

## SDG 16+ Report Format

# Monitoring and Review of SDG 16 Plus at the National and Regional Level ( 2015-2020) in Asia

## CSOs perspective

### Chapter 1

1. What is Goal 16 Plus in your national context (maximum 500 words)  
(This will seek to explain the relevance of Goal 16 + as the core of the 2030 Agenda's Peaceful, Just and Inclusive pillar, SDG 16+ as a catalyst to fully realize the 2030 Agenda, as an integrated and mutually-reinforcing whole focused on advancing government accountability, building trust, and sustaining peace, at the national level)

*SDG 16 is crucial for achieving Agenda 2030. India aligned its SDG targets to its various government programs and projects. The criticality of ensuring peace, justice and ending all forms of violence are critical benchmarks to ensure that SDGs are fully realized with ease and do not witness any form of roadblocks. In the last five years, civil society has extensively produced evidence-based research that singularly point to the need for improving governance in delivery of public goods. This inevitably means development aspirations are intrinsically related to the essence of SDG 16+. Being a developing country India is facing a daunting challenge with regards to equitable resource management, inefficient delivery of public services, lopsided ratio of administrative/ justice officers to number of people and ineffective laws that provide deterrence to crime and violence. In the national context of India, Goal 16 is seen as a key driver for realizing access to justice, combating violence at national and sub-national levels, providing legal identity to citizens. As consistently reiterated by global civil society and United Nations, SDG 16 will require carefully designed data to measure the success of indicators, at the country much of these data are obscured due to non-availability. For instance, there is not effective data to measure governance, transparency and accountability. Reliance on official sources will be mere tokenism to SDG 16. In government produced reports such as the Baseline index for SDGs and Localization of SDGs (NITI Ayog) most indicators have tended to focus on the general aspects of SDG 16 and not taken deep focus on the nuances in contrast to other SDGs. A tendency to do this makes it difficult for civil society to converse with officials on actioning SDG 16. For example, with relevant laws working to ensure transparency and accountability in governance there is very minimal information with regards to their progress and closing of governance gaps which is at the heart of SDG 16. Therefore, while VNRs have tended to include chapters and justifications for SDG 16 it has informed HLPF that India has achieved SDG 16 because of already existing laws in the country(exclusive of ending crime and violence). Therefore, there is a worry that while SDGs have received wholesome attention the same may not be true for SDG 16. This calls for proactive civil society sensitization at all tiers of governance to encourage usage of measurable indicators and promoting laws for institutional promotion of SDG 16. The need for SDG 16+ in India emanates because of the growing concerns of violence and crime, increase in corruption, deterioration in rule of law. It evidently shows the need for concerted measures that should be undertaken towards*

*increasing the scope and bandwidth of implementing SDG 16 and 16+ that promotes a positive environment of peace and justice.*

## Chapter II

- Please refer to the Regional Report

## Chapter III

1. Understanding SDG 16 Plus (1000 words maximum)
  - 24 targets from seven other goals directly measure, using a total of 33 additional indicators, at least one aspect of peace, inclusion, or access to justice. Though not directly, SDG 16 is also inseparably linked with all other SDGs; their related targets and indicators are leveraged to enhance all facets of SDG 16+.
  - Looking at the available data for all the national level data , share data gaps, if any data collected by the CSOs and other stakeholders - Citizens led data is available, if yes, Please highlight them

SDG 16 + is cross linked with other goals. Fighting corruption is essential to eradicating poverty (SDG 1), ending hunger (SDG 2), ensuring access to health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4) and clean water (SDG 6), protecting marine environments (SDG 14) and taking climate action (SDG 13). The organization cites UN figures indicating that corruption, bribery, tax evasion and illicit financial flows cost developing countries around USD 1.26 trillion a year. Similarly, transparent and accountable institutions with compliance to rule of law are essential for achieving SDG 16+ since most government programs of health, education, WASH are publicly funded and for their successful fruition have to see implementation. In recent years there has been civil society led initiatives to study the impact of thematic SDGs and their various data gaps. The following provide the gaps in SDG implementation and the relevant gaps vis-à-vis SDG 16-

