



United Nations Human Rights Appeal 2021



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

**United Nations
Human Rights
Appeal 2021**

Table of contents

1. Foreword by the High Commissioner	4
2. UN Human Rights in 2020	6
3. Roadmap to 2021	10
4. UN Human Rights around the world in 2021	32
5. Funding and budget	34
6. Trust funds	44
7. You can make a difference	46
8. Annexes	48
UN Human Rights organization chart	
Abbreviations and acronyms	

Foreword by the High Commissioner



© OHCHR

We launch this Annual Appeal at a time of unprecedented upheaval. COVID-19 is accelerating a number of forces that impede peace, development and human rights – including deeply harmful inequalities and discrimination, restrictions on fundamental freedoms in the civic space, and extreme hunger and poverty. The social, economic and political impacts of this pandemic will be deep, and could be very long-lasting.

It is a matter of great urgency that we overcome the pandemic and its accompanying recession; recover from the harms they are causing; and rebuild our societies in more resilient and sustainable ways.

Never have the relevance and practical value of human rights been more obvious. It is clear that universal social protection, universal health-care, freedom of information, freedom from discrimination and all other fundamental human rights protect all of society from a wide range of harms. In fact, the pandemic is almost like a heat-seeking device that zeroes in on gaps in human rights protection, fuelling its spread from those areas of suffering, injustice and neglect. To be most effective, policies and programmes that aim to address and recover from COVID-19 must have at their core the goal of fixing those protection gaps and advancing human equality, dignity and rights.

Since the onset of the crisis, our UN Human Rights Office has rapidly ramped up our support to the UN system, States and other stakeholders with immediately effective tools,

To be most effective, policies and programmes that aim to address and recover from COVID-19 must have at their core the goal of fixing those protection gaps and advancing human equality, dignity and rights.

technical assistance and targeted, practical guidance.

Our field teams have devised and implemented new remote monitoring and information management systems via smartphones and other technologies. They have uncovered and ensured greater visibility for the pandemic's impact on populations left behind – and contributed to ensuring more effective targeted assistance to them, in both national and international responses.

In Cambodia, our teams worked to build disaggregated datasets on vulnerable communities, and develop policy options for alternative – and transformative – economic development.

In Kenya, we partnered with grassroots social justice centres to assess and improve sanitation and housing conditions in deprived areas, as well as to issue detailed guidance on police conduct in enforcing curfews.

In Peru, our strong relationships with Afro-Peruvian communities in rural areas will assist us to support the Government's recovery plans with strong recommendations on discrimination and inequalities.

In Kyrgyzstan, we supported the Government and civil society to conduct research and analysis to identify the impact of government actions on human rights and freedoms during the pandemic.

In Tunisia, we worked with the National Prevention Mechanism on vulnerable groups in detention to formulate recommendations to the authorities to improve these detainees' situation.

In a wide range of countries in every region – working with support from colleagues from across the UN – we have ensured that human rights priorities, and our human rights checklists, are fully integrated into global and national COVID-19 response plans.

We need to continue ramping up this work. We need to address inequalities, push back against discrimination, promote public participation and uphold and advance economic and social rights. We need to put human rights at the centre of the digital universe, and we need to mitigate and prevent conflicts.

We must ensure that our teams can deliver the transformational, human rights-based responses that can ensure a swift, sound recovery, by societies that are better equipped to face complex shocks.

To do this, we are counting on your support. In the following pages, we outline some of the strategies we are devising to tackle these fast-moving challenges. As you read through this Appeal, I ask you to consider how your institutions can best help to further our work.

Last year, the US\$216.4 million* we received from 69 donors was a lifeline for our teams, struggling to advance human rights in an increasingly challenging context. While we appreciate the increase of some 21 per cent from contributions in 2019, the overall sum is not sufficient to enable us to fully implement urgently needed work, while increased earmarking further reduces our flexibility to use these contributions where they are most needed.

This year, it will be vital to provide us with the greatest possible funding, in unearmarked resources – so that we can use those funds rapidly and effectively, as needs appear.

I am convinced that we will all draw from this terrible crisis deeper understanding of the preventive and protective impact of human rights laws and tools as drivers of peace and security, social stability, public health, a healthy environment and economy and sustainable development.

I thank you in advance for your assistance and support. They are crucial to everything we do.

* Figures are estimated as of 14 December 2020 and will be adjusted and confirmed upon the final closure of the 2020 accounts

Michelle Bachelet

United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights

UN Human Rights in 2020

Mandate



Highlights in 2020

Member State cooperation



People centred



Human rights mechanisms support



Human rights integration in the UN

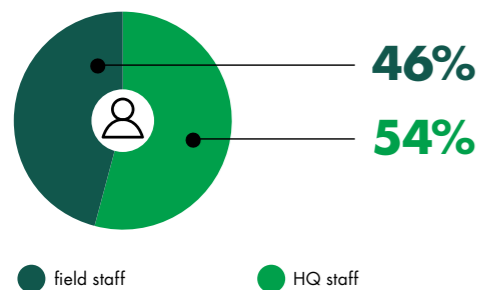
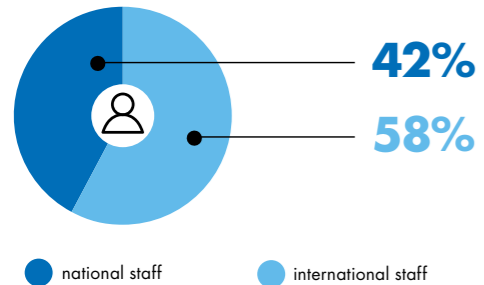
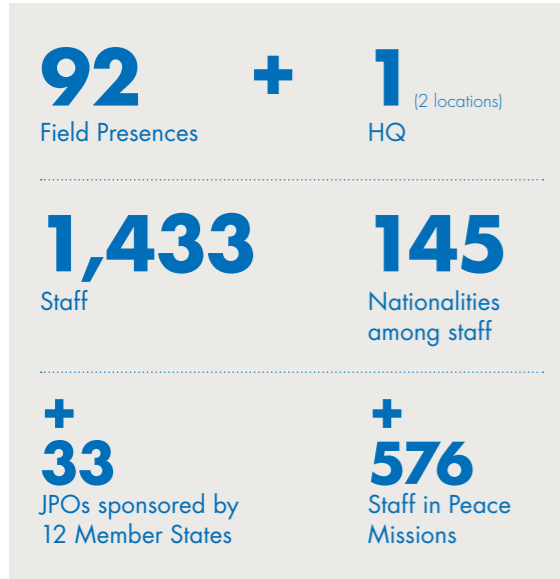


Civil society engagement

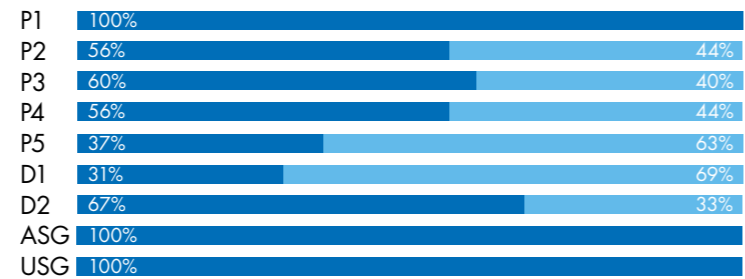
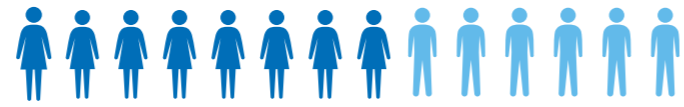


Data available at the time of printing

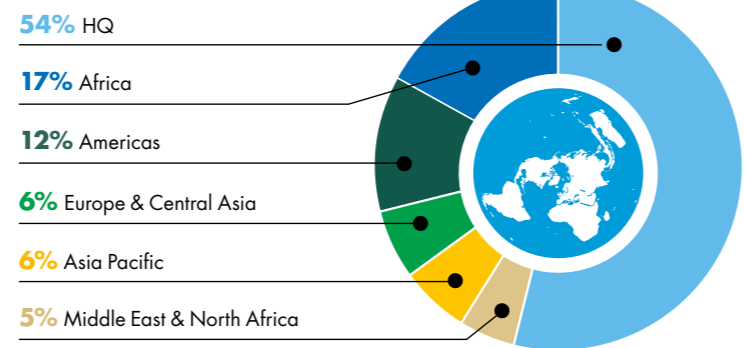
Global presence in 2020



Staff gender distribution



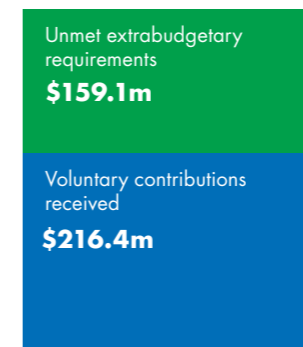
Staff in the field



Funding overview in 2020

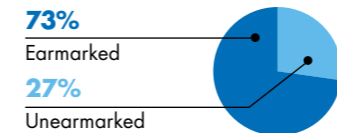
Budget

Regular budget allocation

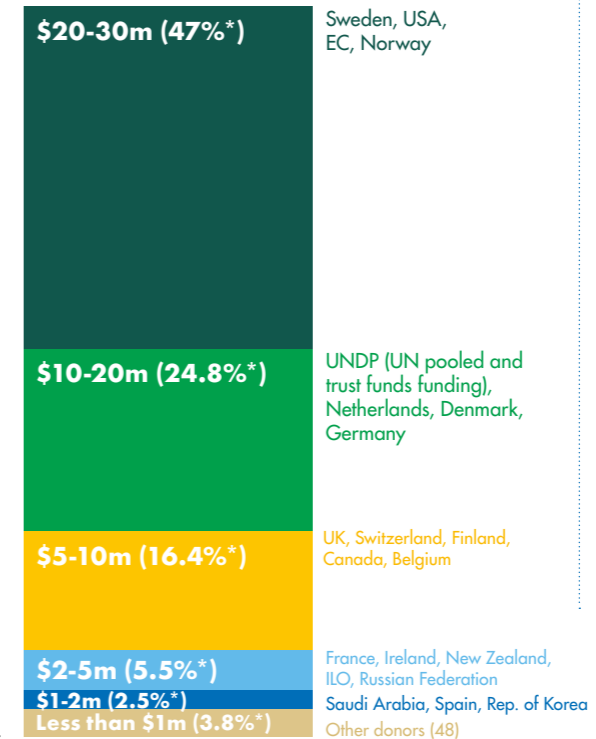


Extrabudgetary requirements
\$375.5m

Voluntary contributions



Breakdown of donors by brackets of contributions**

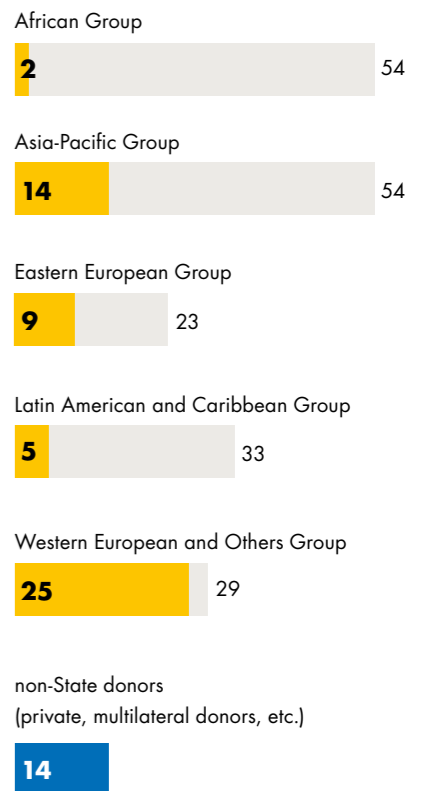


* Of total amount of voluntary contributions.
** Donors are listed according to their level of contribution.
Figures are estimated as of 14 December 2020 and will be adjusted and confirmed upon the final closure of the 2020 accounts.

