

Cultural Heritage for Inclusive  
Growth Collection

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# Cultural heritage for inclusive growth

John Samuel,  
Abraham George  
and Pallavi Rachel George

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# Acknowledgements

## Series Editor

**Dr Chris Dalglish, Inherit**

## Series Manager

**Nikki Locke, British Council**

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## The Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth Collection

Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth (CH4IG) is a British Council action research programme which, since 2018, has been exploring how local culture can improve the lives of individuals around the world. The essays in this collection were originally commissioned by the British Council and Nordicity as independent thematic studies during the pilot phase of the programme. They have since been updated by their authors and edited for the British Council by Inherit.

The essays are published as part of the British Council's What Works Cultural Heritage Protection programme, which is designed to support better outcomes for heritage protection and local communities by bringing the best available

evidence to practitioners and other decision-makers across the international heritage protection sector.

Together, the essays explore the role of cultural heritage in bringing about the change which is needed to secure a sustainable future for people and the planet. The collection explores the relationship between heritage and sustainable development from different geographical, topical and philosophical perspectives. The diverse essays are bound by common themes, namely that cultural heritage is at the heart of human development; that cultural relations create conditions in which human development can occur, and; that human development is enabled by people-centred approaches and transparent, accountable and participatory governance.

## The authors

This essay was produced by the Institute for Sustainable Development and Governance (ISDG) at the Centre for Communication and Development Studies (CCDS) in India.

CCDS was set up in 2002 to promote open spaces for research, communication and dialogue on social justice, sustainable development, pluralism and transparent governance (<http://www.ccds.in>). The Centre works to build knowledge for social change, and to take information for social change out of the seminar rooms and to the people.

ISDG is the governance and development programme of CCDS (<https://isdg.in>). Its mission is to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of citizens, particularly young people and women, to demand accountability, assert their rights and promote democratic governance, sustainable human development and human rights. The Institute is involved in research and documentation, capacity development, knowledge networking and advocacy,

and it seeks to promote dialogue among policy makers, media and civil society organisations and citizens groups. It has a focus on the rights of marginalised and excluded communities, particularly dalits, adivasis, and workers in the informal sector.

John Samuel is the Managing Trustee of CCDS and Executive President of CCDS and ISDG. He has 25 years of experience in strengthening democratic governance, public policy advocacy and sustainable development in India and internationally. He headed the Global Programme on Governance Assessments and has been Global Democratic Governance Adviser at UNDP Headquarters and the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, as well as International Director of ActionAid and Executive Director of the National Centre for Advocacy Studies.

Dr Abraham George is the Director of ISDG. He has a PhD in Economics, more than three decades of experience in teaching and research, and research interests in international economics, the Indian economy, development studies and education policy. He serves as an assessor of higher education institutions with India's National Assessment and Accreditation Council. He previously served as the Principal of Mar Thoma College, Tiruvalla (Mahatma Gandhi University), in Kerala.

Pallavi Rachel George has degrees in Economics and Public Policy and is currently undertaking a PhD in Management at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. Between 2019 and 2021, she was the Public Policy Research Lead at ISDG, and the research lead for this study on Cultural Heritage and Inclusive Growth. She specialises in public systems and public policy, and her research interests include disaster resilience, corporate sustainability, environmental policy and governance.

## The editors

The collection was edited by Dr Chris Dalglish (series editor) and Skye McAlpine Walker (copy editor and proofreader) of Inherit.

Inherit – the York Archaeological Trust's Institute for Heritage & Sustainable Human Development – supports community development through cultural heritage (<https://www.inherit-institute.org>). We help people to safeguard, sustain and transmit their heritage. We provide practical

support to communities so that they can fulfil their cultural rights and use their heritage for the collective good. We carry out purposeful research and advocate evidence-based policy change which enables people to care for their heritage and achieve their development goals. We help other organisations to improve their programmes and services for the benefit of the communities they work with. We collaborate with communities, non-profit organisations, public institutions and experts around the world.

The York Archaeological Trust (<https://www.yorkarchaeologicaltrust.co.uk>) has been safeguarding heritage and making a difference to people's lives since 1972. The Trust is a self-funded educational charity which discovers and protects archaeology and built heritage and enables people to enjoy and benefit from this heritage in its home city of York, elsewhere in the UK and internationally.

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**A Guna Dule girl is looking out from her hut. Girls learn the art of the Molas from an early age, even as young as four.**

Front cover photograph by Jahir Lozano, Alto Caiman Urabá Colombia

# Introduction

This essay examines the concept of inclusive growth, the idea that cultural heritage is a driver for inclusive growth and different international inclusive growth frameworks with special attention to the countries which were a focus for the pilot phase of the British Council's Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth programme: Colombia, Kenya and Vietnam.

The research underpinning the essay used the data source triangulation approach as described by Patton and elaborated by Denzin.<sup>1</sup> Triangulation uses multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to ensure the account is rich, robust and well-developed. It involves 'comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods'.<sup>2</sup> For this essay, we triangulated between primary data (case study literature and interviews with 35 experts and 10 organisations in Colombia, Kenya, Vietnam and India) and secondary data (a literature review drawn from library-based and web-based research). From there, we developed original frameworks linking inclusive growth with cultural heritage, and generated insights and policy recommendations for development actors.

The first section of the essay discusses the historical and policy aspects of the ideas of economic growth and how, over a period of time, looking beyond conventional GDP growth has become imperative in the present global context of inequalities and exclusions. This section also examines how different economic theories have influenced policy choices both at the global level and national levels. Different definitions for inclusive growth are examined and the British Council's definition is adopted, ie inclusive growth as 'developing tangible opportunities which create economic and social growth that benefits everyone'.

The second section of the essay argues that global policy frameworks on inclusive growth are developed and practiced within a 'Three-Dimensional Model of Development Intervention'. The three avenues of intervention are institution-

building, product-development and community-based programmes, each to be understood within the contexts of government, market and society, respectively.

The third section studies how cultural heritage and inclusive growth are related, while paying close attention to how the underlying culture impacts cultural heritage. By highlighting the role of culture in inclusive growth, we argue that culture is both an enabler and disabler of inclusive growth with suitable examples. We also provide a framework for effectively using cultural heritage for inclusive growth.

The fourth section examines how effectively international inclusive growth frameworks could be implemented at the national level. Since culture and cultural practices vary in different communities and societies, contextualisation of international policies at the national/local levels is essential in order to include poor and marginalised groups in the economic growth process and enable them to benefit from the growth policies. The various challenges encountered in using cultural heritage as a policy option to bring about inclusive growth are analysed.

Finally, based on the research, we present a series of lessons and policy options.

1. Patton, 1999; Denzin, 2006

2. Patton, 1999

# Looking beyond growth

The primary objective of economic growth should be to improve the well-being of all sections of a society. As existing models of economic growth have led to inequalities and exclusion in almost every sphere of life, governments and policy-makers need to pay greater attention to the concept of inclusive growth while formulating and implementing various development programmes. This essay highlights the significance of inclusive macro policies and examines how effectively culture could be used as a policy tool to promote inclusive growth in different countries.

Although many countries have made rapid strides in the path of economic progress during the last few decades, several sections of society have remained excluded from the growth process. The level of absolute poverty in different countries and the world over has also been brought down significantly during this period but economic inequalities within and between countries continued to grow. This demonstrates that, while economic growth is important, it is not enough to generate sustained improvements in the general welfare of the people unless the dividends of growth are distributed justly among individuals and social groups. This has been the idea underlying the concept of inclusive growth. It also stems from the recognition that well-being is not just shaped by income and wealth alone, but by non-income dimensions as well.

In recent times, there is a growing recognition of the role of culture in promoting social welfare and economic development. Integrating culture in the macro policy framework could possibly bring about greater social and economic inclusion, thereby making economic growth more sustainable. Apart from analysing the concept of inclusive growth, this essay tries to explore how effectively culture and heritage could be made use of in policy-making, in order to ensure greater inclusive growth that could benefit all levels of society.

## Inclusive Growth: Context and Evolution

The term 'inclusive growth' has been interpreted differently by different agencies. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has defined inclusive growth as participation and benefit-sharing by all by ensuring the participation of everyone in the growth process and sharing the benefits of growth equally.<sup>3</sup> According to the British Council, inclusive growth means 'working with and for all levels of society in order to reconcile the divide between economic growth, and rising poverty and inequality. By working inclusively with communities and wider society, growth can be achieved that benefits a far wider cross-section of that community and works to reduce the gap between rich and poor'.<sup>4</sup> The British Council further explains 'inclusive growth' as developing tangible opportunities that create economic and social growth benefiting everyone. In this essay, we will be going by the definition given by the British Council.

The emergence of the concept of inclusive growth is based on the realisation that growth with equity is indeed possible and desirable. The end of the Second World War witnessed the rise of several independent nations, all plagued by poverty, inequality and deep social divisions. It also marked the division of the world into two spheres: the capitalist sphere led by the United States and the communist/socialist sphere under the USSR. The cold war between the two superpowers and the difficult conditions in the lower-income economies significantly motivated the economic thinking of that time.

In the early 1950s, the major consensus on the issue of growth and development was centred on the theories introduced by Simon Kuznets and Robert Solow. According to Kuznets, inequality in the distribution of income tends to increase in the early stage of the growth process but inequality will reduce once growth staggers in momentum.<sup>5</sup> This model looks at inequality as a side effect of the level of development and encouraged the

3. OECD Secretariat, 2014

4. Lewis et al, 2018

5. Kuznets, 1955

'trickle-down' idea of development, regarding growth as the first step in poverty reduction.<sup>6</sup>

Growth models of that time period were dominated first by the Keynesian Harrod-Domar Model of the 1930s and 1940s, and later by the neo-classical Solow-Swan model of 1956. The Keynesians thought that only the rich can increase the pace of initial economic growth due to their high capacity of saving, and they justified the initial temporary inequality for better growth in future.<sup>7</sup> Another major shift in the notion of growth and development has been associated with the rise of monetarism at the end of the 1970s. The support of the monetarist to neo-liberalist view of development emerged as a major consensus in the early 1980s and this view was strengthened by the adoption of neo-liberal economic policies in the UK and the USA.

### Changing Perspectives

The rise of monetarists and the neo-classical economists in the mid-1970s and in the late 1980s shifted the trickle-down effect theory of development from the field of academia to the real world of policy-making. The policy debates and deliberations that followed led to the emergence of the Washington Consensus. The Washington Consensus (named by British economist John Williamson in 1989) refers to a set of free market economic policies encouraged by financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (known as the 'Bretton Woods twins' having both been established at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944). The aim of the consensus was to help lower-income countries save themselves from economic crises by providing immediate financial support on the condition that they adopted structural reforms and greater market liberalisation. The consensus attached a premium to the assumption of universality of the neo-liberal ideology, commitment to the free market and the presumption of the state as a source of both inefficiency and corruption.<sup>8</sup>

Under the Washington Consensus, the World Bank sets the agenda for development, with the bank and the IMF determining the standards and

enforcing the relevant policies through conditionality imposed on poor countries facing balance of payments, fiscal or financial crises. According to Alfredo Saad-Filho:

It is apparent that this combination of policies, regulations and incentives is designed to shift the economic role of state institutions away from direct intervention in the allocation of resources. Then, poverty alleviation cannot be a priority except only rhetorically and, even then, distributive aspirations were tempered by 'recognition' of their alleged inefficiency-generating implications. With the Washington Consensus, states lost much of their capacity to select, implement and monitor distributive and welfare policies because of legislative changes, departmental reorganisations, salary reductions and large-scale redundancies.<sup>9</sup>

The globalisation process and market liberalisation policy prescriptions of the IMF and the World Bank resulted in the weakening of the governmental controls and strengthening of the free-market forces leading to considerable exclusion and inequalities in different countries of the world. Governments and policy makers failed to ensure the redistribution of the benefits of economic prosperity achieved through economic globalisation.

The 1990s served as an important landmark in the notion of developmentalism. This shift was the result of the developmental experiences of the countries that entered a select group of developed countries during the second half of the 20th century. Empirical evidence from cross-country studies, the experience of East Asian countries (Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore) and the latest growth experience of China, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam, contradicted the prescriptions of the Washington Consensus for growth and development. The success of these countries was a result of strong state interventions, protectionism and directed finance, unlike the free-market approach advocated by the consensus. The East Asian developmental experience decisively challenged the existence of an inescapable trade-off between growth and equity. Combining rapid growth in per

capita income with relatively stable and low inequality, it suggested that 'there might be policy measures to foster the benign combination of high growth and rapid poverty reduction'.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from the successful development in countries outside the Washington Consensus framework, the lacklustre performance of those lower-income countries within the consensus also contributed to the discourse in the 1990s. Some critics argued that the structural reforms had actually contributed to destabilisation.<sup>11</sup> They also blamed the Washington Consensus for different economic crises, such as the Argentine economic crisis, and for exacerbating Latin America's economic inequalities. According to Stiglitz, the treatment suggested by the IMF was too simple: one dose, and fast—stabilise, liberalise and privatise, without prioritising or watching for side effects.<sup>12</sup>

### Approaches and Policies Towards Inclusive Growth

There exist multiple perspectives and policy approaches to inclusive growth, such as human development, pro-poor growth and the rights-based approach. One should have a basic understanding of these approaches for effectively analysing inclusive growth policies. As discussed earlier, after World War II, public policy choices have been considerably influenced by social and economic theories. Though the notions of economic growth and social development were accepted as the dominant policy paradigm, issues of exclusion, marginalisation and inequalities continued to persist in different countries of the world. Globalisation backed by neo-liberal policies enabled faster economic growth in many countries. While rapid economic growth could lift millions of people out of poverty, the model failed to address the issues of exclusion and marginalisation based on identity (ethnic, gender, religious, racial, tribal or caste) that persisted in different societies.

GDP has been the most widely used measure of a country's economic progress and is still considered useful as an accounting tool for economic output,

value added and productivity, and also for its connection with other variables such as employment. But GDP does not measure the overall standard of living or well-being of a country and is unable to explain the distribution of growth. It has been observed that after a certain point, increases in GDP will be offset by externalities such as increased inequality. Thus, there was an increasing realisation that the GDP figure does not properly reflect the complexity or sustainability of the modern economy. According to Banerjee and Duflo, GDP is only a useful means, but not an end: 'the ultimate goal remains one of raising the quality of life of the average person ... And quality of life means more than just consumption.'<sup>13</sup>

Since the 1990s, the international community has been moving towards understanding the limitations of using GDP as an indicator. The most notable factor that brought about a shift in the development paradigm was the publication of the *Human Development Report* in 1990 by the UNDP. The *Human Development Report* sought to place people at the centre of the development process. The UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) is probably the most widely recognised index and has used composite measures embodying welfare dimensions (ie health and education) aside from income. The UN Human Development Index is a summary measure of key dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education and standards of living. HDI gained significance with its dual applicability in the field of development economics, firstly as a tool to popularise human development as a new understanding of well-being, and secondly as an alternative to GDP per capita as a way to measure levels of development for comparison among countries and over time.

Starting in 1998, UNDP also began releasing estimates of a Human Poverty Index (HPI), a measure closely related to the HDI.<sup>14</sup> Apart from HPI, there is a growing body of literature on the measurement of multidimensional poverty which potentially provides possibilities for even richer alternative measures that capture more of the poverty dimensions. This shift in the global policy debate towards inclusive economic growth is evident from the international commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and subsequently

6. Kakwani, 2000

7. Saad-Filho, 2010

8. Krueger, 1974

9. Saad-Filho, 2010

10. Dagdeviren, van der Hoeven & Weeks, 2000

11. Mason, 1997

12. Stiglitz, 2003

13. Banerjee & Duflo, 2019, p 205

14. HPI in effect measures deprivation of welfare as measured by the HDI.

to the Sustainable Development Goals (2030 Agenda) of the United Nations.

Over the years, there has occurred a shift in the focus towards inclusive growth. For instance, the European Commission, which has worked on the issue of inclusive growth for a decade, has outlined a roadmap for new indicators that includes up-to-date measures on environmental protection and quality of life; distribution between income, health, education, and environmental quality; overall sustainability; and social issues. Similarly, the OECD has launched a Better Life Index which provides an interactive tool for users to identify countries that align with their preferred indicators of well-being. The New Economics Foundation provides a similar platform for its Happy Planet Index. These attempts, in fact, are calls to move away from quantity towards quality and from exclusion to inclusion.

For decades, many countries have been focusing mainly on accelerating their economic growth. Economic growth which does not improve the living standards of people in poverty leads to a rise in inequality and deprivation that can pave the way for economic and political instability and dampen economic growth. Due to the shifts in development thinking, the discourse gradually moved towards pro-poor growth. Kakwani has defined pro-poor growth (PPG) as the increase in the income share of people in poverty, ie the incomes of people in poverty grow faster than those of the non-poor, in which case poverty falls faster than it would if all incomes had grown at the same rate.<sup>15</sup> Much of the debates in the 1990s focused on links between growth and poverty reduction measured in terms of per capita income and the number of people living below the poverty line. Accordingly, growth is pro-poor if it reduces poverty, reduces inequality and enhances the income share of people in poverty.<sup>16</sup> However, if people in poverty get benefits but do not participate in the growth process, it will also widen the inequalities. Thus, there was a need for a more broad-based inclusive growth strategy.

Although there are a number of development concepts related to the rights-based approach, generally speaking, the rights-based approach to

development seeks to recognise people in poverty as agents or right-holders. According to this approach, instead of providing charity, the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is to help people in poverty overcome obstacles blocking their rights and to give governments the tools and training to provide these rights. The United Nations developed the right-based approach in the late 1990s to bring human rights into the development discourse, which was followed by many bilateral donor agencies, such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Department for International Development (DFID), and international NGOs such as the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) and Oxfam.<sup>17</sup> A human rights approach calls for existing community resources to be shared more equally, so that everyone has access to the same services. Assisting people to assert their rights, therefore, often means involvement in political debate. While a basic needs approach does not necessarily recognise wilful or historical marginalisation, a human rights approach aims directly at overcoming such marginalisation.

