

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

UNDP NEWS BRIEF, VOL. 4

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT: WHERE DO WE STAND?

25 Years of the Right to Development, Berlin Conference
"The MDGs – Too Important to be Left to Chance."
Copenhagen Conference

THE ARAB SPRING

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UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW – THE ROAD AHEAD

WHAT ARE THE FINDINGS OF THE GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE?

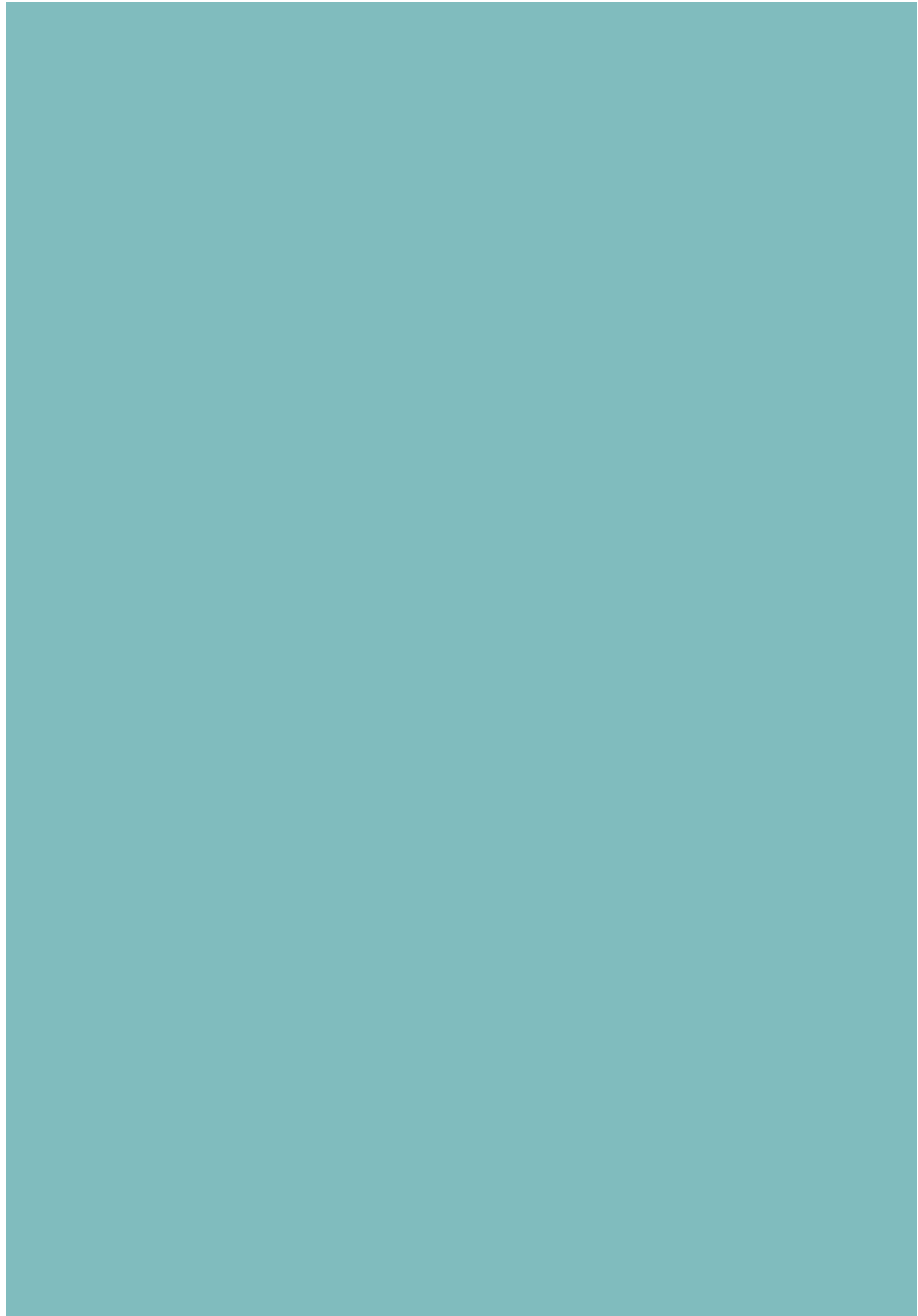


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EDITORIAL

Dear Colleagues,

2011 commemorates the 25th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development. This edition of the News Brief has compiled articles on several of these discussions, processes and meetings. The News Brief also reflects on the R2D against the backdrop of the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights of 1993, and more recently the Millennium Declaration of 2005. The dominant theme for this commemorative year is policy coherence across the global, regional and national levels, but also across the UN system and its related processes, Member States, and a range of other non-state actors such as National Human Rights Institutions, the corporate sector and civil society, amongst others.

It was therefore not surprising, as he reflected on the implications of “The Arab Spring” that ushered in the beginning of a commitment to human rights, that the keynote message of the Assistant Secretary General for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was both unequivocal and inspirational. Indeed, this message gave centrality to the fact that this revolutionary “breath of change” had come to globally challenge leadership, systems, processes and the meaning of rights themselves, and that, as a result, it was now pivotal to further reinforce the three fundamental pillars of UN’s work, namely Human Rights, Development, and Peace and Security. Furthermore, the inextricable links between these three pillars, reinforce the overriding need for these building-blocks come together to strengthen policy and programmatic coherence. There can be little question that leadership of this nature is now needed more than ever before.

The other dominant theme of this commemorative year being the imperative need to transcend and elevate political debate into a robust implementation framework for the R2D, as reflected in Max Abbott’s review of the Copenhagen conference earlier this year.

Of the three instruments referred to above, the Millennium Declaration is supported by an implementation framework, namely the time-bound Millennium Development Goals. This framework is

now also supported by national strategies as articulated through the MDG Acceleration framework (MAF), this further elaborated on in the course of Shantanu Mukherjee’s article.

Bearing in mind the fact that the Millennium Declaration is one of the few instruments coupled with a time bound framework which has come to mobilize international action, it is surely appropriate to consider whether the R2D requires an implementation framework or whether the post -2015 framework can expand on the collective principles of these instruments in order to provide one coherent, comprehensive and robust framework for implementation? On this moot point I would certainly welcome your invaluable perceptions and comments.

Within a context in which social ills such as famine, abject poverty, violence against women and children, conflict, drugs, human trafficking and climate change are endemic, it is of the essence to harness effective leadership by advocating consistently for better policy coherence on trade, investment and economic recovery, and thereby strengthening national institutional capacity for , commerce fiscal growth and systems of governance. More importantly, without strengthening capacity globally in order to ensure the more effective translation of these standards into actual policy, including the very significant principles of the Universal Declaration, it is the case that R2D and the rights reflected in the MD will remain paper rights.

Special thanks to all contributors on whom News Brief depends greatly and, as always, I trust that you will find the articles compiled for you in this edition by the editorial team to be highly useful to you in your work.

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THE ARAB SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN...

