

National Consultation on the Role of Civil Society in the Eleventh Five Year Plan

A REPORT

Date: 15th & 16th December 2008

Venue: India International Centre, New Delhi

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PART ONE - CONTEXT

1.0 Rationale

The Planning Commission has recently taken the initiative to bring together a large number of civil society organizations to contribute to the development of the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Regional and thematic consultations were held across the country to review and provide inputs to the Approach Papers of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, aimed at reaching and engaging civil society organizations across the board in the formation of the Plan document.

The above mentioned processes have also been seen as an entry point to explore the sustained engagement of the voluntary sector in taking the National Development Goals to the masses, and providing ongoing feedback on how the programs and objectives of the Plan are being achieved on the ground.

It is towards this objective of exploring the institutional mechanisms for participation of civil society across the different stages of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Five Year Plan that the national consultation on the '**Role of Civil Society in the Eleventh Five Year Plan**' was proposed. The consultation was jointly organized by the Centre for Budget & Governance Accountability (CBGA), National Social Watch Coalition (NSWC) and Wada Na Todo Abhiyan with the support and endorsement of the Planning Commission of India. Additional support to the consultation was provided by Action Aid India, CASA, National Foundation of India, UN Millennium Campaign and Water Aid.

The consultation brought together more than 250 civil society representatives from nineteen states to interact with representative of the Planning Commission, as well as other National Commissions and Ministries for the identification of possible avenues for sustained collaboration on key themes of the national development agenda.

2.0 Objectives

- To facilitate a dialogue on the opportunities and challenges for development in the context of the Eleventh Five Year Plan among relevant representatives of development organizations, academia, media and the government who have been involved with formulation of the plan.
- To understand the objectives and targets of the Eleventh five year plan, with special emphasis on the priority areas for civil society engagement.

- To identify institutional mechanisms for sustained engagement and contribution of Civil Society Organizations across different stages of the Five Year Plan process, including its planning, implementation, periodic review and evaluation.

PART TWO - PROCEEDINGS

3.0 Inaugural Session

Introduction by Amitabh Behar



At the outset **Amitabh Behar**¹, speaking on behalf of the organizers, stressed on the need to look this engagement within the framework of deepening democracy and emphasized the need to explore and expand the space for the engagement of civil society in the implementation of the National Five Year Plan.

He outlined that the main purpose of the consultation is to derive workable institutional mechanisms to strengthen the engagement between the Planning Commission and Civil Society, with an additional focus on the provisions for strategic engagement that have been outlined in the recently introduced National Voluntary Sector Policy.

Context Setting by Kamla Bhasin



Speaking on the occasion, **Kamla Bhasin**² said that history stands to prove that it is the civil society which has been instrumental in bringing out some revolutionary changes in the society. It is due to the persistent efforts from the side of civil society, certain movements and issues like RTI, Social Exclusion, and Gender Equity have taken the prominence in the current developmental scenario. However, in her

opinion, the attitude of the government towards civil society is still far from encouraging. She highlighted the continued detention of Dr. Binayak Sen as an example which reflects the shoddy approach of government towards civil society.

¹ Amitabh Behar is associated with National Social Watch Coalition and Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

² Kamla Bhasin is associated with SANGAT

She said that the problems of development can be solved only through people's participation. But, unfortunately, this idea has not been effectively implemented in our country due to democracy and corruption. She further suggested that there needs to be change of attitude towards the civil society.

Inaugural Address by Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia



Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission in his inaugural speech stated that the role of civil society has undergone a dramatic change and should now go beyond the conventional role of pushing the parliament to make law and implement it. Given the complexity of the present society, the civil society should play a greater role because the corrective steps and a change in the

perceptions and policies cannot be done in a hierarchical way. He outlined some of the specific areas where he envisaged the civil society playing a significant role, including:

- **Policy level interventions:** Often the governments are not open to changes once they are elected. However, our democratic system provides the space for the civil society to influence the government to modify the policies. Therefore civil society should use this space to the optimal level so as to create new policies or influence the already existing policies.
- **Implementation of the schemes at the ground level:** Recently the role of government has undergone a sweeping change from industrial oriented activity to activities focused on schools, clinics, etc. In other words, delivery at the local level has taken prominence. In terms of contributing to the industrial and technological aspect, civil society may not be able to play a substantial role, but it can play a very significant role in terms of delivering the social service schemes.

