



association for
the prevention
of torture



INTERNATIONAL
OMBUDSMAN
INSTITUTE



SIVILOMBUDET
Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud

IOI WORKSHOP FOR NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISMS

9 – 11 February 2026 | Oslo, Norway

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

Persons with mental health conditions remain among those most at risk of torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Across many countries, mental health systems still rely heavily on institutionalization and coercive practices — including forced treatment, seclusion, or restraints, often justified in the name of protection or medical necessity. These contexts are characterized by stigma, unequal power relations, weak oversight, staff shortages and poor training, which can make violations invisible or normalized.

National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs) have a unique mandate to identify risks, promote safeguards, ensure that people in mental health institutions are treated with dignity, and support deinstitutionalization efforts, advancing human rights-based approach to mental health. Yet they often face challenges.

Moreover, NPMs that have been operating for many years can struggle to maintain visibility, political traction, and institutional energy — despite years of valuable monitoring and recommendations.

This workshop therefore addresses **two complementary challenges**:

- (1) Strengthening the preventive lens in mental health institutions, and
- (2) Equipping NPMs to translate their monitoring into sustained, systemic change — keeping momentum, relevance, and influence over time.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

Enhance the capacity of NPMs and Ombudsman institutions to prevent torture and ill-treatment in mental health institutions and to generate durable change through sustained, strategic engagement.

Specific Objective: Preventive monitoring in mental health institutions

- Deepen understanding of the unique risks linked to deprivation of liberty in mental health institutions.
- Strengthen NPM skills in identifying, analysing, and addressing safeguards.
- Build confidence in interviewing, observation, and documentation methods appropriate to these settings.
- Promote exchange and mutual learning on monitoring approaches and methodology.

Specific Objective: From monitoring to change

- Strengthen participants' ability to frame findings for maximum preventive effect, translating visits into actionable recommendations and reform strategies.
- Explore how NPMs can sustain influence over time — avoiding institutional fatigue, leveraging data, and communicating progress.
- Develop skills in strategic communication, including the use of visuals, narratives, and partnerships with media and civil society.
- Encourage creative thinking about how to maintain the visibility and impact of preventive work in changing political and social contexts.

FORMAT AND METHODOLOGY

The 2.5-day workshop will combine presentations, peer learning, and interactive exercises, providing space for exchange of practical experiences and reflection on challenges faced after years of monitoring.

PARTICIPANTS

Up to 30 representatives from NPMs and Ombudsman institutions, primarily IOI members, with experience in visiting places of deprivation of liberty and a specific interest in strengthening their work in mental health settings and long-term change strategies.

FACILITATORS

The [Association for the Prevention of Torture \(APT\)](#) will facilitate the workshop, in collaboration with the [International Ombudsman Institute \(IOI\)](#) and external experts.

EXPECTED RESULTS

By the end of the workshop, participants will have:

- A clearer understanding of preventive standards and practical monitoring tools for mental health institutions.
- Enhanced capacity to analyse findings, identify systemic risks, and advocate for safeguards.
- Concrete strategies to sustain institutional impact, renew priorities, and communicate effectively.
- Strengthened professional and peer networks to support ongoing learning and collaboration.