**SDG 3 Health:** India today possesses as never before, several interventions, technologies and knowledge required for providing health care. Yet, ill health, disease, premature death, and suffering remain and the gaps in health outcomes continue. Limited access to quality health care, communication, other basic facilities, in many rural, tribal, and even urban settings, especially inhabited by Adivasis/Tribals, Dalits, migrant and mobile populations, who are often socio-economically disadvantaged and facing social exclusion, negatively impact on the chances of living a dignified life. In India, communicable and non-communicable diseases pose threat to achievement of SDGs and lead to and also remain leading causes of immense human sufferings and poverty. Overall, communicable and non-communicable diseases contribute to 24.4% and 39.1% of the entire disease burden, respectively; while maternal and neonatal ailments contribute to 13.8% followed by injuries (11.8%). Today, immense suffering and loss of lives are also witnessed frequently following natural and man-made disasters<sup>1</sup>.

*Recommendations for improving cross-linkage of SDG 16-*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.caritasindia.org/2721-2/>

- Provide publicly financed health insurance through an accountable, rational and regulated health care system. (16.6.1)
- Ensure that ethical and medical standards of care are strictly adhered to and implement Quality Assurance mechanisms as laid down in policy (16.6.2)
- Increase participation of communities and civil society organizations in different stages of policy and programme formulation, implementation and monitoring (for example through inclusion of CSOs in technical and decision-making bodies, capacity building of community volunteers and social audits of programmes) (16.7.2)

**SDG 4 Education-** With the passing of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (hereafter RTE), elementary education for every child between 6 and 14 became a Fundamental right in India, hence legally enforceable. It provisioned for schools within a kilometre from homes with good infrastructure (water, electricity, toilets, playground etc.), trained teachers, a standard teacher-student ratio, No Detention Policy (NDP) and an inclusive environment free of fear and anxiety for all children to learn in an equitable and democratic manner<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Recommendations for improving cross-linkage of SDG 16*

- There is an urgent need to strengthen public education system in the country through transparency and accountability provisions and making rule-based approach in implementation of RTE. (16. 3, 16.7.2 and 16.6)
- Ensuring effective governance to improve quality of education at grassroots 16.7.2)
- Consultative and participatory exercises should be conducted regularly with Civil Society Organizations with a supportive environment for those involved in education sector at the grass16.7.2)
- Circumvent corruption in enrolment of students in private sector schools (16.5)

#### **SDG 5- Gender equality and empowerment<sup>3</sup>**

In India, the root cause of discrimination against women and girls is the roles and responsibilities assigned to women and men, perpetuated and promoted by patriarchal social norms and practices. India has ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), whilst gender equality is firmly established in the Constitution. Despite that, India ranked 125th on the Gender Inequality Index of 159 countries<sup>119</sup> in 2015 and 87th as per Global Gender Gap Index<sup>120</sup> 2016 among 147 countries. As per the Census data 2011<sup>121</sup>, India's sex ratio is 933 females per 1000 males, with 946 females for rural, 900 for urban and 945 for Dalit women. Despite the Constitutional guarantees and ratification of the international treaties women and girls in India continue to face multiple forms of violence based on their gender, caste, class,

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vaniindia.org/admin-latest/images/India%20and%20G20%20Analyzing%20Development%20Policy%20Priorities.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/swindia/2017-Civil-Society-Report-on-SDGs-Agenda-2030-INDIA.pdf>

age, marital status, ethnicity, religion, disability and sexuality. NCRB reporting rose consistently since 2013, at 56% from 2012 to 2013, added up by 16% in 2014. The year 2015 recorded 3, 27, 394 crimes (a slight decrease of 3.1 % from 2014), with a rise in crimes on molestation under Indian Penal Code, (IPC) Section 354 (0.22%), the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (17.1 %), Abetment of Suicide of Women, Section 306 IPC (8.73%) and under Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (8.21 %). Specifically, 8000 crimes against Dalit women were reported at the rate of a crime per hour.

#### *Recommendations for improving cross-linkage with SDG 16*

- Improving tracking of violence against women, girl child (16.A and 16.10.2)
- Providing real time monitoring for effective resolution of violence cases (16.10.2)
- Ensuring strong commissions to take grieved women access to justice through free legal aid. (16.A)

**SDG 6- Water and Sanitation:** India has made rapid progress in ending open defecation across the country, which is having a huge impact on improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Just a few years ago, in 2015, nearly half of India's population of around 568 million people suffered the indignity of defecating in fields, forests, bodies of water, or other public spaces due to lack of access to toilets. India alone accounted for 90 per cent of the people in South Asia and half of the 1.2 billion people in the world that defecated in the open.

