

**Oslo+ digital:  
How can a human rights based approach to development ensure that  
we build back better?**

***Webex, 9-10 June 2020***

**Background**

The Oslo+ meetings of international development actors provide a platform for bilateral development partners and relevant international agencies to share information on the latest developments in relation to human rights based approach to development and the Global Implementation Agenda. The initial meeting of the series was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway in Oslo in 2018 with the support of the Universal Rights Group (URG). A year later the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and SIDA joint forces with the URG to host a second meeting in Stockholm. A third meeting hosted by the EDA and the SDC in cooperation with the URG is scheduled to take place in the fall of 2020 in Montreux.

In advance of the Oslo+2 meeting in Montreux, the Oslo+ platform will organise its first digital meeting with the support of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and the Netherlands, and the URG. This digital meeting will provide an opportunity for development actors to share experiences and recommendations on putting human rights at the center of their response to the COVID-19 crisis and how a HRBA can ensure that no one is left behind in the international communities' response and recovery efforts.

**COVID-19: a health, development and human rights crisis?**

The global COVID-19 pandemic is affecting nearly every country in the world, forcing States to make difficult decisions on how to ensure public health and mitigate the devastating consequences of a global economic slowdown. As one third of the global population is under coronavirus lockdown, meaning their freedom of movement is being actively restricted and controlled by their respective governments, hundreds of millions of jobs are being lost and estimates suggest that by the end of the pandemic half a billion more people could be forced into poverty, with persons, who were already in vulnerable situations before the crisis more likely to face worse economic and health outcomes.



So far the countries and economies initially hit by the pandemic have been high-income economies. However, as the pandemic sweeps across the globe more and more middle-income and low-income-economies are experiencing its deadly consequences, laying bare the fragility of their health systems, economies, and social welfare systems. Income losses in developing countries are expected to exceed USD 220 billion. This figure does not just signal an important GDP decrease, but would represent a massive reversal of the development gains made over the last two decades and could result in a lost generation. As such 2020 might become the first year since 1990 to register a decline in human development, while it should have launched the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs.

As the coronavirus crisis continues to cast a harsh light on the inequalities and vulnerabilities that plague our societies, it also makes clear that a human rights based approach to public policy, which takes into consideration those most vulnerable and at risk of being left behind, is more important than ever. As recalled by UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, ‘the [corona]virus does not discriminate, but its impacts do — exposing deep weaknesses in the delivery of public services and structural inequalities that impede access to them.’

### **From crisis to opportunity: building back better**

However, this pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis also creates an opportunity for societies to cash in on a ‘corona-dividend’ by making those policy choices that create more sustainable, inclusive and equal societies that are more resilient to future shocks. They have the choice to build back better.

As UN Secretary-General stated in the landmark report ‘Human Rights and COVID-19: we are all in this together’:

*This is not a time to neglect human rights; it is a time when, more than ever, human rights are needed to navigate this crisis in a way that will allow us, as soon as possible, to focus again on achieving equitable sustainable development and sustaining peace.*

Human rights standards and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provide governments and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, with a blueprint for ensuring that both the immediate response to the crisis, as well as the medium and long-term response for recovery leave no one behind.



The digital Oslo+ meeting will explore how bilateral and multilateral development actors are trying to support their development partners in building back better. It will provide an opportunity for development and human rights practitioners to exchange on actions being taken and strategies being developed for a post-COVID world, and how existing human rights standards and their compliance and implementation mechanisms can support donors and recipients in creating more sustainable outcomes that lead to a more inclusive, equitable and resilient normal.

## **Programme**

### **DAY 1 - 9 June 2020 – Multilateral perspective**

**16.00 – 16.13**            **Digital tour de table**  
*Each participants is asked to briefly introduce themselves to all attendees*

**16.13 – 16.15**            **Short intro video**

**16.15 – 16.20**            **Introduction by the moderator**

*Marc Limon, Executive Director, Universal Rights Group*

**16.20 – 16.25**            **Welcome address by Kitty van der Heijden, Director General for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands**

**16.25 – 16.30**            **Video message by H.E. Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**16.30 – 17.00**            **Presentations by five panelists**  
*(Each presentation will last 6 minutes maximum)*

Using HRBA to shape the ‘new normal’ – an account from the UN response to COVID-19 in Malaysia  
*Stefan Priesner, UN Resident Coordinator in Malaysia*

*Alejandro Alvarez, Chief, Rule of law Unit, Executive Office of the Secretary-General*



*Antonio Cisneros De Alencar, Human Rights and Normative Adviser, UN Development Coordination Office*

*Eva Grambye, Deputy Executive Director, Danish Institute for Human Rights*

*Siddharth Akali, Director, Coalition for Human Rights in Development*

**17.00 – 17.25                      Questions and answers from the audience**

**17.25 – 17.30                      Wrap-up by the moderator**

## **DAY 2 - 10 June 2020 – Bilateral perspective**

**16.00 – 16.02                      Short intro video**

**16.02 – 16.07                      Introduction by the moderator and reflections on the previous day**

*Prof. Rolph van der Hoeven, Member of UN Committee for Development Policy, and Professor Emeritus of Employment and Development Economics at the International Institute of Social Studies*

**16.07 – 16.45                      Presentations by four panelists**

*Each presentation will last 6 minutes maximum*

Denmark's efforts to promote and protect human rights and democracy

*By Peter Bøgh Jensen, Chief Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark*

EU protection and promotion of human rights at the times of COVID

*Chiara Adamo, Head of Unit, Gender, Human Rights and Development, EU DEVCO*



*Birgitta Weibahr, Lead Policy Specialist Human Rights and Democracy, Policy Support Unit, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)*

*Marcella Favretto, Chief, Sustainable Development Section, OHCHR*

*Patrick Twomey, Director, International Human Rights Network*

<b>16.45 – 17.15</b>	<b>Questions and answers from the audience</b>
<b>17.15 – 17.25</b>	<b>Summary of two-day meetings and wrap up</b>
<b>17.25 – 17.30</b>	<b>Closing address</b>

