

Social Inclusion in Macro-Level Diagnostics

Reflecting on the World Bank Group's
Early Systematic Country Diagnostics

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WORLD BANK GROUP

Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice Group

June 2016

Abstract

The idea of social inclusion has garnered considerable attention, especially in the context of two recent developments: the Sustainable Development Goals and the heightened attention to inequality. This paper reviews the manner and extent to which social inclusion is addressed in the first 17 Systematic Country Diagnostics (SCDs), which are ex ante, country-level assessments conducted by the World Bank Group, ahead of the preparation of its Country Partnership Frameworks. In addition to this primary purpose, the paper fulfils three other purposes. It

allows for a broader reflection on the value of the social inclusion construct in macro-level diagnostics; it takes the opportunity to develop and refine a methodology to assess social inclusion and finally, it positions the narrative on social inclusion into the ongoing discourse on poverty, shared prosperity, inequality and the thinking around the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is therefore, a refined articulation of the idea of social inclusion in the context of global epistemological shifts.

This paper is a product of the Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice Group. It is part of a larger effort by the World Bank to provide open access to its research and make a contribution to development policy discussions around the world. Policy Research Working Papers are also posted on the Web at <http://econ.worldbank.org>. The author may be contacted at mdas@worldbank.org.

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Acknowledgments

This paper draws on a review of the first 17 Systematic Country Diagnostics (SCDs) conducted by the World Bank Group (WBG), in consultation with national partners. In addition to an analysis of the content, the paper reflects conversations with several World Bank staff members involved in the preparation of SCDs, both from country offices and from Washington D.C. They provided valuable inputs on the degree to which the SCDs were able to address social inclusion issues and the substantive and process related challenges involved.

The paper is written by Maitreyi Bordia Das, drawing upon results of a review conducted by (alphabetically) Ezgi Canpolat, Sabina Espinoza, Soumya Kapoor Mehta and Lisa Schmidt (independent consultants) who among them, read the SCDs, ensuring that they were evaluated on meaning and content rather than mere use of words such as “inclusive” or “inclusion”. Soumya Kapoor Mehta led the team of reviewers and her additional insights in synthesizing the results of the review as well as her editorial support are gratefully acknowledged. Sabina Espinoza helped in refining some of the ideas and background inputs. The paper also draws on the discussions held at a workshop on social inclusion in the SCDs in May 2015, where participants reflected on their experiences and had the opportunity to comment on the early findings from this review.

Thanks are also due to Gaia Hatzfelt (independent researcher), Valerie Morrica (Social Development Specialist, GSURR, World Bank), Ambar Narayan (Lead Economist, Poverty and Equity GP, World Bank), Maria Beatriz Orlando (Lead Social Development Specialist, GSURR, World Bank), Dianna Pizarro (Senior Social Development Specialist, GSURR, World Bank), Emcet Tas (Social Development Specialist, GSURR, World Bank) Jan Weetjens (Practice Manager, Social Development, West and Central Africa, World Bank) and Ieva Zumbyte (independent consultant), who read earlier drafts of the paper and gave useful comments.

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SCD	Systematic Country Diagnostic
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WBG	World Bank Group

Abstract

The idea of social inclusion has garnered considerable attention, especially in the context of two recent developments: the Sustainable Development Goals and the heightened attention to inequality. This paper reviews the manner and extent to which social inclusion is addressed in the first 17 Systematic Country Diagnostics (SCDs), which are ex ante, country-level assessments conducted by the World Bank Group, ahead of the preparation of its Country Partnership Frameworks. In addition to this primary purpose, the paper fulfils three other purposes. It allows for a broader reflection on the value of the social inclusion construct in macro-level diagnostics; it takes the opportunity to develop and refine a methodology to assess social inclusion and finally, it positions the narrative on social inclusion into the ongoing discourse on poverty, shared prosperity, inequality and the thinking around the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is therefore, a refined articulation of the idea of social inclusion in the context of global epistemological shifts.

Social Inclusion in Macro-Level Diagnostics

Reflecting on the World Bank Group's Early Systematic Country Diagnostics

1. Motivation and Background

The World Bank Group (WBG) set two goals for itself through a strategy announced in 2013: to eliminate extreme poverty and to boost shared prosperity. A critical component of the strategy is the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) – a macro level assessment, conducted at the country level by the WBG in close consultation with national partners, ahead of the preparation of the Country Partnership Framework (CPF). The SCD is intended as a reference point for client consultations on priorities for the WBG country engagement. Additionally, it can help the broader dialogue between a country and development partners to focus efforts around high impact goals and activities. SCDs are expected to identify key challenges and opportunities in accelerating progress at the country level, but are not limited a priori to areas or sectors where the WBG is currently active, or expects government demand. Finally, SCDs are integrative documents, based on rigorous analysis that draws upon available evidence. As such, they are also supposed to identify critical data and knowledge gaps that merit attention¹.

The requirement of an SCD as a precursor to the CPF marks change from past practice, in that it is a mandatory, comprehensive assessment of a country's development status, with evidence-based prioritization. While the CPF is expected to be informed by the SCD, it does not necessarily have to follow the prioritization in the latter. In the event that the CPF does not accept the priorities laid out in the SCD, the former has to document reasons for the deviation. The requirement of an SCD ahead of the CPF came into effect in July 2014 and until April 2015, 17 SCDs had gone through a formal review process. This paper uses the content of these “first wave” SCDs to reflect on how social inclusion has been addressed.

Social inclusion is intrinsic to both the WBG's twin goals and is a core element of the strategy. In fact, “inclusion”, is also one of the three pillars of the SCD framework (see Annex). The framework itself identifies three main areas as being constraints to, and opportunities for, reducing poverty and building shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. These include the extent of growth; the inclusiveness of growth; and risks to the sustainability of growth, distribution and poverty reduction. “Inclusive growth”, according to the framework, can be achieved by ensuring equal access to services; enhancing agency, voice and freedom; and ensuring that gains from growth, such as through jobs, are distributed equitably.

The articulation of “inclusiveness” or “inclusion” in the SCD framework is similar to, but not the same as that in a 2013 World Bank report *Inclusion Matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity*. For instance, the inclusion pillar in the SCD framework encompasses aspects such as health, education, voice and agency, which roughly conform to the *Inclusion Matters*

framing of inclusion in markets, services and spaces (see Annex). However, the word “inclusion” as opposed to “social inclusion”, does not readily lend itself to a clear focus on groups that are likely to be left out, much less to a focus on social identity. The centrality of inclusive growth in the SCD framework is also linked to, but not the same as, “social inclusion”. This is because social inclusion could well be an end in itself and not always an instrument to enhance growth. As several counterparts from countries in the Middle East and North Africa have pointed out to WBG teams, they care about social inclusion because it is intrinsic to maintaining peace and stability, which seems to be a major preoccupation of these countries, where growth is reasonably robust and poverty rates low². Yet, the key point of intersection between the *Inclusion Matters* framework and the SCD framework is that both are in pursuit of the twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Here social inclusion becomes salient because certain groups tend to be overrepresented among the extreme poor and the bottom 40 percent of the population.

