

THE DANISH  
INSTITUTE FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS

# COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY

GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES  
FOR USING HUMAN RIGHTS TO  
BUILD BACK EQUAL.



COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY: GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES FOR USING HUMAN RIGHTS TO BUILD BACK EQUAL.

This paper is written by Francesca Thornberry with contributions from Birgitte Feiring.

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Denmark's National Human Rights Institution  
Wilders Plads 8K, DK-1403 Copenhagen K  
Phone +45 3269 8888  
[www.humanrights.dk](http://www.humanrights.dk)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAAQ	Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
ILO	International Labour Organization
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NSOs	National Statistical Offices
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION: USING THE 2030 AGENDA AND HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESS INEQUALITY IN COVID-19 RECOVERY

Today, the world faces an unprecedented challenge to achieving human rights and sustainable development for all. Extraordinary pressure has been put on health services, job markets and economies; working conditions and almost all aspects of people's lives across the globe have been impacted in some way by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In May 2020, the Danish Institute for Human Rights highlighted the revealing nature of the pandemic, and its exposure of patterns of inequality and neglect representing gaps in states' fulfilment of their existing human rights obligations but also challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>1</sup> This assessment is key to understanding the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis. It is a clear message that gaps in the fulfilment of human rights obligations can not only lessen society's resilience in crisis situations but can also impair the ability of those furthest behind to claim and fulfil their rights. Depending on how states address this crisis, inequalities could become even more pronounced in the longer term.

Inequality and discrimination can inhibit progress towards all SDGs and realisation of all human rights. The Covid-19 crisis has both laid bare and exacerbated existing inequalities in all their forms and in almost all areas of life, but it has also given rise to new inequalities. The UN Secretary-General has highlighted the "underlying structural inequalities and pervasive discrimination that need to be addressed in the response and aftermath of this crisis"<sup>2</sup> whose impacts are felt more harshly among those who suffer the consequences of discriminatory laws and practices.

Moving forward, and in order to 'build back better', we also need to 'build back more equal', and this means tackling inequality and discrimination as the very core of any recovery efforts, and striving to build back recognising equality as an enabler and an accelerator of progress.

Human rights can guide these efforts. Human rights give us a framework and methods for ensuring no one is left behind. They can ensure more equal development outcomes. If applied properly, they can have a transformative impact. There are decades' worth of lessons-learned from the application of human rights standards, principles, and methods that can shape Covid-19 responses and help achieve the SDGs and realise the human rights of all.

This publication therefore aims to provide guidance to a broad range of sustainable development actors to:

- Understand the ways in which the 2030 Agenda is of relevance to issues of equality and non-discrimination, in particular in relation to the current global pandemic;
- Understand key human rights concepts related to equality and non-discrimination, how they should be used in practice, and how they apply to the Covid-19 recovery;
- Find key guidance documents and references from international human rights bodies on the cross-cutting principles of equality and non-discrimination, and how they apply to specific aspects of the SDGs.

It does not claim to be an exhaustive exploration of states' obligations under international human rights law, or a prescriptive set of recommendations on the measures and methodologies required to ensure respect for the fundamental principles of equality and non-discrimination and the realisation of these rights. Rather, it is intended to provide broad guidance on the use of the equality and non-discrimination framework and a human rights lens, which can be guided by the recommendations of the international human rights system, and the use of well-established human rights-based methods.

Whereas this guidance provides key analysis, concepts, references and resources, it does not provide detailed guidance on operationalisation of these at national level. Further guidance on this can be sought through the reference documents highlighted in this publication. Given the centrality of equality and non-discrimination to human rights in general, and a human rights-based approach to sustainable development, this guidance should also be seen as a direct complement to additional guidance from the Danish Institute for Human Rights on how to operationalise a human rights-based approach to sustainable development programming in a national context.

## CHAPTER 2

# HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS GUIDE EFFORTS TO BUILD BACK MORE EQUAL?

As we have clearly seen, inequality has been both revealed and exacerbated in many areas during the Covid-19 crisis. It has affected numerous groups of rights-holders (some of which have faced multiple forms of discrimination) in many areas of their lives. For example, in many countries, death rates have been higher among ethnic minorities. The particular risks for, and disproportionate impact of the crisis on, various vulnerable groups in society, migrants and trafficked persons, people of African descent and LGBTI people, among others, have also been highlighted. Calls have also been made to address violence against children and violence against women and girls in this context.<sup>3</sup> Fears have also been expressed in many quarters that restrictions imposed due to the health threats are fuelling nationalism, populism and xenophobia, as well as multiple discrimination against minorities, but in particular women at the bottom of the economic ladder.<sup>4</sup> This list of those affected is by no means exhaustive and the areas in which these groups are affected extend well beyond health and healthcare to labour and employment, freedom of movement, freedom of association, freedom of information and expression, access to justice and numerous other areas.