#### *Recommendations for improving cross-linkage with SDG 16*

- Reduce corruption in water distribution services through open and transparent water contracting (16.7.2)
- Ensure equitable access in water-starved areas which can increase water conflicts and violence (16.A and 16.B)
- Improve public service of provisioning clean water, ensuring water justice and raising the standard of water governance. (16.6.2)

### Chapter IV

1. How SDG 16 Plus encompasses Whole of Society approach or Leave no one Behind You may analyse the role of various stakeholders in the Goal 16 Plus progress (in reference to monitoring and indicators) **in last 5 years (2015-2020) (1000 words max)**

In India, SDG 16+ is important for the development of the country because it carries key drivers that ensure safeguard of democracies from deterioration. Given the historical context of India the country was marred by partition on communal lines, violence because of psychologically embedded patriarchal attitudes, a crippling colonial past that crushed national aspirations of people, increased corruption through government interference in industry because of ill-conceived socialist policies, community conflict because of increased diversity and weakly funded public infrastructure. Many of these factors have

been instrumental in inhibiting progress and advancement of the country. Effectively growing inequalities has nurtured a culture of violence which has seen crimes rates booming<sup>4</sup>. Coupled with a strained justice disposing systems, access to justice remains hugely affected with a large population not able to access litigation and remaining aloof from legal coverage. Goal 16 encapsulates many stakeholders and constituencies which find relevance in the goal because of the rights and justice approach it integrates in its spectrum. A review of the last five years with regards to SDG 16+ provides a deterioration in the many global indexes governing corruption, peace, justice and violence. These are provided below-

Area	Index Ranking
Corruption	India's rank has slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries 89% people think corruption exists in India (Transparency International)
Peace	India climbed two spots to become the 139th 'peaceful' country on the Global Peace Index 2020
Violence	India ranked at 133 out of 167 countries with an index score of 0.625 for Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS)
Rule of Law	India Ranked 69th Across 128 Countries, 2020

### Examining Stakeholder Groups in correlation to SDG 16+

When we take the 'Leave No Behind Approach' it is recognizable that most of the affected communities are the marginalized groups such as Dalits, tribal/adivasis, women, elderly, disabled. These groups have been historically, socially and economically been backward and need urgent attention in closing development gaps vis-à-vis SDG 16+

- A) Dalits<sup>5</sup>:** The term Dalit means 'oppressed', 'broken' or 'crushed' to the extent of losing original identity. However, this name has been adopted by the people otherwise referred to as Harijans, or 'Untouchables', and has come to symbolize for them a movement for change and for the eradication of the centuries-old oppression under the caste system. In legal and constitutional terms, Dalits are known in India as scheduled castes. There are currently some 166.6 million Dalits in India. The Constitution requires the government to define a list or schedule of the lowest castes in need of compensatory programmes.

*Dalits affected by crime and violence:* According to official data Crimes against Dalits increased by 6% from 2009 to 2018 with over 3.91 lakh atrocities being reported, at the same time gaps in implementation of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities Act), 1989<sup>6</sup>.

#### Caste based conflict

The **2018 Bhima Koregaon violence** refers to violence during an annual celebratory gathering on 1 January 2018 at [Bhima Koregaon](#) to mark the 200th anniversary of the [Battle of Bhima Koregaon](#). The violence and stone pelting by anti-social elements on the gathering resulted in death of a 28-year old youth and injury to five others

<sup>4</sup> Walte  
Century

<sup>5</sup> https://

<sup>6</sup> https://

*Response of the Police to crimes against dalits:* NCRB data revealed that of the total 188,991 crimes against SCs registered under different laws in 2014, 48.36% (91,411 cases) were registered under the IPC and other legal provisions, and 21.3% (40,300 cases) under the Prevention of Atrocities (PoA) Act. Of the 40,300 cases registered under the PoA Act, the rate of pendency in investigation of these cases was 25%. Consequently, charge sheets were filed for 72% of cases (29,327 cases)

*Access to Justice for Dalits:* According to NCRB data, at the end of 2014, 85.5% cases under SC/ST PoA Act of crimes against SCs were pending trial across the country. Convictions were awarded in only 28.4% of cases (4,716 cases) in 2014 that completed trial. The high pendency rate for cases under trial can be attributed to the inadequate number of Special Courts and Special Public Prosecutors (SPPs); delayed investigation and registration of cases; no day-to-day trial; and overburdened designated courts which also try non-atrocity cases as well<sup>7</sup>.

