

# **Universal Period Review: Training Manual for Civil Society**

December 2013 (reviewed in July 2014)

THE  
CARTER CENTER



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## Introduction

This training is designed to assist civil society in every country in using the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to productively advocate for human rights. It is based on a training provided to civil society members in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2013. By the end of the training, participants will have a sound understanding of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, specifically how civil society can best use this mechanism to work towards the full realization of human rights nationally. The impact objective of this training is to strengthen respect for human rights and to encourage full application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

This training requires at least 2 months **and should occur at least 2 months before a country comes under review at the HRC**. The facilitator should understand that all sessions are built on each other. As such, consistency throughout the training is critically important. The training follows the following structure:

### Training Day 1 (all participants)

- Session 1: Introduction to the Training
- Session 2: Summary of Human Rights
- Session 3: Overview of the Universal Periodic Review

### Training Day 2 (all participants)

- Session 3: Overview of the Universal Periodic Review
- Session 4: Overview of reporting to the UPR

### Training Day 3 (all participants)

- Session 4: Overview of reporting to the UPR

### Breakout session (Thematic groups): Training Day 1-2

- Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report

Action: If further research is required, teams should be given at least **2 weeks** to collect data at this point.

### Breakout Session (Thematic groups): Training Day 3

- Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report

Action: The thematic drafting team should be given at least **1 week** to draft the thematic section of the report.

### Breakout session (Thematic groups): Training Day 4

- Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report

Action: Any changes to the report should be made before the thematic groups meet to compile the report. The thematic drafting teams should be given **1 week** to make these changes.

### Training Day 4 (all participants)

- Session 6: Before the Review at the HRC – Compiling the Report

Action: The drafting team should be given at least **1 week** to compile and complete the report.

**Training Day 5 (all participants)**

- Session 6: Before the Review at the HRC – Compiling the Report

Action: The drafting team should be given at least **1 week** to make any final revisions to the report and to submit the report to OHCHR.

**Training Day 6 – 7 (all participants)**

- Session 7: At the Review at the HRC

Action: The participants should have at least **2 weeks** to finalize and print lobbying material

**Training Day 8 (all participants)**

- Session 7: At the Review at the HRC

Action: The participants should have at least **1 month** for lobbying activities in country. Lobbying activities should take place at least 1-2 months before the review. The following training sessions should take place after the HRC has officially adopted the outcome document – about 1 month after the review.

**Training Day 9 (all participants)**

- After the review

Two facilitators should deliver the training together. For each session, one facilitator should act as the lead and the other as the support. It is important that facilitators work together before the training to coordinate their interaction during the training.

Before the training begins, participants should understand that participation in the training should be regular and that the same persons need to follow the training in its entirety. Regardless of their position in their organization, all participants should engage equally in the training.

Many of the training activities require the participants to work in ‘small groups’. Unless otherwise specified, participants should work with the persons seated directly next to them. They do not need to get up and leave the room for any of the activities (unless they wish to for a specific reason).

At the end of each training day, the facilitators should type up the results. All material will be part of the ‘training report’, produced by the facilitators at the end of the training.

Participants should be provided with a binder at the beginning of the training. During the training, participants will be provided with handouts. These should be stored in the binder. By the end of the training, participants should have compiled a guide to NGO participation in the UPR.

Finally, this manual is for the training facilitator. **Black** text has been used to describe the activities. **Grey** text has been used to provide the facilitator with additional information and input. The facilitator should use the grey text to guide the discussion. They should NOT read the grey text to the participants. Rather they should have read and understood the information before the training and should provide it to the participants, in their own words, during the activity.

Each activity has a pedagogic objective for the participants. These objectives are listed at the beginning of each session. To orient the facilitator, all of the objectives are summarized under the heading 'Facilitator's Notes' at the beginning of each session.

There are six PowerPoint (PPT) presentations included in this training. The facilitator should print the PowerPoint presentations before the activity. During the activity, the facilitator should distribute the printouts before projecting the PowerPoint. The facilitator should ask the participants questions during the presentation to ensure participant engagement.