In 2019, the Global Sustainable Development Report foresaw that, “If we do not put inequality at the heart of the global development agenda, we are doomed to failure.”<sup>5</sup>

The role that inequality plays in hampering the realisation of human rights and the achievement of sustainable development ambitions was clearly recognised well before the Covid-19 crisis – in both human rights standards and the content of their supervision, and in the content of the 2030 Agenda as well as in its follow-up and review.

For decades, international human rights bodies have addressed the impact of discrimination and equality on all areas of human rights and sought to clarify states’ obligations in this regard, providing detailed guidance on how states can not only tackle inequality, but put in place measures to build more equal societies and prevent new inequalities from emerging. This guidance can provide the building blocks for states to build back from the current crisis towards more equal societies. This guidance is applicable equally in the current crisis as it is in ‘normal’ circumstances as it highlights the gaps in the realisation of states’ human rights obligations that are also at the root of the spiralling inequality in the Covid-19 crisis.

The UN treaty bodies (see box below) have clearly underlined their strong mandates to promote equality and non-discrimination, and several of them monitor treaties protecting the rights of groups who are often left behind. In a joint statement well before the advent of Covid-19, they encouraged the High-Level Political Forum – the key global UN body responsible for the follow-up and review of the 2003 Agenda<sup>6</sup> – to:

- Place the elimination of discrimination and reduction of inequalities at the forefront of efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, with a particular focus on reaching the furthest behind first;
- Reaffirm the importance of comprehensive and adequately resourced non-discrimination legislation and policies based on international standards as a basis for action to ensure that no one is left behind.
- Encourage the introduction of appropriate monitoring mechanisms and institutions at the national level – such as national human rights institutions, labour inspectorates, national machinery for the advancement of women, children’s ombudspersons, ombudspersons for persons with disabilities, and national preventive mechanisms for the prevention of torture.
- Support the development of appropriate methodologies, such as human rights impact assessments, prior to the introduction of laws, policies and development programmes to ensure that such instruments leave no one behind.
- Support the development and use of appropriate data collection and monitoring methodologies that provide guidance on collecting data which allows for disaggregation and monitoring the trends and progress of the most disadvantaged individuals and groups to examine whether inequalities are reducing over time.<sup>7</sup>

Whilst highlighting the importance of Goal 10 on reducing inequality, UN treaty bodies have also strongly highlighted that, given the cross-cutting relevance of equality and non-discrimination to all human rights, inequality is a concern that cuts across all 17 SDGs.<sup>8</sup>



## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES

### TREATY BODIES

There are 10 international human rights treaty bodies assigned to monitor the implementation of the UN's core human rights treaties. States that have ratified human rights treaties have a legal obligation to ensure implementation and must submit **periodic reports** to the relevant treaty bodies. Based on the information received, the treaty bodies issue **concluding observations specifically** to the states concerned. These are specific examinations of the status of implementation of the treaty in question in a given country, and include recommendations specific to that country.

The Committees also publish **general comments or general recommendations** on their interpretation of the thematic content of specific human rights provisions. These general comments and recommendations are broadly applicable, non-binding but authoritative interpretations of specific issues, or provisions contained in specific treaties, aimed at advising all states on how to put them into practice. These interpretations provide us with a clearer and fuller understanding of the rights outlined above, as well as the obligations associated with them.

### THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

The **Universal Periodic Review** (UPR) is a process of peer review of the human rights records of states. It is a state-driven process and issues recommendations to specific states on a wide range of human rights issues.

### SPECIAL PROCEDURES

There are also 44 thematic and 12 country-specific UN Special Procedures mandates. These are independent human rights experts with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective.

Given the close linkages between human rights and the SDGs, the specific **recommendations of human rights bodies** to states, as well as their General Recommendations and General Comments which are more broadly applicable, are a goldmine of qualitative analysis and guidance that can be used to help design laws, policies, and actions to tackle discrimination and inequality in all sectors. The human rights monitoring system can support efforts to build back equal in the following ways:

- Highlighting different forms of discrimination or exclusion, including systemic discrimination, that prevents specific groups or categories of persons from fully enjoying their human rights;

- Identifying the legal and policy measures necessary for eliminating discrimination and working towards substantive equality, and providing guidance for this based on human rights norms and standards to support these measures;
- Going beyond the elimination of discriminatory laws and policies to eliminate discrimination in practice, they can also help identify the need for specific measures, including special measures, that need to be taken to eliminate discrimination and achieve equality for specific groups of rights-holders. This can include budget allocations, financial regulations, specific programmes, training of relevant personnel and other measures;
- Providing guidance on the collection and disaggregation of data that is necessary for measuring the progress of specific groups that are at risk of being left behind;
- Guiding practitioners to use human rights to guide the adequate and meaningful participation of rights-holders in decision-making on the design of policy frameworks, strategies, and actions to tackle discrimination and inequality, to ensure that they respond to their real, and not perceived, needs and situations.<sup>9</sup>

The direct relevance of these recommendations – both as broadly applicable to the 2030 Agenda as a whole, as well as to more specific challenges in the context of the recovery from the Covid-19 crisis - is explored in more detail in Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 3

# KEY HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS, NORMS AND CONCEPTS FOR LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

“ Responses that are shaped by and respect human rights result in better outcomes in beating the pandemic, ensuring healthcare for everyone and preserving human dignity. But they also focus our attention on who is suffering most, why, and what can be done about it. They prepare the ground now for emerging from this crisis with more equitable and sustainable societies, development and peace.”<sup>10</sup>

In order to start to fill the gaps in the fulfilment of human rights obligations and corresponding gaps in SDG achievement, we first need to understand the fundamental human rights concepts and norms that can help to guide our efforts.

