

# Human Rights Indicators

## *Tools for Measuring and Implementing Human Rights*

*Mila Paspalanova*



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# 9 core human rights treaties

- Normatively binding
- Established a committee of experts to monitor implementation of the treaty provisions by its States parties.
- Apply without distinction of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin to all people

1. **ICERD** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (21 Dec 1965)
2. **ICCPR** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (16 Dec 1966)
3. **ICESCR** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (16 Dec 1966)
4. **CEDAW** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (18 Dec 1979)
5. **CAT** Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (10 Dec 1984)
6. **CRC** Convention on the Rights of the Child (20 Nov 1989)
7. **ICMW** International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (18 Dec 1990)
8. **CPED** International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (20 Dec 2006)
9. **CRPD** Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (12 Dec 2006)



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**Check ratification status here:**

<https://indicators.ohchr.org/>



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International Recommendations: emitted by the treaty bodies after examining country reports under treaties.

Consult here: Universal Human Rights Index

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/databases>



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# International recommendations to EU member states

## On RACISM:

CERD: 2478

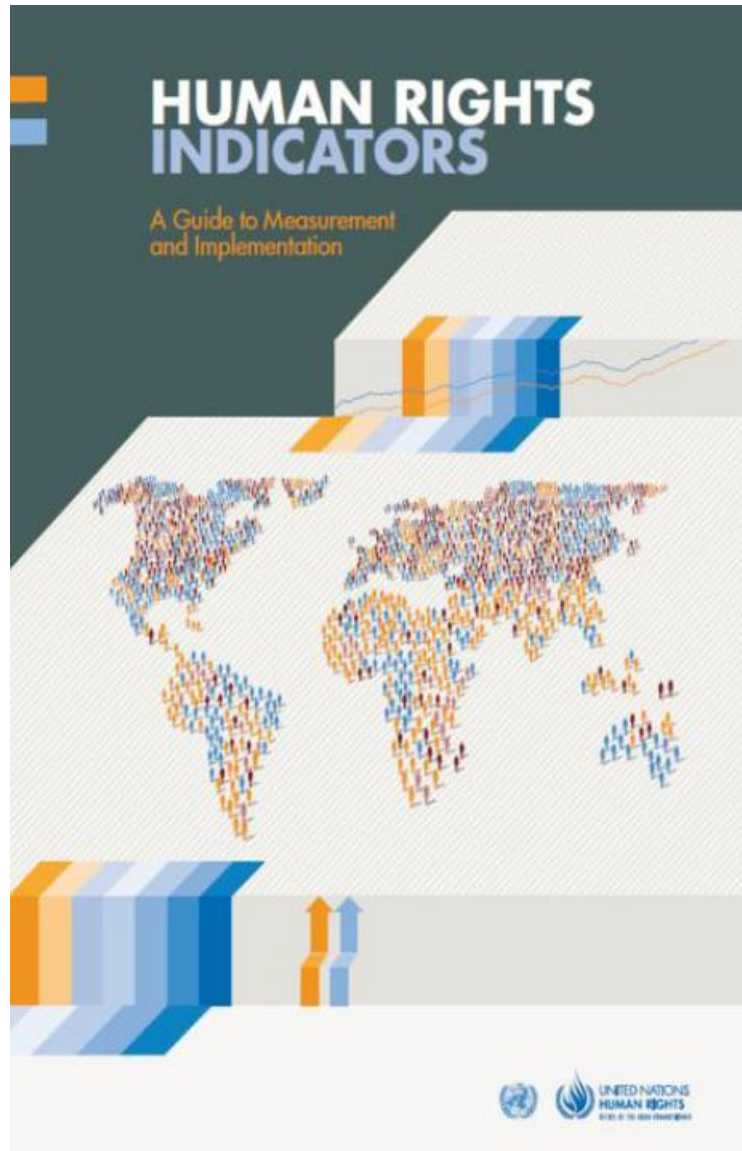
All Treaty Bodies: 3879

All TB, SP and UPR: 8685

On DATA: 1580 from all TB, SP, UPR



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The human rights journey from standard-setting to effective implementation depends, in large measure, on the availability of appropriate tools for policy formulation and evaluation. Indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, are one such essential tool.

