

Online Training Workshop on Government Innovation for Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups

Co-organized by

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)/ Division for Public Institutions and Digital
Government (DPIDG)/ United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) &
Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) &
UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Malaysia



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Social inclusion in the context of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs

- ▶ Commitment to **Leave no one behind** and endeavor to **reach the furthest behind first**
- ▶ Those whose needs are reflected in the Agenda include all **children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80 per cent live in poverty), people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants.**
- ▶ SDG 16, SDG 1, SDG 10, but also mainstream

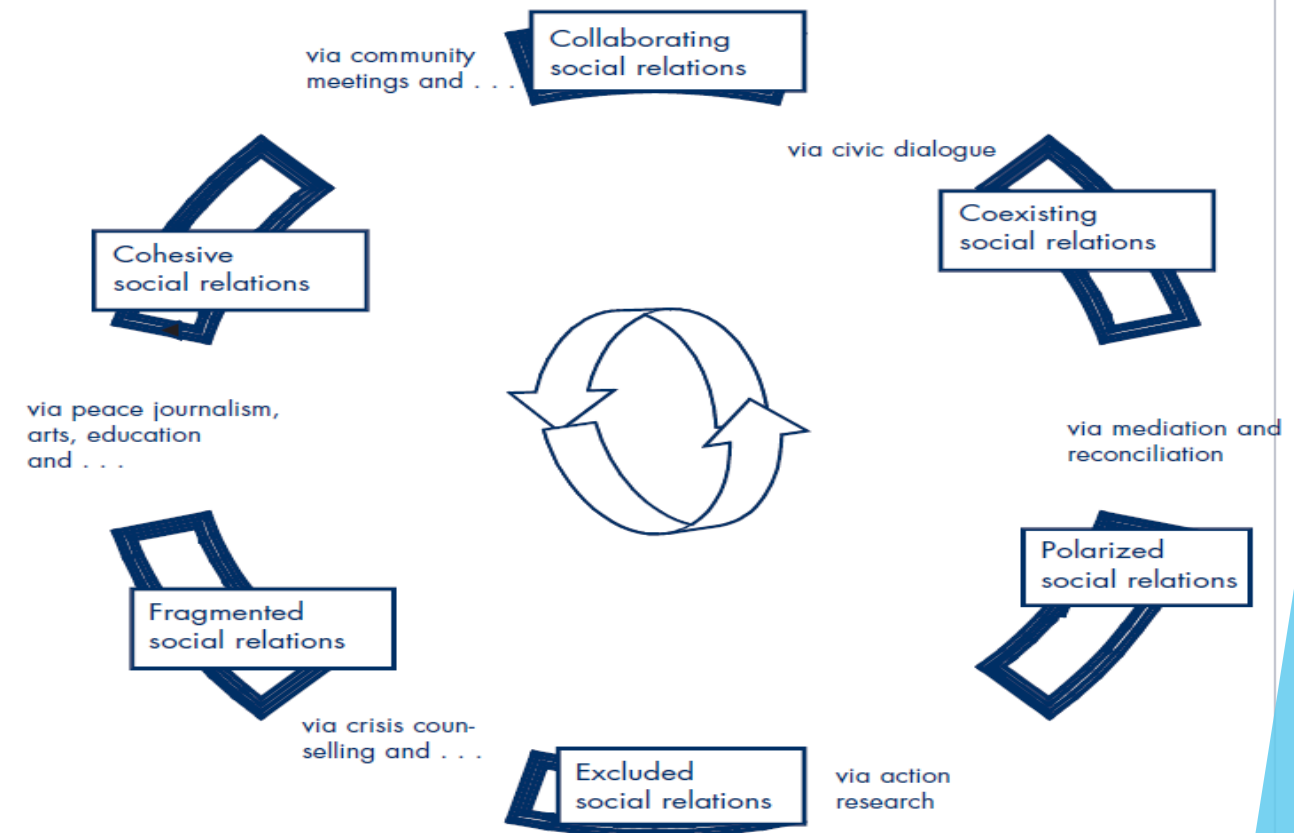


SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels eating a society for all

- ▶ It is necessary to transform negative social relations to positive one.
- ▶ Lack of social inclusion → growing social tensions, high inequality, increased public expenditures, underuse human resources in labour markets, less creative societal problem-solving
- ▶ Social tensions → weakening social cohesion and social contract/trust in public institutions

