

The Federal Human Rights Implementation Framework

The Government of Canada's Approach to Strengthening the Implementation
of Canada's International Human Rights Obligations

Context

In 2020, federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) ministers responsible for human rights reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen intergovernmental collaboration to implement Canada's international human rights obligations and public dialogue on human rights by endorsing the Engagement Strategy on Canada's International Human Rights Reporting Process ("the Strategy") (read it [here](#)) and the Protocol for Follow-up to Recommendations Received by International Human Rights Bodies ("the Protocol") (read it [here](#)).

Led by Canadian Heritage (PCH), the Federal Human Rights Implementation Framework ("the Framework") is the Government of Canada's approach to rolling out the Strategy and the Protocol at the federal level. It is intended to complement the work of existing mechanisms that address human rights issues domestically. The Framework offers a vision and concrete steps for strengthening the Government of Canada's implementation of Canada's international human rights obligations. It encourages federal departments and agencies to apply a human rights-based approach to policy development and to be informed by recommendations made by international human rights bodies in their decision-making, with the overall goal of strengthening respect for human rights in Canada.

Objectives

The objectives of the Framework include:

- Facilitating informed consideration of international human rights obligations and recommendations within the Government of Canada;
- Encouraging federal departments and agencies to mainstream human rights in all Government of Canada efforts;
- Reflecting on and consolidating existing initiatives related to the implementation of Canada's international human rights obligations;
- Creating a space and opportunities for sharing best practices; and,
- Developing new ways of enhancing the domestic implementation of human rights and tracking results.