## Training Agenda

This training should happen over a period of at least **2 months before a country comes under review at the HRC.**

Time	Session	Activity
<b>Training Day 1</b>		
1 hour 30 minutes	Session 1: Introduction to the Training	Activity 1: Introducing Participants
		Activity 2: Introduction to the Training
4 hours	Session 2: Summary of Human Rights	Activity 3: What are Human Rights?
		Activity 4: Duty-Bearers and Rights-Holders
		Activity 5: International Recourse Mechanisms
30 minutes	Session 3: Overview of the Universal Periodic Review	Activity 6: Introduction to the Human Rights Council
<b>Training Day 2</b>		
3 hours 30 minutes	Session 3: Overview of the Universal Periodic Review	Activity 7: Introduction to the Universal Periodic Review
		Activity 8: Introduction to the role of NGOs in the UPR
1 hour 30 minutes	Session 4: Overview of Reporting to the UPR	Activity 9: Overview of Reports
<b>Training Day 3</b>		
4 hours 30 minutes	Session 4: Overview of Reporting to the UPR	Activity 10: Review Guidelines for NGO Reports
		Activity 11: Drawing Lessons from Sample NGO Reports
		Activity 12: Describing Breakout Sessions and the Drafting Process
<b>Breakout Session (Thematic groups): Training Day 1</b>		
5 hours 30 minutes	Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report	Activity 13: Reviewing Recommendations from the Last UPR
		Activity 14: Identifying Key Priorities
		Activity 15: Reviewing the Structure of the Report
<b>Breakout Session (Thematic groups): Training Day 2</b>		
5 hours 30 minutes	Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report	Activity 16: Identifying Relevant Data
		Activity 17: Developing the Questionnaires
<b>Action:</b> If further research is required, teams should be given at least <b>2 weeks</b> to collect data (interviews, reports, etc) at this point.		
<b>Breakout Session (Thematic groups): Training Day 3</b>		
3 hours 30 minutes	Session 5: Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report	Activity 18: Understanding what Makes a Strong Recommendation
		Activity 19: Identifying and Agreeing on Recommendations
		Activity 20: Selecting a Drafting Team
<b>Action:</b> The drafting team should be given at least <b>1 week</b> to draft the thematic section of the report		

Breakout Session (Thematic groups): Training Day 4		
3 hours		Activity 21: Reviewing the Draft Sections
<b>Action:</b> Any changes to the report should be made before the thematic groups meet to compile the report. The drafting team should be given <b>1 week</b> to make these changes.		
Training Day 4		
5 hours 30 minutes	Session 6: Before the Review at the HRC – Compiling the Report	Activity 22: Selecting a Drafting Team
		Activity 23: Reviewing the Content
		Activity 24: Reviewing Recommendations
<b>Action:</b> The drafting team should be given at least <b>1 week</b> to compile and complete the report.		
Training Day 5		
5 hours	Session 6: Before the Review at the HRC – Compiling the Report	Activity 25: Reviewing the Final Report
<b>Action:</b> The drafting team should be given at least <b>1 week</b> to make any final revisions to the report and to submit the report to OHCHR.		
Training Day 6		
7 hours	Session 7: At the Review at the HRC	Activity 26: Overview of the Review Process
		Activity 27: Lobbying States (Role Play)
		Activity 28: Identifying Key Lobbying Messages
Training Day 7		
5 hours	Session 7: At the Review at the HRC	Activity 29: Developing Lobbying Material
<b>Action:</b> The participants should have at least <b>2 weeks</b> to finalize and print lobbying material.		
Training Day 8		
7 hours	Session 7: At the Review at the HRC	Activity 30: Identifying ‘Friendly’ Countries
		Activity 31: Adapting their Message
<b>Action:</b> TCC will examine the participants’ message and advocacy materials over 3 days.		
Training Day 9		
4 hours	Session 7: At the Review at the HRC	Activity 32: Drafting an Action-Plan for Lobbying Activities
		Activity 33: Identifying the Team for Geneva
<b>Action:</b> The participants should have at least <b>1 month</b> for lobbying activities. Lobbying activities should take place at least 1-2 months before the review. The following training sessions should take place after the HRC has officially adopted the outcome document – <b>about 1 month</b> after the review.		
Training Day 10		
5 hours 30 minutes	Session 8: After the Review	Activity 34: Overview of the Official Adoption and Follow-up Action
		Activity 35: Selecting Key Recommendations for Advocacy Action
		Activity 36: Developing an Action Plan



## Session 1: Introduction to the Training

**Session duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes  
**Material required:** Printed agendas

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to introduce the participants to each other and to the content and design of the training.

