 process and will ensure that the operational lessons from the first round of the MDGs — its successes and failures — are effectively integrated into the discourse on the second generation of development goals. The direct involvement of communities in the agenda setting process — with a special focus on women and other socially excluded groups — will help create the basis for a locally relevant and accountable development framework.

2. **Facilitating Civil Society Consensus**

   A widespread dialogue to capture and consolidate expectations of civil society organization with regard to the second round of the MDGs is imperative. Consensus building around key themes and strategies for the post 2015 agenda would enable the greater mobilization of energies, inputs and insights necessary to shape an agenda that is strongly rooted in the principles of human rights and social justice — while also setting the stage for the supporting and monitoring processes that need to be in place once the new development agenda is adopted.

3. **Supporting Critical Research and Analysis**

   The engagement of academic institutions and policy experts located in the global south is a fundamental part of the engagement process. The inputs that shape priorities for the post 2015 agenda must be significantly located in the experience of countries that have struggled with the question of poverty and inequality over the last decade; while also supporting governments to determine the goals and mechanisms that needs to be adopted/adapted at the national and sub-national level after 2015.

4. **Reaching Policy Makers**

   Inputs from the consultations held with community groups, civil society organizations and academicians must form the basis for an active advocacy engagement with the agencies and individuals who are responsible to shape India's policy positions on the post-2015 agenda. This includes engaging relevant ministries and governance institutions, such as the Ministry of External Affairs at one level, and enabling dialogues between communities and elected representatives from local to national levels on the other.

5. **Contributing to Global Advocacy Efforts**

   A strategy to ensure meaningful engagement with relevant inter-governmental negotiations that will be held in the lead up to 2015, monitoring of developments across regional blocs like the African Union and European Union and a plan to engage with positions on the post 2015 agenda emerging from forums such as BRICS, IBSA and the G20 are also some important components of the advocacy process around this agenda.

6. **Enabling Public Engagement**

   In the interest of creating a larger environment for accountability, there is a need to invest in building public engagement with the post 2015 agenda and process beyond traditional development constituencies. Efforts in this direction include creating special initiatives that will inspire the involvement of young people and urban populations — such as the use of online and digital tools for outreach — as well as developing a strong media presence though the engagement of public figures as 'champions' of the new development agenda and the support of relevant agencies to run sustained media campaigns in this regard.

7. **Ensuring Corporate Accountability**

   Mindful of the contradictions in the role of the private sector vis-à-vis the larger development agenda — where there is potential for a strong and stabilizing influence on the social and economic agenda of the country/region on one hand, and scope to generate conflict and deprivation on the other — we believe that there is an urgent need for dialogue on the
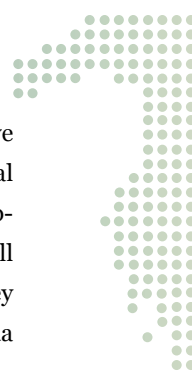
mechanisms for corporate engagement and account-ability to the new development agenda. In the Indian context, some of these conversations are being held in the context of policy discussions around land acquisition, rehabilitation of project affected families and the regulatory framework for extractive industries. The post 2015 agenda however offers an opportunity to look at both safeguards and complementary efforts that can be put in place by the private sector with regard the national development goals and the post 2015 global agenda.

Advocacy Milestones

An immediate effort is required to ensure a proactive dialogue on the new development agenda at the national level and its conversion into inputs that can be contributed to relevant regional and global negotiations that will be held on this agenda across the next three years. Key milestones in the UN process for the post 2015 agenda include:

2012

January 2012-September 2015: 'The Global Conversation Campaign' enables a series of online conversations that bring people across the globe together to focus on poverty and its root causes.

May 2012-June 2013: 50+ Country Consultations and Thematic Consultations

June 2012-December 2014: Process to develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its potential linkages with the post 2015 agenda. An Inter-governmental Working Group formed to lead this effort.

2013

February 2013: The High Level Panel (HLP) formed to advise the UN Secretary General on the post-2015 agenda will produce its report, which will inform intergovernmental negotiations on the framework.

September 2013: High Level Event on the MDGs to be held as part of the 68th UN General Assembly (UNGA).

September 2013: Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group containing a proposal for SDGs for consideration and appropriate action to be submitted to the 68th Session of **UNGA.**

2014

March 2014: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to review challenges and achievements in the implementation of MDGs for women and girls.

July 2014: The Fourth Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) will focus on how development cooperation will feature in the post 2015 agenda. The 2014 ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) will also be held during this time that will assess challenges for meeting the MDGs in 2015 and sustaining development gains in future.

September 2014: UN General Assembly Special Session on the Review of the 1994 ICPD Program of Action.

2014: World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Ten Year Review of Almaty Program of Action (issues relevant to landlocked developing countries and small island developing states).

2015

April 2015: World Conference on Education for All (EFA)

2015: 20th Anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women

2015: High Level Mid-Term Review on the Istanbul Program of Action (special focus on ODA commitments for LDCs)

2015: Ten Year Review of the Mauritius Strategy of the Barbados Program of Action for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States.

Join the conversation on the post 2015 agenda by linking up with the initiatives that are being facilitated by a range of civil society actors across India and beyond!
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SOCIAL PROTECTION: THE POOR MUST BE PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

K. S. GOPAL

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi once said that the world had enough for everyone's need, but not for their greed. He spoke about sustainable living, to spin one's own clothes and to use hand-made and home sourced yarn. The need for autonomous, people-centred livelihood, with people's control over productive economies for sustainable development, is heard in the struggles and protests of the people all over the world. The struggles of people throughout history have been to claim their right to live, and with dignity. Freedom and equality, won through sacrifice and political processes, in order to live with dignity, is being degraded by economic manipulation.

The rulers of the world have succeeded in pulling the wool over people's eyes by the mantra of growth and markets, but this juggernaut of unbridled capitalism has compelled youth all over the world to pour out into the streets or take to guns. Economic growth, development and globalisation as it is being aggressively and globally pursued, has led to land, forests, water, bio-diversity

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Human labour must receive centrality in the economy. Improving its terms of trade along with value recognition leads to labour dignity and satisfaction of active citizenship.

- Social protection must extend to negate the consequences of exclusion and elimination as driven through the markets dominated by the few.

- Autonomy and sustainability of livelihood must be crucial in the new economy wherein every person is enabled to their avail their full capacity.

- The fruition of human values and aesthetics must be celebrated and invested for.

and all natural and productive resources being cornered to provide for the greed of a few. The violence is hidden, as its architect, the market, is being claimed to be both efficient and idealogically neutral. On the ground, however, the structure, motives and dynamics of profit has led to the waste and destruction of all form of productive resources and the shrinking and elimination of people from their competent and competetive based livelihoods.

More budget provisioning, professional implementation or glib talk on sustainable development will no longer meet the expectations of the poor, who must be guaranteed lesser volatility in incomes and greater predictability in their livelihoods. We must strengthen their voices and choices to assert their right over the planet and halt the rapid destruction of all forms of resources. Making life habitable on earth is one of the biggest challenges of our times, and must permeate every thought and activity. Only then can we ensure that everyone will have their basic needs and live with dignity, with the fruits of development being community owned, sustainable and equitable. Human values of love, liberty and fraternity must replace power, greed and control.

In the MDG framework, the onus of and opportunity for livehood is centred on individual improvement. However, we must see livelihoods as a systemic issue arising from the development pathway rather than place the onus on the individual. The strategy now must be to empower and provide for citizens to take charge of their production base so as to improve and hold on to their own modest lives and aspirations. Poverty alleviation strategies and investments have so far showed poor results. With globalization, the lives of the poor are now affected by distant events. According to a World Bank study, while the recent Euro-centered global economic crisis had limited effect of the Indian economy, it negatively impacted ten million livelihoods of poor people in India. The merely poor now plummeted to below poverty levels due to the crisis.

While India has also witnessed unprecedented economic growth, the demand from people's movements and the scope for reaping electoral dividends has led to investments in social protection, which provides for some of their basic needs. India has in place the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, a massive rights and entitlements based rural guarenteed employment scheme. The National Rural Health Mission, the Public Distribution System and the Integrated Child Development Scheme are some of the other social protection measures that the goivernment has provided.

India will soon have the Right to Food legislation. Under this law food is a theoretically available entitlement, but hunger will continue to stalk the needy unless timeliness

is given centrality and attendant measures in governance are put in place. Similarly, the food right must tackle malnutrition, otherwise the demographic dividend will not be achieved.

To ensure reaching to the needy, cash transfer is being adopted as the better way to target the subsidy. This can eliminate the non-poor from taking advantage, while reducing the investment on social protection. However, it is clear that universal access reduces the scope of the most needy and voiceless from being excluded.

With corporate interests getting into social protection deliverance, a disturbing trend is to use social protection to incentivise the behaviour of the poor and the gullible. The focus of the 12th Indian Five Year plan has centrestaged "inclusion". Yet, dig into the plan and financial inclusion is just a bank account in the name of the poor. Social protection must break out of the feudal approach of keeping people begging and then serve them some crumbs and keep them under eternal subjugation. The poor must be partners in progress, not recepients of social protection doles. The challenge to livelihood is lack of opportunties for the poor as productive development partners. This cannot come from teaching value chain analysis, going up its scale or diversification or bank linkage.

What is crucial is to respect and provide for the autonomous growth of communities and not the global village. We must seek social progress and diversity for sustainable growth using renewable energies and non-destructive productive processes. For this we must trigger the enormous innovative capacities of the poor who work with nurture through hard manual work. The joy of being valued as a productive person and reach to one's highest level and capacity must be the right of every citizen. The poor want to be equal citizens in sharing and shaping livelihood opportunities and in that context social protection is the inevitable government approach to to address immediate issues. A good society and ecology will emerge only when the huge and growing disparity between the rich and the poor is ended.

The MDGs emerged to create the global political commitment to deliver a minimal programme for the poor. It must now look at the issues of the masses as a class of capability and work to enhance their ability to serve as contended citizens. Development must be embedded in cultural values of working closely with nature and with spirituality and lead to lives of sharing and caring of all forms of life, and a better world for the citizens of the future.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, enacted in 2005, is India's landmark legislation that enhances livelihood security of the rural poor by providing a legal guarantee for 100 days of work to any adult willing to do public works-related unskilled work. The scheme provides for a statutory minimum wage. A number of people's organizations actively campaigned for this Act. Six years after its inception, while the implementation of the law has been beset by problems, it has brought the 'right to work' at the front stage of the discussion on social protection and livelihood security.

