

## **Human Rights up Front: A summary for staff**

1. Human Rights up Front (HRuF) is a Secretary-General's initiative to strengthen prevention of serious problems that cut across the UN's three pillars of peace and security, development and human rights pillars, and most especially problems issues with serious human rights consequences.
2. It is based on mandates from the UN Charter and GA and Security Council resolutions.
3. It applies to the whole UN system and to UN work in all countries and all situations.
4. It introduces three types of change:
  - Cultural change: (i) All staff and UN entities to conduct their work with an awareness of their wider responsibility to support the UN Charter and overall UN mandates. (ii) Staff to take principled positions and act with moral courage; (iii) UNHQ to back staff who uphold overall UN responsibilities; (iv) greater accountability for UN action.
  - Operational change. (i) Bring the UN's three pillars together. (ii) Joint analysis and strategy by the UN system, in the field and UNHQ. (iii) Better early warning and response.
  - Change to UN engagement with Member States: (i) Proactive engagement with national authorities about concerns identified in analysis; (ii) early and full engagement with Member States to prevent large-scale human rights violations.
5. In all situations, from normal to crisis, it helps UN entities work much more effectively together on cross-cutting issues with human rights implications. In the worst situations it ensures the UN does everything possible to prevent large-scale and serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law
6. It requires courage, commitment and vision from UN leaders in the field and at UNHQ.
7. In practice:
  - It has helped UNCTs to recognize the potential future human rights consequences of development problems, and to identify the political solutions.
  - It has helped UN Country Teams to shift their shared analysis of their country situation to capture problems that previously they were unable to address.
  - It has improved early UN engagement with national authorities, and support from the UN for national-led solutions.
  - UN Country Teams have used it to ensure their various UNHQ entities are unified in understanding the support required by colleagues in the field.
  - UNHQ entities have used HRuF to reposition the UN as a whole on a rapidly deteriorating situation.
  - It has led to more complete and earlier communication by the UN system to the Security Council, leading to early preventive action by the Council.