*Access to Public Services<sup>8</sup>:* Dalits face insurmountable challenges in accessing public services such as health, education, water facilities. There are case stories, media reports how a majority of village officials are still practicing untouchability and discrimination in providing good governance to dalit communities. While this may not be largely prevalent in metro cities, there are documented evidence of discrimination Dalits face.

**B) Women:** The "Crimes in India -2019" report shows that crimes against women have gone up by 7.3 per cent last year. The crime rate registered per lakh women population is 62.4 per cent in 2019, up from the 58.8 per cent figure of 2018<sup>9</sup>. According to official sources (National Crime Register Bureau) –

“A total of 4,05,861 cases of crime against women were registered during 2019, showing an increase of 7.3% over 2018 (3,78,236 cases). Majority of cases under crime against women under IPC were registered under ‘cruelty by husband or his relatives’ (30.9%), followed by ‘assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty’ (21.8%), ‘kidnapping & abduction of women’ (17.9%) and ‘rape’ (7.9%). The crime rate registered per lakh women population is 62.4 in 2019 in comparison with 58.8 in 2018”

Similarly, access to justice for women, remains highly uneven with women with disabilities and those hailing from Dalit community facing daunting challenges<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://idsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Access-to-Justice-Equity-Watch-2015-report-NCDHR.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-caste-affects-public-health-services-11570609511853.html>

<sup>9</sup> The "Crimes in India -2019" report shows that crimes against women have gone up by 7.3 per cent last year. The crime rate registered per lakh women population is 62.4 per cent in 2019, up from the 58.8 per cent figure of 2018.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/03/08/long-wait-justice-women-india>

*Corruption-* About 54 per cent of Indian women reported they paid bribes to get government services and 33 per cent said officials called them repeatedly to harass them, according to a survey report published by Transparency International India<sup>11</sup>

- C) Elderly:** According to Crimes Report, 2019 about 28,104 senior citizens above 60 years became victims of various crimes during 2019. In absolute numbers the cases reported rose from 24,349 in 2018 to 27,696 in 2019<sup>12</sup>.

*Access to Justice for the elderly* is severely hindered owing to complex factors such inability of approaching police, courts owing to health and financial reasons as documented in a data report by the NGO Agewell Foundation. Many elderly especially residing in rural areas are unaware about legal services that they could avail<sup>13</sup>.

- D) Disabled:** Disabled population in India are a vulnerable group which are continually facing increased forms of crime and violence. There are no official figures for the crimes against this group and disability organizations have been advocating the government to publish data<sup>14</sup>. It is widely known that disabled population is regularly facing challenges with regards to accessing justice and public services. Laws such as Rights for Persons with Disabilities, 2016 have ensured that disabled population do not have their rights infringed or discriminated against.

## Chapter V

1. How SDG 16+ is instrumental in protecting fundamental freedoms **in your country in last 5 years (2015-2020)** ? -Please provide reference in respect to the available data (both qualitative and or quantitative) (1000 words max)

India became a democratic republic in 1947 after 200 years of colonial rule by the British Empire. As a constitutional republic it enacted a balanced constitution which is considered a progressive governance roadmap that ensures justice, dignity and well-being of all individuals irrespective of their gender, caste, creed, origin, orientation. Over the years, India's democratic structure has remained intact albeit in 1977 when political emergency was imposed that momentarily crushed democracy, fundamental freedoms and ensured one-party rule. This was finally thwarted via people's movements that backed a united opposition. Democracy to India has been peculiar given that the South Asia region (SAR) have not been able to sustain republican governments for extended period and have made tailspin into deteriorating democracies or dictatorships. However fundamental freedoms have attacked by successive governments via violation of personal liberties, curtailing freedom of speech and expression, blocking freedom of association etc. But instances such as these have been scattered and there have been no blanket application of

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/54-indian-women-paid-bribe-to-get-government-services-what-transparency-international-survey-claims/1090745/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/cases-of-crimes-against-senior-citizens-rising-pendency-in-2019-at-88/articleshow/78504057.cms>