These concepts and norms are derived directly from international human rights standards, but have also been developed during decades of experience of supervising the implementation of these standards by UN human rights bodies. They are not specific to one state, but broadly applicable to all who have ratified relevant human rights instruments and have thus entered into legal obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the rights enshrined in them.

They can help us better understand what is required of states, not only to address existing discrimination and inequality, but also to put frameworks and mechanisms in place to build back more equal societies. The relevance of the concepts outlined in this chapter is explained further in the context of subsequent chapters looking at the use of the SDG and human rights frameworks to build back more equal.

### 3.1 WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Under international law, **discrimination** is generally defined as **any distinction, exclusion or preference based on specific grounds of discrimination that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing an individual's ability to enjoy their human rights**. Non-discrimination is a cross-cutting principle that applies to the application of international human rights instruments in their entirety.

Effective legal frameworks, policies and efforts to eliminate discrimination have a direct impact on inequality in its many forms.

Different international treaties and declarations may enunciate different **prohibited grounds of discrimination** (sometimes also called 'protected characteristics'), depending on their focus. These can help provide a focus for developing specific measures that can ensure no one is left behind in the sustainable development process. Annex 1 contains a list of those grounds in different international and regional human rights instruments.

In order for states to ensure that human rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind, discrimination must be eliminated both formally and substantively.

- **Formal discrimination.** Eliminating formal discrimination requires ensuring that a state's constitution, laws and policies do not discriminate on prohibited grounds. Merely addressing formal discrimination, however, will not ensure substantive equality.
- **Substantive discrimination (de facto discrimination).** Eliminating discrimination in practice requires paying sufficient attention to groups of individuals which suffer historical or persistent prejudice and marginalisation. In order to eliminate substantive discrimination, states may need, or be required to, adopt "special measures" to attenuate or suppress conditions that perpetuate discrimination (see section on special measures, below).

Discrimination may also be systemic: pervasive, persistent and deeply entrenched in social behaviour and organization, often involving unchallenged or indirect discrimination. "Such systemic discrimination can be understood as legal rules, policies, practices or predominant cultural attitudes in either the public or private sector which create relative disadvantages for some groups, and privileges for other groups."<sup>11</sup>

Even in times of crisis, non-discrimination remains a fundamental principle and right, meaning it is also cross-cutting for all human rights, and that efforts to address and recover from the Covid-19 crisis must respect states' obligations in this regard.

### 3.2 MULTIPLE DISCRIMINATION, INTERSECTIONALITY

Some individuals or groups of individuals face discrimination on more than one of the prohibited grounds. Such cumulative discrimination has a unique and specific impact on individuals.<sup>12</sup> The “grounds” of discrimination are therefore extended in practice by the notion of “intersectionality” or situations of double or multiple discrimination.<sup>13</sup>

### 3.3 WHAT IS EQUALITY?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Equality is a fundamental general principle that underpins all human rights. The right to equal treatment requires that all persons be treated equally before the law, without discrimination.

Equality can be addressed from many angles and there are many different manifestations of equality – and by extension, inequality. International human rights instruments and the guidance from the independent bodies charged with the oversight of their implementation, have broadly outlined two main forms of equality; formal and substantive. Formal and substantive equality are different but linked concepts.

- **Formal equality (or equality in law).** Formal equality is expressed in constitutions, legislation and policies. Formal equality assumes that equality is achieved if a law or policy treats specific groups in a neutral manner.
- **Substantive equality, (or equality in fact).** Substantive equality is concerned, in addition, with the effects of laws, policies and practices and with ensuring that they do not maintain, but rather alleviate, the inherent disadvantage that particular groups experience.

This is an important consideration in the context of using SDG and human rights frameworks to build back more equal, as lessons from decades of oversight of human rights indicate that substantive equality cannot be achieved simply through the enactment of laws or the adoption of policies. Even if on the face of it these laws or policies are neutral, they can sometimes even serve to exacerbate inequality as they fail to take into account existing economic, social and cultural inequalities and the particular reasons why specific groups suffer inequalities and discrimination and are consequently also left behind in sustainable development processes and in the Covid-19 crisis.