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### Activity 1: Introducing Participants

**Activity duration:** 1 hour  
**Material required:** No material needed

Ask each participant to write his or her personal objective for the training on a piece of paper. Ask each participant to introduce his/her objective to the group. If the participants do not know each other, participants should introduce themselves with their objective. Tape all of the objectives to the wall. During or at the end of training, ask the group if they have met their objectives. This can be used as part of a more specific evaluation of the training and/or the trainer.

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### Activity 2: Introduction to the Training

**Activity duration:** 30 minutes  
**Material required:** Printed agendas

Describe the training methodology to the participants, stressing the following:

- **The training is participant focused.** As such, the training includes general sessions for all of the participants and specific training sessions tailored to the needs of particular groups of participants.
- **The training is learning focused.** The training is designed not only to provide participants with information (knowledge) but ensure that participants have fully understood the concepts (learning) and are able to independently act on the knowledge (realization)

- **The training is action-oriented.** The training is designed to accompany participants through their action (in this case, participating in the UPR process). As such, participants will work on their UPR report, presentations, etc during the training. In between training sessions participants will carry on with their activities.

Provide participants with the training agenda and give participants a general overview of the sequence of the training session.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 2: Summary of Human Rights

### Objectives:

- Participants will be able to list the rights enshrined in the UDHR and the subsequent conventions (*knowledge*).
- Participants are able to describe the role and responsibility of duty-bearers and rights-holders (*knowledge*).
- Participants are able to describe the UN human rights system (*knowledge*).

**Session duration:** 4 hours

**Material required:** Printouts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Annex 1), flipchart, markers, PPT (1), computer, projector

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to provide participants with the broader human rights framework to allow them to better understand the UPR.

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### Activity 3: What are Human Rights?

**Activity duration:** 1 hour and 30 minutes

**Material required:** Printouts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Annex 1), flipchart, markers

**Objective:** *Participants are able to list the rights enshrined in the UDHR and the subsequent conventions (knowledge).*

Provide each participant with a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). As a group read the UDHR aloud, each participant reading one article until the entire Declaration has been read. After each article is read aloud, ask participants to identify the specific right enshrined in the article.

Using the questions listed below, lead the group in a general discussion regarding the UDHR and its resonance in the country of the participants:

1. Which of the rights enshrined in the UDHR are found in traditional cultures in your country? Can you give examples?
2. Are there any rights in the UDHR that are not found in traditional cultures in your country? Do you think that these rights are helpful or harmful to society?

Ask the participants if they can list any of the UN Human Rights Conventions or Declarations that came after the UDHR. Write down the participants' answers on flipchart paper. Use the Answer Key below to complete the list.

### Activity 3: Notes for the Facilitator

Explain to the participants that the UDHR is considered the founding document of human rights law, though it is not legally binding. It is considered a moral road map for governance. It was written just after World War II in a direct response to the horrible acts committed during the war. All other human rights Conventions were drafted afterwards and are based on the principles in the UDHR. This activity is only an introduction to human rights. It is not intended to give participants a comprehensive understanding of human rights.

Before this activity, the facilitator should identify several examples of rights found in the UDHR that are also found in traditional cultures in participants' country (such as the right to food, the right to housing, etc).

The International Bill of Rights is composed of the following documents:

- a. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- b. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- c. International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (IESCR)

Additional Core Human Rights Instruments include:

- d. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
- e. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- f. Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- g. Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- h. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)
- i. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED)
- j. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

This list is not complete. There are other human rights conventions and declarations, such as the ILO conventions relating to rights in the work place.

## Activity 4: Duty-Bearers and Rights-Holders

**Activity duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Material required:** Flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *Participants are able to describe the role and responsibility of duty-bearers and rights holders (knowledge).*

Begin this activity by reminding participants about the definition of rights-holders and duty-bearers: we use the term rights-holders to describe individuals when we want to underline that they are people who inherently have rights. Also, remind participants that someone is responsible for ensuring the respect of certain rights. We refer to this someone as the duty-bearer.

Ask the participants the following questions:

- Who is responsible for realizing children's right to education?
- Who is responsible for ensuring that citizens are able to vote in their national elections?
- Who is responsible to ensuring that persons detained by the police are not subjected to torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment?

The facilitator should quickly write down some of the participants' answers on flipchart paper.

During the plenary discussion, the facilitator should encourage debate and discussion. The facilitator should draw the below chart on flipchart paper and provide them with the definitions below.

