

## **Social Exclusion in Education in India: Access to education for nomads through ODL**

India passed the Right to Education Act in 2009 and committed the state to ensure that all children from 6-14 years of age have access to basic education. Though most primary school age children in India do enroll in school; as many as half fail to complete the elementary cycle successfully. This paper explores the issues that surround access to education for nomads. More focused research on specific kinds of nomads, especially non-pastoral nomads, is severely lacking. With relation to education, in the present time, national and international bodies are in anticipation of the deadline of achieving Millennium Development Goal No. 2 that promises Education for All by 2015. However, even if we simply look at the yardstick of enrolment in school, governments are slowly realizing that nomadic groups — often grouped with migratory labourers and classified as ‘migrants’— challenge the possibility of success in achieving MDG 2. This is over and above the fact that even today many nomadic communities are not even part of the census and remain surprisingly invisible and un-enumerated as citizens.

The problem of educating nomads remains a challenge for South Asian states and developers, as for much of the world. Educating nomadic children challenging for many reasons, among which is the need to cater to their mobility. This calls for portable strategies and flexible courses that will retain the interest and attention of the children.

The nomadic tribes in India have a unique heritage. They have seen the brightest and the darkest phases of their lives, something incomparable with any other section of our society. They have played a vital role in the development of our arts, cultures and community-based human development activities. A need is, therefore, felt to help them develop and integrate with the milieu. The first move in this direction would be to provide education to the children of the tribes, which in turn could lead to the emancipation of the community at large.

The present paper attempts to explore some of these critical issue related to social exclusion in education and the policies and actions required to making educational expansion more equitable.