Creating an Inclusive Society:
Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration

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Definition of key terminology

While there is no single agreed understanding of the key terminology, social integration, social inclusion, social cohesion and social participation, the following definitions are used in this publication.

Social Integration

Social integration is understood as a dynamic and principled process of promoting the values, relations and institutions that enable all people to participate in social, economic, cultural and political life on the basis of equality of rights, equity and dignity. It is the process in which societies engage in order to foster societies that are stable, safe and just – societies that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as respect for and value of dignity of each individual, diversity, pluralism, tolerance, non-discrimination, non-violence, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.

Social Inclusion

For Part I of the publication, social inclusion is understood as a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that they can achieve their full potential in life. It is a multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes. In Part II of the publication, social inclusion is understood as the process by which societies combat poverty and social exclusion

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is understood as the condition (barriers and process) that impede social inclusion. Social exclusion is a process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from fully participating in all aspects of life of the society, in which they live, on the grounds of their social identities, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture or language, and/or physical, economic, social disadvantages. Social exclusion may mean the lack of voice, lack of recognition, or lack of capacity for active participation. It may also mean exclusion from decent work, assets, land, opportunities, access to social services and/or political representation.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the elements that bring and hold people together in society. In a socially cohesive society all individuals and groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. Social cohesive societies are not necessarily demographically homogenous. Rather, by respecting diversity, they harness the potential residing in their societal diversity (in terms of ideas, opinions, skills, etc.). Therefore, they are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict when different interests collide.

Social Participation

Social participation is understood as the act of engaging in society's activities. It refers to the possibility to influence decisions and have access to decision-making processes. Social participation creates mutual trust among individuals, which forms the basis for shared responsibilities towards the community and society.

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Chapter One: A Vision for an Inclusive Society

I. Introduction

The World Summit for Social Development, held in March 1995, established the concept of social integration to create an inclusive society, "a society for all", as one of the key goals of social development. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, a key outcome of the Summit, pledged to make the eradication of poverty, full employment and social integration overriding objectives of development. Member states made a commitment[1] to promote social integration through fostering inclusive societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant, and respect diversity, equality of opportunity and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons (See table 1).

Following the Copenhagen Declaration, significant policy commitments were made in the Millennium Declaration (2000), adopted at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Millennium Declaration subsumes social integration in its synthesis of peace, security, development and human rights,[2] and further embodies social inclusion principles as well as the objectives and goals set out in the Copenhagen Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which is considered to be the most ambitious framework for development with specific targets and indicators to monitor the progress, were derived from the agreements adopted at the World Summits and Conferences organized by the United Nations in the previous decade, including the World Summit for Social Development. Specifically, MDGs contains one of the objectives of the Social Summit, "poverty eradication" which was designated as the MDG Goal 1 - Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (see Annex XX). The process of social integration also serves an important part in achieving the goal of sustainable development, particularly in view of the direct and indirect impacts to be brought by ongoing climate change and food insecurity on the most vulnerable populations.

In the realization that a broad development vision and commonly agreed objectives arising from the United Nations conferences and summits were not comprehensively addressed in the MDGs, the 2005 World Summit crystallized these internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, into a broad and compelling United Nations development agenda[3]. Achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people - the second goal of the Social Summit, was recognized as a central objective of relevant national and international polices and development strategies designed to achieve the MDGs[4], and has subsequently been added as a new target 1.B under the MDG Goal 1[5] (See the table XX, see SG's Report on the Work of the Organization, 2006).

However, the remaining goal of the Social Summit, "promoting social integration", has not been effectively integrated into the MDGs so far, despite the fact that these three goals are inter-related and mutually reinforcing. The Social Summit recognized that "social integration was an important determinant of, and significantly affected by, poverty and unemployment and that

[1] Delegates from 186 countries and representatives from 811 non-governmental organizations are among those who participated.
[2] A/60/1, para 103
[3] World Summit 2005, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly - A/RES/60/1
[4] World Summit 2005, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly - A/RES/60/1, 47)
[5] SG's report on the work of the Organization (2006)

combating those ills was essential". It further viewed that the failures of social integration will lead to "social fragmentation; widening disparities and inequalities; and strains on individuals, families, communities and institutions as a result of the rapid pace of social change, economic transformation, migration and major dislocations of population, particularly in areas of armed conflict".[6]

The issue of social inclusion/exclusion is not only imperative in the attainment of MDG Goal 1 "Eradicating extreme poverty", but also other Goals, such as achieving universal education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, and improving maternal health. Unless we pay closer attention to the issue of social inclusion/exclusion, some segments of the population will continue to be excluded from the progress made so far. In fact, it has now become a commonly shared view that the overall progress in achieving MDGs across regions will not be possible, if we continue to do our "business-as-usual". The remaining goal of the Social Summit, "promoting social integration", can play an effective role in accelerating the progress in achieving MDGs.

An encouraging recent development is the adoption of a Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization at the International Labor Conference (2008, 97th session). The Declaration which, while acknowledging the benefits of globalization, calls for a new strategy to effectively respond to growing challenges posed by globalization, such as income inequality, continuing high levels of unemployment and poverty, vulnerability of economies to external shocks, and the growth of both unprotected work and the informal economy. These actions were based on the conviction that "investing in full and decent work opportunities constitutes a commitment to fairness and justice and to more effective public policy and better governance"[7], so that the poorest and the disadvantaged could also be included in benefiting from the economic growth. Also, in a recent Secretary-General's report on the second UN Decade For the Eradication of Poverty (2008-1017)[8], the need for "better understanding of the deep-rooted obstacles" as well as broader and more inclusive national poverty reduction strategies was underscored to address multifaceted dimensions of poverty, including empowerment and participation of disadvantaged groups, in the development process.

The question now is how to make the concept of social inclusion operational, even in the face of resistance to change. Indeed, in some cases, social exclusion is willfully pursued as it serves vested interests. The challenge for policy makers and social scientists is, therefore, to find ways to dissociate the concept of social inclusion from the utopian realm of a "perfectly inclusive" world vision to redefining it as a practical tool used to promote an inspirational yet realistic set of policy measures geared towards a "society for all." This requires a paradigm shift so as to recognize the dignity, value and importance of each person, not only as an ethical norm and moral imperative, but also as a legal principle, a societal goal, and ultimately, practice. "No human being should be condemned to endure a brief or miserable life as a result of his or her class, country, religious affiliation, ethnic background or gender"[9]. To this end, social inclusion, as an overarching goal as well as a multi-dimensional process can play a critical role in promoting sustainable human development.

[6] Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly – E/CN.5/2005/6, para 165
[7] Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/63/133, para 8)
[8] A/63/190, para 7
[9] Ibid, paragraph 8

World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*-1995 (Table 1)*

1. *Commitment to creating an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development.*
2. *Commitment to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind.*
3. *Commitment to promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of our economic and social policies, and to enabling all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work.*
4. *Commitment to promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.*
5. *Commitment to promoting full respect for human dignity and to achieving equality and equity between women and men, and to recognizing and enhancing the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and in development.*
6. *Commitment to promoting and attaining the goals of universal and equitable access to quality education, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and the access of all to primary health care, making particular efforts to rectify inequalities relating to social conditions and without distinction as to race, national origin, gender, age or disability; respecting and promoting our common and particular cultures; striving to strengthen the role of culture in development; preserving the essential bases of people-centred sustainable development; and contributing to the full development of human resources and to social development. The purpose of these activities is to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and foster social integration.*
7. *Commitment to accelerating the economic, social and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries.*
8. *Commitment to ensuring that when structural adjustment programmes are agreed to they include social development goals, in particular eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment, and enhancing social integration.*
9. *Commitment to increasing significantly and/or utilizing more efficiently the resources allocated to social development in order to achieve the goals of the Summit through national action and regional and international cooperation.*
10. *Commitment to an improved and strengthened framework for international, regional and sub-regional cooperation for social development, in a spirit of partnership, through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions*

Source: UNDESA

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United Nations Millennium Declaration (Table 2)

I. Values and principles

1. We, heads of State and Government, have gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 8 September 2000, at the dawn of a new millennium, to reaffirm our faith in the Organization and its Charter as indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

2. We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world's people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.

3. We reaffirm our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which have proved timeless and universal. Indeed, their relevance and capacity to inspire have increased, as nations and peoples have become increasingly interconnected and interdependent.

4. We are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. We rededicate ourselves to support all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence, resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the right to self-determination of peoples which remain under colonial domination and foreign occupation, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion and international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.

5. We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed. We recognize that developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge. Thus, only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable. These efforts must include policies and measures, at the global level, which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition and are formulated and implemented with their effective participation.

6. We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include:
• **Freedom.** Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.

•. **Equality.** No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.

• **Solidarity.** Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.

• **Tolerance.** Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.

• **Respect for nature.** Prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development. Only in this way can the immeasurable riches provided to us by nature be preserved and passed on to our descendants. The current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants.

• **Shared responsibility.** Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.

II. Creating an Inclusive Society

WHAT IS MEANT BY AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY?

> *An inclusive society is a society that over-rides differences of race, gender, class, generation, and geography, and ensures inclusion, equality of opportunity as well as capability of all members of the society to determine an agreed set of social institutions that govern social interaction. (Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Social Integration, Helsinki, July 2008)*

The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995) defines an inclusive society as a "society for all in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play". Such an inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice[10] and the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, democratic participation and the rule of law. It is promoted by social policies that seek to reduce inequality and create flexible and tolerant societies that embrace all people.

There are different views in terms of how a socially inclusive society functions. "Integration in all its forms may simply imply the existence of a stable community in which people can find a niche." (Taylor, 2007:3). This simple expression touches the heart of the definition of social integration and social inclusion, which is: difference among members of society is acceptable. Social integration or social inclusion does not mean a uniformity of people but a society which has room for diversity and still fosters engagement. To achieve social integration and social inclusion, voices of people and their needs and concerns, need to be heard. Not only some but all members of society with different backgrounds must have a say and a stake in *their shared* society. This inclusiveness of society creates and maintains stability as well as a readiness to embrace change when necessary.

In order to further our understanding of the concept of social integration and social inclusion, we will begin by taking a closer look at what determines or represents an inclusive society, and why it is important to build such a society. In very basic terms, "International human rights law requires governments to respect individuals' civil and political rights – such as their rights to free speech, fair trial, and political participation – and to promote their economic, social and cultural rights – such as their rights to health care and education."[11] In an inclusive society, members not only have the right to education or the right to political participation but actually take part in the process, using the right to education and having a vote that actually counts in a political process. What is most significant in creating an inclusive society is the engagement of the individual in the process by which society is managed, ordered and represented.

ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

[10] Social justice refers to the principles, values and belief that every individual and group is entitled to fair and equal treatment, which is necessary for the achievement of a society in which all people have equal access to rights, not only under law, but in all aspects of life, and all people get an impartial share of the benefits as well as carry a fair share of the responsibilities of society.

[11] Check with Aki, where this quotation comes from.

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The Social Summit defined that the aim of social integration is to create an inclusive society, in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play.[12] But what makes some societies more inclusive than others? What are the critical elements for creating and maintaining an inclusive society in practical terms? An inclusive society is based on the fundamental human rights value, that is, "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood[13]" It is a society in which all members, regardless of their backgrounds, are able and motivated to participate in civic, social, economic and political activities. For this to happen, legal, regulatory and policy frameworks must be inclusive, and uphold and promote just and inclusive processes in all areas of implementation, so that equal access to basic education, public space, facilities and information are ensured, and diversity and cultural pluralism are respected and accommodated.

As a pre-requisite, *respect for all human rights, freedoms, and the rule of law*, both at national and international levels, are fundamental. Every member of society, no matter what his or her economic resources, political status, or social standing, must be treated equally under the law. Legal instruments ensure the guiding principles that will guarantee equity[14], justice and equal opportunities for all citizens. Violators of human rights should be brought to justice. The judiciary which serves to protect just societies must be impartial, accountable and inclusive to giving weight to the opinions of those who defend the inclusiveness of the society at the local, regional and national levels. *Maintaining the security* of all individuals and their living environment is paramount in creating a feeling of inclusion and an atmosphere of participation in society.[15]

To create and sustain inclusive societies, it is critical that all members of society are able and motivated to *participate in civic, social, economic and political activities*, both at the local and national levels. A society where most members, if not all, feel that they are playing a part, have access to their basic needs/livelihoods, and are provided with the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, is a society that will best foster principles of inclusiveness.[16]

The existence of a strong civil society is fundamental for active participation and making public policies and institutions accountable. It fosters a respect for the rights, dignity and privileges of all people, while assuming that they fulfill their responsibilities within their society. There must be freedom for people to express diverse views and develop unconventional unique ideas. Members of society must have the confidence to engage and interact with each other, and build mutual trust while acknowledging their differences.[17]

In order to encourage all-inclusive participation, there must be *universal access to public infrastructure and facilities* (such as community centers, recreational facilities, public libraries, resource centers with internet facilities, well maintained public schools, clinics, water supplies and sanitations). These are the basic services which will create, when partly or fully put into

[12] The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, Chapter 4, page 95
[13] Fact Sheet No.2 (Rev.1), The International Bill of Human Rights
[14] Equity refers to a condition in which society is characterized by justice, equality, impartiality and fairness, including fair and equal distribution of power, economic resources, opportunities, goods and services across the social spectrum. In an equitable society people are not excluded from the activities of society, such as education, employment, or health care and there is no bias or favoritism.
[15] Summary of E-dialogue on "Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical strategies to promote social inclusion", organized by DPSD/UNDESA, 23 May - 17 June, 2007.
[16] Ibid
[17] Ibid

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place, conditions for people to have a sense of belonging by not suffering the painful consequence of being unable to afford them. As long as both the advantaged and disadvantaged have equal access to or benefit from these public facilities and services, they will all feel less burdened by their differences in socio-economic status, thus alleviating a possible sense of exclusion or frustration.[18] It is important to note though, that access alone does not necessarily ensure use of public facilities, as unequal relations within communities and households may inhibit the use of facilities by vulnerable groups. Addressing the unequal power relations is therefore a necessary step to increase participation.

Similarly, *equal access to public information* plays an important role in creating an inclusive society, as it will make popular participation possible with well-informed members of society. Information that pertains to the society, such as what a community owns, generates, or benefits from, should be made available to all. Collective participation, through accepted representations of all classes and backgrounds, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of community activities should be sought after. Publication/information sharing and increasing the accessibility of the community's activities will eliminate doubts and suspicions which could otherwise create a sense of exclusion. The mass media can be used as an effective tool to educate and enlighten members of society.[19]

Equity in the distribution of wealth and resources is another critical element of inclusive societies. How the resources are allocated and utilized will significantly affect the orientation of a society, either towards a more integrated, inclusive society, or an exclusive, polarized, and disintegrated one. Therefore, socio-economic policies should be geared towards managing equitable distribution and equal opportunities. Inclusive policies, instructions and programs that are sensitive to and cater to the less advantaged and vulnerable need to be put in place in all areas/sectors, including public health, and effectively implemented. There is a need for a strong monitoring and evaluation tools to demonstrate whether inclusiveness was actually achieved, as well as highlight areas for improvement.[20]

Another dimension of inclusive societies is tolerance for and appreciation of *cultural diversity.* This includes societies that celebrate multiple and diverse expressions of identities. By celebrating diversity, there is a recognition and affirmation of the differences between and among members of society, which enables societies to move away from labeling, categorizing, and classifying people, towards more inclusive policies. Also, enabling a diversity of opinions provides the checks and balances crucial for the development of society, while allowing for the greatest amount of diverse opinions to enter every discourse.[21]

Education plays a critical role in this area, as it will provide opportunities to learn the history and culture of one's own and other societies, which will cultivate the understanding and appreciation of other societies, cultures and religions. Particularly for young people, education provides the opportunity to instill values of respect and appreciation of diversity. At the same time, education can empower those who are marginalized or excluded from participating in discussions and decision-making. Learning about the historical processes and changes allows people to understand the way in which they and others have been affected by socially inclusive or exclusive policies, which ultimately influences the values, choices and judgments of individuals, in particular, those who are in decision-making positions.[22]

[18] Ibid
[19] Ibid
[20] Ibid
[21] Ibid
[22] Ibid

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Effective leadership is crucial to the development of an inclusive society. Where leadership is not representative of the society, a disconnection between the people and their leaders may eventually result. The most common way of addressing this critical element at the local level is by engaging in open consultations with members of society about municipal issues such as the budget, and enhancing the free and timely flow of information to citizens and other stakeholders. Popular participation in decision-making and policy formulation processes could be sought for at all levels of governance. At the same time, there must be an effort made to achieve transparency and accountability by all decision-makers and stakeholders.[23]

Finally, there is a need to create *positive narratives of an inclusive society of the future*, and enable each member of society to share, understand and contribute to those narratives. Potent narratives on the future can act like a magnet drawing society towards its envisioned future. A society with no vision for the future indicates a society in decline. Societies that maintain a unity of purpose, or a shared vision embraced by the community, and encourage broad-based stakeholder participation in the formulation of that goal, will be more inclusive as every member will be working synergistically towards a unified objective.[24]

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INCLUSION

The concepts of social integration and social inclusion are similar ones, and in fact overlap each other in many ways. However, some differences exist which are useful to be examined in order to avoid confusion. It is worth mentioning that any attempts to differentiate these two concepts will inevitably face a challenge, as there is no single agreed definition for either. The concept of social integration was created through political consensus among member states at the World Summit for Social Development. Social inclusion or social cohesion were preferred terms for some, however, it was a consensus agreement that the concept of social integration allows broader interpretation. The Social Summit approached social integration in terms of goals, principles and process. It is important to understand that social integration is not an end-state that societies can achieve, but a dynamic process in which societies engage in order to further human development.[25]

The concept of social inclusion is similar to that of social integration. However, social inclusion, focusing on creating conditions for equal opportunities and equal access for all, is considered to be useful when describing the actual process involved in promoting social integration. Social inclusion is also often more easily accepted as a policy goal, as it clearly eliminates a connotation of assimilation that some associate with the term "integration" - not all individuals and/or groups in societies are eager to be "integrated" into mainstream society, but all strive to be included.

