

39th Session of the Human Rights Council

Side Event on Leaving no one behind- the role of participation and equality in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals

17 September 2018 from 12h00-13h30, Room XXVII, Palais des Nations

Co-sponsored by: Mr.Saad Alfarargi, Special Rapporteur on the right to development and the Non-Aligned Movement

Moderated by: Federica Donati, Coordinator, Equality, Non-Discrimination and Participation Unit, Special Procedures Branch, OHCHR

Background:

The 2030 Agenda recognizes “rising inequalities within and among countries”, “enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power”, and persistent “gender inequality” as “immense challenges” confronting the world today. When adopting the 2030 Agenda, countries committed to address these challenges while **leaving no one behind**. This not only requires States to ensure that targets are met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society, but also to systematically reach and empower those left furthest behind first. The commitment to combat inequalities and discrimination is mainstreamed throughout the 2030 Agenda. It is reflected in two goals explicitly focused on this issue: Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) is the stand-alone goal dedicated to bridging the gap between men and women and addressing gender-based discrimination depriving women and girls of their rights and opportunities and thus of their ability to realize their full potential. Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reducing inequality within and among countries) is the goal designed to address inequalities across the spectrum of development goals. In addition, all other Sustainable Development Goals call for more equitable development and universal access to the constituent elements of development for all people.

Inequality threatens long-term social and economic development and impedes poverty reduction. More notably, inequality has an adverse impact on the ability of individuals and communities to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development. Inequality is therefore a major obstacle to the realization of the right to development within and across countries.

To address inequalities it is of utmost importance to ensure active, informed and meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making processes related to development- including communities, non-governmental and grass-roots organizations, women, youth, minorities, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized individuals and groups. Participation should be central in all development-related processes, at the local, national and international level.

What progress has been made in addressing inequalities in the framework of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals two and a half years after the adoption of this major international policy agreement?

Objectives:

To discuss measures and means to combat inequalities and ensure genuine participation of all relevant stakeholders in the process of implementation of the SDGs, consistent with international human rights law:

- Sharing experience and good practices in ensuring participation and promoting equality; In particular, methods to strengthen the voice and participation of communities, non-governmental and grass-roots organizations, women, youth, minorities, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups and individuals at all levels and during all phases of decision-making processes related to development.
- Exchanging views among policy makers, UN agencies and other stakeholders and promoting dialogue on increasing participation and addressing inequalities

Panellists

1. Mr. Jorge Valero, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Office of the United Nations, Non-Aligned Movement Chairmanship
2. Mr. Saad Alfarargi, Special Rapporteur on the right to development
3. Diego Valadares Vasconcelos Neto, Human Rights Officer, Right to Development Section, OHCHR
4. Ms. Mariama Williams, Senior Programme Officer, Global Governance for Development Programme, South Centre
5. Ms Maria Mercedes Rossi, Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)
6. Christophe Bellmann, Senior Resident Research Associate, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

Format: The event is intended for diplomats, experts, civil society, and academics. An interactive dialogue will follow the panel discussion.

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