



# Glion X




**GLION X**  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
DIALOGUE

**2024**

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## **TRANSFORMING UNIVERSAL NORMS INTO LOCAL REALITY – NMIRFs AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM'S EFFECTIVENESS AND ON-THE- GROUND IMPACT**

The tenth Glion Human Rights Dialogue (Glion X), organised by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Universal Rights Group (URG), in partnership with the Permanent Missions of Mexico, Paraguay, Portugal, The Gambia, Marshall Islands, and Thailand, with the support of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was held from 16-17 October 2024 in Marrakech, Morocco, and focused on the topic:

**Transforming universal norms into local reality – NMIRFs and the strengthening of the UN human rights system’s effectiveness and on-the-ground impact.**

The international community has invested enormous time and energy in building the international human rights system over the past 70 years. Today it comprises, *inter alia*, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, nine core human rights instruments (international treaties) and various international human rights mechanisms – namely, Treaty Bodies (TBs), Special Procedures (SPs), and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). These mechanisms are designed to oversee States’ compliance with their international legal obligations, hold duty-bearers to account, and recommend domestic legislative and policy reforms to improve future compliance. They also facilitate national and international dialogue and cooperation on human rights issues.

This system has, on occasion, been confronted with questions over the degree to which it is capable of, and is succeeding in, securing real-world change – i.e., demonstrable improvements in the on-the-ground enjoyment of human rights. According to this narrative, an ‘implementation gap’ has developed between universal values and local realities.

Over the past ten years there have been a growing number of initiatives by States, the UN system, and other stakeholders to address these persistent questions. During that time, far more thought and attention has been paid to the ‘mechanics of implementation’ (i.e., the systems and processes through which States translate universal norms into local reality), as well as to what role the Human Rights Council, in concert with the wider UN system, can and should play in supporting implementation, measuring impact, and highlighting progress.

Central to the former has been the emergence of ‘national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up’ (NMIRFs) – single, streamlined legal bodies that collate, manage, coordinate, and track progress with the implementation of recommendations from all international human rights mechanisms (together, in some cases, with those from regional mechanisms). Some of these States, often supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), have also begun to develop sophisticated implementation and reporting software to support the work of NMIRFs, and connect human rights implementation with progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.




From 2016, this revolution at national level began to be recognised and encouraged at UN level. A 'group of friends on domestic implementation/ NMIRFs' was created in Geneva; subregional groups (e.g., the Pacific Community) began to hold meetings to share good practices and define practical guidance for the establishment and operation for NMIRFs; Paraguay and Brazil secured the adoption of a series of Human Rights Council resolutions on the subject; and Morocco, Paraguay, and Portugal launched a new international network of NMIRFs, as the outcome of a 2022 meeting in Marrakech, and a follow-up meeting in Asuncion, in 2024.

On the basis of these and other steps forward, today a major opportunity exists to catalyse the quantitative and qualitative development of NMIRFs, and thus further accelerate the international human rights 'implementation agenda.' Glion X aimed to seize this opportunity

by elaborating, based on collated good practices from around the world, a practical guidance framework to help States wishing to establish an effective NMIRF or strengthen their existing system.

Glion X sought to provide an informal and inclusive 'Chatham House' space for all key stakeholders to share and identify key 'good practices' in the establishment and/ or strengthening of NMIRFs – i.e., the shared characteristics that make NMIRFs effective in transforming UN human rights recommendations into improved national laws, policies, and practices. The identification of core shared good practices would in turn, it was hoped, contribute to the elaboration, through inclusive dialogue and cooperation, of a practical guidance framework to help guide all States that so wish to establish and/ or develop effective NMIRFs.



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## POLICY DIALOGUES AHEAD OF GLION X

Ahead of Glion X, URG, in conjunction with partners, organised three preparatory informal consultations (pre-Glion dialogues) to provide a space for all interested States, civil society actors, and others, to participate in this process of dialogue and cooperation. Two of these meetings aimed to provide a space for an exchange of NMIRF good practices and success factors. The third sought to contribute to the Human Rights Council's 'self-reflection'/'self-assessment' process, as part of wider consultations to develop a 'Geneva' contribution to the General Assembly's 2021-2026 review of the Council's status.

The three informal policy dialogues addressed the following topics:

- 'Key characteristics and good practices in the establishment and development of NMIRFs (I),' hosted by the Permanent Missions of Paraguay and Portugal, 23 April 2024, Geneva.
- 'Key characteristics and good practices in the establishment and development of NMIRFs (II),' hosted by the Permanent Missions of the Marshall Islands, The Gambia, and the Commonwealth Small States Office, 10 June 2024, Geneva.
- 'A look in the mirror' – 'Geneva's' contribution to the General Assembly's 2021-2026 review of the Human Rights Council: an opportunity to reflect on the Council's effectiveness and on-the-ground impact,' hosted by the Permanent Missions of Thailand and Mexico, 5 June 2024, Geneva.



# GLION X RETREAT



The Glion retreat itself, held in Marrakech from 16-17 October 2024, began with a high-level opening plenary. This was followed by a session consisting of three 'breakout groups' to explore the key characteristics (best practices and success factors) of effective NMIRFs in more detail. A closing plenary then convened to hear back from the breakout groups and further discuss the elaboration of a practical guidance framework for the establishment and/or strengthening of NMIRFs. The retreat ended with the compilation, under the authority of the co-chairs, H.E. Mr Abdellatif Ouahbi, Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Morocco, and Dr Ahmed Shaheed, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Universal Rights Group, of the Marrakech Guidance Framework (see below). For the second day of the meeting, Mr Ouahbi was replaced as co-chair by Ms Fatima Barkan, Secretary-General of the Moroccan Interministerial Delegation for Human Rights (DIDH).

The opening high-level plenary included interventions from, *inter alia*: the meeting co-chairs; H.E. Mr Omar Zniber, President of the UN Human Rights Council; Ms. Amina Bouayach, Secretary of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), and President of Morocco's

National Human Rights Council (CNDH); Dr Salim M. AlMalik, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO); and Ms Ilaria Carnevali, Resident Representative, Country Office in the Kingdom of Morocco, UNDP. These interventions were followed by keynote addresses from: H.E. Mr Mahamane Cisse-Gouro, Director of the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, OHCHR; Ms Belén María Morra, Director of Human Rights, and representative of the coordination of the national implementation, reporting, and follow-up mechanism of Paraguay (SIMORE Plus); Professor Santiago Fiorio Vaesken, Member, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Dr Raymond Nyeris, Vice Chairperson and Commissioner of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR); and Ms Pernille Fenger, Director, UNFPA Geneva Representation Office.

During the opening plenary, Mr Marc Limon, Executive Director of the Universal Rights Group, also presented the key conclusions of the 5 June pre-Glion policy dialogue hosted by Thailand and Mexico, on Geneva's contribution to the General Assembly's 2021-2026 review of the Human Rights Council.



This report on Glion X is divided into four parts. The first three summarise the discussions and good practices exchanged during the retreat (i.e., in the opening and closing ceremonies, and the three breakout groups) relating to the different key characteristics and success factors of NMIRFs. Those discussions and exchanges benefited, in turn, from the outcomes of the 23 April and 10 June pre-Glion policy dialogues. The fourth part presents the Marrakech Guidance Framework – a collation and distillation of those good practices and success factors.