### 3.4 SPECIAL MEASURES

Prohibition of discrimination in law is an essential first step to eliminating discrimination and achieving equality, but it is not enough to tackle discrimination and inequality in practice. The concept of special measures is based on the principle that laws, policies and practices adopted and implemented in order to fulfil states' obligations on equality and non-discrimination, often require supplementing with temporary special measures designed to secure to disadvantaged groups the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>14</sup> Temporary special measures aim to realise not only formal equality, but also substantive equality. Such measures include "legal, regulatory and budgetary instruments, as well as plans, policies, programmes and preferential regimes in areas such as employment, housing, education, culture and participation in public life for disfavoured groups, devised and implemented on the basis of such instruments."<sup>15</sup>

Temporary special measures should, however, not be seen as creating separate standards for different population groups and to this end, they should be implemented with the intent that they be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.<sup>16</sup>

Such positive measures may exceptionally, however, need to be of a permanent nature. Measures of a permanent nature could include, for example, such as interpretation services for linguistic minorities and reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities in accessing basic services.

### 3.5 AVAILABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, ACCEPTABILITY AND QUALITY

Another lens through which to examine inequality is through the lens of the 'AAAQ' framework. This is a framework or lens proposed by international human rights mechanisms to examine the realisation of many economic, social and cultural rights, and in particular, rights to health, education, housing, food, water and access to basic services. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has identified four criteria for judging whether such facilities, goods and services are in line with states' human rights obligations: Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality (AAAQ).

- **Availability:** Facilities, goods and services must be available in sufficient quantities and in continuous supply.
- **Accessibility:** Facilities, goods and services must be accessible to everyone without discrimination. Accessibility criteria include physical access, affordability, access to information and non-discrimination.
- **Acceptability:** Consumer acceptability, cultural acceptability and sensitivity to marginalised groups.
- **Quality:** Facilities, goods and services must be safe and of an adequate standard.

Lack of adequate consideration for these four criteria can result in significantly differential or unequal outcomes in the level of fulfilment of relevant rights for certain groups. Thus, in order to ensure no one is left behind, these are essential considerations when it comes in particular to the provision of goods and services, which therefore concerns a number of SDG goals and targets and critical elements of the Covid-19 recovery.

## CHAPTER 4

# EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION AS CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES FOR SDG ACHIEVEMENT AND COVID-19 RECOVERY

The Covid-19 pandemic is essentially a global health threat. However, its multiple implications for the enjoyment of a broad range of both economic, social and cultural, as well as civil and political rights have become apparent, including due to the severe restrictions imposed by states on freedom of movement and other rights. UN treaty bodies have highlighted the importance that states apply an integrated and holistic approach to upholding human rights in this context. “Thus, it is essential that the measures adopted by States to combat this pandemic are reasonable and proportionate to ensure protection of all human rights.”<sup>17</sup>




This chimes with the 2030 Agenda’s holistic and integrated character and its cross-cutting pledge to ‘leave no one behind’. This aim also reflects the indivisibility, interdependence and inter-relatedness of human rights. The realisation of specific human rights is dependent on the realisation of other rights. For example, the many aspects of economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to healthcare, education and employment, cannot be realised without an adequate enabling environment which is provided through respect for fundamental civil and political rights such as the right to vote and the right to freedom of expression, and vice-versa. The realisation of the broad range of human rights enshrined in international human rights instruments can all be negatively impacted by discrimination in law or in practice, resulting in inequalities of outcome. This is particularly important when considering the considerable efforts that will be required to achieve an agenda that was already off-track, whilst recovering from a global crisis.

### **4.1 SPECIFIC TARGETS ON EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

In the 2030 Agenda, there are two goals specifically dedicated to equality: Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 10 (reduced inequalities). These address a wide range of associated issues including discrimination, equal opportunity in various spheres, participation and representation. The need for non-discriminatory laws and policies is also specifically addressed under SDG 16.

To this end, the table below highlights key considerations from a human rights and Covid-19 perspective in relation to some of the SDG targets that explicitly address equality and non-discrimination.



Target	Key human rights concepts and standards of relevance in a Covid-19 context	
 <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>	<p>Equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting principles which underpin the realisation of all human rights. By extension, specific SDG targets on the elimination of discrimination, and the achievement of equality, are of cross-cutting relevance to the human rights underpinning the entire 2030 Agenda. This implies that the elimination of discriminatory laws and policies, which these targets are all concerned with, not only apply here but also to specific sectoral, and issue-specific SDG targets.</p>
 <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	<p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard</p>	<p>Equality and non-discrimination should be addressed both formally (in law) and substantively (in fact) (see Sections 3.1 and 3.3). This implies that in order to achieve these targets, laws and policies, but also specific and special measures are required.</p> <p>General guidance from international human rights bodies on equality and non-discrimination can be used to inform strategies to achieve all these Targets. Many UN human rights treaty bodies have also provided guidance and issued specific statements on equality and non-discrimination in the context of Covid-19.</p>
 <p><b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>	<p>16b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development</p>	<p>→ <b>General guidance from human rights bodies on equality and non-discrimination:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of <a href="#">guidance and statements of human rights treaty bodies on Covid-19</a>.</li> <li>• Human Rights Committee, <a href="#">General comment No. 18: Non-discrimination</a>.</li> <li>• Human Rights Committee, <a href="#">General Comment No. 28, Article 3 (The equality of rights between men and women)</a>.</li> <li>• Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General comment No. 16 (2005), The equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights</a>.</li> <li>• Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General Comment No. 20, Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights</a>.</li> <li>• Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, <a href="#">General comment No. 6 on equality and non-discrimination</a>.</li> <li>• <a href="#">List of General Recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">List of General Recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women</a></li> </ul>

However, inequality and non-discrimination are also of relevance in a cross-cutting manner to the 2030 Agenda. Almost all issue- and sector- specific goals and targets are of direct relevance to the situation of those left further behind as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. Their achievement can be severely impacted by discrimination and inequality, or, indeed, if pursued without using a human rights-based approach, efforts to achieve them may actually result in exacerbating inequalities.

