

30 July 2021

**Report of Activities and Impact**

**January-June 2021**

1. **Executive Summary: Main Achievements**

During the first six months of 2021, the United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities significantly expanded its field of action, pursuant to global concerns around racial justice and troubling impact of the COVID-19 impact in minority communities worldwide. In December 2020, pursuant to senior guidance from across the UN system at a [November 2020 High-Level meeting](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Minutes_SeniorLevelMeeting.docx), the Network adopted [Network Work Plan 2021+](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/UN_Network_Racia_Discrimination_Protection_Minorities_Workplan2021.pdf) for the period 2021-2025.

The [Network Work Plan 2021+](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/UN_Network_Racia_Discrimination_Protection_Minorities_Workplan2021.pdf) has eight Pillars, each led by one or more UN entities, as follows: (1) Leave No One Behind (WHO); (2) Criminal Justice (UNODC); (3) Agenda for Protection (OHCHR); (4) Intersectionality (UNAIDS); (5) Communications (DGC and UNFPA); (6) Knowledge Hub (UNHCR); (6) UN Internal Diversity: currently inactive pending the outcome of the Secretary General’s Task Force on Addressing Racism at the UN. The Network is co-chaired in 2021 by OHCHR (permanent co-chair) and UNESCO (2021 co-chair). Activities and outputs have continued to be honed at a series of Pillar meetings during the first 3 months of 2021.

Among primary work outputs for the period January-June 2021 are the following:

* In March 2021, the Network launched its [Checklist to strengthen UN work at country level to combat racial discrimination and advance minority rights](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/AnnotatedChecklist.pdf)**.**
* **In April, the Network contributed substantive views and** [inputs in detail on the Agenda for Protection plans under the Secretary General’s Call to Action on Human Rights](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/UN_Network_Racial_Discrimination_Minority_Rights.pdf)**. The submission provided by the Network makes the case for explicit but not exclusive naming of racial discrimination and protection of minorities in the planned architecture under the Agenda for Protection.**
* The Network convened multiple side events at major UN events during the first half of 2021, particularly as concerns racial discrimination in criminal justice (see below).
* **The Network exponentially expanded its membership, including to field colleagues, and it strengthened its own data-basing and communications architecture. The Network now comprises circa 200 UN staff from over 20 agencies and entities.**[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Above all, acting on reinvigorated global concerns in these areas, the Network dramatically heightened the real and potential ability of UN agencies and entities to cooperate and collaborate to address racial discrimination and protection of minorities issues, thanks to the engaged efforts of many staff contributing time and energy, in may cases above and beyond their own work portfolios. In the process, a range of partnerships have been strengthened.**

1. **Network Pillar Work in Detail**

**Pillar 1: Leave No One Behind (LNOB Pillar)**

In March 2021, the Network launched it [Checklist to strengthen UN work at country level to combat racial discrimination and advance minority rights](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/AnnotatedChecklist.pdf)**. The Checklist was launched on 21 March International Day Against Racial Discrimination, and featured a** [video presentation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q74L9g8s2Mo) **by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.**

**During May and June, the Network rolled out Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish versions of the Checklist, also not available on the** [Network website](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Minorities/Pages/UNNetworkRacialDiscriminationProtectionMinorities.aspx)**. The Network also began engaging UN Country Teams to use the Checklist. This has been done via direct discussions and webinars with UNCTs such as Indonesia; by incorporating the Checklist into larger training packages, such as a minority rights training in Moldova involving 55 government officials; as well as by embedding the checklist in analytical work going forward, such as a major inter-agency effort to examine human rights in Common Country Analysis documents and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, currently ongoing.**

The LNOB Pillar is moving ahead with plans for a large training course on " Addressing Racial and Ethnicity-based Discrimination and Strengthening the Protection of Minorities, Indigenous Peoples and other Population Groups in UN Programming Processes" planned to roll out from 4-28 October 2021. The members of this pillar are advancing the work developing the content, defining the methodology, and core competencies for the 4 weeks training. Ten Global Facilitators representing the following entities volunteered to support the content production and design of the course: OASPG, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, and WHO. The finalized concept note will be shared with DCO to commence the process of identifying the 12 UNCTs participating in the course.

Following consultation in the Pillar and in the wider Network, the Network adopted a Template for UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to Gather Case Studies in combatting racial discrimination and strengthening protection of minorities from the UN country teams and humanitarian teams. The template is used to set out good practice examples for UN Country Teams and Humanitarian Teams. The deadline to provide materials based on the Template is 31 August 2021.

Network members from OSAPG and OHCHR worked to supplement [human rights review of the UN Country Team’s Socio-Economic Response Plans to COVID-19](https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/DCO-WG-UNSDG_CF/Shared%20Documents/COVID_SE/SERP-internal-review/Human%20Rights%20Review%20of%20UNCT%20COVID19%20SERPs_FINAL_10112020.pdf). The group will undertake geographically balanced analysis of UNDAFs currently in progress from the perspective of how they address racial discrimination and protection of minorities. First results of the analysis are expected in July.

**Pillar 2: Agenda for Protection Pillar (Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in Times of Crisis/SG Call to Action for Human Rights/ Prevention):**

The Network provided a submission for colleagues working on the new UN protection architecture. The [submission](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/UN_Network_Racial_Discrimination_Minority_Rights.pdf) sets out reasons for directly and openly providing for measures to tackle racial discrimination and to strengthen the protection of minorities in the Agenda for Protection architecture provided pursuant to the Secretary General’s Call to Action on Human Rights.

