

**IDS**N

**International Dalit Solidarity Network**

**WORKING GLOBALLY AGAINST CASTE-BASED DISCRIMINATION**

श्री ५०१ सरकार  
दलित महिला उनसे  
लेडी हैं।

श चन्द चूनी ला

आ पर लीमर कपडे...  
के राज पैरी से कपडे.

श्री  
श्या

**2014**  
annual report



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Cover: Young Dalit woman activist, Manisha Devi, leads a march in India for Dalit women's self-respect and justice. Dalit women across South Asia are fighting for their rights and their struggle has been a key theme in IDS'N's work in 2014. Photo by Thenmozhi Soundararajan/ AIDMAM.

Left: A young Dalit girl in India. 2014 has seen an increase in the silencing of Dalit human rights defenders but at the same time also in the rights manifestations of Dalits across caste-affected countries. Photo by Sean Hawkey.

**2014**  
**annual report**

## Executive Summary

In 2014, caste discrimination figured prominently in a number of reports and country reviews by UN human rights bodies. More treaty body reviews than ever before highlighted caste discrimination in concluding observations, and eleven thematic and country reports of special procedures mandate-holders made reference to caste discrimination addressing a broad range of themes.

A host of country level and global reports by civil society and UN agencies were published in 2014, providing ample evidence on just how hard forced labour and other forms of slavery hit Dalits; why escalating violence and an outrageous lack of justice are intrinsically linked, and how the mind-set of exclusion governs the lives of hundreds of millions.

Throughout the year, IDSN and partners provided multiple inputs and analyses to UN human rights bodies, and in particular strengthened the dialogue with special procedures mandate holders. Outreach to mandate holders in August with a special appeal resulted in a remarkable commitment by mandate holders to pursue joint initiatives on caste discrimination as a key crosscutting issue.

Over the course of the year, IDSN produced a number of thematic, country level or institutionally directed recommendations and promoted them with institutions, expert bodies and states. IDSN also continued its constructive engagement with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, appreciating the further strengthening of the cooperation and the determination of the Office to internalise the issue as a core part of its work on discrimination.

At a Human Rights Council side-event in June, IDSN brought together top UN officials who made calls for a coherent and coordinated approach from the UN in tackling caste-based violence and discrimination. Speaking at the side-event, Ms. Navi Pillay, then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed great concern for the issue of caste-based violence and discrimination, and recommended focused action to support the rights of people of discriminated castes, particularly women and girls.

Other top UN officials addressed the issue in high-level statements and reports suggesting the emergence of a new norm, where caste discrimination is recognized on par with other forms of discrimination leading to gross human rights violations and deprivation, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and beliefs. These efforts were, however, not matched by similar acknowledgement in state led UN processes.

The continuous blocking by one state, namely India, derails legitimate attempts to embrace and include the topic of caste discrimination in UN processes, including at the Human Rights Council, the Beijing +20, the post-

## Highlights in 2014

- **More UN Treaty Bodies than ever before address caste-based human rights violations in 2014.**
- **UN Special Rapporteurs commit to prioritise caste discrimination and attend to it across mandates.**
- **Keynote speech by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at IDSN co-organised UN side-event on caste-based discrimination and violence against women.**
- **UN top officials state concern on caste pointing at the emergence of a new norm.**
- **UN Special Rapporteur highlights the unjust deferral of IDSN's ECOSOC application at UN General Assembly.**
- **Multiple country and global reports by civil society, research institutions and UN agencies document caste related human rights violations.**
- **Caste discrimination increasingly mainstreamed into the work of UN agencies and the OHCHR; UN India country team set up a cross-agency task team on Dalits and Adivasis.**
- **Dalit women in South Asia mobilise with national marches and campaigns in Europe and the US.**
- **Dalits speak at the EU Human Rights Defenders Forum; EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World notes caste discrimination.**
- **Asia Dalit Rights Forum co-hosts meeting of 32 parliamentarians from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal with the Asian Parliamentarians Forum for Dalit Rights Concerns.**
- **Prime Minister's office in Nepal holds seminar on caste discrimination with IDSN involvement.**
- **IDSN adopts new strategy 2015-2018, revised statutes and an adjusted organisational model.**

2015 Agenda and the Durban Review mechanism. In 2014, it reached a point where "silencing" and repercussions on civil society, states and institutions taking up caste discrimination has become another new norm, threatening to undermine the work of concerned stakeholders and the pursuit of justice by Dalit human rights defenders in their work at national, regional and international level.

This is also evident in the case of IDSN, as pointed out by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, in the UN General Assembly in October. The Special Rapporteur highlighted IDSN's seven-year long application for ECOSOC accreditation and the continued blocking by India "as unacceptable, wrong and unfair".

Nevertheless, IDSN continued, in cooperation with international associates, to facilitate representation of Dalit human rights defenders in UN and EU fora, and also

as a first, speaking opportunities were secured for Dalit representatives in panels of the UN Minority Forum and the EIDHR Annual Human Rights Forum.

IDSN regularly informed members and staff of the European Parliament as well as officials of the Commission and the European External Action Service about key developments in the UN and in relevant countries on the topic of caste discrimination. It is noted, also as a first, that the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World published by the EEAS in 2014 includes references to caste-based discrimination in the sections on India, Nepal and Pakistan.

In its engagement with EU officials, Dalit leaders and IDSN staff continued to call for caste specific and caste sensitive policies and programming, as also recommended by the European Parliament in its 2013 resolution on caste discrimination, and for the conduct of EU public diplomacy at the highest level on the topic.

The communication part of IDSN's work took new leaps in 2014. Global use of IDSN communication channels increased considerably as did effective outreach to international media. The IDSN website continues to be the leading global resource on caste discrimination. Furthermore, the foundation was made for a new website with a greatly improved design, security and a documentation links database.

Through the year, communications work focused on IDSN's core thematic priorities of Dalit women and caste-based slavery, while also promoting and spreading awareness of events and issues arising from the struggle against caste discrimination in caste-affected countries and internationally. Campaign-oriented activities were pursued in conjunction with Dalit women campaigns, as well as targeted information outreach based on caste-related research reports published by Human Rights Watch in 2014. The network also extended its reach to diaspora

communities, and Dalit solidarity networks campaigned for public, corporate and political awareness of caste discrimination and for action to end it. The networks also contributed in many ways to IDSN's international lobby work.

There was also a significant strengthening of cross regional cooperation in South Asia on caste issues in 2014, led by Dalit civil society. Notably, at a meeting of concerned parliamentarians from four affected countries, a call for a regional framework to address caste-based discrimination was made by Mr. Bhattarai, former Prime Minister of Nepal.

For IDSN, the year was also marked by substantive reviews and organisational development, leading to an adjusted governing structure and a new, broadly consulted IDSN strategy for 2015-2018.

In January, an external review lead by the Danish Development Agency, DANIDA, was conducted and followed by an internal review and strategy development process. The reviews confirmed the relevance of IDSN's mandate, mission and aims, and the effectiveness of our strategic focus and programmatic work. It furthermore provided the basis for the development and adoption of an IDSN strategy for 2015-2018, revised statutes, and an adjusted organisational model in December.

Warm and special thanks go to the members of the IDSN executive group for offering their expertise and engagement in the development tasks, and to the network for their engagement in the processes. Sincere appreciation is extended to the many external stakeholders for their valuable contributions to the external review and to the IDSN team for their hard work throughout the year. Finally, I wish to acknowledge and thank our funders for their generous support to IDSN's work.

*Rikke Nöhrind*  
Executive Director

## Caste discrimination

There are an estimated 260 million Dalits worldwide, often born into an 'untouchable' status in highly stratified caste systems. Caste systems are found in South Asia, in communities migrated from South Asia across the globe and in other caste-stratified countries in Africa and Asia.

Caste-based discrimination involves massive violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Caste systems divide people into unequal and hierarchical social groups. Those at the bottom are considered

'lesser human beings', 'impure' and 'polluting' to other caste groups.

Those in the lowest of castes, known as Dalits in South Asia, are often considered 'untouchable' and subjected to so-called 'untouchability practices' in both public and private spheres. Dalits may be forced to do the most dirty and hazardous jobs, and subjected to modern slavery. Due to exclusion practiced by both state and non-state actors, Dalits have limited access to resources, services and development, keeping many in severe poverty.

Dalits are often de facto excluded from decision-making and meaningful participation in public and civil life. Lack of special legislation banning caste-based discrimination or lack of implementation of legislation, due to dysfunctional systems of justice, lack of state responsibility and caste-bias, have largely left Dalits without protection.

Despite policy development and new legislation in some countries, fundamental challenges still remain in all caste-affected countries.

These women in India are breaking free from the modern slavery practice of manual scavenging. According to the 2014 Human Rights Watch report on manual scavenging the police refused to file their complaint that they were being forced to do illegal work. Other women interviewed spoke of threats of violence against them if they stopped working. Dalit women facing discrimination, modern slavery, injustice and violence were key themes of numerous UN mechanisms in 2014. Photo by Digvijay Singh/ Human Rights Watch from the report 'Cleaning human waste: Manual Scavenging, Caste and Discrimination in India'

## United Nations

In 2014, caste discrimination figured prominently in a number of reports and country reviews by UN human rights bodies, especially the UN Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures mechanism, to many of which IDSN and its partners had made contributions. IDSN facilitated or supported representation of Dalit human rights defenders at sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC); communicated closely with a number of special procedures mandate-holders, treaty bodies and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); and urged States to address the issue of caste discrimination actively in the context of the HRC.

More treaty body reviews than ever before highlighted caste discrimination in concluding observations. And, eleven thematic and country reports of special procedures mandate-holders made reference to caste discrimination over the course of the year addressing a broad range of themes. IDSN presented an appeal to Special Procedures that resulted in renewed commitments from a number of mandates.

IDSN furthermore carried on its systematic efforts to facilitate inputs to the UN, comprehensively monitor

outcomes and developments and share regular information with decision-makers and affected groups. As an outcome of these systematic lobby activities and inputs, the number of UN observations and recommendations on caste discrimination steadily increased in 2014. By the end of the year, the [compilation](#) of caste-specific references in UN documents exceeded 190 pages.<sup>1</sup>

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**“Legislation alone does not address structural discrimination. The UN has an important role to play and must step up to the plate to help stop caste-based violence against women.”** Saraswathi Menon, UN Women Policy Director

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In June, IDSN and a number of International Associates (IAs) held a HRC side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women: The role of the UN in combatting caste-based violence and discrimination', bringing together Dalit women human rights defenders, high-level UN officials and a number of states, including India. The key-note speech was delivered by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### Human Rights Council

On 17 June, violence against Dalit women and the role of the UN in combatting caste-based violence was highlighted at a HRC side-event co-organised by IDSN. Six Dalit women human rights defenders from South Asia were invited and attended, and three of them, Asha Kowtal, Manjula Pradeep and Durga Sob, addressed the event. They spoke of escalating brutality and violence against Dalit women who assert their rights and called for their Governments to take serious action to implement laws meant to protect them and for the international community to support their struggle. IDSN presented a [set of recommendations](#) to the OHCHR and UN Agencies to end caste discrimination and caste-based violence against women and girls.<sup>2</sup>

IDSN brought together top UN officials who made calls for a coherent and coordinated approach from the UN in tackling caste-based violence and discrimination, with a particular focus on women and girls. Navi Pillay, then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed great concern for the issue of caste-based violence and discrimination.

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**“Our outrage is not enough. We must take real and focused action to mend our societies’ dramatic failure to support the rights of people of discriminated castes, particularly women and girls.”** Navi Pillay, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

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### UN Highlights in 2014

- Caste-based violence against women side-event, with the participation of the High Commissioner, held at the UN Human Rights Council, co-sponsored by Denmark and Norway.
- Seven UN experts make reference to caste discrimination at the Annual Meeting of Special Procedures, six mention caste in their reports.
- More treaty body reviews than ever before highlight caste discrimination in Concluding Observations.
- IDSN's seven-year long application for UN accreditation and continued blocking by India highlighted by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association in the UN General Assembly.
- High-level inclusion of caste – norm emergence; former and new High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN Secretary-General speak out on caste discrimination.
- UN agencies in India team up to focus on fighting caste discrimination.
- Dalit human rights defenders speak at the UN Minority Forum.



Moreover, UN Women Policy Director, Saraswathi Menon stressed that words and legislation is not enough and called for concrete action. She highlighted a need to focus on the structural nature of the intersection of caste and gender that legislation alone fails to address.

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**“We want to capture that women are targeted for punitive violence when they transgress caste, by the community, and when seeking to organise and defend their rights and the rights of others.”**

UN Women Policy Director, Saraswathi Menon

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UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Rita Izsák commended Dalit women in South Asia for mobilising collective efforts to fight for their rights, “in order to confront and end violence, we must take a holistic approach and address causes of violence.”

The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in Geneva spoke from the floor, acknowledging the gravity of the issue and that implementation of the laws meant to protect Dalits in India was a very difficult task, “due to the deep roots of this complex issue”.

The side-event was sponsored by Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Movement against all forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), Minority Rights Group, Franciscan International, and Asian Forum for Human

Rights and Development, and co-sponsored by Denmark and Norway. The event was well attended with around 70 participants and had good state representation.

Following the side-event, a [report](#) was produced and forwarded to around 300 contacts.<sup>3</sup> IDSN and HRW also jointly issued a [press release](#).<sup>4</sup> The [media pick up](#)<sup>5</sup> was considerable and included an [article](#) by the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Office.<sup>6</sup>

During the year, IDSN facilitated representation of Dalit human rights defenders at HRC sessions, supported the submission of inputs to treaty bodies and special procedures and held a number of meetings with state and UN officials. Prior to the three HRC sessions in 2014, IDSN provided UN member states with specific recommendations on caste-related issues and called on them to raise the issue in the HRC.<sup>7</sup>

IDSN continued to promote, through submissions, continuous referencing and lobby, the draft [UN Principles and Guidelines](#) for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent (UN PnG) in 2014.<sup>8</sup> In March, the European Parliament [urged](#) EU member states to promote its endorsement and at the June side-event, Rita Izsák similarly called for UN stakeholders to look to it for guidance.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the constantly growing number of recommendations issued by UN human rights bodies, States continue to hesitate to voice their concerns when relevant reports are presented and to take a specific initiative on



IDSN team members in Geneva for the June session of the Human Rights Council. On 17 June, violence against Dalit women and the role of the UN in combatting caste-based violence was highlighted at a HRC side-event co-organised by IDSN. Six Dalit women human rights defenders from South Asia were invited and attended, and three of them addressed the event. Photo by IDSN

caste discrimination at the HRC. This hesitation from States was all the more apparent when calls were made to States for co-sponsorship of the June side-event.

### UN Special Procedures

IDSN continued to lobby and provide input to UN special procedures, specifically for visits to caste-affected countries and addressing caste discrimination in reports and consultations.

In October, a team from IDSN organised lobby interventions linked to the Special Procedures Annual Meeting. The team of Dalit human rights defenders Manjula Pradeep (Navsarjan Trust), Ashif Shaikh (Jan Sahas) and representatives from the IDSN secretariat put forward an [appeal](#) to the mandate holders to address caste discrimination and had meetings with a total of nine mandates.<sup>10</sup>

At the related exchange of views with civil society, seven mandate-holders highlighted caste discrimination as a key cross-cutting issue of concern and caste discrimination was the issue that was raised and addressed by most Special Rapporteurs. Significant proposals for initiatives raised included moving towards a more structured mechanism against caste discrimination, consideration of the issue at the next annual meeting in 2015 and working on caste discrimination across mandates as a concerted effort.

IDSN continued its close cooperation with relevant Special Rapporteurs and six mandate-holders gave specific consideration to the issue of caste discrimination in reports. IDSN and the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) also submitted a [briefing note](#) on 'Religious Minorities in Pakistan: Scheduled Caste Hindus'.<sup>11</sup>

In June, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Rashida Manjoo presented her [mission reports](#) from India

and Bangladesh that highlighted and strongly criticized the plight of Dalit women in both countries.<sup>12</sup> IDSN made submissions on the situation of Dalit women in cooperation with IDSN members in advance of the 2013 visits.

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**“The intergenerational nature of caste discrimination condemns women to a life of exclusion, marginalization and disadvantage in every sphere of life. Many of those women are denied an education and economic opportunities, and perform dangerous and unprotected work, including ... modern forms of slavery”<sup>13</sup>** Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Rashida Manjoo

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Ms. Manjoo also [found](#) that redress for Dalit women victims of violence is very limited, that multiple discrimination is a significant barrier to access to services and that Dalit women continue to engage in dangerous and unprotected work, such as manual scavenging, although legislation has been adopted.<sup>14</sup> In the [report on Bangladesh](#) Ms. Manjoo found indications of “... high levels of violence against women from religious and ethnic minority communities, with Dalits, Hindus and indigenous groups most at risk.”<sup>15</sup>

In the [Interactive Dialogue](#)<sup>16</sup> with the Special Rapporteur and in the [official response by the state](#)<sup>17</sup>, India strongly criticized the Special Rapporteur for making “unsubstantiated yet sweeping generalizations which tends to point to either a lack of understanding of issues or a high degree of prejudice”. In her response, the Special Rapporteur noted that she never before, on her 14 prior missions, had encountered such offensive behaviour and language that she received on her mission to India and rejected any allegations of violating the code of conduct.

IDSN continued its close dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Rita Izsák, who in addition to addressing the HRC side-event in June, highlighted numerous issues of caste discrimination in the context of education, health, hunger, food security and nutrition, environmental sustainability and water in her [annual HRC report](#).<sup>18</sup> The now Special Rapporteur also [urged](#) attention be given to caste-based groups and namely Dalit populations in the post-2015 development agenda and highlighted that violence against Dalits remains widespread and their access to justice poor.<sup>19</sup> In September, PDSN and IDSN sent an [urgent appeal](#) to the Special Rapporteur and others on the killing of two Hindu traders in Pakistan.<sup>20</sup>

In his [annual report](#), the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, Mutuma Ruteere, highlighted the CERD General Recommendation 29 on descent-based discrimination, recommending that States take strict measures against any incitement to discrimination or violence against descent-based communities.<sup>21</sup>

In his [report](#) on his mission to Mauritania in September 2013, the Special Rapporteur raised concern over caste discrimination and recommended for the government to include adequate resources to tackle such issues as well as slavery-like practices.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, upon her [follow-up mission to Mauritania](#), Gulnara Shahinian, now former Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, reiterated the need to introduce a law against discrimination practices based on caste or ethnic slavery.<sup>23</sup>

Urmila Bhoola was appointed the new Special Rapporteur on Slavery and underlined, in her [annual report](#), her commitment to continue to work on caste-based forms of slavery and the contemporary forms of slavery highlighted by her predecessor.<sup>24</sup>

In February, Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan (RGA), National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) and IDSN submitted a [joint report](#) to the Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque for her September report on common violations of the right to water and sanitation, drawing attention to violations against Dalits.<sup>25</sup> In the [report](#), Ms. Albuquerque highlighted that societal rules prevent Dalits from using water fountains and that Dalits face violence in accessing water and sanitation, often linked to deeply entrenched stigmatization.<sup>26</sup> She further urged that the State of India fully implement the new Manual Scavenging Act and take appropriate action in response to any violations.