#### **4.2 BROADER RELEVANCE OF EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Bearing in mind the cross-cutting nature of equality and non-discrimination, this section attempts to show how the fundamental principles of equality and non-discrimination are of relevance across the SDG framework, in relation to the Covid-19 recovery.

The table below refers to selected SDG targets to illustrate their human rights relevance, and their relevance to equality and non-discrimination in a Covid-19 context. It does not claim to identify all the SDG targets that are of relevance to equality and non-discrimination in the Covid-19 recovery and rebuilding, but rather demonstrates using examples, highlighting related thematic human rights guidance.

The links to human rights and related norms in the second column are based on the links between SDG targets and provisions of international and regional human rights instruments that are outlined in the Danish Institute for Human Rights' Human Rights Guide to the SDGs. For a detailed breakdown of the specific provisions of human rights instruments of direct relevance to these targets, go to <https://sdg.humanrights.dk/>. This tool also explains the methodology behind the linking of SDG targets to human rights standards.


The "relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states" referred to in the third column include recommendations from UN treaty bodies based on examination of periodic state reports, as well as recommendations from the Universal Periodic review and the Special Procedures of the UN, as described in Chapter 2. These recommendations can be searched for in the Danish Institute for Human Rights' SDG - Human Rights Data Explorer.


The **SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer** enables exploration of 150,000 recommendations and observations from 67 monitoring mechanisms of the international human rights system – many of direct relevance for Covid-19 responses and recovery. The information can be filtered by country, affected group, SDG target and other relevant parameters.  
Available at: <http://sdgdata.humanrights.dk/>





The screenshot shows the homepage of the SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer. At the top, there is a large image of a conference room with a circular arrangement of seats and a colorful, abstract mural on the wall. Overlaid on this image is a black box with white text that reads: "Making the link between human rights and sustainable development". Below this, it says: "Use information from the International human rights monitoring system to develop a human rights-based approach to the SDGs". There are two orange buttons with white text: "LEARN MORE" and "EXPLORE THE DATA", both with right-pointing arrows. Below the image, there is a red banner with the text "Find your country" in white. Underneath, there is a smaller line of text: "Type in the name of a country or region, and explore the links between human rights recommendations and the SDGs". At the bottom, there is a white search input field with the placeholder text "Country" and a magnifying glass icon on the right.


The general comments or general recommendations also referred to in third column are broadly applicable, non-binding but authoritative interpretations of specific issues, or provisions contained in specific treaties, aimed at advising all states on how to put them into practice, as described in Chapter 2.

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
 <p>1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions</li> <li>• Right to work, and to just and favourable conditions of work</li> </ul>	<p>The economic recession caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have huge impacts on global poverty levels.</p> <p>Economic deprivation (lack of income) is a standard feature of most definitions of poverty. However, this does not take into account the myriad of social, cultural and political aspects of poverty. Inequality and discrimination both exacerbate poverty and are exacerbated by poverty. This has wide-ranging consequences as poverty can prevent the full realisation of civil and political, and economic social and cultural rights across the board.</p> <p>People in poverty experience various forms of discrimination, “based mostly not on the level of incomes <i>per se</i>, but on family relationships, on the schools the person has attended, or on childhood circumstances.”<sup>18</sup></p> <p>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, <a href="#">Tackling extreme poverty in times of crisis: Key challenges facing the fight against poverty and thematic priorities for the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights</a></li> </ul>


SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="153 430 379 654" style="background-color: #2e8b57; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>  </div> <p data-bbox="165 694 363 1169">3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Right to life</b></li> <li>• Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health</li> </ul>	<p>The right to prevention, treatment and control of diseases is an integral part of the more general right to health. In this context, inequality plays a significant role in the extent to which different sectors of the population are vulnerable to, or benefit from measures to combat and control epidemics of communicable diseases. For example, in the current crisis, the elderly and persons with disabilities in care settings have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and the lack of adequate safeguards put in place in these particular settings. Ethnic minorities have also been disproportionately affected due in part to their over-representation in occupations which put them at risk, or due to other reasons, such as poverty, residential overcrowding and other factors.<sup>19</sup> As with other targets specified here, discrimination and inequality are at the root of many of these factors.</p> <p>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 1207.</b></p> <p>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights</a> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.</li> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General Comment No. 14, The right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)</a>, 2000.</li> </ul>

