

By

## Scaling Up Specialised Human Rights Country Support for CCAs and UNSDCF's MPTF OFFICE GENERIC FINAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: FROM March 2020 TO 31 MAY 2022

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results <sup>2</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Title: Scaling Up Specialised Human Rights Country Support for CCAs and UNSDCF's</li> <li>Programme Number: 00120375</li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>3</sup> 00120375</li> </ul>	<p>(if applicable) Country/Region: All regions</p> <p>Priority area/ strategic results: Economic, social and cultural rights, curbing inequalities and the interlinkages with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</p>
Participating Organization(s)	Implementing Partners
OHCHR	The project was implemented in close collaboration with UN partners, States including National Human Rights Institutions, civil society and International Financial Institutions
Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	Programme Duration
<p>Total approved budget as per project document: MPTF /JP Contribution<sup>4</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,842,928 Agency Contribution</li> </ul>	<p>Overall Duration (27 months) 3 March 2020 – 31 May 2022</p> <p>Original End Date<sup>5</sup> (end 2021)</p> <p>Actual End date<sup>6</sup> (31 May 2022)</p> <p>Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system?</p> <p>Expected Financial Closure date<sup>7</sup>:</p>
<p>Government Contribution (if applicable)</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors)</p>	<p>Yes (final financial report will be submitted at the end of April)</p>

<sup>1</sup> The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

<sup>4</sup> The MPTF/JP Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](#).

<sup>7</sup> Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report](#).

(if applicable)	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	
<b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b> Evaluation Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i> Evaluation Report - Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>	<b>Report Submitted By</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Title: <input type="checkbox"/> Participating Organization (Lead): <input type="checkbox"/> Email address:

## ACRONYMS

- Availability, accessibility, acceptability, adequacy, sustainability, and quality: AAAQ
- Civil and political rights: CP rights
- Civil society organisations: CSOs
- Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: CEDAW
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child: CRC
- Economic, social and cultural rights: ESC rights
- Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: GEWE
- Human Rights-Based Approach: HRBA
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: ICESCR
- International Financial Institutions: IFIs
- International Monetary Fund: IMF
- Member States: MS
- Leave No One Behind: LNOB
- Resident Coordinator's Office: RCO
- Senior Human Rights Advisor: SHRA
- Stand-By Agreement: SBA
- Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs
- UN Common Country Analyses: CCAs
- UN Country Team: UNCT
- UN Human Rights Mechanisms: HRMs
- UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission: HRMMU
- UN Regional Monthly Reviews: RMRs
- UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks: CFs
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: 2030 Agenda
- Universal Periodic Review: UPR
- Voluntary National Review VNR

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the programme cycle – March 2020 to May 2022, the Surge Initiative maintained prioritized focus over the provision of country- and regional-specific advice relative to the **operationalization of economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights and the interlinkages with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) as well as curbing economic and other inequalities**. This was done in collaboration with OHCHR in-country and regional presences, by providing specialized support to UN development partners, States, civil society organisations (CSOs), International Financial Institutions' (IFIs), and other stakeholders through the contribution of human rights-based analysis, and policy and operational options, on combating inequalities, on fiscal policies, debt relief, and social spending - including through human-rights-based budgeting - on health, social protection, water and other ESC rights. The Surge Initiative worked with all relevant State and non-State stakeholders and partners to research the human rights impact of economic reforms and austerity policies on marginalized and discriminated-against populations, engaged with the IFIs and offered strategies to advocate for Member States' (MS) compliance with their ESC rights obligations for 'maximum available resources', and meeting the 'minimum core obligations' for the 'progressive realization of human rights'.<sup>8</sup>

In 2020 and 2021, particular focus was directed at providing in-depth and comprehensive human rights analysis and operational options to **COVID-19 response and longer-term recovery**, and in 2022 an additional focus was that of addressing the vast socio-economic consequences of the **war in Ukraine, the food, fuel and energy crises as well as the triple planetary crisis**. This was undertaken through for example:

- ❖ Providing advice to **104 Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (CFs)**,
- ❖ Contributing analysis to **42 UN Regional Monthly Reviews (RMRs)**,
- ❖ Holding **61 strategic consultations** with UN Resident Coordinators' Office (RCO) economists,
- ❖ Engaging in capacity-building activities and delivering **58 briefings and trainings** to UNCTs and other partners on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the CF Guiding Principles of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and Leave No One Behind (LNOB),
- ❖ Providing technical and financial support to **54 seeding-change country projects** - often designed and implemented with other UN entities, national partners and CSOs to reinforce analysis on groups left behind, build disaggregated datasets and evidence to advise UNCTs and governments on human-rights-based socio-economic responses.
- ❖ Contributing support and engaging in **9 human rights-based budget analyses**.

Throughout the project period (2020-2022), the Surge Team filled a long-standing gap in the UN system to **better link human rights with economics and development practice**. Specific emphasis was placed on **joining forces with UNCTs, RCO and other UN economists** at a time of increased efforts by the UN system to reinforce its engagement with the IFIs and advise on economic policy-making of MS. For example, the Surge economists joined the UN policy network of economists coordinated by DESA (UNEN). And in 2021, it held an [inter-agency workshop on Operationalising the New Social Contract at the Country Level: Sharing Experiences of Integrating UN Values for Transformative Economic Change](#),<sup>9</sup> which brought together UN economists from OHCHR, ILO, UN Women, UNICEF, UNRISD, UNDP, and DCO, to brainstorm and reflect on how the UN's human rights normative standards can be leveraged in advising macroeconomics. In 2022, the Surge contributed to key **global advocacy processes** - including by engaging in strategic dialogues with eminent economists, academics and other stakeholders<sup>9</sup> including the IFIs<sup>10</sup> - with a view to conceptualise and operationalise OHCHR's vision for [a human](#)

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<sup>8</sup> Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment 3: The nature of States parties obligations (Art. 2, par. 1).

<sup>9</sup> For example: Gayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Mariana Mazzucato, Professor, Economics of Innovation and Public Value, University College London and the IMF

<sup>10</sup> For example, the Surge Initiative contributed substantive inputs to the IMF's strategy to mainstream gender, noting that from a human rights point of view, gender inequality is macro-critical because "it affects and has the potential to erode the core contents of rights, economic stability and/or social stability."

[rights economy](#) - human rights-anchored transformations of today's economic policies and analysis for sustainable, fairer, and more inclusive development.

During the reporting period, the Surge Initiative entered into two new strategic partnerships with the [Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights \(RWI\)](#) and the [New School's Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy](#) reinforcing its research and analytical capacity, and increasing its capacity and outreach to academics, research institutes and other key stakeholders.

The MPTF was *one of* the donors that provided financial support to the Surge Initiative. The work that is presented in this report may therefore refer and include certain capacities and workstreams which were funded by other donors – e.g. Ireland, Switzerland, the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation and OHCHR's core funding - but which were an integral part of the work that was also financed by the MPTF. Across the project period from March 2020 to May 2022, the % of funding provided by the MPTF to the Surge Initiative with respect to other funding was as follows: 2020: 70%; 2021: 48%; and in 2022: 12%.

## **I. Purpose**

The main objective of the Surge Initiative - composed of five country-facing economists working together with OHCHR specialists on ESC rights and sustainable development - remained that of stepping-up specialized expertise for UNCT country analyses and programming to operationalize States' ESC rights obligations and commitments and the interlinkages with the 2030 Agenda, its SDGs and the pledge to LNOB, including by leveraging the findings and recommendations of HRMs. This work was anchored in addressing the dramatic socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, as well as the food, fuel and energy crises and the triple planetary crisis. More particularly, this was done by integrating human rights in development and economic agendas and related efforts at curbing inequalities, through the provision of ESC rights-based analysis and advice on building forward better and transforming development plans and economies in an inclusive, green, and sustainable manner, including through national budgets, data-collection and analyses, and targeted advocacy.

## **II. Results**

The Surge Initiative's expected outcomes under this project were as follows:

*A. Increased technical and specialized human rights advice and support to RCs/UNCTs to:*

*- A1.Place economic, social rights and curbing inequalities at the center of COVID19 country responses and recovery processes.*

*- A2.Transform States' human rights commitments, UPR and other HR mechanisms' recommendations into contents for common country analysis and long term sectoral development policies, strategies and measures aimed at increasing realization of economic, social and other rights and countering discrimination and economic and other type of inequalities as well as drivers of exclusion and instability. This includes connecting analysis and data from UN human rights reviews with SDG indicators, address data gaps and build disaggregated datasets with the aim to address unequal access to economic and social rights and operationalize leave no one behind; and*

*B. Compilation of good practices and lessons learned in support of UN system knowledge management.*

Within this overall framework, from March 2020 to May 2022, the Surge Initiative provided catalytic in-country and regional specialized advice and policy options towards:

i. The development and implementation of ESC rights strategies to enhance sustainable and inclusive development through strengthened social protection systems, health and/or the protection and fulfilment of other rights, mainly but not limited to the context of COVID-19 recovery. This included advice and support on, for example:

- Producing evidence and policy options on critical elements relevant to the availability, accessibility, acceptability, adequacy, sustainability, and quality (AAAQ) of ESC rights and corresponding SDGs (e.g. Cameroon, Chad, Moldova and Nepal);

- Developing partnerships and strategies to address barriers and drivers of exclusion, and ensure non-discrimination and participation in access to essential services, leaving no one behind and reducing inequalities (e.g. Kenya, Guinea Bissau, Mongolia, Serbia, South Africa); and
- ii. Expanding fiscal space for ESC rights and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and its pledge to LNOB, and investing in quality public services (e.g. Kenya, Jordan, Lao PDR, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe), by providing analysis and advice on:
  - Ring-fencing and/or increasing social spending and avoiding retrogression of ESC rights (e.g. Kenya);
  - Expanding resources for ESC rights by advising on progressive fiscal policies (e.g. South Africa);
  - Reallocating public expenditure to priority areas for meeting State obligations on ESC rights (e.g. Zambia);
  - Increasing budget transparency, participation and accountability to avoid the diversion of public funding and ensuring that other pressing obligations, such as debt servicing, do not take precedence over human rights obligations (e.g. Jordan); and
  - Reviewing financing and conditionalities by IFIs to assess how they could support, and not undermine, States' efforts to meet human rights obligations (e.g. Tunisia).

Special attention was paid to curbing discrimination and inequalities as a cross-cutting priority, including by avoiding further economic burdening on already marginalized, vulnerable or discriminated against groups. The Surge Team also continued investing in outreach and partnerships, and particularly with UNCTs, and various RCO and other UN economists to contribute to human rights-based common UNCT economic policies as an advocacy base for engagement with States and other stakeholders, including IFIs. Solid results were also achieved in the area of knowledge management in recognition of the importance of cross-fertilising learning across in-country presences and the UN system, inter alia, through ensuring systematic documentation of work examples and promising practices and creating the necessary platforms for making this information accessible.

Without exception, the Surge Initiative **delivered results beyond the outputs initially envisaged** for this project:<sup>11</sup>

<i>The Surge Team supported UN in-country presences with analytical contents and operational advice for CCA and CF processes</i>	104
<i>The Surge Team delivered briefings and trainings to UNCTs and other partners on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and the CF Guiding Principles of a HRBA and LNOB</i>	58
<i>The Surge Team held strategic discussions and engagements with RCO Economists</i>	61
<i>The Surge Team participated and provided inputs and recommendations to UN RMRs</i>	42
<i>The Surge Team provided technical and financial support to seeding-change country projects</i>	54
<i>The Surge Team provided support and engaged in human rights-based budget analyses</i>	9
<i>The Surge Initiative issued promising practice and lessons learned reports</i>	3
<i>The Surge Initiative provided guidance and advice to UNCTs on addressing the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, including through UNCT COVID-19 socio-economic impact assessments and socio-economic response plans.</i>	38

The below narrative highlights some of the principal areas of Surge Initiative work, outputs and results throughout the reporting period that contributed to the programme's overall outcomes.

## **II. A. Increased technical and specialised ESC rights advice and support to RCs and UNCTs, including by contributing to the transformation of States human rights commitments into MS' country policies, plans and programs**

<sup>11</sup> See indicators table later in the text and Annex I for the 2022 results more specifically



This objective was achieved by:

- Providing specialized analytical and operational inputs to CCA and CFs - A.1,
- Advising on joint UN policy positions, including as relevant to the IFIs - A.2,
- Providing expert advice to national actors and national development strategies, including by supporting and undertaking human rights-based budgetary analyses- A.3
- Stepping up in-depth country analysis and evidence to inform policy and programmatic human rights shifts - A.4

### **II.A.1 Providing specialized analytical and operational inputs to CCAs and UNSDCF**

The Surge Initiative contributed research, analysis and advice to 104 CCA and CF processes throughout the reporting period. Through such engagement, Surge Initiative support aimed to anchor UNCT development and economic analysis (e.g. on LNOB, debt, austerity, fiscal space, transparency and accountability, and linkages with social spending) in relevant ESC rights obligations, for example, of AAAQ requirements, non-retrogression, maximum available resources and minimum core obligations. The analysis provided contributed to creating more inclusive development trajectories and economies, by addressing economic and other inequalities including through thorough LNOB analysis and advocacy for use of or for the development of disaggregated data, and human rights indicators, to inform development and economic results frameworks. For example:

In **ALBANIA**, with Surge Initiative support, OHCHR provided input into the process of developing the 2022-2026 CF. While anchoring the analysis in the 2019 UPR review, emphasis was placed on addressing issues related to income inequality, the need to expand fiscal space, notably for social spending, and successfully advocated for including concrete recommendations on how this can be achieved, for instance through specific measures aimed at reducing tax evasion and illicit financial flows. The Surge also advocated for strengthening the integration of a human rights- and gender- based approach across the analysis.

In reviewing the **ANGOLA** CCA, the OHCHR Regional Office for Southern Africa with the support of the Surge Initiative, provided contributions and human rights analysis on the relevant economic context where the country is implementing fiscal consolidation/austerity measures to reduce the debt vulnerabilities amid growing inequalities and poverty. Specifically, suggestions focused on how to integrate the 2019 UPR review, 2019 Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and 2018 Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recommendations in the economic analysis and way forward with emphasis on the debt situation, preserving the fiscal space for ESC rights.

The Surge Team supported efforts to integrate HRM's findings and outcomes for **EGYPT** concerning the rights to food, education, health and social protection. As a result, the CCA included analysis on the minimum core obligations concerning the rights to health and education as set in the Constitution, the budget linked to these rights and the importance to prevent retrogression with respect to these rights. It also includes analysis on debt and fiscal space and progressive taxation largely drawing on recommendations from the HRMs. This support built on a comprehensive HRBA training that the Surge Team and other OHCHR support staff had previously delivered to the RCO and UNCT.

In reviewing the **GHANA** CCA, the Surge Team underscored the need for analyses on national debt as the country was classified as being in high risk of debt distress by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), currently spending more than half of the domestically generated revenues on interest payments, which was crowding out social spending that is crucial to reducing poverty and inequality.

Similarly in contributing to the **MONGOLIA UNSDCF (2022)**, emphasis was placed on how to ensure a greater focus on inequalities and LNOB, including in the outcome areas relating to the economy and

meaningful participation. In this regard, advice was provided to include an analysis of budget allocations and expenditures, including for social and economic sectors, and taking into consideration the need to build back better and fairer. Emphasis was placed on the need to address corruption, tax reform (for progressive taxation on income and wealth), and called for the conduct of human rights impact assessments linked to economic policies and activities, including mining, and human rights budgeting linked to programme design.

Surge policy advice and support relevant to CCA and CF support included **training and other capacity-building support initiatives to UNCTs globally** (e.g. Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Myanmar, Niger, Haiti, Pacific, Saudi Arabia, Zambia). For instance, the Surge Team delivered a training for the **HAITI** UNCT focusing on the interlinkages between ESC rights and the SDGs, and providing practical exercises on how to apply a HRBA and use an LNOB lens in SDG analysis and programming. A similar training was delivered to the UNCT in **NIGER** upon RC request to strengthen the integration of a HRBA in the CCA and ensuing CF, including with a dedicated session on how to integrate relevant human rights-based macroeconomic analysis. This resulted in strengthened human rights-based analysis on inequalities, structural and economic vulnerabilities, and debt and public finances in view of a regressive fiscal regime. A similar focus on human rights-based macroeconomic analysis relevant to the CCA and CF's political economy analyses was delivered at trainings undertaken in, for example, **KENYA** and **SYRIA (2022)**. In collaboration with the Senior Human Rights Advisor (SHRA) for **Myanmar (2022)**, the Issue-Based Coalition on Human Rights and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) and the UNCT in Myanmar, the Surge Team facilitated a training on operationalizing HRBALNOB-GEWE, on multidimensional risks and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus for staff in the UNCT in Myanmar. The training was organized in the context of updating the CCA for Myanmar.

## **A.2 Advising on joint UN policy positions, including as relevant to the IFIs**

The Surge Initiative also maintained and progressively increased active engagement - in close collaboration with its UNCTs, RCOs and RCO and other economists, IFI and other partners - in contributing to UN developmental and economic positions and advocacy efforts to inform strategic national-level legal, budgetary and policy processes. For example:

In **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**, the Surge Team contributed analysis and options to a UN Position Paper on social protection fleshing out the human rights aspects of social protection and establishing the relevant links with the 2030 Agenda goals and targets, national SDG framework, as well as LNOB considerations.

Building on Surge efforts in **CAMBODIA** to develop a human rights-based economic strategy with a focus on macroeconomic priorities key for the progressive realization of ESC rights, the UNCT issued a public [information note](#) illustrating ways in which the UN in Cambodia has worked with the Government to reduce inequalities and protect ESC rights, underscoring the need for a “human rights economy that invests in people in general and in particular in livelihoods, workplace, social security, family life, [and] participation in cultural life.”

In the **CONGO**, the Surge Team contributed to the 2021-2026 UN Political Sustaining Peace Strategy, placing emphasis on the need to integrate a HRBA to economic reform, including measures that could place disproportionate burden on vulnerable people – for example in negotiations with the IMF on domestic resource mobilization for increasing social spending and investments - and to further analyse the drivers of risks arising from shrinking fiscal space.

The Surge Team accompanied the OHCHR Regional Office for Southern Africa in providing support to the efforts of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum in developing a Model Law

on Public Financial Management for **SOUTH AFRICA (2022)**. These efforts aimed to ensure that SADC national parliaments are enabled to conduct their legislative, budgetary, and oversight functions for public financial management in a way that is transparent, efficient, and responsive to the needs of SADC citizens. Written inputs reinforced the importance of ensuring that investment in social sectors is in line with human rights obligations and the agreed international and regional human rights benchmarks for national budgets. OHCHR recommended that the law considers that SADC States explore domestic resource mobilization options as a means of increasing fiscal space, including through progressive taxation that can be used for social spending.

In **TUNISIA (started in early 2022)**, in the context of ongoing negotiations of a future support programme with the IMF, OHCHR and the RCO collaborated on a UNCT position paper for engagement with the IMF. The paper provides suggestions on how to support a HRBA in future economic reforms, including by expanding the coverage of the social safety floor vertically by targeting the poor and the “missing middle” most likely to fall into poverty, and through meaningful public participation of all relevant stakeholders - including trade unions, employers, human rights, transparency and anti-corruption organizations - in the design and the regular review of reforms.

Surge Team support enabled the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission (HRMMU) in **UKRAINE** to assess the human rights implications of an IMF Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and to contribute to the formulation of a UNCT position paper on engagement with the IFIs. In February 2021, the Surge Team provided further support to the HRMMU on this through additional analysis on subsidy reforms relating to gas and heating and their impact on housing and social security rights for vulnerable groups in Ukraine - a condition of the SBA. This analysis included recommendations to the UNCT as well as the Government to ensure that all members of society are able to have essential levels of adequate housing, especially in terms of affordability and accessibility of utility services, and habitability of housing, without discrimination.

