

UN Inter-agency Desk Review of New Generation Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks

PUBLIC SUMMARY

Establishing a Baseline on the Level of Integration of Human Rights, Leave No One Behind, and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Conducted by the UN Interagency Network on Human Rights, LNOB and Sustainable Development

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1. Executive Summary

The [UN Secretary-General's \(S-G\) Call to Action for Human Rights](#) in 2020 challenged the UN system to step up efforts and place human rights “front and centre” in UN action. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic made the strengthening of human rights in UN analysis and programming even more compelling and urgent given the impact of pandemic responses on virtually all human rights everywhere.

The devastating socio-economic consequences of COVID-19, worrying setbacks on human rights and escalating inequalities make it critical to ensure that Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) better leverage States' human rights obligations. This is critical to address development bottlenecks that exacerbate violence, inequality, poverty, and discrimination that hinder progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and have pushed disadvantaged groups further behind in the context of the pandemic.

A priority action assigned to the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) through the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights is to “[develop] a nimble system to monitor and evaluate human rights, leave no one behind (LNOB) and gender integration in the new generation of [CCAs] and [CFs], to assess patterns and design targeted interventions in support of [Resident Coordinators (RCs)] and [UN Country Teams (UNCTs)] and build internal capacity/training.”¹

CCAs reflect the shared independent UN assessment on development opportunities and constraints in the country. CFs are statements of the shared priorities agreed by the host government and the UN. Together, CCAs and CFs form the foundation of UNCT entity plans and programmes for the lifecycle of CFs. It is imperative that the UN does justice to the purpose of these key instruments, including a comprehensive human rights, LNOB, and gender analysis, anchored in the normative framework of international human rights treaties and operationally directed at the country-level to reach the furthest behind first. When the UN does not meaningfully address the full spectrum of human rights concerns in these documents, it affects trust and undermines the sustainability of development efforts.

Through a desk review of 44 CCAs and 40 CFs, UN Interagency Network on Human Rights, LNOB and Sustainable Development, which supports the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights' strategic interventions on sustainable development, established a baseline to develop a common understanding of what is working well, capturing lessons learned and promising practices, key challenges, and highlighting areas of improvement as part of this process. The Network consists of DCO, DESA, ILO, IOM, FAO, OCHA, OHCHR, SRSG VAC, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.²

Three years into the [UN development system reform](#), key findings of this review show that while there is a degree of human rights uptake in the new generation of CCAs and CFs, there is an urgent need to step up ambition and strengthen the human rights integration in UN development analysis and programming work at the country level.

The review also points to good practices and missed opportunities, with excellent examples that demonstrate the value of human rights analysis, including drawing on the wealth of recommendations from UN human rights mechanisms and ILO Supervisory Bodies. However, even when CCAs include good human rights analysis, this is not always translated into programmatic opportunities. The review finds that when we engage civil society in the design of CCAs and CFs, the quality of our frameworks improves. Yet, UNCT engagement with civil society is inconsistent.

There is regular gender analysis in CCAs, but there are mixed results on integrating gender in CFs. In this regard, there is a need to ensure that CFs include at least one gender-targeted outcome and integrate gender equality considerations across all outcomes.

Focus on LNOB remains a key feature across CCAs and CFs. However, attention to some disadvantaged groups, such as indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ+ people, and racial, ethnic, and other minorities needs to improve. Furthermore, intersectional inequalities, structural barriers and discrimination are not consistently included. At the same time, several CFs tackle the root causes of inequality that leave groups of people behind, even in challenging country contexts.

This report outlines the lessons that must be learned moving forward and establishes a set of practical recommendations to support RCOs and UNCTs to do so. This includes learning from good practices, scaling up support, and acting on the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights' priority to develop a UN self-assessment tool. In response, an Online Tool with two Checklists to support RCOs and UNCTs, based on existing guidance, was issued in December 2022.