### Activity 4: Notes for the Facilitator

#### ***Rights-holder:***

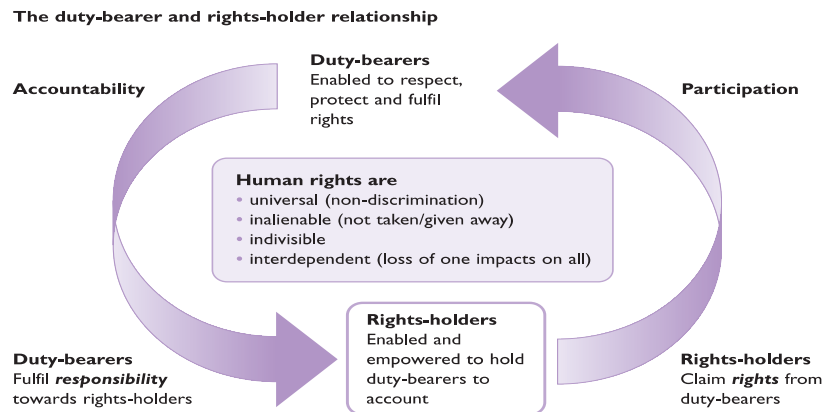
- Has rights
- Claims rights
- Holds duty bearer accountable
- Has responsibility to respect rights of others (as duty bearer)

#### ***Duty-bearer:***

- Has responsibility to fulfill, protect and respect rights of others and self

In legal terms, the State is the primary duty-bearer.

## The relationship between Duty-Bearers and Rights-Holders



Source: Save the Children<sup>1</sup>

### The state is the main duty-bearer in protecting and realizing human rights, as per the UN human rights conventions.

In certain cases, the state can work with private companies or civil society organization to put in place a system that can help guarantee certain rights (for example, private schools). Or, for example, private companies are legally required to protect the rights of their employees in the workplace. As such, civil society and private companies can also become duty bearers.

Family and communities also have a role to play in ensuring certain rights, particularly for children, women and persons with disabilities. For example, families play a central role in ensuring that women and girls are not subjected to violence, that they are allowed to go to school, that they are encouraged to work for a fair wage, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Save the Children (2007). "Getting it Right for Children: A Practitioners' Guide to Child Rights Programming."

## Activity 5: The UN Human Rights System

**Activity duration:** 1 hour

**Material required:** PPT (1), computer, projector

**Objective:** *Participants are able to describe the UN human rights system (knowledge).*

Using PPT (1), present the information provided in the Notes for the Facilitator to the participants:

### Activity 5: Notes for the Facilitator

The UN has 193 member states and six principle organs – namely the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat. UN implementing agencies (MONUSCO, UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women, WHO, etc) report to the General Assembly. The peace-keeping operations report to the Security Council. According to the UN charter, one of the key purposes of the UN is to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

There are two bodies of the UN that are primarily responsible for overseeing human rights:

- 1) The Human Rights Council (HRC) – The HRC was created by the General Assembly. Forty-seven rotating member states participate in the HRC. It is mandated to review and address human rights violations.
- 2) The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – This UN agency works to promote and protect human rights globally by standard setting, monitoring and implementation.

### Treaty-bodies

International human rights law is comprised of a series of international declarations, conventions, and covenants. Under each UN core treaty, states are required to provide regular reports to the relevant treaty body on their implementation of the treaty in law, policy and practice. A treaty body, which is a group of independent experts, then assesses the report in dialogue with the state and produces observations on the implementation of the treaty by the state. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, for example, monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The treaty bodies can also receive information from civil society organizations.

Some of the conventions even have individual complaints mechanisms that allow individuals to report on human rights violations. These mechanisms are quasi-legal. The Human Rights Committee, for example, can examine individual complaints regarding alleged violations of the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, if the state in question has ratified the first Protocol to the Covenant.



## **The Universal Periodic Review**

In 2007 the UN adopted a new procedure to monitor the human rights situation in member states. Every 4.5 years, the UPR considers the global situation of human rights in each of the member states of the UN. It considers the progress and the obstacles for the implementation of treaty obligations and recommendations of the Human Rights Council. Civil society organizations as well as UN agencies can submit reports to the OHCHR.

Make sure to answer participants' questions and to clear up any confusion.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 3: Overview of the Universal Periodic Review

### Objectives:

- Participants are able to describe the function and mandate of the Human Rights Council (*knowledge*).
- Participants are able to explain each step in the UPR process (*knowledge and learning*).
- Participants are able to explain how NGOs can participate in each stage of the UPR process (*knowledge and learning*).