Having said this, he put forward some of the suggestions to maximize the contributions that civil society can offer to the governance process, namely:

- **Developing a Compendium of the best practices of the Civil Society:** A compendium of the best practices made by the civil society needs to be developed, which in turn could be a model for the state government to follow.
- **Implementation of the National Voluntary Sector Policy at the State level:** Due attention must be given to the implementation of the National Voluntary Sector Policy at the state level as this would create a space for civil society to engage with the government at the state level. The translation of the national policy into state

level policies conducive to the engagement and strengthening of civil society could also be explored.

- **Effective Market Interventions:** Civil society can also think in terms of making an intelligent use of the markets to achieve the stated goals.

He concluded by reiterating that the government should be subjected to intense scrutiny and even criticism to ensure due attention is given to the national development agenda and welcomed the role that civil society has played in this regard.

“There is absolutely no doubt in mind that some of the best examples of ground level work, using resources efficiently and achieving the stated objectives consists of schemes that are being given to civil societies or dominantly done with the heavy involvement of civil societies”

- Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission of India

4.0 Overview of the Eleventh Five Year Plan

Key Features of the Eleventh Five Year Plan and Priorities for Civil Society Engagement: Dr. Rajesh Tandon



Dr. Rajesh Tandon³ stated that the formation of National Voluntary Sector Policy (2002) has been an affirmative step by the Central Government to integrate civil society in the developmental framework of the country. The major challenge lies in translating this policy into action at the state and national levels.

He outlined three areas for further collaboration between the civil society and the government, namely (a) creation of formal consultative mechanisms at all levels, (b) strategic collaboration on complex issues where social mobilization is critical over long term, (c) project funding through standard schemes. He also exhorted the government to take civil society into confidence in responding to new challenges being faced by the country such as terrorism and violence.

In the context of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, he highlighted some areas that need special attention, namely:

³ Dr. Rajesh Tandon is associated with PRIA

- **Definition of Civil Society:** There is an enormous confusion in the use of term like NGO, Civil Society, CBOs, and People’s Organization etc. the plan document too uses the term at various places differently. Therefore, it has various implications and connotations.
- **Recognition of civil society in the Eleventh Five Year Plan:** The roles outlined for civil society in the Five Year Plan are limited to the extent of local level implementation. There is no specific role envisaged for civil society at the state and national level. The Vision document of the Plan has a precise blueprint for the engagement of the private sector, but a corresponding outline for civil society engagement does not exist, reflecting on the gaps that exist in the recognition of this sector as a building block of democracy. The policy making role of civil society remains unrecognized, and the Plan document does not speak about strategic partnership with the Voluntary Organizations.
- **Creation of an Enabling Environment:** The Plan document needs to outline the steps that will be taken to create an enabling environment for civil society to function and grow.
- **Public Sector Financing:** Public sector financing for the Voluntary Sector continues to be below international standards and immediate attention needs to be given to increasing the resources required to promote civil society, while at the same time streamlining the mechanisms for funding and standards for transparency and accountability within the voluntary sector.
- **Accountability of the Delivery System:** The need to reform the government delivery system for inclusive growth has been adequately recognized. There needs to be further emphasis on making the delivery system more accountable and mechanisms to “revamp the governance system, not just the resources”.

Opportunities & Challenges for Marginalized Groups: Martin Macwan



Dr. Martin Macwan⁴ stressed that the planning commission should make solid efforts to address the issues of the socially excluded. He highlighted the experience of manual scavengers who have been neglected or rather sidelined from the developmental framework. The work that has been done in several states to ensure the recognition and integration of socially excluded groups in policies and programs

⁴ Dr. Martin Macwan is associated with Navsarjan

needs to be replicated at the national level, he said.

Closing Remarks



Dr. Syeda Hameed, Member - Planning Commission reflected that civil society has an all important role to play to bring the priorities of the ‘people’ into focus within the Five Year Plan. As a result of the consistent efforts for integration and collaboration, recently there have been efforts to create spaces for the voluntary sector in the Plan. For instance, a civil society window has been created giving space for mutual dialogue on

social issues. She stressed on the importance of state level efforts to take forward the provisions of the National Voluntary Policy.

5.0 Role and Priorities of Civil Society in the Eleventh Five Year Plan

In keeping with the core objective of the consultation, parallel sessions were organized to identify the roles and priorities of civil society in relation to thematic areas of the Eleventh Five Year Plan and discuss possible mechanisms to strengthen collaboration with the Planning Commission across the Five Year Plan process.