Navy Pillay  
*High Commissioner For Human Rights*



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# Human rights indicators help...

- concretize human rights standards into measurement and policy tools
- strengthen transparency and accountability
- implement and follow-up on recommendations from human rights mechanisms



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# Context & Background

## OHCHR methodology for human rights indicators:

- endorsed and recommended by national, regional and international human rights mechanisms
- applied by a growing number of countries and organisations from different regions and on different human rights issues

# Context & Background

OHCHR methodology for human rights indicators: HRI/MC/2008/3

- Published in 2008

“Report on Indicators for Promoting and Monitoring the Implementation of Human Rights”



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# Context & Background

- 2005: group of experts (academia, international bodies, CSOs, treaty bodies, mandate holders) examines proposals on the concept, methodology and definition of illustrative indicators.
- Review by: WHO, UN HABITAT, UNESCO, UNODC, FAO, ILO, Statistical Division of the UN Economic Commission for Europe, World Bank, UN Statistical Division,



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# Validation of the framework

National workshops:

OPDH, legislative bodies, executive power, policy makers, agencies responsible for TB reporting, statistical bodies, UNCT, CSOs.

> 13 events in >10 countries



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# What is it ? What it does?

OHCHR methodology for human rights indicators provides:

- a structured approach to the development and use of indicators to measure and implement human rights at international, national or local level
- a framework for moving from statistics to indicators for human rights



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# What is it ? What it does?

Strengthen the capacity of the State to:

- Monitor its level of compliance with international HR standards
- Report to TB
- Establish HR accountability and transparency measures



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# HR Indicator

Specific information on the state of an event, activity or an outcome that can be related to human rights norms and standards; that address and reflect human rights concerns and principles; and that are used to assess and monitor promotion and protection of human rights.



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# Criteria for the selection of indicators

Relevance and effectiveness in addressing the objective(s) for which the indicators are to be used.

Valid and reliable.

Simple, timely and few in number; based on objective information.

Suitable for temporal and spatial comparison and following relevant international statistical standards;

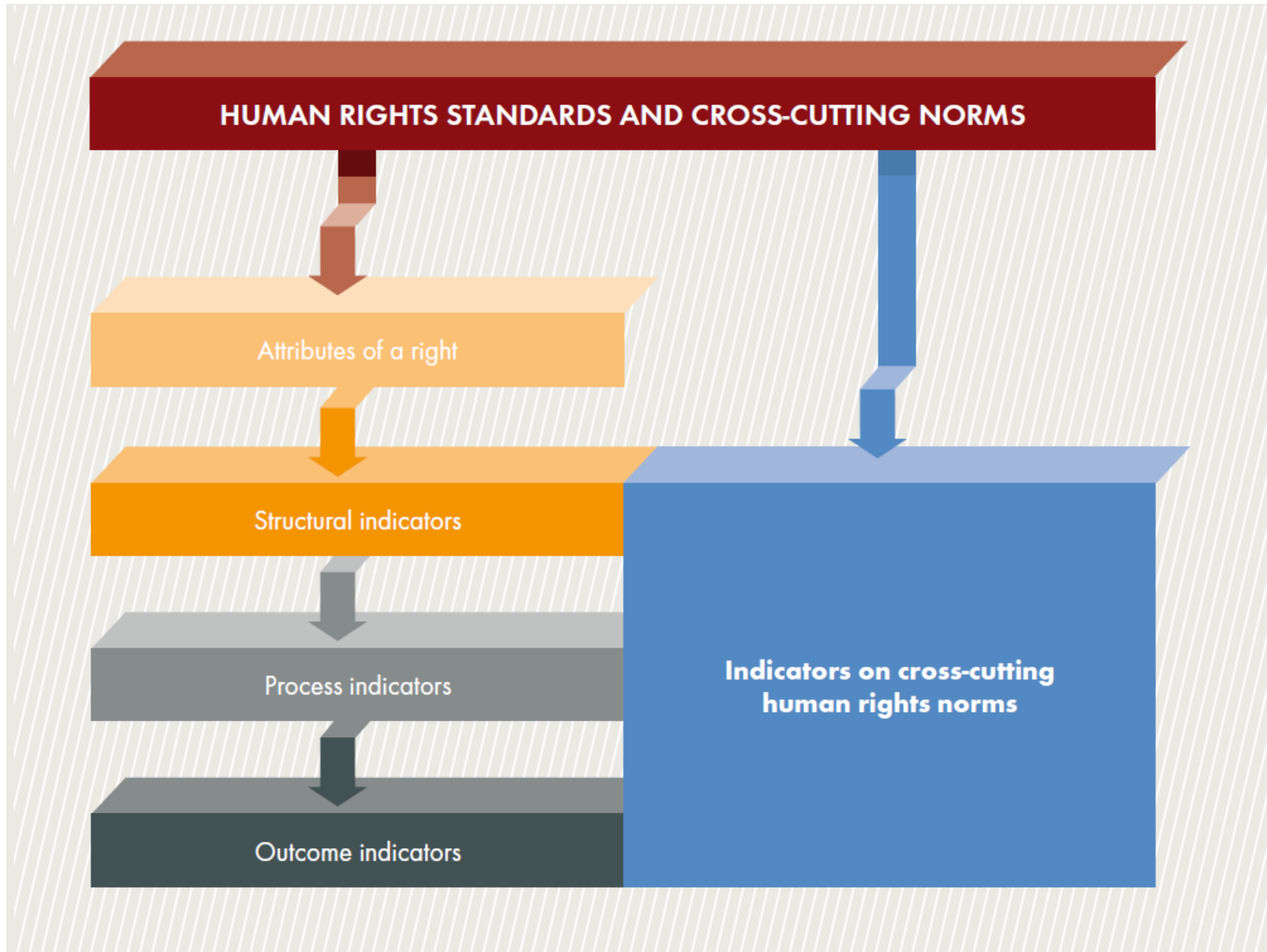
Amenable to disaggregation in terms of sex, age, and other vulnerable or marginalized population segments.