### Addressing Inequality

Despite rapid economic growth and urbanisation around the world in recent decades, there has also been a phenomenal increase in the number of urban and rural people in poverty, leading to large scale exclusion and inequalities in both the urban and rural areas of various countries. The inequalities we find in today's world are multi-dimensional in nature. Apart from economic inequality, social inequalities based on identities such as religion, language, caste, gender or location could also lead to the marginalisation of communities. Such socio-economic and cultural exclusion could result in social tensions and violence that could adversely affect economic growth and human development. In several countries, dominant groups based on language, religion, caste or custom are often found to marginalise weaker sections of society including tribal communities and minorities who are denied the opportunity to participate or benefit from the development process. Therefore, while formulating

inclusive development policies, it is necessary to pay attention to the causes, consequences and cultural context related to exclusion.

The aftermath of the 2008-9 financial crisis has brought inequality to the centre stage of economic thinking and mainstream news media. The writings of economists such as Piketty, Stiglitz and Deaton<sup>18</sup> highlighted the problems of capitalism and the lack of democracy within international organisations. They upgraded the discourse on inequality from the realm of the Gini Coefficient<sup>19</sup> and Theil Index<sup>20</sup> by regarding inequality not as an *accident* but as a *feature* of capitalism that required state intervention to be rectified. The growing inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth paved the way for several forms of open protests in different countries starting with the 'Occupy Wall Street Movement' in the USA in 2011. These developments across the globe have brought the issues related to inequality to the forefront.

Although the United Nations has been providing overall leadership for inclusive growth through both the MDGs and SDGs, the issues related to inequality began to be directly addressed with the launching of the SDGs. While SDGs 5, 10 and 16 specifically focus attention on gender disparity, economic inequality and governance/peace/justice issues respectively, the first four SDGs provide ways to tackle inequality issues through different forms of inclusion. With less than a decade to go for achieving the SDGs, many countries and several international organisations have adopted growth with equity as a priority. This change is triggered by the fact that the benefits of growth have become concentrated in the hands of a wealthy few. According to Oxfam, by mid-2019, while aggregate global wealth rose by US\$9.1 trillion over the previous year, the bottom half of the world's population collectively owned just less than 1 percent of total global wealth.<sup>21</sup>

In the last few years, we have seen much geopolitical uncertainty and pressures such as climate change and population ageing, which together have slowed economic growth globally

leading to unprecedented protests in many cities of the world. In an environment of slow growth, the dangers of rising inequality have become more apparent. Many people think that the new technologies and the growing size of the 'gig economy' could worsen inequality further – hence the need to develop a more sustainable and inclusive growth model.

### Inclusive Growth Strategies for Sustainable Growth

It is obvious that inclusive growth goes beyond traditional economic growth models. While traditional economic growth has a tendency to focus on increasing the market value of goods and services produced, inclusive growth adopts a wider perspective, combining economic growth with an improvement in the equality of living standards and factoring in dimensions such as labour market participation, human capital, health, environment quality, social protection, housing, food security and the like. The inclusive growth paradigm thus considers not only how income increases over time but also how to ensure that income gains are enjoyed by the widest population feasible.

This idea stems from the philosophical roots of Amartya Sen's (1992) capabilities approach, which is about improving and enhancing the quality of life and capabilities of all individuals by striving for a level of equitable parity within a community, not only via economic means but by social means as well. This has been further explored by Dreze and Sen, who argue that:

In this perspective, we have to recognise the importance of the two-way relationship between economic growth and the expansion of human capability, while also keeping in mind the basic understanding that the expansion of human freedom and capabilities is the goal for which the growth of GDP, among other factors, serves as important means. Growth generates resources with which public and private efforts can be systematically mobilised to expand

15. Kakwani, 2000

16. Haan & Thorat, 2013

17. Nelson, 2007

18. Piketty & Goldhammer, 2014; Stiglitz, 2013; Deaton, 2015

19. Corrado Gini introduced the index in 'Variabilità e Mutabilità' (Variability and Mutability) in 1912. The Gini coefficient ranges from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality) and is derived from the Lorenz curve, which sorts a population from poorest to richest, and shows the cumulative proportion of the population on the horizontal axis and the cumulative proportion of expenditure (or income) on the vertical axis.

20. The best-known entropy measures are Theil's T and Theil's L, both of which allow decomposition of inequality into the part that is due to inequality within areas (eg urban, rural) and the part that is due to differences between areas (eg the rural-urban income gap).

21. Basu, Mahendru & Sardar, 2020

education, health care, nutrition, social facilities, and other essentials of fuller and freer human life for all. And the expansion of human capability, in turn, allows a faster expansion of resources and production, on which economic growth ultimately depends.<sup>22</sup>

### Significance of Public Policies for Inclusive Growth

As there exist several barriers to people in poverty and the marginalised productively participating in the economy, public policies are inevitable for promoting inclusive growth.<sup>23</sup> Since a major proportion of the world's poor people live in remote/rural areas, they will have less access to public services and growth opportunities. In many lower-income countries, limited public investment in human capital, including health, education and skills training, further constrains the scope of their participation in the labour, credit and product markets. As people in poverty have high levels of vulnerability and economic insecurity, the policy intervention of the government is imperative. Macro-economic policies can thus become an engine of growth for enabling people in poverty to productively participate in the economy.

According to the report of the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), the government should provide an enabling environment for business and investment in technology and innovation for inclusive growth, and promote an environment for equal participation, along with effective legal institutions and rule of law. The government can promote inclusive growth through progressive tax policies and, more importantly, through public expenditure policies, especially for health, education, public infrastructure and targeted social protection schemes. Government support for building human capital and strengthening people's capabilities is crucial for providing greater opportunities for people in poverty and vulnerable groups. Policy-makers need to adopt a pattern of growth that is broad-based in terms of its coverage of sectors, regions or population. Development of the rural economy through investments in rural infrastructure and agricultural technology are also necessary for the promotion of inclusive

growth.<sup>24</sup>

Banerjee and Duflo argue that in order to transform millions of lives profoundly, policy-makers need to have a clear focus on the well-being of the poorest.<sup>25</sup> Governments therefore need to give greater attention to targeted poverty alleviation programmes for promoting inclusive growth. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) of India, which is one of the largest ever poverty alleviation schemes of the government of India, is a good example. This act was able to lift millions of people out of poverty by ensuring productive employment and income for a certain period in a year. Such programmes are capable of altering the social, economic and cultural environment of a society and promoting inclusive growth.

Economic growth is sustainable only if adequate aggregate demand in the economy is generated and sustained. Aggregate demand can be increased only through improving human capabilities and the economic capacity of ordinary citizens. Thus, in order to make inclusive growth sustainable, government policies should be directed towards boosting the effective demand of the people. Public policies thus need to focus both on the promotion of economic growth and also on the distributional aspects of growth to make economic growth sustainable. To ensure inclusive growth, the political will of the government is fundamental.

22. Dreze & Sen, 2013, pp ix-x

23. GSDRC, 2010

24. GSDRC, 2010

25. Banerjee & Duflo, 2019, p 207

# Inclusive growth: A three-dimensional approach

'We reaffirm that culture should be considered to be a fundamental enabler of sustainability'.<sup>26</sup>

In this section, we will examine the relevance of global policy frameworks and argue that global policy frameworks on inclusive growth are developed and practised within a 'Three-Dimensional Model of Development Intervention'. The three avenues of intervention are: institution-building, product-development and community-based programmes, each to be understood within the contexts of government, market and society, respectively. Different actors have pursued inclusive growth through different combinations of these interventions in different country contexts, strategically using different forms of culture and cultural heritage. By highlighting the role of culture in inclusive growth, we argue that

culture is both an enabler and disabler of inclusive growth, with suitable examples. We end the section by providing a framework for effectively using cultural heritage for inclusive growth.

### Relevance of Global Policy Frameworks

A policy framework provides a suitable structure to achieve a specific policy goal. They are extremely important in public policy since they explain how to reach the policy goal and how to measure its success. Global policy frameworks provide the perspective and approach of an international organisation towards achieving its own targets. The relevance of a global policy framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

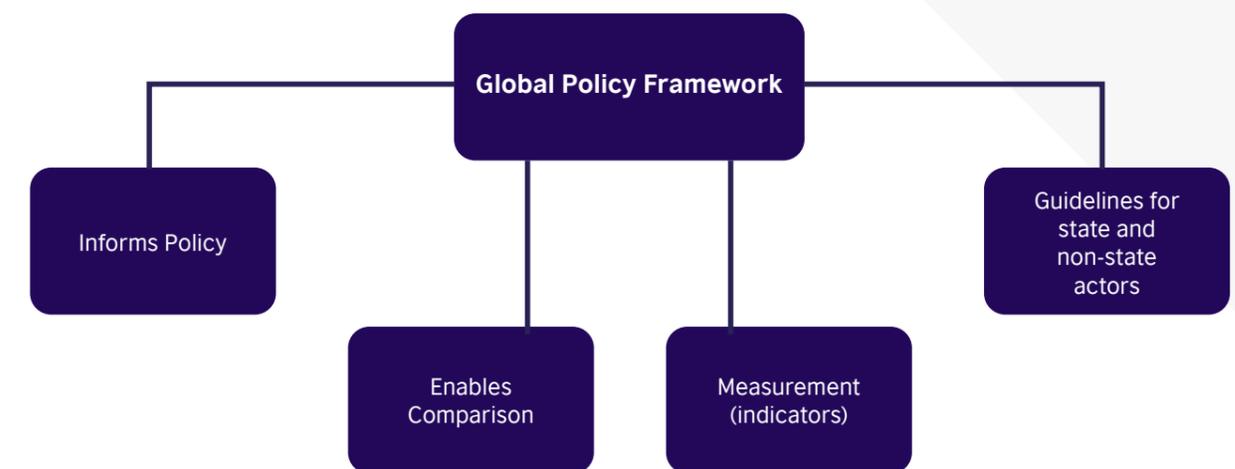


Figure 1: Relevance of Global Policy Frameworks

26. The Hangzhou Declaration, 'Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies', 17th May 2013

Global policy frameworks influence macro-level interventions by multilaterals and states and inform micro-level (project level) interventions by non-state actors. They are important as guidelines for analysis, but the impact of following a global policy framework is felt foremost at the national and the local level. The impact of a global policy framework is different in different countries. To maintain relevance and positive impact, a global policy framework on inclusive growth must be able to bring inclusivity in the economic growth of 'Country A' by understanding the exclusion

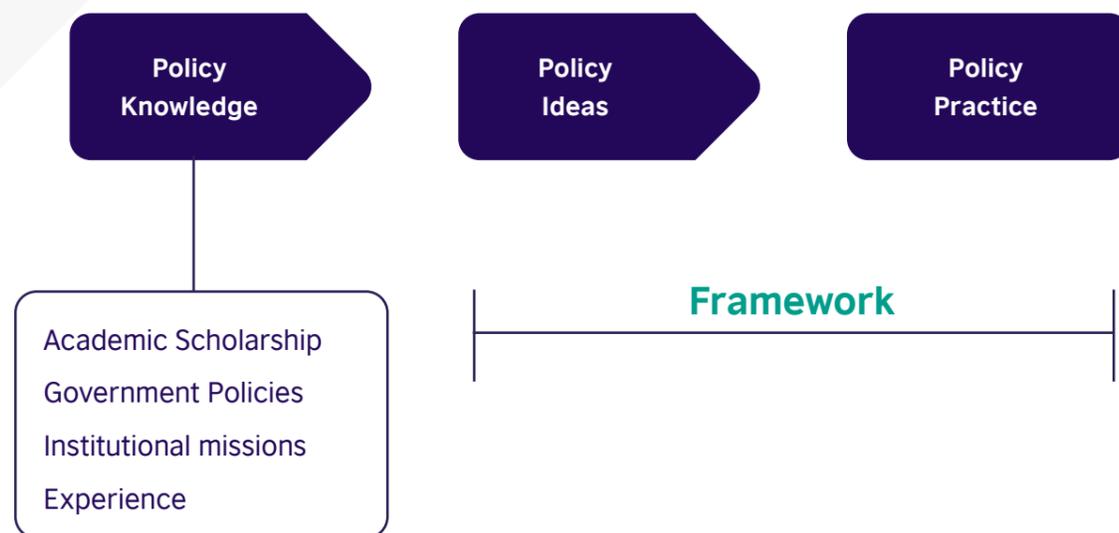


Figure 2: Policy Approach, from Knowledge to Practice

When looking at the emergence of inclusive growth as a global policy framework, the sources that formed policy knowledge are:

- The UN Charter (1945)
- The UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Bretton Woods Twins (1944)
- The Marshall Plan (1948)
- Government Policy Reforms (New Deal and the Beveridge Report)

prevalent in 'Country A'.

A policy approach gets developed in two stages (Figure 2). Firstly, policy knowledge becomes established as policy ideas. Secondly, the policy ideas inform policy practice. The framework that was generated in this process serves as a guide to the policy implementation. There are different sources for the policy knowledge framework, comprising academic scholarship, government policies, institutional charters and experience.

The policy knowledge from these sources was transformed into policy ideas by different actors (multilateral, bilateral, non-state) and informed policy practice.<sup>27</sup> The frameworks that emerged in the process, be they under the social welfare state model or the trickle-down effect theory, were questioned considering the difficult experiences of several countries in the Global South. William Easterly argues that the reason for the failure of such global frameworks at the country-level is because one size does not fit all. He wrote that:

Poor nations include an incredible variety of institutions, cultures and histories: millennia-old civilizations in gigantic China and India; African nations convulsed by centuries of the slave trade, colonialism, arbitrary borders, tropical diseases and local despots; Latin American nations with two centuries of independence and five centuries of extreme inequality; Islamic civilizations with a long history of technical advance relative to the West and then a falling behind; and recently created nations like tiny East Timor. The idea of aggregating all this diversity into a 'developing world' that will 'take off' with foreign aid is a heroic simplification.<sup>28</sup>

The limitations of the top-down approach have been recognised by global actors since the 1990s. The 1990s can be characterised as a multi-stakeholder partnership in the field of international development assistance. Moving away from the government-based interactions of the earlier decades, the 1990s saw the participation of private players, civil society and common people. The UN Summits of the 1990s were heavily influenced by the participation of non-state actors, indicating a dramatic shift from the state-centric policy frameworks of the 1980s to consensus-building and multi-stakeholder frameworks in the 1990s. The call for equality and the concept of inclusive growth emerged due to the counter-policy narratives provided by an active civil society and their influence in global forums. Indeed, the development of the Millennium Development Goals and the current Sustainable Development Goals, are the result of a healthy partnership between governments, private companies and civil society activists. The 1990s made prominent the human development and capability approach.

The broad contours of the goals to be achieved for human development were developed at the global stage as the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, while their actual achievement was pursued by multiple actors (multilateral organisations – state and non-state) adopting a more people-centric and bottom-up approach.

### Three-dimensional Model of Development Intervention

In this essay we argue that the approaches of development actors can be examined from three dimensions, namely:

- Institution-building for inclusive growth (government)
- Product-development for inclusive growth (market)
- Community-based programmes for inclusive growth (society).

Every policy and programme can be analysed based on the specific area it aims to influence, ie government, market and society. Figure 3 provides the three-dimensional model of development intervention.<sup>29</sup> While the government has traditionally served as the driver of public policy, there is an increasing role played by global actors in influencing policy-making and governance. The degree of participation in each location varies according to the existing institutional structures of the region. Using this model, different development actors can be analysed in terms of their inclusive growth approaches, and how they link inclusive growth to cultural heritage. The overlap between the different realms, ie government, market and society, is a critical component of this model, since it implies that taking a multi-pronged approach is also a viable option.

27. There was a shift into monetarism under neoliberals, leading to the Washington Consensus which was soon replaced by the human development and capability approach in the 1990s.

28. Easterly, 2003, p 40

29. This is an original framework developed in-house by CCDS-ISDG, Trivandrum, India and can be disseminated by acknowledging the authors.

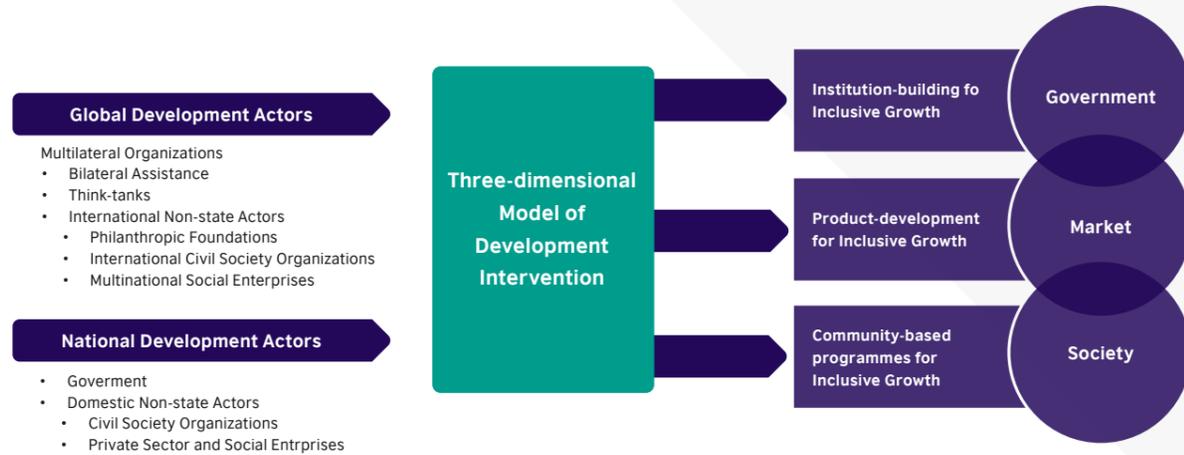


Figure 3: Three-dimensional Model of Development Intervention

**Effective Inclusive Growth Framework**

Through the 3-D model of development intervention developed in the previous section, we can categorise different interventions and their frameworks. But in order to examine their effectiveness, we now turn to the fundamental tools of economic theory, that of supply and demand (Figure 4). We argue that inclusive growth policies become successful when the supply side of knowledge and theory is met with demand from people and civil society. Inclusive growth models and theories are developed by leading scholars but the existence of this knowledge itself does not ensure that they become a reality. This is one of

the key limitations of social science; that experimenting in the effectiveness of policies becomes difficult. However, if there is demand from common people and civil society for specific policies, it becomes a political voice that politicians cannot ignore, especially in democracies.