Another aspect of the SCD framework closely linked to social inclusion is the idea of sustainability. While sustainability in the SCD framework is articulated in terms of risks to growth, social inclusion is a forward-looking agenda, but in practice, it is difficult to make this distinction clearly. Take the case of land acquisition or resettlement. Weak processes in the acquisition of land for infrastructure development (so essential to growth) can make a project or an initiative unsustainable, due to citizen resistance, but this is too narrow a perspective. Fair and transparent acquisition of land is a central aspect of both social inclusion and sustainability. It is about the manner in which citizens contribute to the development process and in turn, benefit from it. Perhaps for this reason, the Colombia SCD (which is outside the purview of this review, since it did not fall within the stipulated period) saw issues of sustainability and social inclusion as one and the same. This blurring of lines is not peculiar to the SCD framework. The original articulation of the idea of sustainable development that stood on the tripod of economic, environmental and social sustainability derives from the idea that unless social issues are addressed, development will be unsustainable. *In sum, social inclusion is one aspect of social sustainability or of furthering sustainability, but it is not the same as sustainability.* Much more work needs to be done to clearly separate the analytical and programmatic aspects of social inclusion and sustainability.

This review of SCDs fulfils one primary, and three other purposes. To start with, as the first batch of SCDs were completed, the time was opportune to assess the degree to which social inclusion can and has been addressed in them. This is the primary objective of this review and reflection. Second, this paper allows for a broader reflection on the value of a social inclusion lens in analytical products and ex ante diagnostics, which are prolifically conducted for different purposes across agencies and institutions³. Third, it affords the opportunity to develop and refine a methodology to assess social inclusion for future reviews. Finally, it positions the narrative on social inclusion into the ongoing discourse on inequality, exclusion, poverty and the thinking around the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In doing so, it provides space to reflect on the aftermath of *Inclusion Matters* in the context of global epistemological shifts and the attention to SDGs. As a follow up to that report, this paper deliberates upon whether and how the *Inclusion Matters* framework can be applied to analytical products and diagnostics. As a review of SCDs, this paper is intended primarily for the staff and management of the WBG. Insights from the paper are expected to

help deepen the analysis of social inclusion in future SCDs, both by those leading the SCD as well as those contributing to it. In addition, the paper will likely find an audience among those undertaking macro level analysis and ex-ante diagnostics in general.

The paper has four sections. This first section served as a background and motivation for the paper. Section 2 describes the conceptual underpinnings for this review and reflection. It discusses how a social inclusion lens can strengthen macro level analysis and outlines the methodology used for the review. Section three reports the findings and goes on to reflect more broadly on them. The final section draws lessons for those who seek to integrate social inclusion into macro level analysis and on to action.

2. Conceptual Underpinnings and Methodology

a. Overuse of the “Social Inclusion” Terminology

The word “inclusive” and its variants, “inclusion”, “inclusiveness” and even “inclusivity” are being used more prolifically and more loosely today than they were when *Inclusion Matters* was published in 2013. Such proliferation of the use of terms related to social inclusion, regardless of the form of usage is a positive development. The renewed focus on social inclusion stems partly from the worldwide attention to growing income and wealth inequality, and the likely social and political consequences thereof. A second reason why the variants of the adjective “inclusive” seem to be more prominent now has been the run-up to the SDGs. The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that set the principles of the SDGs used “Leave No One Behind” as a clarion call (United Nations 2013). Following this and as the attention shifts from the goals to their implementation, social inclusion is likely to become even more important as a framing device.

In terms of usage, variants of the word “social inclusion” appear to be used rather loosely; they have almost become a catch-all set of terms for any positive welfare outcome – from poverty to equality to better education, health, housing, transport, among others. Yet, it is fair to assume that when people use the variants of “inclusion” they do not simply mean them as substitutes for poverty reduction, or equality or better human development outcomes. They must mean something more than, or different from, these other good outcomes. Do they mean a basket of good outcomes? It is possible that they do. If so, what is in the basket? The answer to that is often contextual and driven by gaps that a basket is seeking to fill.

Poor outcomes are often systematically distributed across ethnicity, gender, age, disability status, sexual orientation, occupation or place of residence. The stigma and discrimination that often accompany the exclusion of certain identity groups can make it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes, even if the supply of services is adequate. Here the distinction between poverty and social exclusion is instructive. That “the poor” is a highly heterogeneous group is now well accepted. Certain identity groups however, tend to be overrepresented among the poor (e.g. indigenous groups); they also tend to systematically lack access to education, health and other services; to receive low quality services; and to have a weaker voice in decision making. Using a social inclusion lens for poverty analysis lets the discussion on

poverty move away from the symptoms of exclusion to its underlying causes and explains *why* some inequalities are “durable” or stubborn (World Bank 2013). Simultaneously, even the non-poor may face social exclusion due to a variety of reasons. For example, Dalit⁴ entrepreneurs in India employ a range of tactics to hide their identity so that their caste does not prevent them from accessing credit or other markets (World Bank 2011; Jodhka 2010). These entrepreneurs are not necessarily poor, but they are excluded in a number of domains. In short, social identity needs to be salient in any discussion of social inclusion, which is not the same as ending poverty.

If outcomes are equalized, has social inclusion been achieved? Yes and no. While equal outcomes are important, social inclusion is more than that – it is about the type of society we seek to build. It is possible to equalize measurable outcomes – for example in jobs, housing, credit, access to education to name a few areas - but to leave old forms of exclusion intact or even to simultaneously create new forms of social exclusion. Take the example of a hypothetical city that has universal access to housing. Yet, it may be an intensely divided city, segregated along lines of race or ethnicity. In this case, the outcome for access to housing has been equalized, but social exclusion remains intact.

New forms of social exclusion may be created even as good outcomes obtain. For instance, in trying to correct historical differentials in outcomes across say, ethnic groups, countries may err on the other side and penalize groups that were originally at an advantage. Take the case of Tamils in Sri Lanka, who had an initial advantage in access to education and jobs, but over time, some policies, that were intended to improve outcomes for the Sinhalese ended up penalizing Tamils (such as making Sinhalese the official language). In this case, outcomes may have improved for a previously excluded group, but reverse exclusion may also have occurred. In sum, social inclusion is not only about achieving equality; it is also about the process through which equality is achieved.

b. Conceptual Frame

The paper draws on the analytical framework developed in *Inclusion Matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity* (World Bank 2013) and adapts it to the assessment of SCDs.

Inclusion Matters defines social inclusion as:

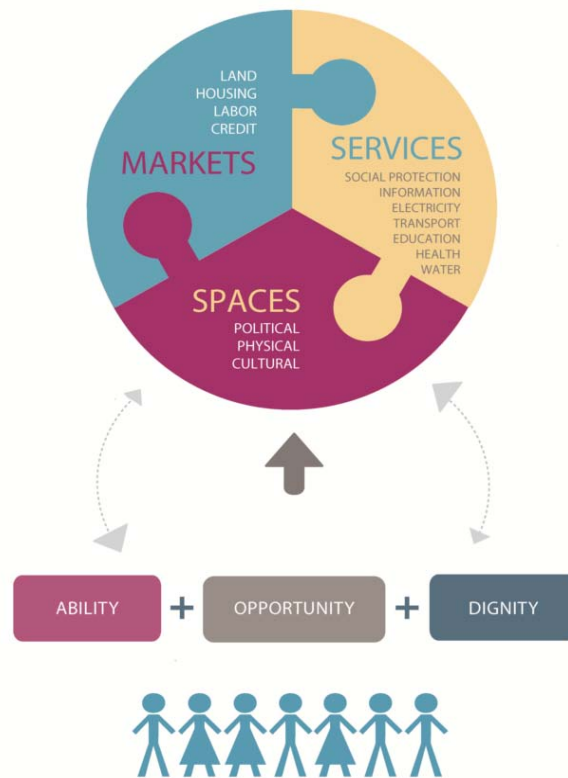
The process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society

Or more specifically as:

The process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged on the basis of their identity to take part in society (World Bank 2013, 50).