### Session duration:

5 hours

### Material required:

PPT (2), Flipchart, markers, PPT (3), printout of 'Steps in the UPR process' (Annex 2), computer, projector

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to introduce participants to the Universal Periodic Review.

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## Activity 6: Introduction to the Human Rights Council

### Activity duration:

30 minutes

### Material required:

PPT (2), computer, projector

### Objective:

*Participants are able to describe the function and mandate of the Human Rights Council (knowledge).*

Using PPT (2), present the function of the Human Rights Council. A summary of its function and mandate is provided in the Notes for the Facilitator.

### Activity 6: Notes for the Facilitator

According to a leading human rights scholar:

"The formation of the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2006 by the General Assembly, and consequently its replacement of the Human Rights Commission, represents one of the most profound changes to the United Nations human rights system since 1945."<sup>2</sup>

"The Council has the responsibility for 'promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner.' The council will 'address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon.' The Council will also promote and co-ordinate the mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system. Additionally, the Council shall

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<sup>2</sup> Rehman, Javaid (2010). *International Human Rights Law*. Pearson Education Limited: England.

promote human rights education, advisory services, technical assistance, and capacity building with the relevant Member States. The Council is to serve as a forum for dialogue on thematic human rights issues and recommend opportunities for the development of international human rights law to the UN General Assembly; and promote the full implementation of human rights obligations by Member States, and follow up on human rights commitments from other conferences.”<sup>3</sup>

The Human Rights Council reports to the UN General Assembly. The Council’s 47 members are elected by the General Assembly for a period of three years. The elected members are selected from different regions to ensure global representation: 13 members are selected from Africa and Asia, 6 from eastern Europe, 8 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 7 are from western Europe and other states.

Among other things, the Council undertakes the following activities:

- **The Universal Periodic Review** (discussed in subsequent activities)
- **Complaints procedure:** The complaints procedure allows individuals and groups to report human rights abuses in a confidential setting: “The objective of the procedure is to encourage and facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the accused State, Council members and the complainant(s)...The complaints procedure is established to ‘address consistent patterns of gross and reliably attested violations of all human rights and all fundamental freedoms occurring in any part of the world under any circumstances’”.<sup>4</sup>
- **Special Procedures:** The Council is able to initiate thematic or country-specific monitoring. In both cases, the Council can appoint Special Rapporteurs to follow analyze particular human rights violations. For example, there is a Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders and there is an Independent Expert on the Situation of Human Rights in the Central African Republic.
- **Advisory Committee:** The Council has an Advisory Committee that acts as a think-tank, providing expertise and advice as well as conducting substantive research on thematic human rights issues.
- **OHCHR:** As discussed in the previous activity, OHCHR acts as the Secretariat for the Council. It is mandate to monitor human rights and to implement projects, among other things.

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<sup>3</sup> Rehman, Javaid (2010). *International Human Rights Law*. Pearson Education Limited: England.

<sup>4</sup> Rehman, Javaid (2010). *International Human Rights Law*. Pearson Education Limited: England.

## Activity 7: Introduction to the Universal Periodic Review

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Flipchart, markers, PPT (3), printout of 'Steps in the UPR process', computer, projector

**Objective:** *Participants are able to explain each step in the UPR process (knowledge and learning).*

Provide participants with each of the steps below, printed on separate pieces of paper in random order (see Annex 2). In small groups, ask the participants to try to put the steps in the correct order. The groups should discuss each step and should try to identify what each step consists of (e.g. what happens during each step). Each group should present their order to the plenary, describing what they believe happens during each step. The list below provides the facilitator with the correct order and a brief description of each step. The facilitator should input the information provided in the Notes for the Facilitator into the discussion.

### Activity 7: Notes for the Facilitator

#### Steps in the UPR Process

##### **1. Preparation of reports**

The state under review drafts a report (max 20 pages). Other stakeholders, such as NGOs, prepare reports for the OHCHR (max 5,630 words if submitted by a group of organizations and 2,815 words if submitted by a single organization).

##### **2. Compilation of reports**

The OHCHR summarizes the information provided by UN agencies and treaty-bodies (such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child) into one report (max 10 pages) entitled "Compilation of UN Information". The OHCHR also summarizes the information provided by civil society and other stakeholders into a second report (max 10 pages) entitled "Summary of stakeholders' information". The OHCHR cannot modify the information subject by NGOs, but can select sections to be included in the final report. The reports submitted by the NGOs are a crucial for the UPR, because they allow for direct evaluation, with direct primary sources concerning the human rights situation.