Respect for the right to privacy, data protection and confidentiality issues, and may, therefore, require appropriate legal and institutional standards.



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# From HR standards to indicators



# OHCHR conceptual framework

## Attributes of human rights:

- Exhaustive reading of the standard
- Reflect essence of normative content of the right to be measured
- Mutually exclusive



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# Illustrative indicators on the right to health (OHCHR)

	Sexual and reproductive	Child mortality and health care	Natural and occupational environment	Prevention, treatment and control of diseases	Accessibility to facilities and essential medicines
<b>Structural</b>	• International treaties relevant to the right to highest attainable standard of physical and mental health ratified				
	• Time frame and coverage of national policy or strategy on...			• Date of entry into force and coverage of national policy on mental health	
<b>Process</b>	• Proportion of received complaints on the right to health investigated and adjudicated by the national human rights institutions, human rights ombudsperson or other mechanisms and the proportion of these responded effectively by duty-bearer(s)				
	• Antenatal care coverage (number of visits)	• Proportion of children immunized against vaccine preventable diseases	• N of cases of deterioration of water sources brought to justice	• Proportion of mental health facilities inspected during reporting period	• Proportion of people covered by health insurance
<b>Outcome</b>	• Proportion of live births with low birthweight	• Infant under five mortality rate	• Prevalence of deaths, injuries and disabilities caused by unsafe natural and occupational environment	• Death rate associated with (and prevalence of) communicable and non-communicable diseases • Suicide rates • Proportion of persons abusing harmful substances	

## SOURCES AND DATA-GENERATING MECHANISMS

1

Events-based data

2

Socioeconomic  
and administrative  
statistics

3

Perception and  
opinion surveys

4

Expert judgements

*Administrative data*

*Statistical surveys*

*Censuses*



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# RIGHTS criteria for indicator selection

In selecting human rights indicators, the RIGHTS criteria, which take into account the desired statistical and methodological properties in an indicator as well as the principles and human rights concerns, could be useful.

**R**

Relevant and **R**eliable

**I**

Independent in its data-collection methods from the subjects monitored

**G**

Global and universally meaningful but also amenable to contextualization and disaggregation by prohibited grounds of discrimination

**H**

Human rights standards-centric; anchored in the normative framework of rights

**T**

Transparent in its methods, **T**imely and **T**ime-bound

**S**

Simple and **S**pecific

# Operationalization at country level

## Where?

- human rights reporting and follow-up on recommendations from human rights mechanisms
- national human rights action plan
- development policy / programme (human rights mainstreaming)

## Who?

- government, NHRIs, CSOs,...



