

Poverty and economic, social and cultural rights

Pursuing economic, social and cultural rights and combating inequalities and poverty, including in the context of the economic, food and climate crises

Background

At the end of 2010, a desperate Tunisian individual denied the most basic elements of a life in dignity was driven to set himself alight - a spark that lit the fire of the Arab Spring. The events of the Arab Spring fuelled demands for human rights worldwide and exposed the fallacy of the assumption that economic or social progress can be achieved in isolation from enjoyment of human rights.

Against this backdrop, the imperative to respect, protect and fulfil economic, social and cultural rights acquires even greater urgency. In the context of this global awakening, the High Commissioner reminded Governments and international institutions that health care, education, housing and access to justice are not commodities for sale to the few, but are rights, guaranteed to everyone, everywhere, without discrimination. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties call for the enjoyment by all of fundamental values and principles of dignity and freedom; universal standards for all to be upheld at all times.





The year 2011 also marked the global commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development. Human rights, including the right to development, provide both intrinsic and instrumental standards for development work. Development must be guided by, and aim for, human rights protection and be participatory, empowering, sustainable, accountable and non-discriminatory. The empowerment of women, minorities and marginalized communities generates significantly more development resources. At the international level, the need for system-wide policy coherence, based on international human rights and humanitarian law, is imperative.

OHCHR's role

At the core of OHCHR's work is the provision of guidance and technical advice, legal analysis and applied research, development of methodological tools and learning packages, capacity-building and sharing expertise on economic, social and cultural rights and human rights-based approach to development with Member States, NHRIs, CSOs, UN partners and advocacy groups.

As part of its efforts to promote the full implementation of economic, social and cultural rights, the Office continues to provide dedicated support to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, which is tasked to review the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in States Parties and to other treaty monitoring bodies and special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

OHCHR endeavours to integrate all human rights, including the right to development and their gender dimensions, into international cooperation and national development policies and economic and social programmes, particularly in the context of the implementation and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this regard, OHCHR leads UN system-wide efforts to mainstream human rights and is an active participant in the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda within and outside the UN.

The following are results the Office helped bring about in this area in 2011.

National laws, policies and institutions

EA 1 - Increased compliance with international human rights standards by relevant State institutions in domestic laws, policies and programmes relevant to development, poverty reduction and economic, social and cultural rights

OHCHR assisted Governments, civil society and other national stakeholders, upon their request, to make necessary changes in national legislation and policies to realize economic, social and cultural rights and integrate human rights in national poverty reduction strategies, development policies and budgets. Along with methodical tools, OHCHR's applied research, technical advice and practical learning which were instrumental in raising awareness and building capacities of national partners to align national policies and programmes with human rights obligations.

As a result of OHCHR's multi-year advocacy efforts to raise awareness and promote the full implementation of the ICESCR with national partners, the Guiding Principles on Development-based Evictions, elaborated by the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, are increasingly being put in practice. In Serbia, for example, the Guiding Principles were used by OHCHR in response to the relocation of a Roma settlement in Belgrade, provided a planning framework for alternative housing solutions and helped promote the participation of civil society and communities in determining just solutions. In Haiti, the President declared, on 22 July 2011, that his Government was opposed to forced evictions and requested that municipalities put a hold on any evictions of camp inhabitants. This was a result of long-term advocacy by OHCHR and its partners.

In Guatemala, the Office assisted national stakeholders and civil society in their claims for policy change in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and food security. Key women's organizations promoted the incorporation of human rights standards on sexual and reproductive health into a resolution issued by the Ombudsman. In line with recommendations of OHCHR and special procedures, the Government increased social spending between 2009 and 2011 and presented proposals to institutionalize a Cash Transfer Programme to Congress.

A number of Government agencies and national and regional human rights institutions have engaged in the development and use of indicators to foster the implementation of human rights, drawing on



© UNHCR/R. Gengale

OHCHR's methodology for human rights indicators. In Nepal, for instance, OHCHR facilitated the strengthening of the Government's human rights-based approach to national planning and programming on poverty reduction, including through the development of human rights indicators to monitor economic, social and cultural rights. Launched in September 2011, Nepal's national human rights indicators, which replicated OHCHR's indicators framework, are intended to assist national stakeholders in monitoring the status of the rights to adequate food, housing, health, education and work.

