

Commonwealth Forum
of National Human
Rights Institutions

Strategic Plan

2019 - 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1. About us

The Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) is a network of 46 organisations, all of which have a mandate to protect, promote and improve human rights in their respective jurisdictions.

With global reach, we are a diverse network united by our shared values and aspirations¹. Collectively we protect, promote and improve the human rights of nearly 2.4 billion citizens². We play an important role in ensuring that human rights standards are enjoyed on the ground in accordance with international standards within our respective countries across the Commonwealth.

The CFNHRI promotes, protects and improves human rights in the Commonwealth through influencing the progression of human rights within the processes of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM); providing a united voice on human rights priorities; and ensuring members and other stakeholders can learn from the insight, experiences and expertise contained within the Forum.

This strategy outlines our priorities from 2019 – 2021.

¹ <http://thecommonwealth.org/our-charter>

² <http://thecommonwealth.org/about-us>

2. What we will achieve

Our vision is for an effective and sustainable Forum that informs and influences the promotion, protection and improvement of human rights in the Commonwealth. To achieve this we will prioritise the following:

2.1. Robust governance:

A well-governed and professional Forum recognised for its expertise on human rights in the Commonwealth.

2.2. Exemplar communication:

An exemplar communicator of human rights and recognised for effective information sharing between human rights stakeholders in the Commonwealth.

2.3. Creating change:

Creating lasting change in promoting, protecting and improving human rights in the Commonwealth. As a membership we have identified a number of key human rights priorities affecting the Commonwealth which will be explored collectively within the Forum and individually by NHRIs. At the 2018 Biennial LGBTI rights was identified as a key human rights challenge to explore and address during 2019 – 2021.

3. How we will achieve our aims

We will realise our strategic priorities through the following:

3.1. Robust governance

In working towards our vision for a well-governed and influential Forum recognised as an expert on human rights in the Commonwealth, we will prioritise the following:

- Ensuring our founding documents support good governance and are effective in enabling the Forum to achieve its overall goals. This will include clearly defining roles and responsibilities within the Forum to ensure its effective operation
- Developing mechanisms to ensure members of the Commonwealth Forum are regularly updated as to developments and delivery of Forum activities, increasing accountability of the Chair to its members.
- We aspire to influence the development of human rights in the Commonwealth via the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM). Following the review of CFNHRI's governance we will work with the Commonwealth Secretariat to identify opportunities to achieve this aim.

3.2. Exemplar Communication

In working towards our vision for the Forum to be an exemplar communicator and recognised for effective information sharing between human rights stakeholders in the Commonwealth, we will prioritise the following:

- Providing opportunities for members to share their expertise with key stakeholders, raising the profile of NHRIs in the international human rights community.
- Providing opportunities for members to connect, share best practice, and offer mutual support in addressing shared challenges.
- Further developing the Forum's website, ensuring it continues to meet the needs of members and is sustainable for future Chairmanships.

3.3. Creating change

Our vision is to create lasting change in the promotion, protection and improvement of human rights in the Commonwealth. Our membership has identified several key human rights priorities affecting the Commonwealth. At the 2018 Biennial, LGBTI was identified as a key human rights challenge in the Commonwealth. In tackling key human rights concerns in the Commonwealth, we will prioritise:

- **Strengthening our expertise:** We will promote learning opportunities on key issues such as LGBTI. We will deliver regional seminars and develop resources which explore these rights in relation to different human rights themes e.g. business, sport, human rights defenders. We

will develop an open access library of resources on the CFNHRI website to share experiences and expertise of NHRIs working on these issues.

- **Promoting dialogue:** We will create opportunities for the discussion of some of the most challenging human rights topics, including LGBTI rights. This will be achieved through activities such as the delivery of regional seminars and information sharing through our communication channels. We will progress calls for LGBTI rights to be included in the agenda for future Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings
- **Increasing our influence:** We will raise awareness of the role of NHRIs in promoting, protecting and improving human rights. We will identify opportunities for CFNHRI members to showcase their expertise, particularly in relation to LGBTI. We will make collective commitments to advancing human rights and communicate our impact.

4. Success measures

Our Strategic Plan will lead to the following change:

4.1. Robust Governance

- Members recognise CFNHRI as an effective and professional Forum of NHRIs.
- The Forum is accountable to members through effective communication.
- CFNHRI is able to effectively influence the human rights agenda at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM).

4.2. Communication

- Members indicate that accountability of the Forum to its members has strengthened.
- Member NHRIs are recognised for their vital role in promoting, protecting and improving human rights in the Commonwealth.
- Evidence of strengthened relationships between Commonwealth NHRIs and collaboration in addressing shared challenges.

- Members provide positive feedback on website and recognise it as an effective communication tool.
- Website is successfully handed over to the incoming Chair.

4.3. Creating change

- Members indicate that the Forum's expertise on key human rights issues such as LGBTI in the Commonwealth is strengthened.
- Evidence that CFNHRI contributes to increasing dialogue in the Commonwealth on some of the most challenging human rights issues such as LGBTI.
- Stakeholders recognise the Forum as experts in advancing human rights in the Commonwealth.
- Key stakeholders recognise the impact of the Forum in advancing rights in the Commonwealth, including LGBTI rights.

5. Evaluation

- 5.1.** This document aims to provide an overview of the Forum's strategic direction for a two year period. Work plans will be developed as a separate document by the incumbent chair to outline how this strategy will be implemented.
- 5.2.** This strategic plan will be monitored on an annual basis by the Chair. Progress will be reviewed and discussed by the membership at the Forum's annual meeting.
- 5.3.** Success of the Strategic Plan will be measured using information from sources such as membership surveys, stakeholder surveys, evaluation forms, and website statistics.

For any further information please contact:
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Annex A: Summary

Vision	“An effective and sustainable Forum that informs and influences the promotion, protection and improvement of human rights in the Commonwealth”		
Strategic Priorities	Robust Governance	Communication	Creating Change
Success Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholders recognise CFNHRI as an effective and professional Forum of NHRIs. 2. The Forum is accountable to members through effective communication 3. CFNHRI is able to effectively influence the human rights agenda at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member NHRIs are recognised for their vital role in promoting, protecting and improving human rights in the Commonwealth. 2. Evidence of strengthened relationships between Commonwealth NHRIs and collaboration in addressing shared challenges. 3. Members provide positive feedback on website and recognise it as an effective communication tool. 4. Website is successfully handed over to the incoming Chair. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members indicate that the Forum’s expertise on key human rights issues such as LGBTI in the Commonwealth is strengthened . 2. Evidence that CFNHRI contributes to increasing dialogue in the Commonwealth on some of the most challenging human rights issues such as LGBTI 3. Stakeholders recognise the Forum as experts in advancing human rights in the Commonwealth. 4. Key stakeholders recognise the impact of the Forum in advancing rights in the Commonwealth, including LGBTI rights.