##### **3. Review of the state party**

The review takes place in Geneva. During the review, the state presents its report. Subsequently, there is a 3.5 hour interactive dialogue between the country under review and the UN countries. The examination is facilitated by a group of three reports (troika) chosen by the Human Rights Council in accordance with specific geographic criteria and drawn by lot. Following this discussion, the UPR working group (composed of the 193 UN members and 2 observer states) informally adopts the outcome document, which includes a list of recommendations made during the review.

#### **4. Official adoption of the outcome document**

Several months later (to give time for the state under examination to consider and to accept or reject recommendations), the Human Rights Council officially adopts the outcome document. Each item in the official document is discussed in the Human Rights Council before its adoption. NGOs and other states, as well as the state under review, are given the opportunity to speak before the item is voted on. However, at this stage, no modification to the report is made.

#### **5. Follow up and implementation of recommendations**

States are encouraged to implement recommendations offered during the UPR. They are also encouraged to conduct broad consultations with NGOs in this regard.

**Using PPT (3), introduce the participants to the mandate and objective of the Universal Periodic Review (Further information provided below).**

#### **What is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)?**

The Universal Periodic Review is the mechanism through which the Human Rights Council assesses the human rights situation in each member state of the United Nations, in accordance with their international obligations and commitments. Each country is assessed once every four and half years.

During the UPR process, each country is reviewed on the basis of the following human rights agreements:

- The Charter of the United Nations (UN Charter)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- The human rights instruments to which the country is a party (treaties or conventions)
- The country's voluntary pledges and commitments, including those undertaken when presenting its candidature for election to the Human Rights Council<sup>5</sup>

#### **How is the UPR different from other UN treaty-based human rights mechanisms?**

Unlike the treaty-bodies (such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child), the UPR does not focus on thematic topics. Rather it reviews all human rights.

Another difference is that in the treaty-based mechanisms, countries are assessed by independent experts. During the UPR, countries are assessed by their peers: the members of the Human Rights Council and other state parties. As such, the UPR is a very political process.

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<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."

### **How does it work?**

A state is reviewed on the basis of three documents:

- 1) A national report submitted by the state under review
- 2) A compilation of UN information about the state under review (prepared by OHCHR)
- 3) A summary of information submitted by other stakeholders – mainly civil society and the national human rights institutions (prepared by OHCHR on the basis of reports submitted by stakeholders)

The review takes the form of a 3.5 hour interactive dialogue between the state under review and the other states in the Human Rights Council. The state under examination begins by presenting the human rights situation in their country or, if in the second cycle, the implementation of recommendations accepted during the last UPR. States are invited to offer support, criticism and recommendations to the country under review. The country under review is given license to respond to the recommendations and concerns.

A few days after the initial meeting, the Council adopts an unofficial report of the review proceedings.

A few months later, the official document is adopted by the Council. This report contains the recommendations put forward by members of the Council and the response of the State under review. One hour is set aside for the adoption of the final document. That hour is equally divided among the State under review, other States, national human rights institutions, and NGO observers.<sup>6</sup>

Refer to the following website for additional information:

<http://www.ohchr.org/FR/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13866&LangID=F>

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<sup>6</sup> OHCHR. "A Practical Guide for Civil Society: Universal Periodic Review"

## Activity 8: Introduction to the Role of NGOs in the UPR

**Activity duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Material required:** Flipchart, markers, printout of 'Steps in the UPR process' (provided in the last activity)

**Objective:** *Participants are able to explain how NGOs can participate in each stage of the UPR process (knowledge and learning).*

Using the steps in the UPR process discussed in the previous activity, ask participants to work in small groups to identify how they think NGOs might be able to intervene at each step. In the plenary, led the group in a discussion about how they believe NGOs will be able to intervene.

After all the groups have provided their suggestions, the facilitator should use the information presented in the Notes for the Facilitator to provide participants with guidance.

### Activity 8: Notes for the Facilitator

#### NGO participation in Steps in the UPR Process

##### **1. Preparation of reports**

NGOs are able to prepare and submit reports on the human rights situation of the country under review to OHCHR for the UPR. They can either draft reports as a coalition (max 5,630 words) or submit individual reports (max 2,815 words). NGOs do not need to be ECOSOC accredited to submit a report.

NGOs should also participate in consultation sessions with the government during the government's preparation of the state report.