BY **MAXWELL ABBOTT**

HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK

The recent uprisings in the Arab region have posed many questions and thus far few answers have been provided. It is clear that many countries in the region now face a turning point that will come to shape their national destinies for many years to come. How the future will unfold is still highly uncertain. The situations within each nation are complex, and each will require a specially tailored response if progress is to be made towards peace and development. UNDP will help begin the transition process in a way that promotes dignified human development.

For many years, Arab states have been characterized by a particular form of social contract, in which citizens pay no or very low taxes, but only receive modest government services and have little opportunity for political expression. Systems such as these have been justified by appeals to the principles of stability and security. A more balanced social contract, with an emphasis on human rights protection (including the rights of freedom of speech and assembly and the right to organize) could achieve long term stability by meeting the needs of the poor and providing sufficient legal protection and democratic expression to all. The countries in the region have ratified most of the UN Human Rights instruments -- indeed, most have ratified the economic, social and cultural rights as well as the civil and political rights conventions and even adopted an Arab Charter of Human Rights. Enhanced enforcement of those rights will facilitate a peaceful transition to a stable state. The existing social contract has been one of the driving factors behind critical development failures which have plagued the region, especially deficits in governance, freedoms and social justice and, in particular, at their nexus with poverty, unemployment and inequality – in essence, failures in terms of promoting and protecting human and national dignity. In response to these development failures, marginalized groups of the young and poor have responded in a wave of unrest that we now see across the region.

In this transitional period a new social contract will be developed. Moving forward, stability and security concerns cannot trample the principles of accountability, transparency and human rights. In the immediate future, pending government request, the UNDP will work to foster an inclusive national dialogue on the transition period, including constitutional, electoral and reconciliation processes which can lead to a new

social contract that upholds human rights. This may include timely high level missions from HQ and RCC to initially engage with all key national stakeholders and assist in the specification of the broad outlines of possible support (this is currently the approach adopted for support in Tunisia). Transitional plans with UNCT and national stakeholders will then be drawn up on an urgent basis. Political parties, the media, and civil society organizations will require structural and/or sector reform and capacity development as well as technical support.

Implementing human rights must be achieved through policies such as media reform, legal empowerment of the poor, and developing the capacity of national human rights institutions. Regarding media reform, the UNDP can be effective as an advocate for “bottom-up” communication that brings the voices of the marginalized and vulnerable into local and national public policy-making domains, as well as enabling the media to effectively fulfil one of its key roles as a public accountability watchdog. Legal empowerment of the poor is another crucial area for a rights-based development. This can be achieved through UNDP regional consultations which focus on enhancing the capacity of the legal profession and civil society to provide collective advocacy and support for the social and economic rights of those working in non-organized sectors, i.e. the informal sectors of Arab economies which reportedly create most of the jobs and absorb most of the unemployed and underemployed. Key to shaping resilient, human rights-based state-society relationships are the role of the national human rights institutions, including their follow up of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review. Some of the UNDP Country Offices have, with their national counterparts, developed national action plans on human rights. UNDP will strengthen the capacity of national human rights institutions, especially in Egypt, Tunisia and Bahrain, in the context of their respective transition processes.

The situation in the Arab world is an affirmation of the universality of human rights. It is a reminder that people do care about how they are governed. It is also brought home to us that people aspire to economic and political opportunities alike and, indeed, to human and national dignity. They also aspire to decent jobs and to have a voice in an orderly and transparent transition of power which respects, protects and enforces their rights and their equitable access to resources, assets and quality services. These ends can only be achieved through the proper implementation of human rights.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. IVAN ŠIMONOVIĆ – ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The “Arab Spring” was and is a clear demonstration of the exercise of freedom of expression. Furthermore, it is inextricably bound up with the demands of citizens with regard to being respected by the State and also being in a position to determine their future and that of their own countries. These demands have constituted the mainsprings of the revolution in the region, in which, as the High Commissioner has said, “we had all been told the people had other preoccupations and were not particularly interested in human rights.”

We asked the Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights – Mr. Ivan Simonovic – to reflect on the reaction of the UN System to the recent events in North Africa and the Arab States. We wanted to learn from the ASG whether the centrality given to the rights rhetoric at the inception of the “Arab Spring” has come to affect the trajectory of the global human rights discourse and what its implications are for human rights within the UN System?

Ivan Šimonović: By all means. If one observes the work of the UN Human Rights bodies – particularly of the Human Rights Council – it is evident that the “Arab Spring” has had a major impact on the human rights discourse. The “Arab Spring” is direct and solid proof that human rights violations are the root causes of the conflict and entrenching of human rights into transition and reconstruction settings are the way out of trouble for counties in North Africa and the Arab Countries.

At the global human rights policy making forum – in the Human Rights Council – we could see much engagement and active traction to establish commissions of inquiry. With regard to Libya, we witnessed the recommendation made to the General Assembly to suspend Libya from the work of the Human Rights Council. There was also extensive support in the Security Council for the referral of President Gaddafi to the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.

It becomes quite apparent, that these bodies increasingly embrace the importance of human rights both as root causes of potential unrest and dissatisfaction as well as the way to resolve grievances. I think that the very simple message carried on the banner of a protester in North Africa says it all – ‘I am a man’, -- which means that people simply demand to have their dignity and the rights that they are entitled to: fair pay for their work; being in a position to decide for themselves about the way in which they are governed; and an entitlement to social services without needing to pay a bribe.

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News Brief: These are the implications of the “Arab Spring” for human rights on the highest intergovernmental policy level. Do you also see the projection of the Arab Spring on human rights in the way we organize ourselves as the UN – particularly given the partnership between UNDP and OHCHR?

Ivan Šimonović: I think that we have a huge task in front of us – in which our collaboration is extremely relevant. In a number of countries – such as Libya – there is a large institutional gap and this is where we can step in. In particular, we will be able to support the development of National Human Rights Institutions. At all stages of the process of institution building, it is important to bear in mind the human rights perspective. And the challenge is a big one, because the countries of North Africa and the Middle East will not remain the same. Whether these changes will lead to democracy and human rights, or some other different types of human rights suppression, is still an open question and in this respect it is important that we use this window of opportunity that has been offered to us to work together on entrenching the human rights framework as the countries in question advance in their national dialogue and institutional development.

News Brief: Thank you so much for your illuminating reflections. Is there a final message you would like to share with our readers? UNDP colleagues and the general HURITALK membership?

Ivan Šimonović: The simple message that I would like to transmit here is that the three pillars of the UN should be working together more closely. If there is anything clear that we have learnt from the Arab Spring, it is that human rights, development and peace and security are very closely interrelated and that all are mutually reinforcing.