It is important to note that demand for policies could develop independent of the supply side knowledge. Those demanding the policy need not be aware of what scholars have theorised on the topic. This is especially true in countries in the Global South, where strong people and civil society collaboration can lead to landmark policies.

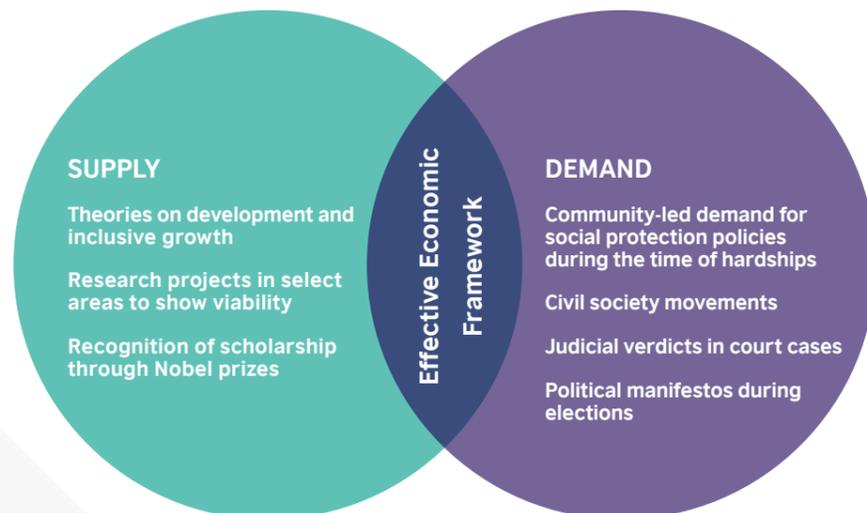


Figure 4: Making Frameworks Effective

People-centred policy design is given life when people recognise the need for it and command ownership over the policy. This essential ‘buy-in’ by the people and community is vital for the success of a project or policy. When there is limited ownership by the people, the ability for a project to effectively sustain itself gets restricted.

This can be a key concern in international development assistance because of the likelihood of hostile reception, since the aid is coming from a foreign entity whose motives could be suspect. Often, the aid beneficiaries prefer receiving cash rather than learning livelihood skills, and this affects the sustainability of results, especially when it comes to inclusive growth. A top-down approach, where there is limited involvement of the people in designing the project, can prove to be ineffective.

**Global Development Actors**

In the global policy framework, the actors (Figure 5) have a vital role in providing global leadership. These formal and informal groupings of countries and non-state actors, as well as bilateral development actors such as the British Council, are influential, nationally and internationally. The organisations have the potential to increase complex interdependence among the countries.<sup>30</sup>

*Multilateral organisations* influence global policy through:

- Knowledge Leadership: these organisations provide the knowledge and the associated policy ideas that get transformed into praxis. The importance of knowledge was highlighted by scholars such as Foucault who argued ‘knowledge is power’. The creation of global policy frameworks and the technical assistance provided by these organisations help in cementing their knowledge leadership.
- Global Consensus-making: by securing the buy-in of countries into the global order, these organisations can achieve consensus and unity among countries on several global concerns.
- Allocation of finance for development (with leverages): organisations such as the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary

Fund and others provide assistance through grants and loans to lower-income countries. The loans are often accompanied by conditionalities that impact the receiving country’s policies, national debt and trade patterns.

In the context of cultural heritage as a policy intervention for inclusive growth, multilateral organisations develop the knowledge leadership required for linking cultural heritage and inclusive growth. They strive to achieve global consensus through conferences and stakeholder discussions. This also helps in legitimising their programmes.

During our interview with Dr Vinod Thomas, Director-General (Evaluation) and Principal Economist in Colombia for the World Bank, he said that although the World Bank has helped to make growth more inclusive in several countries, such as China and Indonesia, this has primarily been in terms of income poverty, which is only one of the dimensions of inclusive growth.

30. There are similar actors at the national level, namely the government, national NGOs and social enterprises, as shown in the 3-D model.

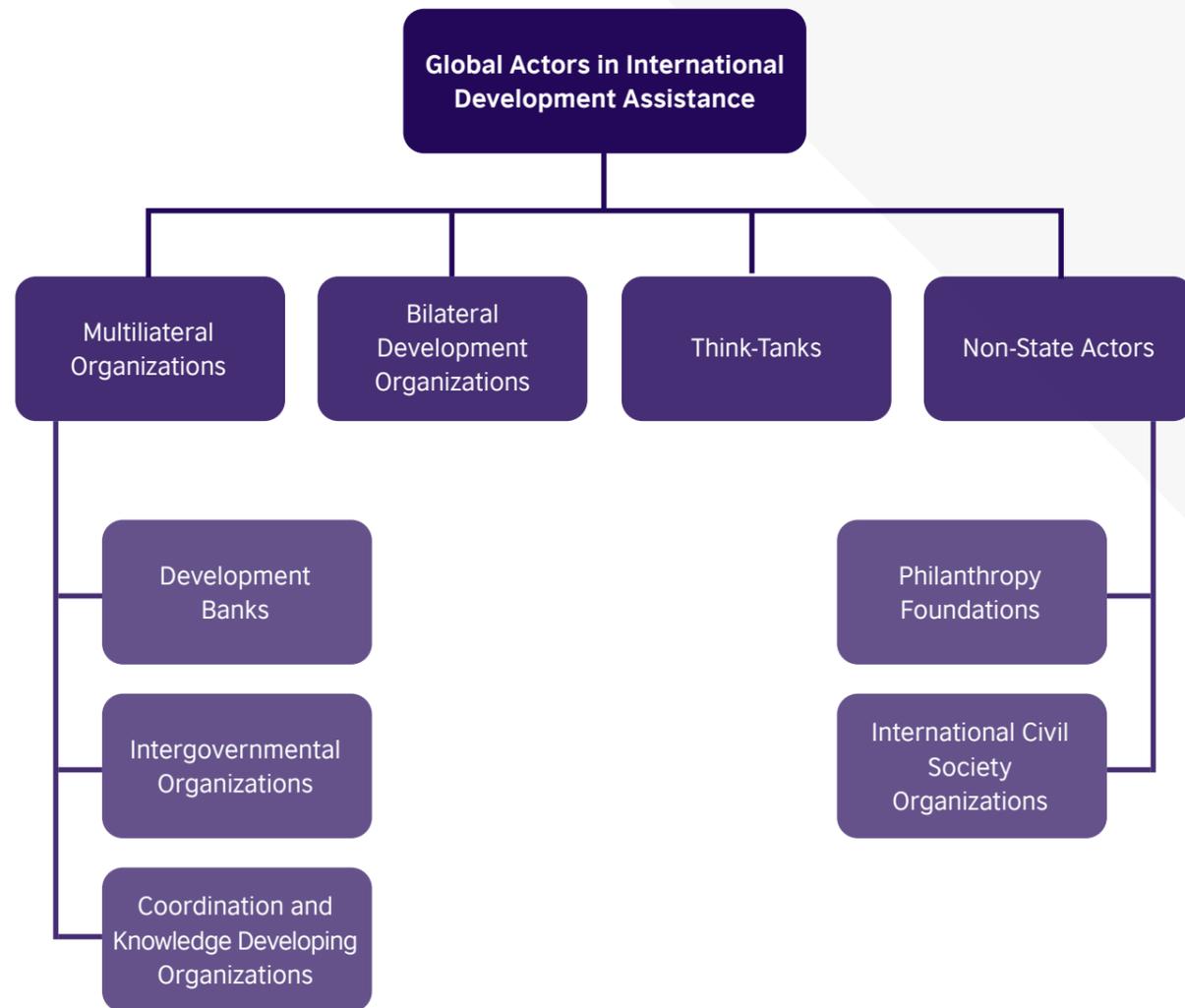


Figure 5: Categorisation of Global Development Actors

*Bilateral* development assistance is provided by countries drawing inspiration from the Marshall Plan of the United States, as an extension of their foreign policy. By imparting technical knowledge and financial aid, the receiving countries have been able to invest in specific projects that have the potential to increase goodwill among its citizens for the donor country. Thus, they primarily fulfil the knowledge leadership and financial aid functions, similar to the multilateral organisations, while cultivating stronger bilateral relationships. For example, the British Council is the oldest cultural organisation in the world. It is an important component of the soft power of the United Kingdom, promoting the English language in several countries and carrying out socio-cultural development initiatives. Similarly, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) helps

with human rights, environment, gender equality and other causes.

This is not exclusive to developed nations, as India began the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme in 1964 to further South-South Cooperation at a time when India was itself dependent on international aid. Today India is a net donor of foreign aid and has established development assistance programmes in several African and Asian countries, thereby harnessing its own soft power.

*Think tanks* have emerged as vital centres of evidence-based policy research across the globe on the heel of the behavioural revolution of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The creation of sophisticated software to study social sciences, and the inter-

disciplinary nature of global problems such as poverty and inequality, led to the rise of dedicated university-led research projects. For example, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab was founded in 2003 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) by professors Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Sendhil Mullainathan. The governments, NGOs and the private sector use this evidence-based research to make better decisions regarding poverty. Questions such as whether there should be a universal basic income or targeted cash transfers are examined through academic rigour. They also help us to work towards inclusive growth even when the macro-level structures are not favourable. During the research, we realised that there is a dearth in the number of think tanks dedicated exclusively to cultural heritage. While some think tanks may occasionally publish a paper on the creative industry or cultural heritage, it is evident that cultural heritage is not yet a fundamental pillar of inclusive growth.

*Non-state actors* include philanthropies, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and they have begun to play a vital role in development projects. One can argue that the existence of such philanthropic organisations also contributes to inclusive growth as they motivate the world's richest one-percent to voluntarily redistribute their wealth among the poorest. Apart from directly funding projects, these organisations have also been contributing to multilateral organisations. The Global Heritage Fund and the Aga Khan Foundation are some of the important actors in cultural heritage.

Civil society organisations form another category of non-state actors. The shift to a human rights-based approach after the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993) was embraced by civil society organisations long before the United Nations' Common Understanding guidelines of 2003. For example, ActionAid embraced the human rights-based approach in the 1990s, shifting away from the basic-needs approach of the 1980s. The World Social Forum was started in 2001 in Brazil, and is the largest gathering of civil

society to address the world's most pressing problems. Similarly, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty is a network of over 11,000 civil society organisations to address poverty and inequality.

The interaction between these actors and the 3-dimensional model introduced earlier can be illustrated through a case study on financial inclusion in Bangladesh.

Financial Inclusion is a policy goal pursued by governments through schemes such as the Bolsa Familia policy of Brazil and the MUDRA scheme of India. In Bangladesh, the government is pursuing the National Financial Strategy 2019–2024, based on the global framework provided by the Maya Declaration of 2011, and supported by UKAID's BFP-B project (Business Finance for the Poor in Bangladesh).<sup>31</sup> Prior to the NFIS, the government has been running the Ekti Bari Ekti Khamar programme (One House, One Farm) since 2009 to ensure e-financial inclusion and credit opportunities for rural and agricultural activities.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time, one of the most successful examples of financial inclusion, namely the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh founded in 1983, emerged from a research project on micro-credits by Dr Muhammad Yunus at the University of Chittagong. Behind the success of the Grameen Bank project, we see the helping hand provided by the Shorebank of Chicago and by the Ford Foundation.<sup>33</sup> Today, the knowledge developed by Dr Yunus in the poor villages of Bangladesh is being used across the world, even in the United States through Grameen America. Along with evidence-based research, the Grameen Bank project skilfully utilised the cultural norms of the villages to ensure accountability and solidarity, thereby ensuring a loan recovery rate of more than 90%<sup>34</sup> (though some have criticised the use of cultural norms for regulating behaviour.)<sup>35</sup> Local languages are used for policy transmission and inclusiveness by sub-national governments despite the existence of official state languages.

31. <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/stock/2018/08/09/financial-inclusion-for-all-by-2024>

32. <https://inford.org/ekti-bari-ekti-khamar-project-living-standard-of-rural-people-improves/>

33. <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20061016/NEWS01/200022455/shorebank-leaders-had-hand-in-nobel-prize>

34. Khandker, 1996

35. Karim, 2008

# Cultural heritage and inclusive growth

## The Role of Culture in Inclusive Growth

According to Amartya Sen:

If development is seen not just as growth of GNP (or as increases in some other inanimate objects of convenience), but more broadly, as an enhancement of the freedom and well-being of people, then cultural issues can figure among the ends of development as well as among its means.<sup>36</sup>

Amartya Sen further states that if development could be seen as enhancement of our living standards, then efforts aimed at development could hardly ignore the world of culture; and cultural freedoms are among those by which development must be assessed. Thus, cultural factors could be of crucial importance in the development process.

The British Council has interpreted 'cultural heritage' as any type of cultural object or activity that is connected to an individual's history and identity. This could be anything from the built environment to cultural traditions such as music and language.<sup>37</sup> According to the British Council, a people-centred approach to heritage will benefit all levels of society and will bring social cohesion and economic growth to emerging economies and developing countries.<sup>38</sup>

The most visible form in which cultural heritage contributes to inclusive growth is through the creative industries. UNESCO defines Cultural and Creative Industries as 'those sectors of organised activity that have as their main objective the production or reproduction, the promotion, distribution or commercialization of goods, services and activities of content derived from

cultural, artistic or heritage origins.' Therefore, cultural heritage is a subset of the cultural and creative industries.

At the same time, 'culture' operates in a much wider sense, and there is a need to examine this wider sense of culture in order to be able to effectively address how cultural heritage can contribute to inclusive growth. Culture constitutes a range of world views that are expressed through language, cuisine, clothing, emotions and much more. It is not incorrect to say that everything is culture, from the gestures made to greet others (a handshake in some western cultures, folded hands in Indian culture, and bowing respectfully in Chinese culture) to elaborate dance forms, religious differences and political behaviour during elections. Culture is heavily influenced by geography, weather and economic opportunities. For example, many festivals developed as harvest festivals, and the requirements of cultivation motivated the type of societal relations. Culture provides a set of normative values passed on from generation to generation and influences life choices, beliefs and speech. Culture provides identity.

Culture is a great unifier.<sup>39</sup> Language, music and dance help in building solidarity, and contribute to economic growth through the creative industries. Ancient trading communities developed unique systems of credit based on culture while many religious organisations have their own systems of finance. Culture has enabled human development by valuing education, encouraging good health (the ancient practice of yoga), and developing cultural products that have economic value. Cultural activities give cognitive, behavioural, therapeutic, societal and economic benefits to other sectors.<sup>40</sup>

36. Sen, 2004

37. Lewis et al, 2018

38. Lewis et al, 2018, p 4

39. UNESCO defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (2001 UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity). Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

40. The Rand Corporation, 2002

Cultural commons refer to cultures located in time and space – either physical or virtual – and shared and expressed by a community.<sup>41</sup> Being essentially made of information, cultural commons do not suffer from limited carrying capacity, even as individual demand for culture could be finite. Their carrying capacity, as public goods, is infinite: consuming culture does not reduce its total amount for the others, ie cultural commons are non-rival in consumption. We can think of cultural commons as per the understanding of 'new commons' provided by Charlotte Hess: 'a commons is a resource shared by a group where the resource is vulnerable to enclosure, overuse and social dilemmas. Unlike a public good, it requires management and protection in order to sustain it'.<sup>42</sup>

## Cultural Heritage as an Enabler of Inclusive Economic Growth

François Matarasso has said 'Culture is how development happens'.<sup>43</sup> Cultural rights are empowering rights, providing important opportunities for the realisation of other human rights.<sup>44</sup>

Culture is an essential part of the economy. Although modernisation has led to a decline in the prominence of culture in the day-to-day lives of people, there has been an increase in spending on cultural activities and products. The range of products associated with the culture of a particular place has increased, a trend that has intensified due to digitisation and globalisation. The cultural sector in some developed countries is more economically important (at least in employment terms) than several older established industries such as mining or car manufacturing, and it contributes significantly to national export earnings.<sup>45</sup>

Culture is also essential to inclusive growth in that it can strengthen the economic and social solidarity of the people. In most of the countries in the Global South, where the majority of the people are engaged in rural based agriculture and allied activities, social solidarity can help ensure people's

participation in the economy. Social solidarity to a large extent is built on culture, be it music, dance, festivals, folk songs or symbols. Common language, cultural heritage, etc also strengthen solidarity by unifying people. Such a social solidarity will enable them to work together in various economic activities productively.

