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Resilient nations.*

**Consolidated Annual Progress Report on
Activities Implemented under the UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming (UNDG-HRM) Fund**

**Report of the Administrative Agent of the UNDG-HRM Fund
1 January – 31 December 2018**

**Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
Bureau of Management
United Nations Development Programme**

GATEWAY: <http://mptf.undp.org>

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



Office of the United Nations
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United Nations Educational,
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Fund



United Nations Children's Fund



United Nations System Staff
College

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DENMARK, Government of



FINLAND, Government of



GERMANY, Government of



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NORWAY, Government of



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

DEFINITIONS

Allocation

Amount approved by the Steering Committee for a project/programme.

Approved Project/Programme

A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Contributor Commitment

Amount(s) committed by a donor to a Fund in a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.

Contributor Deposit

Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement.

Delivery Rate

The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Participating Organization against the 'net funded amount'.

Indirect Support Costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Participating Organizations. UNDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs.

Net Funded Amount

Amount transferred to a Participating Organization less any refunds transferred back to the MPTF Office by a Participating Organization.

Participating Organization

A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is an implementing partner in a Fund, as represented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular Fund.

Project Expenditure

The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all Participating Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Participating Organization follows for donor reporting.

Project Financial Closure

A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project Operational Closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which Participating Organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project Start Date

Date of transfer of first instalment from the MPTF Office to the Participating Organization.

Total Approved Budget

This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Steering Committee.

US Dollar Amount

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEB	The United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination
HRA	Human Rights Adviser
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HRM	Human Rights Mainstreaming
HRuF	Human Rights up Front
ILO	International Labour Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF Office	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office UNDP
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RC	Resident Coordinator
RHRA	Regional Human Rights Adviser
RMC	Resource Management Committee
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDS	United Nations development system
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
HRM	UNSDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism
HRWG	UNSDG Human Rights Working Group
RG VVN	UNSDG Results Group: Give Voice to Common Values and Norms
UNDCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff Colleague
WHO	World Health Organization

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This Annual Progress Report on Activities Implemented under the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Human Rights Mainstreaming Fund (UNDG-HRM Fund), which was designed to support the work of the UNDG Human Rights Working Group (UNDG-HRWG), the UNDG Results Group: Give Voice to Common Values and Norms (RG VVN) and the UNSDG Task Team on Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda (henceforth referred to as the Human Rights Task Team) - the human rights mainstreaming structures of the UNDG¹ / UNSDG, is submitted to the donors of the UNDG-HRM Fund by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the UNDG-HRM Fund in fulfilment of the reporting provisions of the Standard Administrative Arrangement. The information presented in this Progress Report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018. This report is consolidated based on information contained in the individual programme narrative reports and financial information provided by the UNDG-HRM Fund Secretariat and Participating UN Organizations.

Strategic Framework

The UNDG-HRM Fund was designed to support the overall objective of the UNSDG to institutionalize human rights as a central part of the UN's development work. This work has been taken forward through the standing UNSDG human rights mainstreaming structures as they have evolved over time, through strengthening system-wide coherence and collaboration on human rights mainstreaming and providing policy and operational support to Resident Coordinators, Regional UNSDG Teams and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in integrating human rights principles and international standards into the work of the UN and in supporting national partners implement human rights obligations. In 2018, the UNSDG established the Human Rights Task Team under the Strategic Results Group on SDG Implementation. The Human Rights Task Team is now the standing senior level inter-agency coordination mechanism responsible for taking forward the UNSDG's human rights mainstreaming work. As with the preceding mechanism, the Human Rights Task Team is co-Chaired by OHCHR and UNESCO, with WHO joining as a third co-Chair. The Human Rights Task Team sets the strategic vision and priorities of the UNSDG and the UNDG-HRM Fund in terms of human rights mainstreaming activities.

Progress Highlights

Since 2011, the UNSDG (through the HRM, HRWG, RG VVN, and the Human Rights Task Team) has championed a comprehensive and systematic approach to strengthening policy coherence in integrating human rights in development. This approach has included work to ensure that the support structures to respond to the increased demand for support on human rights are readily available to RCs and UNCTs, that catalytic expert capacity can be deployed and pioneering initiatives taken forward.

In 2018, this work continued under the chapeau of the 2030 Agenda, responding to its strong focus on human rights; an agenda that is about leaving no-one behind, reaching those furthest behind first, and addressing inequality and discrimination. A key focus has been to continue supporting the UN at country-level to address human rights in the context of implementation of the SDGs.

In 2018, the strong focus on implementation of UN reform mandated by the General Assembly in 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) (A/Res/71/243) and the General Assembly

¹ The UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) was previously known as the UN Development Group (UNDG). It was reconstituted as the UNSDG in May 2018. Reflecting this change, we use the UNSDG throughout this report to refer to the work of the UNDG in 2018 and before that time. As the name of the UNDG-HRM Fund was not changed in 2018, this name remains the same in the report.

Resolution on the repositioning of the UNDS (A/Res/72/279) provided the backdrop for reflecting on the kinds of human rights leadership and technical capacities needed to ensure that the new development system will be able to fully integrate human rights into the support provided to Member States, in line with the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

In addition, the Secretary-General's Human Rights up Front initiative and strong focus on Prevention as a cornerstone of development results underlines the critical importance of the UN system in fulfilling its human rights responsibilities. As a result, demand from the field for human rights support continues to grow exponentially. In 2018, the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and its Human Rights Task Team was able to build on previous achievements and the new UNDS mandates and structures to scale-up policy and operational support in the new era of development. A central message is that human rights are at the core of the UN's common efforts and in particular as key principles of the 2030 Agenda, with the UNDG-HRM Fund's work in 2018 supporting initiatives of the UNSDG to ensure that the UN's normative role -- particularly on human rights, including gender equality and women's empowerment - are core considerations of new frameworks, policy guidance, institutional change and UN delivery at country level.

The programme of work in 2018 built on the earlier efforts and priorities relating to principled leadership and rights-based programming and advocacy capacities at country level, including through scaling up the deployment of Human Rights Advisers, the development of operational guidance for UNCTs, and the facilitation of communities of practice for peer exchange and knowledge management. As elaborated below, significant results are seen in improved system-wide policy coherence on human rights at the global level and strengthened UN technical capacities and activities to integrate human rights into development at the country level.

In response to demand for support on **integration of human rights in development activities at country level**, the Human Rights Task Team of the UNSDG published an [Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind for UN Country Teams](#), which responded to demand from the field for clear guidance on how the UNDS can support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda's commitment to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first and facilitate joined-up humanitarian-development actions at country level. This Operational Guide is now the primary system-wide tool of the UNSDG for UNCTs in taking forward the pledge to leave no one behind, and is referenced in key documents relating to UNDS reform including the new Cooperation Framework Guidance, the Joint SDG Fund first call for concept notes, and the Report of the Secretary General on implementation of the QCPR (A/74/73 - E/2019/4). It will be piloted in three countries in 2019.

Another key focus was on supporting **a human rights-based implementation of the 2030 Agenda and repositioning of the UN development system**, drawing on the foundational strategic thinking spearheaded through the 2016 *Human Rights Frontiers 2030 Forum*. Active engagement across multiple levels of the UN included **integration of key human rights principles and elements in the new UNDAF** (renamed UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in 2019) drafts, informed by valuable technical and operational advice from members of the Human Rights Task Team and Human Rights Advisers.

To **strengthen UN Leadership on human rights**, the UNSDG continued to implement the three-pronged approach of **Visionary Thought Leadership, Principled Leadership** and **Communities of Effort** developed at the Human Rights Frontiers Forum to support RC and UNCT leadership in leveraging the normative mandate, expertise and convening role of the UN to promote human rights at the country level. In particular, the first **Regional Human Rights Dialogue for Resident Coordinators in the Asia Pacific Region** (21-22 May 2018, Bangkok) was convened by UNDP, OHCHR and UNDCO² with support

² The UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO) was previously known as the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UN DOCO). In January 2019 the name was changed to UNDCO. Reflecting this change, we use UNDCO throughout this report to refer to the work of UN DOCO in 2018.

from the Asia-Pacific regional UNSDG. This forum provided a much-needed platform for identifying effective tactics and strategies for human rights leadership at the country level and exploring possibilities for support from the regional UNSDG including the UNSDG Human Rights Network.

The **deployment of Human Rights Advisers (HRAs) to RCs and UNCTs** was significantly scaled up to enable the RC/UNCT to engage in a more active, joined-up and strategic manner on human rights issues in the context of development and, where relevant, humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts. .

In 2018, the UNDG-HRM Fund supported HRAs in 16 countries, namely **Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Brazil, Ecuador, Jordan, Madagascar, Malaysia, The Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Timor-Leste, Uruguay** and **Zimbabwe**. (Another 18 were deployed with funding from other sources.) Initiatives to foster the community of practice within the HRA cohort have enabled the UNSDG to draw upon HRAs as a key resource in development of new UNSDG guidance. Key achievements for HRAs included the integration of human rights into UN programmes and activities, UNDAFs and other key strategic planning tools and the application of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) and support to building and strengthening of national capacities and institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of the 2030 Agenda and UN development system reforms. Their support also strengthened and expanded RC and UNCT activities to promoting human rights as a common UN value and upholding international norms and standards through advocacy and awareness raising. Their advice strengthened the integration of human rights considerations in humanitarian responses and post-crisis recovery under the direction of the RC/Humanitarian Coordinator. In addition, HRAs provided support to the UN and national partners in their engagement with international human rights mechanisms. This report includes many concrete examples of such support.

The UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team continued global-level efforts to support normative and operational coherence through strengthened UNCT engagement with the human rights mechanisms. In 2018, this included the annual **letter to every Resident Coordinator informing them of the opportunities for engagement with human rights mechanisms** in the coming year. Following internal discussions on the strategic value of the UPR and other human rights mechanisms for advancing rights-based development work, UNDCO also strengthened its annual reporting system – the Information Management System (IMS) - to collect **new data on the extent to which UNDAFs and Common Country Assessments integrate the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review, treaty bodies and special procedures**. Selected human rights data from the IMS – such as on support provided by UNCTs to governments to engage with human rights mechanisms - are already integrated into the QCPR 2016 monitoring framework. This new data reveals significant room for progress. Going forward, the data will be critical for tracking UNCTs' systematic use of the human rights mechanisms to guide programming in support of the 2030 Agenda.

As of 31 December 2018, the cumulative use of UNDG-HRM Fund funds under the framework set by the UNDG-HRWG / RG VVN / Human Rights Task Team was US\$ 13,371,472 with a balance of US\$ 6,573,584 remaining in the UNDG-HRM Fund account (the vast majority of which was received in late 2018). The maturity and strength of the UNDG-HRM Fund and its support structures is evident in its high delivery rate for 2018, which reached 95 percent. This highlights the ability of the Participating Organizations, supported by the Secretariat to the UNDG-HRM Fund and UNSDG inter-agency coordination mechanism on human rights and the Trust Fund's Governance Structure to effectively take forward its work plan.

“Now is the time to urgently accelerate implementation of Agenda 2030. This also means accelerating our progress on realizing all human rights, including the right to development, for all. We must leverage the multilateral system to secure progress and increase resources for the national-level implementation of the 2030 Agenda and human rights, including for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.”

Amina J Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General,
 Remarks at the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council, 7 March 2019.

1. Strategic Framework and Objectives

Human Rights Mainstreaming within the UN System

As Member States reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda, the world we strive for is one of “universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination.” With its transformative ambition and universal applicability, the 2030 Agenda challenges the UN to remain steadfast in ensuring the SDGs are implemented in accordance with international law, through an integrated and comprehensive approach which ensures that no one is left behind. Moreover, in a context where people are suffering the impact of conflict, violence, disaster and environmental degradation, where inequality and discrimination are on the rise, all members of the UN family – development, humanitarian, political, peace and security and human rights – must work together across the pillars to provide an integrated and joined-up response to prevent and address crises, human rights violations and the denial of human dignity.

One of the key aims of the UNSDG has been to support the UN development system (UNDS) to leverage its moral authority, convening power and operational capacity for the realization of human rights. Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) are at the forefront of the UN’s efforts in advancing human rights at the country level. Their leadership to strategically position the UN on human rights will be even more critical as the UNDS is repositioned to strengthen its support to Member States’ implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To meet the promise of “leaving no one behind,” and to reach the furthest behind first, the UN must leverage its moral authority, convening power and operational capacity, putting the imperative of addressing inequalities and discrimination at the heart of the UN system-wide support on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2018, the UNSDG Task Team on Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda (hereinafter referred to as the Human Rights Task Team) was established under the Strategic Results Group on SDG Implementation, carrying on the long-standing functions of previous mechanisms for human rights mainstreaming.

