

Inclusive Development: Lessons from water

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Target 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Key messages:

1. The SDGs require an understanding of Inclusive Development (ID)

If inclusiveness is key to the achievement of the SDGs, it requires reconsideration of the definition of development and for whom. This is also framed in Goal 10 on inequality.

2. ID requires proactively engaging the social sciences at multiple levels of governance

Understanding and assessing the science for the SDGs requires also an assessment of the social sciences especially if the focus is on transformational change.

3. There should be no trade-offs between social, ecological and relational inclusiveness

Trade-offs between social, ecological and relational inclusiveness is counterproductive to achieving ID.

4. A technocratic focus is counter-productive

A technocratic focus through public private partnerships and cost-recovery when applied to the marginalized will exclude them even more.

5. Inclusive instruments when implemented in different contexts can have different results

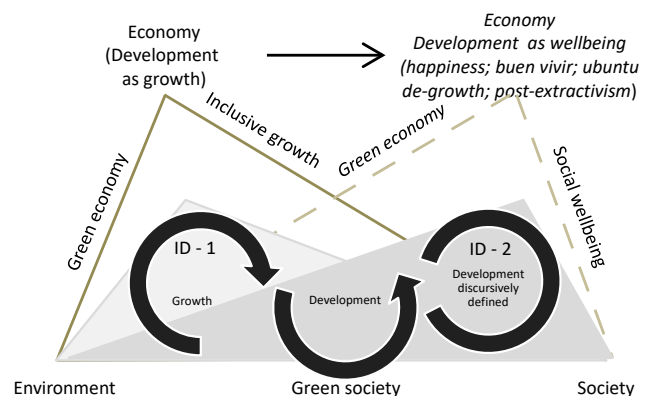
Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically require that the goals are achieved in an inclusive manner (Gupta and Vegelin 2016) and ‘the furthest behind first’. This raises the question: What does Inclusive Development (ID) imply?

The SDGs require an understanding of ID

ID is often used to imply only social inclusiveness; the ecological and relational component is often excluded. The ecological component is important because ecosystem services (e.g. clean water, reduced risk of floods) affect the lives and livelihoods of the poor and if these are degraded, the poor lose out. The relational component helps to address the unequal power relationships which otherwise lead to status quo ‘pro-poor’ policies. ID requires redefining development.

Figure 1. Inclusive development (Gupta & Pouw 2017)



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Inclusive Development requires proactively engaging the social sciences at multiple levels of governance

Much of the focus of the SDGs is on the natural sciences; this ignores the social science research on the related ecological, social and political challenges that can help in understanding how transformative goals can be achieved. ID requires an understanding of how access to, and allocation of resources (e.g. water) and the definition of development and for whom in an increasingly unequal world is organized. This requires active engagement of political science, law, economics, sociology, anthropology, gender studies in order to identify other knowledge systems (see Pouw and Gupta (eds.) 2017).

Table 1. ID can draw on social, ecological and relational theories

	Inclusive	Development
Social	Inclusive growth, pro-poor, human rights, sustainable livelihoods, public/merit goods, inequality, education; inclusive finance/business inclusive innovation; humanitarian policy	Feminist/Marxist critique of growth; alternative dev.; wellbeing, happiness, <i>Bien vivir, ubuntu</i> , post-extractivism, de-growth post-development theories
Ecological	Tragedy of the commons; free rider, planetary boundaries; tipping points env. rights, green economy/innovation, industrial ecology, ecological modernization, circular economy, frugal innovation	Ecological critique of growth; inclusive wealth; Development within ecosystemic; socio-ecological critique of commodification of resources and ESS; landscape approach
Relational	<p><u>North-South issues</u>: Big D/ little d development; Securitization and 3D policy; Steady state or de-growth in industrialized countries? Right to promote (sustainable) development in developing countries? Combating institutionalized power politics; Renegotiating production, distribution and consumption patterns and redistributing responsibilities for maintaining public goods.</p> <p><u>Multiple levels of governance</u>: Adopting rights, responsibilities and risks-based approaches; Recognizing policy instruments are not neutral; Combining policy instruments to address all underlying causes; Redistributing the costs of the risks of global to local change from those who face these risks to also those who cause these risks; Ensuring meaningful participation and access to justice</p>	

There should be no trade-offs between social, ecological and relational inclusiveness in the post 2015 world

An exclusive focus on social inclusiveness through e.g. providing jobs and services (e.g. water) may externalize ecological impacts (e.g. sewage). An exclusive focus on ecological inclusiveness may externalize social issues. A focus on both without relational inclusiveness may lead to paternalistic pro-poor, pro-water and pro-environment measures that don't address the underlying inequities may lead to thus have counter-productive results.

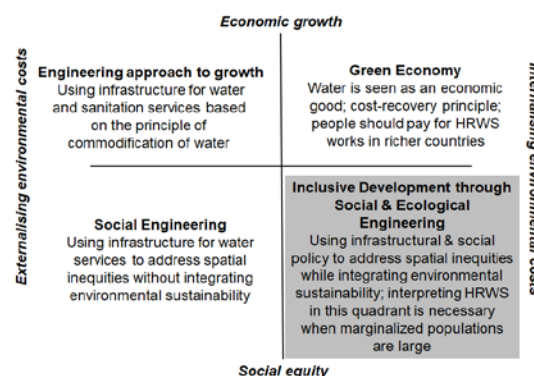
Technocratic focus may have counter-productive results

In the water services sector, expanding networks often requires retrofitting the entire network and provision to slums may legitimize 'squatting' in the context of reduced freshwater and increased demand. This cannot be addressed by differentiation in services based on cost-recovery through engaging expensive private sector actors with a profit motivation (see also Policy Brief 12). It requires cross-subsidies and anticipatory planning and standardized services that are future proof and do not externalize ecological impacts (Schwartz et al. (eds.) 2018).

Inclusive instruments when implemented in different contexts can have different results

The Human Right to Water and Sanitation as an inclusive instrument can have different results, depending on the balance between economic, social & ecological considerations (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. The Human Right to Water and Sanitation (HRWS) can be interpreted differently in different paradigms



References

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