5.1 Health, Education and Basic Services

Health and the Eleventh Five Year Plan: Dr. Abhay Shukla⁵

Dr. Abhay Sukhla focused his presentation on key health sector priorities and possible forms of civil society engagement with the Eleventh Five Year Plan. In his opinion health care can be considered either as a commodity to be sold, or it can be considered a basic social right. He stated that factors such as the privatization of medical education, approving private sector expansion in health care, promotion private practice by government doctors and promotion of medical tourism without consideration of its impact on health care access for Indians were trends that would have a negative impact on the public health sector.

The possibilities for civil society engagement with the agenda of Health in the Eleventh Five year plan outlined by Dr. Shukla were in relation to the community monitoring and planning of health services, periodic social audit of NRHM and NUHM, participation in regulation and ensuring patients rights in private medical sector and the creation of a ‘Right to Health Act’ to enable civil society to work on the redress of health rights violations.

⁵ Dr. Abhay Shukla is associated with Jan Swasthya Abhiyan

Education and the Eleventh Five Year Plan: Sharmila Bhagat⁶



Sharmila Bhagat stressed that the absence of common school system is a cause of concern and there are too many layers of the school system – even within private and government schools. Hierarchy of access and the exclusion of the marginalized are other areas that need further attention. In additions to this, she said that the factors like the quality of para teachers, equity in education and the adverse impact of

privatization in education need to be given further attention.

Basic Services and the Right to Housing: Kirtee Shah⁷

Kirtee Shah outlined the gaps in relation to the the volume of requirements for housing in both rural and urban areas. Speaking on basic services, he said that there is a need to demystify this requirement and understand this as a process where the participation of people in planning and monitoring the service must be prioritized. He spoke of the importance of strengthening public housing agencies and placing communities at the centre of housing solution. Presently the focus is on project based response which needs to be moved into a people based response, he said.

The discussion on Health, Education and Basic Services was chaired by Dr. Kirit. S. Parikh, Member, Planning Commission of India, and reported by Sandhya Venkateswaran⁸.

5.2 Livelihood, Food Security and Environment

Livelihood and Social Security: Ashim Roy⁹

Ashim Roy proposed that labour should become a building block of the democracy building and planning efforts of the government and further efforts should be made to secure the right of the labour force and enhance their productive work. He suggested that the Public Distribution System should be converted into a central delivery mechanism for delivery of services to the poor can be integrated. This will provide the

⁶ Sharmila Bhagat is associated with Ankur

⁷ Kirtee Shah is associated with INHAF (Indian Habitat Forum)

⁸ Sandhya Venkateswaran is associated with Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

⁹ Ashim Roy is associated with the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI)

government and Planning Commission with a strong platform to deliver the social welfare schemes for the marginalized and the poor.

Agriculture and Food Security: Dr. Suman Sahai¹⁰

“There is a need to make agriculture worthwhile, economically viable, thus making it attractive to the youth”, said Dr. Suman Sahai. She outlined some of the major challenges facing the food security, and pointed out to climate change as the most crucial challenge in this regard. In this context, she called for concerted efforts to prepare the farming community to deal with the potential changes in the climate.

Dr. Sahai called upon the Planning Commission to prioritize nutrition delivery a key goal in addressing the worsening situation of malnutrition in the country. She also pointed out that the weak Bio-fuel Policy of the government poses a serious challenge to the food security and warned against the practice of converting land used for food production for the production agro-fuel. The undue focus on genetically engineered crops also has an adverse impact on food security.

There is a need for develop clear cut policy mechanisms to strengthen the mutual engagement between the Planning Commission and civil society in order to proactively address these concerns, she said.

Environment and Natural Resources: Ananya Dasgupta¹¹

Civil society is not adequately represented in the steering group and the working committees of the Plan, stated Ananya Dasgupta. Speaking on the theme of Environment and Natural Resources, she opined that if the Planning Commission looks forward to a constructive and fruitful engagement, it should include the civil society at every stage of the Plan process. She highlighted the need for Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) is to be done on every project.

The discussion on Livelihood, Food Security & Environment was chaired by Prof. V. L. Chopra, Member, Planning Commission of India and rapporteured by Biraj Patnaik¹².

5.3 Social Justice and Marginalized Groups

Adivasis: Dr. Ram Dayal Munda¹³

Dr. Ram Dayal Munda stressed on the inclusive development of the community and recommended that the Planning Commission must develop mechanisms to engage with

¹⁰ Dr. Suman Sahai is associated with the Gene Campaign

¹¹ Ananya Dasgupta is associated with EQUATIONS

¹² Biraj Patnaik is Principal Adviser to the Commissioners of the Supreme Court

¹³ Dr. Ram Dayal Munda is the former Vice-Chancellor of Jharkhand University

local level groups and communities directly if it wants to genuinely take the process of development to the socially excluded. He highlighted that initiatives like the Forest Rights Act and PESA need to be implemented in full spirit to enable changes in the lives of the people.