The overall objective of these UNSDG inter-agency human rights mainstreaming coordination mechanisms has been to strengthen system-wide coherence and collaboration and to provide catalytic support for RCs, Regional UNSDG Teams and UNCTs and their national partners in mainstreaming human rights. Specifically, the HRWG aimed to:

- a) Ensure policy coherence on human rights mainstreaming and on normative and operational linkages across the UN development system
- b) Support the UNDG in providing system-wide human rights expertise to Member States, anchored in strong human rights leadership by RCs and UNCTs with relevant capacity and support structures
- c) Support the UN development system effectively deliver its human rights responsibilities and demands under the Human Rights up Front initiative.

The Human Rights Task Team is a critical inter-agency policy and programme support coordination mechanism. It sets the overall vision and strategic priorities of the UNSDG and the UNDG-HRM MDTF

in terms of the UNSDG’s overall effort to ensure the integration of human rights in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Co-Chaired by Assistant Secretary-Generals from OHCHR, UNESCO and WHO, this team comprises over 20 UNSDG entities. The vision and mission of the Human Rights Task Team are set out below, together with the three focus areas agreed for 2018-2019.

UNSDG Task Team on Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda

Vision

The UNDS places the people as rights-holders at the heart of its development efforts, working to promote, respect and protect their inherent dignity and human rights within the development context and seeking their empowerment as active partners in and for more sustainable, equitable and resilient development. The UNDS support to countries’ implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be grounded unequivocally in that for which the UN, by its very Charter, stands: freedom from fear and want for all, without discrimination.

Mission

Through development and provision of policy, guidance, good practices, communications and other operational support, the **Team on LNOB, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda** enables the UNDS to leverage its unique role as custodian of global norms, convening power, technical expertise and operational capacity as it provides normative and evidence-based development assistance to Members States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and their commitment to leave no one behind, ensuring respect, protection and promotion of the human rights and equality, including gender equality, imperatives embedded in the 2030 Agenda.

FOCUS AREAS

Within the framework of its vision and mission, the Team will spearhead provision of strategic deliverables, building also on the work of the *UNSDG Human Rights Working Group* and the *UNSDG Results Group: Give Voice to Common Values and Norms*. The Team will also seek synergies with other Results Groups and Teams to avoid duplication of effort and maximize the use of resources.

The following focus areas have been identified in which action by the Team can significantly enhance the UNDS’ ability to fulfill its responsibilities ensuring adherence to key principles of human rights.

1. **Serve as the primary policy forum** (on leaving no one behind, human rights and the normative agenda) in support of the UNDS’ normative and evidenced-based “thought leadership”, strengthening related policy coherence across the UNDS using an integrated approach, including for the purpose of consistent and coherent advocacy and messaging at country, regional and global levels.
2. **Through advocacy and technical support** for relevant capacity and empowerment structures for the field, help anchor strong, system-wide human rights and evidence-based expertise in the leadership of RCs and UNCTs, specifically as they engage national development actors.
3. **Support other teams of the Strategic Results Group on SDG Implementation and other UNSDG Strategic Results Groups** to integrate norms, standards and principles, including leave no one behind, human rights and gender equality, in their work and to speak as one voice on these issues.

“The Sustainable Development Agenda – which aims to lift millions from poverty and enable them to exercise their inalienable rights – has human rights at its core and as its foundation. Lasting peace and inclusive sustainable development can never be achieved without full respect for human rights.”

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, Remarks at the opening of exhibit on the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 6 December 2018

Key strategic programme objectives include:

- Ensuring rights-based implementation of the 2030 Agenda by articulating the normative human rights framework for policy and programming support with a focus on:
 - ✓ Alignment with international norms and standards
 - ✓ Leaving no one behind
 - ✓ Active and meaningful participation
 - ✓ Robust accountability at global, regional and national levels
- Developing and supporting a repositioned UNDS that promotes an integrated UN agenda, with human rights facilitating strategic solutions with human dignity at its core by:
 - ✓ Providing thought leadership on the human rights dimensions on critical issues of our time and creating a common vision across the pillars of the UN system, including through contributing to high-level system-wide discussions and decisions on strengthening the UNDS’ actions at global, regional and country level to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda in accordance with human rights
 - ✓ Providing operational guidance on core values of equality and non-discrimination, including the principle of “leaving no one behind” (building on the CEB UN System Framework for Action - *Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development*)
 - ✓ Providing messages on human rights mainstreaming to inform the UN Development System reform efforts, and integrating essential human rights elements into new UNDS policies, frameworks and guidance (including the repositioned UNDAF/UNSDCF)
- Support RCs and UNCT leadership to engage politically and tactically on human rights, by:
 - ✓ Providing capacity support on human rights to RCs and UNCTs, including through scaling-up deployment of in-country and regional human rights advisers
 - ✓ Developing and rolling-out guidance and tools on human rights for RCs and UNCTs
 - ✓ Supporting the implementation of UN management decisions and UN system-wide strategies relating to human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment
 - ✓ Advancing a Human Rights Leadership Development Strategy for RCs and UNCT Members
- Strengthening coherent and strategic engagement by UNCTs with human rights mechanisms, such as treaty bodies, special procedures and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), by ensuring integration into development programming and advocacy
- Maintaining effective UN system-wide knowledge management in human rights and development, including knowledge exchange and the UN HRBA Practitioners’ Portal: <http://hrbportal.org/>
- Supporting RCs and UNCTs to deliver on their responsibilities under the Human Rights up Front initiative and prevention agenda through these global, regional and country level initiatives.

The UNDG-HRM Fund Governance Structure and programme/project development, approval and review procedures are in Annexes 1 and 2 of the report.

2. Programme Results

“Human rights must be woven into UN action at all levels – from analysis to planning to assessment and accountability for progress”

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, remarks to the Human Rights Council, February 26, 2018

2.1 Policy Coherence - Human Rights Reflected Strongly in the UN Development System Including Reform Implementation

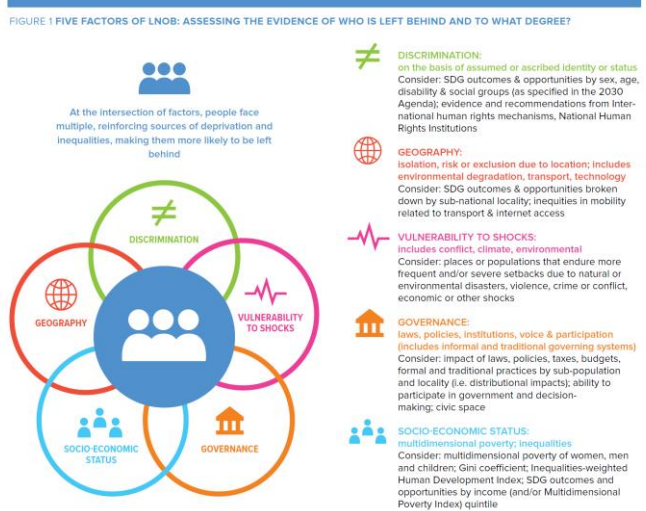
With its transformative ambition and universal applicability, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development challenges the UN to remain steadfast in ensuring the SDGs are implemented universally in accordance with international law, through an integrated approach and ensuring that no one is left behind and the furthest behind are reached first. The 2016 QCPR (General Assembly Resolution 71/273) noted the importance of the contribution of the UNDS with the aim of supporting government efforts to achieve the SDGs, based on full respect for human rights, including the right to development, as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights, and stressed that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. It called upon the UNDS to strengthen its support to building national capacities. The General Assembly Resolution 72/279 on UN reform also initiated the repositioning of the UNDS to ensure improved UN support for Member States to address the integrated development challenges of the 2030 Agenda. The implications for greater normative capacities and coherence in the UNDS and across the UN system are further echoed in the Secretary General’s focus on prevention and cross-pillar action, including through the *Human Rights up Front* initiative.

In 2018, the UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team contributed to integration of human rights into the policies, frameworks and structures established in 2018 to implement and institutionalize the UNDS reform priorities. In 2018, the UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team contributed to the revision of the guidance for new UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs, now renamed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks) as the primary instrument for more coherent and effective programming at the country level. These inputs helped ensure that UNCTs integrate human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment and the principle of leaving no one behind. This was facilitated through one of the co-Chairs of the Human Rights Task Team, who was also the co-Chair fo the UNDAF Design Team. In addition to inputs from HQ-based members of the Task Team and the UNSDG, the Human Rights Task Team facilitated exchange between the Co-Chair of the UNDAF Design Team and the Human Rights Advisors, who provided important field perspectives on critical elements for ensuring human rights are mainstreamed into the UNDAF/UNSDCF.



The UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team also prepared specific policy guidance for UNCTs. In 2018, the [UNSDG Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind for UNCTs](#) was finalized and endorsed by the UNSDG for dissemination as an interim draft for country level testing/piloting, finalization (including alignment with the new UNDAF/UNSDCF Guidance) and roll out in 2019.

This was a significant undertaking that required extensive discussions and coordination amongst the UNSDG members to ensure conceptual and operational coherence, building on the [UN Shared Framework for Action on Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development](#) (UN Chief Executives Board, 2017), the human rights-based approach to development, UNDAF Guidance and other relevant UNSDG policies and guidance. The Guide elaborates a step-by-step approach for analysis, programming and advocacy. In 2019 the Human Rights Task Team will pilot the interim draft of the Guide in several countries with a view to publishing the final draft at the end of the year.



Assessing the evidence of who is left behind and to what degree (Step 1).

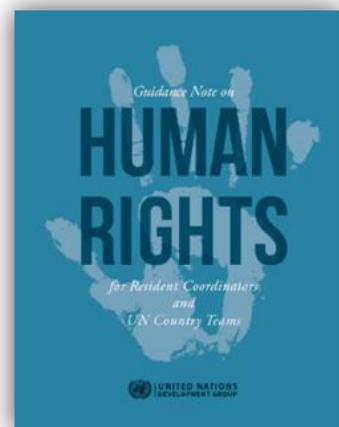
Excerpt: *UNSDG Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind for UNCTs* (2018)

2.2 Strengthened RC and UNCT capacities to lead on human rights at the country level

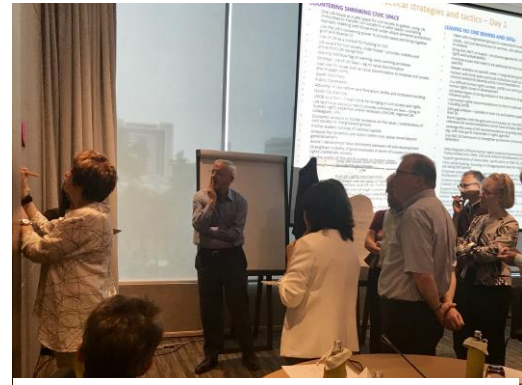
In 2018, the UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team contributed to global policies and implemented programmes at regional and country level designed to empower and support RCs to lead on human rights in the context of their development work.

In this context, implementation of the multi-pronged approach to support RCs and UNCTs to fulfill their human rights responsibilities - which continue to feature in the new RC job description remains a priority for the Human Rights Task Team. The UNSDG will further refine the strategies and tools as needed. Elements of the approach include:

- Human Rights Advisers (see following section);
- The *UNDG Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams* (including the [web version](#)) - provides substantive and tactical guidance in moving the human rights agenda forward at country level.
- The Human Rights Leadership Strategy for RCs and UNCTs - which entails a range of activities aimed at ensuring that senior field leaders have access to appropriate leadership development opportunities on human rights.



In 2017 OHCHR, UNDP and an interagency working group jointly developed a human rights leadership initiative specifically for RCs, which was implemented in the Asia Pacific region in 2018. The **Regional Human Rights Leadership Dialogue for RCs from Asia and the Pacific region** (Bangkok, May 2018) provided a valuable platform for peer exchange, building on previous UNSDG initiatives in support of UN leaders.³ The dialogue facilitated dynamic exchanges among 17 RCs from the region, as well as with civil society representatives, Regional UNSDG and the UNSDG Regional Human Rights Network. Through these discussions, RCs shared analyses of challenges and solutions tested in their countries, and jointly identified strategies and tactics for responding to some of the common challenges arising in these contexts. The dialogue enabled RCs to understand the support available from their peers in the region, particularly in addressing common or transboundary challenges, and enabled them to articulate priorities for further support at global and regional levels, including for strengthened coordinated, inter-agency responses. RCs expressed deep appreciation for the valuable opportunity to exchange with and learn from other RCs in a dedicated forum.