World Bank (2013) links the idea of social inclusion to socially constructed notions of identity. It defines exclusion or inclusion on the basis of affiliation with a group. As referenced in the last section, among the most common group-based identities that can result in social exclusion are gender, race, caste, ethnicity, religion, and disability status. Such exclusion based on group attributes can lead to lower social standing, often accompanied by more visible disadvantages in terms of lower income, human capital endowments, poorer access to employment and services, and low voice in both national and local decision making. The report goes on further to highlight **markets, services and spaces** as domains across which exclusion plays out (Figure 2.1). Just as the dimensions of an individual's life intersect, so do the three domains, representing both barriers to, and opportunities for, social inclusion. Markets can comprise land, housing, labor, and credit. Services can include inter alia, social protection, information, electricity, transport, education, health, and water. Spaces may be physical as well as symbolic. In the most blatant cases of exclusion, excluded groups may be banned from entering certain physical spaces, such as clubs, educational or religious institutions. But often exclusion can take place covertly and groups may be underrepresented in, or left out entirely from, decision making processes, or face discrimination in social interactions in their daily lives. Finally, World Bank (2013) considers three interrelated channels through which inclusion can be enhanced: **ability, opportunity, and dignity**. All three channels act in tandem to produce the conditions for individuals and groups to take part in society.

Figure 2.1. Framework for Social Inclusion



Source: World Bank 2013, 101.

c. Review Methodology

This section describes the methodology used in this review of SCDs – one that is exportable to similar reviews of other macro level analyses. The current review covers 17 SCDs for which near-final drafts (circulated at formal review meetings) were available. A cut-off date of 14 April 2015 was used and the latest versions of the SCDs available at the SCD Spark page (an internal website of the WBG) as on that date were downloaded⁵. To ensure that the SCDs were evaluated on meaning and content, rather than the mere use of “social inclusion terminology”, each SCD was read in full. In other words, the review is not based on a search for terms like “inclusion” or “inclusive”; neither is it a selective reading of sections that may have contained relevant keywords.

The methodology for the review is based on the axiom that asking the right questions is the first step towards good analysis. Rather than a top-down, prescriptive guide to conducting reviews, the paper builds a methodological model based on an iterative, reflective process. To do so, it relies on a set of guiding questions that were used to assess the manner and extent to which social inclusion was addressed in the first wave SCDs. These questions can be readily applied to other analytical products that seek to assess the extent to which social inclusion is addressed in varied diagnostics.

The following questions guided the review and are represented in Figure 2.2:

1. Does the SCD identify excluded group/s? The “who” question.
2. Does the SCD analyze domains from which identified groups are excluded? What are the processes through which exclusion occurs? The “how” question.
3. Does the SCD analyze reasons for the exclusion of some groups? The “why” question.
4. Does the SCD recommend social inclusion among priority actions for the country? If so, does it point to specific actions? The “what next” question.

Figure 2.2. Social Inclusion: Stylized Steps from Diagnosis to Action



Guiding Question 1: Identification of excluded groups: The who question

Does the SCD identify *who* is excluded? This is a first step to analyzing social exclusion and was asked in this review with the understanding that there could be several reasons for unequal outcomes between groups. The construct of social inclusion recognizes the centrality of social identity in driving exclusion, as well as the more nuanced notion that the intersection of identities can multiply, or perhaps, extenuate disadvantage. When the SCD suggested that disadvantage was due to a group identity, it was considered as having identified an excluded group.

Guiding Question 2: Domains in which are individuals and groups excluded; processes through which exclusion occurs: The how question

The “*who question*” is a first step and while important, on its own, it makes for incomplete analysis. Unless we understand the manner and domains a group is excluded, there is little we can propose to promote inclusion. Hence we ask the “*how question*”: does the SCD identify the *domains* in which some groups are excluded? Does it identify the practices through which exclusion plays out such as stigmatization, stereotyping, overt or covert discrimination, bullying or harassment, to give a few examples?

Guiding Question 3: Why are some groups excluded? The *why* question

The “how question” is relatively easier to answer compared to the “why question”. The former requires analysis of country data to establish the manner and extent to which certain groups face disadvantages in access to markets, services or spaces. The “why question” is more complex since it requires a granular understanding of processes, politics and the nature of vertical and horizontal stratification in societies.

World Bank (2013) highlights the example of tribal women in India and illustrates the nuance in the *how* and *why* questions. The National Family Health Survey of India 2004/05 reports that 80 percent of tribal women in India give birth at home, compared to 60 percent of all Indian women. When asked why they opt to deliver their children at home, 72 percent of responses indicate that women do not consider it necessary to deliver in a health facility⁶. This finding could lead health authorities to conclude that the seemingly low demand for institutional births among tribal women is a result of cultural factors and of ignorance. However, low demand may actually reflect complex phenomena that are not immediately discernible. For example, the tribal woman may be unable to deliver at a health center because of the distance to the facility, the absence of female health providers at the facility, the costs involved, or simply because she is not comfortable with the manner in which providers deal with her. She may for instance, feel disrespected because of her culture or ethnicity and way of life. The SCDs were accordingly read with the lens of whether or not they unpacked such processes that perpetuate exclusion of some groups.

Guiding Question 4: Does social inclusion feature as a priority and are there recommended actions? The *what next* question

The final question that guided the review was whether social inclusion was identified as a priority by the SCD and if so, whether the SCD recommended specific actions. This is important because an SCD is intended to provide the analytical foundation for the CPF and to inform discussions with governments and other stakeholders on how best the WBG can support the country’s efforts to address its development challenges. Accordingly, the interim guidelines for conducting the SCD call for using the analyses in the SCD to “identify a select set of priorities for a country, in order to maximize its progress toward the goals of poverty reduction and welfare improvements among the less well off”.⁷ It is not necessary for the SCD to spell out actions that can help the country move toward the identified priorities. Equally, the CPF is not bound to adopt these actions or reflect on them, guided as it may be by the nature of demand from the country. However, and as suggested earlier, in the event that the CPF chooses to focus on areas that are not among the priorities identified by the SCD, the former has to document the rationale for such a choice. In short, the priorities that are set in the SCDs are important for the CPF.

3. How has Social Inclusion Been Addressed in the First-Wave SCDs?

Summary Findings

Most SCDs under review make prolific use of the term “social inclusion” or more frequently, of the term “inclusion”, but conflate these with almost any positive development outcome. Conversely, some SCDs address aspects of social inclusion without necessarily referring to social inclusion. This is inherent in the fact that social inclusion has multiple meanings and its variants are being used more frequently in the policy literature over the last few years.

The methodology for this review rests on four guiding questions discussed earlier. Table 3.1 below lays out the main findings based on guiding questions posed in this review.

