

Why should Dalit movements engaging with UN?

Time: 10.30 am- 4.00 pm

Date: 10/07/2016

The inclusion and participation has become the buzz words for the populist UN Sustainable Development Goals and Targets. The idea of 'No one is left behind' has expressed the UN's desire to include everyone, even the most marginalized and sidelined person into the decision making, policy formation, implementation and monitoring. This shift from the top down to bottoms up approach has played an instrumental role in making SDG an immensely appreciated programme. However, the initial idea has not able to translate into the final agreed document for implementation and follow up. Neither in the SDG summit document nor in the indicators has SDG kept the promise of inclusion of all though leaving no one behind.

Communities like Dalits and Blacks have been victims of policy segregations in order to alienate and exclude them from any forms of progressive welfare and development. These communities, like other excluded communities have been discriminated on the basis of their race, caste or ethnicity for generations and have faced various forms of violence and atrocities. Dalits and other communities who face discrimination based on work and descent collectively forms almost 4 % (260 million) of the total world's population. Dalits have been marginalized from developmental agendas for ages and generations, which have resulted in extreme poverty, under development, pre mature deaths, indecent work/employment, forced labour and high mortality rate. Human rights violations on Dalits are higher than other communities, with atrocities are committed on daily or even hourly basis against the Dalit and especially Dalit women.

Dalit issues have been raised various times in UN by various Dalit activists, leaders and human right activists, with varying success. However the UN with the SDG has totally sidelined the issues of Dalit and other excluded communities. With the focus on inclusion, participation, accountability and transparency, has totally ignored the excluded communities from the complete agenda. While Black issues have been given some reference, they are not substantial in providing holistic development and sizeable improvement in their condition. The other minority groups have faced similar kind of problem with limited reference in the development agenda document or in indicators, the concept of inclusion and participation in development has become just the 'buzz word' not an action oriented focus.

This intervention for bringing in larger movements for active intervention in the UN and other platforms for recognition and inclusion of the Dalits and other minority and excluded groups in the world, in participatory and inclusive development and progressive welfare. This meeting focus on bringing various movements together for collaborating towards addressing the issues of marginalized and excluded together for inclusion and participation of these communities in the development model and UN agendas, in order to provide a share for progressive development of these marginalized and excluded communities, where it matters the most.