Nomadic and Denotified Tribes: Balkrishna Renke¹⁴

Speaking from the dimension of nomadic and denotified tribes, Balkrishna Renke said that all socially excluded groups should be mainstreamed so as to give them an

opportunity to identify themselves. It is unfortunate that nomadic tribes are not even aware of many of the developmental schemes of the Planning Commission as well as the government. He said that programmes like Indira Awas Yojana are good, but they need to be effectively tailored so as to meet the developmental needs of the socially excluded and marginalized.

People with Disabilities: Javed Abidi¹⁵

Irrespective of the clear statement in the Plan that each ministry should develop clear cut guidelines for the disability sector within six months of the approval of the Plan, no ministry has taken serious steps to implement this agenda, stated Javed Abidi. Besides this, the provision that the 3% of the budget should be solely used for the disability sector too has not been adhered to in its right earnestness. He stated that increased political will is needed to push all these issues to a further level. A separate Ministry for People with Disability is a key demand that is yet to materialize.

The discussion on Dalits, Adivasis, Denotified & Nomadic Tribes and People with Disabilities was chaired by N J Kurian, former Advisor to the Planning Commission and rapporteured by Dr. Prakash Louis¹⁶.

¹⁴ Balkrishna Renke is the former Chairperson of the National Commission for Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and Denotified Tribes

¹⁵ Javed Abidi is associated with NCPEDP (National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People)

¹⁶ Dr. Prakash Louis is associated with the Bihar Social Institute

Dalits: Ashok Bharti¹⁷

Speaking on the issue of Dalits, Ashok Bharti called for implementation of “*proportionate allocation of resources*”. The emphasis on inclusive growth is meaningless if Dalits are not involved in the planning process, he said. Development Planning implies equitable growth for everyone in this country and the government must take onus to facilitate the effective implementation of programs. He stressed on the need to design special



mechanisms for the involvement of socially excluded groups in the government programs & policies.

Women: Mary E John¹⁸

Partnership with CSOs in creating permanent institutional mechanisms that incorporate the experiences, capacities and knowledge of Voluntary Organizations and women's

groups should be a priority area for the Planning Commission, said Mary E John. She recognized that the Eleventh Five Year Plan has made a first step recognizing the centrality of women across all sectors, and added that there is a need for greater engagement between the Planning Commission and civil society / women's groups on issues such as a balanced approach to implementing the two child norm, recognizing Violence Against Women as a public health issue, and the recognition of the rights of people with alternate sexual orientation.

Minorities: Shabnam Hashmi¹⁹

The most important issue for Muslims is sense of *security* and *dignity* and the Planning exercise should try to address these core issues, said Shabnam Hashmi. Although the word 'Muslims' is mentioned across the Plan document, one often sees good words and good ideas but no money for its implementation, she said. The 'Prime Minister's 15

¹⁷ Ashok Bharti is associated with the National Conference of Dalit Organizations (NACDOR) and Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

¹⁸ Mary E John is associated with the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS)

¹⁹ Shabnam Hashmi is associated with ANHAD (Act Now for Humanity and Democracy)

Point Programme' for the Welfare of Minorities is a welcome step but there need to be concrete mechanisms to monitor its implementation and outcomes.

Children: Enakshi Ganguly Thukral²⁰

This is first time that the '*rights language*' has received a due place in a Plan document, observed Enakshi Ganguly Thukral while speaking on the spaces for Children in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. A cross cutting and multi-pronged approach has been attempted in this Plan and on the issues of children we see for the first time that this document makes cross cutting linkages with others Ministries such as the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Human Resource Development, she said. The overall perspective of the Eleventh Five Year Plan is the need to create a protective environment for children. Civil society should play an active role in monitoring the implementation of schemes such as the ICDS and the timely utilization of resources allocated, she suggested.