Table 3.1. Summary Findings

Guiding question	Finding
Does the SCD identify excluded groups?	All SCDs identify exclusion along at least one identity group.
Does the analysis identify the domains in which exclusion occurs? Does it discuss practices through which exclusion plays out, such as stigma, stereotyping, or perceived or actual discrimination?	Almost all SCDs that identify excluded groups <i>also</i> contain analyses of some of the domains in which these groups are excluded. These are usually human development related domains such as health or education. Few SCDs actually address the practices through which exclusion occurs, despite notable exceptions.
Does the SCD drill down to <i>why</i> some groups fare worse than others?	Very few SCDs address the often politically charged “why question”. Any political analysis is usually in the area of governance failures and is not usually linked to the exclusion of specific groups.
Does the SCD prioritize social inclusion in any way?	Social inclusion issues show up in prioritization as recommendations to broaden access to markets and services, but SCDs do not usually recommend special attention to excluded groups, except in some cases, women. There are notable exceptions such as Panama,

	and some countries in Eastern Europe which address Roma exclusion (e.g. Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia). Those SCDs that identify excluded groups in prioritization and suggest actions to advance their inclusion are usually ones that had also addressed processes of exclusion in response to the “how question” and had asked the “why question” upfront.
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These findings are not surprising. They are consistent with anecdotal accounts of the manner in which the concept of social inclusion is used in other analyses, policy documents and frameworks for action. What this section does additionally is reflect on these results to frame the broader challenges in usage of the term social inclusion and where possible, make practical clarifications.

Discussion

Addressing Social Inclusion without Using the Terminology

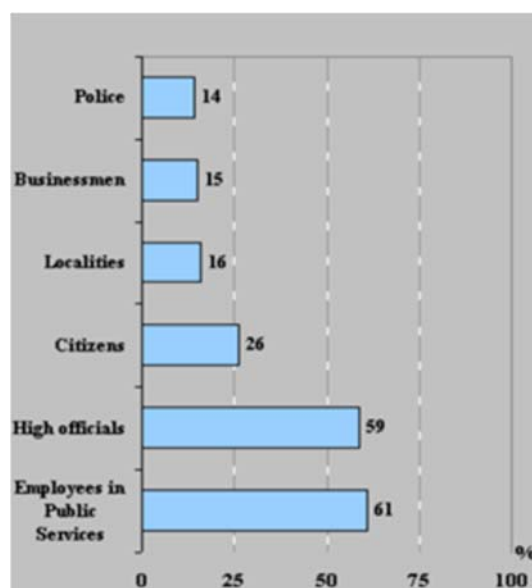
Although there is general agreement in the SCDs covered under this review that social inclusion is important, there is little agreement on what the concept signifies. Most SCDs tend to conflate all good outcomes with “social inclusion”. The adjective “inclusive” is thus prefixed to outcomes that range from growth to governance, without adequate attention to what it signifies. Further, there appears a tendency to lump social inclusion with related concepts of poverty and inequality reduction. However, as discussed earlier, good outcomes like poverty and inequality decline, improved service delivery, financial inclusion, better infrastructure or improved governance are not social inclusion, *unless they address the who, how and why questions, both to outline forms of exclusion and to recommend the actions to be taken.*

Some SCDs address issues closely related to social inclusion, but do not articulate it as social inclusion. Poor governance, for instance, can be an important driver of social exclusion. Where political power is concentrated among a few, and public institutions have weak accountability to citizens, many, if not most, people can be excluded from opportunities that growth presents. Poor governance is a common thread running through many SCDs and this review acknowledges it as affecting “inclusion” even if the concept or terminology of social inclusion is not used. The Mali SCD is a case in point. It documents the fact that the civil servants mostly belong to the South as opposed to the North (where an ethnic group that has been vying for independence predominantly resides), and power is thus concentrated (World Bank 2015a). The Arab Republic of Egypt SCD emphasizes corruption and lack of transparency as a significant impediment to holding officials accountable for their actions and ensuring equitable access to services for all citizens (World Bank 2015b). Figure 3.1 from the SCD shows that Egyptians single out employees in public services as the group most

responsible for corruption. The Chad SCD shows how persistent conflicts between regions and/or ethnic and religious groups in the country have resulted in low state legitimacy and a fractured society, with the winners of conflicts capturing resources (including oil rents) and directing them for military spending instead of expenditures such as those on health and education (World Bank 2015c).⁸ The Haiti SCD, similarly, notes how “Haitian institutions have never provided justice, education or healthcare to the majority of the population. Instead, a small economic elite has supported a state that makes negligible investments in human resources and basic infrastructure” (World Bank 2015d, 2).

Yet, a mere description of poor governance does not suffice as an analysis of social exclusion. When the diagnostic isolates winners and losers and addresses institutional foundations of poor governance, it comes close to addressing social exclusion. If it identifies the social and historical roots of elite capture and identifies *which groups* captured power, *when* and *how*, and *who* became excluded as a result, it addresses the root causes of social exclusion. As pointed out earlier, such analysis is inherently political and in the absence of a body of robust political and sociological literature, can become subjective and so, controversial. The SCD team needs to make a judgment call as to what extent it will pursue such analysis and how far it will make definitive statements about the roots of social exclusion.

Figure 3.1. Arab Republic of Egypt: Perceptions of Who is Responsible for Corruption



Source: World Bank 2015b, 14.

It is often difficult to separate “feelings of exclusion” from “real exclusion”. The Bulgaria SCD notes, for instance, that low levels of state transparency and accountability have deepened citizens’ perceptions of corruption and resulted in low levels of trust in public institutions (World Bank 2015e). While the Bulgaria SCD does not identify a specific group that may be disproportionately affected by corruption or lack of transparency, it acknowledges that governance challenges have shaped the views of a large section of citizens, who feel excluded

by the state. Perceptions matter in and of themselves and can lead to fragility and political instability. The last decade has seen a spate of protests the world over, against feelings of unfairness or lack of accountability and transparency. These protests have been usually directed against the state, but they may also be the result of inter-group tensions and the sense that some groups have benefitted at the expense of others.

Who is Excluded?

All SCDs within the scope of this review identify disparities in development outcomes along at least one identity group, but as expected, there are variations in the identity that is considered salient. The most commonly discussed identity in the first wave SCDs is gender, with **women** in most SCDs being described as having lower access to services such as health care or education, having poorer labor market outcomes, being less likely to own assets, or having low voice in decision making (see Table 3.2). The Lesotho SCD has a separate annex on gender and shows, for instance that women are at greater risk of getting HIV/AIDS than men are (World Bank 2015f).

Table 3.2. Who is Excluded? Summary from the SCDs under Review

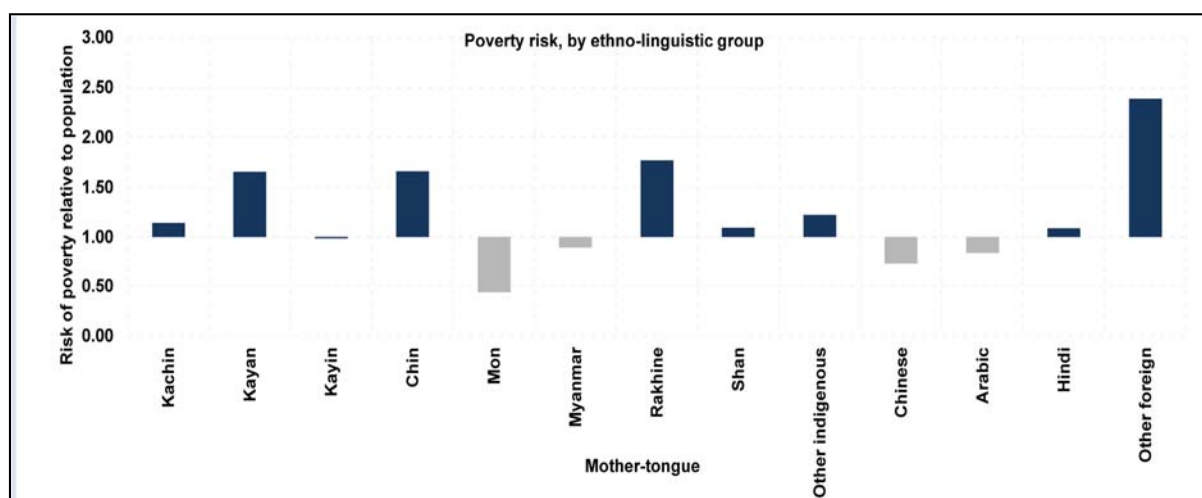
Identity	Country/SCD	No. of SCDs
Gender (Women)	Albania, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Chad, Costa Rica, Arab Republic of Egypt, Haiti, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Myanmar, Serbia, Tunisia	15
Location/geography	Azerbaijan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Chad, Arab Republic of Egypt, Haiti, Indonesia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mali, Myanmar, Panama, Tunisia, Serbia	14
Age (Children, youth and elderly)	Azerbaijan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Arab Republic of Egypt, Haiti, Lebanon, Mauritius, Lesotho, Mali, Serbia, Tunisia	12
Ethnicity	Albania, Botswana, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Mali, Mauritius, Myanmar, Panama, Serbia	9
Sexual orientation	Albania, Botswana, Serbia	3
Migrant status/IDP	Azerbaijan, Costa Rica, Lebanon, Myanmar	4
Religion	Lebanon, Myanmar	2
Disability	Albania, Mali, Serbia	3