Changing gears is essential to implement the vision of the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights and to realize a "*renewed social contract anchored in human rights*" and recognize the potential of human rights as "*problem-solving measures*" as foreseen and highlighted in [Our Common Agenda](#). It is also integral to positioning the UN development system to contribute to the [Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\), to realize the 2030 Agenda's LNOB commitment](#). The [2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review](#) also calls upon the UN development system to assist Member States in their efforts to respect and fulfill their human rights obligations under international law, as a critical tool to operationalize the LNOB pledge.³

2. Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of a UN human rights-based desk review of the new generation CCAs and CFs developed and finalized between the beginning of 2019 and mid-2021.⁴ The exercise includes the review of 44 CCAs and 40 CFs.⁵ The purpose of the review was to establish a baseline and develop a common understanding of what is working well, capturing lessons learned, and promising practices, key challenges, and highlighting areas of improvement.

The review was conducted through the UN Interagency Network on Human Rights, LNOB and Sustainable Development, which supports the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights' strategic interventions on sustainable development. It involved 12 UN entities, namely: DCO, DESA, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR (coordination), UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.⁶ In addition, the review includes analytical inputs from the [UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](#)⁷, which reviewed a sample of new generation CCAs and CFs.⁸ Consultations with the regional UN Peer Support Groups (PSGs), which provide quality oversight to the CCAs and CFs, also took place during the review.

The review assessed levels of human rights integration into CCAs and CFs based on existing requirements in UN policy, including the [UN Sustainable Development Framework Internal Guidance](#) and its companion pieces, such as the [Guiding Principles](#), as well as the [Good Practice Note for UN Country Teams on Operationalizing LNOB](#). It also drew on the 2021 [Management Accountability Framework](#), which underscores RCs' and UNCTs' human rights roles and responsibilities, including to ensure that the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development leads to results that advance human rights.

It is important to note that while CCAs and CFs are key analytical and programmatic documents and they provide a fundamental indication of the overall UNCT direction, they do not exhaust the wealth of action, policy advice, and interventions that RCs and UNCTs take inside of the country to promote and protect human rights.

The key findings of the review only pertain to the CCAs and CFs that were reviewed.

3. Methodology

The desk review occurred between July 2021 and April 2022 and was based on an established methodology. Reviewers from 9 of the 12 UN entities involved⁹ analyzed CCAs and CFs in English, Spanish, and French using a multiple-choice questionnaire with 20 questions for CCAs and 16 questions for CFs. This questionnaire drew on UN policy and guidance on applying a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to UN programming.¹⁰ A mock review was organized in advance of the review to ensure consistency among evaluators concerning the benchmarks that would be used to evaluate the documents.

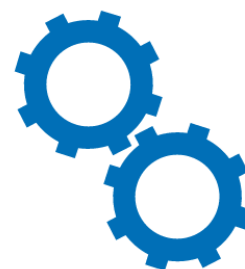
Reviewers were asked to highlight promising practices as well as provide overall comments for each of the CCAs and CFs that they reviewed. The questionnaires' responses and analytical comments were collected through an online form, which produced 1,520 quantitative results and 1,688 qualitative results to analyze.

It is important to acknowledge that a desk review has limits, especially in terms of capturing the complex environment in which RCOs and UNCTs operate as they undergo the CCA and CF processes. To avoid survey fatigue, it was advised that the review group not survey RCOs or UNCTs directly, but rather engage with PSG¹¹ colleagues to get an overview of the patterns and trends from the CCA and CF examinations they carry out. As such, in order to inform the drafting of this report, consultations were held with PSG members for them to share common challenges as well as gaps that they have identified in the integration of human rights, LNOB, and gender in CCAs and CFs. In addition, UN entities involved in the review were encouraged to consult with key stakeholders within their own organization and their PSG representatives.

Given the importance of addressing racial discrimination and protecting minority rights as part of the UN's work, the [UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](#) contributed analysis by reviewing a selection of CCAs and CFs across geographic regions.¹² They used a set of questions that are based on the 2013 [UN S-G's Guidance Note on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](#) and mirror the [Checklist to Strengthen UN Work at Country Level to Combat Racial Discrimination and Advance Minority Rights](#) that was developed by the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and published in 2021.¹³ The findings of that review are provided in a [separate report](#).

