



EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND ENSURING EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

ADRF interventions in APFSD, March 2019

Asia Dalit Rights Forum

Introduction

The theme of Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) 2019- **‘Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality’** could be possible through countries commitment to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of the resources and services. To be true to the motto of ‘Leave No One Behind’ the SDG implementation should ensure the inclusion and participation of the all marginalised communities including women, youth and children, migrants, scheduled caste, indigenous people, people with disabilities, sexual minorities among others.

Reducing inequalities within the countries is a strong statement, which categorically points out towards socio-economic and political equity and erasing of any discriminatory mechanisms, which propels inequality among the people.

Excluded communities are most marginalized groups with their social, economic, political and cultural segregation, with standing

compared to others are impuissant. The inequalities exist in various services like education, hunger, health, water and sanitation, employment, land and housing, disaster risk reduction among others, which are represented in SDGs through definite goals. Gender and peace and justice other determinants which propels inequalities within the countries.

The entire plan of the events and conferences in Bangkok was to have very strong interventions on the inclusion of Dalits in SDGs and asking for a constituency for Dalits within the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanisms (APRCM) and thus in ESCAP.

Key Outcomes of the meeting:

1. Successful initiation of the Dalit and DWD constituency as the 18th Official Constituency within the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Mechanism (APRCM) in realizing Sustainable Development Goals in Asia Pacific.
2. First Dalit constituency meeting held in the Asia Pacific People’s Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) with participation from Dalits and DWD community representatives from Asia.



3. ADRF Chair Paul Divakar and ADRF member Bhakta Biswakarma delivered the Dalit statement in the APFSD 2019.
4. APPFSD Workshop on *Gender, Caste and Intersectionalities; Challenging inequalities and accessing Development Justice* was conducted with Dalit representatives and solidarity representatives from women against violence and indigenous women being in the panel discussion.
5. APPFSD Workshop on *Are we on track to reduce Inequalities Within?* Looking at the implementation of SDG10 for most marginalized communities including Dalits, farmers, migrants and other major groups.

Realizing Dalit and DWD Constituency within the APRCEM

The Dalit and DWD constituency was adopted as the 18th Constituency (Stakeholder) for the Sustainable Development Goals for Asia Pacific under Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM). The process of selection took place in the General Assembly on the third day (26th March 2019) of the Asia Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development.

The selection process was hosted by Joan Carling who requested ADRF Chair Paul Divakar to make his statement in favour of why it is important to consider Dalits as a constituency within the APRCEM mechanism. Paul Divakar made a compelling argument stating the exclusion of Dalits who doesn't fit into any given category or constituencies, while there are more than 220 million people who are discriminated based on their caste in social, economic and political standpoint.

The adoption of the constituency was succeeded with overarching support from the participants and other constituencies unanimously voting in favour of the 18th official constituency under APRCEM and thus providing a seat under major stakeholders in Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

The call for a constituency for Dalits was constantly requested by ADRF members including Paul Divakar in 2016, Deepak Nikarhil in 2017-18 and Beena Pallical in 2018 before the decision to consideration was placed in front of APRCEM secretariat. Further appeal was send to the members by Sushil BK (2017), Pradeep Pariyar (2018), and ADRF members through oral and written requests. In 2018, Paul Divakar and Deepak Nikarhil has written a petition for inclusion of Dalits in APRCEM and was followed up by Bhakta Biswakarma and Zakir Hossian.

After three years of engagement with the APRCEM, the constituency was finally adopted and is requested to be part of the coordination committee from 2020 onwards for the APPFSD and other events planned for the region.