Faced with yet another deferred [application for UN consultative status](#) in the first half of 2014, IDSN stepped up its advocacy efforts.<sup>27</sup> IDSN highlighted the reprisals against IDSN in a submission to the Special Rapporteur on

## UN Minority Forum

### Focus on violence against minorities

The annual UN Forum on Minority Issues in November focused on preventing and addressing violence and atrocity crimes against minorities. For this event, IDSN submitted [suggestions for recommendations](#) and language on preventing and addressing violence against Dalits to be included in the outcome document.<sup>35</sup>

The Minority Forum Secretariat invited IDSN to propose a speaker to elaborate on the situation of Dalits. As a result, Thilagam Ramalingam, Program Director of EVIDENCE; an organization advocating for the rights of marginalised in Tamil Nadu, [spoke at the Forum on violence against Dalit women](#).<sup>36</sup> Also, in the [IDSN team](#)<sup>37</sup> was Pirbhu Lal from the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) who [spoke at the forum on violence against Dalits and religious minorities in Pakistan](#).<sup>38</sup>

Consideration of caste was subsequently included in the [Recommendations of the Forum](#).<sup>39</sup> It was recommended for States to address the situation of those who face stigmatization and dehumanisation on the basis of their caste as it results in exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence. And, for States to collect data disaggregated by caste.

the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai, for his report on multilateral institutions. In October, IDSN [submitted the case](#) to the UN Urgent Appeals Mechanism<sup>28</sup> and in June, IDSN joined other NGOs in sending an [open letter](#) to the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs calling for measures to stop its members from blocking legitimate human rights organisations.<sup>29</sup> In October, Maina Kiai, [highlighted](#) IDSN's year-long application.<sup>30</sup>

In his [presentation to the General Assembly](#), the Special Rapporteur criticised India for arbitrarily blocking IDSN from obtaining UN consultative status calling it "clearly unacceptable, wrong and unfair."<sup>32</sup> Many States speaking at the General Assembly noted concern that the NGO committee, meant to ensure inclusion of civil society

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**"The case of the International Dalit Solidarity Network, an international NGO focusing on caste discrimination and other forms of discrimination based on work and descent, is particularly troubling; since 2008, the Network has received 64 written questions from the Committee, all raised by India. It is now the longest pending application before the Committee."<sup>31</sup>** Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

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**UN studies and reports**

## Several UN agencies have addressed caste discrimination in reports and new initiatives

- In January, UNICEF and UNESCO released a South Asia regional study, on out of school children. The [report](#) highlights that Dalit girls have the highest primary school exclusion rate in India and that half of pre-school age Dalit children are not attending school.<sup>60</sup>
- In April, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, launched a [project](#) to map the AI-Akhdam communities in Yemen and expect to reach some 10,000 households.<sup>61</sup>
- The [UNDP Nepal Human Development Report](#) released in May, found Dalits and Muslims in Nepal to be at the bottom of development tables on all fronts including education, poverty and health.<sup>62</sup>

at the UN, is acting in a manner contrary to its purpose. Norway specifically [highlighted](#), "The continued deferral for seven years of the International Dalit Solidarity Network's application for accreditation as an NGO with the UN ... is in our view unacceptable and the situation should be rectified."<sup>33</sup> The application will be reviewed again in 2015.

The Special Rapporteur also addressed the challenges faced by Dalits in their enjoyment of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in his [annual HRC report](#).<sup>34</sup> 2014 therefore saw the 17th mandate-holder added to the list of Special Procedures that have addressed caste discrimination.

### UN Treaty Bodies

More treaty body reviews than any year before gave specific consideration to the issue of caste discrimination in Concluding Observations.

After a six-year break from any treaty body reviews, India was scheduled to be reviewed by two Committees in 2014. In June, Navsarjan Trust, AIDMAM and IDS<sup>N</sup> presented a [joint submission addressing multiple discrimination against Dalit women](#) to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>40</sup> In its [conclusion](#), the Committee raised serious concern about human rights violations against Dalit women, caste-based violence and rape, land rights and the lack of implementation of the SCST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.<sup>41</sup>

The Committee recommended that India take action to end caste-based violence against women and the Devadasi practice. At the same session, CEDAW also issued [Concluding Observations for Mauritania](#) and as a first

recommended for the State to fully dismantle the caste-based system of enslaving women in domestic work.<sup>42</sup>

For the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) review of India in June, NCDHR advocated for the Committee to address the plight of the 84 million Dalit Children in India, both in its contribution to the [India Alliance for Child Rights report](#),<sup>43</sup> and through its participation in the review. The Committee subsequently [raised concerns](#) at the unequal access to education, health care, safe water and sanitation and other social services for Dalit children in India.<sup>44</sup> The [Concluding Observations](#) on the CRC-Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in the first review of India, raised particular concern at the inadequate mechanisms in place to detect and identify minority children at risk of becoming victims such as children from Scheduled Castes.<sup>45</sup>

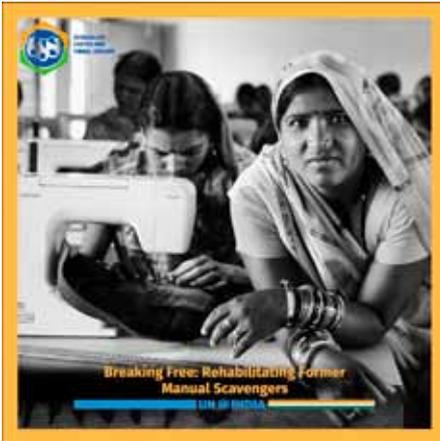
CRC also issued [Concluding Observations for Yemen](#), in which it raised concern at the persistence of discriminatory social attitudes against Muhamasheen children and specifically the widening gap in the rate of school enrolment of Muhamasheen children when compared with nationwide rates.<sup>46</sup>

In November, the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) [raised concern](#) that Dalits in Nepal continue to face widespread discrimination and that Dalit women are victims of multiple discrimination as they are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation, trafficking and various forms of violence, including domestic violence.<sup>47</sup>

For the first time, the Human Rights Committee (CCPR) [raised the issue](#) of caste discrimination in Nepal. The Committee raised concern over the lack of effective implementation of the Caste Discrimination and Untouchability Act and the persistence of de facto discrimination against the Dalit community.<sup>48</sup> The Human Rights Committee also [raised serious concern](#) of discrimination against the Buraku in Japan, with particular attention paid to Buraku women.<sup>49</sup> These concerns raised by IMADR, an associate of IDS<sup>N</sup>, were similarly noted by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in its September [review of Japan](#), urging the State to act on the discrimination faced by the Buraku.<sup>50</sup>

### High-level inclusion of caste – gradual norm emergence

High-level inclusion of caste, as a ground and on par with other forms of discrimination, gains increased political salience and gradually emerges as a norm in the HRC context. The commitment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was reaffirmed in the [OHCHR Strategic Management Plan 2014-17](#) that includes



## UN agencies in India team up to fight caste discrimination

Convened by the United Nations Development Programme, six UN agencies including IFAD, ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women are working together to help accelerate inclusion of Dalit and Adivasi issues and access to rights in national and state policy and planning processes.

The team has launched a campaign to end manual scavenging including the production of a briefing leaflet on manual scavenging entitled [Breaking Free: Rehabilitating Manual Scavengers](#) and photo essays and [videos](#) to create awareness and engagement.

many references to caste discrimination and a key headline in the anti-discrimination section of the action plan.<sup>51</sup> In the introduction, the now former High Commissioner, Navi Pillay, notes that the exclusion, marginalization and abuse of people on the basis of their caste status, among others, are scourges that the international community must combat. Ms. Pillay highlighted caste discrimination in various reports and statements to the Human Rights Council.

Long term champion for the cause, Ms. Pillay ended her six-year tenure as High Commissioner for Human Rights on August 31. Ahead of the June side-event, to which Ms. Pillay made the opening statement, a group of Dalit human rights defenders met the now former High Commissioner to express their gratitude for her unwavering commitment to support them in their struggle to end caste discrimination.

It is noted that the new High Commissioner, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, has made a number of [references to caste discrimination](#) in his initial statements.<sup>52</sup> Also, the UN Secretary-General has [called for](#) particular attention to be paid to direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of caste, among others.<sup>53</sup>

## The Post-2015 Agenda

IDSN made two submissions to the UN-led public consultation in [March](#)<sup>54</sup> and [September](#)<sup>55</sup> calling for caste-affected groups to be addressed in the post-2015 agenda, noting that leaving out caste and similar forms of

discrimination from this equation mean that hundreds of millions of people will indeed be "left behind".

Three of the eight [policy briefs](#) delivered by the UN Non-governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) to the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in 2013 and 2014 addressed caste discrimination and inequalities.<sup>56</sup> The recommendations were compiled from various [UN-NGLS civil society consultations](#)<sup>57</sup> including consultations where National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), Asia Dalit Rights Movement and IDSN provided input.

Although, the UN-led public consultation recognised caste discrimination as a source of inequality in 2013, neither the 2014 Focus Areas Document nor the Final Report of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals include mention of caste. Moreover, the UN Secretary General's Synopsis report, released in December, also fails to recognise caste discrimination. The new Sustainable Development Goals are expected to be adopted at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

## UN related country level developments in caste-affected countries

As a first and convened by the UNDP, six UN agencies including [IFAD, ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women formed a task team](#) to help accelerate inclusion of Dalit and Adivasi (tribals) issues and access to rights in national and state policy and planning processes in India.<sup>58</sup>

**"Targeting interventions to the most disadvantaged improves lives and addresses multi-dimensional poverty...The United Nations in India is committed to support the Government of India's efforts towards greater inclusion of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the development process."**<sup>59</sup>

UN India website

In December, the Office of the Prime Minister in Nepal organised a Consultation Workshop on Anti-Caste Based Discrimination and Untouchability on the implementation of the first UPR recommendations and in preparation for the second UPR, to take place October 2015. IDSN Director, Rikke Nöhrind, was invited and presented on the existing international standards and practices. Ms. Nöhrind and Bhakta Bishwakarma, NNDSWO, were also invited to present on the topic of 'Caste-based discrimination and possibilities for engaging with the UPR' at the Human Rights Core Group meeting of multilateral and bilateral donors. The meeting had more than 30 participants from UN agencies; Embassies and the EU delegation.

This Dalit family in India suffers after flooding. Caste discrimination in humanitarian aid and disaster relief was highlighted by the EU humanitarian agency ECHO, at the 2014 New Delhi launch of the report 'Equality in Aid'. Photo by Jakob Carlsen

## European Union

2014 was an election year with less opportunities for interaction with members of the European Parliament (EP) compared to previous years; partly due to the election campaign and constitution periods, and partly as many relevant [legislative processes](#), such as the new funding instruments, were concluded in 2013.<sup>63</sup> IDS was, however, able to engage with MEPs and parliament officials on different occasions with fruitful outcomes.

Some of the long-standing supporters of the Dalit cause left the parliament in connection with the election and IDS wishes to acknowledge the important role they have played in putting the issue strongly on the agenda of the Parliament and other EU institutions. Leonidas Donskis (Lithuania), Michael Cashman (the UK), Thijs Berman (the Netherlands) and Graham Watson (the UK) are among those who have made valued contributions in defence of Dalit human rights.

As in previous years, IDS regularly informed MEPs, Parliament staff and officials of the Commission and the EEAS about key developments in the UN and in caste-affected countries on the topic of caste discrimination.

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**“IDS is key for bringing the issue of caste discrimination to the attention of EU. It has credibility with EU and UN, works SMART, and is strong in lobbying and follow up.”**

Bert Theuermann, Chair of COHOM,  
Human Rights Working Group, Council of EU

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## European Parliament

The strong engagement on the issue of caste-based discrimination by the Parliament in 2013 was followed up in the March resolution on EU priorities for the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council, to which IDS had given input. In the resolution, the Parliament welcomes the work of the OHCHR and the UN Special Procedures mandate holders on combating caste-based discrimination, and furthermore urges EU member states to promote the endorsement of the draft UN Principles and Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent.

IDS further provided input to the EP's draft resolution on the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World through a submission to the rapporteur, Antonio Panzeri. The amended EP resolution, which is to be adopted early in 2015, will include a section on caste-based discrimination with recommendations for policy action by

EU institutions, and inclusion of policy objectives on caste-based discrimination in the new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy.

As Chair of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Barbara Lochbihler brought up caste-based discrimination as a human rights issue for the EU to prioritise in her interaction with the EU Council's working group on human rights, COHOM, in May. Ms. Lochbihler furthermore contributed with a statement for the [side-event](#) on Caste-Based Violence against Dalit Women and Girls at the UN Human Rights Council in June, and she called for implementation of legislation to end caste discrimination and highlighted the recommendations in the European Parliament resolution on caste-based discrimination.<sup>64</sup>

## European Commission/EEAS

As a first, the EU [Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World](#), published by the EEAS, includes several references to caste-based discrimination in the sections on India, Nepal and Pakistan.<sup>65</sup> IDS has for several years pointed out the lack of reporting on the issue in the annual reports as a serious omission and welcomes the representation of the issue in relation to different topics, including humanitarian aid with specific reference to the EU funded IDS report '[Equality in Aid](#)'.<sup>66</sup> Caste-based violence is furthermore mentioned, including as an aspect of violence against religious minorities in Pakistan. It is noted that the important EP resolution on caste discrimination is mentioned only in the section on Pakistan.

Dalit human rights defenders and a team from the IDS secretariat took part in the European Instrument on Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) [2014 Forum](#), which focused on human rights defenders.<sup>67</sup> General Secretary of the National Dalit Women's movement in India (AIDMAM), Asha Kowtal, was invited to speak about Dalit women human rights defenders as part of a panel that addressed issues of human rights defenders from minorities, indigenous peoples and communities affected by caste-based discrimination.

IDS had nominated Asha Kowtal as a speaker, and it was the first time a Dalit speaker was included in the programme of the EIDHR Forum. Ms. Kowtal highlighted the structural mechanisms of gender and caste dominance that enforce the pressure on defenders of Dalit women's human rights. Henri Tiphagne, Director of People's Watch Tamil Nadu, raised the issue of shrinking space for human rights defenders in India and the Forum was furthermore an opportunity to share information with some key contacts in the Commission and civil society representatives.

Brussels based media, Mo Magazine and New Europe, brought interviews with Henri Tiphagne and Asha Kowtal



in connection with the EIDHR Forum, and the articles highlighted the current human rights situation of Dalits in India and the call for the EU to put the issue strongly on the agenda.

Following the EIDHR Forum, Asha Kowtal went on a tour to seven European countries together with filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan to participate in public awareness and political advocacy activities together with Dalit Solidarity Networks.

IDSN made several submissions to the EU and was invited to give input for the coming EU Human Rights Action Plan. IDSN suggests a specific heading on caste-based discrimination, development of an EU policy with set specific objectives for addressing caste-based discrimination in policies and programmes, and in dialogues with affected countries.

Pursuit of public diplomacy by EU high level officials on human rights issues such as caste discrimination remains an ideal in contrast to the case of UN high level officials. IDSN notes that statements by high level representatives, including the High Representative of Foreign Affairs and EU Special Representative for Human Rights, as well as EU policies and thematic papers are devoid of references to discrimination based on caste, despite its impact on human rights and poverty reduction challenges.

IDSN maintained a positive dialogue with the EEAS and Commission officials and continued to share updates on

key developments and recommendations with officials. A number of high-level officials, including the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, met with the IDSN team in Brussels.

Fruitful discussions with ECHO officials on the inclusion of Dalit communities was maintained following the cooperation on the 2013 IDSN report 'Equality in Aid', which was officially launched in January 2014 in New Delhi jointly with ECHO India. The awareness of caste issues is high in the EU's humanitarian agency, as illustrated in the [2015 Humanitarian Implementation Plan](#) for South Asia, which has a focus on caste-based discrimination in analysis and target groups, "Particular attention will be paid to excluded communities (scheduled castes, tribes, other minorities)".<sup>68</sup>

EU representations in some caste-affected countries have taken a proactive approach. They have on several occasions interacted with Dalit human rights defenders, and EU Delegations and member states' embassies have invited presentations by Dalit representatives at joint meetings in India and Nepal respectively. In a [statement on political developments in Nepal](#), the EU delegation and Ambassadors of EU member states in the country urged Nepal's political leaders to find common ground for a timely completion of the constitution process ensuring protection of human rights for/of all citizens without discrimination on the basis of caste or other grounds.<sup>69</sup>

## Communication and networking

Communications work in 2014 focused on IDSN's core thematic priorities of Dalit women and caste-based slavery, while also promoting and spreading awareness of events and issues arising from the struggle against caste discrimination in caste-affected countries and internationally. Awareness is growing through IDSN's communication channels, and media sensitization to caste discrimination is improving.

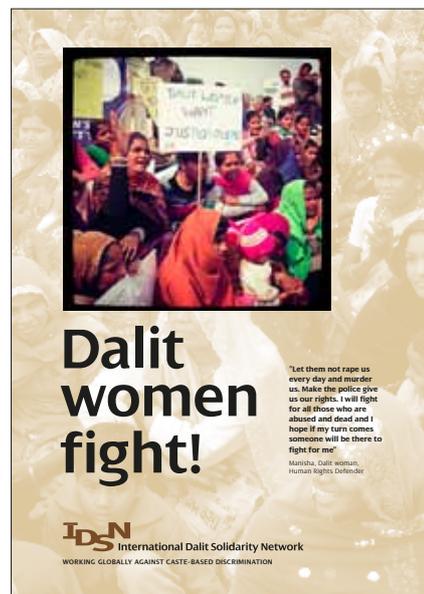
### Promoting Dalit women's rights

Promoting awareness of the situation of Dalit women, their rights claims and manifestations of their struggle, were key themes in IDSN's communication and networking work in 2014. IDSN was particularly active in publicizing and supporting the two month-long Dalit women's self-respect marches, in March and November 2014. IDSN coordinated with Dalit women activists and organisers to launch a twitter campaign with the hashtag #dalitwomenfight and pitch the story to international journalists.

Following the first march, IDSN also supported a [mini European tour](#) by the organiser of the marches Asha Kowtal from India and the American Dalit filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan to the Netherlands, UK, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark.<sup>70</sup> The tour served to report back on the women's rights marches, bring attention to the situation of Dalit women especially in relation to violence and screen short clips from an upcoming documentary film to European audiences. IDSN also publicized the two Dalit women's appearance at the high-profile 'Women in the World Summit' in New York. Actress Uma Thurman introduced the talk by playing the part of a Dalit woman rape victim and NBC anchor Cynthia McFadden moderated the discussion.

IDSN promoted several other women's rights initiatives and events in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh throughout the year and in June released the new IDSN publication '[Dalit Women Fight!](#)' The publication includes quotes and documentation by the UN and INGOs and covers themes such as violence, rape, slavery, prostitution, obstacles to education and basic services and the denial of justice.<sup>71</sup> The publication also underscores the way that Dalit women are uniting to fight for their rights and are becoming increasingly empowered.

In connection with the high profile IDSN co-organised UN side-event on caste-based violence against women in June, IDSN released a media advisory that was widely distributed to journalists and approached media contacts to promote coverage of the event. At the side-event IDSN, together



In 2014 IDSN published the booklet [Dalit Women Fight!](#) containing information on Dalit women's human rights, key issues, cases, quotes from activists, INGOs, the UN and the EU and calls to action.

with young Dalit women activists, contacted Geneva based reporters in person to hand over briefing materials and the media advisory. Following the side-event, at which the High Commissioner for Human Rights spoke, IDSN coordinated the issuing of a joint press release between Human Rights Watch and IDSN, and followed up with the media and published a [report from the side-event](#).<sup>72</sup> Human Rights Watch, IMADR and Minority Rights group also took part in social media promotion of the event and press release, coordinated by IDSN. IDSN disseminated the report to almost 400 stakeholders through direct mail.