> *Inclusion is community. No one becomes included by receiving handouts, even if these handouts are given by public bodies and with public resources. No one becomes included by being treated by a program in which they are no more than a number or a statistic. Inclusion is connection to the network of community development, it is to become more than a speck of dust, to have a forename and surname, with one's own distinctive features, skills*

[23] Ibid
[24] Ibid
[25] Participatory Dialogue: Towards a stable, safe and just society for all", UN, 2007

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and abilities, able to receive and give stimulus, to imitate and be imitated, to participate in a process of changing one's own life and collective life. (Busatto, 2007: 4)

The above quotation places emphasis on the recognition of the individual and the relationship between community and the individual. This suggests that inclusion is a mutually beneficial state for both the community and the individual. When people rely upon each other and the success of their interactions, that responsibility and interdependence creates a commitment to the social processes in a community. The depiction of social inclusion at the local level is useful as it addresses inclusion at a manageable and feasible level. In a smaller geographic region than the nation, there is much greater opportunity to develop inclusive systems, economically and socially as well as politically. Cities can thus be seen to provide the space for testing and expanding notions of social inclusion. The role of local government in promoting social inclusion and participation is further discussed in chapter 3.

As mentioned earlier, there are numerous definitions and concepts of social inclusion,[26] and despite a multitude of discussion, it is still difficult to obtain agreement on the term. Lombe notes that: "Inclusion is the realization that everyone has essential dignity and everyone has something to contribute." (Lombe, 2007:3) Social inclusion can be described as a "multi-dimensional process aimed at lowering economic, social and cultural boundaries between those who are included and excluded, and making these boundaries more permeable" (Therborn, 2007.2). It is a dynamic phenomenon, as its boundaries are changing over time, space, and in quality. Sen described social inclusion as "being characterized by societal elements that would include the active participation by citizens, equality of opportunities, and basic levels of well-being."[27]

At the core of most definitions of social inclusion lies the concept of ***full participation in all aspects of life***, while exclusion refers to the conditions (barriers and processes) that impede inclusion. Participation is most significant as it denotes an active involvement in the process, not merely having access to society's activities, but engaging in them, and building and maintaining a social network. Participation also creates a sense of responsibility towards others, a community or an institution, and influences decisions or enables individuals to have access to the decision-making processes[28].

In this publication, social inclusion refers to a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, in order to enable full and active participation in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes. Social inclusion can be approached as a goal, an objective, and a process. Its process affects almost all societal activities, and should therefore be approached from various dimensions. (EGM Paris)

Exclusion conversely is a process and a state resulting in lack of access to full participation in mainstream society. The manifestations of social exclusion are often understood differently

[26] Note: Beall originates the terms in French public policy and Rene Lenoir for popularizing the term in France, as well as highlighting the historical disregard of les exclus or 'the others' by the social contract of the French republic. (Viswanathan, L. et al, 2003:5).
[27] Viswanathan, L. et al, 2003:5
[28] "Social Participation and Social Capital", Raymond Breton, University of Toronto http://canada.metropolis.net/events/civic/rbreton_e.html

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according to the perceived needs of the society. For example, in some societies, women may be the main excluded group, in other societies, immigrants or racial, ethnic and religious minorities are excluded.

Dimensions of Social Inclusion and Exclusion

The focus of this section is predominantly on social inclusion, which inherently includes the factors of social exclusion. In order to promote social inclusion, it is important to understand the processes through which individuals or groups are excluded, as promotion of inclusion can only be possible by tackling exclusion. Social inclusion needs to occur on various dimensions and multiple levels. It is a process through which the dignity of each individual is recognized, needs and concerns of all people are reflected, rights of all people are not only guaranteed in legislation, but also respected, and people are able to participate actively in life activities. The process of social inclusion needs to take place simultaneously at multiple levels, from the individual, community and local levels, to the regional and national levels, as social inclusion is a subject which concerns all stakeholders in society. While social inclusion involves formal (societal) level engagements, ensuring that institutions in society reflect, uphold, respect, and activate the inclusive processes within society, it at the same time, addresses the informal (individual) level of engagements, and as such, perceptions and experiences of individuals, how they think and feel, also need to be taken into account. Social inclusion reflects, on the one hand, an individual's experience of and possibilities for self-actualization, and on the other hand, societal capacities to eliminate causes of exclusion and ensure equal opportunities for all[29]. Figure 1 illustrates the multiple levels involved in a social inclusion process.

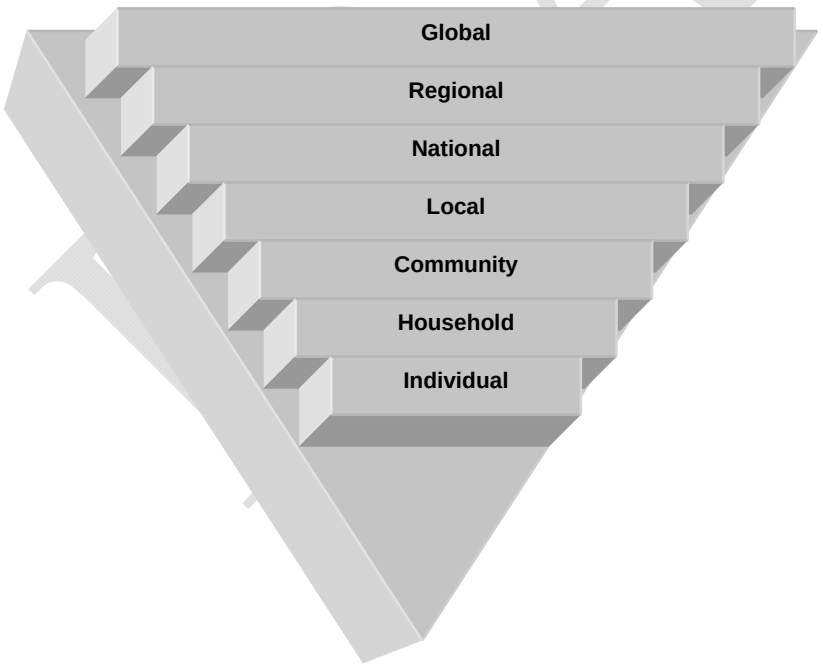

Figure 1: *Levels involved in a social inclusion process*

[29] Final Report of the Expert Group Meeting on "Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical strategies to promote social inclusion", May 2008, unpublished.

***S**teps to promoting social inclusion*

In order to understand the actual process of social inclusion, Goran Therborn (2007, 2) suggests that the following five categories of inclusion could be considered as incremental steps to promote social inclusion. These steps are hierarchical with visibility as the first step. Without the possibility to fulfill the lower steps the person is deterred and limited from climbing to the next step. Each of the five steps can be approached and understood in terms of both "process" and "contents" (see figure 2).

Figure 2: *Steps to promoting Social Inclusion*

The five steps are as follows:

1) ***Visibility***:
First and foremost, people need to be noticed, recognized, and have their own voices. There is no possibility of having a voice if an individual or group is not accounted for and represented in the processes that make up formal society. One of the greatest difficulties even at a local level is the actual census of population. People remain uncounted and therefore invisible.

2) Consideration:
The concerns and needs of individuals and groups are taken into account by policy-makers. Often policy-makers do not consider the poor and other marginalized groups as important stakeholders, and therefore, do not incorporate their needs and concerns.

3) Access to Social Interactions
People must be able to engage in society's activities and social networks in their daily life, including economic, social, cultural, religious, and political activities.

4) Rights:
People must have rights to act and claim, rights to be different, legal rights, rights to access social services, such as housing, education, transportation, and health care. They must have

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the right to work and the right to participate in social, cultural and political life. The right to claim will regress if one is discriminated.

5) Resources to fully participate in society

Those who do not have access to rights are not able to participate fully in society. However, even if people have rights to access, they cannot participate fully without adequate resources. Therefore, resources to fully participate in all aspects of societal activities are the ultimate step for successful social inclusion. It is not only because of lack of financial resources that people are unable to participate, or stop participating, but also because of conditions, such as insufficient time or energy, spatial distance, lack of recognition, lack of respect, physical conditions or constraints. These elements all need to be taken into consideration.

Dimensions and elements of Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Figure 3 below illustrates the multidimensionality of social inclusion. Social inclusion touches almost all dimensions of life, both individual and societal. These dimensions can be categorized in many different ways. In fact, there are various attempts to categorize the dimensions of social exclusion and inclusion. As each context or purpose of social inclusion varies significantly, it would be best if each society or community identify the most appropriate dimensions in consultation with wide range of stakeholders. Also, social inclusion can be promoted at many different levels, which has different objectives and target beneficiaries. For example a national government may be interested in identifying dimensions that have a linkage with their sectoral policies, such as education, health, employment, access to basic services, etc. A local government may be more geared towards creating innovative categories, for example, social capitals, social mobility, etc.

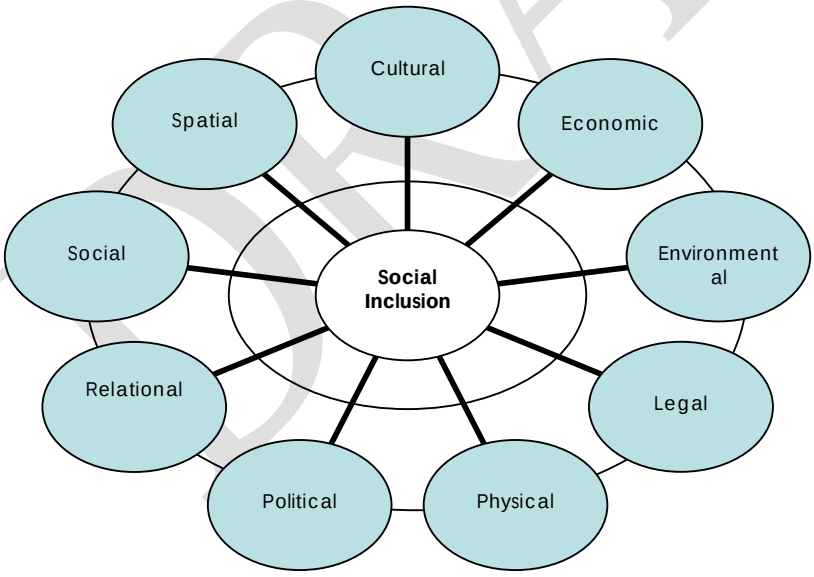

Figure 3: *Dimensions of Social Inclusion*

The table below is inspired by the Laidlaw Foundation Social Inclusion Framework (2002) and Shookner's Dimensions of Social Exclusion and Inclusion (2002). It contains a list of dimensions of social inclusion and exclusion, and elements, which relate to these dimensions. This list is one example of various attempts to categorize the dimensions and elements of social exclusion and inclusion. The elements are listed randomly and not in order of priority. For each dimension, further elements of social inclusion and exclusion may be identified.

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Table 1: *Dimensions and elements of Social Exclusion and Inclusion*

Elements of Exclusion		***Elements of Inclusion***
- Exclusive policies and legislation - Lack of respect for human rights - Discrimination, intolerance, stigma, stereo-typing, sexism, racism and homophobia - Fear and psychological insecurity - Lack of access to basic services, including education, health care, clean water and sanitation - Lack of access to decent work and employment - Lack of resources to sustain livelihood - Lack of access to land - Lack of access to credit - Lack of transparency in decision-making - Lack of access to political processes - Lack of access to information and communications - Lack of transportation - Lack of access to public spaces - Physical Insecurity - Segregation - Violence and abuse	Cultural Economic Social Environmental Legal Physical Political Relational Spatial	- Inclusive policies and legislation - Access to clean and safe places for living, work and recreation - Access to information and communication - Access to public spaces - Access to resources - Access to basic services, including education, health care, clean water and sanitation - Access to transportation - Transparent and accountable decision-making processes - Adequate income and employment opportunities - Affirmation of human rights - Opportunity for personal development - Respect for diversity - Freedom (of choice, religion, etc.) - Participation in decision-making - Social protection - Solidarity

It is worth noting that elements of exclusion and inclusion cannot be limited to only one dimension, but need to be dealt with from various angles. Discrimination for example, can be addressed not only through the social dimension, but also through legal, cultural, and political dimensions. Another example, poverty eradication strategies, one of the key areas in which social inclusion objectives needs to be mainstreamed, requires interventions in a wide range of areas, from macro-economic, to employment, social protection, housing, education, health, information and communications, mobility, security and justice, leisure and culture. It is necessary, therefore, to mainstream the objective of social inclusion into all relevant policies in multiple dimensions. When we address the issue of social mobility, it is necessary to examine if there is a public transportation system in a particular neighborhood, to assess the degree of access for marginalized communities to social, political, cultural, and economic life. If we look into education, we need to examine if there is equal access to formal and informal education for all, and if certain groups of children (differing in for example ethnicity, gender, or religion) may be excluded. Regarding the health sector, we need to examine if specific needs of vulnerable groups are addressed, or if there is any discrepancies between mortality rates or life expectancy between excluded groups and mainstream groups.

For successful social inclusion to take place, it is useful to examine the areas in which inclusion is weak and where exclusion is most prevalent; where engagement is least successful and participation is faltering. How and why are people being left out of the processes that make up society? Who does it affect and what are the economic, social and political environments in which the problem is most apparent? Structures, processes and relations of power that exist within societies, which result in the inclusion of some and exclusion of others, need to be

examined. As a starting point, the next section examines some key areas where social inclusion perspectives need to be incorporated, as well as which groups of people are typically excluded.

III MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

KEY AREAS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

There are several key areas in which social inclusion objectives need to be integrated; poverty, employment and sustainable development. These three areas are highlighted as they are part of the major UN agenda. Poverty eradication and employment creation, two goals of the Social Summit, are considered to be key areas to achieve the goal of creating an inclusive society. Likewise, promotion of social inclusion is considered to be an important determinant of the attainment of poverty eradication and employment creation. The major socio-economic and political challenges of climate change has emerged as an additional incentive for promoting inclusive policies in the context of mitigation and locally driven adaptation and supporting fragile ecosystems, particularly in the developing world. Incorporating social inclusion perspectives in these areas will provide substantial possibilities for promoting social inclusion. Examples of initiatives which contribute to promoting social inclusion at the local level within these areas and others are presented in chapter 3.

Poverty

Poverty interacts with social exclusion in important ways and it has been recognized as the key challenge of our time. Despite various efforts through the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, poverty, inequality and social exclusion remain rampant in many countries, and are closely connected. UNDP National Human Development Report (2007) for Ghana indicated that there is a high correlation between poverty and social exclusion[30], but that not all poor are socially excluded, nor that all the vulnerable socially excluded people are poor. It also indicated that an increase in poverty induces an increase in social exclusion.

The notion of social exclusion can contribute to the understanding of the nature of poverty, as well as help identifying causes of poverty that may otherwise be neglected.[31] Almost by definition, poverty limits the access of people to the most basic levels of social inclusion. Not only directly, in the form of material deprivation, such as the inability to afford shelter and buy food, but also in regards to agency; the poor are often without the willingness and capacity to act, and psychologically disempowered, as they feel excluded from the greater society, discouraged of becoming visible, participating and contributing.[32] If the poor are systematically excluded from mainstream society, their exclusion can impede social progress and endanger social and political stability. The degree of inequality in a society is considered to be more closely

[30] Ghana UNDP Human Development Report: Towards more inclusive society, 2007, page 3 and 53
Note: Based on a survey conducted by ClayDord Consult (2004), poverty contributes extensively to the exclusion and accounts for approximately 60.63 percent of social exclusion in Ghana.
[31] Sen, 2000
[32] UNDP, 2007, Ghana report; UNDP, Human Development Report, 2007

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correlated with crime levels than poverty.[33] Even though there is no direct causal relationship between poverty and violent conflict, the poverty associated with high degree of inequality and exclusion/marginalization can be a major contributing factor to higher crime rates and higher risks of social tensions, social disintegration, and ultimately violent conflict.[34] Poverty reduction strategies and efforts are therefore some of the most important fronts in promoting social inclusion.

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It is evident that we will not be able to eradicate poverty if we continue to exclude those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. As long as we fail to address the root causes of poverty and exclusion, some segments of the population will continue to be left out of the benefits gained by society as a whole. The World Social Summit identified poverty eradication as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of mankind and called on governments to address the root causes of poverty, provide for basic needs for all and ensure that the poor have access to productive resources, including credit, education and training. In order to achieve the MDG goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, with the specific target of halving the proportion of people whose income is less than 1$ a day, social inclusion must play a key role, as it addresses root causes of poverty in all its dimensions. Social inclusion entails promoting a people-centered approach to poverty eradication, advocating the empowerment of people living in poverty through their full participation in all aspects of political, economic and social life, especially in the design and implementation of policies that affect the poorest and most vulnerable groups of society. An integrated strategy towards poverty eradication necessitates implementing policies geared to more equitable distribution of wealth and income, and social protection coverage. (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/poverty/)

Employment

Full employment, self-employment or adequately remunerated work is an effective method of combating poverty and promoting social integration and social inclusion. When members of society have work, they automatically become stakeholders in the economic realm. Engagement in and access to the labor market is therefore the first and most important step in participation in the economic processes of society, and employment and self-employment are the most salient aspects of economic inclusion. Employment also acts as a source of identity and gives access to a social network.