ADRF Council Meeting

Date	22 march 2019
Location	IBIS Styles, Khao San Road, BKK
Participants	Paul Divakar, Durga Sob, Bhakta Biswakarma, Pradip Pariyar, Zakir Hossain, Wilson Bezwada, Deepti Sukumar, Sono Khangharini, Radha Bheel, Zakir Hossain, Pradeep Baisakh, Nadia Sarachini, Beena Pallical, Manisha Majumdar,

Mr. Paul Divakar Namala, Chairman of the Asia Dalit Rights Forum welcomed the participants and explained the brief history of ADRF including its conception in 2007 in Bangkok. While looking at the large amount of work done by the forum, he also explained the future focus of through thematic interventions including Access to Justice; Dalit Women; Budget and Public finances; Children and Youth; Manual Scavenging and SDGs.

Ms Durga Sob, Co-Chair of ADRF highlighted key achievements of ADRF in s gained influential regional and global visibility for intervening on CBD and DWD issues. A paper is being written on Access to Justice; it has two parts; first part focuses on current situations of Dalits including current mechanisms and gaps in the countries and second part focuses on the strategies to address the issues of access to justice in South Asia.

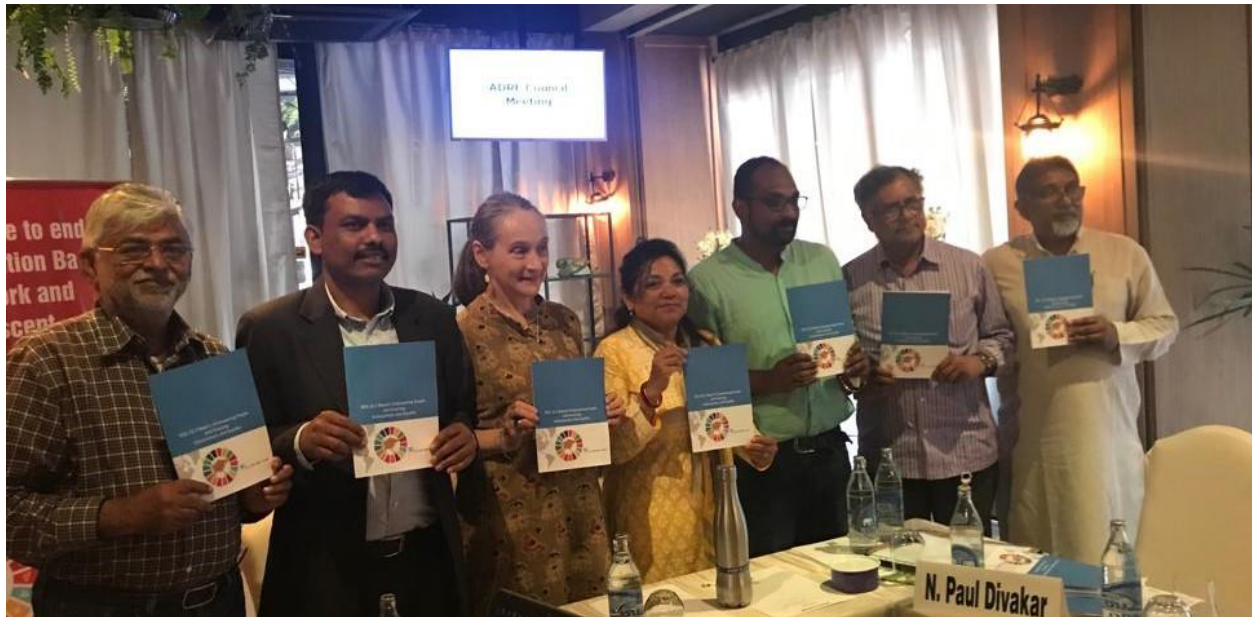


Thematic discussions on the key topics followed:

Access to Justice: Dr Ramesh Nathan (NDMJ) explained the key challenges to Access to Justice for the Dalit communities like increasing violence and atrocities against Dalit communities in the last few years and state and judicial impunity existing within the political and judicial systems in the countries in South Asia. The resistance towards addressing the crime by the state authorities and judicial bodies have limited the access to justice for the dalit communities. Mr. Bhakta Biswakarma, echoed similar position, with claiming that Dalits and Dalit women are the key targets of violence and often discriminated in justice because of their social positioning. The speakers has worked out

a paper stating the status of access to justice for Dalit communities from South Asian countries, with appropriate recommendations in the national, regional and global level.