Donors



Breakdown of donors by geographic group



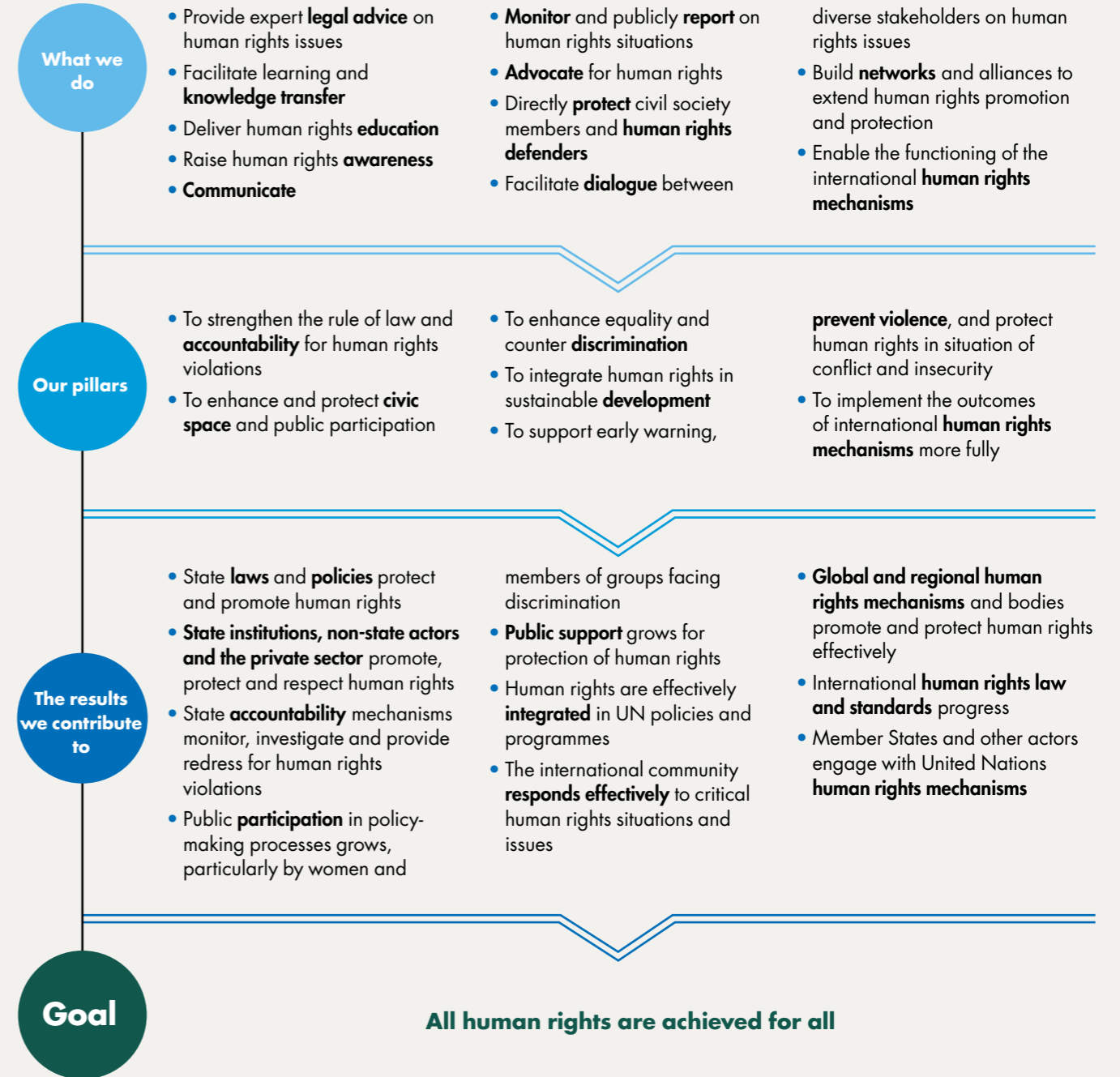
Roadmap to 2021

This Annual Appeal presents the financial requirements of our work in 2021, under the Secretary General’s Strategic Framework and as guided by our 2018-2021 Management Plan (OMP). The Plan provides a robust results framework based on six Pillars, four Shifts and three Spotlights.

OMP at a glance



Theory of change





A young girl runs in the streets of New Andong village, a relocation site established by the Municipality of Phnom Penh. Thanks to OHCHR and CSOs' advocacy, improvements in terms of housing and water and sanitation have been made to the original plans. Phnom Penh, Cambodia on November 14, 2018. ©OHCHR

Build back better: human rights at the heart of the recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic poses a threat to societies worldwide. It is expected to reverse decades of development progress. The crisis has exposed the weaknesses of political, economic and social systems and has intensified and magnified existing patterns of poverty, inequalities, stigma, discrimination, exclusion, environmental degradation, and other gaps in human rights protection. It has evidenced the centrality of core human rights issues, such as access to reliable and free flow of information, the ability to influence decision-making and voice opinions, and the crucial role of civil society in responding to the crisis. It is widely acknowledged that building back better requires transforming existing economic and social paradigms that have created inequality.

But the COVID-19 crisis also provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform societies; address discrimination and inequality, exclusion, gaps in social protection systems, the climate crisis and the many other fragilities and injustices that have been exposed. Instead of going back to unsustainable systems and unfair approaches, it is an opportunity to transition to a more inclusive, equal, resilient, just, and sustainable system. In the words of the UN Secretary-General:

“The response to the pandemic, and to the widespread discontent that preceded it, must be based on a New Social Contract and a New Global Deal that create equal opportunities for all and respect the rights and freedoms of all.”

Under the Secretary-General's leadership, the UN development system is expected to be at the forefront of the battle to reduce ‘unsustainable’ inequalities and be a catalyst for thorough solutions. UN Human Rights is committed to use the momentum created within the UN system by the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights, the UN Development Reform, an empowered Resident Coordinator system, revised Common Country Analysis (CCA) and Cooperation Framework closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

“Health is not a luxury item for those who can afford it; it's a human right.”

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director-General of the World Health
Organization, September 2020

COVID-19: Human Rights Now More Important than Ever

The onset of COVID-19 is exposing society's fault lines and demonstrating that the need for a human rights-based approach to governance is greater than ever. While the pandemic brings with it a string of crises, UN Human Rights believes it also provides some unexpected opportunities.

In a dismal flat of the inner city, children in COVID-19 lockdown miss their friends – and their education. Unlike wealthier children, they aren't studying online or watching their teacher on a screen. Their parents can't afford a laptop, or even an Internet connection. Around the world, millions of children are failing to get an education because they are poor.

Elsewhere, a couple in a small town supports an extended family at home. They are being told to isolate. But their jobs are gone and with it, their income. Should anyone become infected, health care would be out of the question: the hospital is too expensive and anyway, it is too far to travel. The best they can do is huddle in an overcrowded room and hope for the best.

What these situations have in common is the absence of basic rights: in one case, the right to education and in the other, the right to work and health care.

These scenes and millions of similar ones are playing out the world over, highlighting the stark inequalities and marginalization brought glaringly to the surface by COVID-19.

A HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS, MADE WORSE

Most countries are doing their best to provide public health responses and rein in their pandemic, often at high cost.

Yet the pandemic cannot be blamed for everything; a global human rights crisis was already in the making when the virus struck.

“We face considerable pushback on human rights, and we have sometimes seen a greater focus on security and counter-terrorism approaches than on a rights-based approach,” said Nada Al-Nashif, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.

What COVID-19 has done is worsen the situation by undermining the mechanisms people need to defend themselves, threatening the lives of the most marginalized and vulnerable and plunging the world into its worst recession since World War II.

Where human rights were weak, the pandemic has made them weaker.

But COVID-19 did not invent or redraw society's fault lines: it merely laid them bare for all to see.

“Many of those deprived of rights, the most marginalized, have been at the heart of the coronavirus – the refugees, homeless populations, older persons... these are the kinds of people who have suffered the most,” said Ms Al-Nashif. “In fact, the impact of the coronavirus does discriminate, by affecting those who are the least enfranchised.”

EXACERBATING INEQUALITIES

In a cruel twist of fate, those least able to fight the pandemic are those most affected by it.

In Europe, older persons in care facilities have faced the most deaths, yet residents of these homes are a tiny proportion of the population. In the United States, research shows Black and Latino communities are at greater risk both of exposure to COVID-19 and of death from the virus. The pandemic also affects women and girls disproportionately by placing them in greater danger from gender-based violence and exploitation. The one billion people with disabilities are already among the most excluded in the world and the pandemic makes it even harder for them to access care and services. Refugees and migrants, often illegal or without support, cannot isolate if they live in crowded camps.

“This is a time when, more than ever, governments need to be open and transparent, responsive and accountable to the people they are seeking to protect.”

António Guterres,
UN Secretary-General, April 2020

The list of vulnerable groups is immense, and UN Human Rights is working to bring things into balance.

In Serbia, those who already faced discrimination – the Roma, people with disabilities and members of the LGBTI communities – had unequal access to social protection and health care. UN Human Rights is gathering essential data and mapping their needs, using this information to advocate with the Government for fairer treatment.

In Mexico, by championing guidelines preventing the cremation of unidentified bodies, UN Human Rights is restoring some dignity and peace to anguished families seeking their loved ones.

In eastern Ukraine, the human rights impact of the conflict has been intensified by COVID-19, as the severe curtailing of movement of people separated families and prevented access to pensions, social benefits, health care and education. UN Human Rights is working to ensure that human rights concerns are embedded in all COVID-19-related restrictions imposed by parties to the conflict in order to mitigate these negative impacts.

In West Africa, where certain unscrupulous Koranic teachers force children under their care to beg, UN Human Rights has been working with partners to pull children off the street, where they face the triple vulnerabilities of poverty, exposure and COVID-19 infection.

And in South Sudan, where prisons are full and provide fertile territory for the circulation of the virus, UN Human Rights

advocates with authorities to release those inmates who may be ill or incarcerated for only minor offences.