Furthermore, building on the budgetary analysis work undertaken in **ZIMBABWE (started in 2022)**, referred to below), the Surge Team is informing the Zimbabwe WASH financing strategy which strategy provides overall financing to the WASH sector and explores ways to close the finance gap and address inequities in WASH services delivery. OHCHR inputs focus on ensuring that financing in the WASH sector is anchored in human rights principles and call for increased public investments that better respond to the needs of groups at risk of being left behind.

### **A.3 Providing expert advice to national actors and national development strategies, including by supporting and undertaking human rights-based budgetary analyses**

As portrayed through various examples across this report, the Surge Initiative has been actively engaged, in close collaboration with its UNCTs and other partners, in reviewing, analysing and informing human rights contents and operational options relevant to strategic national legal, budgetary and policy socio-economic processes, in close collaboration with State and other national actors. Some examples of technical support include: a wage protection scheme reform (**BAHRAIN**); a draft Framework for Shock Responsive Social Protection, and the annual budget speech with specific focus on social spending and the informal sector (**CAMBODIA**); the second National Economic and Social Development Plan 2021-2025 (**GUINEA**); a national Social Protection Strategy (**LEBANON**); human rights-based budgeting (**MOLDOVA**); an LNOB analysis linked to the States Covid-19 response (**SYRIA**); and the annual budget draft law (**URUGUAY**).

Support to national actors is increasingly taking the shape of responding to direct requests for capacity-building and other training needs. For example, a training was delivered for the People’s Advocate of **ALBANIA**, the Institute of Statistics of Albania, and Ombudsperson of Kosovo on Agenda 2030 and Human Rights as well as a briefing on the 2030 Agenda, human rights, and reporting processes for a delegation from



**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**, which included a representative of the Institution of the Ombudsman of BiH. On 12 May 2022, the Surge Initiative collaborated with other OHCHR colleagues working on national institutions, treaty bodies, and data and indicators in providing capacity-building support to OHCHR's Regional Office for East Africa for a Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on the SDGs and human rights in **ETHIOPIA (in 2022)**. This joint endeavour by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, OHCHR and the Danish Institute for Human Rights brought together national authorities (e.g. Justice and Planning and Development Ministries, the Statistics Service, and relevant Standing Committees of the House of Peoples' Representatives) and other partners (e.g. the Kenya Human Rights Commission, UN agencies, and CSOs). The aim was to strengthen the Commission's capacity and operational understanding of its role, entry points and approaches to optimizing the critical linkages between the 2030 Agenda and human rights. A workshop entitled "Linkages between the 2030 Agenda and human rights, ES rights and COVID-19 response and recovery" was also organized by the Surge in response to a request from the NHRI of **SERBIA** (Protector of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia), in collaboration with the Human Rights Team at the RCO in Serbia. The workshop focused on sharing good practices and lessons learned in the relevant work of NHRIs and on identifying ways to strengthen the NHRI's work on monitoring and reporting on ES rights, including as linked to the 2030 Agenda and its principle of LNOB, and engagement in national policymaking and reporting, including the VNR. In **SUDAN**, the Surge Team delivered a training to Government officials on the role of public budgets in realizing ES rights and to advance on the 2030 Agenda. The objective of the training was to familiarize officials with a HRBA to public budgeting and to consolidate and expand the collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and other Government line-ministries and departments on a HRBA to planning and programming.

Engaging in or undertaking human rights-based budgetary analysis has also become one of the Surge's principal entry points, in view of one of its central objectives of expanding fiscal space for ESC rights and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and its pledge to LNOB. This stream of work has also become a common feature across most of the more recent Surge Initiative seeding-change projects (e.g. Chad, Jordan, Somalia, Ukraine), and has progressively become a more prominent stand-alone activity that is being used by the Surge Team to inform advocacy aimed at MS' obligations for the progressive realization of human rights (e.g. Cameroon, Kenya, Zimbabwe; Palestine).

So in **KENYA**, for example, the Surge Initiative supported (still ongoing) the work of the SHRA by undertaking a human rights-based analysis of the national budget for the [2021/2022](#) and then the [2022/2023](#) fiscal years to inform the ongoing CF process. These analyses support the implementation of recent 2020 UPR recommendations, looking into options to expand investment in social spending, examining how budget allocations impact upon the progressive realization of ESC rights and efforts to address inequalities and realize the SDGs in the country, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Building on this (end 2022), and in collaboration with the RCO economist, the SHRA team convened a meeting with the Parliamentary Caucus on SDGs to reinforce their capacity on human rights-based approaches to budgeting, discuss strategies towards ring-fencing social sector allocations at a time of shrinking fiscal space and risks of austerity measures, for example in view of the national-level Medium-Term Plan IV and related County Integrated Development Plans. The SHRA team is now (2023) also supporting county-level development and budget processes, to promote citizen participation through CSO and community participation to advocate for allocations to meet key development priorities.

Similarly, against a background of recession, austerity measures, and unsustainable debt levels in **ZIMBABWE**, the Surge supported (started in 2022, still ongoing) the work of the SHRA by undertaking a human rights-based analysis of the national budget allocations for the period of 2020/2021 with a specific focus on the rights to WASH to inform CSO and UNCT engagement in the country, including the update of the then ongoing CCA. The analysis looked at investments in the WASH sector and whether these guaranteed

the respective ESC rights. Following this analysis, increased Surge support provided support to the SHRA and the RCO economist in undertaking a follow-up human rights-based budget and expenditure analysis of the WASH sector to provide additional analysis on expenditure to assess the potential under-utilisation of resources in this sector. The planned analysis will provide practical policy recommendations that can inform State improvements of fiscal policy to better respond to the needs of poor and vulnerable groups in the WASH sector.

Substantial support was also provided to State actors during the outset and recovery from Covid-19. For example in **ZAMBIA**, the Surge Team, working alongside OHCHR's Regional Office for Southern Africa, engaged in the government-led Zambia's CRNA under the partnership framework bringing together the UN, the World Bank Group and the European Union. Surge substantively supported the Macroeconomic Impact Assessment group in assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Gross Domestic Product, inflation, revenues, domestic and foreign debt, public investments (i.e. social spending), and external variables like exports, trade balance, imports, external debt, and remittances. Surge efforts are also contributing to the Human Impact Assessment group discussion in the areas of living conditions (health, education, water, sanitation and hygiene), social protection, social inclusion, livelihoods, food security, and gender equality.

Similarly, in **CAMBODIA**, the Surge worked in collaboration with the OHCHR country office to provide human rights-based macroeconomic inputs for the country's socioeconomic recovery plan, within the framework of LNOB, incorporating a gender-sensitive perspective. Surge inputs identified the need for counter-cyclical measures to ensure minimum essential levels of the rights to health and social protection and the use of tax policies to generate maximum available resources, while highlighting the different impacts on workers in the informal or formal sectors. This work strengthened collaboration among members of the UNCT in addressing uneven development, and paved the way for joint strategic advocacy to expand fiscal space for the realization of ESC rights, especially for marginalized communities.

#### **A.4 Stepping up in-depth human rights analysis and evidence to inform country policy and programmatic shifts**

MPTF funding enabled the Surge Initiative to continue providing financial and technical support to seeding-change country projects in support of UNCT, State and other country efforts for human rights-based COVID-19 recovery and beyond. By May 2022, the Team had provided support to 54 of these projects. Drawing on the [SG's Our Common Agenda](#), the specific objectives of these projects are to support system-wide efforts to place human rights at the centre of socio-economic recovery and build-back better, including by advocating for economic and development policy shifts that counter rising inequalities, putting a spotlight on disadvantaged groups and advance investment in ESC rights, building a renewed social contract anchored in human rights and enabling an [economy that enhances human rights](#). For example:

In **CAMEROON** (started in 2020 and finalized in 2023), the Surge Team provided technical and financial support to OHCHR's Central Africa Regional Office to undertake an assessment of the right to health with a particular focus on maternal health. This work built on the UNCT's 2019/2020 LNOB analysis, as well as the 2019 concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights about the challenges faced by the State in effectively mobilizing the necessary domestic resources to address regional disparities and inequalities and the basic needs of the population, including the accessibility, availability and quality of health-care services by the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Together with the Ministries for Public Health and of Social Affairs, the National Institute of Statistics and Finance, the UNFPA and CSOs, and using a participatory and human rights-based methodology, a qualitative<sup>12</sup> and quantitative<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> 16 Focus Group Discussions, 280 key-informant interviews with women and adolescent girls.

<sup>13</sup> Questionnaires addressed to 23 local maternal health structures.

research was undertaken in two marginalised regions in the North and East of the country. This included a human rights-based budgetary analysis of the health sector. Through this research, the project identified: (i) the weaknesses and gaps related to the organization and supply of maternal health services in 23 structures of the 4-selected Emergency obstetric and neonatal care networks; (ii) the needs of women and girls of reproductive age, especially those at risk of being left behind; and (iii) the human, technical, material and financial needs of these health networks. The recommendations aimed at addressing these challenges placed a particular emphasis on women and girls of reproductive age who are especially at risk of being left behind, including women suffering from fistula, women living with HIV, IDP or refugee women, women living in extreme poverty and indigenous women.

Another project focused on the violent conflicts between herders and farmers in **CHAD** (started in 2021 but continued in 2022) due to difficult access to and management of natural resources (in particular land and water), which has been further exacerbated by the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and climate change. Against this background and in view of various HRMs recommendations<sup>14</sup> as well as the government's commitment to the 2030 Agenda,<sup>15</sup> support was provided to conduct a human rights-based root cause analysis of these conflicts, using the right to food as the analytical framework, as relevant to socio-cultural, judicial, budgetary and other structural issues. Focus group and individual consultations were held with 44 rights-holders, local authorities, CSOs, religious and traditional leaders, and other stakeholders in Logone Oriental and Guéra provinces. The assessment also included a human rights-based budgetary analysis of allocations and expenditures of the Ministries of agriculture, livestock, water and environment from 2017 to 2020. The analysis identified legal<sup>16</sup> and structural<sup>17</sup> obstacles to the accessibility by both herders and farmers of agricultural resources, which were further hindered by the State's shortcomings in fulfilling its obligation to fulfil,<sup>18</sup> respect<sup>19</sup> and to protect<sup>20</sup> the right to food and to make use of the maximum available resources. Recommendations of the study call for legal reform related to land and property management and a higher and more effective investment by the State into the agriculture, livestock, water and environment sectors. The majority of the principal recommendations of the analysis were reflected in the final outcomes adopted at the National Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue held in August.<sup>21</sup>

In a context marked by high vulnerabilities suffered by large groups of the population, a Surge project in **GUINEA BISSAU (2022)** succeeded in supporting a LNOB approach in the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) presented by the country. In collaboration with the State as well as the RCO, UNDP, UNICEF, and FAO, OHCHR supported the organisation of 9 Government-led consultations across the country. The consultations ensured representation and inclusive participation from a varied range of stakeholders including

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<sup>14</sup> These challenges and concerns were raised by CESC in its Chad review in 2009 (E/C.12/TCD/CO/3). Similarly CERD's review in 2013 also made specific recommendations on addressing tensions between these two groups (CERD/C/TCD/CO/16-18). Finally the most recent 2021 UPR report recommended strengthening the development of the rural sector as well as food security, combatting social inequalities and taking the necessary measures to guarantee inclusive and sustainable economic development, particularly for the most vulnerable.

<sup>15</sup> Particular reference is made to SDGs 1.4, 2.3, 5.1, 5a, 10, and 16.

<sup>16</sup> The national framework fell short of translating the State's human rights obligations relevant to the right to food, and did not clarify the rights of either the herders or the farmers in accessing natural resources related to their livelihoods.

<sup>17</sup> For example high price variations and impact of climate change on the harvests due to drought or floods.

<sup>18</sup> As per art. 2 of the ICESCR- e.g. budgetary allocations and investments for livestock, water, environment, are limited and the execution rates are also very low.

<sup>19</sup> For example, allegations of corruption and of local authorities sidelining one party to the conflict providing them impunity.

<sup>20</sup> For example, small farmers not being protected from land-grabbing by agro-businessmen or by new actors such as urban elites.

<sup>21</sup> Chad has been in a political transition since April 2021 when late President Idriss Deby was killed and his son Mahamat Deby took over to head a Military Transitional Committee and a civilian Government appointed by him in May 2021. The Transitional Government adopted in July 2022 a *roadmap for the transition* that includes several milestones: (1) Holding of a national inclusive dialogue; (2) Drafting and adoption of a new constitution; (3) Organization of a Constitutional referendum; (4) Legal reform; and (5) Holding general elections. During the National Inclusive Dialogue, issues relating to human rights, rule of law and democracy will be discussed. OHCHR Office in Chad is currently supporting the Organizing Committee of the National Inclusive Dialogue and its sub-committees to ensure that human rights are mainstreamed throughout the dialogue.

civil servants, the private sector, traditional and religious leaders, professional and community-based organisations, human rights organizations, and most importantly, representatives of most disadvantaged groups. As a result, stakeholders, including groups left behind, were able to collectively identify priority SDGs. A summary of the discussions was annexed to the State's VNR report with some of the principal findings also integrated in its main content. The initiative is being complemented by a HRB-budgetary analysis undertaken jointly with the RCO economist, and will examine public spending on health, education, and governance, the impact of debt servicing on GB's ability to offer quality public services, thereby exploring options for expanding fiscal space. Both products will be critical to inform the upcoming National Development Plan, the State's first report to the CESC, as well as the UN's CCA.

In **JORDAN** (started in 2021 but continued in 2022), the SHRA and the Surge Initiative collaborated with the UN and the Jordan Economic and Social Council (JESC), and contributed to discussions to place people at the centre of public finance policies through engagement with various state and non-state stakeholders including through the development of a [Policy brief on “Domestic revenue collection- a human rights-based approach to tackling inequalities”](#). The policy brief highlights the importance of mobilizing the necessary resources to invest in ESC rights, and to reposition public expenditure to prioritize people's needs and rights. It seeks to respond to four key questions: 1. whether Jordan is raising enough revenue to cover SDG financing needs in pace with economic growth, 2. to what extent the tax system is non-discriminatory and addresses inequalities; 3. to what extent the tax system provides for transparency, participation and accountability; and 4. whether Jordan is investing adequately in the realisation of human rights. The policy brief is timely to support the current Governmental Economic, Political and Administrative reform processes and it may also be seen as a promising practice in that it established new partnerships for OHCHR with the UN and the RCO economist, but also between the JESC and the UN through the establishment of an MOU. It also supported joint UNCT analysis and advocacy placing human beings and rights at the centre of economic policy. This project follows up on relevant human rights recommendations of the UPR, CEDAW, CRC, CPRD and CAT related to human rights-based budget allocations and financing, as well as analysis of Jordan's 2021 CCA which underscored the urgent need for reforms and a more inclusive approach to achieve the right to education, work, and social protection, amongst others.

The Surge Team supported the UN HRA's team and a network of 24 community-based Social Justice Centres in **KENYA**, in undertaking a human rights assessment to identify the extent of inequality in accessing safe drinking water in informal settlements in Nairobi. This project was directly linked to SDG 6 as well as recommendations of the UPR<sup>i</sup> and other HRMs, including the country visit by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation in 2015.<sup>ii</sup> Under this project, 184 household surveys were carried out with inter-active questionnaires on mobile phones. Focus group discussions in 24 informal settlements and communities in Nairobi, Kisumu and Coastal regions were also conducted. The data was complemented with other sources and statistical information, including the assessment of budgetary allocations to the water sector and a review of previous financial years' budgets. The main findings and recommendations of the study were presented in an [infographic report](#), a [web story](#), and a [short film](#) by the Social Justice Centres. Evidence-based data helped amplify the voices of grassroots networks and joint civil society advocacy on gaps in the enjoyment of the right to water, as the country confronted the emerging COVID-19 crisis and centrality of the right to water to prevention. The partnership with the Social Justice Centres, whose members were trained in survey methods and served as enumerators, proved to be crucial to the empowerment of rights holders in shaping the implementation of SDG 6 at the grassroots level. In addition, the findings informed the UNCT's analysis and engagement for the implementation of the UN Development Assistance Framework's outcome on water in relation to the response to COVID-19.

With the support of further funding from the Surge Initiative, the UN HRA in **KENYA** subsequently partnered with indigenous human rights defenders to document the human rights dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis in indigenous communities, with a focus on the situation of indigenous women who face multiple forms of



discrimination. Indigenous communities have historically been left behind in Kenya, facing deep inequalities, with poorer socio-economic indicators in comparison to other population groups in Kenya, as highlighted in observations and recommendations of the UPR and other HRMs (e.g. CESCER, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and CEDAW).<sup>iii</sup> The scoping initiative worked with 49 indigenous human rights defenders from 13 indigenous groups, who surveyed 1,334 households in 512 villages and held over 70 focus group discussions with women, youth, older persons, and persons with disabilities. The [resulting analysis](#) built a compelling case to reinforce indigenous people's inclusion in social protection programmes and targeted responses to address inequalities in the rights to education and health, and increased gender-based violence (including harmful traditional practices). The outcome of the analysis was used as a basis by OHCHR to work with the UNCT to address the identified gaps through the CF work plan and the COVID-19 socio-economic response. The project has also led to the establishment of an informal network of indigenous human rights defenders across the seven counties.

A Surge project in **LAO PDR (2022)** - led by the OHCHR South East Asia Regional Office, in collaboration with the RCO - focused on large-scale hydropower and transport infrastructure projects and their impact on the environment, and ESC rights and in particular the most vulnerable. The analysis proposes a number of policy recommendations and suggests areas for additional research, including on legislative, contracts and financing analysis as well as public participation. Given the possible deterioration of the economic and fiscal situation, and a potential debt renegotiation in the close horizon in 2023, OHCHR and the RCO are committed to following-up on this work in 2023. Preliminary findings of the assessment were recently presented to the UNCT and initial discussions held with the World Bank.

Through advice and additional resources provided by the Surge Initiative, the UN HRA and her team in **MOLDOVA** were able to make a significant contribution towards ensuring that the [UNCT's SERP](#) applies a human rights-based approach, capitalising on existing recommendations from the HRMs and focusing on the situation of numerous 'at-risk groups' experiencing marginalization and discrimination during and post-Covid. Drawing on specific OHCHR guidance on a HRBA to social and economic impacts of COVID-19, and the initial needs assessment conducted among 52 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), members of the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights,<sup>iv</sup> [the analysis](#) identified specific barriers faced by disadvantaged groups and provided policy suggestions on HRBAs to tackle these in the emergency and recovery phases. The analyses generated significant donor interest and led to strengthened UN system-wide collaboration in support of vulnerable groups. In concrete terms, the work resulted in the development of three joint UN projects in 2020, led by UN Women, ILO, UNDP, IOM, and UNICEF, all with considerable contribution from the UN HRA and her team in the design and implementation stages. In conjunction with this work, UN HRA and her team also developed and widely distributed nine specific guidance and information materials, including on the [impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities](#), the [role of social protection in the COVID-19 response](#), [human rights-compliant crisis communications](#), [labour rights in the context of COVID-19](#), the [right to the highest attainable standard of health](#), and a [policy brief on older persons in the context of COVID-19](#). All of these policy briefs were translated into Russian to ensure access to representatives of ethno-linguistic minorities. Four guidance documents were also put into an easy-to-read format. Two guidance documents were made available in the Braille language. Finally, the [UNCT's SERP](#) benefited from the development of a number of contextualized human rights indicators focusing on the rights to health, education, social security, water, sanitation, adequate housing, work and related labour rights, access to information, participation, freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse, and freedom of expression and movement. These indicators were used for the development of a sociological survey (involving over 1,000 participants) assessing the perception of rights-holders on the impact of COVID-19 on their human rights. As a booster to the phone survey, an in-person survey with Roma respondents was conducted to make sure that the survey was properly representative of the Roma population, as one of the most vulnerable groups. Additionally, a targeted survey on the conditions in the Transnistria region (over 300 participants) provided essential information



on the human rights impact of COVID-19 in the region, to further shape advocacy and action to advance human rights during and following the pandemic, especially of vulnerable groups.

