

## Developing a Human Rights Monitoring Strategy

### Step 1. Define the problem and set a strategic goal

- ✓ Understand the problem by drawing a Problem Tree (root causes, consequences); phrase the problem from a human rights perspective by referring to the violation of a certain human rights standard

*Example of a problem: discrimination against people with disabilities in exercising their right to participate in public and political life in Zen City.*

- ✓ Narrow down the subject of monitoring by setting a specific strategic goal. The wording of the goal should consist of the following elements:
  - What positive results will be achieved from a human rights perspective?
  - In whose interest?
  - Reference to relevant human rights standards

*Example of a goal: to ensure that the right to political participation of people with disabilities in Zen City is effectively exercised without any discrimination.*

### Step 2. Conduct a preliminary assessment; define the scope and subject of monitoring

#### Preliminary assessment checklist:

**Problem:** Identify any preliminary quantitative and qualitative information available (including references to official statistics from reliable sources, any studies and reports). Is this a good time to address this problem? Is it gender-specific? Are the causes, circumstances and consequences of the human rights violation gender-specific? Is there any difference in how the problem affects men and women?

**Human rights standards:**

Identify groups/individuals affected by the situation, their human rights needs and whether there are any sensitive aspects that need to be addressed (e.g. victims' rights). Is this violation an isolated incident or part of a wider problem? Identify the related human rights standards: a) international human rights standards, b) State obligations, c) national legislation and its compliance with international standards. Is there a need to prioritise what prevails? Are there any laws or policies that discriminate on the basis of gender?

**Your organisation:** Why is working on this problem important for your organisation? Is it aligned with your principles, the mission and goals of your organisation? Have you or your organisation done any similar work before? What were the achievements/failures/lessons learned? Who will benefit from the change? What situation would your actions put you in when resolving this problem? Will anyone support your work? Who? Who will be your main opponents and how might this affect your work? Does your organisation have the required expertise, capacity, financial means etc.?

**Methodology:** Think about the scope of the project (individual rights, population groups, males or females, number of cases, geographic coverage). Consider the issue of access (e.g. access to courts, closed institutions, access to documentation, etc.) What will be the end result (e.g. public or non-public report, other publications, etc.)? Is there a need for other awareness-raising and advocacy measures to achieve the set goal?

Narrowing down the subject/scope: what rights will be monitored? What elements of the right(s) will be considered during the monitoring? Why? How will the monitoring take into account gender issues?

*Example: the project team decided to address only the cases of "discrimination against people with disabilities in exercising their right to vote" because there are more detailed standards on this right available.*

*Areas identified: a) voting procedures; b) voting premises; b) voting materials.*

### **Step 3. Set monitoring objectives**

Answer the question: What should the monitoring determine?

Example: ...based on Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and based on the State's obligation to guarantee people with disabilities the exercise of the right to vote without discrimination, the monitoring would need to establish the following:

- Whether voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
- Whether persons with disabilities enjoy their right to vote by secret ballot without intimidation;
- Whether persons with disabilities enjoy their right to stand for election without discrimination;
- Whether persons with disabilities are allowed to use assistive and new technologies when necessary, and whether they use such technologies;
- Whether persons with disabilities are allowed assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;
- Whether the authorities are taking positive steps to inform and educate persons with disabilities about existing procedures and opportunities.

### **Step 4. Define investigation questions, identify appropriate methods for collecting information, develop specific tools**

Examples of investigation questions (in most cases they reflect more detailed standards, if any):

- What are the specific voting-related needs of persons with disabilities?
- Are they reflected in voting procedures?
- Are voting materials provided in an accessible form (e.g. written materials in Braille, television announcements with sign language interpretation)?
- Are voting facilities adapted for persons with disabilities (e.g. ramps)?
- Is voting assistance allowed? If so, how does it work?

**Information sources:** legislation, people with disabilities, election officials, etc.

Methods: Interviews with people with disabilities, responsible state bodies, social services; analysis of legislation, voting materials; election observation.

Tools: questionnaires, observation forms, cameras for taking photographs, etc.

**Planning table**

WHAT to do (steps/cycle – in the order of implementation)	HOW it will be done	WHEN it will be completed	WHO is responsible for its implementation (or who will be implementing)