Webinar on UNDROP Implementation in the Europe and Central Asia region

3 april 2025

the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas and the role of the Working Group Peasants

Process for the adoption of UNDROP

- **Early 2000s:** peasants of La Via Campesina (LVC), following the initiative of LVC Indonesian member Serikat Petani Indonesia (SPI), start to advocate for a legal instrument to protect their rights with the support of other small food producers' organisations, social movements, NGOs and, academia. In this period, LVC starts working on a draft for a Declaration on the rights of peasants.
- **2009 – 2010:** the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee is given the task to carry out two studies – one on discrimination in the context of the right to food, and another one on how to address the situation. The second study includes the proposal for a peasants' rights declaration.
- **September 2012:** a resolution of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) establishes the first Open ended intergovernmental working group (OEIWG) to negotiate, finalise, and submit a draft for a declaration. The OEIWG will hold 5 sessions at the UNHRC in Geneva from July 2013 to April 2018.
- **September 2018:** adoption of UNDROP by the UNHRC (**33 votes in favour**, 3 against, 11 abstentions).
- **December 2018:** adoption of UNDROP by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) (**121 votes in favor**, 8 against and 54 abstentions)

Article 1 - Definition of peasants and other people working in rural areas

Article 2 - General obligations of States

Article 3 - Equality and non-discrimination

Article 4 - Rights of peasant women and other women working in rural areas

Article 5 - Rights to natural resources and the right to development

Article 6 - Right to life, liberty and security of person

Article 7 - Freedom of movement

Article 8 - Freedom of thought, opinion and expression

Article 9 - Freedom of association

Article 10 - Right to participation

Article 11 - Right to information with regard to production, marketing and distribution

Article 12 - Access to justice

Article 13 - Right to work

Article 14 - Right to safety and health at work

Article 15 - Right to food and food sovereignty

Article 16 - Right to a decent income and livelihood and the means of production

Article 17 - Right to land and other natural resources

Article 18 - Right to a safe, clean and healthy environment

Article 19 - Right to seeds

Article 20 - Right to biological diversity

Article 21 - Rights to water and to sanitation

Article 22 - Right to social security

Article 23 - Right to health

Article 24 - Right to adequate housing

Article 25 - Right to education and training

Article 26 - Cultural rights and traditional knowledge

Article 27 - Responsibility of the United Nations and of other international organizations

Article 28 - General Obligations

Article 1 - **Definition of peasants and other people working in rural areas**

- “1.1 For the purposes of the present Declaration, **a peasant is any person who engages or who seeks to engage alone, or in association with others or as a community, in small-scale agricultural production for subsistence and/or for the market, and who relies significantly, though not necessarily exclusively, on family or household labour and other non-monetized ways of organizing labour, and who has a special dependency on and attachment to the land.**
- 1.2 The present Declaration applies to any person engaged in artisanal or small-scale agriculture, crop planting, livestock raising, pastoralism, fishing, forestry, hunting or gathering, and handicrafts related to agriculture or a related occupation in a rural area. It also applies to dependent family members of peasants.
- 1.3 The present Declaration also applies to **indigenous peoples** and local communities working on the land, transhumant, nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, and the landless, engaged in the above-mentioned activities.
- 1.4 The present Declaration further applies to **hired workers, including all migrant workers** regardless of their migration status, and seasonal workers, on plantations, agricultural farms, forests and farms in aquaculture and in agro-industrial enterprises.”

Article 2 – General obligations of States

- “2.1 **States shall respect, protect and fulfil the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas. They shall promptly take legislative, administrative and other appropriate steps to achieve progressively the full realization of the rights of the present Declaration that cannot be immediately guaranteed.**
- 2.2 Particular attention shall be paid (…) to the rights and special needs of (…) older persons, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities (…).
- 2.3 Without disregarding specific legislation on indigenous peoples, (…) **States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with peasants and other people working in rural areas through their own representative institutions** (…).
- 2.4 States shall elaborate, interpret and apply relevant international agreements and standards to which they are a party in a manner consistent with their human rights obligations as applicable to peasants and other people working in rural areas.
- 2.5 **States shall** take all necessary measures to **ensure that non-State actors that they are in a position to regulate**, such as private individuals and organizations, and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, **respect and strengthen the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas**.”

Article 2 – General obligations of States

- “2.6 **States, recognizing the importance of international cooperation in support of national efforts for the realization of the purposes and objectives of the present Declaration, shall take appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of peasants and other people working in rural areas, among others**. Such measures could include:
- (a) Ensuring that relevant international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive, accessible and pertinent to peasants and other people working in rural areas;
- (b) Facilitating and supporting capacity-building (…)
- (c) Facilitating cooperation in research and in access to scientific and technical knowledge;
- (d) Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, facilitating access to and sharing of accessible technologies, and through the transfer of technologies, particularly to developing countries, on mutually agreed terms;
- (e) Improving the functioning of markets at the global level and facilitating timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help to limit extreme food price volatility and the attractiveness of speculation.”