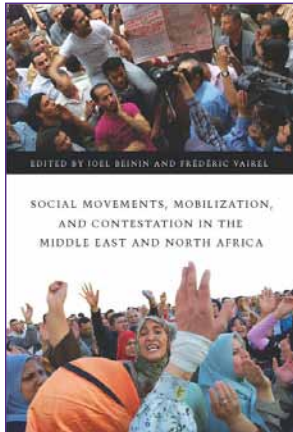
Ivan Simonovic
Assistant Secretary-General
for Human Rights
Office of the High Commissioner
for Human Rights



BOOK REVIEW: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, MOBILIZATION, AND CONTESTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

BY **MAXWELL ABBOTT**

HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK



As the tumultuous events of the Arab Spring began, many scholars were keen to address underlying causes which could begin to explain the revolutionary developments taking place in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, editors Joel Beinin and Frédéric Variel have compiled a selection of essays

that address four of the major themes central to the recent wave of unrest: authoritarianism and opposition, Islamic social movements, labor struggles, and mobilization for human rights. The contributors to this volume provide the reader with an overview of the various social movements that have taken place in countries such as Egypt, Bahrain and Turkey. However, the authors are far from positing that previous events could have provided us with clues that would have presaged the seismic social occurrences unleashed in 2011. In fact, the remit of *Social Movements* is to set out to help us to understand the rationale for these uprisings in a global context that does not diminish the significance of these events by labelling them as “Islamic,” “democratic,” or “social media driven.” According to Beinin and Variel, all of those aspects, and a great deal more, are at work across the Arab world.

The unrest in MENA has transcended established social movements under the narrow definition of Social Movement Theory (SMT). The ways in which activists mobilize

resources and pursue political opportunities demonstrate innovative methods that are unfamiliar to the Global North. Perhaps the most salient feature of social movements in the MENA context is the near complete lack of traditional political opportunities; social movements are highly restricted by draconian state policies that limit freedom of speech and the right to assembly. The authors in *Social Movements* describe situations in which groups have advanced their objectives in the absence of classic political opportunities, a case in point being the Jama’a al-Islamiyya movement in Egypt which was able to reform its ideology in the face of pressure from the Egyptian government and thereby resume legal activities that advocate for “Islamic space” within society.

The innovation also applies to the way in which groups have organized the better to advocate for human rights in MENA. The use of informal organizational mechanisms, such as support networks for the families of victims of government torture and extrajudicial arrest, but framed in terms of universal human rights standards as opposed to regional standards, achieved recognition and increased awareness for the human rights abuses the MENA activists sought to remedy. The Saturday Night Vigils in Turkey, which protested against the problem of those disappearing after having been arrested, had their origin in an ad hoc network of families of the disappeared, and grew to be a widely publicized social movement that brought together a diverse group of supporters. Indeed, the vigils were successful in building awareness despite the political repression enforced by the Turkish government, and against which traditional advocacy methods would have proved powerless.

The case studies presented in *Social Movements* demonstrate that there is no one factor which triggered a wave of social change such as that witnessed in 2011. Social contestation takes many forms and is due to manifold factors. The emergence of a social networking and mobile communications may have been instrumental in creating the current protest movements, but the presence of these tools alone “do not, in the abstract, have determinate consequences.”

THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

BY **MAXWELL ABBOTT**
HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the General Assembly's Declaration on the Right to Development. This seminal document explicitly recognized *"an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized."* Thus, the Declaration firmly establishes R2D among the human rights which cannot be withheld, bargained away, or undermined by any state or private stakeholder.

While the Declaration is the most notable encapsulation of R2D, the history of this particular right can be located much farther back in time. In 1944, the International Labor Organization's Declaration of Philadelphia proclaimed that "all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity." Inherent in many provisions of the UN Charter are the foundations for R2D, such as Article 55, which states that the "UN shall promote higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development...and... universal respect for...human rights." Chief Justice Keba M'Baye of Senegal is widely credited for first articulating R2D as a human right. His work on the subject was influential in the drafting of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted in 1981, which mandates that "all peoples shall have the right to their economic, social and cultural development with due regard to their freedom and identity and in the equal enjoyment of the common heritage of mankind." Finally, in 1986, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right to Development with Resolution 41/128 by an overwhelming majority.

The central points of the Declaration include full sovereignty over natural resources, self-determination, popular participation in development, equality of opportunity, the creation of favorable conditions for the enjoyment of other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Some label R2D a "meta-right," which is an encapsulation and codification of existing civil, political, economic and cultural rights. But R2D is more than a reaffirmation of other human rights instruments. The Declaration has made three major contributions to clarifying the relationship between development and human rights. First, it provides a normative redefinition of the very concept

and rationale of development. It defines "development" as "a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals" and "in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized." Second, it affirms that development is an "inalienable" "human right" of "every human person" and "all peoples", by virtue of which they are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. Third, it prescribes certain normative principles about how development is to be undertaken. The development process is to be one which assures to "every person and to all peoples" the "active, free and meaningful participation in development" and the right to "fair distribution" of the benefits from development.

For the past 25 years, UNDP has been an active supporter of the Declaration and R2D. UNDP understands that development is a human right, with a focus upon the individual. R2D must therefore be understood as promoting a "Human Rights Based Approach to Development." This entails significant focus on the local political, legal, economic, and social contexts. Development efforts at the international level must promote an enabling environment for national stakeholders to implement their own development action plans and realize national economic ownership within the global economic system. Pursuant to that belief, UNDP has mainstreamed human rights into its programming efforts. Prominent examples of this practice include UNDP's support of actions taken by the Planning Ministry of the Philippines to strengthen its institutional and individual capacities, the better to ensure the integration of the principles of human rights in the formulation of the country's planning, programs and development policies. In Liberia, UNDP used its human rights based approach in helping to implement the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy, which aims to increase access to governance mechanisms and economic assets by the most marginalized groups of society. In Belize, UNDP helped reform the governance of boards which controlled the nation's water supply, making them more accessible and accountable.

UNDP will collaborate with OHCHR in the Commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Declaration and the initiative to refocus discussions on the content of the declaration as a human centered development which is our core work: to ensure equity and sustainability of development by empowering all to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development.

25 YEARS OF THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT, BERLIN CONFERENCE

BY **MAXWELL ABBOTT**

HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK

On February 24th and 25th, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation jointly hosted a symposium in Berlin, with the title “25 Years of the Right to Development: Achievement and Challenges.” The symposium included addresses given by the following: the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay; Professor Stephen Marks of Harvard University; Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn of Chulalongkorn University; and UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Oliver De Schutter. The UNDP was represented by Director Cecile Molinier.

In her keynote address, Ms. Pillay stressed that the Right to Development must be internalized globally, as developed and developing nations alike continue to be made aware of the substantive ramifications of the right to development. Ms. Pillay also underscored the fact that the Right to Development is of more importance today than ever before. As social unrest spread throughout the Arab world, she stated that “there is no doubt that the denial of people’s Right to Development is one of the root causes fuelling public discontent and popular uprisings, first in Tunisia, Egypt, and now in Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen and other countries in North Africa and the Gulf region.”

A wide spectrum of discussions and panels were held that addressed nearly every dimension of the Right to Development. Issues covered included the national and international enabling environments that are needed for the realization of the RTD, the justiciability of RTD, and RTD’s relationship with the increasingly important climate change dilemma. A theme that ran throughout the conference was how best to transcend the confines of political debate to ensure the robust implementation of the right to development.