##### **2. Compilation of reports**

The OHCHR summarizes the information provided by civil society and other stakeholders into a report (max 10 pages). This is the report used during the UPR. The OHCHR is not allowed to alter the information taken from NGO reports but can select as little or as much as they would like to from NGO reports. This means that only part of the NGO report is likely to be included in the final report included in the review.

##### **3. Review of the State Party**

NGOs in consultative relationship with ECOSOC may attend sessions of the UPR Working Group. However, there is no provision for such NGOs to take the floor or submit written information at these sessions.

However, NGOs should lobby governments in the Human Rights Council that are friendly to targeted issues (child rights, violence against women, etc) to ask particular questions or to make specific recommendations during the review.



When meeting with delegates, whether in the country or in Geneva, it is important to concentrate on priority issues and present for each about four or five specific questions and recommendations in a short document of one or two pages.<sup>7</sup>

NGOs are encouraged to:

1. **Attend the review:** Civil society organizations are not allowed to take the floor during the review, but they can be present in the room.
2. **Hold a side event:** As during the Human Rights Council, NGOs have the possibility to hold side events during the session of the Working Group. However, side events the day before the review should not be organized for lobbying as it will have limited impact on delegations' statement. Lobbying in Geneva and/or in country should be done 1-2 months before the review. The NGO UPR Info organizes in Geneva lobbying sessions with diplomats which could be useful<sup>8</sup>.
3. **Organize a screening of the webcast in-country:** Each review is "webcasted" (refer to: <http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/>), which means filmed by the UN and accessible live and in archive on the UN website. NGOs can organize in a cinema or in a conference room the screening of the review and invite the civil society, the media, the parliamentarians, the opposition, the UN agencies, etc.
4. **Hold a press conference/statements:** Right after the review, NGOs can hold press conference and/or issue press statements to share their assessment of the review.<sup>9</sup> For examples, refer to Amnesty Internationals Press Statements:
  - a. Ghana  
<http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/info/AFR28/001/2013/fr>
  - b. Sudan  
<http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/info/AFR54/031/2011/fr>
  - c. Sierra Leone  
<http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/info/AFR51/003/2011/fr>
5. **Official adoption of the outcome document:** NGOs in consultative relationship with ECOSOC may also participate in regular sessions of the Human Rights Council, at which UPR outcomes are considered and adopted. NGOs can be involved in this session of the HRC in two ways:
  - During the adoption of the report at the HRC plenary session, 20 minutes are allocated to NGOs to make a statement. In total, ten NGOs are given two minutes each.
  - NGOs can submit written statements. However, written statements have less impact than oral ones.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/how-to/role-ngos> (Accessed 23.04.13)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/upr-process/pre-sessions>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/how-to/role-ngos> (Accessed 23.04.13)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/how-to/role-ngos> (Accessed 23.04.13)

## **6. Follow up and implementation of recommendations**

NGOs and other stakeholders are encouraged to use the recommendations to monitor the human rights situation and to advocate for change. Between two reviews NGOs should:

- Make recommendations and pledges public;
- Monitor their implementation;
- Engage in dialogue with the State reviewed to participate in their implementation;
- Report to the Human Rights Council on the progress.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/how-to/role-ngos> (Accessed 23.04.13)

## Notes to Self

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## Session 4: Overview of Reporting to the UPR

### Objectives:

- Participants are able to describe the type of information that should be included in an NGO report to the UPR (*knowledge*).
- Participants are able to describe the structure of an NGO report to the UPR (*knowledge*).
- Participants have identified best practices for drafting an NGO report (*learning*).

### Session duration:

6 hours

### Material required:

PPT (4), printouts of textbox (Annex 3), printout of ‘Technical Guidelines for the preparation of documents’ (Annex 4), printouts of the ‘Outline of the Summary of OHCHR submissions’ (Annex 5), printouts of a sample submission to the UPR (Annex 6), printout of ‘Checklist: Key elements for good NGO submission for the UPR’ (Annex 7), computer, projector

### Facilitator’s Notes:

This session is designed to provide the participants with an overview of the NGO report to the UPR and to assist them in identifying good practice.

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## Activity 9: Overview of Reports

### Activity duration:

1 hour 30 minutes

### Material required:

PPT (4), Printouts of the textbox (Annex 3), computer, projector

### Objective:

*Participants are able to describe the type of information that should be included in an NGO report to the UPR (knowledge).*

Using PPT (4) as a basis, present an overview of the submitted reports, with an emphasis on the NGO submission. Additional information is provided in the Notes for the Facilitator.