More specifically, the report presents the following content:

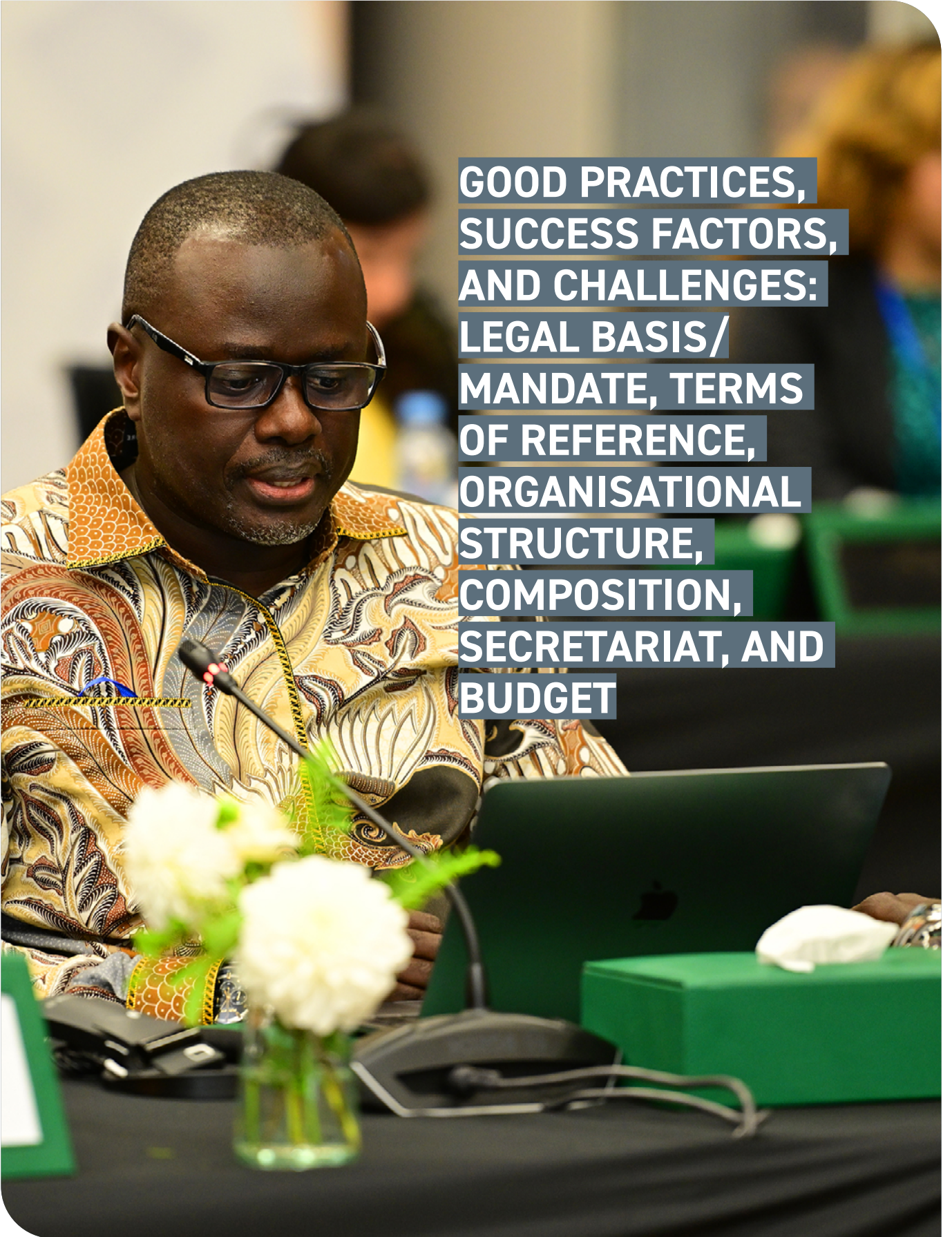
Part one summarises good practices and success factors related to the **legal basis/mandate, terms of reference, organisational structure, composition, secretariat function, and budget** of NMIRFs.

Part two presents shared good practices and success factors related to the **working methods (e.g., regularity of meetings, focal points, clustering)** of NMIRFs, and how they **track implementation, measure impact, prepare periodic reports, use implementation-reporting technology, and connect human rights and the SDGs**.

Part three summarises shared good practices and success factors related to how NMIRFs **engage and consult with the judiciary, civil society, NHRIs, UN Country Teams/UN entities, and bilateral development partners**.

Part four presents the **Marrakech Guidance Framework (MGF)**, a summary and distillation of good practices and lessons learnt (from all regions) shared between participants at Glion X, as well as during the preparatory meetings held in Geneva. The MGF was compiled under the authority of the co-chairs of the 10th Glion Human Rights Dialogue.

The report is an informal document summarising (in a non-attributable manner) some of the key ideas, good practices, and lessons learnt shared during the Glion retreat, based in-turn on the preparatory policy dialogues. The document does not represent the positions of Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal, The Gambia, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Thailand, nor of any of the participants, but is rather a non-exhaustive collection of ideas, views, and good practices shared during those meetings.

A man with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a vibrant, patterned shirt, is seated at a conference table. He is looking down at a laptop in front of him. On the table, there is a microphone, a small vase with white flowers, and a green box. The background is blurred, showing other people in a meeting room.

**GOOD PRACTICES,  
SUCCESS FACTORS,  
AND CHALLENGES:  
LEGAL BASIS/  
MANDATE, TERMS  
OF REFERENCE,  
ORGANISATIONAL  
STRUCTURE,  
COMPOSITION,  
SECRETARIAT, AND  
BUDGET**

## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Since 2016, States, UN agencies including OHCHR and UNFPA, intergovernmental organisations including the Commonwealth, and civil society actors such as URG, have constructed an increasingly wide and open space for dialogue and cooperation on NMIRFs. Early NMIRFs emerged in an organic manner in different parts of the world, based on local exigencies and contexts, and often shaped by individual civil servants. From 2016, when (as noted in the introduction) Portugal and URG established the group of friends on NMIRFs in Geneva, this revolution at national level became an increasing focus of attention at international level. A key aim of that attention was - and has remained - to create spaces where-in States and others might exchange information, experiences, good practices, and lessons learnt regarding the establishment and development of NMIRFs - in other words, what are the key characteristics of an effective NMIRF?

Inspired by and building from the work of the group of friends, an increasingly diverse array of actors has worked to further international exchanges on NMIRFs, and together

identify common 'success factors.' For example, in 2019, Fiji (supported by the UK, the Regional Rights Resource Team of the Pacific Community, and URG) hosted a first-ever regional consultation on NMIRFs, for Pacific Island States. After the meeting, Pacific States negotiated and adopted the 'Pacific Principles of Practice' on NMIRFs. Later in 2019, two members of the Group of Friends, Paraguay and Brazil, initiated a series of Human Rights Council resolutions designed to create further space at regional level (via resolution 42/30) and UN-level (via resolution 51/33) for States and others to share good practices, and identify common characteristics of effective NMIRFs. Other organisations, such as the Commonwealth and UNFPA, have also organised consultations on NMIRFs, while the establishment of a new international network of NMIRFs, as the outcome of a 2022 meeting in Marrakech, and a 2024 meeting in Asuncion, has created yet more opportunities for exchange. Finally, also in 2024, URG published a first-ever global mapping of emergent NMIRFs, which *inter alia* analysed the key common characteristics of these mechanisms, and identified good practices and 'success factors.'



As a result, ahead of Glion X, it was the case that a large quantity of information had been gathered on what makes for an efficient and effective NMIRF. The challenge set by the organisers of Glion X was to collate this information, and distil it into an accessible and useful guidance framework for any State wishing to establish and/or strengthen a NMIRF.

As noted above, participants at Glion X reflected on all the key characteristics or 'success factors' of effective NMIRFs. The first group of common characteristics to be considered were:

- Legal basis (e.g., legislation, statute, warrant, or decree), mandate, and terms of reference.
- Composition - membership of NMIRFs, including government ministries, state agencies (e.g., police, penitentiary services, statistics offices), and parliaments.
- Chairmanship / co-chairmanship of NMIRFs.
- Level of participation in NMIRFs – political/decision-making officials, technical level officials, or a combination thereof?
- Organisational structure - i.e., how are NMIRFs structured/organised, for example, through high-level/political meetings and more technical level meetings, the use of plenary meetings, the establishment of committees/subcommittees?
- Organisational structure in the case of federal States, confederations, and devolved administrations.
- How to involve and engage local government authorities?
- NMIRF secretariats – i.e., should they be institutionally separate or within a ministry/prime minister's office/president's office? Should they be permanent/fulltime or not? Where should it be housed?
- NMIRF budgets – i.e., should NMIRFs have their own dedicated budget, or be part of one or more ministries' budget(s)?