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="153 427 379 651" style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>  </div> <p data-bbox="164 696 363 1240">3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="416 439 600 685">• Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health</li> <li data-bbox="416 696 624 837">• Right to social security, including social insurance.</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="655 439 1423 689">The Covid 19 pandemic has overwhelmed health systems all over the world, many of which were already weakened by public under-investment. Inequality of access to health care, either due to prohibitive costs, location of healthcare facilities, discrimination against certain sectors of the population, and other factors, has meant that vulnerable sectors of the population have been worse affected by the pandemic than others.</p> <p data-bbox="655 725 1423 1162">The right to health includes equality of access to health care and health services; “the right to a system of health protection which provides equality of opportunity for people to enjoy the highest attainable level of health”.<sup>20</sup> To this end, “states have an obligation to provide those who do not have sufficient means with the necessary health insurance and health-care facilities, and to prevent any discrimination on internationally prohibited grounds in the provision of health care and health services, especially with respect to the core obligations of the right to health.”<sup>21</sup> Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality (see Section 3.5) are also key considerations impacting on equality of access to services such as healthcare.</p> <p data-bbox="655 1198 1366 1263">→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 2680.</b></p> <p data-bbox="655 1299 1358 1364">→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="683 1400 1401 1503">• <u>Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights</u> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.</li> <li data-bbox="683 1514 1401 1617">• <u>Statement on universal and equitable access to vaccines for Covid-19</u> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</li> <li data-bbox="683 1628 1401 1765">• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General Comment No. 14, The right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)</u>, 2000.</li> <li data-bbox="683 1776 1414 1879">• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General Comment No. 19; The right to social security</u>, 2008.</li> </ul>

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<p data-bbox="172 443 300 497"><b>5 GENDER EQUALITY</b></p>  <p data-bbox="165 694 357 1133">5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="418 443 619 725">• Right to not be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment</li> <li data-bbox="418 734 619 837">• Equality and non-discrimination</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="657 443 1407 577">Discrimination against women and girls is at the root of gender-based violence. Domestic and gender-based violence have risen considerably during the Covid-19 crisis. This includes increased violence against female domestic workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="657 613 1362 680">→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 9160.</b></li> <li data-bbox="657 712 1362 779">→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="683 815 1362 918">• Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), <u><a href="#">General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women</a></u>, 2017.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>


SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="172 443 322 645"> <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>  </div> <p>5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and non-discrimination</li> <li>• Right to social security, including social insurance</li> <li>• Right to work, and to just and favourable working conditions</li> </ul>	<p>The Covid-19 crisis has deepened gender inequalities as the burden of caring for children at home and for sick or older family members has fallen disproportionately on women, with gender stereotypes still deeply embedded in many societies.</p> <p>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 36***</b></p> <p>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General Comment No. 19,-The right to social security</u>, 2008.</li> <li>• Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), <u>General recommendation No. 17: Measurement and quantification of the unremunerated domestic activities of women and their recognition in the gross national product.</u></li> </ul> <p>*** The low number of recommendations made direct to states regarding this issue is not necessarily an indication that the issue is not a significant one. Indeed, it may be an indication of insufficient attention being paid to this issue and the lack of empowerment of those engaged in unpaid care and domestic work to raise issues regarding their rights.</p>




SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
 <p>6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions</li> <li>• Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health</li> </ul>	<p>Inequality is a key consideration for the achievement of access to adequate sanitation and hygiene for all. Communities and groups subject to structural discrimination and disadvantage may lack basic amenities such as access to water and sanitation facilities, soap and sanitiser. Covid-19 has highlighted the critical role of adequate investment in basic services including water and sanitation.</p> <p>Availability, quality and accessibility (including physical and economic accessibility, non-discrimination and information accessibility) and quality (see Section 3.5) are key elements of the right to water, and states are required to remove de facto discrimination on prohibited grounds, where individuals and groups are deprived of the means or entitlements necessary for achieving the right to water.</p> <p>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 856.</b></p> <p>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General Comment No. 15 (2002), the right to water</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights</a> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.</li> </ul>