Human Rights Leadership Dialogue for Resident Coordinators in Asia Pacific, 2018

The two-day meeting - convened by UNDCO, OHCHR and UNDP - enabled exchange and reflection on effective strategies and approaches to support human rights-based implementation of the 2030 Agenda through interactive plenary and small group sessions. The dialogue's first day and a half was led by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Kate Gilmore and provided a platform for frank discussion and reflection amongst RCs on challenges, successes and support needs in key areas, including the following:

- **Civic space in the region:** Participants reflected on factors working for and against opportunities to expand civic space. They exchanged experiences of, and approaches to: engagement with civil society organizations; protecting and expanding civic space; as well as on the critical entry points that the 2030 Agenda provides to promote, enable and support active, meaningful and free participation of civil society;
- **“Leaving no one behind”** and its **human rights implications**, involved a discussion of the range of methods and approaches in support of governments’ realization of their pledge to “leave no one behind”.
- **Modalities for support to RCs and UNCTs for integrated analyses** and **joint approaches**, including the value of integrated political and human rights analyses.



Human Rights Leadership Dialogue for Resident Coordinators in Asia Pacific, 2018. Photo DCO.

³ Including the 2016 *Human Rights Frontiers Forum* and the **UN Leadership Model**, as endorsed by the United Development Group (UNSDG) and the CEB in 2016. See link: <https://unsdg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-UN-Leadership-Model.pdf>

Through these discussions, RCs shared analyses of challenges and solutions tested in their countries, and jointly identified strategies and tactics for responding to some of the common challenges arising in these contexts. The session on integrated analysis and joint approaches was supported by senior leadership from the Department of Political Affairs, as well as a Peace and Development Advisor and former Human Rights Advisor from the region.

The afternoon of the second day was devoted to discussion with civil society representatives working across the region, as well as the Directors of the Regional UNSDG and members of the Asia Pacific UNSDG Human Rights Network. These exchanges reinforced many of the issues discussed during the previous sessions and enabled the identification of priority areas where the Regional UNSDG and Human Rights Network could provide additional support to RCs in performing their function of leading UNCTs to effectively mainstream human rights in their work. Additional human rights leadership dialogues are planned for 2019.

2.3 Human rights more systematically promoted and integrated into UNCT support to 2030 Agenda through deployment of Human Rights Advisers

“The support provided from the Resident Coordinator’s Office by the Senior Human Rights Advisor and national Human Rights Officer is greatly appreciated by myself as the Resident Coordinator and by the UNCT”

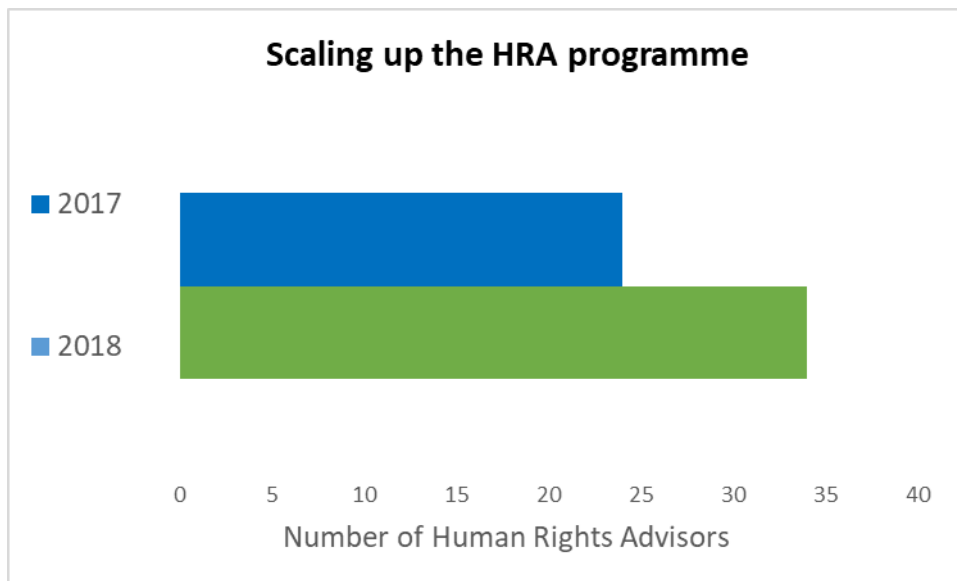
Mia Seppo Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh, 2019

In 2018, as in previous years, **Human Rights Advisers** (HRAs) continued to be deployed to Resident Coordinators’ Offices to support RCs and UNCTs with additional technical assistance and capacity building, and support governments and a range of other national partners to better integrate human rights norms, standards and principles into country level activities.

Demand from the field for human rights support continues to grow. In 2018, the UNDG-HRM Fund, under the leadership of OHCHR, supported the **deployment of HRAs** in 16 UNCTs, namely, **Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados (covering Barbados and the OECS), Belarus, Brazil, Ecuador, Jordan, Madagascar, Malaysia, The Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Timor-Leste, Uruguay and Zimbabwe**⁴. Together with funding from other sources, there were 34 human rights advisors in place in 2018 (up from 24 in 2017, six of which were funded through the UNDG-HRM Fund). In 2018 the programme achieved and exceeded gender parity, and introduced an important innovation in the new modality of national HRA (44 per cent of the 2018 cohort). The scale up of the programme in 2018 demonstrates the recognition by UNCTs and their host governments of the importance of this capacity in development operations, as well as the strong commitment of the

⁴ Four out of the six HRA deployments covered through the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2017 (Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Malawi, and Nigeria) were maintained in 2018 with funding from the UNDCO Delivering Together Fund (DTF). Sierra Leone was temporarily continued for a few months in 2018 with funding through the UN Peacebuilding Fund, and Mozambique was closed in 2017. Deployments in the Philippines and Timor-Leste, temporarily covered in 2017 through other sources, were again supported through the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2018. Eleven new deployments were processed during the period under review: 4 new international staff in Bangladesh, Belarus, Jordan, Zimbabwe; and 7 national staff in Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Malaysia. Three deployments traditionally funded by OHCHR were covered fully or partially through the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2018, namely Rwanda, PNG and Madagascar. Furthermore, the regional UNSDG Asia-Pacific offices and OHCHR directly funded the costs of the HRA to the Regional UNSDG Team for Asia Pacific in Bangkok, originally deployed through the UNDG-HRM Fund, through to May 2018 after which time the position was closed.

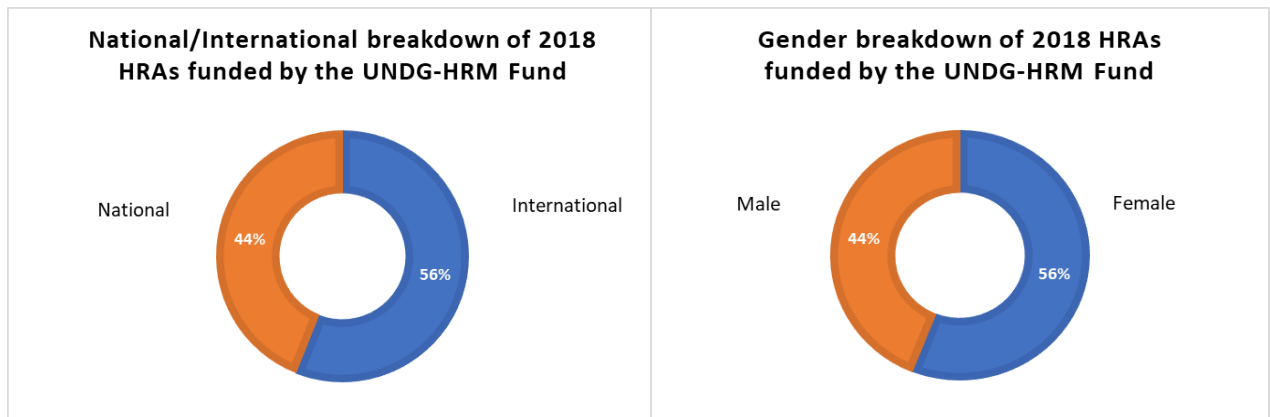
UNSDG and donors to respond to the increasing demand, particularly in the context of the vision for a strengthened office of the Resident Coordinator.



It is clear that HRA deployments are seen to be enormously valuable by RCs and UNCTs, enabling them to jointly engage national counterparts on critical human rights issues, which otherwise would have been challenging. HRAs have been instrumental in the integration of human rights into UN programmes and activities, UNDAFs and other key strategic planning tools and strengthening national capacities and institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. Other achievements include promoting human rights as a common UN value and upholding international norms and standards through advocacy and awareness raising; supporting integration of human rights into humanitarian responses and post-crisis recovery under the direction of the RC/Humanitarian Coordinator; and supporting strengthened engagement by UN and national partners with international human rights mechanisms. In 2018, HRAs have also supported States integrate human rights considerations into implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to strengthen linkages with the work and recommendations from international human rights mechanisms including the Universal Periodic Review, the Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures.

The HRA programme is a key component of the UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team programme of support towards ensuring that the vision for a UN leadership anchored in human rights and positioning human rights strategically at country level is matched with the technical support required by RCs and UNCTs to deliver on the promise. In the context of the reformed UNDS at country level, the 2012 UNDG Strategy for the Deployment of HRAs to RCs and UNCTs is proving to be a visionary approach to supporting system-wide coherence and integrated policy and operational capacities on the ground. It remains an appropriate model for achieving the objectives of the UNSDG and Human Rights Task Team and the UNDG-HRM Fund in the context of the reinvigorated RCOs, which will now have strengthened capacities in other thematic areas in service of the RC and UNCT under the UNDS reforms.

HRA Deployments Under the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2018



Strengthened HRA community of practice

In 2018, support from the UNDG-HRM Fund enabled HRAs to come together for a week of internal exchange, capacity building and dialogue with the UNSDG inter-agency coordination mechanisms (Geneva, 12-16 November 2018). This was the third such workshop held as part of the broader initiative to strengthen the results of HRAs through building the community of practice amongst the HRA cohort.

The workshop, organized by UNDCO and OHCHR in collaboration with the Human Rights Task Team focused on **“Integrating human rights in the UN Development System and leaving no one behind: promoting equality, empowerment and participation”**, including on strategies to enhance economic, social and cultural rights while promoting an indivisibility approach to all human rights. It also fed into preparations for the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and other relevant initiatives and processes under the Human Rights Council.



High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Michelle Bachelet meets HRAs in Geneva's 2018 Workshop

HRAs' experiences in mainstreaming human rights into development work at the country level are continue to be an important part of the policy-programming feedback loop. Through the engagement of the co-Chairs and members of the Human Rights Task Team in this workshop, HQ colleagues leading on the development of the new UNDAF/UNDSCF Guidance were able to test some of the ideas for the repositioned UNDAF/UNDSCF and hear the HRAs' suggestions for how to

ensure that the new Guidance will provide the framework for an UNDAF/UNSDCF that is aligned with the rights-based vision of the 2030 Agenda. This included inputs on what to emphasize or clarify from the 2017 Guidance, as well as suggestions for where to focus resources and support for effective roll out and implementation of the new Guidance. Human Rights Task Team members also led several in-depth sessions with the HRAs to obtain their inputs on the Operational Guide on LNOB for UNCTs. These valuable discussions informed subsequent revisions of the Guide.

This was the third of a series of workshops and trainings where HRAs had the opportunity to share experiences and successes, discuss challenges and opportunities in the development of their functions, and receive updates on the latest policies and tools available. HRAs held strategic discussions on the implications of the UNDS reforms with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Co-Chairs of the Human Rights Task Team. Building the community of practice amongst the HRA cohort is an important way of further strengthening their ability to identify and apply new strategies and innovative actions at country level. HRAs engaged in discussions on how best to support UNCT engagement with human rights mechanisms; protecting and expanding civic space as an enabler to end discrimination; Human Rights up Front; human rights-based approach to data; business and human rights; the UN system wide strategy on disability inclusion and human rights in humanitarian settings. These exchanges with a wide range of partners and interlocutors provided a foundation for continued future collaboration and support of HRAs' work on the ground. At the end of the workshop, participants adopted a follow-up action plan aimed at further strengthening OHCHR support to HRAs, increased efforts to capture the experiences and impact of their work on the ground, sharing through a community of practice and strengthening communication efforts.