## COLLATED AND DISTILLED GOOD PRACTICES AND 'SUCCESS FACTORS'



## GROWING IMPORTANCE OF NMIRFS

- A minister urged colleagues to recognise ‘at the outset, the increasingly critical role NMIRFs play in our societies [...] Whether through the enactment of new legislation, the refinement of existing policies, or the enhancement of practices, NMIRFs are instrumental in translating international human rights standards into tangible improvements in the lives of individuals.’
- ‘Our overarching objective,’ across the Glion X retreat and the preparatory policy dialogues, he said, must be ‘to discern the success factors that underpin effective NMIRFs. By identifying and understanding these critical elements, we can strive towards enhancing the efficacy of such mechanisms and thereby fortifying the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide.’
- An ambassador expressed his country’s ‘unequivocal commitment’ to the further development of NMIRFs, based on its own positive experience. Since it was established in 2010, his country’s NMIRF, he said, ‘has played an effective role in strengthening implementation coordination across government, and in bringing the country’s reporting obligations fully up to date.’
- A speaker from civil society, reminded colleagues that the construction of NMIRFs is still a relatively new agenda. ‘The idea of a single national mechanism to coordinate the implementation of, and reporting on, recommendations from all the UN human rights mechanisms, and do so across all branches of government, was first discussed at Glion IV, only six years ago,’ he said. ‘Much has therefore been achieved in a short space of time.’ ‘What is important now,’ he argued, ‘is to distil all the good practices gathered over those six years into a single, universal, and accessible guidance framework to help States that so wish to establish and/or strengthen NMIRFs.’



## NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

- Many participants insisted that there can be **no one-size-fits-all** for the establishment and development of NMIRFs. Rather, they must be constructed based on national needs and contexts. Notwithstanding, there was also wide agreement that there is great value in sharing good practices, and identifying the key characteristics of an effective NMIRF – the success factors that enable them to efficiently translate UN human rights recommendations into improved national laws, policies, and practice.
- With this proviso in mind, there was wide interest amongst States at Glion X in establishing or strengthening NMIRFs, or in strengthening existing systems, in line with international best practices. This included States with federal systems of government – even if establishing an effective NMIRF in such contexts may be more challenging.



## LEGAL BASIS

- All speakers agreed that a **strong legal basis** is imperative when constructing an effective NMIRF, as this confers **high-level political and legal authority** on the mechanism, and increases the chances of different parts of government engaging fully and reliably with it.
- Different States have created that legal basis through different means. Some through **legislation**, others by **government statute, warrant, or decree**. Executive orders are quicker and more flexible (if, for example, the NMIRF's terms of reference need to be amended). However, some States reported that their NMIRF became inactive following a change in government, and therefore suggested that establishing such mechanisms through legislation may be better – even if it takes longer.
- A representative of an African State underscored the importance and value of NMIRFs for developing countries, including LDCs, as they enable us 'to do more and do better with the limited resources at our disposal.' She explained that her government is in the process of moving from a more ad hoc implementation and reporting system 'to an efficient and effective NMIRF.' The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Gender (the two lead ministries for the NMIRF) both understand the importance of giving the NMIRF a 'clear legal basis,' by establishing it 'through a law or statute that clearly sets out its mandate and terms of reference.'
- The same speaker explained that one important hoped-for benefit of establishing the NMIRF through law or statute, and giving it high-level backing, is that this will help give the mechanism political and legal weight, clarify the roles and responsibilities of different government actors, and make it more likely that these actors will actively engage with the mechanism. 'A key challenge for the government,' she explained, 'is the retention of human rights focal points in line ministries – there tends to be a high staff turnover, and their commitment to regularly participate in meetings varies between departments.' Another speaker agreed, and added that a strong legal basis helps secure the 'buy-in' of all government ministries and departments, 'some of which, in the past, have been reluctant to provide information on human rights, for fear of presenting the country in a negative light.'
- A speaker from Latin America agreed with these points and explained that his country's NMIRF was established by presidential decree and is actually situated in the President's Office. 'This gives it high-level political weight,' he said, 'and ensures that all line ministries are clear as to their roles and responsibilities in fulfilling the State's human rights obligations.'

- A representative of another African State also underscored the importance of a clear and strong legal basis. She explained that, previously, the Foreign Ministry convened ad hoc meetings with relevant line ministries, solely to compile reports (i.e., not implement recommendations). ‘This model was ineffective,’ she said, ‘as government officials were not really interested in the process.’ To overcome these challenges, the government decided to establish a more permanent (standing) mechanism with a clear legal basis. ‘That legal basis and mandate clarified which ministries should be involved, and made clear the State’s expectations of them.’
- Building on this point, there was broad agreement at Glion X that NMIRFs must be **standing or permanent structures**, thereby allowing them to follow the full review-implementation-reporting cycle, and retain institutional memory.
- A representative of a Caribbean NMIRF, for example, described the benefits of moving from an ad hoc to a standing mechanism, established by law and with a clear mandate and terms of reference. Previously, she said, the government had established a UPR-ICCPR steering committee. However, it soon became apparent that the mechanism should cover all UN human rights treaties and mechanisms, not just these two, and that the recommendations from the different mechanisms were inter-related and mutually-reinforcing. Thus, a NMIRF was established by cabinet decree in June 2018.
- A number of participants described another important benefit of a permanent or standing structure and clear mandate: namely, that this makes clear to all national stakeholders that the role of the NMIRF is only to prepare periodic reports, but also – and more importantly – to coordinate implementation actions across government. On this point, an Asian State representative explained that their NMIRF ‘has had a significant positive impact on reporting, but also on implementation – human rights recommendations are now more regularly integrated into government development plans, laws, and policies.’



## COMPOSITION

- There was broad agreement, at Glion X, as to the importance of involving a **wide range of government ministries and departments** in the NMIRF, if the mechanism is to be effective. For example, one Small Island State representative explained that her country's interministerial committee (NMIRF) includes all relevant ministries, including those responsible for finance, justice, home affairs, culture, gender, education, health, justice, labour, and national security, as well as the Attorney-General's Office, and various state agencies including the Bureau of Gender Affairs, the Child Protection and Family Services Agency, the Police Service, and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. 'The Office of the Children's Advocate, and the Director of Public Prosecutions are also part of the structure,' she noted. 'The government would now also like to include representatives of the judiciary and the national statistics office in the NMIRF,' she said, 'however, this will mean amending the founding statute and terms of reference.'
- Many speakers underscored the vital importance of fully involving the **ministry of finance** in effective NMIRFs – in order to help secure the resources needed to properly pursue implementation. Others spoke of the importance of including the national statistics offices. Regarding the latter, for example, one recalled the significant challenges involved in human rights data collection (for example, to measure the impact of implementation measures on the enjoyment of human rights), 'which would certainly be helped by formally involving our **national statistics office**.'
- Some NMIRFs represented at Glion X reported that they are composed of more than 30 ministries and state agencies, though they conceded that this can be unwieldy, and that it is important to strike a balance between inclusivity and efficiency.
- A speaker from a European State explained that the broad composition of her country's NMIRF has another benefit: to **increase awareness** about the States' international human rights obligations and commitments across government and in parliament, and increase their 'commitment, ownership, and involvement in the process of implementing and reporting on those obligations.'
- There was broad agreement at Glion X on the importance of **fully involving parliament** or **parliamentarians** in the process of implementation and of reporting. For example, a civil society speaker pointed out that 'around 60% of recommendations require legislation to be implemented.'
- One African government representative explained that his country's NMIRF is 'required to report regularly to parliament, significantly improving oversight and encouraging deeper progress.' Similarly, a European State representative explained that

her government has taken the opportunity presented by the establishment of the NMIRF to 'recalibrate the government's human rights relationship with parliament.' 'Thanks to the NMIRF, parliament is now a key part of her country's implementation and reporting system. For example, all periodic reports are now presented to both chambers of parliament before they are submitted to the UN mechanisms.' Another State explained that they routinely include parliamentarians in their UPR delegations.