There are several illustrations that reveal that cultural solidarity could be positively used for bringing about socio-economic changes leading to sustainable and inclusive growth. For instance, the highly successful Kudumbashree project of Kerala state in India, which aims at women's empowerment, has led to an overall increase in the welfare of not only women and children, but also that of the entire population of Kerala, a state which could attain several indicators of physical quality of life comparable to those of developed countries. There are several programmes in the Kudumbashree project that use music, folk songs, dance and shared cultural traditions for bringing about social cohesion and solidarity among the members. Use of such cultural forms has played an important role in the success of the Kudumbashree project in promoting inclusive economic growth in the state of Kerala (Case Study 1).

41. Santagata et al, 2011

42. Hess, 2008, p 37

43. Singh, 2019

44. Bokova et al, 2014

45. Barrowclough & Kozul-Wright, 2008

## Case study 1: Kudumbashree, Kerala, India

Kudumbashree, with over 4.2 million members, is the poverty eradication and women's empowerment programme of the Government of Kerala in India. The name Kudumbashree in Malayalam language means 'prosperity of the family'. It was set up in 1997 in the context of the devolution of powers to local governments. Kudumbashree membership is open to all adult women, limited to one member per family. It has received several national and international awards for its projects.<sup>1</sup>

One of the factors that brings the women together is the social solidarity and social capital generated through the effective use of language, songs and cultural practices. These women's organisations often develop their own cultural performances, theatre and songs to build their social and economic solidarity. Kudumbashree is present in all the fourteen districts of Kerala and is a vital network in emergency situations (ranging from floods to the COVID-19 pandemic). The organisation provides access to micro-credit and social security plans for vulnerable communities, while building social and physical assets for the local government. There are 59,769 joint liability groups (JLGs) of women farmers who cultivate both public and private tracts of land.

1. <http://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/171>

In our interview with Dr Vinod Thomas, he said:

Culture can be a huge enabler of inclusion, but it has not been adequately treated as such. Inclusion is less about distributing the benefits of growth and more about tapping the natural strength of all in the growth process. Viewed in the latter sense, it pays for policies and projects to build in the vast cultural strength of local, including indigenous groups, not only to improve the buy-in for the programs but also to improve the payoffs from these community-driven programs.<sup>46</sup>

Together, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) integrate and balance the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. However, from the perspective of UNESCO and many other cultural actors, culture is a 'missing pillar' of sustainability.<sup>47</sup> Culture is seen as both a means to the end of promoting and sustaining economic progress, and as an effect of development, ie as giving meaning to our existence.<sup>48</sup> This has been shown in several international declarations.<sup>49</sup> Some examples follow to illustrate the role culture plays in bringing inclusive growth:

46. Interview with Dr Vinod Thomas, 15th March 2020

47. UCLG, 2010

48. Pessoa et al, 2009

49. 2001 UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity: 'Cultural diversity is characterized as a source of exchange, innovation and creativity ... as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature ... it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence.' 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: 'The global community formally 'recognised the dual nature, both cultural and economic, of contemporary cultural expressions produced by artists and cultural professionals'. 2013 Hangzhou Declaration: Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies: declared that the post-2015 agenda should include a specific goal focused on culture accompanied by relevant targets and indicators. The members committed: 'We reaffirm that culture should be considered to be a fundamental enabler of sustainability ... Culture, as knowledge capital and as a resource, provides for the needs of individuals and communities and reduces poverty ... The capabilities of culture to provide opportunities for jobs and incomes should be enhanced, targeting in particular women, girls, minorities and youth.'

### **The Rio Carnival provides income and job opportunities in Brazil**

A study of the value chain associated with carnival festivities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, revealed that this famous celebration makes a significant contribution to socio-economic growth in the whole state, with a \$600 million annual turnover and job opportunities for nearly half a million people.<sup>50</sup>

### **Botswana's cultural tourism contributes to female empowerment**

Another study examined the impact of a community-based cultural tourism policy in Botswana on women's empowerment.<sup>51</sup> The respondents expressed that the new policy contributed significantly towards cultivating a sense of female empowerment, expressed in terms of freedom from economic dependency on men and society, and from deprivation, emptiness and familial dependency. Women have progressed from passive involvement to active participation in culture-related tourism ventures. Men were seen as facilitators and partners in women's involvement in tourism. The study identified barriers that remain, such as credit access, education levels and centralised control of protected tourism sites.

### **Aga Khan Development Network's music and museum cultural education programmes supports skill development**

For the last three decades the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) has sought to improve lives in urban, impoverished and remote areas throughout the world through culture in the creation of education programmes, such as its Music Initiative and the Aga Khan Museum. The Music Initiative supports talented musicians and music educators working to preserve, transmit and further develop their musical heritage. Furthermore, the Aga Khan Museum is dedicated to preserving Islamic arts and culture in their historical, cultural and geographical diversity. Through education, the

museum fosters dialogue and promotes tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding amongst people. Both these programmes demonstrate the impact cultural education can have on developing skills to support the creative industries, but also cognitive and behavioural abilities as well.<sup>52</sup>

### **UNESCO World Heritage Sites contribute to tourism; increased revenues; social and creative entrepreneurship; and cultural infrastructure and institutions**

Cultural heritage, especially the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, generates revenues from visits and employment for communities. Through the sale of local crafts, music, and cultural products to tourists, the cultural and creative industries are further enhanced and supported. Cultural tourism can also lead to the creation of cultural infrastructure and institutions.<sup>53</sup>

### **Kalamandalam has preserved dance forms and provided a livelihood for local people**

Kerala Kalamandalam is an internationally renowned Indian performing arts centre started in 1930. It was pivotal in reviving many dance forms that had declined during the colonial period. It also provided a livelihood to artisans, providing a permanent income to teachers, diverse performance opportunities for students and as a key pillar of cultural tourism. There are many non-Indians who dedicate years to learn an Indian artform from this institution. Today it serves as an important part of Kerala's tourism and economy.

Mr James Musyoka, an anthropologist and the current Executive Director of Kenya Connect, told us that:

Kenya's culture offers multiple opportunities, and if we can market our culture positively then we can generate income from our culture. In certain regions wood carving has been

50. Prestes Filho, 2009

51. Moswete & Lacey, 2015

52. *Improving Lives through Culture Report*, Aga Khan Development Network, 2016

53. Dr Praveen Jha is a leading Indian economist. We interviewed him on 15th April 2020.

practised for over a century, and their skill is so exceptional that the artist can replicate a human face intricately on wood. Greater focus on organisation and diversification can help in enhancing their livelihoods.

Mike Van Graan provided an interesting perspective when he argued that if culture is understood as 'a way of life' (encompassing values, ideas, belief systems, traditions and the concrete expression of these in social, economic and

political structures and forms of behaviour) and 'development' is generally understood to improve the way of life. Therefore, rather than 'the cultural dimension of development', it might be more appropriate to speak of the 'development dimension of culture'.

The Indian state of Kerala could serve as an example for the 'development dimension of culture' for women's education (Case Study 2).

## Case Study 2: Development Dimension of Culture - Women's Education in Kerala, India

The Indian state of Kerala has long been of interest to academics. Kerala has the highest HDI score, the highest literacy rate and the highest sex ratio in India. This has led to the highly acclaimed 'Kerala model of development'. Some argue that it is a result of political and social movements that created a strong sense of civic nationalism and public trust in the institutions and representatives, while others point to faster gains in education. Still others attribute this development to the practice of matriliney.

Culturally, women in Kerala had freedoms and rights not found elsewhere in India. This implied that, when education schemes were introduced, there was an unusually high participation of women and girls. By blending culture and modern education, the region was able to see a female literacy rate of 15% in 1921 when the figure for all of India was just 1.9%.<sup>2</sup>

The cultural emphasis on matriliney and education in Kerala made it more natural for the policies to also reflect this inclusion. As early as 1898, Travancore found it necessary to develop a scheme of maternity leave for teachers in government schools.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in the specific field of education, culture had a development dimension in Kerala.

2. Jeffrey, 1987

3. Jeffrey, 1987

Economic growth models have traditionally recognised physical capital, human capital and more recently, natural capital as factors contributing to economic growth and welfare. In our interview with Dr Praveen Jha, he said, 'Most economists, if they have to think of 10 factors for economic growth, they will likely keep culture in

the 10th place, if at all. In general, the story of the linkage between economic transformation and culture is a dicey, uncertain and difficult terrain.'<sup>54</sup>

The World Bank's published book *The Quality of Growth*, has provided a framework to show how good governance impacts the three capital assets

54. Dr Praveen Jha is a leading Indian economist. We interviewed him on 15th April 2020.

that improve welfare.<sup>55</sup> Scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu studied cultural capital first within the discipline of sociology<sup>56</sup> while David Throsby introduced cultural capital as a fourth asset in

economic models.<sup>57</sup> In Figure 6, we have extended the framework provided in the book *The Quality of Growth*, to include cultural capital.<sup>58</sup>

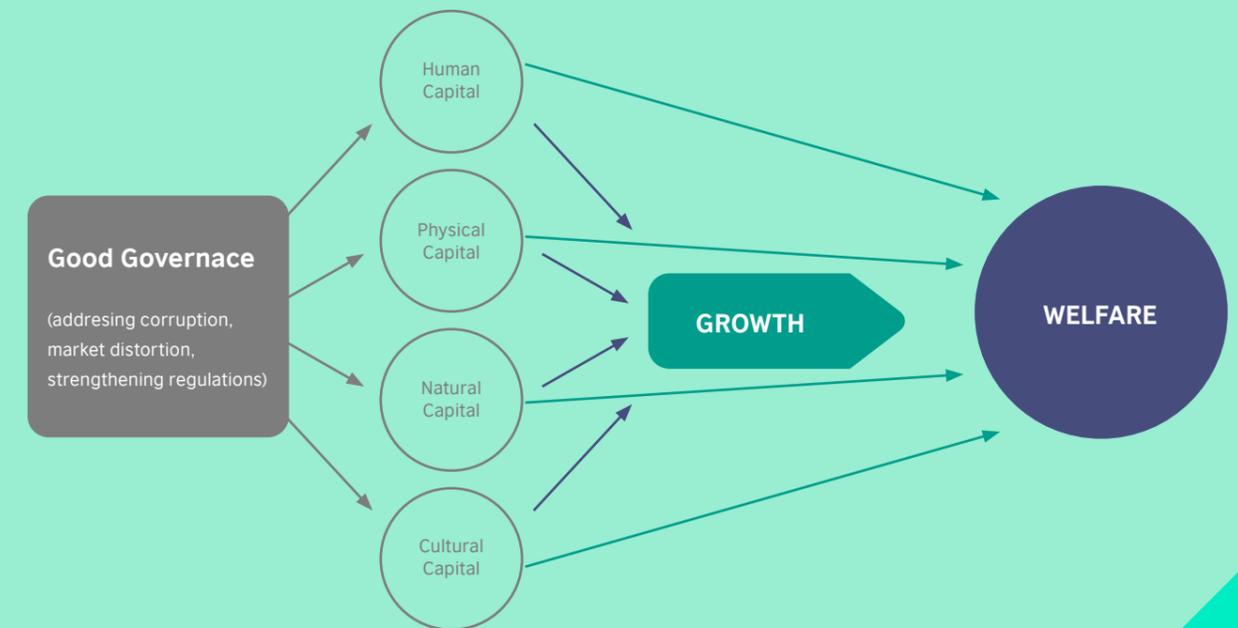


Figure 6: Human, Physical, Natural and Cultural Capital for Economic Growth and Welfare<sup>59</sup>

### Culture and Cultural Heritage as Disabler of Inclusive Economic Growth

Looking beyond culture and cultural heritage as sources of economic growth, it is essential to understand that culture can, and often does, serve as a hindrance. This is because cultural heritage symbolises the underlying culture. If the culture is patriarchal, exclusionary, or discriminatory, then the cultural heritage will reflect this.

Jeffrey Sachs has argued that, if cultural or religious norms in a society block the active role of women in the economy and society, it will leave

half of the population without economic or political rights, thereby undermining its contribution to overall development.<sup>60</sup> According to Sachs, women face extreme cultural discrimination in many countries of South Asia where they have low social standing or limited legal protections to ensure their own basic health and well-being. Women often have limited access to public services like education, health facilities, job training and the like. Religious or ethnic minorities could also possibly face such cultural barriers. Thus, the cultural environment could hinder economic opportunities for people on the basis of class, caste, ethnicity, religion or gender.

55. Thomas et al, 2000

56. Bourdieu & Richardson, 1986

57. Throsby, 1999

58. While there are arguments supporting the inclusion of cultural capital as a part of human capital, our analysis supports regarding culture as a separate entity. As explained in the book *The Quality of Growth*, human capital and natural capital contribute to welfare outside of economic growth as well. We have taken physical capital (manmade goods that assist economic production) as contributing to economic growth. Economic growth itself contributes to welfare. Cultural capital contributes to economic growth while also contributing to welfare, much like human capital and natural capital.

59. Original framework developed by ISDG, Trivandrum and can be used by giving due credit to the authors of the book *The Quality of Growth*.

60. Sachs, 2005, p 60

Culture indicates power relationships and is an institutionalised form of power (Figure 7). Ms Farida Shaheed, United Nations Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights, said: 'Culture is in

constant motion and is always linked to power relations.' This is why voices within a community need to be heard without discrimination.<sup>61</sup>

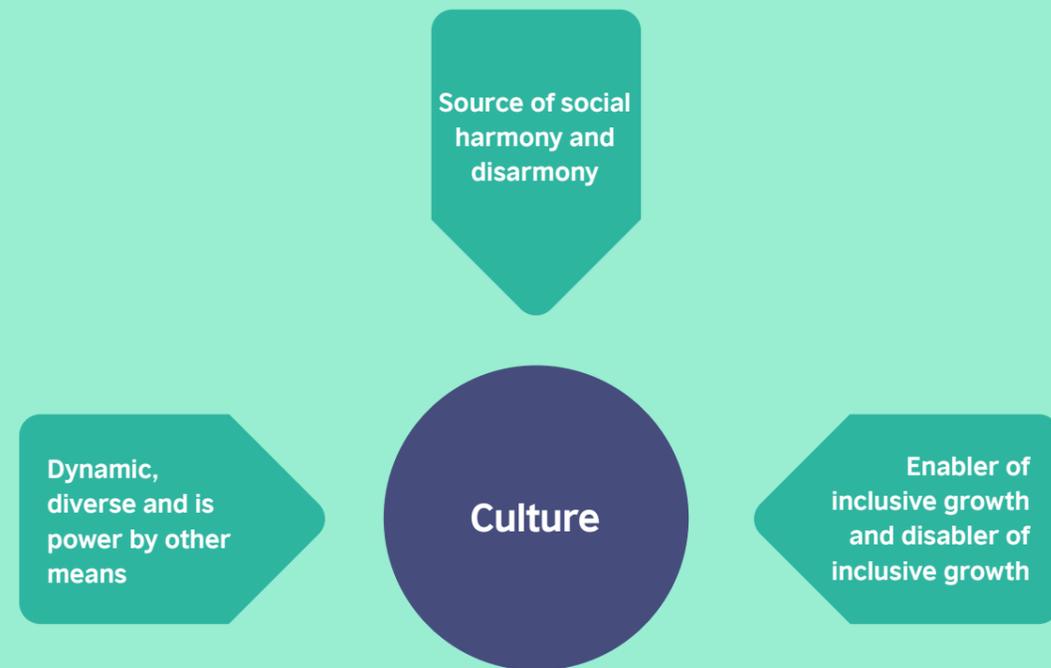


Figure 7: Culture as a Paradox

It is important to understand who holds the power in a community and who defines the cultural identity. For example, many cultures provide an inferior status to women, exclude certain groups and discriminate against others based on culture and tradition. The caste system of India prescribes a hierarchical society where the economic and social choices of an individual are determined by which caste he or she is born into. Patriarchal societies hinder the development of women and justify their discrimination by regarding it as a way of upholding culture. Tribal culture continues to dictate life-choices for many people.<sup>62</sup> Language has been used in many parts of the world to prevent minority communities from acquiring a good education and government jobs.

As Ms Sonia George, a gender and labour expert, currently serving as the Kerala General Secretary

of SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association), said in our interview:

Even when we check the epistemology of the term 'Master Craftsmen' one could find that the sector is owned, operated, and dominated by the men. As a result, the power relation is mostly favourable to men. But the recent shift in the job profile among the youngsters (men) made them pull away from the traditional jobs. This shift has made the women undertake these dying arts and crafts along with their domestic work for which they don't get any economic remuneration.

Culture is often defined by the dominant groups in society. Those who are politically, socially, or economically marginalised are either included in the culture in ways that reproduce their marginalisation, or they are excluded completely.

61. Bokova et al, 2014

62. A society's values and beliefs matter for its economy (2019). Retrieved 20 April 2020, from <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2019/07/25/a-society-s-values-and-beliefs-matter-for-its-economy>

The group who has power decides what constitutes the culture of the community, and the underrepresented usually fall in line to be included in the community. Culture is not value neutral – culture and heritage are often part of the dominant political power. As Antonio Gramsci pointed out in 'Prison Notebooks', culture is used to develop social consensus by the powerful to establish hegemonic policies.<sup>63</sup> In modern times, we have witnessed governments that divide people based on culture, be it language, religion or ethnicity. Culture can help in 'othering' communities and peoples, thereby preventing inclusive economic growth, and this makes the human rights perspective very important when dealing with culture. The most prominent current example of this is the plight of the Rohingyas, regarded as the world's most persecuted minority.<sup>64</sup>

Thus, culture and cultural heritage can contribute significantly as a bridge to development, but it can just as easily become a wall preventing development.

