

Policies towards social inclusion

1) Political inclusion

- ❖ Affirmative action in the form of “reservations” – quotas – used for ethnic/ caste/language/location groups to support to political office or voice
- ❖ Gender quota for political office or representation
- ❖ Right to information acts to ensure public has a right to know rights, legislation, budget decisions
- ❖ Advocate for universal, or regional, citizenship and the portability of basic human rights across borders – ensuring basic entitlements to health, education social protection, child protection, and income security for migrants, IDPs and refugees (based on UDHR, CRC and other)

Caveat: affirmative action/quotas/reservations can over-emphasise identity, create rifts in the population and turn into politically divisive processes, or cement and reinforce divisions.

2) Economic inclusion

- ❖ Employment schemes based on a right to work. E.g. India’s National rural employment guarantee scheme, comprising an offer of 100 days of paid work on public works schemes in the rural economy, at guaranteed minimum wage. Needs to include monitoring process to ensure that all caste and ethnic groups are aware and party to the programme; vocational and soft skills training; free and high quality child care services for children of the labourers.
- ❖ Employment schemes for low-skilled ancillary staff in social services delivery and care services. E.g. South Africa’s employment scheme
- ❖ Promote “creative industries”¹ covering creative products and services such as media, visual and performing arts, design, and heritage which build on cultures of identity and use them to add value and create incomes

Caveat regarding employment schemes: they are usually self selecting for the very poorest and hence stigmatise; negative impact of such schemes – usually in construction of public infrastructure – on the health and safety of women, on the care provided to children of women workers, an inadvertent effect of pulling in child labour where the work is paid as piece work; excluded those who are weak or live remotely

3) Inclusion in social services access

- ❖ Across-the-board approaches such as school meals, which can address dual goals of offering food/improving nutrition and serving as an incentive for attending school.
- ❖ Transfers in cash or kind for young children or for girl children or for children from socially excluded groups (caste, ethnicity, language/categorical or geographical targeting). Eg secondary school stipend introduced for all girl children in Bangladesh in 1994. Girl students receive a monthly stipend, deposited in a bank account to their name, provided they remain in school, have a fair success rate in exams, and do not marry. The success in gender parity in education in Bangladesh – achieved in 2005 - is partly ascribed to this intervention.
- ❖ Salary incentives and top-ups to encourage teachers or doctors to accept socially difficult postings
- ❖ Long term career development: programmes for children from socially excluded groups to be nurtured and funded to reach secondary and tertiary education, some of whom would move to the professions and provide teacher/doctors/lawyers w socially excluded group
- ❖ Behaviour change public campaigns to address culture, prejudice and rights-violating behaviours and language at family, community and national level

Caveat on stipends and other targeted transfers: they may merely cement divisions, or reinforce inequalities and exclusion, since they are one-dimensional tools in a multi-faceted societal process

¹ See UNCTAD/UNDP, Creative Economy Report 2008. The Challenge of Assessing the Creative Economy. Towards informed policy making. Economic, cultural and social aspects. Geneva, New York, 2008. www.unctad.org

4) Social protection

- ❖ Universal, unconditional social protection to addresses vulnerability and redress the impacts of exclusion and prevent the worst effects of livelihood shocks, as well as to offer “transformative” support to enable socially excluded and vulnerable individuals and groups to move into situations of inclusion.
 - E.g. : global social floor proposal² including
 - Health insurance;
 - Income security for all children through child benefits;
 - conditional support for the poor in active age (employment programmes, benefits); and
 - income security through basic, tax-financed, universal non-contributory pensions for older persons, persons with disabilities and those who lost the main breadwinner in a family.
 - Unicef South Asia tri-fold approach³ comprising
 - Social protection *transfers* to households in the form of social assistance, pensions, child benefits as well as health insurance, and
 - The provisioning of trained and salaried care and protection *services* by government or the non-profit sector which would be responsible for inclusion, while
 - Ensuring enhanced, inclusive social services delivery in education, health, water and sanitation, housing, and other areas.
 - Child-sensitive social protection⁴ which emphasises the key rights and development needs of children, including
 - Addressing the age and gender specific risks and vulnerabilities of children;
 - Intervening as early as possible where children are at risk, in order to prevent irreversible impairment or harm to children;
 - Recognising that families raising children need support to ensure equal opportunity for children and to ease the childcare-work dichotomy for parents/caregivers;
 - Making special provision to reach children who are most vulnerable and excluded, including children without parental care, as well as children who are marginalized within their families or communities due to their gender, disability, ethnicity or other factors.

5. Inclusion policies

- ❖ Proactively promoting social integration/inclusion in policies in
 - social sectors - education, health, water and sanitation or housing; and in
 - economic policy – inclusive macroeconomic growth, employment policies, regional (subnational) development strategies, trade, investment policies, migration policies, and the like;
 - ensuring that policies are assessed ex ante and ex post for (inadvertent) impacts on social exclusion⁵

² ILO and DESA proposal.

³ Unicef ROSA Social Policy Section, Report of the UNICEF ROSA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SOCIAL PROTECTION. Forthcoming.

⁴ Alexandra Yuster, Child sensitive social protection. Discussion draft. Unicef New York, June 2008.

⁵ The DESA Draft Aide Mémoire reminds that one should not «ignore the social costs of globalization, trends in international trade, investment flows, the evolution of domestic markets and labour market developments” all of which have a “definite impact on the social inclusion agenda” (p. 12). In a similar vein, also see Isabel Ortiz, Social Policy Guidance Note, DESA 2007.