

Statistics and Human Rights

Mustafa Khawaja
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
P.O. Box 1647 Ramallah, Palestine
Tel: 972-2-2406340
Fax: 972-2-2406343
Email: Mkhawaja@pcbs.pna.org

1. Introduction

Huge jump happened in different enrichment for principles of human rights since the universal declaration of human rights on December 1948, and after 52 years of development the international society and its institutions in developing the universal covenants and conventions related to the human rights, locally, regionally, and internationally.

This framework of reaction on different levels will remain in theoretical frame unless it controlled forward the application.

Statistical institutions which producing the data and the numbers is the main tool in observation the carried out round on the application scene for human rights theories (covenants & conventions).

In order to achieve affective statistical operation in using its results and outputs, it conditioned wording the legislation which unified, steering, and complying for all governments, organizations, and persons in the direction of those statistical outputs, and develop what needed –by case- to pass the prevention reasons for achieving all rights wherever it possible and or at least facilities the difficulties wherever the possibility sank.

2. Statistical Indicators for Human Rights

The main goal for the Statistical Indicators is producing information that will give policy signals on how to better realize human freedoms-such as freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom from discrimination. These indicators rely on measures of outcomes and inputs to tell the story, and it use measures of averages and disaggregating, the global and the local, to reveal information at many different levels.

Human rights could be produced from the following categories: The right of self-determination, prevention of discrimination, Rights of women, rights of the child, slavery, servitude, forced labor. Human rights in the administration of justice protection of persons subjected to detention or imprisonment, freedom of association, employment, marriage and the family, childhood and youth, Social welfare, progress and development, right of enjoy culture, nationality, statelessness, asylum and refugees, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide, and humanitarian law, and it could be derivate many statistical indicators from each subject.

The main point in this field is not only the importance of the indicators limitation and collecting the data, but also the classification of it into groups and sub-groups to consist each right in one bundle of indicators and the total of this bundle will indicate if its right enforcement or not.

3. Measurement

Rights can never be fully measured merely in statistics. Never the less, as a tool for analysis, statistics can open the questions behind the generalities and help reveal the broader social challenges.

Three important contrast in approach should be taken: Conceptual foundation, Focus of attention, and Additional information.

Statistics come with strings attached. They provide great power for clarity, but also for distortion. When based on careful research and method, indicators help establish story evidence, open dialogue and increase accountability, but they need to be: Policy relevant, Valid, Consistently measurable over line, possible to disaggregate and designed to separate monitor and the monitored where possible.

This call for the independency, neutrality, and authority of who has to lead to the classification, this will not available except by the United Nations and its committees especially the human rights committee. Statistics can reveal the indicators but it couldn't uncover the details variables that related to enforcement the rights.

Measurement ability of human rights indicators needs by parallelism; classification and detailing: Classification can produce bundles from set/s of indicators and its data indicate the enforcement (Averages), and the detailing can uncover the related and affective elements (Deprivation and Inequality).

The following example shows how the progress should apply combining three perspectives on the date:

1. **Average:** showing the progress over all through the time.

e.g: in Egypt for 1992 only 67% of all 12-23 month-old infants were fully immunized. By 1998 coverage had risen to 93%. It is impressive progress over all but with out details how and who???

2. **Deprivation:** Disaggregating the national average reveals the initial disparities across the country between rural and urban areas, for the same example it show how had the most deprived areas benefited from national progress

3. **Inequality:** The impact on inequality depends on which parts the faster progress mainly it will reduce the gap between the bottom and top regions, which will contribute in counteract historical discrimination that may due to earlier policies.

All what mentioned suggested being in the international framework of unified and circular, then human rights could measure and compared among countries and societies.

4. Conclusion

The challenge is to build a culture of human rights awareness and commitment. A decent standard of living, adequate, nutrition, health care, education, decent work and protection against calamities part of the human rights.

Developing a set of indicators to be measured in different points of time is the standing point to indicate the current situation and to measure the progress over time. To implement the human rights needs the laws and practice together and basically require action and commitment from the major groups in every society-NGO's, media and businesses, local as national government, parliamentarians and other opinion leaders.

REFERENCES

1. United Nations Development programme, 2000. Human Development Report 2000. New York.
2. United Nation, 1997 Manual on Human Rights Reporting. Geneva.
3. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2000. The Role in Measuring Human Rights. Ramallah
– Palestine.