الشبكة العالمية
للحقوق الاقتصادية
والاجتماعية والثقافية

ESCR-Net
Red-DESC
Réseau-DESC

Community-led research on the rights to land, housing and natural resources

V 2 - 15th May 2020

Introduction:
Too often, data used in decision-making on issues around development priorities and access to land, housing and natural resources do not reflect the lived realities of peoples who are directly affected by these decisions. Public decision-making often relies on 'hard evidence' developed by power-holders like States and corporations while disregarding communities' perspectives as biased and illegitimate. Marginalized groups, particularly women, are often excluded from data and evidence used to make decisions that affect their lives.

Grassroots groups and communities need to be seen as legitimate voice and the main experts over the issues that affect them such as inequality, impoverishment and injustice. In addition, they need relevant data and evidence to be able to organize, articulate their needs and visions for change, and advocate and campaign effectively. Community-led research is a process through which communities collect, analyze and use strong data on issues that are relevant to the them, and building on their knowledge and experiences. Over the past years, ESCR-Net members have recognized[1] the power of community-led research to strengthen collective power, improve participation in decision-making and accountability for human rights violations.

Description:
This project aims at ensuring that communities and movements have the data and evidence they need to develop effective advocacy and campaigning. This project will **facilitate collaboration between ESCR-Net members**, including movements and NGOs with wide experience in monitoring and documentation **and grassroots movements or communities eager to gather, analyze and use new or more robust data to confront corporate capture[2] and secure rights to land, housing and natural resources.**

This project will provide **technical and practical support** to each group in: identifying specific types of data needed, developing methodologies and tools, supporting field research activities, analyzing the data and developing outputs for advocacy or campaigning. In the last phase of this project, members will collectively explore opportunities to amplify local research findings at international level and to strengthen collective advocacy via ESCR-Net and

---

[1] https://www.escr-net.org/news/2018/communities-telling-their-own-stories-report-our-experiences

[2] Corporate capture refers to undue influence of corporate actors over decision-making processes and public institutions, see: https://www.escr-net.org/corporateaccountability/corporatecapture/manifestations

beyond.

The project is aimed at social movement members of ESCR-Net or potentially grassroots groups/social movements working closely with ESCR-Net members in different regions. In line with our core principles and our capacity, we plan to involve 4-6 movements or grassroots groups (one per region) that:

- Are interested in gathering data to advance their rights to land, housing and natural resources;
- Are interested in understanding and confronting the role of private actors in driving violations of the rights to land, housing and natural resources;
- Apply an intersectional gender analysis and approach and strengthen the leadership of women in their group/movement;
- Are committed to engage for the whole duration of the project (approximately August 2020 - December 2021);

Participation of specific groups will also be determined on the capacity of ESCR-Net to facilitate support that meaningfully responds to the needs and goals of the group.

Examples of research projects: this project taps into ESCR-Net members' experiences with a range of methodologies such as mapping, surveying, video documentation, budget monitoring etc. Examples of projects we could support include:
- Field documentation of human rights violations
- Gathering data needed to inform decisions or expose harmful impact of corporate projects on human rights and the environment, particularly through an intersectional approach
- Storytelling and media engagement to amplify the perspectives of communities and the leadership, voices and agendas of women within the movements
- "Follow the money" research to identify relevant information about companies (e.g. investors, politicians), including involvement in different industries in the same country or in other countries
- Mapping of land and natural resources, including scientific and technical data as well as analysis of powerful actors and their impact on a specific territory; Etc.

Outcomes: At local level, the project will allow communities to organize, produce and use data that can support their own struggles. At global level, the project will build a powerful narrative that can feed into collective advocacy and campaigning that ESCR-Net has been advancing on issues such as corporate capture, climate justice, the rights to land, housing and natural resources, and the protection of women human rights defenders.

Brief overview and timeline of activities (to be refined with participants):

الشبكة العالمية
للحقوق الاقتصادية
والاجتماعية والثقافية

ESCR-Net
Red-DESC
Réseau-DESC

June - July 2020: identification of groups who are interested in the project and preliminary discussions. Establishing an advisory group of ESCR-Net members,[3] that will identify 4-6 project participants and provide guidance on all aspects of the project.

August – September: Project participants nuance and refine their ideas for their own research project, with the support of advisory group members.

October (TBC!): first workshop on research methodologies and analytical frameworks.

October 2020 – March 2021: Data collection with the support of ESCR-Net members – this could involve local workshops and meetings as well as a range of research activities.

April 2021 – June 2021: Data analysis, with the support of ESCR-Net members.

July 2021 – October 2021: Development of local advocacy or campaign plans and relevant research and/or media outputs. ESCR-Net will support local advocacy and campaign as needed.

November 2021: final global workshop analyzing the data and drawing key collective messages.

Groups interested in participating should contact the Monitoring Working Group Coordinator, Francesca Feruglio: fferuglio@escr-net.org

---

[3] The Advisory Group will be constituted of ESCR-Net members according to our core principles (gender and regional balance) and will include social movements and NGO members with experience in monitoring and documentation.