Apart from gender, the other commonly discussed axis of exclusion is location or place of residence, with several SCDs noting that **individuals living in remote locations** have worse outcomes along a number of indicators. Quite often, such individuals or groups also have particular identities. The overlap between social and spatial exclusion, or between location

and identity is the most commonly discussed form of such overlap (also called “intersectionality” in the literature). Panama is a case in point. The SCD notes that territories inhabited by indigenous peoples lag behind in outcomes such as poverty reduction and life expectancy (World Bank 2015g). This is in the context of a country that has witnessed impressive reduction in poverty in recent years; but a reduction that has occurred at a much slower pace in indigenous areas, thus resulting in the concentration of poverty in these areas; 24 percent of extreme poor in 2007 lived in indigenous territories, compared to 42 percent in 2012. Life expectancy in these regions too is almost 7-9 years lower than in the rest of Panama.

The Myanmar SCD, similarly, notes the intersection between *ethnicity, religion and linguistic identity* in shaping the narrative around exclusion in the country. Using “mother tongue” as a proxy for ethno-linguistic identity, the analysis finds that the risk of poverty is much higher for non-native Myanmar speakers or foreign language speakers than native Myanmar speakers (Figure 3.2). Even among these non-native ethno-linguistic groups, there is considerable variation with those speaking Mon, Chinese and Arabic much less likely to be poor than others. The SCD also makes note of religion as a major axis of exclusion, with non-Buddhists facing long-standing discrimination and marginalization, dating back to colonial times. It notes how such discrimination has become “highly visible recently, as deadly religious violence, particularly directed at Muslim minorities” (World Bank 2014, 12).

Figure 3.2. Myanmar: Poverty Risk by Ethno-Linguistic Group



Source: World Bank 2014, 25.

The Sri Lanka SCD does not strictly fall within the time-frame of this review, but is a strong example of an analysis that tracks differential outcomes across groups and emphasizes that intersection of identities can exacerbate disadvantage. The SCD states, “...more generally, intersecting identities can produce a multiplication of disadvantage. For instance, the intersection of ethnicity, gender and location (or youth and location) can lead to increased negative effects” (World Bank 2015h, 91). The SCD goes on to show that for female tea estate workers, the intersection of geographic location, ethnicity and gender results in deepened

exclusion. As the SCD emphasizes, estates have the highest maternal mortality rates in the country and women and children suffer from severe malnutrition. These areas also have high levels of gender-based violence.

The exclusion of *youth*, particularly from labor markets and from political and social decision-making is discussed at length in the Tunisia SCD. The Jasmine Revolution of 2011 is still a strong collective memory and policy makers want to avoid anything that may precipitate a similar occurrence. Another group that finds mention in the SCDs is disability, but only three SCDs address or name *persons with disabilities* (PWD) as being excluded (Albania, Mali and Serbia). This is surprising because disability is usually not a politically sensitive topic and most governments tend to be open about bringing it onto the policy agenda (which is not to say that either programs or their implementation is adequate). It is likely that measurement of disability and related data, especially in low-income countries, presents a challenge. However, there are ways around this challenge, and as outlined later in this paper. The Serbia SCD mentions *sexual identity* as an axis of social exclusion and of discrimination (World Bank 2015i). In a box that otherwise focuses on the Roma, the SCD also mentions sexual minorities and persons with disabilities. A similar, light reference to homosexuality also occurs in the Botswana SCD (World Bank 2015j). These references to sexual identity are unusual in SCDs and so deserve special mention.

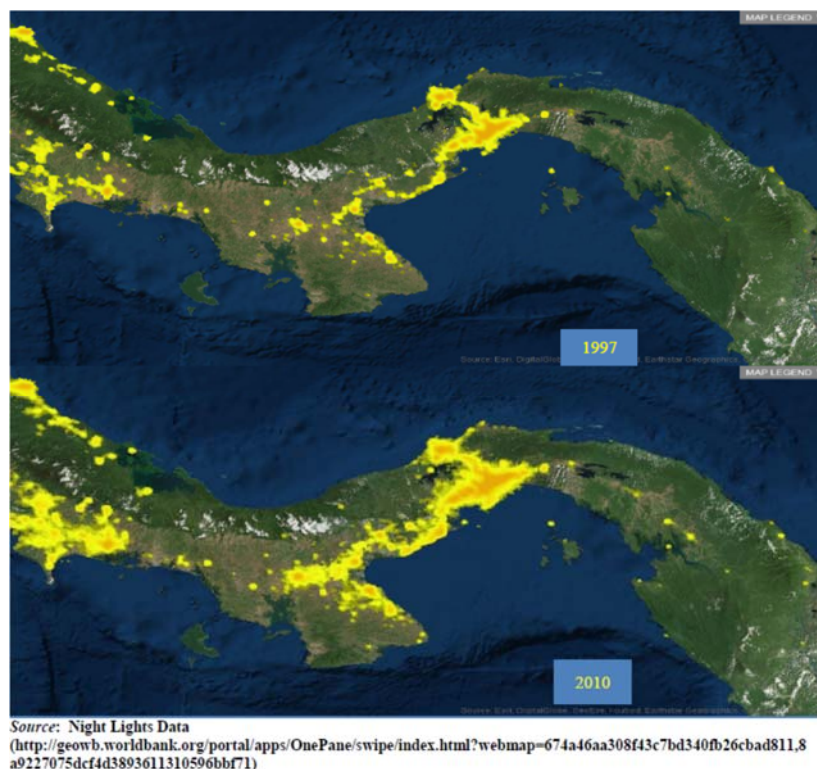
Why is the identification of excluded groups so variable across SCDs? One reason is that context matters; this is a truism, but one worth repeating, given its importance in such identification. Some group-based identities may be politically sensitive in certain countries. These include inter alia, migrant status, religion, sexual orientation, and even ethnicity. In some countries, analysis that highlights disparities across ethnicity or religion c be perceived by the state as provoking inter-group tensions or as undermining the development of a common national identity. Still other countries may have explicit policies that ban references to ethnicity in public speeches or official documents, and may prevent the collection or public use of data on ethnic identity. There could be other causes for the variation across SCDs; whether there is a strong body of research on the issue, availability of data, composition of the SCD team and nature of the dialogue between the WBG team and the country. As a result, some SCDs tend to stick to accepted and “safe” notions of exclusion, such as gender or age, while others venture into what may be considered more politically sensitive identities, such as sexual orientation or religion. Still others take a more nuanced view and note the intersection of identities. In sum, there is considerable variation in the manner and extent to which SCDs identify who is excluded as well as the manner in which issues that are considered politically sensitive are handled.