Source: UNDESA Participatory Dialogue:
Towards a Stable, Safe and Just Society for All

Figure 1: Stages of Social Relations



From Social Integration (WSSD language) to Social Inclusion

Traditional approach

Bring those excluded into a mainstream society (assimilation)

New approach

All persons, keeping their identity, are included in a society

Inclusion

Respect for diversity

Social justice

Mutual Trust

All people, regardless of their background, have rights and responsibilities, and **actively participate in all societal activities**

All people **contribute to the socio-economic development** and the betterment of a society

Meaningful and effective engagement for a common future

Participate in policy-making processes that affect their lives, including formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes

Inclusive development



Social Inclusion

- ▶ Young people
- ▶ Older persons
- ▶ Person with disabilities
- ▶ Indigenous peoples
- ▶ People living in poverty
- ▶ People living in rural or remote areas
- ▶ People living in urban informal settlements
- ▶ People affected by natural or human-made disasters
- ▶ Any other groups and individuals in vulnerable situations



Strategies to promote social inclusion

- ▶ **Reducing inequality and poverty**, in all its dimensions
- ▶ **Universal approach**: universal/equal access to quality education, health care, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, including floors, and **decent work**.
- ▶ **Targeting approach**: cash transfers or targeted social fund, job guarantees, skills/vocational training, graduation approach (targeting ultra poor), **remove barriers** - legal, physical, social, economic and political. Combat discrimination and stereotyping, awareness raising, advocates.
- ▶ **Inclusive and open institutions** to facilitate collective problem-solving through participatory mechanisms



Major gaps and challenges (partnership and participation)

- ▶ Consultations -just a check box, not listening to the needs and concerns of disadvantaged or marginalized groups
- ▶ Consultations do not lead to actionable solutions
- ▶ Limited time and budget allocations for consultations
- ▶ The process is top down and may not procedurally just and comfortable for all (no ownership)
- ▶ Lack of capacity of civil organizations/representatives
- ▶ May not working with the civil society organizations that best represent the marginalized groups to build effective partnerships with various stakeholders

Strengthen the capacity of public institutions to promote empowerment, participation and inclusion

- ❖ Change institutional cultures and the mindset of civil servants (not biased by gender, race, age, or any other traditional norms or values)
- ❖ Identify and build partnerships with various stakeholders
- ❖ Skills to facilitate broad-based civic consultation, collective problem-solving, alliances and coalition building and information and knowledge sharing.
- ❖ Respond swiftly and publicly inform citizens of the outcome of civil consultations, through E-government, internet, mobile technologies and social media networks).
- ❖ Secure budget for information sharing, e-consultation and follow-up survey.
- ❖ Enact legislation and regulations to guarantee the rights to information and set up relevant institutional frameworks to engage citizens. (e.g. India passed the national Right to Information Act in 2005)

Strengthen the capacity of disadvantaged or marginalized groups and communities

- ❖ Improve access to information
- ❖ Literacy and civic education and digital skills
- ❖ Effectively represent and articulate the interest of their groups, organizations, or communities (local/rural associations and networks)
- ❖ Build confidence, self-esteem, skills for teamwork, negotiation and consensus-building

Tools

► Publications:

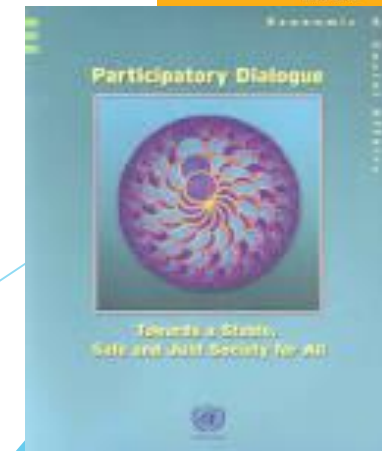
► World Social Report:

- 2020: Inequality in a rapidly changing world
- 2018: Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection
- 2016: Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development

- Participatory Dialogue: Towards a Stable, Safe and Just Society for all

► Expert Group meetings:

- 2020: Socially just transition towards sustainable Development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all
- 2019L Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness
- Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion thorough fiscal, wage and social protection policies
- 2018: Revisiting socio-economic policies to address poverty



Expert Group Meeting on Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness

(Nairobi, 22-24 May 2019)

