

# Human Rights for All Post-2015: A Litmus Test, June 2014

The Post-2015 Human Rights Caucus was born in 2013 as a cross-constituency coalition of development, environment, trade union, feminist and human rights organizations worldwide to lay out a [roadmap for embedding human rights](#) into the core of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.<sup>1</sup> As the Open Working Group's (OWG) efforts near completion and the full-blown political negotiations begin, the Post-2015 Human Rights Caucus has developed this Litmus Test to be used to evaluate whether proposals for the post-2015 framework respect and reflect pre-existing human rights norms, standards and commitments, in line with the Rio+20 agreement that sustainable development goals be "consistent with international law". This series of questions and criteria not only clearly articulate our bottom-line expectations for the outcomes of the post-2015 sustainable development process, but also provides a unique tool for all those involved to more objectively assess whether post-2015 proposals truly encapsulate what the UN Secretary General envisioned as "a far-reaching vision of the future firmly anchored in human rights."<sup>2</sup>

## Do the post-2015 sustainable development framework proposals...

### **Test 1: Support human rights comprehensively, taking into consideration their universality, indivisibility and interdependence?**

- a. Apply universally to all people in all countries, while recognizing local realities.
- b. Frame all goals and targets consistently with existing human rights obligations.
- c. Improve the accessibility, availability, acceptability, and quality of goods and services essential to realizing economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the human rights to health, education, food, water, sanitation, housing and social security.
- d. Include concrete targets to protect civil and political rights, in particular the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful protest, political participation, access to information, and guarantees an enabling environment for civil society and human rights and environmental defenders.

### **Test 2: Ensure full transparency and meaningful participation of all people, especially the most disadvantaged, in decision-making at all levels?**

- a. Ensure the right to prompt and effective access to high-quality information on public policies, including on budget, financial and tax policies, disaggregated on the basis of various grounds of discrimination, including compound and intersecting forms.
- b. Secure active and meaningful participation of all without fear in the design, implementation, and monitoring of all relevant policies and programs, and in decisions about how they are resourced.

### **Test 3: Ensure human rights accountability of all development actors?**

- a. Support citizen-led systems of monitoring of performance in meeting the goals.
- b. Ensure human rights accountability domestically, including by securing for all the right to effective remedy for civil, political, social, economic, cultural and environmental human

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<sup>1</sup> The Joint Statement by the Caucus, "[Human Rights for All Post-2015](#)," has been endorsed by over 350 organizations, followed up by a joint statement ahead of OWG 11, '[OWG inches closer to human rights for all post-2015, but still a long road ahead](#).'

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Secretary-General for the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, 2013 "A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015."

- rights abuses through equal access to and confidence in effective, accountable and impartial justice systems.
- c. Ensure human rights accountability internationally, including by supporting access to effective remedy for those people adversely affected by policies which have spillover effects across borders.
  - d. Eradicate existing barriers to justice, particularly for people in poverty and other disadvantaged groups.

**Test 4: Guarantee that the private sector respects human rights?**

- a. Promote effective legislative and regulatory measures to guarantee in practice that all companies act in line with international human rights law and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- b. Introduce mandatory, independent assessments and periodic public reporting of the human rights and sustainable development impacts of large businesses.

**Test 5: Combat inequality and end discrimination in all its forms?**

- a. Guarantee timely collection of disaggregated data on the basis of the most nationally-relevant grounds of disparity and discrimination, taking into account compound and intersecting discrimination.
- b. Ensure that any non-zero or non-universal sectoral commitments are complemented by time-bound targets to progressively eliminate inequalities between groups by prioritizing a more ambitious rate of progress for those most disadvantaged groups.
- c. Combat economic inequality within and between countries.
- d. Protect decent work and fundamental worker's rights for all, reducing unfair income disparities.
- e. Seek to eradicate cross-border tax evasion, return stolen assets, forgive odious debt and progressively combat tax abuses as critical instruments to reduce inequality between countries.

**Test 6: Specifically and comprehensively support girls' and women's rights?**

- a. Ensure all individuals meaningful access, including financial access, to acceptable, available, and quality sexual and reproductive health information and services and full sexual and reproductive autonomy.
- b. Prevent, investigate and punishes all forms of gender-based violence, including harmful traditional practices.
- c. Increase the share of women's control over land, property, productive and natural resources, their economic independence, access to labor market and political participation.
- d. Reduce the burden of unpaid care work.
- e. Eliminate the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination women and girls face, and entails a series of positive measures to overcome structural discrimination and ensure substantive enjoyment of equality.
- f. Ensure that gender equality and girls' and women's rights are mainstreamed throughout all goals, including by developing gender-sensitive targets under other goals.

**Test 7: Secure a minimum floor of socioeconomic well-being for all?**

- a. Embrace a universal or zero target approach for all minimum core economic and social rights obligations, such as nutritionally adequate and safe food to ensure all people's freedom from hunger, free primary education, essential primary healthcare, and a basic essential level of safe water.

- b. Guarantee a quality social protection floor for all, in line with human rights and ILO recommendation 202.

**Test 8: Ensure that any global partnerships for sustainable development are aligned with human rights?**

- a. Ensure human rights-guided policy coherence, with governments and international financial institutions mandated to conduct independent and periodic public assessments of the human rights and sustainable development cross-border impacts of their policies and agreements, particularly those related to trade, investment, aid, tax, migration, intellectual property, debt, monetary policies and financial regulation.
- b. Include clear, time-bound commitments for all actors in development, including high-income countries, international institutions and large businesses.
- c. Develop a robust, multi-faceted global monitoring and accountability framework which tracks the compliance and accountability of all development actors to their commitments, including high-income countries, international institutions and large businesses, with full civil society participation and in constructive interaction with the human rights protection regime.

Endorse the [Human Rights for All Post-2015 Litmus Test here](#).