- Many of those States that do not currently involve the legislature in the work of their NMIRF nevertheless recognised the value of doing so. For example, one Latin American State representatives conceded that 'the lack of systematic involvement of the parliament is a challenge, as many recommendations require legislation in order to be implemented.'



## CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS, AND LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

- In many of the good practice examples shared at Glion X, and during the preparatory policy dialogues, participants emphasised the value of involving both the **domestic line ministry responsible for human rights**, and the **ministry of foreign affairs**, as central actors in any effective NMIRF. Often, it was pointed out, this is done by making one the overall chair of the NMIRF, and one vice-chair, or having two co-chairs. ‘This twin role can be tricky but is instrumental,’ explained one NMIRF representative.
- For example, one African diplomat explained that their NMIRF is coordinated and chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Director of Human Rights), and the Attorney-General’s Office. A Pacific Small Island State diplomat, meanwhile, noted that their NMIRF is co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.
- Other States explained that their NMIRF is chaired by the **president** or **prime minister** and hosted in their offices. ‘This confers high-level political authority upon the mechanism,’ they explained. Elsewhere, the NMIRF is **institutionally separate**, and not housed within any ministry.
- Many at Glion X spoke of the challenge of determining the most **appropriate level of seniority** of members of the NMIRF. ‘Senior officers are often unavailable, while junior officers are more available but lack decision-making authority,’ explained one. Others replied that the key lays in establishing a structure that involves both senior officials (for example, in a main committee) and more technical-level staff (for example, in subcommittees). A similar question arose regarding the level of seniority of chairs and vice-chairs, with some States (as noted above) explaining that their NMIRF is chaired by the president or prime minister, but that this means the mechanisms is only able to meet infrequently. Most of the States speaking at Glion X opined that the best solution is for NMIRFs to be chaired at **deputy-minister level**.

## FEDERAL STATES, AND REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- A number of participants described the added complications involved in designing an effective NMIRF in the context of **federal governance structures**. For example, one Asian State representative noted that ‘many critical issues, such as women’s and children’s rights, must be implemented by state governments, even if the central government initiates the policy.’
- There was broad agreement that this is an area for further, dedicated research and reflection.
- There was also wide agreement regarding the value and importance of involving **local and regional governments** in both implementation and reporting. This is especially important for the realisation of economic, social, and cultural rights, it was noted, as local authorities have important responsibilities in areas such as education, health, housing, water and sanitation, etc. It was pointed out, in this regard, that ‘most implementation occurs at local level, and therefore we need to engage local actors.’
- A civil society representative also spoke to the importance of this point: ‘There will continue to be a significant implementation gap if local and regional governments are not included,’ she argued. ‘They are often the actual implementers, especially of economic, social, and cultural rights. Think about your daily life,’ she suggested, ‘your children’s education, your social security, your housing, your water, all these things are provided by local authorities.’ Italy, she said, is a rare example of a country that includes regional and local governance in its NMIRF. ‘Central governments are not the only duty bearer.’
- A UN official explained that working with NMIRFs to **bridge the national and the local** is a key dimension of their country programming. ‘NMIRFs are privileged actors at the national level, promoting a coordinated response both horizontally and vertically. This means not just involving different ministries but ensuring these efforts trickle down to the **community level**.’
- Other speakers, while not disagreeing with this point, nonetheless expressed concerns over how to practically engage all relevant regional and local authorities in national human rights implementation and reporting systems, without those systems becoming overloaded.

## SECRETARIAT AND BUDGET

- At present, very few States have established a separate, permanent secretariat for their NMIRF. A more common approach is to maintain a dedicated team of officials in **one of the lead line ministries** or in the president's/prime minister's office, to fulfil the **secretariat function**. They may do so on a full-time basis, though more commonly they fulfil this function as one amongst a number of roles/responsibilities.
- A representative of an African State explained that her country's NMIRF 'is serviced by senior government officials, acting as a kind of secretariat, in the President's Office.' In addition to organising meetings, and coordinating follow-up, the team also manages staff mobility (if one focal point in a ministry leaves, for example, they ensure that a replacement is ready).
- An Asian government representative further underscored the importance of the secretariat in tracking implementation and monitoring impact. The secretariat of her country's NMIRF is also located in the President's Office, specifically in the 'monitoring and evaluation department.' Along with the Parliament, she explained, the NMIRF and its secretariat 'play a crucial role in ensuring compliance and implementation.'
- Many participants at Glion X drew attention to the critical importance of a **well-resourced, dedicated NMIRF secretariat**.

For example, one Caribbean government representative explained that the secretariat 'ensures that all UN mechanism reports and recommendations are shared with all relevant parts of government (including all relevant ministries and the Parliament), and with the public.'

- An African State representative explained that in the context of his country's NMIRF, 'the secretariat of the mechanism sits within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (under a Deputy Director), while the budget falls under the Ministry of Justice.' Others, however, reported that it is more common for both the secretariat and budget to reside in a single ministry.



Many participants at Glion X drew attention to the critical importance of a well-resourced, dedicated NMIRF secretariat.

- Many of the NMIRFs present at Glion X noted the significant budgetary constraints they face, and that this significantly undermines their important work. 'Budget constraints are a constant challenge,' said one. 'Although we have a budget for drafting and consultations, funding travel for reviews in Geneva is often problematic.' Another explained that resource constraints, together with the lack of a permanent secretariat, means that the NMIRF struggles

to fulfil its important mainstreaming role: 'there is a significant challenge in terms of integrating human rights perspectives into the work of ministries that do not traditionally consider them, such as health ministries.' Another speaker agreed, but added that: 'reliance on donor support, like UNDP or UN Women, brings its own set of challenges, including potential influence on the report's direction.'



**GOOD PRACTICES, SUCCESS FACTORS, AND CHALLENGES: WORKING METHODS (FOR EXAMPLE, REGULARITY OF MEETINGS, FOCAL POINTS, CLUSTERING), TRACKING IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASURING IMPACT, PREPARING PERIODIC REPORTS, USING IMPLEMENTATION-REPORTING TECHNOLOGY, AND CONNECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE 2030 AGENDA**



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

As a result of the wide-ranging consultations that have taken place over the past six years on the key characteristics, good practices, and success factors related to the establishment and development of NMIRFs, a large quantity of data had been gathered on what makes for an efficient and effective national mechanism. Against this background, a key objective of Glion X was to collate all this information, and distil it into an accessible and useful guidance framework for any and all States wishing to establish and/or strengthen a NMIRF.

As noted above, during the retreat, participants had the opportunity to reflect on all the key characteristics or 'success factors' of an effective NMIRF. The second group of common characteristics to be considered were:

- Working methods – for example, the formation of committees and subcommittees, regularity of meetings, establishment of networks of focal points, management and clustering of UN human rights recommendations by theme/objective (irrespective of which UN mechanism extended them), and coordination of implementation measures across government.
- Tracking implementation and measuring impact (using quantitative human rights indicator data) on a regularised or perhaps real-time basis.
- Preparing, adopting, and submitting periodic reports to the UN mechanisms.
- Using implementation-reporting technology to manage recommendations, clarify responsibilities, coordinate implementation measures, follow-up on and track implementation progress, apply human rights indicator data, and facilitate reporting;
- Connecting human rights and the 2030 Agenda – e.g., NMIRFs may also be responsible for coordinating implementation of and reporting on the SDGs, linking key clusters of human rights recommendations with relevant SDGs and targets, and linking human rights and sustainable development impact indicator data.