Budget and Public Finance: Ms Beena Pallical (NCDHR) has stated the importance of the access to economic rights of Dalits, especially Dalit women, stating that the social and cultural exclusion has spilled over to the economic and livelihood rights of the community. This has a very significant impact on the policies made towards the empowerment of these communities. The lack of voices has resulted in unfavourable allocation of the budgetary allocations, even in India, where targeted budgeting is in place. She further adds on the work done by NDCHR and ADRF in association with UN Women on the creating awareness of the Dalit women in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka on access to public finance and budgets. Mr Zakir Hossain (Nagorik Uddyog) stated the importance of the budget work in Bangladesh were trainees have taken this work forward with creating networks towards further sensitization of grassroot level organisations and Dalit women.



Gender rights: Ms Asha Kowtal (AIDMAM) explained the lack of focus on the Dalit women in the overall aspects of the development and human rights work done in South Asia. She further explained the multiple forms of discrimination faced by Dalit women due to gender, class and caste. She also explained the lack of representations of Dalit women in programmes and policies as well as decision making mechanisms. Further pointing out the intense atrocities and violence faced by Dalit women, when accessing their rights. Ms Durga Sob (FEDO-ADRF) expressed her feelings towards the correlation of violence and development. The backwardness faced by Dalit women are direct impact of the patriarchal and caste strongholds which are pre-occupied within the system, that negatively impact the progress of development.

Children and Youth: Mr Pradip Pariyar (Samata Foundation) explains the importance of focus on Children and Youth, he emphasized the importance of youth being the drivers of change has been

unevenly focused by the Dalit communities in development and access to justice. The further importance should be given for mainstreaming Dalit youth through SDGs.

Extending support to other DWD groups: Mr Paul Sinnapan (Malaysia) explained the importance of having structural network within the ADRF to address the efforts. Like in Malaysia, even though most of the Dalits live in poverty, there has been some success stories with the help of churches and modern education, barriers of economic estrangement been addressed by the communities. However, deep lying social exclusion persists through lack of inter marriages and social standings.

Sustainable Development Goals: Dr Deepak Nikarthil (ADRF) has discussed the importance of the collaborate approach towards ensuring deep impact of the forum's work intune with the thematic areas. He also introduced the nature of the impact ADRF needs to ensure in the forums like APFSD and HLPF through effective participation and efficient partnership.

Ms Nadia Sarachini (Christian Aid) highlighted the spotlight of data in the Agenda 2030 and how these doesn't cater to the interest of the promoting and pursuing social justice. She suggested, in absence of the large data set, qualitative case studies could substitute the narratives. She suggested creating platforms/hubs for people to share their stories and effectively use them to highlight to the authorities and decision makers.

Manual Scavenging - Mr Wilson Bezwada and Ms Deepti Sukumar explains the glaring manifestation of caste through manual scavenging and other forms of the discrimination forced upon by the dominant communities. Manual scavenging is prohibited in India and some other countries, but it is still existing. In certain counties like Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, policies exist for the elimination of manual scavenging in certain municipalities but not in the country as whole. Data on access to justice and sewer deaths among manual scavengers are not counted or taken into into consideration under the development. The issue needs to be highlighted at international level in UN HLPF and UN GA, that no other countries have similar deaths which may make the governments to take positive steps for protecting manual scavenging community against injustice. As a first step, the issue needs to be highlighted through public hearing tribunal. Studies, workshops to be conducted and model laws need to be prepared.