Policymakers in **SERBIA** (started in 2021 but continued in 2022) have a [new tool](#) at their disposal to help them better integrate actions needed to fulfill the 2030 Agenda's LNOB promise in Government's policy- and decision-making. In response to a request from the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, the Human Rights Advisor (HRA) in Serbia, supported by the Surge Initiative, led the development of a guidance tool on LNOB through a highly inclusive and participatory drafting and validation process. The line ministry, the Public Policy Secretariat, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, members of the National Convention on the European Union (over 200 CSOs) and academia contributed to the drafting of the tool, tailored specifically to the Serbian policymaking environment. The tool provides clear guidelines on how to understand and apply HRBA and LNOB principles in the development of national/local legislative and strategic acts. It looks at each stage of the drafting process and provides concrete advice on how to ensure that the most marginalized and excluded groups are identified, recognized, and meaningfully involved, including disadvantaged women and girls. To make it as operational as possible, the tool includes a tailor-made step-by-step approach to applying LNOB in the various stages of policymaking as well as a set of checklists that can support the identification of vulnerable groups, applying the LNOB principle when forming relevant working groups and conducting consultations, when collecting and analyzing data (with a checklist of possible sources of information, including regional and international human rights mechanisms) etc. Since its finalization in March 2022, the tool has been included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the new Antidiscrimination Strategy and is expected to be used throughout the development of the National Human Rights Strategy. More generally, any actors adopting legislative, strategic, and planning acts at all levels, including local self-governments, civil sector and experts from the academic community, are expected to benefit from the tool. The Tool for the Introduction of the "Leave No One Behind" principle into legislative and strategic acts of the Republic of Serbia, was launched in September 2022.

The development of this tool was preceded by previous Surge-funded and Surge supported work enabling the UN HRA and his team in the RCO to step up analysis on the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups, leading to the examination of the situation of ten specific marginalised or at-risk groups: [workers](#) (with an emphasis on those employed in the informal economy); [Roma](#); [persons with disabilities](#); [homeless persons](#); [youth](#); [LGBTI persons](#); [persons living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\)](#); [persons deprived of liberty](#); [human rights defenders](#); and [journalists and media workers](#) (LNOB analysis), as well as a mapping of 702 [substandard Roma settlements](#) encompassing 167,975 inhabitants. This mapping and the other targeted studies became an integral part of the UN COVID-19 response and emergency measures as well as longer-term recovery strategies. For example, evidence and data collected on the living conditions in the Roma settlements led to practical recommendations on critical ESC rights issues, such as access to safe water, sanitation, basic income and electricity, drawing on the HRM recommendations and guidance, assisting efforts by local governments to remove the obstacles faced by the Roma people in accessing basic services and also informed the work of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government.

A Surge project in **SOUTH AFRICA (2022)** led to the finalisation of an advocacy brief, entitled 'An intersectional approach to socio-economic data in Southern Africa: Leveraging data to Leave No One Behind'. The brief - informed by the results of surveys administered to National Statistical Offices – is anchored in the premise that to properly understand the relationship between ESC rights and the SDGs from a LNOB perspective, disaggregated data is essential. It focuses on Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa with a view to: (i) understand the existing socio-economic data landscapes in the three countries; (ii) illustrate some of the gaps in existing socio-economic data which have been identified by the Committee on ESC rights (CESCR); (iii) outline a HRBA to data for the countries in focus; and (iv) make recommendations as to how existing socio-economic data can be analysed in a manner which reveals the extent of intersectional forms of

disadvantage and discrimination. Ultimately its aims is to support States in meeting their human rights obligations and enable the progressive realisation of ESC rights with recommendations targeting NSOs; NHRIs, CSOs, National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up, UN and international organisations.

In **URUGUAY (2022)**, based on an analysis of public available data, the 2022 project contributed ESC rights indicators to the **MIRADOR DESCA** on Afro populations in Uruguay, to strengthen monitoring of these rights for these populations. Mirador, is a platform established jointly by the NHRI, the National University and OHCHR to monitor human rights in Uruguay. The project also enabled the undertaking of a qualitative report on existing gaps in the available data concerning ESC rights of Afro-Uruguayans and an analysis of the enjoyment of their ESC rights, with a particular focus on women, older persons and others at risk of being left behind. The findings of the assessment were presented to the NHRI and representatives from the Ministry of Social Development with the aim of advocating for enhanced data on Afro-Uruguayans and inform public policies. They have also been used to inform an upcoming visit in March 2023 of the Working Group on Afrodescendants, and will contribute to the implementation of the National Plan for Racial Equity and Afrodescendants by the Consejo Consultivo Nacional de Equidad Racial Étnico y Afrodescendencia.

## **B. Knowledge Management, including through compiling promising practices and tools**

Throughout the reporting period, the Surge Initiative dedicated special efforts and capacities at integrating a knowledge management component in its work, with particular emphasis on documenting its work and country experiences including as a means for cross-fertilising learning within OHCHR and the broader UN development system.

In terms of documentation and reporting, the Surge Initiative issues:

- Quarterly **newsletters** presenting highlights of Surge Initiative work across its various areas of engagement (eight issued between January 2021 and end 2022). These newsletters are semi-public documents that are distributed to the Office's main partners – CSOs, UN agencies, some donors and partner MS;
- Monthly **E-con blogs** (36 issued between January 2021 and end 2022). These are internal documents circulated amongst OHCHR staff;
- Country Snapshots of promising Surge engagement (5 issued since January 2021). Like the newsletters, these are also semi-public documents which have been distributed, as relevant, with some partners including CSOs, UN agencies, some donors and partner MS;
- Promising practice **tool-boxes** on work carried out in Kenya, (2), **Moldova and Serbia** reflecting 'how' Surge engagement is undertaken, with what capacity, expertise, tools and methodology, reflecting particular challenges encountered and specific strategies adopted to overcome these, as well as lessons learned and impact (four drafts have been finalized) Similar to the E-con blogs, these tools are intended for internal use with circulation limited to OHCHR staff but informing engagement with the UN and other partners;
- A comprehensive report 'Seeding Change for a Human Rights Economy' – internal OHCHR document shared with the MPTF - outlining examples of work in over 30 countries, and presenting the principal content of this good practice document in a public report for **ECOSOC**. A second ECOSOC report was issued in **September 2022 (ECOSOC report 2022 E/2022/65)**;
- The Surge Initiative has developed an internal OHCHR **intranet** which hosts all Surge/Surge-related documentation that are accessible to all OHCHR staff at Headquarters and at the country level; and
- The Surge is now featured in the **OHCHR website**.

The Surge has embarked on the development of a **COMPARATIVE NOTE ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND FISCAL POLICIES THAT ANALYSES AND SHARES EXPERIENCES (2022)** in the Latin

American and Caribbean region. The study – which came about following the findings of a previous Surge project in Paraguay that had identified low levels of taxation as a reason behind the gaps in social protection coverage - aims at supporting country engagement in operationalizing the global call of the SG to “building back better” in the area of social protection, including through the promotion of human rights-based fiscal policies. This study has already provided key findings on the relationship between low coverage of social protection and low levels of taxation, examples of taxation policies in the region that led to higher social protection coverage and recommendations on human rights-based fiscal policies, including progressive taxation. In its next stage, the project aims at working closely with UNCTs around the region to deliver trainings on human rights based fiscal policies, to validate the results of the study, establish closer working relationships with partners on the ground, including ECLAC, UNDP, UNICEF and ILO, and aim for strengthened coordinated UNCT advocacy on human rights based fiscal policies as a tool to advance social protection programmes’ reach and effectiveness.

The Surge Initiative continued work on developing a practical guidance to support countries move towards a **HRBA TO UHC (2022)** (see the Surge Initiative’s 2021 annual and 2022 progress report for further information). The first deliverable of this project - an information sheet on the HRBA to UHC will soon become publicly available. The second deliverable - a policy brief for health policy- and decision-makers on the implications of a HRBA to the implementation of UHC - which will be based on good practice country examples – will be finalised by mid-2023. An online call for inputs seeks direct input on country examples and experiences. Both deliverables will become part of the Surge Initiative’s toolbox. OHCHR is planning various follow-up activities to disseminate both tools and explore strategic entry points to inform UHC implementation at the country-level. These tools will be part of OHCHR’s contribution to the High-Level Meeting on universal health coverage taking place in September 2023.

### III.A. Qualitative Assessment: Lessons Learned

With a view to progress, evolve and remain relevant to the needs of the sustained complex global context, the Surge Initiative has continued to consolidate its learning-base and expertise, focusing on the lessons it learns from its own engagement as well as through cross-fertilisation with other UN and other partners and stakeholders. In the little over two years of work covered in this report, the lessons essentially reinforce a common indicator that has remained pertinent throughout - the **relevance, added-value and need of the Surge Initiative and its human rights-based economic expertise**. Linked to this are a number of other important learnings and take-aways to take stock of:

- Through its team of ESC rights, sustainable development and economy specialists, the Surge Team continues to **fill an important and long-standing gap to better link human rights with economics and development practice**, by contributing to breaking these silos and demonstrating the value of including human rights in development and economic spheres. In so doing, it continues to derive its normative and authoritative guidance from key recommendations of UN HRMs on international ESC rights obligations. These efforts have seen a culmination in 2022 (efforts still ongoing) as OHCHR launched its [concept of a human rights economy](#) and has embarked in substantial global and country-level advocacy efforts to more prominently entrench and inform, what OHCHR believes to be, critical human rights-anchored changes to current economic policy and practice, including in collaboration with the UN system. Country work aimed at operationalising this concept is also informing these important discussions, for example, at the Human Rights Council, with both MS and key CSOs, academics and experts now also referring to the need for human rights economy related-efforts and shifts to address global challenges.

- Linked to this - despite being an essential lever to realising the 2030 Agenda, **key international human rights obligations are still not consistently leveraged in un socio-economic analysis and work at the country level, and need to be better utilized**. By continuing in its trajectory of strengthened in-country and regional work, the

Surge Initiative continues to fill this critical gap, ensuring that key human rights standards - such as meeting ‘minimum essential levels’ and allocating the ‘maximum available resources’ for the ‘progressive realization of economic and social rights’, as well as the immediate obligations to eliminate discrimination and avoid retrogressive measures – are better utilized and integrated in economic and development policy-making.

- While several UN entities are providing critical advice on economic issues, **OHCHR has the unique normative mandate to advise on the integration of human rights into states’ macroeconomic strategies and policies** as well as public policies on health, social protection, housing and other ESC rights. The value-add of Surge specialized expertise linking human rights with economic policy making, is evidenced by the continuing increase in demand for Surge expert support across all UN development processes. This expertise remains an essential complement to the UN human rights country capacity in supporting governments with practical and operational advice on human rights-based macro-economic interventions for post-COVID-19 recovery and beyond, LNOB.

- The Surge’s approach of working in a collaborative manner in partnership with key UN, State and other stakeholders has remained at the core of its overall strategy, based on an entrenched understanding that investing in **collaborative and mutually-reinforcing partnerships is essential** for achieving the human rights changes aimed at. Maintaining such constructive synergies with all partners and stakeholders is also fully in line with the true spirit of SDG 17 - joint efforts lead to more sustainable and comprehensive solutions. At the same time, **Surge work has also been critical for establishing new partnerships** - for example for OHCHR with RCOs and RCO economists, as well as for the UN family to engage with non-traditional partners, such as the establishment of an MoU in Jordan between the UNCT and the States Economic and Social Council.

- One of the principal reasons at the basis of the establishment of the Surge Initiative was to recalibrate OHCHR work and focus from a more targeted civil and political rights (CP rights) engagement to one that is more comprehensive, thereby bringing ESC rights on a par with CP rights. While this has remained the approach throughout the reporting period, Surge work and concrete evidence through country and regional projects has also reaffirmed and re-entrenched the essential **interconnectedness and inseparability of ESC rights from CP rights**, and the significance of this indivisibility for sustainable development as well as stability and peace, thereby also underscoring the critical link to prevention.

- And yet, there is still a real **need to sustain system-wide efforts to operationalise ESC rights in CCA/CFs**. An inter-agency review on levels of human rights integration into CCA and CFs developed from January 2019 to mid-2021 indicated that CCAs’ analyses on the political economy insufficiently integrate relevant human rights obligations. Similarly, only 22 percent of CFs include outcomes and outputs that thoroughly connect human rights obligations and recommendations from the human rights mechanisms and ILO supervisory bodies with economic policy advice and programmatic work.<sup>22</sup> The review highlighted country examples where Surge work had impact, but also underscored the importance that specialized human rights capacities be sustained and provided space for, to ensure that socio-economic development challenges, including in the area of health, poverty, adequate food, clean water and sanitation, education, and employment, be informed by human rights obligations and recommendations from country reviews by the UN human rights mechanisms or ILO standards and supervisory body comments.

- The Surge has continued **prioritising engagement with rights holders as a critical means for sustainable recovery**. The approach of inclusion, empowerment and participation of local actors and grass roots communities is not only the right thing to do from a human rights-based perspective, but it is strategic -

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<sup>22</sup> Preliminary findings of ongoing CCA/UNSDCF review.

progressive change can only be sustainable when we mobilise rights-holders and social movements, when our work and objectives enjoy the buy-in and engagement of local partners.

- By focusing consistently across country engagement on groups who are disadvantaged and left behind, the Surge Initiative foregrounds the concerns of rights-holders in policy formulation and planning – making its work wholly evidence-based - thereby also contributing to empowering rights holders and contributing to the building of trust between rights-holders and duty bearers. In this manner, promoting the human rights of the most left behind in a concrete and participatory manner, especially in relation to saving lives and livelihoods, is also an **effective prevention strategy** for political unrest and conflict, and a critical contribution to a renewed social contract anchored in human rights. Surge analysis and inputs to UN RMRs, for example, have been of real added value to the system’s analytical risk considerations of country and regional situations, for example, by placing attention to the potential risks posed by IMF credit facilities and austerity measures, given their potential impact on increased inflation, debt vulnerabilities and ultimately on the State’s ability to fulfil their minimum core human rights obligations and progressive realization of ESC rights.

- Ultimately, the establishment of the Surge Initiative was **particularly timely and relevant** - given the onset of Covid-19 at the beginning of its establishment and then the continuing global socio-economic crises. This led to the realization that there was a real and urgent need to re-calibrate the (lack of) priority all stakeholders had, until then, given to allocating the necessary investment and prioritization of fulfilling ESC rights including through appropriate human rights-based development and economic policies.

- The Surge has also been **especially cost-effective**. As seen from this report, there has been substantial success and impact in the Surge’s strategy: using, though adapting, existing resources (i.e. OHCHR’s ESC rights and sustainable development experts) and adding a small team of economists to establish geographical Surge trios, and ensuring that these trios work together in a manner that is wholly country-facing and in partnership with all UN, State and other stakeholders. This strategy has broken silos both within OHCHR and across the UN system and with partners, providing clear evidence of the success of adopting a whole-of-systems approach.

### III.B. Qualitative Assessment: Partnerships

Maintaining and strengthening, as well as establishing new partnerships, with development and economic UN, State and non-State actors, has been a sustained priority throughout the reporting period. Within the UN system, particular emphasis was placed with establishing strategic engagement with RCO and other economists, although strengthened relations with individual UN agencies, programmes and funds at both the country and global levels has also progressively increased as indicated throughout the report (e.g. with UNDP, ILO, and UNCTs more broadly). Similarly and as shown throughout this report (e.g. UNCT policy brief in Jordan; budget analysis in Zimbabwe; contribution to the CRNA in Zambia; etc.), strategic engagement has been reinforced with the UNDS more broadly and particularly with UNCTs, especially through the provision of human rights analysis and guidance on human rights norms and standards, including in operationalizing the findings and recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms. This was done primarily with the aim to providing critical ESC rights advice to States and international financial institutions on economic and development policy making. For example, under the coordination of OHCHR and in collaboration with 11 other UN entities, notably DCO, DESA, ILO, OCHA, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO, the UN Interagency Network on Human Rights, Leave No One Behind, and Sustainable Development completed a review on levels of integration of human rights, LNOB and gender in 84 CCAs and UNSDCFs developed between the beginning of 2019 and mid-2021. The assessment was guided by human rights requirements in UN policy. The review is one of the [system-wide strategic interventions of the UN Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights](#). Three years into the UN development system reform, the review recommended stepping up human rights ambition in the way the UN development system



integrates human rights into its analysis and programming. It provides an important baseline of what is working well and less well, capturing lessons learned and examples of promising practices, key challenges, and highlighting areas of improvement. The review report also establishes a set of practical recommendations to support RCOs and UNCTs. Since then the Network – under OHCHR lead and coordination – also developed a [checklist and tool on integrating human rights, Leave No One Behind, and gender equality and women's empowerment in CCA and CF. Support has also taken the form of training and capacity-building efforts to UNCTs \(as described above e.g. in Niger\) and the UNDS more broadly. For example, in 2022](#), the Surge Initiative contributed to a refresher course on human rights and HRBA in programming for staff of the RCOs in Europe and Central Asia. The activity marked a first and was lauded as a good practice to be considered for replication in other regions. Organized by DCO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in partnership with OHCHR, the activity brought together 21 staff from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. Sessions focused on (1) an introduction to human rights and the work of and engagement with human rights mechanisms and (2) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights. Emphasis was also placed on presenting the concept of a human rights economy.

Since its inception, the Surge held strategic consultations with 61 RCO economists, and in many instances, have initiated collaboration for joint work. At the global level, the Surge Initiative economists are members of and attend monthly meetings of the **UN Economists Network**, wherein they have been contributing human rights-based analysis to global economic trends and sustainable development including on innovative finance, the digital or the circular economy. At the country level, in Ecuador for example, the Surge economist for the Americas joins the Ecuador UN Economists Network alongside the RCO Economist on a monthly basis, contributing a human rights perspective to discussions on economic and fiscal policies and for the production of quarterly bulletins with analysis on these issues. Furthermore, the Surge Team recently engaged with the DCO Regional Economic Affairs Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region as well as 10 RCO economists from the region notably Argentina, Honduras, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Guyana, Uruguay, Barbados, Jamaica, and Venezuela. Similarly, in the Asia Pacific (AP) region, the Surge Lead Economist, in collaboration with OHCHR's South East Asia Regional Office's economist, held a strategic discussion with 17 RCO economists within the region during a retreat organized by DCO. The discussions underscored the importance of integrating human rights based macroeconomic analysis for transformative economies, and mapped opportunities to enhance collaboration between the Surge and RCO economists. RCO economists who are partners of the Surge Initiative in two of its country-based seeding-change projects, highlighted the value-add of collaborating with the Surge Team, including for the development of integrated and evidence-based human rights economic analysis. These initiatives are aimed to build and further strengthen relations with RCO economists and to stimulate future substantive collaboration in line with UN commitments made under the Secretary General's Call to Action for Human Rights.