MOVING FROM 'GOOD' TO 'JUST' GOVERNANCE

With inputs from

AMITABH BEHAR

SUBRAT DAS

John Kenneth Galbraith once famously referred to India as a 'functioning anarchy'. How else could you describe the governance of a country which is home to 50 of the world's dollar billionaires, but where close to 50% of the population lives in varying degrees of poverty; where surplus grain rots in government godowns while 46% of its children starve?

India's steps towards governance reform began with the landmark Right to Information Act which was passed in 2005, and is being used by thousands of people daily to demand transparency and accountability in public life, as a tool of governance to demonstrate citizen's empowerment, with people demanding their entitlements and rights.

Laws such as the RTI Act have begun to change the discourse from that of a benevolent government handing out largesse to a rights-based discourse, with people demanding their entitlements under the law, and have served to demonstrate the effectiveness and value of transparent and accountable processes.

According to the The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the true test of "good" governance is the degree to which it delivers on the prom-

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- ■ 'Just' governance should be the cornerstone of governance reform and adequate institutions, capacities and resources need to be allocated to ensure implementation.
- ■ Transparency and accountability, not only in terms of governance systems and processes but to people.
- ■ Participation of the people in a continuous and systematic process of engagement.
- ■ The government must be responsive to the needs of the people.
- ■ Decentralization at all levels including effective decision-making powers right from the bottom to the top.
- ■ The principles of just governance need to apply not just to public institutions but to the private sector, to global governance institutions and to the developed world to ensure a level playing field.

ise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The key question is: are the institutions of governance effectively guaranteeing the right to health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, fair justice and personal security?

Good governance is also about transparency and accountability in policy formulation, implementation and decision making, and citizens who are directly affected need to be part of the process. The inclusion of parents, for example, in the School Management Committees under the recently enacted Right to Education Act, is one such small example where parents, who are crucial stakeholders, are part of the governance of the schools.

Amitabh Behar, Executive Director of the National Foundation for India, and an advocate for effective governance, argues that governance is a process which would ensure that a nascent, procedural democracy is transformed into a substantive democracy. For this to happen, the concept of 'just' governance needs to take precedence over 'good' governance.

The focus of 'good' governance, he says, has been solely on effective utilization of resources, which has, in prac-

tice, resulted in a reduction of resources to deliver basic services of health, education, water and sanitation etc. to the people increasingly via the privatization of these services without adequate regulatory mechanisms. Another crucial aspect is the increasing privatization of natural resources, which impact the livelihoods for the majority of the world's population, especially the marginalized. Both these processes violate the socioeconomic rights of people, a large section of which never participate in the decision-making or management processes.

Subrat Das, Executive Director, Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability, India, agrees when he says "the policy formulation autonomy of governments should not be compromised or reduced in the interests of global finance; policy should be responsive to the disadvantaged sections of population and should promote equity and social justice".

'Just' governance, Behar says, connotes the need for justice for all sections of society and the equal preservation of socio-economic rights of all people, which would also be in tandem with the protection of the planet's natural resources.

In Nayi Basti village in Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, the village residents were not receiving the rations despite holding valid ration cards. With help from RTI activists, 54 of the village residents got together and decided to submit an RTI application, demanding to know why they had not been receiving their rations. When the application was filed, the ration shop dealer pleaded with the villagers to take back the RTI application and promising to provide their rations in the future. The villagers refused to do this and eventually the Sub Divisional Magistrate was compelled to take action and dismiss the corrupt official, who had been diverting the rations to the black market. The village members then selected a suitable people to dispense the rations in an open meeting. The village residents today get kerosene and rations at the right time and for a reasonable price.

3

WOMEN AT THE CENTRE STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Compiled by

JAGORI

A critique of the MDGs has been that it is premised on a neoliberal approach to development that privileges economic growth, and does not sufficiently address human development. The MDGs do not adequately reflect inequitable distribution of resources, issues of militarism and fundamentalism that impede realisation of human rights and gender equality agendas and processes. Data compiled on national and global averages, does not highlight disparities at the sub-national and local levels in the MDG figures. Realities of specific population groups—minorities, Dalits, tribals and others — discriminated on the basis of their ethnicity, identity, gender, sexuality, disability and geography are thus not adequately captured in national and MDG statistics.

Secondly, the issue of violence against women has been an obvious missing target in the MDGs so far. Recent data indicate a worrying trend of growing lack of safety and security for women. The data from the National Crime Records Bureau shows that between 1953 and 2011, the incidence of rape rose by 873 per cent, or three times faster than all cognisable crimes put together, and three-and-a-

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- Comprehensive legislative reforms that are gender sensitive and rights based, addressing discriminatory and exclusionary practices.

- A macroeconomic policy framework that is gender sensitive and ensures that sufficient, productive and decent employment is created to absorb new entrants into the labour force.

- A world free of all forms of violence and harassment against girls and women, where justice can be accessed and women claim their dignity and bodily integrity.

half times faster than murder. In India a woman is raped every 22 minutes, and a bride burnt for dowry every 58 minutes. Further the issue is exacerbated by the adverse child sex ratio indicative of a clear bias against the girl child. The elimination of violence against women and girls is key to the achievement of gender equality, peace and development, and thus deserves to be a clear goal of the MDGs going ahead. The government, as part of its obligations under CEDAW, must ensure that deliberate targeted measures are put into place to secure substantive equality for diverse communities of women and girls. Thirdly, while the MDGs have adopted women's representation in politics as a clear target, women continue to be underrepresented as political leaders and elected officials. In India, women occupy less than 8% of cabinet positions, 9% of seats in High Courts and the Supreme Court and 12% of posts of administrators and managers. Political will is needed across the political spectrum to ensure enabling mechanisms to enhance women's voice and political participation at national levels and pass the Women's Reservation Bill, providing for one-third reservation to women in State legislatures and in Parliament, still pending in the lower house of Parliament.

Fourthly, the total proportion of women in any kind of paid work is no more than 15%, as revealed in the 66th round of the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). Women are underemployed, largely in the informal sector, in unpaid labour and have lesser opportunities. Close to 44% of women in both urban and rural areas are unpaid family workers as compared to about 14% of men. There is need for productive work, land reforms secure livelihoods for women and increased ownership of land, assets and control over resources. Investments are also needed into accessible and good quality infrastructure and appropriate technology, essential and care services, to reduce the unpaid care work disproportionately undertaken by women and girls.

The hard-won gains on gender equality have been slow in coming. Recent analysis of state-wise data of gender differentiated information in India on areas of women's survival, freedoms and visibility clearly indicate wide gaps and uneven implementation A gender analysis of the national budget too points out to the biggest share of the pie being taken up by 'gender neutral' expenditures. Taxation policies too have debilitating impacts on women, as the increase in indirect taxes and the decline

- Increase work participation rates of women especially in the organised sector and increased ownership of assets and control over resources.

- Social security policies that ensure protection of informal work, effective compliance with legislation on minimum wage and anti-discrimination, state support for smallholder agricultural and landless women farmers, vendors, home based workers, domestic workers and labourers.

- Widely accessible and good quality basic services and infrastructure that ensures women's access to education, health, food, housing and social security.

- Investing into women's leadership and supporting capacity of women's organizations and collectives and ensuring that 50% of development funds be spent specifically for women, with special focus on the marginalized.

- Ensuring that the specific concerns of disadvantaged women, women in difficult situations, single women, LGBT community, women with disabilities, women sex workers, migrants, displaced and evicted women, women at risk and in conflict areas, marginalized groups (Muslim, transgender, SC, ST community) are addressed.

- Undertake social and gender audits of all state schemes to ensure they do not reinforce patriarchy or push women into further deprivation.
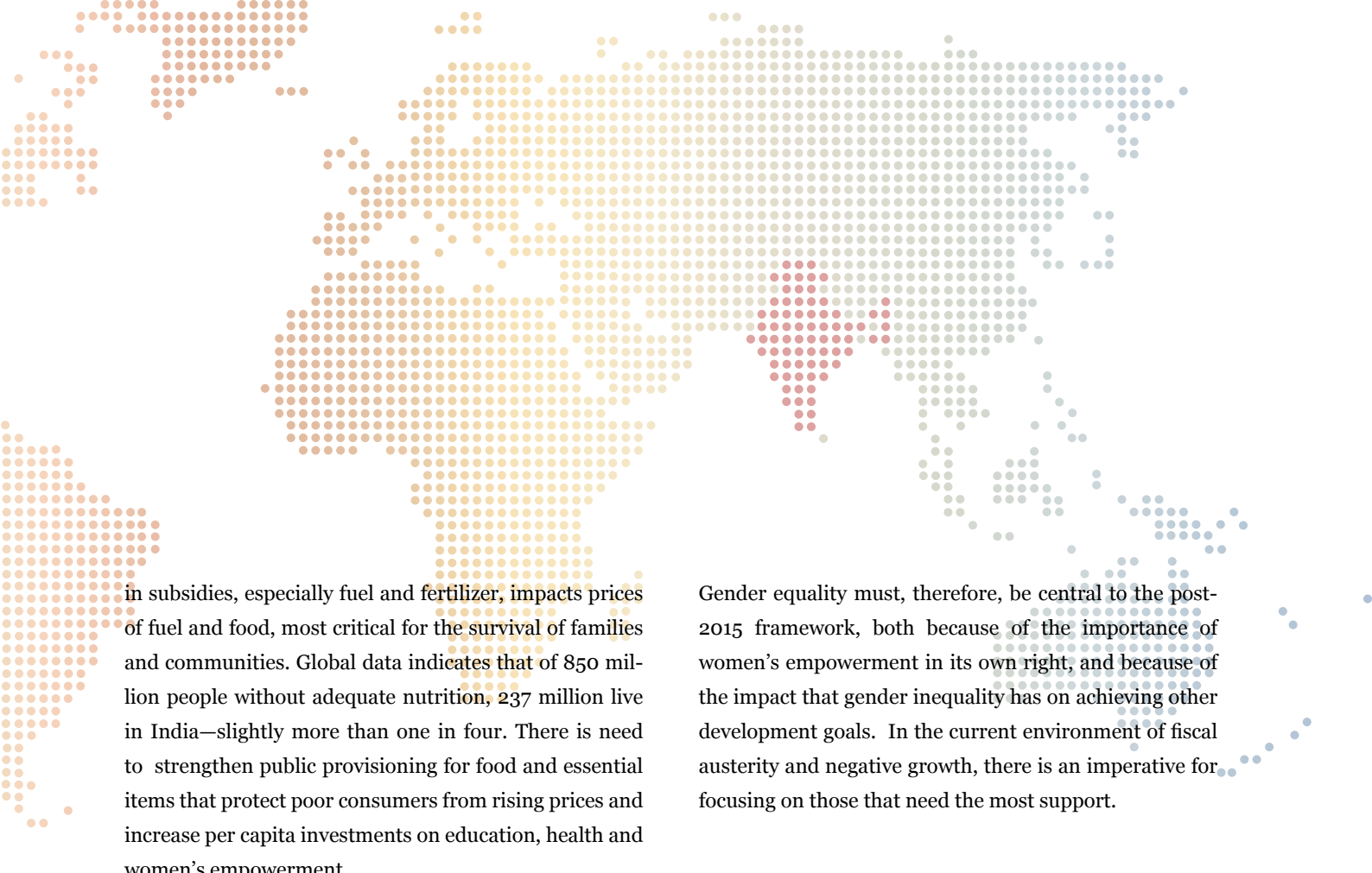
in subsidies, especially fuel and fertilizer, impacts prices of fuel and food, most critical for the survival of families and communities. Global data indicates that of 850 million people without adequate nutrition, 237 million live in India—slightly more than one in four. There is need to strengthen public provisioning for food and essential items that protect poor consumers from rising prices and increase per capita investments on education, health and women's empowerment.