Global DWD: Mr Paul Divakar (ADRF) explained the importance of global DWD work towards ensuring the united voices of the DWD communities towards ensuring access to justice and development through global process. One huge step is to bring the DWD communities in Africa, where the caste and hierarchical forms of discrimination entangled with slavery has been identified. In order to get a UN declaration, all the DWD groups should come under one single umbrella and raise their voice together. GCAP has also been a big supporter of this exercise, and has included the socially excluded communities under their faces of inequalities initiatives. ADRF will be heading the Social Justice Task Force, but need to have two representatives to address this in the global council and one representative in regional council.

Key Outcome: ADRF Chair has suggested having key members taking responsibilities on the thematic sections to address the overall aspects of the ADRF's work in the future. The key responsibilities were provided to the following members:

- Access to Justice - Dr Rameshnathan and Mr Bhakta Biswakarama
- Dalit Women and Gender Justice- Ms Durga Sob and Ms Asha Kowtal
- Public Finance and Budgets- Ms Beena Pallical and Mr Zakir Hossain
- Children and Youth- Mr Pradeep Pariyar and Ms Tammanah
- SDG - Dr Deepak Nikarthil
- Manual Scavenging- Mr Wilson Bezwada and Ms Deepti Sukumar
- Global Advocacy- Mr Paul Divakar
- Extention of ADRF to Malaysia- Paul Sinnappan and Siva Pragasam

ADRF Co-Chairs Paul Divakar Namala and Durga Sob was unanimously elected as representatives of the GCAP Executive Council. ADRF member Mr Zakir Hossain was elected as the representative of GCAP Regional Executive Council.

APFSD Workshop 1: Gender, Caste and Intersectionalities; Challenging inequalities and accessing Development Justice.

Date	24 th March, 2019
Location	Ball room, IBIS Styles, Khao San, BKK
Organization	Asia Dalit Rights Forum, Rural Development Centre, Nagorik Udyog, GCAP, ADA, Christian Aid
Panelist	Asha Kowtal (moderator), Durga Sob (FEDO), Nadia Sarachini (Christian Aid) Radha Bheel (PDSN), Sarah Zamaan (Pakistan), Patricia Wattimena (APWLD)

The caste-based discrimination is not homogenous in its nature but there are commonalities that exist within countries and across south Asian region. Dalit women are discrimination based on caste, class and gender and patriarchy and hence are the most marginalized group in the region. Dalit women are often raped, face violence and are victims of trafficking. Neither MDGs nor SDGs so far has put any effort in addressing issues of Dalit Women. It is important for stalwarts to understand the process of the SDG monitoring, accountability and participation to effectively raise the issues. Alike Dalit women, indigenous women too face various forms of discrimination. Indigenous people have got representation through indicators, targets and major groups but the real work needs to be done at grassroot level for the effective implementation of SDGs for the development of for indigenous people and especially women.

In South Asian Countries such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal Dalits are the primary victims of slavery and bonded labour. Dalits are the primary population to practice manual scavenging. The job is specified to them through inheritance and at time are forced into it. Sewage deaths are common among manual scavengers. There is exists no provision of safety for the manual scavengers. Practice of untouchability exists whereby people avoid physical touch with manual scavengers. In Pakistan, Dalits are often accused of Blasphemy. Dalit women who are abducted or trafficked and converted to Islam are not allowed to visit homes or see family. Asia Bibi is a Pakistan's notorious blasphemy case where an innocent Dalit woman were sentenced to lifetime imprisonment but found to be innocent nine years later. Despite being declared innocent by the court, people of

Pakistan were to murder her in the name of religion. Such victimization of Dalits in the name of protection of Hindu fundamentalism is also widely seen in India.

In India laws are already put in place but justice is not ensured to Dalits. Nepal is in formation stage to have laws and policies for the welfare and development of Dalit. A significant progress has been



made by CSOs in Pakistan for the recognition of Dalits in Pakistan. In Pakistan, Eighty percent of the Dalit population are farmers and are often harassed by landlords. Housemaids who are mostly Dalits are also discriminated. The dress code and lack of education also other reason for the discrimination against Dalits. The efforts are also made for Census to recognize Dalit as Scheduled Caste in Pakistan. Despite Pakistan being Islamic Republic and considerable Dalit population being Muslim, they still face discrimination based on their caste. Prime Minister, other key ministers and politicians have been addressing the issue and it is critical to how the progress is made.

