

Monthly
Newsletter

August 2024

GFOD

GLOBAL FORUM OF
COMMUNITIES DISCRIMINATED
ON WORK AND DESCENT



CDWD MATTERS

Read on to know about recent initiatives in South Asia to build conversations on Access to Justice, key CDWD issues in UN Reports, updates from Universal Periodic Review process in Albania, and what is to come ahead!

Regional Consultation on Access to Justice for CDWDs in South Asia



The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in collaboration with GFoD, [International Dalit Solidarity Network](#) (IDSN) and [Asia Dalit Rights Forum](#) (ADRF) organized a South regional consultation on access to justice from August 19-21, 2024, in Bangkok, focusing on South Asia. The workshop brought together experts to discuss country reports on India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. It highlighted the challenges faced by Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWDs).

The consultation aimed to identify barriers to justice and explore strategies for addressing discrimination and promoting equal access to justice for CDWDs. Participants shared experiences, best practices, and recommendations for improving legal frameworks, policy implementation, and community engagement.

The consultation's outcomes were also about OHCHR's future initiatives and support governments in strengthening access to justice for Descent Based Communities.

Country reports from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal were presented by various researchers who had extensively worked and researched upon Civil and Political rights status of the Dalits in respective countries. It also included the the aspect of status of Human Rights Commission in respected countries and their response and implementation towards Dalit Rights.



Highlighting the situation of CDWD through UN Reports

Human Rights Council
Fifty-seventh session
9 September–9 October 2024
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development

Right to development of children and future generations

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Surya
Deva

Summary

In the present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 33/14 and 51/7, the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Surya Deva, focuses on the right to development of children and future generations. He explains why the right to development, in accordance with the Declaration on the Right to Development, should inform and complement children's rights and child development under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other standards. He proposes five action pillars to overcome ongoing challenges in realizing the right to development of children. The Special Rapporteur also explains why and how to take seriously the human rights – including the right to development – of future generations. He recommends four policy shifts to build an ecosystem supportive of the right to development and all other human rights of future generations.

[Read Here](#)

UN Special Rapporteur's report on Right to Development recognizes barriers faced by children from CDWD

In his report to the Human Rights Council to be presented in Geneva next month, SR Surya Deva emphasizes the importance of the right to development for children and future generations. He highlights the need for policy shifts to create a supportive ecosystem for realizing these rights. Importantly, referring to the submission made by GFoD to the SR, the report recognizes the unique challenges faced by children belonging to communities discriminated based on work and descent (CDWD), such as Dalits, Roma, and Quilombolas, stressing the importance of addressing these barriers to ensure the comprehensive development of all children.

SR on Right to Development's report on Climate Justice: Loss and Damage

The forthcoming report by Special Rapporteur Surya Deva to the General Assembly outlines a comprehensive climate justice framework. Recognizing GFoD's input, the report explicitly acknowledges that communities facing discrimination based on work and descent (CDWD), such as Dalits and Haratine, are disproportionately affected by climate change. It calls for their active participation in the design and implementation of policies related to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, ensuring that their voices are heard and their rights protected in climate justice initiatives.

A/79/168

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development,
Surya Deva

Climate justice: loss and damage

Summary

In the present report, submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 33/14 and 51/7, the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Surya Deva, develops a climate justice framework comprising four pillars (mitigation, adaptation, remediation and transformation) and 12 overarching human rights principles. He proposes that climate change-related loss and damage, which undermines the right to development of individuals and communities, especially those living in developing countries, should be seen as part of the remediation pillar of the climate justice framework. The Special Rapporteur recommends a rainbow of measures that States, international financial institutions, multilateral development banks and businesses must take to address loss and damage. He also outlines several human rights principles that the World Bank, as an interim trustee of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, and the Fund's Board should integrate into all aspects concerning the Fund's administration.