Gender equality has long been recognized as both a core human right and a development goal.

Gender equality must, therefore, be central to the post-2015 framework, both because of the importance of women's empowerment in its own right, and because of the impact that gender inequality has on achieving other development goals. In the current environment of fiscal austerity and negative growth, there is an imperative for focusing on those that need the most support.

The passing of the Women's Reservation Bill in the Rajya Sabha, or Upper House of the Indian Parliament on March 9, 2010, was a historic occasion for the millions of women in India who have been fighting for increased representation in the State Legislatures and Parliament. However, the Bill has yet to be passed in the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of Parliament, and then ratified by at least half of the State Assemblies before becoming an Act with legal status. The Bill was first tabled in 1996, and ensures 33% of reservation to women in Parliament and State legislative bodies on a rotational basis. The Bill seeks to reserve for women 181 of the 543 seats in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) and 1,370 out of a total of 4,109 seats in the 28 State Assemblies.

States such as Manipur and Kerala have experienced rapid progress in improving health and reducing mortality and fertility rates due to increased engagement of women in political life. Within local government institutions such as the panchayats, there have been many success stories where women's panchayats or women-led panchayats have successfully campaigned and taken up pressing issues that impact women such as child marriage, domestic violence and alcoholism.

This article was written using references from the Internet from the following organizations and individuals: UNIFEM and UNDP, (2009); Barton, (2005); Gender and Development Network (July 2012); United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (October 2012); Hendra, UN Women (October 2012); UN System Task Team on the post 2015 (May 2012); UN Women and NCW, India (March 2012); Dr. Jayati Ghosh (2012), Jagori notes,   Planning Commission – XIIth Plan, and recomendations from the national consultation on women in December 2011, organized by Women Power Connect, Jagori, Planning Commission, and Wada Na Todo Abhiyan.

4

INDIA'S DISAPPEARING DAUGHTERS

With inputs from

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, INDIA

The statistics only confirm that whether before or after birth, millions of girls in India are unwanted and considered a burden – a result of beliefs and attitudes that consider a son indispensible, a must and see the daughter as a liability. Social norms and customs such as the son carrying forward the family name, business, inheriting property, providing old age support and the practice of dowry – which benefits sons, but on the other hand perpetuates daughter aversion – still prevail. These beliefs have their impact in every aspect of a girl's life, whether she is in school, at work or at home.

There has been an alarming and consistent decline in the child sex ratio (CSR)[1] for over 30 years. Figures from the 2011 Census in India reveal that in the population of children between the ages of 0 and 6, there are only 914 girls for every 1000 boys. Since 1981, the CSR has been consistently declining, from 962 in 1981 to an alarming 914 in 2011. Disconcertingly, the CSR has fallen in 27 States and Union territories, the lowest being in Haryana. The issue is more severe in urban areas (902) than rural (914), despite higher rates of education and economic progress. However, the worrying trend from the Census is that the ratio in rural areas is now falling more rapidly than in urban areas; signaling the movement of the practice to rural and tribal areas as well.

1. Internationally, the child sex ratio is calculated as boys for every 100 girls in 0-6 years age group while in India it is girls for every 1000 boys in the 0-6 years age group. Similarly, the sex ratio at birth too internationally is calculated as boys born for every 100 girls born. In this write-up, the reference to falling or declining sex ratio is with regard to the Indian definition and thus refers to an adverse sex ratio.

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Strengthen implementation of laws concerning women and girls and enact laws that tackle their subordination which gives rise to practices such as gender-biased sex selection.

- Intensify monitoring of the implementation of the PCPNDT Act. Constitute and build capacities of State and district level Act implementing bodies to strengthen implementation of the Act.

- Strengthen civil registration so that accurate birth data is more readily available across districts to enable monitoring of trends in sex ratio at birth.

- Plan, monitor and implement gender-sensitive communications plans aimed at various stakeholders to reverse son preference.

- Invest in the ability of girls to be self-reliant, and in their empowerment including asset ownership, skill building, credit availability, safety and security among others.

The sex ratio at birth (SRB; girls born for every 1000 boys born) is a better indicator of the extent of practice of gender-biased sex selection as it reflects the influence of factors that could have come into play before birth. It is not influenced by post-birth mortality or gender related discrimination and neglect after birth, which the CSR captures. The SRB from Sample Registration System (2008-10) stands at 905. However, the implied SRB, calculated on the basis of most recent Census 2011 data for 0-6 years population, is 919[2], still below the normal SRB, which needs to be above 950, which is considered the international norm. It is important to note the variations in the implied SRB across States, especially when compared to the CSR. 13 out of 29 States have a normal SRB. States in the north-western region such as Punjab, Haryana Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir have SRB lower than 900. In most of the country CSR is lower than SRB which means that pre-birth discrimination is prominent in parts of the country but post-birth discrimination (lower child sex ratios) appears almost universal, pointing to the growing unwantedness or aversion of daughters before or after birth, subsequently reflected in the continued subordination of women.

According to UNFPA[3], in 2010, missing girls are estimated to be almost 39 million in number, and they represent 7.6% of women aged less than 20 years in affected countries such as India, China, Vietnam, among others. Precise data is missing to estimate the exact contribution of pre-natal sex selection to this total, but current SRB and mortality levels suggest that a vast majority of these missing girls were in fact never born. In India, 13 million girls can be estimated as missing from the female population (<20 years) born since 1990. In addition to gender-biased sex selection, the contribution of excess mortality to this gap is also considerable. Even if the sex ratio at birth does stabilize by 2020, there are likely to be 10% more men than women in India by 2050.

This female deficit has already begun to have its impact as seen from higher incidences of bride trafficking, and increasing violence against women in some parts of the

■ Invest in research on socio-cultural, economic and structural factors perpetuating daughter aversion to design appropriate policy measures and programmatic interventions

■ Reposition girl child incentive schemes to base them on an understanding of people's perception of incentives, while ensuring that these and other women related schemes address factors responsible for discrimination and daughter aversion.

country, with possible tighter controls over their mobility and choices.

A comprehensive approach is required to tackle the issue and the discrimination that underlies it, ranging from monitoring of implementation of the law to integrating the issue into other government schemes and programmes and tackling factors leading to daughter aversion and gender discrimination in general.

While the PCPNDT Act prohibits sex selection for non-medical purposes, its implementation has not been fully effective. There is an urgent need to intensely monitor and review the implementation of the Act and put in place structures at the State level to do so. Parallel sensitization of the issue must take place at all levels of society on a war footing, ranging from working with the judiciary and the law implementing authorities, to medical professional bodies for self-regulation.

The issue of sex selection also needs to be centre-staged in existing government schemes and programmes such as the National Rural Health Mission and the Integrated Child Development Scheme, and government functionaries who deal with the community on a regular basis need to be involved in advocating around the issue. A number of girl child incentive schemes that various State governments have in place need to be repositioned to better address the factors leading to the devaluation of girls such as investment in skill-building and financial independence.

2. District level estimates of fertility and implied sex ratio at birth in India, Sanjay Kumar, K.M. Sathyanarayana, August 18, 2012 vol. xlvii No 33, Economic & Political Weekly

3. Sex Imbalances at Birth: Current trends, consequences and policy implications, UNFPA, Asia-Pacific Regional Office, August 2012

A multi-pronged effort needs to be made to educate people at all levels of society on the issue and to start the process of attitudinal change. Self-help groups, local government organizations, schools, colleges and youth groups are all important groups that can be involved with changing social norms that fuel discrimination against girls and women.

Addressing gender discrimination at all levels is at the core of the efforts that need to be made to tackle the issue of sex selection in India, so that we move towards being a society where all people are treated equally, and women are empowered to be citizens in their own right.

The Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, PCPNDT Act was first passed in 1994 and amended in 2003. It prevents the misuse of medical technology for the purposes of selecting the sex of the foetus before conception or prior to birth. It is the misuse of such technology that is seen to be one of the primary reasons for the dwindling number of girls born as compared to boys.

PROTECT OUR FUTURE, OUR CHILDREN

With inputs from

SHIREEN VAKIL MILLER

RENI JACOB

ALLIANCE FOR RIGHTS TO ECCD

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children," said Nelson Mandela.

Where is the justice in our world when the quality of a child's life, the opportunities she will get, or even survival itself, depends on which part of the world she is born, and into which household? Some children are born into families that have 50, 100, or even 200 times the resources available to the poorest children. While life has undoubtedly improved for some of India's children, for many it has not, and for some, it has arguably even got worse. So while some children India may be born in world-class medical hospitals, others are born under flyovers barely a few kilometres away. No wonder then that for many children, this first hour of life is the most dangerous. Of the 1.7 million child deaths that still occur every year in India, almost half of them are in the newborn period, in the first 28 days of life.

So what do children want?

To not go to sleep hungry

To live in a safe environment and not be subjected to violence or abuse or discrimination in any form.

To be able to go to school with trained teachers who will help them learn and be safe while in school.

To get an education that will give them the skills they require to lead a productive and happy life

To have access to health care when they are ill.

To be able to play and have access to leisure.

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Protect and promote the rights and needs of all children, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized.

- Address the concerns expressed by children and youth, including equal access to quality education, opportunities for employment and freedom from violence.

- Provide special care and attention to children during civil strife and natural disasters.

- Provide adequate budgets for children in health, nutrition, education and protection.

- End child labour and early marriage and provide child protection to the ones most in need.

- No child must die due to preventable causes; adequate nourishment and health care must be universalized.

- Introduce a law to support the Rights of the Young Child from conception to six years, and implement it effectively within a stated time.

- Strengthen the mechanisms to hold national governments accountable for protecting children and ensuring their needs are met.
- Include fundamental reforms to public institutions responsible for children, the distribution of public resources and the sustainability of national revenues.
- Strengthen community participation in planning and monitoring of services for children.