Exclusion of the weakest groups from the labor market and lack of gainful employment represents another threat to social inclusion and cohesion. For the poor, labor is often the only asset they can use to improve their quality of life, therefore, unemployment can have extremely damaging effects on the livelihoods as well as well-being of individuals, households and the entire community. Global unemployment is at a historical high at nearly 200 million in 2006,[35] with a more than 20 percent increase in official unemployment over the decade. The quality of employment has deteriorated so that half of the labor force does not make enough money to escape poverty.[36] Women and young people are particularly affected. Where job growth has taken place, it has been concentrated in insecure, informal employment with low wages and few benefits. Typically, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups have less opportunities to participate

[33] Crime and Development in Latin America: Caught in the cross-fire, UNODC, May 2007
[34] Participatory Dialogue: Towards a stable, safe and just society for all, page 55
[35] Global Employment Trends, ILO, January 2007
[36] Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work: Dialogues at the Economic and Social Council, United Nations, DESA 2006, page 3 and 31

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in the formal sector, due to existing obstacles such as lower levels of education, lack of skills, lack of vocational training, lack of information, lack of social network, or de jure or de facto discrimination, both in hiring and in starting businesses. As a result, those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged engage in economic activities predominantly in the informal sector, often as 'working poor' – employed, yet unable to lift themselves out of poverty. Even though the "informal economy" is recognized as vital to sustain livelihood for the most vulnerable groups, particularly in developing and transition countries, participation in informal economy, by definition, indicates a lack of social protection, a lack of protection by labor laws, absence of rights at work, low job security, and the lack of representation and voice. [37]

It is important to reduce existing barriers to labor markets, not only by instilling 'social responsibility' practices, but also by creating incentives for creating diverse workforces in the private sector. This includes public policies promoting equal opportunities, providing social and economic incentives to enterprises and organizations that promote inclusive values and practices, creating a new vision for inclusive organizational culture based on the basic premise that every individual is entitled to equal opportunities and self-realization, regardless of his/her gender, age, race or religion[38]. The size and diversity of the active labor force should be expanded through progressive labor market policies, while ensuring a better linkage between social protection, life-long learning, and labor market reforms, so that they are mutually reinforcing. There should be a focus on creating better and more productive jobs, particularly those that can absorb the high concentrations of working poor. Among the necessary elements for creating such jobs are investing in labor-intensive industries, especially agriculture, encouraging a shift in the structure of employment to higher productivity occupations and sectors, and upgrading job quality in the informal economy.

Social economy enterprises, such as cooperatives, offer an important source of productive self-employment, as they create income-generating opportunities for poor communities, as well as vulnerable groups such as women, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. In particular, agricultural cooperatives create employment in areas such as food production, marketing, credit, insurance and transportation. Cooperatives, especially agricultural cooperatives, enhance food security as well as job security for the members and their families, through providing competitive wages, promoting additional income through profit-sharing, distribution of dividends and other benefits, and supporting community facilities such as health clinics and schools that do private sector businesses[39]. In addition, there should also be a focus on providing poor people with the necessary skills and assets that will enable them to take full advantage of any expansion in employment potential.[40] Job-creation should be situated at the center of national social inclusion strategies.

Geographic Disadvantage

The geographic characteristics of communities can have a significant effect on the level of inclusion in a society. The world is often described as comprising the 'North' and the 'South', with the North conventionally being viewed as being more economically powerful and wealthy. However, poverty and social exclusion exists across regions, even in the richest countries. When

[37] Decent work and the informal economy, Report IV, International Labor Conference, ILO, Geneva, 2002
[38] Cooperation at Work: A study in a Bi-National Factory, Dr. Zeev Degani, Marzuq Halabi, Tamar Gross, unpublished, 2007. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/egm'07/documents/Delta%20final%20version-RT.pdf
[39] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/poverty/
[40] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/poverty/poverty_and_employment.html

looking at the national or regional levels, disparities become clearer and the definitions around them take on a more contextual character. There are many regions which suffer from spatial disadvantage in that they are far from natural resources or public transportation, or without access to capital, credit and information, which could provide economic benefits and the possibility to engage in markets and the use of their labor force.

People living in poverty and living in certain geographic locations, particularly in the least developed countries, and small island states, arid and high mountain zones, in densely populated coastal areas, or dry lands, are considered to be the most vulnerable for the effect of climate change. *Human Development Report 2007/2008 (Fighting climate change: Human Solidarity in a divided world, UNDP) vividly illustrates how the livelihoods of these vulnerable populations will be affected by droughts, floods, extreme weather, tropical storms, sea level rises, c*hanges in run-off patterns of rivers, glacial melt, and the *spread of diseases, etc. A*s such, the current threat of climate change has significant implications for any efforts to promote social integration and inclusion.

The negative ramifications of climate change often interact with existing social and economic constraints. The impacts of climate change and the possibility for social exclusion are likely to vary considerably depending on factors such as socio-economic status and geographical location. The poorest and most vulnerable communities are the first ones to be affected by "climate shocks", not only during the post disaster period, but also for much longer periods, as they are exposed to a wide range of incremental risks, from food insecurity, malnutrition, loss of jobs and/or income, land degradation, reduction in arable land and agricultural production. Also, they do not possess adequate resources to cope with the challenges[41]. With regard to health and nutrition, the most vulnerable groups are children and older people.[42] Social inclusion efforts may be able to enhance their coping mechanisms. One area which is gaining interest is social protection programmes in the form of safety net programmes or cash transfers that can help people cope, while expanding opportunities for employment, nutrition and education[43].

Migration is an option people often resort to as a coping mechanism where their opportunities are limited. Migration depletes the human capital of societies which may already be capital deficient. The rural-urban migration which forms part of these changes has fundamentally altered the composition of both areas, and redefines 21st century cities throughout the world. Rather than converging with economically more developed urban regions, rural areas are falling further behind. Migration provoked by climate change, places migrants at increased risk of poverty and settlement in marginal areas that are at high risk of environmental disaster.

Although geographic disadvantage may present great difficulties for policy makers, it must be taken into account and looked at contextually when developing policy and strategies to promote inclusion. It is necessary to integrate social inclusion objectives into an overall sustainable development agenda, in particular strategies, plans and programmes to tackle the challenges posed by climate change, and other measures at mitigation so that the irreversible changes already underway are not further amplified over the next few decades. [44]

[41] Human development report 2007/2008, Fighting Climate Change, UNDP
[42] Climate change and human health - risks and responses. published by WHO in collaboration with UNEP and WMO. 2003 http://www.who.int/globalchange/publications/cchhsummary/en/
Summary report from the Joint UNEP-UNAIDS meeting to review a position paper on HIV and AIDS and Climate Change, July, 2008
http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2008/UNAIDS_UNEP_joint_statement_climate_change_en.pdf
[43] Human Development Report: 2007/2008: Fighting climate change: Human Solidarity in a divided world
[44] United Nations. 1987."Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development." General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987. Retrieved: 2007-04-12)

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KEY GROUPS TO BE INCLUDED: WHO IS MARGINALIZED?

Examining the concept of social inclusion with a specific group of marginalized people in mind is an important approach to locating exclusion in the societal framework. Lack of engagement in the processes, which constitute civil life, begins a cycle which is difficult to escape. It is the role and responsibility of policy-makers, social institutions, civil society, and the private sector to address these issues and to seek out, identify and make visible the marginalized.

There is a substantial variation from country to country regarding which groups are subject to exclusion. Women, people living in poverty, persons with disabilities, children, youth and older persons are particularly vulnerable. In many countries, social cohesion is threatened by social tensions or institutional biases that exclude people with different ethnic, religious or cultural backgrounds. Recent migrants are also often excluded by local communities or society at large.

Social groups with particular disadvantages and vulnerabilities and groups that are discriminated against and/or marginalized are the natural, though not sole, beneficiaries of inclusive policies. In a certain sense, every individual and member of society gains from a more inclusive society that encourages and promotes individual development and supports empowerment. Inclusive participation is quintessentially a bottom-up process where action is undertaken by ordinary people. It enhances the quality, credibility and most importantly, ownership of the decisions taken. That is why the inclusive society or "society for all" is not only an abstract notion but also a very practical policy goal.

Social Identity and Social Categorization

Society can be described as being composed of social groups. People perceive themselves partially as individuals with unique characteristics, perceptions, thoughts, dreams, hopes, and so on. This constitutes their individual identities. People also perceive themselves as members of social groups and others perceive them as such. This constitutes their social identities.[45] Social identity is understood as the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups[46]People have multiple social identities corresponding to widening circles of group memberships, such as gender, age, education, economic status, ethnicity, religion, language, nationality, etc. Social identity can be made evident through the use of markers such as language, belief, clothes, and behavior, and the effect of the markers depends on their recognition by others. The individual can discuss the meaning of the markers with others in a negotiation of their social identity[47].

Social identity can be a source, as well as an outcome of processes of social exclusion. In general, people desire a positive social identity and to belong to a group that is valued, respected and resourceful, rather than a low social status group that threaten a positive social identity and reduce self-esteem. Often, individuals and groups achieve positive social identity through discriminating and/or excluding other groups that they perceive as lower status than themselves.

[45] Untied Nations, DESA, Participatory Dialogue: Towards a stable, safe and just society for all, 2007

[46] Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of inter-group behavior. In S. Worchel and L. W. Austin (eds.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Chigago: Nelson-Hall

[47] Mead, G. (1934) *Mind, Self, and Society*. University of Chicago Press.
Stryker, Sheldon (1968). "Identity Salience and Role Performance". *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 4: 558–64

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It is paradoxical, but groups that experience exclusion and discrimination are even more likely to discriminate against other groups of higher or lower status, so that they can raise their self-esteem.[48]

The power imbalances between groups with different social identities can lead to the use of labels to categorize others, often with the use of stereotypes, and based on characteristics such as appearance, age, physical status, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religious, political and cultural affiliations. Often these characteristics have been given meanings and values by those in power which result in discrimination, lack of access to socio-economic resources, and social exclusion. Examples of labels and categories could be *young Catholic woman in a wheelchair*, *Aboriginal older man*, *conservative female African-American from rural area,* and *young man from Asia living with HIV,* etc. The young Catholic woman may have difficulties being gainfully employed, not because of her condition but because there are physical barriers such as inaccessible buses or staircases in the workplace which obstruct her access. The young man from Asia may meet obstacles in his attempts to study abroad, as some countries do not permit access to people living with HIV. The process of labeling and categorization can lead to people concealing a social identity, in anticipation that they may experience discrimination or not be accepted in their society.

The meaning and values of these labels and categories may appear to reflect essential and inherent qualities, but in reality their meaning is a product of interaction and a social construction of a particular culture or society. They should be viewed as the result of the interaction between a person and his or her environment and not something that resides in the individual. So whether or not a specific characteristic leads to inclusion or exclusion of the individual depends on the society's values and culture, as well as the particular circumstances. Belonging to the category of women, for example, does not necessarily create a condition for exclusion. Furthermore, an individual can be included in one area, but excluded in another, and people who are marked by several disadvantageous characteristics are vulnerable to experiencing social exclusion in more spheres of life.

In order to achieve social inclusion it is necessary to change the meanings and values which are associated with unfavorable characteristics and the culture which they are embedded within, including unequal power relations. This is a comprehensive task which must take place at all levels of society. In this process it is important that the implicated individuals are involved and in a position to participate in defining the meaning and values of their own characteristics, markers and social identities. Some groups may wish to maintain their distinct group identities, languages, traditional beliefs, worldviews and ways of life,[49] without integrating into mainstream society. This should be possible in an inclusive society, as social inclusion implies that the rules of society apply to all identity groups, without necessarily integrating the identities of individuals or groups.[50] Social inclusion processes aims at ensuring that society is accepting of all people, and those who are different from others are not only included, but given the possibility to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. The effect of everyone having the possibility to participate in defining the meaning of their own social identities will be a society which is inclusive and participatory, which embraces diversity and instills a sense of belonging.

The following section contains a discussion of some of the important social groups where the issue of social inclusion is most relevant. These groups include women, youth, and older

[48] Untied Nations, DESA, Participatory Dialogue: Towards a stable, safe and just society for all, 2007
[49] Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples' issues, United Nations, DESA, 2008, page, 7
[50] Participatory Dialogue: towards a stable, safe and just society for all, United Nations, DESA, 2007

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persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, ethnic and religious minorities, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Women

> *"It is impossible to realize our goals while discriminating against half the human race" Kofi Annan 2006*[51]

Around the world, traditional gender roles and deeper structural inequalities related to power imbalances rooted in patriarchal societies continue to place women at a disadvantage relative to men in all spheres of life. Many of these power-imbalances are acted out in the space of the household. Women are subject to social exclusion caused by issues such as poverty, power imbalances, gender-based violence, conflict, restrictions in access to resources and exclusion from decision-making. Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of poverty and constitute the majority among 1 billion people living in extreme poverty[52]. Their persistent limited access to credit, land and training in new technologies and fewer educational and employment opportunities, inhibit efforts to extricate them from poverty. Women's labor is more likely than men's to be underpaid or unpaid. Women constitute over 60 per cent of unpaid family workers, meaning that women of all ages continue to lack access to job security and social protection.[53] Violence against women is a pervasive violation of women's human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality and social inclusion of women. Women's access to formal peacemaking and peace building processes remains limited - they are hardly present during negotiations for peace agreements.[54] Furthermore, women's political participation is weak - globally, as of January 2007, women represented only 17 per cent of single and lower houses of parliament.[55] It is important to note that being a woman does not necessarily create a condition for exclusion as women are not a homogenous group.

Youth[56]

> *"There is an urgent need for policy-makers to develop clear strategies and policies aimed at promoting the participation of young people as important stakeholders, actors and partners. Such strategies include: setting youth issues as a national priority; identifying existing youth networks and youth leaders and involving them in policy-making processes; exploring policy options; providing opportunities for policy dialogue with youth, and building institutional capacity." (Expert Group Meeting on "Youth in Africa: Participation of youth as partners in peace and development in post-conflict countries", Namibia, 2006)*

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[51] Quoted in DFID 2007. Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-2009: making faster progress to gender equality
[52] Progress report and collection of resources on Women and Poverty by the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. INSTRAW, 2006
53 United Nations 2007. The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007
[54] General Assembly Sixty-second session, Introductory Statement by Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Assistant Secretary-General Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, 15 October 2007
[55] The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007, United Nations, New York, 2007
[56] The United Nations defines 'youth', as those persons falling between the ages of 15 and 24 years inclusive. It is, however, the operational definition and nuances of the term 'youth' often vary from country to country, depending on the specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors. Within the category of "youth", it is also important to distinguish between teenagers (13-19) and young adults (20-24).

Young people between the ages 15 and 24 years, constituted 18 per cent (1.2 billion) of the world's population in 2007, and are considered to be best educated youth generation in history[57]. They are also better equipped to explore abundant and diverse information and knowledge worldwide through information and communication technology. However, these advantages do not necessarily bring benefits to many young people, especially those living in developing countries. They are facing exclusion in economic social and political participation. Unemployment and underemployment is significantly higher among youth in many countries in the world.

The difficulty of finding decent work and productive employment is compounded by a host of other problems confronting young people, including illiteracy and insufficient training. The crisis of youth unemployment deprives young people of the opportunity to secure independent housing or the accommodations necessary for the establishment of families and participation in society. Unemployment creates a wide range of social ills and young people are particularly susceptible to its damaging effects: the lack of skills, low self-esteem, marginalization, impoverishment and social exclusion.[58] Furthermore youth unemployment can lead to increased vulnerability among young people to drugs and crime, which leads to further social exclusion. There is evidence that unemployment can expose youth to greater risks of lower future wages, repeated periods of unemployment, longer unemployment spells as adults, and income poverty, and thereby lead to the risk of life-long social exclusion.[59]

Many adults believe that the benefits of youth participation accrue mainly to the young people themselves, rather than to society as a whole. For example, youth are often invited to participate in adult-organized or political activities in ways that are tokenistic or symbolic. In addition, approaches to youth participation are frequently shaped by the expectations of adults on what youth will do or say, thereby limiting the involvement and input of young people.[60] Often the limitations which adults set on youth are the product of negative stereotyping in which youth are generalized as being immature, radical or rebellious.

Girls and young woman face certain risks, which may lead them to social exclusion. Measures are still inadequate to protect girls and young women from various forms of gender-based violence, including harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, forced early marriages, trafficking and sexual abuse. Early pregnancies and unsafe abortions are a major health risk for girls and young women around the world[61]. In addition to the stigma involved the unavailability of childcare services forces young mothers to drop out of school, which reduces their employability and increases the possibility of social exclusion in the future.

Older Persons

[57] World Youth Report 2007, UN, 2007
[58] The World Programme of Action for Youth on Employment, 1995 (A/RES/50/81)
[59] Conference room paper Commission for Social Development, Forty-fifth session, 7-16 February 2007, Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda, Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty- fourth special session of the General Assembly: Emerging Issues - Youth Employment: Impact, Challenges and Opportunities for Social Development
[60] Sunaina Maira (2007). Youth and Participation in Decision-Making. Paper presented at the Expert Group Meeting for the World Programme of Action for Youth: "Youth in Civil society" and "Youth and their Well-being" (19-21 May 2008) United Nations Headquarters, New York.
[61] United Nations 2007. World Youth Report 2007. Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges. (Sales No. E.07.IV.1)

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Older persons are a growing segment of the population, particularly in developed countries. One out of every ten persons is now 60 years or above, and it is predicted that by 2050, one out of five will be 60 years or older; and by 2150, one out of three persons will be 60 years or older[62]. In some developed countries today, the proportion of older persons is already one in four. During the first half of the 21st century that proportion will be close to one in two in some countries.[63] Exclusion of older persons is extremely common. In some ageing societies, a negative view around ageing has developed among young people, and some media use the term, "age wars", citing age-based competition over resources (particularly for health care and income security). The consequence of age-prejudice is the perpetuation of a mental "age ghetto" that is detrimental to society and, evidently, to the youth themselves as they grow old.[64]

While still in the workforce older workers face barriers in promotions and hiring. In many countries, companies more or less openly refuse to hire people above a certain age despite the increasing lifespan and average age of the population. Employers may also encourage early retirement or lay off disproportionately older/more experienced workers. For those who are no longer working, the loss of the sense of belonging and meaningfulness associated with work, and the engagement in a working population at large with a common goal, can be difficult.[65]

Despite prevalence in many places of narrow stereotypical images of older persons, the reality is that human diversity increases with age and the accumulation of life time experience enriches the different ways in which older people can negotiate their identity. The trends mentioned above, call for measures that will restore the possibility for easy interactions and collaborations of the generations. Also, the developmental potential and diversity of late life need to be explored and supported, while also addressing the health care and income security needs of this stage of life.