4. Key Findings

- **Some two-thirds of CCAs substantively address the most pressing human rights issues¹⁴ based on the most recent outcomes from the UN human rights system. However, the results were less positive with regard to CFs, with only 40 percent of CFs adequately tackling pressing human rights issues and underlying root causes in their strategic priorities, while an additional 42 percent of CFs address these issues and root causes “to some extent.”¹⁵ Further enquiry into these results is needed to determine the reason for these gaps and how to address them.**
- Human rights issues not reflected in CCAs and CFs are often **the encroachment of civil and political rights, including civic space, threats against human rights defenders, and violations by security forces.** Other important omissions often concern the **structural and persistent drivers of inequalities, discrimination, and violence against disadvantaged groups.** Some stigmatized or excluded groups such as indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ+ people, and racial, ethnic, and other minorities are not sufficiently featured in UNCT analyses and programmatic responses. Positively, there are exceptions: the review noted examples of CFs developed in challenging environments that managed to include pressing and difficult human rights contents. Why this is possible in some contexts but not others was not revealed through this review’s findings, but positive experiences and examples seem to point to the importance of UN leadership, preparedness, and cohesiveness.
- **The majority of CCAs identify the capacity gaps¹⁶ that prevent rights-holders from claiming their rights and duty-bearers from fulfilling their duties. CFs also generally adequately focus on building the local capacity of rights-holders and duty-bearers.** Programmatic measures in CFs include strengthening the judiciary and reinforcing institutional capacities in delivering sustainable, inclusive, and quality social and protection services.



→ **CCAs and CFs generally do not thoroughly integrate a political economy assessment based on or incorporating relevant human rights obligations and recommendations.** This means that socio-economic development challenges, such as those related to health and social protection, are largely not sufficiently informed by human rights obligations and recommendations from country reviews by UN human rights mechanisms and ILO standards or Supervisory Body comments, which provide economic policy advice, including recommendations on social spending and fiscal policy.



→ **Human rights mechanisms' observations and recommendations in CCAs are insufficiently translated into programmatic actions in the corresponding CFs.** Yet some UNCTs in challenging political environments have found in the human rights mechanisms' recommendations an avenue to open space for policy dialogue and technical cooperation on critical issues. The findings also point to an under-utilization of human rights mechanisms' outcomes and recommendations including in informing analysis of SDG achievement and other development challenges and opportunities in the CCAs. Only 27 percent of CFs make a substantive and measurable contribution to addressing specific recommendations by human rights mechanisms through their outcomes and outputs. This is a lost strategic opportunity. The observations and recommendations from these mechanisms provide insights and recommendations that can be built upon to leverage the political space and provide traction to advance development efforts.¹⁷ A better integration of such mechanisms would also contribute towards the UN development system reform's stated promise of stronger cross-pillar cooperation between "Development" and "Human Rights".



→ **There is consistent gender analysis in CCAs, but mixed results on integrating gender in CFs.** Almost all CCAs include some level of gender analysis, though there is a surprising 7 percent that do not. 60 percent of CFs have a gender-targeted outcome, 57 percent integrate gender in all outcomes, and 37 percent have both a gender-targeted outcome and integrate gender in the rest of the outcomes. 5 percent of CFs do not integrate any gender equality considerations in their outcomes.



→ **LNOB analyses in CCAs and the outputs and outcomes in CFs need to better recognize the intersectional nature of discrimination and expose the structural drivers of inequalities and exclusion.** Most CCAs try to articulate who is being left behind through dedicated sections within the CCA and the majority of CFs provide to varying degrees programmatic measures to counter discrimination against stigmatized or excluded groups. However, LNOB analyses are not always complete and either refrain from recognizing the situation of some of the disadvantaged groups in the country or group together several different sub-populations as “vulnerable” in the LNOB analysis without examining the causes of their exclusion in a comprehensive or specific manner. The review found that groups insufficiently represented in CCAs become even more invisible in the CFs. This includes indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ+ people, and racial, ethnic, and other minorities. The review also found that women and children are often treated as homogenous groups respectively in CCAs and CFs, lacking an intersectional analysis. Where an LNOB analysis was done well, often UNCTs undertook the analysis ahead of the CCA process.



→ **When diverse civil society actors¹⁸ are meaningfully engaged in both CCA and CF processes, CCAs and CFs reflect a better integration of human rights, LNOB, and gender considerations. Much more can be done to engage civil society in line with the vision stated by the 2030 Agenda of building whole-of-society responses.** Few CCAs and CFs indicate how civil society actors were able to provide input and only some CFs provide examples of civil society as partners to the UN and the respective government in the implementation and monitoring of the CF. Yet the review found a correlation between how effectively a broad range of civil society actors are engaged in the CCA and CF processes, including through stakeholder consultations and inputs into documents, and the overall level of integration of human rights, LNOB, and gender.

