

Development is a Human Right -The Contribution of Development to the Enjoyment of all Human Rights

Human Rights Council resolution 47/11- Regional Seminar Europe & Central
Asia, 1-2 September 2022

ENNHRI Input for Panel speaker Erinda Ballanca on: “The contribution of regional development strategies to the enjoyment of all human rights with a focus on concrete policies and practices, commitments at the regional level.”

1. Human rights and the 2030 Agenda are intertwined [depending on interventions previous speakers, elaborate/ emphasise interconnections]

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development confirms that the SDGs “seek to realize the human rights of all”. It explicitly references the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties throughout its text. The Agenda 2030 is informed by other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development. All 17 SDGs directly or indirectly reflect human rights standards. 90% of the 169 targets are linked to core international human rights and labour standards.
- Human rights norms and mechanisms offer guidance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and even though in itself is a political commitment, the 2030 Agenda is underpinned by legally-binding human rights treaties. Therefore these legally binding norms can ensure accountability in the SDGs’ implementation, and institutions such as NHRIs, can monitor this implementation and hold states to account in line with their international human rights commitments.
- The SDGs can be also seen as an operational plan for realizing human rights. The 2030 Agenda addresses some of the burning issues of our time, such as climate change and the pollution of oceans, which impact human rights, but are mainly addressed in instruments and processes originating outside the human rights system.

1. Work of ENNHRI and NHRIs on SDGs and Human Rights:

Role of NHRIs

- NHRIs are state mandated institutions, independent of government, with a broad mandate to promote and protect human rights. They provide a bridge, not only between state and civil society, but also between the national and international level. NHRIs can therefore be instrumental in addressing the actions required for the SDGs and their implementation at national level, through their human rights mandate.

For example: Danish member, the Danish Institute on Human Rights, has set up a publicly available [database which shows the overlap between SDGs and human rights](#) and can be used by NHRIs to connect SDGs in annual human rights reports, as is done by the Croatian NHRI.

- NHRIs that comply with the UN Paris Principles are **[an indicator of peaceful, just and inclusive societies under SDG 16](#)** and are internationally recognised as human rights defenders. NHRIs are globally recognized to contribute to peaceful, just and inclusive societies and [play a key role in conflict and post-conflict contexts as early-warning mechanisms](#). This role is also apparent in the context of the impacts of the war against Ukraine and NHRIs, including in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, [have been at the forefront of the response to the human rights challenges from the war against Ukraine](#). While continually monitoring and reporting on the situation on the ground, they have developed initiatives such as dedicated hotlines and information campaigns and expressed solidarity in various ways, including through ENNHRI.
- As NHRIs monitor and report on the human rights situation, advise state bodies and promote a culture of rights, they are already collecting data relevant to SDGs, bringing a human rights-based approach, and providing a system of accountability, which has been recognized as crucial to Agenda 2030. Some NHRIs accordingly also play a role in providing independent parallel reports in context of UN VNRs of states.

National illustration: Albania: One of the principles of the United Nations 2030 Agenda is progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, paying particular attention to poor individuals and families. The Albanian NHRI, which I represent today here, prepared a report on the minimum standard of living in Albania for 2021. Despite the efforts of the Albanian government to reform the social protection system, the definition of the minimum living standard is missing in the social protection legislation, which affects the drafting of social protection policies, especially in the clear definition of their purpose. Therefore, purpose of this report was to assess the economic, legal and social situation

regarding the situation of not defining the minimum living wage as a definition and as a basis not only for Economic Aid, but also for other policies in support of poor individuals and families in Albania. The report aimed i) to give a current panorama of the economic situation and poverty in Albania and to project a level of the minimum standard of living; ii) explore the developments of legislation in Albania regarding social protection and assess whether these developments comply with the principle of "life with dignity" or with the objective of eradicating poverty; iii) to analyse current policies on economic assistance and its impact on poverty alleviation and reintegration of vulnerable groups; and to iv) provide recommendations for improving the impact of Social Aid on poverty alleviation and reintegration of Social Aid beneficiaries.

ENNHRI Actions to Support

- ENNHRI, bringing together all NHRIs across wider Europe, strengthens and supports its members to work on national SDG implementation, through exchange of national experiences, capacity-building activities and building relationships with regional bodies. ENNHRI is also working with UNDP's regional office to strengthen NHRIs' work on SDGs.
- We are also developing understanding of synergies between the SDG and human rights frameworks, and have mainstreamed the SDGs across ENNHRI work such as work on [addressing poverty measurement, making use of the SDG framework](#)

2) Impact of development agenda/ SDGs on NHRIs

- By the inclusion of the existence of an NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles as an indicator under SDG Goal 16, the SDG agenda has also had a positive impetus for the further establishment and strengthening of NHRIs in compliance with the Paris Principles in Europe.
- The number of NHRIs accredited by reference to the UN Paris Principles has risen significantly in Europe since 2015 - this number has increased a 46%, from 26 to 38 countries in Europe with an accredited NHRI in 2022. Among these, the number of European countries with an "A-status" NHRI (fully compliant with the Paris Principles) increased by 50%, from 20 to 30, reflecting important progress in line with the UN SDGs and bringing the 2030 target within reach for Europe.

- While making reference to the SDG agenda, notably, regional policies of the EU and Council of Europe have also included the existence of an NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles as an indicator of respect for human rights, rule of law and democracy in our region, this is for example visible in the [EU's annual reporting on the rule of law in the EU](#), or in the 2021 [Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation on NHRIs](#). ENNHRI provides support on the establishment and strengthening of NHRIs, and also supports NHRIs when they face threats to their compliance with the Paris Principles. ENNHRI has progressively strengthened its monitoring of NHRIs' regulatory framework and enabling environment [within its annual rule of law reporting exercise](#), in order to raise awareness about existing challenges and opportunities and further greater support from regional actors to NHRIs across Europe, as well as to further develop targeted actions in support of A-status NHRIs across the region.

3) Need for ensuring meaningful participation of stakeholders, including NHRIs in development / SDG policies and processes

- While the [UN Declaration on the Right to development \(1996\)](#), includes 'meaningful participation' as benchmark, international development policies and mechanisms -such as the UN ECE- remain not sufficiently or appropriately accessible for NHRIs and ENNHRI , as well as other stakeholders.
- For years now, ENNHRI has been advocating at the UNECE to ensure independent participation rights for NHRIs in compliance with the Paris Principles in the UN SDG processes, as is the case for the UN human rights mechanisms such as at the UN [Human Rights Council](#) , including the [UPR](#) . So far, however, the process has not become more inclusive by awarding independent participation rights for NHRIs in the SDG processes.
- consider an example of cooperation on SDGs at national level that reflects (lack of) inclusivity]

Struggle against hate speech in Albania has been one of the domains where collaboration between NHRI-s, NGO-s and government agencies has excelled. Falling under SDG's 5, 10 and of course 16, eradication of hate speech is the scope of the creation of a broad partnership among members of the "Alliance against hate speech" which unites the People's Advocate, the Commissioner against Discrimination, the Albanian Media Council and the government Authority of the Audiovisual Media. The group has launched several campaigns aiming at the liberation of the public speech from hate elements, urging

political parties to refrain from radicalization of their rhetoric during election campaigns and addressing messages to the media community to raise awareness and refuse hate speech in their reporting process.