Support in promoting human rights as a common UN value and upholding international norms and standards through advocacy and awareness-raising

The HRAs across the world supported RCs and UNCTs to ensure successful celebrations of the 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which helped raise awareness around critical human rights issues and concerns, and in many cases helped to open cooperation avenues with key ministries and institutions to address them. This engagement also facilitated outreach to new audiences, such as youth, students and local human rights defenders in need of stronger support and helped to bring the message of the UDHR to far-flung places in underserved parts of some countries. Activities supported by HRAs included film festivals, school and arts essay competitions, academic publications, model Human Rights Council role plays, Op-Eds, and many other innovative outreach and communications initiatives.



Bangladesh Human Rights Short Film Festival for 70th Anniversary of UDHR. Photo OHCHR.

The technical advice from the HRAs regarding marginalized groups, is considered by the teams on the ground as key in ensuring common views and approaches in line with international human rights standards and effective support to efforts to leave no one behind. This technical advice facilitates the development and adoption of unified strategies to address identified challenges and gaps. Issues addressed by HRAs included those regarding the situation of migrants, gender based violence and stereotyping, human rights situations of persons with disabilities and of persons with albinism; situation of minorities such as the Roma; indigenous peoples; LGBTI; and people living with HIV; people in custody; reproductive health issues; justice, violence and insecurity; use of death penalty and the space for civil society and journalists to operate.

In **Papua New Guinea** with the technical support from the HRA in developing public messages, the RC was able to engage relevant government authorities on the use of death penalty. The death penalty is maintained de jure in Papua New Guinea but has not been implemented since it gained independence 44 years ago. The RC also issued a press release on the World Day Against Death Penalty, encouraging the Government to join the global trend towards abolition. This advocacy led to a joint meeting between Church leaders, the RC and the Delegation of the European Union to Papua New Guinea, and a commitment by the RC, OHCHR and the EU Delegation to support a public forum on the death penalty together with the Council of Churches in 2019.

The HRA in **Uruguay** supported advocacy on issues relating to the justice sector, in particular to address prevailing harmful gender stereotypes in the justice system. The UNCT has been able to help the judiciary in Uruguay recognize that it needs to address harmful gender stereotypes in its own practices, and how these stereotypes represent clear barriers to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights. Particular focus was placed on cases related to sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as gender-based violence. This work presented an opportunity for the judiciary to strengthen their capacity to more extensively use broader the human rights standards in the justice system, working with the technical support of the HRA. Appreciation of these efforts have led to a government request to replicate key activities throughout the country. Similarly, the HRA's advocacy on use of human rights standards and jurisprudence in the administration of justice have led to more in-depth capacity building programmes for the judiciary, which will be supported by the HRA.

In **Madagascar**, the HRA helped the RC and the UNCT take up the issue of prison overcrowding. The HRA facilitated a visit to the Tsiafahy central prison together with the Ministry of Justice and the RC, which verified detention conditions below international standards. The HRA supported a follow-up round-table on detention conditions by the Independent National Human Rights Commission that resulted in resource mobilization (from Norway) to enable the separation of minors from adults in one prison. The HRA also enabled the UNCT to integrate human rights into the curricula of all defense and security forces schools and academies.

HRAs have played a key role in helping UNCTs in **Ecuador** and **Peru** address the rights of persons displaced from Venezuela. In Ecuador the HRA accompanied the UNCT humanitarian response at the northern border and helped to shed light on the protection needs of people who had crossed the border with a human rights perspective, flagging immediate needs such as flexible and acceptable migration procedures, clear, reliable and visible information on life-saving services, alternative care for unaccompanied or separated children and smoother and quicker processes at migration units. The emergency response by the agencies has now tackled all these issues, and the HRA will provide technical assistance on human rights to border control officers in 2019. The HRA in Peru supported the coordination of a joint response to Venezuelan migration, which resulted in a more comprehensive response to migration and refugee issues by the Workgroup for Refugees and Migrants, including enhanced capacity support to the Government to address these issues through the implementation of the National Human Rights Plan 2018-2021.

In **Ecuador**, in response to the outburst of violence at the northern border triggered by the killing of three journalists in May 2018, the technical support from the HRA enabled analysis of the situation from a rights perspective and helped further State awareness and engagement to support efforts to improve the human rights situation on the ground. The RCO and OHCHR jointly coordinated a Rapid Deployment Mission to the northern border, and the mission report shed light on the human rights situation in systematically neglected area. This visit helped draw attention and resources to the area, including a USD 5 million Peacebuilding Fund project and a EUR 3 million project to establish an early warning system for the National Human Rights Institution.

In **Argentina**, the HRA helped focus attention on the situation of indigenous peoples in the country and the challenges they face in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. In close collaboration with relevant civil society organizations, the HRA supported the RC and UNDP with training for women leaders belonging to grassroots, peasant and indigenous social organizations and communities to submit a comprehensive complementary report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as part of Argentina's review in 2018. The Committee's final observations have helped raise awareness of some of the main economic, social and cultural human rights concerns of rural, peasant and indigenous women and have been an influential tool for national and provincial advocacy for these women in the context of the State efforts to meet the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In **Bangladesh**, relying on the legal expertise of the HRA, the RC and the UNCT were able to engage jointly around the human rights implications of the war on drugs, including more than 290 alleged extra judicial executions. For example, the RC and UNODC issued a joint OpEd and engaged in coordinated policy advocacy with government ministries. Relevant ministries committed in principle to further dialogue around the concerns expressed, and an expert policy dialogue is planned for 2019. The HRA in **the Philippines** continued providing advice, expertise and good practices to the RC and UNCT on drug policy, -prevention, -treatment and -rehabilitation in line with international human rights standards. This has informed and strengthened the advocacy and programming efforts of WHO, UNODC, and UNAIDS which are providing assistance to the relevant Government agencies through advocacy and regular programming initiatives. This support has contributed to the respective authorities adopting a more public health-oriented approach and moving away from the previous strong security focus.

Encroachments on civic space and freedom of expression and association is an issue in many countries that is impacting negatively on sustainable development and rights. In Bangladesh, the UN transmitted messages to the Government on the compliance of the new Digital Security Act with international human rights obligations. The Minister of Law agreed in principle to further dialogue around documented abuse of the law. The HRA strategically used opportunities before and after the adoption of the Act to keep the issue on the radar of development partners, UN and civil society alike. In **Malaysia**, the technical and legal advice provided by the HRA supported the RC and UNCT on their engagement with Government agencies on the national efforts to amend a number of laws such as the Printing Press and Publications Act 1984. In **Brazil**, the technical and legal support from the HRA supported the RC and the UNCT to present a common voice regarding the situation of human rights defenders. The UNCT issued two public statements, one regarding the killing of human rights defender Marielle Franco and her driver, and one on threats against sexual and reproductive health and rights defender Debora Diniz.

Barbados amended their respective Sexual Offences Act to criminalize marital rape and introduced sexual harassment legislation for the workplace. These legal reforms are the result of years of advocacy and awareness raising on the part of UN agencies, particularly UN Women, international donor partners, and civil society. As part of these efforts, the HRA, in collaboration with the Barbados Bureau of Gender Affairs helped to raise awareness around all forms of gender-based violence including marital rape and sexual harassment through facilitating workshops and public consultations for government officials, civil society and the general public and participating in

televised panel discussions and public rallies. Such efforts helped strengthen government officials' understanding of Barbados' international human rights obligations and capacity to implement the gender related human rights recommendations from UN human rights mechanisms such as CEDAW and the UPR, both of which explicitly recommended criminalizing marital rape, and the UPR recommendations to introduce sexual harassment legislation.

Throughout 2018 the role of the HRAs supporting UNCT's efforts for stronger information management systems for early warning and prevention, through the provision of regular human rights and early warning analyses, including in the context of elections, has also been highly appreciated by the RCs and recipient teams. There has been good collaboration in various instances with Peace and Development Advisers in the provision of joined up, integrated human rights and political advice. The information management system developed under the Human Rights up Front initiative aggregates data from different sources and provided increased capacities to analyze trends over time. The system is being developed or implemented in a number of countries benefiting from HRA deployment, including in **Brazil, Philippines** and **Zimbabwe**⁵, where it will help inform decision-making and joint programming and UN advocacy initiatives.

In **Zimbabwe**, for example, the collaboration between the HRA and the Peace and Development Adviser strengthened the UN capacity for work on sensitive areas touching on remedying past injustices and more broadly on advocating for mainstreaming of human rights in the context of early action on prevention of violent crises. Human rights technical support was provided, for instance, to the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) on integrating human rights and gender considerations in their 5 year strategic plan. Technical support was also provided towards ensuring that the various tools and forms that facilitate the NPRC's investigation work are human rights compliant. Further technical support is to be provided in 2019 for activities aimed at building trust and confidence to discuss and tackle some of the sensitive human rights issues, which will be implemented with support from the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

Integration of human rights into UN programmes and activities, UNDAFs and other key strategic planning tools and application of the Human Rights-Based Approach

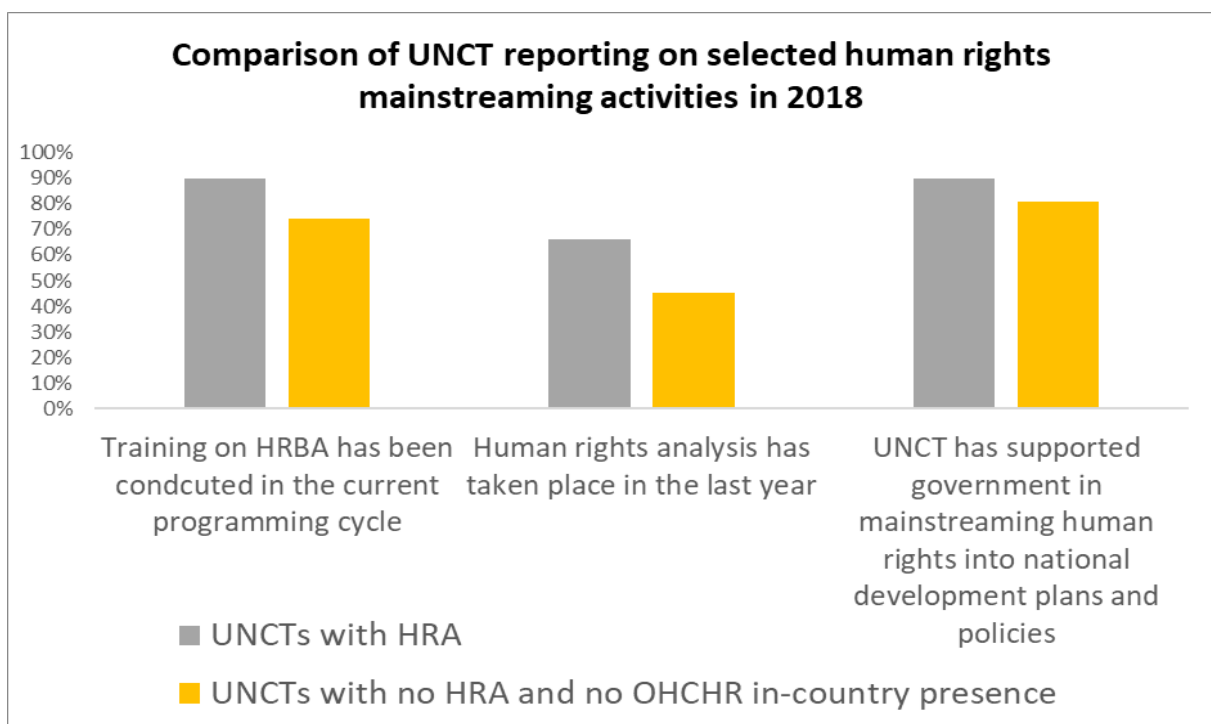
As UN reform gets under way at the country level, training for UNCTs members as well as national partners on human rights-based approaches in the context of the 2030 Agenda are an important tool for advancing a coordinated response based on the UN common understanding on HRBA to development.

HRAs have a variety of responsibilities in supporting RCs, UNCT and national partners to integrate human rights in activities towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Data from the DCO Information Management System (IMS) on reporting by UNCTs of selected human rights mainstreaming activities in 2018 (see figure below) illustrates that countries that had an HRA were able to undertake a much higher number of human rights mainstreaming activities compared to UNCTs that did not have an HRA or with OHCHR in-country presence.