### A rise in global media coverage

IDSN's ties to key global media have been strengthened in 2014 and a rise in international media attention to the issue of caste-based discrimination has been evident. IDSN has facilitated interviews with Dalit leaders and activists in key international media including the BBC and the Guardian. Although IDSN aims to mainly facilitate the representation of Dalit voices in global media articles, some journalists have also specifically wished to interview the IDSN Executive Director, who has subsequently been cited in media such as the Guardian and Reuters.

Larger scale media coverage of the issue of caste-based discrimination was seen particularly in relation to the rape and hanging of two low-caste teenage girls in Badaun, Uttar Pradesh. On this occasion, journalists also contacted IDSN for background information and comparative cases involving Dalit women.

In May, in connection with the visit of two prominent [Dalit leaders to the EU Forum on Human Rights Defenders](#) in Brussels, IDSN also issued a media advisory and profiles of the two leaders.<sup>73</sup> The Human Rights Watch Brussels office

media team assisted with distribution of the advisory to key contacts and subsequently the well-established newspaper New Europe featured an article profiling the two leaders as well as a web television clip and the development journal MO! Magazine also ran an interview.

### Raising awareness of caste-based slavery and manual scavenging

Later in the year the release of the 2014 Human Rights Watch report, '[Cleaning Human Waste: "Manual Scavenging," Caste, and Discrimination in India](#)', gathered substantial media coverage following a close cooperation between IDSN and Human Rights Watch in the run-up to the release and a joint social media campaign on Twitter to promote the report.<sup>74</sup>

IDSN also sent the press release directly with a personal note to several key media outlets with positive responses from Associated Press and others who subsequently covered the issue. In addition, IDSN facilitated contacts for interviews with Dalit activists working on the issue of manual scavenging.

Alongside Dalit women, another key theme in IDSN's 2014 communications work has been on promoting reports and press stories on caste-based slavery across IDSN communications channels. In addition to this, IDSN also contacted journalists around the India launch of the report 'Equality in Aid' on caste discrimination in disaster response, which yielded an article by Reuters.

### Newsletter, social media and a new IDSN website

Subscribers to the IDSN monthly newsletter grew by about 10% while trackable engagement with the content of the newsletter rose by over 30% in comparison to 2013. This is the only newsletter capturing core developments on caste-based discrimination and also UN and EU action on this issue. Increasingly UN and EU officials and EU parliamentarians are subscribing to the newsletter as are other key decision makers.

IDSN members and associates also use the newsletter to stay updated on developments and draw inspiration from the struggle to end caste discrimination nationally, regionally and globally. On average, one IDSN news story was published per week and these stories as well as reports and stories gathered from members, associates and media coverage were published in the newsletters.

The IDSN website continues to be the leading global resource on caste-based discrimination with a particularly strong user base coming from universities and rights organisations with 30,000 unique visitors and 100,000 pageviews in 2014. The website has a global audience with the top ten countries in 2014 visiting the site being India,

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**"Stakeholders find that IDSN has developed an excellent media platform, for combatting caste discrimination ... UN and EU officials make use of IDSN documentation before country visits. Likewise, IDSN members at national level indicated that the newsletter is their newsletter that they feed into from the national level"** 2014 DANIDA Review of IDSN

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United States, Denmark, UK, Netherlands, Nepal, Canada, Germany, Pakistan and Australia. The same global spread in users is seen on the IDSN Facebook page.

Generally IDSN's social media channels have become a base for both internal and external communication with IDSN members and international associates, interacting with IDSN regularly via social media and cross promoting news and documentation. IDSN's Facebook fans rose by 45% to 5788 in 2014 and followers on Twitter increased by 56% with UN officials including Special Rapporteurs, prominent journalists and opinion makers among the new followers.

Views of IDSN's online introductory videos on caste discrimination and on Dalit women, launched in 2011, also rose by 40% to almost 45,000 views. IDSN's older intro video 'I'm Dalit How Are You?' also continues to gather views, now at 181,000. IDSN also maintains an online video playlist library on its YouTube channel with playlists organised both thematically and by countries.

The review of IDSN conducted by the Danish Development Agency Danida commended IDSN on its communication work.

The IDSN Communication Officer also spent much of the second part of the year on setting up a new IDSN website with a greatly improved design, security and a documentation links database that will enable cross-referencing across, themes, countries and programmes. This will make the website an invaluable tool for researchers, activists and officials working on caste discrimination and Dalit rights. The new website will also be optimised for mobile devices to meet the needs of the many users accessing the site via smart phones and tablets. Integration with IDSN's social media channels is also upgraded. The new features will also allow for tailored IDSN documentation to feed directly into the websites of Dalit Solidarity Networks. The website is being launched in 2015.

### Other work

In addition, IDSN liaised with several international filmmakers working on documentaries on caste-based discrimination as well as with key photographers. A dialogue

Dalit children, and particularly Dalit girls, in India have a disproportionately high drop-out rate in relation to primary and secondary education. This has been documented in several 2014 reports on education and the reasons found include discrimination and child labour. Photo by Jakob Carlsen

was established with the Communications team at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which yielded a profile of a Dalit woman human rights defender to be published early in 2015 by the OHCHR as well as new ideas that are planned for the OHCHR to further engage in promoting Dalit rights on their website and social media outlets. IDS<sup>N</sup> also took part in the OHCHR Human Rights day campaign sharing a 'Vine' video on Dalit women.

Finally the production of the IDS<sup>N</sup> annual report and dissemination is also a key task undertaken under the networking and communications programme.

## Regional developments

In 2014, we have witnessed a clear tendency across most caste-affected countries towards the shrinking of space for civil society. In spite of this, political dialogue on caste-based discrimination between government, civil society, politicians and key stakeholders, such as UN agencies and the ILO, and in India private sector entities, has been ongoing.

Several events on caste discrimination took place at the regional level in 2014. One key event was the [People's SAARC](#), an 'alternative' civil society South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) meeting.<sup>75</sup> Here, Dalit leaders and activists from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan came together for several events and workshops to highlight Dalit rights. Meetings of the Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF) and the Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns (APFDC) were also held in connection with this. Dalit rights were subsequently duly included in the final declaration of the People's SAARC.<sup>76</sup>

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**"How can you talk of peace and security without addressing the systemic and systematic exclusionary practices that exist across the region?"**

Paul Divakar, National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) and Chairperson of the Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF).<sup>77</sup>

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At the [APFDC meeting](#) 31 parliamentarians from India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh met to discuss ways forward in addressing caste-based discrimination, regionally and nationally.<sup>78</sup> A keynote address, given by the former Prime Minister of Nepal and Chair of the Constitutional Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee of the Constituent Assembly (CA), Baburam Bhattarai, highlighted the fact that despite constitutional safeguards and progressive legislation to combat caste discrimination,

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**"I would like to appeal to the international policy makers to work towards increased social justice, equality, inclusion and the recognition of human rights. We need to design and develop a common framework for the elimination of discrimination based on work and descent."** Former Prime Minister of Nepal and Chair of the Constitutional Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee of the CA, Mr. Baburam Bhattarai

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South Asian countries were not progressing significantly on this issue.

The release of comprehensive benchmarking studies on the status of Dalits in India, Nepal and Bangladesh vis-a-vis the draft UN Principle and Guidelines on Work and Descent Based Discrimination, were also announced by IDS<sup>N</sup> members from the respective countries, although the digital release is still pending.

The UN-Resident Coordinator's office in Nepal and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights also published a [report](#) in 2014, on the December 2013 Regional Consultation on Caste-Based Discrimination, held in Kathmandu.<sup>79</sup>

Throughout the year network members and associates participated in IDS<sup>N</sup> events at the UN and EU level. IDS<sup>N</sup> works with a range of Dalit rights and human rights organisations in South Asia, and links up with other in-country stakeholders but does not make grants to national level activities.

## India

A Dalit college student fell in love with a woman from a different caste and ended up dead in a well, [body parts chopped up](#) and his parents murdered.<sup>80</sup> The goat of a young Dalit boy wandered into the field of a dominant caste man and the boy was [burnt alive](#).<sup>81</sup> A Dalit girl was [gang-raped](#) and subsequently refused admission to hospital.<sup>82</sup> Two Dalit men who tried to break out of slavery had their [hands chopped off](#) with an axe.<sup>83</sup> An 8-year old Dalit boy enjoyed sweets offered by the local temple and the [priest smashed the boys head](#) into a pillar until it bled.<sup>84</sup>

Killing in the name of inter-caste love, in the name of caste boundaries, in the name of caste domination, or just because you can get away with it. Whichever form it has taken, in 2014, India has witnessed an upsurge in reporting on caste-based atrocities and killings.

The types of crimes and the manner with which they have been dealt has served to underscore the need for



demanding implementation of legislation and amendments, as well as to continue focusing on the deploring conditions for Dalit women and children, and the widespread caste-based slavery in India.

Therefore, much of the work of IDSN's members and associates in India as well as the IDSN secretariat has revolved around these themes. The National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights and a broader coalition have also spearheaded anti-poverty initiatives including through calling for transparency and full implementation of programmes with special budgets for Dalits and indigenous people.

The cases mentioned here are just the tip of the 2014 caste atrocity iceberg, underpinned by extreme brutality, and a lack of protection and justice for the victims. Most frightening, is the seemingly direct correlation between Dalit rights assertions, and the escalation of violent retaliation against them, as well as a rapidly shrinking space for parts of civil society, in particular human rights defenders. Most uplifting, is the spirit with which Dalits in India continue to fight for their rights, undeterred by the threat of increasingly brutal consequences.

### **Dalits fight, despite brutal retaliation**

It is a testament to the determination of the Dalit human rights defenders, that these attacks are not successful in crippling their resistance.

In 2014, Dalits in India have marched, protested, launched petitions, held countless meetings with officials, and engaged with video documentation and social media campaigns. Dalit human rights defenders have fearlessly fought for cases of atrocities against Dalits to be brought to justice. Some facing [torture](#) and false accusations as a result.<sup>85</sup>

Adding insult to injury IDSN members and associates also persistently report on the shrinking space for civil society in India and the harassment of Dalit human rights defenders, including through the police filing false charges against them. This was painfully illustrated when five police officers in Tamil Nadu [brutally tortured a Dalit human rights defender](#).<sup>86</sup>

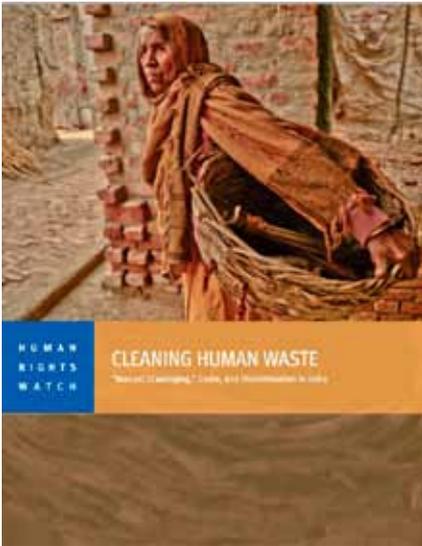
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**“I will raise my voice against any injustice even at the expense of my own life.”** Manisha Devi, a young Dalit activist who has been a leading figure in two month-long marches for Dalit women's rights.<sup>87</sup>

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### **Failure of justice leaving millions with no rights protection**

The enduring failure of justice when it comes to protecting the rights of India's 200 million Dalits is a key obstacle to ending caste discrimination and the structural hierarchies



## Slavery

[HRW Report: Cleaning Human Waste: 'Manual Scavenging', Caste, and Discrimination in India](#)

The report describes the barriers people face in leaving manual scavenging, including threats of violence and eviction, but also threats, harassment, and unlawful withholding of wages by local officials.

"Successive Indian government attempts to end caste-based cleaning of excrement have been derailed by discrimination and local complicity," said [Meenakshi Ganguly](#), South Asia director at Human Rights Watch, "the government needs to get serious about putting laws banning manual scavenging into practice and assisting the affected caste communities.

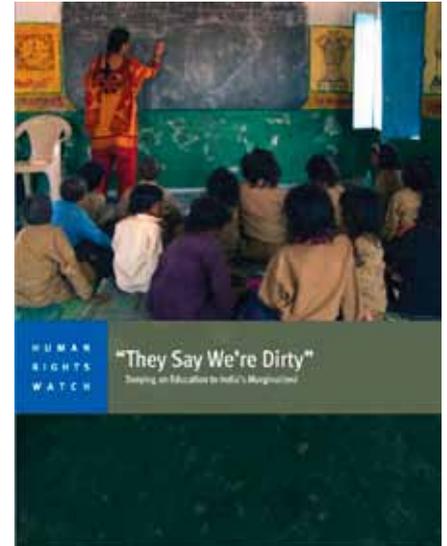


## Slavery

[Harvard Report: Slavery and Child Labour in India's Hand-Made Carpet Industry](#)

The report finds that, "minority castes and ethnic groups remain heavily exploited in India's carpet sector. The fact that 99.9% of cases documented belonged to these communities is a blistering indictment of the country's inability to protect and empower its most vulnerable and disenfranchised citizens."

Spanning hundreds of production sites across nine states in northern India, the study found appalling working conditions endemic to India's carpet sector, including estimated prevalence rates of 45% for forced labour, 28% for bonded labour, and 20% for child labour in the hand-made carpet industry.



## Education

[Human Rights Watch Report: They say we're dirty – Denying an Education to India's Marginalised](#)

The report finds that Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims are most at risk of dropping out of school and being denied an education in India.

The report includes numerous cases of Dalit children who are discriminated against at school to such a degree that they feel forced to drop out. The dropout rate from elementary school for Dalit children is 51% while the national average is 37%. Those who are the worst hit are adolescent girls whose dropout rate is 64% and even higher when the girl is a Dalit, Adivasi or Muslim.

underpinning an entrenched discriminatory mind-set.

A number of reports have been issued in 2014 on the failure of the administration of justice to protect Dalits in India.

Two [comprehensive reports](#) on caste discrimination in the justice system in India find serious obstacles to Dalits obtaining justice.<sup>88</sup> One example is the dismal conviction rate of 2% in cases where rape victims are Dalits – in comparison to a national conviction rate for rape of 25%. Another example is the reply of an Indian court judge to a gang-raped Dalit woman, upon seeing a mobile phone video of the rape. He said, "Great, now you have proof that you enjoyed yourself."

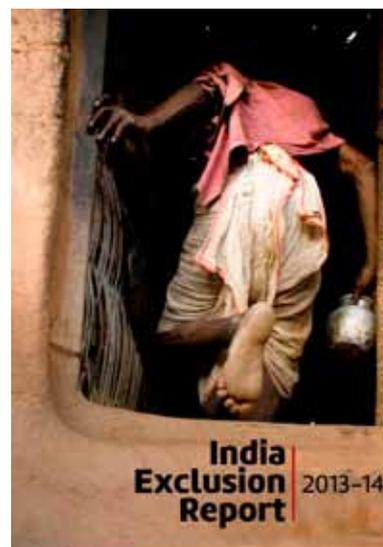
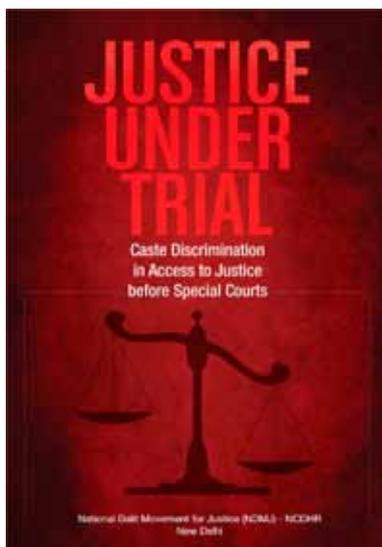
At the state-level, it was reported that in Haryana crimes against Dalits rose 245% in the last decade, that Bihar has seen [a sharp rise](#)<sup>89</sup> in atrocities against Dalits and that atrocities against Dalits were also rampant in [Uttar Pradesh](#)<sup>90</sup> and Madhya Pradesh.

Analysis in 2014 also showed that 60% of money in India budgeted for Dalits and Adivasis (Tribals), has been diverted to other unrelated budget posts.<sup>91</sup>

## Pushing for implementation and amendments of legislation

Much of the work on Dalit rights in 2014, including by IDSN member the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), has been on pushing for the implementation of existing legislation, bringing amendments to the 'Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act' (SC/ST Act) and holding the Government accountable for the large scale diversion of funds meant for Dalits and Adivasis.

Organisations defending the rights of Dalits and Adivasis across India have joined forces in the National level Campaign for Strengthening the SC/ST Act (NCSA) and National Coalition on SCP-TSP Legislation



### Access to Justice

Report: Justice under Trial: Caste discrimination in Access to Justice before Special Courts

A comprehensive 2014 report by the National Dalit Movement for Justice (NDMJ/NCDHR) finds serious obstacles to Dalits obtaining justice in crimes against them and reports growing impunity when victims are Dalits.

The report states that despite the increasing number of atrocities against Dalits, trends across the country indicate that a disproportionately lower conviction rate exists for crimes prosecuted under the Prevention of Atrocities Act than under the Indian Penal Code.

### Access to Justice

Report: Claiming Justice on Atrocities against Dalits

Told directly from victims, witnesses, community members, human rights defenders and public officials, the report 'Claiming Justice: A Study of CSO Interventions in Addressing Atrocities Against Dalits and Tribals in India' analyses over 400 atrocity cases, with 20 in-depth case studies covering atrocities such as murder, rape, mass attack, and land grabbing.

The report finds that state-sanctioned impunity, social and economic oppression, and blatant disregard for the dignity of Dalits resulted in continued acts of violence.

### Exclusion

India Exclusion Report 2013-2014

The comprehensive and highly collaborative report by the Centre for Equity Studies, analyses discrimination across labour, education and housing in India. Within all these areas Dalits, and particularly Dalit women, come out at the bottom of the tables.

"India is inherently prone to exclusion practices that make large quantities of people extremely vulnerable to a sliding path towards destitution. The excluded almost exclusively belong to the suppressed castes, religious minorities and tribal groups. Within these categories, women are perhaps the worst off."

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**"If one uses common sense, the current Prevention of Atrocities Act is stringent and misused. But the government statistics and everyday incidents of brutal and subtle violence against Dalits and Adivasis prove that the Act is simply not working. Perpetrators use ambiguities and loopholes in the Act to evade punishment. An insensitive judiciary and police contribute in their own way to work around the Act."** Ramesh Nathan, General Convener of the National Coalition for Strengthening of SC/ST PoA Act

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(NACSTL) on budgets, to put political pressure on the Government to uphold the country's legislation. The coalitions held high-level meetings with Government ministers and have received reassurances that the

amendment bills would be passed and accountability improved, but as yet this has not been made official.

To further address the roadblocks for implementation of these acts the legal wing of the NDCHR called NDMJ designed two key interventions in 2014; one is to strengthen the justice delivery process at the special court level through an innovative model of Legal Clinics piloted in five special courts, and launching an [Atrocity Tracking and Monitoring System](#).<sup>92</sup>

IDSN have monitored these developments and promoted news and press releases from the coalitions throughout the year as well as taken up the issue with relevant contacts at the UN and EU level.