Exclusion in What Domains? How are Groups Excluded?

Almost all SCDs that identify excluded groups also contain analyses of some of the domains in which exclusion occurs. In other words, almost all SCDs in the pool for this review describe exclusion of specific identity groups either in markets (such as land, labor, housing and credit); in services (such as education, health, water and sanitation, transport, energy, ICT and social protection); or in spaces (including physical, political and social spaces). A few

SCDs go further and provide a detailed account of exclusion in all three. To illustrate, the Panama SCD makes powerful use of data – nightlight maps – to show that areas that lack electricity coverage are also those with high populations of indigenous peoples (Figure 3.3). The Mali SCD, similarly details the exclusion women face in social spaces, including in their homes. They have limited control over household income and have restricted access to other means of production such as equipment, raw material, and technology; high levels of domestic and other forms of violence, including genital mutilation – all contributing to their exclusion from multiple domains.

Figure 3.3. Night Lights in Panama: 1997 and 2010



Source: World Bank 2015g, 52.

The analysis in some SCDs cuts across domains to show how exclusion in one area (e.g. in transport or education) can *aggravate* exclusion in another (e.g. in the labor market). The Botswana SCD is an example of how these links can be made. The SCD notes the failure of the education system, in terms of unequal and generally weak outcomes, and the role it has played in restricting the long-term prospects of youth in the labor market. Limited access to public transportation is identified as a barrier to inclusion, as poor Batswana are forced to spend higher shares of their income on transport due to greater distances between housing and employment opportunities. The SCD sees exclusion in access to water as another factor contributing to persistent inequalities – especially in farming. The Chad SCD sees domestic violence as a manifestation of women’s lack of autonomy within households.⁹ It notes that “while poor and non-poor women suffer similar rates of domestic violence, the impact on poor women is likely to be more severe given their lower access to healthcare, justice and social

protection institutions” (World Bank 2015c, 16). The Bulgaria SCD, similarly, makes the connection between the exclusion of the Roma in labor market outcomes to their exclusion in education: only 14 percent of Roma in Bulgaria have completed secondary education, compared to 85 percent of the rest of the population. Further, the education gap starts early in life: only 38 percent of Roma children aged 3-5 are enrolled in preschool, less than half the 82 percent for non-Roma.

While SCDs address the domains along which identified groups are excluded, most stop short of showing the manner in which exclusion plays out. Manifestations of social exclusion include stereotyping, that often affects hiring decisions, perceptions, that exacerbate discrimination and stigma, which stymies traditionally excluded groups from attaining their full potential. In order to highlight such practices, analysis would have to include not just the presence or absence of opportunities, but also, whether the social structures allow or disallow groups excluded on account of their identity, to take up such opportunities. There are a few notable exceptions, however. The Myanmar SCD explicitly states how non-Buddhists and ethnic minorities have faced systematic discrimination including restrictions on family size, marriage, birth registration and mobility. The Bulgaria SCD, similarly, addresses the deep-seated animosity of the majority towards the Roma.

Attention to perceptions and attitudes is an important part of understanding the channels through which social exclusion plays out. Such channels could well be overt and sometimes even institutionalized through discriminatory laws or policies, but often, they play out in more subtle ways, such as through social norms. Perceptions of both excluded groups and the groups that exclude are important because members of both groups act based on how they feel (World Bank 2013). For example, in Bulgaria, 36 percent of jobless working-age Roma say that they are not registered with employment offices because they “don’t believe it’s worth it,” compared to 23 percent of the jobless non-Roma. Sixteen percent of the Roma do not search for work because they “believe there is no chance of getting a job,” compared to 2 percent of the non-Roma. Feelings of discrimination and hopelessness affect labor market outcomes: only one in every four Roma of working age population in Bulgaria is employed compared to one in every two of ethnic Turks, and three in every four of the ethnic Bulgarians respectively. In Lesotho, similarly, where women have greater vulnerability to HIV, are economically dependent, and have lower social status, nearly half believe that women are not justified in refusing sex with their husband, even if they know that he has had sex with other women. These perceptions, by affecting women’s sexual decision-making, may partially explain why they are more vulnerable to HIV.

Why are Some Groups Excluded?

While most SCDs identify at least one group as being excluded and many analyze the manner and extent of exclusion, very few analyze *why* some individuals and groups fare worse than others do. The Panama SCD is a notable exception as it traces the roots of exclusion of indigenous peoples to the appropriation of their lands by non-indigenous farmers, Colombian forces and resource extractive industries. It suggests that the exploitation of lands and natural resources by outsiders in the territories of indigenous peoples (IP) is driving social mobilization (*Mesa Indigena*) in the country. The Myanmar SCD also traces the history of

Muslim residents and the roots of discrimination against them as being central in their exclusion. However, for the most part, there is little attention to why some groups are left behind, or are at risk of being so.

Why does analysis of the “why question” become thin, after the “who” and “how” questions have been reasonably well addressed? There are several reasons for this. The first has to do with time and resources. SCDs have to be prepared within a tight timeframe, often with limited resources. It is an exercise in integration and not meant to generate new analysis. Second, there are often challenges of data and of useful extant inter-disciplinary analysis. The “why question” requires detailed reviews of the literature and more nuanced framing than merely problem description. Data availability is more of a challenge in developing countries, many of which do not conduct regular surveys even to track outcomes such as labor market participation, child malnutrition or maternal mortality. Moreover, the “why question” needs a nuanced understanding of the political economy and an ability to weave political insights into the main narrative. Skills for such nuanced analysis and integration are generally scarce, and may not be readily available in every country team, which explains why such insights do not find space in SCDs.

While there are methodological, data, epistemological and political challenges in addressing the “why question”, the SCD plays a critical role in moving the conversation about social exclusion into the mainstream discourse. Its catalytic role in spearheading even informal conversations about the “why question” is noteworthy. Such conversations can create or solidify the platform to engage with national partners on issues that may otherwise be considered off-limits. Even if an SCD cannot answer all, or even most, of the “why questions”, it can help frame (often difficult) issues, hypothesize about potential explanations, and articulate the knowledge/data needs for the future.

Is Social Inclusion a Priority?

Prioritization is the crux of the SCD. It is through this route that critical issues enter country programming. While some SCDs explicitly identify elements related to social inclusion as priorities, most tend to make general recommendations to improve welfare. For example, the Albania SCD identifies strengthening of labor market engagement of women and minorities as a priority (World Bank 2015k). The Lesotho SCD, similarly, notes the importance of improving women’s employment outcomes, and recommends addressing health barriers (especially HIV) that they face in this regard. The Tunisia SCD identifies increased social inclusion and equal opportunities, particularly for youth, as being paramount to social stability and economic participation (World Bank 2015l), while the Azerbaijan SCD identifies strengthening delivery of services to IDPs as a priority (World Bank 2015m).