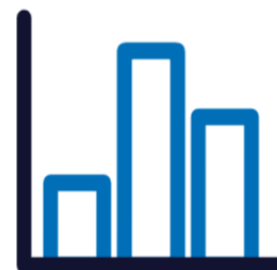


→ **The expertise of NHRIs is underutilized and less than a third of CFs have activities that strengthen NHRIs.** NHRIs play a critical role in advising human rights-based policy-making and overseeing government action. Just 27 percent of CFs plan to strengthen the capacity of an independent NHRI, in compliance with the Paris Principles and in line with SDG 16. The review shows that for countries with an existing NHRI, there is no example of a CF where the NHRI is engaged fully in the monitoring and decision-making process of the CF. The review found that expertise and analyses developed by NHRIs on the country’s development challenges from a human rights lens can help fill data gaps, but these are also underutilized in CCAs.¹⁹



- **The lack of data undermines analysis. More needs to be done to strengthen data collection and disaggregation capacities.**

Many CCAs indicate that the lack of disaggregated data limits a thorough analysis of the multiple forms of discrimination and deprivation that groups experience. While most CCAs note data gaps and the majority of CFs include programmatic activities to support the collection of disaggregated data, fewer CFs include adequate programmatic measures aimed at building local capacity to collect quality, accessible, timely, and reliable disaggregated data.



- **The review shows that just over half of the CFs make use of human rights-based indicators.**²⁰ The other half use human rights-based indicators minimally or not at all, despite their importance to measure progress on human rights commitments and related efforts of the State, and/or improvements in the situation of rights-holders.

- **The review also points to the importance of making the best possible use of UN resident and non-resident entities' human rights capacities.**

Overall good practices mapped by the review include developing CF roadmaps that enabled early and quality involvement of human rights capacities (e.g. providing sufficient time to review, research and input content), early strategizing as one UN system on ways to address pressing human rights issues, and optimizing the input of UNCT thematic working groups on human rights and LNOB.



- **Regional discrepancies exist with more consistent integration of human rights noted in CCAs and CFs of Europe and Central Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.** Given the nature of the exercise, which was a desk review, it was not possible to analyze further the cause of this regional trend.



- **A growing body of guidance on human rights, LNOB, and gender equality to UNCTs and RCOs is available, but it may not be widely known among all UN entities in UNCTs.** The findings do not point to a pattern of improvement in the integration of human rights within the two-year period of 2019-2021²¹. There is a need to build greater operational understanding of the 'how to' and benefits of integrating human rights in sustainable development.



→ **A UN self-assessment tool could assist UNCTs, PSGs, and RCOs to reinforce operational integration of human rights, LNOB, and gender into future CCAs and CFs.** The findings of this review reiterate the need for the self-assessment tool called for in the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights, alongside further support to UNCTs and RCOs.²²



5. Fast Facts

- * **66 percent** of CCAs substantively address the **most pressing human rights issues** based on the most recent outcomes from the UN human rights system – *whereas* only **40 percent** of CFs adequately tackle the most pressing human rights issues and underlying root causes in their strategic priorities. Another 42 percent of CFs do so to some extent, while 18 percent of CFs do not address these issues at all or only nominally.
- * **11 percent** of CCAs thoroughly address **threats to human rights defenders and civil society actors**; another **55 percent** do so in a limited manner while the remaining **34 percent** do not at all.
- * **42 percent** of CFs have outcomes and outputs that provide specific measures to actively promote and protect **meaningful, safe and diverse civil society participation in decision-making processes** at national and local levels.
- * **50 percent** of CCAs include **a gender analysis** in all of the CCA sections. **60 percent** of CFs have **gender-targeted outcomes**, **57 percent integrate gender** in all outcomes, and **37 percent** have both gender-targeted and integrated outcomes. **5 percent** of CFs do not integrate any gender equality considerations.
- * **75 percent** of CFs invest in addressing at least some extent **capacity gaps** of rights-holders and duty-bearers.
- * **27 percent** of CFs support the **creation or strengthening of an independent NHRI**, in compliance with the Paris Principles and in line with SDG 16.
- * **27 percent** of CFs address specific **recommendations by human rights mechanisms**²³ through their outcomes and outputs, another **43 percent** do so partially, and the remaining **30 percent** do not.
- * While **22 percent** of CFs indicate that there is thorough active and inclusive local community and **civil society engagement and meaningful participation** throughout the CF cycle, **53 percent** indicate that there is some engagement, while **25 percent** do not.
- * **22 percent** of CFs have outcomes and outputs that thoroughly connect human rights obligations and recommendations from the UN human rights mechanisms and ILO standards and Supervisory Bodies with **economic policy advice and programmatic work**, another **48 percent** do so partially, and the remaining **30 percent** do not.

