

Designing Inclusive Targets for a Post-2015 Agenda

Tackling extreme poverty and marginalisation alongside rising and intersecting inequalities must be a priority for the post-2015 agenda. As country representatives at the United Nations undertake the difficult task of agreeing the next steps towards a final framework, a focus on three key areas including improving livelihoods and pro-poor infrastructure development; increasing opportunities for participation and citizen action and tackling discriminatory social norms is critical if the final targets are to be transformative for the poorest and most marginalised people.

The impact of development on the poor and marginalised

In 2013, *Participate* partners carried out participatory research in over 30 countries with people experiencing poverty and marginalisation with the aim of bringing their perspectives into the post-2015 debate. The research builds a picture of how the lives of people, including those living with disabilities, the elderly, indigenous people and sexual minorities have changed, for better or for worse, and what positive changes they want to see happen.

The research shows with remarkable consistency that not only has development failed to benefit the poorest and most marginalised people, it has frequently been the cause of, or has deepened their poverty. They are often impacted adversely by the 'development' of those who are easier to reach.

The research also shows that those living in extreme poverty and marginalisation have not significantly benefited from the Millennium Development Goals. In order to 'leave no-one behind', tackling extreme poverty and marginalisation alongside rising and intersecting inequalities, must be a priority for the diverse range of development decision-makers at all levels. This will require a rights-based, people-centred approach which prioritises social justice and recognises the need for long-term policies and programmes.

A strong call for a 'data revolution' reverberates through the post-2015 debate. *Participate* research shows that disaggregated data is not enough. In order to truly understand the complexities of people's lives and the ways in which they are impacted by different sorts of policies and interventions, data generated in participatory ways is essential.

Where discriminatory norms, livelihoods and citizenship inequalities meet

'CityMakers' refers to the identity claimed by the urban poor in Chennai, India who see themselves as the people that build the cities they live in. Participatory research by the CityMakers found that slum dwellers are denied the right to legal identity, the right to state systems that protect them, services that truly respond to their needs, and the right to be treated equally. In their research they recognised unemployment, addictions, poverty, rising costs, homelessness, and no assets as their major concerns. It was clear that these issues are consequences of major structural challenges linked to CityMakers not being treated as citizens and being discriminated against and stigmatised by society.

"We are denied our Pehchaan (identity)! Only if we have a house can we have an address. When we don't have a house, how can we present proof of residence?"

CityMakers are fighting to get equal access to entitlements and services:

"We even used the number on electricity or telephone posts that are close to where we are to serve as address markers and get the needed government issued identity cards..."

CityMakers face criminalisation and marginalisation, a situation increasingly resulting in exclusion and isolation due to 'urban development' initiatives:

"People who live in jhuggis are treated as insects (keede makode)... those who live in big buildings are considered human beings. Aren't those who live in slums also human beings?"

Relocation, displacement and eviction have become daily threats as urban development advances:

"Because we are dispensable, we can be evicted. So, slums that come in the way of the metro route can be demolished and the 'evictable' population can be pushed to the outskirts of the city."

Targets that meaningfully transform lives

The targets needed for people living in greatest poverty and those who are most marginalised are ones that provide solid ground and strong foundations from which dignity is enabled and people can build a future for themselves and their families. These include:

- having a secure place to live (an informal settlement which people know will be there tomorrow), their identity recognised, the rights to citizenship, a basic livelihood (including in the informal economy) and safety and security;

- freedom from extreme discrimination and exclusion;
- an environment that does not destroy their capacity for building collective solutions and solidarity;
- meaningful processes of participation for them to articulate their needs and construct their own futures.

Participate proposal for post-2015 targets

The *Participate* proposal for post-2015 targets sets out **three foundational target areas**, which will be critical to ensuring that the post-2015 targets framework are meaningful for the poorest and most marginalised people.