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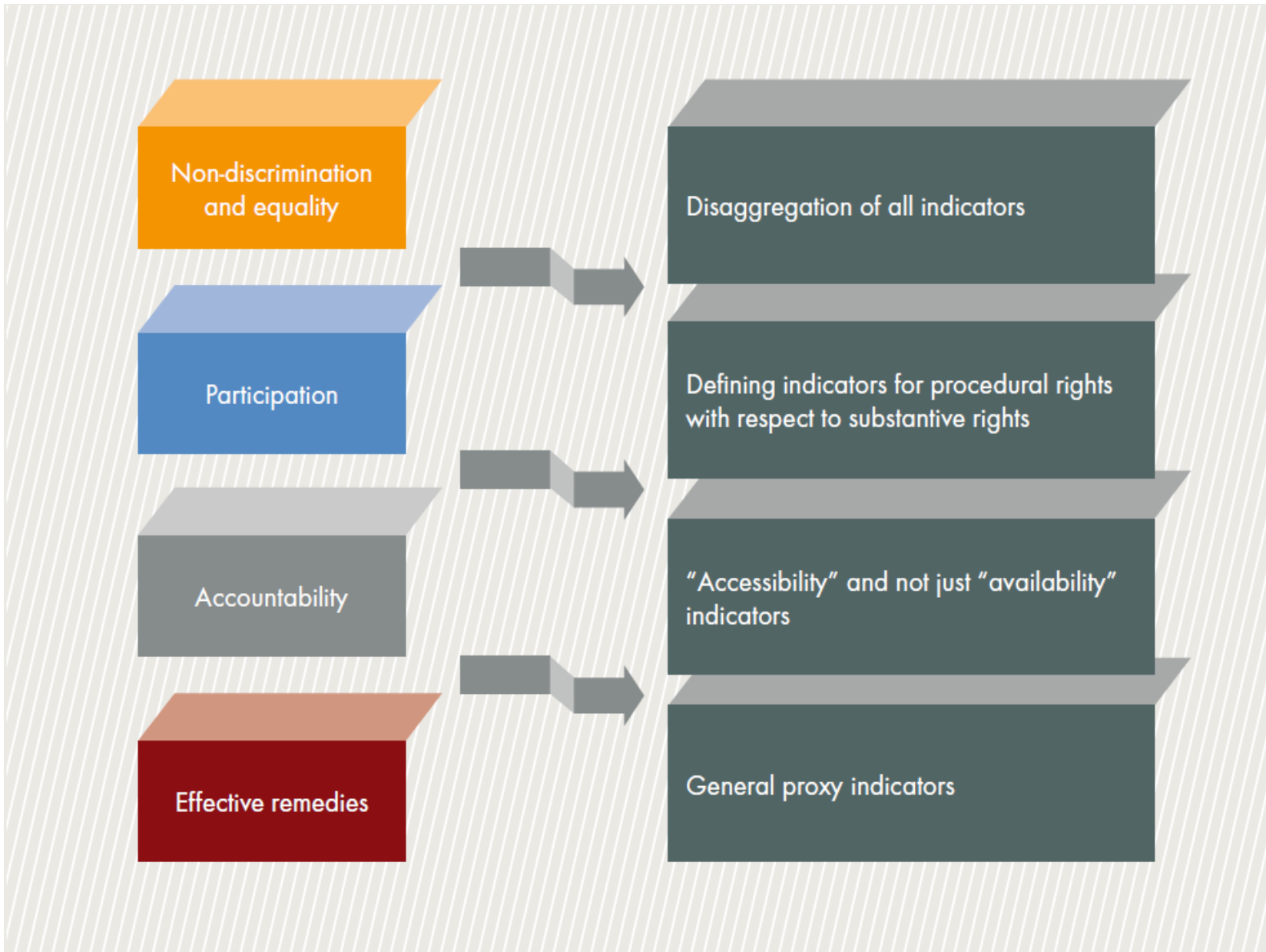
# OHCHR conceptual framework