6. Recommendations

To RCs and UNCTs:

1. Optimize the Role of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms:

- a. Ensure that CCAs and CFs actively and explicitly use the outcomes and recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms, including by means of the [Universal Human Rights Index](#).²⁴
- b. Maximize the use of the [ILO database](#) to find, by country, ILO Supervisory Body comments that may relate to a country's socio-economic priorities and needs on the ground, as well as the situation of civil liberties.

2. Upgrade Gender Equality, LNOB and Intersectional Analyses and Interventions:

- a. Ensure that gender and LNOB analyses are not siloed, but integrated throughout the CCA and CF.
- b. Ensure that gender and LNOB analyses from CCAs inform corresponding actions in CFs.
- c. Directly address all the marginalized, most disadvantaged and excluded groups identified in human rights mechanisms' recommendations, to capture existing systemic and other forms of discrimination.
- d. Avoid treating disadvantaged groups homogenously in analyses and programmatic measures – rather, recognize the intersectional and compounding factors of discrimination. In addition to describing the manifestations of inequalities and discrimination suffered, also analyze the root causes behind the disadvantages.
- e. Apply a gender analysis to all LNOB groups and those identified as at risk of being left behind.
- f. Improve focus on indigenous peoples as well as LGBTIQ+ people, racial, ethnic, and other minorities, and other LNOB groups, in line with the 2030 Agenda's LNOB pledge.
- g. Invest in UN and local capacity for data disaggregation and utilize the [Guidance Note to Data Collection and Disaggregation](#) when collecting data on the most marginalized populations, including the stringent privacy and confidentiality ('do no harm') safeguards, given safety and security issues.

3. Reinforce Meaningful Participation with Civil Society and Support Civic Space:

- a. Improve consistent stakeholder participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of CCAs and CFs through systematic and dedicated, structured consultations with diverse civil society actors and those representing the most disadvantaged groups, including by investing in inclusive feedback channels to assess human rights developments and receive feedback on UN programmatic activities.
- b. Place greater focus on analysis and interventions to address democratic deficits affecting people's enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, by protecting civil society²⁵ and expanding civic space, both online and offline.

4. Engage and Build National Capacities for Human Rights Change:

- a.** Place greater focus on supporting the creation or strengthening of NHRIs as part of CF outputs, in such a way that it complies with the Paris Principles and in line with SDG 16.
- b.** Enhance engagement with NHRIs in the entire CCA and CF processes, including when collecting data, but also in the monitoring and decision-making process of the CF.
- c.** Develop programmatic activities that are aimed at building local capacity to collect quality, accessible, timely, and reliable disaggregated data.

5. Connect Socio-Economic Development Challenges with Human Rights-Based Solutions:

- a.** Make greater use of human rights obligations and recommendations from human rights mechanisms and ILO Supervisory Bodies in the CCA's economy analysis of the CCA, including in relation to budgets, taxation, access to land and resources, etc.
- b.** Connect the CCA's economy analysis that is informed by human rights with the CF's outcomes and outputs.
- c.** Align SDG financing in CCAs and CFs with economic, social, and other human rights obligations, including with regard to social spending and fiscal policy.
- d.** Apply a gender lens to the macroeconomic analysis in CCAs and include gender-responsive recommendations in CFs.