Capacity development for UN actors on the ground implementing and preparing UNDAFs and to apply the HRBA in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda continued to be a common area of work for all HRAs in all countries of deployment. This was given particular emphasis in 2018 in **Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Jordan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Timor-Leste, and Uruguay**. For example, in **Jordan**, the HRA organized trainings on HRBA and advised and advocated

⁵ The HRA in Kenya, though not funded through the UNDG-HRM Fund, has been instrumental in the development and implementation of this system in Kenya, and shared experiences with other HRAs/countries interested in implementing the system.

for the integration of the relevant recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms into the respective outcomes, activities and indicators in the UNSDF 2018-2022. The HRA also worked closely with the UNCT in the identification of the human rights dimensions in the implementation of the Joint Strategic Approach in support of the Government’s plans on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. These results help support the Government define a continuum of activities in Jordan across the humanitarian-development nexus, from non-status-based humanitarian aid, emergency relief, short-term and long-term development based on the SDGs and the principle of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, including through integration of recommendations from the human rights mechanisms. **Rwanda**, the HRA supported the development of a One UN Strategy on Human Rights, which informed the integration of human rights into the UNDAF and the UNCT’s support to the Government’s National Transformation Strategy. In **Zimbabwe**, the HRA developed a matrix that illustrates the linkages between the UPR recommendations issued to Zimbabwe and the SDGs and identifies which ZUNDAF Results Groups will follow up on implementation. This has been identified as strategically useful by the teams on the ground for cooperation and monitoring progress.



Data in above figure drawn from 2018 UNCT reporting in UNDCO Information Management System (IMS)

The right to equality and non discrimination for persons with disability in Uruguay – para que nadie quede atras!

In Uruguay, the technical and political advisory support of the HRA was critical in the development of a project on the right to equality and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities, that brings together four main UNCT entities, six State institutions and a coalition of CSOs promoting the rights of persons living with disabilities to support State efforts to advance the right to health and to live a life free of violence, particularly gender-based violence. It



also seeks to improve the country's data ecosystem on disability and strengthen awareness of the work that organizations of people with disabilities carry out throughout the country. Since the commencement of the project, the HRA has enabled the integration of the paradigm of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in every component of the project, as well as liaised with experts in the region to identify cutting-edge initiatives implemented in accordance with the HRBA and supported UNCT members to mainstream these into their programming. Early results of this joint endeavor have included raising all partner institutions to the same level of understanding of CRPD norms and standards and the development of collective plans for each area of work informed by agency-specific human rights expertise. UN agencies' own capacity and profile has been expanded through the experience acquired, as evidenced through their increased role as reference entities in the region and support provided to similar initiatives in other countries. Similarly, the role that the project has played in establishing a national platform on disabilities, has opened new opportunities to address other important areas that were not originally included as part of the project, including contributing to discussion on the proposed establishment of a common disability accreditation mechanism in Uruguay.

Throughout 2018, capacity development and advisory services for UN actors and partners continued including through HRAs' leadership of UNCT Human Rights Working Groups and through their participation in other theme groups, such as on Gender Equality, to ensure cross-cutting human rights work. There has been increasingly steady focus on the implementation of the SDGs and the provision of practical content to realization of the pledge to leave no one behind. HRAs have acted as resource persons in numerous internal exercises aimed at re-positioning teams to better support countries in this effort as well as providing trainings, workshops and events aiming at strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Particularly relevant have been the advice and support for example on human rights based-approach to data collection and use of human rights-based indicators.

For example, in **Zimbabwe**, the HRA conducted a technical briefing on the use of human rights indicators based on the OHCHR guidance "Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation" for members of the inter-agency UN Programme Management Team (PMT). This technical briefing served to inform the joint planning and programming processes under the Zimbabwe UN Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF) for 2019. As follow up, the HRA has been requested to provide technical support to the ZUNDAF Results Groups in refining their indicators as a means of ensuring that human rights are mainstreamed in the UN programmes, outcomes and activities on the ground. This is critical as an evaluation of the 2016 -2020 ZUNDAF

will be undertaken in the course of 2019 with a view to aligning it to the Government’s Transitional Stabilisation Programme for the period 2018-2020.

The HRAs also supported individual agencies and programmes to integrate human rights and to ensure enhanced compliance with international human rights standards. This is the case in **Jordan** where HRA has been supporting IOM’s efforts to strengthen the compliance framework of its standard operating procedures for the promotion of migrants’ rights, and UNDP regarding its support to decentralization processes.

Empower for Change – reducing violence and discrimination against women and children with disabilities in Timor-Leste



Planning meeting disability rights Timor- Leste. UN Women photo.

The HRA in Timor-Leste played a key role in developing a successful proposal by five UN agencies to the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Implementation of the three-year project started in 2018. As part of inception, the HRA and persons with various types of disabilities jointly raised awareness of the human rights approach to disability with about 100 UN staff and national partners from Government and civil society. One immediate outcome was that participants and their respective agencies, started using more appropriate terminology when referring to disability, and increased

engagement with persons with disabilities in their programmes. The HRA was supported the the project in developing guidelines to integrate disability in legislation, policy and planning processes. The HRA and the umbrella of organizations working on disability are now jointly advocating for Government adoption of the guidelines and their use as a standard practice when drafting laws, policies and action plans.

HRAs continued to help link the normative human rights framework with the operational activities in support of national development objectives at country level \. The HRA in **Malaysia** played a key role in supporting the UNCT’s proposal to the Government on linking human rights related recommendations from various human rights mechanisms that Malaysia is engaged with to SDG goals, targets and indicators that Malaysia is committed to achieving in line with national priorities. This will feed into the 12th Malaysia Plan as well as the next Common Country Assessment and Cooperation Framework. In **Uruguay** with the support from the HRA, the UNCT is working to strengthen stakeholders’ understanding of the structural transformations across the various dimensions of development required for the SDGs. The UNCT in Uruguay is engaged with academia, government, the private sector and civil society in an initiative called “Transitions”, that seeks to help the country understand its current development trajectory, reformulate problems, and think of a new combination of social, fiscal and productive policy interventions that allow Uruguay to transcend its high-income status to reach sustainable development. In this context, the HRA, supported by the UPR Fund and the RCO, together with UN Women and UNDP elaborated a strategy to mainstream human rights and gender empowerment approaches into the three main areas of the initiative. The strategy will involve identifying the connections between the 2030 Agenda and recommendations from human rights mechanisms to Uruguay, as well as interpretation and elaboration of human rights norms and standards by Special Rapporteurs on relevant issues such as poverty, development, and social security transfers to inform decisions on SDG implementation.

In **Peru**, similar support for multisectoral approaches to ensure that transformations help to dismantle structural bases for historical discrimination and exclusion has been provided by the entire UN system in the country with the technical advice from the HRA. In **Madagascar**, under the HRA's leadership as the Chair of the Programme Management Team (PMT) and vice-Chair of the UN Gender and Human Rights Thematic Group, the UNCT developed an adaptation plan of the UNDAF and the SDGs through a human rights-based approach that contributes to the Government's efforts in establishing national strategies and policies including the National Development Plan.

Under the UNDAF 2016-2020 and with technical advice from the HRA, the UNCT in **Argentina** supported the integration of the 2030 Agenda and its human rights basis into national and local policy-making. This support included: advocacy and dissemination activities for different target audiences including civil society organizations, academia, businesses, trade unions, faith-based organizations, youth, ombudsman offices, and legislators; the generation of valuable information for developing indicators, baselines and goals used to monitor achievement of SDGs; and assessing data availability and supporting the definition of baselines for localized SDG targets. Specific emphasis was made with the support of the HRA to ensure human rights-based approach to data and in particular disaggregation to track progress amongst particular groups and populations being left behind.

Support to the building and strengthening of national capacities and institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

Providing support for the strengthening national capacities and institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights is also a main feature of the roles of HRAs on the ground. The convening, facilitating and capacity building roles of HRAs have been highly appreciated by RCs and national partners. This enables UN teams on the ground to provide more coherent technical assistance to State institutions and processes in line with international human rights standards. Supporting civil society to engage strategically on the rights-related aspects of development, including states' pledge to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first, is also a critical part of their work.

In **Papua New Guinea** the support from the HRA has been pivotal in the context of meaningful participation of rights-holders in the upcoming October 2019 Bougainville independence referendum by enhancing the capacity of the Government and civil society to address human rights issues. In particular, the efforts focused on the rights of women, youth and persons with disabilities to participate in a violence-free referendum. Through these efforts, Ministers and Parliamentarians made commitments to apply a human rights standard to their public roles and referendum support, and communities have demonstrated increased capacity and confidence to engage with Parliamentarians representing their constituencies on human rights issues. In light of the upcoming referendum, the enhancement of the Government's capacity to respond to human rights issues is observed as a major development.



Workshop on Human Rights for Parliamentarians, Autonomous Region of Bougainville, 2018.

The HRA in **Zimbabwe** provided technical support and expertise under a UNDP project to develop several tools for the Zimbabwe Republic Police: a Handbook on Human Rights, Policing and Elections; a Human Rights Pocket Book; and a Human Rights Elections and Policing Curriculum. An abridged version of the Pocket Book specifically focusing on human rights and policing during

elections was finalised and used by the police during the 2018 elections. Finalization and publication of the tools and trainings for the police covering human rights and policing is being envisaged as follow up as this is deemed as useful for the next electoral cycle.

In **Barbados** the HRA supported UNDP in the ongoing implementation of the Being LGBTI in the Caribbean (BLIC) project by facilitating a human rights consultation with civil society partners. Under the two-year BLIC project, the HRA will contribute to the strengthening the capacity of civil society and state institutions to reduce inequality, exclusion, stigma, and discrimination against LGBT persons.

Supporting the National Prosecutor’s Office in Argentina on the national efforts against femicides

In **Argentina** with the technical advice from the HRA and OHCHR, UN WOMEN and UNDP, the UNCT supported the National Prosecutor’s Office adaptation of the Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (femicide) to Argentina’s legal context. In addition to providing technical guidance to the National Prosecutor’s Office to adapt the Model Protocol, the HRA and OHCHR regional gender specialist trained justice sector and law enforcement officials in the Model Protocol and applicable human rights standards. This project will continue under the Spotlight Initiative in Argentina to address femicide, speaking to joint leadership and coordinated work led by the RCO in 2018, involving 5 leading UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, ILO and UNICEF). This initiative applies an HRBA and will focus on women suffering multiple forms of discrimination, such as girls and adolescents, indigenous women, women with disabilities, migrants and refugees and women of African descent.

Another major area of work for the HRAs is supporting the establishment and strengthening of the capacities National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). This has been the case in **Bangladesh, Brazil, Jordan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Timor-Leste** and **Zimbabwe**. Throughout 2018, the technical advice and support provided focused on strengthening of the operational capacities of these institutions. In **Jordan**, the HRA supported the National Center for Human Rights in its efforts to strengthen its promotion tools and protection mechanisms. In **Rwanda**, the HRA advised and supported the National Commission for Human Rights on methodologies to follow-up the implementation of the 50 recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review accepted by the Government so far. The HRA in **Barbados** contributed to the commitment of the Equal Opportunity Commission in Trinidad and Tobago to transition into a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles, including through facilitating a workshop for civil society and members of the Equal Opportunity Commission and Equal Opportunity Tribunal on the work of National Human Rights Institutions and Paris Principles. The Government has requested ongoing technical assistance from OHCHR on this issue.

In **Papua New Guinea**, with the support from the HRA, efforts towards strengthening accountability for human rights through the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission were made by the RC and the UNCT working closely with key Government institutions, as well as civil society. The HRA supported the review of the enabling legislation for the establishment of the Commission. This support builds on the commitments to establish this body made by the Prime Minister during the visit of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as during Papua New Guinea’s participation in the Universal Periodic Review.

Supporting the national protection system in Zimbabwe in the context of elections



In Zimbabwe, HRA provided technical support to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) in the development of tools for monitoring human rights during the elections and to this end, conducted a working session with the Commission's Human Rights Team to finalise the tools. These tools were instrumental in assisting the ZHRC to monitor the human rights situation in the context of the July 2018 presidential, parliamentary and council elections and to gather information for its report on human rights monitoring of the 2018 elections. As a result, the

ZHRC issued several statements on the human rights environment during the elections and post-election period, a preliminary human rights report on the elections was also issued after the elections, with the full report due for release in early 2019.

In **Madagascar**, with the view to reinforcing the national framework for protection of human rights defenders, the HRA supported the implementation of a pool of specialized human rights lawyers that would, inter alia, ensure legal assistance to human rights defenders, implement a comprehensive capacity-building programme, and extend technical assistance to the Independent National Human Rights Commission (INHRC) aiming at its effective operationalization. The HRA also assisted in establishing a solid structural and organizational footing of the INHRC, including through advocacy for State Authorities to take measures to fulfil Paris Principles requirements such as adequate budget, human resources, premises and autonomy from State entities. With the operationalization of the INHRC, the country now has a solid and reliable human rights protection mechanism that is accessible to the population. The results of these developments contribute to human rights violations allegations being investigated, and perpetrators brought to justice and sanctioned.