The world beyond 2015 must ensure that every child has the right to survival, the very first of all rights, and has the healthcare, nutrition, and education they require in the crucial early childhood period, from conception up to the age of six must be supported by providing and enabling support structures that are provided by many caregivers in this stage of a child's life, from the mother to institutional caregivers.

All children should be in school and not in labour or work. While India, and the world, has made considerable strides in securing access to education, issues of quality still loom large, with high rates of dropouts and children completing a cycle of primary schooling without even the basic levels of literacy and arithmetic skills required. One in five children drop out before they complete grade 5 and marginalised groups of children such as child la-

bourers, migrant children, and children affected by conflict are either the most excluded from formal education systems. When they are a part of the formal system, they are often the worst performers. Here again, while the average dropout rate is 52%, the dropout rate of children form Scheduled Tribes is 75%. 12.6 million children are still engaged in child labour and are not in school. Millions have had their education disrupted by disasters and conflict. 8 million children still don't attend school at all. Globally, 42% of the out-of-school children live in conflict-affected countries such as India.

Adequate resources need to be allocated for services for children. India spends less than 5% of its total budget on children. This cannot continue if we are indeed to make any substantial difference to their lives. Laws need to be consistent in order to provide an enabling environment. No two laws related to children define the child, the protagonist of all child rights related legislations, the same way. Under some specific legislation, such as the Juvenile Justice Act, a child is defined as being less than 18 years of age, but in others, such as the right to Education, a child is defined as being less than 14 years of age.

India, unlike many countries, is a young country with 400 million children. They are the future. Any post 2015 framework must then be essentially grounded on agreements of what will benefit children and youth the most; in particular addressing what they need to thrive and become active citizens in the 21st century. With the majority of poor people now living in middle-income countries, it is crucial that those focused on development and child

well being address the inequalities within these countries. The post 2015 framework should consist of goals that enshrine equality and deliberately seek to improve the life chances and well being of the poorest and most vulnerable. The framework must be the outcome of a process whereby children and youth participate and are consulted on the next generation of development goals and their impact on their lives. The rights and needs of all children, particularly the most vulnerable, should be at the centre of whatever framework follows and builds on the MDGs.

"Whenever I would see other children going to school I would also feel like going to school, but couldn't do anything. I am a girl and I cannot dream of studying," says 15-year-old Sameena Begum, who lives in the Sarvar Nagar slum, Hyderabad. Born in a family of 5 sisters, Sameena has had the responsibility of staying at home to take care of her younger siblings. "My father had no regular income so my mother also made me work as a domestic worker", says Sameena, who was identified during a survey conducted for out-of-school children among the excluded communities. The team from Save the Children counselled her on the importance of education but she was worried that her family would lose her income. MAHITA, a local NGO, supported her to complete her education through the distance education mode, conducted by the State's Open School Society (Andhra Pradesh Open School Society). Ghawaah Weekly Newspaper sponsored her school fees. Sameena has now cleared her senior school certificate examinations and is on her way to college. "Today I explain to all the girls of my locality that they can also study", says Sameena.

6
AT THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM—
WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

With inputs from

AYAN BISWAS

Benjamin Franklin once said "When the well is dry, we know the worth of water". Unless we take steps to sustain and manage our drinking water sources, India is fast heading towards a crisis of untold proportions. Lack of safe drinking water, coupled with inadequate sanitation facilities, leads to poor health and has an adverse impact, especially for women, on all aspects of life, ranging from birth to adolescence to adulthood. Without safe drinking water, a child cannot absorb nutrients from the food she eats, which leads to a weakened immune system, susceptibility to disease and poor health. Diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, respiratory infections, skin and eye infections are all diseases that beset her. When she becomes a teenager, she drops out of school as she has no functional toilet with running water to practice menstrual hygiene and when she is about to be a mother her immune system is so weakened that she gives birth to an underweight, malnourished child. And the cycle continues. The costs of death, hygiene related illnesses, reduced productivity and reduced tourism revenues as a result of inadequate sanitation facilities was estimated by a World Bank Study to be 6.4% of the GDP, not to mention the social costs of the issue.

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- **Improved accountability:**

  Establish access to water and sanitation as a legal entitlement, providing a basis for individuals and groups to hold governments and other stakeholders accountable for realizing the right.

- **Focus on vulnerable and marginalised groups:**

  (Prioritize access to basic water and sanitation services to the most marginalized groups of people.

- **Increased participation in decision-making:**

  Facilitate genuine participation of communities in decision making on water and sanitation.

Access to piped sources of water and sanitation facilities continues to be a challenge, especially in rural areas and underserved urban slums, especially for the poor and marginalized groups such as SCs, STs and the poor. Women, especially, still have to travel a distance from their homes to a common water supply source in their village in order to collect water for daily tasks. High levels of arsenic, salinity, fluoride and chemicals, industrial effluents and municipal waste have rendered groundwater undrinkable.

Community ownership and participation, and people-centred and participatory approaches are at the heart of the matter to ensure equitable access and quality in water and sanitation services. Ayan Biswas, from Arghyam, speaks about the need to engage all members of the community in every aspect of planning the water and sanitation facilities. He says: "Involving the community in every part of the project cycle to inculcate a sense of ownership and improve effectiveness of service delivery, focussing on inclusion and sustainability aspects, ensures the last-mile delivery keeping the local context in mind."

The National Family Health Survey results show that in 2008-09, over 91% of households had access to an improved source of water, an increase from 68.2% in 1992-1993. Compared to 45.2 per cent of total non-SCs/STs households having drinking water facility within the premises, only 27 per cent of the SCs and 15.2 per cent STs have this facility within the premises. Differences persist in sanitation coverage vis-à-vis other household categories in comparison with SCs/STs. The latest Census showed that while 63.2% of the population has tele-

- **Individual and community empowerment:** Strengthen individual and community struggles for access to basic services.

- **Fix systemic issues** Implement better governance structures and decentralised project planning.

visions and 52.3% have cell phones, only half of India's population has toilets. This means that one in two people defecate in the open.

While there are many government programmes and service provisions in place, people still lack the knowledge and empowerment to access these programmes. Availability, sustainability of multiple sources such as water conservation and rainwater harvesting and improving quality are the three focus areas of the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). But how many communities actually know and demand the provision that the States/UTs are required to earmark and utilize at least 25% of the allocated funds for drinking water supply to the habitations dominated by SCs and at least 10% for the ST dominated habitations? How many communities know and demand that Gram Panchayats monitor water quality? Ayan Biswas from Arghyam speaks about the need to involve Community participation and behavioral change are vital to ensure the success of the government's policies and programmes to ensure safe drinking water and sanitation to all.

A community effort

During Participatory Rural Appraisal exercises carried out by Gramalaya, an NGO in Tamil Nadu, working with UNICEF and the Government, the community in Thally block of Krishnagiri District itself mapped out open defecation places and worked out the diseases for the past two years. This helped them develop a better understanding of the link between unsanitary practices and diseases. As a result, a total of 200 household toilets were constructed in the target villages. School and anganwadi toilets were renovated for use by the school children. AWASH – Association for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene committees were formed in the target villages to provide awareness and training to the communities. Overall there has been a significant increase in awareness among community members on sanitation and hygiene issues and a trained resource pool of master masons is available to support toilet construction.

Additional inputs were provided by Richard Mahapatra, Senior Editor, Down to Earth Magazine.

7

TOWARDS A SYSTEM FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

With inputs from

**MEMBERS OF THE JAN SWASTHYA ABHIYAN**

The Taj Mahal, India's premier tourist attraction, is ironically also the world's most famous monument to maternal mortality. Mumtaz Mahal, wife of Emperor Shah Jahan, died during child birth in 1631. The Taj Mahal was built in her memory.

Sixty five years after Independence, India is being touted worldwide as a medical tourism destination, and yet as a nation has been unable to ensure that its mothers and children are safe. One out of every four mothers who die worldwide due to maternal deaths is from India, a higher rate than its neighbouring countries Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. India contributes to more than 20 per cent of the child deaths in the world, and a staggering 1.83 million children die annually before completing their fifth birthday – most of them due to preventable causes. Maternal and child deaths are closely related, and access to quality reproductive care and early childhood care is crucial. Low maternal nutrition and adolescent anemia are two important causes of low birth weights and maternal and neonatal deaths. Respiratory infections, diarrhea, other infectious and parasitic diseases and malaria account for about half of under-five deaths in India.

Good quality water, sanitation and hygiene practices and better nutrition, combined with practices such as exclusive breastfeeding for children up to six months, immunization and micro-nutrient intakes such as Vitamin A

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Increase public health expenditure to 3% of GDP by the end of the 12th Five Year Plan.

- Guarantee that all essential medicines would be regularly supplied and made freely available in all public health facilities.

- Abolish user fees and provide basic public health services free of charge; publicize and ensure delivery of guaranteed health services.

- Implement a public-centred human resource policy in the health sector.

- Declare zero tolerance for corruption and ensure transparency, accountability and grievance redressal at all levels in the public health system.

- Community members, community based groups and civil society organizations along with elected representatives and public health providers at various levels must be involved in the planning and monitoring of the public health system.
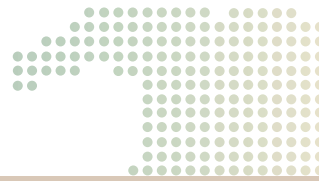
and Zinc, are low cost preventive measures that will easily prevent such deaths. For pregnant mothers, antenatal care services and skilled delivery, emergency obstetric and post partum care, contraception and family planning need improvement. Early marriage must be prevented in order to control maternal deaths.

While specific policy measures are required to deal with the health needs of various major sections, including the specific health issues of women and children, there is also an urgent need to address the entire spectrum of the social determinants of health, including nutrition and food security, clean water supply and sanitation, and housing and environmental conditions.

However, while the National Rural Health Mission has focused attention on institutional deliveries, tackling emergencies at the time of delivery and curbing early neonatal deaths, unless the entire health services system is revamped, these initiatives may not bring desired results. India's public expenditure on health as a proportion of GDP is only about 1%, and as a result it has one of the most privatized health systems in the world, with people having to spend out of their own pockets on health.

According to Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, the People's Health Movement in India, health is a fundamental right of the people and equitable health care needs to be available based on people's needs; three pillars are needed in order to develop a universal health care system: significant expansion and strengthening of the public health system; regulation of the private sector in medical care; and accountability of both public and private health systems; unless these pillars are in place, to develop a functioning and responsive health system, there is not much value in monitoring individual goals.