Configuration of indicators to assess steps taken by States Parties in addressing:

- acceptance, intent and commitment to HR obligations (*structural* indicators)
- efforts to transform commitments to desired results (*process* indicators)
- results of efforts in furthering human rights (*outcome* indicators)



# Indicators on cross-cutting human rights norms



**Box 2** Scope of State human rights obligations

**RESPECT**

**PROTECT**

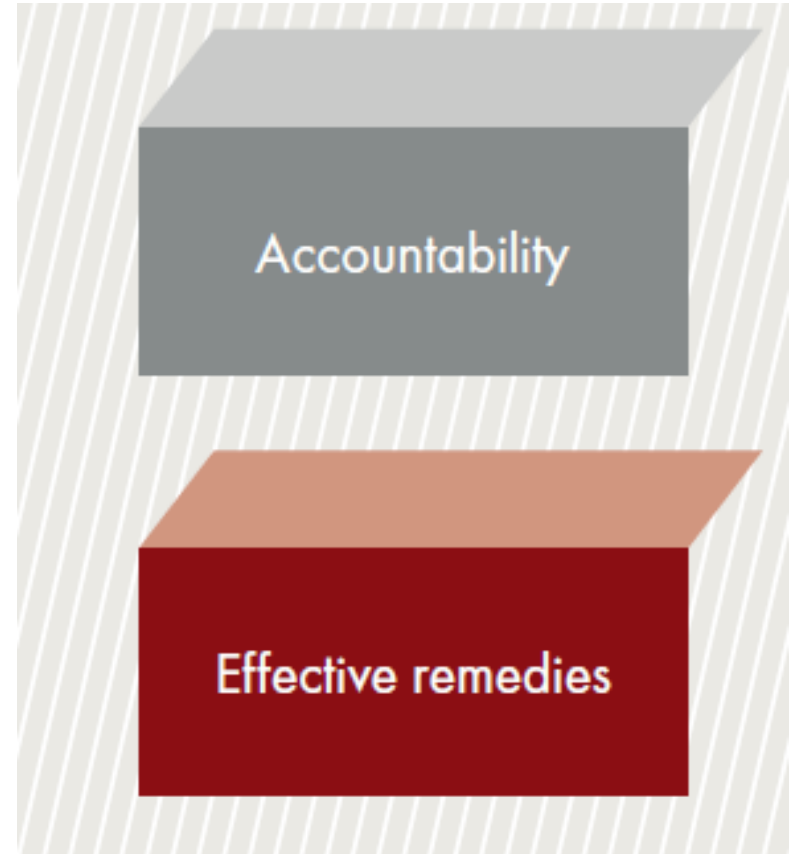
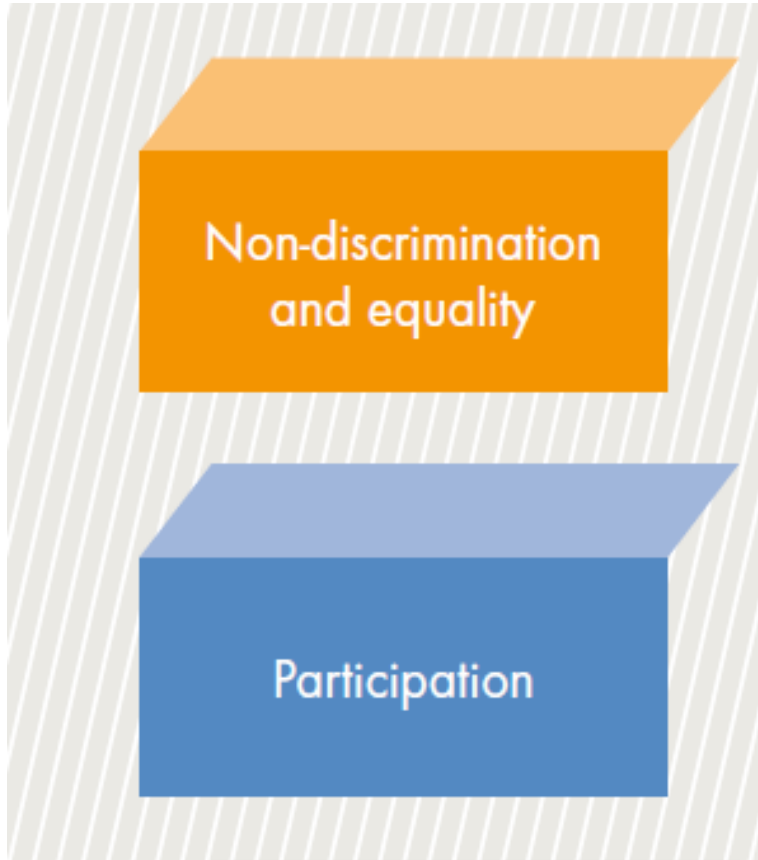
**FULFIL**