Article 15 – Right to food and right to food sovereignty

- “15.1 Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the **right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger**. This includes the right to produce food (…)

- 15.4 **Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to determine their own food and agriculture systems, recognized by many States and regions as the right to food sovereignty. This includes the right to participate in decision-making processes on food and agriculture policy and the right to healthy and adequate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods that respect their culture.”**

Article 16 – Right to a decent income & farmers protests in Europe

- “16.1 Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the **right to an adequate standard of living** for themselves and their families. (…)
- 16.3 **States shall** take appropriate measures to **strengthen and support local, national and regional markets in ways that facilitate, and ensure that peasants and other people working in rural areas have, full and equitable access and participation in these markets to sell their products at prices that allow them and their families to attain an adequate standard of living.** (…)
- 16.6 States shall take appropriate measures to **ensure fair wages and equal remuneration** for work of equal value, without distinction of any kind.”

Article 17 - Righ to land and other natural resources

- 17.1 “Peasants and other people living in rural areas have the

  - “17.1 Peasants and other people living in rural areas have the **right to land, individually and/or collectively** (…)

  - 17.3 States shall take appropriate measures to provide legal recognition for land tenure rights, including customary land tenure rights not currently protected by law, recognizing the existence of different models and systems.

  - 17.4 Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to be protected against arbitrary and unlawful displacement from their land or place of habitual residence (…).”

Article 19 - Righ to seeds
& Article 20 - Righ to biological diversity

- “19.1 Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the **right to seeds** (…) including:

  (a) The right to the **protection of traditional knowledge** relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

  (b) The right to equitably participate in sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

  (c) The right to participate in the making of decisions on matters relating to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

  (d) **The right to save, use, exchange and sell their farm-saved seed or propagating material**.”

- “20.1 States shall take appropriate measures (…) to prevent the depletion and **ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity** in order to promote and protect the full enjoyment of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

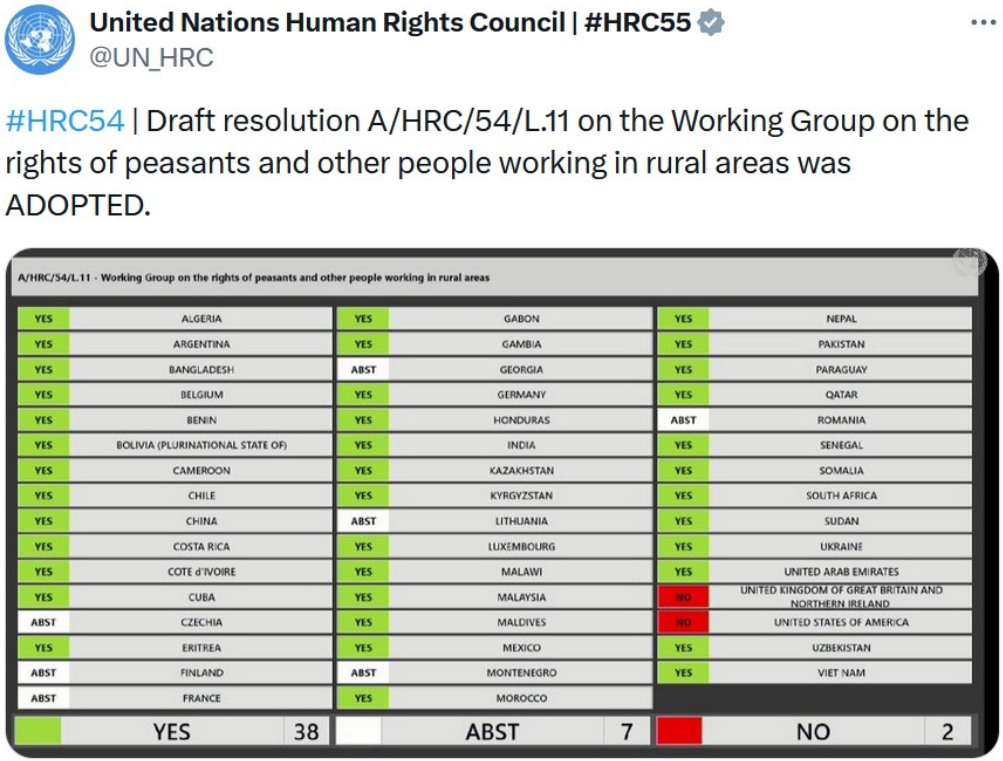
- 20. 2 (…) to **promote and protect the traditional knowledge, innovation and practices of peasants and other people working in rural areas** (…)

- 20.3 States shall **prevent risks** of violation of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas **arising from the development, handling, transport, use, transfer or release of any living modified organisms.**”

Special Procedure on UNDROP with the objective to favour its implementation

- On 11 October 2023, the UNHRC voted in favour of the establishment of a **Working Group on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas** (**38 votes in favour**, 2 against, 7 abstentions)

- The duration of the Working Group is **3 years** and it will be composed of **5 independent experts** with balanced geographical representation from the 5 UN geographical groupings.