<sup>13</sup> <https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/eleventh/Inputs%20NGOs/Access-to-justice-in-old-age-special-focus-on-right-to-work-online.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/crimes-against-persons-with-disabilities-rights-organisations-want-ncrb-to-maintain-data/article33635243.ece>

curtailment except the emergency of 1977. In the last five years, India has witnessed scattered actions against fundamental freedoms most notably detention of individuals, non-redressal of justice remedies against individuals, actions against certain vested groups/organizations etc. However, it should be noted that given India's vulnerable neighborhood and an active terrorist sponsorship by neighboring countries freedoms of association and speech are curtailed. Already India is sitting on deadly fault lines exacerbated by communal tensions, ethnic and geographic divisions. Many vested groups and forces that are working against the idea of India have been working day and night to ensure that the country continues to face challenges and its disturbed provinces succeeds the Indian union. Based upon this premise, many curtailments have been introduced to regulate associations and organizations through different laws by different governments. And the justification provided is the need for maintaining peace and security of the region. The safeguards introduced by the governments was based on the rationale of homeland security of USA and the FATF regulations which heavily came down on non-profit associations which had been identified as conduit agencies for terrorist financing. Based on this, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government came out with the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) which thoroughly regulated foreign funding to non-profit organizations. During the UPA's time it was highlighted that the need for such a legislation was demanded by the growing anti-development activities undertaken by non-profit organizations, civil society groups in their crusade against de-nuclearization and environmental activism which stalled signature projects of that government. Evidently the FCRA has undergone major changes which has largely affected the working of NGOs genuinely involved in development work. As such, justice to civil society on account of actions of a few has largely resulted in affecting pro-people work.

### *Role of SDG 16+ in protecting fundamental rights*

There are six fundamental rights recognized by the Indian constitution:

1. Right to equality (Articles. 14-18)
2. Right to Freedom (Articles. 19-22)
3. Right Against Exploitation (Articles. 23-24)
4. Right to Freedom of Religion (Articles. 25-28)
5. Cultural and Educational Rights (Articles. 29-30), and
6. Right to Constitutional remedies (Articles. 32-35)

During the last few years right to speech has been greatly affected due to filing of 405 sedition cases against individuals<sup>15</sup> (these cases have been filed by individuals, organizations not related to the government. Filing of sedition does not represent the government in any light but merely portrays misuse of law against people.)

In cases related to exploitation, a considerable number of people are still squashed under the yoke of forced labour. A 2016 report found that in the state of Tamil Nadu, 351 of 743 spinning mills use bonded labour schemes, otherwise known as *Sumangali* schemes. In granite quarries, wage advances and loans with an interest ranging from 24 percent to 36 percent are used to bond workers to the quarry. It is reported that in certain brick kilns accepting a wage advance from a contractor, who acts as an intermediary between the kiln owner and the worker, is seen as a mandatory step to accepting a job, as shown by a study in Punjab in 2014 where 94 percent of those interviewed had taken an advance. The advance system makes it obligatory for the worker

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<sup>15</sup> <https://scroll.in/latest/985724/96-sedition-cases-filed-against-405-people-after-bjps-2014-victory-shows-new-article-14-database>



to remain in the kiln, and with advances and payments reportedly made via a contractor, there is little scope for workers to seek out other employment opportunities<sup>16</sup>.

Protection against discrimination<sup>17</sup>- In 2018-19, the NHRC registered 79 such cases of harassment against minorities and 672 such cases against Scheduled Castes (SCs). A comparison of data in the last three years also shows that the number of cases of harassment against in 2018-19 is significantly higher than those in the earlier two years. This figure stood at 464 in 2017-18 which was dip from 505 such cases registered in 2016-17. India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, accounted for the highest number of such cases in all these three years. In 2018-19, this figure was highest with Uttar Pradesh accounting for nearly half (311) such cases.

As such SDG 16+ forms an important component for securing peace, providing justice to marginalized communities and ending all forms of discriminatory based violence which should be promoted at the institutional level. Without transparency and accountability that provides for action on constitutional/ fundamental freedoms, SDG 16+ cannot be properly realized. Considering that discrimination, violence and injustice is rampantly prevalent in India there are needed measures to make SDG 16+ a critical factor through policy embedding in national priorities.

