

Concept Note

Realizing the Right to Development with Civil Society

Workshop with the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development
20 September 2022 from 14:00 to 17:00 CET, OHCHR-Motta, in-person

Background

The 1986 United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development was adopted nearly four decades ago. Yet, the knowledge, implementation, promotion and protection of this right is far from realizing the vision and principles outlined therein. One of the main reasons for this reality is the little awareness and mobilization on this right, especially among civil society. In fact, many civil society organizations (CSOs) are focusing on development but just few advocate for the right to development (RTD). From the perspective of global civil society, a wide range of peoples' issues can be linked to the RTD including poverty-eradication, food sovereignty, ecological/climate justice and self-determination sovereignty, among others.

Activists and CSOs have often been the catalysts in making landmark decisions, promoting awareness amongst the public and ultimately holding duty bearers accountable. However, with regards to RTD there seems to exist a knowledge gap amongst civil society actors on what this right means, what it promotes and protects, its implementation and mobilization. This challenges the RTD's universal realization.

The recent development of the draft Convention on the Right to Development¹ illustrates the importance of dialogue and participation of civil society in the process of making it and in realizing the RTD. Civil society plays a critical role as advocates, mobilizers and even as mediators to help the international community establish legal and policy standards for the benefit of all.

It is therefore crucial to close this knowledge gap through capacity-building dialogues and workshops for and with civil society with a view to targeted sensitization of key actors in the public at large. The Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development (EMRTD) has been working with communities, Member States and organizations advocating several important issues,² and highlighting the critical importance of realizing the RTD to advance these issues. Through this capacity-building session to promote implementation of the RTD, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the EMRTD together with civil society actors, will engage in a constructive dialogue with CSOs on the meaning of the right to development, why it is essential, how it can be implemented and how to overcome obstacles in realizing this right.

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2021/working-group-right-development-21st-session>

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrc-subsidaries/expert-mechanism-on-right-to-development/thematic-studies>

Objectives

- Provide a clear understanding of what the right to development means, elaborating on its principles and elements.
- Build capacity through raising awareness amongst key civil society actors on the importance of the right to development and its mobilization
- Engage in a dialogue on how civil society organizations have already been working to realize and claim the right to development and how to strengthen these efforts
- Promote strategy and network-building amongst participants for promoting, protecting and implementing the right to development and overcoming obstacles to its realization

Moderator: **Ms. Shyami Puvimanasinghe**, Human Rights Officer, Right to Development Section, OHCHR

Speakers: **Mr. Ayuush Bat-Erdene**, Chief of the Right to Development Section, OHCHR
Mr. Mihir Kanade, Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development
Mr. Koen de Feyter, Member of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development
Ms. María Mercedes Rossi, Permanent Representative of Association “Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII” (APG23) in Geneva **(TBC)**
Mr. Melik Özden, Director of Centre Europe-Tiers Monde, CETIMC **(TBC)**
Ms. Srruthi Raaja, Director of Polity Link International

Time and Date: 20 September 2022, 14:00 – 17:00 CET

Location: OHCHR, Av. Giuseppe Motta No. 48, 1202 Geneva. Room RI-02 and RI-03

Programme

1. Welcome remarks by Mr. Ayuush Bat-Erdene (5 min)
Briefly welcome the experts, civil society actors advocating the RTD and participants and introduce the objectives of the workshop
2. A comprehensive understanding of development by Mr. Mihir Kanade (15 min)
Development as a human right - What is the RTD? The difference between development-based approach to human rights and human rights-based approach to development, development as a prerequisite for the enjoyment of all human rights, contribution of development to human rights, etc.
➤ Discussion and Q & A (10 min)
3. Declaration on the Right to Development by Mr. Koen De Feyter (10 min)
History and normative framework
➤ Discussion Q & A (10 min)

4. The relationship between sustainable development, the Sustainable Development Goals and the RTD by Mr. Mihir Kanade (10 min)
 - Discussion and Q & A (10 min)

** 10 min break **

5. Rights Holders, Duty Bearers and Justiciability by Mr. Koen De Feyter (10 min)
 - Further elaborate on the importance of equality, inclusivity, participation and good development policies for the realization of all human rights for all
 - Discussion and Q & A (10 min)
6. CSO engagement in the RTD Intergovernmental Working Group process and the draft Convention on the Right to Development by Mr. Melik Özden (10 min)
 - Discussion and Q & A (10 min)
7. Practical understanding of the RTD using cases, examples and issues of concern³ by Ms. María Mercedes Rossi (10 min) and Ms. Srruthi Raaja (10 min)

** 10 min break **

8. General discussion on civil society engagement and commitment to RTD to support building strategy amongst civil society and how to overcome obstacles to RTD advocacy (20 min)
9. Concluding remarks by Ms. Shyami Puvimanasinghe (5 min)

Suggested reading materials:

- [UN Declaration on the Right to Development](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on the Right to Development](#)
- [E-Book on the Right to Development](#)
- [Contribution of Development to the enjoyment of all human rights](#)
- [Training Materials - Online Course on the Right to Development and Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [Reclaiming the Right to Development - Mobilizing Civil Society](#)
- [Civil Society Engagement in Development Cooperation](#)

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³ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/FSheet37_RtD_EN.pdf;
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development>;
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/development/realizing-right-development-ebook>;
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/development/contribution-development-enjoyment-all-human-rights>