HOPE ON THE HORIZON: HUMAN RIGHTS OPPORTUNITIES IN A PANDEMIC

At first sight, the situation appears bleak. But while the weakening of basic human rights may have exposed society's fault lines, it may also give governments the opportunity to build back better and with greater compassion.

“We need to understand what forms of abuse exist in a society and how we can ameliorate conditions,” said Ms Al-Nashif, “but long-lasting solutions require two things: decision makers must be accountable, and the weakest must have access to decision makers.”

The fulfilment of basic rights would help soften some of the pandemic's worst impacts. Open and free communication would enable more points of view to be heard, contributing to faster and more varied solutions. Shielding a population from extreme poverty would give people a buffer when disaster strikes, and providing more robust health services would help people better protect themselves.

The pandemic is also enhancing the understanding of how all human rights are connected: you cannot uphold one right, ignore another and hope for the best. If a woman lacks adequate housing, her security will be threatened and she will not be able to isolate. Without equal access to

health care, racial and gender minorities will suffer more from the pandemic.

At every level, a stronger human rights approach would safeguard the most vulnerable and make society as a whole more resilient, helping prepare the future.

The tools already exist: States have obligations to protect and promote human rights. Fulfilling these obligations would go far towards easing the burdens of their citizens.

With this in mind, UN Human Rights continues to advocate for the inclusion of human rights in policies and basic protections for all, provides formal guidance to governments, monitors human rights abuses and advises on the way forward.

No one – not the inner-city child, not the jobless family – should be left behind during a crisis of this magnitude. It is a question of human dignity, and of preserving that dignity for all people.

In the words of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet: “The pandemic clearly demonstrates that respect for human rights is beneficial to everyone. Universal health care, universal social protections, and the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly – online and offline – contribute to protecting our well-being, and promoting our shared interests.”

No one is safe until we are all safe.

A human rights-centred approach to build back better

To build back better, human rights must be placed at the centre of the recovery efforts so no one is left behind. This means strengthening our commitment to human rights and to achieving the SDGs. It means fixing inequalities within and among countries; abolishing systemic gender inequality; strengthening universal health and social protection systems for all people; strengthening institutions; and tackling structural discrimination and human rights violations, which have fed the spread and severity of COVID-19. It means urgently addressing the climate emergency and creating a world that is just, inclusive, equal and sustainable – therefore more resilient and prepared to face future crises.

PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

The pandemic exacerbated pre-existing patterns of discrimination and inequalities, threatening lives, eroding livelihoods and further pushing millions into poverty. It has exposed the weakness of political, economic and social systems. These have long neglected to prioritize and give effect to the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights and to ensure that essential public services, including comprehensive health care and social protection systems, are available and accessible to all without discrimination. It underscored the urgency for human rights-based economic shifts to build back better and ensure that governments are able to meet their minimum core obligations and commitments at all times and especially during crises.

The COVID-19 crisis has also shown us how the vision of the 2030 Agenda – grounded in human rights – remains

relevant and key to addressing many of today's most pressing challenges, including those related to health, decent work, inequality, poverty, and the destruction of our environment. To accelerate SDG progress and to provide practical advice on how to rebuild societies and economies, UN Human Rights has stepped up its work on economic, social and cultural rights through: the provision of analysis and policy suggestions on curbing inequalities and 'minimum core obligations' in Cambodia; advancing the rights of indigenous groups in the socio-economic response in Kenya; revenue generation, social spending and extractive industries in Madagascar; designing surveys and country monitoring strategies on economic and social rights and groups left behind in Moldova and Serbia; impacts of new taxation on poor populations in Ecuador; options for more inclusive social protection schemes in Ukraine.

Through its Surge Initiative in 2020, the Office has also deployed macroeconomists with in-depth knowledge of human rights to the field, injecting specialized expertise on how to build transformative economies by operationalizing economic and social rights in public policy. Our gender experts are also working with governments to ensure that building back better efforts, including stimulus packages, adopt a gender lens.

Successful strategies developed by the Office include, reinforcing collaboration with local partners and disadvantaged groups, resourcing national human rights institutions (NHRIs) for enhanced monitoring, empowering civil society actors and grass-roots communities to build disaggregated datasets, advising on stimulus packages and documenting the impacts of COVID-19 on marginalized sections of the population and designing long term policy solutions.

Business plays a key role in building back better. Through our work on business and human rights we help businesses ensure that their response to the COVID-19 pandemic is rights-based. We provide practical guidance to businesses to help them ensure that their global value chains respect human rights responsibilities. To further enhance the impact and reach of our work in 2021, we will redouble our efforts to adapt our activities, including our capacity building work to the new context by transforming content to more easily accessible online format.

In 2021, we plan to:

- Respond to growing demands for advice on how to integrate States' human rights obligations in sectoral development agendas and economic plans and strategies including by scaling up UN Human Rights Surge Initiative, which includes deploying macroeconomists to the field, to provide specialized human rights expertise;
- Document and make available promising practices in protecting economic, social and cultural rights in response to the pandemic and building back better to enhance the impact and reach of UN human rights work;
- We will continue to invest in measuring the human rights impacts of UN and State responses to the pandemic and promote the sharing of promising practices. We will prioritize the provision of guidance to governments and other relevant stakeholders on key indicators – linked to and drawn from the UN's health, humanitarian, socio-economic, SDGs and human rights frameworks;
- We will collect timely and disaggregated data on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including on SDG indicators on experiences of discrimination; conflict-related death; killings, enforced disappearances, and other attacks against human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists; and countries' progress in establishing or strengthening national human rights institutions;
- Provide tailored advice and make existing advice more easily accessible on how businesses can ensure that their response to the COVID-19 pandemic is aligned with their responsibilities under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The interlinked health, economic, social and environmental crises that the world is currently facing calls for a sustained and global effort to take action to address environmental degradation. There is a growing consensus, reflected in environmental and human rights laws and policies and the work of related mechanisms, that environmental action must respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Secretary General's Call to Action for Human Rights clearly reflects the need for increased action in this area. Crisis response and recovery must respect the rights of future generations, including their rights to a healthy environment, through enhanced climate action aiming at carbon neutrality by 2050, the protection of biodiversity and the prevention of pollution.

In 2020, UN Human Rights worked with UNEP to develop and disseminate Key Messages on Human Rights, the environment and COVID-19 – they informed the work of our field presences and UN partners, and supported a series of virtual dialogues on the human right to a healthy environment. The crisis has led to an increased focus on developing communication and capacity-building tools to promote rights-based environmental action.

The Secretary-General's Call to Action has deepened collaboration across UN agencies with respect to key priorities including protection of environmental human rights defenders, advancement of the human rights to a healthy environment, youth participation in environmental decision-making, and NHRI engagement on environmental issues. In response to the call to Build Back Better, UN Human Rights committed to aligning its own operations with sustainable development and initiated an internal process to mainstream sustainability throughout its planning.

For example, in Southeast Asia, together with UNEP, the Office has initiated a regional analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on environmental decisions and regulations as well as on the situation of environmental human rights defenders. Another example is the mapping of relevant laws and policies and a study on the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups by Human Rights Protection Group of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia.

UN Human Rights' field presences have been actively engaged in this process, and have worked on other critical issues like the impact of mining on human rights and the environment in Colombia, Guinea and Madagascar, organizing regional discussions on environmental human rights defenders in South America and Southeast Asia, supporting environmental litigation in Kenya, supporting youth activism in the Pacific and Southeast Asia, and addressing climate-related displacement in the Sahel.



Indigenous Karen community members welcome Human Rights and Biodiversity workshop participants, including from OHCHR, to Pa Pae village in Northern Thailand where they actively exchange about traditional agricultural practices, conservation of biodiversity and fulfilment of human rights, including rights to lands, resources and territories. The visit will later inform a report and interventions at the negotiations of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Pa Pae, Thailand, February 2020. ©AIPP

In 2021, we plan to:

- In collaboration with UN entities, support the implementation of the SG's Call to Action with respect to key priorities including protection of environmental human rights defenders, advancement of human rights to a healthy environment, youth participation in environmental decision-making, and NHRI engagement on environmental issues;
- Together with UNEP, work with UN Country Teams to advance the human right to a healthy environment at country level and ensure that our joint Key Messages on Human rights, the environment and COVID-19 inform efforts to build back better;
- Continue to advocate for integration of human rights in UN climate and UN biodiversity negotiations and support the work of the new Issue Management Group on human rights and the environment - UN Environment Management Group;
- Develop communication and capacity-building tools to promote rights-based environmental action to increase the reach and impact of UN Human Rights' climate and environment work;
- Align UN Human Rights' own operations with sustainable development through an internal process to mainstream sustainability throughout its planning.

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES

The Secretary-General has described inequality as the defining challenge of our era – one that the COVID-19 crisis has thrown into even greater prominence. Whether a consequence of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, descent, colour, origin, religion, economic or other status, inequalities are pervasive – both within and between countries. These inequalities often coexist, overlapping and interacting in ways that create severe and compounded forms of deprivation, discrimination and disadvantage.

The macroeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis are still unfolding. Yet, it is already well understood that without concerted government action and international solidarity, the economic devastation is going to increase inequalities within and among countries. There are tools available to governments to prevent a widening of inequalities and to protect minimum levels of economic and social rights. These include carefully designed stimulus packages, the expansion of fiscal space to finance social and economic policies, the use of special drawing rights for developing countries, sustainable debt restructuring, the reallocation of resources, the eradication of tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows, and ensuring fair, efficient and progressive taxation.

Investing in economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, will yield resilience and foster more just, equal and sustainable societies. Indeed, international human rights law requires, in all countries including in times of crises, the mobilization of the maximum available resources to ensure universal social security and social protection.

In response to the pandemic, the UN system has developed a Socio-Economic Response Framework (SERF) to COVID-19. UN Human Rights is providing practical advice to ensure a rights-based implementation of the SERF at the country level. For example, in Guatemala, the Office played a central role in spearheading human rights integration in the UNCT's socio-economic response to COVID-19 and ensuring focus on indigent and other disadvantaged groups.

The work on the right to development is providing evidence-driven advice on fiscal space policies with the aim of greater equality, researching the human rights impact of economic reforms and austerity policies on marginalized populations and offering strategies to prevent retrogression and ensure compliance with 'minimum core obligations' on economic and social rights.

"The pandemic can only be defeated if we work together and show solidarity with each other. Those most vulnerable, on the margins of society, who have already been hardest hit from inequalities and discrimination, must be our priority."

Ilze Brands Kehris,

Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, December 2020

In 2021, we plan to:

- Build on UN human rights mechanisms' recommendations and States' human rights obligations, provide evidence-driven advice policies to create greater fiscal space with the aim of greater equality; research the human rights impact of economic reforms and austerity policies on marginalized populations and offer strategies to ensure compliance with 'minimum core obligations' on economic and social rights;
- Work with UN Country Teams to ensure a rights-based implementation of the UN Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19 and launch a new round of country level seeding-change projects under the Surge Initiative to operationalize on rights-based macro-economic analysis and engagement at the country level;
- Continue to provide human rights advice on comprehensive social protection systems and universal access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and education for all, free of discrimination and irrespective of migratory status and how to protect people and groups in the most vulnerable situations through targeted measures;
- Support the work on the right to development and highlight its relevance in the context of COVID-19 recovery efforts, including its call for international solidarity and continue to play a central role on inequalities within the UN system.