*The discussion on Dalits, Muslims, Women and Children was chaired by **Dr. Manjula Krishnan**, Advisor, Ministry of Women and Child Development and rapporteured by **Yamini Mishra²¹**.*

²⁰ Enakshi Ganguly Thukral is associated with Haq

²¹ Yamini Mishra is associated with the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA)

6.0 Conclusion: Ideas & Recommendations for Future Collaboration

The objective of the deliberations on Day Two of the consultation was to define concrete proposals for institutional engagement between civil society and the Planning Commission. Rapporteurs presented the key issues and ideas that have emerged from the thematic deliberations held the previous day. Subsequently, an interactive session was facilitated to accommodate the inputs on various issues.

Speaking on this occasion, **Dr. Lalit Kumar**, Jt. Adviser (Voluntary Action Cell), Planning Commission outlined some areas for reflection in relation to strengthening the role of civil society with the Planning Commission. He suggested that the aspect of social entrepreneurship needs to be effectively addressed and explored further. He further stated that there is a need to build sustained strategic partnerships among the Centre, State, PRIs and NGOs. Besides this, there should be more emphasis on the development of physical infrastructure. He invited suggestions to the various task forces being formed by the Planning Commission.

Dr. Ajay Mehta²² who chaired the deliberation observed that the space and scope of strengthening the ground level outcomes of the Plan has not been adequately addressed. Even if there is conceptual clarity at the higher levels of the planning exercise, the absence of strength at the ground to translate the national development goals into action would prevent the achievement of desired results, he said. Therefore, the key question is what mechanisms do we have to strengthen the presence at the ground?

In this context, the National Voluntary Policy that has been adopted in 2002 and identifies the Planning Commission as the nodal agency for engagement between civil society and the government should be an important blueprint in outlining the way forward, said Dr. Mehta.

The consultation concluded with a presentation by **Lysa John**²³ on the key ideas and recommendations that have emerged from the consultation on mechanisms to strengthen civil society engagement with the government and the Planning Commission. Further inputs to the emerging proposals were received from participants before the meeting was drawn to a close.

²² Dr. Ajay Mehta is associated with the National Foundation of India

²³ Lysa John is associated with Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

7.0 Proposals for Engagement with the Planning Commission

The national consultation on the 'Role of Civil Society in the Eleventh Five Year Plan' has been organized with the purpose of identifying mechanisms to strengthen the engagement of civil society with the Planning Commission, and their contribution to all stages of the Five Year Plan process.

The consultation brought together more than 250 civil society representatives from nineteen states to interact with representative of the Planning Commission, other National Commissions and Ministries for the identification of possible avenues for sustained collaboration on key themes of the national development agenda.

The key recommendations that have emerged as a result of this interaction are:

1. Creating Operational Mechanisms for the National Voluntary Sector Policy

The National Voluntary Sector Policy is the result of close to two decades of discussion on the relevance of civil society engagement in the processes of planning and governance in India. The identification of the Planning Commission of India as the nodal agency for interaction between Voluntary Organizations and the government in 2000, and the subsequent adoption of the National Voluntary Sector Policy (NVSP) by government in 2007 are significant first steps taken to recognize the role of civil society and provide formal spaces for their engagement and contribution to the governance process.

There is a need to facilitate an agreement on the operational mechanisms of the NSVP between civil society representatives and relevant Union Ministries, National Commissions at the national level, and achieve the same at the state level with the participation of State Planning Boards, relevant State Departments and the District Planning Committee / district level line departments.

Towards this objective, the creation of a national taskforce on the implementation of the NVSP could be considered, which would comprise of Members of the Planning Commission, key Ministries and civil society representatives. The Taskforce would be responsible to outline the proposed mechanisms and processes for the integration of the NVSP, which would serve as an input for further attention to the implementation of the National Voluntary Sector Policy in the Twelfth Five Year Plan.

2. Integrating the Instruments of Partnership proposed in the NVSP

The 'National Policy on the Voluntary Sector' recognizes three instruments of partnership with civil society, namely (i) consultation (ii) strategic collaboration and (iii) project funding. The Planning Commission must undertake to identify how the three

instruments of partnership become an integral component of the all national, state and local interventions of government. The steps that need to be taken towards this objective include:

(i) Consultation:

Civil Society representation must be integrated in the policy making bodies and delegations of the government. This includes the participation of the voluntary sector in national level consultations, think-tanks and forums, as well as in bilateral or international missions related to the United Nations, International Financial Institutions or Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral Forums. This would allow the expertise of the sector to be utilized while also enabling a closer understanding of and engagement with the challenges and issues being faced by the government within the voluntary sector.

In addition to consultations towards the Approach Development of the Five Year Plan, civil society must also be actively engaged to provide inputs into the Annual Plan meetings held with state governments and formally involved in the Mid-term Review of the Five Year Plan.