Engagement with RCO and UN economists was further strengthened following the organisation by OHCHR, in collaboration with DCO, UN Women, and the ILO, of a three-day [workshop, "Operationalising the New Social Contract at the Country Level: Sharing Experiences of Integrating UN Values for Transformative Economic Change"](#) – which brought together UN economists from OHCHR, ILO, UN Women, UNICEF, UNRISD, UNDP, and DCO, to brainstorm and reflect on how the UN's human rights normative standards can be leveraged in advising macroeconomics so that COVID-19 recovery can address inequalities, reverse chronic underinvestment in public services, and bring transformative, inclusive, and sustainable economies country strategies and tools, including on labour, social protection, decent work, gender equality, and the environment. In addition, The Surge Team, together with the Development Coordination Regional Office (DCO) for Africa, organised two webinars for all RCO economists across Africa in June and October to discuss the added value of a human rights based approach to economics and policy advice that can help realise the SDGs.

The Surge Team has also been actively engaged in establishing and building networks with **prominent economists, academics and other stakeholders** - key to ongoing economic discussion globally (e.g. Gayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Mariana Mazzucato, Professor, Economics of Innovation and Public Value, University College London and the IMF), thereby also contributing to critical **global advocacy processes** relevant to merging the interlinkages between human rights, development and economics. The aim is to further conceptualise and operationalise OHCHR's global advocacy efforts for human rights-anchored transformations of today's economic policies and analysis for sustainable and more inclusive development. For example, the Surge Initiative contributed substantive inputs to the IMF's strategy to mainstream gender, noting that from a human rights point of view, gender inequality is macro-critical because "it affects and has the potential to erode the core contents of rights, economic stability and/or social stability."

Outside the UN system, the Surge and the [Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights](#) have entered a cooperation agreement, with the RWI supporting in growing the Surge Initiative to combat inequalities in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond by expanding partnerships, outreach and visibility of the Surge work and its significance. The partnership places focus on outreach efforts, including with academics and universities. More recently, the Surge Initiative also signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing a formal working partnerships with the [Institute on Race, Power, and Political Economy](#) of the NY New School, reinforcing the Surge's research and analytical capacity, and increasing its capacity and outreach to academics, research institutes and other key stakeholders.

#### **IV. Challenges**

Whereas there is undisputed evidence of the added-value of the specialized expertise that the Surge continues to inject in UN work towards contributing to inclusive and sustainable development at the country level, its **success and impact goes beyond its own capacity to deliver and engage** – ultimately the onus remains with duty-bearers to respect and fulfil their human rights obligations, and the ability of key stakeholders such as the UN system to fully implement its human rights-mandate and to leverage entry points strategically to inform the desired changes for a new social contract. The extent to which Surge analytical inputs and operational advice have been integrated into UN country responses and recovery plans has relied on RC and UNCT openness and ability to integrate human rights in UN development and economic analysis and programs. This was a risk identified when the project was conceived and remains altogether relevant today.

The Surge Initiative's strategy to mitigate this reality continues to be that of **investing and building-in strategic outreach and partnerships**, thereby gathering the momentum and support required to inform and influence the understanding and buy-in by key stakeholders. The Surge's approach to obtain such buy-in continues to be that of being available and accessible at the various levels at Headquarters and at the regional and country levels, and showing, through **concrete and specialised engagement** and operational support, accompaniment and direct involvement, how the work of the **Surge has added-value and is useful in addressing critical gaps needed for the intended changes**.

For example in **Kenya**, the Surge Initiative has since its inception, provided financial and technical support, including through three seeding-change projects (on access to water in informal settlements, on the impact of Covid on indigenous peoples, and on human rights-based budgets analyses of the national 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 budgets). This continued support and engagement enabled the contribution by the SHRA to essential and comprehensive human rights analysis that informed critical UNCT advocacy positions and processes (e.g. CCAs and CFs) as well national stakeholder efforts (e.g. for the Voluntary National Review and the UPR process). In turn, this created a more robust enabling space for the SHRA with the various stakeholders, including the RC, the RCO and the RCO economist, as well as State Parliamentarians, the NHRI

and Statistical Office, civil society more broadly and other stakeholders including donors, allowing inroads to innovative and transformative work. So for example, last December 2022, building on the human rights-based analysis of the 2022/2023 national budget - which examined social sector allocations and expenditure trends in recent financial years, in collaboration with the RCO economist – the SHRA team convened a dialogue with the Parliamentary Caucus on SDGs to reinforce their capacity on human rights-based approaches to budgeting, discuss strategies towards ring-fencing social sector allocations at a time of shrinking fiscal space and risks of austerity measures affecting ESC rights and the achievement of the SDGs. This with a view to informing the upcoming budget, as well as the national-level Medium-Term Plan IV and related County Integrated Development Plans.

Another **key challenge has been that of having sufficient and stable funding**. The Surge Initiative continues to be funded from various donors, though in an ad hoc manner. Despite its unequivocal success and impact at various levels, and despite continued efforts at fund-raising and keeping donors informed of the work of the Surge, the Surge Initiative does not yet have predictable and sufficient funding and has so far been working on an annual planning cycle. Commitments for predictable multi-year funding would allow the Surge to, at a minimum, allow it to maintain its engagement at the current status quo, but more importantly to scale up to an ideal and optimum potential level, including for more longer-term, sustainable and therefore impactful planning. This would enable the Surge Team to be more strategic, better able to accompany its partners to see work through the various stages, and beyond the current approach of injecting inception/seeding-change support. To this end, the Surge leadership continues to prioritise efforts at institutionalizing Surge capacity, including through continuous resource mobilization efforts - both internally within OHCHR and with donors and funds. The strategy is also for all Surge engagement and support to be followed-up by engagement with donors bilaterally at the country level. Success has been seen on a number of occasions already, for example as described in this report, with Surge work undertaken in collaboration with OHCHR Chad, Cambodia and Moldova resulting in funding by donors for follow-up work. Nonetheless, the aim at the broader and global level, is to transform the Surge Initiative into a core UN entity and a standing source of support for the UNDS as a whole, supported by long-term and predictable funding. **This need has not yet been met**; efforts will continue in this regard.

### **Outcome 1:**<sup>23</sup>

A. Increased technical and specialized human rights advice and support to RCs/UNCTs to:



A1.Place economic, social rights and curbing inequalities at the center of COVID19 country responses and recovery processes.

A2.Transform States' human rights commitments, UPR and other HR mechanisms' recommendations into contents for common country analysis and long term sectoral development policies, strategies and measures aimed at increasing realization of economic, social and other rights and countering discrimination and economic and other type of inequalities as well as drivers of exclusion and instability.

This includes connecting analysis and data from UN human rights reviews with SDG indicators, address data gaps and build disaggregated datasets with the aim to address unequal access to economic and social rights and operationalize leave no one behind.

**3. Compilation of good practices and lessons learned in support of UN system knowledge management**

<sup>23</sup> Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be **as outlined in the Project Document** so that you report on your **actual achievements against planned targets**. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc.

<b><u>Indicators:</u></b>	<b><u>Achieved Indicator Targets</u></b>	<b><u>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</u></b>	<b><u>Source of Verification</u></b>
Over 40 human rights <u>analytical operational products</u> to inform socio economic response plans and ongoing advice on their implementation.	<p>In 2020, the Surge Initiative provided guidance and advice to OHCHR in-country presences and UNCTs on addressing the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 concerning <b>38</b> countries, including through 30 UNCT COVID-19 socio-economic impact assessments and socio-economic response plans.</p> <p>Beyond that, refer to statistics below relevant to CCA/CF given DCO's instructions for UNCTs to shift engagement and focus from SERPs to CCAs and CFs.</p>		OHCHR-SDS
Development of at least three <u>guidance tools</u> for use at the UN country level	<p>The Surge Initiative developed, coordinated or otherwise contributed to the development of <b>11</b> tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Checklist for a Human Rights Based Approach to Socio-Economic Country Responses to COVID-19 – 2020</a></li> <li>2.  <a href="#">OHCHR: Building Back Better: A Human Rights Approach to the SERF Pillar 4: Macroeconomic Response – 2020</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">The Tool For The Introduction Of The 'Leave No One Behind' Principle Into Legislative And Strategic Acts Of The Republic Of Serbia – 2022</a></li> <li>4.  <a href="#">Checklist on Integrating Human Rights, Leave No One Behind, and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Common</a></li> </ol>		OHCHR-SDS

	<p><a href="#">Country Analyses</a> – 2022</p> <p>5. <a href="#">PDF Checklist on Integrating Human Rights, Leave No One Behind, and Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks</a> – 2022</p> <p>6. <a href="#">Online Tool with Checklists on Integrating Human Rights, Leave No One Behind, and Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks</a> – 2022</p> <p>7. <a href="#">OHCHR’s Overview on the Right to Social Security/Social Protection</a> – 2022</p> <p>8. <a href="#">A Human Rights-Based Approach to COVID-19 Economic Response and Recovery – Checklist for European National Human Rights Institutions</a> – 2022</p> <p>9. <a href="#">Human Rights and Voluntary National Reviews – Operational Common Approach Guidance Note</a> – 2022</p> <p>10. Comparative note on social protection and fiscal policies in the Latin American and Caribbean region; and</p> <p>11. Practical guide to support countries in their implementation of a HRBA to UHC (underway).</p>		
Over 80 human rights analytical operational products to inform <a href="#">CCAs and UN cooperation frameworks</a> (From March 2020 until March 2022)	Since its inception until May 2022, the Surge Team supported UN in-country presences with analytical contents and operational advice for <b>104</b> CCA and/or UNSDCF processes.		OHCHR-SDS



<p><u>3 travels</u> and over <u>40 on-line interactions/briefs</u> in support of UNCTs strategy &amp; program development (April 2021 to March 2022).</p>	<p><b>3</b> travels – one to provide support to the OHCHR Regional Office in the Middle East on strengthening the interlinkages of their human rights work with the 2030 Agenda; another to provide support to the MINUSCA Human Rights Component on developing an ESCR strategy + a mission to provide support to OHCHR’s country Office in Sudan on strengthening ESCR work, including HRB-budgetary work.</p> <p>Throughout the reporting period, the Surge Team held strategic discussions and engagements with <b>61</b> RCO Economists and took part in several discussions with national authorities on various aspects of human rights-based budgeting.</p> <p>Throughout the reporting period, the Surge Team delivered <b>58</b> briefings and trainings on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and the CF Guiding Principles of a Human Rights-Based Approach and Leave No One Behind.</p> <p>Throughout the reporting period, the Surge Team participated and provided inputs and recommendations to <b>42</b> UN RMRs.</p>	COVID-19 restrictions	OHCHR-SDS
<p>At least 10 <u>in-depth country human rights-based assessments</u> with focus on situations with the highest levels of economic and other type of inequalities (March 2020 to March 2022).</p>	<p>Throughout the reporting period, the Surge Initiative provided financial and technical assistance to <b>54</b> seeding-change country projects around the world, all of which are finalised or nearing completion. All of these projects involve in-depth country human rights-based assessment with focus on</p>		OHCHR-SDS

	situations with the highest levels of economic and other types of inequalities.		
One good practice and lessons learned <u>report</u> (Feb 2021)	<p>The report “Seeding Change For a Human Rights Economy – Progress Report of the Surge Initiative” was issued in June 2021, and shared with the MPTF.</p> <p>In addition: The UN High Commissioner Bachelet issued in September 2021 and in February 2022 <b>two</b> reports (E/2021/77 and E/2022/65) on the Surge Initiative, showcasing how OHCHR has responded to the call made by the Secretary-General to place human rights at the centre of UN development work. Country case studies illustrate how the UN system has supported States and national stakeholders in addressing the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and righting trajectories towards achieving the SDGs.</p> <p>The Surge Initiative also finalized <b>4</b> promising practice write-ups on country engagement in Kenya (2), Moldova and Serbia.</p> <p>The Surge Initiative has also issued <b>5</b> country snapshots on its country engagement and support in Cambodia, Costa Rica, Kenya, Lebanon and Ukraine for giving visibility to good practices and cross-fertilisation.</p>		OHCHR-SDS
One <u>meeting</u> with colleagues	The Surge Initiative has held a		OHCHR-SDS

from other UN entities to review entry points and lessons coming out of the project in order to share lessons and experiences (Feb 2021)	number of consultations with ILO <sup>24</sup> on enhancing collaboration at country level on human rights-based budgetary analysis and revenue generation strategies.		
One expert meeting with economists from other UN entities to share on impactful practice and approaches (March 2021).	On 5-7 May 2021, OHCHR, DCO, UN Women, and the ILO organized a three-day <a href="#"><u>workshop, “Operationalising the New Social Contract at the Country Level: Sharing Experiences of Integrating UN Values for Transformative Economic Change.”</u></a>		OHCHR-SDS

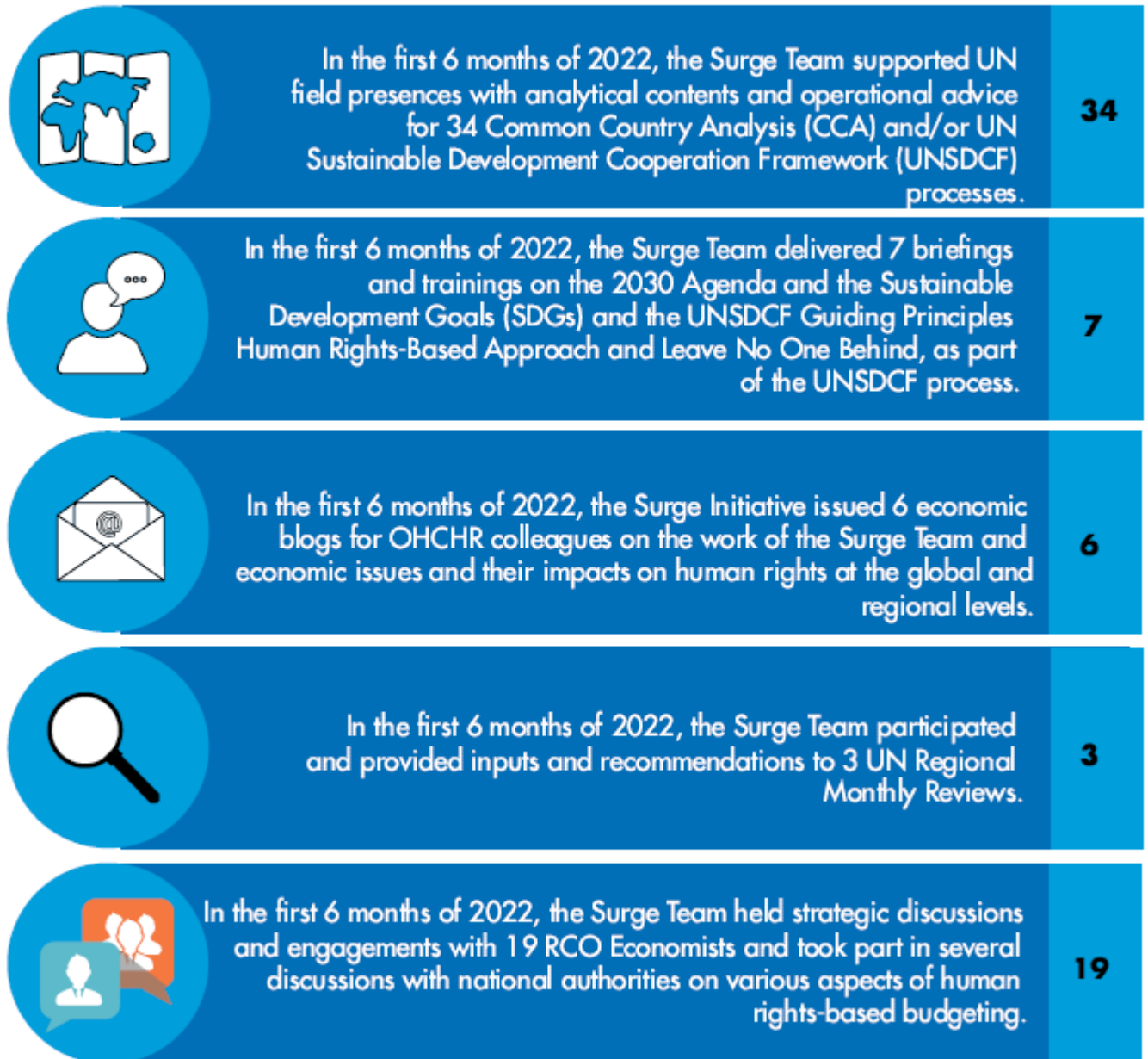
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#### Annex I: Results for 2022

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<sup>24</sup> Shahra Razawi, Director of ILO’s Social Protection Department.

# Surge Initiative's Impact



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Annex II: List of RMR countries

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Year	Number	Countries
2020	15	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Cambodia, Chile, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ecuador, Lebanon, Madagascar, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania
2021	24	Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia, El Salvador, Election in MENA Region, Eritrea, Fiscal space in Sub-Sahara Africa, Gambia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Malawi, Migrants in the MENA and Asia-Pacific Region, Montenegro, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Tunisia, Zambia
2022	3	Angola, El Salvador, Tunisia



Country	Focus	Outcome
1. <b>Argentina (2020)</b>	A human rights-based analysis of the impact of Covid-19 and austerity measures, including through an analysis of the fiscal capacity of the country, on some economic, social and cultural rights.	Austerity measures that were implemented in the country in 2018-2019 under an IMF agreement have negatively affected the enjoyment of economic and social rights, especially by the most vulnerable segments of society. In the first semester of 2019, 35.4 percent of the population lived in poverty, while 7.7 percent lived in extreme poverty, compared with 30 percent and 6 percent, respectively, in 2016. At the end of 2019, due to the ongoing unstable economic situation and with a central Government debt of approximately 90 percent to GDP, Argentina declared a food, health, social, and productivity crisis. COVID-19 further exacerbated the economic crisis, with a contraction of 12 percent of GDP during the first three quarters of 2020. Against this backdrop, the Surge Team provided support to the UN HRA in undertaking an assessment that aimed to contribute to the COVID-19 emergency and socio-economic recovery response by the UN. This assessment was also undertaken in follow-up to a previous OHCHR analysis of the 2018-2019 austerity measures in Argentina, which had also been highlighted as a concern by the CESCR in its concluding observations in 2018. <sup>v</sup> The Surge Initiative study analysed the measures taken by the Government on COVID-19 and their impact on vulnerable groups. It also assessed the fiscal capacity of the country, especially in relation to debt and IMF agreements, to meet its human rights obligations. The aim of the project is to provide advice to the authorities in their ongoing negotiations with the IMF and to recommend that human rights impact assessments of economic reform policies are carried out. Furthermore, recommendations based on an analysis of Argentina's tax system were intended to inform the UNCT's engagement on tax reforms. The Surge Initiative study also contributed to the CCA update and the UNSDCF 2021-2025 implementation in order to identify UN actions to support the Government and other counterparts to include a human rights perspective to macroeconomic

<sup>25</sup> Four projects are missing from this table: Guinea Bissau and Ukraine/Colombia (as these were undertaken in 2019); CAR and Kenya III (as these were undertaken at the end of 2022);

		programmes. The study is also a key input for the newly created National Social and Economic Council, an inter-institutional body, which was created to exchange, debate and search consensus on economic and social strategic priorities for Argentina.
<b>2. Bangladesh (2020)</b>	Strengthening capacity of human rights defenders (HRDs) to monitor, report and follow-up on human rights violations, including as relevant to inequalities and discrimination, within the immediate and longer-term Covid-19 context and assessing the challenges in the main civil society networking platform to recommend strengthening how CSOs and HRDs may influence human rights response strategies related to COVID-19.	Following the launch of the SERP, the UNCT in Bangladesh prepared a coordinated UN plan that will serve as a bridging document between the current UN Development Assistance Framework and the new UNSDCF, commencing in January 2022. Through a Surge Initiative project, an analysis was undertaken featuring four key human rights indicators and a baseline on the use of these selected indicators. The baseline was aimed at assisting the UN to analyse developments related to the challenges posed by the deepening socio-economic crisis in the context of COVID-19 and the impact on human rights. The four indicators measure violence against women (indicator 3); COVID-19-related censorship, digital shutdown, violence against human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists, medical and other experts, and whistle-blowers (indicator 5); discrimination, harassment, racism or xenophobia relating to COVID-19 (indicator 6); and emergency legal measures undertaken during COVID-19 (indicator 10). These indicators are considered highly relevant to the Bangladesh context and are linked to Pillar 5 of the SERP on social cohesion and community resilience. Guided by the <a href="#">OHCHR Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation</a> , the Bangladesh analysis elaborates a guide for collecting the requisite information under the indicators, including on the assessment of data categories and the identification of victims and perpetrators. Finally, the project assessment outlines data gaps and challenges, in addition to identifying areas for additional research.
<b>3. Barbados (2021)</b>	An assessment of how growing external debt levels and accompanying austerity measures impact access to economic and social rights, in	With the support of Surge Initiative funding and technical support, the OHCHR regional Human Rights Advisor (HRA) for the Eastern Caribbean, undertook an analysis on how high levels of debt, and associated austerity measures in Barbados and

particular health and education, in Barbados and Grenada.