The issue needs to be highlighted at international level for greater implications. There is no fixed approach to engage in for the eradication of discriminatory norms, but the first step is to make the international organisations understand the effect of marginalisation and discrimination on Dalit especially Dalit women. Marginalisation corners discrimination from recognizing caste experts hence it is important to create evidence and strong data on discriminatory practices, violence and enforced hierarchies.

Suggestions

- The countries should have clear narratives in terms of recognising Dalits
- Bring all marginalised and excluded communities together to address discrimination
- There is need to have policies for the inclusion of Dalits in education and employment by means of reservation in accordance with the percentage of Dalit population in countries such laws do not exist. And in countries where such laws exist must strive for its effective implementation
- The government should have clear narratives and legal mechanism on non-tolerance on caste-based discrimination
- Appropriate and sufficient measure must be taken bridge gender gap, ensure gender equality and end patriarchy
- Ensure protection of rights for the Dalits including human rights
- Organize regionally and internationally and work together with all solidarity groups towards addressing the intersectionalities and to have more impact on the rights and development of Dalit
- Take necessary action to create more opportunities for Dalit women in the larger/mainstream women movement nationally, regionally and internationally
- Prevent forced and child marriages, violence, exploitation and trafficking of Dalit women

Major Constituency Meeting -Dalits

Date	24 th March 2019
Location	IBIS Styles- APPFSD 2019
Participants	Paul Divakar Namala, Beckie, Denison, Aaron, Deepak, Bhakta, Wali, Triranjana, Nadia, Ramesh Nathan, SONO, Deepak, Bhakta, Zakir, Manuela

Discrimination is practiced in various forms. It is important to see how to accommodate all of the caste affected group as people not always identify discrimination based on caste and not all affected communities identify themselves as Dalits. It is critical to see how to accommodate all of the caste affected or similarly discriminated communities and countries together for larger solidarity. Caste discrimination is division of labourers and discrimination based on work and descent which UN also recognises as Discrimination based on Work and Descent (DWD).

ADRF existence is very important in the Asia and must extend its working presence in all of the caste affected countries in Asia. ADRF needs to play a pivotal role in building strong solidarity across

Asia-Pacific region facing caste-based or similar forms of discrimination. Women is a big constituency; ADRF has been getting opportunities to speak on Dalit women during UN HLPF and UN GA. But having regional solidarity can help in acknowledging caste issue by international communities and can also help to have Dalit as constituency through APRCEM. APRCEM constituency gives prominence in UNESCAP and may help to take up the caste or DWD issue in UN HLPF.

It is planned to campaign and build more solidarity among the caste affected communities and



countries through up to UN HLPF. It involves side events, lobbying and campaigning with the support from CSOs, other major groups, diaspora communities and strong evidence base is critical to take up caste and DWD issue at global level in UN HLPF.

In addition, the plan is to have a Global Assembly of the representatives of the DWD communities in Africa, Asia, Americas and Europe during the UN General Assembly review meeting of SDGs between 20-24 September 2019 to try and push for DWD issue with several bodies. Reports and relevant materials need to be adequately used to push this agenda further. A consultation is planned in Dakar on Global Partnership and Joint Actions in Addressing Discrimination based on Work & Descent - DWD, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination. The focus of the consultation is to collaborate for joint action in UN HLPF and in UN GA. It is also expected from the Dakar participants to attend General Assembly in New York to show solidarity and involve in further joint actions. Additionally, working with Aid agencies either in development or humanitarian sector can provide potential opportunities in a way that these organisations have influence and language to involve sub groups and help to do things at greater pace.

