

*The UN Human  
Rights Office in*  
**HUMANITARIAN  
ACTION**



UNITED NATIONS  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

## What we bring

Humanitarian crises around the world, either caused by conflicts or natural disasters, almost invariably result in or exacerbate human rights concerns. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is a unique actor in humanitarian action: we bring a holistic perspective and analysis that contributes to enhancing the response by including all individuals affected, without discrimination.

Our work brings us close to all affected persons and helps us identifying and understanding their vulnerabilities and relevant threats. We endeavour to ensure that affected populations – including the most vulnerable and excluded – can fully and meaningfully participate in making decisions, as active agents and rights-holders – not as needy and passive beneficiaries.

Our work is based on international human rights law and international humanitarian law, which when used together prevent protection gaps that arise when only one body of law is applied. Our legal analysis on the ground, through a human rights lens, produces information that is verified, impartial, timely, and that can save lives.

Through human rights work, we look at the root causes of conflict and social inequalities; we help bridge the divide between humanitarian action, development and peace and security; and ultimately, we contribute to lasting peace and greater security for everyone.

## Our impact

- ▶ Respect for international human rights and humanitarian law is enhanced and strengthened
- ▶ Victims of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict access justice and redress mechanisms
- ▶ The most vulnerable groups are identified and included in the humanitarian response
- ▶ Humanitarian and human rights actors cooperate effectively



## **Our protection services**

- ▶ Identifying vulnerabilities and protection needs of all affected persons, with no mandate restrictions, in the context of humanitarian crises with a view to address root causes and offer durable solutions.
- ▶ Providing advisory services, guidance and trainings to national and local authorities, judiciary, law enforcement and security forces, national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations on human rights protection; housing, land and property rights; civil documentation; disability, access to justice and rule of law.
- ▶ Providing legal assistance and advice to affected populations and ensuring that people in need of assistance are systematically referred to humanitarian partners.
- ▶ Enabling national institutions and civil society organizations to be more involved in the humanitarian response.
- ▶ Analysing cases and trends of conflict-related sexual violence to inform prevention and protection responses.
- ▶ Ensuring access to justice for victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) through supporting legal reform, free legal aid and assistance to authorities to investigate and prosecute SGBV, and design and implement gender-sensitive and transformative reparation programmes.

- ▶ Monitoring violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and advocating for their respect, aiming to achieve protection and ensure accountability.
- ▶ Recording civilian casualties aiming at minimizing the impact of armed conflicts on civilians, strengthening protection, and promoting respect for international law among all parties to the conflict.



*Gaza*

- ▶ In the event of pandemics and national disasters, establishing mechanisms to monitor the impact of the disaster as well as providing advice to ensure a non-repressive, participatory and successful response.
- ▶ Providing direct assistance to victims of torture, conflict-related sexual violence and modern slavery by means of grants awarded to non-governmental organizations in emergencies (including through the UN Fund for Victims of Torture and the UN Fund for Victims of Modern Slavery).

## Complementing our humanitarian partners

Through the participation in humanitarian coordination structures, we aim to support national protection mechanisms; empower Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams to address serious violations; link human rights mechanisms and institutions with humanitarian actors; and contribute to improving human rights information management in humanitarian contexts.



*Democratic Republic of Congo*

As active members or leaders of Protection Clusters, we incorporate human rights analysis in humanitarian assessments and programming with a view to ensure a rights-based approach to the humanitarian response. By taking into account the rights of vulnerable groups such as women and girls, minorities, people with disabilities, migrants and internally displaced people, we contribute to making sure that no one is left behind.

## Our work

### Since 2010, the Office has responded to 25 emergencies around the world

- ▶ In Liberia, OHCHR led the Protection Cluster and established the first 'Ebola Survivors Forum' to end stigmatization and promote the protection of survivors in the National Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan.
- ▶ In Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, grants to civil society have enabled people to access formal justice systems.
- ▶ In the Philippines and Haiti, OHCHR provided advisory services to national authorities on housing, land and property rights for people affected by the typhoon and earthquake.
- ▶ Following the earthquake in Nepal, OHCHR facilitated the inclusion of the National Human Rights Institution in the humanitarian coordination structure.
- ▶ We regularly report on civilian casualties from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Palestine.
- ▶ Through the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, OHCHR has granted USD 500,000 to four on-going emergency specialized programmes for the rehabilitation of survivors and their families fleeing the conflict in Syria.

# Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

## Palais des Nations

CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

+41 22 917 9000

InfoDesk@ohchr.org

## Humanitarian Action

humanitarian@ohchr.org

## Civil Society

civilsociety@ohchr.org

## Donor and External Relations

dexrel@ohchr.org

## Media

press-info@ohchr.org

## Publications

publications@ohchr.org



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