Proceedings

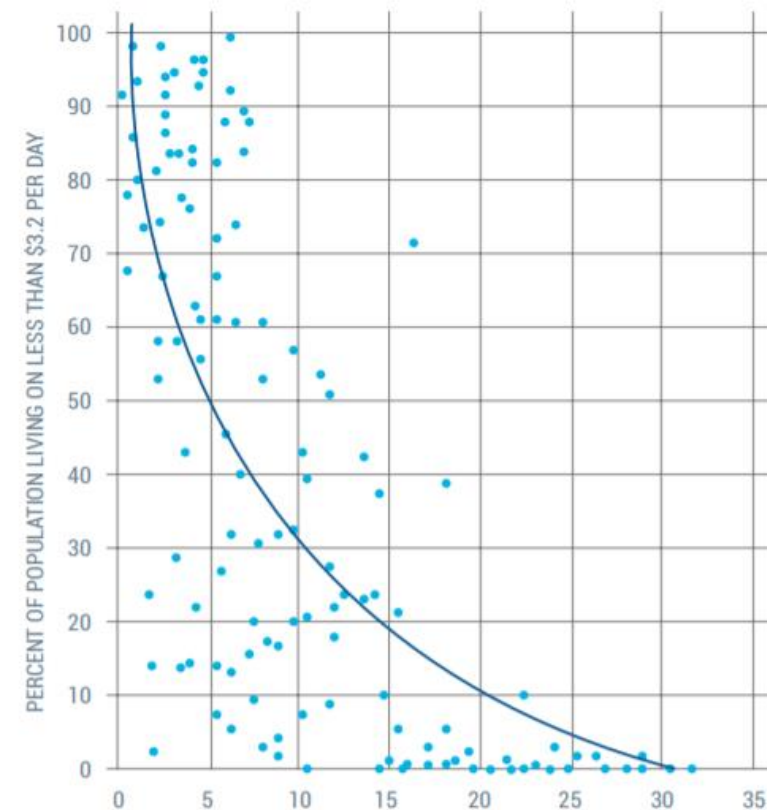


Currently,
45%
of the global
population has
access to at
least one social
protection benefit.



The Expert Group recommended, among others, to continue developing or strengthening social protection systems in line with ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) that points out the crucial role of these floors in “guaranteeing at least a basic level of income security and effective access to essential health care for ensuring life in dignity”.²

Figure 2: Social protection expenditure (including health, percentage of GDP) and percent of population living on less than \$3.2 per day, latest available years



Source: World Social Protection Report 2017-2019 (ILO, 2017a) and PovcalNet (World Bank, 2019, data accessed in May 2019)

Note: Percent of population living on less than \$3.2 per day in 2011 PPP. Data available for 141 countries. R²=0.528.

Leveraging digital technologies to promote social inclusion

- ▶ **Technology has great potential to promote social progress but can also exacerbate existing inequalities.**
- ▶ **The COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating digital transformation, deepening the digital divide and exacerbating existing inequalities**
- ▶ **Digital inclusion is fundamental to promoting equality and equity.**

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2020-meetings/socially-just-transition-digital-technologies.html>

Digital divide

- ▶ **Lack of digital infrastructure, especially in rural and remote areas**
- ▶ **Accessibility/Availability**
 - ▶ Offline population: People living in rural and remote areas; older persons: gender gap: people living in poverty; people with low educational attainment. (ITU 2017, Connecting the Unconnected).
- ▶ **Affordability is a key obstacle**
- ▶ **Lack of digital skills/literacy**

Digital inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalized groups

- ▶ **Older persons and persons with disabilities** often encounter accessibility challenges.
- ▶ **Indigenous peoples** have little digital content in their native languages.
- ▶ **Women** are 50 % less likely than men to be connected, due to cultural barriers, lack of digital skills and high costs to connect. (ITU 2017)
- ▶ **Individuals with low educational attainment** lack digital skills

Include these disadvantaged groups in formulating policies and strategies to address their specific needs

The 59th session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development: (February 2021)

“Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all”

- ▶ **Inclusive Economy”**
- ▶ **Society/well-being of all people**
- ▶ **Protect Environment/Planet**



Everyone is included
and actively participate
in building
a more inclusive,
equitable, resilient and
sustainable society

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EVERYONE

INCLUDED

Thank you



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