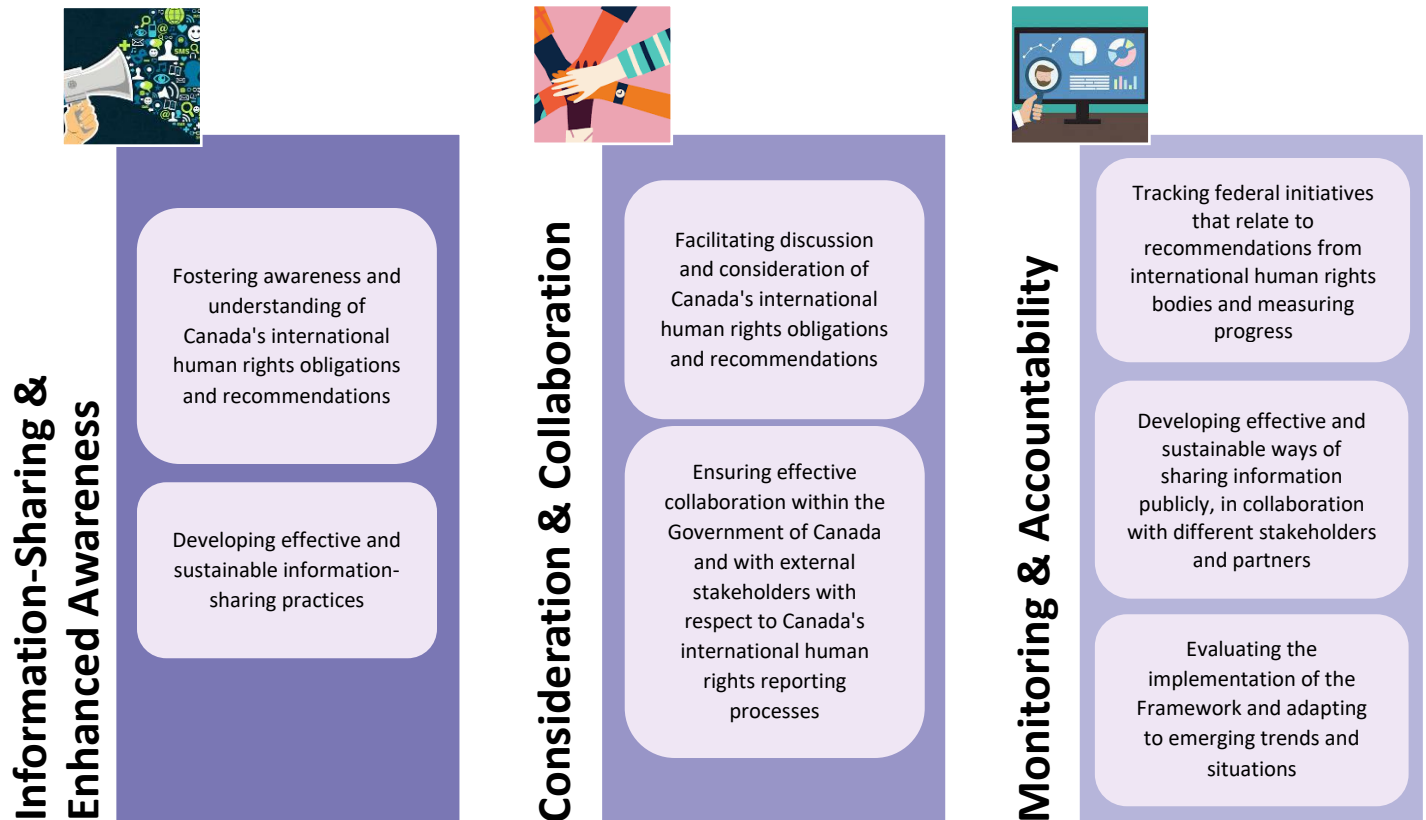
Areas of Work & Activities

The areas of work and activities of the Framework will aim to ensure that federal departments and agencies have the tools they need to:

- Understand international human rights obligations and recommendations;
- Consider these obligations and recommendations in relation to the work they do;
- Effectively contribute to Canada's international human rights reporting;
- Share information with relevant stakeholders and the public; and,
- Enhance transparency and accountability.

Some of these activities will be informed by the views of civil society organizations, Indigenous representatives, human rights commissions, and academics, among other stakeholders, as appropriate. They will be implemented in a way that complements the ongoing initiatives undertaken by federal departments and agencies.

Areas of work conducted under the multi-year Framework will focus on the following:



Structure

The following structure is proposed to support effective implementation of the Framework. Efforts are underway to develop the other proposed committees to support the work of the Framework.

1. Director General International Human Rights Forum (“DGRights Forum”)

- Launched in 2022, the DGRights Forum is co-chaired by Canadian Heritage and the Department of Justice.
 - The DGRights Forum provides a space for senior-level discussions, awareness-raising and information-sharing on Canada’s international human rights obligations and follow-up to recommendations.
 - DGs are encouraged to champion consideration of international human rights obligations and recommendations within their respective departments and agencies.
 - The DGRights Forum meets on a quarterly basis.

2. Network of Focal Points on International Human Rights (“RightsNet”)

- The RightsNet will provide a space for policy experts to discuss, raise awareness, and share information regarding Canada’s international human rights obligations, the reporting process, follow-up to recommendations and current initiatives.
- Members of the RightsNet will be encouraged to share this information with their leadership and with their peers in their respective departments and agencies, and to facilitate consideration of recommendations in the context of their own mandates.

3. Core Interdepartmental Working Group on International Human Rights (“RightsWG”)

- PCH will work with key departments and agencies implicated in international human rights to advance the work of the Framework.
- The RightsWG should be considered as a secretariat at the experts’ level for the work carried out in the other committees of the Framework.

4. Advisory Committees on International Human Rights

- Advisory Committees may be composed of key stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, Indigenous representatives, human rights commissions, and/or academics.
- They may provide advice and collaborate with the different committees within the Framework in the planning and implementation of federal activities/efforts related to international human rights obligations and implementation of recommendations.
- Further efforts to develop an approach for rolling out these advisory committees will be undertaken in 2023-2024 in collaboration with key stakeholders and partners.

Next Steps

PCH will further elaborate a workplan for the period of 2023-2025 to carry out activities guided by the Framework. Each activity will support the Framework’s overall goals of strengthening the implementation of Canada’s international human rights obligations and improving respect for human rights in Canada, as well as align with one or more of the areas of work identified above. The aim will be to standardize these activities and to ensure they are sustainable.