Other action in India in respect to legislation included an important Supreme Court verdict ordering the full implementation of the act banning the practice of

manual scavenging, and the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment stated commitment to monitor the implementation of the act.

In 2014, justice also fell dangerously short where Dalit women were concerned. Speaking to a global audience earlier this year Asha Kowtal, Leader of the Dalit Women's movement AIDMAM, a part of the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights stressed the need for global support.

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**"Systems of justice meant to protect Dalit women at the national level are completely failing us. We are asking for immediate loud and clear global support in our struggle."** Asha Kowtal, General Secretary of the National Dalit Women's movement AIDMAM

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AIDMAM in fact staged two important month long [marches for Dalit women's rights](#) in 2014.<sup>93</sup> The marches brought together women activists who visited victims of atrocities and held local police and justice systems accountable, demanding that the women's cases be taken up and given justice. AIDMAM also launched a social media campaign in connection with the marches and American Dalit woman filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan documented the march on camera, in order to later produce a documentary.

IDSN supported and promoted the marches, and also helped organize that AIDMAM General Secretary, Asha Kowtal and Thenmozhi Soundararajan came to Europe and reported back on the marches and the situation for Dalit women, in key European countries and in collaboration with IDSN's European Dalit Solidarity Networks. IDSN furthermore supported the social media campaign and included quotes and materials from the march in the 2014 IDSN publication '[Dalit Women Fight!](#)'.<sup>94</sup>

Many other initiatives to support Dalit women in claiming their rights were also launched in India in 2014.

### **Dalit women particularly at risk**

In June 2014, the UN Women policy director, Saraswathi Menon, spoke out passionately against caste discrimination urging the UN to do more to help protect Dalit women and hold Governments accountable.

In the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 2014 review of India, the Committee noted that Dalit women and the lack of implementation of laws were matters of serious concern.

The fact that [Dalit women](#) are easy prey with little or no protection and the escalation of retaliation attacks against Dalits in 2014, also means that Dalit women are increasingly

## **Access to justice**

### **Local police fail to provide access to justice**

**While the global media justifiably were raging about the rape and hanging of two low caste girls in Uttar Pradesh, four young Dalit girls from Haryana were camped out in front of parliament to demand justice. The girls were gang-raped because their community was standing up for land rights. When local police failed to provide the girls with access to claim justice, the girls set up a protest camp in New Delhi, in front of the houses of parliament. This action caused the dominant castes in their village to issue a social boycott against the whole Dalit community, having severe consequences for the livelihoods and jobs of the Dalit villagers.**

vulnerable.<sup>95</sup> They often face multi-dimensional poverty and multiple discrimination. Rape and violence against them is often used to oppress communities who dare to challenge the caste hierarchy.

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**"There is no dearth of evidence to show that Dalit women elected representatives face severe barriers as they perform the role of leaders in governance ... the SC/ST PoA Act is not implemented effectively. Culprits in serious cases like rape and murder are not punished. Caste abuses, stripping and parading of Dalit women in India is not rare."** Justice K.G. Balakrishnan, Indian National Human Rights Commission, CEDAW 2014 review of India

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The 2014 report on India by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against women, Rashida Manjoo, finds that redress for Dalit women victims of violence is very limited and that multiple discrimination is a significant barrier to access to services stating that,

"Numerous allegations were made of de facto caste-based discrimination, perpetrated by police officers, public representatives and community members, with regard to access to services."

The report also highlights that Dalit women engage in dangerous and unprotected work such as manual scavenging.

### **Caste, violence and inequality fuelling slavery and child labour**

Dalit women were also central to the struggle to end the degrading modern slavery practice of manual scavenging. In 2014, Human Rights Watch published the extensive report '[Cleaning Human Waste: Manual Scavenging, Caste, and Discrimination in India](#),' presenting evidence for manual scavenging as a form of modern slavery and holding

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**“While legislation has been adopted to eradicate bonded labour and manual scavenging, reports and interlocutors indicate that there is a consistent failure in the implementation of such laws and a tendency to minimize the significance of the problem.”** UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Rashida Manjoo, 2014 report on India

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government and state-level administration accountable to a lack of implementation of the manual scavenging act.<sup>96</sup>

The UN India cross agency task team on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes also released a report on the need for rehabilitation of manual scavengers who had left the practice and were excluded from other work.

The [Global Slavery Index 2014](#), released by the Walk Free Foundation, singles out India as the country in the world with the most slaves and sees caste at the root of slavery in India.<sup>97</sup>

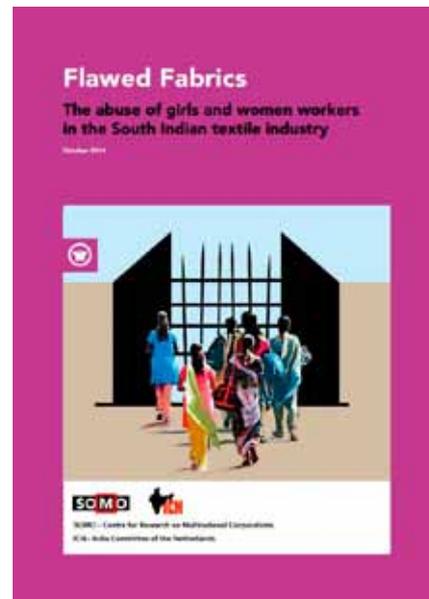
IDSN members and associates have focused in 2014 on combatting caste-based modern slavery, including caste-based prostitution, bonded labour in the agriculture sector, manual scavenging and caste-based modern slavery in the mining, garment, carpet weaving and construction industries. However, as long as ingrained discrimination and stigma continue to be the cause of extreme poverty and lack of opportunities for Dalit families, finding alternative routes for Dalits to engage in, such as education or other employment, is proving difficult to sustain.

Beyond exclusion and the lack of alternatives, intimidation and threats of violence are key in maintaining caste-based slavery. An example of this was when two Dalit men who tried to break out of working in an Indian brick kiln had their [hands chopped off](#) with an axe by their captors.<sup>99</sup>

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**“Traditional caste rules mandate forced labour from certain communities. Caste is one of the foundations of the bonded labour system and remains a key feature of bondage even in non-agricultural industries today. The lack of access to their own land, combined with this expectation to perform free labour and the threat of violence and economic boycott against those who challenge their expected social roles, keeps many Dalit families in bondage and a perpetual state of poverty.”** [India Exclusion Report 2014](#)<sup>98</sup>

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### Report: Dalit girls in modern slavery in India's textile industry

The report '[Flawed Fabrics](#)' following up on modern slavery in Indian spinning mills, finds that despite initiatives launched to end conditions of forced labour, the situation remains alarming. Efforts of clothing brands and retailers to end this, lack scale and conviction. Due to their marginalised status and lack of alternative opportunities, the majority of girls working in these factories are Dalits.

The report released by the Dalit Network Netherlands member, India Committee on the Netherlands ([ICN](#)) and the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations ([SOMO](#)), states that girls as young as 15 are still facing appalling [labour conditions](#), that amount to forced labour, in South India's spinning mills. They live in very basic company-run hostels and are hardly ever allowed to leave the company compound.

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Child labour and caste unfortunately also continue to go hand in hand in India.<sup>100</sup> In connection with the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to one of India's chief campaigners against child labour, Kailash Satyarthi, this issue has again been raised in global media and in expert statements.

In the article 'Poverty and caste fueling child labour in South Asia', in connection with Mr. Satyarthi's Nobel peace prize win, Harvard child labour expert, Siddharth Kara, comments that caste is a key factor underlying child labour in India.<sup>101</sup>

Earlier in 2014 the Dalit Network Netherlands promoted the release of the report '[Flawed Fabrics](#)' documenting the continued use of Dalit girls and young women in modern

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**“Every single child labourer that I have documented comes from a highly impoverished family unit and belongs to a low-caste or minority community.”**

Siddharth Kara, Director of the Program on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery at Harvard University

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slavery under the 'Sumangali Scheme' in Tamil Nadu's textile industry.<sup>102</sup>

In her 2014 statement, 'Stopping the small hands of slavery', Human Rights Watch South Asia Director, Meenakshi Ganguly, also points out that caste discrimination is partly to blame for child labour in India, as discrimination pushes many Dalit children to drop out of education.<sup>103</sup>

This was also a key concern stated in the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) and partners [report](#) to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 2014 review of India.<sup>104</sup> The [review](#) subsequently raised particular concern at the inadequate mechanisms in place to detect and identify minority children, such as Dalits, at risk of becoming victims of slavery and child prostitution, as well as for the unequal access to education, health care, safe water and sanitation and other social services for Dalit children in India.<sup>105</sup>

### **Caste, apartheid, and segregation**

The entrenched structural discrimination underpinning caste inequalities and exclusion has consequences on all levels of life for Dalits in India. Reports in 2014 by UNICEF and Human Rights Watch highlighted caste discrimination in education, and the [India Exclusion Report](#), covering caste inequality in everything from housing to health and access to services, bring ample documentation of the pervasive nature of caste discrimination.<sup>106</sup> The pre-released statistics from the India Human Development survey underscore these findings.

There have been widespread reports in the media and by NGOs of untouchability practices including Dalit children

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**“India denied caste as a factor of gender inequality in the recently held Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing +20. India's reluctance to acknowledge the reality, to accept its responsibility to uphold the legal obligations to address the discrimination and cruelty of the caste system, continues.”** Programme Director of the Human Rights NGO Evidence, Thilagam Ramalingam

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### **Survey**

## **Exclusion and untouchability are widespread and only 5% marry out of their caste**

Merely five percent of Indians said they had married a person from a different caste, and 27 percent of households self-reported engaging in untouchability practices, according to the pre-released findings of The India Human Development Survey, conducted by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and Maryland University.<sup>108</sup> When Brahmins (dominant caste) were asked, 52% self-reported to not allow a Dalit to use their kitchen utensils, a common practice of untouchability.

That only 5% marry outside their caste, is a clear indicator of the perseverance of caste segregation. The survey found that there had been no increase in this number since the survey was last conducted 10 years ago. In Madhya Pradesh state, less than 1% reported marrying outside their caste.

The survey findings on untouchability were particularly stark in some states where untouchability across castes was found to be almost 50% in Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Bihar and just over 40% in Uttar Pradesh. As the survey only documents self-declared practices of untouchability, the true figures are thought to be even higher.

being barred access to schools, Dalits not being allowed to eat and drink with others, being denied land rights, and not being allowed other work than what their caste prescribes. Dalits who defied this have faced severe consequences including being hung in a noose from a tree or being burnt alive.

IDSN and the NCDHR also highlighted caste discrimination in the delivery of humanitarian aid in 2014 with the [New Delhi launch](#) of the 2013 report 'Equality in Aid', financed by the EU through IDSN. The launch gathered aid institutions and the NCDHR '[Inclusive Vulnerability Mapping & Monitoring of Post Disaster Response](#)' manual was launched simultaneously.<sup>109</sup> Following information distributed to journalists by IDSN, the event was covered by Reuters in the article '[Lower-caste people get less aid when disaster strikes](#)'.<sup>110</sup>

### **Stepping up international-level efforts to end caste discrimination in India**

The severity and multitude of reprisals against Dalit human rights defenders in India in 2014, has only served to underscore the need for international level attention and support to the struggle against caste discrimination in India.

IDSN members and associates report that space for civil society in India is shrinking with tight regulations of foreign

contributions for organisations working on Dalit rights and the harassment of Dalit human rights activists and leaders.

While the new Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has made [several national level statements](#) against caste discrimination, these statements appear to be contradictory to the stance taken by India at the International level.<sup>111</sup> This became ever more evident when the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and Association [called out India](#) at the UN General Assembly, for unjustly blocking the UN ECOSOC accreditation of IDSN.<sup>112</sup>

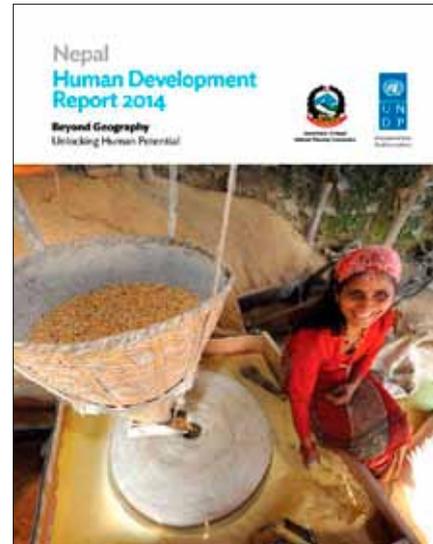
The international level refusal of India to enter into dialogue about caste has not deterred human rights defenders from promoting Dalit rights at the international level. [Speaking at the UN Minority Forum](#) in 2014, Dalit human rights defender and Programme Director of the Human Rights NGO Evidence, Thilagam Ramalingam said despite promises to do otherwise India continued to be in denial when it came to the issue of Dalit women.<sup>113</sup>

Two Indian defenders of Dalit rights Asha Kowtal and Henri Tiphagne took part in the [EU Human Rights Defenders Forum](#) in 2014 and spoke to the European press about the need for international action.<sup>114</sup> In addition to their tour of Europe, Asha Kowtal and Dalit woman filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan also appeared on stage at the renowned ['Women in the World Summit'](#) to speak out on violence against Dalit women in India.<sup>115</sup>

As a part of the newly established Asia Dalit Human Rights Forum (ADRF), Dalits from India also organised numerous events at the People's SAARC in Kathmandu at the end of 2014, to highlight caste-based discrimination. Indian Parliamentarians also form part of the [Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns](#), which held an important meeting in Kathmandu in connection with the People's SAARC.<sup>116</sup>

Indian representatives of ADRF also participated in the 2nd World Reconstruction Conference, held at the World Bank Group headquarters, advocated recognition of caste at the Sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Bangkok, and contributed with input to the [post-2015 development agenda](#).<sup>117</sup>

Throughout the year, Dalits in India have also connected with leading figures from the American civil rights movement – and solidarity actions have taken place. The similarities between the Dalit struggle for their rights with historical uprisings against discrimination, have also prompted figures such as Jesse Jackson to declare empathy with the Dalits and speak up against caste discrimination in a 2014 lecture in New Delhi.



### UNDP 2014 Nepal report

[The UNDP Nepal Human Development Report](#) released in May 2014, found Dalits and Muslims in Nepal to be at the bottom of development tables on all fronts including education, poverty and health.

## Nepal

The work of IDSN members, associates and the broader network in Nepal in 2014, revolved around political dialogue and mobilisation, and implementation of the Anti-Caste Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act, in addition to work on Dalit women's rights, caste-based slavery and access to services and rights for Nepal's Dalits. Alliances are also being built to foster inclusion of more non-Dalits in the struggle for Dalit rights.

Dalit women marched and united to fight for their rights and Dalit civil society organisations held consultations with politicians and officials on the implementation of legislation, budget allocations and creating awareness to change the public attitude towards Dalits in Nepal.

Political concerns included the risk of losing gains made in the previous Constitutional Assembly, including provisions on proportional representation and special rights for Dalits. Despite national legislation, forbidding caste-based discrimination and the practice of caste-based slavery in Nepal, discrimination persists and Dalit human rights defenders report a serious and widespread lack of enforcement and implementation of laws to protect Dalits.

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**"While welcoming the adoption of the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act in 2011, the Committee remains concerned at the lack of its effective implementation and the persistence of de facto discrimination against the Dalit community."** Concluding observations of the 2014 UN review of Nepal in the Human Rights Committee (CCPR)

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Gore Sunar, a 55 year-old Dalit man, has worked in bonded labour for 25 years because of loans. With no agreement on interest rates, Gore gets no salary and works just to keep his four landlords happy so that they won't ask for repayment. Caste-based forced and bonded labour continues to plague Nepal. It is seen in the agricultural sector, but also in domestic labour and other industries. Photo by Jakob Carlsen

The 2014 UN review of Nepal in the Human Rights Committee (on civil and political rights, CCPR), also raised concern about the lack of implementation of the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act.

Only 22 judgements have been made since its enactment and Dalit organisations call for an amendment of the law, inter alia to ensure penalty efficiency. Furthermore, a key problem found is also that Dalits, and state officials, generally lack awareness of the legislation.

Implementation of policy initiatives to address caste discrimination, especially at the local level is insufficient or lacking, partly due to inadequate resources and traditional mind-sets in communities and the bureaucracy. State institutions also remain behind in effectuating inclusion policies, and importantly in reporting on inclusion of Dalits in government services, military, police and as teaching staff.

In order to create awareness the Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organisation (NNSDWO), the Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO), the Dalit media organisation JMC and others organised a 12-day anti-discrimination campaign. The campaign celebrated the state's commitment towards ensuring equal rights for Dalits, by creating pressure and providing policy feedbacks to agencies for fair and effective implementation of the law. The campaign also served to create public awareness about laws for combating caste-based discrimination and promoting collective action among key stakeholders.

The continued campaigning takes place in a difficult environment of political fragmentation, resulting in a much delayed Constitutional process, and the weakening of some human rights institutions including the National Dalit Commission (NDC), whose effective operation is still pending enactment of a bill. The NDC remains a politically appointed body with little autonomy and few resources. On a more positive note, the National Human Rights Commission took important steps to expand its work on caste-based discrimination.

### **Dalits at the bottom of poverty and development tables**

The ineffectiveness of measures to boost the social and economic standing of Dalits also became apparent in two key reports published in 2014, singling out Dalits as one of the worst off groups in Nepal.

The UNDP Nepal Human Development Report 2014 found Dalits and Muslims in Nepal to be at the bottom of development tables on all fronts including education, poverty and health. The report emphasizes that,

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**“Social sector policies need to recognize the caste and ethnic dimensions of human development. Clear and ongoing caste and ethnic inequalities are revealed in different educational achievements and earnings. This strengthens the argument for deliberate strategies to increase inclusiveness by providing educational and economic opportunities for disadvantaged ethnic and caste groups such as the Dalits and Muslims.”** The UNDP Nepal Human Development Report 2014 <sup>118</sup>

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Dalits also reign at the bottom of the scales in the Nepal Multidimensional Social Inclusion Index, by Tribhuvan University's Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology.<sup>119</sup> The Index attempts to encompass all aspects of life and is a composite derived from six other indices: social, economic, political, cultural, gender, and social cohesion.

Across all counts, Dalits are faring very poorly in Nepal and gender discrimination is also high across castes. There is a glaring gap between especially Tarai Dalits, and their dominant caste countrymen from the same region when it comes to all dimensions of the index.

The reports also found that Dalit women ranked particularly low as they were victims of multiple discrimination.

### **Dalit Women mobilise against intersectional caste and gender discrimination**

This fact was also highlighted by the UN Women Representative and acting UN Resident Coordinator, Ziad Sheikh, in his keynote speech at a conference on Dalit women in 2014, organised by FEDO.

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**“When, for example, you are a Dalit woman, you face double discrimination leading to social, political and economic exclusion and often worse. As we know, this is a reality in Nepal.”** UN Women Representative and acting UN Resident Coordinator, Ziad Sheikh

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The conference was organized to sensitize Government, political parties, civil society and related stakeholders on Dalit women's human rights issues and agenda, push for the inclusion of Dalit women's issues in the new constitution and discuss the major challenges Dalit women face from the local to the national level.

Around 300 Dalit women from across the country, Dalit non-governmental organizations, Dalit intellectuals,



Feminist Dalit organization, human rights organizations, Government, political parties, international non-governmental organizations, donor agencies, the UN, the EU and journalists participated in the conference. The IDSN Executive Director also participated and spoke at the conference.