State must refrain from interfering with the enjoyment of human rights

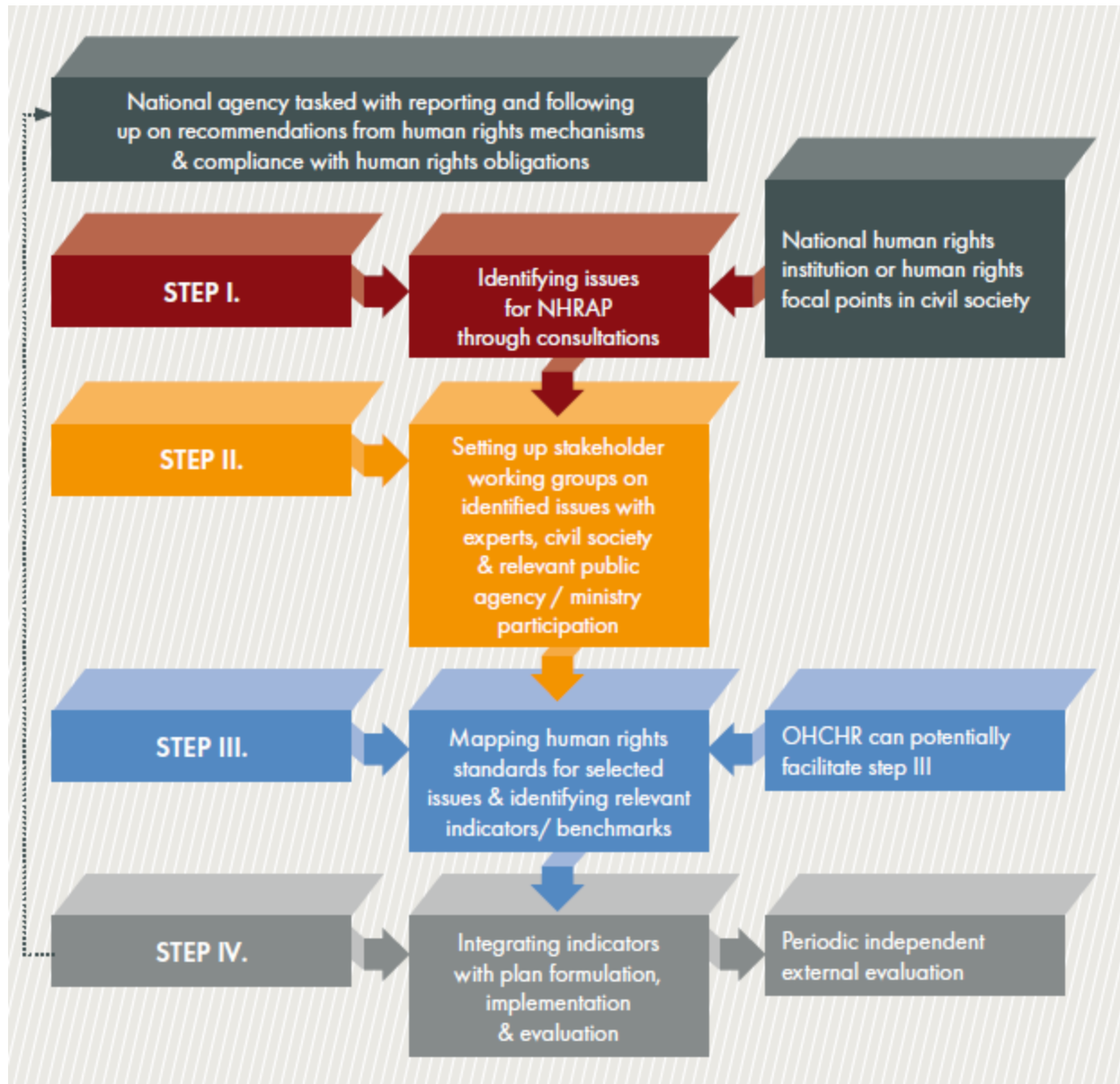
State must prevent private actors or third parties from violating human rights