OHCHR has also supported efforts to incorporate a human rights perspective into the development of national programmes, policies and budgets. In July, the Government of Ecuador adopted a guide on the formulation of human rights-based sector-specific public policies through a ministerial decree. This guide, developed with technical and financial support from OHCHR, adopts a human rights-based approach to planning as a mandatory methodology for all branches and departments of the Executive and makes operational the equality agendas enshrined in the Constitution. It also establishes the mandatory and systematic use of the recommendations of international and regional human rights mechanisms in the diagnosis and formulation of public policies. The Mexico City Governmental Mechanism to implement and evaluate the local human rights programme was established with sustained technical assistance

from OHCHR. Substantive progress was also reported in the elaboration of two new human rights assessment processes in the states of Oaxaca and Baja California, Mexico. In the context of the proposed 2012 State budget, the Parliament of Timor-Leste considered the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights to increase public expenditure on social services and agriculture. The final, adopted budget for 2012 increased funding for health and education by 47 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively.

The Office organized a regional workshop on a human rights-based approach to the budget process in December 2011 in Cameroon. Delegations from seven countries from Central Africa, including officials from finance and planning ministries, NHRIs and civil society, attended this event and identified concrete entry points and follow-up actions to advance human rights in their respective national development agendas, public policy and financial frameworks. For example, the Government of the Central African Republic was able to further influence positively the adoption of a 2012 financial law by the Parliament which resulted in the planned allocation of more financial resources to human rights activities in key ministries. Similar workshops on human rights and budget processes were delivered in the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Kenya and Nepal, directed at national actors from the Government, NHRIs, civil society and the UNCT.

Putting human rights into practice through development: the Ecuadorian experience

Human rights and development share a common objective: to improve people's well-being. Some economic strategies focus narrowly on growth, yet this is insufficient for human development. Human rights provide the normative framework to protect the freedom and equality of all individuals and bring principles of accountability and social justice to the development process.

By incorporating human rights principles into national development strategies, Governments are more likely to be successful in achieving the MDGs and realizing the UN Charter's vision of a more equal and just world.

During a summit on the MDGs in September 2010, the High Commissioner offered her Office's support to countries "willing to integrate human rights into their development and cooperation policies." She said it was her

intention to bring the findings from such country experiences to the attention of a "Special Event" on the MDGs in 2013. "This," she added "will help identify success factors towards achieving the MDGs."

In 2010, the Government of Ecuador requested assistance from OHCHR to integrate human rights principles and approaches into development planning. The collaboration between the Government of Ecuador and OHCHR resulted in the publication in May 2011 of a *Guía de Formulación de Políticas Públicas Sectoriales*, a guide for the formulation of sectoral policies.

The guide, issued by the National Secretariat for Development and Planning of Ecuador, represents the first in a series of efforts by the Government, with OHCHR's assistance, to ensure that human

rights will contribute to the vision of *Buen Vivir*, or good living. This vision, enshrined in the Ecuadorian Constitution adopted in 2008, is based on the principle that there is no real development without the full enjoyment of human rights by all.

The State, which according to the Constitution of Ecuador embodies the principles of human rights and justice, must design and implement public policies that ensure the full enjoyment by all of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The guide has been made available as a working document to support the formulation of human rights-based sectoral policies by all Ministries and Secretariats of the Republic of Ecuador and will be piloted in June in the water and sanitation sector with the assistance of OHCHR.

In Liberia, the Office organized workshops on human rights and business for the National Investments Commission. This resulted in the development and endorsement of a "Ten Principles Framework on Business and Human Rights," aimed at guiding the negotiation of concession agreements and monitoring and advising business operations. OHCHR and UNDP collaborated to support the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs to integrate human rights in Liberia's Second Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2012-2017 (PRSP II). A briefing paper analysing the Liberian National Budget for 2011-2012 from a human rights perspective was presented to the legislature by civil society organizations.

Access to justice and basic services

EA 4 - Increased number of measures taken to improve access to justice and to quality economic and social services by discriminated groups, and particularly women, indigenous and minority groups and people living in poverty

OHCHR engaged in advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity-building activities to improve access to justice and quality economic and social services by individuals and groups experiencing discrimination.