To the UNSDG, Regional Collaborative Platforms, and PSGs:

1. Equip UNCTs to integrate human rights, LNOB, and gender considerations more effectively and build greater operational understanding of the benefits of integrating human rights in sustainable development:

- a.** Organize a UNSDG Principals discussion on the findings of this review and convey leadership support to follow up on its recommendations, followed by regional meetings to discuss the findings.²⁶
- b.** Adopt a self-assessment tool to help UNCTs integrate human rights, LNOB, and gender considerations into CCAs and CFs systematically, and PSGs to review the integration of these Guiding Principles into CCAs and CFs.²⁷
- c.** Provide resources for peer learning internally by guaranteeing dedicated space for UNCTs and RCs at the global and regional levels to showcase promising practices and share knowledge and experiences.²⁸
- d.** Finalize the "Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and Leave No One Behind Normative Guiding Principles Training Package", prioritize its roll-out to countries embarking into new CFs and resource the development of an additional module on human rights and transformative economies, while monitoring the package's impact.²⁹
- e.** Ensure that human rights are a standard item on the agenda of global and regional RC meetings with a focus on promising practices and lessons learned on HRBA advice and programmes.

2. Enhance Human Rights Support and Capacity at the Country and Regional Level:

- a.** Support UNCTs to address gaps in CCAs and CFs, which were identified through the review, in the joint work planning process.
- b.** Encourage the establishment of UNCT thematic inter-agency working groups tasked to follow, support, and advance the integration of human rights in the work of the UN at the country level.
- c.** Hold UNCT dialogues on human rights issues, as per the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights, including ahead of developing a CF in order to map and review ways to address pressing human rights issues. These dialogues should serve to update the CCA on its human rights analysis.
- d.** Expand human rights' regional and in-country human rights capacity, including OHCHR and Human Rights Advisor capacity, for specialized, operational and context-specific input.
- e.** Continue the work of the UN Interagency Network on Human Rights, LNOB and Sustainable Development in supporting the recommendations of this review.
- f.** Reinforce the capacity of PSGs, including through the use of the self-assessment tool and update relevant tools and templates to be consistent.

3. Incentivize Human Rights Integration

- a.** Ensure that the mandatory human rights markers, gender equality marker, and LNOB tags are used in UN-INFO, to make visible how human rights are being integrated into CFs and Joint Work Plans by UNCTs.
- b.** Engage with the Joint SDG Fund and other vertical funds to ensure the systematic use of recommendations from human rights mechanisms in CCAs and CFs, the inclusion in CCAs of all disadvantaged groups identified by human rights mechanisms' recommendations, and the inclusion in CFs of engagement with civil society in the design and monitoring of CFs, as (pre)conditions for financing, while including human rights parameters for monitoring purposes.

Annex 1

Over the last few years, a series of measures have been taken to facilitate access to and use of human rights recommendations. Some examples are described below.

OHCHR's [Universal Human Rights Index \(UHRI\)](#) is an online database that is available in all UN official languages and compiles recommendations from the UPR, UN Special Procedures, and the UN Treaty Bodies for every country, filtered by SDGs, SDG targets, affected groups, and themes.

In addition, the [ILO database](#) provides information, by country, on ILO Supervisory Body comments that may relate to a country's socio-economic priorities and needs on the ground. In a similar vein, the ILO at times prepares a study known as "normative stocktaking," which serves to identify the areas where international labour standards and the recommendations of the ILO Supervisory Bodies intersect with the development priorities of the country in question and the risks it is facing.

Since 2014, individualized letters are sent, under the lead of OHCHR, to each RC, outlining the key dates, concerning the year ahead, for the visits and reviews of the UPR, UN Special Procedures, and the UN Treaty Bodies for their host country.

With regard to the UPR³⁰, the [UPR Practical Guidance document](#) was issued in 2019 on how to maximize the use of the UPR at the country level. To support [each country's analysis](#), OHCHR has developed matrices in follow-up to UPR sessions that group the recommendations that States have either noted or accepted, as well as the relevant linkages to SDGs. Moreover, OHCHR also develops infographics that cluster, among other things, the recommendations by issue, and indicate which SDGs are most frequently addressed by the UPR recommendations. In addition, the High Commissioner for Human Rights issues a letter addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs following the UPR adoption. This letter highlights issues that the High Commissioner for Human Rights has raised with the government, as requiring particular attention in the coming years, within the approximate 200 UPR recommendations that each Member State receives. In addition, in 2022, OHCHR, UNDP, and DCO issued a [repository of UN good practices on how the UPR supports sustainable development](#).

