



PACIFIC PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

A guide to establishing effective
National Mechanisms for Implementation
Reporting and Follow-Ups
(NMIRFs)

PACIFIC PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

(of National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-Up)

*The Pacific Principles of Practice of National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-Up ('NMIRFs') are responses to the agreed challenges and lessons learned shared at the Pacific Regional NMIRF Dialogue held in Nadi, Fiji in April 2019. They are intended to be used as a **guide** in the establishment and strengthening of NMIRFs in the Pacific and contribute to the global conversation on effective implementation of human rights obligations and development commitments.*

1. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to NMIRFs

Narrative: An ad hoc approach to human rights reporting and tracking is recognised as ineffective and a cause of implementation and data gaps. In order to facilitate the effective coordination and tracking of national implementation of human rights NMIRFs are a required state structure. It is understood that NMIRFs may take a variety of forms and should be tailored according to the national context, taking consideration of available resources and building on existing effective structures. At a national level an NMIRF should be regularly reviewed and evolve over time to meet the changing nature of the state. Notwithstanding the need for an individual approach for establishing NMIRFs a number of common features exist as a pre-requisite for effectiveness, as defined further below.

2. NMIRFs should be permanent and be established by the executive or legislature

An NMIRF should be established on a permanent basis to ensure the retention of institutional knowledge across reporting cycles. Acknowledging the state as the primary duty bearer of human rights, with the obligation to protect, respect and fulfil rights, NMIRFs should be established by the executive or legislature.

3. NMIRFs shall be given a structure, mandate and resources to effectively coordinate and track national implementation of human rights and other overlapping frameworks

In the pursuit of a more systematic and coordinated approach to the realisation of national human rights obligations, it is necessary for all implementing actors to be regularly involved in the functions of any NMIRF. The determination of the composition of an NMIRF should take into account the need to safeguard against turnover of staff, irregular data collection and loss of institutional knowledge between reporting cycles. Preventive action could include incorporating NMIRF duties into job descriptions, designating multiple focal points for data collection and having a permanent secretariat that maintains publicly available records. Recognising that effective implementation requires the identification of gaps and corrective actions, an NMIRF should be composed of adequately senior representatives with decision-making powers. To effectively address the many and overlapping recommendations and human rights obligations it is best practice to develop a living national action plan that clusters, prioritises, identifies indicators, and assigns responsible agencies to actions and data collection.

Plans can be effectively developed and tracked through the use of technology designed for these purposes including, but not limited to, the National Recommendations Tracking Database, IMPACT OSS and SIMORE. This allows a degree of automation to reporting, which in turn negates the need for numerous drafting committees and repetition of data collection and report writing. The overlapping nature of human rights, the sustainable development goals and other national development framework objectives creates an opportunity for increased efficiencies and effectiveness through the adoption of an integrated approach by NMIRFs.

- 3.1 **Composition** – an effective NMIRF should include representation of all primary actors involved in the implementation of human rights including, but not limited to, government ministries and agencies, statutory bodies, parliamentarians, the judiciary, civil society, national human rights institutions, traditional and religious leaders/groups, national statistics offices and the private sector. Different levels of membership of the NMIRF may be appropriate (e.g. full / observer members) and all representatives should be at a level of seniority that enables their full participation.
- 3.2 **An NMIRF should be mandated** to coordinate implementation of human rights obligations across all national implementing actors, through all or some of the following responsibilities:
- a. Receiving, clustering, planning, tracking and centrally managing all human rights recommendations, treaty body and national legislative or constitutional obligations, through the development of National Action Plans or Implementation Plans;
 - b. Centralised collection of data and information management to continuously track progress and identify implementation gaps;
 - c. Regular convening of all national implementing actors;
 - d. Making all recommendations, past reports and implementation status publicly available in primary national languages;
 - e. Regular reporting to Parliament on implementation progress;
 - f. Managing requests for invitations from the Special Procedures and coordinating their visits;
 - g. Establishment of drafting committees for report drafting;
 - h. Consultations on all draft reports and implementation plans;
 - i. Building the capacity of members through training and information sharing; and
 - j. Engaging with international development partners to address implementation gaps.
- 3.3 **National development** – NMIRFs should seek to capitalise on the interrelated and mutually reinforcing nature of human rights, the international development agenda and national development frameworks to ensure no one is left behind by adopting an integrated and holistic approach to developing National Action Plans and the implementation and tracking of these obligations and commitments.
- 3.4 **Utilisation of technology** – to facilitate the aims and functions of an NMIRF and simplify reporting writing processes tracking software/tools can be used to:
- a. Create a single national database of clustered recommendations that becomes a 'living national human rights action plan' through continuous inputs from line ministries and other implementing actors;
 - b. Link human rights obligations to national and international development commitments;
 - c. Automate and semi-automate many of the processes required for the effective implementation, tracking, measurement and reporting including data collection requests, data analysis and visualisation, the generation of periodic reports (to parliament and relevant international mechanisms), identification of implementation/data gaps and elimination of reporting/data collection duplication across all human rights obligations and development commitments;
 - d. Enable public tracking of implementation activities and progress in relation to all clusters of recommendations and development commitments;
 - e. Expand the space for civil society engagement through a platform that allows data inputs from the full range of implementing actors.
- 3.5 **Working methods** – a terms of reference should be developed and published by any NMIRF, which establishes frequent meetings, decision making rules, roles and responsibilities, and other relevant processes necessary for the effective functioning of the NMIRF.

- 3.6 **Secretariat** – a secretariat should be established and written into the terms of reference to enable the effective functioning of an NMIRF.
- 3.7 **Resources** – an NMIRF should be provided with adequate resources to fulfil its mandate by the government including, but not limited to, costs of the secretariat, any required translations, stakeholder consultations and the installation and use of tracking tools.

The following countries hereby endorse the Pacific Principles of Practice as a guiding document for the establishment and strengthening of NMIRFs:

- Fiji
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Kiribati
- Republic of Marshall Islands
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Vanuatu



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