## Chapter VI

1. Please give 5 examples of Goal 16 plus progress or lack of progress in your country and explain (maximum 1000 words) by concrete examples. This could be in the form of data (both official and citizen's led data) , pictures, graphs

In India, SDG 16+ has not received much attention with regards to implementation given that it espouses a radical demand based and tangible implementation of transparency/accountability, good governance, institutional partnership/consultative procedures. The official confirmation and working for SDG 16 is recorded in VNR reports of the Indian government which marginally touch on implementing certain indicators but there is a lack of concrete measurable outcomes presented by the government. Critically it becomes difficult to measure peace and justice given that the government in VNR or its indicator charts have not been specifically measure these themes. While this is not the only gap responsible for lack of progress on SDG 16+, there is very minimal way forward achieved. This primarily because there has been microscopic effort by government to advance interaction on SDG 16 which is evident that most indicators are measured with schemes and operations handled by Ministry of Home Affairs which are responsible for maintaining law and order<sup>18</sup>. As such SDG 16 is looked more as security and police concern rather than a goal that fosters citizen engagement. The following demonstrate the lack of progress on advancing SDG 16+:

- 1) Lack of measuring peace at national and sub-national level: While efforts are in making to broker peace, conflict resolution through citizen led groups officiated by government and citizens there are gaps in meaningful impact they have made. For example, in February 2020, Delhi was affected by community riots that had claimed the lives of 40 people<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/2018/findings/country-studies/india/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/nhrc-registered-79-cases-of-discrimination-against-minorities-and-672-against-scs-in-2018-19-1563275262548.html>

<sup>18</sup> [http://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/SDX\\_Index\\_India\\_21.12.2018.pdf](http://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/SDX_Index_India_21.12.2018.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/topic/delhi-violence-2020/>

This prompted citizen led groups to take forward the peace agenda by promoting inter-community dialogue and conflict resolution. Peace committees were set up by governments to restore tranquility to riot affected areas<sup>20</sup>. Similar efforts of peaceful resolution took place from October 2020 to February 2021 when farmer protests took hold of the country. Farm protestors were demanding the repeal of three agricultural laws that were considered detrimental for agricultural sector in India. As such, interlocutors were deployed by both sides to seek a middle way that restored peace between farmers and government. But somehow these efforts of peace do not get adequate representation and measurability. As such peace-making efforts are normally led by citizens.

- 2) Less attention to access to justice: There is a need to foster responsive justice in India given the high pendency of cases and litigation<sup>21</sup> which means inaccessibility to justice. There is a need to formulize local level indicators on justice which measures accessibility at the grassroots specially to marginalized sections of society. For example, a large section of marginalized populations is critically affected by discrimination followed in their route to justice<sup>22</sup>. Also, justice integration by NITI Ayog in their reports has not received adequate attention despite its importance in SDGs essence of delivering a rights based affirmative agenda. Notably justice delivery has not been given due emphasis despite being a strong pillar of SDGs.
- 3) Lack of localization on SDGs which derails SDG 16: SDGs follow a holistic approach in providing development-based deliverables to almost all people. To realize this, localization forms an important pillar to make SDGs universal nationally. However, it is observed that localization has been very rudimentary and has only remained at a knowledge level with government think tank-NITI Ayog releasing a report on localization. After this not much effort has been made at the policy level to integrate them. As such, without localization, action on SDGs will not be realized completely and there is a high possibility that Agenda 2030 will become a liability. Critically since SDG 16 focuses on institutional response and promoting good governance many development initiatives pegged to SDGs will remain unfulfilled.
- 4) Faulty transparency and accountability: A tacit approval is given by the VNR presented by India at the HLPF that increased efforts by the government to promote digitization have helped in fulfilling transparency and accountability. This faulty assumption severely affects the scope of SDG 16. Not only does SDG 16 provides a framework for holding governments accountable to rule of law but provides citizens a platform to ask questions to the government on spending, transactions and combat bureaucratic corruption. While it is true digitization does reduce corruption<sup>23</sup> and technology has been able to track and reduce corruption, there is a need to put an end to the culture of bribery which still exists in India at enormous levels<sup>24</sup>. While international rankings and surveys point to increased forms of corruption in India there is a need for specific reporting on transparency and accountability measures through recognition of civil society led reports and critiques.
- 5) Lack of inclusion in SDG implementation: While SDGs have not been adequately implemented as a policy action level, there has been no encouragement by decision-makers to make them integrated with socially excluded communities such as dalit, tribal and women constituencies. Official conclaves under the aegis of government sponsorship