A photograph of a man with glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and a pink patterned tie. He is seated at a conference table, looking slightly to his right. In front of him is a black microphone with a red light, a black tablet, a clear plastic water bottle, and a green folder with a white label. The background is blurred, showing other people and lights.

**COLLATED AND  
DISTILLED GOOD  
PRACTICES AND  
'SUCCESS FACTORS'**

## WORKING METHODS

- As noted in the preceding chapter, a common challenge for NMIRFs is to combine high-level political backing and representation, in order to give weight to the mechanism and its work, with the more technical level work necessary to coordinate implementation measures, follow-up with government departments, gather information for periodic reports, etc. One way to combine the two, common to many of the NMIRFs that shared experiences and good practices at Glion X, is to organise the NMIRF into a system of **committees**, and **subcommittees**.
- For example, one State representative explained that her country's NMIRF comprises a more high-level 'community committee,' which *inter alia* takes decisions on implementation measures, and reviews periodic reports (final approval is by the cabinet), and a more technical level 'interdepartmental committee,' which prepares annual human rights workplans, follows up on implementation measures, and prepares draft periodic reports.
- A further important challenge shared during Glion X is that many national implementation-reporting systems or mechanisms are heavily focused – or even entirely focused – on preparing periodic reports (rather than also on coordinating implementation). This is due to the heavy reporting burden on most States (which may have to submit up to ten periodic reports over a five-year period). To overcome this challenge, one African government representative explained that the warrant or statute establishing his country's NMIRF makes clear that 'the mechanism shall handle the **full cycle of engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms**: coordinating the implementation of recommendations, gathering information on progress and impact, and drafting and submitting periodic reports.' According to the official, 'we see implementation as the priority – our most important task in the NMIRF is to coordinate and follow-up with other ministries to ensure recommendations are implemented.'
- Others agreed on the importance of focusing on implementation measures, but added that it is equally important for the NMIRF to actively track implementation progress, and to **measure impact** on the enjoyment of human rights. Measuring impact requires the application of **indicators**, meaning – again – national statistics offices must be actively involved. One speaker made clear that the NMIRF and national statistics office must work closely together so that the latter can gather the right (disaggregated) data.

- All speakers at Glion X underscored the importance of **clustering recommendations** from all three mechanisms (TBs, SPs, and UPR) by theme and objective. This helps make the number of recommendations more manageable. Moreover, the recommendations of the three mechanisms complement each other.
- Practices vary between NMIRFs in terms of **how work is organised**. Some mechanisms convene only when a periodic report is due – though this has the disadvantage, as explained above, that the mechanism becomes overly focused on reporting, at the expense of implementation. Others organise their work by mechanism and treaty. So, for example, one country's NMIRF has created a taskforce to implement and report on UPR recommendations, a taskforce to implement and report on recommendations received from the Committee on the Rights of the Child, etc.
- One best practice in terms of **organisation of work** is common to a number of Small Island States in the Caribbean and the Pacific. In these countries, the NMIRF is convened regularly (for example, every two months, or quarterly), and **each meeting focuses on a particular cluster of recommendations** received, irrespective of which UN mechanism or treaty extended those recommendations.
- A further good practice, common to many NMIRFs, is to maintain a **system of NMIRF focal points** – officials in all relevant line ministries and state agencies responsible for implementing and reporting on UN human rights recommendations. Notwithstanding, many States reported difficulties in maintaining such networks, due to factors such as a lack of prioritisation of NMIRF responsibilities, or high staff turnover. The former can be addressed by establishing NMIRFs through statute or law, and including high-level political



officials in the mechanism, for example as chairs or vice-chairs. The latter can be resolved by establishing a **‘living roster of focal points.’** For example, one Pacific Island State maintains such a ‘living roster,’ which includes focal points and **‘substitute focal points,’** in case the focal point is unavailable, or so that the substitute can ‘move up’ should the lead focal point move jobs.’ This helps maintain continuity, build formal and informal relationships between focal points, and retain institutional memory.

- This approach generated significant interest and support amongst other States present at Glion X, with many indicating that they will explore the idea in their own national contexts. Notwithstanding the challenge of staff turnover, a number of the speakers expressed the view that, in-any-case, the mere presence of a NMIRF provides a significant boost to **continuity and the retention of knowledge and data.**

One speaker explained that the centralised NMIRF has become her country’s ‘institutional memory, ensuring continuity and permanence in our interactions with our international partners on human rights.’

- Another related point, raised by a number of speakers, is that NMIRFs should play an important role in **training and capacity-building,** both with focal points, but also with, for example, parliamentarians, and representatives of the judiciary.
- Once a NMIRF has met to agree on steps to implement UN recommendations, that information is often integrated into an **‘implementation plan,’** which includes which ministry or other government entity is responsible, indicators to monitor progress and impact, and an implementation timeline. As explained below, those implementation plans are increasingly taking the form of online and regularly updated national databases.



## IT SYSTEMS AND DATA MANAGEMENT, AND INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE SDGs

- An ambassador explained that her country is increasingly **connecting human rights and the SDGs in its national development planning**. Yet for the moment, they maintain two different implementing and reporting mechanisms, one for human rights (an 'advisory group'), and one for the 2030 Agenda (an 'intersectoral commission'). This raises the question of whether these two mechanisms should be merged?
- Notwithstanding this question, all participants agreed on the utility of connecting clusters of recommendations with relevant SDGs and targets. This is especially useful in terms of highlighting the 'development value' of human rights to government departments, in terms of **monitoring and measuring human rights and development progress in an integrated manner**, and in terms of easing reporting burdens to the UN human rights and sustainable development systems (i.e., High-Level Political Forum).
- She agreed with previous speakers about the importance of 'going local' with implementation and reporting. In her view, 'talking about human rights recommendations together with the SDGs and targets makes them stronger – especially in terms of **local acceptance, understanding, and implementation**.'
- A speaker from civil society then spoke of the rapidly evolving landscape of **digital tools** to help NMIRFs coordinate implementation actions, track progress, measure impact, and facilitate periodic reporting. Such tools, including OHCHR's national recommendations tracking database (NRTD), and IMPACT OSS, based on Samoa's SADATA software, help improve coordination across government, avoid overlap and duplication of efforts, reduce administrative and time burdens, and avoid disruption caused by staff turnover.
- A speaker from a NHRI agreed on the increasing utility of these digital tools, which 'track and thematically cluster recommendations, link recommendations to relevant SDGs and targets, identify and assign responsible government ministries, and develop national implementation and follow-up plans. This digitalization marks a human rights data revolution, essential for all NMIRFs.'
- A UN official introduced one of these tools – **OHCHR's national recommendations tracking database (NRTD)**. She explained that tools like NRTD help States manage UN recommendations more easily and efficiently, plan and coordinate implementation progress across government (horizontal) and between different levels of government (vertical), and track progress and impact.

- The tool is under a constant process of review and improvement, she said. For example, following a request from a European State, OHCHR is working to integrate coordination with local government authorities. OHCHR is also looking at integrating recommendations from the regional human rights mechanisms.
- Participants at Glion X explained, moreover, that digital tools to support implementation and reporting are evolving rapidly. For example, **artificial intelligence (AI)** is now being used to categorise recommendations in the **Universal Human Rights Index (UHRI)**. 'The idea is to minimise manual tasks and have recommendations clustered efficiently and effectively.'
- Another speaker added that there is also ongoing work to use AI 'to better align human rights recommendations with relevant SDGs and targets.' 'This will,' she said, 'ease the integration of human rights recommendations into national development plans and UN country programming.'
- A number of States present at Glion X, while welcoming the increasing application of technology, warned that digital technology is rarely neutral, and care must be taken to ensure that its use (especially the use of AI) is consistent with human rights principles.