However, cultural norms and practices could change with economic times and circumstances and through public policies.<sup>65</sup> Macro-economic policies and programmes have the potential to be drivers of inclusive growth by bringing about positive changes in the cultural norms and practices of people in poverty and the deprived sections of society. Existing cultural norms can be improved by increasing the capabilities of poor and excluded peoples through the provision of better education and health facilities, thereby increasing their employability and income-earning capacity.

### Cultural Heritage and Economic Development in the 21st Century

It is now clear that there is increasing recognition in the international community that investing in cultural heritage can lead to inclusive growth. However, this investment must be sensitive to the digital economy of the 21st century. Digital platforms present a significant challenge for

traditional artisans and marginalised communities who have relied on travelling from village to village, performing for a group of people and earning an income. While some forms of musical expressions are economically profitable on digital platforms, other cultural forms that may not be digitally transmittable will need a different kind of investment.

Technology can also be an enabler for inclusive growth. For instance, a rural community in Gujarat, India, was transformed by the socially inclusive approach adopted by a group of women (consisting of more than 5,000 women) of SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association). The women farmers' basic sources of income are cattle rearing and milk production. SEWA equipped the illiterate rural women with technical skills and improved their capacities. Now they have a WhatsApp group through which they communicate (mainly through voice message as they can't read) and share valuable information. This helps them to get accurate information about prices and market conditions.

Technology can be used in a similar manner for cultural heritage projects in handicrafts by connecting artisans to e-commerce platforms. Tribal handicrafts and jewellery are now sold on Amazon.com globally. Gadhika products are made by marginalised groups in Wayanad, India, and sold on e-commerce platforms. The Mola Sasa project (Case Study 3) utilises e-commerce to bring Colombian indigenous products to global consumers. This helps in bringing higher incomes for the artisans because their crafts have higher value among foreign consumers than domestic consumers. Another example is the NOVICA impact marketplace that connects artisans from around the world to consumers.<sup>66</sup>

63. Gramsci, 1996

64. Rohingyas are an ethnic minority of Myanmar whose culture, including language and religion have been denied by the government under the 1982 nationality law. The 'othering' of the Rohingyas from the majority Buddhist culture has ensured that the Rohingyas are stateless and poverty stricken.

65. Sachs, 2005, p 317

66. Novica is a partner with National Geographic Society. They have generated 75 million USD for artisans worldwide in 2017. They also collaborate with KIVA, a microcredit organisation to provide zero-interest loans to Novica artisans.

### Case Study 3: Mola Sasa – A High-End Accessories Brand which supports Indigenous Women

Mola Sasa collaborates with Colombian artisanal communities, mostly women, to create unparalleled handcrafted pieces. The business model consists of no external funding, a commitment to organic growth, 70% direct-to-consumer (e-commerce) and 30% wholesale. All the artisans are from marginalised communities (Indigenous communities, or those affected by the long-lasting violence in Colombia from guerrilla warfare and drug trafficking).

According to Ms Yasmin Sabet, the founder of Mola Sasa:

We identify women's groups because we believe they will bring all of their resources back into their households. From the income they have received, many have improved their homes, many use it for basic needs, some for health. We have also helped by donating specific materials to the community schools and for specific community celebrations.

Colombia is one of the few countries with a governmental entity that serves and promotes the country's artisanal cultural heritage. Artesanias de Colombia, as this entity is called, has several ongoing projects to promote this specific heritage and they also organise a yearly fair in Bogota, where artisans from all over Colombia have a chance to showcase their work and generate important sales.

The challenges that the enterprise faces include the logistics of moving handmade elements that come from all over Colombia to the workshop in Bogota and being competitive despite the high labour value. According to Ms Sabet:

For us, the hardest part was to build a brand and gain visibility. This has to be done by creating something that is new that really has a story behind it. After that, it is all about hard work; there are many humps along the way and most days are down but the days that are up are wonderful!

Based on an interview with Mola Sasa Team.

Another policy concern is that some interventions to promote cultural heritage for inclusive growth, such as cultural tourism, could exacerbate inequality or diminish the culture it seeks to preserve. If tourism is not managed properly, it causes degradation of the landscape and can also be the cause of further gentrification of the population, causing spatial and social inequalities.<sup>67</sup> Through an interview, Mr Gandolfi, a community-based tourism expert at the UNWTO Academy and Project Director with CODESPA, explained how a cultural tourism lodge, in anticipation of Western

tourists, might buy televisions for the rooms or serve food items which are curated, assuming the preferences of the tourists, but in reality, tourists seek cultural tourism for the authentic cultural experience. If the staple diet of a region is quinoa, then that should be served, rather than wheat or rice.

Our expert from Africa, Mr Mike Van Graan, President of the African Cultural Policy Network, an award-winning playwright and currently an artist-in-residence at the University of Pretoria,



A Guna Dule woman artisan working on a Mola – she is tracing the pattern which will then be cut out in layers and sewn in a reverse appliqué technique in order to create beautiful and intricate designs.

Photograph © Jahir Lozano, Alto Caiman Urabá Colombia

highlighted the challenge of culture and creative industries being interpreted widely, leading to selective support to only those sectors which are seen as economically valuable. He said:

This was the South African experience when government adopted the Cultural Industries Growth Strategy in 1998 which appeared to be inclusive, but in reality, only concentrated on film, contemporary music, publishing and craft as these were deemed the most likely to be sustainable in the market place and/or to create jobs.

He also explained that the creative industries cannot replace other efforts by the government towards development. According to him: 'to pursue cultural and creative industries as development strategies without addressing issues of governance in most African countries, is to render the approach a non-starter.'

Mr Graan gave the example of the National Arts Festival in South Africa which, although it contributes significantly to the GDP of Makhanda (Grahamstown) where the festival takes place, has had no impact on reducing the 70% unemployment rate in the town.<sup>68</sup> He said:

... the creative and cultural industries are not islands, but are integral to the economy generally and to society in general so that if the economy struggles, it has a direct impact on the creative sector too, with less disposable income meaning less support for creative products.

Cultural heritage has been aided and facilitated by globalisation. If culture determines the exclusion/inclusion at a community level, there are arguments that it is prevalent at the international arena through the high influence of the American creative industries. But with the rise in travelling and tourism, migration and the rise of digital media, there is greater awareness and appreciation for cultural heritage from different countries. This means greater enthusiasm to consume foreign cultural products, be it handicrafts, movies, cuisine, performing arts or experiencing unique cultures.

Thus, the potential for using cultural heritage to bring inclusive growth is high in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By valuing, learning, protecting, and sharing cultural heritage there can be greater realisation of this potential.

#### Effective Inclusive Growth Framework Keeping Cultural Heritage as the Reference

The task of bringing inclusive growth through cultural heritage with international development assistance could be an important way to ensure buy-in from the people, as culture is very close to one's identity.

At the same time, it can pose a challenge for the same reason, as illustrated in the case of churches and mosques in Kosovo. Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHWB), a Swedish Non-Governmental Organisation, implemented a project in Kosovo with the help of SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) between 2012–2015, to develop local heritage plans that can improve tourism and promote economic development. An earlier project that had restored Serbian Orthodox Churches (with EU support) had created hostility among members of other communities. The lesson from this was incorporated in the SIDA project by ensuring that citizens selected the buildings, and they chose both Albanian mosques and Serbian Orthodox church sites.<sup>69</sup>

Culture is complex; it is personal and it reflects power-relations within societies, as explained above. This implies that a project on cultural heritage and livelihood must ask important questions such as:

- Whose cultural heritage are we studying and why?
- When a particular heritage is selected for the project, does it exclude certain members of the community?
- Will encouraging cultural heritage lead to strengthening divisions between communities and different identities?
- Will this programme break down barriers or reaffirm existing stereotypes?

- Are there biases that have impacted the designing of the programme?
- Are the terms and symbols of the programme showing the cultural heritage and community in a positive light?
- Will this programme invite hostility from other communities?
- Does the programme provide scope for upward economic and social mobility for the artisans and communities?

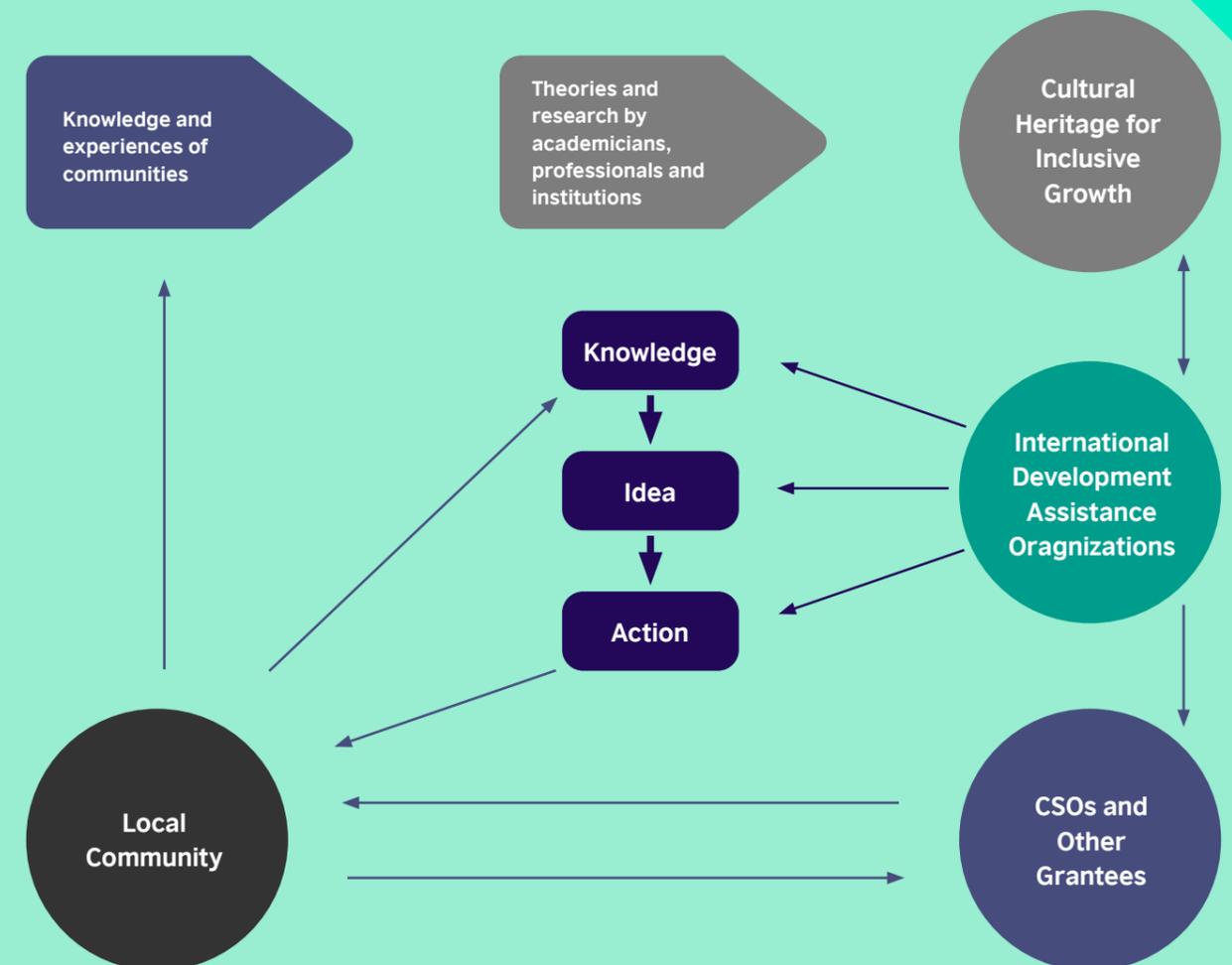


Figure 8: 'Cultural Heritage – Inclusive Growth Framework' for International Development Agencies

68. Graan, 2019

69. <https://www.sida.se/English/where-we-work/Europe/Kosovo/examples-of-results/Cultural-heritage-promotes-peace-and-wealth/>

Working with culture requires understanding of the political aspect of culture as well as the policy aspect of culture. A people-centred approach ensures that these questions are being explored by the local communities, and this will help international development agencies, governments and other organisations to act as a facilitator instead of a supervisor. We have developed a framework for international development agencies seeking to use cultural heritage in their development initiatives in Figure 8.<sup>70</sup> Similar frameworks can be developed for other global and national actors.

The main argument that this framework seeks to put forth is that the process must begin with the communities and their existing knowledge, and this must inform the knowledge developed by scholars, as well as the knowledge of the organisations. For example, some projects suggest the benefits of English language learning for employment opportunities in cultural tourism. Our cultural expert Mr Marcello Gandolfi explained in his interview that over-emphasis on learning English could diminish the local language and culture. Such insights can be achieved only by incorporating specialists into the design of a programme. This matter needs far greater sensitivity than regular livelihood projects because of the inherent complexity and emotional attachment to the asset, namely cultural heritage.

Rather than international organisations selecting the heritage topics or using cultural symbols, the project becomes effective when the people themselves become part of the decision-making process. At the same time, when looking at how cultural heritage can be utilised to bring development, it is important to differentiate between projects that purely enhance cultural heritage and those that can bring inclusive growth. When this link cannot be established either directly or indirectly, it becomes difficult to derive a causation.

70. This is an original framework developed in-house by CCDS – ISDG, Trivandrum, India and can be disseminated by acknowledging the authors.

## Leaving no one behind

*'As we embark on this great collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. Recognizing dignity of human person is fundamental ... we will endeavour to reach the farthest behind the first'.<sup>71</sup>*

In this section we will explore how international policies on inclusive growth have been contextualised in different countries, studying the political, social and cultural factors that ensure inclusive growth by using culture and cultural heritage practices. The cultural dynamics that affect the link between policy and people will be studied and case studies will be provided to enrich the core arguments.

### Contextualising International Policies to the National Level

The effectiveness of any inclusive growth policy depends on the amount of positive difference

such policies make in the lives of the most marginalised people within a given country. Mahatma Gandhi's 'talisman' may very well be applied to test the validity of any inclusive growth policy: 'Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her].' It is precisely for this reason that adapting and implementing global policy frameworks for inclusive growth strategies at the national level becomes a challenge.

In Figure 9, we have re-interpreted the five stages of the policy-making process, explained in Howlett and Ramesh<sup>72</sup>, for policies and programmes. While most of this process is spearheaded by internal experts and programme leads, there is a need for wider stakeholder consultation with the marginalised groups whose interests are rarely presented.

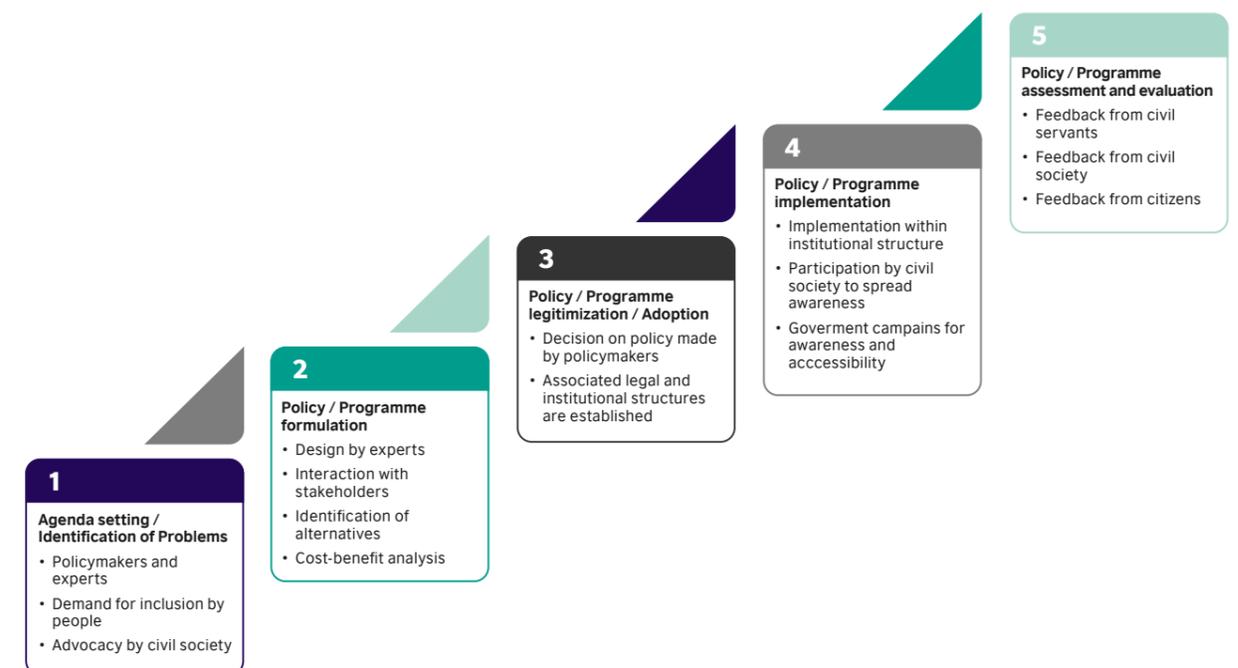


Figure 9: Five Stages of Policy and Programme Development

71. Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNGA Resolution 70/1 21st October 2015

72. Howlett & Ramesh, 2003

Even when the policy or programme is well designed, it could face problems at the implementation stage, especially at the grassroots level. This is particularly acute in the context of countries in the Global South that face problems in transmission due to structural and institutional limitations, as well as poor capacity and awareness among the most marginalised.

There is also a critical need for interdisciplinary knowledge. For example, a craft-making livelihood programme requires inputs from cultural experts, economists, political scientists, human rights specialists and others, apart from dialogues with the community leaders and government agencies, to get a better picture about how the particular community looks at the world. Without painstakingly going through this process, development actors run the risk of first designing a model and then trying to fit communities and their cultural heritage into this model.