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities constitute a group at risk of exclusion. They are often denied the opportunities of full participation in the activities of the socio-economic and cultural system which they are part of. This deprivation comes about through physical and social barriers that have evolved from ignorance, indifference and fear. In most parts of the world there are deep and persistent negative stereotypes and prejudices against persons with disabilities, which lead to social exclusion. There are an estimated 650 million persons with disabilities worldwide, or 10 per cent of the global population. Approximately two thirds live in developing countries. In certain developing countries nearly 20 per cent of the general population in some way has a disability.[66]

Many persons with disabilities are excluded from active participation in society because of barriers for their physical access to public space, such as: doorways that are too narrow for wheelchairs; steps that cannot be mounted leading to buildings, buses, trains and aircraft; telephones and light switches that cannot be reached; sanitary facilities that cannot be used. Similarly they can be excluded by other types of barriers, for example oral communication which ignores the needs of the hearing impaired and written information which ignores the needs of the visually impaired. Such barriers are the result of ignorance and lack of concern;

[62] The Population Division, DESA United Nations
[63] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/popageing.html
[64] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/society_steps_fostering.html
[65] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/index.html
[66] Demographic yearbook ask Vanessa for exact reference

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they exist despite the fact that most of them could be avoided at no great cost by careful planning.[67] People tend to avoid contact and personal relationships with those who are disabled. The pervasiveness of the prejudice and discrimination affecting persons with disabilities and the degree to which they are excluded from participating in social interaction, produce psychological and social problems for many of them. The language used to refer to persons with disabilities has also played a significant role in the social exclusion of persons with disabilities. Terms such as "crippled" or "mentally retarded" are clearly derogative.[68]

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples have historically faced social exclusion and marginalization. They are disproportionately represented among the poor and extremely poor and their levels of access to adequate health and education services are well below national averages. Indigenous peoples number about 300 to 370 million globally. While they constitute approximately 5% of the world's population, indigenous peoples make up 15% of the worlds poor. Furthermore, indigenous peoples make up about one third of the world's 900 million extremely poor rural people.[69] Indigenous peoples face huge disparities in terms of access to and quality of education and health. In Guatemala, for example, 53.5% of indigenous young people aged 15-19 have not completed primary education, as compared to 32.2% of non-indigenous youth.[70] In Bolivia, the infant mortality rate among the indigenous population is close to 75/1000, as compared to 50/1000 for the non-indigenous population.[71] Indigenous peoples around the world have sought recognition of their identities, their ways of life and their right to traditional lands, territories and natural resources; yet throughout history, their rights have been violated.

Indigenous women suffer from multiple discriminations, both as women and as indigenous individuals. They are subjected to extreme poverty, trafficking, illiteracy, lack of access to ancestral lands, non-existent or poor health care and to violence in the private and the public sphere. This violence is exacerbated when indigenous communities find themselves in the midst of conflict and women become the target of violence with political motives, when going about their daily work, fetching wood or water for the family. Indigenous children and youth also face extreme problems and social exclusion caused for example lack of health care service, incarceration and lack of legal protection, forced relocation and loss of land, lack of culturally appropriated education, illiteracy and drop-out rates, trafficking and sexual exploitation. [72]

Migrants

One in every fifty human beings – more than 190 million persons – lives outside of their countries of origin as migrants. [73] Migrants differ in terms of ethnicity, religion, beliefs, languages and traditions from those in the communities to which they move. As a result, they

[67] World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly on 3 December 1982, by its resolution 37/52
[68] http://www.un.org/disabilities/
[69] IFAD (2007), *Statistics and key facts about indigenous peoples*
[70] UNESCO (2004), *La conclusión universal de la educación primaria en América Latina: ¿estamos realmente tan cerca? Informe Regional sobre los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio vinculados a la educación*
[71] ECLAC (2005), *Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective*
[72] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/index.html
[73] *Trends in total migrants stock: the 2005 revision*, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, February 2006

are often victims of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and social exclusion, having little or no participation, influence or communication with the processes in society. The fact that an increasing proportion of international migration today is irregular and unauthorized facilitates abuse and exploitation. But, even when their movements are legal and authorized, non-citizens face high levels of discrimination.[74]

Quite often migrants are geographically marginalized, grouped together in areas of disadvantage with little or no access to the mainstream labor market and economic and social opportunities. Cheaper and more available housing outside of cities can become the area where migrant's communities convene or conversely over-populated and disadvantaged urban areas. Access to services and transport may be hindered by location essentially excluding and marginalizing migrant communities.

The inclusion of migrants into the mainstream society can be hindered by a variety of forces: exclusionary social policies which unfairly exclude migrants from access to health, education and social security systems, or exclusionary elements within labor markets, which discriminate against migrants by non-recognition of qualifications and exclusion from some jobs on the basis of background rather than qualifications or proven ability and experience; citizenship and residency qualification guidelines that restrict access of immigrants and their children (and subsequent generations) and immigrant groups' cultural and linguistic rights not being recognized in all host societies.[75]

Ethnic and Religious Minorities

Every large society contains ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (Note[76]). Ethnic minorities may be migrant, indigenous or landless nomadic communities. Ethnic identity is marked by the recognition from others of a group's distinctiveness and by common cultural, linguistic, religious, behavioral or biological traits. Persons belonging to religious minorities have a faith which is different to that held by the majority.

Ethnic and religious minorities are often victims of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and social exclusion. In some countries, people may be prosecuted for their religious faith and practices. Xenophobia towards ethnic and religious minorities can in some cases be directed against a group which has been present for centuries. This form of xenophobia can elicit or facilitate hostile and violent reactions, such as mass expulsion of immigrants, or in the worst case, genocide. It is worth noting that some ethnic or religious minorities choose to maintain their cultural or religious identities, and intentionally resist any attempts to assimilate themselves into mainstream society. These groups should however also be included and given an opportunity to actively participate in political, economic, social and cultural activities in their societies.

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[74] *International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia*, A publication jointly produced by: International Labour Office (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) In consultation with Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). August 2001

[75] Aki has forgotten to put the complete reference in the reference list !!! Hugo, 2005: 30-31…

[76] Note: Minority is understood as a sociological group that is disadvantaged to a dominant group, in various areas, such as, social status, education, employment, wealth or political power. Minority does not mean population minority group.

Ethnic and religious minorities are not necessarily small groups; they may consist of one third or even a half of a country's population. Nevertheless, members of minority groups may be treated differently in their society, which often creates tension between majority and minority groups. Countries where "power and wealth are very unfairly distributed between ethnic or religious groups" are more prone to conflicts, and therefore there is a need to "promote political arrangements in which all groups are fairly represented, combined with human rights, minority rights and broad-based economic development.[77]" The diversity that minorities bring to the nations should be understood as important contributions to the society.

People living with HIV/AIDS

> "*Since the beginning of the epidemic, stigma, discrimination, and gender inequality have been identified…as major obstacles to effective responses to HIV. Yet there has never been serious political and programmatic commitment to doing anything about them."* [78]
> *Peter Piot, Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS*

People with diseases are often subject to social exclusion, and people living with HIV and AIDS are particularly often subject to discrimination, human rights abuses and social exclusion. Stigma and discrimination operate at multiple levels throughout society: within individuals, families, communities, institutions and media, and in government policies and practices.[79] In many countries and communities, the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and the resulting discrimination can be as devastating as the illness itself: abandonment by spouse and/or family, social ostracism, job and property loss, school expulsion, denial of medical services, lack of care and support, and violence.[80] Civil society reports from over 30 countries indicate that stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS remains pervasive. 40% of countries, including half of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, have yet to adopt anti-discrimination laws to protect people living with HIV/AIDS.[81]

Furthermore, stigma and discrimination constitute one of the greatest barriers to dealing effectively with the epidemic. Stigma and discrimination discourage governments from acknowledging or taking timely action against HIV/AIDS. They deter individuals from finding out about their HIV status. And they inhibit those who know they are infected from sharing their diagnosis and taking action to protect others and from seeking treatment and care for themselves.[82]

Women living with HIV in general experience greater stigma and discrimination than men and are more likely to experience its harshest and most damaging forms, and have fewer resources

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[77] Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the Untied Nations in his statement on presenting his Millennium Report, 3 April 2000.

[78] Piot, P., *How to reduce the stigma of AIDS,* Keynote address. August 12, 2006: Symposium at the XVI International AIDS Conference, Toronto.

[79]Heijnders, M. and Van der Meij, S.. The fight against stigma: An overview of stigma-reduction strategies and interventions. *Psychology, Health and Medicine*, 2006. 11(3): p. 353-363.; Ogden, J. and L. Nyblade, Common at Its Core: HIV-Related Stigma Across Contexts. 2005, International Center for Research on Women: Washington, DC.

[80] UNAIDS, 2007. Report: Reducing HIV Stigma and Discrimination: a critical part of national AIDS programmes- A resource for national stakeholders in the HIV response

[81] Combating stigma and discrimination is vital to improving access to HIV/AIDS care, say UNAIDS and WHO, Press release Kampala, Uganda, 26 October 2003, http://data.unaids.org/Media/Press-Releases01/kampala_pr_26oct03_en.pdf

[82] http://www.unaids.org/en/PolicyAndPractice/StigmaDiscrim/default.asp

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for coping with it. Violence is a severe consequence of stigma faced principally by women. Both women and girls report increased violence at the hands of their partners for requesting condom use, accessing voluntary testing and counseling, refusing sex within or outside marriage or for testing HIV-positive. [83]

IV. APPROACHES TO PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

> *Promoting respect for democracy, the rule of law, diversity and solidarity and removing institutionalized inequalities are critical to successful social integration. To that end, national Governments and their development partners have utilized the educational systems and the various media to advance an understanding of the multiple facets of social integration and to promote tolerance in their societies. Participation by all, including civil society organizations, in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring requires responsive and accessible Government as well as capacity of and opportunity for all, especially the vulnerable and groups with special needs. Equity, social justice and equality of access and opportunity, for both basic services and work, are important concepts to promote social integration.*
>
> *The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action[84], which was further underscored in the five year review of implementation of the Summit.*

Social inclusion, as a multi-dimensional process to create conditions, which enable full and active participation in all aspects of life, is a concept with universal appeal. It is evident that social inclusion must be and has become a priority in international policy discourse. However, the challenge lies at the core: how to apply the concept in real life situations, and how to operationalize it through mobilizing all actors in society, at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

There are numerous ways to promote social inclusion and remove impeding obstacles. Important are protection and empowerment of the vulnerable and marginalized, proclaiming the right to differ, and eliminating discrimination based on attributes, such as gender, age and ethnicity. Social inclusion can also be approached as an overarching cross-sectoral concept, which will then be incorporated, as an objective and a process, into sectoral policies, strategies, programmes, and other initiatives. Each policy or strategy must be reviewed as to whether it is inclusive, and if participatory measures are installed in the policy formulation, implementation and monitoring processes. This approach is particularly useful when tackling the structural aspects of social inclusion/exclusion, in areas such as poverty eradication, employment and education. Institutional structures need to be transformed and institutional capacities need to be strengthened to promote social inclusion. Strategies need to be devised for enhancing visibility, taking into consideration the individual's needs and concerns, facilitating dialogue, and promoting community participation. The following sections discuss some of the existing frameworks and approaches and provide an overview of conceptual framework considered to be most relevant in promoting social inclusion.

[83] UNAIDS, 2007. Report: Reducing HIV Stigma and Discrimination: a critical part of national AIDS programmes- A resource for national stakeholders in the HIV response

[84] This was further underscored in the five year review of implementation of the Summit (E/CN.5/2005/6, para 166)

REMOVING THE OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL INCLUSION

Eliminating/Amending Discriminatory Laws and Practices

Many exclusions stems from discrimination of individuals or groups on the grounds of their attributes, or social, economic or physical disadvantages. The act of discrimination is a violation of international human rights, as human rights ensure that every single human being is entitled to enjoy his or her rights without unreasonable distinction as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. Human rights are founded on respect for the inherent dignity and worth of each person, and are applied equally and without discrimination to all people. Eliminating or amending customary laws or practices that are discriminatory will be the fundamental first step to lay the foundations for an inclusive society.

There are core legally binding international human rights treaties within the United Nations human rights system, which can be effectively applied to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups. These are: Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[85] (CERD), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD), and Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPMW)[86].

In addition, there are many other universal instruments relating to human rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Among those, the following are useful to address the issue of those who belong to vulnerable groups. For the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities, Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[87], Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989), Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities[88], Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief[89] and United Nations Principles for Older Persons[90].

Special Rapporteurs are appointed to monitor the effective implementation of these Conventions and Declarations. For example, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief[91], is to examine "incidents and governmental actions in all parts of the world which are inconsistent with the provisions of the Declaration on the include Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief" as well as "to recommend

[85] Here, "racial discrimination" is defined as "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life

[86] http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/index.htm#core

[87] Adopted by the General Assembly Resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007

[88] Adopted by General Assembly Resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992

[89] Adopted by General Assembly Resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981

[90] Adopted by General Assembly Resolution 46/91 of 16 December 1991

[91] Created by the Commission on Human Rights in 1986, in its resolution 1986/20 (check)

remedial measures"[92]. In order to monitor the way which States Parties are fulfilling their human rights obligation under the respective treaty, mechanisms have been developed for each Convention[93], including monitoring Committees and Optional Protocols, which allow any individuals or groups to submit their complaints directly to the Committee. For example, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is monitoring discrimination against minorities through examining the periodic reports. In addition, since 1993, the Committee developed early warning measures to prevent serious violations of the Convention, with the aim to prevent existing problems from escalating into conflicts.[94] However, as further addressed in the following section, these Conventions and International Treaties, national laws to eliminate inequality and/or discriminations have limited effects, due to lack of enabling environments, such as easy access to information, appropriate mechanisms and funds for enforcement, empowerment of those who are marginalized or disadvantaged to enable their participation.

Special Measures

Some Conventions allow State Parties to take special measures to eliminate discrimination and stereotyping or protect the rights of certain specific groups in order to meet their particular needs. For example, ILO Convention No. 111 specifically refers to special measures to address the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples.[95] Another example is the article 5 of CEDAW, which requires to take "all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women", in order to "eliminate prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women".

Quota systems are another effective way of ensuring inclusion of excluded groups into employment opportunities and political institutions. For example, in the case of determining women's political representation, the most decisive factor remains gender quota systems. In 2006, countries with quotas nearly doubled the number of women elected, compared to countries without any form of gender quota system.[96]

International Policy Frameworks pertinent to social groups

Achieving social inclusion requires long-term strategic response on the part of all institutions and organizations, also at an international level. There are mechanisms in place through a variety of international bodies and groups to support empowerment and capacity building of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples. In this area, comprehensive frameworks have already been developed with their implementation action plans or programmes adopted at the United Nations summits and conferences. Among others, the following are important: The Beijing Platform for Action; The World Programme of Action for Youth; The Madrid International Plan of Action on

[92] Since 1994, the Special Rapporteur has on a yearly basis been requested to report to the General Assembly, as reiterated most recently in General Assembly resolution 61/161.
[93] Pamphlet No. 4 of the UN Guide for Minorities
http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuideMinorities4en.pdf and also see:
http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/minorities.htm
[94] Pamphlet No.4 of the UN Guide for Minorities
[95] Eliminating discrimination against indigenous and tribal peoples in employment and occupation, A Guide to ILO Convention No. 111 (2007)
[96] Statement by Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women at the 10th session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Quito, Ecuador, 6 August 2007

Ageing; World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. These commitments are expected to be implemented nationally and sub-nationally. Further efforts should, therefore be centered around effective implementation of these frameworks and programmes of action concerning the vulnerable groups and individuals at national, regional and local levels, in order to promote social inclusion.

The issues pertinent to these social groups are discussed at the following inter-governmental forum, the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women. These functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meet annually to monitor the progress of the implementation of these international agreements, [97] submit recommendations to ECOSOC, which will subsequently be adopted at the General Assembly. In addition, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues serves as an advisory body to the ECOSOC, providing expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues. A Forum on Minority Issues[98] has also been established in 2007, which provides a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues related to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. This Forum will provide thematic contributions and expertise to the work of the independent expert on minority issues, as well as identify and analyze best practices, challenges, opportunities and initiatives for the further implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

Transforming the Mindset of People

While changes in legislation and policies supportive of vulnerable and marginalized groups, improvements in their access to resources and participation are fundamental steps to take, they do not by themselves, change relations of power, as their implementation is frequently obstructed by entrenched structures and values, and undesirable discourses, with culture and religion continuing to be used by a privileged few to legitimize unequal power structures. Unequal power relations must therefore also be challenged and transformed at the meso- and micro-level if social inclusion is to be enhanced. Social inclusion of the excluded groups can only happen if everyone becomes "part of the group" that defines the culture, values and standards of the society in which they live. Actions which can be used towards this purpose include education, dialogue and public awareness campaigns. [99]

It is vital that the entire educational system is geared towards addressing the patterns of exclusion, and promoting pluralism, and respect for diversity and dialogue, as exclusionary behavior is often perpetuated through educational curricula. School curricula promoting social inclusion should be established, for example, a curriculum offering theoretical understanding of how we fit into a larger global. Faith-based organizations and media can also play a major role in transforming people's mindset, and therefore should be included as important stakeholders in the endeavor in promoting social inclusion. Both faith-based organizations and media can be very effective in increasing socially inclusive discourse and reduction of use of language, which causes categorization and discrimination.

