



Erika Schläppi

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Areas of Most Relevant Expertise

- Twenty-five years of experience in backstopping and advising on international human rights, discrimination against women, access to justice, state building, and governance (including decentralization, political participation and local governance),
- Expertise on women's rights, particularly on gender in governance. Member of the CEDAW Committee 2025-2028, monitoring the UN Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women,
- Working on human rights, governance and supporting policy dialogue in a variety of challenging, fragile and conflicting contexts, with different stakeholders from government agencies to civil society organizations

Higher Education

Dr. iuris, University of Bern, Switzerland, 1998

Doctoral thesis "Human Rights in Bilateral Development Co-operation: Opportunities and Risks from an International Law Perspective" was awarded the 1999 Walther Hug Prize for outstanding legal research.

Attorney-at-Law (Rechtsanwältin), University of Bern/Bernese High Court, 1985

General legal education (civil, criminal and public law), including extended practical training in courts and law firm

Languages

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
German	mother tongue	mother tongue	mother tongue
English	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
French	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Spanish	Good	Excellent	Good

Curriculum Vitae and employment record

Born in the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland, Erika Schläppi studied law at the University of Bern and gained her diploma as an attorney in 1985. Following her specific interest in political systems, human rights and public law she started her professional career as a research assistant under Prof. Saladin, Professor for Public and International Law at the University of Bern. In 1987 she started work as a legal analyst for the Association for the Prevention of Torture APT (formerly: Swiss Committee Against Torture), an NGO based in Geneva. There she prepared and edited a study mandated by the Council of Europe to design the first steps for implementing the then new European Convention for the Prevention of Torture. From 1989 to 1994 she was a staff lawyer and deputy head of section (1992-1994) in the Human Rights Section of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. She had various responsibilities, particularly the preparation, formulation and implementation of strategies and operational decisions in the context of Swiss human rights policy, at multilateral (UN, Council of Europe, OSCE) as well as bilateral level (interventions and co-operation programmes). She also edited the messages to the Swiss Parliament concerning the ratification of the UN Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In 1994 Erika Schläppi returned to the University of Bern to prepare her doctorate as a senior research analyst at the Institute of Public Law under Prof. Kälin (1994-2000). Together they prepared and edited a study mandated by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs on implementing Human Rights issues in Swiss Development Co-operation (1994-1996), and a study financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation on Human Rights and Swiss economic assistance. Her doctoral thesis "Human Rights in Development Co-operation" was published in 1998 and was awarded the 1999 Walther Hug Prize for outstanding scientific research.

Using her academic background and her practical governmental and non-governmental experience, she has been working as an independent consultant since 1998, specialising in the field of governance and the rule of law, international human rights (including women's rights), and development co-operation. She provides expert support, advice and training to a variety of stakeholders in different roles, working in different institutional and cultural contexts. This gives her broad practical experience in political analysis, assessment of contexts, development of strategies, designing and planning interventions, implementation processes, review and evaluation of interventions. Erika Schläppi co-founded Ximpulse Ltd in 2009 (www.ximpulse.ch) and is co-directing the consultancy. Ximpulse has a core team of three experts working mainly in developing and transition countries, often in conflict or post-conflict situations. Ximpulse specializes in state organisation, governance, and human rights as well as in designing and facilitating multilayer processes. From 2019 to 2024, Ximpulse was a member of the LoGov Consortium implementing the project on "local governments and the changing urban-rural interplay", www.logov-rise.eu, funded by the EU under the Horizon 2020 RISE (research, innovation and staff exchange) program. Erika Schläppi was responsible for the work package on local political participation. Ximpulse was also in charge of managing PolitExchange, the competence center of the Capital Region Switzerland for study visits on governance, from 2016 to 2025.

In 2024, Erika Schläppi has been elected to the CEDAW Committee tasked with monitoring the UN Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, for 2025-2028.

Country Experience

Many short term consultancies in Central, South and East Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Balkans, Middle East, particularly in: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bhutan, Bolivia, Cambodia, Georgia, Honduras, Jordan, Kyrgystan, Lebanon, Mali, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, India, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, Rwanda, Serbia, Tajikistan, Tchad, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam.

Professional Experience as a Consultant

Expert Support and Advice in the Field of Development Co-operation, Relating to Human Rights, Rule of Law and Governance

Selected references (mostly mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation SDC):

- Support, advice for and editing of policy papers and briefings of SDC on governance and human rights, (managing Ximpulse's support as a subcontractor of the Institute of Development Studies IDS Brighton 2018-2021, as part of the P4PGE consortium, 2022-ongoing)
- Advice on context analysis, design and implementation of country strategies, multi-annual programs and projects, particularly in fragile contexts, in:
 - Tajikistan (Support of rule of law programme 2011-2012, 2015, 2019)
 - Albania (recommendations for integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion into the Swiss portfolio of support programs, 2024); analysis of the justice sector and possible interventions by SDC, team leader (2016)
 - Mali (Case study for the SDC learning journey on governance and conflict, on behalf of the Democratization, Decentralization and Local Governance DDLG Network and the Conflict and Human Rights CHR Network, team leader, 2019)
 - Support to the building of a networking and exchange platform for the diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Switzerland (2014-2015, 2019, together with the Ximpulse team)
 - Uzbekistan (support to the planning of the new programme on governance, 2022)
 - Cambodia (Study on the Law on Associations and Non-governmental Organisations (2023-2024))

Independent Evaluations and Reviews on Human Rights, Access to Justice, Decentralization and Governance

Selected programs and projects (mostly in the role of a team leader), most recently in:

- Mali (World Bank/SDC programme for the support of urban municipalities in Mali PACUM, 2018)
- Honduras (Case study for the SDC learning journey on governance and conflict, on behalf of the Democratization, Decentralization and Local Governance DDLG Network and the Conflict and Human Rights CHR Network, team leader, 2018)
- Bolivia (Final evaluation of SDC's access to justice programme, 2022)

Collaboration in multiple training activities, workshops, and study tours to Switzerland, recently:

- Conceptualization of and contribution to trainings on governance, accountability, human rights for SDC Democratization, Decentralization and Local Governance Network, 2015, 2017, 2018
- Design and organisation of governance study visits for government authorities, parliamentarians, NGOs, from various country contexts to Switzerland (together with the Ximpulse team, 2010 – ongoing)

- Managing PolitExchange, the center of competence on Governance study visits, for the Capital Region Switzerland (www.politexchange.ch; together with the Ximpulse team, since 2016)

Diverse assignments in the field of international human rights, democracy and peace building, mandated by the Human Security Division of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, recently:

- Support of the design and implementation of various workshops on democracy (2022-2023)
- Expert support of the establishment of the Swiss National Institution on Human Rights, design and accompaniment of the working process, with the participation of Swiss civil society and Swiss authorities (2022-2023)

Various **lectures on human rights, access to justice and governance** issues in post-graduate courses at the Universities of Bern, Fribourg, and Geneva and at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich.

Selected Assignments on Women's Rights and Gender, recently:

- Albania (recommendations for integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion into the Swiss portfolio of support programs, 2024)
- Support to the Monitoring of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs' strategy on gender equality and women's rights, 2019-2020
- Support to the collection of data for and drafting of the first report of Switzerland on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, 2020
- Drafting the first, second/third, and fourth/fifth reports and several interim reports of Switzerland to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), mandated by the Swiss Federal Department of Internal Affairs and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (1999-2001, 2005-2008, 2011, 2012, 2013-2014, 2018)
- Design and elaboration of an on-line tool for legal practitioners to use CEDAW in practice, on behalf of the Federal Commission on Women's Issues of Switzerland (team leader, 2010, 2011-12, 2016-2018)