UN Human Rights' role in the COVID-19 response and recovery

Our work relating to COVID-19 aims to embed human rights in the response of States, UN partners, civil society and the private sector, and to ensure the human rights impacts of the pandemic are effectively addressed.

Our role is central in promoting and protecting the effective enjoyment by all of all human rights. A human rights-based approach is crucial if we are to secure the realization of human rights and the right to development for all, including those most vulnerable, and to effectively eradicate inequalities within and among countries.

Our **monitoring and reporting** on the human rights implications of COVID-19, at field and global levels feeds into the UN system mechanisms, informs the Office's communications and advocacy, and drives our programmatic focus. We have also developed a set of key indicators to monitor the human rights impacts of the crisis for use by the UN and governments.

Through **leadership, guidance and technical support**, we provide guidance on human rights issues, relating to the COVID-19 pandemic for governments, the UN system and for other actors. We work with UN partners to integrate and address human rights aspects into National Response Plans and other efforts. We mainstream human rights within the broader framework of the Secretary-General's Call to Action for human rights. We identify, collect, analyze and disseminate human rights best practices that States have demonstrated in responding to the crisis.

We **advocate and communicate** to raise awareness on human rights issues relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and for the integration of human rights into the COVID-19 response and actions to effectively address and mitigate the impact on human rights.

Finally, we **engage with and support the Human Rights System** in their work relating to the human rights implications of COVID-19. We help to integrate the work of national human rights institutions, human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review, and special procedures), and human rights NGOs in the COVID-19 response.

ENDING DISCRIMINATION OF ANY KIND

The virus may not discriminate, but unequal societies do. Data shows that marginalized people are both more likely to be infected, die of COVID-19 and are hardest hit by its socio-economic consequences. UN Human Rights plays a critical role in assessing the impact of COVID-19 on different population groups and communities, and in unmasking underlying patterns of structural inequalities and pervasive discrimination. As custodian of SDG indicators 10.3.1 and 16.b.1, we have led efforts to collect data on the prevalence of discrimination, which are often connected to the legacy of the past.

Our analysis shows that women, people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities and migrants experience discrimination more often than the general population. The data also reveals that people who were already ‘left behind’, are those who are worst harmed by the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. UN Human Rights contributes to ensuring unheard voices are heard. For example, we worked to expand research and analysis on the Roma population, persons with disabilities, first line responders, and the homeless in Serbia. This analysis critically contributed to the UN response to COVID-19 as well as to the upcoming Common Country Analysis (CCA) and Cooperation Framework (CF) processes.



UN Human Rights helped shape laws to end discrimination in the Republic of Moldova, including against the Roma community that has suffered from decades of discrimination. Schinoasa, the Republic of Moldova, July 2018. ©OHCHR

Our Regional Office in Western Africa conducted a gender assessment, jointly with UN Women and UNICEF, on the impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of women and men to capture the impact of the pandemic on health, access to information, livelihood (including employment in the informal sector and micro- and small-size business enterprises), violence, access to public assistance, and domestic care work. The Office is also conducting a study on access to health and

basic services for LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Mexico.

The Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa, in cooperation with the National Council for Human Rights in Morocco (CNDH), organized an online webinar on the role of NHRIs in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This engagement aims at

“To address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on minority groups, we must undo the generations of discrimination and neglect that have shaped its spread.”

Michelle Bachelet,
UN High Commissioner for
Human Rights, November 2020

increasing accountability of NHRIs and ensuring that persons with disabilities are not left behind and able to enjoy their right to benefit from services that meet their specific needs. In the MENA, Asia-Pacific, West Africa and the Americas regions, the Office monitored and reported on the impact of COVID-19 on migrants’ human rights. For example, the Regional Office for Central America has provided technical assistance to the NHRI of Panama to strengthen its capacity to monitor and report on the human rights situation of approximately 2,600 migrants, including children, held in migration centres in bordering provinces.

Another example is the dispatch of a team to Malta to monitor the situation of migrants transiting through Libya. To support partners in their monitoring work UN Human Rights developed guidance material on the monitoring of the human rights of migrants and a toolbox to help stakeholders promote positive hope- and values-based narratives on migration. Both products will be rolled out in 2021, including through capacity-building workshops for civil society organizations.

We have also highlighted the human rights issues of groups that have traditionally been less in the spotlight, such as older persons. We led the drafting of the Secretary-General’s Policy Brief on COVID-19 and Older Persons and are currently updating a 2012 study on the normative and protection gaps in the human rights of older persons to inject a human rights perspective into the General Assembly Working Group on Ageing.

In 2021, we plan to:

- Play a critical role in assessing the impact of COVID-19 on different population groups and in unmasking underlying patterns of structural inequalities, affecting people of African descent among other groups, and pervasive discrimination;
- Support countries’ efforts in mitigating the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women and girls and gendered impact of the pandemic and advise on how to design a gender sensitive recovery, including through UN Human Rights’ network of regional gender advisors;
- Use the 20th Durban World Conference Against Racism Anniversary and the Mid-term review of the International Decade for People of African Descent and the High Commissioner report on the HRC resolution 43/1 as a lever for racial equality and justice;
- Reach out to marginalized and discriminated groups, including by building bridges with local partners to connect them to government and UN analysis and evidence gathering and country strategy formulation process to ensure that their needs and concerns are taken into account.

PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AND EXPANDING CIVIC SPACE, ONLINE AND OFFLINE

A vibrant civil society is essential to building back better. Civil society can help provide accurate information about the situation and needs on the ground, design responsive measures that are inclusive, contribute to the implementation of measures adopted by the authorities, and provide feedback and oversight on measures rolled out, allowing for timely adjustments.

In 2020, the Secretary-General's Office and UN Human Rights spearheaded the adoption of a system-wide Guidance Note on Civic Space under the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights. Built around "3 Ps", civil society participation in UN processes, promotion of civic space, and protection of civil society actors at risk, it commits the UN as a whole to work to view expanding civic space as a core task.

UN Human Rights has and will continue to play a key role in advocating for and ensuring that all civil society groups, are included in decision-making bodies and response and recovery discussions. In addition, we will leverage global multi-stakeholder processes to accelerate action towards protecting and expanding civic space for women, girls and LGBTI persons, including the Beijing+25 Generation Action Coalition on Feminist

Movements and Leadership of which UN Human Rights is the lead UN entity.

Civic space has increasingly moved online. Building on our work on civil society participation in UN fora and processes, UN Human Rights organized and moderated a discussion for civil society on the "future of meetings" in support of broader engagement on the effects of the pandemic on civil society and to explore new opportunities the online space offers. We also advocated for innovative thinking to ensure safe and effective online participation of civil society at "the future of international diplomacy in the digital sphere" meeting.

In 2021, we plan to:

- Mobilize the UN system in the fight against a shrinking of civic space by working with UN system entities on the implementation of a system-wide guidance note under the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights. This includes, convening country level strategy discussions with various entities and civil society to enable more coordinated and targeted civic space promotion efforts and more effective protection responses;

- Better leverage new technologies for more inclusive and effective civil society participation in UN fora and processes and better feedback loops, as civic space is increasingly moving online. Work with social media platforms to ensure human rights inform their policies and practices;
- Respond to requests for advice and support from human rights defenders suffering from intimidation and reprisals; for coordinating with the UN and cooperating with the human rights mechanisms; convene actors to develop relevant formats for better documenting and reporting on online attacks against human rights defenders;
- Steadily expand the scope and data coverage of SDG indicator 16.10.1 on the killing of human rights defenders, journalists or trade unionists and engage with stakeholders to expand the use of data in monitoring online and offline attacks to civic space;
- Advocate for constructive responses to protests, also with a view to developing tools to address new forms of protests.

"The contribution of civil society to surviving the pandemic and recovering better once it is over, will be absolutely vital, and the curtailment of civil society's contributions is one of the surest ways of undermining that recovery, by removing one of the key remedies."

Michelle Bachelet,
UN High Commissioner for
Human Rights, December 2020

Adjusting the way we work

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced how we work and what human rights issues we have emphasized. The Office has responded to the crisis with agility and creativity and managed to shift its focus and implementing approach. This allowed us to continue doing our human rights work and at the same time address critical human rights issues emerging from the pandemic crisis. Going forward, we will review our alternative working methods, spontaneous innovations and coping mechanisms and learning, to build back better.

Here are some illustrations of how we have adjusted to the new context:

- Since the beginning of the crisis and associated travel restrictions, all human rights mechanisms meetings that have taken place have been online. The Human Rights Council was able to complete its annual programme of work in a hybrid format; 8 out of 10 treaty bodies held online sessions; the UPR Working Group was held successfully in an almost entirely remote setting; treaty bodies dealt with 200 petitions; and a new Universal Human Rights Index was launched. Building on existing capacity, in 2021 UN Human Rights will advance towards a digital transformation, in order to ensure uninterrupted functioning of normative work of all international human rights mechanisms. This will include the upgrading of online platforms in order to achieve greater inter-activity as well as accessibility for persons with disabilities and those connecting from disadvantaged regions. More performing and user-friendly portals will also be

developed to ensure better storage and searchability of stakeholders' submissions to human rights mechanisms.

- The pandemic has constrained our ability to conduct field monitoring, thus increasing the identification of human rights incidents from news media and social media has experienced a step-change in significance for our work. We have absorbed additional technology tools and updated our methods for remote and open source human rights monitoring and investigations, which has had a catalytic effect on our monitoring across many human rights themes and contexts.
- We have shifted the focus to monitoring the human rights situation and providing technical assistance in relation to the most vulnerable excluded segments of the society impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) of populations in the most vulnerable situations. We have also been scaling up the application of education technology to our human rights training work, a need which has significantly increased in the context of the pandemic.
- The pandemic has impacted our ability to conduct face-to-face human rights training activities at the field and headquarters levels. This has required us to shift to online tools and methodology for human rights training. In 2020, we have identified and implemented priority actions needed to support such a shift, including the establishment of a unified UN Human Rights learning management system to optimize our training resources. In 2021, we will build on this work and increase staff capacity in this area via e-learning materials and online activities.

LEVERAGING THE DIGITAL WORLD TO REALIZE HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

‘Building Back Better’ means ensuring the digital world serves rather than undermines the human rights of all people. The COVID-19 crisis has put a spotlight on the vulnerabilities of societies – and it has highlighted societies’ growing dependency on digital technology. For millions of people, being connected allows them to work and study from home; access information; express themselves and meet up online. Digital technology has also played an important role in combatting the pandemic, for example, by providing powerful tools for data analysis and forecasting as well as the development of vaccines. At the same time, data-driven approaches have enormous implications on many rights and freedoms, from the right to privacy, to freedom of association, freedom of expression, the right to non-discrimination, the liberty of movement to the right to health and the right to life. And the potential longer-term use of such tools may have deep implications for these rights and democratic space more broadly.