FOCUS AREA 1

Livelihoods and pro-poor infrastructure development

Participate research highlights the pressing need for dignified livelihoods. As a result of the lack of formal employment, the informal economy often becomes the only opportunity available for generating income, developing skills and exchanging resources for those living in extreme poverty. Furthermore, efforts to create jobs through infrastructure-driven growth, rarely benefit the poorest. Some projects destroy people's homes while others drive informal workers off the streets, tearing them from their livelihoods. Moreover, marginalised groups (women in particular) are excluded from access to productive assets and formal land rights – a situation that makes livelihood security impossible.

Strategic targets

Target 1.1: Informal livelihoods and settlements that enable people to live a life of dignity are recognised and supported

Rationale: Informal livelihoods and enterprise activities need to be supported, not criminalised, and recognised for building the social and material resources of development as well as providing a pathway into the economy.

Example indicators:

- Policies that marginalise informal street economies are identified and reformed to support transitions from informal environments to more stable and formal ones
- Formal recognition of informal settlements increases by X% and clearance of informal settlements decreases by X%

Target 1.2: Increased access and control over productive assets and market opportunities by the poorest and most marginalised

Rationale: One of the major causes of poverty, in particular for women, is a lack of access to productive assets such as land and property, equipment, finance and markets. However, access is not enough, people must be able to use those resources productively and effectively and individual and collective land rights must always be respected.

Example indicators:

- % of women and men in the bottom quintile with access to productive assets (such as land and property, equipment, finance and markets) and proof of their rights over these assets increases by X%
- % of land disputes resolved in favour of marginalised people and communities instead of big corporations

Target 1.3: Infrastructure development benefits the poorest, while doing no harm to their livelihoods and the environment

Rationale: People are frequently displaced and their environments damaged in order to build infrastructure that does not benefit them. This includes for example, dams, roads, sanitation facilities and urban residential and commercial developments.

Example indicator:

- People living in poverty and marginalisation are engaged in the design, implementation and evaluation of local, regional and national infrastructure projects

FOCUS AREA 2

Participation and citizen action

Development fails the poorest because decision-making processes that affect their lives exclude them. People living in poverty have a right to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes and to hold public institutions, civil society and the private sector accountable. Frequently, even if processes exist, they are inaccessible, restricting opportunities for participation for the most marginalised. Citizen action is a strategy for people to claim spaces for participation on their own terms, and to engage policy-makers on the issues which are important to them.

Strategic targets

Target 2.1: Decisions are decentralised to the most local unit of governance

Rationale: Many decisions such as the provision of water and sanitation are made at a national level on a one-size fits all basis. Decisions need to be made locally and tailored to local circumstances.

Example indicator:

- Increase in the proportion of decisions taken by the most local unit of governance

Continued next page ➔

Target 2.2: Decision-making is participatory and barriers to participation are removed, particularly for those who are systematically excluded

Rationale: Much of 'development' fails those who are not involved in decision-making. Everyone has a right to participate in decisions that affect them. However, many barriers to participation exist for the poorest and most marginalised; hence, these must be removed. Governments must be held to account to ensure that these processes are genuinely participatory and not co-opted.

Example indicators:

- Evidence that people living in poverty are engaged in the design, implementation and evaluation of policy and programmes
- Resources are allocated to removing barriers to participation such as language and discriminatory attitudes (see Focus Area 3)
- Mechanisms are in place to ensure that governments are held to account on the legitimacy, openness and responsiveness of participatory processes

Target 2.3: Public and private institutions are responsive and accountable to citizens

Rationale: Institutions must place the rights of all people at the

centre of policy and programming. Where there is abuse of power, people have the right to hold decision-makers to account through the existence of appropriate and accessible mechanisms.

Example indicator:

- Appropriate laws, policies, institutions, procedures and mechanisms are in place in order to enable accountability. These include, for example, the ability to remove official and politicians for wrong doing, complaints procedures, and legislation on the right to information for all

Target 2.4: A properly resourced and enabling environment for citizen action

Rationale: To ensure their rights, citizens have to be able to organise. They need to mobilise information that supports their cause, and create networks and organisational that enable them to express solidarity through collective action. Governments need to ensure that groups are given the freedom to organise without fear, and the resources to organise effectively.