The process of social inclusion should not merely be reversing the social order from one group to another, but should be transforming a society into a new, more inclusive one. It is a process to

[97] See: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/
[98] Human Rights Council resolution 6/15 of 28 September 2007
[99] Quoted from message from forum: "*Where's the Power in Women's Empowerment?"* organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). organized by Ms. Noeleen Hayzer, Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP's Executive Secretary

"level the playing field" for both the disadvantaged and advantaged, which is required for social transformation. Transforming the mindset of people is about creating solidarity and about the realization that though there are differences we are all human beings; it is about encouraging the acceptance of others and interrelations among groups who may not share affinity, common values, or have empathy towards one another. So far, efforts tend to focus on empowering those who are marginalized through cultivating confidence and capacity, but not so much on strengthening the capacity of the dominating majority. It is critical, however, to engage the people in mainstream society, so that they feel more comfortable in embracing those who are excluded, feel less insecure for their participation, and are ensured that the inclusion of individuals and groups with different cultures, beliefs or values does not pose a threat to them.

Participatory dialogue can be an effective tool to create a safe space for people with different backgrounds to create positive relationships and common understandings. Unlike negotiation or mediation, dialogue focuses on building relations and trust among individuals or groups that hold fundamentally different positions, which are grounded in different values, culture, identities or world views. These issues, involving values, belief or identity, are so deep-rooted that there is very little space for compromise. And in such circumstances, "the traditional method of conflict resolution does not produce the expected results, as parties involved feel threatened, and there is upsurge in stereotyping, misrepresentation, and marginalization".[100] Dialogue can facilitate lowering boundaries between those who are excluded and included, through providing opportunities for learning each other's points of view as well as feelings, which will create human connection and mutual understanding, and eventually mutual trust. When people do not have to "give up" something of value, they are more likely to behave in a less self-defensive manner, and engage in the process to create a common future for society.

INCLUSIVE POLICY FRAEWORK

Once policies have determined and prescribed an outline of action to be taken, the institutional mechanisms at the national level must take on the responsibility of implementation. To promote social inclusion, the legal systems and security forces must be impartial and uphold the most basic rights for all members of society. Schools, universities and governments must assure the access and accessibility to education for every individual. Social institutions must develop and create housing and welfare systems, training programmes and promote knowledge, information and community responsibility.

Governance and policy-making processes need to become more transparent and inclusive in their functioning and also uphold social inclusion principles. Policy must be tailored and rewritten to reflect the needs, concerns, languages and cultures of diverse population. If the aim is to have an inclusive society, where everyone participates and engages with societal and governmental processes, then it is necessary to encourage or create a system where socially excluded groups become stakeholders in the social, political and economic process and the success of a society. Simply writing a policy which includes them will not create this. If people feel that they have a voice then they will be encouraged to include themselves. The chance to use this voice must be offered and members of society must be engaged.

Finally, it is important to understand that inclusive policies apply to everyone, and should not be understood as a special treatment for certain groups, which often exacerbate the existing division rather than create unity in society. The core idea of social inclusion is ensuring equal

[100] Participatory Dialogue: Towards a stable, safe and just society for all", UN 2007, page 56 – 57.

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treatment of all regardless of their background, so that everyone has equal opportunities and access, equal rights and responsibilities, and is able to participate in all aspects of their life activities. Social inclusion is an overarching concept that aims at transforming our thinking, process, policies, strategies, and programmes. While there is a need to target our efforts to empower those who are excluded, it is also important to make the mainstreaming society more inclusive. And this will require the efforts of not only government, but also every individual, community, local authorities, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, the private sector, as well as the very people and groups who are disadvantaged and marginalized. Everyone has a stake and responsibility in achieving an inclusive society.

Setting Social Inclusion Objectives

Based on the overall framework established at the international level, national governments need to identify their own social inclusion goals and objectives, incorporating their specific needs and context. The broad social inclusion goals or objectives need to be connected to the particular vision people have for their society – a positive image of an inclusive society of the future. This vision needs to be framed as concretely as possible, which allows effective monitoring and analysis, possibly using a set of indicators. These goals and objectives then trickle down to local and community levels, so that there is coherence between goals set at the national and local levels. The objectives set by each community may differ, but the broad overall goals or principles should be commonly shared across communities.

In addition to objectives, it is useful to set a couple of principles to make social inclusion goals more explicit. Such principles may be: shared future, rights and civic responsibilities, mutual respect, respect for diversity, social cohesion, equality, equity, social justice, social contract, trust in the institutions as well as in neighbors, sense of belonging, inter-connectedness, etc.

A good example of social inclusion objectives and principles has been formulated by the UK Social Unit's Commission on Integration and Cohesion[101]. The primary concern of the Commission is social cohesion that encompasses racial, ethnic and religious differences, primarily arising out of the community conflicts which emerged recently. (See Text Box XX) A second example is a set of objectives from the "Good Relations" work of Northern Ireland, which was recently a conflict-ridden divided society. (See Text Box XX).

[101] Report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, "Our Shared Future" (2007) http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/Our_final_report.aspx

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Setting Objectives

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion of UK was established in 2006 to promote social cohesion that encompasses racial, ethnic and religious differences. Their objectives are expressed in the following terms:

- *There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country*
- *There is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn.*
- *Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment.*
- *There is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny.*
- *There is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common.*
- *There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.*

(Fitzduff, 2007:4)

Table XX

In Northern Ireland, improving relationships between and within communities is a long term goal. The "Good Relations Indicators Working Group" was established to identify and develop a set of high level, outcome focused indicators to monitor the impact of the policy and strategic framework of good relations over time. The priority outcomes were identified as follows.

1. *Northern Ireland society is free from racism, sectarianism and prejudice.*
2. *All places are shared, safe, inclusive and welcoming for everyone.*
3. *Positive and harmonious relationships exist between communities at interface areas.*
4. *Increased sharing in education*
5. *Northern Ireland is a community where people of all backgrounds work, live, learn and play together.*
6. *All work places are safe and shared.*
7. *Minority ethnic people participate in public, political and economic life.*
8. *Minority ethnic people benefit from equality in health and welfare.*
9. *Northern Ireland is a place where cultural diversity is embraced, respected, valued.*
10. *Victims/survivors have a voice.*
11. *Public service delivery in Northern Ireland provides value for money on a shared, inclusive and equal basis.*

Source: Good Relations Indicators Baseline Report (2007) http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/good-relations-report.pdf

Table XX

Mainstreaming Social Inclusion Objectives

Once social inclusion goals and principles are set, the next step is mainstreaming social inclusion goals and objectives in various legislations, sectoral policies, strategies, programmes and projects, for example mainstreaming social inclusion goals and objectives into education policies, employment policies, or poverty reduction policies, or public information policies. Other examples are: mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities into the wider development agenda[102] and mainstreaming of gender perspectives across legislation and policies.

Social inclusion may be perceived as a big step or as involving a dramatic change. This notion should be dispelled, as the mainstreaming of the concept of social inclusion is very achievable and would constitute in many areas only slight changes but with very significant effect. The concept should be approached as a positive development tool, one committed to creating a sustainable and increasingly successful society for all. Respecting and accommodating diversity, while sustaining or even enhancing economic growth and cultural and community benefits, as well as personal and collective satisfaction - such a vision of inclusiveness should be endorsed by every member of society.

There are many areas in which the ideals of social inclusion can be implemented. It is necessary to identify the main themes and situations where positive, measurable and effective change can be brought about. It seems as though the fostering of a stake-holders attitude in all members of society so that an investment in the economic, political and social processes is seen as productive, useful and effective, is the most explicit goal in achieving the objectives of social inclusion.

The EU objectives for Social Protection and Social Inclusion exemplify how social inclusion can be comprehensively addressed as a common priority area (see table XX). The European Union is presently in an optimal position to tackle social inclusion and exclusion issues with an overarching justice system and many common policies, goals and a joint commission. Coming out of the Lisbon Agenda (2000), social inclusion has become one of the priority areas of EU development policy. The objectives highlight the cross-disciplinary and multidimensional character of inclusion linked to sectoral policies and statistical data (indicators) for all EU member states.

EU Objectives for Social Protection and Social Inclusion

EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process currently covers three strands: Social Inclusion; Pensions; and Healthcare and Long-term Care

Three objectives of Social Inclusion strand are:

In order to make "a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion", three objectives were set under the social inclusion strand, that are:

- "access for all to the resources, rights and services needed for participation in society, preventing and addressing exclusion, and fighting all forms of discrimination leading to exclusion";

[102] Report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons [A/62/157], 2007

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- ”the active social inclusion of all, both by promoting participation in the labour market and by fighting poverty and exclusion”;
- ”that social inclusion policies are well-coordinated and involve all levels of government and relevant actors, including people experiencing poverty, that they are efficient and effective and mainstreamed into relevant public policies, including economic, budgetary, education and training policies and structural fund programmes”.

Key Priorities of the EU

- increase labour market participation by expanding active policies and ensuring a better linkage between social protection, education and lifelong learning;
- Modernize social protection systems to ensure they are sustainable, adequate and accessible to all;
- Tackle disadvantages in education and training by investing more in human capital at all ages and focusing particularly on the most disadvantaged groups;
- Eliminate child poverty by guaranteeing their education, increasing the assistance given to their families and ensuring that their rights are protected;
- Ensure decent accommodation for vulnerable groups and develop integrated approaches to tackling homelessness;
- Improve access to quality services in the fields of health, social services, transport and the new information and communication technologies;
- Eliminate gender-based discrimination and increase the social integration of people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and immigrants.

Source: Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2005

Table XX

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

Some question whether the costs of promoting social inclusion and participation are worth the benefits. Contrary to a widely shared view, economic constraints to redress in equality and exclusion are not very robust. In fact, many countries that achieve relatively equal societies demonstrate stronger economic competitiveness. (Therborn: 2007) Moreover, the cost of inclusion should not be approached through only economic terms, as it also includes social costs, which need to be carefully examined. The consequences for not including a part of the society will be significant in the long run: increase in insecurity, high crime rates, brain drain, emigration, social conflict, expansion of slums, instability, urban violence, divided societies, and violent conflict, etc.

Social inclusion could also be viewed as an opportunity cost. There is, not only social costs of excluding some, but also lost opportunity by not including them. For example, in a globalized world, understanding people with different backgrounds, their culture, their customs and values, has added-value. Those individuals, employers, or institutions who understand diverse views appeal to a wide range of population, and are therefore, more likely to succeed. For example, in a global marketplace, a company that employs a diverse workforce is more creative, innovative, and better able to understand the demographics of the marketplace it serves and is thus better equipped to thrive in that marketplace than a company that has a more limited range of employee demographics.[103]

[103] Bassett-Jones, N. and Lloyd, G. (2005) 'The paradox of diversity management', *Journal of Creativity and Innovation Management*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 169-175, June

The cost of social inclusion is ultimately a matter of political will, as those who are advantaged are skeptical to change as they have vested interest in maintaining status quo. Building awareness around costs of exclusionary policies and practice, from multiple perspectives, is crucial. If we carefully analyze the costs and benefits of inequality/equality and exclusion/ inclusion for each individual, each community, as well as for the society as a whole, the benefit that social inclusion could bring about is evident. Social inclusion is a necessary key process for sustainable development. Therefore, the cost for social inclusion should be seen as a long-term investment for sustainable development.

V. CONCLUSION

Social inclusion is a multi-dimensional and cross-sectional concept, which needs to be mainstreamed into various areas, at national, regional and local levels. It lies, not only within one tier or section of society, nor does it rely on only one area of policy to exact changes. There is a larger and infinitely more comprehensive aim to social inclusion that encompasses many areas of society and humanity.

If a vision can be created which is communicable to the masses and stems from a collective agreement that promotes diversity, tolerance, empowerment, inclusion, participation and community-minded action, then important steps can be made. Fostering a common purpose in all members of society which has input from all sectors is crucial.

Understanding how the dimensions of inclusion are structured and realizing its diverse nature is necessary for this. As inequality and exclusion are produced systematically, they can be tackled. It is necessary to distinguish inequality from being different. While we can be different, we all need to be provided with equal opportunities and access. Accommodating people with different backgrounds and working together to build a common future is a core value of an inclusive society. Developing a concept of inclusion in which people get together, are interconnected, and share sense of belonging as well as sense of responsibility, is necessary.

If this concept of social inclusion is promoted, cycles of exclusion and traditional blockades, structural and perceived, will begin to dismantle. This would constitute an important step towards an inclusive society. Equally, while the actual fiscal responsibilities involved in creating inclusive societies may initially present a challenge, the viewpoint should be promoted that the investment in motivating participation in all sectors of society is an investment in a successful and sustainable future and a more balanced society, meeting the needs of all it's members, where investment in inclusion and the resulting change in society are actually beneficial to all.

Finally, there is a need for specific tools to map out the areas for improvement and measure progress in order to formulate or amend existing policies and interventions to make them more inclusive. Chapter Two of this report will discuss at length the necessary conditions, requirements and possible approaches to capture, analyze and measure the multiple dimensions of social inclusion, the reasoning behind the need and roles for social indicators and the process of developing indicators that fit for specific contexts of each society.

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Recommendations of EGM (2007)

II-1. Actions to be taken to reduce obstacles for social inclusion

In order to reduce obstacles for social inclusion and promote respect for human dignity, the following actions were proposed:

- Set clear and targeted social inclusion, cohesion and well-being goals, with the appropriate strategies to achieve these goals, including the implementation of policies that will further social inclusion. Suggested policy goals include:
    - Promote social inclusion, social cohesion;
    - Promote gender equality;
    - Ensure equal opportunity for all, including on the labor market;
    - Promote equal access to basic quality social services (education, health, transport, shelter, etc.);
    - Ensure access for all to the resources (including land), rights and services, that are necessary for a true participation in society;
    - Prevent and address social exclusion, and eliminate all forms of discrimination;
    - Recognize the dignity and respect for each and every individual regardless of their background, as a moral and legal principle/instrument;
    - Overcome spatial components of exclusion (e.g. land policy);
    - Create safety and sense of security; and
    - Establish well-being of people as a policy objective.

  In order to achieve the above policy goals, there is a need to strengthen capacities and develop tools in the following areas:

    - Formulate social inclusion policies that are adequate, accessible, financially sustainable, adaptable and efficient;
    - Provide support to and strengthen capacities of institutions that are working on justice and social inclusion;
    - Enhance access to knowledge and information (including ICTs);
    - Empower people to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies, as well as in the planning, budgeting, and resource mobilization (including civil society, the private sector, academia, various social groups);
    - Invest in social capital - building trust amongst people and between institutions;
    - Invest in and enhance capacities of key social welfare institutions that can create effective linkages between existing sectoral indicators and expertise with inclusive goals (For example, public health and public mental health infrastructures and their use of, and responses to, measures implicated in inclusion/exclusion such as well-being and social trust through population-level interventions);
    - Build effective partnerships, recognizing the complementary responsibilities of different sectors within society, within and between (sub-)national governments, as well as the need for an increased cooperation between United Nations entities and other international institutions;
    - Create an open space for dialogue to explore policy options, common values and identity, bringing communities together, and ensuring that the excluded and marginalized are heard;
    - Build capacity in good governance, accountability and transparency at national and sub-national levels;
    - Strengthen statistical capacity for data collection and better analysis and better use of data at national and sub-national levels; and
    - Mobilization and mobility.

II-2. Mechanisms or processes most productive in creating and sustaining an inclusive society

- Articulate the concept of social inclusion as a foundation for inclusive policies, which affect all citizens' lives, in particular those of the minority and vulnerable groups.

    - Clearly state the right/opportunity to be different while also being included and actively participate in processes, spaces, and institutions.
    - Differentiate the concept of "social inclusion" from merely "reducing disparity among people", which were common indicators in the past. Social inclusion is a much wider concept, incorporating distinctive and relevant dimensions such as: alienation; social mobility; access to space; sense of ownership; trust among people and institutions, being part of society; and well-being of individuals. Social inclusion indicators should go beyond traditional disparity indicators, and should not rely on a single indicator alone.
    - As such, the following components should be further explored and considered to be an integral part of social inclusion:
        - Social capital: linking the relationship between the state, government and public services, and citizens, focusing on the interface
        - Overcome spatial components of exclusion (e.g. land policy)
        - Social mobility: effective public transportation system, walk-ways to increase access for marginalized communities to social and economic life, including labor market
        - Mobilization:
        - Well-being: capture how people experience their lives (how people think and feel about their lives). Try to integrate a subjective and cognitive/affective component into the concept of social inclusion, which is currently absent. This will include the use of measures already developed in this area that can link with existing capacities such as community mental health networks.
        - Open Space for everyone to engage in dialogues and exchanges (i.e., Porto Alegre, Observatory in the City Hall)

- Mainstream the objectives of social inclusion into existing polices and programmes in all areas, including regulatory framework, governance, economic planning, education, health, housing, employment, and urban planning, etc.

    - Demonstrate commitment to "inclusion-driven" policy-making measures, through prioritizing social inclusion dimension, better described as "Convivencia/ Interconnectedness/Ubuntu", or "sense and feeling of belonging", in rectifying existing economic and social disparities and policy priorities. This "Convivencia/ Interconnectedness/ Ubuntu" dimension is to be considered as an overarching goal for people's aspiration and, at the same time, it needs to be incorporated into all polices and programmes in other key areas. Specific actions to be taken include:
        - Formulate policies that promote a sense of belonging
        - Redefine collective pride and identity in an inclusive and participatory manner
        - Define a shared future with accommodating diversity
        - Create a mechanism for envisioning processes at local, regional and national levels.
        - Develop resilient and accessible dispute resolution mechanisms such as, facilitation, consultation, participatory dialogue, public hearing to enable reasonable accommodations of different views, values and cultures, etc.
        - Invest in measuring strategies that capture this dimension

Such strategies should have actionable responses that prioritize the connections between the "Convivencia/Interconnectedness/Ubuntu" dimension and other disparities and policy priorities

- Identify indicators on inclusiveness of a society, and monitor the effectiveness of the inclusive policies and strategies. It is important to use a multi-method approach that uses qualitative approaches in addition to quantitative ones, to provide explanation for the findings.