**Pillar 3: Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in Criminal Justice**

In March 2021, the Network delivered a [Statement to the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice: “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Statement_Kyoto_Crime%20Congress.pdf)”.

In May 2021, the Network held a side event on the margins of the 2021 UN Crime Commission: “[**Stepping up the United Nations System’s Coordinated Response to Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities: Towards Effective, Inclusive and Equitable Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Systems**](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/30_Session_2021/side_event_program_thu_20-05.html)**”.** Panelists included OHCHR officials working on the report pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/1, a member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) discussing the recently adopted CERD General Recommendation on racial profiling by law enforcement, as well as UN Network representatives discussing the work of the Network in the area of racial discrimination and criminal justice.

**Pillar 4 Intersectionality**

The Intersectionality Pillar convened and agreed on goals for 2021, including building a resource library of materials on intersectionality, as well as developing a Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. A draft outline for the Guidance Note was developed and circulated to the Network for its June 15 meeting. The Network plans to adopted the Guidance Note in December 2021.

**Pillar 5: Communications and Campaigning**

DGC created and shared a Trello board for repository and calendar of events for use by the Network to share and store relevant content and have a access to a shared calendar of events. A range of communications activities are ongoing related in particular to the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action.

**Pillar 6: UN Diversity and the Policy Field: Internal/External Linkages**

The March Network meeting heard an update from members of the Secretary General’s Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations. The Network agreed that, in light of the existence of the Task Force, it will revisit its role in the area from September 2021, once the Task Force produces its report and recommendations for action.

**Pillar 7: Knowledge Hub**

In April 2021, the Network Knowledge Hub has initiated Network Teams channel and spaces, with a view to providing more accessible and user-friendly online meeting spaces and communications tools. The Network Teams channel also makes available document databasing for the Network. UNHCR colleagues have entered all of the Network email addresses into the Teams space, and carried out 2 information sessions on using Teams. Transition to Teams is ongoing, as not all of the UN agencies and entities in the Network currently use Teams.

**Pillar 8: UN Network Development, Accountability and Branding**

The ***Network Co-Chairs*** (OHCHR and UNESCO) met bilaterally during 2021 on a monthly basis. Work during 2021 included:

* Recovering the UN Network logo and bring it back into use;
* Expanding the Network email list to circa 200 email addresses, including a major expansion to include field colleagues;
* Reconnecting with UN agencies not longer actively represented on the Network;
* Efforts to secure funding for the work of the Network from the 2nd half of 2021;
* Planning a briefing for the Member States on the work of the Network, to take place on the margins of the September 2021 Human Rights Council t.b.c.
* Beginning of the 2022 Network work planning

The Network website is now updated in detail, and includes public statements by the Network at various events, knowledge products produced by the Network, as well as the Network Work Plan 2021+, which achieved its final form in April, following convening of all of the Network Pillars to agree on plans in detail: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Minorities/Pages/UNNetworkRacialDiscriminationProtectionMinorities.aspx>

French, Russian and Spanish-language versions of the site have been similarly updated.

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The [United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Minorities/Pages/UNNetworkRacialDiscriminationProtectionMinorities.aspx) (“the Network”) was created by decision of the Secretary General at the 6 March 2012 meeting of the Policy Committee, with the main goal of providing a platform to address issues of racial discrimination and the protection of national or ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, including issues of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on gender, disability, age and other grounds. It enhances dialogue and cooperation between UN Departments, Agencies, Programmes and Funds to address these issues. The Network brings together more than 20 UN Departments, Agencies, Programmes and Funds. The [Network Workplan 2021+](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/UN_Network_Racia_Discrimination_Protection_Minorities_Workplan2021.pdf) has eight Pillars, each led by one or more UN entities, as follows:

1. Leave No One Behind: WHO Pillar Lead: [gomezs@who.int](mailto:gomezs@who.int)
2. Criminal Justice: UNODC Pillar Lead: anna.giudice@un.org
3. Agenda for Protection: OHCHR Pillar Lead: [ccahn@ohchr.org](mailto:ccahn@ohchr.org)
4. Intersectionality: UNAIDS Pillar Lead: [euzebiodelimac@unaids.org](mailto:euzebiodelimac@unaids.org)
5. Communications: DGC and UNFPA Pillar Leads: [hagl@un.org](mailto:hagl@un.org) and [pdasilva@unfpa.org](mailto:pdasilva@unfpa.org)
6. Knowledge Hub: UNHCR Pillar Lead: [svobodov@unhchr.org](mailto:svobodov@unhchr.org)
7. UN Internal Diversity: currently inactive pending the outcome of the Secretary General’s Task Force on Addressing Racism at the UN
8. UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities Development Pillar: OHCHR and UNESCO Co-Chairs Pillar Leads ([ccahn@ohchr.org](mailto:ccahn@ohchr.org), ccsaunders@ohchr.org, [k.tararas@unesco.org](mailto:k.tararas@unesco.org) and [am.majlof@unesco.org](mailto:am.majlof@unesco.org))

1. Members include DESA, DGC, DOCO, DPA, DPKO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, OSAPG, PBSO, UNAIDS, UNAOC, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNITAR, UNESCO, UNODC, UN Women and WFP. OHCHR acts as permanent Co-Chair for the Network. The 2021 Co-Chair is UNESCO. Contacts for Pillar leads are included at the end of this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)