

UN Forum on Minority Issues

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ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EFFECTIVE EDUCATION STRATEGY

Madam Chairperson, members and colleagues,

Thank you for this opportunity. AIDMAM is a national platform for Dalit women's rights and is a member body of the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights. I bring before you the concerns on the education of Dalit children, particularly in the areas of teacher training and monitoring.

1. Teacher Recruitment and Training

We find that by and large teachers reflect the same attitudes and practices against minority students as what is prevalent in the larger society. In the case of India, attitudes towards Dalit, Adivasi and Muslim children are anti-social and stereotypical.

We recommend that:

- a. The teacher's attitudes, beliefs and track record on caste and other minority issues be a matter of verification while recruitment.
- b. Teacher training curriculum includes awareness and sensitization on issues of minority culture, knowledge and contribution
- c. Teachers actively encourage minority students to participate in special programmes like Meena Manch, children's parliament, sports, festivals
- d. Incentives be provided to schools and teachers based on Dalit and other minority students satisfaction and achievements in the school

2. Need for Monitoring

In the case of India we have some provisions to help Dalit and other minority children to access education. These include:

- a. Pre-matric and post matric scholarship
- b. Free books and uniforms
- c. Reservation in higher education
- d. Budgetary provisions under Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and Tribal Sub Plans

Students and parents report on the lack and poor implementation of these provisions. They are not provided in time, they are not allocated in sufficient quantity

leading to only a few children to benefit and the procedures and corruption involved in accessing the special provisions

An added problem reported by students is the humiliation they are subjected to while accessing these provisions. These provisions are not provided as a right or a way of correcting historical and current injustices.

We recommend that an independent body with large proportion of members from Dalit and minority communities including women with expertise and track record be appointed to study and report on the implementation of provisions, barriers and achievements and explore employment opportunities for Dalit and minority students.

We recommend that India is requested to report on the implementation of the special provisions for Dalit and other minority children towards education in their treaty reports.

Thank you,