**GOOD PRACTICES,  
SUCCESS FACTORS,  
AND CHALLENGES:  
ENGAGEMENT AND  
CONSULTATION WITH  
THE JUDICIARY, CIVIL  
SOCIETY, NHRIs, UN  
COUNTRY TEAMS/UN  
ENTITIES, AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENTS**



## WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

As noted in the previous sections, participants at Glion X had the opportunity to reflect on all the key characteristics or ‘success factors’ of effective NMIRFs. The third group of common characteristics to be considered were:

- Engagement/consultation with other key national stakeholder groups including:
  - The judiciary – how to involve judges and lawyers in strengthening State compliance with international human rights obligations, while respecting judicial independence?
  - Civil society organisations – how to engage civil society as an implementing partner, where appropriate, and as a contributor to State periodic reports, while also respecting the independent monitoring and reporting role of NGOs?
- National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) – how to engage NHRIs, to leverage their complementary role of connecting international and national human rights systems, for the purposes of implementation and reporting, while – again – respecting their independence?
- Private sector – businesses have an important role to play in strengthening compliance by respecting human rights, but how should they be engaged?
- Engagement/consultation with key international stakeholders, including UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams, individual UN agencies and programmes, International Financial Institutions/development banks, and bilateral development partners.



**COLLATED AND  
DISTILLED GOOD  
PRACTICES AND  
'SUCCESS FACTORS'**

## IMPLEMENTATION AS A DEMOCRATIC RATHER THAN TECHNOCRATIC EXERCISE

- During discussions on the application of digital technology (see previous section of this report), a UN official warned that this should give rise to an understanding that implementation can be an automated or bureaucratic process. Rather, **implementation must be a democratic process involving all national stakeholders**.
- What is more, human rights change cannot be imposed without the consent of the general public. Thus, implementation measures must be combined with **awareness-raising and education programmes**, and must take into account national cultural and religious contexts.

Implementation must be a democratic process involving all national stakeholders.

## JUDICIARY

- There was considerable discussion at Glion X regarding whether and how to involve the judicial branch of government in the work of NMIRFs. There was agreement that this is a complex issue, involving balancing **judicial independence** with the need to inform the judiciary about relevant conclusions and recommendations issued by the UN human rights mechanisms.
- The broad view of participants was that the judiciary should be engaged, for example via national judicial service commissions, but on an **information-sharing or consultative basis**, rather than as decision-makers (e.g., as is the case for line ministries or parliamentarians).
- For example, a representative of an Asian State said: 'judiciaries should be separate from the executive, to maintain their independence; they should not therefore be fully involved in implementation; but perhaps they should be aware of UN recommendations if they are relevant to the administration of justice?'

## CIVIL SOCIETY

- A speaker from civil society discussed best practice in terms of a NMIRF's outreach to and engagement with NGOs. She recognised that this is not a simple issue to address. Civil society is not homogeneous - different actors monitor and help implement different sets of recommendations. **How then to choose which NGOs** to invite to engage and consult with the NMIRF?
- In response to the last question, another participant proposed that civil society organisations be chosen based on the degree to which their expertise aligns with the cluster(s) of recommendations to be considered at a given meeting of the NMIRF. Thus, the selection of invited NGOs might change from meeting to meeting. 'It is important not to have a set list or preferred NGOs that are always consulted, while others feel excluded,' he said.
- Building on this point, a diplomat from the Pacific explained that while the Cabinet Directive establishing her country's NMIRF is clear that civil society must be included, the Directive does not name specific organisations. 'Instead, we involve them on an ad hoc basis depending on the human rights issues to be discussed.' For example, 'if the NMIRF will be discussing disability rights recommendations, we invite disability rights NGOs.'
- Another speaker outlined a further challenge, namely that civil society is often seen, including by itself, as principally focused on **monitoring**. Yet, she said, it can and should also **play a role in supporting implementation** (even if this is primarily the role of governments) through exerting pressure, advocacy, inputting policy ideas into periodic reporting, and - especially at the local level and often alongside NHRIs - by being an implementation partner. 'NGOs and NHRIs can act as important implementing partners, and their perspectives on formulating and monitoring implementation plans are crucial,' she noted.
- Another speaker from an African NGO spoke of civil society's important **role in informing and educating the public**

about UN mechanisms and processes, and about how the implementation of recommendations might improve their lives. 'We need to bring UN processes and recommendations to the public so that people can engage and understand. That involves civil society organisations, governments, and the media. **NGOs can bridge the gap between the public and the government.'**

- Participants at Glion X heard good practice examples from countries including Paraguay, Portugal, and Morocco, where civil society participation is built into the heart of the NMIRF, 'allowing engagement with the government at all stages.'



# NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIs)

- Glion X includes the participation of numerous representatives of national human rights institutions (NHRIs), as well as from the Global Alliance of NHRIs (GANHRI). One representative explained that 'independent human rights institutions are uniquely positioned to monitor the work of NMIRFs and to contribute to and support their mandates, by bringing **specific human rights expertise and a wealth of experience** to the process.'
- A number of participants at Glion X referred to **ongoing confusion as to the different roles of NHRIs and NMIRFs**. 'As the number and sophistication of NMIRFs continue to grow, it is crucial to have clarity on their distinct roles and responsibilities, as well as the contributions that NHRIs and civil society can make [to NMIRFs],' said one.
- One speaker highlighted a few areas where NHRIs can contribute to the establishment and operation of NMIRFs:

**1. Support and evaluation** - NHRIs can support NMIRFs in reviewing and evaluating progress in implementing recommendations. This involves providing evidence-based information on the human rights situation on the ground, and advising on appropriate evaluation and planning processes, such as the development of national implementation plans, data indicator frameworks, and follow-up mechanisms.

## **2. Building knowledge and expertise** -

NHRIs can contribute to building knowledge and expertise within government structures. For example, during the drafting of the NMIRF framework in an East Asian country, the NHRI actively participated with the Ministry of Justice, resulting in a framework that includes provisions for consulting NHRIs and NGOs ahead of reviews.



### 3. Ensuring meaningful participation -

NHRIs can support NMIRFs in ensuring meaningful and inclusive participation of relevant stakeholders throughout their work. They can advise on effective consultation mechanisms and serve as a bridge between NMIRFs and other national bodies, such as parliaments, media, academia, and the wider public, ensuring all voices are heard.

**4. Accountability** - NHRIs bring an important element of accountability to the work of NMIRFs by independently monitoring their work and impact on human rights. They can do this through recommendations to the international system. For example, a number of European NHRIs have fed into the UPR process with the aim of securing recommendations to their governments, urging them to establish or strengthen NMIRFs.



## UN COUNTRY TEAMS, UN AGENCIES, AND BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- A speaker explained that a key dimension of the UN Secretary-General's reforms is to better integrate UN human rights recommendations into country programming to support sustainable development. 'NMIRFs are therefore a critical partner for UN agencies and UN Country Teams,' she said, 'as the integration of human rights standards into national development is precisely their mandate.'
- A UN official explained that in 2016, UN development agencies conducted an assessment to understand the emergence of NMIRFs, revealing significant diversity and versatility. There is no one-size-fits-all. 'Each State needs a mechanism that makes sense for its unique context.' Notwithstanding, UN agencies have a role to play in helping to ensure that basic human rights principles are incorporated into the designs.
- The roles of UN agencies include:
  - 1. **Strengthening the bridge** between normative commitments and operational work - translating norms into policy and law.
  - 2. **Mobilising government entities** - for example, UNFPA works with ministries of gender and health, to help ensure they are fully involved.
  - 3. **Bringing expertise** in human rights-based approaches (HRBA) to development.
  - 4. Supporting governments to **bridge the national and the local** - thereby helping implement recommendations at community level.
- A number of State representatives welcomed the UN system's growing interest in NMIRFs, and the **increased engagement with NMIRFs on the part of UN development agencies**. One Small Island State representative explained that her country's NMIRF 'now regularly involves and consults with the **UN Resident Coordinator**'. We have found this to be a valid entry point for the UN to be more involved through various agencies, which has really helped with human rights and SDG implementation.'
- A civil society representative pointed out that, for the moment, UN development agencies and programmes are far more advanced in understanding the importance of NMIRFs and engaging with them as critical 'entry points' for development programming, than is the case with **bilateral development partners/donor countries**.