- Enact a National Health Act with focus on right to universal, free public health services, unequivocal public health obligations and health sector wide rights.

- Create a comprehensive framework for urban health care, with public health services as the core.

- Implement universal health care coverage for unorganized and organized sector workers as a key component of universal health care.

- Develop rational treatment protocols and norms for costs of health services; regulate the private medical sector for basic standards, rational care, patient rights and public obligations.

- Introduce comprehensive drug price control; implement rational pharmaceutical and vaccine policies.

- Instead of 'Public Private Partnerships', develop public harnessing and socialization of private medical resources as in case of private doctors working under NHS in the UK.

- Move in a planned manner towards a system for universal health care, learning from examples like Sri Lanka, Brazil and Thailand.

- Address social determinants of health through inter-sectoral coordination and planning.

The Assam Public Health Bill   2010 is a landmark legislation enacted by the State of Assam in India, which provides the right to health as an inclusive right of every citizen. Assam is the first State in the country to enact such a legislation, which makes it mandatory for all hospitals   and nursing homes, government and private, to provide free treatment for the first 24 hours to an emergency patient. Among other things, the Act guarantees people the right to appropriate medicines and the right to effective measures of   prevention, treatment and control of epidemic and endemic diseases.

EDUCATION IN THE POST-2015 ARCHITECTURE

ANJELA TANEJA

This article is based on a National NGO Consultation in the Post 2015 Framework jointly organized by the RTE Forum and UNESCO.

These were the best and the worst of times. The last decade, born as it was amidst the optimistic dawn of the new Millennium, saw an undeniable and massive enhancement in school enrollments, a reduction of child labour, the expansion of school infrastructure, the narrowing of gender gaps in literacy and the overall enhancement of the literacy rate. The Right to Education is finally a legal right in India after a century-long struggle.

However, the last decade has also seen progressive erosion of public schooling, a push for meeting enrollment targets often at the expense of putting in place the perquisites needed for learning and a quest for quick fix solutions instead of adequate investment in improvement of the education system as a whole. While a series of legal and policy measures have been taken to improve the status of education, the status on the ground continues to lag behind the progressive vision of the government, and by some estimates, 16 million children remain out of school. As in 2010-11, the pupil teacher ratio exceeded the legal norm in 40% of schools and 2 in 3 children were enrolled in schools exceeding the legal norms, over half a million in-service teachers were untrained, and almost a third of the schools lacked school libraries. As in 2009-10, 95% schools failed to comply with the full set of school infrastructure norms. Furthermore, the lack of responsive materials and curriculum, localized mechanisms for learning assessment and basic supportive mechanisms

like functional spaces for parental participation and grievance redressal remain problematic. This, in turn translates into a large number of children out of school, especially at upper primary levels and higher. There are also gross disparities - between the rich and poor (7 years of schooling), rural and urban (3 years), gender (1.5 years), different states (5.5 years) and the different social groups.

At the same time, the world has changed over the last decade and new problems require new solutions. Thus, mere attainment of basic literacy is no longer adequate at a time when the digital divide has become an issue of concern worldwide. This needs to receive attention in the upcoming framework.

The world that we seek is one in which all children have opportunities for quality, free, public schooling at least till secondary education and which is followed by spaces for continuing education. It is one where the role of education as a tool for social transformation is recognized and is not reduced to being an instrument for basic literacy.

Attaining this would entail a different system for the post-MDG framework - one that is different both in terms to its approach to the educational endeavour and in terms of the issues that it chooses to focus on.

In terms of process, the new framework should,

- Recognize the imperative of strengthening the public system of education and place the onus of delivery on the State

- Base the process in a rights-based approach that takes into cognizance existing international treaties and conventions, many of which have their own goals, indicators and timelines.

- Have a clear focus on equity and inclusion, especially on forms of inequality that also includes issues other than gender. Class, ethnic background, disability, minority status and occupation and descent-based and other forms of discrimination require corresponding focus. Gender needs to be seen as cross-cutting and not limited to a single goal.

- Be grounded in the indivisibility of rights.

- Look into the interplay of education with the other issues, feeding it into other issue group debates.

In terms of content, the new framework should,

- Recognize the reality of the incompleteness of the existing agenda - both in terms of the Education for All and the MDG goals. Access to even primary education has not been achieved and some of these issues would need to be carried over in the coming period.

- Move from enrollment to retention and completion. It is essential to move towards a norm of schooling till secondary level and the necessity of having lifelong learning.

- Focus on quality. Mandate a universal input package for schools (partly derived from existing covenants), but also space for a more disaggregated and nuanced understanding of the problems faced by country specific categories of marginalized groups within the education system. Recognize the need for enhancing learning, but focus on improving necessary inputs and concentrate on localized teacher assessment, not a global testing architecture.

- Expand the literacy goal to look at a system of continuous learning for all citizens.

- Have categorical focus on professionalization of the teacher profession including training and working conditions.

- Include a systemic target looking at the extent to which accountability and justice systems have been put in place and put in place independent mechanisms for tracking of government progress against national and international commitments. Spaces for parental and community participation in education systems are essential.

- Lay down benchmarks for financing for education both through domestic resources and through ensuring compliance with existing donor targets for aid to education.

The most critical development in India during the last decade was the passage of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. This is the only legislation in the world that places the compulsion on the State, not parents. It combines an element of norm setting of all schools with a clear strong element of positive discrimination, reminiscent of US's Brown vs. Board of Education as it sets aside 25% seats for the marginalized sections in fees charging private schools. This has provided a much needed platform for civil society and communities to demand implementation of the new provisions. The law itself provides for legally mandated structures for parents, communities and civil society to, jointly with teachers, influence the planning, budgeting and agenda setting for India's over 1 million schools through the formation of School Management Committees. Simultaneously, the gap between legal norms and the status of individual schools also creates the prerequisite for civil society to come together into a concerted movement demanding its implementation. Combination of civil society activism, government priority and judicial activism has to lead to an improvement in the educational system.

References for this article were taken from the District Information System for Education (DISE), ASER Report 2012, Working Group report on Education for the 12th Five Year Plan, and the World Inequality Database on Education.

WHEN **YOUTH** STOLE CENTER STAGE — A **DECADE** ON, YET **FOREVER** YOUNG

PRAVAH

COMMUTINY - THE YOUTH COLLECTIVE

'Youth are definitively shaped by the times they live in'.

In the growth story of India, young people are increasingly playing the protagonist's role. India's youth population and the demographic dividend has been getting attention for several years now mainly because it is seen as one of the key sources of future economic growth in India. The youth segment of the population (15-34 age group) is projected to peak at 484.86 million in 2030. This has important implications for the labour market. According to official data, 25% of the world's workers in the next three years would be Indians.

Employment is a concern shared by young people as well. A 2008 study titled "Indian Youth in a Transforming World" by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies reveals that youth identified unemployment and poverty as the two major challenges that they faced and felt the generation and guarantee of employment should be the first priority of the nation.

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Policy making must be geared towards developing psycho-social identity among youth.

- Holistic employability skills for entrepreneurship promotion and enhanced livelihood opportunities must be promoted.

- Serious measures to curb corporal punishment, sexual harassment, honor killings, domestic violence, discrimination and alienation resulting from conflict.

- Food security, access to education and complete health services.

- Investment in learning and leadership spaces for young people to engage in self and social change experiments and advocacy.

This concern is being addressed with huge investments into education as well as vocational training. The Economic Survey has stressed that for "growth to be inclusive". India must create adequate employment opportunities—a call that underlines existing inequality, including urban-rural income disparity, and concern that it may increase as more young people enter the job market. In higher education, large foreign investment and vocational training have received disproportionate attention of policy makers.

Employment opportunities are only one side of the story. To reap the demographic dividend, a key imperative is that those entering the job market are adequately and appropriately skilled, and it is in this context that the issue of employability is critical. There is an urgent need to focus on the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours a person needs to get employment or generate employment through enterprise, stay in work, do their job well and reach their fullest potential. At the core of this engagement is to ensure that young people develop capacities to critique and innovate to develop more sustainable and non-exploitative livelihood options, enterprises and models of growth.

Apart from this economistic lens, sections of youth are also viewed as requiring services that are given today like drug rehabilitation, crime correction, violence mitigation etc. For instance, in the state of Punjab, drug abuse has become a national level issue. Similarly rapes in Haryana and the National Capital Region by young offenders have reached alarming proportions. From this lens, it becomes imperative that youth have access to safe spaces, schools, communities and homes. Measures to curb corporal punishment, sexual harassment, sex selection, honour killings, domestic violence, social exclusion and alienation resulting from conflict need concerted attention.

At a macro level, it is to be noted that every third poor person in the world is an Indian and every third illiterate person is an Indian. Food security, access to education and complete health services become critical for the young of India to become part of the growth story.

Another lens through which society views young people is as fodder and energy givers towards various causes. People wearing this lens have been known to mobilize the young for common causes, like the anti- corruption movement that has, of late, captured the imagination of a large cohort of young people and across many cities in India. Youth energies have also been channelized for destructive causes like sedition and violence. Here, there is a need for enabling young people to have multiple viewing points rather than corralling them into narrow points of view. The approach to solution finding need not only be ideological and emotional, rather society would be

better served if young people were allowed to take a more systemic view and thereby make informed choices of the causes they want to espouse and learn the value of dialogue and conflict resolution. This is illustrated by Rebecca, a young peace educator in Manipur, who sees herself also as a change maker working to address the conflicts that plague her community: "I now realize how important it is to see a situation from different perspectives and above all the need for reconciliation from thoughts like anger, fear... I decided to help my community and people using all the knowledge I have about conflict resolution. I focused mainly on youth groups, helping them to be aware of the crisis our community is going through."

As a step in this direction, a *fourth lens advocates designing interventions that are more youth centric.* Some civil society organizations subscribe to this view and believe that at their particular stage of life young people are engaged deeply in their quest of identity formulation. There is a need to greatly invest in young peoples' psy-

cho-social growth by creating enabling spaces for young people to explore their identity even as they engage in social change experiments and voluntary action with communities. In this journey of self to society they question and act against patriarchy, discrimination across caste, gender, religion and ethnic identities and other human rights violations. Skills learnt in this space will enhance young people's livelihood choices, family engagements and quality of relationships among friends while nourishing common spaces.

The above is not possible without broad stakeholder engagement to input to, and in the implementation of the National Youth Policy and Monitoring of Youth Development Indicators with immediate effect as well as enhancing investment, governance and accountability of organizations working in this field. Needless to say, youth participation and leadership in all of these processes is non-negotiable.