A few SCDs move a step ahead and identify policy opportunities for addressing exclusion. The Panama SCD, for instance, identifies addressing concerns of indigenous communities as a priority area and notes the need to pay attention to culturally appropriate service delivery as a mechanism to move on the agenda. Specifically, it describes how the secondary education program, Beca Universal, may be delivered to indigenous students in a culturally appropriate manner. The Serbia SCD, similarly, identifies specific actions for the Roma as a priority,

especially those that would increase Roma access to public employment and to ensure that undocumented Roma receive identity cards. It also focuses on the health system and on mechanisms to make it more responsive to the needs of vulnerable Roma communities, on legalizing Roma settlements, and supporting local governments in improving Roma living conditions.

There seems to be a link between depth of analysis in the diagnostic and the specificity of prioritization of social inclusion. SCDs that identify social inclusion as a priority *as well as* suggest actions to advance it are also those, which have analyzed processes of exclusion and have asked the “why question” upfront. These include, as noted, SCDs from Panama and Bulgaria, which make innovative use of data to unpack the processes that underline exclusion, and recommendations shaped accordingly. For example, the Panama SCD emphasizes the need for culturally appropriate opportunities for indigenous communities, keeping in mind their communitarian social organization, property regimes and the tradeoffs they often articulate between development and preservation of natural resources. The Bulgaria SCD notes the despair the Roma recount while trying to access education and employment opportunities. It accordingly suggests customizing labor market policies for jobless Roma and the importance of adult education for them.

There also appears to be a link between existing analytical work and country engagement of the WBG on social inclusion issues on the one hand, and the extent and specificity of prioritization on the other. In short, SCDs, which make specific recommendations in their prioritization of social inclusion, are often those where country teams have had a longer history of reflecting on social inclusion and/or where existing analytical work has already identified such issues. The SCD then serves as an opportunity to bring the issues into the realm of action, rather than to start afresh.

4. The Way Forward

This review of the manner and extent to which the first 17 SCDs addressed social inclusion showed that:

- a. All SCDs identify social exclusion along at least one identity group.
- b. Almost all SCDs that identify excluded groups *also* contain analyses of some of the domains in which these groups are excluded. These are usually human development related domains such as health or education.
- c. Few SCDs address the practices through which exclusion occurs, such as stigma, discrimination, although there are notable exceptions.
- d. Even fewer SCDs address the often politically charged “why question”. Any political analysis within the SCDs is usually related to governance failures and is rarely linked to the exclusion of specific groups.

- e. Social inclusion issues show up in prioritization as recommendations to broaden access to markets and services, but SCDs do not usually recommend special attention to excluded groups, except in some cases, women. There are notable exceptions such as Panama, and some countries in Eastern Europe that address Roma exclusion (e.g. Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia).
- f. There seems to be a link between depth of analysis in the diagnostic and the specificity of prioritization of social inclusion. SCDs that identify social inclusion as a priority *as well as* suggest actions to advance it are also those, which have analyzed processes of exclusion and have asked the “why question” upfront.

This final section provides ***lessons and directions*** for those who seek to integrate issues of social inclusion into future analytical products.

1. **Setting the country context.** Saying that context matters is a truism, but one that needs repetition because social exclusion is indeed more context specific than say poverty, or inequality. The same issues that may be critical in one context may not be so in another. For instance, some countries, such as Bolivia may consider indigenous people as being excluded, but in another country, the indigenous issue may not be as important. Similarly, a current social exclusion issue may not have been as salient a decade ago, hence lending a strong temporal dimension to the context. Thus, the first step in analyzing who is excluded and why is to set the context.
2. **Engaging early.** A SCD is a collaborative effort. The WBG staff develops SCDs in consultation with country partners and other stakeholders. Staff members who have worked on SCDs emphasize the importance of establishing a diverse SCD team early in the process, starting before the concept note stage. Commenting on a concept note or a draft SCD after it is written can be useful, but the likelihood of making significant change, is lower, because SCDs follow a very short timeline. For social inclusion issues to be well reflected, SCD task leadership should bring experts on board early on.
3. **Building collective understanding.** Collaboration across teams is likely to lead to a richer collective understanding of social inclusion from both empirical and policy standpoints. Creative use of household survey data where social experts and poverty specialists collaborate, can lead to the kind of analysis that this paper has highlighted from Bulgaria, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Panama and other countries. Intensive discussions within SCD teams also orient those members who may not reflect naturally about social exclusion, and help them realize that outcomes in their sectors may be stymied because of the exclusion of certain groups.
4. **Deepening coalitions and in-country partnerships.** While desk reviews and data analysis are an essential first step, they are not substitutes for in-country engagement and consultation. The SCD process can help country teams in deepening partnerships in an atmosphere of trust and transparency, especially around issues that may have earlier seemed too political, too fuzzy or out of bounds. Clearly, such engagements are

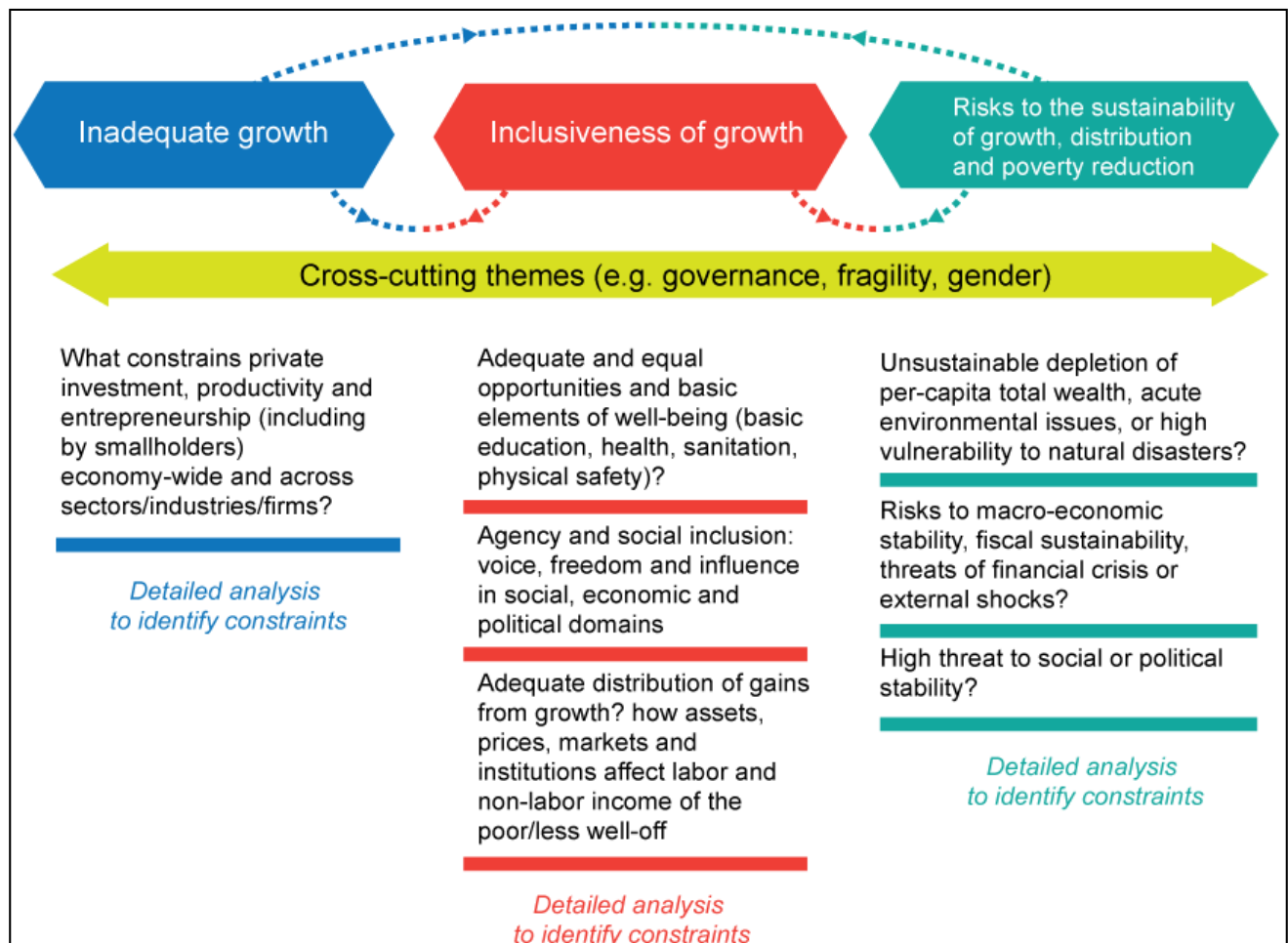
also contextual and depend on several factors, most importantly, the previous WBG country engagement. Typical in-country partners are members of civil society, of associations of excluded groups, and of private sector organizations. While time and resources are often constrained in the SCD process, a few meetings and field visits to consult with communities and other partners can go a long way in anchoring the SCD to reality. Such efforts should ideally include core members of the SCD team, and may be linked to ongoing projects, so as to minimize transaction and other costs.