(ii) Strategic Collaboration:

All national programs and policies must incorporate the three instruments of partnership with civil society identified by the National Voluntary Sector Policy. An important strategy in this regard would be to create institutional measures for the direct participation of communities in planning, monitoring and evaluating government programs on the ground. Adequate resources must be allocated (and utilized) within all programs for popular education on entitlements and for the development of innovations. Institutional mechanisms such as Social Justice Committees created at the level of the Gram Panchayat or Municipal Council are required to strengthen the engagement of socially excluded groups in government programs.

The Planning Commission can also play a strategic role in facilitating multi-sectoral dialogues on national development priorities, thereby enabling an interaction and debate between civil society, the government and the private sector.

(iii) Project Funding

The concept of Project Funding needs to be expanded to look comprehensively at the need for 'Sector Funding'. The government contributes only 28% of the civil society related investment in India, as opposed to the global standard of 40% funding for civil society being provided by the public sector. Increased public sector investment for voluntary action and a funding approach that prioritizes the development of the

voluntary sector as whole would contribute significantly to building a vibrant culture of civic engagement and public participation in the country and must be seriously considered by the Planning Commission.

Provisions for civil society collaboration must be integrated in all major programs and guide State Governments to set aside similar provisions as part of their Plan fund. The Planning Commission must also create a 'Civil Society Sector Support Fund' that is allocated through a mechanism independent of the line Ministries.

3. Strengthening Civil Society Collaboration Mechanisms within the Planning Commission

As the nodal agency for collaboration between civil society and government at the national level, the Planning Commission must invest in strengthening its internal mechanisms for ongoing and substantive interaction with civil society across thematic areas of the Five Year Plan. Suggested mechanisms to enable this objective are:

- a) The Five Year Plan document must include a separate chapter on the Civil Society & the Voluntary Sector, thereby providing a vision and directions for the engagement of civil society in the context of the term and objectives of the Plan
- b) A Steering Committee on the Voluntary Sector must be created to function on par with other groups created by the Planning Commission to review and provide inputs to various sections of the Five Year Plan, as well as compile the above mentioned section on Civil Society & the Voluntary Sector as recommended above. The Steering Committee must also comprise of members of Civil Society
- c) The existing Voluntary Action Cell within the Planning Commission must be upgraded to function as an full fledged unit, thereby providing the mandate and resources required for sustained interaction with civil society across thematic areas of the Plan, as well as in utilizing civil society expertise to address new and complex social issues and crises that may emerge during the period of the Plan.
- d) The ongoing process of creating a Single Window for Civil Society to deal with all procedural aspects at the national, state and district levels is welcome. Further efforts to simplify laws and rules governing voluntary organizations need to taken by the Planning Commission to make them less complex and restrictive, and conducive to increased participation of Voluntary Organizations in development programs.

4. Proposals on Thematic Areas of the Eleventh Five Year

Health, Education, Basic Services & Housing

- Public awareness of entitlements under the flagship programs for Education and Health needs to be strengthened and is comparatively much lower than, for instance, the awareness of entitlements on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA).
- In addition to the Right to Education Bill, a National Health Bill must also be discussed and developed in the period of the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The introduction of a Common School System within the period of the Eleventh Five Year Plan must be prioritized.
- Processes and mechanisms for community monitoring of Health and Education program as well as local level public health and education systems need to be outlined more clearly and actively put into place. This may include processes such as Social Audits and Activity Mapping as well as the creation of institutional mechanisms for oversight such as the NREGA Council and Land Reforms Council which have active civil society representation.
- In the areas of health, education and basic services, the government response seems to heavily favour the privatization of systems. Instead the overwhelming need is to focus on increasing investment in public systems and strengthen the mechanisms for regulation of private sector intervention in these sectors. The legitimacy of traditional health systems must also be emphasized.
- There is a need for an alternate vision on the housing agenda with the emphasis on people-driven housing rather than project driven housing solutions. The government must prioritize the availability of land for social housing and strengthen public housing agencies in a far more vigorous way than at present.

Livelihood, Agriculture, Food & Social Security, Environment

- The monitoring of programs by the government must not be restricted to a financial audit but also involve the Social, Gender and Structural Audit of its interventions.
- The concept of Public-Private Partnerships must be redefined to prioritize the engagement of Labour Co-operatives and community groups in the implementation of programs.