While focusing on international advocacy and joint actions it is also important to strengthen national policies, gender equality, gender justice, gender budgeting, disaster risk reduction and relief interventions concerning Dalits. It would be a great idea to have a young team put in place. Working together with a young team would be quite helpful in bringing new ideas can be very influential for greater visibility and participation.

In India and Nepal, laws are put in place, which help in identifying and counting Dalit population. But it is not so in countries like Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Pakistan and Bangladesh. For wider recognition of the Dalit and Caste issue in these countries the issue can be brought to focus through consistent debate and discussions among various stakeholders.

Tax Justice is a new concept that is brought forward through the solidarity meeting. Employing the most marginalised labour at low wages is injustice to poor Dalit as tax regulation are same for both poor and rich. Work on Dalit rights have not focused on Tax Justice so far, women working in informal sector are the most affected.

Conclusion:

A letter needs to be written on the importance of tax Justice. Thematic areas such as Access to Justice, Violence, Exclusion, Manual Scavenging, Children, Youth, Domestic Workers need to be included in ADRF future action plans.

APPFSD Workshop 3: Are we on track to reduce Inequalities Within?

Date	25 th April 2019
Location	Meeting Room 2- IBIS Styles, Khao San Rd
Panelist (Session 1)	Paul Divakar Namala(Moderator), Ramesh Nathan, Beena Pallical, Zakir Hossain, Siva Pragasam, Nadia Sarachini, Sono Khangharani
Panelist (Session 2)	Deepak Nikarhil (Moderator), Beckie Malay, Denison Jayasoorya, Wali Haider, Bhakta Biswakarma, Aaron Ceradoy, Trinanjan Radhakrishnan

Are Dalit inclusive SDGs in right track?

The first session was chaired by Mr. Paul Divakar Namala and a report on Caste and Discrimination was released. Following key issues are addressed:

Discrimination in education & employment, untouchability, forced & bonded labour, violence, exploitation at work, manual scavenging & sewer deaths, migration, unsafe living conditions leading to severe health issues, trafficking of Dalit women and rape, all these issues are common in India,



Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Considerable Dalit population especially women work in informal sector with no social security. Alike India, similar discriminatory practices are found in Malaysia. Disaggregated data on such thematic from multi-dimensional perspective is must for further interventions.

While framing development agendas the precondition is to address structural inequalities for greater impact. Structural issues include agriculture-based economies, lack of infrastructure, lack of legal recognition, no discrimination prevention laws or ineffective implementation, discrimination in education and employment, no provision for sectorial minimum wages etc. If such structural inequalities are not considered, then the development agendas come with inherent flaws and real growth is hard to ensure in such situations.

It needs genuine democracy for marginalised groups such as Dalits who should be engaged at equal levels in decision making of social, economic and political spheres. There is need to institutionalise participation of such marginalised communities to monitor and assess resources.

At national level Dalit advocacy groups should extend solidarity among affected population within the nation state and eventually influence respective the government to take necessary actions through proper channel such as national planning commission, census bureau, welfare departments etc.



Development justice is highly linked with private sector as it often disenfranchises Dalit and Tribal population and hence CSOs see private sector as evil while this may be the reality, government are advocating and influencing rules, laws, policies and programs such as in the case of India, it released national voluntary guidelines for greater corporate accountability. Hence changing that mindset and involving private sector for the betterment of Dalits would be crucial for further interventions concerning development justice. It may be of great help if we succeed to have constituency on Business with a view of development justice.

Country reports does not always give a real picture of its growth and development hence it is a good idea to network with grassroot level advocacy networks, national and international NGOs and CSOs and bring out country reports to highlight the hidden realities. UN SDGs are in its fifth year and it is essential to bring such innovative ideas of exploring ground realities to make the issues such as DWD and others to make globally visible. SDG10 that ensure reduced inequalities must take note of migrant workers and address the issue accordingly through UN SDG 2030 agenda.