Director Molinier led a discussion on the High Level Task Force’s “Core Norm” which was an endeavor to clarify the 1986 declaration by encapsulating RTD as the “rights of people and individuals to the constant improvement of their well-being and to a national and global environment, conducive to just, equitable, participatory and human-centered development respectful of all human rights.” This dialogue questioned whether the Core Norm was too vague, and how it could be amended and reinforced in order to create an unambiguous set of national and international obligations. The participants concluded that the Core Norm did succeed in placing a strong focus on the universally acceptable goals of social justice and fairness. However, a consensus was also reached that the Core Norm is a weak political settlement in view of the fact that it

avoids the contentious issues of justiciability and the obligations of states and other stakeholders to protect and fulfill, and not merely to pay lip service to RTD. Moving forward, Director Molinier and the discussion participants proposed two alternatives to the Core Norm: to clarify RTD; and to guide the implementation of the 1986 Declaration. The first option is a framework agreement with less legal power than a treaty, but more power than a declaration, which would encompass all its goals within a human rights framework linked to the Millennium Development Goals. The second option proposed was a set of guidelines with an implementation component. These guidelines would be created through a cross-regional dialogue mechanism which would share best practices on the implementation of RTD.

THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: A LEGAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL OBLIGATION

BY **A.H. MONJURUL KABIR**

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As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, the bedrock document for human rights, proclaims so eloquently when it states that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”, so we must consider it central to our policy initiatives and programming work that they contribute, both directly and indirectly, to addressing the challenges posed by ‘special abilities’, somewhat pejoratively known as ‘disabilities’ in our daily discourse. There is also a powerful reason for us at UNDP for setting ourselves such a task: this objective is inextricably linked to our central human development mandate, including the internationally agreed development goals, i.e., Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Persons with disabilities constitute around 15 per cent of the World’s population. Studies have shown that around 2.5 billion people around the world are affected by disabilities, either their own or that of a family member. Those with disabilities do not, therefore constitute a limited group, yet persons with disabilities are still one of the groups that are most discriminated against and overlooked.

The international community has recognized the problems faced by this disadvantaged and marginalized group, and in December 2006 the United Nations General Assembly signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which entered into force on 3 May 2008. Within Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), 17 countries have ratified the Convention to date and another 10 have signed it.

While many countries have policies for promoting the social inclusion and economic empowerment of persons with special abilities, there are many challenges with regard to their implementation. Some of the most frequent reasons for this include weak technical capacities, lack of national ownership of this inter-sectoral field, lack of ineffective consultative mechanisms for engagement with disabled persons' organizations, lack of effective support by the national institutions, etc.

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTHS OF DEPRIVATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) reaffirms that persons with disabilities are entitled to exercise their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights on an equal basis with non-disabled persons. Due to a high level of marginalization however, they often cannot access these rights. In fact, they are routinely denied rights such as receiving an education, moving around freely, living independently in the community, being employed, accessing information, and obtaining proper health care, exercising political rights, and making their own decisions. In Serbia, for example, 70% of persons with disabilities live in poverty, and only 13% have the opportunity to work. Similarly, in Bulgaria only 13% of persons with disabilities are employed. In the Russian Federation the number is slightly higher, with 30% of persons with disabilities finding employment. A survey in Orissa, India found that 100 % of disabled women and girls were beaten at home, 25 % of women with learning disabilities had been raped and 6 % of disabled women had been forcibly sterilised. This is not unique to India alone. The woeful list of statistics goes on.

A PERSPECTIVE FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CIS

Against this backdrop, UNDP Bratislava Regional Center organised the first Regional Conference on Human Rights and Justice for Persons with Disabilities on June 2-3, 2011 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The purpose of the regional conference was to discuss the causes of policy-practice gaps and present existing programmes and emerging ideas which make a difference to the daily lives of persons with disabilities by facilitating their access to justice and services, and informing them about their rights. Over 60 UNDP, government and civil society representatives from throughout the region of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) participated in the conference.

The Conference promoted discussion about challenges faced by those persons with disabilities in accessing the national human rights protection system (i.e., National Human Rights Institutions, CSOs etc.) including the justice system. It built awareness of the challenges involved in mainstreaming disability issues in development and linking these with Social Justice, Social Inclusion, and the equitable growth agenda. The

two-day conference presented good practices in the use of the processes and mechanisms for facilitating effective partnership, access to information, knowledge, and justice for persons with disabilities (selected from the UN programmes, disabled persons' organizations, government agencies, and independent institutions) which raised awareness about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its implications for the National Human Rights Protection System.

In addition, the conference hosted the fourth regional meeting of UNDP focal points for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities (the first of these was held in 2008 in Croatia, the second in 2009 in Montenegro and the third in 2010 in Russia). These regional meetings promoted the exchange of information and lessons learned among UNDP Country Offices. The Ashgabat Meeting of Disability Focal Points generated a new momentum in promoting East-East Collaboration. The new regional UNDP human rights and justice initiative — The PHASE Project (Promoting Human Rights and Access to Justice for Social Inclusion and Legal Empowerment 2011-14) — will work with practitioners and focal points in promoting mutual policy and programming support across country offices.

NOT A MATTER OF MORAL OBLIGATION

The CRPD provides an effective legal tool for States to end this discrimination and violation of the rights of persons with disabilities, so long as it is implemented effectively and supported by policies and programmes to promote the active inclusion of this population. Therefore, it is important for us as a human rights and development community to take effective steps to support the implementation of the CRPD. It is also in line with the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) that all UN agencies promote its programming principles and methodology. This is no longer a matter of moral obligation but is now our legal and developmental obligation. The constituent elements (NHRIs, CSOs, national agencies, judicial and quasi-judicial bodies) of the National Human Rights Protection System (NHRPS) in our respective countries are faced with an active responsibility to take up this crucial concern and mainstream disability issues, challenges, and solutions into vision, strategic planning, annual work plan, and, most importantly, budgeting.

Inaccessibility and prejudices in society prevent access to basic rights and services, such as participating in political processes, gaining access to justice, and engaging in meaningful economic and social activity. Actions taken to counter existing prejudices are critical in terms of achieving inclusive growth, the MDGs, and, most importantly, human dignity, human rights and social justice.

ARE WE DOING ENOUGH?

With its limited mandate and resources, UNDP BRC has been trying to move beyond advocacy of the ratification of the CRPD to implementing the convention at national level,

particularly ensuring the engagement of the National Human Rights Protection System that includes judicial institutions. This year, following the major regional conference, several of our country offices are partnering with their national counterparts to implement different provisions of the CRPD.

The requirements of Article 33.2 of the CRPD to establish independent mechanisms to promote, protect and monitor the rights set out in the convention is a powerful new tool for calling states to account for implementation of the Convention. Article 33.2 can also be a powerful catalyst for fostering dialogue at the domestic level between states, civil society, DPOs and those persons with disabilities. In establishing independent mechanisms, the CRPD requires states to take into account the same standards (the Paris Principles) used for the international accreditation of National Human Rights Institutions. As a starter, we have succeeded in Central Asia in establishing a system of Focal Points among the National Human Rights Institutions on disability. The ultimate objective, a work in progress, is how present and future National Human Rights Institutions can help to ensure implementation of the CRPD. We have also launched a regional study to see how the national institutions in this region are addressing some of these issues.