## THE MARRAKECH GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

At the conclusion of Glion X, good practices and success factors shared (from all regions) during the retreat in Marrakech, as well as during the two relevant preparatory meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 23 April and 10 June 2024, were collated and distilled into the Marrakech Guidance Framework (MGF). The MGF was compiled under the authority of the co-chairs of the 10th Glion Human Rights Dialogue.





**Good practices and lessons learnt providing a guidance framework for the establishment and development of effective National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-Up (NMIRFs)**

## Marrakech Guidance Framework (MGF)

17 October 2024

The Marrakech Guidance Framework (MGF) is a summary and distillation of good practices and lessons learnt (from all regions) shared between participants at the 10th Glion Human Dialogue (Glion X) preparatory meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 23 April and 10 June 2024, and at the Glion X retreat held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 16-17 October 2024. It is compiled under the authority of the Co-Chairs of the 10th Glion Human Rights Dialogue.

The discussions and reflections at Glion X built, in turn, upon earlier exchanges of experience and good practice, including in the context of regional consultations initiated by Human Rights Council resolution 42/30, and related work by UN agencies, funds, and programmes, international organisations, NHRIs, civil society organisations, and others. Those discussions and reflections also complemented related work at the Human Rights Council, including in the context of Council resolution 51/33.

The MGF is a voluntary framework, and seeks to contribute to and complement wider international efforts to support States, through exchanges of good practice, in establishing and/or strengthening NMIRFs, for example, in the context of the International Network of NMIRFs initiated through the Marrakech Declaration (December 2022) and launched through the Asunción Declaration (May 2024), as well as through technical assistance and capacity-building support extended by States, UN agencies, funds, and programmes, international organisations, civil society organisations, and others.

### 1. National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up (NMIRFs)

NMIRFs are single governmental entities that provide a multisectoral and multistakeholder platform to collate, manage, coordinate, and track domestic progress with the implementation of recommendations from the main United Nations (UN) human rights mechanisms (the Universal Periodic Review – UPR, Treaty Bodies, and Special Procedures), as well as regional human rights mechanisms as appropriate, measure impact, and facilitate efficient periodic reporting. While the exact form of NMIRFs varies from country to country (see paragraph 2 below), they are all founded upon an understanding that it is more efficient for States to establish a single, standing, human rights implementation and reporting mechanism, covering all recommendations from all three main UN human rights mechanisms, rather than maintain a web of ad hoc government committees, each responsible for either different UN treaties or mechanisms.

The experience of States that have already established and developed NMIRFs suggests that these national mechanisms significantly strengthen the capacity of States to implement UN human rights recommendations, facilitate human rights dialogue across society as well as awareness of the State's international human rights obligations and commitments, strengthen cooperation with international partners, and improve the frequency and quality of periodic reporting, thereby strengthening the enjoyment of human rights, and contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) leaving no-one behind.

## **2. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to the establishment and/or development an effective NMIRF**

NMIRFs take a variety of forms, operate in a variety of different ways, and should be tailored according to the national context, taking into consideration the availability of resources, and the need to build upon existing national implementation and reporting systems. NMIRFs may also evolve over time, taking into consideration national experiences and lessons learnt.

Notwithstanding, participants at Glion X and its preparatory meetings identified a number of common good practices that may serve to enhance the effectiveness of NMIRFs, thereby strengthening the realisation of the obligations of States to promote universal respect for, and the fulfilment and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, other instruments relating to human rights, and international law.

These common good practices or 'success factors' are set out in the paragraphs below.

## **3. NMIRFs may be permanent or 'standing,' and have a clear legal basis and mandate**

A NMIRF is most effective when it is a permanent or standing structure, reflecting the continuous/perpetual nature of State review-implementation-reporting cycles with the main UN human rights mechanisms. A standing NMIRF also supports the retention of institutional knowledge.

Related to this point, a NMIRF is most effective when it has a clear legal basis, for example, where it is established by decree, statute, or legislation. This confers high-level political legitimacy, visibility, and legal authority on the NMIRF (with various benefits, including that all relevant government officials will wish to participate in meetings/activities), clarifies its mandate, objectives, and leadership (e.g., high-level co-chairs), and clearly sets out the expectations on, and responsibilities of, relevant stakeholders.

## **4. A NMIRF may be mandated to coordinate the implementation of and periodic reporting on a State's international human rights obligations and commitments, across all national implementing actors, through all or some of the following responsibilities:**

- a.** Receiving, clustering (by theme and objective), managing, and following-up on all recommendations received from the main UN human rights mechanisms, as appropriate. The management of recommendations may be assisted by the use of databases and other digital technology solutions (see paragraph 10, below).

- b.** Facilitating national dialogue with implementation actors, on necessary actions, especially across government, to secure the implementation of UN human rights recommendations, as appropriate, and coordinating implementation measures/actions by responsible ministries or government departments, and other relevant actors.
- c.** Managing the network of implementation/reporting focal points and deputy focal points across ministries or government departments, and state agencies.
- d.** Continuously tracking progress with the implementation of recommendations, as appropriate, and collecting data to measure the impact of implementation measures on the enjoyment of human rights.
- e.** Coordinating relevant national stakeholders to prepare periodic reports to the UN human rights mechanisms.
- f.** Making information on inter alia the State's international human rights obligations and commitments, past periodic reports, progress with the implementation of recommendations, draft periodic reports, and the activities of the NMIRF, available and accessible to relevant government actors, parliament, the judiciary, civil society, and the general public. This information should be made available in all primary national languages and be made available in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- g.** Regular reporting to the national parliament on implementation progress, and consultations with parliament on the preparation of periodic reports.
- h.** Managing requests to visit from Special Procedures mandate-holders, coordinating their visits, and following-up.
- i.** Ensuring regular engagement and consultations with National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and civil society organisations.
- j.** Strengthening the capacity of its secretariat, focal points, and other relevant national stakeholders, through training and other capacity-building initiatives; and
- k.** Engaging with UN Country Teams and other international development partners to secure capacity-building and technical support for implementation, tracking, and reporting, and to address implementation gaps.

## **5. NMIRFs may adopt clear and detailed terms of reference**

Complementing the legal base and broadly defined mandate, the adoption of detailed terms of reference and/or standard operating procedures by the NMIRF, in coordination with relevant government departments and national institutions, helps strengthen the mechanism's effectiveness by clearly setting out the organisational structure, methods of work, frequency of meetings, decision-making rules, and the roles and duties/responsibilities of those involved.

One common good practice, under methods of work, is to base the work of NMIRFs on key clusters of UN human recommendations, irrespective of which mechanism issued them.

## 6. Chairing, secretariat, and budget

A common practice is for NMIRFs to be chaired by a lead domestic ministry with primary responsibility for the national implementation of the State's international human rights obligations and commitments, working in close cooperation with the ministry of foreign affairs.

The chair or co-chairs may be of sufficient seniority to effectively guide the work of the NMIRF, secure the support of all relevant parts of government, and encourage the regular participation of all members of the NMIRF. For example, a common good practice is for NMIRFs to be co-chaired by ministers, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, or deputy permanent secretaries (i.e., senior civil servants).