Aajeevika Bureau, a well known NGO based in Udaipur, Rajasthan, working on migrant labour issues found that a large number of their vocationally trained people were not able to hold their own in the Ahmadabad labour market and were returning back in droves. An intervention in collaboration with Pravah and Commutiny, The Youth Collective, is underway, which builds aspiration in tribal youth, nurtures deep self awareness and gets them to place their life goals in a competitive world. The intervention has shown good early results. Thus vocational training needs to become holistic livelihood education, imparted through centres that make the learner own their education through promoting peer-to-peer as well as experiential learning processes.

10

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE AND SAFER CITIES

INDU PRAKASH SINGH

JAGORI

YOUTH FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION (YUVA)

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children," said Nelson Mandela.

Where is the justice in our world when the quality of a child's life, the opportunities she will get, or even survival itself, depends on which part of the world she is born, and into which household? Some children are born into families that have 50, 100, or even 200 times the resources available to the poorest children. While life has undoubtedly improved for some of India's children, for many it has not, and for some, it has arguably even got worse. So while some children India   may be born in world-class medical hospitals, others are born under flyovers barely a few kilometres away. No wonder then that for many children, this first hour of life is the most dangerous. Of the 1.7 million child deaths that still occur every year in India, almost half of them are in the newborn period, in the first 28 days of life.

Exclusion in cities has also taken on newer dimensions; in 2010, a number of street hawkers, pavement dwellers and beggars were evicted from Delhi during the Common-

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Consider the rights and needs of women, children and excluded groups in urban planning and infrastructure development, including service delivery in health, water and sanitation, and education in urban areas.

- Develop solutions to identify and remove the barriers to inclusion that prevent marginalized children and families from using services, and expose them to exploitation.

- Housing tenures must be made secure for the urban poor and a moratorium imposed on evictions.

- Housing needs of homeless residents and urban workers, who are the backbone of all cities, must be addressed immediately.

wealth Games, in a bid to 'clean up' the city and make it presentable for foreign visitors. This move threw a sharp focus on the dichotomy of urban living; on one hand, the glitz of the capital city, and on the other, the underbelly, where people live in subhuman conditions and earn a subsistence living. Indu Prakash Singh, an advocate for the rights of the urban poor, says "it is ironical that the games, which are played to celebrate the humanity and sportsmanship of our citizens, have been used as an excuse to trample on the rights of the poor. Construction workers building the city's infrastructure for the games are housed on construction sites without adequate access to water or sanitation facilities or housing."

Migrants, in particular, are extremely vulnerable due to lack of adequate identification such as ration cards and electoral cards, as they have no access to basic services including water and sanitation, schools, and housing and therefore have to pay a premium for them in the black market. There is a housing deficit of over 27 million houses in urban areas, the majority of which affects people from economically weaker sections and low income groups. In general, migrants are daily wage workers and face insecurity in their workplace, with no compensation

- Plan and implement a national level mechanism to trace the movement of people in search of livelihoods to generate data and facilitate access to basic services.
- Widen the social security net to include the urban poor and migrants.

even for accidents. Since there is no mechanism to trace the mobility of such people at the National or state level, it is even more difficult for the planners of urban centres to meet the needs of the migrants.

In the context of urbanisation and migration post 2015, India will witness a shift in its demographic, with the majority of the population living in urban spaces. The post-2015 framework should explicitly encompass targets and innovative strategies to address the issues of urbanization, migration and the urban poor, with a special focus on the needs of children and women, especially from excluded communities.

Recognizing the need to protect the welfare of migrant workers and those of the unorganized sector, the Maharashtra State Government has established the Domestic Workers Welfare Board and the Construction Workers Welfare Board. The government has also introduced various financial inclusion schemes, which enable migrant workers to open bank accounts. A basic insurance scheme (Janshree Bima Yojna) has also been initiated as a social security measure to provide cover for accidents, children's education, and pension for informal workers. While these are good initiatives to ensure that the State provides for the needs of the unorganized sector, they scattered and not legally binding on the State. There is a crying need for legislation to cater to the needs of the unorganized sector and ensure that they are provided their rights.

Creating safer and more inclusive cities for women in India
By Jagori

The issue of women's safety in cities and urban spaces has come on to the agenda quite centrally in the light of several cases across India which have highlighted the gaps that exist in policing and service delivery, as also the attitude towards women in public spaces. Further, recent crime data also shows not only increase in violence but also increased reporting from cities which were previously considered more women friendly and safe. What constitutes safety? Is it merely freedom from crime and violence? Or does it encompass a wider notion of a right to safety, or right to the city which also ensures the conditions to realise this right. The fear of violence structures women's ability to live, move around and work in the city and is an important barrier to women's participation in city life. Existing research points out that there are several interrelated factors that have an impact on women's access and safety of spaces. Among them is urban design, usage of space, policing and law enforcement, community support networks, social and cultural attitudes. Some research has been conducted in different cities highlighting that women and girls experience physical and sexual violence from strangers and acquaintances – in the form of touching, staring, catcalling, intimidation, stalking and other forms of harassment, as well as rape and other physical assaults. In a 2010 survey conducted by UN Women, Jagori and the Delhi Department of Women and Child Development with 5000 respondents, almost two out of three women reported experiencing sexual harassment two to five times over the previous year. In Mumbai, a study conducted by Akshara with Hindustan Times with 5000 people in 2012 revealed that 95% of the women respondents had faced sexual harassment or assault. In a study carried out by Sakhi and Anveshi in Trivandrum and Kozhikode in 2010, 98% women reported fearing sexual harassment.

The impact of lack of safety affects the poor more severely as girls and women have to often give up, or at least compromise on their right to education or to earn a livelihood because of the lack of safe transport to schools or places of work. In some cases, parents of young girls discontinue school education of their daughters because of the fear of sexual violence on way to the school, especially in the buses.

These findings and the efforts of women's movements around the country have generated a greater awareness and the need to address it in a holistic manner. In practice, strategies addressing women's safety focus on what can be done at the community and local level to increase their safety, and on the responsibilities of the police, city governments and other stakeholders to take action. This has led to several interesting initiatives including community led initiatives, addressing public transport, improved policing, engaging with youth and men and creating better support services for women and girls. We know that there are no easy solutions and quick fixes but that different groups of people need to engage with the issue in order to find a holistic solution. Often when we think of addressing sexual assault or harassment, we think of better policing. While this is very necessary, it is not the only solution. Addressing women's safety involves a range of preventive strategies including working with communities, youth, schools and with local governments to provide better infrastructure and services.

11

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY IN A CLIMATE CHANGING WORLD

DR.(MS) NAFISA GOGA D'SOUZA

It is the phenomenon of Climate Change that, for the first time, brings us to the concept of ecological integrity as an urgent imperative to choose between a sustainable future or impending doom. We have lived beyond the holding capacity of this earth. The use of fossil fuels, hitherto an indicator of the level of wealth in a country, is counter-productive and harmful for the future survival of human beings. Today the world average carbon consumption stands at 4 tons per person per year. The sustainable average is 2 tons per person per year. There is no doubt, therefore, that we are reaching a crisis of monumental proportions if we do not act with the urgency that this situation demands. There are some countries that are far above the sustainable and global average and there are many others who are much below these levels. It stands to reason that we need to arrive at a solution in a context where there is stark inter- and intra-nation inequity.

What is needed is a rethink on the current paradigm of development. We can no longer talk about a model of development that does not work. We now have evidence of a model of development which has not worked. For example, India's current model of development believes that the higher the growth rates, the more the poor in India will benefit. And hence the approach is to intensify the fossil fuel based industrialization process by undertaking huge infrastructure projects and overusing natural resources to serve the aspirations of the growing middle class and the elites. What we are witnessing today is development induced marginalization. What is clear is that growth does not ensure distribution of resources unless the 'marginalized majority' in India and around the globe becomes the centre of decision making processes. Hence, the key question is what should the future of a 'sustainable globe' look like?

New paradigm of development

The key question to be addressed is what is the character of a 'sustainable globe' that we are seeking? Is it possible that within the same globalised world we can have a small section of people, who have the means to live luxuriously at the cost of a sea of people, who can barely survive? The cost of fulfilling the greed of the rich is to deny the means of survival of the poor.

A sustainable development pathway then, seen from the lens of the majority of the population of the globe, would mean in real terms year round food security, decent housing, accessible mass transport, good health services, access to quality education, and access to basic amenities for all to survive with dignity. The goal must not be merely to alleviate poverty but to ensure 'well being', where economic and environmental sustainability are simultaneously ensured. To achieve this would imply that we relook at our development trajectory bottom-up. Basic survival for all is possible even while we pursue a low carbon path to development if we recognize that there are limits to growth. The vision of a low carbon society is an opportunity for us to make development choices that will take us along this path, especially since we have large populations in developing countries which have yet to have access to basic energy.

There are no easy answers especially in a global context where developed countries have indeed consumed more than their fair share of the global commons. The phenomenon of the Climate Crisis has arisen in the first place because of a skewed process of industrialization for exorbitant profit, which has lead to colonization and neo-colonization in search of raw materials all over the globe, thus making it unsustainable for living and putting its future in jeopardy. This model of destructive development has not only been environmentally unsound but also has exacerbated inequity, political and civil unrest
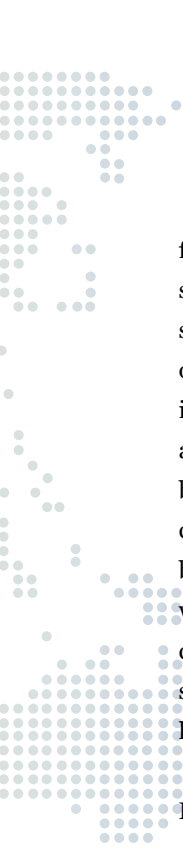
and threatened the sovereignty of nation-states. What we have witnessed across the globe with reference to the relationship between developed and developing countries are the phenomenon that we are witnessing today within most developing nations.

The challenge is to make radical decisions in favour of an increasingly humanizing society, ensuring 'wellness' rather than indiscriminate growth, and forging a technological revolution which at the end of the day would safeguard economic sufficiency, environment soundness, equitable growth, good governance and inter-generational equity at the grassroots. This is the only pathway that will help India to leap-frog the conventional GDP growth model, attend to its basic industrial needs, and attain equitable development that leads to "Gross National Happiness" (GNH).