However, there can be no doubt that these are just initial measures and do not go far enough. There are many questions that beg answers i.e., as a UN workforce, are we inclusive enough? Are our premises accessible? Are our web-based platforms and sites accessible? Are our programmes successful in addressing the concerns and challenges of those persons with disabilities?

As members of the UN family, the moment has now come to ask ourselves: are we really doing enough?

TOGETHER, CAN WE MAKE THE VITAL DIFFERENCE?



You can follow Monjurul Kabir on Twitter @mkabir2011

“THE MDGS—TOO IMPORTANT TO BE LEFT TO CHANCE.” COPENHAGEN, 17 NOVEMBER 2010

BY **MAXWELL ABBOTT**
HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK

On November 17th and 18th, the Danish Institute for Human Rights hosted a seminar with the title “Getting the Millennium Development Goals Right.” The seminar focused on ensuring that the MDGs are conceptualized and implemented, with human rights as an overriding consideration. As a nexus of both human rights and the development agenda of the MDGs, the Right to Development was a central issue at the conference.

Three overall goals for the conference were outlined: (1) To formulate an operational framework for the MDG-human rights link – the *Copenhagen MDG Operational Framework* – and solicit endorsement by all key stakeholders, (2) To promote implementation of the framework at operational levels to support real impact on the ground, and (3) To guide agendas aimed at formalizing a Human Rights Based Approach to the MDGs at national and international policy levels. Central to these efforts is R2D. The introduction to the conference affirmed that “The *UN Declaration on the Right to Development* of 1986 defined development as a process aimed at realizing a maximum of human rights and the link was re-affirmed in the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* 1993 and in the *Millennium Declaration* 2000, from which the MDGs originated.”

Manfred Nowak, Professor of International Law and Human Rights at the University of Vienna, made a presentation called “A Human Rights Based Approach to Development and Poverty Reduction,” which focused on the role R2D plays in the relation between human rights and development. In the 1970s, donor countries would often condition their support for development upon a recipient country’s human rights record. Criticism of this approach as “neo-colonialist” led to the emergence of what Professor Nowak calls “a goal-process relationship.” Largely influenced by the UN Declaration on R2D, the goal-process relationship conceptualizes the realization of human rights both as a goal of development and a process through which development is achieved. The MDGs are an important component of the goal-process relationship, but have been disparaged by prominent scholars such as Thomas Pogge for being “top-down” and “state-focused rather than human rights-focused.” Professor Nowak called upon those present at the Copenhagen conference to reaffirm the goal-process relationship and the value of human rights by making sure they are mainstreamed into implementation of the MDGs.

UNDP strongly supports the arguments put forward by Professor Nowak. The Human Rights Based Approach to Development pursued by the UNDP is not a top-down or state-centered philosophy. Indeed, individuals are throughout the central concern in UNDP’s work. The values, principles and standards of human rights must permeate the entire process of development programming, from situational analysis and assessment through to program design, implementation and evaluation.

THE MAF--FOCUSING EFFORTS ON SPEEDIER ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

BY **SHANTANU MUKHERJEE**
POLICY ADVISOR – MICROECONOMICS
CLUSTER LEADER A.I.
MDG SUPPORT TEAM

1. The MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) has become one of the key instruments for targeted country support in their efforts to accelerate the MDG achievement. What is the MAF and what is it not?

The MAF is a methodology designed to help countries address those MDG targets (corresponding to goals 1 through 7) towards which they are not making rapid enough progress. It was initially developed over 2010 by UNDP and tested in ten pilot countries that year. Based on the experience of those countries, and review by the UN Development Group's (UNDG) MDG Task Force – the consortium of UN agencies, funds and programmes working on the broad spectrum of development issues – the UNDG endorsed it as a valid, cross-agency approach to speeding up MDG progress at the country level.

The MAF does not directly lead to faster progress on any MDG target, nor is it a cookie-cutter recipe for acceleration. What it, in fact, does do is to produce a nationally owned, cross-sectoral plan of action on the poorly performing MDG target that harnesses the contributions of a range of stakeholders on the ground – government departments, international agencies, local academia, NGOs and others. The analysis leading to the MAF action plan is participative, but rigorously based on evidence from the country itself, and therefore customized to each country's realities.

The MAF action plan is also, not in itself, a resource mobilization tool – rather, it is a blueprint for how to better focus one's efforts. In some cases it may actually help attract more resources, from both domestic and external sources, towards the solutions it has identified – but that is not the primary purpose of the plan.

In order to actually make a difference on the ground, the MAF action plan must be of high quality – not just a re-hashing of existing sector plans – but also be implemented. The most important pre-condition for both is strong political commitment to do something about the MDG in focus.

2. Please explain briefly the key steps of the application of MAF?

There are three dimensions to be kept in mind while applying the MAF in any given country – politics, substance and process. A good result is possible when all three work to reinforce each other, and that can only happen when the right people are involved.

A MAF application is initiated at the request of the Government, made most often to the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) who brings the UN Country Team together to respond. Once the full political backing of the Government at a high level has been established, UNDP (or another lead UN agency) will work to frame a formal proposal that lays out the technical and financial resources needed to prepare the action plan, any assistance that may be required, and the timeline.

Typically, countries take about three months to complete the action plan. During this time, a series of workshops and consultations are held with all relevant stakeholders – line ministries, ministries of finance and planning, technical agencies, local academia, NGOs and others. The first of these introduces the methodology behind the MAF analysis, which is designed to help identify what is holding the country back, and how it can be addressed efficiently and effectively.

Participants are taken through four successive steps – identifying the interventions that are expected to lead to the goal; assessing which of these are not working as well as may be expected and why (*'the bottlenecks'*); prioritizing the bottlenecks in terms of likely impact if removed; identifying feasible solutions to priority bottlenecks and working out a division of labour to accomplish them. While this description may appear a little abstract, guiding questions available to the facilitators help focus the discussions, leading to concrete results in terms of producing an implementable action plan. Of course, a lot of work goes on outside the workshops as well – preparing successive drafts of the action plan, going back to the evidence from the ground, consulting with experts and writing up the report.

The quality of the action plan depends on the quality of the evidence available; and the skill with which the workshops are facilitated so as to achieve consensus around the prioritized bottlenecks and solutions. In fact, the MAF most often adds value in the way it brings together a cross-sectoral set of solutions to attack what may have been seen so far to be the concern of just one sector.

Perhaps the most important part of the MAF process is what follows after the action plan has been prepared and validated – the implementation.

3. What are the examples of the most effective application of the MAF?

We have now applied the MAF in fourteen countries spread across all regions and a variety of MDGs and many have been very successful. Due to space constraints, I will mention just three here – one from Uganda on maternal health, another from Niger addressing hunger and a whole series from Colombia done at the sub-national level, addressing region-specific priorities, ranging from poverty, gender imbalances, health and others. You can read more about them in our 2010 synthesis report, ‘Unlocking Progress – MDG Acceleration on the Road to 2015.’