- Eligibility barriers such as in relation to volume of business or years of operation, which currently prevent civil society organizations from taking up development works and programs must also be reviewed.
- Steps to make Agriculture a viable livelihood option for young people must be explored. The government must work to support farmers to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change, and restrict the conversion of land available for food production to other purposes.
- An Environmental Impact Assessment of all infrastructure development and tourism projects must be made mandatory. Local communities must be taken into confidence and formally involved in the process for the sanctioning of these projects.
- Land acquisition must be recognized as a critical issue by the government and special attention must be paid to ensure that the process of transfers or lease of land for corporate interest is undertaken with utmost transparency and due involvement of local communities. Land-for-land must be the core principle of any resettlement and rehabilitation intervention.

Social Justice & Marginalized Groups

- Civil society representation in government bodies must necessarily include the participation of representatives from socially excluded groups including (and not limited to) Dalits, Adivasis, Women, Denotified & Nomadic Tribes, Minorities and People with Disabilities.
- The vision of Inclusive Growth should be understood to mean the involvement of socially excluded communities in the design and implementation of the Plan, and not merely as welfare agents. The formulation of programs for socially excluded groups at the level of the Planning Commission and Ministries is meaningless if there is no scope for the direct participation of these communities and the integration of members from socially excluded groups in the Planning Commission itself as well as in its functional groups and deliberations must be made mandatory.
- Specific programs and institutions addressing the disaggregated needs of socially excluded groups must be put into place. The creation of a separate Ministry for Women & Child Development and institution of the National Commission on Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and Denotified Tribes are positive steps in this direction. However other initiatives such as the creation of a separate Department for Disability at the national and state levels are pending.

- There must be greater public and political engagement with initiatives such as the Prime Minister's Fifteen Point Program for Minorities. Monitoring mechanisms to track its implementation and outcomes across Ministries need to be set into place. Greater information sharing and broader civil society engagement with the activities of the Ministry of Minority Affairs is also required.
- The Eleventh Five Year Plan takes a progressive stand on the integration of women's and children's agenda across sectors and provides due recognition to newer and more complex issues. However, a corresponding emphasis is required in the allocation of resources. More than 97% of the resources available to the Ministry of Women & Child Development is invested in Child Development, indicating a need for separate resource allocation for women. As a result, important initiatives such as the Muslim Women's Leadership Scheme and the National Taskforce on Violence against Women in Zones of Conflict remain feeble and invisible to the public. On the other hand, even resources that have been set aside for initiatives such as the recent Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) remain unutilized.
- The engagement of related systems and institutions in implementing initiatives related to socially excluded groups must be emphasized. For instance the involvement of the police system in implementing the Domestic Violence Act, or the engagement of Local Self Governments in integrating Gender & Child Budgeting and Gender & Child Based Plans must also be pursued.
- Other social groups such as Youth, Migrant Populations and People Living with HIV-AIDS are under-represented in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Separate attention to their needs and priorities must be provided in the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Plan.
- A separate mechanism for regular reporting to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights must be created, on par with the existing reporting mechanisms for CEDAW (UN Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women).

PART THREE – ANNEXURES

8.0 Program Schedule

9.15am: Registration	
DAY ONE: 15 December 2008 (Monday)	
10am – 11am: Inaugural Session	Welcome & Introduction Keynote Address: Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission of India Civil Society & the Planning Commission: Kamla Bhasin
11 – 11.30am: Tea Break	
11am – 1.00pm: Overview of the 11th Five Year Plan	Chair & Opening Remarks: Dr. Syeda Hameed (Member, Planning Commission) Key Features of the 11th Five Year Plan & Priorities for Civil Society Engagement: Dr. Rajesh Tandon Opportunities & Challenges for Marginalized Groups: Martin Macwan
1.00 – 2.00pm: Lunch Break	
2.00 – 3.30pm: Role & Priorities for Civil Society in the 11th Five Year Plan <i>Parallel Sessions aiming to identify the roles and priorities of civil society in relation to thematic areas of the 11th Five Year Plan and discuss possible mechanisms to strengthen collaboration with the Planning Commission across the Five Year Plan process</i>	
<u>Session 1A: IIC Auditorium</u> Chaired by Dr. Kirit S. Parikh (Member, Planning Commission of India) Health: Dr. Abhay Shukla Education: Sharmila Bhagat Basic Services: Kirtee Shah <i>Rapporteur's Comments</i>	<u>Session 1B: Conference Room No. 1</u> Chaired by Prof. V L Chopra (Member, Planning Commission of India) Livelihood & Social Security: Ashim Roy Agriculture & Food Security: Suman Sahai Environment & Natural Resources: Ananya Dasgupta <i>Rapporteur's Comments</i>
3.30 – 4.00pm: Tea Break	