The imperative of people's voices

This is where the voice of the common man is essential. The voice of the marginalized majority around the globe is unrepresented. The voice of the middle class is mute in a context where the race for career options, often dehumanizing for most, leaves little time for engagement in critical issues that will one day engulf us all to a point of no return. In the ultimate analysis, the Climate Crisis will strike at the very root of the meaning of our existence. I say this, because to my mind the Climate Change phenomenon is a wakeup call for us all to question our own

future priorities. The responsibility of bringing about a structural change where every individual has the right to survive with dignity lies squarely on the shoulders mainly of the young today who will have to play a leadership role in steering and directing a new course of action that we all say must be inclusive growth. Radical initiatives will be required in order to bring about radical changes in society such that a paradigm shift towards inclusive growth becomes a reality rather than a fringe benefit. And whether we like it or not, the fate of the haves is intrinsically tied up with the fate of the have-nots. The more we strive towards an equitable social fabric the more we can hope for real prosperity.

Education in a climate changing world

Structural change cannot be brought about in a vacuum. We need thinkers, professionals, sound value systems and operating mechanisms that are designed to meet the needs of all people on this planet such that decent existence for every person is not elusive but real. We need to regain the humanism and spirituality that we seem to be losing when career options become a tool for monetary gains alone with little social implications. Yes, we need doctors, who consider their profession as a service to humanity; we need engineers, who can contribute to technological options that are far reaching for the future sustainability of our country; we need managers with a social perspective and businessmen, who are ethical in their operations. I am aware that in today's world even common sense is a costly product just as basic human values are considered to be unrealistic. And yet the irony of the situation is that the Earth is in peril and unless we all act now there will hardly be any future for the generations to come. And hence even for very selfish reasons it is critical that we go back to our human roots of interdependence with the value of equity as the solid foundation for a meaningful existence; that we safeguard our common future in a way that humanizes, not demonizes the social fabric of the economy and environment in which we all live.

Hence investment in value based education in a climate changing world must indeed become the key pillar around which we can hope for a revolution both in our aspirations for lifestyles and technological breakthroughs. This will ensure us the environment sustainability that we are seeking without compromise, with a development threshold that promises a meaningful existence for all.

12

FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

DIPA SINHA

India's 'national shame' needs no elaborate introduction - a mind boggling 46% of Indian children are underweight, and 1 in 3 of the world's hungry are in India, despite almost two decades of economic growth. About half the population suffers from undernourishment of some sort, and the impact is felt the most among vulnerable groups of children, women and the elderly. India ranks amongst the lowest in all global indices related to hunger and nutrition.

India is currently faced with the contradiction of overflowing godowns with over 80 mn tonnes of foodgrain stocks, and widespread hunger and malnutrition. The Indian Government runs a number of programmes to improve the food and nutrition conditions of the population. One of the most important schemes is the Public Distribution System (PDS). While the PDS has a wide coverage through a network of Fair Price Shops (FPS) in almost every village, it also suffers from major problems. The Planning Commission survey (2004) says that 58% of the subsidised foodgrains do not reach Below Poverty Line families, with 36% on the black market, and the rest reaching the non-poor. Diversion of commodities is a big problem due to lack of transparency, low accountability and poor monitoring in the scheme's implementation.

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- A comprehensive Food Security Bill that includes a universal PDS, special focus on children through ICDS and MDMS, entitlements for the marginalized such as migrants, aged, single women and disabled.

- Improve oversight mechanisms of the PDS and other Central Government Schemes to prevent fraud and corruption.

- Enhance agricultural productivity and employment generation.

- A system of decentralized procurement that is focused on reaching MSP to small and marginal farmers.

- Provide farmers with important skills and opportunities to build their capacity and economic strength at the community level.

A major problem with the PDS is that it is a targeted scheme with those identified as being Below Poverty Line (BPL) getting significantly higher quantities of grain at lower prices. Several national surveys have shown that about half the poor in the country do not have cards that identify them as being BPL. Therefore this approach of targeting comes with major exclusion errors. It has been argued that given the extent of poverty in the country, and the experience with different methods of targeting, it is impossible to identify a fixed number of 'poor' or 'BPL' populations. The current method of using proxies to identify households, while pre-determining the number of households on the basis of arbitrary poverty lines has proven to be faulty. States that have shown an improvement in the PDS are those that have followed a model of universalisation or 'near'-universalisation; and introduced reforms in the PDS towards greater community control, accountability, transparency and effective grievance redress.

With more than 50% of the population still dependent on agriculture and the slow-down in agriculture growth, especially of foodgrains, special efforts must be made to revitalize agriculture. Farmers need to be supported for increased productivity and production of foodgrains including millets, pulses and oilseeds. The focus for these

■ Agrarian reform legislation should not be undermined to serve the interests of landlords and agribusiness with large landholdings.

■ Greater investment in irrigation, power, agricultural research and development, and roads in the poorer regions, where the concentration of poverty is increasing.

efforts has to be on small and marginal farmers. Decentralised procurement mechanisms where foodgrains are directly procured from the farmers can ensure that minimum support prices reach the small farmers and also that enough foodgrain is procured for a universal PDS. Other government programmes such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) which provides health and nutrition services including supplementary nutrition to children under six years of age and the Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) which provides the mid-day meal to children also make important contributions to alleviating hunger and malnutrition among children. These schemes, especially the ICDS, are also in need of an urgent overhaul. This is important also because research

across the world has shown that the 'window of opportunity' for nutrition interventions is the period before two years from birth. Universalisation with quality of the ICDS, where every child, pregnant and lactating woman and adolescent girl has access to ICDS services with better infrastructure, better nutrition and growth monitoring, has been a stated objective of the Government for almost ten years now. There have been recent increases in the budgets for these programmes, and it is hoped that other reforms that make these services reach the needy will soon be put in place.

The Government has tabled a National Food Security Bill in Parliament, which is an opportunity to take bold steps towards achieving food and nutrition security. Food security includes nutrition security and therefore has to address issues of access, availability and absorption. Aspects related to production, procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains need to be seen together.

Further, special efforts are required to reach out to the unreached. It has been seen that even universal programme leave out certain groups if special efforts are not made to reach them. To address this, programmes such as provision of free cooked meals for the destitute, cheap food through community kitchens for the urban migrants, social security pensions for the aged, single women and disabled, maternity entitlements for pregnant and lactating mothers have been proposed.

It is only when such a comprehensive package of entitlements is provided that one can truly dream of moving towards food security for all. For these entitlements to reach people, it is important to have in place transparency and accountability measures, decentralization with greater powers given to local communities and an effective grievance redressal.

As this article was being written, 100,000 people in India were marching from Gwalior to Delhi as part of a Jan Satyagraha, or March for Justice, demanding land reform. As a result of the march, the government has agreed to consider a major policy change on land rights and land distribution, benefitting the poorest population segments in the country, including adivasis, dalits and many other marginalised groups.

A study of a land purchase program in Andhra Pradesh, which provided beneficiaries with plots of land of up to one acre, found that the recepients experienced significantly higher levels of food security: 76% of beneficiary households reported having two meals a day, compared to only 50-57% of non-beneficiary households. In China, the number of undernourished people fell from 387 million in 1969-1971 to 150 million in the mid-2000s—a reduction that had its roots in key agricultural reforms related to improved land rights.

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND JUST SOCIETY

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON DALIT HUMAN RIGHTS
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION (CSEI)

The positive developments of India's growth story have bypassed large sections of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Nomadic and De-notified tribes, minority communities, the disabled and the Other Backward Classes that constitute more than half of the population, the majority of which are below the poverty line. Women and children from these communities are the worst victims. Much of the deprivation experienced by these communities can be linked to the entrenched nature of social exclusion based on caste, ethnicity, gender, religion, and region.

A central feature of caste discrimination is the "untouchability practices" stemming from the notion that scheduled caste communities are "impure" and "polluting" to other caste groups. Other biased notions against communities, of being anti-development, backward, anti-national, violent, also result in systemic exclusion, denial of rights and basic services.

India has an impressive range of constitutional provisions and laws that ban caste discrimination and untouchability, and promise equality, equity and social justice compared to its neighbours in Asia. However, the lack of implementation remains a chronic problem resulting in human rights violations and development inequalities of the socially excluded communities. Of critical concern are: impunity and non-implementation

THE WORLD WE WANT: LOOKING BEYOND 2015

- Legislative reform and its implementation must address the principle of non-discrimination as well as provide recourse mechanisms for disadvantaged groups and individuals to claim their rights;

- Widely accessible and quality basic services including in health, water and sanitation, education and housing, among others must be ensured.

- Specific targets must be integrated to measure progress on development gains for the most excluded communities. This should include collection of disaggregated data relating to the communities.

- Excluded communities must be involved in planning, not only of budgets but also of development schemes that are of benefit to the community.

of laws for the protection of the excluded, diversion of economic entitlements allocated for them, lack of political participation, manual scavenging and bonded labour, exclusion in disaster relief programmes, extreme poverty and exclusions in health and education.

Planning Commission data shows that 37% of people live below the poverty line in India, and the majority of them are Dalits (47.2% in rural areas and 39.9% in urban centers). More than 20% do not have access to safe drinking water. Only 10% households have access to sanitation and the vast majority of them depend on the goodwill of dominant castes for access to water from public wells.

Excluded communities are often discriminated against in health services. Public services which they routinely access are of poor quality, have inadequate staff, equipments and medicines. Often they are not provided sufficient information and are treated so rudely that they delay treatment or opt for unqualified private treatments. Health care costs become a major reason for perpetrating the vicious cycle of their poverty. Health indicators such as infant mortality, maternal mortality and aneamia continue to be higher among these communities. Infant mortality rates for SC children is as high as 88 per 1000 as compared to children from the dominant caste social groups (69 per 1000).

Despite near universal enrollment at primary level, children in some of the more marginalized among these communities continue to be out of school, and have poor learning achievements. Among Mushahars (one of the SC communities), barely 9% of women are literate. Enough evidence suggest that inappropriate language and curriculum, discrimination, humiliation, verbal abuse, corporal punishment, denial of access to school facilities, segregation in class rooms, academic neglect and de-motivation force the majority of socially excluded children to drop out of schools without completing even primary schooling.

- Education as an enabling right should ensure a seamless system from pre-primary to higher, professional and technical education.

- A Public Health Act must be enacted, with special entitlements for excluded groups and communities, especially the women and children.

Violence by the police, the administration and dominant castes is an everyday reality for the excluded communities that further negatively impacts their ability to overcome poverty.

Equity with social inclusion has to be the foundation of any future development framework post -2015. The state needs to take a more pro-active role in addressing discriminatory mindsets and behavior towards the excluded communities through public education and ensuring access to justice.

The communities need to be important stakeholders in planning, monitoring and implementation of development interventions and these interventions must be planned taking into consideration local realities. The complex interplay of the many vertices of social exclusion of marginalized communities owing to gender, disability, language, occupation, migration, poverty in addition to their identity markers need to be critically addressed through a bundle of policies and institutional convergence in implementation.

