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GLAWCAL COMMENT

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Based on

**Cernic, Jernej Letnar. Corporate
Accountability under Socio-Economic
Rights. Transnational Law and Governance.
Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2019.**

Countries all over the world have issues when it comes to accessibility to certain things. Clean drinking water, healthy food, and transportation are a few of the largest issues in the world. These are “life and death” issues and can determine a lot of things. However, these are not the only large issues that countries are facing. For example, a large issue that many countries face today is that of access to justice in terms of socio-economic rights. Which is important because these large, global corporations are growing more and more powerful. Corporations can lobby local and even national governments to get certain things that they want and so that they can get around certain laws and regulations. In some countries, these corporations hold the government like a puppet, deciding its every move. As time goes on, however, there are more and more countries that seem to be making the attempt to do the right thing. Their governments are looking to improve the lives of their citizens. One way is through corporate accountability for socio-economic rights. For example, China and Colombia have been steadily writing, passing, and implementing socio-economic rights in order to improve the lives of their people. However, just because a right has been written, passed, and implemented doesn’t mean that it is being protected. These same countries that are looking to do the right thing and move forward are also facing issues with protection of these rights. For instance, particularly in developing countries such as China and Colombia, the path to access justice for violations of socio-economic rights is not a very easy one. Unfortunately, it is not as easy as filing a complaint, having your complaint heard, and getting a ruling. In these countries, the biggest issues lie in rural areas. People who live and work in corporations that are in urban areas

tend to be able to find an easier path to justice, compared to those who live and work in rural areas. It is unfortunate is not a very surprising bit of information. It must be noted that, while accessing justice is an issue, it is not the only issue. For example, if someone is able to file their complaint and prove the violation, it is not guaranteed that their case will be heard by the court system. Very large corporations such as Coca-Cola, Chiquita, BP, Chevron, and Nestle have all had violations and complaints filed against them all over the world. These are powerful, law bending corporations that tend to take advantage of situations in which they may find themselves in. When a corporation as powerful as these is located in a country, the government should make sure that their people can express their issues and showcase violations and that these corporations are held accountable. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and people can be taken advantage of, injured, or even killed.



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