

Looking forward to bigger and better things ahead and  
#LeavingNoOneBehind in

2025



GfOD

GLOBAL FORUM OF  
COMMUNITIES DISCRIMINATED  
ON WORK AND DESCENT



THE  
INCLUSIVITY  
PROJECT

Monthly  
Newsletter

CDWD MATTERS

## 🌟 New Year Wishes 🌟

As we step into 2025, we carry forward our shared commitment to justice, equality, and inclusion. This new year offers fresh opportunities to amplify the voices of marginalized communities, break down the barriers of discrimination, and build a world where dignity and respect are a reality for all. Thank you for being a vital part of this movement. Your support empowers us to continue advocating for those who are too often overlooked. **Together, let's make 2025 a year of progress, solidarity, and lasting change.**

Here is a look at what happened in the last month of 2024:

## Understanding the plight of Osus of Nigeria: In conversation with Ephraim Ogwu



We bring the first in a three-part series of articles highlighting the struggles of the Osus of Nigeria based on a detailed interview with Ephraim Ogwu, a [CDWD](#) activist who has tirelessly fought for the rights of Osu across [Africa](#). In the first part, Ogwu talks about his earliest experiences, how social segregation continues even today, and the lessons he learnt during his journey as a CDWD activist.

[Read Here](#)

## Strengthening Regional Ties: Europe edition

Being the Global Forum of CDWD, we are on a mission to strengthen the foundation of our collective through building deeper connections and strengthening channels of action and communication with our regional partners and community. This time in Europe - GfOD Global convener, Paul Divakar and Europe Coordinator, Simona Torotcoi visited the community, CSO and state actors across Europe. Here are some highlights from this journey:



**Alexander Daško**, office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities

A very successful meeting with the Plenipotentiary for Roma Welfare in the ministry at Bratislava, capital of Slovakia on potential future engagements. He is also an artist of Romani music and we discussed strategies to promote marginalized CDWD artists & more.

*"Educate Agitate and Organize"* are ringing in the streets of Miskolc, a Romani populated city in Hungary being campaigned by the Dr. Ambedkar School run by Janos and Tobir, & an Indian Dalit artist Sajjan Panwar. Visited by GFoD's Paul Divakar and Simona Torotcoi.



**Derdak Tibor**, director of Dr. Ambedkar High School in Hungary. The school leadership, **János Orsós**.



Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (CPPD), **Zekir Abdulov** - Roma member, **Dragana Drndarevska** - Gender LGBTI+

With **Fikrija Tair**, GFoD Rights Expert and former advisor to the President of North Macedonia on Roma Rights, with the National Commissioners on anti Discrimination, NM, a federal govt body.

Meeting with **Albert Memeti**, CEO of **Romalitico**, a think tank for Roma Rights & advocacy in Skopje, North Macedonia & across the Baltic states in Europe. Romalitico has presence across the country & partners on 6 other with 16 full time teams including Budget Analysis, media and Podcast!



Romalitico Institute for Roma Policy Analysis  
**Deniz Selmani, Elvis Shakiri, Albert Memeti, Suad Skenderi, Kenan Tair**



**Mabera KAMBERI** Head of Department for Coordination and Technical Assistant to the Minister Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth

Meeting with the Secretary of Ministry of Roma Development, North Macedonia.

*Right in the centre of Skopje, capital of North Macedonia, sight of a marginal Roma settlement, in shacks living in the cold with hardly any amenities.... Situation of CDWD living on the periphery without basic facilities is a parallel experienced across regions.*



**Emiliano Aliu** from Romaversitas, **Bledi Taho** from Institute of Romani Culture, and **Brisilda Taco** from Romani Kham

*Meeting with Emiliano Aliu from Romaversitas, Bledi Taho from [Institute of Romani Culture](#), and Brisilda Taco from [Romano Kham](#)*

*[Romani Godi Association](#) Meeting in Turkey, Istanbul*



## Talking about #CDWD at the 4th UNESCO Global Forum against Racism & Discrimination

At UNESCO Global Forum against Racism & Discrimination breakout session 12 on Climate, Racial, Gender, and Reproductive Justice, Simona Torotcoi highlighted the environmental challenges & exclusion faced by Roma community, especially women, in Europe. She drew parallels with those from other communities discriminated on work & descent (#CDWD) across the globe, such as Quilombola, Haratin, Dalit etc.

Simona pointed out how Quilombola women are similarly and diversly impacted as their struggle is strongly related to land, with mega infrastructure projects causing Quilombola women to be removed from their land. Haratin women in Sahel are experiencing precolonial forms of slavery. They don't own land, and thus, are often pushed into migration. Similarly, Dalit women in South Asia are left out of all sorts of policies, even though there are important frameworks established addressing this form of discrimination.

