

Dear Colleagues,

We warmly welcome you to Part II of the e-discussion under the 2014 ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review theme of *“Addressing on going and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future”*.

Part II of the e-discussion will be held from **17 February to 2 March 2014** and will address the theme ***“Sustaining development gains through inclusive development”***. It will be moderated jointly by Sarah Cook on behalf of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and Donald Lee of the International Committee for October 17.

Building on Part 1 of this e-discussion, which focused on facilitators and enablers of development progress, and particularly on institutional and policy frameworks that support progress, this section turns to the questions of how to generate and sustain gains that are ***inclusive***. While achievements and progress over recent years, particularly in relation to the MDGs, have led to gains for some of the most vulnerable population groups, significant disparities and gaps remain. Moreover, a context of rising income inequality compromises the inclusiveness of the development process.

Key elements of inclusive development would involve improvements in incomes and well-being which reduce disparities in critical outcomes, such as those related to health and education, along lines of income or other characteristics (for example, gender, race, age, disability). Progress on such dimensions rests on the capacity of states to deliver high quality basic services such as health, education, water and sanitation, adequate housing and infrastructure, to generate decent jobs, and to extend social protection to all those in need in order to address contingencies and provide security across the life course. Inclusive development also requires political inclusion, particularly for those trapped in poverty or otherwise marginalized through processes of economic and social exclusion.

In Part II of the e-discussion we hope to identify concrete strategies, policies and practices that have been particularly constructive in fostering inclusive development. We invite interventions that: reflect on structural or institutional constraints to inclusion; illustrate the obstacles faced in implementing inclusive development strategies or policies; and identify the catalysts for more inclusive development processes. Such a discussion should pay attention to the processes for priority-setting or decision-making and for implementation, at local and national levels, and the extent to which these involve broad engagement and participation – particularly of otherwise excluded groups.

We invite you to consider (but not be limited by) the following questions as a guide to this phase of the e-discussion:

- What are specific examples of institutional arrangements, policies or practices that have enhanced inclusive development? What were the key drivers of success in these cases?

- What factors have exacerbated inequalities or act as obstacles or impediments to inclusion? What lessons can be learnt from continuing disparities in MDG achievement for understanding the obstacles to inclusive development?
- What specific mechanisms have been useful in broadening and deepening the political, social and economic participation by all, especially those living in poverty or experiencing other forms of exclusion?
- Can a set of necessary and widely applicable conditions or strategies for fostering social inclusion and citizen engagement be identified? How can such conditions be enabled and enhanced?

We welcome contributions on these and other questions related to the challenge of sustaining inclusive development, and look forward to your participation and contribution to this e-discussion.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cook, Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

Donald Lee, International Committee for October 17 (UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty)