

Non-discrimination (ND)

Enhancing equality and countering discrimination



Non-discrimination in numbers

Since its establishment in 1985, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples has supported the participation of over

2,500

indigenous persons in UN human rights mechanisms



15



national laws adopted to combat discrimination in all its forms

1

transgender person participated in the new UN Human Rights LGBTI Fellowship Programme launched in 2019



UN Free & Equal campaign supported national campaigns and activities in

17

countries across the world, reaching

187,000

followers via its social media platforms



35

fellows (18 women, 17 men) from

29

countries participated in the annual Indigenous Fellowship Programme in Geneva



The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent sent 44 allegation letters and urgent appeals on behalf of over

30,200

victims



30

members of minority groups (15 women, 15 men) from



27

countries participated in the annual Minorities Fellowship Programme in Geneva

12

persons of African descent (8 women, 4 men) from



11

countries awarded a UN Human Rights Fellowship for People of African Descent

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF TUNISIA'S RURAL WOMEN



CHEBIKA, Tunisia – Here in the fields of the interior, in the central Tunisian province of Kairouan, farmers – mostly women – spend eight hours a day picking olives, peppers or tomatoes, regardless of the weather.

“It is very hard work – sometimes we are so tired we fall down,” said Naima Khlif, 49, bending over to pick another handful of peppers.

Many rural farming women in Tunisia carried out this work, which entailed a multitude of risks, without a safety net for themselves or their families. Working for short periods for a variety of employers made them ineligible for social security benefits. With high unemployment rates in Tunisia, there were always plenty of other women waiting to take up available work. Despite these precarious conditions, some positive changes are slowly helping to improve the situation of these women.

PROTECTING RURAL WOMEN'S RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

As a result of a local scheme that is supported by the Office, many rural women are now able to access social security and pay their contributions with a simple and free phone app that requires limited technical knowledge.

The app is the brainchild of Maher Khlifi, a local mechanic whose mother, a farm worker, was refused hospital care after her cancer diagnosis. After finding out that more than 90 per cent of women didn't have social security, Mr. Khlifi launched Ahmini, which means “protect me” in Arabic, a volunteer-based social enterprise designed to improve working



Naima Khlif at work picking peppers in Chebika, Tunisia.
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conditions for rural women. “I wanted to find a way to change the lives of women like my mother and give them greater equality,” he said.

Today, women who join the scheme can register for social security on their phones, upload the required documents and pay their contributions. This simple technology has meant freedom from fear and uncertainty.

CHANGING ATTITUDES, CHANGING LAWS

It all started in 2016 when Eljezia Hammami, a former coordinator with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, proposed a study on rural women and access to social security. The Office helped to fund and design the study, with support from UN Women.

The final report, which identified some of the startling reasons why rural women were ineligible for social security benefits, combined with advocacy materials, including from NGOs, served as the

cornerstone for a national strategy to ensure the economic and social autonomy of rural women.

“UN Human Rights was relentless in its advocacy for legal reform. Each time a representative met someone...in Tunis or Geneva, the issue of rural women was discussed and kept alive, adding a strong voice to ours,” Ms. Hammami said.

The legal reform was finally enacted in 2019, following which nearly 10,000 previously excluded rural women signed up for social security. The strategy for rural women has now been expanded to a five-year plan and many more women are expected to join.

The women are no longer refused healthcare, nor do they have to hide illnesses and pregnancies from employers. Working conditions may not yet be ideal, but the safety net for the poorest rural women is growing.

See the full version of this story on the UN Human Rights Exposure platform: <https://unhumanrights.exposure.co/improving-the-lives-of-tunisias-rural-women>

Highlights of pillar results

Non-discrimination (ND)

PILLAR RESULTS / SHIFTS / SDGs

ND1

Laws, policies and practices more effectively combat discrimination in all forms, and responsible authorities actively work to 'leave no one behind', including by addressing the root causes of inequality.



RESULTS / SPOTLIGHTS

Spotlights: Youth Disabilities Women



In December, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) of **Guatemala** adopted a ministerial agreement for the implementation of the intercultural bilingual education model in 13 communities in Antigua Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá. This ministerial agreement is the direct result of a strategic litigation case that was supported by OHCHR. Building on the favourable decision handed down by the Constitutional Court, in 2016, the Office provided technical assistance to the MINEDUC, indigenous authorities and affected communities regarding the design and implementation of the abovementioned intercultural bilingual education model, which includes a carefully prepared curriculum for indigenous children and scholarships for students.

The Parliament of **North Macedonia** adopted a new Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, in May, after long political debates. UN Human Rights used the opportunity of the country's third UPR report, in January, to support CSOs in their advocacy efforts prior and during the review. The resulting eight recommendations that were issued to expedite the adoption of the Law, coupled with advocacy undertaken by civil society after the review, contributed to the Parliament's decision to adopt the Law. An assessment of the compliance of the Law with international human rights standards will take place in 2020. The adopted text, however, appears to fully incorporate the Office's comments and comply with international human rights standards and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. The new Law includes provisions related to persons with disabilities, explicitly lists sexual orientation and gender identity among the prohibited grounds of discrimination and clarifies definitions. Most importantly, it also strengthens the mandate and provisions for ensuring an independent and effective Commission for prevention and protection against discrimination, which were the weakest elements of both the previous Law and the national anti-discrimination framework.



A number of results were achieved in the context of the project to support the eradication of begging and child abuse in **Senegal**, including the development of standard operating procedures for the care of children in danger and a national action plan for child protection that has been endorsed by the government; and a Children's Code that has also been finalized and is under consideration at the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, a methodological tool that will be used in conducting a national survey on child begging in Senegal, was developed with the technical assistance of OHCHR and approved by the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection. The provision of equipment (bedding and medicines) for 10 reception centres that were established to promote access to protection services for 500 children in vulnerable situations is also a significant achievement. Finally, the Office carried out three studies linked to the implementation of this project including a mapping of actors and initiatives to combat begging and child abuse; an analysis of Senegal's international, regional and national legal framework on the rights of the child and the implementation status of the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms on the rights of the child; and a study on the status of data collection related to child begging in Senegal.

ND2

Justice systems and related institutions increasingly monitor and investigate discrimination and provide redress to victims.



UN Human Rights contributed to the capacity-building of national institutions and equality bodies, mainly in **Europe** and **Latin America** and the **Caribbean**, and provided substantive inputs to national non-discrimination bills and plans of action against racism. For instance, as follow-up to recommendations issued by the UPR, UN Human Rights provided technical assistance to the Government of **Belgium** in its preparations of a national action plan against racism.

In April, the Constitutional Court ruled in favour of indigenous Mayan midwives, in a strategic litigation case that was supported by OHCHR in **Guatemala**. The Court's decision instructed the Ministry of Health to report on the implementation status of its internal policies for the provision of sexual and reproductive healthcare with an intercultural approach. Further, it ruled that the Ministry of Health must provide indigenous midwives with the tools and utensils they need to ensure quality, accessible and dignified reproductive healthcare. The Court ordered the Ministry of Health to develop adequate legal, technical and operational measures to ensure the effective inclusion of and respect for the customs, languages, practices and traditions of Maya, Garífuna, Xinca and Ladino women in the provision of maternal health services.

ND3

Legal and social frameworks increasingly promote women's and girls' autonomy and choice and protect them from violence, including in the digital space.



The Office's conference on "Protecting Civic Space in the **European Union**" recommended that any new legislation in the EU relating to online civic space should strictly define what constitutes prohibited content in accordance with ICCPR and ICERD. It was also suggested that consideration be given to the adoption of EU legislation to combat violence and abuse against women online. As a result of its participation in the conference, the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency expanded its survey on civic space in follow-up to its 2018 report entitled "Challenges facing civil society organizations working on human rights in the EU" to include questions about online harassment of HRDs in general, and women in particular. In November, UN Human Rights was invited to highlight the human rights-based perspective at the Women's Network of European Socialist Parties event on "Breaking the silence on online violence against women," which focused on the consequences of women withdrawing from political life on account of online harassment. The then incoming European Commissioner for Equality attended the event and pledged to take action.

OHCHR successfully engaged with the National Human Rights Commission and CSOs to advocate for enhancing the participation of women in public space in **Niger**. UN Human Rights' advocacy contributed to the adoption by the Parliament, on 6 December, of the bill amending Law No. 2000-008 of June 2000 establishing the quota system in elective, government and State administration positions. The revised legislation instituted a quota system for the participation of women in elective, government and State administration functions. The objective is to increase the quotas from 15 to 25 per cent for elective positions and from 25 to 30 per cent for appointments to senior government positions. It is anticipated that this legislation will strengthen the participation of women in public and political life in Niger.

ND4

Judicial institutions, media, and other sectors increasingly recognize and challenge harmful gender stereotypes and gender norms with a view to their eradication.



In **Paraguay**, Law No. 6338/19 was adopted on 1 July, amending article 10 of Law No. 5407/15 on domestic workers and improving their working conditions. This amendment was undertaken in response to a recommendation of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences during her visit to Paraguay in 2017.

ND5

Principles and practices effectively counter discrimination and hate speech in the digital space.



The High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner raised their concerns about the pushback on women’s rights and gender equality, including in online attacks, misogyny and hate speech in several high-level discussions, including at the Commission on the Status of Women, which was held in New York, in March; at the Women Deliver 2019 Conference, which was held in Vancouver, in June; and at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development, which was held in Nairobi, in November. The Office also contributed to the Doha Forum’s panel on “New Models for Online Content Governance,” during which panellists explored issues such as current and proposed efforts to monitor, regulate and curate online content; who should define what constitutes misinformation, hatred and violence on digital platforms; and risks associated with private actors developing their own decision-making frameworks for the removal of content. To this end, OHCHR developed a joint project with UN Global Pulse for monitoring online hate speech and incitement.

In the context of the rampant discourse emanating from religious and political groups opposing gender equality, UN Human Rights implemented activities aimed at countering the prevalence of hate speech and negative stereotyping directed towards women, LGBTI persons and groups that are frequently subject to discrimination. For instance, within the context of Human Rights Day, the Regional Office for Central America and **Panama’s** Museum of Contemporary Arts co-organized a digital arts exhibition, which included a specific segment emphasizing the need to combat the use of harmful stereotyping and its negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights of discriminated persons and groups.

ND6

The human rights of all migrants, particularly those in vulnerable situations, are protected.



OHCHR supported selected State institutions and programmes in the **Middle East and North Africa** to significantly improve their compliance with international human rights norms and standards on migration. The Office translated into Arabic the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders and widely disseminated this document during capacity-building activities and discussions with governmental and non-governmental partners in the region. OHCHR also organized a training programme on these guidelines and conducted training sessions on the protection of migrants across borders for the Lebanese General Security (GS). As a result of the programme, 150 GS Officers were trained on human rights principles and guidelines for border management, trafficking and due process in border management. The programme allowed UN Human Rights to further engage with GS and relevant UN entities to uphold the rights of people on the move.

In 2019, concluding observations issued by CMW in relation to **Argentina, Colombia** and **Guatemala** addressed frontier issues, such as mixed migratory movements, and in particular, migrations known as the “migrant caravans.” The Committee also highlighted the human rights of women and children on the move in the context of the massive migration of Venezuelan citizens, including in relation to citizenship for Venezuelan children born in Argentina and Colombia, family reunification, border management capacities and the lack of infrastructure at border crossing points. The Committee expressed its concern about the persistence of xenophobic attacks and hate speech against migrants from the media. In addition, CRPD issued recommendations concerning people’s displacement and movement, particularly migrants, asylum seekers and refugees with disabilities, in 15 out of 18 concluding observations and recommendations that were issued during the year.


ND7

Public support for equal, inclusive and diverse societies, without discrimination, increases.



The UN Free & Equal campaign launched four mini-campaigns reaching more than 14.3 million people in 2019 alone through campaign videos. The campaign also reached more than 187,000 people through its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. In March, the campaign celebrated International Transgender Day of Visibility with a short, animated video. In May, International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia was marked with a campaign celebrating political progress achieved by human rights activists and LGBTI communities in countries around the world. In October, a mini-campaign for Spirit Day called on allies to stand up for the rights of LGBTI youth experiencing bullying. In December, a mini-campaign was launched to laud the dedication of some of Africa's most inspiring allies, including Willy Mutunga, former Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya; Seun Kuti, a musician and activist from Nigeria; Bishop Ssenyonjo, a theologian from Uganda; and Alice Nkom, a lawyer from Cameroon.

The Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights of persons with albinism engaged with various partners, including a dermatology company, to launch the largest worldwide awareness-raising campaign on albinism. This included NYDG's ColourFull campaign, which used billboards in New York's Times Square on International Albinism Awareness Day to advocate for the rights of persons with albinism. Similar billboard campaigns were launched in other cities, including London and Hong Kong. In conjunction with the campaign, a consultation was held in New York bringing together Member States, UN entities, media representatives and communications specialists to reinforce advocacy efforts to combat discrimination against persons with albinism. The Independent Expert continued to advocate and promote "Champions for Albinism" to increase dialogue in civic space on persons with albinism. UN Human Rights has set up a dedicated web page (<https://albinism.ohchr.org/>) on its website that features champion advocates for albinism. The Independent Expert visited South Africa during national albinism month. While there, the President of South Africa delivered a national statement that acknowledged the need to address challenges faced by persons with albinism.

 Following the 2018 design phase, the Association of Persons with Disabilities in **Timor-Leste** (ADTL) implemented a national campaign on the rights of persons with disabilities, with support from the Office. The campaign was based on a strategy that was drafted after consultations with persons with disabilities in three municipalities, interviews with organizations conducting behavioural change campaigns and desk research. The campaign featured inspiring persons with disabilities who are positive role models that embrace inclusion and make use of traditional and social media. Radio talk shows on the rights of persons with disabilities went on the air, in May, and preparations for three short videos/films commenced in November. One of the three videos, which highlighted terminology that should be used to respect the rights of persons with disabilities, was launched on International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The national campaign aims to raise awareness about the equal rights of persons with disabilities and reduce the use of stigmatizing language and discriminatory behaviour. It also emphasizes the importance of ratifying CRPD. The ADTL received financial support to carry out the campaign under the joint UN agency project entitled Empower for Change in order to reduce discrimination and violence against persons with disabilities. The campaign was funded by the UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

NDS

The UN system implements a coherent and human rights-based response to inequality and discrimination, including intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination.



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities continued to actively promote a process to strengthen UN system-wide accessibility, inclusion and mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities. The findings of the 2018 baseline review of UN action to mainstream accessibility and disability inclusion informed the development of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), adopted in 2019. The Special Rapporteur engaged directly with the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General and collaborated with the IASG using CRPD as a reference point, which led to the adoption and launch of the UNDIS, in June. UN Human Rights contributed to the substance of the UNDIS.

ADDITIONAL RESULTS FROM OTHER PILLARS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE PEACE AND SECURITY PILLAR:

A3

Justice systems investigate and prosecute gender-related crimes more effectively.



With the support of UN Human Rights, protection measures were put in place for victims of sexual violence participating in the Walikale case in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, which enabled more than 20 victims to safely testify in court. In addition, UN Human Rights coordinated the provision of individual protection measures for 11 victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the **Central African Republic**. These measures enabled victims to participate in a public hearing judicial proceedings, in Bangui, from 11 to 15 March.



UN Human Rights @UNHumanRights · Dec 13, 2019

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#India: We are concerned that the new #CitizenshipAmendmentAct is fundamentally discriminatory in nature. Goal of protecting persecuted groups is welcomed, but new law does not extend protection to Muslims, incl. minority sects: ow.ly/PYQC50xzfD9

#FightRacism #CABProtests



4.8K
10.9K
17.6K
📤

Top social media post in 2019 highlighted the discriminatory nature of India's new Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

#FAITH4RIGHTS: INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

Religious leaders are important human rights actors in light of their considerable influence on the hearts and minds of millions of people.

The Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence (A/HRC/22/17/Add.4) outlined some of the responsibilities of religious leaders to prevent incitement to hatred. In order to expand on those responsibilities and include the full spectrum of human rights, UN Human Rights brought together faith-based and civil society actors, in Beirut in 2017 (see A/HRC/40/58, annexes).

The Beirut Declaration considers that all believers – whether they identify as theistic, non-theistic, atheistic or other – should join hands and hearts to articulate the ways in which “faith” can more effectively stand up for “rights” so that they are mutually reinforcing. The individual and communal expression of religions or beliefs thrive and flourish in environments where human rights are protected. Similarly, deeply rooted ethical and spiritual foundations provided by religions or beliefs are also the foundation of human rights and can contribute to their protection and promotion. The Beirut Declaration is linked to 18 commitments on “Faith for Rights,” with corresponding follow-up action (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/FaithForRights.aspx>).

In 2019, UN Human Rights enhanced the application of the Beirut Declaration and its 18 commitments on “Faith for Rights”

for training and advocacy purposes with religious minority groups, civil society organizations as well as international human rights mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief.

OHCHR focused on the protection of religious minorities by organizing a regional workshop, in Tunis, in October, on enhancing civic space and addressing hate speech on social media platforms in the Middle East and North Africa. In November, the Office organized a side event during the Forum on Minority Issues on “Telling human rights stories of minorities: Short films and conversations with UN Human Rights minority fellows.” It screened and facilitated discussions on several short films from Iraq. The films had been selected at the 2019 Baghdad Foundation of Cinema and Arts Film Festival, conducted in partnership with the Human Rights Office of UNAMI.

Bringing rights into the digital age, UN Human Rights produced a #Faith4Rights toolkit, in December, as a prototype for faith actors, academic institutions and training experts that can be adapted and enriched to suit unique interfaith engagement contexts. The concept is interactive and participatory and the methodology of engagement is designed to be implemented through information technology and social media, with a particular focus on the needs of youth. The toolkit contains 18 modules, which offer concrete ideas for peer-to-peer learning exercises, such as how to share personal stories, search for faith quotes or provide inspiring examples of artistic expression.

Throughout 2019, the “Faith for Rights” framework was used by UN Human Rights, faith-based actors and civil society organizations to promote and advocate for the respect of freedom of religion and of minority rights. For example, the G20 Interfaith Forum in Osaka recommended reducing incitement to hatred by supporting religious leaders and faith-based actors to fulfil their human rights responsibilities outlined in the Beirut Declaration and its 18 commitments. In addition, the Action Plan of the Faith Action for Children on the Move Global Partners Forum called for the design and implementation of projects and initiatives aimed at promoting respect for and understanding of minority groups, including those with different beliefs, faiths and religions in order to reduce violence and xenophobic narratives and to nurture peaceful societies. Furthermore, the Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process organized a “Faith for Rights” seminar, in Nicosia, in October, which focused on the role that faith communities can play in combating human trafficking and supporting victims. In November, Arigatou International published a multi-religious study entitled “Faith and Children’s Rights,” which also draws upon the Beirut Declaration.