The dominant language, religion and cultural heritage often acts as an impediment to achieving inclusive growth by preventing non-dominant groups from accessing services and inclusive growth programmes. As a result, such inclusive growth programmes do not reach the most marginalised and poor. Inclusive growth policies and programmes become effective only when initiatives understand and respect the diversity and pluralism of culture and heritage, ie when they are people-centric.

One of the most effective ways to reach out to disadvantaged communities, including those with poor literacy, is to effectively use their local culture and heritage. This has proved effective in many countries. For example, Vietnam makes use of the frontal organisations of the communist party or independent civil society organisations to reach out to the ethnic minority communities, thereby making use of the local language and culture (Case Study 4).

## Case Study 4: The Government's Approach to Cultural Heritage, Vietnam

Vietnamese national cultural heritage is derived from the long-standing history of imperial powers and water-rice agriculture that led to the development of the Red River civilisation.<sup>4</sup> At present, Vietnam has recorded more than 40,000 forms of cultural heritage: nearly 10,000 cultural festivals per year of the 54 ethnic groups in the country,<sup>5</sup> as well as the customs and cultural cuisines of different regions that are a valuable cultural treasure for Vietnam's tourism industry.

The key strategy of the Vietnamese government aims at the harmonious combination of inclusive growth with socio-cultural development to enable Vietnamese people's cultural and spiritual lives to improve together with their material well-being. The transition towards a capitalist market-based economy led to more complex challenges from rising poverty inequality to environmental deterioration. However, the revision of the Grassroots Democracy Decree in 1998, opened doors for cooperation and the active participation of INGOs, local civil society organisations, and avenues for the Vietnamese government to engage in grassroots level decision-making.<sup>6</sup> This participatory approach gave the rural community the right to participate, be informed and monitor decisions at the community level, leading to the collaboration of civil society and the government.

The government (central and local) has played an important role in preserving and promoting heritage, especially in terms of recognising the value of heritage sites, leading to positive outcomes, such as the renovation of heritage sites and tourism promotion. In the area of intangible cultural heritage, the government has worked more on research and documentation for UNESCO lists rather than on linking it to local development and inclusive growth.

4. Nguyen & Johanson, 2008

5. [https://en.nhandan.org.vn/special\\_reports/item/5857802-developing-vietnam%E2%80%99s-cultural-industry.html](https://en.nhandan.org.vn/special_reports/item/5857802-developing-vietnam%E2%80%99s-cultural-industry.html)

6. UNDP, 2006

The success of the policy and programme in developing effective inclusive growth policies is influenced by culture. Unless cultural factors are incorporated within the process, it is unlikely that the historically marginalised and socially excluded communities can access the benefits. This is because the policy and programme are being developed on the invisible bedrock of culture in the society and thus it will mimic the degree of inclusion that exists within society. Only by factoring in the cultural bedrock and by creating policies and programmes that balance out the cultural topography can the policy become truly effective.

The conditions and context of inclusion vary in significant ways and are determined by multiple factors, but the role of politics in institutionalising exclusion is highly relevant. In almost all countries, dominant communities capture state power and this power-leverage supports the accumulation of

wealth in the hands of the few. Culture, in terms of language, religion and locations, plays a particularly important role in determining access to the economy and market. One of the reasons for migration from rural areas to metropolitan cities is the 'language-culture' and proximity advantages that enable many relatively poor people to also get jobs in the cities.

Cultural tourism and community-based tourism have emerged as key policy options to bring inclusive growth through cultural heritage (Case Study 5). Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a responsible and inclusive form of tourism that involves local people in all stages of decision making. While providing the visitors a real insight into local life, the local families are directly involved in tourism activities and benefit from tourism economically and socially. It also contributes to environmental protection and cultural preservation.

## Case Study 5: Community-based Tourism in Different Countries

### CODESPA Foundation, Colombia

CODESPA Foundation is a non-profit organisation helping poor people and communities in Asia, Africa and the Americas. CODESPA engages with different communities to support cultural tourism in Colombia. They introduced the RUTAS model of community tourism comprising competitiveness, sustainability and strategic public-private alliances. Their work is based on rigorous market analysis and involves the participation of stakeholders such as tour operators, government departments and community leaders. The objective is to make the communities more competitive so that they get higher income, especially for communities who do not get benefits despite being located near tourist attractions. Their work has benefited tourism entrepreneurs: tour operators are better equipped to market their tour routes and more tourists have arrived as a result of this project.

Based on an interview with CODESPA.<sup>7</sup>

### Kenya's National Tourism Blueprint 2030

Kenya is often acclaimed as the 'cradle of mankind' for conserving Africa's natural ecosystem and diverse history of rich traditions and vibrant cultures, including natural topographies. Kenya hosts lively and jubilant festivals and celebrations such as the Mombasa Carnival, blending Arabian and African culture. The tourism sector is one of the most significant sources of income for the Kenyan

7. for details see <https://www.codespa.org/en/about-us/our-work/>

economy, contributing 10% to the GDP and providing 1.5 million jobs.<sup>8</sup> Kenya's National Tourism Blueprint 2030 (NTB2030) is a strategic government framework developed to use tourism to fuel the economy. Accordingly, the government maps how tourists can create positive impacts in the supply chain and jobs in multiple sectors. For instance, the Maasai Mara flagship project primarily aims at developing new niche tourism products, including avitourism, photography, volunteerism, flora, entomology, scientific research and film. It envisions enhancing interactions and integration of the Maasai people through interpretation and cultural tourism experiences.<sup>9</sup>

### Action on Poverty, Vietnam

Action on CBT is a community-based tourism network developed by Action on Poverty (AOP) in Vietnam that works with local partners to combat poverty and inequality and supports disadvantaged communities. It has adopted the community-based approach and an assets-based approach to enhance what communities already have for sustainable development. AOP partnered with local communities and governments, provided technical assistance to upgrade homestays, supported ancillary livelihood models (traditional dance, local products like tea and brocade crafts) and established a locally led management structure to ensure equitable distribution of benefits.

The Community Fund enables the distribution of benefits from CBT to the entire community, thereby ensuring inclusive growth. Da Bac CBT is now registered as a social enterprise and has built a strong reputation. Dam Thi Ngan (Senior Program Officer) told us that 'we have offered a series of diverse CBT services which has ensured the participation of everyone in the CBT activities. These include delivery groups for motorbikes, cooking, transportation etc which ensures that all inputs of the CBT value chain are sourced locally'. The CBT model has attracted support from the government, providing opportunities for cooperation in building CBT into Socio-Economic Development Policy (SEDP), knowledge and skills exchanges, and other collaborations.

8. Sanghi et al, 2017

9. Ministry of Tourism, Kenya, 2017

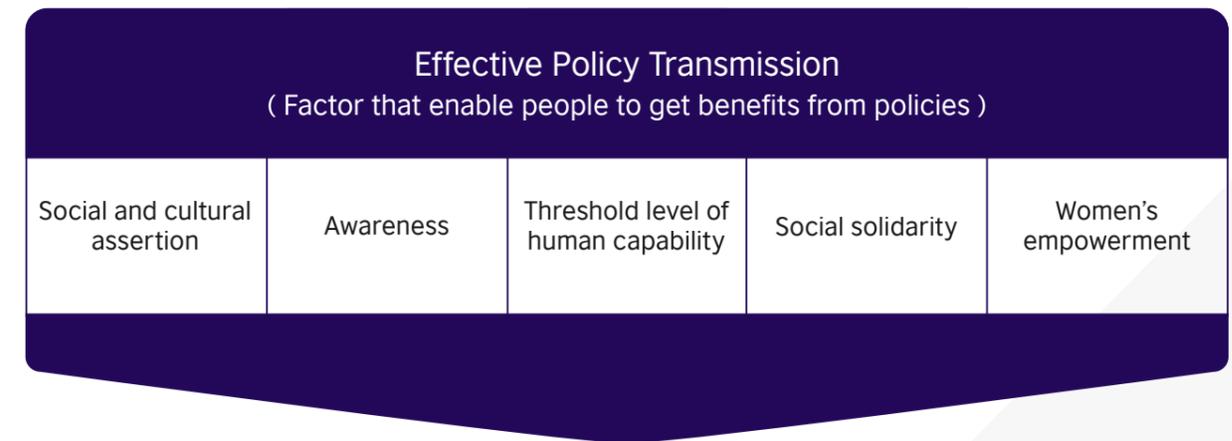
### Culture as a Tool for Effective Policy Transmission

The research pointed out four factors that enable people to get the benefits of inclusive economic growth policies (Figure 10). These factors are:

- Social and cultural assertion among marginalised communities to demand both political and economic inclusion;
- Awareness about inclusive growth policies that helped marginalised communities to access services and programmes of the government;
- A threshold level of human capability, in terms

of better education and health, that enables people to participate in the market and get gainful employment;

- Social solidarity that helps communities to develop community entrepreneurship through cooperative movements, micro, small and medium scale business;
- Women's empowerment as a prerequisite for inclusive growth.



## Cultural Heritage

Figure 10: Enabling Factors for Effective Policy Transmission

The research, case studies and discussions with experts clearly indicated a few important prerequisites for the effectiveness of any inclusive growth policies. Language and culture play a crucial role in all the four conditions that enable excluded communities to participate. In many communities with lower levels of literacy, such as the Indigenous peoples, tribal communities and other excluded communities, it is often folk songs,

folk art and the use of colloquial language that helped to build social awareness, and these cultural symbols become the markers of their identity (Case Study 6). A basic awareness and degree of literacy often helps people to participate in inclusive growth policies. As various experts indicated, awareness among women plays a very important role in accessing inclusive social and economic programmes at the grassroots level.

## Case Study 6: Currulao Music - Symbol of Hope for Afro-Colombians, Colombia

Afro-Colombians form 10% of Colombia's population. They face discrimination and are also affected by drug mafias and guerrillas. It is in this situation that the Currulao, an Afro-Colombian acoustic folk music, has come to support young people who might have otherwise been pulled into Colombia's underworld. Currulao music was conceived by enslaved Africans who were first brought to Colombia in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century to mine gold and cut timber. The people of the Pacific and Caribbean coast have long felt ignored by the government, but music academies have now begun to offer a livelihood that can support young people in finding their paths away from violence.<sup>10</sup> The organisation Dejusticia has played a proactive role in Colombia by organising inter-community consultations, combating discrimination in education and employment, and by empowering local communities.

10. <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/13/817801249/afro-colombian-music-offers-youths-a-rhythmic-alternative-to-drug-gangs>

In the political context where a dominant power language/ethnic/race/religious community marginalises the minority communities, cultural markers of identity such as language, music and folk heritage become an important means to assert their cultural and political identity. Such assertion of identity to demand inclusion plays an important role in political and

economic inclusion. In many countries, it was often a threshold level of social development and human capability that enabled and empowered excluded communities to engage with the market, civil society and government to access better quality services.<sup>73</sup> This threshold level of human capability also depends on the amount of information available to the people (Case Study 7).

## Case Study 7: The Right to Information, India

The experience of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan MKSS (workers and farmers organisation) in Rajasthan, India, is an excellent example of how culture and heritage can make a positive difference to seek accountability from the government and to access better wages for their work. In Rajasthan, the rural infrastructure projects, such as roads and canals, were built with rural workers. However, they were getting only half of their wages, as the rest of the wages were taken by the local contractors and government officers. This led to an unprecedented grassroots mobilisation. The activists of MKSS used the local puppet show performance to communicate to the people and they used folk songs as an expression of their demands.<sup>11</sup> This led to the famous Right to Information movement in India, resulting in the passing of the landmark RTI Act in 2005. The movement has influenced other policies as well, such as the decision to have social auditing of MGNREGA projects (see Case Study 9). The people were able to get their rightful wages, thereby helping in the realisation of their right to livelihood.

Often, power dynamics hinder the effectiveness of social accountability. As a result, the disempowered are socialised into silence mainly due to the persistence of illiteracy and ignorance among the rural community. They often find it difficult to comprehend the procedures and accounting aspects of local governance. To effectively transmit information on programmes and policies, MKSS uses cultural tools such as folklore and puppetry for grassroots mobilisation and awareness building. This is an important aspect of inclusive growth because marginalised groups do not have social security nets or knowledge of their socio-economic rights. Without this information, it becomes easy to exclude them from the benefits of economic growth and keep them out of the redistribution of goods and services in the society, thereby leading to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the rich and powerful.

11. <https://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/society/puppets-that-provoke/article3268884.ece>

One of the most effective methods of governance and public policy practice is to create social solidarity at the grassroots level. This helps people to become more aware of policies, thereby helping them to participate in advocacy that demands accountability from the government. For example, the social solidarity networks in the rural areas of

Kenya helped people to access school education, government services and livelihood support programmes. For example, a programme of education by a local NGO in Kenya goes beyond just targeting the development of children; it takes a 'whole of society' approach (Case Study 8).

73. For example, Ayyankali, one of the most important figures in the early twentieth century in India used folk songs as a mode to develop community empowerment and assertion to demand universal primary education. Later, Dr B R Ambedkar, one of the foremost leaders in India, from the excluded Dalit community, made strategic use of language and religion (he converted to Buddhism) as modes of cultural assertion to make political bargaining to be included in the social, political and economic development.

## Case Study 8: A Local NGO and its Whole-Of-Society Approach, Kenya

Kenya Connect is an active local civil society organisation that works with the principle of inclusive growth. They are committed to improving the capabilities of local communities through skill development, without diminishing traditional knowledge and skills.

According to Monicah Kyalo, the organisation gives utmost importance to educating rural communities. Kenya Connect empowers students and teachers in rural Kenya by providing better access to technology and ensuring quality education in regions such as Wamunyu, Machakos and others. The projects developed by the organisation ensure community buy-in by ensuring community participation and leadership.

Their 'whole of society' approach was explained by Mr James Musyoka through the case of the Learning Resource Centre. The Learning Resource Centre, developed for students to gain new learning experiences, was designed and built by local craftsmen using local resources. This also helped artisans who specialise in basket weaving and wood carving to sell their products to Kenya Connect's visiting teams. The children's mothers have also been able to play a role by developing their Kyeengai traditional dance forms for cultural programmes. Ms Esther points to a case of how cultural heritage could affect development by explaining how the cultural heritage of wood carving encourages many children to drop out of school to participate in wood carving in order to earn an income.

Thus, a balance needs to be created where culture preservation and development can be achieved together. One of the most persistent challenges faced by Kenya Connect is the 'dependency syndrome' in the rural societies, who assume that NGOs can provide everything for free.

Based on an interview with Kenya Connect.

A highly effective inclusive economic growth policy can be found in India: the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act is a law that ensures redistribution of around US\$ 9.5 billion dollars as a part of the Right to Work initiative of the government of India. This policy and programme helps people in poverty to get assured work in times of need, thereby helping to revitalise consumption and savings at the grassroots level. This in turn, increases the aggregate demand for goods and services, thus contributing to the growth of India's GDP (Case Study 9).

## Case Study 9: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, India

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA) is an Indian social security measure to provide guaranteed 100 days' work to marginalised sections of the population. The act was first proposed in 1993 and received ratification in 2005.<sup>12</sup> Given large scale unemployment and seasonal employment, India launched this scheme to provide relief to the vulnerable population. MNREGA has been one of the most successful fiscal instruments that provided subsistence wages to the poorest sections of society. Further, the technical streamlining of direct wage transfer through Jan Dhan accounts for the workers, secured financial transactions and improved the accountability and transparency in its operations. While providing employment to those who seek it, the programme also builds up durable assets for the nation.

How effectively MGNREGA works in different parts of India, a land of immense cultural diversity, indicates the importance of culture and governance in policy implementation. Even if there is high demand for work, the implementation depends on the supply of work that is, in turn, dependent on the capacity of the state, local power relations and other factors. Thus, the same policy can operate with different degrees of effectiveness depending on the local context.

12. <https://prsindia.org/theprsblog/mahatma-gandhi-national-rural-employment-guarantee-act-review-of-implementation>

Social bonds serve as a catalyst for development in many parts of the world. Dr Patrick Heller of Brown University highlights the role of civic nationalism in building social bonds in the Indian state of Kerala. In our interview he said:

I am convinced that Kerala's solidarity has more to do with the recognition of rights rather than any type of ethnic nationalism. For over a century we have had one social movement after another pushing for an expanded conception of social rights, and I think that's what sustains the welfare state, and the idea of social citizenship in Kerala.

The social bonds indicated by Dr Heller for the state of Kerala in India, holds true in other countries such as Vietnam. In the northern part of Vietnam, social solidarity enabled communities to produce electricity by making use of check dams in the hill's streams. With more access to electricity and water, the agricultural output increased many-fold.

This, on the one hand, helped the community to achieve food security and, on the other hand, increased their income by selling farm-products.

One of the most striking insights from the research is the role of women's empowerment in development. Women's empowerment is a prerequisite for inclusive growth. When the fundamental requirements of education, health and well-being are met for women, even if they are in a patriarchal society, they are more able to attain inclusion in the economy. This is crucial because educating women helps to create a virtuous cycle, where they ensure their children are educated as well. This is also important because educating women can help in reforming culture over time, enabling the realisation of many other rights for women. Taking the case of Vietnam, the female labour force participation rate is 79%, a figure higher than many OECD countries.<sup>74</sup> Even though this does not imply that gender roles, particularly in the domestic sphere, have become

74. Vietnam has one of the highest shares of women in work in the world. Retrieved 23 April 2020, from: <https://www.economist.com/asia/2019/06/08/vietnam-has-one-of-the-highest-shares-of-women-in-work-in-the-world>

egalitarian, yet education and employment have helped women in Vietnam to be entrepreneurial, financially independent and have a strong voice in governance.

