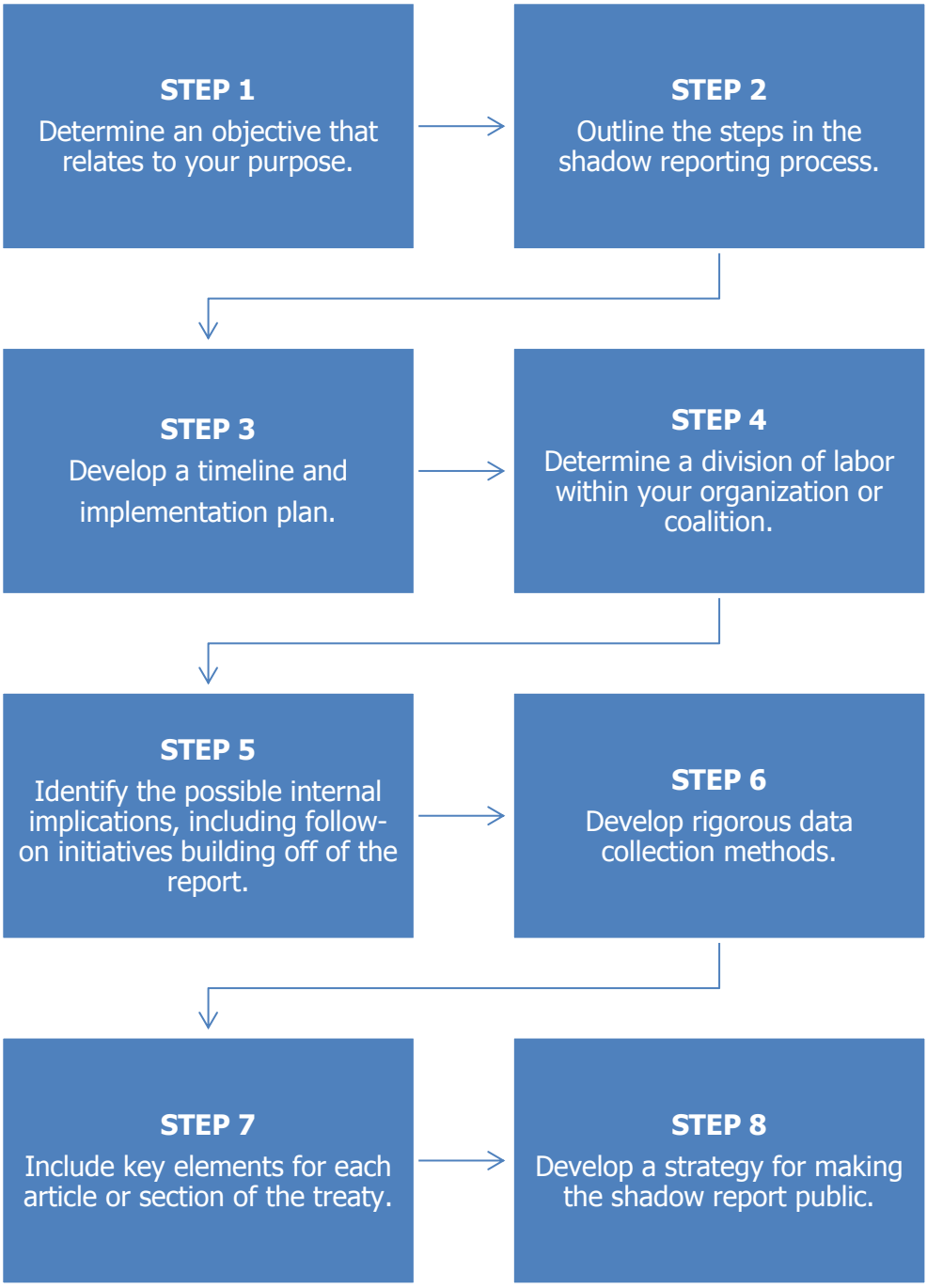
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING A SHADOW REPORT



1) Determine an objective that relates to your purpose.
The first step in developing a shadow report initiative is to determine exactly what your objective is. An objective is the immediate goal that you want your monitoring project to accomplish. This should also fit into the overarching purpose of partner or coalition member organizations.

> For example, if you are a member of a coalition working to reduce violence against women, your shadow report objective may be to see that your government is fully implementing the CEDAW provisions (if, in fact, your government has ratified the convention). That is an easy example, but not all efforts are as easily focused.
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> If your effort is focused on improving education, you may need to spend more time thinking how a shadow report on CEDAW (or maybe the Convention on the Rights of the Child), may be a good fit for what you are focused on as well as how developing a shadow report fits into a coalition's purpose for expanding education.

2) Outline the steps in the shadow reporting process.
Once you and partners have settled on an objective, you will need to outline the steps to develop a thorough shadow report, including necessary human and financial resource needs, timeframes for completion, roles and responsibilities and divisions of labor.