Watch here



## Deadline Extended! Express Interest for CSO Preparations for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)

**Call For CSOs**  
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Join us in amplifying CDWD voices!

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

The Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (GfOD) invites civil society organizations, advocates, and experts to participate in our preparation process for the 2025 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

This initiative is designed to:

- Raise the voices of Communities Discriminated by Work and Descent (CDWD) in the global VNR process.
- Build capacity for CDWD-focused engagement through a tailored Webinar Series (online)

Together, let's ensure no one is Left behind!

Register by January 20th, 2024

For the last few years, the GfOD as part of the UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, has been engaging in the National Voluntary Reviews (VNRs), presenting the viewpoint of our communities across the world (i.e., Roma, Haratins, Buraku, Dalits, Quilombola, etc.). The Major Groups and Other Stakeholders provide the space for stakeholder engagement around the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

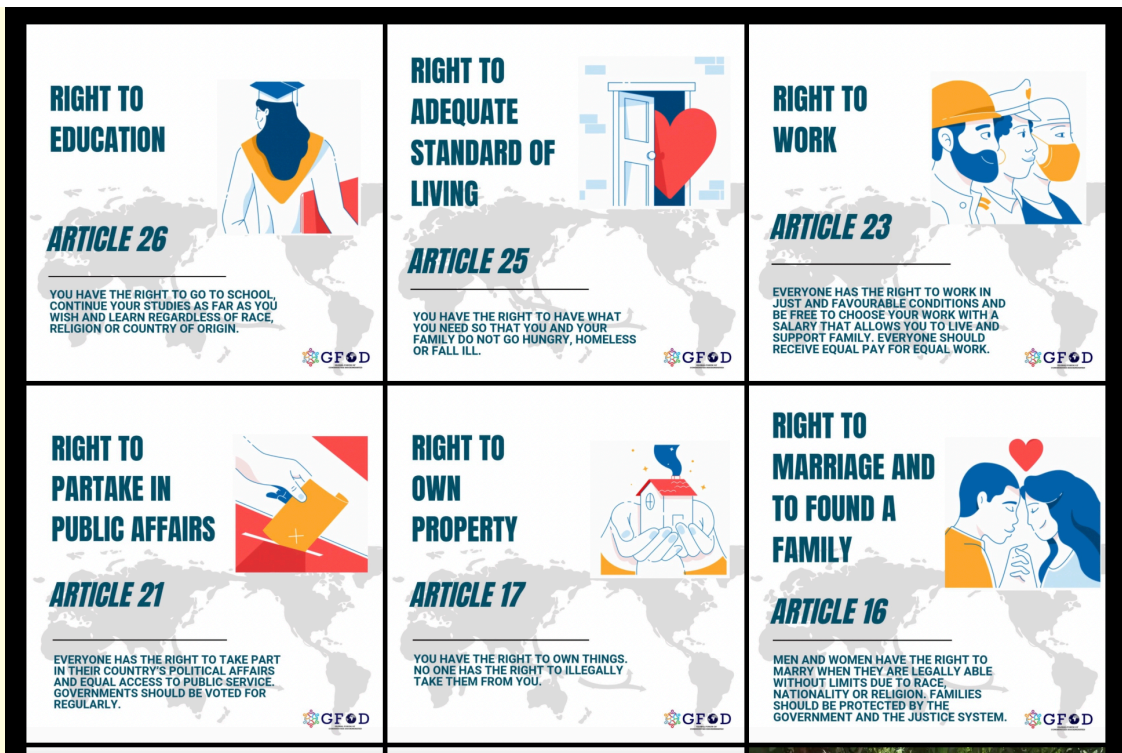
This year we would like to support those civil society representatives and other stakeholders interested in getting involved into their national VNRs, by providing the in-house knowledge and resources (i.e., training) on how to best engage in such advocacy activities from the perspective of CDWD through a series of monthly online webinars.

**If you are a CSO, advocate, or expert interested in ensuring CDWD voices are heard in the 2025 VNR process**, register for the Webinar Series to build your understanding and capacity.

To express your interest please fill out this form by January 20th, 2024. [Click here for more information.](#)

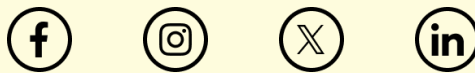
Express Interest

## Social Media Campaign for Human Rights Month



This Human Rights Month, we were honoring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) through a special campaign that began on December 10th and continues throughout the month. Every two days, we've highlighted key articles, including Articles 1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 21, 23, 25, and 26, connecting them to the struggles of marginalized communities facing discrimination on work and descent. These articles protect fundamental rights like equality, freedom from torture, the right to education, and the right to work—but many still face barriers to these freedoms.