Despite their promise, if not developed and governed with human rights at the centre, digital, data-driven tools may further entrench discrimination and exclusion and may put us on the way towards surveillance societies. The recovery must include human rights law and principles

as the foundation for governance frameworks for the use of digital technologies.

The Office has advocated publicly in numerous fora – from the UN General Assembly, to World Economic Forum meetings in Davos, to RightsCon, the world’s largest NGO technology conference, underscoring the importance of safeguards on new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), where they are used for surveillance and contact tracing in response to COVID-19, including purpose limitations and adequate privacy and data protections. We have worked independently and across the UN system to produce guidance and policy papers, including the Joint Statement on Data Protection and Privacy in COVID-19 response.

We have also used new technological tools to track trends in public discourse online during the pandemic. For example, we monitored trends in xenophobic hate speech in Southern Africa. We engaged with the actors on different sides of the debate in an attempt to humanize it, and in instances where public discourse crosses the threshold into incitement to violence or hatred, together with civil society organizations, we flag issues to social media platforms. We hope to scale these methods, tools and approaches across our field presences in 2021.

The role of technology companies is pivotal when it comes to ensuring and expanding civic space. Applying the lens of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and in close consultation with technology companies and relevant stakeholders, UN Human Rights B-Tech project has and will continue to provide normative clarity and practical guidance for both States and tech companies on how to effectively embed respect for human rights in the design and deployment of digital technologies. A series of foundational papers on the core focus areas of the project have been issued, and a number of dedicated consultations and events involving tech companies and other key stakeholders have been convened.

In 2021, we plan to:

- Implement recommendations from the Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation by developing system-wide guidance for human rights due diligence for the UN’s use of digital technologies, including in response to COVID-19 and efforts to meet the SDGs;
- Follow-up on the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights by creating a ‘one stop digital shop’ of United Nations and other guidance for the development of governance frameworks and use of digital technologies;
- Advance data consolidation and interoperability, as foreseen under the UN Data Strategy, to enhance our prevention efforts, via increased speed, rigour and efficiency of lead identification and trend and pattern analysis of human rights incidents;
- Advance digital transformation for uninterrupted functioning and normative work of all international human rights mechanisms;
- Advocate directly with States and social media companies for human rights-based content governance frameworks and policies to create an open, inclusive and safe digital space for all;
- Open dialogue with experts to discuss artificial intelligence and gender bias, and the relevance of human rights and gender equality;
- Undertake a study on the integration of a human rights-based approach to development initiatives promoting broadband access of the internet in the least developed countries in Africa. The study will consider how cooperation initiatives factor key concerns such as the negative impacts of internet shutdowns and the digital divide to the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development.
- Work with technology companies, States and other stakeholders to develop practical guidance for tech companies and States on how to effectively embed the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in the development and use of digital technologies, including how to ensure access to effective remedy.



©Markus Spiske/Unsplash

MITIGATING CONFLICTS

The pandemic is particularly taxing for countries facing peace and security challenges. The outbreak has exacerbated protection concerns and prevention shortcomings and exposed populations in vulnerable situations to new threats in humanitarian crises. There is a risk that when the international community is distracted, parties to conflicts will take advantage of the impact of the pandemic to create or aggravate insecurity and impede medical care and other life-saving assistance and services including those deemed politically sensitive, in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights, while at the same time not addressing serious violations and abuses that occurred.

The pandemic has led to countries imposing emergency and security measures, which UN Human Rights has closely monitored. For instance, in Guinea, the Office trained the National Human Rights Commission on a human rights-based approach to prevention and response to COVID-19 to monitor and report on violations linked to measures taken by the Government to tackle the pandemic.

As we witness new waves of the pandemic, the Office will continue to send a strong message that in responding to the crisis, States should guarantee rights related to the use of force, arrest and detention, fair trial and access to justice and privacy,

among others and that basic principles of legality and the rule of law must be observed. While in most cases emergency measures are needed to fight the virus, UN Human Rights has raised red flags where states of emergency are abused or discriminately applied. For example, with UN Human Rights' technical assistance, the Government of Honduras modified the decree of state of emergency adopted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to comply with human rights standards.

The Office also advises States on and how to turn individuals and communities into partners instead of opting for a militarized security response. Evidence shows that mere security-coerced measures have not proven effective to address the threat of terrorism and escalating violence. We will continue to advocate for a rights-based approach to secure long-term and deeper change that address peoples' grievances and respect human rights. The failure to respect human rights when preventing or responding to terrorism and violent extremism is not only counter to international law, it will also render such efforts ineffectual. Indeed, there is no better guarantee of prevention than for Member States to meet their human rights responsibilities.

UN Human Rights has highlighted concerns that the pandemic could provide a

pretext to undermine democratic institutions, disenfranchise people and groups (particularly women within those groups), quash legitimate dissent or disfavoured people or groups, target and attack certain civil society actors (e.g. women human rights defenders), with far-reaching consequences that we will live with beyond the immediate crisis.

The UN's support to national security forces is in many States necessary to ensure security, stability and space for democratic and judicial processes to take place. Where this is the case, we will continue to help ensure that this support does not contribute to the very human rights violations it aims to prevent.

In 2021, we plan to:

- Work with States and provide authoritative guidance on how to ensure that emergency measures are in line with States' international human rights obligations;
- Work with States on ensuring counter-terrorism measures comply with their international human rights obligations;
- Enhance the use of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to prevent violent extremism as a lever to advocate with States that they move away from a "security-only" approach to terrorism and violent extremism, to addressing the conditions conducive to their spread;
- Support the implementation of the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) in mission and non-mission settings and continue to co-lead the Global review Group with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including by coordinating a study to expand the scope of the HRDDP beyond support to non-UN security forces.

UN Human Rights' added value

UN Human Rights is the lead UN entity on human rights. In 1993, the General Assembly entrusted both the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office with a unique mandate to promote and protect all human rights for all people. Over the course of subsequent decades, with investment by Member States, UN Human Rights has developed unique competencies for the protection and advancement of human rights; competencies that bridge the humanitarian, peace and development sectors.

UN Human Rights provides **technical expertise** and **capacity-development**, to support the implementation of international human rights standards on the ground. It assists governments, which bear primary responsibility for the protection of human rights, to fulfil their obligations, supports individuals to claim their rights and speaks out objectively on human rights violations and abuses. UN Human Rights has built **global credibility** by being a principled advocate for international human rights standards. It represents the **leading, authoritative voice** on legally binding norms enshrined in international human rights treaties including in situations of conflict and insecurity. We are uniquely placed in working closely with governments, the civil society, the UN family and other stakeholders to advance the human rights agenda.

Our strength lies in our unique capability to **monitor, analyse and report** on human rights violations and abuses.

The support that we provide to the **international human rights mechanisms** is a core element of our work. Their monitoring and analysis, as well as their interactions with Member States and a wide array of stakeholders, help to identify strengths and weaknesses and create opportunities for reform.

Our **92 field presences** enable us to act quickly and sustain effort. We work effectively and supportively with Member States, including by providing evidence-based briefings, raising awareness and ensuring that key actors and decision-makers have up-to-date information and analyses.

Kenya's informal settlements need safe water to survive COVID-19



©Social Justice Centre

HANDWASHING REMAINS A CHALLENGE

Kenya has a population of 47.5 million and about 60 per cent of its urban population live in informal settlements, mostly in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu.

With the confirmation of the first case of COVID-19 in Kenya in mid-March 2020, following in the footsteps of the majority of countries across the globe facing the pandemic and the recommendations of WHO, the Government urged the population to adhere to the organization's directives on handwashing, hygiene and physical distancing. Yet it is difficult to implement these prevention measures in informal settlements where there is limited access to water, no sanitation and physical distancing is nearly impossible.

Only a minority of households in informal settlements have access to the public water supply. In informal settlements, water supply has been privatised by 'cartels' and many residents rely on private water vendors, particularly during the dry season.

Water commonly costs less per litre in urban middle class neighbourhoods - where there is piped water - than in informal settlements - where the majority rely on water vendors. For example, the price of piped water in Nairobi is in the range of 34-53 Kenyan Shillings (USD 0.34-0.53) per cubic metre (1000 litres), compared to 10-50 Kenyan Shillings for a 20 litre jerry can in informal settlements.

Considering that residents of informal settlements pay up to 50 times the price of water per litre than middle

class households, affording more water for frequent handwashing presents an economic challenge.

Further, it takes many residents in informal settlements more than 30 minutes to access water because there are few water points where they live. There are security-related concerns, mostly for women who sometimes have to pay people to provide security for them when they collect water after dark. "During the daytime, it is really hard because so many people want water, so I usually prefer to fetch water at night. But it's not that safe because people get robbed," said one respondent to the survey. Others pointed out increased levels of crime when they have to leave their homes unattended to travel long distances to collect water at night.

THE RIGHT TO WATER, "A QUESTION OF LIFE AND DEATH" ACCORDING TO GRASSROOTS DEFENDERS

"The Government needs to know that having clean water is our right. They provide clean water to State House so they should also provide clean water to the people of Mathare. We are not lesser people," said Njeri Mwangi of the Mathare Social Justice Centre.

To implement the survey project, UN Human Rights partnered with a network of 24 Social Justice Centres (SJs) in Nairobi, Kisumu and Coastal regions. These community-based centres are critical in giving a voice to disadvantaged populations and marginalized groups to

illustrate inequalities they face in accessing water and expressing their priorities.

Since 2017, UN Human Rights has engaged with these Social Justice Centres in Kenya and raised the profile of their work and the human rights issues affecting the urban poor in informal settlements. The project was another opportunity to support these Centres and build the capacity of young grassroots human rights defenders.

"Right now, access to water is not just a basic right, but a question of life and death in the informal settlements, if we are to win this war against the COVID-19 pandemic," said Wilfred Olal, the national convenor of the Social Justice Centres Working Group. Gacheke Gachihi, coordinator of the Mathare Social Justice Centre, underscored the urgency, saying that a major social emergency was looming. "The threat of the coronavirus is a disaster for the majority of people living in settlements, who have no water, no sanitation and no basic services." The Social Justice Centres have called on the Government to ensure public water supply to informal settlements.

SUPPORTING KENYA'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Following the analysis of the results of the survey, UN Human Rights made a set of recommendations to national and county governments such as investing in extending the availability and accessibility of public water supply to informal settlements and vulnerable communities;







putting in place regulatory frameworks to ensure the affordability of safe drinking water; investing in water and sanitation infrastructure, noting the close correlation between the rights to water and sanitation, and the right to health.

"The links between the right to water and the right to health could not be clearer at this moment, as Kenya battles the spread of COVID-19. Swift action to ensure access to water will save lives," said Li Fung, Senior Human Rights Adviser at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya.

Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the UN Country Team in Kenya has partnered with the Government to support the COVID-19 response, including in the water and sanitation sector. The Ministry of Water has installed close to 500 handwashing points in Nairobi, including 56 in informal settlements; and the UN has provided soap for distribution and is working to increase water supply to 30,000 people in five informal settlements.

UN Human Rights is continuing its partnership with the Social Justice Centres to monitor the human rights impact of the COVID-19 crisis in informal settlements, and orient response and prevention measures to address the range of risks for vulnerable communities and groups.

UN Human Rights around the world in 2021

-  Headquarters
-  Country/Stand-alone Offices/Human Rights Missions
-  Regional Offices/Centres
-  Human rights components of UN Peace/Political Missions
-  Human Rights Advisers deployed under the framework of the UNSDG
-  Other types of field presences

FIELD PRESENCES HQ

92 + 1

(2 locations)

COUNTRY/STAND-ALONE OFFICES/
HUMAN RIGHTS MISSIONS

18

REGIONAL OFFICES/CENTRES

12

HUMAN RIGHTS COMPONENTS
OF UN PEACE/POLITICAL MISSIONS

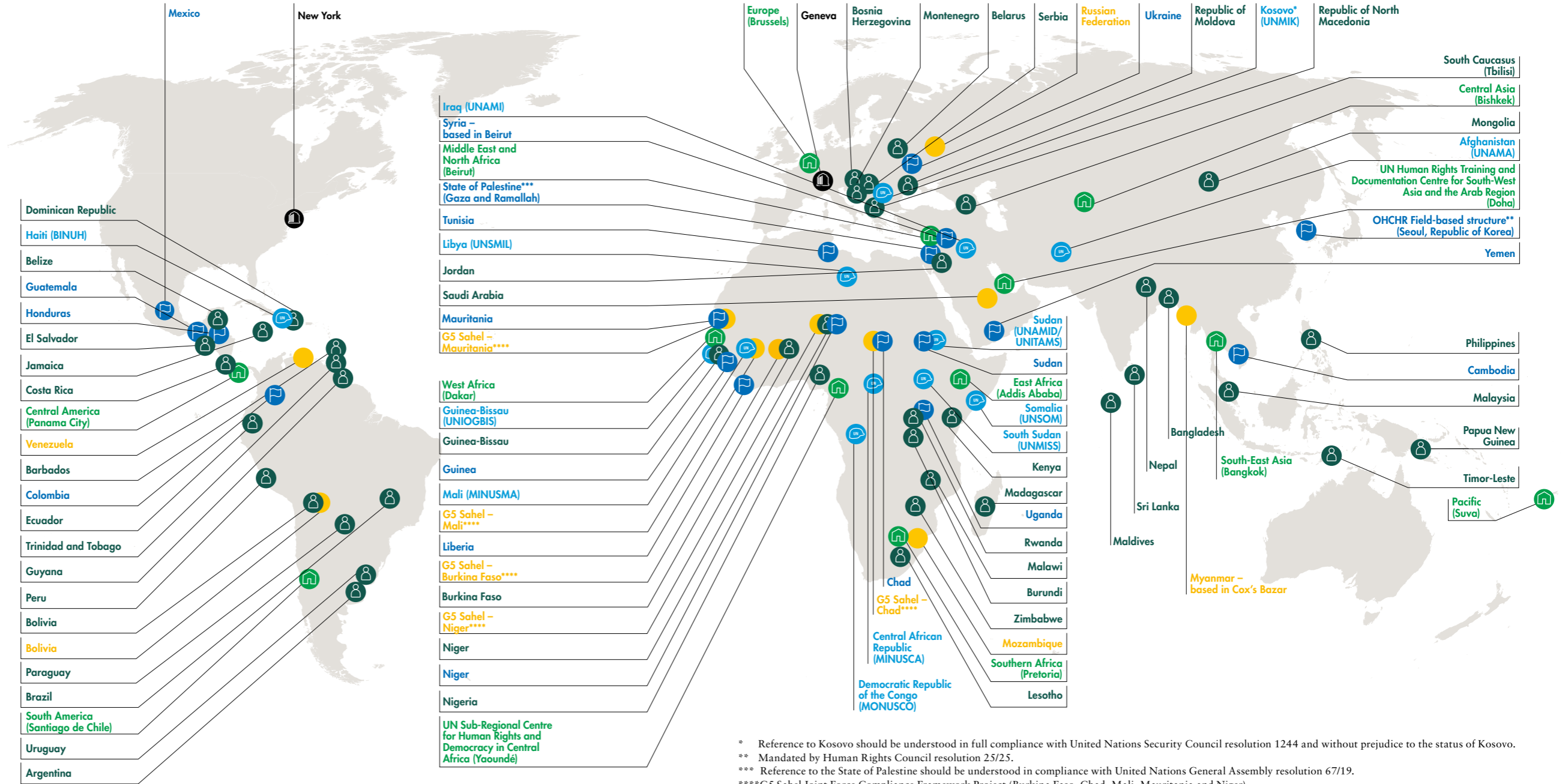
12

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISERS DEPLOYED
UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNSDG

43

OTHER TYPES OF FIELD PRESENCES

7



* Reference to Kosovo should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
 ** Mandated by Human Rights Council resolution 25/25.
 *** Reference to the State of Palestine should be understood in compliance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/19.
 ****G5 Sahel Joint Force Compliance Framework Project (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger).
 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Funding and budget

FUNDING

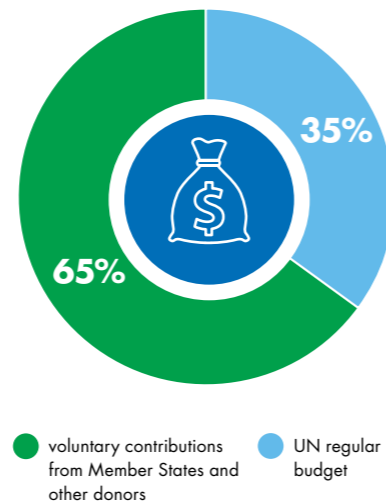
Almost two thirds of UN Human Rights' income comes from voluntary contributions from Member States and other donors. The remainder is covered by the UN regular budget.

The UN regular budget, approved by the General Assembly, is funded by “assessed contributions” from each Member State. These are determined according to a formula that takes into account the size and strength of their respective national economies.

The 2021 regular budget is the second annual budget prepared in accordance with the UN management reform agenda. The UN regular budget should finance all activities mandated by the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs, including the Human Rights Council. Human rights are Charter responsibilities, recognized as one of the three pillars of the UN system, the other two being development, and peace and security. The Secretary-General’s “Human Rights Up Front” programme clearly underscored the centrality of human rights to the work of the entire UN Secretariat. Yet, the regular budget allocates to human rights only a tiny percentage of the resources that are extended to the other two pillars. While approximately half of all regular budget resources were directed to these three pillars in 2020, human rights receives less than 7 per cent. The regular budget submission for the Office for 2021 is US\$102.4 million, representing just over 3% per cent of the total UN regular budget.

The 2021 regular budget is a continuation of “zero growth” as in previous years, but also reflects a number of across-the-board reductions from previous years decided by the General Assembly. Thus, although official human rights mandates continue to grow in number and scope, and Member States have formally requested consideration of an increase in the budget share for human rights, the reality is that the level of resources allocated to the human rights programme is in decline. As a result, UN Human Rights continues to rely heavily on voluntary contributions to finance as much as 20 per cent of the mandated activities that should be financed by the regular budget, primarily treaty body and special procedures work.

This challenging financial situation was further exacerbated in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing cash flow difficulties due to Member States’ assessed contributions arrears meaning only 90 per cent of the expected 2020 approved budget was actually received by UN Human Rights. Although most of the resources required for new mandates introduced by the Human Rights Council are approved each year, the delay in their presentation to the General Assembly means that the Office is forced to rely on existing resources to cover new activities with a more immediate timeline. As those existing regular budget resources were 10 per cent less than expected, the financial situation meant that many mandated activities were postponed from 2020 to 2021.



Total extrabudgetary resources needed for 2021 amount to \$385 million

Voluntary contributions, or extra-budgetary resources, represented, in 2020, around 65 per cent of the UN Human Rights’ overall budget. However, in order to respond to all requests for assistance and needs identified, the Office requires greater financial support from Member States and other donors, including the private sector.

In 2020, the Office received US\$216.4 million* in extra-budgetary contributions, compared to US\$179 mil-

lion in 2019. This represents an increase of some 21 per cent. In absolute terms, during 2020, UN Human Rights raised the fourth highest amount of unearmarked funds ever received (US\$58.2million). Notwithstanding, this represented the lowest percentage of unearmarked funds (27 per cent) compared to the total extrabudgetary income since 2005. While some of the increase in earmarking can be attributed to more local funding for field activities and contributions from non-traditional budget lines that are restricted as earmarked funds, other contributions that were previously unearmarked have been transformed into more circumscribed funding. While all contributions are much appreciated, the ongoing trend toward earmarking limits the Office’s capacity to allocate resources to where they are most urgently required and demands more constant budgetary adjustments over the course of the year.

* Figures are estimated as of 14 December 2020 and will be adjusted and confirmed upon the final closure of the 2020 accounts.

2021 FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

Total extra-budgetary resources needed for 2021 amount to US\$385 million. These are the funds the Office would require, in addition to the regular budget allocation, if it were to address all the needs identified and requests of assistance received. Contributions need to be as flexible as possible and preferably provided in multi-year agreements to help increase the predictability and sustainability of our work. Early payment is also critical as it helps to mitigate cash flow constraints during the year.

The Office demonstrates through this Appeal the full extent of these requirements, as opposed to presenting only its operating cost plans. Nevertheless, the “needs-based” budget presented herein is still limited to what can realistically be implemented within a single year. For this reason, and due to the lengthy recruitment process to which the Office must adhere, some increases, notably in the field, remain modest. Expanding the reach of field presences requires a steady build-up of human resources and budgets over time.



UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet speaking with internally displaced people in Bunia, Ituri, Democratic Republic of Congo, in January 2020. ©MONUSCO

Overview

Regular budget allocation and extrabudgetary requirements for 2021

OPERATING RESOURCES

All figures in US\$

	REGULAR BUDGET	EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	TOTAL (PLANNING FIGURES)
Programme of Work			
Subprogramme 1 Human Rights Mainstreaming, Right to Development, Research and Analysis	16,615,000	46,000,000	62,615,000
Subprogramme 2 Supporting the Human Rights Treaties Bodies	17,125,000	12,000,000	29,125,000
Subprogramme 3 Advisory Services and Technical Cooperation*	30,662,000	28,000,000	58,662,000
Subprogramme 4 Supporting the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures	24,493,000	25,000,000	49,493,000
Headquarters			
Executive Direction and Management and New York Office	8,193,000	28,000,000	36,193,000
Policy-making Organs	9,484,000	-	9,484,000
Other			
Headquarters effectiveness	-	4,000,000	4,000,000
Human Rights in the Secretary-General's Prevention Action Plan	-	7,000,000	7,000,000
Unmet requests for HRAs (activities)	-	2,000,000	2,000,000
Support to the Programmes	4,950,000	12,000,000	16,950,000
Subtotal Headquarters	111,522,000	164,000,000	275,522,000

	REGULAR BUDGET	EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	TOTAL (PLANNING FIGURES)
Field Presences			
Africa	5,417,000	85,000,000	90,417,000
Americas	2,102,000	44,000,000	46,102,000
Asia and the Pacific	3,926,000	19,000,000	22,926,000
Europe and Central Asia	1,930,000	16,000,000	17,930,000
Middle East and North Africa	4,440,000	33,000,000	37,440,000
Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation	2,268,000	-	2,268,000
Programmatic, Outreach and Administrative Functions at Regional or Country level	-	7,000,000	7,000,000
Subtotal Field Presences	20,083,000	204,000,000	224,083,000
Total Operating Resources (HQ + Field Presences)	131,605,000	368,000,000	499,605,000
OTHER TRUST FUNDS			
Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture	-	11,500,000	11,500,000
Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples	-	1,200,000	1,200,000
Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery	-	1,200,000	1,200,000
Trust Fund for Universal Periodic Review - Participation	-	570,000	570,000
Trust Fund for Universal Periodic Review - Technical Assistance	-	800,000	800,000
Trust Fund for Participation of LDCs and SIDS in the HRC's work	-	1,200,000	1,200,000
Special Fund for the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture	-	520,000	520,000
Total Other Trust Funds	0	16,990,000	16,990,000
Grand total	131,605,000	384,990,000	516,595,000

*Does not include all regular budget allotments for the Human Rights Council.

Headquarters

Regular budget allocation and extrabudgetary requirements for 2021

SUBPROGRAMME 1 - HUMAN RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING, RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS All figures in US\$

	REGULAR BUDGET	EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	TOTAL (PLANNING FIGURES)
Coordination and Management	423,000	14,569,000	14,992,000
Rule of Law, Equality and Non-discrimination Branch	5,214,000	11,610,000	16,824,000
Development, Economic and Social Issues Branch	5,730,000	19,821,000	25,551,000
Human Rights Council Mandates	5,248,000	-	5,248,000
Subtotal Subprogramme 1	16,615,000	46,000,000	62,615,000

SUBPROGRAMME 2 - SUPPORTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES BODIES

Coordination and Management	406,000	1,733,000	2,139,000
Human Rights Treaties Branch	16,719,000	6,517,000	23,236,000
Innovation for an effective Treaty Body System	-	3,750,000	3,750,000
Subtotal Subprogramme 2	17,125,000	12,000,000	29,125,000

SUBPROGRAMME 3 - ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION DIVISION

Coordination and Management	3,100,000	8,697,000	11,797,000
Africa Branch	2,211,000	2,529,000	4,740,000
Americas, Europe and Central Asia Branch	2,338,000	2,361,000	4,699,000
Asia-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa	2,942,000	5,588,000	8,530,000
Human Rights Council Mandates	20,071,000	-	20,071,000
Commissions of Inquiry	-	-	-
Investigation on Capacity	-	8,826,000	8,826,000
Subtotal Subprogramme 3	30,662,000	28,000,000	58,663,000

SUBPROGRAMME 4 - SUPPORTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND ITS SPECIAL PROCEDURES

	REGULAR BUDGET	EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	TOTAL (PLANNING FIGURES)
Coordination and Management	422,000	1,601,000	2,023,000
Human Rights Council Branch	2,820,000	3,065,000	5,885,000
Universal Periodic Review Branch	4,417,000	662,000	5,079,000
Special Procedures Branch	9,782,000	11,433,000	21,215,000
Special Procedures Branch - Earmarked/Specific Funding	-	8,239,000	8,239,000
Human Rights Council Mandates	7,052,000	-	7,052,000
Subtotal Subprogramme 4	24,493,000	25,000,000	49,493,000

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION AND MANAGEMENT AND NEW YORK OFFICE

	8,193,000	28,000,000	36,193,000
--	-----------	------------	------------

POLICYMAKING ORGANS

	9,484,000		9,484,000
--	-----------	--	-----------

OTHER

Headquarter effectiveness	-	4,000,000	4,000,000
Human Rights in the Secretary-General's Prevention Action Plan	-	7,000,000	7,000,000
Unmet requests for HRAs (activities)	-	2,000,000	2,000,000
Support to the Programmes	4,950,000	12,000,000	16,950,000
Subtotal Other	22,627,000	53,000,000	75,627,000
Subtotal Headquarters	111,522,000	164,000,000	275,522,000

OTHER TRUST FUNDS

Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture	-	11,500,000	11,500,000
Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples	-	1,200,000	1,200,000
Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery	-	1,200,000	1,200,000
Trust Fund for Universal Periodic Review - Participation	-	570,000	570,000
Trust Fund for Universal Periodic Review - Technical Assistance	-	800,000	800,000
Trust Fund for Participation of LDCs and SIDS in the HRC's work	-	1,141,000	1,141,000
Special Fund for the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture	-	579,000	579,000
Total Other Trust Funds	0	16,990,000	16,990,000
Total Headquarters and Trust Funds	111,522,000	180,990,000	292,512,000

Field

Extrabudgetary requirements for 2021

AFRICA

All figures in US\$

EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS

Country Offices	
Chad	1,783,000
Guinea	5,554,000
Liberia	5,712,000
Mauritania	2,189,000
Niger*	686,000
Sudan	9,952,000
Uganda	5,590,000
Regional Offices	
Central Africa, Yaoundé - Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy	1,610,000
East Africa, Addis Ababa	8,091,000
Southern Africa, Pretoria	2,328,000
West Africa, Dakar	6,447,000
Human Rights Advisers	
Burkina Faso	565,000
Burundi	1,103,000
Guinea-Bissau	235,000
Kenya	1,611,000
Lesotho	441,000
Madagascar	1,131,000
Malawi	302,000
Nigeria	349,000
Rwanda	752,000
Zimbabwe	264,000
Human Rights Components in Peace Mission	
Central African Republic	80,000
Democratic Republic of the Congo	10,917,000
Mali	192,000
Somalia	543,000
South Sudan	135,000
Sudan, Darfur	57,000

EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS

Other	
Gambia	121,000
Mozambique	1,012,000
G5 Sahel	15,246,000
Subtotal Africa	85,000,000
AMERICAS	
Country Offices	
Colombia	12,326,000
Guatemala	6,542,000
Honduras	6,271,000
Mexico	3,264,000
Regional Offices	
Central America, Panama City	1,851,000
South America, Santiago	2,147,000
Human Rights Advisers	
Argentina	108,000
Barbados	211,000
Belize	119,000
Bolivia	192,000
Brazil	196,000
Costa Rica	271,000
Dominican Republic	288,000
Ecuador	154,000
El Salvador	1,221,000
Guyana	102,000
Jamaica	399,000
Paraguay	303,000
Peru	166,000
Trinidad and Tobago	206,000
Uruguay	146,000
Human Rights Components in Peace Missions	
Haiti	1,136,000
Other	
Bolivia	2,447,000
Nicaragua	756,000

EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	
Venezuela	3,178,000
Subtotal Americas	44,000,000
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC	
Country Offices	
Cambodia	3,596,000
Republic of Korea - Field-based structure	522,000
Regional Offices	
South-East Asia, Bangkok	4,771,000
Pacific, Suva	2,181,000
Human Rights Advisers	
Bangladesh	511,000
Malaysia	292,000
Maldives	412,000
Mongolia	80,000
Myanmar	270,000
Nepal	111,000
Papua New Guinea	762,000
Philippines	972,000
Sri Lanka	738,000
Timor-Leste	653,000
Human Rights Components in Peace Missions	
Afghanistan	357,000
Other	
Myanmar	2,771,000
Subtotal Asia and the Pacific	19,000,000
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	
Regional Offices	
Central Asia, Bishkek	1,349,000
Europe, Brussels	914,000
Human Rights Advisers	
Belarus	823,000
Bosnia Herzegovina	339,000
Georgia, South Caucasus	965,000
Montenegro	234,000

EXTRABUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS	
Republic of Moldova	1,117,000
Republic of North Macedonia	110,000
Serbia	568,000
Human Rights Mission	
Ukraine	7,226,000
Other	
Azerbaijan	877,000
Georgia	552,000
Russian Federation	926,000
Subtotal Europe and Central Asia	16,000,000
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	
Country Offices	
State of Palestine**	5,229,000
Syria	4,941,000
Tunisia	3,405,000
Yemen	8,612,000
Regional Offices	
Middle East and North Africa, Beirut	5,196,000
South-West Asia and the Arab Region, Doha - Training and Documentation Centre	720,000
Human Rights Advisers	
Jordan	416,000
Human Rights Components in Peace Missions	
Iraq	1,326,000
Libya	215,000
Other	
Iran	625,000
Saudi Arabia	2,315,000
Subtotal Middle East and North Africa	33,000,000
Programmatic, Outreach and Administrative Functions at Regional or Country Level	7,000,000
Total Field	204,000,000

* This also includes the Human Rights Adviser

**Reference to Palestine should be understood in compliance with UN General Assembly resolution 67/19.

Trust funds

Voluntary contributions to support UN Human Rights' activities are channelled and managed through nine United Nations trust funds, as well as three special funds. In addition, the Office receives contributions from United Nations multi-partner trust funds. While UN Human Rights encourages funding to be unearmarked whenever possible, contributions to some of these Funds must be specifically earmarked in order to be attributed.

UN TRUST FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY UN HUMAN RIGHTS

UN Trust Fund for the Support of the Activities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Established in 1993 to supplement regular budget resources, it is the largest fund administered by UN Human Rights and it is used to manage approximately 75 per cent of all extra-budgetary funds received (especially unearmarked funds).

UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment

Established in 1981, it awards grants to organizations working to alleviate the physical and psychological effects of torture on victims and their families. The types of assistance provided by Fund-supported organizations range from psychological, medical and social assistance to legal aid and financial support.

UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples

Established in 1985, it provides indigenous peoples with the opportunity to raise issues faced by their communities at the international level and participate in the development and implementation of international standards and national legislation for the protection of their rights. Funds are distributed in the form of travel grants to enable indigenous peoples to participate in UN meetings and events.

UN Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights

Established in 1987, it supports national efforts at building human rights protection frameworks, including strong legal frameworks, effective national human rights institutions, independent judiciaries and vibrant civil society organizations.

UN Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Established in 1991, it distributes small grants to grassroots projects that provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of contemporary forms of slavery. The Fund primarily focuses on projects that assist individuals who are suffering from the most severe forms of human rights violations occurring in the context of contemporary forms of slavery and other forms of exploitation.

UN Trust Fund for a Human Rights Education Programme in Cambodia

Established in 1992, its aim is to contribute to the development and implementation of a human rights education programme in Cambodia to promote the understanding of and respect for human rights.

UN Voluntary Fund for Participation in the Universal Periodic Review mechanism

Established in 2008 to facilitate the participation of official representatives from developing and least developed countries in the UPR process and to provide training for the preparation of national reports.