Civil society has an important role in identifying socially excluded groups, however small, and unraveling these various layers of exclusion and providing space for strengthening the agency of these communities in planning, implementation and monitoring. Mechanisms and structures should be put in place to ensure that duty bearers are accountable to the people. Pro-active and focused efforts by the state in these directions will bode well for the future.

Reservation in education and employment, economic development programmes and the Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes and the Tribal Sub Plan, are important special provisions for minorities and the excluded, in addition to general provisions in health, education, and physical amenities applicable to all the population. The implementation of these programmes suffers from the mindset of exclusion and discrimination.

14

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS MUST BE MADE ACCOUNTABLE TO CITIZENS

JOE ATHIALY

The growing role of multilateral and international institutions/forums in matters that impact citizens – particularly economically and socially vulnerable groups – has a significant bearing on global governance and, by this extension, on national policies. Collectively, they influence policies and priorities of a country, reallocate funds and promote market-driven solutions for problems that people face on a day-to-day basis. It is critical that we demand greater accountability from these global institutions of governance alongside the efforts that are being made with regard to national processes and institutions.

Some of the key global institutions in this context include:

- The G20, which has more or less replaced the G8 and is now the premier forum for the discussion of a whole range of critical global issues;
- The BRICS, which is a south-south grouping of emerging economies;

- The World Bank Group, which continues to be an influential player and trend setter with the power to influence the agenda of other global institutions;
- The International Monetary Fund, whose dominance has been reinforced in the post crisis period, and ;
- regional players like the Asian Development Bank, the Bank of the South and the African Development Bank.

The birth of new economic giants on the global landscape has significantly altered the geography of development finance. Emerging economic powerhouses such as the BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – have become more assertive and to some enthusiasts, are seen to provide a long awaited alternative to the hegemony of global North.

The past few years have witnessed India's growing stature in these institutions, with India's commitment to economic liberalization and free market being seen as key to the new opportunities for global engagement and leadership. The flipside of this, however, is that positions taken by the Indian government in these forums / institutions have not emerged from a context of wider public debate or under Parliamentary oversight. Decisions taken at these forums are often driven by the interests of the political or economic elite in the country and are made fait accompli on the larger populace, with no policies in place to ensure that the rights of the people are not trampled, their livelihoods are not at risk and the environment is not further jeopardized as a result of the decisions made.

In this context it is essential that a post 2015 agenda also includes the safeguards that are necessary to ensure that existing rights and entitlements are not compromised. This includes the need for an upward harmonization of best practice safeguard policies to ensure that people and the environment are the least impacted negatively, implementable mitigation plans in case of exceptions and punitive measures in case of gross violations.

There is also a need to ensure transparency at all levels of decisions; including taking policy decisions up for debate at all levels of legislature from village level Gram Sabhas to the National Parliament.

It is essential that the new development framework also incorporates mechanisms for accountability to the diverse constituencies and communities whose life opportunities and choices are ultimately influenced by the decisions taken at these forums.

RIGHTS ARE INDISPENSABLE

SUHAS CHAKMA

In the last decade, funding the Millennium Development Goals has been the most fashionable thing for donors and governments. That the MDGs will not be achieved by 2015 is no longer a matter for the rocket scientists, and the UN has now started the debate on the "Post-2015 Development Agenda".

Previous flaws must be acknowledged for course correction. The most serious problem of the MDGs is the absence of a rights-based approach. The rights that are recognized under international human rights law and many domestic laws were suddenly reduced to goals to be achieved.

This discourse must be re-visited for the "Post-2015 Development Agenda" and there is no better case than that of India.

Extreme poverty and hunger is not a goal but a question of right. India's Supreme Court, in the longest running mandamus, has been monitoring the realization of the right to food through proper implementation of the food schemes for about a decade. India has been considering the Food Security Bill, which many consider as an attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court monitoring.

The Constitution of India has further been amended to make the right to universal primary education a fundamental right. Primary education is no longer a case of gradual implementation, and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 is justiciable before the Indian courts.

The gender equality and empowerment of women requires legislative measures to make it a matter of right. About 33% of the seats are currently reserved for women in the local government bodies of India, but the Women's Reservation Bill, which guarantees the same for women in the State legislatures and Parliament, is still pending before the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament.

The issues relating to child mortality rates, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases are too matter of rights. The Supreme Court has intervened with respect to pricing of life saving drugs and the Government of India agreed to come out with a policy on the issue by October 2012.

Most international actors, however, have been conspicuously silent on ensuring environmental sustainability. India's proposed National Investment Board will be

empowered to do away with any objection for a project worth Rs. 10,000 millions.

Further, India has also thrown out any global partnership for development by targeting NGOs and bilateral donors that focus on exclusion issues, rights and democratic credentials.

India's case is far from perfect and beset with lack of implementation and onslaught on the foreign funded NGOs. Yet, if India can be forced to adopt rights-based approaches by the Courts and citizens, and also equally cope with the same despite having a population of 1.2 billion, there is no reason why the rest of the world cannot do it.

India's case also emphasizes on the indispensability of democracy and the rule of law. The MDGs unfortunately undermined indivisibility, inter-dependence and inter-relatedness of human rights by completely ignoring civil and political rights. The Arab Spring has shown that civil and political rights must be addressed. The United Nations Human Rights Council, under the Universal Peri-

odic Review, has been taking a holistic approach to assess commitment of each State "to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfill their human rights obligations".

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must note Article 5 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action which states, *"5. All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms."*

The MDGs were irrelevant to the Arab Spring. If the Post-2015 Development Agenda is to remain relevant, it must emphasize on the universality, indivisibility and interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights.

CONTRIBUTORS

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is a women's documentation, training and communication centre with the aim of spreading feminist consciousness to a wider audience using creative media. Jagori's vision is to help build a just society through feminist values. Jagori undertakes action research studies, supports capacity development of urban and rural women on issues of women's safety, ending violence against women and enhancing access to essential services and empowerment.

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4. INDIA'S DISAPPEARING DAUGHTERS

With inputs from the
UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, INDIA.

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5. PROTECT OUR FUTURE, OUR CHILDREN

SHIREEN VAKIL MILLER is the Advocacy and Policy Director at Save the Children, India, which works for children's rights across 12 states to ensure that every child has a happy and healthy childhood.

RENI JACOB is the Advocacy Director of World Vision India, a humanitarian organisation working to create lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty and injustice.

THE ALLIANCE FOR RIGHTS TO ECCD comprises of practitioners, activists and academicians working together to build a strong legal and policy framework for the young child.

6. AT THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM – WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

AYAN BISWAS is the Manager, Advocacy, Arghyam. Arghyam is an Indian public charitable foundation working in the water and sanitation sector since 2005.

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7. TOWARDS A SYSTEM FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

With inputs from members of the
JAN SWASTHYA ABHIYAN

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8. EDUCATION IN THE POST-2015 ARCHITECTURE

ANJELA TANEJA is the the education specialist of Oxfam India, and one of the founding members of the Right to Education Forum, India's largest education coalition.

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9. WHEN YOUTH STOLE CENTER STAGE — A DECADE ON, YET FOREVER YOUNG

PRAVAH is a civil society organziation that has been working for youth development and active citizenship since 1993.

COMMUTINY - THE YOUTH COLLECTIVE is a group of individuals and organisations working to promote youth development and youth leadership of social change in India.

10. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE AND SAFER CITIES

INDU PRAKASH SINGH leads the CityMakers programme for advocating the rights of the urban homeless, at the Indo-Global Social Service Society. He is the convener of the National Forum for Housing Rights (NFHR).

JAGORI has worked on gender inclusion and women's safety in cities for over 8 years, with the vision of creating cities that are respectful of the diversity and dignity of all women and girls. The Delhi Safe City Initiative is a joint programme of the Department of Women and Child, Delhi Government, UN Women and UN Habitat and works with the police, transport, community and relevant service agencies. Jagori partners women's groups across the country on the issue.

YOUTH FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION (YUVA) is a civil society organization working on the issues of the urban poor.

11. ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY IN A CLIMATE CHANGING WORLD

DR.(MS) NAFISA GOGA D'SOUZA is the Executive Director, Laya Resource Centre, Visakhapatnam, which primarily focuses on issues of marginalized communities, in particular indigenous people. She is also the Convener, Indian Network on Ethics and Climate Change, a network which represents the concerns of the climate crisis from the perspective of eco-system based communities.

12. FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

DIPA SINHA an independent researcher and activist working on issues related to right to food, nutrition and child rights. She has worked at the Office of Commissioners to the Supreme Court on Right to Food and is currently Adviser to the Commissioners on children's right to food.

13. TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND JUST SOCIETY

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON DALIT HUMAN RIGHTS is a forum committed to the elimination of discrimination based on caste. It is a democratic secular platform led by Dalit women and men activists, with support and solidarity from movements and organizations, academics, individuals, people's organizations and institutions throughout the country who are committed to protect and promote human rights of Dalits focusing on women and children.

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION is concerned with deepening democracy and enhancing development by increased stake-hold of excluded communities in social, economic and cultural rights. CSEI undertakes collaborative research, policy monitoring and advocacy, and pilots social inclusion interventions in the critical areas of education, employment and governance.

14. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS MUST BE MADE ACCOUNTABLE TO CITIZENS

JOE ATHIALY is the South Asia Coordinator of Bank Information Center. Formerly, he was Campaigns and Communications Coordinator of Amnesty International India and prior to that he was a full time activist of Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save Narmada Movement).

15. RIGHTS ARE INDISPENSABLE

SUHAS CHAKMA is the Director, Asian Centre for Human Rights, which is dedicated to promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Asian region.

About Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan - which means "Don't Break Your Promises" - is a national campaign that is organized around the mission of "holding the government accountable to its promise to end poverty, social exclusion, and discrimination".

At the World Social Forum 2004, Mumbai, human rights activists and social action groups agreed on the need for a forceful, focused, and concerted effort to make a difference to the fact that one-fourth of the world's poor live in India, and continue to experience intense deprivation of opportunities to learn, live, and work in dignity. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan emerged from this consensus.

Wada Na Todo aims to make a difference by monitoring the commitments made in the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) the National Development Goals, with a special focus on the Right to Livelihood, Health, Education and Exclusion. The campaign strives to ensure that the concerns and aspirations of Dalits, Adivasis, nomadic tribes, women, children, youth, people with disability and people living with HIV-AIDS are mainstreamed across the programmes, policies and development goals of the government.

The campaign brings together over 4000 rights action groups across 28 states and three Union Territories of India and is governed by a Campaign Coordination Group and an elected Steering Group. Its activities are coordinated by a National Secretariat is based in New Delhi.

Wada Na Todo is also affiliated to the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP).

www.wadanatodo.net