The role of women's education for inclusive growth is also seen in Kerala. Kerala scores the highest among all the Indian states in the Human Development Index – it has the highest literacy rate and the best healthcare system in India. According to many scholars, much of the development seen by Kerala is a result of higher education levels attained by the women of Kerala. In our interview with Dr Robin Jeffrey, he opined that, while government policies affected the timing at which people in Kerala became literate, 'culture – and the most important aspects of old Kerala's culture were the attitudes towards women and women's attitudes about themselves— explains the eagerness with which they acquired literacy.' Dr Leela Gulati has argued that while norms on marriage, divorce and property rights were more lenient towards women in Kerala, in the rest of the country patriarchy made it exceedingly difficult for women to think about education or independent lives (see Case Study 2). Women's empowerment, together with social solidarity and culture, are effective in bringing inclusive growth. The Kudumbashree model of Kerala is a relevant case study to show this complementarity (see Case study 1).

Different ways that culture is used by people to demand inclusion are highlighted in Figure 11.<sup>75</sup> As discussed, the demand for inclusion is dependent on the social awareness and the socio-political empowerment of the people. While social awareness is influenced by government initiatives, civil society initiatives and the amount of human capability, socio-political empowerment is determined by the amount of 'culturally endowed empowerment' and the amount of 'cultural solidarity that can be converted into political assertion'. 'Culturally endowed empowerment' is the amount of empowerment that an individual gets as a result of his or her culture. Thus, a man born into a patriarchal culture, has higher culturally endowed empowerment than a woman born in that culture. Even within marginalised communities, women may not be able to access economic development due to entrenched patriarchy.

For example, in the case of many micro-finance institutions that are created with the intention of ensuring financial inclusion, the money in the hands of the women goes to the hands of the men in the family. Re-balancing this culturally endowed disempowerment of women is needed to ensure inclusive growth. Therefore, the success of inclusive policies depends on cultural and social conditions for substantive inclusion, leading to the social and economic empowerment of the communities. Our research in India, Vietnam, Kenya and Colombia clearly indicates that socio-political empowerment is an important condition for excluded communities to participate in economic growth.

While cultural solidarity and assertion of identity leads to empowerment and a demand for inclusion, cultural segregation is its natural antithesis (Figure 11). Assertion of cultural identity that encourages the exclusionary norms of the community, and political assertion which encourages the 'othering' of communities, further leads to exclusion of whole communities and/or sub-communities. As explained earlier in the essay, cultural heritage can serve as a major impediment to inclusive growth initiatives. Culture is not value neutral – culture and heritage are often part of the dominant political power. As Antonio Gramsci pointed out in 'Prison Notebooks', culture is used to develop social consensus by the powerful to establish hegemonic policies.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the key question for policy makers involved in designing inclusive growth policies and programmes is whether they want to use 'culture' as a bridge or use 'culture' to build walls of segregation.

75. This is an original framework developed in-house by CCDS – ISDG, Trivandrum, India and can be disseminated by acknowledging the authors.

76. Gramsci, 1996

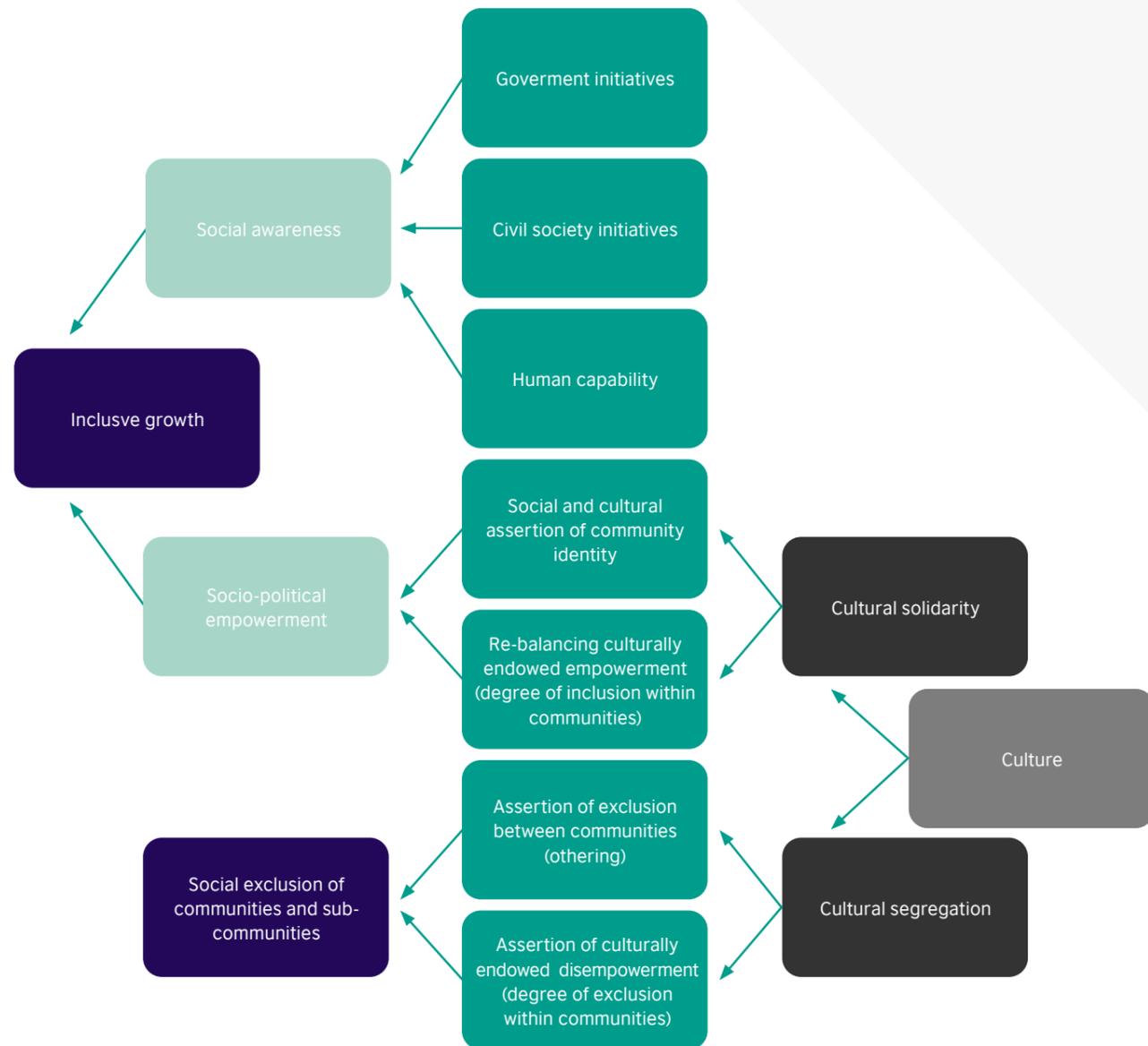


Figure 11: Role of Culture in Influencing the Demand for Inclusion by the People

It is important to remember that, apart from a simple case of inclusion or exclusion from the economy, there is a third fundamental concept of 'adverse inclusion'. In adverse inclusion, an individual or group is included in the economy, but on terms that are adverse for them. In this case, the culturally endowed disempowerment gets further institutionalised. As Amartya Sen explained:

While exclusion is one route to capability failure and poverty, what may be called 'unfavourable inclusion' can also be a considerable danger. Indeed, many problems of deprivation arise

from unfavourable terms of inclusion and adverse participation, rather than what can be sensibly seen primarily as a case of exclusions pointed.<sup>77</sup>

One of the best examples of unfavourable inclusion is that of the unpaid care work done by women. This has been highlighted by Dr Ritu Dewan, who has called for 'visibilising' the contribution of women to the economy. She has said that:

[in a developing country where the unit of livelihood is the family] there can be no family

77. Sen, 2000, p 28

which is non-working, there can be no family member that is non-producing, there can be no woman who is non-productive and non-working. The issue is whether the existing data structures and systems visibilise her work, recognise it and quantify it, and, in the ultimate, include her contribution to the national economy.<sup>78</sup>

In all the countries that we studied, multilingual context is a very important factor of exclusion as well as inclusion. The dominant language of policy-making and political process often excludes minority languages. This also implies that those from the minority languages have often not even been aware of the inclusive growth policies. In such contexts, culture becomes a means for segregation and marginalisation. In certain speech communities, social and policy awareness is possible only when it is in the language of the respective speech communities. One of the major challenges in many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America is the increasing multi-dimensional nature of inequalities. The rising economic and income inequality among people in poverty,

marginalised and excluded people, tend to increase the already existing social inequality. In the absence of social and economic justice and lack of access to effective services, many poor people across many countries tend to be left out of economic growth.

As pointed out earlier in the essay, inclusive economic growth policies become effective when there is an adequate supply side initiative as well as demand side capabilities (where people have the capacity to demand such services). For example, direct cash transfer to the excluded communities in Colombia helped them to have food security, health, and education. This also enabled them to access the market more effectively and get job opportunities (Case study 10). In all the four countries we studied, micro-finance and micro-credit programmes helped millions of women to achieve food security, better health and more access to education. Women's empowerment and capability are crucial conditions for inclusion as they ensure education and better life opportunities for their children.

## Case Study 10: Familias en Acción – The Conditional Cash Transfer Program of Colombia

Conditional cash transfers as a social assistance program are found in 'virtually every country in Latin America', where it is seen as the most effective way to reduce the high levels of inequality. Dr Vinod Thomas told us:

In the mid-1980s when I was the Principal Economist for Colombia [for the World Bank], the country faced a macroeconomic crisis as well as deep social inequalities. The crucial challenge was to restore growth and macroeconomic stability but by improving social divisions rather than by accentuating them. The programmes were partly effective in achieving a more inclusive growth agenda, for example by emphasising agriculture and rural development, but the gaps remained large. More recently, a Conditional Cash Transfer Programme has been reasonably well executed in Colombia. An evaluation attributes some of the poverty reduction and improvements in children's health to this programme.

Colombia's cash transfer programme<sup>13</sup> was started with the assistance of the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. It is primarily a health and education grant targeted at the

13. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/09/04/conditional-cash-transfers-mexico-colombia-social-protection>

78. Dewan, 2015, p 4

most vulnerable in the country, including Indigenous communities, and focuses on the human capability development of children below 18 years of age.

The conditions for the programme go beyond school attendance and medical check-ups to include attendance by mothers and household members in the training and care conferences scheduled by the municipality. The programmes facilitated in improving the education and health outcomes of poor children among the low-performing regions of Colombia. According to an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, the average income per person expanded by 50% from 2000-2015. According to the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the program succeeded because of political support; an incremental implementation strategy; a credible beneficiary selection system; operational and financial independence; and independent evaluation.

In 2012, the Colombian government converted the programme into a national policy (renamed as Mas Familias en Acción), to be funded by national resources instead of external funding. It was made part of the government strategy, with its own ministry and budgetary allocation. It helps 2.6 million households in Colombia and was recently used by the government to provide economic relief during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within the context of many countries, the most marginalised people are those of Indigenous communities or marginalised tribal communities. Many marginalised ethnic or tribal communities are alienated even further in the face of the rapid digitisation that defines the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this context, there is a need for social enterprises that can utilise the new spaces of e-commerce and other platforms to integrate cultural heritage and inclusive growth.

With the immense growth of social media platforms and the digital economy, it is easier for the government to develop robust databases and quickly reach out to people. For example, the recent experiment of the unique identity card (Aadhar card) in India, as the basic information point to access services, helped the government to transfer money directly to the bank accounts of beneficiaries. However, a significant challenge is that many of the poorest groups and indigenous communities do not have access to digital communication.

Economic growth is concentrated in the finance capitals and urban cities of the world where the manufacturing and service sectors flourish. However, the majority of the workforce in most of the countries in the Global South is in the agricultural sector, which has seen declining growth in the past few decades. The world today is witnessing a jobless growth model, and this excludes a large number of socially and economically marginalised farmers, agricultural workers and rural people in poverty. It is in this context that the President of Colombia began to use the Orange Economy as a key driver of economic growth in Colombia (Case study 11).

## Case Study 11: Orange Economy and Colombia

Colombian President Iván Duque Márquez developed the concept of the ‘Orange Economy’<sup>14</sup> – which refers to a country’s creative industries – during his time at the Inter-American Development Bank. The manual begins with the question:

How could one classify as ‘invisible’ a sector, which according to Johns Hawkins was estimated to represent 6.1% of world economy in 2005, and almost a decade later does not register on the radar of most economists?<sup>15</sup>

It is this thinking which motivated President Duque to begin implementing his ideas once he became president in 2018. President Duque considers the Orange Economy to be a vital economic sector for Latin America, not only because the vibrant culture offers multiple opportunities, but also because it will help to reduce the region’s dependence on natural resources. Colombia also launched the world’s first ‘orange bonds’ to help build cultural infrastructure.

14. <https://www.as-coa.org/articles/explainer-what-colombias-orange-economy>

15. Buitrago Restrepo & Duque Márquez, 2013

In our interview with Dr Ritu Dewan, she highlighted how well-intended government policies often perpetuate existing discrimination. For example, the Swachh Bharat Mission of India, the largest sanitation drive in the world, has had several positives but it has not been able to improve the lives of the sanitation workers who carry out the profession, not out of choice but because of the

compulsion of being born into a lower caste. She also described the case of tribes whose centuries worth of institutionalised livelihood and societal patterns are not recognised by the current social order. In this context, the approach taken by ActionAid Vietnam can be an interesting case study on how traditional forest laws can be utilised for inclusive growth (Case study 12).

## Case Study 12: ActionAid in Vietnam: Using orally transmitted traditional forest laws for inclusive growth

Recognising the economic viability of aligning livelihood and cultural heritage in Vietnam, ActionAid Vietnam developed an innovative agricultural livelihood and cooperatives afforestation model. The PFG-Vietnam project – ‘People’s participation in the improvement of forest governance and poverty alleviation in Vietnam’ – focused on poverty reduction through forest management and the effective use of forest resources. The project targeted poor and ethnic minorities, whose livelihood connects directly to traditional forest management methods, and it enabled 230,000 people to attain rights in forest governance through better access to information and government authorities. Finland has been a dependable foreign assistance partner in this project.

ActionAid Vietnam played a critical role as a middleman to ensure the benefits to all stakeholders,

especially to the community. They adopted a value chain livelihood model to improve the natural heritage of local communities, enabling them to attain inclusive growth and sustainable livelihoods. The generations of people in the village have traditionally had oral instructions for protecting the common forest and they always adhere to the rules very seriously. Forest resources are shared equally between people in the community, and priority is given to households with disabilities. The instructions passed down by ancestors were recognised in the project and used strategically to ensure a sustainable livelihood from the forest.

According to Minh Anh:

... we were able to establish effective market linkages that connected the local community with the market, and the integration information system facilitated farmers to access the right information from the authorities.

The sustainability of the project is assured in the adoption of the forest development plan by the local government into the local socio-economic development plan. In the Thong Nong commune, Cao Bang province (Northern Vietnam), the spice tree development plan was put into the strategic livelihood development plan of the commune.

Based on an interview with ActionAid Vietnam.

### **Democratic Governance, a Human Rights Based Approach, and Inclusive Development**

Our studies have clearly indicated the link between democratic governance, the human rights-based approach and inclusive economic growth. Apart from the government initiatives and policies, civil society plays a very important role in enabling and empowering excluded communities. Independent civil society organisations played a crucial role in reaching out to the most excluded and marginalised communities.

For example, in Kenya, ActionAid worked with the most marginalised nomadic communities in the border district close to Somalia. This helped the communities to get access to water, education and health, and also enable them to do policy advocacy to get more budget allocation for their economic and social development. Oxfam worked with rural women to improve their literacy and awareness to access better health care for them and their children. In Colombia, human rights organisations played a crucial role in advocating the rights of Indigenous people. In India, success of the inclusive social protection initiatives depended on the efforts of civil society organisations in empowering the marginalised

communities to demand rights. In Vietnam, with one party rule, there is relatively less space for independent civil society organisations and no space for human rights organisations outside the strict supervision of the government. Therefore, most of the government policies are often top-down and there is less effort for substantive empowerment of marginalised communities.

What has become evident over the course of our research and analysis is that civil and political rights play a very important role in the empowerment of the marginalised and excluded communities to claim inclusive participation in the economy and in governance and to assert their equal rights as citizens. Right to expression and association are crucial factors that enable and empower the marginalised communities to claim entitlement as equal citizens.

One of the great challenges in countries in the Global South is the increasing gap between the policy rhetoric and real implementation. This is largely due to the fact that many countries do not allocate adequate budget to ensure effective implementation of a policy, and neither do many global development actors for programmes. In the absence of committed budgets, many of the

policies and programmes do not reach the most marginalised people, particularly in locations far away from the mainstream centres of government. In some other cases, although governments and actors allocate the budget, the money remains unspent due to the inertia of the government officials, entrenched cultural or social prejudices and lack of accountability.

One of the main reasons for the lack of adequate budget is the effective lack of transparency and accountability of budget. For example, the tracking of the health budget enabled many to see how the budget did not reach the most marginalised locations and communities. This led to an advocacy campaign in Colombia, resulting in Indigenous communities getting access to health care. In India, budget advocacy led to more allocation of budget for the marginalised communities and for the empowerment of women. The gender budget initiatives in different states of India helped women to access better human development and participate more actively in local and community governance.

In Vietnam, local governance and democracy played an important role in enabling communities to take the decisions that affect their lives and livelihood. The response to COVID-19 in Kerala was more successful due to the active role of local government institutions in tracking the cases and responding quickly to contain the spread.