- Advocate through effective use of the media, and effective partnerships with policy makers, civil societies, and the private sector to put into force the social inclusion agenda. Also support corporate bodies to meet their social responsibility goals.

Note:

1. Seven essential securities which are often denied: labor market security (adequate employment opportunities through high levels of employment ensured by macroeconomic policies); employment security (protection against arbitrary dismissal, regulation on hiring and firing, employment stability compatible with economic dynamism); job security (a niche designated as an occupation or "career", the opportunity to develop a sense of occupation through enhancing competences); work security (protection against accidents and illness at work, through safety and health regulations, limits on working time and so on); skill reproduction security (widespread opportunities to gain and retain skills, through innovative means competences); work security (protection against accidents and illness at work, through safety and health regulations, limits on working time and so on); skill reproduction security (widespread opportunities to gain and retain skills, through innovative means as well as apprenticeships and employment training); income security (provision of adequate incomes); and representation security (protection of collective voice in the labour market through independent trade unions and employers' organizations and social dialogue institutions).

For the ILO however, the most meaningful way of looking at the situation of those in the informal economy is in terms of decent work deficits. Poor-quality, unproductive and unremunerative jobs that are not recognized or protected by law, the absence of rights at work, inadequate social protection, and the lack of representation and voice are most pronounced in the informal economy, especially at the bottom end among women and young workers.

2. Out of 59 countries observed by the World Bank, 10 countries (17%) demonstrated positive income growth with decreasing inequality, 26 countries (44%) positive income growth but increasing inequality, 20 countries (34%) negative income growth with increasing inequality, and
3 countries (5%) negative income growth with decreasing inequality.

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Chapter two: Role of Local Governments in Promoting Social Inclusion and Participation

Stavros Stavrou & Liam Coakley

I. Introduction

New challenges posed by globalization affect not only national governments, planners and policy-makers, but also regional, provincial and local governments who need to cope with new dynamics operational at a level beyond their direct control. How people set and meet their goals and aspirations depends to a large extent, on their immediate economic and social environment. Successful policies to respond to globalization need to start with local communities[104]. Indeed, it could be argued that it is at the local level where contemporary social and economic transitions have the most fundamental impact.

In a globalized world, not only information and goods, but also people are on the move across cities, provinces, and national borders. An urban life characterized by living together with people with different backgrounds has become an increasingly complex reality of daily life for many ordinary people. How to manage diversity in a transformative manner has thus become a critical issue for local governments that aim to build a peaceful and prosperous society. While an ongoing degree of social transformation is inevitable and indeed ordinarily to be welcomed as part of a developing society, the sometimes rapid onset of such transformations in recent years has led to the experience of tension in many places. Confrontations stemming from cultural, ethnic, religious and other differences sometimes give rise to irrational fears, prejudices, and can encourage the development of racism and practices of discrimination.

Within the next few years, more than half of the world's population will be living in and around cities[105]. The city is home of the socially excluded as well as the included and it is the place where the difference between the included and the excluded is painfully visible. Mayors and city councils take most of the decisions that have a practical bearing on people's lives. In a modern metropolis, what the city governors do and don't do, what they strive for and neglect, determines the level of social inclusion in their areas of responsibility. A metropolitan city is "a universe in itself, as complicated as a national scene, but more intense, since the subjects of your governing are only miles away and when there is roar of disgruntlement the sound cannot be ignored" (Martin Angeby, 2007).

Negative social conditions at the local level creates fertile ground for the exclusion of those who are different from the majority of people living in the society based on their social, cultural, religious, ethnic or behavioral characteristics. The sense of impermanence created by exclusion discourages the excluded from investing themselves in the locales in which they live. Lack of attachment to the place of residence can have a negative effect, especially when experienced

[104] A Fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all, ILO, 2004

[105] According to the third World Urban Forum (Vancouver, June 2006), most of the population growth is happening in cities, and the majority of them are in the poorest countries. It is projected that the number of people living in urban areas will, for the first time in history, outnumber those living in rural areas. In 1976, one-third of the world's inhabitants lived in cities. Thirty years later in 2006, cities are home to half the world's population, and data suggests this proportion will continue to grow to two-thirds of the world's population - or six billion people - by 2050. http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=41

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horizontally across a sub-set of the population. Excluded people with shared characteristics can react violently as a group against the experience of 'horizontal' inequality and disadvantage in society.

The increasing complexities of the demography of residents and in particular, the increasing and unprecedented levels of immigrants with different backgrounds, pose a significant challenge to local governments. Many local governments are coping with the new reality through developing new strategies, which generally have two fronts. While there is a need to integrate new residents into mainstream society, local governments need to transform the existing policies, institutions, processes, infrastructures, spaces, programmes and practices to be more inclusive, and furthermore they need to transform the mindset of people to accommodate diversity. Formulating wide-ranging inclusion goals in coordination with national government and the civil society is vital, and with the emergence of social inclusion units in local governments, the opportunity arises to expand the responsibility, range and types of activities that local governments can take on in tackling exclusion. "The activities of the local authority have an important economic and social impact. Increasingly, the authority is being asked to respond in a more coordinated manner to social and cultural issues. It is working closer with communities in addressing social exclusion, developing participatory planning models and in developing social capital" (Galway City Council, 2006).

While, it would be overly-simplistic to hold that the city, as an administrative unit, has the possibility to promote inclusion rather than exclusion in isolation from all other administrative units existing within a country, local governments (or local areas) do occupy a potentially pivotal position when it comes to the promotion of economic, social and cultural inclusion, especially if their actions are: 1) coordinated with other administrative structures operating in the area, and 2) validated by national policies that acknowledge the key role local governments play in the promotion of inclusion. Managing this process will inevitably pivot on the formulation of new responses to and a rethinking of urban governance, urban strategy, urban policy and urban practice in order to meet the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that will arise.

The following sections explore some of the common challenges local governments are facing in their localities, and highlights possible approaches which are considered to be useful in promoting social inclusion and combating social exclusion. Finally, this Chapter presents examples of innovative initiatives that local governments have carried out in recent years, which have been successful in promoting social inclusion in its various dimensions. These examples are meant to provide inspiration for local practitioners and can be used as examples of good practices. At the same time, it is hoped that national governments and international actors may find useful lessons from these local initiatives, which can be reflected in their efforts in creating an inclusive society.

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II. Challenges and opportunities for local governments in promoting social inclusion and combating social exclusion

CHALLENGES FACING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

An increasingly diverse and growing local population

In recent years, the challenge of including all people in society has been complicated by various factors, including, growing inequality, widening income disparity, and jobless growth, which has lead to increased incidents of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among youth. Also the growing population movement - rural to rural, rural to urban, and cross-border migration, while creating new opportunities for local communities as resources are mobilized through remittances form migrant workers, have also caused uncontrolled urbanization and expansion of urban slums and deteriorating security, which poses serious challenges for local governments. Unskilled migrant workers for example, tend to be concentrated in the margins of the labor market, occupying the lowest socio-occupational categories of their host societies which are off the wage scale and subject to the harshest working conditions (UNDESA, 2004). Institutional discrimination between the highly-paid skilled and officially well-accepted, and the unskilled majority reinforces patterns of marginalization and segregation, further undermining processes of social cohesion (Marconi). Furthermore, even where migration involves economic betterment for the individual concerned - the migrant may be subject to gender, ethnic and racial discrimination in the host society, which may lead to criminalization. Unfortunately many local governments have remained stultified in the face of growing social complexity and challenge, neither reflecting nor comprehending the changes and tensions that are building in local areas today.

Exclusion can be a spatial experience and therefore access to the public spaces of the city, the space beyond private control, are important as they allow for a person to claim their place in society. To be denied access to such locations will inevitably foster feelings of invisibility and encourage a sense of marginalization from the mainstream society. Poor and marginalized populations often concentrate in and depend on informal settlements, which give them a feeling of security; as such settlements of migrants protect them from daily experiences of discrimination and stigmatization (Achermann and Chimienti, 2005). Often, these settlements are located in peripheral urban locations, and constitute a spatial expression of social exclusion in urban contexts as the populations are inevitably marginalized by virtue of their residential situation and denied access to the full range of city spaces placed at the disposal of others. The location of these informal settlements, often found just outside the control of municipal authority, further hampers effective interventions, as local governments are unable to address or improve the conditions of these informal settlers who reside outside of their authoritative mandates. More integrated regional approaches, which have been already taken by some metropolitan areas, may be a solution.

Local governments must recognize the diverse nature of the challenge of having to deal with an increasingly diverse and growing population in order to foster social inclusion in the city and also recognize the axes of connection that exist across all experiences of exclusion. While the manifestly diverse nature of exclusion necessitates the institution of a variety of targeted interventions, the various challenges of exclusion cannot be addressed in isolation. Local

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governments must institute a coordinated, flexible and multi-faceted response to the challenges presented, across all relevant sectors.

Capacity of local government

The capacity of local governments to accommodate different needs of diverse groups is critical, if civic participation and civic engagement are to occur. Traditionally, local government dealt mainly with roads, public transportation and land use. However, recently new areas, such as the economic and social dimensions of local development, have been included as responsibilities of local governments. For example, at the request of stakeholders in the region, the policy makers in the Stockholm metropolitan areas decided to include a social dimension in its regional development plan, capitalizing a person's ability to connect with his/her coevals, in their drive to foster a city that truly embraces all its residents. Through a series of stakeholder meetings they have engaged with creating a vision of inclusion, by focusing on strengthening social capital, in particular "bridging capital", a type of social capital[106] focusing on social networks of people of different backgrounds. (Martin Angeby).

Such Multi-stakeholder Processes (MSP), however, may not always work, especially where the institutional capacity of local government is weak, due to brain drain of local human resources, lack of clarity on the role of local governance, lack of financial resources, lack of coordination with central government, or lack of political skills. In this case, the capacity building of local government must also be addressed as a priority. The gap in capacity is not necessarily limited to local government, but also to that of stakeholders, in particular, those who have been excluded so far, such as women, youth, the poor, older persons, indigenous peoples, peoples with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities. Local governments are also affected by the political attitude of the central state, which may be committed or opposed to local control of public functions and resources. The central position can vary across regions or other parameters, and can shift quickly depending on dominant political groups. Local governments in wealthier areas may have more strength in negotiating with central counterparts. Depending on the degree of decentralization, the local government may be unable to implement commonly agreed objectives due to insufficient financial resources and administrative authorities, which may create dissatisfaction among local communities. Local governments need to reconcile the expectations of the residents and the actual delivery of the tangible results.

While coming up with strategies and policies are important roles of governments locally, local governments must be able to see beyond a short time period and invest in and facilitate sustainable and long-term projects and initiatives that aim to enhance the quality of life in their area. As UNDESA (2008: 9) states, "the institutions and processes of public governance should aim systematically at enhancing public welfare fully and equitably". A sustainable pattern of civic engagement in public governance is of paramount importance here as such participation can enhance the very nature of governance itself, through the higher levels of transparency it encourages.

In this light, one of the most important roles of local government is accessibility to the government itself and its processes. This means accessibility to the buildings and services that government runs, accessibility to all documentation and information, and accessibility to its members. Some local authorities have begun to engage with electronic media to ensure that they

[106] Michael Woolcock, The place of social capital in understanding social and economic outcomes, *www.oecd.org/dataoecd/5/13/1824913.pdf*

engage with their populations. Local governments use this e-format to make announcements and to administer forums where issues affecting local communities can be discussed. While mixed results can be experienced, a host of less formalized inputs and arrangements are possible as well as, for example, patterns of Network Governance, Deliberative Democracy and Direct Democracy (UN E-Government Survey 2008: From E-Government to Connected Governance. UNDESA, 2008: 69-71).

There are also other challenges; how the bottom-up decisions are coordinated with national policies and/or strategies; how to reconcile with existing legislative framework; how to ensure that the capacity of those excluded are built; how to address the existing power imbalances; and how to make local governance truly inclusive. Another area which needs more attention is the capacity of local government in data collection for planning, policy analysis, and monitoring. In particular, data disaggregated by gender, age, or other social attributes are important for mapping out where exclusion exists, and insufficient data is a challenge.

Local Governance: Local representation and civic participation

Effective local governance[107] is key to promoting social inclusion and combating social exclusion, as it improves access to basic services, mobilizes human and financial resources, and strengthens social and human capital. Likewise, broad-based participation, contributes to good local governance, to fostering transparency, accountability, legitimacy and to making quality decisions with higher levels of implementation and compliance.[108] As the political environment at national and local levels significantly affect the way in which decisions are made, the legitimacy of participatory processes, however, need to be carefully examined. Some understand governance as "the manner in which power is exercised, who exercises it, for what purpose and how this power is shared[109]", the existing governance structures have significant implications for social inclusion processes. There is a delicate balance, and sometimes a conflicting interest, between local representation and direct broad-based participation, depending on the way in which representatives are selected. While local governments are capable of reaching out to various segments of population and mobilizing communities, it is difficult to assess how representative those selected are of the members of society. There may be a case in which individuals with stronger power or incentives may be selected unfairly, which can result in a significant barrier to inclusion of the excluded. Equally, "community groups themselves can become the barrier to inclusion because they are so issue focused and do not see or want to see the bigger picture and how it affects a larger group or the whole community" (FCC, 2008). It is often the case that excluded people or groups are neither participating nor represented in decision-making processes.

Even where there is a political will to reach out to those who are excluded, gaining access to and identifying the needs and concerns of all members of society remains a challenge. In many cases, the excluded are 'invisible', as they are often not included in the official statistical data and are

107 Although there is no single agreed definition, local governance is generally understood as "a broad spectrum of issues and actors that influence local political, economic and overall human development planning and decision-making. Some of the elements shaping local governance include political patterns, institutional arrangements, accountability mechanisms, the degree of civil society empowerment and capacities for generating local resources107" The World Bank defines governance as the processes and institutions by which authority in a country or a local municipality is exercised for the common good, and this exercise of authority includes: 1) the process by which those in authority are selected, monitored, and replaced; 2) the capacity of the local government to manage its resources effectively, and to implement sound policies; and 3) the respect of citizens and the local government for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions between them.

108 OECD, 2001 a, p.6, cited in Citizen participation and pro-poor budgeting, DESA, 2005

109 Citizen participation and pro-poor budgeting, DESA, 2005

often absent in societal institutions and processes. Getting people to engage with government, not only casting a vote in selecting their representatives, but also being involved in contributing to decision-making processes that affect their lives can be even more difficult. Language barriers, fear, lack of confidence and trust in the system, cycles of violence and poverty can all contribute to hesitation and distrust of authorities including governments. This can translate into an unwillingness to participate. Common groups who tend to be excluded from participation include: women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, ethnic and religious minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS, ex-combatants, refugees, and the poor. The challenge for local government is to create an environment where these groups are motivated and enabled to engage in discussion of matters affecting their lives.

Citizenship

In a diversified local environment, it is easier for many residents to identify with the city where they live, work and interact, rather than the national state. In policy discourse related to social inclusion, citizenship is frequently invoked. Yet, citizenship, as a legal status with a bundle of legal rights and duties attached, inevitably marks a distinction between members and outsiders based on their different relations to particular states (Baubcock et al, 2006: 5). Citizenship, by definition, is membership of a political community and includes rights to political participation[110]. In many countries, this definition excludes some segments of city residents from being citizens, including asylum seekers, refugees, migrant workers, and temporary residents. There is therefore a need for finding a way to allow inclusion of all residents in a particular location so that some of them are not be excluded or marginalized.

If a local government is to be all-inclusive, then all of the people within its sphere of influence must be taken into account, regardless of their social/ethnic/political /behavioural specificities. A new construct of "membership" may be considered as a viable solution. As cities are seen to bear the greatest responsibility for managing and ministering migrant populations, and because they suffer from the ambiguities and inflexibilities of national policy, both Sandercock (2004) and Baubock (2003) find that cities should be given far more autonomy and be granted powers to bestow "membership" on those who fulfil certain criteria, which ideally be accompanied by a set of social policies to respond to the needs of new settlers, such as language policies and culturally sensitive social services provision. The concept of "membership" should be part of an urban policy response to accommodate a diverse population in global cities. This new way of thinking is increasingly being discussed in trans-national municipal networks, in order to permit participation and governance by all those living in a territory in whatever manner (joint statement issued by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and the Council of Europe COE/CLRAE 2006).

III. Promoting Social Inclusion at the local level

As the issue of social integration and social inclusion has become a reality of local governments, they must recognize the diverse nature of the challenge, and that initiatives to promote social inclusion need to take place in various fronts at multiple levels. A social inclusion strategy should be the starting point for identifying a series of practical objectives and actions that can positively impact processes to decrease the levels of social exclusion, and poverty, and improve the quality of life of every member of society. Local government should formulate an effective local solution involving all residents within a participatory framework devising, promoting and

[110] Wikipedia. The Definition varies, depending on countries.

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monitoring initiatives that will achieve measurable positive change. There are a range of modalities and strategies of inclusion available to local governments attempting to counter marginalisation and promote social inclusion. In Chapter 1 a number of recommendable actions to promote social inclusion are presented, and these can also be applied to local governments, they include: eliminating discriminatory laws and practices; transforming the mindset of people; producing inclusive policy framework; setting social inclusion objectives and mainstreaming social inclusion objectives. Furthermore, if local governments adopt social inclusion as a goal, it is recommendable to undertake and increase multi-stakeholder dialogue and processes; civic engagement; social inclusion units; and social protection. These topics will be discussed and presented in the following sections.