Grenada impact on the enjoyment of ES rights, particularly the rights to health and education. The Surge analysis builds on various recommendations of HRMs for Barbados and Grenada, including on assessing the gender-specific effects of austerity measures and ensuring an internal redistribution of its domestic resources in order to overcome the consequences of budget cuts ([CEDAW 2017](#)), ensuring transparent, efficient and accountable delivery of public services ([UPR 2018](#)), as well as continuing to promote social policies in the areas of health, education and poverty reduction, in favour of the most vulnerable groups ([UPR 2020](#)). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Eastern Caribbean countries were among the most heavily indebted countries in the world.<sup>26</sup> Government responses to the COVID-19 emergency, coupled with a drastic fall in tax revenues (partly because of the impact of movement restrictions in the travel industry - critical to many Caribbean countries' economies), increased fiscal deficits and exacerbated debt burdens. In terms of some of the principal findings, the analysis found that the debt-to-GDP ratio in Barbados rose from 61.3% of GDP in 2000 to a high of 158.3% of GDP in 2017, reflecting the highest level in the Latin America and Caribbean region, as a prolonged recurring budget deficit for over two decades. The Government of Barbados has not been able to respond to increasing needs for investment and transformation of the sector.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, while Barbados has the highest level of health spending in the East Caribbean Countries, due mainly to its universal health care system, an increase in debt servicing needs has resulted in a downward trend in the expenditure on health care spending since 2013.<sup>28</sup> Overall, the analysis highlights ways to ring-fence budgets for ES rights with special attention to groups at risk of discrimination, and to integrate human rights considerations in debt negotiations. In addition,

<sup>26</sup> See, Inter-american Development Bank, [“Why have Caribbean countries been so indebted, and what can they do to improve outcomes?”](#), 2021; ECLAC, [“Caribbean development report A perusal of public debt in the Caribbean and its impact on economic growth”](#), 2018; IMF, [“Caribbean Small States: Challenges of high debt and low growth”](#), 2013.

<sup>27</sup> The share of the national budget allocated to education averaged 17.7% over the 22-year period from 1999 to 2020, comparable to the average spent in the Caribbean (15% between 1960 and 2009). However, spending has been on a downward trend from a high of 26.9% in 2001 to 10.8% in 2019. Similarly, spending as a share of GDP has declined, particularly in the last two years (2019-2020), coinciding with the structural adjustment programme in Barbados - UNICEF and the Government of Barbados 2020. Generation Unlimited: the Well-Being of Young People in Barbados.

<sup>28</sup> World Bank statistics, Current health expenditure (% of GDP): <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.CHEX.GD.ZS?locations=BB&view=chart>

		the assessment makes suggestions on how to achieve greater disaggregated fiscal and socio-economic data, to allow better understanding of the impact of fiscal policies on marginalized groups.
4. <b>Cambodia (2020)</b>	Human rights-based analysis of the national and sub-national economic crisis with links to prevention and a particular focus on LNOB.	<p>The Surge Team, including through funding that enabled the recruitment of a macro-economist, provided support to the OHCHR Field Presence in Cambodia to deepen its focus on economic and social rights. Another objective was to strengthen its relationships with development partners through context-specific and multi-thematic human rights-based analyses of the socio-economic realities of Cambodia, to contribute to the CCA and UNSDCF in 2024. The Surge Team supported the OHCHR Field Presence in Cambodia in developing the UNCT Country Risk Dashboard (CRD). The tool facilitates human rights-based risk analysis based upon multi-thematic quantitative and qualitative data and helps to diagnose, predict and target socio-economic vulnerabilities. The setup of the risk dashboard followed the involvement of the Surge Team in the design of a UNCT strategy on economic growth and employment. The specialised capacity provided by the Surge Team and OHCHR's METS Human Rights Indicators and Data Unit facilitated the development of the CRD's human rights-based SDG risk indicator framework. The framework permitted the integration of human rights data into the COVID-19 socio-economic impact and risk assessments, the update of the CCA, tracking patterns of discrimination and analysing measures put in place by the Government to address wealth and income inequalities. The project strengthened collaboration among UNCT agencies through sustainable development cooperation efforts to address uneven development. It also supported the development of joint strategic advocacy for expanding fiscal space for the realisation of economic and social rights, especially for marginalised communities. By drawing on the guidance of CESCRR and the UPR and by correlating SDG indicators and risk factors into an early warning prevention framework, the Surge Team's support underscored the indivisibility of all human rights as integral to prevention. It also contributed to the requirements for new generation CCAs to be more forward-looking, with a heightened focus on risk and prevention.<sup>vi</sup></p>

Cambodia has been on a trajectory of steady economic growth, albeit uneven and inequitable. The country plunged into a serious socio-economic crisis as a result of COVID-19, with the garment and tourism sectors most severely affected. The pandemic has pushed an additional 1.3 million people into poverty, bringing the total number of people living below the poverty line to 3.8 million. Within the framework of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and from a gender-sensitive perspective, the Surge Initiative has provided human rights-based macroeconomic inputs into the socio-economic recovery plan. This included pointing to the need for counter-cyclical measures to ensure minimum essential levels for health and social protection and the use of tax policies to generate maximum available resources, while highlighting the differential impacts on workers in the informal sector. The Surge Initiative also conducted an analysis of the stimulus measures put in place to address the impacts of COVID-19 containment measures, the effects of the loss of preferential trading agreement with the European Union on Government revenue, garment workers and employment, as well as household debt on the enjoyment of economic and social rights. The overall aim was to support the OHCHR Field Presence and the broader UNCT to develop a human rights-based economic strategy to enable the UNCT to employ a human rights lens on sustainable development programming with a focus on macroeconomic priorities for the progressive realisation of economic and social rights. This project has better equipped the OHCHR Field Presence and the UNCT in Cambodia to identify areas where the lack of respect for or progress in the realisation of economic and social rights has led to persistent under-development and increased inequalities and risks for civil unrest. The Surge Initiative is specifically guided by the recommendations of the CESCR<sup>vii</sup> and the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>viii</sup> Additional funding, which has been secured from the European Union, allowed for the continuation of this work through the longer-term engagement of the macro-economist, as well as the additional expertise of a data analyst to support the



		preparation for the 2024 UNSDCF.
<b>5. Cameroon (2020)</b>	An assessment of the minimum essential levels of the right to maternal health in Cameroon.	<p>The Surge Team provided technical and financial support to OHCHR's Central Africa Regional Office to undertake an assessment of the right to health with a particular focus on maternal health. This work built on the UNCT's 2019/2020 LNOB analysis, as well as the 2019 concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) on the challenges faced by the State in effectively mobilizing the necessary domestic resources to address regional disparities and inequalities and the basic needs of the population, including the accessibility, availability and quality of health-care services by the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Together with the Ministries for Public Health and of Social Affairs, the National Institute of Statistics and Finance, the UNFPA and CSOs, and using a participatory and human rights-based methodology, a qualitative and quantitative research was undertaken in two marginalised regions in the North and East of the country. This included a human rights-based budgetary analysis of the health sector. Through this research, the project identified: (i) the weaknesses and gaps related to the organization and supply of maternal health services in 23 structures of the 4-selected emergency obstetric and neonatal care networks; (ii) the needs of women and girls of reproductive age, especially those at risk of being left behind; and (iii) the human, technical, material and financial needs of these health networks.</p> <p>The recommendations aimed at addressing these challenges placed a particular emphasis on women and girls of reproductive age who are especially at risk of being left behind, including women suffering from fistula, women living with HIV, IDP or refugee women, women living in extreme poverty and indigenous women.</p>
<b>6. Chad (2021)</b>	A human rights-based root-cause analysis of the herders/farmers' conflict with a specific focus on the right to food.	<p>Against a backdrop of violent conflicts between herders and farmers over difficult access to and management of natural resources (in particular land and water), this project concerned a human rights-based root cause analysis of these conflicts, with a focus on the right to food. Recommendations call for legal reform related to land and property management and a higher and more effective investment by the State in these sectors. The project's final analysis,</p>

		<p>main findings and recommendations informed the new National Development Plan, the upcoming UNSDCF, the National Human Rights Forum and subsequently the ongoing National Inclusive Dialogue. The project has also helped generate additional funding for OHCHR Chad's capacity to work on ESCR, thereby securing follow-up and sustainability to the project in collaboration with State, UN and other partners. The majority of the principal and recommendations of the study were reflected in the final outcomes adopted at the National Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue held in August 2022. Some of these concern: finalising, adopting and implementing the Land and Pastoral Codes in line with human rights standards including gender equality for equitable and sustainable access to land and other natural resources such as water, essential for agriculture and livestock; combatting corruption; improving and ensuring optimal execution of annual expenses allocated to the agriculture, livestock, water, environment sectors; monitoring and evaluating public investment expenditure on infrastructure, development and equipment necessary for the availability and accessibility of water, land, and pastures; and finally improving the right to food of the most vulnerable including by putting in place the necessary investments and support measures for small producers in the agricultural sector to ensure their means of livelihood. OHCHR Chad is following-up on these recommendations as a core part of its work on ESCR in 2023. The project also helped generate additional funding for OHCHR Chad's capacity to work on ESCR, thereby securing follow-up and sustainability to the project in collaboration with State, UN and other partners.</p>
7. <b>Chile (2022)</b>	<p>Developing indicators to assess the level of enjoyment of the right to work and social security for migrant population, applying a human –rights based and LNOB approach.</p>	<p>The Surge Initiative provided support on an assessment aimed at tackling inequalities and discrimination faced by migrant communities in their access to the rights to work and social security, through the identification of structural and procedural obstacles to their full enjoyment, including through the development of indicators applying a human rights-based and LNOB approach. The final report presents the process followed to elaborate the indicators relevant to assess the level of enjoyment of the right to work and social protection by the migrant population in Chile. It also presents a matrix with</p>

		<p>said indicators, and a brief pilot in which two indicators were populated to show what type of information was available. In addition, the report also identifies the gaps of information in relation to migrant population and their enjoyment of rights. As part of the research process, the consultants carried out workshops with relevant actors (government officials and CSOs) to discuss the indicators being created within each attribute (content) of the rights under study. This could serve as a platform for advocacy activities in relation to the use of the matrix of indicators, improvements of data availability and, more broadly, for discussions about different topics related to the situation of migrants in Chile. Follow-up activities will focus on the development of an advocacy strategy and related follow up activities with the support of the Surge team.</p>
8. <b>Colombia I (2020)</b>	<p>The development of a mathematical formula to calculate the cost of meeting the minimum essential levels of the right to adequate food through an assessment of the elements of a healthy and culturally appropriate food basket for peasant populations in the Andean region of Colombia.</p>	<p>In its 2017 review of Colombia, the CESCR expressed its concerns about the critical rates of malnutrition and food insecurity, and recommended the development of a national strategy “for the protection and promotion of the right to adequate food in order to address food insecurity throughout its national territory and to promote healthier diets.”<sup>ix</sup> Building on this recommendation, the Surge Team undertook a preliminary assessment with the aim to inform, at a second stage, a dialogue with authorities, the UN, CSOs and other stakeholders, and present concrete policy options building on relevant UN Human Rights Mechanisms recommendations. This assessment placed a specific focus on the peasant populations in the Andean region of Colombia – a population that suffers from a high degree of vulnerability with regard to the right to adequate food. In this regard, and in an effort to contribute to discussions on how States can ensure minimum essential levels and allocate necessary resources (maximum available resources) therein, the Surge Initiative developed a mathematical formula to calculate the cost of meeting the minimum essential levels of the right to adequate food for the peasant community in the Andean region. This project entailed an assessment of the elements of a healthy food basket for the peasant population and an overview of the country’s revenues and expenditures to identify</p>

		<p>ways in which the tax system limits the ability of the country to mobilize resources to fulfil human rights. This methodological work builds on the guidance of the CESCER on the right to adequate food and normative developments related to the minimum essential levels and maximum available resources<sup>x</sup> and is informed by regional agreements, national legislation and policies. This project also allows for adding other layers of complexity related to the economic, social and cultural rights requirements of ‘availability’, ‘accessibility’, ‘acceptability’ and ‘quality’ (AAAQ) that can be replicated in other country situations and for other rights.</p>
<p>9. <b>Colombia II (2021)</b></p>	<p>A human rights-based budgetary analysis of the implementation of the 2017 Buenaventura Agreements, in the district of Valle del Cauca department, on health and water and sanitation. A human rights-based budgetary analysis of the implementation of the 2017 Buenaventura Agreements, with focus on the agreements related to health and water and sanitation priorities.</p>	<p>Through technical and financial Surge Initiative support, OHCHR Colombia undertook a human rights-based budgetary analysis of the implementation of the 2017 Buenaventura Agreements (BA), in the district of Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca department. The project enabled consultations with various local authorities and community representatives, which focused on 28 thematic priorities of the BA identified on health and water and sanitation, and more particularly on urban sewage systems, aqueduct infrastructure, more investment in primary health care, and the implementation of citizen oversight mechanisms. Using official socio-economic data and building on various human rights mechanisms recommendations on budgeting for human rights, reducing inequality and poverty, and fighting discrimination, the analysis presents an overview of ESCR indicators highlighting how the level of enjoyment of rights in Buenaventura - and therefore of Afro-Colombians who represent the highest proportion of the population in this municipality - is consistently lower than in other parts of the Valle del Cauca department. In terms of compliance with the Buenaventura commitments, the analysis provides an update on the percentage of commitments relating to water and sanitation as well as health that have been executed. The final report makes various recommendations for greater fiscal transparency, more coordination amongst national and local actors overseeing the provision of public services, and closer relations between the local government and civil society organisations to strengthen their capacity to monitor the implementation of the agreements.</p>

<p><b>10. Costa Rica (2020)</b></p>	<p>The development of an early warning and prevention monitoring platform within the UNCT to ensure up to date analysis on the recurring disputes between indigenous and non-indigenous communities related to land and natural resources.</p>	<p>The UN HRA implemented a Surge Initiative seeding-change project aimed at establishing an early warning and prevention monitoring system in four prioritised indigenous communities in the South of the country. It was based on economic and social rights (access to land) with the participation of indigenous leaders, including women and local and national authorities, such as the Government, judiciary, legislative assembly and the NHRI. It drew on the wealth of recommendations made by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights during her visit to Costa Rica in 2019 and by UN Human Rights Mechanisms, including the need to protect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples in accessing their lands. A preliminary assessment was prepared, identifying a road map, including a root-cause analysis of tensions, especially in relation to recurring land disputes between indigenous and non-indigenous communities in the prioritized communities, as well as a risk analysis and preventive measures to protect indigenous rights defenders. The project contributed to the CCA process with the required up-to-date analysis on emerging issues, early warning and prevention. The integrated analysis is also expected to inform a comprehensive UNCT protection and prevention strategy, including on indigenous peoples and their access to land. This monitoring system will be key to mapping persistent and emerging factors that generate inequalities, which disproportionately affect indigenous peoples, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The next phases of the project was funded by the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the MPTF/UN HRA funds.</p>
<p><b>11. DRC I (2019/20)</b></p>	<p>Human rights-based analysis of a State policy on free and universal primary education, with a specific focus on Kinshasa.</p>	<p>The objective of this project was to provide support to an NGO platform working on economic, social and cultural rights - that the JHRO helped establish - to undertake a timely assessment on the commitment to provide free universal primary education by the newly elected Government. The final report of the assessment made important recommendations concerning, for example, the need for the Government to mobilise funds to ensure the sustainability of this commitment, to start collecting reliable statistics to inform the continuing implementation based on real needs, put in place a</p>



		<p>mid-term review and an inclusive plan for implementation, and to work in an inclusive manner with government and non-government partners moving forward. The report and recommendations were well-received and created a keen interest from the authorities to jointly engage on the necessary follow-up. This exposure also provided the NGO platform with increased space to engage and advocate for the protection of ESCR more broadly, including as relevant to the Covid-response. For example following this project, the NGO platform has been working alongside the JHRO in monitoring the illegal detention of hospital patients when unable to pay their medical bills, and it is also undertook an LNOB analysis related to the socio-economic impacts of Covid.</p>
<b>12. DRC II (2020/2021)</b>	<p>A human rights-based assessment of budgetary allocations of pro-poor and Covid-19 funds from 2018 – 2021.</p>	<p>Based on the analysis undertaken under the auspices of this project, a number of recommendations were made for the authorities and their financial and technical partners, including on: the need to strengthen the transparency and accountability relative to access to budgetary information and participation; and the need to increase resources relative to priority ESC rights including health, education, WASH and social protection.</p>
<b>13. Ecuador (2020)</b>	<p>A human rights-based analysis of level of enjoyment of economic and social rights by four vulnerable groups including a brief overview of budgets allocated to services related to those rights.</p>	<p>At the outset of the pandemic outbreak in early 2020, Ecuador was one of the most seriously affected countries by COVID-19 in South America, in terms of economic impact. Prior to the pandemic, Ecuador's economy was already on a weak footing, <a href="#">with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growing only by 0.1 percent in 2019</a>. Furthermore, the deficit was estimated at -3.2 percent of GDP in 2019, and projected to be -7.8 percent in 2020, while public debt was projected to reach above 60 percent of GDP by December 2020, according to <a href="#">IMF projections</a>. A reform in October 2019 to eliminate fuel subsidies, which would have disproportionately affected indigenous peoples and workers in small businesses, triggered social unrest and was eventually annulled by a second decree in October 2019. Against this background, the Surge Initiative engaged in two main activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Surge Team supported the UN HRA to elaborate a human rights analysis of the Government's COVID-19 emergency draft law,</li> </ol>

which was shared with the RCO to feed into the several context analyses produced at that time. This law initially included provisions that would have a disproportionate impact on the most marginalized sectors of society. The draft law introduced a new “humanitarian” tax that appeared to be progressive, but in effect, would burden the poorest segments of society by taxing their already low incomes. Moreover, the draft law fell short of providing a roadmap for the discharge of Ecuador’s obligations on economic and social rights as well as signalling avenues to monitor Government spending and accountability.