OHCHR strengthened the capacity of judges, lawyers and civil society organizations on the judicial protection of economic, social and cultural rights through training activities in Bolivia, Central America and Western Africa. Support was also given to the Kyrgyz NGO OOSZN in their provision of legal aid and humanitarian assistance to homeless people in Jalal-Abad, southern Kyrgyzstan, and bringing local authorities' attention to the various ways and means of preventing and reducing homelessness.

In Timor-Leste, OHCHR provided technical and financial support to a national NGO, Forum-DESK (Forum on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), on advocacy on the right to education, based on their past monitoring activities and consultations with Members of Parliament, the Ministry of Education, local authorities and civil society. As a result, the Ministry of Education included the re-opening of four schools in the subdistrict in its 2012 programme.

Following the visit to the United States of America of the UN Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, the community of Seville received notice that it was eligible for two types of grants from the State of California. It had previously been informed that it was ineligible. The community is

currently using these funds to implement different solutions to improve water quality. The Special Rapporteur had convened a public hearing with the local communities who had expressed concern regarding the safety of the drinking water, particularly regarding nitrate contamination.

Participation

EA 5 - Discriminated groups, and particularly women, indigenous and minority groups and people living in poverty, increasingly advocate for their economic, social and cultural rights and participate in decision-making processes and the formulation and monitoring of relevant public policies

Participation is vital for achieving equal, equitable and sustainable public policy outcomes. International human rights standards should be the normative baseline for participation. The 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development requires that participation be “active, free and meaningful.”

In Guatemala, following OHCHR’s technical assistance to key civil society organizations, five legal claims filed against the State on the violation of the right to food were admitted by the court in Zacapa, marking the first occasion on which such claims had been admitted. The aim of these cases

was to align jurisprudence with international standards concerning the right to food.

In Cambodia, the Office promoted and facilitated the further involvement of civil society organizations in prison reform work, including through legal aid support. For example, support to the Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture on prison farming yielded positive results, including enhanced capacities of staff and prisoners, improved production techniques and increased yields, which led to higher income-generation by prisons and increased prisoners’ rations. The Office supported SIPAR, a French NGO working towards the reconstruction of Cambodia through youth education, in its partnership with the General Department of Prisons to improve literacy, education and rehabilitation opportunities through the establishment of libraries in four prisons. The Office has also been working closely with VBNK, an institute to serve facilitators of development, to build the capacities of the core team of prison trainers from the General Department of Prisons and the Royal Police Academy of Cambodia.

In the North-East Department of Haiti, OHCHR provided support to CSOs in relation to public policy monitoring and the identification of development priorities within local public budgets. A report on



Guatemalan students learn about human rights with interactive materials developed by OHCHR.

human rights priorities to be used as a reference document in the preparation of public policies and budgets was presented to local officials, civil servants and elected parliamentarians. Parliamentarians for the North-East Department publicly endorsed the report and presented it to the Prime Minister.

In Liberia, OHCHR provided technical support to civil society networks so that they are now able to gather data and monitor the implementation of the human rights-based approach in Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy and County Development Agendas in relation to health, education and the rights of persons with disabilities in five counties. In addition, the Office facilitated a pilot project on the new Freedom of Information Law, the County Development Fund and Social Development Fund, implemented in three counties with support from the World Bank. The results include the establishment of a civil society human rights and budget network for a number of sectors at the county level, enhanced capacities of local CSOs to monitor the use of these development funds and the creation of a database containing over 300 active CSOs in 15 counties in preparation for strengthened civil society engagement in the nationwide PRS II consultation processes in 2012.

OHCHR also contributed to the development of a common understanding in international standards on the right to adequate housing and the prohibition of forced evictions and facilitated dialogue between various actors in these areas through its work with State authorities and CSOs in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan

and Tajikistan. In Kyrgyzstan, OHCHR advised on the drafting of the housing code which is currently under review by Parliament and, if adopted in its current form, could serve as a useful model for the region. OHCHR further supported the work of the Office of the Ombudsman in Serbia in monitoring the implementation of national Roma action plans aimed at improving the situation of Roma in the areas of housing, health, employment and education.

The Assisting Communities Together Project, implemented in partnership with UNDP, supported 28 CSOs in 13 countries through providing small grants for human rights education and promotional activities in local communities to address a variety of issues, including the right to health, rights of older persons, women's rights, human rights of persons with disabilities, land rights, domestic violence, anti-discrimination campaigns and others.