UN Special Procedures also issues numerous recommendations, including on issues related to various populations and discrimination, as well as the [SDGs](#). All thematic and country work is compiled and accessible on the OHCHR website, including [country mandate holder reports](#), reports after country visits or on thematic issues to the [Human Rights Council](#) and to the [General Assembly](#), and recommendations on [individual complaints](#).

Furthermore, UN Treaty Bodies' [analysis and recommendations following country reviews](#) as well as [decisions on individual complaints have increasingly linked these with the SDGs and their targets](#).

It is also important to recognize the role of [national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up \(NMRFs\)](#), which are a key component of a national human rights system. They are government structures that coordinate engagement with human rights mechanisms and the implementation of recommendations at the national level.

NMRFs can support the CCA and CF processes through the development of human rights mechanisms' recommendations implementation plans that can feed into a national action plan as well as foster meaningful consultations with the country's NHRI and civil society, as well as marginalized groups.

¹ This is one of the system-wide strategic interventions listed under Sustainable Development.

² IOM, FAO and the Office of the SRSG VAC joined the network after the review was completed.

³ Concerning the contribution of UN operational activities for development, the [2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review \(QCPR\)](#) of operational activities for development of the UN system states in Paragraph 28 that it "[r]ecognizes the [UN] contribution to the promotion of all human rights for sustainable development, calls upon all entities of the [UN] development system, in accordance with their respective mandates, to assist Governments upon their request and in consultation with them, in their efforts to respect and fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments under international law, as a critical tool to operationalize the pledge to leave no one behind."

⁴ The documents that were reviewed were published on the UN Sustainable Development Group's (UNSDG) Country Cooperation Framework Status Dashboard.

⁵ This includes the following 44 CCAs: Albania; Argentina; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Caribbean Multi-Country Assessment; Cameroon; Chad; China; Colombia; Cote d'Ivoire; Cuba; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Dominican Republic; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Georgia; Guatemala; Indonesia; Jamaica; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Lao PDR; Malaysia; Maldives; Mali; Moldova; Montenegro; Morocco; North Macedonia; Panama; Paraguay; Serbia; Sierra Leone; Somalia; South Africa; Timor-Leste; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Uganda; Uruguay; and Uzbekistan. It also includes the following 40 CFs: Albania; Angola; Argentina; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; China; Colombia; Congo (Republic of); Cote d'Ivoire; Cuba; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Georgia; Guatemala; Guinea-Bissau; Indonesia; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Kuwait; Lao PDR; Liberia; Malaysia; Maldives; Mali; Mexico; North Macedonia; Panama; Paraguay; Sierra Leone; Somalia; Timor-Leste; Tunisia; Turkmenistan; Uganda; Uruguay; Uzbekistan; and Zimbabwe.

⁶ As of February 2023, the Network also includes IOM, FAO, and the Office of the SRSG VAC.

⁷ The Network was created by decision in 2012 of the Secretary-General, with the main goal of providing a platform to address issues of racial discrimination and the protection of national or ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, including issues of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on gender, disability, age and other grounds. The Network brings together a range of UN Departments, Agencies, Programmes and Funds, which have identified focal points for this purpose. Members include DESA, DGC, DOCO, DPA, DPKO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, OSAPG, PBSO, UNAIDS, UNAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNITAR, UNESCO, UNODC, UN Women and WFP. OHCHR acts as permanent Co-Chair for the Network. See more [here](#).

⁸ The sample included the following CCAs: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Mali, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Uruguay. The sample included the following CFs: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Uruguay.

⁹ Namely: DCO, DESA, ILO, OHCHR, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO. The inter-agency nature of the exercise enabled a wide range of perspectives within the UN development system to be considered in the conceptualization and execution of the review.

¹⁰ This includes the following documents: [Cooperation Framework Internal Guidance](#); [Cooperation Framework Companion Piece on the Guiding Principles](#) and other companion pieces, and the [Good Practice Note for UNCTs on Operationalizing LNOB](#).

¹¹ Anchored to the Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP), the PSGs are an important part of the broader UN architecture at the regional level. The PSG serves as a quality assurance mechanism for the CF cycle, serving as an interface between the UNCTs and UN entities' Regional Directors, seeking to enhance the UN's collective programmatic strategy on country and sub-regional issues.