2. The UN HRA, with the support of the Surge Team, led a seeding-change project that aimed to assess the barriers that prevented four vulnerable groups (indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, persons deprived of their liberty, and Afro-Ecuadorians) from accessing COVID-19 socio-economic measures adopted by the Government. Building on the recommendations made by the CESCER in 2005 and 2019<sup>xi</sup> to ensure that austerity measures and economic reforms do not disproportionately impact vulnerable groups, the assessment provided an overview of the socio-economic situation of these four groups. It highlighted key measures adopted in the context of the pandemic and briefly discussed the implications of a recent agreement with the IMF to provide an equivalent of US\$6.5 billion for a new programme extending over 27 months, which includes, amongst other conditions, a tax reform in the country. Paucity of disaggregated data has been a challenge, but the analysis has confirmed the severe disadvantages suffered by the four identified groups. For example, poverty and extreme poverty were approximately 35-40 percent higher amongst Afro-Ecuadorians than non-Afro-Ecuadorians. Sixty-four percent of Afro-Ecuadorians are amongst those with the lowest incomes, compared with 49 percent of non-Afro-Ecuadorians. Also, whilst the country has made good progress on legal protection for persons with disabilities (around 2.7 percent of the population), there has been a 24 percent reduction in health services for this group during the pandemic. Although some of the health

		<p>measures implemented were intended to reach indigenous peoples and Afro-Ecuadorians, by May 2020, 7 percent of indigenous peoples and 1 percent of Afro-Ecuadorians had been infected by COVID-19. The information compiled by this seeding-change project aimed to inform the UNCT's ability to contribute to the country's recovery strategy by providing inputs for engagement with the Government in relation to inclusive economic measures and their potential impact on human rights especially of the marginalized populations. Surge Initiative support to the UN HRA also enhanced OHCHR's engagement with the RCO economist, resulting in openness to strengthened and more rights-based UNCT strategies relating to immediate socio-economic responses to COVID-19.</p>
<p><b>14. El Salvador (2020)</b></p>	<p>Strengthening NHRI capacity on ESCR monitoring in the context of the response to Covid-19.</p>	<p>As part of OHCHR's technical collaboration with the NHRI in El Salvador, a Surge seeding change project was undertaken to develop the institution's capacity in monitoring and analyzing ESCRs, including in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, which was particularly important giving the shrinking space for civil society and human rights actors. The project, led by the SHRA and a consultant, analyzed the NHRI structure, capacity and personnel; with support from the Surge team, it delivered capacity building workshops (on ESCR and their monitoring, the 2030 Agenda and indicators), and worked in strengthening the NHRI's methodological tools for ESCR analysis on the impact of COVID 19.</p>
<p><b>15. Guinea (2019/2020)</b></p>	<p>An assessment of the impact of extractive industries on economic, social and cultural rights.</p>	<p>In Guinea, the Surge Initiative provided technical and financial support to the OHCHR Presence to undertake an assessment of the impact of the mining sector on human rights, with particular emphasis on economic and social rights. The mining industry is one of the major sources of revenue for Guinea and therefore, a key potential accelerator for sustainable development and stronger fulfilment of economic and social rights. Extractive industries in Guinea contribute to 31 percent of Government revenues with more than 90 percent of exports being mining products. Guinea is the world's third-largest producer of bauxite, following Australia and China. Gold is also among its main exports. Despite these resources, Guinea</p>

ranked 178<sup>th</sup> of the 189 nations listed in the [2020 Human Development Index](#), with 43.7 per cent of Guineans below the poverty line. Mining is also associated with serious human rights violations and environmental degradation including forced displacement, loss of property, destruction of livelihoods and the deterioration of economic and social rights more broadly, in particular health, water and sanitation. Against this backdrop, the Surge Initiative's assessment was key to ongoing State reforms, including legislative, institutional and governance reforms in the mining sector as well as the management of natural resources. For example, the Mining Code that was amended in 2013 included transparency and accountability provisions as well as a review of existing mining contracts. This also included tax reforms that aimed at attracting investors and at guaranteeing state revenues at national and local levels, including new revisions in 2019 relating to revenue allocation at the local level through local funds for development. The study generated significant interest and engagement for change by the State, the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI), the UNCT, mining companies, CSOs, peasant and other affected communities. This is evidenced by these partners' adherence to OHCHR's [strategy on mining and human rights](#) launched on 24 February 2021 in collaboration with the Resident Coordinator (RC) and the Guinea Chamber of Mining. The 40 participants representing the aforementioned actors expressed full support for the strategy that includes a seven-pronged road-map covering capacity-building, strengthening of the legal framework and partnerships. These are all aimed at a greater promotion and protection of human rights pertaining to the mining industry, particularly of the most vulnerable groups. The strategy was also launched within the context of the implementation of relevant recommendations from the [January 2021 UPR](#) and the concluding observations of the 2020 CESCR<sup>xii</sup>. Some of the recommendations of the study informed Guinea's National Human Rights Action Plan and a joint pilot project on the right to development between OHCHR and the Government. The project and its methodology also led to discussions between OHCHR, the RC, UN Habitat and the UN Office

		for Project Services on two potential streams of work linked to the impacts on economic and social rights and the environment, on the one hand, and advocacy for upholding human rights in the context of ongoing urbanisation projects, on the other hand. Finally, the human rights commitments made under the auspices of this project translated into concrete action by the mining companies with regard to the State's COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives. <sup>xiii</sup>
<b>16. Guinea Bissau II (2022)</b>	The provision of HRBA and LNOB support to the first voluntary national review presented by Guinea-Bissau, through the organization of consultations with various stakeholders in all of the nine regions in the country.	In a context marked by high vulnerabilities suffered by large groups of the population, the project in GB succeeded in supporting a LNOB approach to the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) presented by GB. In March this year, OHCHR supported the organisation of 9 Government-led consultations in each of the 8 administrative regions of the country and the autonomous sector of Bissau. The consultations ensured representation and inclusive participation from a varied range of stakeholders including civil servants, the private sector, traditional and religious leaders, professional and community-based organisations, human rights organizations, and most importantly, representatives of most disadvantaged groups. As a result, stakeholders, including groups left behind, were able to collectively identify priority SDGs, also in light of GB's human rights obligations. A summary of the discussions was annexed to the State's VNR report with some of the principal findings also integrated in its main content. The State's VNR presentation at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July, included an intervention by a civil society actor and the review was broadcast live in GB followed by a panel discussion, again with the inclusion of a human rights activist. Seventeen leaflets summarizing the findings for each SDG were distributed amongst State, UN and other stakeholders. The initiative is being complemented by a HRB-budgetary analysis undertaken jointly with the RCO economist. Both products will be critical to inform the upcoming National Development Plan, the State's first report to the CESCR, as well as the UN's CCA
<b>17. Jordan (2021)</b>	The development of a UNCT brief on public financing for human rights that will focus	The UN and the Jordan Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with support from the Senior Human Rights Advisor (SHRA) and the Surge Initiative, are



	<p>on the maximum available resources to ensure the progressive realisation of economic and social rights.</p>	<p>contributing to discussions to place people at the centre of public finance policies through engagement with various state and non-state stakeholders including through the development a policy brief on a human rights-based approach to revenue collection. This work comes in a context of calls to increase accountability, transparency, and participation in fiscal policies and budgetary processes, and to ensure that policies do not have a negative impact on the most vulnerable groups. The policy brief - which was launched in March 2023 by the new Resident Coordinator (RC) in Jordan and the President of ECOSOC - aims to present recommendations on the following questions: How does the central Government generate revenue, and is it raising enough to cover SDG financing needs, and in pace with its economic growth? Is Jordan investing adequately in the realization of human rights, including to fulfil its obligations of non-discrimination and addressing inequalities? Is it abiding by the human rights guiding principles of transparency, participation and accountability in terms of resource mobilization? This project can serve as a global promising practice for initiating new partnerships (in this case between the SHRA and the RCO economist, and between the Economic and Social Council through the establishment of an MOU with the UN in July 2022) and supporting UNCT joint analysis and advocacy placing people and rights at the centre of economic policy.</p>
<p><b>18. Kenya I (2019/2020)</b></p>	<p>Human rights-based assessment of the right to water in informal settlements in Nairobi.</p>	<p>The Surge Team supported the UN HRA's team and a network of 24 community-based Social Justice Centres, in undertaking a human rights assessment to identify the extent of inequality in accessing safe drinking water in informal settlements in Nairobi. This project is directly linked to SDG 6 as well as recommendations of the UPR<sup>xiv</sup> and other human rights mechanisms, including the country visit by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation in 2015.<sup>xv</sup> Under this project, 184 household surveys were carried out with inter-active questionnaires on mobile phones. Focus group discussions in 24 informal settlements and communities in Nairobi, Kisumu and Coastal regions were also conducted. The data was complemented with other sources and statistical information, including the assessment of budgetary allocations to the water sector and a review of previous financial</p>

		<p>years' budgets. The main findings and recommendations of the study were presented in an <a href="#">infographic report</a>, a <a href="#">web story</a>, and a <a href="#">short film</a> by the Social Justice Centres. Evidence-based data helped amplify the voices of grassroots networks and joint civil society advocacy on gaps in the enjoyment of the right to water, as the country confronted the emerging COVID-19 crisis and centrality of the right to water to prevention. The partnership with the Social Justice Centres, whose members were trained in survey methods and served as enumerators, proved to be crucial to the empowerment of rights holders in shaping the implementation of SDG 6 at the grassroots level. In addition, the findings informed the UNCT's analysis and engagement for the implementation of the UN Development Assistance Framework's outcome on water in relation to the response to COVID-19.</p>
<p><b>19. Kenya II (2020)</b></p>	<p>Human rights-based assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on indigenous peoples in 7 counties.</p>	<p>With the support of further funding from the Surge Initiative, the UN HRA in Kenya subsequently partnered with indigenous human rights defenders to document the human rights dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis in indigenous communities, with a focus on the situation of indigenous women who face multiple forms of discrimination. Indigenous communities have historically been left behind in Kenya, as highlighted in observations and recommendations of the UPR and other human rights mechanisms (e.g. CDESCR, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and CEDAW).<sup>xvi</sup> Prior to the pandemic, these communities already faced deep inequalities, with poorer socio-economic indicators in comparison to other population groups in Kenya. The scoping initiative worked with 49 indigenous human rights defenders from 13 indigenous groups, who surveyed 1,334 households in 512 villages and held over 70 focus group discussions with women, youth, older persons, and persons with disabilities. The <a href="#">resulting analysis</a> built a compelling case to reinforce indigenous people's inclusion in social protection programmes and targeted responses to address inequalities in the rights to education and health, and increased gender-based violence (including harmful traditional practices). The outcome of the analysis aimed to enable OHCHR to work with the UNCT to address the identified gaps through the ongoing UN</p>

		Development Assistance Framework work plan and the COVID-19 socio-economic response. The project also led to the establishment of an informal network of indigenous human rights defenders across the seven counties.
<b>20. Lao PDR (2022)</b>	An analysis of the implications of limited domestic public finance, in the context of significant foreign debt repayment obligations associated with large investment projects, on the government's ability to finance inclusive and sustainable development including economic, social, and cultural rights.	Preliminary findings of an assessment of the impact of foreign debt and foreign-debt funded development projects on ESC rights was recently presented to the UNCT and initial discussions held with the World Bank. The research - led by the OHCHR South East Asia Regional Office, in collaboration with the RCO - focused on large-scale hydropower and transport infrastructure projects and their impact on the environment, and ESC rights of people, and in particular the most vulnerable, including on access to food and clean water, loss of shelter, land and other assets, employment and income generating activities, constraints on cultural life, and loss of life. The analysis proposes a number of policy recommendations and suggests areas for additional research, including on legislative, contracts and financing analysis as well as public participation. Given the possible deterioration of the economic and fiscal situation, and a potential debt renegotiation in the close horizon in 2023, OHCHR and the RCO are committed to following-up on this work in 2023.
<b>21. Liberia (2019/20)</b>	Human rights-based analysis of the Liberian economy, including an analysis of the rights to health, education, food, and social protection in the Covid-19 context, with a focus on disadvantaged groups.	In Liberia, where the pandemic has had a devastating socio-economic impact against a background of debt distress and years of austerity budgets, the Surge Team supported the development of an analysis of the rights to health, education, food, and social protection in the context of the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19, with a focus on disadvantaged groups. The latter includes workers in the informal sector who account for 79.9 percent of the total workforce and have no access to any social security schemes. The analysis includes persons with disabilities, who, according to Government estimates, represent 20 percent of the population, with 99 percent living in absolute poverty. <sup>xvii</sup> The study provides advice on reinforcing Government emergency efforts to keep vulnerable populations afloat by advocating for greater public investments in health, social protection, food and education. It maps a decline of more than 20 percent in Government budget allocations to these rights over the last five

		<p>years and raises a red flag on an additional 4 percent decline in the fiscal year 2020-2021.<sup>xviii</sup> Policy recommendations include ways to increase fiscal space for economic and social rights in line with the Government's human rights obligations. Recommendations identify taxes that disproportionately impact low-income households and highlight groups that need to be prioritized for inclusion in social security schemes. With the number of poor households (below US\$1.90 a day) increasing by 3 percent (from 42.4 percent in 2018 to 45.4 percent at the end of 2020), the study provides an important baseline for the UNCT to advocate for gender and human rights responsive budgeting in 2021, in support of the Government's Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (2018-2023). The analysis also provides targeted suggestions for Government and UN programming on the implementation of the November 2020 cycle of UPR recommendations, which included a renewed focus on curbing inequalities, extending public health coverage to disadvantaged groups, and redesigning inclusive social protection schemes.</p>
<p><b>22. Madagascar I (2019/2020)</b></p>	<p>An assessment of the impact of extractive industries on economic, social and cultural rights.</p>	<p>The Surge Team accompanied the UN HRA with financial and technical support in assessing the impact of the mining sector on economic and social rights. The mining industry presents Madagascar with opportunities to raise additional revenues to combat extreme poverty and contribute to sustainable development. The Surge Initiative's analysis led to policy recommendations to expand fiscal space through revenues generated from the extractive industry and the identification of other measures to advance the rights of affected communities. The latter includes, for instance, mandatory human rights impact assessments preceding the provision or renewal of mining permits. The project was particularly timely given that the Madagascar Mining Code and related mining tax regimes are currently undergoing revision in Parliament. The project drew on a 2016 visit of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment that recommended that revisions to the Mining Code meet human rights standards and that profits of the mining industry also benefit the local communities</p>

		<p>most directly affected by the mining.<sup>xix</sup> Notably, there was political will to increase revenue generation from the extractive sector, despite resistance from mining companies and a certain lack of transparency in the process. Various arms of the State, including the Executive and the Judiciary, initiated measures in accordance with the country's human rights obligations, influenced in part by the robust mobilisation of CSOs and local communities.<sup>xx</sup> The analysis and findings of the Surge Initiative also informed the UNSDCF, which integrated a dedicated pillar on sustainable, inclusive and resilient management of the environment.</p>
<p><b>23. Malaysia (2021)</b></p>	<p>Analysis and recommendations on the right to social security for informal sector and migrant workers, aiming to support development of human rights informed budget allocations and policies.</p>	<p>The HRA in Malaysia is, in collaboration with the RCO and with the Surge Initiative support working on an analysis on the right to social security, with a particular focus on informal sector workers who include a large number of vulnerable non-nationals (migrants and refugees). In response to the pandemic and its impacts on the incomes and livelihoods of the vulnerable poor, specifically those working in informal employment, the Government introduced additional social security measures, including transfers to informal sector workers. These measures have, however, started to be scaled back. This project, therefore, represented an opportunity to advise on ways to move from temporary emergency measures to long term solutions. It draws on various recommendations of the 2018 UPR and CEDAW reviews of Malaysia,<sup>29</sup> as well as 2019 recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights,<sup>30</sup> including as relevant to the need to increase spending on social protection, to establish a social protection floor, and to enhance attention to the situation of migrant workers. The project also seeks to support Malaysia's realization of the 2030 Agenda and various SDG targets.<sup>31</sup> The report includes recommendations towards a strengthening the right to social security for informal sector workers in Malaysia in the medium to long term, and advocates for comprehensive social protection systems rather</p>

<sup>29</sup> CEDAW/C/MYS/CO/3-5, para. 43- 44

<sup>30</sup> A/HRC/44/40/Add.1, in particular paras. 90 and 92.

<sup>31</sup> In particular: 1.3, 3.8, 5.4, 8b, 8.8, as well as targets 10.2 - 10.4.

		<p>than safety nets that could potentially add fragmentation and inefficiency. It includes recommendations focused on facilitating the transition from informal to formal work and redressing the unfair and unsafe working conditions and lack of access to social protection. It also provides compelling evidence for moving away from an austerity budget and towards increasing investments in social protection.</p>
24. <b>Maldives (2020)</b>	<p>An assessment of key human rights challenges faced by women in the informal sector, including their access to stimulus measures provided by the Government to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>The Surge Initiative's seeding-change funds supported an assessment of key human rights challenges faced by women in the informal sector, including their access to stimulus measures provided by the Government to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Various UN Human Rights Mechanisms<sup>xxi</sup> have highlighted the overrepresentation of women in precarious jobs in the informal economy in the Maldives.<sup>xxii</sup> However, due to a lack of updated data, women workers in the informal economy are rendered invisible and largely excluded from social protection programmes. The Surge Initiative's analysis was aimed to contribute a baseline aimed to inform advocacy for policy reforms, as well as address data gaps in official statistics. The seeding-change project report on the socio-economic exclusion of women was conducted by a civil society partner and validated by a network of CSOs in the Maldives. This methodology strengthened partnership with civil society, facilitating more active dialogue and collaboration. The document was developed with critical inputs from experts within UN agencies. In addition, the Surge Initiative project successfully highlighted the particular challenges faced by women in the informal sector and in leveraging responses to strengthen the enjoyment of their economic and social rights within the context of the development of the CCA that was finalised in December 2020 and the UNSDCF, which was being finalised. The project report also contributed data and situational analyses of social and economic policies and practices, as well as challenges for inclusive, diversified and enhanced economic transformation for women. It also had the potential to assist the UN in its support to the Government on linkages between economic growth,</p>



		<p>social and gender equality, and women's empowerment. Beyond the Maldives, this project also had the potential to serve as a cross-fertilisation example in other countries, especially the Small Island Developing States, on challenges faced by women in the informal sector.</p>
<p><b>25. Mexico (2020)</b></p>	<p>An assessment on access to health care, social protection and basic services for sexual and gender minorities and persons with disabilities in Mexico City.</p>	<p>The Surge Team supported the OHCHR Field Presence concerning two assessments on access to health care, social protection and basic services for sexual and gender minorities on the one hand, and for persons with disabilities on the other hand, in Mexico City. The methodology for both assessments included surveys, focus group discussions and direct engagement with rights-holders to produce qualitative and quantitative information regarding their experiences in accessing health care and social services during the pandemic. The assessments contributed to the creation of alliances with grassroots disability rights organizations as well as LGBTI+ rights organizations. It also contributed to strengthening the partnership with the local government of the City of Mexico, in particular the Council on the Prevention of Discrimination [Consejo para Prevenir y Eliminar la Discriminación de la Ciudad de Mexico] and with the Health Secretary of the City [Secretaría de Salud de la Ciudad]. An institutional dialogue through online meetings was initiated to devise local solutions for the protection of these groups' rights to health and social protection, as a follow-up to the assessments. In particular, both studies presented recommendations for the adoption of targeted measures to raise awareness on the rights of these groups, public education campaigns to combat stigma, and harmful stereotypes and tailored capacity-building workshops to address bias and discrimination of basic service providers and public officials. The studies also recommended the more systematic participation of LGBTI+ persons and persons with disabilities in the design of plans and policies of the public health sector.</p>
<p><b>26. Moldova I (2020)</b></p>	<p>Integration of a human rights-based approach in Covid-19 assessment and response measures, including through the identification of specific barriers faced by</p>	<p>Through advice and additional resources provided by the Surge Initiative, the UN HRA and her team were able to make a significant contribution towards ensuring that the <a href="#">UNCT's SERP</a> applies a human rights-based approach, capitalising on existing recommendations from the UN Human</p>

disadvantaged groups.