To be effective, a NMIRF may ideally benefit from a permanent secretariat – i.e., government officials dedicated to the task of servicing the NMIRF, where possible on a full-time basis, and, where not, with the secretariat function as a major part of the officials' job descriptions. Some States may benefit from an institutionally separate and distinct secretariat, depending on national contexts.

NMIRFs (including secretariats) should benefit from sufficient budgetary resources to effectiveness undertake their work and functions. Common practices in this regard are for States to include NMIRF budget lines in the budgets of a lead ministry or ministries, or in the government budget.

## 7. Composition – implementation as a 'democratic' rather than bureaucratic exercise

A NMIRF is most effective when it includes the participation of all relevant national and international actors important for the implementation of the States' human rights obligations and commitments.

This includes national actors central to and with legal responsibility for the implementation of States' international human rights obligations and commitments, and thus of UN human rights recommendations; and national and international actors that may play an important role in supporting implementation or, at a minimum, that should be consulted on implementation measures, as well as on reporting.

The roles, prerogatives, and responsibilities of these two sets of actors are different, and this distinction should inform the organisational structure and methods of work of the NMIRF. In some national examples, the first group of actors are referred to as full or permanent members of the NMIRF, and the second group of actors as observer or consultative members.

In decentralised systems of government, it may be important to provide sufficient time for consultations with and capacity-building (e.g., training) for lower levels of government, to build awareness as to their roles in human rights implementation and reporting, and to show how international human rights recommendations may be useful in informing regional and/or local policy. Engagement with sub-national actors may be facilitated by regional and/or local coordinators.

Participation may be at an appropriate level of seniority to allow for necessary decision-making.

Specifically, effective NMIRFs typically include, inter alia, the participation of the following actors:

**National actors central to and with legal responsibility for the implementation of UN human rights recommendations**

- a. All relevant ministries or government departments (e.g., the ministries of justice, planning, finance, health, education, gender/family/children, home affairs, foreign affairs, the attorney general's office).
- b. State agencies (e.g., the police service, the penitentiary service, social services).
- c. The national statistics authority.
- d. The national parliament (e.g., representatives of the human rights committee, individual parliamentarians focused on a particular human rights issue, or parliamentary secretariats/clerks). The systematic involvement of parliament is essential considering that a majority of UN human rights recommendations require new legislation or legislative amendment in order to be fully implemented. Parliaments, moreover, play a central role in preparing national budgets – with important implications for human rights.

**National and international actors that may play an important role in supporting implementation or, at a minimum, that are consulted on implementation measures, as well as on reporting**

- e. Representatives of the judiciary (e.g., the judicial services commission) – to ensure the flow of relevant information, while respecting the independence of the judicial branch.
- f. Representatives of regional and/or local governments.
- g. The national human rights institution (NHRI).
- h. A wide and diverse range of civil society organisations – selected based on the human rights issues to be addressed at a given NMIRF meeting (e.g., children's rights NGOs for discussions on the implementation of, or reporting on, children's rights recommendations).
- i. Academia, including students and legal clinics.
- j. Traditional and/or religious community leaders.
- k. Youth representatives, and persons with disabilities.
- l. Business enterprises, or chambers of commerce, as appropriate.
- m. UN Resident Coordinators, and individual UN agencies, funds, and programmes.

A common good practice is to organise representatives of relevant ministries or government departments, and state agencies, into a system of focal points – individual officials with permanent responsibility for attending NMIRF meetings, for coordinating implementation actions/measures within their own ministry or agency, and for regularly updating the NMIRF (e.g., the secretariat) on progress and impact. A further good practice is to maintain a regularly updated database of focal points, and deputy or substitute focal points. These latter officials would work with the main focal

points, and replace them if the main focal point cannot attend a meeting, or should the main focal point move positions/departments. This may help safeguard against disruption caused by staff turnover, and help preserve institutional memory.

It is a common good practice to integrate the roles, duties, and responsibilities of focal points and deputy focal points into job descriptions.

## **8. Committees and subcommittees**

A common good practice is to organise the work of a NMIRF into committees and/or subcommittees. For example, a NMIRF may comprise a main committee (perhaps with more senior officials with decision-making powers, e.g., regarding how to implement recommendations, and with the power to adopt periodic reports), and one or more sub-committees to follow-up on implementation decisions, track progress, measure impact, and prepare draft periodic reports (with more technical level officials).

## **9. Integrated approaches to human rights and sustainable development**

A common good practice is to input clusters of UN human rights recommendations into national databases (see paragraph 10, below), and link those clusters with relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, as well as commitments stemming from other major UN conferences and summits. Because human rights and sustainable development are interconnected and mutually-reinforcing, this allows the NMIRF to be a key driver of both human rights progress and progress towards the achievement of the SDGs leaving no-one behind. Connecting the two agendas also facilitates improved and timely reporting to the UN human rights mechanisms, and to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

NMIRFs may also play an important role in integrating important clusters of UN human rights recommendations into national development plans. This underscores the importance of including ministries of finance and planning in the work of NMIRFs.

NMIRFs may also play an important role, in cooperation with the UN Country Team, in integrating important clusters of UN human rights recommendations into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), and into the country programming documents of individual UN agencies, funds, and programmes.

With this latter point in mind, one good practice is for governments to consult with UN Country Teams when defining the operation of NMIRFs, in order to facilitate dialogue and cooperation.

## **10. Digital technology tools to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of human rights (and SDG) implementation and reporting**

NMIRFs around the world are increasingly mobilising digital technology to cluster and manage recommendations, to regularly coordinate implementation measures/actions across government, to

track progress, to measure impact on human rights (by applying quantitative indicators), and to streamline periodic reporting.

Increasingly sophisticated implementation-reporting software (e.g., OHCHR's National Recommendations Tracking Database – NRTD, the SIMORE system, and IMPACT OSS) can help NMIRFs significantly strengthen implementation and reporting by:

- a.** Creating a single national database of clustered UN human rights recommendations and commitments that becomes a 'living national human rights action plan' and tracking mechanism, through continuous inputs from line ministries and other implementing actors;
- b.** Linking human rights obligations to national and international development commitments;
- c.** Automating and semi-automating many of the processes required for effective implementation, tracking, measurement, and reporting, including through data collection, data analysis and visualisation, the generation of periodic reports (to parliament and relevant international mechanisms), the identification of implementation/data gaps, and the elimination of reporting/data collection duplication across human rights obligations and development commitments; and
- d.** Improving public transparency and accountability by allowing civil society, academics, the media, and the public to track government progress with the implementation of all clusters of human rights recommendations, as well as development commitments.

A good practice is to ensure that digital tracking tools are open, public, and participatory, in order to ensure engagement with non-governmental stakeholders, and the general public.

Notwithstanding, while such digital technology tools may allow for a degree of automation, and help improve efficiency in data management, implementation follow-up and tracking, and reporting, for these systems to be effective, it is essential that they be based on robust manual processes to regularly input, review, and follow-up on information.

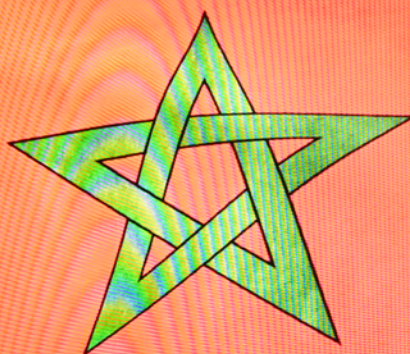
16-17 أكتوبر 2024  
MARRAKECH October  
مراكش

Royaume du Maroc



10<sup>ème</sup> Edition du Dialogue de Glion sur Les Droits de l'Homme  
(Glion X)

النسخة  
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المملكة المغربية



النسخة العاشرة من حوار جليون بشأن حقوق الإنسان  
(جليون X)



GLION HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE



# GLION X HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE

2024



working together to protect universal human rights



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