

What We Do

The Human Rights Team supports mainstreaming of the 2003 United Nations Common Understanding on the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to Development Cooperation within the purview of the mandate of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The UN Common Understanding stipulates as follows:



1. All programmes of development co-operation, policies and technical assistance should further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

In the human rights-based approach to programming and development cooperation, the aim of all activities is to contribute directly to the realization of one or several human rights.

2. Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process.

Human rights principles guide all programming in all phases of the programming process, including assessment and analysis, programme planning and design (including setting of goals, objectives and strategies); implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Among these human rights principles are: universality and inalienability; indivisibility; inter-dependence and inter-relatedness; non-discrimination and equality; participation and inclusion; accountability and the rule of law.



3. Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and/or of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights.

The Human Rights-Based Approach identifies rights-holders (and their entitlements) and corresponding duty-bearers (and their obligations) and works towards strengthening the capacities of rights-holders to make their claims, and of duty-bearers to meet their obligations.



Human Rights Team

Why We Do It



The UN Charter: Article 1: The purposes of the United Nations are:

3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion

The United Nations New Urban Agenda: Human rights is the first of five guiding principles of the New Urban Agenda, and elements of the 2003 UN Common Understanding on the HRBA are part of the remaining four principles

Delivering As One: The Delivering as One initiative was introduced by the Secretary General in 2006. It builds on the existing reform agenda set by UN member states, which asks the UN development system to accelerate its efforts to increase coherence and effectiveness of its operations in the field through the development of an UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for each country.

Human Rights Up Front: To further stress the central importance of human rights within the UN, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon launched the “Human Rights Up Front” initiative in December 2013. The need for early action, and the crucial role of responding early to human rights violations, is at the heart of the “Human Rights up Front” initiative.



Fit For Purpose: Concerning Human Rights, making the UN “fit for purpose” in achieving the post-2015 development agenda means:

- Enable systematic interface between development and human rights systems
- Operationalize Human Rights Up Front
- Support UN Country Teams with rule of law and human rights capacity enhancements



UN Development Group – Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism:

The undg-hrwg aims to further strengthen system-wide coherence, collaboration and support for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams, so that they can better provide support to Member States to strengthen national capacity for the promotion and protection of human rights.

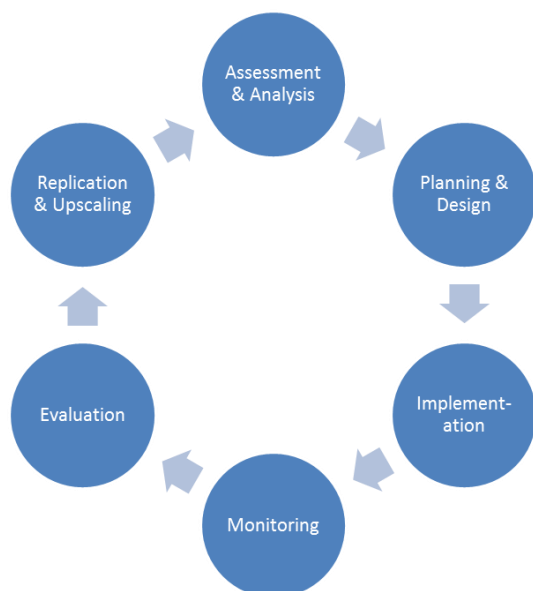


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How We Do It

Following the endorsement by the UN-Habitat Governing Council in April 2013 to consider human rights as one of four cross-cutting issues in UN-Habitat's Strategic Work Plan 2014-2019, we developed a Human Rights Strategy that institutionalizes human rights mainstreaming:

Legislative Analysis of Housing Rights and Human Rights: We offer legislative reviews of the countries where UN-Habitat is engaged. These reviews point out ways in which we can increasingly human rights-base our projects, policies and programmes.



Systematic engagement at the project design phase:

We have a standing invite to the senior management meetings of the **Project Advisory Group** that approve all UN-Habitat projects. We not only quality assure projects at the point of approval; we are increasingly engaging colleagues at the project formulation phase to ensure that baselines are set; disaggregated data are available to ensure a focus on the most discriminated and marginalized; projects are appropriately located within the international and national legal frameworks, collaboration at country level particularly through Delivering as One and the UNDAF are encouraged; project implementation plans and related indicators ensure broad-based participation, etc. We are building the capacity of colleagues through the development and dissemination of a **Human Rights Marker** related to HRBA quality assurance, which will ensure increasing awareness and knowledge of colleagues, and serve as a baseline for the progress we make in improving the quality of projects.

Capacity building and learning together: So far, we have developed a UN-Habitat Programmatic Guidance Note on Human Rights for staff, disseminated Briefing Notes on human rights issues (such as the Universal Periodic Review, the Human Rights Up Front Initiative, the Human Rights Based Approach) and held Human Rights Brown Bag lunches on topics ranging from Human Rights in Public Spaces to Forced Evictions and Advocacy. We have conducted two strategic retreats on human rights for senior managers and are delivering basic "Human Rights 101" briefings to colleagues. In May 2015 we rolled out the next level of learning – an intermediate learning together where colleagues for a day combine theoretical and practical approaches to HRBA and take away with them an improved project document/policy document/strategy paper/concept note.



Human Rights Team



Advisory services and partnerships: We provide input to the work of our colleagues and through global policy partnerships e.g. including through our engagement in the United Nations New Urban Agenda, the post-2015 agenda, the UN Development

Group's Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism, UN-OHCHR/UN Housing Rights Programme, etc. We are engaging and collaborating with the work of colleagues across branches and the other cross-cutting issues of gender, youth and climate change, examples of which will be collected into a Handbook on Human Rights in Cities.

Publications: We have produced a number of publications to build knowledge around specific issues relating to human rights in cities. These are available for your use, and can be downloaded here:

<http://unhabitat.org/human-rights/>



Further Information

- UN-Habitat Human Rights: <http://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/human-rights/>
- UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR): www.ohchr.org/
- UNDG Human Rights Working Group: <https://undg.org/home/undg-mechanisms/undg-hrm/>
- UN Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) Portal: <http://hrbaportal.org/>

How to Contact Us

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