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<sup>20</sup> <https://theprint.in/india/delhi-cm-kejriwal-announces-peace-initiatives-compensation-for-riot-victims/372530/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.theleaflet.in/what-does-data-on-pendency-of-cases-in-indian-courts-tell-us/#>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.indiaspend.com/a-dalit-family-struggle-shows-how-indias-justice-system-is-failing-its-lowest-castes-41599/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2020/the-role-of-technology-and-anti-corruption-measures-in-fighting-.html>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-records-highest-rate-of-bribery-in-asia-survey/article33184156.ece>

on SDGs have tended to focus on policy gaps, rectification and increasing allocation budget to the existing government programs and schemes. Very less effort has been put into making inclusion a cornerstone for SDGs, which is also promoted by SDG 16+. Until and unless affirmative development action undertakes comprehensive inclusive measures that provide space and safeguards to vulnerable/marginalized communities-SDG 16+ will be futile. Most of the discussion on inclusion vis-à-vis SDGs has been undertaken by civil society. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (Don't Break Promises Campaign)-the India chapter of Global Call Against Poverty undertook a comprehensive civil society study on the role of marginalized communities and SDGs<sup>25</sup>. The study provided breakthrough results and suggestions for policy formulation on SDGs to the government and are yet to witness practice in programs and schemes.

## Chapter VII

### 1. Engagement and Roles of Parliamentarians in national SDGs mechanism and Review process (especially on SDG 16 Plus)in the last 5 years

India parliamentarians have not adequately engaged on SDG 16+ given that advocacy by civil society on these areas is very issue specific. While many parliamentarians, political parties underline the need for promoting peace there has been very little effort put towards conferring it an institutional policy goal under the ambit of the SDGs and specifically SDG 16. Efforts have been taken by CSOs working on SDG 16 to sensitize rule-makers, decision-makers to be aware of the need of working towards SDG 16, but more effort requires to be put in making them partners in implementing SDGs.

### 1. Role of CSOs in implementation, progress , Monitoring and Review of Goal 16 Plus in your country

Many CSOs are carrying out independent work on peace and security, justice delivery and institutional governance. However, there is lack of convergence on SDG 16 + given that it requires convergence and partnership with government on issues of transparency and accountability, ethical governance etc. In 2018, Commonwealth Human Rights Institution (CHRI) released a datascape report on SDG 16 which was critical in breaking the data points of SDG 16. The report has helped map the data landscape of SDG 16 and is an accelerator and baseline blueprint to work on SDG 16+

## Chapter VIII

### 1. Concrete Recommendations (minimum 3 in each section) for

- Your national Government
  - 1) To institutionalize peace committees in conflict areas and study its work in mitigating violence over a specific period of time
  - 2) Promoting civil society legitimacy in bringing grassroots data and gaps in institutional frameworks for government policy
  - 3) Enlarging the scope of SDG 16+ with administrative officers responsible for law and decision-making
- Regional Institutions

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<sup>25</sup> <https://feedbacklabs.org/blog/including-marginalized-voices-in-sdg-implementation/>

- 1) To institutionalize peace committees in conflict areas and study its work in mitigating violence over a specific period of time
  - 2) Promoting civil society legitimacy in bringing grassroots data and gaps in institutional frameworks for government policy
  - 3) Enlarging the scope of SDG 16+ with administrative officers responsible for law and decision-making
- Global Institutions
    - 1) Ensuring funding for campaigns on SDG 16+
    - 2) Creating global fund on SDG 16+
    - 3) Capacity building of CSOs on SDG+
  - **Please provide Maximum 5 national CSO Indicators**
    - 1) Number of peace led committees in conflict areas
    - 2) Access to justice to marginalized groups such as Dalits, tribals, women
    - 3) Level of good governance in public services
    - 4) Measuring effective transparency and accountability of governing schemes and policies
    - 5) Measuring public engagement in institutional assessment of SDGs

## Reference

[www.sdg16.org](http://www.sdg16.org)

<https://www.sdg16.plus/> - PathFinder

[SDG Accountability Handbook](#) - TAP Network

[A4SD Scorecard](#)

[Mainstreaming SDG 16: Using the Voluntary National Review to Advance More Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies](#)