

# CSSSC-UNICEF Social Inclusion Cell

## COOCH BEHAR

with demarcation of

Blocks/Panchayat  
Samities



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**"No concept of poverty can be satisfactory if it does not take adequate note of the disadvantages that arise from being excluded from shared opportunities enjoyed by others." - Amartya Sen**

The Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta in partnership with UNICEF, India has established a 'Social Inclusion Cell' in the year 2008.

### **The Objectives**

The objective of CSSSC-UNICEF Social Inclusion Cell is to pursue the larger goal of improving the situation of socially excluded communities, especially children and women in the state of West Bengal. In addition to comprehensive analysis of various dimensions of social exclusion, the CELL also contemplates collection of micro-data for rural West Bengal. One of the important objectives of the CELL is to offer geographic targeting of socially excluded population and construct a Social Exclusion Index (SEI).

### **The Website**

Detailed information about activities of the CELL and copies of Newsletters and Reports are available at -  
<[http://cssscal.org/social\\_inclusion\\_cell.html](http://cssscal.org/social_inclusion_cell.html)>

### **The Activities**

#### **A. Knowledge Hub and Publications of the Cell**

A knowledge hub has been created to collect disparate documents and materials dealing with diverse aspects of social exclusion. The main activities include collation and listing of multi-dimensional analyses on all existing representation in user-friendly formats to facilitate wider dissemination of knowledge.

#### **B. Networking/Conference/Seminar/Workshop**

The CELL regularly organizes conferences, seminars and workshops. The Steering Committee (comprising of CSSSC faculty, UNICEF representatives, Government Officials, NGOs, media and civil society at large) contributes towards expanding the knowledge community by facilitating these events periodically.

#### **C. District-wise Household Survey/ Large Primary Survey**

In 2010-11, the CELL conducted a large sample survey in the district of Cooch Behar, in northern West Bengal. We surveyed approximately 1200 households spread over 50 villages in each block. We constructed the village level index of social exclusion for various socio-economic categories and offered an overall index. The indices are directly applicable to policy interventions at the state level. The detailed report along with an extended executive summary is available in the Website.

## Highlights of the Survey:

1. Measuring Social Exclusion for an entire district is first of its kind.
2. The construction of SEI is a novel step towards measuring development disparities and facilitating policy advocacy in a decentralized regime.
3. Future extensions in other districts shall provide comprehensive analysis at the state/regional levels.
4. Villages ranked according to the social exclusion indices reflect:



a. poor access to safe drinking water and in-house toilet facility; low average age of girls during marriage; low weights at birth among infants; in most excluded villages institutional delivery is remarkably low;



b. considerable section of the mothers belonging to SC/ST category have received partial financial support and other benefits from the JSY (Janani Suraksha Yojana) scheme of the Government of India;



c. low degree of sensitization on health/hygiene/breast feeding practices among villagers; poor service by health facilities, in particular government hospitals;



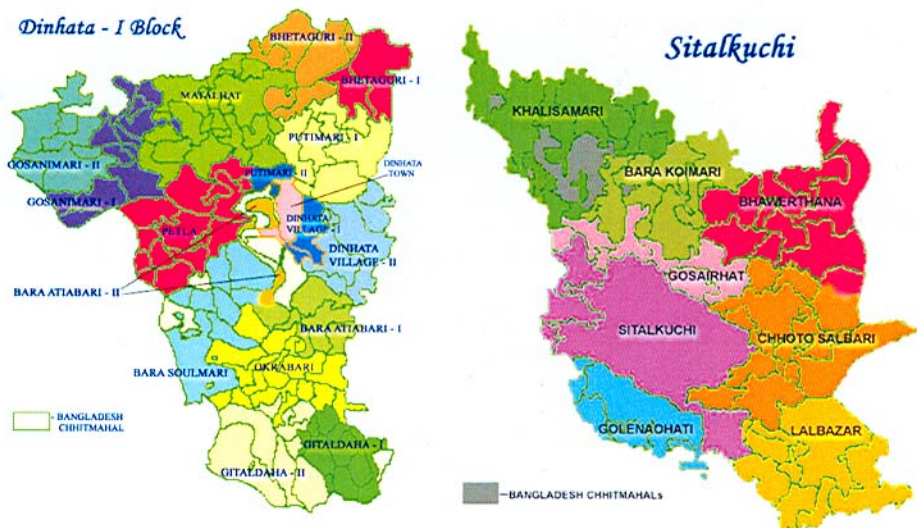
d. not more than 40% of all school going children (between age 6-14) belonging to SC/ST category in Cooch Behar received mid-day meal;

## Recent Workshops, Seminars and Conferences Organized by the Cell:

(1) A one-day workshop on 'Mapping Marginality' was organized on 21st October 2009. The Key Note Address was delivered by Professor Surinder S. Jodhka, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, on "ENGAGING WITH CASTE". This was followed by a discussion session by eminent scholars like Professor Nirmala Banerjee, Sachetana and former Professor, CSSSC.

(2) Another one day workshop titled 'Inclusive Goals Exclusive Practices' was organized by the Cell in April 2010 where eminent scholars like Virginius Xaxa, Prashant Negi and others shared their valuable insights on different aspects of the topic in concern. In this workshop the secondary data analysis was presented by the Cell. A booklet containing contacts of the network partners of the Cell was published and circulated.

# Measuring Social Exclusion in Cooch Behar:



## Publication of Occasional Papers

- No.1 - Girl Children, Family and Dirty Work:  
Paid Domestic Service in the Indian State of West Bengal
- No. 2 - Tribes and Social Exclusion
- No. 3 - Fragmented Identities, Polarized Futures  
Conceptualizing Caste as Social Exclusion

## The CSSSC Team

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