

THE DANISH
INSTITUTE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE 2030 AGENDA

AND THE ROLE OF
NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
INSTITUTIONS



The 2030 Agenda is explicitly grounded in human rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) seek to realise human rights for all. Moreover, the pledge of leaving no one behind echoes the fundamental human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality.

Through their mandate and capacity, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are uniquely placed to contribute to, monitor and follow up on a human rights based approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The global indicators framework highlights the importance of NHRIs for the SDGs. The **existence of an independent NHRI** serves as a global indicator for achieving SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

As the NHRI of Denmark, the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) is mandated to protect and promote human rights, and has worked to create sustainable change for the past 25 years. DIHR seeks to realize and contribute to the 2030 Agenda in a variety of ways, in Denmark and through collaboration with the Global Alliance of NHRIs as well as partnerships with governments, UN agencies, business and a range of other stakeholders at a global level.



Human Rights

Read more:

Human Rights Guide to the SDGs: humanrights.dk/sdg-guide

FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

A crucial element of the 2030 Agenda is the implementation and monitoring of progress, which is specified in the guiding principles on **Follow-up and review (FUR)**.

The aim of the FUR is to **ensure accountability**, and FUR mechanisms should be inclusive, participatory, transparent, people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind. These principles reflect the principles of the Human Rights-Based Approach to development (HRBA), which should guide both the design and the operationalization of FUR mechanisms.

The high degree of convergence between human rights and the SDGs points to the potential of utilizing **human rights mechanisms to assess and guide SDG implementation**. NHRIs can contribute by providing systematized qualitative analysis and data through institutionalised reporting mechanisms.

A way for states and other actors to utilise the synergies between human rights and the 2030 Agenda is by integrating their SDG reporting with their human rights reporting. By **recycling reporting**, states can accommodate the two agendas at once, ease their reporting burden and enhance **coherence, efficiency and accountability**:



DATA

Data is vital for assessing progress and gaps, and to support **accountability to citizens**. The implementation of the Agenda should be informed by high-quality, reliable and **disaggregated data** by relevant categories in different national contexts.

The data collection must be guided by the **Human Rights-Based Approach to Data** (HRBAD) developed by the OHCHR, emphasizing the importance of the principles of self-identification, participation, disaggregation, transparency, privacy and accountability.

In order to overcome gaps related to the global indicators, data availability and weak statistical capacity in many countries, it is necessary to establish a **pluralistic data ecosystem**. Human rights monitoring mechanisms at international and national levels constitute a crucial element of such an ecosystem. NHRIs can contribute as credible data providers and facilitate participatory data collection through partnerships with particular groups of rights-holders and others actors.

CREATING A PLURALISTIC ECOSYSTEM OF DATA



Read more:

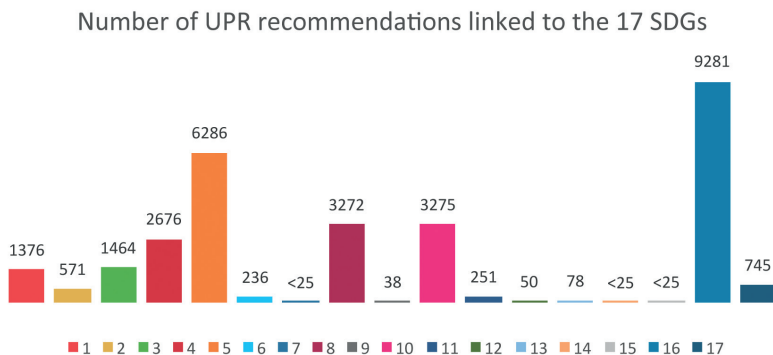
Human Rights and Data: bit.ly/humanrights-data

Human Rights in Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda: bit.ly/follow-review

THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

One of the key human rights mechanism that can contribute to monitoring of the SDGs is the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**. The UPR offers a **wealth of recommendations** that can guide the development of sustainable development policies and monitor their implementation. In particular, the UPR can help identify **priority areas** for SDG implementation and **vulnerable groups** that require special attention.

Over the two cycles of the UPR, states have issued **more than 50,000 recommendations**. Using an innovative and experimental **data mining** procedure, it has so far been possible to link **more than 50%** of them to specific SDG targets. The chart shows their distribution across the Agenda:



In principle, UPR recommendations relate to the **full range of Goals under the 2030 Agenda**. However, a majority of recommendations address **equality** (SDG 5 and 10) and **peace, justice and accountable institutions** (SDG 16).

The analysis **confirms the potential** for pursuing **integrated approaches** to human rights and SDG implementation. Human rights monitoring mechanisms can clearly and to a large extent guide and assess SDG implementation, including by identifying salient issues and vulnerable groups, and by suggesting concrete measures to overcome gaps.

BUSINESS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The 2030 Agenda emphasises the importance and responsibilities of businesses in sustainable development. It pledges to foster a dynamic and well-functioning business sector, while protecting labour rights and environmental and health standards in accordance with international standards and agreements, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The implementation of the Guiding Principles lays the foundation for implementation of states' human rights and sustainable development commitments with regard to business activity, and is thus an essential contribution to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

Business respect for human rights should be the baseline for corporate action in relation to the SDGs. To that effect, countries should develop National Action Plans (NAPs) through multi-stakeholder processes to concretise measures to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Given the synergies between business respect for human rights and sustainable development, there is a huge potential to align such NAPs with national efforts to implement the SDGs. NAPs should adhere to the human rights principles of participation, inclusiveness, transparency and accountability outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Further, NAPs can serve as a vehicle for streamlining and leveraging business' reporting on its contribution to sustainable development, including through its actions to respect human rights.

DIHR works with government authorities, National Human Rights Institutions, UN agencies, businesses and civil society, to support the implementation of the Guiding Principles at national level.

ENGAGING WITH COMPANIES

DIHR works directly with companies as well as with governments to develop tools and guidance that can help drive the needed change towards sustainable business conduct.

This work aims at assisting companies to respect human rights, and improve the impacts of their operations at the global, country and project level. In relation to the 2030 agenda, DIHR supports companies to:

- Develop and build internal awareness of and capacity for human rights and how they link to the SDGs in relevant company functions.
- Develop policies and management systems that support business contribution to the goals, targets and measurement of the 2030 Agenda through responsible business conduct.

THE SDGs ARE UNDERPINNED BY LEGALLY-BINDING HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS.



Human Rights

The **Human Rights Guide to the SDGs** uncovers the human rights anchorage of the 17 goals and 169 targets. More than 90% of the SDG targets are linked to international human rights and labour standards.

The guide is an essential tool to:

- Understanding the linkages between human rights and the SDGs.
- Developing a human rights-based approach to sustainable development programming, implementation, follow-up and review.

[HTTP://SDG.HUMANRIGHTS.DK/](http://sdg.humanrights.dk/)

