

UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
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Regional Priorities for implementation:

Statistics and Mainstreaming of the SDGs to address vulnerability

Consolidated Statement of the CSOs (Asia Pacific Regional Engagement Mechanism -AP-RCEM)

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We recall the commitment that ‘no goal or target be considered achieved unless it is met for all social and economic groups’. ^[1] Despite significant progress, the SDGs still lack inclusive language, specific goals, and action areas that would embrace an inclusive society that “leaves no one behind”.

Vulnerability and marginalization are not caused by accident. They are the result of current and historic decisions and systems that dis-empower specific groups. Similarly, patriarchy, caste systems, homophobia, ageism, racism, sexism, among others) remain deeply embedded in historical processes of discrimination and inequitable development in the region. Indeed, many groups – women, persons with disabilities, older people, indigenous peoples/ethnic minorities, *dalits*, LGBTIQ, single and widow, migrants, People Living with HIV, young people, people in the remote area, sex workers, informal workers and others are excluded and marginalized from national development and governance processes, with few opportunities for redress.

The regional roadmap should incorporate indicators and disaggregation of data most relevant to our region. Inclusive data collection and disaggregation is necessary to track the gaps and progress on the conditions of marginalized groups to guide the development and implementation of specific measures; and targeted and sustained action plans with allocated budgets to ensure that no one is left behind. This also means ensuring the effective participation of marginalized groups in the SDG implementation including in data collection, analysis and reporting to ensure that they are the central agents in the follow-up and review process.

Civil society participation and representation should also be institutionalized at all levels and be reflected in the regional roadmap, respecting the principle of non-regression. We are deeply concerned about the increasing number of laws and practices in the region that are limiting civil society space and impeding people’s freedom of speech, expression, information and assembly; as well as the numerous threats against and criminalization of human rights defenders

Addressing marginalization and discrimination requires the redistribution of power – economic, political, social and cultural power. This means we need to empower groups by ensuring their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled and an end to

the culture of impunity and ensure accountability; implement targeted and measurable action plans to meet their specific needs and wellbeing; and by establishing open and inclusive mechanisms for their effective participation and representation in decision-making at all levels. It also means dismantling the systems that concentrate power in the hands of a tiny minority of economic and political elites – a fact that is rarely acknowledged in this process.

To ensure the roadmap incorporates meaningful statistics and Mainstreaming strategies to address vulnerability, we offer you a series of recommendations in the full CSO statement to be submitted for the official record of this forum.

Finally, we wish to stress the need to fully address the causes of marginalization and discrimination through transformative actions in order achieve the aim of “leaving no one behind”

Thank you, Mr Chairperson