

1. Please indicate what you see as the main challenges and opportunities of a human rights-based approach to development, with particular attention to large-scale development projects and the role, protection and effective participation of human rights defenders. What do you think are the best measures to mitigate the challenges? Kindly provide examples of good practices in this respect.

*The fact that human rights is at the centre of every development initiative, the human rights based approach is the best in terms of companies social responsibilities to the people affected by the projects executed hence transparency leading to growth with greater benefits to both the communities and the companies concern. This eventually leads to the sustainability of the project as responsibilities are clearly shared by the public, government and the companies concern. The Extractive Industries Initiative (EITI) in Cameroon, the Centre for Environmental Development (CED) and currently the Investment Watch (IWatch) initiative have all been involved in monitoring and liaising between communities, the companies and the government in major projects in Cameroon. Some of the projects include: the Cameroon/Tchad Pipe Line project, the Kribi Deep Sea Port project and the Heracle Farm project in the south West Region of Cameroon.*

2. Please explain how, in your view, large-scale development projects can best be elaborated in order to the effective participation of human rights defenders. Please describe participation/consultation mechanisms in place and provide examples of good practices.

*The best way of elaborating large scale development projects with the participation of human rights defenders is by bringing some of these defenders on the table to contribute ideas that can mitigate any violations in the course of the project. For this to be effectively done, the indigenous population should also be brought to the table to discuss the impact of the project to their lives and the terms of compensation for any expropriation. As such, the human right defenders should be given the task to monitor the execution phase of the project and liaise in reporting between the government, the companies concern and the communities affected by the project.*

3. How do you think that human rights defenders can effectively monitor the impact of large-scale development projects? Please provide examples of successful experiences/ mechanisms in this regard and kindly address the issues below.

*Human rights defenders can effectively monitor big projects by being part of the follow up committee put in place by the government. Secondly, they can also carry out independent investigations and reports on such a project. Such reports will permit the government and the international community to be informed on what is happening on the ground.*

- a. Kindly indicate how relevant information about large-scale development projects is made available and accessible to the public. Provide concrete examples if applicable.

*Relevant information on big projects is made accessible to the public through: the media (Radio, TV, newspapers; communication tools such as posters, flyers, banners etc, reports; and workshops and seminars.*

- b. How can defenders complain if they feel that human rights are unduly restricted or violated in the context of the implementation of large-scale development projects? Kindly provide

concrete examples of mechanisms in place to seek redress at every stage of the process, that is, assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

*Once human rights are violated in large scale projects, defenders can act by first approaching the company in charge and the government. If no positive response comes from them, they can then move forward by submitting complain to the Human Rights Commission and the courts. If no head way is found they could carry these complains to the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights and also to the UN Commission on Human Rights.*

- c. How do you ensure that human rights defenders can peacefully voice their opposition to development projects without fear of intimidation or violence of any sort?

*The first thing is that the human rights defender needs to master the law in place and be able to provide concrete facts for the violation they are trying to redress. Secondly, they should be able to follow the various stages and institutions that address such a violation from the national to the international level for action to be taken on the violation in place.*

4. How, in your view, can business and corporations involved in large-scale development and investment projects be best monitored regarding corporate social responsibility principles and their engagement with human rights defenders? What is, in your view, the role of defenders in this process and how could their capacity to engage be strengthened?

*In every project, the company concern should be able to provide transparent and accurate figures of their benefits. This therefore permit the parties involve to be able to determine in accordance to the law how much percentage of the profit that goes for social responsibility. In the meantime, the communities benefiting from the social responsibility services of the project should be consulted on their needs and what services should be offered to them.*

*Defenders are very important in this process because they serve as the third voice that pressure the company in charge and the government to respect their engagements and raises awareness to the communities affected on the stakes of the investment.*

*In order for the human rights defenders to effectively act there is need for them to undertake trainings on the investment law, corporate social responsibilities of companies and the various legal procedures related to addressing social responsibilities issues.*

5. How, in your view, should development cooperation programmes integrate the role of human rights defenders and the notion of a safe and enabling environment in recipient countries? How do you think can the expertise of human rights defenders on the ground be best used to design, implement, monitor and evaluate development cooperation programmes? How should security/ protection concerns be addressed when necessary?

*Once the human rights based approach is implemented in the execution of every project, human rights defenders and the notion of safe and enabling environment will automatically be considered in the planning of every project. This will therefore permit defenders to contribute on the human rights perspective during the planning phase of every large scale project. Security/protection concerns can be better address through dialogue between the company executing the project, the government and the violators that most often are the communities.*