Multi-stakeholder processes to promote coordination

Multi-stakeholder processes (MSP), which foster dialogue across stakeholders to build common understanding on certain issues, and set common goals, allow people to engage with an idea in a safe and supportive environment. In any given situation, stakeholders will represent a wide range of people. In terms of inclusion, often it is the excluded themselves, the greatest stakeholders in their own lives, who are left out of policy design and its resulting implementation. It is the place of their local governments to find and make heard their voices and create leaders and representatives from distinct community groups and furthermore to facilitate relevant interaction with other stakeholders, government, the private sector, various social groups, and other members of society.

For this to happen, local government facilitators must be conceptually 'multi-lingual'. They must be able to use the often different vocabularies that resonate with different groups and discuss issues relevant for everyone. However, when safe spaces for dialogue are created, people who participate will be engaged and their societies will evolve from within. In order to create such a dialogue space, local government and its processes must present an inviting, safe, open and participatory environment which encourages interaction and input from its community.

It is recommendable to institute a coordinated, flexible and multi-faceted response to the challenges presented, across all relevant sectors. Programmes to promote single elements of economic, social, cultural, political and demographic inclusion (etc.) all have a place in a broad-based approach, but inclusion may best be operationalized through the institution of a variety of perspectives, working together in a coordinated manner in an effort to support the necessity to perform well economically, while ensuring social cohesion and sustainability.

An example of how local authorities can support multi-sector collaboration can be found in Flanders, Belgium, where a regional government decree in 2004 institutionalized the direct participation of local stakeholders and citizens in multi-sectoral collaboration on social rights. In one of the cities, Ghent, 450 local actors of the health and welfare sector have been clustered in 11 thematic forums: legal help; support and security of minors; services for young people and adolescents; child care; ethnic cultural minorities; people with a disability; the elderly; housing; work and employment; people living on a "critical income"; and health. The local authorities facilitate and support the collaboration of the various organizations and sectors through the collection and monitoring of data, information and communication, access to services, and efforts to make services more pro-active. They are also responsible for networking between all the sectors with a view to improving coordination. They pick up the proposals and plans, and are responsible for channelling them to the province, region, federal state or the European Union for translation into relevant political decisions and legislation. (WHO Report, 2008)

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Given the different capacities to effect change present in different governmental structures, inclusive policies should ideally be able to integrate local, regional and national abilities and resources vertically, and encourage dialogue horizontally between different administrative units operational at the same scale, to ensure a holistic and a multi-dimensional response to local need. The knowledge and ability to combat exclusion as well as develop more responsive and accountable services ideally exists, or to be created, at the national level, which then needs to be transferred and translated into local government capacities as it is they who often play pivotal roles. In Ireland, for example, inclusion is fostered through a series of mechanisms operational from the national – such as social partnership agreements, to the local – via public consultation workshops (Mangan, 2008: 9-10).

Furthermore, a highly significant role of local government is to facilitate partnership between members of society, interest groups and stakeholders in the community. If local governments can successfully portray, to these stakeholders, the importance and benefit of open dialogue, participation and co-operation, through facilitating networks, and sharing information and resources, a significant amount of inclusion can result. As Busatto (2007) states, "the role of local government is sharing responsibility with all members of society, fostering a strong sense of co-responsibility in each citizen and institution, stimulating transversely of knowledge within government agencies…The result will certainly be a systemic approach to problems and solutions, a huge collective intelligence to the service of all city dwellers".

A key factor of socially inclusive and sustainable development is that communities take ownership of program components. Communities are represented by civil society but also include private sector interests. From the outset communities would have to be involved with the process in the planning, intentional design, and establish consensus on the kind of change that local governments would like to implement. It is therefore imperative that the mapping of stakeholders is undertaken before any strategy is devised or plans put into operation.

The challenge that local governments have is ensuring that they have an exhaustive list of all Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), which are representative of all communities, and that in working with communities, the CSOs identified are indeed their legitimate representatives. This might entail sponsoring forums to enable communities to elect representatives or form community based organisations (CBO's) that would be representative of their interests. The next challenge is creating forums whereby all community representatives can participate in dialogue. This might involve setting up local community forums which in turn elect one or more representatives to speak on their behalf at larger local government level forums. Such a process is very time consuming, so sufficient lead-in periods will have to be planned and accommodated for. Once all stakeholders are mapped and communities have bought into the process, an agreed format of how communities respond to challenges, how the participatory dialogue process meets, identifies, implements, monitors and evaluates projects and how the funding mechanisms work, will have to be agreed upon by the stakeholder forum. The next task would be to agree to a terms of reference for a social inclusion strategy.

Creating knowledge base on good practice: experience sharing of social inclusion practices

Many cities have developed, or are developing, integrated policies and practices that seek to enhance social inclusion and harness the strengths inherent in their diverse populations. In this regard, local governments can do much to promote a vision of inclusion and equality by their own functioning. It is necessary for local governments to examine positive and successful social inclusion practices, find new ways to incorporate these practices into their own policy and action

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plans, and share their experiences horizontally with other local governments, as gaining insights from lessons learned of others as well as adopting good practices will enhance any effort at local level. Creating a knowledge-base at the provincial and national levels is one way of doing this, but also a more innovative approach, using an E-format, to create a "Community of Practice" on the existing local government network, may be another way. International organizations have also started compiling good practices and lessons learned, and may be a good source of facilitating such experience-sharing networks and workshops at the global level.

An example of a successful horizontal experience sharing network can be seen in the network "The Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at local level" (AMICAALL). AMICAALL is a growing network of local government authorities, mayors and municipal leaders committed to supporting sustainable responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic at the local urban level. The network has national chapters in 13 African countries. The objectives of the alliance are to enhance advocacy and urban local leadership for HIV/AIDS response in urban local governments, enhance institutional capacity development for effective HIV/AIDS response in urban local governments, strengthen coordination of the multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS in urban local governments, facilitate the development of partnerships and networks for HIV/AIDS response at local and international levels, and mobilize resources to support HIV/AIDS initiatives in urban local governments. (Emilio Ovuga, Ted Boardman, Danuta Wasserman, .Integrating mental health into primary health care: local initiatives from Uganda, World Psychiatry, February 2007, 6(1)60-61.)

Civic Engagement

A potential path forward in the promotion of social inclusion by local governments may lie in the area of civic participation, as all moves towards inclusion depend on active participation by members of society themselves. To feel part of a whole, a person must be able to participate in the decision-making structures that impact on his/her life. The exclusion of even one group inherently destabilises efforts in the area. The most basic manifestation of this issue is that local governments need to be able to hear from the members of society and talk with them, as without knowledge of their interests, local governments will be powerless to include the needs of the diverse members of society in the decision-making processes. This is especially important as "experience has shown that inclusion of the full range of stakeholders is not only an essential pre-condition for successful participatory decision-making but also vital for promoting equity and social justice in urban governance." (UNHCS, 2001:19) The benefits of such participation include: stakeholders' increased self-awareness; the construction of positive social relations between otherwise separated groups; broad ownership of any outcomes; and wider dissemination of the outcomes of the dialogue.

It is clear, when changes occur, that resultant policy shifts tend to suffer from long and complex chains of command at local level and can therefore be ineffective on the ground. However, an engagement with civil society, when nurtured by actors influential at local level, as for example local government, can affect change by fostering a freedom to express, freedom to disagree, and freedom to be different. Such patterns can then encourage the creation of horizontal connections between different groups and those charged with governance at local level, not simply between local government and the people, vertically. While such a pattern will require a bottom-up willingness to participate in the very processes that may be implicated in a person's feelings of exclusion, participation in such patterns may encourage a significant rapprochement between the excluded and the society at large.

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Introduced in 2007, The Citizenship Fund Initiative in The Hague, Holland is an example of a creative initiative increasing local participation and representation. The Citizenship Fund makes €1 million available every year for projects from residents to improve the social quality in their neighbourhood and/or to build bridges between population groups. The rules for selection include that the plan must be supported by at least 10 residents, who must be willing to carry out the plan themselves (if necessary with professional support). Encounter, dialogue and active co-operation between different population groups should be a crucial aspect of the plan. For every ambitious and sustainable plan there is a maximum grant available of €25,000. Each year, an independent committee makes a selection of the best projects that have been sent in for a contribution from the citizenship fund. The people of The Hague decide by voting which of the nominated projects will be given the citizenship award. (www.thehagueprocess.org)

Social Inclusion Units

Supporting local governments in strengthening their capacity is important, especially in the areas of social inclusion and poverty reduction. In order to formulate potential inclusion programs, local government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, could consider establishing "Pilot Social Inclusion Units" in selected sub-local authorities to span social inclusion strategy for a minimum period of three-year, mainly for learning, but also for enhancing awareness of social inclusion within individual local authorities. This will also ensure that the issue of social inclusion and exclusion is tackled across the full range of local activities in a cohesive and coordinated manner. As a pre-requisite for operationalizing social inclusion units, local governments need to map out all stakeholders and work with them in developing commonly agreed processes for implementation, as well as financial arrangements for both activities.

An example of similar initiative in this area is the "Social Inclusion Initiative" in Australia, which was established in 2002. The focus of the initiative is to provide the South Australian Government with advice on innovative ways to address some of the most difficult social problems. The Initiative has a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for the most vulnerable members of society to participate in the social and economic life of the community, including the unemployed, homeless, mentally ill and those that are disadvantaged as a result of a physical or intellectual disability. (http://www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/)

Social Protection

Social protection lies at the core of social inclusion policies and is a central measure to promote inclusion. It is vital that local governments create 'modern' systems of social protection which include protection transfers to households such as pensions, child benefits, and welfare, as well as access to social assistance, such as health care, education, housing, and recreation, all of which play an important role in an inclusive society. Social protection has both protective and developmental functions; it can address vulnerability in the form of reactive actions to redress the impacts of exclusion and prevent the worst effects of livelihood shocks, as well as offer "transformative" support to enable socially excluded and vulnerable individuals and groups to move into situations of inclusion. Social protection can generate outcomes which contribute to economic objectives (livelihoods) and human development objectives (capabilities). We should aim at developmental forms of social protection that can bring about economic and social benefits and identify and promote positive externalities and empowerment, rather that reinforce dependencies. With this approach social protection can be viewed as an investment, and not an expense.

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The design of social protection schemes is very important and should avoid stigmatizing people; targeting may stigmatize people and unwillingly contribute to social disintegration – on the other hand, special needs of specific groups should not be neglected. Social protection mainly addresses those who are vulnerable, but the vulnerable are not only the poor, we may all be vulnerable in certain times of life. In the designing of social protection programs particular attention should be paid to the vulnerability of children, so as to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. It is also important to be aware of the urban bias of social protection provision and ensure that social protection reaches people living in rural areas. Furthermore social protection policies need to meet certain criteria, such as sustainability; feasibility; right-based aspect; judicious management, and community support.

IV. Good initiatives which promote social inclusion at the local level

In the following sections good initiatives which promote social inclusion at the local level are presented as examples of good practices for local practitioners. Bear in mind that each case is context specific, and merely applying the same approach will not necessarily produce the same results. Each section relates to a specific dimension of social inclusion and the examples presented relate to these dimensions. The examples are presented under a key dimension, but can relate to several dimensions at once. More examples of good initiatives promoting social inclusion at local, national and global level can be found in annex XX

Initiatives promoting the cultural dimension of social inclusion

Societies are increasingly made up of different subcultures; groups of people with distinct sets of behavior and beliefs that differentiate them from a larger culture of which they are a part, including people of different religions, different languages, different ideologies, and different ethnicity. This diversity poses a challenge to local governments when trying to create a common vision for the future. However, when a sense of individual and collective belonging is mediated by the built environment and its socio-spatial relations, everyday practices of life in the city can take place within a social bond of belonging to and participating in the local community or city, and basic rights can be guaranteed for everyone.

There is an urgent need for the emergence of new policies which allow for all members of society to have opportunities to enjoy all aspects of their lives in a particular location without being excluded or marginalised due to their backgrounds or status. Diversity should be recognised and respected as a source of strength in contemporary society. Cultural participation is one of the aspects which need to be addressed when accommodating diversity. Access to diverse cultural events substantially improves the quality of life, the communication and dialogue among different groups and contributes to a harmonious existence in the society. In this perspective, local governments can implement and support measures addressing vulnerable people with special cultural characteristics and invite them to participate in current cultural events and to express themselves. Initiatives to gain insight and get familiar with immigrants' and other cultural groups' cultural heritage, such as promotion of artistic work, lectures on subcultures, and sports programs for vulnerable groups, would enhance the process of social inclusion.

An example of a local government which has made efforts to accommodate a diverse population in various ways is Frankfurt, which from 1989-1995 embarked on an ambitious social experiment to create a multicultural city in an anti-immigrant minded society, establishing AMKA (the Municipal Department of Multicultural Affairs), in the Lord Mayor's office. AMKA's tasks were to work in

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collaboration with all the agencies of the state to promote the social integration of the city's 30% non-German population, and to work directly in the public sphere, to involve itself in a process of '*zusammenwachsen*' or 'growing together' of all ethnic groups into a peaceful multicultural society, respectful of difference (Friedmann and Lehrer, 1997). AMKA's political objectives have included: Reducing the ethnic German population's fear of people with different ethnic backgrounds, and the number of violent acts against people with different ethnic backgrounds; encouraging public discussion of migration and the limits of social tolerance; working towards the active participation of newcomers in the public affairs of the city; encouraging the cultural activities of residents with diverse ethnic backgrounds; and offering in-service training for members of the municipal bureaucracy in intercultural communication.

AMKA worked towards these objectives through three main fronts: public hearings; the creation of a Municipal Advisory Council of Foreign residents; and through strengthening the many voices of civil society among foreign residents. Over three years there were two hearings and a public forum. The second sphere of AMKA's work involved the creation of a Foreign Residents' Advisory Board, whose members were chosen by election, and had the right to attend city council meetings, and the opportunity to review and comment on the municipal budget proposal. The third sphere, strengthening civil society, involved a number of activities, including preparing a register of all organizations run by migrants, supporting multicultural events with financial and technical assistance, working with sports clubs, and providing allotment gardens for immigrants. (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997)

Another example of a local government initiating a strategic plan to increase social and intercultural coexistence is the local government of Madrid, Spain. In March 2005 Madrid city council launched a plan which constitutes the practical outcome of a debate on migration matters between governmental and non-governmental participants convened within a social forum. The objectives of the initiatives have been defined as: fostering the institutional progress of immigrant reception at the municipal level; to provide better access to civil rights and resources for immigrants; and to improve coexistence between Spaniards and foreigners in order to create dynamic and harmonious neighbourhoods.

The 'Plan Madrid' contains a clear set of working areas and instruments to attain the objectives. Since the 'Plan Madrid' was adopted, the city has established the first of three information centres for the integration of immigrants, and it has founded a centre to facilitate immigrants' access to the local housing market. Regarding active participation in civil society, various institutions have been established on the basis of Madrid's plan for peaceful co-existence, including institutions aimed at initiating an effective intercultural dialogue. In round tables for intercultural dialogues in the districts topics of everyday intercultural understanding are discussed; representatives of these round tables are requested to meet in the Madrid forum for a dialogue of neighbours, which functions as a communication and advisory body on relevant issues. Other initiatives include a yearly social forum, an association to promote the creation and establishment of immigrant organisations, and an intercultural programme to support initiatives of Madrid civil society for the advancement of intercultural coexistence in the city.

In the wake of the Plan Madrid a scientific institute, the Monitoring centre for migration and intercultural coexistence of the city of Madrid has been created. Since 2005 the centre has exercised analytical as well as practical functions: besides investigating different aspects of the migration phenomenon in the city, it coordinates the exchange of relevant information within competent municipal structures. (Brokert, 2007)

Initiatives promoting the political dimension of social Inclusion

Political inclusion of all members of society, in the form of popular participation in decision-making processes and policy formulation, is a central aspect of social inclusion and should be sought for in all aspects of local governance.(Kliksberg on Participation) Research shows that as societies modernize, people increasingly want to have a say in the decisions which affect their lives. (Halman, 2008; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005) This includes issues such as resource

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allocation or organization and regulation of care. Political inclusion entails that each individual has a say in decisions that affect his/her life. The opportunity for everyone to participate and engage in decision-making processes is vital to promoting social inclusion. Another aspect of political inclusion is access to information so that each individual can make an informed-decision. An effort must be made to achieve equal access to transparent and accountable public information.

Local governments can do a lot to promote a vision of political inclusion through their own functioning. For example, having representatives in government from all segments of the population may provide one way of creating a diverse and representative government. Other conduits for increased political participation may include: diverse members of society's access to and participation in policy formation and budgeting. An example of politically inclusive democracy processes can be seen in the municipality of Cuqu'o Jalisco, Mexico, where deliberative democracy processes have been instituted to valorise the creation of a dialogic pattern of negotiation around policy matters. Innovative forms of dialogue have been fostered around public investments in the area through the creation of the Democratic Municipal Council of Cuqu'o (CODEMUC). Participating communities were able to elect representatives who were empowered to make decisions on the use of public monies on their behalf. A web of interactions arose, in which ordinary people were empowered to voice their opinions and hold their elected representatives accountable. (www.deliberative-democracy.net/resources/contrib/selee_20030801.shtml).

Another example of successful political inclusion is The Participatory Budgeting (PB), practiced in Brazil. It allows each sub national area in Brazil to have a voice in the annual allocation of capital investments. It entails a delegation of statutory powers of the executive branch of local governments. PB is an instrument of empowerment and social inclusion as communities are recognised as having urban collective rights that legitimate both their claims and demands and their participation in the decisions taken to meet them. The PB ensures direct popular participation through voting at the plenaries to select priorities for investments and elect representatives on the forum and the PB council. It is structured to ensure transparency and objectivity through an open voting system and the use of quantitative criteria at every step leading to the budget allocation.