In **Timor-Leste**, the HRA supported the NHRI to lead the implementation of a new human rights training programme for the national army. Prior to 2018, with full agreement from the Ministry of Defense and the army's command, the HRA with the OHCHR thematic support, led the drafting of a training manual and trained trainers from the NHRI, Ministry of Defense and army officials on how to use the manual. In 2018, in four sessions were conducted throughout the country under the leadership of the NHRI, 101 army officers (86 male, 15 female) were trained on human rights in peace and emergencies.

The role of HRAs in facilitating engagement in the area of human rights and business continues to increase. For example, in **Brazil**, the HRA supported the UNCT in implementation of the UN Free & Equal campaign, organizing high level events and engaging all relevant national partners to advocate for the rights of LGBTI persons. Amongst other activities, the UN Free and Equal campaign launched OHCHR standards on business and LGBTI rights. This event, attended by more than 300 people, has already engaged more than 25 companies in support of the standards. The HRA also validated a methodology for promoting social inclusion of transgender persons. The project "Trans-Formations" has strengthened the role of transgender activists in policy making as well as the capacity of national institutions to address the needs of transgender persons. This work led to the publication by UNCT

and partnering organizations of a development of a Users' Guide to Public Services for Trans People and of a Handbook aiming to allow replication of the project in other cities and countries.

Advice on integrating human rights in the humanitarian response and post-crisis recovery under the direction of the RC/Humanitarian Coordinator

Support on the integration of a human rights perspective into the local responses to humanitarian situations and post-crisis recovery, should a humanitarian emergency arise in the country of assignment, is one of the integral components of the terms of reference of HRAs. The HRAs also played an important role in supporting the UN teams on the ground regarding the Human Rights up Front framework.

In the **Philippines** the HRA is coordinating the UN agencies in the development of an action plan for durable solutions to internal displacement. This is in the context of the initiative by the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons and the 20th anniversary of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP20), which was in 2018.

Human rights integrated into the UN humanitarian response to earthquake in Papua New Guinea

Following a 7.5 magnitude earthquake on 26 February 2018, 544,000 people (46 per cent children under 18) were affected, of whom about half needed life-saving assistance. The effects of the earthquake also exacerbated law and order problems in the Southern Highlands, which faces recurrent intergroup tribal fighting driven by unresolved socioeconomic grievances, as well as extremely high rates of gender-based violence, including sorcery accusation related violence. Under-resourced police and government authorities and traditional and structural justice and protection mechanisms were further eroded by the earthquake which hampered the response and the delivery of life-saving services and goods. The humanitarian response thus underscored the



RC PNG visits earthquake-affected areas. UNICEF photo.

nexus between imperative for greater peace, security and cohesion at national, provincial, district and community levels. Through support by the HRA, including as the co-Chair of the Protection Working Group, human rights were placed at the centre of the earthquake response, and the development of longer-term interventions. For example, the HRA supported the integration of protection and human rights in survey and assessment collection tools, to ensure the needs of vulnerable groups was captured and addressed. As a result, the Government issued a code of conduct for security forces involved in humanitarian support which aimed at minimizing potential human rights violations by security forces. The UN also undertook the first multi-agency conflict analysis for the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea, that supported the development and successful resourcing of two projects: the first ever gender and youth initiative supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund; and a Rule of Law initiative. As a result of the observed need for greater human rights monitoring and response during the earthquake response, human rights monitoring and protection will be a critical component of the new UN area-based programme in the Highlands.

In **Jordan**, the HRA contributed regularly to the work and discussions of the United Nations Protection Working Group and related structures coordinating the UN response to the refugee crises

following the armed conflict in Syria. These contributions cover a range of human rights issues, including prevention of gender-based violence. Addressing cross-border protection issues with Syria required constant advice from a human rights perspective. For example, in July 2018, the HRA successfully advocated for agreement on joint minimum duty of care standards within the cross-border Task Force. These standards, developed and promoted based on international human rights and labour standards, contributed to the protection of Syrian NGOs during the re-establishment of control of the Government of Syria in a province bordering Jordan. The HRA also facilitated the implementation of the recommendations emanating from a visit of the Victims' Rights Advocate, aimed at strengthening the support that the United Nations gives to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by providing them with adequate protection, appropriate assistance, and reliable recourse to justice.

Engagement and cooperation with relevant United Nations mechanisms has also been a major feature of the work in humanitarian action in **Bangladesh**. The advice from the HRA strengthened engagement between the UNCT, humanitarian actors, local non-governmental organizations and international human rights and human rights accountability mechanisms such as the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, the Special Rapporteur for Myanmar, and the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. In the humanitarian response context, the HRA provided policy advice and coordination relating to follow-up to major human rights violations including sexual violence in conflict and its documentation.

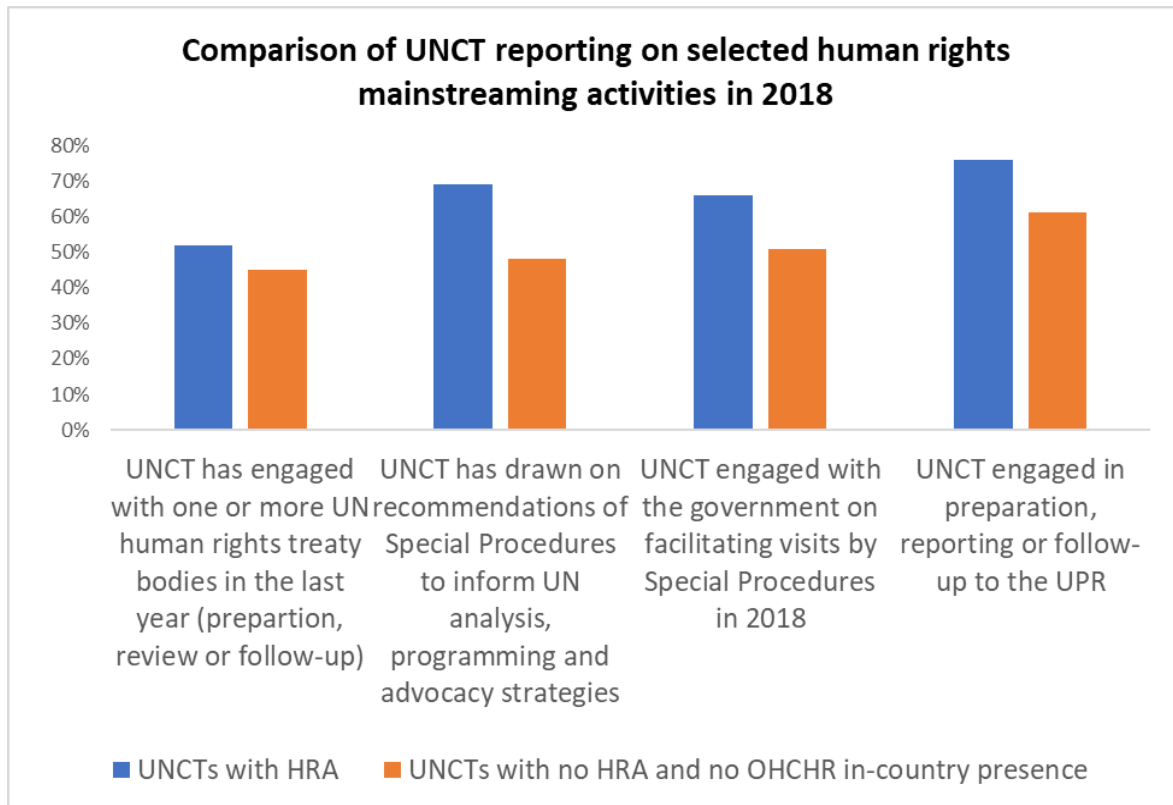
Support to the UN and national partners in their engagement with international human rights mechanisms and the use of the mechanisms' recommendations in the development of national human rights and development plans

“The HRA support has been critical to advance a complex human rights agenda in the country. Myself and the UNCT value immensely the support provided. I would like to commend the initiative and thank you for the support provided.”

Nicky Fabiancic, Resident Coordinator, Brazil.

HRAs on the ground are a key tool for RCs and UNCTs to increase their engagement with human rights mechanisms and support national efforts to ensure consideration and integration of the work of these mechanisms and recommendations in national processes including those linked with the 2030 Agenda. The expertise of the HRAs has also been a resource to support countries' efforts to establish national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up on the recommendations of human rights mechanisms. HRAs effectively contributed during the reporting period to increase interest and engagement of both national partners and UN teams in the work of the human rights mechanisms including UPR, treaty bodies and special procedures in all countries of deployment. RCs and UNCTs as well as national partners value the support they have received from the HRAs, in particular in the preparation of their engagement with the UPR, through national consultations as well as in the preparation of submissions and reports.

Data in the figure below, drawn from the DCO-managed Information Reporting System (IMS), show a sample of indicators on the self-reported engagement of UNCTs with UN treaty bodies, Special Procedures and the UPR in 2018. These data illustrate the increased capacities of UNCTs with direct support from an HRA or OHCHR in-country presence to strategically use these mechanisms to strengthen and inform country efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.



Data in above figure drawn from 2018 UNCT reporting in UNDCO Information Management System (IMS)

Belarus – supporting concrete steps and funding streams for the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan

With the technical support of the HRA a number of project proposals to advance implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan in Belarus were developed in agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The projects include the following activities: an assessment of current drug policies with the aim to bring them further in line with evidence-based practices and human rights standards; the support to alternatives to detention, reducing recidivism through strengthened programmes for released prisoners and assessment of the current civic monitoring programme for places of detention; and the strengthening access to free legal aid and legal information, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups. The work in these technical areas has been possible thanks to the expertise and technical capacities of the HRA, particularly in the application of recommendations from human rights mechanisms to development issues in the country. The HRA engaged also with the members of the UNCT to widen support in a number of thematic areas in the National Human Rights Action Plan for example on migrants, statelessness, HIV/AIDS, health, domestic violence and children’s rights.

In **Brazil**, the HRA has supported the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises (also referred to as the Working Group on Business and Human Rights) following its 2015 visit to Brazil. The HRA has also provided support to the Human Rights Working Group of the Global

Compact Brazilian Network, including through facilitating a workshop on due diligence for 50 companies in Curitiba, holding a webinar for members on the “Standards of Conduct for Business: tackling discrimination against LGBTI”, and participating in advocacy activities on transgender employability. In **Timor-Leste** the HRA and civil society groups promoting LGBTI rights conducted training for business which resulted in seven companies subsequently signing up to the Standards of Conduct for Business: tackling discrimination against LGBTI.

HRAs have also played an important role in catalysing UNCT mobilization in support of national counterparts’ engagement with international human rights mechanisms, for example, on overdue reports to the international treaty monitoring system. For example, in **Papua New Guinea** the HRA, UN Women and UNDP supported increased engagement and progress with reporting obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. In **Madagascar**, further to HRA’s technical advice, support and intensive advocacy, the mandate of the Intra-governmental Committee in charge of drafting reports to human rights mechanisms was expanded to include follow up on the implementation the recommendations issued by such mechanisms. Also with the technical support of HRA, the Government in **Madagascar** produced a mid-term report of the implementation of the UPR recommendations, and a consortium of organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities finalized a shadow report to the CPRD. Similarly, the HRA in **Barbados** provided support to UN Women in Antigua and Barbuda and St. Lucia to strengthen the capacity of government officials in human rights reporting and to facilitate consultations with key stakeholders to gather gender-specific data intended to inform the countries’ national reports to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The support and technical advice for engagement and active participation in the Universal Periodic Review process is another main area of work for the HRAs, involving national stakeholders and the UN on the ground. For example in **Bangladesh**, the HRA supported consistent engagement by the RC and the UNCT with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and other authorities, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), civil society and the development partner community regarding the preparation, conduct and follow-up to the review of Bangladesh by the UPR. Following these efforts, the Government committed to develop an implementation plan for UPR and treaty body outcomes and joint UNCT follow-up was initiated on key issues such as reporting to human rights mechanisms, laws discriminating against women, and constraints on civic space and freedom of expression. In **Malaysia**, the HRA played a key role in strengthening engagement of the UNCT with the Government on initiating follow up to Malaysia’s UPR review. A number of stakeholder dialogues are foreseen in 2019 to advance actions on key issues such as the repealing of discriminatory laws and provisions.