4. Does the MAF integrate a human rights perspective and if so – how?

The MAF helps countries identify and work through five distinct categories of bottlenecks. Several of the guiding questions that are used to identify these give practical expression to key human rights principles (accountability and rule of law, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion) and the three dimensions of economic, social and cultural rights (availability, accessibility and quality, incl. cultural acceptability). Practically speaking, it means that the MAF includes questions such as:

- Are the institutional responsibilities and powers clearly defined for this intervention among national, district, and municipality authorities?
- What categories of disaggregated data are available (e.g., sex, ethnicity, age, income, rural, urban) and what do they tell us about the effectiveness of the interventions?
- What are the barriers for accessing services (e.g., physical and financial)?
- Is the intervention culturally acceptable, particularly to marginalized and/or minority populations? Does the service meet the cultural/religious criteria and are the services provided in minority languages (if applicable)?
- Can representatives from the civil society support and participate in the monitoring process?

More importantly perhaps, in practice we find that civil society representatives are quite active in the workshops, and bring important insights to bear. We also find that setting the stage early on by presenting evidence for unequal achievement, especially by region, is very conducive to asking questions that seek to pinpoint what specifically is holding people back.

5. If so, what difference did it make to have included the human rights perspective in the MAF?

It has helped MAF pilot countries identify and deepen the analysis of some critical bottlenecks to achieve the MDGs. For example in Belize, applying the MAF helped the government to identify why rural areas, primarily populated by Mayan communities, were not receiving adequate water and sanitation services. The lack of representation and participation by stakeholders in local water boards and a lack of accountability were identified as the key bottlenecks. Specific measures were then agreed upon to improve the governance of water boards—making them more inclusive and accountable. UNDP is now engaged in helping implement some of these measures.

In Uganda, the MAF helped the government identify that in some circumstances, the manner in which deliveries at health facilities are conducted are not compatible with women’s cultural beliefs, which are considered inadequate for women – leading to their avoiding government run health centres. Those cultural practices include giving birth in a vertical rather than horizontal position and burying the placenta post-partum. Revising the training guidance given to health workers is one way of removing such a bottleneck.

RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS - RECOGNIZING THE DIVERSITY

BY **PABLO MANDEVILLE**
RESIDENT COORDINATOR OF THE UN SYSTEM IN NICARAGUA

For the first time, the UN System in Nicaragua participated in the Tenth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, held between May 16-May 21, 2011. The UN Resident Coordinator in Nicaragua, Pablo Mandeville, in addition to members of the UN Consultative Committee of Indigenous and Afro-descendant Peoples (CCPIAN), namely Ms. Daysi Pérez, Ms. Kensy Sambola and Mr. Arisio Genaro, presented the experience of this unique consultative body and the UN System in Nicaragua in the course of the Forum plenary session dedicated to Latin America and also at a side event on the 18th of May. Around 90 participants attended the side event that counted on the presence of distinguished representatives, such as Ms. Mirna Cunningham, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; Mr. Alvaro Pop, Permanent Forum Member from Guatemala; Mr. James Anaya, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Mr. Heráldo Muñoz, Assistant Secretary General and UNDP Regional Director for Latin America; and Ms. Carmen Rosa Villa, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As result of the deliberations, the Permanent Forum's will submit a draft report to the ECOSOC that will discuss the experience of UN in Nicaragua and the CCPIAN, and recognizing this initiative as a good example that should be followed by other UN Country Teams.

The UN System (UNS) in Nicaragua and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have extensive experience in promoting the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. Since 1990, the UN has worked with people in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua and in tandem with the legal framework which supports them. The 2005 National Human Development Report "*The Autonomous Regions on the Caribbean Coast: Does Nicaragua Recognize its Diversity?*" constituted a milestone in the establishment of the understanding and dialogue between the State, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, and Nicaraguan society at large. In 2009 the UN Consultative Committee of Indigenous and Afro-descendant

Peoples (CCPIAN-SNU) was established and one year later Nicaragua ratified ILO Convention 169 which, jointly with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, provides the international human rights framework. These developments have given fresh impetus to the work of the UN system with indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples.

The CCPIAN has become a flagship of UN Nicaragua, and its continuous engagement with the Council is a clear expression of the strong commitment of the UN system towards the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. CCPIAN is a unique initiative which gives substance to the promise of the United Nations in Nicaragua: "We the People" and brings new life into the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Article 3: Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article 32 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

The Committee will provide guidance and ensure the application of the UNDG Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues. More importantly, the CCPIAN will play a pivotal role in contributing to the effective implementation of ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Nicaragua through a new country programme proposal being developed in the framework of the UN-Indigenous Peoples' Partnership and launched by UNDP, ILO, OHCHR and UNICEF on May 20, 2011.

With CCPIAN, the UN has established a partnership with indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples that is founded on trust and equality, and as a result of which representatives of these groups can propose actions and shape the development and implementation of the UN Assistance Framework in Nicaragua.

The CCPIAN is a consultative mechanism strengthening partnership between indigenous and Afro-descendant people and the UN, founded on trust and equality, in order to ensure that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is translated successfully into concrete and sustainable development and advocacy initiatives.

ENSURING MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN MEXICO

BY **MAGDY MARTINEZ-SOLIMAN**
RESIDENT COORDINATOR OF THE UN SYSTEM IN MÉXICO

Over the last 20 years, considerable progress has been made in Mexico with regard to increasing the representation of indigenous peoples, a population of 15.7 million which constitutes 13 percent of the country's total. Even though indigenous peoples represent 40 percent or more of inhabitants in more than 30 percent of Mexico's municipalities, they represent only eight out of 500 members of the lower house of parliament. While this is a larger number than in the parliaments of many other countries in the region, the representation is still substantially lower than in Bolivia, with 43 percent of indigenous representatives in the lower house, and Guatemala, with 9.4 percent, according to a recent UNDP-Organization of American States report on Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the first half of the 1990s, Mexico took the initial steps in carrying out a number of reforms of laws and institutions, recognizing rights for indigenous peoples. Within the following five years, Mexican authorities approved boundaries for 28 indigenous territorial and electoral districts. For the last 4 years UNDP has been providing support to Mexico's electoral bodies in a number of significant initiatives to promote political and electoral participation of indigenous peoples. And currently UNDP, with assistance from the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, is working on a programme to enable governments and indigenous peoples in Bolivia and Mexico to share experiences in electoral and political participation.

Democracy in many Latin American countries hinges largely on government action to uphold indigenous peoples' rights and ensure their participation in decision-making processes. Multiculturalism is a key component in the construction of a true democracy, but it can only thrive when all cultures are equally cherished and are granted institutional support that seeks to correct past and present discriminatory practices.

Indigenous cultures are facing great challenges in Mexico and many countries around the world. According to the recent **UNDP Human Development Report of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico**, multiculturalism can lead to greater human development only if it impacts on wider political participation, from the local to the national level.