The central features of the programme are the district and thematic plenary assemblies that gather in different areas of the city to participate in the budget-writing process. Each year, citizens, area representatives and delegates from local community-based organizations and NGOs meet with public officials to determine investment priorities. The opportunity to participate in decisions regarding the allocation of public funds for projects has fostered a shift in the local political culture from dishonest political bargaining to constructive debate and civic engagement in governance. Since its emergence in Porto Alegre, participatory budgeting has spread to hundreds of Latin American cities, and dozens of cities in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. More than 200 municipalities are estimated to have initiated participatory budgeting programmes. (Serageldin & Driscoll, et al., 2004; Souza, 2001)

Another initiative that was recently implemented in Porto Alegre, partly as an outcome of the successful participatory budgeting, is that of Local Solidarity Governance (LSG). Local Solidarity Governance is a proposal for the reformulation of Porto Alegre's management model and the relationship between state and society. The program is based on three principles: plurality, dialogue and consensus and aims at acknowledging the differences in society to foster mutual respect and dialogue, promoting the formation of a community with social co-responsibility projects and agreements in favour of development (Busatto, 2007). The purpose

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of the LSG is to transform Porto Alegre into a multi-connected, *Network-City* that provides citizens and communities with the opportunity to exercise their full rights and responsibilities within an environment of participative democracy. One of the outcomes of LSG is the "City Observatory", which is a portal for information distribution for neighbourhoods and regions. Through democratizing the access to information, offering an easy understanding of information and extending the knowledge, the project aims at empowering local communities and qualifying social networks and instances of participatory democracy. (http://www2.portoalegre.rs.gov.br/observatorio/)

An example of how political inclusion can be increased through decentralization can be observed in Bolivia. The Popular Participation Law (PPL) was passed in 1994, with the aim of ensuring that the decentralization system included the participation of local level civil society and grassroots organizations in municipal planning. The PPL came into being largely as a result of the effort and struggle of civil society organizations to be heard and have a voice in politics (Calderon, 2003). The Popular Participation Law re-divided the entire territory of Bolivia into various municipalities based on two criteria: population and land area. Presently, the country has 311 municipalities. This marked a dramatic change for the organization of the Bolivian state: the Law transferred 20 percent of the national budget to the country's 311 municipalities and mandated grassroots participation in local planning and budgetary oversight. Rural areas, where the presence of the state was practically non-existent before 1994, were particularly benefited from this policy. The law produced a more equal distribution of government revenue and extended democratic political processes to rural, indigenous and peasant groups who were previously excluded from formal political participation. (Calderon & Pinc, 2003)

Initiatives promoting the economic dimension of social inclusion

Economic assets are essential if the marginalised are to move beyond exclusion. The presence of an equitable political economy is of primary importance here and it is consequently unsurprising that access to economic development is a central focus of many social inclusion programmes and initiatives, such as UNDP and UN-HABITAT's Urban Management Programme (UMP) which recognises that access to finance represents a key conduit of social inclusion for economically marginalised urban inhabitants. Activities favoured in these programmes can include efforts to improve the capacity of local governments to organise community savings schemes and developing their ability to administer schemes that may lead to increased income generation. (http://ww2.unhabitat.org/programmes/ump/)

Furthermore, local governments need to create greater means whereby the socially excluded can access the labor market, as employment automatically gives individuals the possibility to participate in the economic processes of society. Incentives should be created for employing a diverse workforce, including the encouragement of corporate social responsibility practices, and tools and support need to be developed and disseminated to help employers who wish to open their doors to socially disadvantaged people.

An example of an initiative which increases employment possibilities for persons with disabilities can be found in British Columbia, where the Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in 2006, in partnership with 2010 Legacies Now launched the 10 by 10 Challenge, a province-wide challenge to all communities and employers to raise the number of employed persons with disabilities by 10 percent by 2010, equated to 13,000 new jobs for persons with disabilities. This challenge has been beneficial for communities participating as there are labor shortages in many parts of the province, while persons with disabilities continue

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to face an employment rate 20 percent lower than the non-disabled of the population. To launch the Challenge, every community in British Columbia, Chamber of Commerce and over 50 business sectors received information on customized target numbers. 10 by 10 Toolkits were also provided which contain materials that make the business case for, and describe the benefits of, hiring persons with disabilities. The tools provide practical information to help communities and industry sectors achieve their specific 10 by 10 goal.
(http://www.fas.ie/en/PubDocs/AnnualReports/ANNUAL_REPORT05/services_social_inclusion.htm)

A similar initiative is Michigan's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Project, USA. In June 2005, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS**)** awarded the Michigan Department of Community Health, Office of Long-Term Care Supports and Services grant funds to increase competitive employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Key efforts and initiatives include: Developing collaborative partnerships between individuals with disabilities, state-wide advocacy organizations, the Michigan Rehabilitation Services, the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Social Security Administration and the Michigan Business Leadership Network; Researching, evaluating, developing, and implementing strategies and policies to remove barriers to competitive employment; Protecting and enhancing workers healthcare, other benefits, and employment; and collaborating with the Michigan Business Leadership Network to increase employer benefits for employing a diverse workforce.

Khushal Pakistan Programme (KPP) is a different type of example of a promising intervention, which is aimed at generating economic activity through public work and temporary employment, and thus creating jobs and providing crucial infrastructure in rural and low-income areas. The programme is a poverty elimination effort, targeting and promoting the inclusion of rural poor. It has resulted in farm-to-market roads, rehabilitation of water supply schemes, small rural roads, streets, drains, and storm channels in villages and by December 2003, the programme has provided job opportunities for around 2 million people.
(www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/ContentInfo.jsp?DivID=45&cPath=618_621&ContentID=3270) It is important to recognize, that when tackling poverty, it involves not only economic measures and improvement in infrastructure and services, but also requires building social capital: the networks, norms and trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.

Initiatives promoting inclusion into social services

Increasing access to social services, such as universal access to quality basic education and universal health care, is an important aspect of social inclusion as these services enable people to function in and contribute to society. In the Residential Care Centres for Migrant Families' Children, Orissa, India, the focus of the social service provided is care and education of children of rural migrant workers who migrate under conditions of distress. Seasonal migration of agricultural labour is a common problem in certain parts of Orissa. The main reasons for such migration are high proportions of landless labourers in a few districts because of skewed land ownership patterns (in some pockets, 2% of the population owns 90% of the land), the underdevelopment and poor socioeconomic conditions that result, long-term indebtedness and lack of job opportunities. The objectives of the programme is to allow children to continue their education without disruptions caused by migration and ensure that children are still within the reach of the community to provide them care and support. A major achievement of the RCCs is to place emphasis on the rights and needs of migrant children in a context where large-scale migration under distress conditions is not recognized in state policy measures. By offering

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parents options to educate their children, both at source and destination of migration, the intervention provides parents with some degree of choice, ensuring that these choices do not harm children's access to education. Furthermore, by providing the children of migrants with the opportunity to receive an education, an attempt is made to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. (www.sristi.org/rjmc/shiksha/index1.htm)

Another example of a local initiative which illustrates how social inclusion can be enhanced by increasing social services in the form of home based health care can be found in the Enlarged Community Rehabilitation Project (ECR), Istanbul, Turkey. ECR is a Health Affairs Department initiative that provides Home based health care to patients who are not covered by any health insurance system or who are in great need of help. The process starts with a visit in the townships to assess the health situation of the people in need: sick, persons with disabilities, pregnant, older persons or deprived people. This step is followed by the visit of a physician and a nurse to the houses to examine the patients and make treatment plans. According to the patient's state of health, further investigations and examinations by specialist physicians are carried out. Surgical operations are also performed if required. For severely socially deprived families, fuel for heating and food aid is provided. So far the project has covered 29 townships in Istanbul and 1,303,801 houses have been visited. The ECR Project has achieved many social and economic benefits for the city by helping many people with treatment and assistance in dealing with social problems enabling them to become active and well functioning participants in society. (http://www.bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/social_services.html)

The Hygiene Promotion, Sanitation, and Water Supply (HYSAWA) project is a quite different example and is local initiative which has increased social inclusion of an indigenous group, the Jumma people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh, by increasing their awareness of proper hygiene and providing them access to water and sanitation facilities. The implementation of the HYSAWA project has showcased successes in addressing rural water supply, sanitation, and hygiene programs, in a fruitful cooperation among NGOs, local governments, and communities.(http://www.adb.org/Water/Topics/Rural-WSS/default.asp; http://www.hysawa.org/)

Initiatives promoting the physical dimension of social Inclusion

Having rights and possibilities to access the physical space of the city is a recurring theme among projects aimed at addressing marginalisation. For example in the case of persons with disabilities, older persons and parents with prams, optimizing the physical aspects of the built environment are important to achieve inclusion. The provision of ramps, sufficiently large and unblocked corridors and doors, the placement of door handles, and the availability of assistance and support can ensure that everyone has access to a workplace, a place of entertainment, a voting booth, transport, a court of law, etc. (http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=224)

An example of a local initiative aiming to improve the physical environment to allow access to more people can be seen in The *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002,* Western Australia. Western Australia is a strong supporter and champion for ensuring that public transport is accessible to all. The Public Transport Authority has a *best practice* bus replacement program, developed as an action plan endorsed by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. The program involves buying approximately 65 new buses each year which must meet the Transport Standards. Of the 1050 buses in the fleet, 510 are now fully accessible. Because of this fleet replacement program, existing buses are not being retrofitted. The bus replacement program is a key strategy for meeting requirements that involve structural changes to the bus fleet, such as priority seating. Items such as symbols, signs, alarms and

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information are being installed. A *Best Practice* program is in place to audit, refurbish and redesign older bus stations and bus-train interchanges to meet the Transport Standards. (Department of Planning and Infrastructure, 2006. www.ag.gov.au/dsfapt/welcome.html)

Initiatives promoting the spatial dimension of social inclusion

Access to housing is a spatial aspect which contributes to social inclusion. A place to call home is of pivotal importance in society in general. Not only does it provide shelter but it also anchors the person in society by acting as a conduit for sense of place. At its most basic sense, 'home' grounds a person and allows that individual to buy into many wider associations with locality, community, city and region. In this regard, to be without adequate housing is perhaps one of the most marginalising of contemporary experiences.

'The Partners in Development Programme', Naga City, Philippines, is an example of a social amelioration program which has had the effect of reducing social exclusion and bringing participants in the programme closer to mainstream society. It is primarily designed to empower squatters and slum dwellers which comprise 25 percent of the city population residing in 21 urban districts of Naga City. The program recognizes the role that the urban poor play in the city's economy and it addresses the absence of security of land tenure among the most socially excluded people resident in the city as well as the lack of basic infrastructure in their communities. The program has two main components: 1) land acquisition and 2) urban development to increase the socially sustainable nature of their areas in question. The program has been successful in resettling 2,017 families to relocation sites with a combined area of 33 hectares; secured home lots for 789 squatter families; and upgraded 27 urban poor communities which host around 2,700 families. Six years after the program was launched, Naga's urban poor are more empowered and involved in society through a credible and effective tripartite mechanism for solving land tenurial issues that the Program has institutionalized. This programme is generally regarded as a revolutionary experiment in local governance with civil society being empowered to work closely with local government to design, implement and evaluate the City's strategic management. "Partners in Development" is acknowledged as a model urban poor program among Philippine local governments today. (http://www.unesco.org/most/asia8.htm)

Another aspect of the spatial dimension of social inclusion is that local governments can engage in furthering social inclusion by the way they design, develop and maintain the built environment in cities. The careful development of public spaces is a case in point: these can be designed in ways that allow people to feel safe in them, to easily find their way around in them, and to use them for gathering (leisure and work), recreation and other purposes. Examples of programmes which seek to give potentially excluded people more access to the city but with a different emphasis are supported in Dublin, Ireland and Curitiba, Brazil.

The Dublin City Council initiative is focused on the provision of secure access to communal public space in the city. It does so on the premise that "the provision of community facilities, such as education and library services, health services, community centres, meeting places and places of public worship, all contribute positively to the support and development of communities…" (Dublin City Council, 2007: 20) This initiative is based around the maximisation of facility use, partnering with schools and churches and public buildings to make the best possible use of existing infrastructure, improving and sharing facilities and promoting a partnership between groups and users of facilities. This is a useful practice, as not only does it provide a location in which to pursue the activities in question and also save money, but by

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promoting a shared use, vision and partnership it inherently increases inclusion and creates a community and sense of place and common purpose amongst the people that use it (Fingal County Council, 2008).

In Curitiba, Brazil, the Sustainable Transport Planning programme seeks to secure free access to the space of the city by encouraging the use of a sustainable transit orientated pattern of city development. Curitiba effectively encourages greater inclusion of its marginalised people by allowing for greater access to and use of the city. Innovative measures in this programme include the introduction of an inexpensive "social fare" on public transport services. This fare inevitably benefits the marginalised in the city, most often those whose residential locations are to be found in peripheral urban locations. Other measures include the dedication of a series of 'green park areas' to potentially excluded groups such as immigrants and ethnic minorities. (Rabinovitch, J. Curitiba: towards sustainable urban development. Environment and Urbanization, Vol.4, No.2 October, 1992)

Spatial inclusion has also been approached by UNESCO and UN-HABITAT in the joint initiative of the Right to the City (RTTC). The main objective of RTTC is to promote "inclusive cities" and to primarily address Mayors, municipalities, city professionals and international NGOs that group together associations of cities and city dwellers. It encourages the residents to engage in their right to occupy public space and to participate as an equal in public affairs and urban democratic processes. Its emphasis is less on legal rules and more on norms, practices, meanings and identities, which all have political implications and urban policy consequences. A number of initiatives are being carried out at various levels towards promoting a rights-based approach and ensuring the 'Right to the City' for all urban dwellers. In this initiative the city is viewed as being responsible for guaranteeing equitable access to all to the opportunities it has to offer, and thereby fulfilling a social function.
(http://www.unhabitat.org/cdrom/networking/urban_policies_and_the_right.html; http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php ; UNESCO/UN-HABITAT, International Public Debates on "Urban Policies and the Right to the City". Third Meeting of the Working Group. December 2006, UNESCO Paris)

Initiatives promoting the relational dimension of social Inclusion

To feel included in society at the local level people have to feel a sense of belonging that extends beyond the inclusion operationalized through access to the material needs of life. This is a subtle experience but one which is vitally important if truly socially inclusive environments are to be created and supported. The experience of social support and contact is vital to experience being socially included. An aspect of relational inclusion is creating solidarity and encouraging the acceptance of others and interrelations among groups who may not share affinity, common values, or have empathy towards one another. Participatory dialogue, presented in Chapter 1, is one approach which is recommendable to use in these situations. Initiatives which support contact between people, including marginalized groups, solidarity and the formation of new relationships should be encouraged by local governments.

An example of a residential community that supports development of relationships between generations is Hope Meadows, Illinois, USA. Hope Meadows provides low-cost housing to foster care families, and low income older persons who contribute to the community by volunteering a minimum of six hours per week. Older persons' volunteer tasks can include tutoring, playground supervision, and guarding school crossings. In Hope Meadows neglected and abused children who have been removed from their biological parents for their safety, find a

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permanent and caring home with adoptive parents, as well as surrogate grandparents. The older persons are integral to the healing of the children and the children provide a sense of purpose in the daily lives of the older persons. (Eheart and Hopping, 2001) (http://www.generationsofhope.org/hm_main.html).

The campaign VI KBH'R' (We Copenhageners), by the city of Copenhagen Council in Denmark, is an example of a local government initiative which aims to increase cross-cultural relations and dialogue between members of society and make more Copenhageners feel accepted as equal citizens, part of a unity and as Copenhageners. Inclusion is understood by the Copenhagen Council as equal participation in the city's activities; trusting relations between the city's citizens and the city's institutions and the experience of unity and togetherness through dialog and communities across different backgrounds culturally and attitudinal. The 3 year campaign celebrates and acknowledges diverse religious, national and cultural holidays and a pool of 1 mill kr. annually goes to support initiatives that strengthen diversity and inclusion in Copenhagen, such as debates, concerts, public dinners, and dialog events. The campaign is closely connected to a string of Copenhagen Council's other focus areas, including the prevention of and fight against radicalization amongst the cities people and efforts against discrimination.
(http://www.oplevforskellighed.dk/)

V. Conclusion

Planners and policy-makers of local governments have the clear responsibility to foster unity among diverse populations and create a vision for a common future that pivots on the acceptance of difference and animation of societies with a view to harnessing the strengths that are inherent in diverse societies. A key challenge will inevitably rest with the need to ensure that all people are able to engage with society and benefit from the possibilities inherent in contemporary life and therefore that all people are included, irrespective of their social attributes. In this process 'the local matters'. Local governments have a critical role in promoting social inclusion, and programmes and policies need to be tailored to address specific local needs.

Participation of all members of society is essential. While, on the one hand, underlining the importance of equity and equal access for all and participation of all residents in decisions that impact on them, there must, on the other hand, be a processes that seeks to promote diversity and the participation of 'groups of difference' in the process of governance. Responding to the needs of vulnerable groups, such as the poor and marginalised, the disenfranchised migrants, youth and the elderly should be a central feature of inclusive governance. In fact this represents a litmus test of good local governance as a whole. If local governments are to respond to the challenge of social inclusion, they will have to reinvigorate, refocus, redefine paradigms and reclaim the participatory process that first brought them into being rather than trying to identify or uncover some new direction.

The need to engage successfully with all potential stakeholders is clear. Everyone must be encouraged to participate and partnership must be facilitated. The real challenge for local government lies, not simply identifying and including all relevant actors, but in the need to encourage a real level of engagement in the process among potentially reluctant parties.

This chapter has endeavored to outline what the challenges are for local governments in promoting social inclusion and why it is important that a new form of coordination and

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engagement is instituted if local governance models are to be truly socially inclusive. Approaches to promote social inclusion and examples of good practice that highlight how meaningful social inclusion can occur are presented as inspiration and to gain a better understanding of practical actions that can promote social inclusion.

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Annex I: Compilation of existing approaches to capture, analyze and measure the multiple dimensions of social inclusion and other related concepts

Available in a separate document

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