UN Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of the Universal Periodic Review

Established in 2008 to provide financial and technical support to implement recommendations issued under the UPR review process, at the request of and in consultation with the country concerned.

Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council

Established in 2013 through Human Rights Council resolution 19/26 to enhance the institutional and human rights capacity of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States through the provision of targeted training courses, travel assistance for delegates attending Council sessions and fellowship programmes.

SPECIAL FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY UN HUMAN RIGHTS

Contingency Fund

A Contingency Fund of US\$1 million was established in 2006 by the Office to enable it to respond to human rights emergencies in a timely and adequate manner. The revolving Fund is maintained through voluntary contributions to facilitate, implement or carry out activities within the priorities, overall strategies and policies of the Office, in particular in the context of the establishment of a rapid response capacity. The Fund has greatly increased the capacity of UN Human Rights' headquarters to provide conceptual and operational support to unforeseen mandates or situations that require a rapid response.

Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture

Established in 2006 through article 26 of OP-CAT, the objective of this Fund is to help finance the implementation of recommendations issued by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT), following a visit of the Subcommittee to a State Party, as well as education programmes of national preventive mechanisms (NPMs). Recommendations have to be contained in a report made public upon request of the State Party. Applications may be submitted by State Parties and NPMs, by national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles and NGOs, provided that the proposed projects are implemented in cooperation with State Parties or NPMs.

Special Fund for the Participation of Civil Society in the Social Forum, the Forum on Minority Issues and the Forum on Business and Human Rights

Created in 2013 by Human Rights Council's decision 24/118, its objective is to facilitate the broadest possible participation of civil society representatives and other relevant stakeholders. It also aims to give priority to the participation of local or national-level non-governmental organizations active in relevant fields, with particular attention to participants from Least Developed Countries, in the annual meetings of the three forums. The Special Fund became operational soon after the receipt of the first contributions in 2014.

MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND (NOT ADMINISTERED BY UN HUMAN RIGHTS)

UNSDG-Human Rights Mainstreaming Multi-Donor Trust Fund

Established in 2011 and administered by the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO), it provides support to the work of UN agencies and UN Country Teams in mainstreaming human rights and strengthening coherent and coordinated responses to national needs. Over the last decade, there has been significant progress in mainstreaming human rights into the work of the UN system. An increasing number of UN agencies are not only integrating human rights into their internal policies but are also actively advocating for human rights through their mandated work. The Trust Fund is used to support the placement of human rights advisers in UN Country Teams.



UN Human Rights staff visit defenders of Guapinol, in preventive detention in the penal center of Olanchito, for their work in defense of the territory and the environment. Olanchito, Honduras on October 15, 2020. ©OHCHR

You can make a difference

The opportunities for advancing human rights impact are many, but our resources are too limited.

We can change this, but we need your support. We rely on voluntary donations from governments, as well as private donors and businesses. To carry out our mission, maintaining our independence is vital – and so is diversifying our funding mix.

MEMBER STATES

In 2020, 55 out of 193 UN Member States provided a voluntary contribution to UN Human Rights. The donations ranged from US\$2,000 to US\$30 million. Some countries provide the entire contribution free of earmarking while others earmark part or all of the contribution to specific themes and areas of work as set out in our Management Plan 2018-2021.

We highly encourage Member States to explore the various modalities for funding which exist within their national structures and discuss available options with the Office. While the most common budget lines used for UN Human Rights are those that correspond to human rights, there is also wide scope for the Office to receive money from other types of budget lines, such as development and humanitarian lines.

FOUNDATIONS

The Office has been working with several foundations on country specific and thematic programmes around the world. We welcome opportunities to expand and strengthen our cooperation with foundations in the future.

CORPORATE SECTOR

A world in which human rights are respected is more prosperous, more stable and, ultimately, better too for business. We invite companies to demonstrate their commitment to human rights, through closer engagement. Support can come in many forms:

- Making human rights central to all corporate strategic decisions and practices, taking into account the effect of its operations on supply chains, employees and customers.
- Working with us to develop policies that make your company's commitment to human rights a reality.
- Engaging in strategic discussions to improve human rights wherever your company has business interests.
- Developing a genuine partnership with UN Human Rights, where your skills, experience and resources are used to promote and improve respect for human rights.
- Providing pro bono or financial support, to help us achieve the goals in our ambitious four-year plan.

INDIVIDUALS

The Office receives donations from individuals through the following website: donatenow.ohchr.org

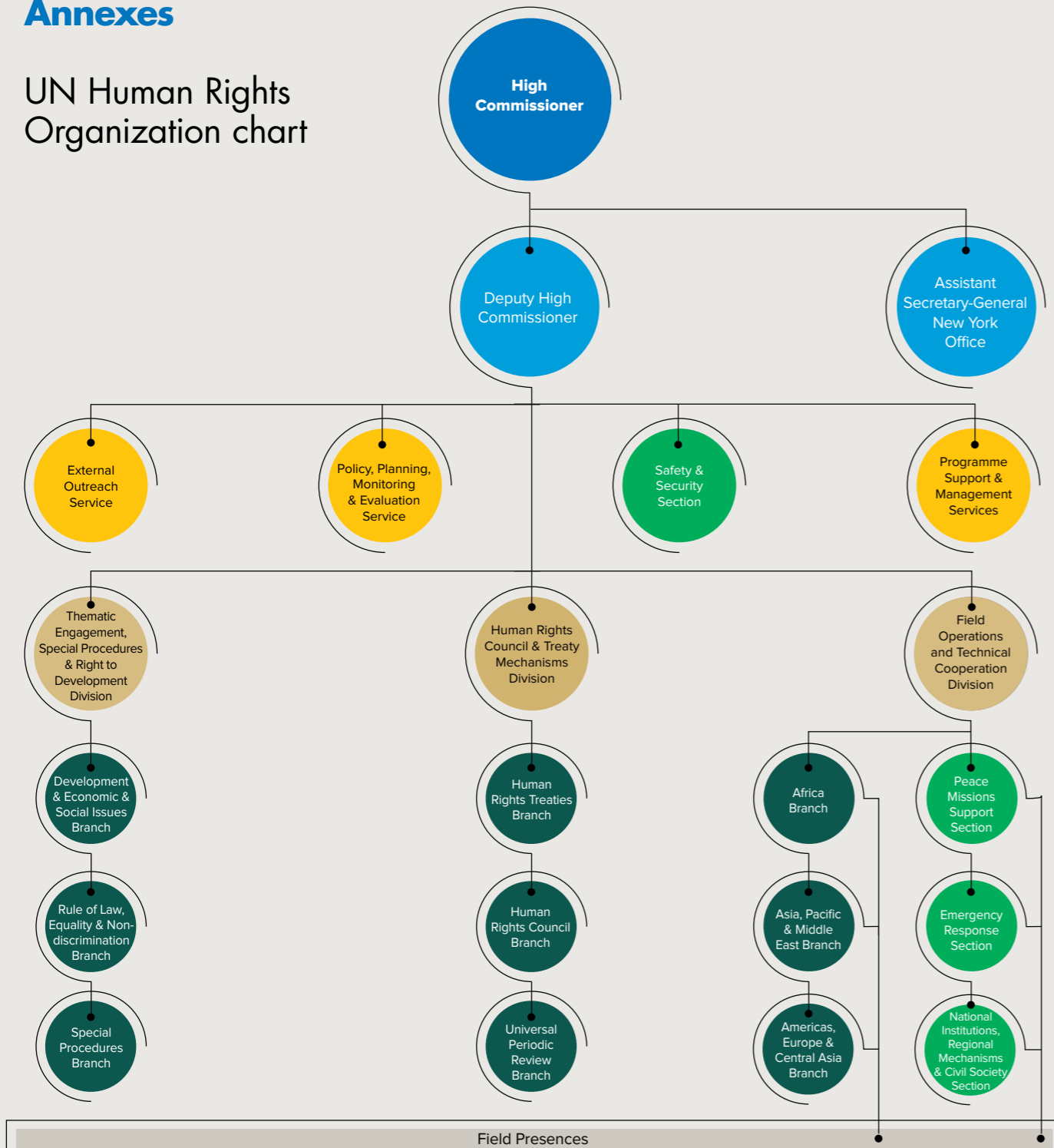


If you, or the organization you represent, would like to make a contribution, please contact UN Human Rights Donor and External Relations Section in Geneva, or go to our website to make an online donation.

Tel: +41 22 917 91 54
 Fax: +41 22 917 90 08
 Email: DexRel@ohchr.org
 Palais des Nations
 CH 1211 Geneva 10 – Switzerland

Annexes

UN Human Rights Organization chart



Abbreviations and acronyms

- AI**
Artificial intelligence
- BINUH**
United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti
- CCA**
Common Country Analysis
- CF**
Cooperation Framework
- EC**
European Commission
- ECOSOC**
Economic and Social Council
- ILO**
International Labour Organization
- MINUSMA**
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
- MONUSCO**
United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
- MPTFO**
Multi-partner Trust Fund Office
- NGO**
Non-governmental organization
- NHRI**
National human rights institution
- NPM**
National Preventive Mechanism
- OHCHR**
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- OMP**
OHCHR Management Plan
- OP-CAT**
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture
- SDG**
Sustainable Development Goal
- SERF**
Socio-economic response framework
- SPT**
Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- UN**
United Nations
- UNAMA**
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
- UNAMI**
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
- UNAMID**
United Nations - African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur
- UNDP**
United Nations Development Programme
- UNEP**
United Nations Environment Programme
- UNIOGBIS**
United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau
- UNITAMS**
United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
- UNMIK**
United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
- UNMISS**
United Nations Mission in South Sudan
- UNSDG**
United Nations Sustainable Development Group
- UNSMIL**
United Nations Support Mission in Libya
- UNSONM**
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
- UPR**
Universal Periodic Review

Cover

Indigenous girls from Guarani Mbyá joke at Aldeia Mata Verde Bonita on May 26, 2020 in Maricá, Brazil. About 80 Guarani Mbyá indigenous who form twenty-six families in the Aldeia Mata Verde Bonita, have had their economy, which is based on the sales of handicrafts and on tourism, paralyzed due to the social isolation and quarantine of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Families rely on the assistance of the municipality, partners and volunteers.

©Getty/Buda Mendes

Back cover

Colorful chalk message of hope on a street during the coronavirus pandemic in New Jersey ©Getty/Daryl Solomon



United Nations Human Rights Office

Palais des Nations

CH 1211 Geneva 10 – Switzerland
T +41 22 917 92 20 **F** +41 22 917 90 08
ohchr.org

 [UNHumanRights](https://twitter.com/UNHumanRights)  [unitednationshumanrights](https://www.facebook.com/unitednationshumanrights)

 [unitednationshumanrights](https://www.instagram.com/unitednationshumanrights)  [UN Human Rights](https://www.youtube.com/UNHumanRights)

●● [United Nations Human Rights](https://www.un.org/development/dha/ohchr/)



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER