



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. Currently, Ximpulse is 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. Ximpulse is responsible for the work package on local political participation. Ximpulse is also in charge of managing PolitExchange, the competence center of the Capital Region Switzerland for study visits on governance.

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, Kyrgyzstan, 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), including:

- Substantial advice on the preparation and edition of the SDC strategic guidelines and factsheets on human rights (1997/2005, 2015, 2017), the rule of law (1998/2008), decentralization (2000), conflict prevention (2002), guidelines on governance for the SDC Latin American Section
- Advising SDC's governance division on different fields of activity (2001-2008), particularly on human rights (human rights-based approach), access to justice, and gender (implementation of CEDAW)
- Support of SDC's decentralization and local governance network (2009-2011), developing policy papers on various governance topics and guidance for implementing governance as a transversal theme and guidance for measuring governance results (2014-2015)
- 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)
- Support of SDC's Conflict & Human Rights network (2011 – 2014), particularly edition of 2 factsheets on human rights topics (2015), elaboration of a new SDC human rights policy, incl. the human rights-based approach (2017-2018)
- Support of SDC's network on migration (2012 – 2014) on the human-rights based approach to migration
- Advice on context analysis, design and implementation of country strategies, multi-annual programs and projects, particularly in fragile contexts, in:
 - Tajikistan (SDC governance strategy 2001, support of rule of law programme 2011-2012, 2015, 2019)
 - Niger (human rights and governance perspective to SDC's development co-operation program, 2001/2004)
 - Pakistan (SDC's human rights strategy of 2002; SDC decentralization programme, 2006; training and support to integrate governance as a transversal theme in SDC's development cooperation programme, 2015)
 - Nepal (SDC's governance strategy, 2003)
 - Rwanda (options for SDC to improve access to justice, 2005)
 - Middle East and North Africa (input for planned governance strategy 2006/7); SDC Regional program (support and advice for the domain of "protection", 2011)
 - Serbia (study on judicial training commissioned by the World Bank, team leader, 2008)
 - Bosnia (study on potentials for future SDC programme in the justice sector, 2008/09, support for the design of a project supporting prosecutors 2009/10)
 - Albania (study on potentials for future joint SDC/ADC programme on regional development and decentralization, team leader, 2008/9, support for the design of the SDC-funded Decentralization

and Local Government Project (DLDP), general support in decentralization (2010 -2012, 2013), analysis of the justice sector and possible interventions by SDC, team leader (2016)

- Ukraine (gender assessment for local governance programme of DESPRO/SKAT, 2010)
- Morocco (context analysis, planning of SDC intervention in democratic transition, team leader, 2012)
- Bolivia (context analysis, planning for SDC intervention in access to justice, team leader, 2012)
- Cambodia (backstopping SDC's interventions in the governance domain, 2014-2017)
- Tunisia (advice on planning a new program on accountability mechanisms, 2019)
- 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)

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) in:

- Rwanda (governance programme, 2000, decentralization programme, team leader, 2004)
- Pakistan (human rights program, team leader, 2002/3)
- Southern Caucasus (SDC's governance programme, team leader, 2004)
- India (SDC-funded water project, reviewed from a human rights perspective, team leader, 2006; SDC funded access to justice project, team leader, 2007)
- Tajikistan (SDC's access to justice and human rights project, team leader, 2007, 2010; SDC's programme on prevention of domestic violence, 2015)
- Bosnia (evaluation of SDC's governance strategy, team leader 2007)
- Vietnam (SIDA/SDC/Novib project on legal aid, team leader, 2008)
- Mongolia (SDC programme on Human Trafficking, team leader, 2009)
- Albania (Austrian Development Co-operation-funded Equity in Governance Project, team leader, 2010)
- Latin America (desk study on implementing governance in SDC's programmes in Latin America, 2012)
- Bangladesh (study on Horizontal Learning Programme HLP for local governments, funded by SDC, on behalf of Ximpulse, with Ursula König, 2013)
- Moldova (SDC programme on water and sanitation, expert on governance and gender, 2014)
- Occupied Palestinian Territory (SDC human rights programme, 2001, SDC's programme in "Rule of Law and Protection", team leader, 2017)
- 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

- SDC training on human rights and development, particularly the human rights-based approach (1998-2008, 2012)
- Conceptualization of and contribution to trainings on governance, accountability, human rights for SDC Bolivia (2009), SDC Pakistan (2015), Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Bhutan (2016), SDC Democratization, Decentralization and Local Governance Network, 2015, 2017, 2018

- Design and facilitation of two regional SDC seminars on the role of the State in Latin America (Peru, 2006)
- 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:

- Study of experiences with and prospects for bilateral Swiss human rights dialogues (2000, with Jörg Künzli)
- Study of Swiss activities supporting intl. human rights observers (2000/01, with Jörg Künzli)
- Study of the internal management of relevant human rights information (2001, with Jörg Künzli)
- Study and advice on the various options for creating a national human rights institution in Switzerland (2003/4, 2007-9, 2010)
- Design and preparation of workshops on “constitutional reform in peace processes” (2005, 2006)
- Study of options for reforming the OSCE human dimension events (2011-12, on behalf of Ximpulse, with Nicole Töpperwien and Ursula König)
- Advice on supporting Chad in its human rights reporting (2012)
- Study on monitoring OSCE human dimension commitments (2013-14)
- 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

- 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)
- Study on women’s rights and human rights, mandated by the Federal Commission on Women’s Issues of Switzerland (2006/7)
- Advice to SDC’s governance division’s gender desk on the implementation of CEDAW (2005/2006)
- Evaluation of a gender and governance project (“Equity in governance”, funded by Austrian Development Cooperation) in Albania, 2010
- Gender assessment of DESPRO decentralization programme and advice on how better to integrate gender (Ukraine 2010)
- 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)
- Review of SDC programme on water and sanitation, regarding governance and gender (Moldova, 2014)
- Review SDC programme on prevention of domestic violence (Tajikistan, 2015)

- Support to the Monitoring of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs' strategy on gender equality and womens' rights, 2019-2020

Selected Publications

- Erika Schläppi, 'Common goals – different universes: gender equality in human rights, the CEDAW Convention and the transformative agenda for sustainable development' (in German), in: University of Linz / Institute for Legal Gender Studies, *Kritisches Rechtsdenken II*, Linz 2022, pp. 4–33.
- Erika Schläppi, 'From voting rights to effective political participation: formal and substantive equality - and the need for positive measures' (in German), in : *Juristinnen Schweiz* (ed.), *Recht und Geschlecht, Herausforderungen der Gleichstellung*, Zürich/St. Gallen, 2021, pp. 47–70.
- Judith Wyttenbach, Erika Schläppi, 'Women's rights and children's rights: Which international complaint procedure?' (in German), in: *FamPra.ch* 2018/2, pp. 429–465.
- Erika Schläppi, Silvia Ulrich, Judith Wyttenbach (eds.), 'Commentary on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW' (in German), Bern/Vienna, (Stämpfli/Manz) 2015 (1380 p.), co-editor and (co-)author of several parts.
- Erika Schläppi, Jeanne DuBois, 'Overcoming discrimination against women in family law: approaches and possibilities' (in German), in: *FamPra.ch* 2012/3, pp. 601–626.
- Erika Schläppi, "Women's rights and human rights: how can the Swiss equality politics make better use of international momentum?" (in German), in: *Eidgenössische Kommission für Frauenfragen* (ed.), *Frauenfragen* 2007/2.
- Erika Schläppi, "Governance: a new perspective of political and legal structures in developing countries" (in German), in: Kohler/Marti (ed.), *Konturen der neuen Welt(un)ordnung*, Berlin (de Gruyter) 2003 (30 p).
- Erika Schläppi/Walter Kälin, "Swiss Economic Assistance and Human Rights Policy: Conflicts and Convergences" (in German), Zürich/Chur (Rüegger) 2001.
- Erika Schläppi, "Human Rights in Bilateral Development Co-operation: prospects and limits from an international law perspective", doctoral thesis (in German), Nomos (Baden-Baden, Germany) 1998 (390 p).
- Elisabeth Diethelm/Erika Schläppi, "The Legal Basis for Development Co-operation in Switzerland" (in German), in: Heinrich Koller/Georg Müller/René Rhinow/Ulrich Zimmerli (eds.), *Handbuch des Bundesverwaltungsrechts*, vol. 15 (Aussenwirtschaftsrecht), Basel (Verlag Helbing und Lichtenhahn) 1999 (70 p).
- Erika Schläppi/Walter Kälin, "Human Rights and Development: Criteria for the Integration of Human Rights into Development Co-operation" (in German), Bern (Switzerland) 1996, mandated by SDC, not published.
- Christina Hausammann/Erika Schläppi, "Human Rights and Women's Rights: the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women CEDAW and its meaning for Switzerland" (in German), *Allgemeine Juristische Praxis* 4/1995, pp 32-46.