State must take positive measures, including adopting appropriate legislation, policies and programmes, to ensure the realization of human rights

# Cross cutting human rights norms



# Indicators framework and National Human Rights Action Plan



# Setting up human rights monitoring systems - A reality check

ASPECT	BEST PRACTICE	INADEQUATE RESPONSE
<b>Political commitment</b>	Senior political sponsorship or democratic regime, well-defined human rights responsibilities	Reluctant or undemocratic regime, human rights insensitive, dispersed responsibilities
<b>Ministries and administrative organizations</b>	Clear mandate and comprehensive coverage of issues, aware of human rights obligations, well organized to collect and disseminate data	Overlapping or diffused mandates, human rights insensitive or ignorant, weak capacity or irregular data collection and dissemination
<b>National human rights institution (NHRI)</b>	Independent, organized, receives adequate funding, accessible, well-developed human rights plan, and capacity for monitoring and analysis	Weak, ill-resourced or non-existent; inaccessible and irregular human rights plans
<b>Institutions for context-specific vulnerable groups</b>	Effective institutions, capacity to monitor rights, equal opportunities and well-being of vulnerable groups	Weak, ill-resourced or non-existent; inaccessible with diffused mandate and poor credibility
<b>National statistical agency</b>	Independent, mechanism for statistical review and dissemination, willing and equipped to collect and handle human rights information from multiple sources	Pliable, ill-resourced or sceptical of human rights concerns, erratic collection or dissemination of data
<b>Indicators and monitoring methodology</b>	Identified contextually relevant indicators, sound data collection methods, regular analysis / reporting	Inappropriate / imported indicators, weak data collection methods and analysis, inaccessible records
<b>Reporting and follow-up on recommendations from United Nations human rights mechanisms</b>	Well-appointed secretariat and consultation process, timely reporting and follow-up procedures	Ad hoc arrangements, piecemeal or non-existent consultation process, irregular or non-reporting
<b>Stakeholder engagement and civil society organizations</b>	Well-resourced, independent, visible civil society organizations, aware of United Nations instrumentation and practice	Weak, limited civil society, irregular or sporadic adversarial reports, ill-informed of United Nations practice
<b>Media freedom and motivation</b>	Independent, vigorous and sensitive media, human rights literate	Controlled or passive and pliable media, limited reach and credibility
<b>Right to information</b>	Enacted and uniformly enforced	Not enacted or poorly enforced

# Setting up human rights monitoring systems

- 1. Identification of monitoring stakeholders*
- 2. Facilitation of country owned monitoring mechanisms*
- 3. Identification of major vulnerable groups*
- 4. Focus on non-discrimination and accessibility*
- 5. Capacity building for data collection and disaggregation*
- 6. Reporting periodicity, publication, public access to information and follow-up*

# FRA Being black in Europe

1. Non generalizable: 12 countries

2. Studies limited HR issues:

Harassment, violence, physical violence, police stops, discrimination awareness, education, health employment, housing, social inclusion (poverty)

3. No intersectionality

4. Perception survey; feeling discriminated

5. Difficult to interpret the findings in some cases:



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# FRA Being black in Europe

Risk of experiencing racist harassment decreases with age

Does it decrease or people are less prone to perceive and report it. Internalized racism. Normalized violence

Reasons for non reporting:

Contradict the findings: e.g. incident was minor

Dealt by myself: address the risks



# FRA Being black in Europe

Self perceived health: 81% very good, 2% higher than general population.

## Explore contradictions:

1/5 has a long standing illness; and 1/5 has long standing limitations in their usual activities.

Unmet need for medical examination: in some countries it is 50% higher than the general population