Major themes discussed were the status of violence against Dalit women; media monitoring of violence against Dalit women, political participation and Constitution making as well as the socio-economic status of Dalit women.

Throughout the year many in the network worked on Dalit women's rights in Nepal and Dalit women from Nepal took part in IDSN interventions in the UN, including in the IDSN UN side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women the role of the UN in combatting caste-based violence and discrimination.'

At the side-event, Durga Sob, President of the Feminist Dalit Organisation in Nepal, explained that the UN has played a significant role in uplifting the situation of Dalit women in Nepal, for instance, through the presence of the former OHCHR office. She expressed the need for the OHCHR to organize training to enhance and strengthen the capacity of Dalit women and the need for a Regional Consultation on caste-based discrimination with a thematic focus on Dalit women. She also mentioned the important role that UN Women could play in Nepal to support Dalit women and that the UNDP and UN agencies should mainstream the issue of Dalit women and non-discrimination as a crosscutting issue.

Another crosscutting issue in Nepal, that legislation has also not been a sufficient deterrent of, is caste-based slavery, which continues to persist, particularly in the form of bonded labour.

### **Caste-based slavery continues to plague Nepal**

IDSN's international associate, the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), published a [submission](#) to the UN Human Rights Council in 2014, to highlight caste-based slavery in Nepal.<sup>120</sup>

With a particular focus on the form of bonded-labour in the agricultural sector termed Haliya, Haruwa and Charuwa. The AHRC points out that workers, sometimes in generations, are working to pay off small loans with no repayment plans and that there is no transparency as to when their loans may be considered repaid. Often their children inherit the loan.

Government figures in Nepal find that over 10% of Dalits in the far western region of Nepal are found to be in this type of debt-bondage and suffer ill health, extreme poverty, and lack of access to services and opportunities.

The AHRC also raised concern that there are no proper schemes in place for rehabilitation of Haliya workers in Nepal. This means that those who break free of the practice are often left with no alternative sources of livelihood due to discrimination in employment and lack of training.

Concern over Dalits in bonded labour in Nepal was also brought into high-level political dialogues between civil society and key state and international actors.

### High-level political dialogue

Civil society organisations in Nepal working on Dalit rights have held numerous consultations and meetings with members of the Constituent Assembly, those drafting the constitution and relevant ministers, officials and politicians.

While there is a will to push for improvements in implementation and inclusion of Dalit rights in the upcoming constitution, the political establishment seems to pay less attention to this issue of caste discrimination and political parties generally remain disinclined to promote Dalit leadership and issues within their parties.

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**“Only passing laws against caste-based discrimination and untouchability is not enough to end the deep-rooted social ill. Now, time has come to integrate both Dalit and non-Dalit activists in the movement against caste-based discrimination.”** Rem

Bahadur Biswokarma, JMC, Dalit rights activist

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Late in the year, a [high-level consultation workshop](#) on the implementation status of UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations concerning caste-based discrimination was held at the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (OPMCM) in Nepal.<sup>121</sup>

The workshop enabled a constructive dialogue among 40 participants; government officials from the OPMCM and 10 line ministries, representatives of the police and the army, the Attorney General’s office and national human rights institutions, Dalit civil society organisations and IDS.N.

Rikke Nöhrind, Executive Director of IDS.N, facilitated a session on international human rights standards and measures for effective elimination of caste-based discrimination and Yam Bahadur Kisan, Social Inclusion Expert, addressed the outcomes of the ongoing UPR consultations on six major marginalised communities. Other speakers included Bhakta Bishwakarma, President of NNDSWO and Anshu Manav from FEDO who presented core issues and the implementation status of UPR recommendations, including those specifically related to the rights of Dalit women and girls.

The Government representatives acknowledged the gaps in implementation highlighted by the civil society pointing to key barriers such as the lack of awareness among both officials and the general public of the legislation addressing caste-based discrimination. Officials also acknowledged that

the mechanisms in place to implement these laws were not yet fully functional and stressed the importance of enhancing the reporting culture on caste discrimination.

Civil society representatives recommended the development of a National Action Plan for the Elimination of Caste Discrimination and Untouchability and a road map for its implementation. Rikke Nöhrind suggested taking guidance from the UN human rights system, and establishing multi-stakeholder cooperation between the government, the UN Country Team, national human rights institutions, civil society and bilateral and other multilateral donors for a concerted effort.

The workshop is seen as an important stepping stone in the dialogue between state and non-state actors on how to work together to end caste-based discrimination.

Another key event in Nepal in 2014 was the [People’s SAARC](#), an ‘alternative’ civil society South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) meeting.<sup>122</sup> Here, Dalit leaders from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan came together for several events and workshops to highlight Dalit rights. Meetings of the Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF) and the Asian Parliamentarians’ Forum on Dalit Concerns (APFDC) were also held in connection with this.

## Pakistan

A defining event in the 2014 struggle for the rights of Dalits in Pakistan was the [mass protest](#) of 15,000 Hindus, the majority of them Dalits, through the streets of Karachi.<sup>123</sup> The march was organised to push for the provincial Government of Sindh in Pakistan to meet their demands for provisions to stop escalating discrimination against Hindus in the region.

The protest came following a string of attacks on non-Muslim communities in the form of murders, kidnappings, forced conversions and attacks on places of worship.

The demand paper presented by the protesters to the Government included a number of key actions to be taken to end the discrimination and attacks lodged at scheduled caste Hindus. Protesters also demanded an urgent

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**“A combined effect of low education levels, exclusion from family decision making processes and a lack of property rights make Dalit women vulnerable to labour exploitation and bondage. Rape of female bonded labourers is widespread and violent, and there is little legal recourse.”** UN minority Forum Statement of Purbhu Lal Satyani, Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN)

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investigation into the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Thar desert to address the social, economic and political root-causes of the issue in order to bridge the growing discontent in the region.

The protesters furthermore urged the government to implement the landmark verdict of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, announced in May 2014, in which the apex court has asked the government to constitute a National Council for minorities' rights, to form a Special Police Force for the protection of worship places of minorities and remove hate material from the school curriculum. They demanded that measures be taken to implement all the recommendations including enforcement of the relevant policy directives regarding reservation of quota for minorities in all the government services.

This protest sums up many of the core issues that IDS and the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) have been working on in Pakistan this year. To draw the attention of the UN Special Rapporteurs to the many serious issues faced by Dalits in Pakistan, IDS and PDSN submitted a [briefing note](#) to them ahead of their annual meeting in September 2014.<sup>124</sup> Purbhu Lal Satyani, of the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) also formed part of the IDS team participating in the UN Minority Forum in November, where he delivered a [statement](#) on violence against Dalits and religious minorities in Pakistan.<sup>125</sup>

### **Dalit women struggle for freedom from captivity and abuse**

An upsurge in forced conversions and marriage of Dalit girls into Muslim families, kidnappings and enslavement of Dalit women has been witnessed in 2014. Captivity, enforced by the use of violence, is a key issue for Dalit women in Pakistan. The women have little or no access to justice or protection and are therefore considered easy prey.

Dalit women working in bonded labour in Pakistan's brick kilns and similar industries are often considered the property of landlords and raped and abused by them. Landlords are also often involved in arranging marriages for Dalit girls of bonded labourers and exercise control of most aspects of the workers lives.

### **Breaking out of caste-based slavery remains a dream for most Dalits**

It is estimated that there are several hundred thousand Dalits working in bonded labour in Pakistan. Bonded labour is particularly common in the areas of agriculture, brick-making, carpet-weaving, mining, tanning, cotton seed production, handicraft production, production of glass bangles, and domestic work.

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**“A weak rule of law, widespread corruption, and poverty reinforce political, social, and economic structures of modern slavery in Pakistan. Underpinning this are culturally accepted practices that are tantamount to modern slavery... This reinforces perceptions that lower caste groups are not equal citizens and subsequently limits policy and service provisions tailored to their needs.”** 2014 Global Slavery Index by the Walk Free Foundation

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A 2014 expert [seminar](#) on bonded labour in Pakistan heard that labourers were denied basic rights of free movement, education and health facilities and reasonable wage and that in most cases the situation was that of modern slavery.<sup>126</sup> Experts also pointed out that while brick kiln production has been declared an industry, their workers were still not given the status of industrial workers and they were not covered under the labour laws, and not receiving social security or other benefits.

The 2014 Global Slavery Index released by the Walk Free Foundation also pointed out that lower caste groups in Pakistan are not seen as equal citizens and therefore are not protected through policies and other provisions and their enslavement is culturally sanctioned.<sup>127</sup>

An inspirational story of a Dalit woman, Veeru Kohli, was reported in the media in 2014, as an example of a woman with unimaginable courage who broke free from slavery and is now fighting for others to do the same.<sup>128</sup> She told her story in a Pakistani television special on bonded labour where Zulfiqar Shah of the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) also participated.

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**“My husband, my children and I were kept separate from each other... My daughter was dying of starvation because the landlord whose field I was working on was not paying me anything. When I confronted them, they beat me up.”** Veeru Kohli, Dalit woman and former bonded labourer, now working to help others escape

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Breaking out of slavery for Dalits in Pakistan is extremely difficult and bears a significant risk for those who try, and also there are no proper rehabilitation schemes in place for the freed slaves.

### **Dalit children starve to death in the Thar Desert**

Starvation and hunger is a real threat to many Dalits in Pakistan, particularly those in the Thar desert, which is



often hit by droughts. Network members and associates, especially PDSN and the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) have worked for many years to highlight disaster preparedness in relation to drought in the region, but despite their efforts little has been done by the state. In 2014, PDSN raised the alarm again in March when more than 100 children starved to death in the Thar desert, many of them Dalits.<sup>129</sup>

A number of NGOs pointed out that authorities were culpable over the failure to provide the Tharparkar region with adequate healthcare and infrastructure to prevent this situation recurring year after year.

PDSN demanded that the government allocate adequate funds for establishing medical care and that mobile medical units be sent to the desert areas to save human lives. They also asked that the government chalk out a long-term socio-economic development programme for the Thar desert, focusing on marginalized communities such as scheduled castes so they are less affected in the future. IDSN covered this in a news story and spread this to relevant disaster relief actors working in the region.<sup>130</sup>

Despite promises from the Government to act, little was done and later in the year in September Dalit children were again dying in the Thar desert, due to a new drought.<sup>131</sup> PDSN issued a press release calling for action and IDSN reported on this and spread the news through the IDSN network and political and media channels.

In a media report, Sono Khangarani of the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN), called for coordinated efforts to replace broken promises, commenting on the need to prioritize the health and nutrition of the children, establishing systems for early warning, equitable distribution of relief for humans and livestock, and ensuring water security in the specific environmental context. He called for NGOs, Government and agencies to coordinate and work together to make sure the situation is not repeated.

### **Dalit human rights defenders at risk in Pakistan**

Reports from PDSN throughout the year have made it clear that Pakistan is becoming increasingly difficult from the perspective of Dalits and religious minorities. Protection of the rights of vulnerable groups is not materializing on paper and the existing protections are not implemented.

Human rights defenders working on Dalit rights are threatened and intimidated and may be targets of false charges, accusations and mistreatment by the police and authorities.

PDSN is working in a very challenging and difficult environment and are looking towards international mechanisms for support. Nonetheless, they continue to undertake fact-finding missions, speak out publically on Dalit rights issues, work to end bonded labour and organise protests, seminars and press events to raise awareness and push for action.

In 2014 drought in the Thar desert of Pakistan killed more than 100 children, many of them Dalits. The Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network took action to attract media attention to the disaster and facilitate relief for the victims, calling upon Government and NGOs to work together in a concerted effort. Photo by Jakob Carlsen

## Bangladesh

Dalits in Bangladesh continue to exist on the margins of society. The focus of the struggle for Dalit rights in 2014 was on fighting discrimination through securing legal protection and advocating for the socio-economic development and political rights of Dalits. Dalit women's issues were also addressed on several occasions and a campaign on the International Day for the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination helped create mass awareness of Dalit human rights in Bangladesh.

### Demanding the enactment of the Anti-Discrimination Law

In order to strengthen legislative measures to protect Dalit rights, IDSN member the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) submitted a draft anti-discrimination law to the Bangladesh Law Commission, which was subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Law. BDERM continued to lobby with Government and parliamentarians for the enactment of this bill and other key Dalit rights issues. This included holding a consultation with 10 parliamentarians who committed to furthering Dalit rights. BDERM also maintained strong links to the National Human Rights institutions in Bangladesh, to further push for the rights of Dalits.

Several events and marches were staged to push for the enactment of this law by BDERM, the Bangladesh Dalit Parishad (BDP) and Parritrans (Dalit rights NGO), including a colourful rally and human chain in Dhaka in connection with Human Rights Day and World Dignity Day.

The need for the enactment of the new anti-discrimination law in Bangladesh, was also brought to the attention of the United Nations. Speaking at the IDSN co-organised UN Human Rights Council side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women,' Afsana Binte Amin, of BDERM, asked for international support to further this law.

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**"We are demanding an antidiscrimination act for Dalits in Bangladesh. Civil society organizations and the National Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh along with the Law Commission have submitted the draft law to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Bangladesh. We wish for the international communities to encourage our government to pass the law."** Afsana Binte Amin, speaking at the 2014 IDSN UN side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women'

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Other speakers at the side-event also highlighted the plight of Dalit women in Bangladesh and the need for action to protect Dalit women's rights.

### Dalit women's issues addressed nationally and internationally

Indications of "... high levels of violence against women from religious and ethnic minority communities, with Dalits, Hindus and indigenous groups most at risk," were documented in the country visit report on Bangladesh, released in 2014, by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Rashida Manjoo. The report also stated that the rate of rape is higher for minority women in Bangladesh because they are considered "double infidels" for being women and also for being part of a religious minority.

In 2014, the National Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh, assisted by BDERM, organized a seminar on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that analysed the situation of Dalit women. Members of the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Women Federation (BDEWF), a national platform of Dalit women organisations, organised meetings with key Dalit leaders and Panchyats (village councils) and the federation's Annual Conference.

Dalit woman leader, Moni Rani Das, spoke at several seminars on Dalit rights throughout the year. In December, Moni Rani Das also travelled to Kathmandu to meet with other Dalit women leaders from Nepal and India and take part in several events in connection with the people's SAARC. Several of the events specifically addressed Dalit women's rights and intersectional caste and gender discrimination.

### Joining forces regionally through the Asia Dalit Rights Forum and Parliamentarian's forum

Moni Rani Das, Zakir Hossein and other Dalit human rights defenders from BDERM were also in Kathmandu in connection with a meeting of the newly established Asia Dalit Rights Forum. In connection with the people's SAARC in Kathmandu, a benchmark meeting of the [Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns](#) was held, with participation of five parliamentarians from Bangladesh.<sup>132</sup>

In Kathmandu, the release of a benchmarking study on the status of Dalits in Bangladesh vis-a-vis the draft UN Principle and Guideline on Work and Descent Based Discrimination was announced, although the digital release is still pending.

### Spotlighting access to water, sanitation, housing, budgets and education for Dalits

In order to address the severe issues faced by Dalit communities in Bangladesh in relation to access to water,



sanitation, housing, budgets and education, BDERM organised a number of seminars.

These included the seminar 'Housing and Land Rights: Accessibility and Realities of Dalits in Bangladesh', where stakeholders met to discuss ways forward. Recommendations issued included ensuring permanent housing for Dalits, proper monitoring by the Government of funding meant to reach Dalits, and conducting a survey and mass awareness raising campaign on Dalit rights.<sup>133</sup>

In 2014, BDERM submitted a memorandum to the Finance Ministry demanding special allocation in the national budget for Dalit communities. The Government has subsequently allocated funds to build houses for Dalit cleaners in divisional cities and funding for social safety nets in 22 districts.

BDERM also jointly organised the seminar 'Water and Sanitation: Access and Reality of Dalit Community.' Speakers at the seminar noted that Dalit communities were suffering from an acute crisis of safe water. They also observed that this underprivileged section of the society had very little access to sanitation.

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**"We do not like this lifestyle, but there is no option. Nobody will rent us houses in other areas."** Jony Das, resident in a Dalit colony

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A seminar was also organized on 'Rights to Education for Dalits' with participation of educators, civil society representatives and Dalit leaders. Throughout 2014, BDERM has been lobbying for the admission quota in higher education. In response to this work, six public universities enacted admission quotas for Dalit students in the 2014-15 academic year.

Despite Dalits having more access to education than previously, many young Dalits comment that discrimination continues to be a barrier to employment. The literacy rate is far below that of the general population, assessments go as low as 10%, underpinning Dalit representatives' call for official surveys and in-depth studies on the socio-economic conditions of Dalits in Bangladesh.

## Dalit Solidarity Networks in Europe

The Dalit Solidarity Networks (DSNs) in Europe have been actively campaigning for public, corporate and political awareness of caste discrimination and for action to be taken to end it. All DSNs also participated in the IDSN strategy process and Council meeting and DSN-Norway and UK are represented on the IDSN board.

Several DSN members took part in IDSN lobby events in Geneva and Brussels during the year, including in the IDSN co-organised UN side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women.' Core thematic priorities of the IDSN on

Young Dalit women in a sweepers' colony in Bangladesh. In 2014 members of the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Women Federation (BDEWF) included many young Dalit women, and the federation organised meetings with political leaders and an annual conference on Dalit women. Photo by Abir Abdullah

Dalit women and caste-based slavery were also clearly reflected in the work of the Dalit Solidarity Networks.

### **Dalit Solidarity Networks raise awareness of Dalit women's rights**

A key event in 2014 for many DSNs was when Asha Kowtal, General Secretary of the National Dalit Women's movement in India (AIDMAM), and Dalit filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan, brought the campaign to end violence against Dalit women, to European decision-makers and public gatherings. The events were organised in DSN countries by the respective Dalit Solidarity Networks and supported and partly coordinated by IDS N. The two women spoke at a number of significant events in Europe<sup>134</sup> to report back on the Self-respect march for Dalit women in India and the struggle for Dalit women rights.<sup>135</sup>

In Finland, the two women gave a talk at the renowned World Village Festival for development cooperation, attended by approximately 80,000 people. Together with representatives of the DSN-Finland the two women met Finnish front line politicians, among them Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja and Minister for International Development Pekka Haavisto. They also spoke about violence against Dalit women with Members of the European Parliament, Sirpa Pietikäinen and Heidi Hautala, former Minister for International Development. With the help of volunteers, many of them exchange students from India or Nepal, the DSN-Fi was able to distribute information on caste discrimination to thousands of people in Finland. More than one thousand signed a petition in which they expressed their support for the work against caste discrimination.

In Norway, Kowtal and Soundararajan were key speakers in a seminar on multiple discrimination and caste discrimination hosted by NORAD (the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) – organised by the Dalit Solidarity Network in Norway.<sup>136</sup> In addition, meetings were organized with the International Association of Women in Radio & Television, the Oslo Documentary Cinema, Amnesty International Norway and representatives of the Asian Section and the Human Rights Section of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. DSN-Norway also facilitated several noteworthy media interviews.

In the UK, the two women headlined a seminar on 'Caste-based Sexual Violence & Dalit Women's Self Respect March' at SOAS, University of London and in Denmark a seminar on confronting caste-based sexual violence in India, at Copenhagen University.

