SPECIAL PROCEDURES
UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Decoding the Right to Development

1 Human right

2 Dimensions

3 Elements

4 Facets

5 Principles



1 Human right

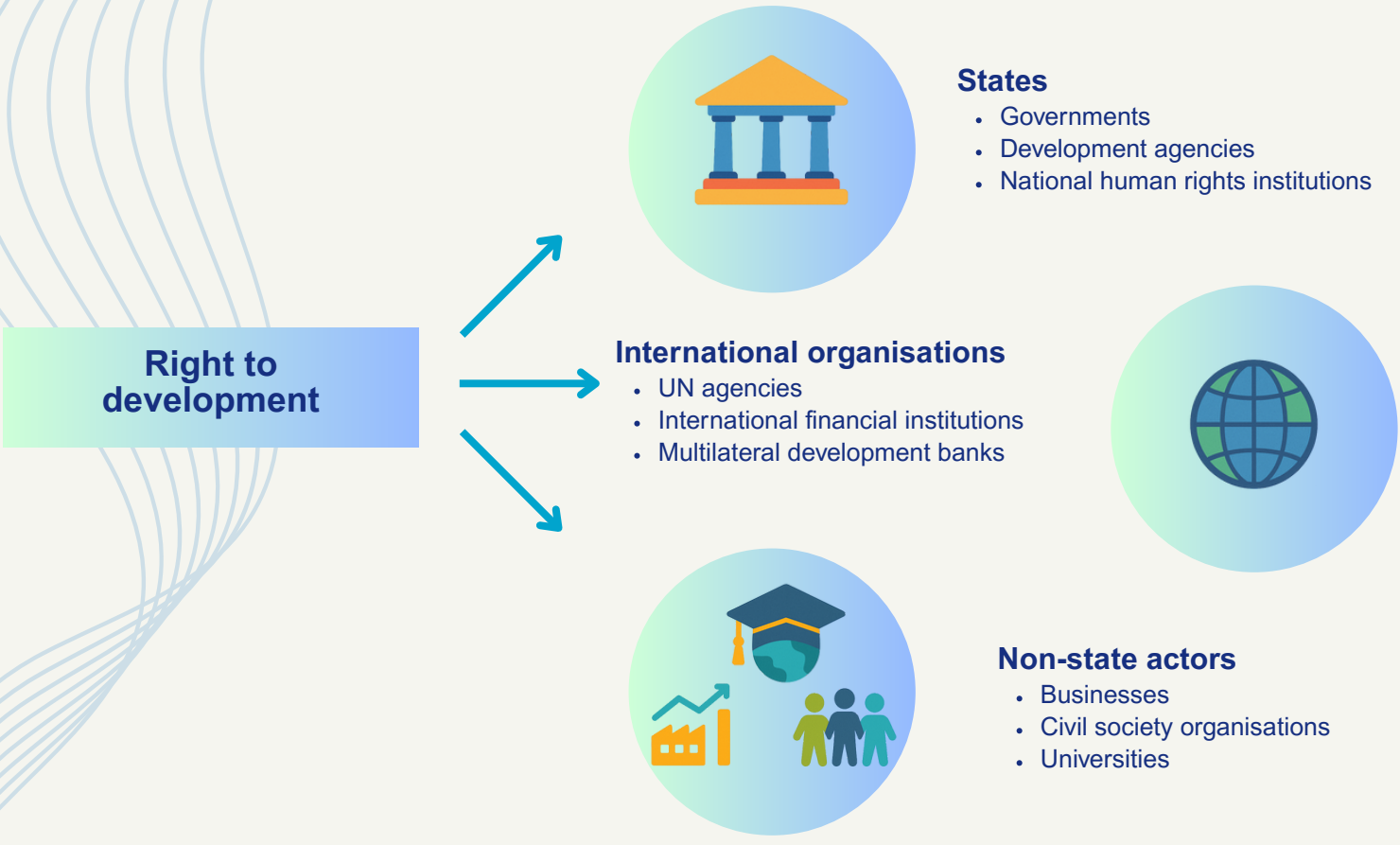
The right to development is a human right like other civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. The right can be traced to the Charter of the United Nations (Article 55) and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (Articles 25 and 28).

The 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development articulates important aspects of this right. The right is also recognised in regional human rights instruments and national constitutions.

States are currently negotiating a legally binding international instrument to codify the right to development.

Corresponding duties

Multiple actors have distinct but complementary duties or responsibilities to realise the right to development:



2 Dimensions

The right to development has both individual and collective dimensions, as ‘every human person and all peoples’ have this right.

Many other human rights have individual as well as collective dimensions, e.g., the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the right of peaceful assembly; the right to freedom of association; the right to enjoy one’s culture and use own language; the right to form trade unions; and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

3 Elements

Every human and all peoples are entitled to:

participate in **contribute to** **enjoy**

economic, social, cultural and political development.

Participation in decision making concerning development policies, programmes and projects should be ‘active, free and meaningful’.

4 Facets

The right to development envisages economic, social, cultural and political development of every human being as well as of all peoples. The right is both an end and a means to realise all human rights and fundamental freedoms.



5 Principles

Fair distribution: National, regional and international development policies should aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals and ensure the fair distribution of the benefits resulting from development.





Intersectionality: Since many individuals and groups face multiple layers of discrimination, the right to development should be realised 'without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status'.

Intergenerational equity: The right to development is not a licence to destroy the planetary ecosystem or undermine the ability of future generations to fulfil their development aspirations. The right to development 'must be fulfilled so as to meet equitably the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations.'





Self-determination: Peoples have a right to determine their economic, social, cultural and political development in line with the International Bill of Human Rights. Self-determination includes peoples having full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources.

International cooperation: International cooperation is essential to realise the right to development of all human beings everywhere, especially in developing countries. Cooperation among States and other actors is also critical to overcome barriers to realising this right.



Value addition

The right to development:





- Recognises the agency of human beings
- Highlights the importance of collective dimensions of human rights



- Demonstrates indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights



- Stresses the importance of active, free and meaningful participation



- Provides a process to realise all other human rights
- Emphasises the importance of disarmament to peace and development





- Underscores States' duty to cooperate
- Promotes the creation of a fair international economic order to address injustices



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