Rights Mechanisms and focusing on the situation of numerous ‘at-risk groups’ experiencing marginalization and discrimination. Drawing on specific OHCHR guidance on a human rights-based approach to social and economic impacts of COVID-19, and the initial needs assessment conducted among 52 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), members of the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights,<sup>xxiii</sup> [the analysis](#) identified specific barriers faced by disadvantaged groups and provided policy suggestions on human rights-based approaches to tackle these in the emergency and recovery phases. The analyses generated significant donor interest and led to strengthened UN system-wide collaboration in support of vulnerable groups. In concrete terms, the work resulted in the development of three joint UN projects in 2020, led by UN Women, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), International Organization for Migration, and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), all with considerable contribution from the UN HRA and her team in the design and implementation stages. Support was provided financially by the MPTF COVID-19 Fund, the Austrian Development Agency, and the United Kingdom. In conjunction with this work, UN HRA and her team also developed and widely distributed nine specific guidance and information materials. These include on the [impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities](#), the [role of social protection in the COVID-19 response](#), [human rights-compliant crisis communications](#), [labour rights in the context of COVID-19](#), the [right to the highest attainable standard of health](#), and a [policy brief on older persons in the context of COVID-19](#). All of these policy briefs were translated into Russian to ensure access to representatives of ethno-linguistic minorities. Four guidance documents were also put into an easy-to-read format. Two guidance documents were made available in the Braille language. Approximately 32,440 copies of guidance and information materials were distributed to rights-holders by the National Agency for Social Assistance, in addition to 56 partner NGOs,<sup>xxiv</sup> including from the Transnistria region. Finally, the [UNCT’s SERP](#) benefited from

		<p>the development of a number of contextualized human rights indicators focusing on the rights to health, education, social security, water, sanitation, adequate housing, work and related labour rights, access to information, participation, freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse, and freedom of expression and movement. These indicators were used for the development of a sociological survey assessing the perception of rights-holders on the impact of COVID-19 on their human rights. This phone survey (involving over 1,000 participants) was finalised in January 2021. As a booster to the phone survey, an in-person survey with Roma respondents was conducted to make sure that the survey was properly representative of the Roma population, as one of the most vulnerable groups. Additionally, a targeted survey on the conditions in the Transnistria region (over 300 participants) provided essential information on the human rights impact of COVID-19 in the region. The findings and recommendations of the analysis were presented at a consultation with all relevant stakeholders during a Human Rights Forum at the end of May 2021 and were aimed at shaping advocacy and action to advance human rights during and following the pandemic, especially of vulnerable groups.</p>
27. <b>Mongolia (2022)</b>	Monitoring of housing rights of persons with disabilities to identify critical gaps and propose recommendations to strengthen legal and policy frameworks.	<p>During a UNCT-convened consultative meeting for the International Day of People with persons with disabilities, CSOs and various government officials, the NGO - Tugeemel Khugjil - that partnered with OHCHR and the RCO on this project, presented the initial findings of a Surge study focused on the right to housing of persons with disabilities. The research identified the most critical gaps in legal and policy frameworks, and barriers faced by persons with disabilities. For instance it looked into limited access by persons with disabilities to decent and affordable housing in ger areas – traditional Mongolian dwelling areas - that are not connected to central heating, water supply, and sewage system; a lack of clear policies concerning the regulations and safeguards for persons with disabilities on whether and how many have been able to benefit from new housing constructions; and the lack of prioritisation of the particular vulnerabilities of persons with disabilities in housing policies and mortgage procedures. The UNCT is committed to including some of the most</p>

		pressing ESCR issues identified in the implementation of the new UNSDCF. The National Human Rights Commission Mongolia is also expected to include the report's findings and recommendations in its annual report.
<b>28. Nepal (2021)</b>	Analysis of the enjoyment of the right to social security of street vendors in Kathmandu, including as shaped by discrimination, stigma and violence: creating a baseline to advocate for the right to social security and developing recommendations to the local government.	The HRA in Nepal, in close collaboration with national CSOs and women's rights organizations, and with the support of the Surge Initiative, finalised an analysing of the minimum essential levels of material components of the right to health for disadvantaged groups of women working in informal sectors. The health sector in Nepal is facing long-standing challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately affected people working in the informal sector. Marginalised groups, including the women targeted by this project, could not systematically access stimulus measures and the Interim Relief Package related to COVID-19, and have faced particular challenges in accessing minimum essential health services more broadly. The project is unique in that it works directly with women social movements through their self-represented community-based organisations. Fifteen focus group discussions with women from the selected communities were undertaken. In addition, the assessment included an initial analysis of budget allocations and trends in government allocations for sexual and reproductive health care services at the national and federal level. The project assessment notes the challenges women experience in accessing the right to health and also highlights the importance of decent work for the right to health. The final report will serve as a basis for the UN, CSOs and other stakeholders to support and advocate for State improvements in the respect and protection of the right to health of these marginalized women, including as relevant to specific recommendations from CEDAW, <sup>[4]</sup> CESC <sup>[5]</sup> and UPR <sup>[6]</sup> relevant to sexual and reproductive health services, and will also contribute to the 2030 Agenda pledge of LNOB and its SDGs 3 (targets 3.1 and 3.7) and 5 (target 5.6).
<b>29. Paraguay</b>	A human rights analysis of the social protection system,	The UN HRA in Paraguay, with thematic and financial support of the Surge Initiative, carried out a

<sup>[4]</sup> See CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/6 paras. 27, 35 and 39.

<sup>[5]</sup> See E/C.12/NPL/CO/3 para. 15.

<sup>[6]</sup> See recommendations 135, 137, 138, 143, 144, 146 and 147.

(2020)	including a review of policies and programs adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic.	human rights analysis of the social protection system, including a review of policies and programmes adopted during the pandemic, to identify gaps in protection. UNICEF, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP, the Food and Agricultural Organization and the UN HRA, led by the RC, used the study to engage with the Technical Unit of the Social Cabinet [Unidad Técnica del Gabinete Social] and the Ministry of Social Development [Ministerio de Desarrollo Social] to promote the extension of the new Government programme “ <i>Vamos!</i> ” to segments of society thus far excluded from social protection, including youth, indigenous peoples, women, older persons, children and persons with disabilities.
30. <b>Peru (2020)</b>	Human rights assessment of access to healthcare, social protection and decent work opportunities for Afro-Peruvians in the cities of Lambayeque and Piura.	In Peru, the UN HRA, with Surge Initiative support, is finalising an assessment, employing a strong gender lens, of access to health care, social protection and decent work opportunities for Afro-Peruvians in the regions of Lambayeque and Piura. The project builds on the recommendations of the recent visit of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent that called for the inclusion and participation of Afro-Peruvians in designing policies and strategies to address persistent and multiple forms of structural discrimination, further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. <sup>xxv</sup> The UNCT is using the assessment, which relies on the partnerships with CSOs and the NHRI, to inform the new UNSDCF, and especially the CCA and LNOB chapter, to highlight the human rights situation of these communities. Moreover, the study aimed at supporting the elaboration of the COVID-19 Response Guidelines to reflect Afro-Peruvian’s cultural, social and economic perspectives. It also aimed at ensuring their proper representation in processes related to the national and local health committees in the response to COVID-19 in Piura and Lambayeque. The report contributed to the elaboration of the National Policy for Afro-Peruvians and provides Afro-Peruvian representatives and human rights defenders with evidence-based information to strengthen their advocacy for promoting inclusion and non-discrimination.
31. <b>Serbia I (2020)</b>	Three sets of human rights-based analyses of the socio-economic impact of the	Additional resources provided by the Surge Initiative enabled the UN HRA and his team in the RCO to step up analysis on the impacts of COVID-19 on

pandemic on the situation of specific marginalised or at-risk groups, including Roma and workers in the informal sector.

vulnerable groups. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation funding also contributed to the joint UN and Government efforts under the auspices of the Surge Initiative. Targeted LNOB studies deeply grounded in the guidance and recommendations by the UN Human Rights Mechanisms on Serbia examined the situation of ten specific marginalised or at-risk groups: [workers](#) (with an emphasis on those employed in the informal economy); [Roma](#); [persons with disabilities](#); [homeless persons](#); [youth](#); [LGBTI persons](#); [persons living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\)](#); [persons deprived of liberty](#); [human rights defenders](#); and [journalists and media workers](#) (LNOB analysis). With Surge Initiative support, the UN HRA worked with Government officials and grassroots organisations to conduct a mapping of 702 [substandard Roma settlements](#) encompassing 167,975 inhabitants. Evidence and data collected on the living conditions in these settlements led to practical recommendations on critical economic and social rights issues, such as access to safe water, sanitation, basic income and electricity, drawing on the mechanisms' recommendations and guidance. This mapping has assisted efforts by local governments to remove the obstacles faced by the Roma people in accessing basic services and has also informed the work of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government. This mapping and the other targeted studies conducted with support of the Surge Initiative project have become an integral part of the UN COVID-19 response and emergency measures as well as longer-term recovery strategies, including through the UNSDCF. The latter is grounded in a robust human rights CCA, which dedicates one of its three priority pillars to human rights, gender equality and the rule of law. The LNOB studies were launched by the newly-formed Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue as well as with the Ministry of Public Administration and local self-government. The LNOB studies, which demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing the targeted recommendations, include reinforced data collection, greater exchange of information and a participatory approach, as well as urgent measures to address the lack of access to basic services. This work was also showcased by the RC as a good practice at the UN

		Human Rights Council's <a href="#">Third Inter-Sessional Meeting on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda</a> , held on 14 January 2021.
32. <b>Serbia II (2021)</b>	The development of a practical tool for policymakers helping them operationalize LNOB principle in national policies and strategies across all sectors.	<p>Policymakers in Serbia have a <a href="#">new tool</a> at their disposal to help them better integrate actions needed to fulfill the 2030 Agenda's LNOB promise in Government's policy- and decisionmaking. In response to a request from the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, the Human Rights Advisor (HRA) in Serbia, supported by the Surge Initiative, led the development of a guidance tool on LNOB through a highly inclusive and participatory drafting and validation process. The line ministry, the Public Policy Secretariat, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, members of the National Convention on the European Union (over 200 CSOs) and academia contributed to the drafting of the tool, tailored specifically to the Serbian policymaking environment. The tool provides clear guidelines on how to understand and apply HRBA and LNOB principles in the development of national/local legislative and strategic acts. It looks at each stage of the drafting process and provides concrete advice on how to ensure that the most marginalized and excluded groups are identified, recognized, and meaningfully involved, including disadvantaged women and girls. To make it as operational as possible, the tool includes a tailor-made step-by step approach to applying LNOB in the various stages of policymaking as well as a set of checklists that can support the identification of vulnerable groups, applying the LNOB principle when forming relevant working groups and conducting consultations, when collecting and analyzing data (with a checklist of possible sources of information, including regional and international human rights mechanisms) etc. Since its finalization in March 2022, the tool has been included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the new Antidiscrimination Strategy and is expected to be used throughout the development of the National Human Rights Strategy. More generally, any actors adopting legislative, strategic, and planning acts at all levels, including local self-governments, civil sector and experts from the academic community, are expected to benefit from the tool. On 22 September 2022, the OHCHR Team in Serbia, jointly with the</p>



		<p>Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, organized the launch of The Tool for the Introduction of the “Leave No One Behind” principle into legislative and strategic acts of the Republic of Serbia. This global pilot initiative was implemented with the support of the Surge Initiative. The Republic of Serbia is the first country to develop a tool that provides clear guidelines to decision-makers in understanding and applying one of the major principles of the 2030 Agenda, thereby ensuring that the most marginalized and excluded groups are recognized and involved at all stages of legislative and strategic acts.</p>
<p><b>33. Somalia (2021)</b></p>	<p>An analysis of the maximum available resources for the minimum core obligations of the right to social protection.</p>	<p>The Surge Initiative supported the Human Rights and Protection Group of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia with financial and thematic support to undertake a study to assess the human rights compliance of a social protection cash transfer scheme led by the Government. The study, which builds on a number of 2021 UPR recommendations on economic recovery and poverty reduction, included consultations in Benadir, Galmudug, Jubaland, HirShabele, SouthWest and Puntland, with a focus on communities who are amongst the most disadvantaged and marginalised. The study also included a human rights-based budget analysis of social protection investments in Somalia, highlighting, amongst others, that for the period 2018-2021, Somalia spent an average of 0.7 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on social safety nets, compared to an average of 2.1 percent of GDP in Sub-Saharan countries and a global average of 12.9 percent of GDP. The analysis calls for the Government to expand fiscal space by increasing domestic resources and to use debt relief to make social protection available and accessible to its population in line with its human rights obligations to use maximum available resources to respect, protect, and fulfil the minimum core obligations of the right to social protection, leaving no one behind.</p>
<p><b>34. South Africa I (2020)</b></p>	<p>Human rights-based and LNOB analyses, including on the socio-economic impacts of Covid-19, to inform CCAs and UNSDCFs in 10 priority countries within the region.</p>	<p>This project provided support to the OHCHR regional office for southern Africa to undertake LNOB analyses for various countries including Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Zambia to contribute to various UNCT processes and analyses including for CCA purposes.</p>

<p>35. <b>South Africa II (2022)</b></p>	<p>An analysis of CESCR's analysis concerning Angola, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa to identify existing socio-economic disaggregated data and gaps, develop an intersectional HRBA and LNOB analysis on economic transformation, to support CESCR and VNR reporting.</p>	<p>The 2022 Surge project has led to the finalisation of an advocacy brief, entitled 'An intersectional approach to socio-economic data in Southern Africa: Leveraging data to Leave No One Behind'. The brief - informed by the results of surveys administered to National Statistical Offices (NSO) – is anchored in the premise that to properly understand the relationship between ESC rights and the SDGs from a LNOB perspective, disaggregated data is essential. It focuses on Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa with a view to: (i) understand the existing socio-economic data landscapes in the three countries; (ii) illustrate some of the gaps in existing socio-economic data which have been identified by the Committee on ESC rights (CESCR); (iii) outline a HRBA to data for the countries in focus; and (iv) make recommendations as to how existing socio-economic data can be analysed in a manner which reveals the extent of intersectional forms of disadvantage and discrimination. Ultimately it aims to support States in meeting their human rights obligations and enable the progressive realisation of ESC rights with recommendations targeting NSOs, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), CSOs, National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up, UN and international organisations, and focuses on how existing socio-economic data can be leveraged to LNOB.</p>
<p>36. <b>South Sudan (2019/2022)</b></p>	<p>An assessment, including through human rights-based budgeting, of the impact of illicit financial flows on economic, social and cultural rights.</p>	<p>Surge funding and technical support was provide to the Commissions of Human Rights in <b>South Sudan</b>. The focus here was on the impact of illicit financial flows on the countries' economic and other areas of development, including the protection of ESCRs and the SDGs. In South Sudan, the assessment looked closely at resources emanating from extractive and non-extractive industries on maximum available resource and the progressive realisation of the right to education. The investigation - carried out by a financial investigator with the support of one of the Surge team's economists – included a multi-year budget analysis and highlighted how the illicit diversion of revenues deprived the State of critical resources to provide for the protection of economic, social and cultural rights. In its <a href="#">report to the Human Rights Council in 2021</a>, the Commission concluded that: "On the basis of its findings, the Commission has reasonable grounds to believe that members of</p>

		<p>the Government of South Sudan engaged in acts amounting to economic crimes, including tax evasion, money laundering, bribery, using one's position to influence decisions in the allocation of State resources, and using public funds for personal gain and advantage. The illicit diversion of revenues deprived the State of critical resources to fund economic, social and cultural rights." It recommended that the State "Realign spending priorities and commit resources towards fulfilling citizens' needs, including ensuring freedom from hunger and other economic, social and cultural rights, and improved standards of living."</p>
<b>37. Sudan (2022)</b>	<p>An assessment focusing on the rights to food and housing of women tea sellers, and social protection for the informal sector more broadly, including through a HRB-budgetary analysis.</p>	<p>OHCHR Sudan is in the final stages of implementation of a Surge Initiative project assessing the right to social protection, with a particular focus on the rights to housing and food, of Khartoum's food and tea sellers, which involved consultations with rights holders, authorities, CSOs and other stakeholders. On 13 December 2022, OHCHR Sudan held a validation workshop with representatives of the food and tea sellers, the Commission on Poverty Reduction and Social Protection, and the Ministries for Social Development and Finance, amongst others to present the preliminary findings and recommendations of the analysis. The preliminary findings address, for example, the situation of access to food and food security, housing and general standard of living experienced by this community, and a social protection system that is not inclusive, transparent nor reflective of the needs and rights of the most vulnerable. The assessment's recommendations will inform advocacy by OHCHR and UNCT for the necessary human rights changes, with commitments already expressed by the relevant authorities.</p>
<b>38. Tanzania (2022)</b>	<p>An analysis of the right to health of persons with disabilities in mainland Tanzania, including through a human-rights based budgetary assessment, with a specific focus on the regions of Dar Es Salaam, Morogoro and Iringa.</p>	<p>Still ongoing</p>
<b>39. Tunisia</b>	<p>A qualitative LNOB study of</p>	<p>The OHCHR Country Office in Tunisia, with close</p>

(2020)	<p>vulnerable groups traditionally left behind, with an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 response measures on these groups and their access to stimulus measures, for building back better. The study was undertaken following CCA/UNSDCF discussions, which highlighted the need to complement the already available quantitative data with human rights-based and qualitative information.</p>	<p>support from the Surge Team, is undertaking a qualitative LNOB study to complement an initial quantitative CCA assessment of vulnerable groups traditionally left behind. The initial quantitative assessment was considered incomplete due to limited disaggregated data on marginalised groups. For example, there was a lack of information concerning persons with disabilities, migrants, persons living with HIV, older persons, informal and undocumented workers, etc. The LNOB study responded to the critical need identified by the CCA in Tunisia for “a deeper understanding of the multi-dimensional exclusion experienced by diverse groups” and to “develop targeted and comprehensive strategies to bring them ... into the socio-political, economic and cultural life of Tunisia.” Building on the <a href="#">Checklist for a Human Rights-Based Approach to Socio-Economic Country Responses to COVID-19</a>, the study included an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 response measures on vulnerable groups and their access to stimulus measures. The project aimed to provide the UNCT and public authorities with concrete recommendations for recovering better by presenting strategies to address structural inequalities, and support the enjoyment of economic and social rights by marginalised groups.</p>
40. <b>Timor Leste (2022)</b>	<p>Analysis of barriers to social security for women informal sector workers, with a focus on women in domestic work, the agricultural sector and market sellers, and recommendations for implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy in a way that strengthens access the right to social security, including through a HRB-budgetary analysis (2018-2022) of allocations and expenditures on social security.</p>	<p>The national and international consultants undertook consultations and focus group discussions with various stakeholders in Timor-Leste, including the government, UN entities, CSOs and in particular with women in the informal economy, throughout October. The project focuses on women in domestic work, the agricultural sector and market sellers, as these are dominated by women. The project has been well-received by all interlocutors and field missions were undertaken jointly with ILO. A draft report, which will be complemented by a budgetary analysis, was prepared in November. The preliminary assessment notes various barriers faces by women in the informal economy, including financial, organizational and administrative, information barriers as well as those relating to policy and coherence. The report identifies several recommendations directed at a multitude of actors among the State, the NHRI, civil society organizations, the UN and different international</p>