In the Netherlands, the programme included a well-attended public meeting, meetings with women's organizations, an interview in a major newspaper, a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a meeting with a Dutch

MP. Four MPs subsequently raised parliamentary questions on sexual violence against Dalit women in India.

A booklet in Dutch was published on violence against Dalit women and member of the DNN network, India Committee on the Netherlands (ICN), gave several press interviews on the issue. DNN also published an exclusive interview with prominent Dalit women activist Manjula Pradeep and around 25 specific articles on Dalit women on the DNN website. There was generally strong media coverage in newspapers and on websites of sexual violence against Dalit women and on Dalit girls in the textile sector, largely based on input by ICN/DNN.

### **Calling for action on caste, modern slavery and business**

A major event in the Netherlands at the cross section of Dalit women and caste-based slavery, was the release by the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) and the India Committee on the Netherlands of the report 'Flawed Fabrics'.<sup>137</sup> The report finds that predominantly Dalit girls and young women are victims of modern-day slavery and child labour in the Indian textile sector, of which a considerable number works in the supply-chain of western brands like Primark, C&A, H&M, Mothercare and HanesBrands.

The report received wide publicity, around 200 articles worldwide, including on the front page of a major Dutch newspaper and on the websites of The Guardian and Vogue.<sup>138</sup> Some brands like Primark and H&M, as well as the certifying organization SA 80000, reacted positively and promised improvements. Parliamentary questions were raised in the Dutch Parliament and twice in the European Parliament by MEPs and the Dutch Minister of Trade and Development Co-operation raised the issue in a dialogue with her Indian colleague, Minister of Women and Child Development.

Regarding the Dutch National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, a parliamentary question was raised on combating caste-based discrimination as part of the CSR policy of Dutch and European companies and mandatory inclusion of improving the position of Dalits in the India-EU Free Trade Agreement. The answer regarding the CSR policy was that caste-based discrimination is a violation of human rights, that the government expects companies to implement the OECD Guidelines and "the due diligence that companies have to perform includes looking at their direct or indirect risk to be involved in caste-based discrimination, also in their supply chain. Based on the insight gained companies have to implement a policy to combat existing discrimination and the chance that they might be involved in discrimination".<sup>139</sup> On Dalits and the India-EU FTA, the



answer was that the discussion on the inclusion of human rights in the trade agreement will take place in the last phase of the negotiations.

In the UK, work also continued on highlighting Sumangali modern slavery schemes in Tamil Nadu's textile production sector, especially through DSN-UK's work with the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). DSN-UK are involved in the ETI's Sumangali group – including the initiative of the Tamil Nadu Multi Stakeholder Group. As part of this work DSN-UK have started a three-year programme in Tamil Nadu to address the forced labour of girls in the spinning mills supplying the textile industry. The project is supported by TRAIT.

DSN-UK is also the main NGO involved in the ETI Rajasthan Stone Group working with the mining sector and human rights abuses in the stone supply chain in Rajasthan, where the workers are predominantly Dalits. DSN-UK Director, Meena Varma, presented the topic at an Ethical Trading Initiative side event at the UN Business and Human Rights Forum. The event was well attended and many of the questions after the presentations were about addressing caste discrimination in international supply chains.

Meena Varma also gave a presentation in Norway at the DSN-Norway and Norwegian Ethical Trading Initiative (IEH) seminar 'Tackling caste discrimination in the supply chain,' to raise awareness of this issue with Norwegian businesses. The seminar was a sequel to the seminar 'Better Business without Caste Discrimination' organized in 2013.

The meeting was well attended by businesses engaging in trade with partners in caste-affected countries, mostly India. The response among the attending companies was good. The DSN-Norway member organization Rafto Foundation has allocated means to follow up this work with research in India aiming to locate consultants for Norwegian businesses, enabling them to avoid discrimination by caste, and hopefully also to actively recruit partners or suppliers belonging to castes otherwise excluded from the opportunities offered by Norwegian companies.

In Norway, work on sensitization of the Norwegian business community, which has a growing presence in caste-affected countries, to various local varieties of caste-based discrimination, was generally a priority.

The DSN-Denmark similarly engaged in work with the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative and helped organize a push for special attention to be paid to caste-based discrimination in the work of the ETI. Due to work on media sensitization to the issue of caste discrimination, increased media attention to caste discrimination was a significant feature of 2014 for DSN-Denmark.

On six different occasions, live TV-interviews covered the issue with a starting point in current events. High profile cases of violence against women in India was an opportunity to highlight caste-based violence against Dalit women, and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Kailash Satyarthi opened for a discussion on the relationship between caste and bonded/child labour.

President of the Feminist Dalit Organisation in Nepal, Durga Sob, speaks at a meeting in Norway organised by the Dalit Solidarity Network in Norway. Throughout the year Dalit Solidarity Networks in Europe invited Dalit women and men from caste-affected countries to speak at events and in dialogue meetings with relevant Government officials and agencies. Photo by Dalit Solidarity Network, Norway

During his visit to Denmark in May, Indian human rights defender Henri Tiphagne was interviewed by a major national newspaper and by a national news TV channel about the Indian election and implications for Dalit communities. Henri Tiphagne also participated in DSN-Denmark meetings with Danish officials and MPs, and met the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Per Stig Møller.

In Finland, work on highlighting caste-based discrimination in relation to Finnish business operating in or sourcing from caste-affected countries continued. The Finnish Dalit Solidarity Network also made a Finnish language factsheet on the report on manual scavenging, released by Human Rights Watch, and distributed this to specialists in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Embassy in India.

### Lobbying for Government concern over caste discrimination

Generally DSN-Finland played an active role in highlighting caste-based discrimination at several seminars and events held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs throughout the year. DSN-Finland was also able to get one question about caste discrimination inserted into the voting machine operated by the NGOs prior to the European Parliament election in the spring 2014. This revealed that eight of the thirteen elected Finnish MEPs agreed that it is the EU's task to raise discrimination issues, such as caste discrimination, with developing countries.

Throughout 2014, all the DSN countries have worked to further political inclusion of concern for Dalit rights in the strategies and actions of their respective Governments.

In Norway, the Norwegian DSN submitted input to relevant political processes to push for Government concern and acknowledgement of caste-based discrimination. A roundtable meeting with Norwegian organizations working in Nepal, with the introduction of Durga Sob from the Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) Nepal, was also held, focusing on women and Dalit issues in Nepal. DSN-Norway and Durga Sob had separate meetings with relevant civil society organizations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.

DSN-Norway continued to urge the Norwegian government to include explicit reference to and analysis of caste issues in all relevant activities relating to caste-affected countries, to include caste as an independent concern in their articulation of the human rights strategy for the operation of the Norwegian foreign services, and to lobby for caste issues to be included in the activity of foreign services in international fora.

One result of this work was the inclusion of a specific passage on caste discrimination in the Norwegian

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**“Discrimination based on caste constitutes a major problem in countries with caste systems. An estimated 260 million people are affected, mainly in Asia and Africa. An example is sexual violation of lower caste women used to maintain control by a higher caste, and to ensure their ownership of all types of resources, from real estate to information. Ineffective judicial systems often imply impunity for the perpetrators. Police belonging to lower castes may be powerless to act against abusers of higher caste, widespread corruption makes many complaints are not registered, and episodes are increasingly reported where girls are also raped by police when they report a rape. Norway is working to increase awareness about caste issues in international fora.”** Section on caste discrimination in White Paper of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Government's white paper 'Opportunities for all – human rights as means and end in foreign and developmental politics.'

In addition to the aforementioned political work in the Netherlands on Dalit women and slavery, the position of Dalits was raised at various occasions in the Dutch Parliament through parliamentary questions and contributions to the parliamentary debate including on business and human rights, Dalit women, slavery and child labour. The questions and the ensuing answers are a result of political lobbying by the Dalit Network Netherlands through letters to Parliament and the Minister of Trade and Development Co-operation and direct contacts and meetings with a number of MPs and officials from the Ministry, including from the human rights, CSR and trade mission sections.

The Dalit Network Netherlands and ICN/DNN also participated in the IDS-N advocacy meeting in Brussels with around ten officials of the European Commission and took part in the EIDHR Forum on Human Rights Defenders together with IDS-N and Dalit leaders from India. ICN/DDN informed new Dutch members of the European Parliament of Dalit rights issues and urged inclusion of the topic in parliamentary reports.

Political lobbying was also at the centre of the DSN Germany's (DSID) work in Germany. Dalit leader from the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, Paul Divakar as well as Dalit activist, Ajay Kumar Singh, visited Germany and had meetings with decision makers from the German Parliament as well as from the German Federal Foreign Office. Discussions focused on the severe implementation

The 2014 Dalit women's self-respect march in India was brought to a European audience when General Secretary of the National Dalit Women's movement in India (AIDMAM), and Dalit filmmaker Thenmozhi Soundararajan, reported back from the march at events and meetings organised by Dalit Solidarity Networks in Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark and in Sweden. Photo by Thenmozhi Soundararajan/ AIDMAM

gaps in the administration of justice, the Tribal Sub-Plan, the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and the Prevention of Atrocities Act. The dialogue partners noted the topics with great concern and voiced a continued interest to be kept informed about developments. Ajay Kumar Singh also met members of the German Catholic Church and discussed religious freedom in India as well as caste discrimination, which persists within the Indian church.

DSiD also co-organised a side event on the occasion of the 27th session of UN Human Rights Council. Three Indian guests discussed "Preventing Religious Violence in India: Challenges and Prospects of Managing Diversity" together with Prof. Dr. Heiner Bielefeldt, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. With 90 participants, it was a well-attended event.

In the UK, high-level political lobbying has also been central to DSN-UK's work in 2014.

### Struggle for enactment of caste clause in UK equality legislation continues

One of the key struggles in the UK political work on caste-discrimination continues to be for the enactment of the caste discrimination clause of the UK equality legislation. The Government's announcement of an unprecedented 2 year consultation period on the clause came as a disappointment to UK Dalits. This consultation was to include further research commissioned by the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and a public consultation to take place after the aforementioned study. The timetable as set out means that the clause would not effectively be implemented before the next General Election of 2015.

In February 2014, the Equality and Human Rights Commission completed their tranche of the timetable by the publication of two reports on Caste in Britain, 'A socio-legal review' and 'An experts and stakeholder workshop'. Both reports confirm that caste discrimination "cannot be tolerated and should be included in the protections against discrimination and harassment provided in the Equality Act 2010". The reports also question the proposed sunset clause

stating that: "for a non-discrimination ground is legally without precedent and goes against this key differential"

The Government Equalities Office, having received these reports early in January 2014 was to draft the questions for the consultation by February 2014, followed by a draft Affirmative Order in Autumn 2014. A public consultation is yet to be issued, over nine months behind schedule.

### UK Parliamentary Group for Dalits and key political debates on caste

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Dalits chaired by Lord Harries continued to ask questions to the Government with regard to caste discrimination globally and more specifically regarding the legislation in the UK. An adjournment debate also took place at Westminster Hall on Caste Discrimination in the UK.<sup>140</sup> Lord Harries has followed up on caste discrimination in the international context and recently wrote to the then Foreign Secretary and Chancellor in advance of their trip to India to meet Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. The DSN-UK Director continues to coordinate the All Party Parliamentary Group for Dalits in a personal capacity.

An All Party Parliamentary Group for British Hindus was launched. This group is serviced by the Hindu Lawyers Association, a key member of the Alliance for Hindu Organisations and vocal opponents of the caste legislation.

The UK Government's action on tackling caste discrimination in India was also the topic of a debate on the 26th November in the UK House of Lords.<sup>141</sup> Many Lords spoke out passionately against caste-based discrimination and asked that the UK Government in its relations with India take up fighting caste-based discrimination. In the debate many Lords raised grave concerns for the human rights of Dalits in India.

In her response to the debate, Baroness Northover, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for International Development (DFID), expressed faith in the many recent promises by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to pursue equality but also expressed concern at the gravity of the situation.

DSN-UK also joined the Voice of Dalit International Charity Organisation (VODI) at the meeting of BOND, a network of UK based NGOs working in international development, seeking to foster greater collaboration on issues such as training, advocacy and fund raising. The main action from the meeting was to agree to form a special interest group within BOND membership on Dalits and caste discrimination. The members of the group would be invited from the INGOs working in India and South Asia, as well as those who have a human rights or a Dalit focus. This

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**"The enforced silence around caste-based apartheid now extends as far as the UK ... the trap of caste-based apartheid that has ensnared millions of people across the world still grips, and its grip threatens fundamentally the democracy of those states that tolerate it, not least the world's largest democracy."** Aidan McQuade, Director of Anti-Slavery International, speaking at the Annual General Meeting of the Dalit Solidarity Network UK (DSN-UK)

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**“Statistics on caste discrimination show that these groups, particularly Dalit households, continue to perform worse than others. For example, mortality rates for Dalit children are 50% higher than those for children born in other families. Only one out of three Dalit girls completes five years of schooling compared to half in other communities,”** Baroness Northover, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for International Development (DFID)

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resulted in the passing of a BOND motion specifically on caste discrimination.

### **Awareness raising, exhibitions and events**

In addition to the events mentioned as part of the work on Dalit women, caste-based slavery or political lobbying, many Dalit Solidarity Networks also carried out other events and exhibitions to raise public awareness of caste-based discrimination.

In Finland, a translated version of photographer Jakob Carlsen's exhibition for IDSN on Dalits in South Asia was on public display at universities and in events that for example included an introduction on caste-based discrimination before the screening of “Light fly, fly high” about a Dalit woman boxer, at the film festival “Human Rights – Human Wrongs”.

DSN-UK co-hosted the screening of the film FANDRY on 21 July at SOAS. Professor David Mosse introduced the film and the Director Nagraj Manjule. The theatre was full and with about 200 people there for the screening. The DSN-UK Director chaired the post-film Q&A. DSN-UK's work was also presented at the Methodist Women in Britain event 'Caste out', highlighting the programme of 'forced labour of Dalits in the textile industry'.

In Germany, DSiD has participated in an international consultation on 'Caste and Church: Retrospection, Challenges, Way forward' organized by the National Council of Churches in India. Discrimination of Dalit Christians, inside and outside the church, as well as challenges of Dalit women and youth within the church, was discussed and a strategy plan was formed.

DSiD regularly published articles in the German magazine “Südasiens”. In India, DSiD also took part in organizing

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**“This house recognises that caste and discrimination based on 'work & descent' actively contribute to the structural causes of poverty and inequalities among Dalits and other excluded communities. It calls for Bond members to express solidarity and work towards addressing this problem as appropriate.”**

Bond, Network of UK NGOs working on international development

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the annual seminar on the topic "Gender, Violence and Society". Together with the pastor Pearly Walter, Dalit leader Manjula Pradeep and Bishop Pushpalalitha, the participants discussed the role of women and men in the Indian society and the intersection of caste and gender.

In Belgium, awareness raising activities have been focused on the youth sector in 2014, both at school and movement levels. Using the main IDS N exhibition "260 million reasons to act" in several schools, teenagers have discovered the harsh reality of caste-based discrimination in South Asia, while making the link with similar discriminations in their own environment and analyzing the causes of their marginalization. Regular updates of the Website [www.dalit.be](http://www.dalit.be) have helped in communicating with a broader audience and introducing the question of caste discrimination in South Asia as well as the knowledge of Dalit leaders like Dr. Ambedkar to a broader French speaking audience.<sup>142</sup> And here as well, Solidarité Dalits Belgique tries to address younger generations in particular.

In Sweden the exhibition 'Voice of the Voiceless' was organised to promote awareness of Dalit rights and culture, and a seminar was held in connection with Asha Kowtal and Thenmozhi Soundararajan's tour of Europe.

Many Dalit Solidarity Networks are also actively raising awareness through social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter and through regular website updates and newsletters.

## Organisation and finances

### A year of reviews and change

The year was marked by substantive reviews and organisational development, leading to an adjusted governing structure and a new, broadly consulted IDS N strategy for 2015-2018. Furthermore, IDS N moved to new offices.

In 2012, the IDS N Executive Group initiated a strategy process, and a first strategy discussion at IDS N Council level took place in February 2013. After almost 10 years since the establishment of IDS N, it was time for a review of IDS N as an

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**"IDS N works with a standardized, firm, well-established and recognized methodology, which includes a range of products and approaches used for servicing the various stakeholders. Methods include systematic documentation based on input from partners and other sources in caste affected countries and international bodies, monitoring, lobbying, face-to-face interaction with stakeholders as well as meetings and workshops, with participation of representatives of Dalits and other NGOs from caste affected countries"** 2014 Review of IDS N by Danida

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organisation and network, for discussions on strategies and pathways ahead; and to position IDS N for future challenges and opportunities. Over the years, IDS N has gradually expanded its scope of work and institutional outreach; and collectively built awareness, political influence and support for the cause of securing Dalit human rights, with a considerable impact.

In 2014, IDS N embarked on the final leg of a strategy development process. This was informed by the findings and outcomes of an external review conducted early in the year and based on responses from IDS N members and associates to a comprehensive questionnaire in June. The review and strategy processes provided unique opportunities to review experiences and achievements, and further enabled alignment of vision, strategies and expectations.

These processes confirmed the relevance of IDS N's mandate, mission and aims, and effectiveness of IDS N's strategic focus and programmatic work. The reviews were characterised by a high degree of consistency in respondents' views on programmes and strategies, with a strong majority recommendation for maintaining the overall strategic programme focus, and provided the basis for the development and adoption in December of a new IDS N strategy 2015-2018, and revised statutes.

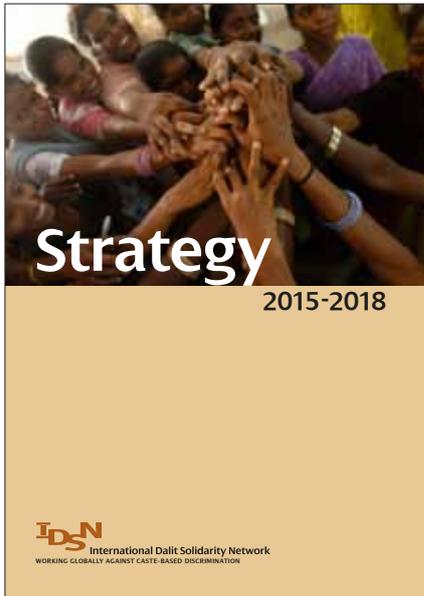
### External and Internal Reviews

From January to March 2014, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Danida undertook a [review of IDS N](#)<sup>143</sup>, carried out to assess IDS N's activities, and the relevance and effectiveness of its strategies and programmes in the period 2009-2013. The review was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a team of consultants from the consultancy group COWI. It included desk studies and analyses of verifiable indicators as well as stakeholder interviews with the EU, UN, and state officials, as well as members in caste-affected countries and Dalit solidarity networks in Europe.

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**"The focused and shared objectives, members with a high degree of ownership, NGOs with the same or similar goals and focus as IDS N, strong partnership networks, and EU and UN stakeholders that have a high degree of respect for IDS N, make up the glue and ensure coherence and strong loyalty to IDS N"** – 2014 Review of IDS N by Danida

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The [IDSN Strategy 2015-2018](#) was adopted in December 2014.

One of the strengths highlighted in the external review is the unique role of IDSN as the only international human rights NGO that systematically targets the EU and UN on caste-based discrimination, in solidarity and cooperation with NGOs from caste-affected countries, solidarity networks and international human rights NGOs.