These issues were discussed during a side event organized by UNDP Mexico on May 18th on the occasion of the UN Permanent Forum Tenth Session (New York, May 16-28). The round table entitled "*Mexican Electoral Bodies and Indigenous Peoples: 20 Years of Experience in Support to Indigenous Political Participation*" was carried out with the participation of Mr. Saul Vicente Vasquez, Permanent Forum Member; Mr. Claude Heller, Permanent Representative of Mexico to United Nations; Mr. Juan Pablo de LaIglesia, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations; Ms. Maria del Carmen Alanis, President of the Electoral Court of the Judicial Power of the Federation; Mr. Leonardo Valdés, President of the Electoral Federal Institute; Heraldo Muñoz, Regional Director of UNDP; and other indigenous representatives. The event included the premiere of the documentary: "Indigenous Identity and Democracy in Mexico".



INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS—INVISIBLE NO LONGER



BY **GERALDINE FRASER-MOLEKETI**
CHAIR OF THE UNDP LIAISON COMMITTEE ON
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' ISSUES

DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE GROUP
BUREAU FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY

UNDP REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

During the Opening of Permanent Forum Session on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), UNDP Associate Administrator, Rebeca Grynspan, stated that human development is not possible in cases in which discrimination, injustice, and social exclusion prevail. She also stressed the imperative need to develop specific strategies that are guided by the views and priorities of indigenous peoples with regard to overcoming their «invisibility», as is evidenced by an absence of adequate statistical data and information.

Rebeca Grynspan announced the launching of the UN Indigenous People's Partnership (UNIPP) on May 20th, this being the first global UN inter-agency initiative to advance the rights of indigenous peoples, and counting on the participation of the UN Deputy Secretary General on behalf of Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon; Mirna Cunningham, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and José Carlos Morales, Chair of the Experts Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among other distinguished indigenous participants and colleagues. UNIPP is a commitment to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which calls for UN Agencies, at the country, regional and global levels, to contribute to the full realization of the Declaration through the mobilization of financial cooperation and technical assistance. UNIPP will support joint country programmes that are focused on legal and policy reform, support to indigenous institutions, access to justice, natural resources management and conflict prevention, and the establishment of consultative and participatory mechanisms.

This year the Permanent Forum was a review of the level of implementation of previous Forum recommendations. It dedicated a half-day session to South and Central America and the Caribbean. Assistant Secretary General Heraldo Muñoz stated during the opening of the Session that, in order to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality, it is necessary to implement comprehensive social policies that are funded with more progressive fiscal structures which in turn improve democratic governance. It is imperative that countries strive to ensure the active and inclusive participation and empowerment of all citizens in accordance with international human right obligations. This essential task was also stressed in the Second Regional Report on Democracy, published by UNDP in collaboration with the Organization of American States.

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is an advisory body to ECOSOC with a mandate to provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council as well as to other UN Programmes, Funds and Agencies, including UNDP. The Forum consists of 16 members, of which 8 are nominated by governments and 8 by indigenous peoples from various geographic regions.

UNDP participated actively at the Forum during the plenary sessions and with the organization of side events on critical issues and Programmes such as UN-REDD, and engagement with indigenous peoples, biodiversity and land rights, and indicators which measure the human development of indigenous peoples.

The Forum was successful in producing many concluding observations and recommendations that will guide UNDP in its future work on indigenous peoples. The Forum recognized progress with regard to UNDP's Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in the implementation of a Programme on Electoral Processes with a focus on indigenous women and youth, and the Small Grants Programme for engaging directly with indigenous peoples.

As stated by the UNDP Associate Administrator at the Opening of the Forum, UNDP will continue to provide support towards more inclusive governance systems, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF MOZAMBIQUE AND THE ROAD AHEAD

BY **MARTIN BORGEAUD**
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BUREAU FOR CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY/UNDP

INTRODUCTION

Mozambique presented its report to the Human Rights Council in February 2011. The government delegation was accompanied by representatives of civil society and the media. UNDP Resident Representative (RR a.i.) was also present. Meanwhile, in Maputo, a live broadcast of the session was organized for a broad audience. UNDP played a significant role throughout the UPR process.

The preparation of the UPR session created a dynamic exchange between the Government, Civil Society and the UN system in Mozambique.

A. Preparation Phase

In Mozambique, the report was coordinated by the Resident Coordinator's Office, with each agency contributing in its area of expertise. Considering the variety of areas of work of the UN Agencies, the UN Country Team's contribution to the UPR report was crucial, and complemented the information provided by various UN bodies (Human Rights Treaty Bodies, Special Rapporteurs).

B. Session Phase

In Mozambique, the UPR provided an opportunity to broaden the knowledge of international human rights mechanisms on the part of various audiences – including (CSOs). UNDP Mozambique co-organized a training session for other stakeholders, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Geneva. The training was instrumental in building the capacity of the CSOs with regard to international human rights mechanisms, including the UPR. Moreover, the training served as a forum for local CSOs to exchange expertise with Geneva-based international human rights CSOs, which also shared the valuable experiences garnered by other CSOs with the UPR, and additionally with OHCHR officials who made presentations on UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.

A joint live broadcast—co-organized by UNDP in Maputo—proved to be an excellent opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between Government and CSOs and UN agencies on human rights issues. UNDP Mozambique organized the broadcast hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Civil Society Platform. The session was widely attended, with the participation of more than 100 individuals from fields such as government, parliament, judiciary, civil society, embassies and UN agencies.

Meanwhile in Geneva, the session proceedings were attended by the representatives of the CSOs whose trip had been supported by a range of international partners, including UNDP.

UNDP's RR a.i. was present at the session and also delivered a keynote speech at the parallel event organized by the Civil Society Platform.

UNDP had been involved since the very first stage of the process and had resolved to make clear its support for Mozambique on this occasion.

C. Follow-up Phase

One month after the session in Geneva, UNDP organized, jointly with the MoJ and the Civil Society Platform, a follow-up session with three panelists: the MoJ; the President of the Human Rights League; and the UNDP RR a.i. The remit of the meeting was to present to government officials, Civil Society representatives and donors the result of the session in Geneva, including the recommendations adopted by the country, those that had been rejected and those that were still under discussion. It was also an opportunity for the Government to present the path to be pursued in the future. The MoJ had decided to use the future National Action Plan on Human Rights as a framework for the implementation of the recommendations.

UNDP presented its analysis of the UPR process and the course to be followed to the Justice Donors Working Group. The next step will be the dissemination of the Outcome Report, along with the reports in the second trimester of 2011.

The UPR Process enabled a more effective communication vis-à-vis human rights issues as well as the general visibility of the international UN Mechanism and, last but not least, a greater appreciation for the work of the UN agencies throughout the country.



CONCLUSION

While the UPR is a state-to-state process, UN agencies undoubtedly have a pivotal role to play throughout. UNDP's contribution was a key one indeed, due to its close ties with government and Civil Society partners. The UPR Process enabled a more effective communication *vis-à-vis* human rights issues as well as the general visibility of the international UN Mechanism and, last but not least, a greater appreciation for the work of the UN agencies throughout the country.