In **Zimbabwe**, the HRA participates in an advisory capacity on the National Steering Committee that was established to oversee and monitor implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) for the implementation of UPR recommendations. The HRA in **Barbados** provided technical assistance and support to the National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRFs) in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The creation of these mechanisms is a direct result of advocacy at the regional and national level by the HRA and OHCHR with government officials. The HRA also provided ongoing support to the work of some NMRFs including the development of tools and methodologies for data collection to inform UPR and treaty body reporting processes, which then feed into development planning.

HRAs also played a key role in supporting states’ and UN engagement with UN Special Rapporteurs. For example, in **Ecuador**, after years of pending requests, the Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression and on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples visited the country. The outcomes of the visits were welcomed by the Government, civil society organizations and UNCT as valuable tools to support State efforts to promote and protect human rights. To provide the necessary technical support the HRA convened key UNCT members around preparations for the two missions, which

resulted in meetings with the highest levels of all branches of government, and all relevant civil society and academia. The missions were considered successful by the government and civil society and received impressive media attention. In **Zimbabwe**, through the consistent advocacy of the RC and UNDP, with the HRA's support, the Government extended invitations to six Human Rights Council Special Procedure Mechanisms.

In **Argentina**, under the leadership of the HRA and with the support of the OHCHR Regional Office for South America, the UNCT contributed to the establishment of the National Mechanism for Reporting and follow-up human rights recommendations, and the online database called SIMORE PLUS. Through triangular cooperation with Paraguay and the UN, Argentina is adapting this system to its context. The SIMORE PLUS is an online tool that links the follow-up of international human rights recommendations to the SDGs and their targets with national and sub-national government actions. This online tool will provide a more comprehensive approach to monitor and implement human rights recommendations and SDGs at national and subnational level. The Argentina SIMORE PLUS will be the first existing in a federal system.

In **Uruguay**, the HRA led RC and UNCT support to the National Follow-up Mechanism (SIMORE), which was created in 2016 following the SIMORE mechanism in Paraguay. Throughout 2018 concrete products were developed illustrating the practical links between pending recommendations and the efforts to achieve the SDGs. The establishment of a fully functioning state mechanism to follow up and implement human rights recommendations in Uruguay has improved the internal understanding of the obligations derived from human rights treaties and strengthened Uruguay's performance in intergovernmental fora including the Human Rights Council. The awareness created among State institutions that are part of the SIMORE network has resulted in increased requests for support from the UN for responding to the human rights recommendations. This push to mainstream human rights in public policy design enables the UNCT to make full use of the UN's specialized resources and expertise across sectors.

In **Peru**, with assistance from the HRA, the UNCT provided technical cooperation to support enhanced integration of the recommendations from the international human rights mechanisms and its linkages with the realization of SDGs into the National Human Rights Action Plan and a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. Also in **Peru**, technical advice from the HRA strengthened the UNCT's capacity to support follow-up and engagement with the human rights mechanisms, notably CAT, WGED and CERD. The UNCT's engagements contributed to concrete and relevant recommendations from CAT that can be used to inform development activities, and dialogue with the government, rights-holders and other stakeholders on follow up to Peru's review by CERD to strengthen coordination around implementation of the recommendations.

2.4 Enhancing UNSDG Regional Teams' capacity and support for human rights mainstreaming

In Asia Pacific participating agencies in the UNSDG Regional Team for Asia and the Pacific including OHCHR raised additional funding for the extension of the deployment of the Regional Human Rights Adviser to the UNSDG Regional Team up to April 2018. This regional role which had been previously supported through the MDTF enabled the provision of technical support to UNCTs in the region ensuring integration of human rights considerations through common country development planning and programmes grounded in the 2030 Agenda/SDGs; human rights analysis and strategy advice for regional directors, guidance on engagement with the international human rights mechanisms including the Universal Periodic Review, the Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures and support for the implementation of the Human Rights Up-Front.

The Human Rights Leadership Dialogue for RCs from Asia and the Pacific, held in May 2018, incorporated discussion with the Regional UNSDG and the UNSDG Regional Human Rights Network.

Outcomes of this dialogue included recognition of the valuable support offered by these two structures to RC leadership and strategies on human rights issues in the region (such as regional reviews of emerging/frontier issues and backstopping on human rights elements in the PSG review of UNDAFs), and recognition of the importance of access to dedicated human rights support at the regional level, particularly if gaps remain at the country level. Members of the Regional UNSDG also provided inputs on the dialogue design, identified civil society representatives to participate and provided critical operational support to the local implementation of the event.

2.5 Coherent and strategic engagement with UN human rights mechanisms

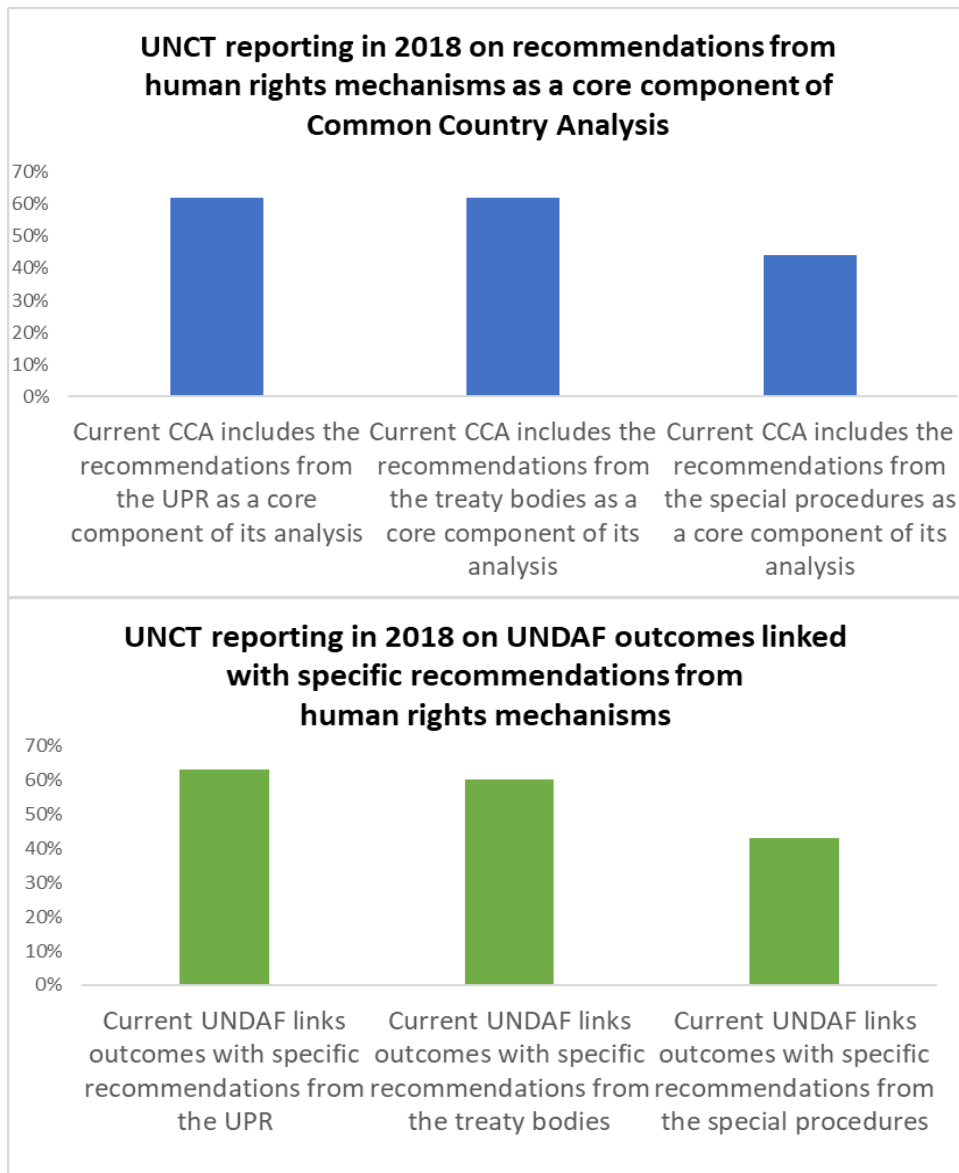
In early 2018, the Secretariat worked closely with the OHCHR to send letters to RCs containing tailored communications on key upcoming opportunities for UNCTs to engage with the UN human rights mechanisms. The letters provide country specific information with the aim to facilitate UNCT strategic planning and coherent engagement by providing a comprehensive overview of all upcoming reviews by treaty bodies, the UPR and forthcoming visits of Special Procedures mandate holders. This was the fourth year in which this initiative has been undertaken, and it was again received very positively by Resident Coordinators.

Feedback from RCs on Letters on Opportunities to Engage with UN Human Rights Mechanisms

“Many thanks for this information from the co-Chairs of the Task Team on LNOB, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda, which is very much appreciated. These are key priorities for the UN system in Costa Rica and for me as Resident Coordinator.”

Alice Shackelford, Resident Coordinator, Costa Rica

The Secretariat also undertook a review of the indicators in the annual UNCT/RCO reporting platform - the Information Management System (IMS) - to strengthen data on the integration of the recommendations from UN human rights mechanisms (UPR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures) in the Common Country Analysis and the UNDAF. This baseline data will help inform policy and operational support developed at global level, and enable tracking of progress and trends in the future. Incorporating such questions in the IMS also reinforces to UNCTs the importance of following global guidance on these matters. 2018 baseline reporting under these new indicators is presented below. It suggests that there is a need for greater efforts and support to the full integration of the outcomes of human rights mechanisms into CCAs and UNDAFs.



Data in above two figures drawn from 2018 UNCT reporting in UNDCO Information Management System (IMS)

2.6 Secretariat activities to support Human Rights Task Team and UNDG-HRM Fund

The Secretariat played an instrumental role in supporting the Human Rights Task Team to deliver the 2018 Work Plan, and included ongoing substantive guidance and coordination support for strategic initiatives supported under the UNDG-HRM Fund. The Secretariat provided important quality assurance, coordination and partnership support for the human rights mainstreaming work of the UNSDG. This included the provision of support to the establishment of the new Human Rights Task Team, such as guiding new co-Chairs and their support teams on the new UNSDG structures and working mechanisms and supporting co-Chairs in articulating a strategic vision for the Human Rights Task Team in the context of the changes to the UNSDG architecture. Once the Human Rights Task Team was established, the Secretariat initiated both formal and informal processes to build consensus around the Terms of Reference, develop a results-focused work plan for 2018-2019 and to identify focal points/leads within the membership for each of the outcomes and deliverables.

The Secretariat also provided coordination and technical advice to agency leads in taking forward their respective activities under the Human Rights Task Team Work Plan. This included leading intensive coordination and providing technical inputs to the drafting of the Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind for UNCTs, ensuring continued engagement of UNSDG entities in the drafting process which was essential for conceptual coherence and a smooth approval processes during review and endorsement. The Secretariat also collaborated with UNDP and OHCHR on the conceptualization and implementation of the Human Rights Leadership Dialogue for RCs in Asia Pacific. In this initiative, the Secretariat was particularly critical in facilitating the strategic engagement of the Regional UNSDG and civil society, and in all operational aspects as the funding implementer for that project. The Secretariat also ensured collaboration of the Human Rights Task Team in the HRA community of practice workshop, introducing workshop design elements that leveraged the opportunity for obtaining inputs from the HRAs on the UNDAF/UNSDCF Guidance and the Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind for UNCTs.

The Secretariat ensured a transparent process for funding decisions and ensured the smooth functioning of the UNDG-HRM Fund, including with regards to fundraising, reporting and liaising with donors. This included participation in the “Informal meeting of development partners on: International support for the national implementation of human rights obligations and recommendations”, held in Oslo on 20 April 2018, where the Secretariat shared analytics and insights on the activities of UNCTs in supporting the implementation of human rights through development work and some of the key results of the UNDG-HRM Fund. The Secretariat also provided technical inputs to senior UN leadership to inform strategic discussions on the feasibility of available mechanisms for funding the UNSDG’s human rights mainstreaming priorities in the changing operational context of the new UNSDG architecture. Following these discussions, the Secretariat liaised closely with donors, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office and Participating UN Organizations of the UNDG-HRM Fund to build consensus on the proposal to extend the UNDG-HRM Fund to December 2020, and to ensure timely completion of all relevant administrative requirements once there was agreement of all relevant partners to extend. As documented above, the Secretariat also worked closely with OHCHR on the mobilization and strategic use of additional funds available through the UNDCO-managed Delivering Together Facility to support the priorities of the Human Rights Task Team and the UNDG-HRM Fund (specifically, the deployment of HRAs).