Thus, there is clear evidence that democratic governance and the human rights-based approach to inclusive development enable and empower communities to claim space for inclusion as equal citizens. Transparency and accountability in the budget and decentralisation are crucial to make any inclusive growth policy or programme effective with desired outcomes and impact.

### **Children, Young People and the Elderly**

Culture and traditions operate at multiple levels in society. More often religion, language, customs and social norms play an important role in shaping human behaviour and societal attitudes. It is often in the name of customs and practices that children are unable to express their aspirations or interests. In marginalised and excluded communities, children drop out of school early due to poverty or prevailing social norms. Even among children, girl

children often drop out after primary education. This relative lack of education for girls and boys often prevents them from getting gainful employment or access to economic development.

Therefore, marginalisation of children further entrenches the generational cycle of poverty, marginalisation and exclusion. This was evident in the case of the tribal communities in Kenya and India, and the Indigenous communities in Colombia.

Along with the empowerment of women, the rights of children to food, education and health transform a community, making them able to participate in the economy and move out of the vicious cycle of poverty. This is evident in many village communities in all the countries that we studied.

Young people can play an important leadership role in building awareness and solidarity within the communities to enable them to access a more inclusive development. However, in many communities, young people often do not get adequate opportunities due to entrenched customs and practices. Youth participation in governance is often confined to the participation of youth from the urban middle class; and due to the language-gap and access to institutions, young people from rural communities get fewer chances to grow within the system of governance. However, local governance initiatives often provided an opportunity for young people to participate in governance and inclusive development. This was evident in Vietnam, Kenya and India. Investing in ethical and inclusive youth leadership from the marginalised and excluded communities is crucial to enable them to participate in inclusive growth and government.

In many societies, elderly people have relatively less access to income and also less access to health facilities. Often, they are marginalised within the communities and societies, particularly in many of the countries in the Global South. Therefore, any policy on inclusion and inclusive growth needs to consider the well-being and participation of older people.

### **Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction**

In all the countries we studied, natural disasters and changes in weather patterns affected poor and marginalised communities more. Drought in

many countries destroyed the agriculture and investment of farmers. Floods played havoc to the lives and livelihood of people in poverty. In most of the natural disasters, it is often people in poverty and excluded people who suffer more.

There is increasing evidence about the link between climate change and the change in weather patterns in many countries. These changes in weather patterns have adversely affected people in poverty and marginalised farmers in Kenya and in India in a substantive way, with many farmers committing suicide in the face of crop failures. Drought in Africa kills the livestock and affects the livelihood of many pastoralist communities.

Many years of investment in inclusive development can be destroyed overnight due to a big natural disaster or a pandemic like COVID-19. The ongoing global pandemic in many countries has affected people in poverty and marginalised communities. The economic and social lockdown has resulted in increasing instances of poverty, and the number of vulnerable poor people in many countries has substantially increased.

Therefore, sustainable economic development requires a long-term approach to reduce carbon emissions and take mitigation in the context of climate change. This also requires an active disaster risk reduction and more proactive disaster preparedness.

### Bringing SDGs to the National and Local Levels

The Sustainable Development Goals are a broad policy framework with indicators to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth and reduce gender and economic inequalities. While the seventeen SDGs are integrated into the national policy framework, the major challenge is the lack of effective realisation of the SDGs. Many countries such as Vietnam and China effectively implemented many of the SDGs. However, when it comes to gender inequality and economic and income inequalities, many countries have failed to address the causes and consequences of such inequalities. Many of the countries in the Global South also invested less in realising many of the SDGs. There is greater focus on the first four SDGs in most countries, than in the remaining ones.

In our interview with Dr Vinod Thomas, he said:

... the Sustainable Development Goals provide an adequate framework to motivate inclusive and sustainable development. The problem however, is that when it comes down to it, policy-makers still opt for short-term income GDP growth at all costs, without recognising that inclusion and sustainability in the quality of growth would be far more beneficial.

Research has shown that social solidarity at the local and grassroots level strengthens demand for schemes, the political mobilisation of which can lead to the realisation of SDGs at the local level. For example, the Institute for Sustainable Development and Governance (ISDG) uses art, culture and heritage to reach out to a large number of young people to make them aware of the SDGs and inclusive growth policies. Here too, the challenge for any government, as well as the civil society organisations, is to reach out to the most marginalised communities, especially since most of them have had limited education.

### Conclusion

The success of inclusive growth policies depends on the political and cultural context at the national and subnational level. In all the countries, women's human development and empowerment is the key leverage for social and economic development of communities to actively participate in inclusive development. Democratic governance, a transparent and accountable budget, and public finance are enabling conditions for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. A rights-based approach to sustainable development, with a stress on civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; as well as group rights, is crucial for the awareness and empowerment of communities to participate in economies, social-economic development and governance as equal citizens. The mapping of cultures as both enabling and disabling factors, helps to design and implement inclusive growth policies in an effective manner. A transformative policy and political agenda requires a concerted effort to realise Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, where 'no one will be left behind ... recognising human dignity of human person is fundamental ... for all peoples and for all segments of society'.

# Lessons and policy options

This essay on inclusive growth in diverse governance settings clearly indicates the significance of socio-political and cultural contexts in the formulation of effective policies at the national and sub-national levels. The research study based on a series of case studies, interviews and analysis of public policies in different countries, helped to identify the underlying political as well as cultural factors which could determine the outcome of inclusive economic growth policies.

This essay has focused mainly on different aspects of inclusive growth approaches. The introductory section of the essay examined how social and economic theories have been shaping the public policy framework on inclusion. Any effort on inclusive economic growth requires an understanding of the process of exclusion in different socio-political and cultural contexts. Despite the unprecedented economic growth in many countries across the world, entrenched exclusion based on gender, ethnicity, language, and culture has always persisted. While the neo-liberal economic growth approach could reduce poverty and hunger to a large extent, it has also increased multi-dimensional inequalities and different kinds of exclusion. Various research studies have clearly demonstrated that the impact of macro-economic growth need not reach the most marginalised and excluded communities, thereby leading to multi-dimensional inequalities within a given country. Economic inequality itself is often indicative of other forms of inequalities that prevail in a society. Socio-political and economic inequalities can lead to environmental inequalities as well.

Any inclusive economic growth strategy needs to address the causes, culture and consequences of multi-dimensional inequalities. Social inequalities are directly related to culture, customs and societal attitudes and behaviour. The exclusion of people and communities based on gender, religion, race, caste and location is directly linked to cultural aspects. Therefore, a strategic approach to inclusive economic growth policies needs to consider the following aspects of culture:

- a. How culture and cultural heritage could be used as leverage to reach out to excluded communities and enable and empower them to participate in the market, government policies/programmes and civil society initiatives.
- b. How disabling aspects of culture in a given context could be challenged and transformed in order to give equal opportunities to women and excluded communities to participate in the process of social and economic development.
- c. How culture as a mode of communication, using folk songs, music and art forms strategically, can be used to make people aware of the opportunities as well as options for inclusive participation in the economy, society and policy process.

The review of policies and practices in different countries indicated a few of the pointers that are important for inclusive growth. Policy analysis in different countries helped to decipher a few lessons and practices in the context of inclusive growth in relation to culture and heritage.

### 1. Significance of economic growth

Economic growth is a basic requirement for facilitating inclusive growth but the redistribution aspect of the benefits of growth determines whether economic growth is inclusive or not. The existing neoliberal policies have led to growing inequalities and exclusion and hence the need for inclusive growth.

### 2. Inclusive growth

Although the concept of inclusive growth has been found in development discourse during the past few decades, economic growth policies have failed to bring about greater inclusion of the marginalised groups as partners and beneficiaries of the growth process. Therefore, there is a need

for implementing effective equitable redistribution policies also as part of the growth process.

### 3. Macroeconomic policies

The significance of formulating sound macroeconomic policies and their effective implementation to achieve inclusive growth is rather high. Inclusive growth policies, if implemented well, have the potential to reduce poverty and socio-economic inequalities to a large extent. Greater focus on basic health, education and access to public services to all the sections of society increases the overall capabilities of the population, particularly of women, different deprived sections, and minority groups.

### 4. Enhancing the capabilities of the people

By incorporating a rights-based approach, governments and policy makers at all levels should redefine macroeconomic policies so as to provide health, education, skills training and such other social and economic infrastructural facilities as entitlements for all the citizens. While such macro policies would possibly increase the capabilities, productivity and employment opportunities of the groups of people hitherto left out from the growth process, it would also substantially increase aggregate demand in the economy, triggering further economic growth.

### 5. Importance of culture in inclusive growth

Culture could act both as an enabler and as a disabler for inclusive growth. Many countries the world over have sharp divisions in their society on account of long practised cultural norms which deny opportunities for different groups of people on the basis of gender, religion, language, ethnicity and the like, thereby hindering growth. State and non-state actors and agencies can ensure better inclusive growth for these excluded sections by bringing about positive cultural transformation over time by enhancing their capabilities and opportunities for productive economic participation through effective policies and programmes.

### 6. Role of culture in promoting social solidarity

Culture has a major role in promoting social solidarity that in turn could be harnessed for inclusive growth. Commonality in cultural norms and practices, language, religion, caste, class etc constitutes a binding factor for different groups. Policy-makers and governments, while designing their various programmes and projects, should give due importance to cultural factors in order to strengthen social solidarity among the marginalised and minority groups, to empower them to overcome their exclusion from the mainstream.

### 7. Need for contextualisation in the development intervention by institutions

Considering the role of culture in promoting inclusive growth, in recent times international development agencies have started incorporating culture in their development projects and programmes. Since implementation of such projects will be taking place at the country level, effort needs to be made to contextualise the project in the cultural setting of the programme country. The development agencies need to be sensitive to cultural norms and practices for the successful implementation of the project and also for achieving greater participation and socio-economic inclusion of the targeted people.

### 8. Using inclusive growth to achieve SDGs

Macroeconomic policies to ensure inclusive growth in practice could give a huge boost to the efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by individual countries. An inclusive growth strategy has been embedded in the SDGs, since the overall aim of Agenda 2030 is to leave no one behind. The various SDGs clearly highlight the priority the United Nations has given for including the excluded in the social, economic and environmental development of the countries/communities in order to achieve a growth pattern which is sustainable. As has been argued in this essay, factoring culture in the development process is crucial for attaining inclusive growth as envisaged in the SDGs since such a development model alone would be sustainable in the long run.

The lessons drawn while analysing the scope for using culture and heritage to achieve greater inclusive growth could be useful as policy guidelines for all the developing economies across the globe. Specific policy options for inclusive economic growth include the following:

#### 1. National political and cultural contexts are crucial in shaping, designing and implementing inclusive growth policies.

Our research has clearly indicated that the process of exclusion has both political as well as socio-cultural dimensions. In a multilingual or multi-ethnic/religious context, dominant political and economic powers often tend to marginalise the minority communities, thereby excluding them from the process of economic development. While there may be inclusive economic policies, many communities marginalised on the basis of location, caste, creed, culture or language may not have the capacity to participate in the inclusive policies. Therefore, political empowerment and cultural appreciation of excluded communities plays a very important role in inclusive policies. As there is no single recipe for inclusive growth, any inclusive growth strategy needs to be developed only by taking into account the given national/subnational political and cultural context.

#### 2. Investments aimed at improving the capabilities and human development of excluded communities enable them to participate in the economy, society and government policies.

In all the four countries where we have done detailed case studies and analysis, it was evident that a threshold level of education, literacy and health was required to enable people to effectively access the economy and the market. By attaining basic human capabilities, people will be able to make use of modes of cultural expression, language and customs as a strategic leverage to build social and economic solidarity. This was evident in the micro-finance and micro-credit programmes in Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Kenya and Colombia. Investing in human development can thus trigger the economic development of excluded and marginalised communities.

#### 3. Investing in cultural and linguistic development and folk-modes of communications empowers communities to assert their rights and claim space for inclusion and participation.

Excluded communities often feel alienated due to the marginalisation of their language and culture by the dominant political forces. However, communities which have collective awareness and appreciation of their own culture, forms of expression and language, could have greater ability to assert politically and claim their rights.

#### 4. Women's empowerment leads to inclusive development and growth.

The study clearly revealed that the effectiveness of inclusive growth is closely linked to women's empowerment, attained largely through providing women with greater access to health and education. Strategic use of culture also has the potential to strengthen women's empowerment. In many countries, women could be successfully mobilised and motivated through songs, folk performances and the inspiring stories of women could make change happen within families and societies. Investing in education and health for women, and promoting women's rights, leads to a multiplier effect in terms of human development and capabilities in excluded and marginalised communities. Moreover, women's enterprise development, micro-finance and political participation also substantially improved the quality of human development, effective governance and inclusive economic growth.

#### 5. Inclusive economic growth policies will be sustainable only when there is an active bridge between macro-economic growth and micro-economic initiatives.

Social and cultural aspects play a crucial role in linking macro-economic policies with micro-economic initiatives at the grassroots level. Social solidarity based on cultural identity and modes of communication plays an important role in building social and cultural capital which would enable people to participate in economic initiatives such as cooperative ventures, credit-unions, micro-credit and various kinds of micro-entrepreneurial efforts.

**6. SDGs can be achieved only if there exists a responsible governance system with policies and programmes that respond effectively to the felt demands and needs of the people.**

Within the Sustainable Development Goals, SDG5 on gender equality, SDG10 on reducing inequalities and SDG16 on governance, peace and justice, are crucial to achieving inclusive economic growth. The demand for services pertaining to Sustainable Development Goals from the excluded or marginalised communities depends on their socio-cultural and political empowerment.

**7. Mapping of the enabling and disabling factors in relation to culture and heritage for inclusive growth is important for effective policy design and implementation.**

As indicated in the study, culture is dynamic, multi-dimensional and contextual. While an understanding of the different dimensions of culture in terms of language, attitudes, social behaviour, beliefs and customs will be useful to design and implement inclusive policies, it is important to realise that culture can also be used as a means to segregate, discriminate and exclude. Therefore, mapping of the enabling and empowering aspects of culture as well as the disabling and excluding aspects of culture in a given context is important. Such a mapping of the multi-dimensional aspects and practices of culture would enable the policy-makers to design and implement public policies and practices more effectively.

**8. Perspectives and practices of excluded and marginalised communities and people are crucial for the effective designing and implementation of inclusive policies.**

Usually there exists a gap between those who design inclusive policies and the perspectives and cultural practices of different excluded communities. Therefore, it is necessary to listen to the voices of the marginalised and the excluded communities and also to incorporate their perspectives in the policies meant for their inclusive development and growth. This will ensure better participation of such communities and will give greater effectiveness and legitimacy to the inclusive growth policies in any given national or

sub-national context.

**9. The perspectives and participation of children, young people and elderly people are key to the success of inclusive growth policies.**

Even within the excluded communities, there could exist several unequal and unjust power relations, often shaped by customs, social norms and the culture of such social groups. For instance, patriarchy is a disabling factor in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Similarly, in most societies, children who are more vulnerable hardly get any role in the decisions that affect them. Since children from excluded communities often drop out of schools, their access to gainful employment or ability to effectively participate in the economy and governance would remain curtailed. Relatively poor achievement in education and the health of children often reinforce the multi-dimensional inequalities and exclusion in a society.

Unlike in progressive/urban communities, youth participation in some traditional communities is relatively less due to customs and cultural practices. Investing in the leadership and education of young people from the marginalised and excluded communities could be a very effective way to positively influence and transform social solidarity, governance and the socio-economic growth process. Youth leaders from excluded communities could play an important role in building community confidence and their ability to participate in the inclusive growth policies and programmes.

The multiple challenges faced by older people are particularly severe among those belonging to economically and socially marginalised communities. Therefore, the formulation and implementation of inclusive economic policies needs to consider the rights, needs and perspectives of older people.

**10. Democratic, accountable and transparent governance and budget accountability provide enabling conditions for effective inclusive policies.**

In societies with less democratic governance, there will be less freedom of expression and

association, especially for people and communities experiencing exclusion and marginalisation. In such an environment, issues of poverty and marginalisation or exclusion are often glossed over by the media. It was clear from the study that in countries with multi-party democracy and governance, people from the excluded communities could build social and political solidarity to claim their rights and demand for economic and social inclusion, to a great extent.

Despite the much-publicised inclusive growth policies of different governments, quite often there will not be adequate budget allocation for inclusive growth programmes, particularly for those meant for Indigenous and Tribal populations. Without adequate budget allocation, it will be a challenge to effectively implement any inclusive development programme. In many cases, despite budget allocations, money meant for inclusive development will not be adequately or efficiently spent either. Prejudices among the government officials also work against the effective implementation of projects for excluded or marginalised communities. Therefore, investing in democratic, accountable and transparent governance and advocacy for budget allocation, expenditure and quality of expenses are important to the success of inclusive socioeconomic development.

**11. Addressing the causes and consequences of climate change and disaster risk reduction is important to sustain inclusive economic growth.**

The increasing occurrence of droughts, floods and other natural disasters due to climate change is likely to affect the lives and livelihood of people from excluded and marginalised communities more adversely. In recent times, droughts and floods have wreaked havoc to the livelihood of people belonging to poor and marginalised communities in several countries in the Global South. Years of investments in inclusive economic growth could be eroded by natural disasters. Therefore, addressing the causes and consequences of climate change would be an enabling factor for sustaining inclusive economic growth.

As with natural calamities, it is the people in poverty who are more vulnerable to diseases and

other kinds of disasters. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the lives and livelihoods of people in poverty and excluded communities have been affected more than others. The economic impact on people in poverty has become worse due to the prolonged lockdowns in many countries around the world. Therefore, there is an increasing need to revitalise the inclusive social and economic development programmes during the post COVID-19 situation.

Above all, we will be able to successfully achieve the SDGs only by developing a broad-based holistic approach to inclusive economic growth.

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