The basic process steps include:

- ✓ *Developing a plan* on how you will access necessary government information and other relevant plans. Click here for an example of a data collection plan from a youth education evaluation.
- ✓ *Analyze data and findings*. How will you analyze the information once you have it? Will you need special software or extra help to dig through the information to find trends, patters or to develop recommendations?
- ✓ *Write the shadow report*. Who will write the report? Will you need any special human or technical support? What will be the vetting process for all coalition members for the final product?
- ✓ *Publicizing Findings*. Begin to consider your outreach plan even before you begin your shadow report project. Do you need to develop or strengthen relationships with government officials or the media? Who will present the report to the government or relevant UN Committee? Will you launch an advocacy campaign or public awareness campaign?
- ✓ *Follow-up*. Once the report is public, what will you need to do to follow up on the report's recommendations?

In addition to the steps laid out here, you will also need to consider a few additional areas. Do you have the **necessary human resources?** Maybe you need to hire a lawyer or legal expert, engage research staff or recruit volunteers to conduct community surveys. You will also need to estimate **necessary financial resources** – can coalition members provide financial contributions or will you need to do extra fundraising, or can much of the work be done at little extra cost?

3) Develop a timeline and implementation plan.

Now that you have a general idea of the steps for the shadow report process, what is the timeline for implementation? What steps need to come first or will need to get started before others? Are there any important processes external to your project that you may need to consider as you plan your project (such as a legislative cycle or election)?

A good, simple tool that may be useful for you to plan is a task chart. An example is shown here:

Task	Responsible Organization/Individual	Month						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Develop Timeline and Implementation Plan	Coalition Secretariat/Decision-making body	X						
Collect Data	Designated Coalition members and volunteers		X	X	X	X		
Write Report	Designated writer, reviewed by Coalition Secretariat						X	
Publicize Report	Designated Coalition members							X
Develop Follow-on Plan	Coalition Secretariat						X	X

4) Determine a division of labor within your organization or coalition.
Once you have developed a timeline and implementation plan, you will need to consider who will do which planned item. This may be done individually or together with many people from members of a partnership. It is important to assign tasks so that everyone is aware and agrees to roles and responsibilities. See the previous step's task chart as an example.

If you are working in a coalition, the members may also develop a secretariat or steering committee that has ultimate responsibility for the shadow report process. This secretariat may include members from each participating organization or from selected groups.

5) Identify the possible internal implications, including follow-on initiatives building off the shadow report.
It will be important early on to begin to consider what implications the shadow report project may have on your own organization or a coalition – including its goals and activities and any future work your group may be considering.

> For example, your group may be focused on providing services that help women who are victims of abuse. How will your service delivery work be impacted by the shadow report activities (will you need to hire or recruit staff/volunteers to help with any new or existing workload, for example)? How might the recommendations, and whether or not the government can implement any shadow report recommendations, affect your service delivery work?

It is important to think about how your individual organization's work also contributes to the shadow report process. Using the example above, does your organization bring any specific expertise or access to resources that others may not? For example, do you have doctors or lawyers on your staff or board of directors? Do you have access to government information or abuse victims that could be a part of the data collection step?

6) Develop rigorous data collection methods – using document reviews, surveys and questionnaires, interviews or small group discussions.
The meat of the shadow report process is collecting and analyzing data. The best way to get started is to develop well thought-out data collection tools.

- ✓ If you are reviewing specific documents, you may want to develop a checklist of key information that would align with the convention you are developing a shadow report for.
- ✓ If you are collecting data through interviews or community surveys, you may want to develop questionnaires that have well thought-out, non-biased questions that collect consistent information (the question is applied the same across different audiences, for example).
- ✓ If you are conducting small group discussions, you may want to develop a facilitators guide that poses the same questions and provides instructions to facilitators so they are aware of the specific information you are gathering.

In addition, you should also consider how you will keep information secure – what are your data management processes? Who will have access to the questionnaires and where/how will they be stored (in a file cabinet that is locked or encrypted on a computer hard drive that is password protected)? If you are conducting interviews of female abuse victims, how will their personal information remain secured and protected to avoid reprisal?

7) Include key elements for each article or section of the treaty.
Include the text of the treaty, convention or accord; the government's stance on its compliance; the findings on the government's compliance; and your recommendations for improving government compliance. For whatever document or standard that you are developing a shadow report for, you will want to align your findings and data to specific articles.

8) Develop a strategy for making the shadow report public - including submission to the appropriate UN committee or other governing bodies, publication in local and international media and submission to your host government.
Now that all of the information is in and analysis is complete, what is the best way to present your findings? Of course you will have the written shadow report that should be presented to both the relevant government officials as well as the appropriate UN committee.

- Who will be the person or persons to present the report to these important stakeholders?
- What will your media strategy be?
- Will you make the full report public at an event where the media will be present, or will you seek to do on-air interviews or some other media event?
- What will your social media strategy be?
- Will you seek to include the international media in your outreach plan?
- How will you get them interested in your issues and your shadow report?