4 – 5.30: Social Justice & Marginalized Groups in the 11th Five Year Plan

Parallel session aiming to identify the development agenda related to marginalized and socially excluded groups in the 11th Five Year Plan and discuss possible mechanisms to strengthen the representation of their needs and priorities across the Five Year Plan process

Session 2A: IIC Auditorium

Chaired by N J Kurian (Former Advisor, Planning Commission of India)

Adivasis: Prof. Ram Dayal Munda

Nomadic & Denotified Tribes:

Balkrishna Renke

People with Disabilities: Javed Abidi

Children: Enakshi Ganguly Thukral

Rapporteur's Comments

Session 2B: Conference Room No. 1

Chaired by Manjula Krishnan (Advisor, Ministry of WCD)

Dalits: Ashok Bharti

Women: Dr. Mary E John

Minorities: Shabnam Hashmi

Rapporteur's Comments

DAY TWO: 16 December 2008 (Tuesday)

**9.30am – 11.30pm:
Proposals for
Future Engagement
with the Planning
Commission**

Chaired by Ajay S Mehta

**Conclusions & Ideas for Future Engagement from the
Parallel Sessions:**

- Sandhya Venkateswaran (1A)
- Biraj Patnaik (1B)
- Dr. Prakash Louis (2A)
- Yamini Mishra (2B)

11.30 – 12.00pm: Tea Break

**12.00 – 1.30pm:
Conclusion & Way
Forward**

**Proposals for Institutionalizing Civil Society Engagement
with the Five Year Plan process:** Lysa John

Discussion & Further Inputs from the Plenary

Key Conclusions & Way Forward

1.30pm: Lunch

9.0 Presentations & List of Participants

- The presentations made in this consultation can be downloaded from:
www.wadanatodo.net/events (2008)
- The List of Participants of this consultations can be downloaded from:
www.wadanatodo.net/reports (2008)

10.0 Photos & Video Documentation

- Photo documentation of this consultation is available on:
www.wadanatodo.net/photogallery
- Video documentation of this consultation is available on:
www.wadanatodo.net/videogallery

11.0 About the Organizers

- ***Centre for Budget & Governance Accountability (www.cbgaindia.org)***

CBGA is the first of its kind of effort in India to look holistically at the Union Budget, from the perspective of social exclusion groups and with an aim to promote the direct participation of people in the making and implementation of the Union Budget. CBGA is also responsible for facilitating the 'People's Budget Initiative' which is a network of civil society organizations working to build awareness and public participation in the national and state budget processes. The Centre also works closely with a range of academic institutions and provides ongoing policy inputs to several government institutions. Key initiatives include the consolidation of civil society inputs to the Union Budget and the organizing of a public forum '*Budgets As If People Matter*', aimed at responding to the Union Budget each year.

- ***National Social Watch Coalition (www.socialwatchindia.net)***

The National Social Watch Coalition is a broad based network of civil society organizations, citizens and communities to build a process of monitoring governance towards professed goals of social development, particularly with respect to the marginalized sections of our country. As an attempt to check rhetoric against the real, it tries to monitor the institutions of governance and their commitment towards citizens and principles of democracy. The innovative approach of the Social Watch process is unique in terms of looking at the functioning and efficiency of the key institutions of governance - executive (in terms of policy and practices), the judiciary, the legislative (represented by the parliament), and the institution of local self-governance. Every year the Social Watch Report undertakes the monitoring of the institutions of governance and

democracy through the lenses of fundamental economic and social values such as rights, development, freedom, and security.

- ***Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (www.wadanatodo.net)***

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan is a national coalition of over 3000 development organizations working across 23 states to monitor and ensure governance accountability to End Poverty and Social Exclusion. Since 2005, the Abhiyan has worked to review, monitor and create grassroots pressure for the implementation of policies in line with the promises made in the Millennium Declaration, National Development Goals and National Common Minimum Program. Initiatives of the campaign include the Annual Civil Society Reviews of the NCMP, the '9-Is-Mine' Children's Campaign (9% GDP for Public Expenditure on Health & Education), the Women's Tribunal against Poverty, Policy Dialogues on the National Flagship Programs and the 'All India People's Manifesto'.

For further information on this consultation and to get involved with follow up activities, please reach us at: 011-46082371 to 74 or write to info@wadanatodo.net