5. **Ensuring thorough reviews of extant material.** Reviews of the existing literature that also taps into the country discourse is an essential step to a robust diagnostic. If this step is incomplete or narrow, it will color the extent to which social inclusion is integrated into the SCD. If done well on the other hand, it will help to answer many questions. Such a review also helps to build in-country partnerships that provide invaluable support to the SCD and the CPF process.
6. **Using mixed methods and multi-disciplinary perspectives.** There are several ways of identifying and understanding exclusion. Analysis of survey data is often an essential step in framing the questions. But it is often qualitative data, derived from focus groups, consultations or interviews with key stakeholders, which provides a granular understanding. A task team may also use other innovative tools. Some SCDs covered by this review, for example, have used methods like client satisfaction surveys or surveys of subjective well-being, that reveal the underlying causes of exclusion, including the less discernible ones such as lack of trust, feelings of stigmatization, stereotyping and discrimination. The Lesotho SCD, for example, draws on client satisfaction surveys to explain why the utilization of health facilities is low despite the high prevalence of HIV infections, citing provider problems such as a lack of medicines and supplies, absent and disrespectful doctors, and long waiting times at facilities as main reasons for dissatisfaction.
7. **Identifying gaps in data and knowledge.** While issues of social inclusion are acknowledged as being important in most macro level analyses such as the SCD, gaps in data and knowledge can prevent an empirically grounded narrative; in turn keeping them outside the purview of prioritization. Not only it is essential to do a thorough review of the extant literature and to undertake creative, inter-disciplinary analysis of data, but it is also important to highlight areas where data gaps prevent relevant issues from being addressed. Examples are data on disability, knowledge base on sexual orientation, and gender disaggregated data across a number of outcomes. There is now increasing empirical evidence on processes of social exclusion – such as on stigma, stereotyping and overt or covert discrimination. Often, small tweaks to survey questions can yield significant results in terms of data and knowledge and if highlighted in the SCD, the proposed changes are likely to get greater policy traction in the country.
8. **Going beyond the “who” and “how” questions to asking “why”.** As pointed out earlier, the “why question” is an essential step towards designing the right policies and programs for social inclusion. It helps in figuring out what to do by identifying

the underlying drivers of exclusion. Often, such analysis may reveal that it is not always about doing more, but doing things differently, adopting innovations and nuancing the design or implementation of policies and programs. Such granularity can help in prioritizing policies and channels through which social inclusion can take place. The “why question” can be addressed in a number of ways. For example, in analyzing women’s poorer labor market outcomes, the “why question” can be addressed by asking what prevents women from entering or staying in the labor market. Does the norm that women will attend to household duties first hamper their ability to engage in the labor market? Does lack of childcare or safe transport play a role? Similarly, it may make sense to ask why some groups (e.g. ethnic/religious minorities or high-risk groups for HIV/AIDS) may not access health care facilities even though there may be adequate supply. Could it be because health services are delivered in a way that does not respect minority customs or cultural and religious values? Do high-risk groups fear stigmatization by the community in accessing care?

9. **Treating the SCD as an iterative process.** Given the complexity and often the accompanying political sensitivity of social exclusion, limitations of data and evidence and the tight timeline of the SCD, it may not be possible to undertake a comprehensive diagnostic in one report. So, how far should SCD task teams go in integrating social inclusion in the SCD? This review suggests that at the minimum, a Systematic Country Diagnostic should have analysis that can take the conversation on social inclusion further in the country and in the WBG team. It can do so by tapping into the country discourse through a thorough review of the literature and engaging with relevant stakeholders through consultations, even if data are not available. In addition, at a minimum, the SCD should attempt a disaggregation of the poverty and shared prosperity analysis by the “who question”. If the SCD cannot publicly acknowledge the identities of excluded groups, it can use analysis to discuss action to enhance inclusion of those who are left out. In short, it should frame questions that lead to a better understanding of social inclusion. As a recommended bar, however, the SCDs should try to attempt analysis of why individuals and groups are excluded. This could help in prioritizing policies that can further inclusion, or perhaps help in identifying new ways of delivering programs, without changing significantly

Annex. SCD Framework



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Notes

¹ Interim Guidelines for Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) February 21, 2014 version. Last accessed at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSCContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/03/11/000333037_20140311165242/Rendered/PDF/859050WP0World00Box382171B00PUBLIC0.pdf on September 28, 2015.

² Shanta Devarajan: Personal communication

³ For instance, the Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) is an ex ante diagnostic at the level of a reform program and is a requirement in development policy operations (DPOs), when adverse poverty and social impacts are anticipated.

⁴ Dalit: meaning "oppressed" in Hindi, is the self-chosen political name of the castes in India who were formerly considered "untouchable" according to the Hindu social order. While some of these castes are recognized as "Scheduled Castes" (SCs) by a Constitution Order, and get special treatment, such as reservations in public sector employment and government-run educational institutions, there isn't strict overlap between Dalits and SCs.

⁵ The 17 SCDs were Albania, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Chad, Costa Rica, Arab Republic of Egypt, Haiti, Indonesia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Republic of Mali, Mauritius, Myanmar, Panama, Serbia, and Tunisia. The Sri Lanka SCD was included in this list, even though the decision meeting for the SCD took place after the cut-off date. This was because two of the reviewers were working as social specialists on the Sri Lanka SCD task team and were therefore well-versed with the draft SCD.

⁶ The question allowed multiple responses.

⁷ http://consultations.worldbank.org/Data/hub/files/consultation-template/towards-country-partnership-frameworkopenconsultationtemplate/materials/interim_guidelines_for_systematic_country_diagnostic.pdf

⁸ In 2014, "pro-poor" public expenditures (health, basic education, social, water, microfinance and agricultural expenditures) did not exceed 6 percent of Chads GDP.

⁹ Using national survey data from 2011, the SCD notes that only 23 percent of women in Chad are responsible for deciding whether or not to work, and 21 percent are responsible for deciding whether or not to access financing. Gender-based violence is pervasive, and 41 percent of women report being beaten by their husband during the survey period.