



Implementing Human Rights Post-2015

As the UN funds, programmes and agencies, we recognize that the UN development system is bound by the UN Charter to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination. Human rights unite us across our diverse mandates, as is evidenced across our various strategic priorities, our contributions to the preparation of the new development agenda and our commitments under the “Human Rights Up Front” framework.

We will stand for rights:

The UN’s very roots are in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - human rights are the cornerstone and guide-star of our mission and identity. Specifically, as we contribute to implementation of the Post-2015 development framework, we will be unequivocal in what we stand for and what we uphold: freedom from fear and want for all, without discrimination. The person will be at the heart of our development efforts and we will uphold their inherent dignity and human rights as rights-holders while working for their empowerment as active partners for more sustainable and equitable development.

We will work for the fullest possible application of human rights’ core principles:

- **Universality:** Human rights are universal. International human rights standards must be upheld by both the UN system and governments, including through the rule of law.
- **Indivisibility:** We will recognize human rights as a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing, interdependent framework of economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights, and the right to development.
- **Equality and non-discrimination:** Dignity and human rights are the birth-right of all, without distinction of any kind as to: race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. We will work to ensure no one is left behind or left out, recognizing that gender equality too is fundamental to the realization of all human rights for all.
- **Active and meaningful participation:** People are development’s most precious resource and their agency and voice are key to unlocking the fullest potential that communities have for building more sustainable and inclusive development. We recognize that rights to freedoms of information, expression, association and assembly, are fundamental pre-requisites to empower people as agents of sustainable development.
- **Accountability:** A robust accountability framework, aligned to national and international human rights obligations, is essential for the new development agenda’s success. Relevant institutions, including the UN, can then be more fully answerable to clearly defined responsibilities. We recognize that civil society has a critical role to play in support of more transparent monitoring of progress and accountability for action.



We will focus on people-centered development:

As the UN funds, programmes and agencies, we will work together for:

- **Promotion of human rights:** Throughout all facets of our support to the Post-2015 agenda's implementation, and in our interactions with all Member States, we will consistently emphasize human rights standards and norms as core values of the UN. We will systematically engage with the international human rights mechanisms, including the human rights treaty bodies and monitoring bodies of specialized agencies, the special procedures and the universal periodic review, so that human rights standards and the recommendations of those bodies inform our programming and other development activities.
- **Application of international human rights standards:** As the new development agenda's targets are adapted and tailored to the national level, we will work to ensure these are consistent with international human rights law. In our partnerships with the private sector and other non-state actors, we will work for the full implementation of normative standards and international principles such as the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- **Elimination of all forms of discrimination that lie at the heart of poverty, inequality and conflict:** We will strengthen our analysis, including by supporting the collection and analysis of disaggregated data, to ensure that all forms of discrimination and other root causes of inequalities are identified and addressed.
- **Elimination of violence and exploitation:** We will work towards the elimination of all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, recognizing that gender based violence is the most prevalent form.
- **People's meaningful participation:** We will establish strong partnerships with civil society. Through our convening role, we will create space for civil society participation, ensuring people are empowered to participate in and influence development policy and programming, particularly marginalized, disempowered and excluded groups, and we will strengthen our focus on the protection of human rights defenders.
- **Accountability:** We will support strong accountability mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels to ensure that people have access to relevant information, can express their views without fear of reprisal and seek remedies when their rights are violated.
- **Evidence-based monitoring and reporting:** To clearly identify inequalities and disparities and monitor whether gaps are truly being addressed, we will monitor and report on our progress transparently, with data disaggregated to the fullest extent possible by all grounds of discrimination prohibited under international, regional and national law.

Our fitness for the purpose of human rights:

Human rights provide us with a strong normative basis to underpin the UN's "fitness for purpose". We share a core responsibility to leverage our moral authority, convening power and operational capacity so



that respect for human rights becomes a reality for every person in every country. To aid this purpose we will:

- **Deepen our leadership engagement:** We will engage and support international and national dialogue on human rights, both at the Principals’ level from Headquarters, and through Resident Coordinators and UN country leadership.
- **Systematically apply the “normative” to the “operational”:** Responding to the call from Member States, we will apply systematically a human rights-based approach in all our work and we will support Member States to do so in their national policies.
- **Strengthen our capacity and accountability for processes and results:** We will develop our human rights capacity, and that of our national partners, and be fully accountable for our processes and results.

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Background:

The UNDG-Human Rights Working Group (HRWG), which is chaired by Flavia Pansieri, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights and Kate Gilmore, DED-P UNFPA, has underlined the need for, and unique opportunity to, provide a coherent and unified UN voice on human rights as part of the Fit for Purpose discussions.

Reviewing Funds’, Programmes’ and Agencies’ strategic plans and submissions to and about the Post 2015 agenda, the HRWG was able to examine the breadth of the UN’s human rights aspirations and commitments. On this basis, HRWG Members developed this summary of the UN’s core human rights messages. The HRWG believes that these set out what would be the distinctive character of the UN as it goes about implementing the new development agenda, noting that human rights are not only about “what” the UN does under force of that agenda but are also deeply connected to “how” the UN will implement that agenda and for “whom”.

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