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="172 443 370 497" data-label="Section-Header"> <p><b>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="210 510 322 631" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="165 694 363 1205">8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value</p>	<ul data-bbox="418 443 619 945" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and non-discrimination</li> <li>• Right to work, and to just and favourable working conditions</li> <li>• Right to just and favourable remuneration, equal pay for work of equal value</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="657 443 1433 689">The right to work, including just and favourable conditions of work, is a right of everyone, without distinction of any kind. Millions of workers across the global have faced unemployment, redundancy, reductions in working hours and wages, and loss of social benefits as a consequence of Covid-19. Particularly affected have been precarious workers in the “gig economy” or the informal sector. Many of these also represent groups who face discrimination.</p> <p data-bbox="657 725 1433 869">Even in a crisis, non-discrimination remains a state obligation in all areas of the world of work, from recruitment, to job evaluation, conditions of employment including remuneration, promotion and training.</p> <ul data-bbox="657 904 1433 1415" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 1865.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Detailed observations to states by ILO supervisory mechanisms on a full range of ILO labour standards.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b> <ul data-bbox="689 1205 1433 1415" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights</u> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.</li> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work.</u></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="167 436 367 638" style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH   </div> <p data-bbox="167 683 359 1232">8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and non-discrimination</li> <li>• Right to work, and to just and favourable working conditions</li> <li>• Right to safe and healthy working conditions</li> <li>• Right to protection against exploitative working conditions, forced and bonded labour, child labour.</li> <li>• Rights to freedom of association, right to organise and right to collective bargaining</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="662 436 1412 761">Health and safety at work, among all the issues addressed by Target 8.8, is a fundamental consideration for all workers in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many healthcare workers, for example, have been infected as a result of inadequacies in or shortages of personal protective equipment and clothing. Further, numerous categories of low-paid workers such as delivery workers, supermarket staff, rubbish collection workers, manual labourers and agricultural workers have been exposed to heightened risks of being infected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 2497.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Detailed observations to states by ILO supervisory mechanisms on a full range of ILO labour standards.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work.</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="164 439 371 499" style="background-color: #f9a825; padding: 5px;"> <b>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</b> </div> <div data-bbox="188 510 347 633" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions</li> </ul>	<p>Equality of access to safe and affordable housing, basic services and other components of the right to an adequate standard of living are a major concern of international human rights mechanisms. Concerns around inequality in these areas have been raised in relation to the rights of migrant workers, women, racial discrimination, indigenous peoples, minorities and other groups.</p> <p>In the context of Covid-19 and the ensuing challenging economic and financial climate, <u>evictions</u> and homelessness have increased significantly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Number of relevant international human rights recommendations addressed to individual states: 2420.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General comment No. 4: The right to adequate housing</u>, 1991.</li> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <u>General comment No. 7: The right to adequate housing (art. 11 (1) of the Covenant): Forced evictions</u>, 1997.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

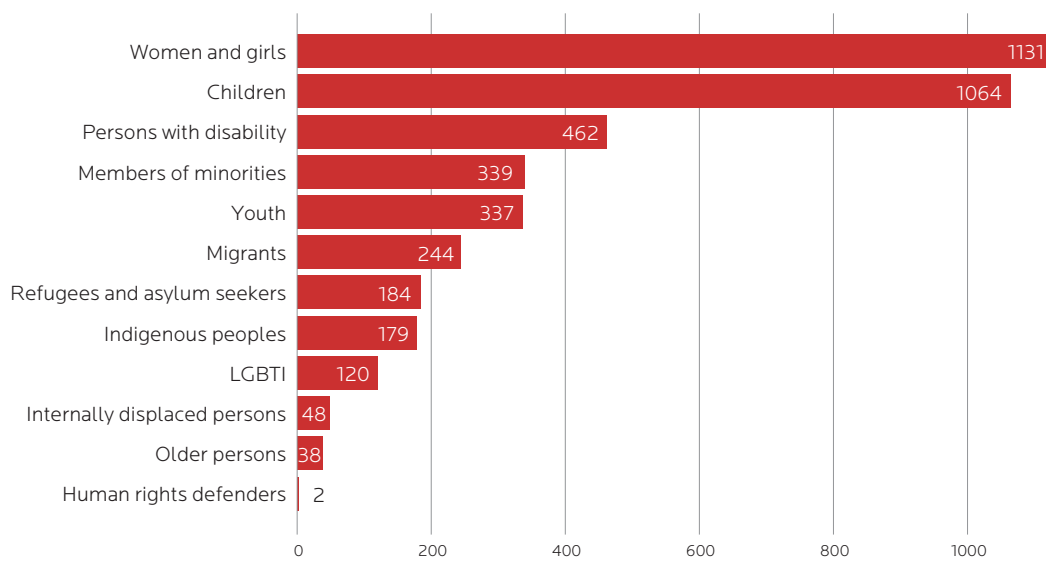
SDG Target	Human rights and related norms concerned	Relevance to non-discrimination and equality in a Covid-19 context and guidance from human rights bodies*
<div data-bbox="151 425 375 649" style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>  </div> <p>17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking steps, including through international assistance, to the maximum of states' available resources, to progressively realise economic, social and cultural rights</li> <li>• Right to development</li> <li>• Right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions</li> </ul>	<p>Domestic resource mobilisation includes the raising of taxes to ensure that states are able to comply with their obligation to raise the maximum available resources for the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to health and therefore increased access to healthcare and social security, which provide crucial services and safety nets in this context.</p> <p>“Covid-19 has highlighted the critical role of adequate investments in public health systems, comprehensive social protection programmes, decent work, housing, food, water and sanitation systems [...]. Such investments are crucial in responding effectively to global health pandemics and in counteracting multiple, intersecting forms of inequality, including deep inequalities in income and wealth [...]”<sup>22</sup></p> <p>Regressive tax regimes (where the average tax burden decreases with income) can increase inequality as low-income taxpayers pay a disproportionate share of the tax burden, while middle- and high-income taxpayers shoulder a comparatively small tax burden.</p> <p>Former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, has stressed that “taxation is a key tool when tackling inequality and for generating the resources necessary for poverty reduction and the realization of human rights” and that progressive tax regimes are key to decreasing inequality both between socio-economic groups and between men and women.<sup>23</sup></p> <p>→ <b>Relevant guidance from the international human rights mechanisms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights</a> by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.</li> <li>• International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, <a href="#">General comment No. 3: The nature of States parties' obligations</a>.</li> </ul>

\* The numbers of recommendations referred to in this column do not include specific recommendations to states directly related to Covid-19, as the UN database containing recommendations from international human rights bodies was not updated with these at the time of writing. However, the human rights issues, standards, principles and norms, and guidance from human rights bodies covered in this publication remain applicable regardless.