¹² The sample included the following CCAs: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Mali, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Uruguay. The sample included the following CFs: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Uruguay.

¹³ Both of these guidance documents are themselves strongly underpinned by primary normative instruments in these areas, notably the [ICERD](#), the [UN Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities](#), and the [Durban Declaration and Programme of Action](#), adopted at the close of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism.

¹⁴ By "pressing human rights issues", this report refers to issues that are repeatedly highlighted in country reviews by the UN human rights mechanisms as well as other parts of the UN human rights system, including the ILO Supervisory Bodies.

¹⁵ 18 percent of CFs do not address these issues at all or only nominally. Main shortcomings are a lack of action to protect civic space, the rule of law, and civil and political rights, as well as action to reduce the structural discrimination and exclusion of marginalized groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, to reform longstanding gaps in legal, institutional, and policy frameworks, and to tackle structural impediments to inclusive and sustainable development.

¹⁶ Capacity gaps covers a broad range of issues. For rights-holders, this could include a lack of awareness/knowledge/information/skills/resources, lack of security, stigma, legal or other barriers to participation, association and expression related to their access to information, meaningful participation, access to effective remedies, and limited

representation and inclusion of groups left behind within the duty-bearer institutions. For duty-bearers, this could include insufficient administrative or legal framework, lack of political will, lack of authority or clear mandate to take action, lack of human, financial and technical resources and expertise, lack of coordination.

¹⁷ Annex 1 provides a series of measures that have been taken to facilitate accessing and examining human rights recommendations.

¹⁸ This includes employers' and workers' organizations as ILO constituents.

¹⁹ [OHCHR has compiled trends and initiatives undertaken by NHRIs that foster good practices](#). UNDP, OHCHR and GANHRI have also conducted a global study of three-thirds of NHRIs globally outlining their pivotal role during the pandemic. This includes issuing guidance to governments on the importance of applying specific and targeted measures to protect the most vulnerable groups in society; monitoring the implementation of emergency measures; and sharing information with rights-holders about the protection of their human rights and about human rights standards during the pandemic and their rights. See more [here](#).

²⁰ Human rights indicators are indicators that embody human rights standards and principles and corresponding human rights obligations. See p. 13 of the [Cooperation Framework Companion Piece on the Guiding Principles](#): "When selecting indicators, the following questions will help the UN country team assess if the guiding principles have been adequately considered: Are human rights indicators used, i.e., indicators that embody human rights standards and principles and corresponding human rights obligations?..."

²¹ Looking at the overall scoring of CCAs and CFs, there has not been an obvious improvement over time. For some of the aspects that were examined through this review, however, there was a degree of improvement over time. Concerning CCAs, this includes the mapping of relevant international obligations and commitments made by the country. Concerning CFs, this includes an increase in the number of outcomes that address the capacity gaps of duty-bearers and rights holders.

²² As of February 2023, an **Online Tool** with two Checklists to support RCOs and UNCTs, based on existing guidance, have been issued.

²³ This includes ILO Supervisory Bodies.

²⁴ This means using the recommendations in a holistic and strategic manner by including a thorough analysis of the recommendations in the CCA and by linking CF outcomes and outputs to relevant recommendations.

²⁵ This includes employers' and workers' organizations as ILO constituents.

²⁶ The UN Deputies Committee discussed the review as part of its discussion on the S-G's Call to Action for Human Rights in July 2022.

²⁷ As of February 2023, an **Online Tool** with two Checklists to support RCOs and UNCTs, based on existing guidance, have been issued.

²⁸ DCO is hosting a knowledge platform where tools, promising practices, knowledge and experiences are shared within the UN system.

²⁹ The training package has been finalized and is being rolled out.

³⁰ According to the [Repository of Good Practices on the Use of the UPR Support to Sustainable Development](#), UNCTs and UN entities across all regions are supporting governments to engage with all stages of the UPR process and integrating the UPR into UN programming and planning. The same document indicates that UNCTs and UN entities are supporting the integration of UPR recommendations into their CCAs and CFs. Similarly, a [Study on Emerging Good Practices from the UPR](#) demonstrates a greater synergy between development cooperation and support for implementation of accepted human rights recommendations as a result of the UPR, especially in States that have some form of UN presence and are recipients of Official Development Assistance.