The team concluded that IDSN has been instrumental in increasing attention to the issue of caste discrimination in international bodies and organizations, and that the network is recognised internationally for its working methodology, including a systematised and persistent documentation process, lobby work, mapping of stakeholders as well as monitoring and follow-up on specific issues. IDSN is, furthermore, commended for its strong and comprehensive communication platform.

In both the external and the internal reviews, the UN and EU were found to be of key importance in putting international pressure on caste-affected countries to address caste-based discrimination for new measures, a higher level of political commitment, and effective implementation of laws, policies and additional measures.

The DANIDA review team noted some challenges to IDSN, in particular surrounding sustainable long term funding. The team recommended that IDSN revise and update statutes and bylaws, and carry out a systematic strategy process. It also offered recommendations to donors; to make new and existing contracts longer term and rolling and lasting a minimum of three years.

Finally, the review team noted that the workload is high and that “if it would be possible for IDSN to obtain more funding, the organisation would profit from adding one or two staff members more that could assist in strengthening the organisation.”

The internal review led by the IDSN Executive Group was based on a collation and analysis of responses from IDSN members and associates to a comprehensive questionnaire sent out in June. As mentioned above, respondents showed a high degree of consistency and coherence in replies both on assessment of the value and strategic direction of IDSN, governance issues as well as new immediate and long-term priorities. A summary of collated responses was shared with IDSN council members and associates, and results taken into the strategy development process.

### IDSN 2015-2018 strategy

The development of the 2015-2018 IDSN strategy was informed by the findings and outcomes of the external and internal review, accompanied by an internal strategy development process inspired by U-theory and Theories of Change.<sup>144</sup> The strategy sets out IDSN’s vision, mission, values and approach as well as priorities and opportunities for future development.

With a point of departure in a results-based management frame, the strategy outlines how IDSN will pursue work in three main programme areas: 1) United Nations, 2) European Union and 3) Communication, Networking and Campaigning. The work will continue to be carried out from a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), with leeway to adjust or fine tune institutional targeting according to political opportunity. IDSN’s approach in 2015-2018 relies on methodologies that have been reviewed to work within UN, EU and Communication and Networking programmes.

Crosscutting thematic strategic priority is given to the intersectionality of gender and caste-based discrimination and violence against Dalit women, and that of caste, forced and bonded labour, also linked to the business and human rights agenda.

Collective action and widening of the range of actors promoting an end to caste-based discrimination through campaigns and events-based collaboration forging alliances with existing and new collaborative partners and members will be emphasised.

The strategy further sets out long-term organisational change objectives related to 1) gradually expanding membership and capacity of the network; 2) enhancing cross-cutting thematic work and; 3) securing long term financial sustainability.

Additional long-term priorities have been set, including broader public awareness raising initiatives and campaigns, and engagement of high-level champions for the cause, which, however, can only be effectuated, if additional long term funding can be secured.

## Adjusted organisation and expanded membership

On 19th December, IDSN adopted a new strategy, and an adjusted organisational model and revised statutes. The revised organisational model restructures IDSN governance and redefines membership and affiliation with a gradual phasing in of the adjusted structure. IDSN will in future have changed membership criteria for organisations from caste-affected countries and a category of affiliates.

The organisational model builds on the existing structure of IDSN, delegates policy approval and decision making to an elected IDSN Board, and establishes a General Assembly of members and associates, who meet every third year. The year 2015 will be a year of gradual transformation. Interim governing arrangements with the current Executive Group have been approved by the Council and will be functioning until a General Assembly can be called later in 2015.

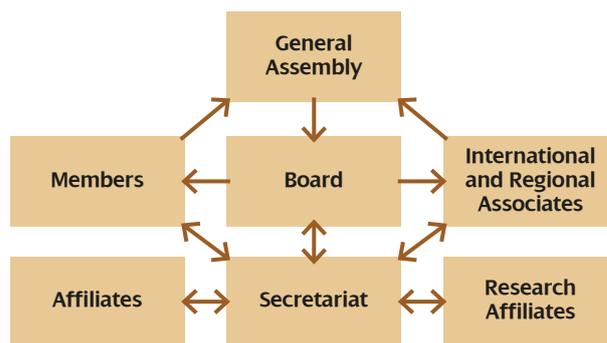
Membership from organisations in caste-affected countries will no longer be tied to a national platform structure. The membership base will gradually be expanded with up to five new national level organisations or networks per year. This opens up opportunities for bringing in more members and new active partners working at different levels and with expertise in a variety of fields. The categories of Dalit solidarity network members and international or regional associates are retained.

As part of a commitment to broadening its base and reach, IDSN introduces a new category of affiliates. IDSN affiliates shall only be from organizations actively engaged in the grassroots from a caste-affected country or country in solidarity with the cause, or may be a research affiliate. Prospective affiliate organisations will need an invitation from an IDSN member. The board approves of new members and affiliates based on applications received and relevance of the organisation or institution nationally to the promotion of Dalit rights and to IDSN's international work.

## Council meeting

At the 11th IDSN Council meeting, held in Geneva on 7-8 November, members from Dalit platforms and Dalit solidarity networks (DSNs), and international and national associates of IDSN discussed the findings of the external and internal reviews, the new strategy and proposals for adjusted organisational structure and revised statutes.

At the Council meeting, the opening speech was made by Rory Mungoven, Chief of the Asia Pacific section of the OHCHR, who congratulated IDSN for its achievements and for raising the profile of the issue of caste-based discrimination to a new level. He expressed appreciation for the cooperation with IDSN and noted that the issue of



IDSN governance structure

caste-based discrimination has been internalised as a core part of the OHCHR's work on discrimination, and articulated specifically as a key headline in the action plan of the office. Katia Chirizzi, Human Rights Officer from the OHCHR, echoed Rory Mungoven's strong appreciation of IDSN work.

While most part of the Council meeting was dedicated to strategy discussions and other organisational business, it also provided space for sharing information among participants on developments and strategic interventions in affected countries, regionally and internationally.

Following the meeting, a brief final amendment and review process took place and the new strategy and revised statutes were formally adopted on 19 December.

## Executive group (EG)

In February, IDSN's executive group was joined by a new member, Henri Tiphagne, Director of People's Watch-India and Convenor of the Working Group on Human Rights in India and the UN.

The Executive Group thus had the following members in 2014:

- Manjula Pradeep, Navsarjan Trust, India – Co-convenor
- Meena Varma, Dalit Solidarity Network, UK – Co-convenor
- Paul Divakar, National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, India
- Durga Sob, Feminist Dalit Organisation, Nepal
- Sandra Petersen, Dalit Solidarity Network, Norway
- Henri Tiphagne, People's Watch, India
- Rikke Nöhrhind, IDSN, Ex-officio member

The frequency of EG meetings was higher than usual due to the internal review and strategy processes. Members

## Governance

### Revised structure and statutes

**With the adoption of revised statutes and a modified structure in December 2014, IDSN has created the possibility for expansion of membership and affiliation and simultaneously simplified IDSN governance with a Board and General Assembly to create a more efficient mode of working together.**

**The adjusted structure of IDSN opens up for increased engagement with a broader base of collaborative partners enabling IDSN to pursue collective action by IDSN stakeholders more strategically based for example on action research, thematic calls or presentation of cases of gross human rights violations, that are particularly apt for reaching out to the public and the political establishment.**

met in Geneva in March, Copenhagen in September and again in Geneva in November and conducted several SKYPE meetings. Furthermore, members engaged in development tasks in between meetings.

### ECOSOC Application

As described in the UN section of this report, the IDSN application for ECOSOC consultative status – now the longest pending application with the UN Committee on NGOs – became subject of severe criticism by UN Special Rapporteurs.<sup>145</sup> Since IDSN first submitted its application for this status to the Committee on NGOs in 2007, we have received 65 written questions from India, resulting in continuous deferral of the application.

At the UN General Assembly meeting on 28th October, the UN Special Rapporteur on the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai, criticised India for arbitrarily blocking IDSN from obtaining UN consultative status calling it “clearly unacceptable, wrong and unfair.”<sup>146</sup> Maina Kiai suggested a reform of the NGO Committee “to ensure that unjustified blocks of legitimate human rights organisations such as IDSN do not occur”.

The obstruction of the granting of ECOSOC consultative status to IDSN continues to pose challenges to IDSN’s legitimate work with the UN. IDSN has addressed the issue in exchanges with high-level officials of the UN, the EU, and states and co-signed a letter by 10 NGOs to ECOSOC

members on unwarranted deferrals of NGO applications by the NGO Committee. On several occasions, IDSN was approached by researchers, desiring to include the IDSN ECOSOC case in their research on UN multilateral mechanisms.

### Secretariat

In August, IDSN moved office as the rental agreement with MS/Action Aid expired. After months of searching for appropriate and affordable office space, offices with Save the Children Youth at a convenient location were secured.

The Secretariat was staffed by Executive Director Rikke Nöhrind, Programme Officer Maia Ingvardson, Communications Officer Maria Brink Schleimann, Assistant UN Programme Officer Marie Gertz Schlundt (partly in a subsidized position), and part-time bookkeeper Peter Søb Pedersen. Towards the end of the year, a part time student assistant joined for specific website tasks.

As noted by the DANIDA review team, the secretariat has a high workload, which unfortunately could not be off-set by additional staff resources due to uncertainty of both short and long term funding. The multiple functions of the small team and the additional tasks in 2014 put a strain on staff. Nevertheless, general activity levels were high and also included multiple travels to Nepal, Geneva and Brussels, for meetings, networking and lobby interventions, most of which involved IDSN members, associates or other alliance partners from South Asia.

### Finances

In 2014, IDSN sustained its core programmes with the long-standing partnership of DANIDA, Bread for the World, the Open Society Foundation, ICCO, CCFD, DanChurchAid, and since 2013, the Swiss organisation HEKS. In 2014, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined the donor group. IDSN wishes to express its gratitude and sincere appreciation of the highly valued support and cooperation extended by the group of funders.

Programme and budget management were to some extent affected by the uneven phasing and granting procedures of donor agencies, which makes long term planning challenging, as also pointed out by the DANIDA review team. However, in spite of uncertainties well into the year on actual grants, IDSN managed to carry out a considerable amount of activities, which ensured tangible outcomes. A modest balance was carried forward at the end of the year, i.e. unspent funds due to late notification and receipt of some grants for 2014, and reduction of some budgeted programme costs due to repeated cancellation of expected participation of Dalit representatives, mainly from Pakistan, in UN and EU related events due to visa difficulties.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2014

### Profit and loss

| (Details in note 1)                | 2014<br>DKK         | 2014<br>EURO      | 2013<br>DKK         |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Opening balance                    | 493,124.18          | 66,191.17         | 616,418.62          |
| <b>Income</b>                      |                     |                   |                     |
| Admin for EU/DCA project           | 0.00                | 0.00              | 0.00                |
| DanChurchAid                       | 250,000.00          | 33,557.05         | 375,023.37          |
| Bread for the World 2013           | 401,857.00          | 53,940.54         | 722,179.90          |
| Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 550,000.00          | 73,825.50         | 223,431.00          |
| Danida                             | 1,000,000.00        | 134,228.19        | 1,000,000.00        |
| HEKS                               | 422,010.90          | 56,645.76         | 413,868.90          |
| CCFD                               | 163,737.00          | 21,978.12         | 109,159.15          |
| ICCO                               | 223,515.00          | 30,002.01         | 223,395.00          |
| Open Society Institute             | 218,852.00          | 29,376.11         | 0.00                |
| European Commission                | 0.00                | 0.00              | 548,952.72          |
| Other Income                       | 1,775.81            | 238.36            | 2,047.57            |
| Membership fees recd. for DSN-DK   | 32,500.00           | 4,362.42          | 51,873.60           |
| Interest                           | 1,013.11            | 135.99            | 896.44              |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>3,265,260.82</b> | <b>438,290.04</b> | <b>3,670,827.65</b> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 | <b>3,511,403.12</b> | <b>471,329.28</b> | <b>3,794,122.09</b> |
| <b>Balance</b>                     | <b>246,981.88</b>   | <b>33,151.93</b>  | <b>493,124.18</b>   |

### Balance statement

| (Details in note 1)             | 2014<br>DKK       | 2014<br>EURO     | 2013<br>DKK       |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                   |                   |                  |                   |
| Cash at bank at 31.12           | 993,420.32        | 133,345.01       | 1,040,944.45      |
| Rent deposit                    | 0.00              | 0.00             | 35,829.00         |
| Petty cash                      | 16,043.67         | 2,153.51         | 11,344.40         |
| Outstanding accounts            | 21,450.17         | 2,879.22         | 46,618.65         |
|                                 | 37,493.84         | 5,032.73         | 93,792.05         |
| <b>Liabilities</b>              |                   |                  |                   |
| Balance Master Card account     | -15,133.16        | -2,031.30        | -11,539.09        |
| Compulsory holiday payment fund | -267,306.79       | -35,880.11       | -273,893.30       |
| Norway MFA received for 2015    | -366,639.14       |                  |                   |
| Outstanding accounts            | -134,853.19       | -18,101.10       | -356,179.93       |
|                                 | -783,932.28       | -105,225.81      | -641,612.32       |
| <b>Balance carried forward</b>  | <b>246,981.88</b> | <b>33,151.93</b> | <b>493,124.18</b> |

The financial statements are presented in Danish kroner.

For reasons of comparison, amounts in Euro are presented, using a fixed exchange rate based on a monthly average from [www.inforeuro.eu](http://www.inforeuro.eu): 7.45

Hence, some discrepancies may appear compared to actual amounts received in Euro.

### Note 1

| Profit and loss                        | 2014<br>DKK         | Core programme<br>DKK | EU project<br>DKK  | DSN-DK<br>DKK    | Reserve<br>DKK    |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Opening balance                        | 493,124.18          | 360,730.39            | -213,939.02        | 421.78           | 345,911.03        |
| <b>Income</b>                          |                     |                       |                    |                  |                   |
| DanChurchAid                           | 250,000.00          | 250,000.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| Bread for the World 2014               | 401,857.00          | 401,857.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| Norway MFA 2014                        | 550,000.00          | 550,000.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| Danida                                 | 1,000,000.00        | 1,000,000.00          |                    |                  |                   |
| HEKS                                   | 422,010.90          | 422,010.90            |                    |                  |                   |
| CCFD                                   | 163,737.00          | 163,737.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| ICCO                                   | 223,515.00          | 223,515.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| Open Society Institute                 | 218,852.00          | 218,852.00            |                    |                  |                   |
| European Commission                    |                     |                       |                    |                  |                   |
| Membership fees recd. for DSN-DK       | 32,500.00           |                       |                    | 32,500.00        |                   |
| Other Income                           | 1,775.81            | 1,775.81              |                    |                  |                   |
| Interest                               | 1,013.11            | 972.73                | 40.38              |                  |                   |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>3,265,260.82</b> | <b>3,232,720.44</b>   | <b>40.38</b>       | <b>32,500.00</b> | <b>0.00</b>       |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                     | <b>3,511,403.12</b> | <b>3,424,932.19</b>   | <b>55,181.58</b>   | <b>31,289.35</b> |                   |
|  | 246,981.88          | 168,518.64            | -269,080.22        | 1,632.43         | 345,911.03        |
| Transferred to the reserve, Danida     |                     | -46,896.05            |                    |                  | 46,896.05         |
| Transferred to the reserve, Norway MFA |                     | -25,792.83            |                    |                  | 25,792.83         |
| <b>Balance</b>                         | <b>246,981.88</b>   | <b>95,829.77</b>      | <b>-269,080.22</b> | <b>1,632.43</b>  | <b>418,599.90</b> |

### Balance statement

|                                 | 2014<br>DKK       | Core programme<br>DKK | EU project<br>DKK  | DSN-DK<br>DKK   | Reserve<br>DKK    |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                   |                   |                       |                    |                 |                   |
| Total Bank accounts             | 993,420.32        | 628,825.37            | 609.70             | 18,074.22       | 345,911.03        |
| Rent deposit                    | 0.00              | 0.00                  |                    |                 |                   |
| Petty cash                      | 16,043.67         | 16,043.67             |                    |                 |                   |
| Outstanding accounts            | 21,450.17         | 6,450.17              |                    | 15,000.00       |                   |
|                                 | 37,493.84         | 22,493.84             |                    | 15,000.00       | -                 |
| <b>Liabilities</b>              |                   |                       |                    |                 |                   |
| Balance Master Card account     | -15,133.16        | -15,133.16            |                    |                 |                   |
| Compulsory holiday payment fund | -267,306.79       | -267,306.79           |                    |                 |                   |
| Norway MFA received for 2015    | -366,639.14       | -366,639.14           |                    |                 |                   |
| Outstanding accounts            | -134,853.19       | 166,278.52            | -269,689.92        | -31,441.79      | 0.00              |
|                                 | -783,932.28       | -482,800.57           | -269,689.92        | -31,441.79      | 0.00              |
| Fund balance brought forward    | 0.00              | -72,688.87            | 0.00               | 0.00            | 72,688.87         |
| <b>Balance carried forward</b>  | <b>246,981.88</b> | <b>95,829.77</b>      | <b>-269,080.22</b> | <b>1,632.43</b> | <b>418,599.90</b> |

DKK 366,639.14 received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norway in 2014 allocated for use in 2015 is registered under liabilities.

The reserve includes funds to cover legally binding employer obligations.