[Read Here](#)

GFoD's Submission on Birth Registration and Digital Technologies



Romalitico field staff supporting Roma in North Macedonia to obtain birth certificates

[Read here](#)

This month, we also submitted two regional inputs to the OHCHR on the challenges faced by CDWD in accessing universal birth registration and the use of digital technologies. Birth registration is crucial for ensuring legal identity and access to services, but many CDWD communities face systemic barriers due to discrimination, poverty, and geographic isolation. The submissions, from Asia & Africa, and Europe, highlight examples from countries like Nepal, Mauritania, Mali, Nigeria, Kenya; Hungary and North Macedonia respectively - illustrating the challenges faced by marginalized communities, including (but not limited to) Dalits, Haratins, and Roma. The submissions advocate for policy reforms, use of digital technologies, and greater inclusivity to ensure these communities can secure legal identity and access essential services.

**CDWD Statement at Human Rights Council 57th Session
#HRC57**

**Human Rights Council**

Fifty-seventh session

9 September–9 October 2024

Agenda item 9

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by The Inclusivity Project, Inc., a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

To further increase the visibility and reach of CDWD, The Inclusivity Project, on behalf of the GFOD, has submitted a statement to the UN Secretary-General for the UN Economic and Social Council, ahead of the next Human Rights Council (HRC) session.

The statement acknowledges progress made under the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action but questions whether the full spectrum of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance is being adequately addressed. It highlights the ongoing marginalization of CDWD who suffer from entrenched social hierarchies that devalue their personhood and consign them to stigmatized labor, a form of oppression still insufficiently addressed.

Despite affecting over 270 million people globally, these communities remain largely unrecognized by international mechanisms. The statement calls for formal acknowledgment of CDWD as a distinct category of systemic oppression within the global human rights agenda and the establishment of an informal working group to address their specific needs, ensuring their inclusion in the broader human rights discourse.

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The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Albania: A Catalyst for Roma Rights



As a marginalized group, the Roma minority, estimated to be between 8,301 and 120,000 people, continues to experience systemic discrimination, social exclusion, and poverty. These challenges have significantly impacted their access to education, healthcare, employment, and housing. On Friday, August 30, 2024, Albania had its Universal Periodic Review Pre-session. A Pre-session is a meeting on the human rights situation in a specific UN Member State. Pre-sessions provide national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) with an international platform through which they can inform the representatives of the recommending States about the human rights situation in the State under review (SuR) before the UPR. Roma CSOs play a crucial role in advocating for the rights of the Roma in Albania. By involving CSOs, particularly Roma and pro-Roma CSOs in the UPR process, the Albanian government can gain valuable insights into the perspectives of Roma communities and tailor its policies accordingly. The Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (GFoD) and ERGO Network and its members have been instrumental in facilitating and supporting Roma civil society's involvement in these processes, helping to overcome access challenges and ensure that their voices

are heard in shaping inclusive global policies. Highlighting issues concerning Roma in the country, our Rights Expert from Albania, Siljana Hyseni, has prepared a Factsheet providing an overview on the situation of Roma community in the aspects of Inequality, Economic Status, Education, Access to justice; antigypsyism in Albania; National and International efforts; along with key recommendations. Siljana has also written a [piece](#) on the importance of UPR for Roma and the need for civil society engagement.

[See Factsheet](#)

A look at the ongoing Rights Experts Program at GFoD

Our team of 26 Rights Experts (REs) - who come from 15 countries and 4 regions, i.e., Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America (including representatives from diaspora), are a core aspect of GFoD. Our REs undergo thorough training in various aspects of research and advocacy processes, so that they are well equipped to engage with the mission of CDWD recognition and inclusion in their respective contexts. This past month, we have had two intensive sessions with the REs - i.e., review of High Level Political Forum (HLPF), and the basics of 'Discrimination Based on Work and Descent and how to address it?'. Through these sessions, we have been able to discuss what brings us together as we continue to engage with a common vision amid our multiple identities, and the various strategies that we could bring through engagements at the UN and further in the regions to realize that very vision. The next leg of the program aims to kickstart our research process at GFoD that will address some crucial themes, such as the general status of CDWD communities, especially women and girls; Status of CDWD Women and Criminal Justice Administration; State mechanism responses to CDWD and discrimination experiences; courage & resilience, and more.

