



# Pre-interview Information Sheet No 3: Social Inclusion - a Development Opportunity

## What about Social Inclusion?

You should be prepared to demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the social inclusion challenges your country faces – and be prepared to discuss these at your interview. This fact sheet will help guide your thinking.

## Social exclusion vs inclusion

**Social exclusion** is a process whereby certain individuals are prevented from fully participating in society as a result of discrimination, their poverty or their lack of basic competencies or learning opportunities. This distances them from life opportunities, as well as social and community networks and activities.

**Social inclusion** entails ensuring that excluded groups and the processes of exclusion - geographic, social, political, and economic - are recognised, understood and addressed so that all can participate equally and fairly in society.

## Is poverty linked to social exclusion?

Being poor can lead to exclusion but exclusion is more than just being poor.

## Why Social Inclusion?

Creating a society for all is a moral obligation – that is: a society that upholds fundamental human rights and principles of equality and equity. Inclusion aims to create a society that is safer, more stable and more just. And this is essential for sustainable economic growth and development<sup>1</sup>.

## Social Inclusion entails:

- › Improved access to services for the most disadvantaged
- › Improved access to resources and benefits of development for the most disadvantaged
- › Meaningful participation in decision making for the most disadvantaged
- › Removal of institutional and social barriers to the above

## Barriers to Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion seeks to identify who is left out of society, why and how can we include them? Some of the barriers that cause exclusion are:

- › Exclusion within institutional or organisational culture and practices
- › Exclusion in policies that we use to guide activities;
- › Exclusion from participation in planning and development processes;
- › Exclusion from political participation;
- › Attitudinal barriers to those we perceive as 'different' - prejudice, discrimination, stigma;
- › Environmental barriers that include physical barriers;
- › Communication and information barriers like inaccessible formats.

## How do I link social inclusion to the development in my country?

It is important for you as a candidate to have an understanding of exclusion issues faced both generally and specifically in your country/sector/organisation.

- › Reflect on the development context of your country - who do you think is marginalised/left behind in development and how? Is it children/youth/persons with disability/women/men/the aged/rural communities?
- › What are the expectations of your government or the focus of national development goals? Has inclusion been covered?
- › Reflect on your workplace and sector- are there individuals/ groups who are excluded from the work process or from the benefits of the work you are doing?
- › What can you do to promote inclusion in the above scenarios? Prepare a response that links the above points to your preferred course of study.

## How can I link Social Inclusion to my professional field?

When reflecting on the inclusive development contribution you intend to make, you must reflect on what is within your scope of influence or ability. Below are the three levels of influence you may choose your example from – this should not limit you.

### 1. Can you influence policy?

A policy is a course of action adopted or proposed by a government or an organisation on how it intends to conduct business.

### 2. Are you a practitioner?

Not everyone develops policy - most people implement policy directives.

### 3. Are you able to promote a culture that supports inclusion?

Individuals as change agents foster positive and inclusive cultures.

## Be inspired...

“An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.”

**Martin Luther King Jr**

<sup>1</sup> Analysing and Measuring Social Inclusion in a Global Context, UN 2010