		<p>partners. Among those recommendations enacting legislation that targets specific groups of informal workers, the establishment of transitory social security schemes that can serve as incentive for broader reach, the extension of existing social protection coverage and impact through non-contributory benefits, better and disaggregated data collection, and increasing coordination among sectorial policies so to ensure policy coherence and adequate use of resources, in themselves scarce in a country like Timor-Leste. The assessment also identifies several cross-cutting recommendations aimed at supporting the transition from the informal to the formal economy of workers and businesses, extending universal social protection, raising awareness and stepping up initiatives to disseminate information on the social security system, among other. Once the report has been finalized, it will be translated into Tetum and disseminated. Based on the findings and recommendations, the UNCT will in early 2023 discuss how to support the government to implement the National Social Protection Strategy in a way that strengthens the right to social security for women in the informal sector.</p>
41. <b>Uganda I (2020)</b>	Human rights-based analysis of the impacts of Covid-19, including an analysis of the economic stimulus measures, on marginalised groups.	<p>In Uganda, the Surge Team supported a preliminary analysis of the stimulus packages and a mapping of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on groups at risk of being left further behind, notably persons with disabilities, persons with albinism, and persons living with HIV/AIDS, in particular women and indigenous peoples. The analysis was conducted with a participatory methodology, including focus group discussions with activists and representatives of the concerned groups. It generated recommendations on short- and longer-term measures for increased protection of affected groups as well as their greater access to health, food, water and sanitation, employment, and other income-generating activities. The data collected was aimed at ensuring that the human rights of marginalized communities are given prominence in the implementation of the UNCT Joint Work Plan. This plan was prepared in support of the implementation of the recently signed UNSDCF covering 2021-2025, in order to recover better. It also aimed at informing UN efforts – led by OHCHR – to</p>

		operationalize the Memorandum of Understanding on the human rights-based approach to data, signed in 2019, which brings together the Uganda Human Rights Commission, National Planning Authority, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, and the Office of the Prime Minister.
<b>42. Uganda II (2022)</b>	An analysis of trends of resource allocations (2018-2022), to identify gaps and needs, build capacity of local stakeholders, for strengthened advocacy aimed at institutionalizing a human rights responsive planning and budgeting process for local government in Gulu and Nwoya Districts.	Still ongoing.
<b>43. Ukraine/Colombia (2019/2020)</b>	An assessment of the impact of economic blockades on economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to social security (undertaken through cross-fertilisation with OHCHR Colombia).	In Ukraine, the Surge Team supported the HRMMU in a variety of initiatives and activities with the general aim of strengthening work on economic and social rights and the 2030 Agenda, including in the COVID-19 responses, while stepping up collaboration with the RC and UNCT. In this regard, in 2020, the Surge Initiative provided HRMMU with support in developing detailed human rights recommendations for a <a href="#">UNCT policy paper on social protection</a> . The policy paper, which was launched at a high-level event hosted by the RC in April 2021 <sup>xxvi</sup> , aims to initiate a dialogue with national authorities and contribute to ongoing reforms of the pension system. With worsening levels of poverty in the country due to the pandemic, the brief has put forward a set of comprehensive policy suggestions to remedy low coverage and a lack of access for the poorest and socially excluded and to design a universal social protection system that offers coverage to all, without discrimination. In Ukraine, the Surge Team has also helped to deepen rights-based analysis of socio-economic impact assessment and responses to COVID-19 in relation to the inclusivity of stimulus packages and other emergency measures, particularly for the Roma, homeless persons, older persons and persons with disabilities. The Surge Team has offered suggestions on counter-cyclical economic policies and on expanding fiscal space to guarantee minimum essential levels for the

		rights to health, food, housing and other economic and social rights. A variety of analytical pieces were produced to inform the Government's national human rights action plan and the mid-term UN planning, including a <a href="#">Briefing Paper on Social Housing in Crimea</a> , and two briefing notes on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities and on homeless persons. <sup>xxvii</sup>
<b>44. Ukraine (2021)</b>	The development of human rights-based strategies to enhance social protection through human rights-based budgetary analysis.	<p><u>The project follow-up is currently on hold given the situation in Ukraine.</u></p> <p>With an overall aim to develop targeted engagement and advocacy with local authorities on ways to better integrate human rights-based approaches in their budgeting, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) undertook a project to produce an analysis of social spending and participatory budgeting in ten selected localities - Berezivska, Chaplynska, Kramatorsk, Kyiv, Lanovetska, Mariupol, Mykolaiv, Novopskovska, Sumy, Shyrokivska, (ranging from large cities to small towns and rural communities). Special emphasis was placed on participation in the local budgetary processes, on trends related to social spending (including in the context of Ukrainian decentralization reforms),<sup>32</sup> and on vulnerable groups (women, homeless persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, Roma, IDPs). Budget allocations were compared against existing social protection policies/programmes (e.g. local social and economic development plans, social budget programmes, etc.) and any indicators that showed how the budgets contribute to the realization of human rights commitments outlined in such programmes/plans. Further, drawing on existing research on local budget transparency in Ukraine, complemented by desk research and interviews with relevant stakeholders, the project also examined to which extent the budgeting process on social protection in the selected communities is participatory in the various stages of budgeting process (approval, execution, oversight and evaluation), and more particularly, to which extent it is transparent, accountable, inclusive and non-discriminatory with regard to vulnerable and</p>

<sup>32</sup> Since 2014, Ukraine has been implementing a decentralization reform. According to the Ukrainian legislation, executive committees of local councils draft forecasts and local budgets, and approve them prior to consideration of the budget draft by a local council at their session. Local communities have become responsible for the provision of social services, for assessing the needs, planning, organization and financing social services.



		<p>marginalized groups. The project follows-up on various HRM recommendations, notably the <a href="#">2020 CESC</a>,<sup>33</sup> and is closely linked to the 2030 Agenda, its central LNOB promise and SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, and 16. It was undertaken within a context of important development reforms,<sup>34</sup> exacerbated inequalities of marginalized and disadvantaged groups resulting from COVID-19, as well as the significant impact on prices of basic utilities, especially heating resulting from energy sector reform which impacted the standard of living and increased the need for social protection at the national and sub-national level.</p>
45. <b>Uruguay I (2020)</b>	<p>The integration of a human rights-based approach in Covid-19 and longer-term CCA/CF responses, including the establishment of a UNCT monitoring mechanism on the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on those most left behind.</p>	<p>In Uruguay, the Surge Initiative provided the UN HRA with the necessary resources and expertise to effectively mainstream human rights into the COVID-19 response and the CCA and CF. This support facilitated the establishment of a UNCT monitoring mechanism on the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on those most left behind. It aimed to enable the UNCT to better monitor the human rights context and will feed into the CCA's continuous analysis. It also aimed to contribute to identifying priorities within the CCA and thereby support UN Agencies, Programs and Funds (APF) in redefining action anchored in evidence-based data. Building on this and learning from other good examples, including in Kenya, the medium-term objective was to create a permanent multi-agency mechanism for integrated analysis that goes beyond the COVID-19 crisis. This mechanism would be able to alert the UNCT, through timely human rights-based data and analyses, of inequalities, discrimination and obstacles faced by groups left behind, including through systematic consultations with and analysis provided by CSOs. The monitoring mechanism would also act as an effective prevention framework. The Surge Team also supported the UN HRA in two other analytical efforts, seeking to contribute to the RC's engagement with the Uruguayan Government, particularly in advocating for the increase of social spending for economic and</p>

<sup>33</sup> Also relevant in this context are the recommendations stemming from the [2017 review of Ukraine by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) and the [2011 review by the Committee on the Rights of the Child](#).

<sup>34</sup> In addition to the decentralization reform, other ongoing reforms include social services, energy sector reform and healthcare reform. In 2021, Ukraine was also elaborating the [Human Development Strategy](#) which focused on health, social protection and gender equality. As a result, during the last five years, local communities' budgets grew approximately four times, making local communities responsible for the provision of social services as well as local and emergency healthcare.

		<p>social rights. In one such effort, the Surge initiative provided support to an analysis on monetary transfers to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable populations. Recommendations were also provided based on the human rights framework, including on participation, transparency and accountability. Furthermore, as a contribution to an RCO-funded project, the Surge Team also gathered data on government budget allocations and expenditures for social spending over the past 10 years. The findings show a steady increase in social spending, from 8.2 percent of GDP in 2011 to 10.7 per cent in 2019, in areas such as education, science and technology, health, housing, social protection, culture, and sports. However, the findings also note recent reductions in the 2021-2025 budget in the allocations for housing, science and technology, culture, sports and education, when compared to previous budgets. In order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government established an extra-budgetary multi-source fund. However, monitoring its use and implementation has proven challenging.</p>
46. <b>Uruguay II (2022)</b>	<p>Developing indicators and gathering information (and identifying gaps of it) to present evidence of the level of enjoyment of ESC rights by Afro-descendant communities in Uruguay to contribute to the already existing Mirador DESCA platform.</p>	<p>Based on an analysis of public available data, the 2022 project contributed ESC rights indicators to the <a href="#">MIRADOR DESCA</a> on Afro populations in Uruguay, to strengthen monitoring of these rights for these populations. Mirador, is a platform established jointly by the NHRI, the National University and OHCHR to monitor human rights in Uruguay. The project also finalised a qualitative report on existing gaps in the available data concerning ESC rights of Afro-Uruguayans and an analysis of the enjoyment of their ESC rights, with a particular focus on women, older persons and others at risk of being left behind. The findings of the assessment were presented to the NHRI and representatives from the Ministry of Social Development with the aim of advocating for enhanced data on Afro-Uruguayans and inform public policies. They have also been used to inform an upcoming visit in March 2023 of the Working Group on Afrodescendants, and will contribute to the implementation of the National Plan for Racial Equity and Afro-descendants by the Consejo Consultivo Nacional de Equidad Racial Étnico y Afrodescendencia.</p>

<p><b>47. WARO (2020)</b></p>	<p>Joint regional project with UN Women and UNICEF: quantitative surveys on the gendered dimensions of the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.</p>	<p>The Surge Initiative, OHCHR's METS Human Rights Indicators and Data Unit, its Women's Human Rights and Gender Section, and Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division contributed financial and technical support to the OHCHR's West Africa Regional Office (WARO) for a joint regional project with UNICEF and UN Women, which is the initiator of the project, in close collaboration with the National Statistical Offices and Ministries for Gender Affairs in 10 countries within the region, namely, Benin, Central African Republic, <a href="#">Côte d'Ivoire</a>, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, <a href="#">Mali</a>, Niger, <a href="#">Senegal</a>, Sierra Leone and Togo. The project, which started in late 2020, supported quantitative surveys on the gendered dimensions of the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. Data and analysis on women remains generally inadequate. Given the challenges related to COVID-19 restrictions, information was gathered through computer-assisted telephonic surveys and included interviews with a sample of 2,400 individuals per country, nationally representative of sex, age, economic/social status and location. With the guidance of OHCHR specialists in the field, the surveys were developed and implemented following the <a href="#">Human Rights-Based Approach to Data</a>. The surveys<sup>xxviii</sup> were aimed at documenting multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women in their enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to health, information, and to be free from violence. The project is anchored in the recommendations of the CEDAW, to collect accurate and comprehensive age- and sex-disaggregated data on the gendered impact of the pandemic to facilitate informed and evidence-based policy-making regarding women and girls.<sup>xxix</sup> The project contributed to strengthening collaboration with the various ministries and national statistical offices, which opened strategic opportunities for joint follow-up work. For example, in Senegal, following the launch of the first of these survey reports, several actors expressed interest in undertaking a second analysis looking at the continued impact of COVID-19 and related measures.</p>
<p><b>48. WARO/Nig</b></p>	<p>A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the socio-</p>	<p>In collaboration with the Mixed Migration Centre, this project developed <a href="#">quantitative analysis</a> which</p>

er	economic impacts of Covid-19 on migrants in Niger, with a specific focus on international migrants and the Katche community in Agadez.	focused on the various impacts of the Covid-19 on the ESC rights of migrants in Niger. The analysis used the MMC's 4Mi data analysis tool – the MMC's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements. The objective of this analysis was to develop disaggregated data and evidence to inform legal, policy, planning and programming at the country level. The outcomes of this analysis were also aimed to serve as a basis for future activities of the PROMIS project, a UNODC-OHCHR joint initiative aimed at promoting a human rights-based response to smuggling of migrants and to effectively respond to human rights violations related to irregular migration in West Africa. The qualitative analysis focused more specifically on the ESC rights of the international migrants and the Katche community in Agadez.
49. <b>Zambia (2022)</b>	The development of a framework to monitor Government actions to uphold the rights to food and education, including through a human rights-based budgetary analysis focused on allocation and expenditure patterns and trends in the food and education sectors for the past five years.	Still ongoing.

<sup>i</sup> See, for example, the [January 2020 UPR recommendations from Sudan to Kenya during the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group: "Continue efforts to eradicate poverty and provide drinking water and sanitation to the population"](#), Paragraph 142.

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- <sup>ii</sup> See the [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation on her mission to Kenya](#) (22– 28 July 2014).
- <sup>iii</sup> See, for example, Paragraphs 7, 8, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, and 22 of [CERD Concluding Observations on the fifth to seventh periodic reports of Kenya](#). See also Paragraphs 44-46 of [CEDAW Concluding Observations on the eighth periodic report of Kenya](#).
- <sup>iv</sup> OHCHR established the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights in 2020. The Task Force includes civil society representatives from the Transnistria region as well as from ATU Gagausia.
- <sup>v</sup> See Paragraphs 5–6, [Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Argentina](#).
- <sup>vi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>vii</sup> See the 2009 [Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for Cambodia](#). Paragraph 27 notes with concern the wide regional disparities in the less developed and economically marginalized provinces, and the significant inequalities in income distribution, especially between urban areas and the rural areas where most of the population live in poverty. See Paragraph 16, concerning indigenous peoples' rights.
- <sup>viii</sup> In 2019, CEDAW raised concerns about indigenous and ethnic minority women. See Paragraphs 32 to 33 of the [Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Cambodia](#). Other groups who are in vulnerable situations include workers, especially women, working on short-term or fixed-duration contracts, or in domestic settings – lack of basic labour protection and benefits (including maternity leave and paid leave). See Paragraphs 36(a)(b), 37(a)(b)); and Paragraphs 40 to 41.
- <sup>ix</sup> See Paragraph 58 of the [Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Colombia](#).
- <sup>x</sup> See [CESCR General Comment No. 3 on the Nature of States Parties' Obligations](#) concerning Article 2, Paragraph 1, of the Covenant and [CESCR General Comment No. 12 on the Right to Adequate Food](#) concerning Article 11.
- <sup>xi</sup> For example, see Paragraphs 5 to 7, of the [Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Ecuador](#). The project also built on guidance provided by the [2016 CESCR statement on "Public debt, austerity measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,"](#) and its [2020 "Statement on the Covid-19 Pandemic and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights."](#)
- <sup>xii</sup> For example, Paragraphs 16-17 of the [March 2020 CESCR Report on Guinea](#). The CESC also requested Guinea to provide an update on its recommendation related to mining operations in 2022.
- <sup>xiii</sup> For example, the Chambre des Mines de Guinée (CMG) has been greatly involved in providing support to the national COVID-19 prevention and response strategy, including by donating over 1,000,000 US\$ to the national agency for health security as well as 3 080 000 USD for the acquisition of 28 000 vaccine doses to vaccinate 14 000 employees and a part of the population. In collaboration with its members, it also took a number of necessary precautionary measures to ensure that mining employees could continue going to work, including by providing in kind donations to communities, initiating information and sensitisation campaigns and providing prevention kits for employees, their families and neighbouring communities.
- <sup>xiv</sup> See, for example, the [January 2020 UPR recommendations from Sudan to Kenya during the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group: "Continue efforts to eradicate poverty and provide drinking water and sanitation to the population"](#), Paragraph 142.
- <sup>xv</sup> See the [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation on her mission to Kenya](#) (22– 28 July 2014).
- <sup>xvi</sup> See, for example, Paragraphs 7, 8, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, and 22 of [CERD Concluding Observations on the fifth to seventh periodic reports of Kenya](#). See also Paragraphs 44-46 of [CEDAW Concluding Observations on the eighth periodic report of Kenya](#).
- <sup>xvii</sup> Poverty here refers to the national poverty line and is defined as the line below which individuals cannot meet their food and non-food minimum needs.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Republic of Liberia (2018), "Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD)".
- <sup>xix</sup> For example, the Special Rapporteur noted that "... [f]or mining to accord with human rights obligations, it must be undertaken only after prior assessment and consultation with the people most affected. Effective remedies must be provided for violations of their rights. ... Mining permits should result in benefits not only for the country as a whole, but for the local communities most directly affected by the mining. The Government must impose restrictions that ensure that mining activities proceed only if these requirements are met, and the regulations themselves must be considered, adopted and implemented in a transparent manner that allows for free and informed public debate. ... Moreover, that the revisions to the Mining Code meet human rights standards ... and that the process of considering the revisions is transparent and open to public discussion. ...." See Paragraphs 54 and 80 of the [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, on his visit to Madagascar](#).
- <sup>xx</sup> For example, on 8 September 2020, the Audit Court [Cour des Comptes] made a landmark decision in the area of human rights and environmental justice. The Court presented the results of an audit relating to the compliance of the procedures for granting mining permits and environmental certification for the Base Toliara project (in the southern region of Madagascar) and subsequently decided that the granting of the operating permit did not comply with the regulations in force. The Court evoked *inter alia* violations of land rights of the traditional occupants, failure in the public consultation process, as well as violations of the rights of local public authorities. This audit was conducted following intensive advocacy and denunciation made by a platform of CSOs supported by OHCHR.
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<sup>xxi</sup> The UPR, CESC and CEDAW have all had concluding comments/recommendations related to women in the informal sector. For example, in its [Concluding Observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Maldives](#), the CEDAW Committee made a number of recommendations to Maldives – which are specific to addressing the economic opportunities for women. The recommendations include: take legislative measure for the adoption of temporary special measures which are aimed at achieving substantive equality between women and men in all areas (19(b)); (34(a)); designing and implementing public policies to extend social protection to women in the informal sector (34(c)); address obstacles preventing women from entering the labour market (34(d)); promote opportunities for women in the tourism sector (34(f)); and ensure that women benefit from all social schemes in place (39).

<sup>xxii</sup> Women in the Greater Male Region and 70 islands covering all of the atolls were interviewed in the survey.

<sup>xxiii</sup> OHCHR established the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights in 2020. The Task Force includes civil society representatives from the Transnistria region as well as from ATU Gagausia.

<sup>xxiv</sup> The NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights initially had 52 members. To date, the membership has grown to 58 partner NGOs, further indicating a strong interest to engage through and with this body.

<sup>xxv</sup> [See the recommendations of March 2020 here.](#)

<sup>xxvi</sup> This high-level event will be the second Hernán Santa Cruz dialogue, part of a global lecture series launched by OHCHR in October 2020, aiming to raise awareness and stimulating discussions within communities to strengthen the realisation of socio-economic rights. The dialogue is based on the vision and mission of Hernán Santa Cruz, whose important contribution was his successful advocacy for the inclusion of socio-economic rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For more information, see the dedicated page on [the Hernán Santa Cruz Dialogues](#).

<sup>xxvii</sup> It should be noted that HRMMU monitoring reports from the 27<sup>th</sup> quarterly report onwards much more strongly reflect the linkages with the 2030 Agenda and economic, social and cultural rights. Furthermore, [the last HRMMU report in 2020](#) focuses on the impact of COVID-19 on human rights in Ukraine, including its socio-economic impact and the impact of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Lastly, HRMMU also produced a briefing note on the impact of COVID-19 and its prevention measures on homeless persons in Ukraine, indicating increased capacity to address economic, social and cultural rights, including in the context of COVID-19.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Published report so far on Côte D'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal include:

- [Enquête rapide sur les effets de la COVID-19: Une perspective genre Côte d'Ivoire](#);
- [Enquête rapide sur les effets de la COVID-19 au Mali: Une perspective genre](#); and
- [Enquête rapide sur les effets de la COVID-19 au Sénégal: Une perspective genre](#).

<sup>xxix</sup> [See the Guidance note on CEDAW and COVID-19 here.](#)