United Nations Human Rights Council | #HRC55
@UN_HRC

#HRC54 | Draft resolution A/HRC/54/L.11 on the Working Group on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas was ADOPTED.

A/HRC/54/L.11 - Working Group on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas

YES	ALGERIA	YES	GABON	YES	NEPAL
YES	ARGENTINA	YES	GAMBIA	YES	PAKISTAN
YES	BANGLADESH	ABST	GEORGIA	YES	PARAGUAY
YES	BELGIUM	YES	GERMANY	YES	QATAR
YES	BENIN	YES	HONDURAS	ABST	ROMANIA
YES	BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)	YES	INDIA	YES	SENEGAL
YES	CAMEROON	YES	KAZAKHSTAN	YES	SOMALIA
YES	CHILE	YES	KYRGYZSTAN	YES	SOUTH AFRICA
YES	CHINA	ABST	LITHUANIA	YES	SUDAN
YES	COSTA RICA	YES	LUXEMBOURG	YES	UKRAINE
YES	COTE d'IVOIRE	YES	MALAWI	YES	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
YES	CUBA	YES	MALAYSIA	NO	UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
ABST	CZECHIA	YES	MALDIVES	NO	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
YES	ERITREA	YES	MEXICO	YES	UZBEKISTAN
ABST	FINLAND	ABST	MONTENEGRO	YES	VIET NAM
ABST	FRANCE	YES	MOROCCO		
	YES 38		ABST 7		NO 2

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Mr. Carlos DUARTE (Colombia)

Ms. Shalmali GUTTAL (India)

Mr. Davit HAKOBYAN (Armenia)

Ms. Uche Ewelukwa OFODILE (Nigeria)

Ms. Geneviève SAVIGNY (France)

Special procedure on UNDROP with the objective to favour its implementation

The mandate of the Working Group is to:

- Promote the effective and comprehensive dissemination and implementation of UNDROP.
- Identify, exchange and promote good practices and lessons learned on its implementation.
- Work in close coordination with UN agencies and human rights bodies.
- Facilitate and contribute to the exchange of technical assistance, capacity-building, transfer of technologies, and international cooperation in support of national efforts, actions and measures to better implement UNDROP.
- Submit an annual report with recommendations to the UNHRC and the UNGA.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications are letters sent by the Special Procedures to Governments and others, such as intergovernmental organisations, businesses, military or security companies.

In these letters, the experts report on allegations of human rights violations they have received, regarding:

- past human rights violations - which can be the object of a letter of allegation;

- on-going or potential human rights violation - which can be the object of an urgent appeal;

- concerns relating to bills, legislation, policies or practices that do not comply with international human rights law and standards.

The expert(s) will in the letter present the allegations and request clarifications on them. Where necessary, the experts request that the concerned authorities take action to prevent or stop the violation, investigate it, bring to justice those responsible and make sure that remedies are available to the victim(s) or their families. The experts also recall the applicable human rights provisions in these letters.

Methods of work

The Working Group carries out its mandate in accordance with the resolutions of the Human Rights Council and in a spirit of constructive dialogue with Member States, rights holders as defined in article 1 of the Declaration, civil society, UN specialized agencies, funds, programmes as well as national, regional and international human rights mechanisms.

The Working Group makes full use of a common set of tools available to special procedures mandates, namely, thematic reports, country visits and communications.

It holds three sessions per year (two in Geneva and one in New York).

The Working Group has an interactive dialogue at the Human Rights Council during the September session on its thematic and country visits reports, and also reports to the General Assembly in October/November each year.

Furthermore, the WG undertakes other initiatives including public statements, position papers, amicus curiae briefs, participation in events, and contributions to the work of others in the UN human rights mechanisms or UN entities.

call for input | Special Procedures

Call for input - Global trends in challenges affecting peasants and other people working in rural areas, as well as their right to equal participation

What are the main challenges facing peasants, small-scale fishers, pastoralists and rural workers in your country?

How does your government, organization or community address those challenges affecting the rights of peasants and rural workers? Please provide specific examples, where possible.

What policies or measures have been found effective to promote the rights of peasants and rural workers in your country?

What specific groups of peasants or rural workers may be at particular risk in your country; and what measures have been, or could be, taken to mitigate those risks?

What are the challenges or violations facing peasants and other people working in rural areas in their exercise of the right to equal participation at the local, national, and international level?

What laws, policies or other measures exist to recognize and/or promote the right to participation for peasants and other people working in rural areas?

When the right to participation for peasants and other people working in rural areas is violated, what judicial and non-judicial procedures, remedies and processes are available to address the violations, and how effective are they?

What policies and measures have been found effective in empowering peasants and other rural communities to participate in decision-making at the local, national, or international levels?

https://www.ohchr.org/en/specialprocedures/wg-peasants