Responsiveness of the international community

EA 10 - International community is increasingly responsive to the human rights dimensions of poverty and the realization of economic, social and cultural rights

The continuing effects of recent global crises illustrate the critical importance of encouraging international responsibilities for human rights and international partnerships to create an enabling environment for development. The commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to

Commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Right to Development: "Development as a human right for all"

The 2011 global commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development provided an opportunity for the international community to reflect on the lessons learned, achievements made over the past 25 years and the potential of the right to development to address contemporary global challenges in an increasingly interdependent and globalized world. The anniversary inspired an unprecedented amount of initiatives and activities by stakeholders, international organizations, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society. OHCHR organized

13 international events, seminars, workshops, panels and roundtables; and developed and disseminated three new publicity materials and one video, including through social media platforms. Some 20 public statements were made in support of the right to development.

Many of the discussions echoed the four key messages that the High Commissioner emphasized at the launch of the anniversary year: development is a human right for all; the right to development belongs to everyone, without discrimination; the right to development is as relevant today as it was on the day the Declaration was adopted; and

we must act together in a determined and coherent manner in order to realize the right to development. The conclusions of the anniversary events call for a resolute transition from theory to action. They also highlighted the many challenges that remain for the meaningful realization of the right to development.

For the full report on the anniversary activities, see the Report of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Right to Development, 8 December 2011 (A/HRC/19/45).



Mothers with their young children at a mobile clinic in Timor-Leste.

Development in 2011 provided an opportunity for the international community to reflect on lessons learned, achievements made over the last 25 years and the potential of the right to development to address contemporary global challenges in an increasingly interdependent and globalized world.

OHCHR actively supported the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations in finalizing the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework”, unanimously endorsed by the Human Rights Council in June 2011. This marked the first time an intergovernmental human rights body adopted a normative instrument clarifying the respective duties and responsibilities of States and business enterprises for managing the human rights risks related to business activities and establishing the Guiding Principles as the authoritative global reference point. OHCHR produced an interpretive guide on the corporate responsibility to respect human rights which focuses on the second pillar of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

A number of special procedures mandate-holders have been active in relation to the MDGs agenda. In May 2011, the Office supported the Special Rapporteur on safe drinking water and sanitation in convening a multi-stakeholder meeting to address post-2015 monitoring of water and sanitation which

included representatives from the UN, the World Bank, Member States, bilateral donor organizations, regional development banks, water and sanitation experts and civil society experts. The participants agreed that the human rights to water and sanitation should inform the selection of global goals, targets and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda. The Inter-Agency Advisory Board for the global monitoring platform in relation to the water and sanitation MDGs, co-chaired by UNICEF and WHO, committed to incorporating human rights standards into the indicators developed for the post-2015 MDG framework.

Drawing from the human rights commitments undertaken by Member States in the 2010 MDG Review Summit Outcome Document, OHCHR strengthened its research, advocacy and partnership work in relation to the MDGs and post-2015 development agenda by working within intergovernmental and UN development structures and through a broad range of civil society partnerships. In November 2011, the Office convened an expert consultation on the concept of accountability in connection with the MDGs and post-2015 development agenda. OHCHR facilitated and supported various forums and expert consultations to promote coherent and coordinated advocacy on human rights, including quantitative assessment methods for human rights, the MDGs and economic, social and cultural rights.



The Human Rights Council continued to hold panel discussions throughout the year which addressed the human rights dimensions of poverty and the realization of economic, social and cultural rights. It held panel discussions on issues ranging from violence against women and girls and the realization of the right to health of older persons to a panel discussion on the way forward in the realization of the right to development, focusing on both policy and practice. The panels were supported by OHCHR and provided an opportunity and venue for the international community to focus on and discuss, with experts in the field, new and emerging thematic human rights issues and increasing awareness of these issues from a human rights perspective.

Human rights mainstreaming within the United Nations

EA 11 - Increased integration of human rights standards and principles, in particular those relevant to economic, social and cultural rights, into policies and programmes of the UN system and other intergovernmental bodies in development, humanitarian action and in response to global crises

Mainstreaming human rights principles and standards in UN policies, guidelines, programmes and learning and methodological tools is critical for strengthening

UN capacities to support national human rights promotion and protection efforts, including on economic, social and cultural rights.