Knowledge Management

The Secretariat continued to support UNCTs apply a human rights-based approach to development through knowledge exchange, particularly through managing [the UN Human Rights Policy network \(HuriTALK\)](#) and [the UN HRBA Practitioners' Portal](#) pending a review of knowledge management structures and tools by the Human Rights Task Team. Activities under the HuriTAK network in the reporting period included regular Resource Updates, compiling HRBA-related news, activities, tools and publications in an easily digestible format. These continue to be valuable platforms and tools for colleagues in the field.

Challenges

Securing stable funding to scale-up the human rights mainstreaming work of the UNSDG is crucial to maintain the momentum created over the past years and continue to respond to the increasing demand for human rights support, particularly in the context of the UNDS reform. The results reported above demonstrate the significant impact of the relatively modest UNDG-HRM Fund on UNSDG policies and guidance and on RC/UNCT activities on the ground. Moreover, through close collaboration between the Secretariat and Participating Organizations of the UNDG-HRM Fund, donor

contributions through various sources were directed to human rights mainstreaming activities in 2018, enabling the scale up of human rights support at a particularly critical time.

Changes to the UNSDG architecture in 2018 resulted in the need to use funding from multiple sources. This presented operational challenges throughout the reporting period that required considerable effort on the part of the Secretariat and Participating Organizations of the UNDG-HRM Fund to overcome. With the UNDG-HRM Fund due to close at the end of 2018 and the structural changes within the UNSDG, the future funding modalities for the priorities supported through this Fund was unclear for much of the reporting period, hindering planning and resource mobilization.

Funding remains a key requirement to ensure sustainability and strategic decision-making for the deployment of HRAs. In the absence of multi-year funding commitments, it is extremely difficult for the UNSDG and the UNDG-HRM Fund to engage with RCs globally and move the agenda forward in a strategic direction. With the decision in late 2018 to extend the UNDG-HRM Fund to the end of 2020, and a significant 2-year contribution received from SIDA, participating organizations have been able to plan for the continuation of key activities, including the extension and scale up of the HRA deployments. Nevertheless, even a 2-year funding period is short in terms of strategic planning, particularly where staff deployments are involved.

In relation to the deployment of HRAs to RCs and UNCTs specifically, increased coverage and stability for the programme was achieved in 2018 through the efforts of OHCHR and the Secretariat to respond to increasing demands by strategically using funds available from various sources. These actions were informed by the results of evaluations and ongoing assessments of the programme in close consultation with RCs and the HRAs. The lessons learned over the last seven years of implementation enhanced the programme through, for example, the establishment of a new modality of deployments through national Human Rights Advisers where capacity, composition of teams and conditions are met, and through increased efforts to build the community of practice amongst the HRA cohort. While expansion of the HRA programme delivers an equally expanded impact footprint at country level, it also entails greater multi-year financial commitments and the responsibility to ensure funding for stronger systems of support for the programme such as communities of practice and operational support.

The changing financial environment at national level started impacting negatively on the capacity of RCs and UNCTs to cost-share the extensions of the deployments, despite the needs and results on the ground. To address this situation OHCHR, the other members of the Steering Committee and the Secretariat adopted a flexible approach to the salary cost-sharing parameters. Where cost-sharing opportunities were limited, full coverage was supported using available sources of funding to maximize sustainability. However, there are still several ongoing transformations in the context of the UNDS reform which require close collaboration and strategic planning between OHCHR, other members of the Steering Committee and the Secretariat to ensure optimal use of resources to continue facilitating that sustainability as well as predictability of resources.

Opportunities

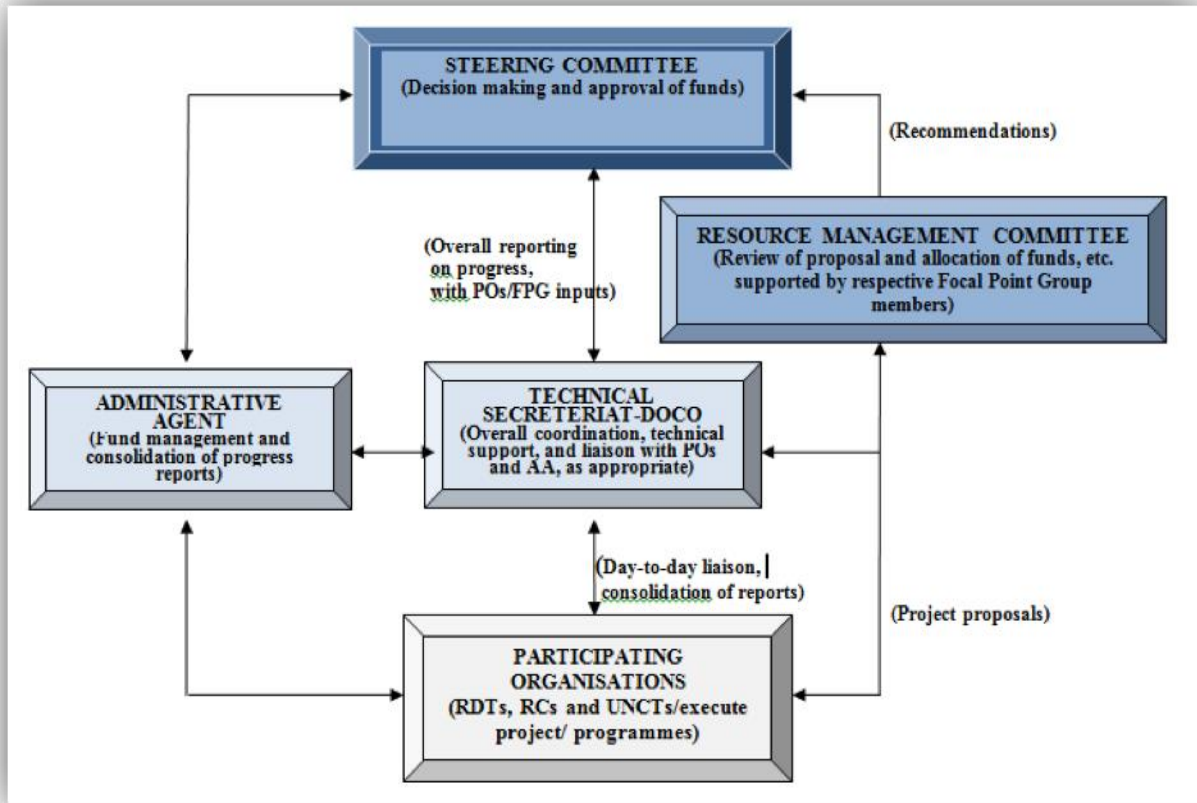
The repositioning of the UNDS under the 2016 QCPR and GA Resolution 72/279 is opening up opportunities for new and expanded support to mainstreaming human rights in development policies, frameworks and tools, and in operational activities on the ground for greater impact on people's lives. The results documented above illustrate what can be achieved through modest funding for this important area of work. The UNDG-HRM Fund provides an excellent tool to ensure that we are able to ensure that as the UNDS reforms take root, RCs and UNCTs have the human rights capacities they need, and that the requisite supportive policies, tools and structures are in place and well-functioning. Ensuring continued support for the UNDG-HRM Fund remains a priority mechanism to 2020 and

beyond for ensuring that UNDS support to countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda is grounded unequivocally in that for which the UN, by its very Charter, stands: freedom from fear and want for all, without discrimination.

ANNEX 1 - UNDG-HRM Fund Governance Structure

This section outlines roles and processes and describes how they contributed to the overall governance and accountability of the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2018.

Figure 1: UNDG-HRM Fund Governance Structure



Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides overall leadership, sets the strategic direction and approves allocations, and tasks the Resource Management Committee to meet regularly to prepare resource allocation recommendations for the approval of the Steering Committee.

In 2017, the Steering Committee role was performed by the RG VVN, which was co-Chaired by Kate Gilmore, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director General at UNESCO. At the end of 2017, due to the imminent re-structure of the UNSDG working mechanisms, the Steering Committee delegated responsibility for any final decisions regarding the use of remaining UNDG-HRM Fund for Human Rights Advisors to the Resource Management Committee. The RG VVN was dissolved at the end of 2017 as a result of the UNDS reforms and the restructure of the UNSDG and its working arrangements. Before its dissolution, the RG VVN authorised the UNDG-HRM Fund Resource Management Committee to make limited decisions on its part in relation to the funding of Human Rights Advisors order to ensure the effective utilization of remaining funds in the UNDG-HRM Fund in 2018. In late 2018 it was decided to extend the Fund to 31 December 2020.

Technical Secretariat

The UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO) (re-named the Development Coordination Office in 2019), in its capacity as the UNSDG secretariat, hosts the UNSDG coordination mechanisms including the Human Rights Task Team, with the strategic and substantive work carried out by the UNSDG entities leading on specific components/tasks. In addition, UNDOCO provides advice on UNSDG policies and guidelines, and ensures institutional linkages with other UNSDG Results Groups and Teams. UNDOCO is responsible for leading the coordination of, support to, and communication with, Resident Coordinators/UNCTs and Regional UNSDG Teams on behalf of the Human Rights Task Team. For this purpose, appropriate technical capacities have been established in UNDOCO.

Resource Management Committee (RMC)

The Resource Management Committee (RMC) is a sub-committee of the UNDG-HRM Steering Committee, established to make recommendations on all areas related to the allocation of funds from the UNDG-HRM Fund. The RMC is comprised of senior representatives from up to seven Participating Organizations which have signed the MOU, one of whom serves as the Chairperson.

Participating UN Organizations

UN Organizations that participate in the UNDG-HRM Fund sign a standard MOU with the Administrative Agent, and operate under its financial regulations, rules and policies and assumes full financial and programmatic accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent and for the implementation of the project, and provides financial and narrative progress reports to the Administrative Agent on its activities, as described in the MOU. Participating UN Organizations assume full programmatic and financial accountability for funds transferred to them. They are responsible for the following duties:

- Submit proposals to the UNDG-HRM RMC, through the Technical Secretariat, for review and subsequent consideration by the Steering Committee;
- Design, implement and oversee projects;
- Establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent; and,
- Provide narrative and financial progress reports as outlined in the MOU.

Administrative Agent/Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office)

The role of the MPTF Office, as the Administrative Agent for the UNDG-HRM Fund, includes the receipt, administration and management of contributions from donors, disbursement of funds to Participating UN Organizations in accordance with decisions of the Steering Committee, and consolidation and dissemination of progress reports to the donors. Through the MPTF Office GATEWAY, a public website on all MPTFs administered by the MPTF Office, it ensures full transparency of the operations of the UNDG-HRM Fund.

ANNEX 2 - Programme/Project Development, Review and Approval Procedures

Implementation Modalities

Activities in the HRWG / RG VVN / Human Rights Task Team work plan, supported by the UNDG-HRM Fund, are implemented by Participating UN Organizations utilising existing agency programme/project infrastructures (including relevant oversight bodies) at global, regional and national levels, including through the joint programming modalities.

The UNDG-HRM Fund Steering Committee, supported by its Secretariat, coordinates the implementation of all activities under the UNDG-HRM Fund to ensure their timely delivery and compliance with the overall work plan and objectives. The Steering Committee has established clear criteria for selecting and allocating funds to country, regional and global activities.

One of the main objectives of the HRWG / RG VVN / Human Rights Task Team is to support RCs in their strategic leadership of the UNCTs in mainstreaming human rights at country level and through relationships with national authorities. When activities are implemented at country level at the request of UNCTs, Resident Coordinators provide on-going oversight of the activities.

At the global and regional level, Participating Organizations receiving funds from the UNDG-HRM Fund take responsibility for the oversight and monitoring and evaluation of the project/activity.

Programme Approval Criteria

To facilitate strategic decision-making in using the funds, the HRWG adopted detailed criteria for selecting and allocating funds towards country, regional and global activities and proposals. Criteria include UNCT involvement and ownership, strategic opportunities and a conducive environment at the national level; the potential for scaling- up or drawing lessons for the regional and global levels; and creation or leveraging of strategic entry points to move the human rights and development agenda forward. These criteria help guide UNCTs in developing their country submissions, as well as the RMC and Steering Committee members in evaluating proposals received.

Transfer of Funds

Information on contributions received, transfers made and the available balance is publicly available on the UNDG-HRM Fund website (<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/HRM00>) on the MPTF Office GATEWAY. Based on the approval of the Steering Committee, and the signed Joint Project/Project document by the Chairs and Participating UN Organizations, the MPTF Office transfers approved funds to the Participating UN Organizations who are signatories to the Joint Project/Project after ensuring consistency with the applicable provisions of the Standard Administrative Arrangement between donors and the MPTF Office, as the Administrative Agent on behalf of the Participating UN Organizations.