**EXPENDITURE 2014**

|  | Budget<br>DKK | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|--|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
|--|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|

|  | Budget<br>DKK | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|--|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
|--|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|

**Communication, networking and coordination**

## General staff expenses

|                      | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Staff training       | 35,000         | 33,022             | 4,698         | 4,433              |
| Insurance            | 40,000         | 30,918             | 5,369         | 4,150              |
| Other staff expenses | 40,000         | 4,174              | 5,369         | 560                |
| Holiday allowance    |                |                    |               |                    |
| Finance officer      | 90,000         | 76,297             | 12,081        | 10,241             |
| <b>Subtotal</b>      | <b>205,000</b> | <b>144,411</b>     | <b>27,517</b> | <b>19,384</b>      |

## Office costs

|                         | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Cost of moving office   | 40,000         | 36,075             | 5,369         | 4,842              |
| Rent                    | 155,736        | 134,851            | 20,904        | 18,101             |
| Office supplies         | 26,000         | 15,280             | 3,490         | 2,051              |
| Postage and freight     | 16,000         | 4,375              | 2,148         | 587                |
| Hospitality expenses    | 2,500          | 2,558              | 336           | 343                |
| Telecommunication       | 20,000         | 14,638             | 2,685         | 1,965              |
| Materials/memberships   | 2,000          | 1,738              | 268           | 233                |
| Equipment               | 5,000          | 10,139             | 671           | 1,361              |
| Bank                    | 19,000         | 13,288             | 2,550         | 1,784              |
| Office cleaning         | 18,000         | 8,757              | 2,416         | 1,175              |
| Salaries administration | 3,000          | 5,702              | 403           | 765                |
| Audit                   | 40,000         | 97,976             | 5,369         | 13,151             |
| <b>Subtotal</b>         | <b>347,236</b> | <b>345,379</b>     | <b>46,609</b> | <b>41,517</b>      |

## IT

|  | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|--|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| IT service                                   | 14,000         | 21,313             | 1,879         | 2,861              |
| MS IT service/internet connection            | 5,880          | 5,639              | 789           | 757                |
| Software license                             | 20,000         | 24,531             | 2,685         | 3,293              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                              | <b>39,880</b>  | <b>51,483</b>      | <b>5,353</b>  | <b>6,911</b>       |
| <b>Total administration and office costs</b> | <b>592,116</b> | <b>541,273</b>     | <b>79,479</b> | <b>72,654</b>      |

## Communication

|                               | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR  | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Website                       | 5,000          | 6,162              | 671            | 827                |
| Tech. Assistance website      | 200,000        | 148,398            | 26,846         | 19,919             |
| Publicity & Publications      | 100,000        | 83,899             | 13,423         | 11,262             |
| Campaign and activity support | 35,000         |                    | 4,698          |                    |
| Travel                        | 30,000         | 34,030             | 4,027          | 4,568              |
| Communications officer        | 494,134        | 509,035            | 66,327         | 68,327             |
| <b>Subtotal</b>               | <b>864,134</b> | <b>781,525</b>     | <b>115,991</b> | <b>104,903</b>     |

## Governing bodies

|   | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|---|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Executive group meetings, travel        | 76,000         | 64,048             | 10,201        | 8,597              |
| Executive group meetings, venue/lodging | 25,000         | 60,873             | 3,356         | 8,171              |
| Council meetings, travel                | 120,000        | 80,788             | 16,107        | 10,844             |
| Council meetings, venue/lodging         | 170,000        | 100,923            | 22,819        | 13,547             |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                         | <b>391,000</b> | <b>306,632</b>     | <b>52,483</b> | <b>41,159</b>      |

|   |                  |                  |                |                |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Programme management and implementation                 | 463,339          | 466,059          | 62,193         | 62,558         |
| <b>Total communication, networking and coordination</b> | <b>1,718,473</b> | <b>1,544,591</b> | <b>230,667</b> | <b>207,328</b> |

**UN Programme**

## UN Human Rights Council

## Interventions at Council sessions

|                               | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Travel, affected country reps | 77,000         | 37,246             | 10,336        | 4,999              |
| Travel, secretariat           | 12,000         | 8,915              | 1,611         | 1,197              |
| Food                          | 27,300         | 33,038             | 3,664         | 4,435              |
| Accommodation                 | 54,000         | 66,596             | 7,248         | 8,939              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>               | <b>170,300</b> | <b>145,795</b>     | <b>22,859</b> | <b>19,570</b>      |

## UN Human rights mechanisms

|                  | Budget<br>DKK | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Travel           | 39,000        | 25,657             | 5,235         | 3,444              |
| Accommodation    | 25,000        | 29,407             | 3,356         | 3,947              |
| Food/consumption | 12,740        | 14,047             | 1,710         | 1,886              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>  | <b>76,740</b> | <b>69,111</b>      | <b>10,301</b> | <b>9,277</b>       |

## UN Treaty Bodies

|                               | Budget<br>DKK | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Travel, affected country reps | 20,000        | 6,338              | 2,685         | 851                |
| Travel, secretariat           | 3,000         | 0                  | 403           | 0                  |
| Food                          | 6,000         | 1,593              | 805           | 214                |
| Accommodation                 | 12,000        |                    | 1,611         |                    |
| <b>Subtotal</b>               | <b>41,000</b> | <b>7,930</b>       | <b>5,503</b>  | <b>1,064</b>       |

|   |                |                |               |               |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| ECOSOC application                      | 15,000         | 5,535          | 2,013         | 743           |
| UN follow up/capacity building          | 30,000         | 17,079         | 4,027         | 2,292         |
| UN Research & support                   | 10,000         |                | 1,342         |               |
| Programme management and implementation | 388,653        | 436,257        | 52,168        | 58,558        |
| <b>Total UN Programme</b>               | <b>731,693</b> | <b>681,707</b> | <b>98,214</b> | <b>91,504</b> |

**EU Programme**

## Lobby interventions

|   | Budget<br>DKK  | Expenditure<br>DKK | Budget<br>EUR | Expenditure<br>EUR |
|---|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Travel, affected country reps           | 28,000         | 20,182             | 3,758         | 2,709              |
| Travel, secretariat                     | 15,000         | 8,192              | 2,013         | 1,100              |
| Food                                    | 20,475         | 12,968             | 2,748         | 1,741              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                         | <b>103,975</b> | <b>53,449</b>      | <b>13,956</b> | <b>7,174</b>       |
| Programme management and implementation | 500,412        | 542,647            | 67,169        | 72,838             |
| <b>Total EU Programme</b>               | <b>604,387</b> | <b>596,096</b>     | <b>81,126</b> | <b>80,013</b>      |

**Private Sector**

|   |               |               |              |              |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Promotion activities                    | 5,000         |               | 671          |              |
| Travel                                  | 6,000         |               | 805          |              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                         | <b>11,000</b> |               | <b>1,477</b> |              |
| Programme management and implementation | 51,153        | 51,640        | 6,866        | 6,932        |
| <b>Total Private Sector</b>             | <b>62,153</b> | <b>51,640</b> | <b>8,343</b> | <b>6,932</b> |

**Summary core programme**

|                                 |                  |                  |                |                |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Administration and office costs | 592,116          | 541,273          | 79,479         | 72,654         |
| Networking and Communication    | 1,718,473        | 1,554,216        | 230,667        | 208,620        |
| UN Programme                    | 731,693          | 681,707          | 96,200         | 91,504         |
| EU programme                    | 604,387          | 596,096          | 81,126         | 80,013         |
| Private sector                  | 62,153           | 51,640           | 8,343          | 6,932          |
| <b>Total programmes</b>         | <b>3,708,822</b> | <b>3,424,932</b> | <b>495,815</b> | <b>459,722</b> |

**EU Project extension 2014**

|              |  |               |  |              |
|--------------|--|---------------|--|--------------|
| <b>Total</b> |  | <b>55,182</b> |  | <b>7,407</b> |
|--------------|--|---------------|--|--------------|

**DSN-DK (funded separately)**

|   |               |               |              |              |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Programme management and implementation | 51,153        | 31,289        | 6,866        | 4,200        |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>51,153</b> | <b>31,289</b> | <b>6,866</b> | <b>4,200</b> |

**Summary total expenditure**

|                             |                  |                  |                |                |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Total core programme</b> | <b>3,708,822</b> | <b>3,424,932</b> | <b>495,815</b> | <b>459,722</b> |
| EU Project extension 2014   | 0                | 55,182           | 0              | 7,407          |
| DSN-DK                      | 51,153           | 31,289           | 6,866          | 4,200          |
| <b>Grand total</b>          | <b>3,759,975</b> | <b>3,511,403</b> | <b>502,681</b> | <b>471,329</b> |

## Notes

- 1 Caste discrimination and human rights - Compilation of UN references to caste discrimination and rights webpage
- 2 IDSN recommendations to the OHCHR and UN Agencies to end caste-based discrimination and caste-based violence against women and girls
- 3 Report from the UN HRC26 side-event on caste-based violence against women
- 4 UN Rights Council: End Caste-Based Rape, Violence (IDSN news)
- 5 Press Clippings – HRC26 side-event on 'Caste-based violence against women'
- 6 The Road to Doha – February Issue of the UN NGLS newsletter
- 7 IDSN recommendations on agenda items of relevance to be considered at the 27th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) (8-26 September 2014);  
 IDSN recommendations on agenda items of relevance to be considered at the 26th session of the Human Rights Council (10-27 June 2014);  
 IDSN recommendations on agenda items of relevance to be considered at the 25th session of the Human Rights Council (3-28 March 2014).
- 8 Draft UN Principles and Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination Based on Work and Descent
- 9 European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on EU priorities for the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council
- 10 Appeal to UN Special Procedures mandate holders (2014)
- 11 IDSN briefing note on religious Minorities in Pakistan: Scheduled Caste Hindus
- 12 Annual reports of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women
- 13 Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo
- 14 India report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo
- 15 Bangladesh report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo
- 16 HRC26 Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Ms. Rashida Manjoo, 12 June 2014
- 17 Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo - Comments by the State of India
- 18 Report of the Independent Expert on minority issues, Rita Izsák
- 19 Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities - Note by the UN Secretary-General
- 20 Urgent appeal: Two Hindu traders killed (Sindh, Pakistan)
- 21 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mutuma Ruteere (HRC26)
- 22 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mutuma Ruteere - Mauritania mission
- 23 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Gulnara Shahinian
- 24 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Urmila Bhoola
- 25 IDSN submission on the violations of the right to water and sanitation
- 26 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque
- 27 Factsheet on the IDSN application for ECOSOC Status
- 28 Urgent appeal: Reprisals against IDSN by the Government of India in trying to formalize its association with the UN and obtain ECOSOC Status
- 29 Open Letter: A Call for Transparency in the ECOSOC NGO Accreditation Process
- 30 Rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (Note by the UN Secretary General)
- 31 Rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association
- 32 India called out at UN General Assembly for blocking IDSN's UN consultative status (IDSN news)
- 33 India called out at UN General Assembly for blocking IDSN's UN consultative status (IDSN news)
- 34 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai
- 35 IDSN recommendations on addressing violence and discrimination against Dalits
- 36 Caste based gender violence – Dalit women's security and access to justice - presentation of Ms. Thilagam Ramalingam
- 37 Violence and atrocities against Dalits debated at the UN Forum on Minority Issues (IDSN news)
- 38 Violence and atrocities against Dalits debated at the UN Forum on Minority Issues (IDSN news)
- 39 Recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its seventh session
- 40 Alternative Report to the UN CEDAW on Multiple discrimination against Dalit women
- 41 CEDAW concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of India
- 42 Concluding observations on the combined second and third reports of Mauritania of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women
- 43 Alternative country report for India's third and fourth combined periodic report on the convention on the rights of the child
- 44 Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of India
- 45 Concluding observations on the report submitted by India under article 12, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- 46 Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Yemen
- 47 Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Nepal
- 48 Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Nepal
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- 50 Concluding observations on the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of Japan
- 51 OHCHR Management Plan 2014-17
- 52 UN High Commissioner and UN Secretary-General references to caste in statements and reports
- 53 Report of the Secretary-General on the question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights
- 54 IDSN Input to the online discussion on the Focus Areas Document of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals. Posted on The World We Want 2015 platform (UN and Civil Society) on 14 March 2014
- 55 IDSN Input to the World we Want E-discussion on the Open Working Group Final Report on the Sustainable Development Goals taking place from 15 September to 15 October 2014
- 56 UN-NGLS Recommendations on Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality for the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG on SDGs)
- 57 UN-NGLS Policy Briefs for the OWG on SDGs
- 58 UN agencies in India team up to fight caste discrimination (IDSN news)
- 59 [www.in.one.un.org](http://www.in.one.un.org)
- 60 UNICEF: Dalit girls most excluded from primary education in India
- 61 Yemen takes a major first step in reaching marginalized communities (IDSN news)
- 62 Nepal Human Development Report 2014
- 63 European Union chapter of the IDSN Annual Report - 2013
- 64 European Parliament resolution of 10 October 2013 on caste-based discrimination

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- 66 Equality in aid - publication
- 67 Dalit leaders speak at EU Human Rights Defenders Forum (IDSN news)
- 68 Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) South Asia
- 69 Local EU Statement on political developments in Nepal
- 70 Dalit women activists bring the struggle to end violence against Dalit women to Europe (IDSN news)
- 71 IDSN Publication - Dalit women fight!
- 72 Caste-based violence against women - briefing
- 73 Dalit leaders speak at EU Human Rights Defenders Forum (IDSN news)
- 74 Cleaning Human Waste (Human Rights Watch Report)
- 75 Press Release: Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns and Asia Dalit Rights Forum at People's SAARC in Kathmandu, 25 November 2014
- 76 People's SAARC 2014 – Declaration
- 77 Caste Rules The Roost Across South Asia, 2014-12-13 , Issue 50 Volume 11, Tehelka
- 78 South Asian Parliamentarians meet to discuss strategies for ending caste discrimination (IDSN news)
- 79 Report of the 2nd Regional Consultation on caste-based discrimination, Kathmandu, Nepal
- 80 Triple murder of Dalit family rocks Maharashtra (The Hindu)
- 81 Lynching of boy underlines how the curse of caste still blights India (The Guardian)
- 82 Badaun: Minor dalit girl gangraped, dies after hospital refuses treatment
- 83 Punished by axe: Bonded labour in India's brick kilns (BBC)
- 84 Indian priest thrashes 'untouchable' boy, 8, who asked for sweets (Telegraph)
- 85 Urgent Appeal: Brutal police torture of Dalit human rights defender – perpetrators must be held accountable (IDSN news)
- 86 Urgent Appeal: Brutal police torture of Dalit human rights defender – perpetrators must be held accountable (IDSN news)
- 87 Dalit women in India stage month-long march for justice (IDSN news)
- 88 Justice under trial - report
- 89 Dark days of violence on Dalits return to haunt Bihar (Indian Express)
- 90 Atrocities against Dalits from Jan 2012 to May 2014
- 91 Denial and diversion of Plan Fund: The Great Adivasi-Dalit Rip-off (ADRF)
- 92 <http://www.annihilatecaste.in/home>
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- 94 Dalit women fight! - IDSN publication
- 95 Dalit Women - IDSN key issue web page
- 96 Cleaning Human Waste - Human Rights Watch Report
- 97 Caste at the root of India and Mauritania's position as top global slavery offenders (IDSN news)
- 98 New reports: Exclusion and untouchability remain widespread and only 5% marry out of their caste (IDSN news)
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- 106 New reports: Exclusion and untouchability remain widespread and only 5% marry out of their caste (IDSN news)
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- 108 Biggest caste survey: One in four Indians admit to practising untouchability (Indian Express)
- 109 Aid institutions gather in Delhi for launch of caste discrimination in disaster relief report (IDSN news)
- 110 Lower-caste people get less aid when disaster strikes (Reuters)
- 111 Indian Prime Minister Modi takes a sweep at caste (IDSN news)
- 112 India called out at UN General Assembly for blocking IDSN's UN consultative status (IDSN news)
- 113 Violence and atrocities against Dalits debated at the UN Forum on Minority Issues (IDSN news)
- 114 Dalit leaders speak at EU Human Rights Defenders Forum (IDSN news)
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- 120 NEPAL: Council should exert pressure to abolish Haliya practice, a form of slavery (AHRC)
- 121 Nepal: Prime Minister's office holds workshop to address caste discrimination (IDSN news)
- 122 Press Release: Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns and Asia Dalit Rights Forum at People's SAARC in Kathmandu, 25 November 2014
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- 124 Briefing note on religious Minorities in Pakistan: Scheduled Caste Hindus
- 125 Statement of Purbhu Lal Satyani at the 7th session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues
- 126 Call for law to rid eight million people of bonded labour (Dawn)
- 127 Caste at the root of India and Mauritania's position as top global slavery offenders (IDSN news)
- 128 Unstoppable: Two workers risking lives to fight bonded labour in Sindh (IDSN news)
- 129 Drought in Pakistan kills over 100 children – many are Dalits (IDSN news)
- 130 Drought in Pakistan kills over 100 children – many are Dalits (IDSN news)
- 131 Dalits in Pakistan suffer from severe drought – despite promises to act (IDSN news)
- 132 Press Release: Asian Parliamentarians' Forum on Dalit Concerns and Asia Dalit Rights Forum at People's SAARC in Kathmandu, 25 November 2014
- 133 Bangladesh: Dalits fight for their rights – hold anti-discrimination marches and a housing rights seminar (IDSN news)
- 134 Dalit women activists bring the struggle to end violence against Dalit women to Europe (IDSN news)
- 135 Dalit women in India stage month-long march for justice (IDSN news)
- 136 Norges arbeid med flerdimensjonal diskriminering og kastediskriminering
- 137 Report: Dalit girls in modern slavery in India's textile industry (IDSN news)
- 138 Overview media attention referring to the report Flawed Fabrics
- 139 List of questions and answers: referring to The National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights in the Netherlands
- 140 Caste Discrimination Debate comes to House of Commons (IDSN-UN news)
- 141 Caste discrimination debated in the UK House of Lords (IDSN news)
- 142 <http://www.dalit.be/>
- 143 Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Danida review of IDSN – 2014 (Summary)
- 144 IDSN strategy 2014-2018
- 145 Factsheet on the IDSN application for ECOSOC Status
- 146 India called out at UN General Assembly for blocking IDSN's UN consultative status (IDSN news)



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### IDSN members

#### National platforms

- The National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights – India
- The Dalit NGO Federation – Nepal
- Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement
- Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network

#### Dalit Solidarity Networks

- The Dalit Solidarity Network – UK
- The Dalit Solidarity Platform – Germany
- The Dalit Network – Netherlands
- The Dalit Solidarity Network – Denmark
- The Dalit Solidarity Network – Belgium
- The Dalit Solidarity Network – Finland
- The Dalit Solidarity Network – Norway

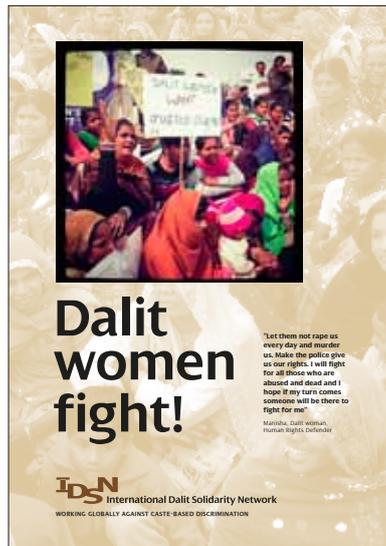
### IDSN associates

#### National associates

- Feminist Dalit Organisation – Nepal
- National Federation of Dalit Women – India
- National Conference of Dalit Organisations – India
- Navsarjan Trust – India
- People's Watch – India

#### International associates

- Human Rights Watch
- The International Movement Against all Forms of Discrimination and Racism
- Anti-Slavery International
- The Minority Rights Group International
- The Asian Human Rights Commission
- The Robert F. Kennedy Foundation
- ICMICA/Pax Romana
- FORUM-ASIA
- The Lutheran World Federation
- The World Council of Churches
- The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative
- Asian Centre for Human Rights
- Franciscans International



In 2014 IDSN published the booklet **Dalit Women Fight!** containing information on Dalit women's human rights, key issues, cases, quotes from activists, INGOs, the UN and the EU and calls to action.



The **IDSN Strategy 2015-2018** was adopted in December 2014.

**IDSN** was founded in March 2000 to advocate for Dalit human rights and to raise awareness of Dalit issues nationally and internationally. IDSN is a network of international human rights groups, development agencies, national Dalit solidarity networks from Europe, and organisations in caste-affected countries. IDSN engages with the United Nations, the European Union and other multilateral institutions, working for action-oriented approaches to address 'untouchability' and other human rights abuses against Dalits and similar communities that suffer discrimination based on work and descent. IDSN bases its work on contributions from members, associates and affiliates. The network produces crucial input in the form of documentation, strategic interventions and lobby action and also supports national level lobbying.



Keep track of IDSN on Facebook on [facebook.com/dalitnetwork](https://facebook.com/dalitnetwork)



You can register to receive the monthly IDSN newsletter on [www.idsn.org/newsletter](http://www.idsn.org/newsletter)



Stay updated with IDSN's twitter feed on [twitter.com/idsnupdates](https://twitter.com/idsnupdates)



View a selection of videos on caste discrimination on [youtube.com/idsnvideo](https://youtube.com/idsnvideo)



The new **IDSN website** was prepared in 2014, for launch in spring 2015. The website features a new documentation database and enhanced features.