Example indicators:

- National legislation ensuring freedom of association, expression and media
- % increase in resources allocated to support community based campaigning organisations of the poorest and most marginalised

Tackle social discriminatory norms

Participants in the research consistently expose discriminatory social norms and abuses of power at the local level as the main factors that impact on their capacity to overcome poverty and marginalisation. The rights and dignity of people with marginalised identities are systematically abused, excluding them from access to services and resources, and subjecting them to abuse and harassment because of intolerant attitudes. *Participate* research shows that a great deal of the worst prejudice and harm lies within families and local communities. Attention needs to be paid in these domains, as well as formally guaranteeing the respect of individual and collective rights of these groups.

Strategic targets

Target 3.1: Access and quality of justice institutions, legal services, and the right to identity for people living in poverty and marginalisation

Rationale: Discriminatory social norms influence the development of unfair and inequitable justice systems that perpetuate these social norms, making access to justice and legal services unattainable for those most marginalised.

Example indicator:

- % increase of people reporting confidence in accessing justice institutions and complaint mechanisms
- % increase of people supported to gain proof of their legal identity

Target 3.2: Institutions are free from discrimination and prejudice

Rationale: Because of their poverty, informal livelihoods, ethnicity, religion, sexual identity, gender and/or disability, people endure stigma and humiliation at the hand of those institutions which are supposed to provide them with services and care.

Example indicator:

- % of people in poverty who express confidence in being able to access services free from discrimination and prejudice
- Mechanism are in place for filing complaints related to mistreatment, harassment and discrimination, that take into account language and cultural diversity

Target 3.3: Strengthened grassroots organisations of people living in poverty and marginalisation

Rationale: Strong grassroots movements are crucial to building collective power in the fight against discrimination. An enabling environment for the development of such collectives is crucial (see Focus Area 2).

Example indicators:

- National legislation ensuring freedom of association, expression and media
- % increase in resources allocated to support community based campaigning organisations of the poorest and most marginalised

Target 3.4: Resources, programmes and policies focus on shifting discriminatory attitudes and achieving behaviour change

Rationale: Discrimination experienced within the family and community needs to be challenged; legislation alone is not sufficient. Work on attitudes towards people affected by TB and HIV/AIDS has shown that awareness raising and transformative education initiatives can be extremely effective.

Example indicators:

- Number of 'awareness raising' and 'sensitisation' initiatives increases by X%
- % increase in policies and programmes that integrate components to overcome discrimination and achieve behavioural change

Policy recommendations

To ensure that the post 2015 agenda is transformative for the lives of the poorest and most marginalised the following targets must be included:

OVERARCHING FOCUS

- A rights-based, people-centred approach which leaves no-one behind, prioritises social justice and recognises the need for long-term policies and programmes.

FOCUS AREA 1

Livelihoods and pro-poor infrastructure development

- Informal livelihoods and settlements that enable people to live a life of dignity are recognised and supported.
- Increased access and control over productive assets and market opportunities by the poorest and most marginalised.
- Infrastructure development that benefits the poorest, while doing no harm to their livelihoods and the environment.

FOCUS AREA 2

Participation and citizen action

- Decision-making is participatory and barriers to participation are removed, particularly for those who are systematically excluded.
- Public and private institutions are responsive and accountable to citizens.
- A properly resourced and enabling environment for citizen action.

FOCUS AREA 3

Tackle discriminatory social norms

- Access and quality of justice institutions, legal services, and the right to identity for people living in poverty and marginalisation.
- Institutions are free from discrimination and prejudice.
- Strengthened grassroots organisations of people living in poverty and marginalisation.
- Resources, programmes and policies focus on shifting discriminatory attitudes and achieving behaviour change.

Further reading

Burns, D.; Howard, J.; Lopez-Franco, E.; Shahrokhi, T. and Wheeler, J. (2013) *Work with us: How people and organisations can catalyse sustainable change*, Brighton: IDS.

Credits

This *IDS Policy Briefing* was written by members of the *Participate* Core Team in collaboration with the Participatory Research Group (PRG). The Editors were Danny Burns and Clare Gorman.

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© Institute of Development Studies, 2014
ISSN 1479-974X



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