

Enhancing national reporting and implementation of human rights through coordinated engagement at the local and regional levels: the role of NMIRFs

23 July 2025

Palais des Nations, Room H-207-208-209

10h-12h30 and 14h-16h30 Geneva time

Concept Note

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I. Background

1. States hold the primary responsibility for engaging with international human rights mechanisms and implementing their recommendations. Effective national implementation requires coordinated action across all levels of government. This seminar explores how national structures, such as national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up (NMIRFs),¹ can better integrate the expertise, implementation capacity and data from local and regional governments (LRGs)².

¹NMIRFs are central government structures mandated to coordinate and prepare reports to, and engage with, international and regional human rights mechanisms, including the UN Treaty Bodies, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and Special Procedures. They also address the implementation gap by initiating, coordinating and tracking national follow-up and implementation of obligations and recommendations emanating from these mechanisms.

² See inter alia Geneva Academy, *Academy Briefing No. 25: Localizing Multilateralism – The Role of LRGs in Advancing Human Rights and the SDGs*, March 2025, https://www.geneva-academy.ch/joomlatools-files/docman-files/Briefing%2025_web.pdf. This report, co-produced by the Geneva Human Rights Platform of the Geneva Academy, the Global Cities Hub, and the Faculty of Law of the University of Bologna, provides an in-depth analysis of how LRGs contribute to the implementation of international human rights obligations and outlines concrete pathways for enhancing their engagement with NMIRFs.

2. Despite the acknowledged importance of LRGs in promoting and protecting human rights effectively, there are still gaps in including these actors in engagement with the human rights mechanisms and in implementation at the national and local levels. States' experience is uneven in terms of capacity and systems to foster, organize, or support human rights reporting or implementation at different levels. In some countries, NMIRFs have taken up this role. These mechanisms can sometimes be instrumental in providing guidance or technical assistance in relation to human rights treaties and obligations and in bridging with SDGs-related processes. On data planning and collection for the purpose of reporting, NMIRFs would gain from the contribution from local and regional governments.
3. The Human Rights Council's latest resolution on local and regional governments (HRC res. [57/12](#)) acknowledges the challenges local authorities face in contributing to international reporting, including limited resources and cooperation between national, regional and local governments, lack of awareness and the absence of a robust framework for their work on human rights. It recognizes the constructive role local authorities could play in strengthening national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, and encourages their continued participation in and contribution to these mechanisms. NMIRFs can be instrumental in ensuring that LRGs' contributions are heard. This would improve the quality of reports, which would provide a more comprehensive picture of the reality and in turn enhance ownership of follow-up and implementation.
4. Given that the role of LRGs and their relationship with central governments significantly varies depending on political and administrative configurations – a federal, unitary or confederate government system – the seminar will aim to provide a space for contextualized peer-exchanges.

II. Objectives

5. The seminar will focus on exchanges of experiences, good practices, challenges, and progress made in fostering the participation of local and regional governments, including through national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up (NMIRF). Special attention will be given to federal States and other devolved systems.
6. Discussions will dissect good practices at every stage of State engagement with human rights mechanisms: reporting, review, hosting visits, following up and implementation. In relation to the reporting stage, conversations will include the role local and regional governments can play in data planning and collection.

III. Methodology and outputs

7. The seminar will consist in one plenary session followed by break-out discussions, including for remote participants. Break-outs will be divided per language (English, French and Spanish).
8. The expected outcomes of the seminar are as follows:
 - a) Conclusions on the added value and potential challenges of the engagement of local and regional governments through NMIRFs
 - b) Recommendations from participants on practices in relation to coordination and consultation in different political and administrative contexts.

IV. Participants

9. Participants will include representatives of central governments, local and regional governments, representatives of international organizations, UN agencies, CSOs, NHRIs, academia as well as UN independent experts. Due to the liquidity situation facing the United Nations secretariat, all participants will be requested to sponsor their travel, accommodation and any expenses while in Geneva.

V. Date, venue, time, language, and format

10. The international seminar will take place on 23 July 2025 in the H building of Palais des Nations, Geneva, room H-207-208-209. It will consist of two hybrid meetings, from 10am to 12:30 pm and from 2pm to 4:30 pm, Geneva time. AI generated captioned translation will be available through Webex. Registration is open on the following Indico link: <https://indico.un.org/event/1018351/>