To view this campaign and more like this, follow us on social media platforms by clicking these icons:



## Informing The UN Special Rapporteurs' Country Visits

### Submission to the Special Rapporteur on the right to education: Country Visit to Hungary

[Read Here](#)

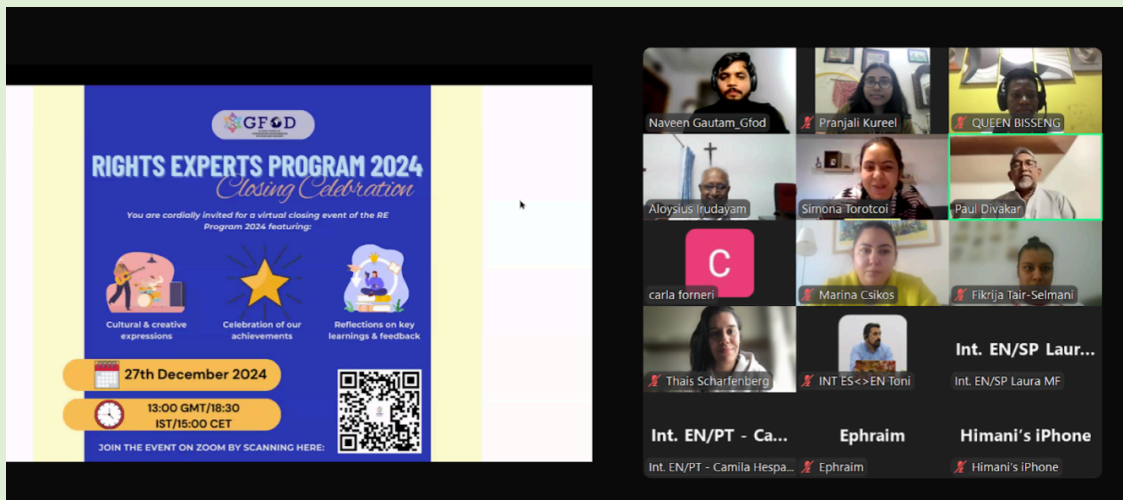
*In 2023, a staggering 75% of Hungarian Roma were living below the poverty line, a stark contrast to the national average of 13.8%! Read this submission to know about the existing social barriers in accessing education for the Roma in Hungary - especially for girls & women.*

[Read Here](#)

### Report submitted to Special Rapporteur on Contemporary forms of Slavery, Tomoyo Obokata , Country visit to Australia, November 2024

*Did you know about the prevalent Caste based discrimination in Australia? Read this submission to know about the situation, the new and emerging forms of Discrimination based on Work & Descent, and more.*

And it's a wrap: Rights Experts Program 2024



Ending on a beautifully productive note, December marked the closing of the Rights Experts Program 2024. A virtual closing ceremony for the RE program took place on 27th December - an opportunity to come together to share insights and feedback, reflect on the journey and the way forward, and share solidarity through various forms of art such as music, poetry and so on.

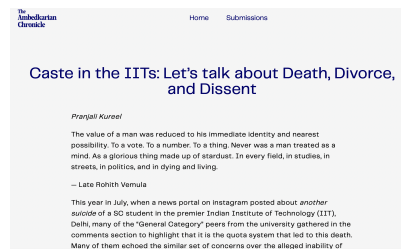
Through this program, about 26 grassroots leaders, researchers and youth activists from 15 countries across four continents were a part of GfOD and connected its mission from the local to global. GfOD organized about 12 training sessions over the second half of the year to build capacity among the Rights Experts and to facilitate their engagements on global platforms as well as within their contexts. We will continue to engage with these Rights Experts through the next phase of the program!

## Spotlight ✨



GfOD's Sr. Legal Researcher, Naveen Gautam was invited to adjudge a moot court competition on consumer rights issues at the Sharda Global University, Greater Noida, UP, India - which took place in the 3rd week of November.

This article, written by GfOD's Pranjali Kureel for The Ambedkarian Chronicle - a Dalit-run media platform in India, highlights the issue of Caste-based discrimination in the premier Tech institutes in India. It also reflects on the need to bridge the (perceived) gap between Science & Society to address this issue.



[Read Here](#)

## Looking forward to a great year ahead!

As we welcome the new year, GfOD looks ahead with hope and determination. From amplifying our voices at the UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council, and regional forums to deepening engagements with communities, partners - and more, we're ready and excited to inculcate change. Here's to a year of action, growth and progress, and a very happy new year!



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