WHAT BRINGS US TOGETHER AS COMMUNITIES DISCRIMINATED ON WORK AND DESCENT (CDWD)?

Similitudes en cuanto la discriminación, a los trabajos a los que nos han relegada, a la exclusion [*Similarities in terms of discrimination, the jobs to which we have been relegated, the exclusion*]

Neris Isabel Barrios Reyes, Rights Expert from Colombia (Latin America)

our shared experiences of this kind of discrimination brings us together

Heman Das, Rights Expert from Pakistan (Asia)

Our commonality is our resistance and survival as nations :D

Fikrija Tair-Selmani, Rights Expert from North Macedonia (Europe)

As CDWD we are united by our similar challenges and the social barriers we are trying to break as we improve our quality of life overall

Dalpheen Nyambane, Rights Expert from Kenya (Africa)

A vision for a just future brings us together.

Kunjani Pariyar Pyasi, Rights Expert from Nepal (Asia)

Upcoming

GFoD at the Summit of The Future

The Summit of the Future Action Days are an open invitation by Secretary-General of the United Nations and will take place on 20 and 21 September 2024 at UN Headquarters in New York. Member states will officially adopt the Pact at the Summit of the Future (SOTF) after the Action Days, on September 22nd and 23rd of September.

In addition to the main summit, the Global People's Assembly (GPA) will be held from 20 to 24 September 2024 at the UN Church Centre. The GPA will run programs from 09:00 to 18:30 on 22 and 23 September, with a significant session titled "Inequalities and Leave No One Behind," co-organized by GFOD, Oxfam, and Youth LGBTI on 23 September from 13:30 to 15:00. Lastly, GFOD is will hold a Round for Friends of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent. This closed-door event will bring together member states who support CDWD and our work, focusing on



increasing visibility at the UN and exploring concrete ways for further collaboration within the UN System.

Untouchability Campaign

In collaboration with the [Ambedkar International Mission](#), USA, GFoD is hosting an event as part of Campaign against Untouchability on September 22, 2024 at Council Chambers, New Jersey. This event aims to raise global awareness of the deep-seated discrimination faced by CDWD. Bringing together youth leaders, community representatives, and advocates, the event will focus on developing meaningful dialogue, strategies to combat untouchability, and sharing best practices. Through discussions, interactive sessions, and workshops, participants will work toward building a more inclusive global movement to challenge and dismantle caste-based discrimination.



Policy Brief by UN Women will highlight key issues & recommendations concerning CDWD women

Addressing a gap in current international human rights frameworks, GFoD will be supporting UN Women in bringing out a Policy Brief that addresses the unique and specific types of discrimination experienced by women from Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent. The policy brief will highlight the specific challenges faced by women from CDWD across various regions, provide evidence based analysis and actionable policy recommendations. This policy brief calls for a coordinated effort by UN Women, governments, and civil society to create an inclusive and equitable environment where these women can thrive.



News from Partners

CONAQ National School launches booklets that show the experiences and activism of Quilombola students in Brazil

The National School for the Training of Quilombola Girls of CONAQ launches, this Thursday (22), the booklets "Fight like a Quilombola girl" and "Letters from Quilombolas: what the students of the National School for the Training of Quilombola Girls of CONAQ say". One of the graphic materials shows how the National School was created, an unprecedented project that strengthened and engaged students and families in the fight for quality education for Quilombolas in all regions and biomes of Brazil. The second booklet presents the experiences of the girls and boys inside and the challenges faced in attending schools.

[Read More →](#)

National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights examines Union Budget, analysing budget allocations to CDWD and Indigenous groups in "Dalit-Adivasi Budget Analysis" in India

Like every year, NCDHR produced their analysis of the Budget presented by the Union government in India - examining the allocations to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes groups under Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) in the country. The analysis found that the trend of non targeted allocations continue and only about 3.2 % (Rs.46,195 Crs) is directly reaching the SCs and only about 2.9 % (Rs. 41,730 Crs) is directly reaching the STs. Click below for the detailed analysis.

[Read More →](#)



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