The Secretary-General and his High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF) advocated for world food and nutrition security throughout 2011, including at key international policy processes such as the General Assembly, ECOSOC, the Committee on the World Food Security and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). OHCHR actively participated in the development of common advocacy messages and positions for the UN and international financial institutions through the HLTF. The HLTF's advocacy consistently integrated reference to the realization of the right to food and adoption of a human rights-based approach as a part of its strategies to achieve world food and nutrition security.

The Office also provided substantial technical assistance to the negotiation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, developed under the auspices of the Committee on World Food Security. OHCHR's contributions sought to ensure consistency of the guidelines with existing international human rights law. The agreed language of the draft guidelines reflects existing international human rights norms and standards.

OHCHR increased its institutional collaboration with UN-HABITAT under the United Nations Housing Rights Programme. This collaboration resulted in, inter alia, the development of several activities, including a publication on eviction impact assessment methodologies which clarify the relevance of international human rights norms in practice. OHCHR also contributed to the inclusion of human rights as a cross-cutting issue in UN-HABITAT's organizational restructuring.

OHCHR continued to play a leading role in strengthening system-wide efforts to integrate human rights in the UN's operational activities for development through the chairing and coordinating of the work of the UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism (UNDG-HRM). During its initial phase in 2011, the UNDG-HRM undertook a survey on human rights mainstreaming by UNCTs. A total of 99 UNCTs responded to the survey, demonstrating their strong commitment to supporting the needs of national partners and providing critical insights into challenges and opportunities at the country level, including in the context of implementing recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review. In addition, the UNDG-HRM undertook a mapping of mainstreaming policies and collected over 400 programming and other tools which were made available on the HRBA Portal, re-launched on 10 December on the occasion of Human Rights

Day. An inter-agency training package on HRBA was updated and enhanced and a training-of-trainers workshop was carried out to expand the pool of accredited trainers further. On 27 October 2011, a Multi-Donor Trust Fund was launched to solicit support for the full implementation of the UNDG-HRM's priorities.

At the field level, OHCHR continued to support UNCTs in implementing a human rights-based approach to the formulation of UNDAFs and other common country programming processes by, inter alia, delivering HRBA workshops to UNDAF roll-out countries in partnership with the UN System Staff College (UNSSC); participating in the drafting of outcome documents of these programmes; and coordinating or chairing a number of task teams responsible for the development of the common programmes mentioned above. As a result, UNDAFs and similar development programmes in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, DRC, Djibouti, El Salvador, the Gambia, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, the Republic of Moldova, Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Senegal and Uruguay include human rights concerns to a moderate or substantial extent. A significant number make reference to specific recommendations from UN human rights bodies and mechanisms and comprise human rights interventions that are to be

The UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism and the Multi-Donor Trust Fund

On 27 October 2011, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UNDP Administrator and Chair of the United Nations Development Group, jointly launched the Multi-Donor Trust Fund to support the work of UN agencies and country teams in mainstreaming human rights and strengthening coherent and coordinated responses to national needs.

Over the last decade, there has been significant progress in mainstreaming human rights into the work of the UN system. An increasing number of UN agencies are not only integrating human rights into their internal policies, but are also actively advocating for human rights through their

mandated work, including in relation to the rights of people affected by HIV, the rights to food, education, health and shelter and the fundamental rights of workers.

"For our colleagues on the ground, human rights are no longer 'add-ons' to their long list of other priorities, but a foundation on which they can build the UN's coherence and comparative advantages," said the High Commissioner.

As the first four-year cycle of UPR is completed, there have been increased demands and expectations for more technical assistance from the United Nations. "This is why UN Member States will have to be provided with coherent and coordinated support from the

UN system," said the Ambassador from Uruguay and President of the Human Rights Council. "The 'Delivering as One' approach in Uruguay has been helpful in bridging the development and human rights pillars of the UN reform and in enhancing the synergies between various UN institutions present or not in the country."

The UNDP Administrator added that "through development, countries can improve their ability to promote and protect human rights. And conversely, through the application of human rights principles, including non-discrimination, participation and accountability, countries can help make national development efforts more effective and peace more secure."

implemented by OHCHR or in cooperation with other agencies. OHCHR contributed to several trainings and induction programmes aimed at Resident Coordinators and UNCT leadership organized by the UN Development Operations Coordination Office and UNSSC. As a result, 170 Resident Coordinators and Heads of UN agencies were trained during the year on human rights leadership and coordination.