Action Plan:

- Free movement within South Asia region
- Disaggregate trafficking of women to understand Dalit women and children issues in particular
- Financing for development: allocation of budget from government and other sources for elimination of malpractices like manual scavenging and discrimination in education.
- Ensure private sector does not exploit or discriminate the marginalised Dalits

Civil Society Statement on behalf of the CSOs APRCEM at the Sixth APFSD 2019

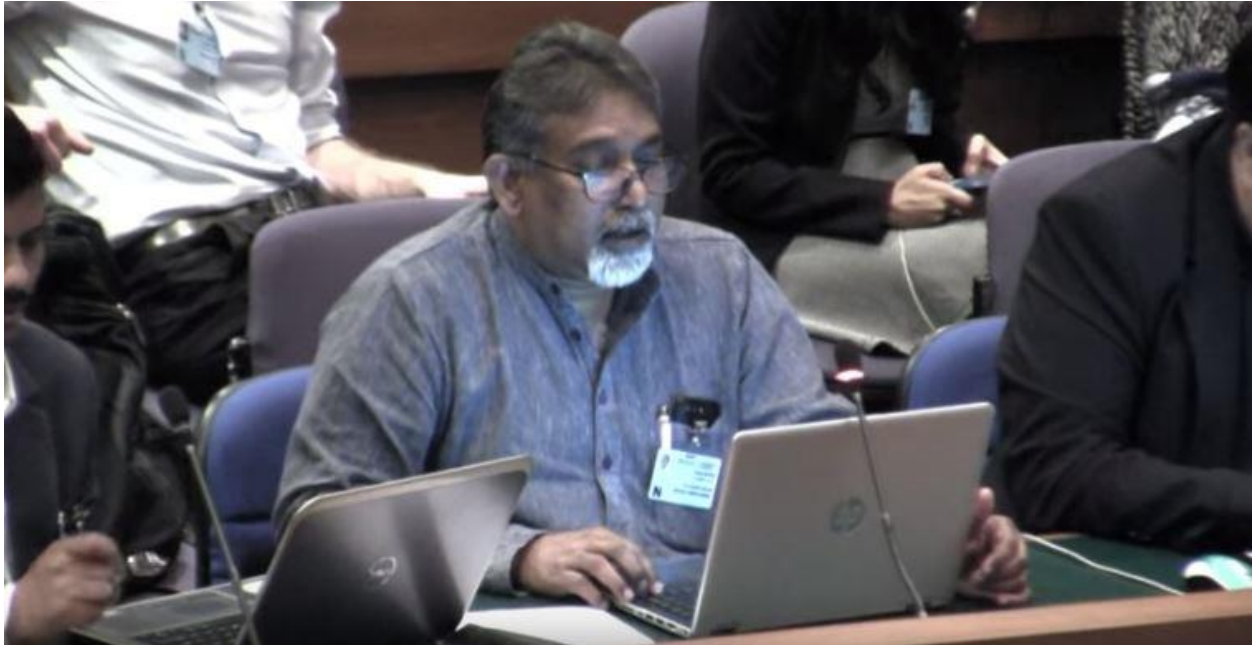
Delivered by Paul Divakar Namala, Asia Dalit Rights Forum

My name is Paul Divakar Namala, from the Asia Dalit Rights Forum and I myself come from a community which has named itself Dalits, one of the most excluded and discriminated but resilient communities in South Asia. I am reading this statement on behalf APRCEM, the Civil Society Mechanism, representing more than 200 people's organizations and civil society groups in Asia Pacific converged in solidarity to share experiences, discuss the multiple dimensions of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and convey our demands of accountability and justice at the People's Forum on Sustainable Development 2019.