Recommendations from international human rights bodies also often highlight the situation of specific groups of rights-holders. The chart below, for example, shows the distribution of recommendations related to SDG Target 3.8 (Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all) across a range of different groups of rights-holders.

Number of Recommendations linked to SDG target 3.8 by affected group

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Source: <https://sdgdata.humanrights.dk/>

# ANNEX 1

## PROHIBITED GROUNDS OF DISCRIMINATION

Annex 1*: Prohibited grounds of discrimination	
Instrument(s)	Grounds of discrimination
International instruments	
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).	Race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status**.
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)	Race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin.
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status**.
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Sex.
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	Migrant status, sex, race, colour, language, religion or conviction, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, nationality, age, economic position, property, marital status, birth or other status**.
Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	Race, religion or country of origin
ILO Convention on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation (Convention No. 111)	Race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin
UN Declaration on the Right to Development	Race, sex, language or religion.
European instruments	
European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)	Sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status**.
Inter-American system instruments	
American Convention on Human Rights	Race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic status, birth or any other social condition.
African instruments	
African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).	Race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status**.

\*This table only represents a limited selection of international and regional human rights instruments.

\*\* International human rights bodies have clarified that 'other' status includes **age, nationality, marital and family status, health status, gender identity, place of residence, economic and social situation and other grounds**. Therefore, the list of grounds should not be considered exhaustive.

## NOTES

- 1 Danish Institute for Human Rights, **Covid-19 response and recovery must build on human rights and SDGs**, May 2020.
- 2 Covid-19 and Human Rights: we are all in this together
- 3 Thornberry, F., Using Human Rights to Leave No One Behind: Covid-19 Responses and Beyond, Guest article, International Institute for Sustainable Development, May 2020.
- 4 Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), **Call for joint action in the times of the Covid-19 pandemic**.
- 5 Global Sustainable Development Report, 2019, p. xvi.
- 6 The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) UN platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level. For more info., see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>
- 7 **Human rights treaty bodies and their role supporting the 2030 Agenda**, Submission by OHCHR to the HLPF, 2016, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10323Human%20Rights%20Treaty%20Bodies%20contribution%202016-May-26.pdf>
- 8 **Human rights treaty bodies and their role supporting the 2030 Agenda**, 2016, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=201&menu=3170>
- 9 Thornberry, F., **Using Human Rights to Leave No One Behind: Covid-19 Responses and Beyond**, Guest Article for the SDG Knowledge Hub, <https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/using-human-rights-to-leave-no-one-behind-covid-19-responses-and-beyond/>
- 10 Covid-19 and Human Rights: we are all in this together, p. 2.
- 11 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 20, Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2, para. 2, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), UN Doc. No. E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009, para. 12.
- 12 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), **General Comment No. 20, Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2, para. 2, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)**, UN Doc. No. E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009, para. 17.
- 13 UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, **General recommendation No. 32, The meaning and scope of special measures**



- in the **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Racial Discrimination**, UN. Doc. No., CERD/C/GC/32, 2009, para 7.
- 14 UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, **General recommendation No. 32, The meaning and scope of special measures in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Racial Discrimination**, UN. Doc. No., CERD/C/GC/32, 2009, para 11.
- 15 UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, **General recommendation No. 32, The meaning and scope of special measures in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Racial Discrimination**, UN. Doc. No., CERD/C/GC/32, 2009.
- 16 See UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, **General recommendation No. 32, The meaning and scope of special measures in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Racial Discrimination**, UN. Doc. No., CERD/C/GC/32, 2009, paras 26 and 27. See also UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, **General recommendation No. 25: Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention (temporary special measures)**, 2004.
- 17 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, **Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights**, April 2020, UN Doc. No.: E/C.12/2020/1, para. 3.
- 18 UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, **Tackling extreme poverty in times of crisis: Key challenges facing the fight against poverty and thematic priorities for the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights**, 1 May 2020, para. 4.
- 19 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/22/why-are-people-from-bame-groups-dying-disproportionately-of-covid-19>
- 20 International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, **General Comment No. 14, The right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)**, 2000, para. 8.
- 21 Ibid., para. 19.
- 22 **Statement on the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights** by the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, para. 24.
- 23 See Danish Institute for Human Rights, **A human rights based approach to the Means of Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**, 2020, pp 17-27 for more information.

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