OHCHR worked to mainstream human rights into the response of the UN system to humanitarian crises, both in situations where it acted as lead of local Protection Clusters or where it was a member without coordinating responsibilities. In OPT, for instance, the Office successfully ensured the integration of human rights standards into the Protection Cluster's work, in particular with regard to responses to settler violence, violations in Access Restricted Areas in Gaza and related to the mainstreaming of protection into the work of other Clusters. OHCHR's efforts resulted in the identification of protection as one of the two main themes in the 2012 Consolidated Appeal Process and the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the document. OHCHR also worked with the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster and the Health Cluster to integrate human rights into programming related to health, water, sanitation and hygiene and, as a result, programming checklists were finalized and adopted by Cluster members.

Challenges and lessons learned

OHCHR has moved from taking a conceptual approach to one that is more operational in nature in the promotion of economic social and cultural rights. It has also applied this approach in the integration of human rights in development policies and programmes against the growing demands and compounding impact of the global food, oil, financial and climate crises. The focus and scale of demands for OHCHR's support have increased and are consequently stretching OHCHR's technical capacities and institutional resources.

This challenge, however, has also been an opportunity to move economic, social and cultural rights and human rights-based approaches from rhetoric to operational reality, enabling OHCHR to innovate and work closely with Member States at the policy level, achieve greater impact in policy interventions and sectoral programming and create deeper and more effective partnerships within the UN and civil society. Nevertheless, in light of the evolving global demands and trends, more efforts and resources are needed to ensure that OHCHR can meet the substantial challenges that the UN system must confront. National capacities to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights need to be reinforced further in tandem with efforts to restore peace and security and the rule of law and address impunity.



The High Commissioner with the UN Secretary-General at a special event organized by OHCHR to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development, November 2011.

OHCHR's strategy in the area of human rights mainstreaming is to strengthen partnerships with UN agencies further so as to raise awareness and build the capacities of UN staff members on human rights issues connected with their work. Resident Coordinators play a critical role in promoting and advocating for human rights as a common UN value. They also coordinate the integration of human rights into operational and capacity-development activities of the UN system at the country level in a manner that is responsive to national demands and challenges. This will remain a priority for OHCHR and will benefit from enhanced inter-agency support under the UNDG-HRM.

Challenges remain in the realization of the right to development, including politicization and polarization in intergovernmental debates; the need to enlarge the constituencies in support of the right to development; and the imperative of mainstreaming the right to development into all areas of the UN system's work. This underscores the importance of human rights-based policy coherence in the global partnership for development and requires complete mainstreaming of all human rights, including the right to development, into the work of the United Nations system. This will be particularly critical in the upcoming Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review in 2012 and post-2015 development agenda.

Reaching zero discrimination in the AIDS response

Claire Gasamagera, from Rwanda, was five when her parents discovered she had been born with HIV. Her mother died the same year from AIDS-related causes. With no access to treatment at the time, she considers it a miracle that she is alive today. "I was meant to die but God has [kept me alive]... Today is my birthday. I am 28," she told a panel of the General Assembly High-level Meeting on AIDS.

According to UNAIDS, AIDS has claimed approximately 30 million lives worldwide since it was first identified 30 years ago. While access to treatment has significantly increased, new infections, estimated at 7,000 daily, far outstrip capacity

to provide universal treatment. More than half of eligible people in low and middle income countries - 9 million out of 15 million - are not receiving treatment. Countries meeting at a United Nations summit in New York in June 2011 adopted a Political Declaration with ambitious new targets to defeat AIDS, such as the promotion of laws, policies and measures to ensure the full realization of all human rights for people living with HIV, including access to prevention, treatment, care and support and the elimination of related discrimination and stigma.

Inadequate funding is not the only obstacle to universal access to

prevention, treatment, care and support. Participants in the High-level Meeting also identified gender inequality; violence against women and girls; marginalization and criminalization of drug users, sex workers and men who have sex with men; and discrimination and stigma against people living with HIV as major obstacles. "The question is no longer whether we can eliminate AIDS, but whether we have the will to do what it takes: to end discrimination and stigma and to ensure that marginalized populations can enjoy their human rights," said the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.