The forum had the theme "Strengthening People's Power for Development Justice in an Unequal and Divided World" and was held in Bangkok on March 24-26, 2019. We are bound together and committed to work in solidarity, and to strengthen the inter-linkages among rights, development and sustainability. We demand accountability from our governments and key institutions in the delivery of the SDGs in our respective countries and constituencies. We reiterate the need for an inclusive planning, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs with democratic participation of the most marginalized groups - indigenous peoples, women, especially rural women, farmers, workers, fisherfolk, urban poor, LGBTQI, people living with HIV/AIDS, people living in conflict, older people, youth, migrants, people with disabilities, Dalit, and those discriminated based on work and descent.

While we acknowledge some progress on the SDGs, there is still a big gap, especially with implementation and monitoring. We want to express our disappointment with the lack of commitment and action from our governments to the SDGs. As seen in the recent ESCAP progress

report on the SDGs, more than two thirds of the SDGs targets are off track and not likely to be met in this region.



While there is recognition from governments in Asia Pacific on the importance of the SDGs, there continues to be lack of political will and different priorities at the local level. The region is home to the poorest and most marginalized communities. There is widening inequality between the rich and the poor, worsening poverty exacerbated by regressive tax systems and illicit financial flows, increasing human rights violations, further degradation of the environment, deprivation of people's access to resources and services, worsening impacts of climate change, and shrinking democratic spaces. It's business-as-usual at the national level. Corporations continue to enjoy the space provided by the governments to access resources at the cost of the people. The influx of corporate investments in land, water and natural resources have led to massive displacements, destruction of the environment and violation of human rights.

We are concerned that these people's realities on the ground are not reflected in the implementation of the SDGs, as well as the lack of disaggregated data and inclusivity of governments in the national level in the planning and monitoring of the goals and targets. We would also like to highlight the increasing and alarming rate of killings and harassments against frontline defenders and how this is impacting the achievement of the SDGs.

We reiterate the call for a genuine transformative development agenda framed by Development Justice. The current development paradigm of neoliberal globalization is not working, it continues to push people to the margins and usher profit-seeking corporations to access and control our resources. The Development Justice Framework seeks to address the pervasive injustice we face today through the Five Foundational Shifts--Redistributive Justice, Economic Justice, Social Justice, Environmental Justice and Accountability to the Peoples. Guided by these principles, we commit to

strengthen our movements, harness people power and demand accountability and justice from our governments and big corporations who have perpetrated grave human rights violations.

“Leaving no one behind” is recognizing and addressing the root causes and systemic barriers that continue to hamper people’s development. Barriers that have led to the current situation will continue to adversely affect many while benefiting a few around the globe and hinder the achievement of the SDGs if they are not confronted and addressed.

Dalit Statement on Regional to Global Interventions

Delivered by Bhakta Biswakarma, Asia Dalit Rights Forum



Empowering people and ensuring equality and inclusiveness is only be possible if we strengthen the mechanisms to transactional exchange of experiences of countries towards the regional and further global level. Issues of the most marginalized communities like women, youth and children, Dalits, indigenous people, people with disabilities, migrants, workers including plantation workers, and LGBTIQ, could only be possible with partnership with countries, private sector including business and CSO from the region to representation in the global level.

Inequalities within is the key issues for grassroot communities like Dalits and discriminated based on work and descent including plantation workers, the barriers of representation and limitations in participations in the SDG process even after counting more than 220 million in this region. Further, the transactions of information between countries, influences the under development of such

communities. While there are many countries taking positive steps towards breaking the barriers of inequality within, the best practices are often not shared for effective and constructive addressing of the issues.

These issues have also led to lack of disaggregated data for means of implementations in the national level. The efficient and updated disaggregated data is often the challenge for the states, especially communities like plantation workers and discriminated based on work and descent. We would request for mechanism for incorporating community participative data collection within the SDG system nationally and regionally.

Financing on the Leaving No one behind, has been nominal through cherry picking targets and indicators, which has not really addressed the holistic transformative change ambitioned by SDGs. Thus, we request for targeted budgeting opportunities for the grassroots by the member states and financial stakeholders.