**Political support and commitment**

Active participation from the highest political levels are of vital importance to the success of NHRAP development and implementation. Political will is ultimately linked to the commitment of key stakeholders.

The State powers must play an active role in promoting the NHRAP to ensure that the plan remains a living instrument that achieves concrete results. Political commitment should also translate into the provision of sufficient resources so that the NHRAP can cover its budgetary needs.

**Public participation**

As a guiding principle, the plan should be regarded as a truly national undertaking and to the extent that more sectors of society are involved in its elaboration, the more effective and permanent its results will be.

Efforts should be made to avoid a situation in which the NHRAP becomes an exercise focused narrowly on government and civil society organizations. It is important to convene wide public hearings to discuss the plan, where participants can formulate recommendations.

**NHRAPs in South America**

In South America, most countries are at different stages in the development and implementation of their NHRAPs. Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela either have a plan or are in the process of implementing one.

OHCHR´s Regional Office for South America supports and promotes the creation and implementation of these plans in all of the countries it covers.

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**National Human Rights Action Plans:**

 **Ingredients for Success**

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***¨The World Conference on Human Rights recommends that each State consider the desirability of drawing up a national action plan identifying steps whereby that State would improve the promotion and protection of human rights.¨***

*Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,*

*Part II, paragraph 71*

**What are National Human Rights Actions Plans?**

Many countries seek to improve their capacity to protect and promote human rights at the national level. However, they don´t always have a roadmap on how to do so in a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated manner.

A National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) provides a structured approach towards strengthened human rights. The objective is to entrench principles and achieve tangible improvements.

A NHRAP is a comprehensive document that establishes a series of concrete and measurable actions that must be undertaken within a specific time-frame, with an end to improving the promotion and protection of human rights in that country.

By developing and implementing a NHRAP, the State makes an unambiguous statement to its people and the world about its human rights agenda.

**NHRAPs serve to:**

● review a country needs in relation to human rights;

● provide a human rights realization roadmap;

● initiate programmes and coordinated responses;

● link human rights to development planning;

● facilitate stakeholder cooperation;

● raise awareness of human rights actors among various social actors;

● help States meet their human rights commitments under international and regional treaties as well as national laws.

**Who should participate?**

A NHRAP is a national endeavor, but since such a plan includes commitments from the government, the latter will have particular responsibility for its development.

No matter where the initiative to implement the plan emanates, a specific organ of government must be given the responsibility to initiate the process and convene stakeholders.

Depending on the projected plan and available resources, this process should include input from all levels of government, public-private entities, national human rights institutions and NGOs.

It should also convene representatives of vulnerable groups, unions and professional associations, human rights experts, academics and researchers, media, the private sector and society as a whole. It may also be useful to involve representatives of international organizations that provide technical cooperation.

**How to create a NHRAP?**

The steps in the development of a NHRAP include at least five stages, namely:

• A preparatory stage where actors perform initial consultations and diagnose the major human rights challenges for the country. In addition, they design strategies for action and identify the operational requirements of the NHRAP, mainly in terms of financial and human resources.

During this stage, participants can designate a coordinating committee in charge of combining the efforts of the various areas involved in the process. This committee should be composed of officials from the three branches of government and civil society organizations, taking into perspective a balance in gender, regions, and ethnic, religious or other groups.

• A development phase, during which stakeholders draw up a draft of the NHRAP, discuss and adopt a management plan, as well as devise a communications strategy to publicize their activities and the plan itself.

• An implementation phase, where relevant organs put the plan into operation.

• A monitoring or control stage, which involves monitoring the implementation of planned activities and an adjustment of the plan´s objectives.

• Finally, a phase of evaluation and review of the degree of implementation and scope of the objectives set.