The preparation of the UPR session created a dynamic exchange between the Government, Civil Society and the UN system in Mozambique. The tripartite meetings initiated around the UPR process (UNDP, MoJ and Civil Society) facilitated a far keener understanding about the positions of respective partners, especially those of the MoJ and CSOs. Within the UN agencies, there was a more effective liaison between those groups working on human rights issues. In addition, this informal network was pressed into service for all activities relating to human rights. CSOs established a platform on these human rights issues and decided to maintain that structure for future joint undertakings.

In Mozambique, the UPR came into being at a time when the country had embarked on designing a National Action Plan on Human Rights and, indeed, had set up a National Commission on Human Rights. During discussions among the MoJ, Civil Society and UNDP, it became manifestly clear that the follow-up of recommendations should be made within the National Action Plan that was offering an excellent framework in this regard. Mozambique now has four years to implement those recommendations. Based on the foregoing developments, it is obvious to all concerned that a new, and highly positive, phase has now commenced.

2ND GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEETING, 28.11.2011 – 02.12.2011, SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA

BY ORRIA GONI,
COP COORDINATOR, HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM, UNDP NEW YORK

The Democratic Governance Group (DGG), within the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) in UNDP, is convening the UNDP's 2nd Global Human Rights Community of Practice (CoP) meeting. This meeting will take place over the course of four days, from 28th November to 2nd December 2011, in San José, Costa Rica.

2011 marks the 25th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development. To commemorate such a groundbreaking Declaration, the CoP meeting will be given the title of "Human Rights for Development". In view of the current challenges and rapid changes attendant on our ongoing pursuit of Universal Human Rights - which finds that the most vulnerable individuals continue to be increasingly excluded from development in political, social and economically terms - this

meeting will be a timely opportunity to take stock jointly of current events and assess future directions in the area of work of human rights and development with a global perspective.

The meeting in question will cover a diverse range of thematic areas contained within UNDP's three strategic areas of intervention on Human Rights: a) Supporting the Strengthening of National Human Rights Systems; b) Mainstreaming Human Rights in policy and programming processes; and c) Greater Engagement with International Human Rights Mechanisms. The organization has received more than 70 expressions of Interest with regard to participation, and these expressions are being used vis-à-vis the planning and design of the CoP, the better to respond to the demands of UNDP Country Offices. The representatives of UNDP Country Offices from all regions, as well as key UNDP global and regional experts on Human Rights and Development, are expected to attend the event in San José, Costa Rica. For further information, please contact Orria Goni – the COP coordinator -- at Orria.goni@undp.org.

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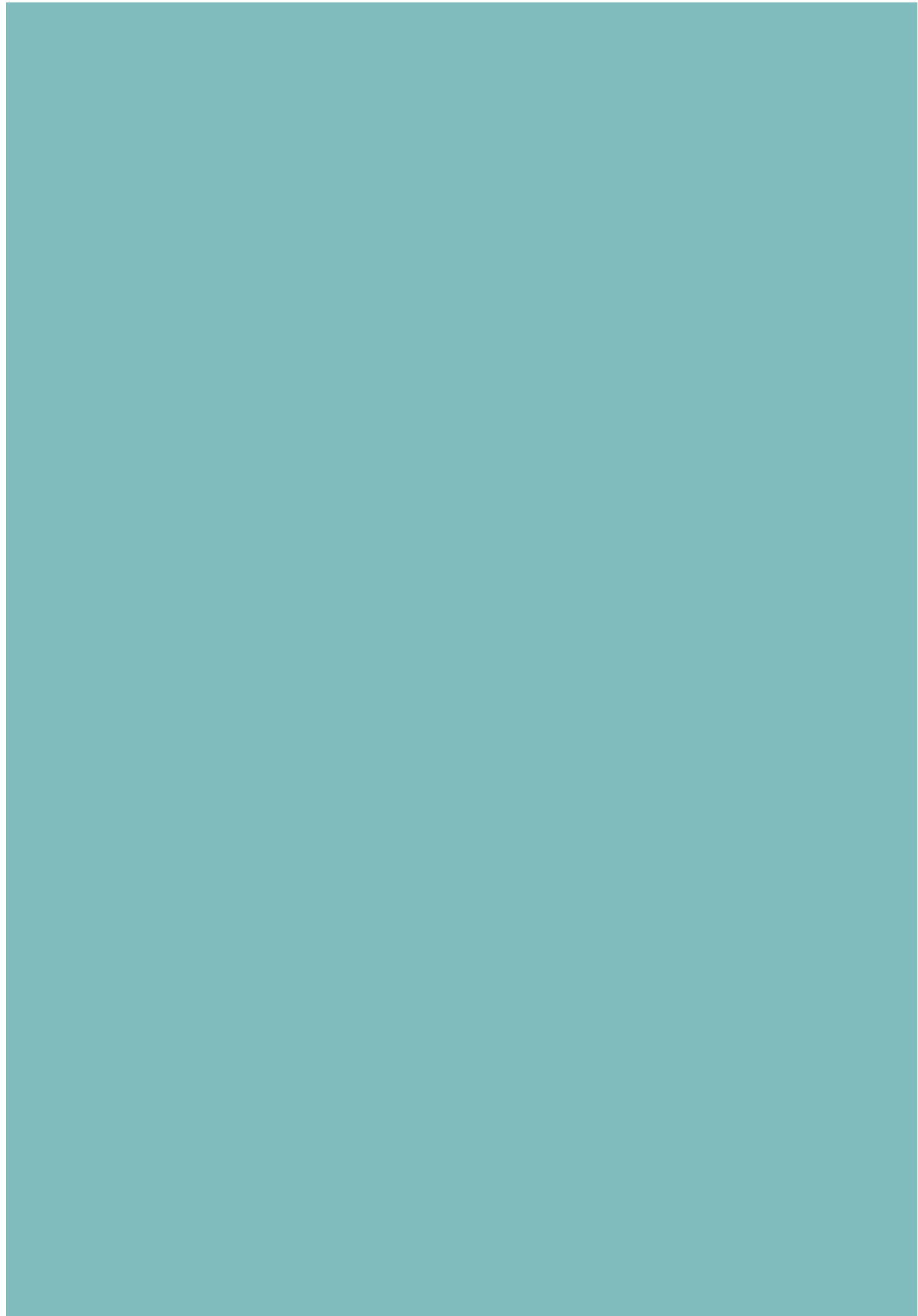
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IN THE NEXT VOLUME:

- WE WILL PROVIDE REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES REGARDING THE **UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW**. ARTICLES WILL INFORM ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST CYCLE, ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNTRIES AS WELL AS THE PREPARATION FOR THE INCOMING CYCLE OF THIS IMPORTANT MECHANISM.
- THE **2ND GLOBAL UNDP HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEETING** WILL TAKE STOCK OF CURRENT EVENTS AND ASSESS FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN THE AREA OF WORK OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR DEVELOPMENT. WE WILL REPORT ON ITS FINDINGS AND REFLECT ON THE OUTCOMES.

IF YOU HAVE AN EXPERIENCE FROM YOUR WORK ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR DEVELOPMENT TO SHARE – **PLEASE CONTACT US AT: [JAGODA.WALOREK@UNDP.ORG](mailto:jagoda.walorek@undp.org)**

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