The following information was taken from Fact Sheet No. 2, developed by the NGO Group for the CRC and UPR Info. Following the facilitator’s presentation (which should cover this information), provide the participants with printouts of the text below (see Annex 3) for their use during the drafting process.

### **What information can an NGO submission include?**

Under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), any NGO can send a written submission on the human rights situation of any UN Member State. NGOs can therefore raise issues under each international covenant and convention as well as any relevant issue covered by the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other human rights instruments to which a State is Party, voluntary pledges and commitments made by a State, and applicable international humanitarian law.

### **What are the particularities of an NGO submission for the UPR?**

- All UPR submissions are public, be they the State, United Nations or NGO submissions.
- NGO submissions are maximum 2,815 words (about 5 pages) for a submission from an individual NGO and 5,630 words (about 10 pages) for a joint submission.
- NGO submissions do not have to cover all rights. **On the contrary, prioritization of key human rights issues is recommended.**
- NGO submissions that respect the technical guidelines of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) will be uploaded on the OHCHR website.
- Extracts of NGOs' submissions may be selected by the OHCHR and included in its summary of stakeholders' information (known as the OHCHR summary).
- NGOs have to send their submissions before the State submits its national report. NGOs are therefore not able to respond to State's views, but they have a chance to highlight issues to be discussed.
- NGOs are encouraged to include achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints of their States in their submissions (where possible) and information on the implementation of accepted UPR recommendations since the last review.
- NGO written submissions to the UPR cannot be anonymous or confidential; the name of the NGO submitting the information and the written submission will be available online. Reference to individual cases should therefore only be made if the safety and well-being of the individuals concerned are not at risk. If there is a fear of reprisal, national NGOs may wish to submit information through an international NGO.

### **How to ensure NGO information is included in the OHCHR summary?**

- *Ensure the submission is credible and reliable:* The OHCHR does not have the time to check the information provided by NGOs; therefore they need to have confidence in the information they receive. A joint submission increases the credibility and visibility of NGOs' information, therefore increasing the likelihood of its inclusion in the summary. This is especially true for national NGOs that might not be known to the OHCHR.<sup>12</sup>
- NGOs should use technical language and examples, as this will indicate that the NGO submission is based on first-hand information.
- *Provide information in a format that the OHCHR can easily use:* Although there is no formal template for NGO submissions to the UPR, the OHCHR has developed a template for its summary. If NGO information is presented according to its headings, it will make it easier for the OHCHR to know under which section the information should be included.<sup>13</sup>
- To increase the chances of getting information included in the summary, NGOs should provide the following information on each issue: **1) a general statement defining the issue, 2) supportive examples and 3) recommendation(s).** The OHCHR often uses the general statement and the recommendation(s) in its report. While the examples are rarely included in the summary, they show that NGO information is credible and reliable.

<sup>12</sup> UPR Info and NGO Group for the CRC. "Fact Sheet No. 2, NGO Written Submission for the Universal Periodic Review: Information for NGOs"

<sup>13</sup> UPR Info and NGO Group for the CRC. "Fact Sheet No. 2, NGO Written Submission for the Universal Periodic Review: Information for NGOs"

**What type of information should NGOs include?**

- Highlight the main issues of concern in the State over the past 4 1/2 years, including emerging issues or ones which need international pressure.
- Include information on the implementation of recommendations accepted in previous UPR cycles.
- Refer to human rights instruments, national legal standards, and so on for each issue described.
- The general statement defining the issue should be kept short, and where possible, should include the State's achievements and best practices.
- Make precise, specific, action-oriented (i.e. implementable in the next 4 1/2 years) and easy to monitor recommendations to the State. It is important to carefully word recommendations. The impact is different if the recommendation is 'to ratify' a treaty or 'to consider the ratification of a treaty'.
- Written submissions should not include second-hand information (except when it clearly supports original information). Facts and supporting evidence of the identified priority issues and recommendations may be annexed to the submission for reference.
- Identify a maximum of 5–10 key issues in the country (ideally 1–2 issues per page).<sup>14</sup>

**Activity 9: Notes for the Facilitator**

In preparation for each country's review, member States are provided with three different documents:

1. **Information prepared by the country under review:** The country under review provides a 20-page report with detailed information on how it has fulfilled its human rights obligations and commitments including information on achievements, best practices, challenges, and limitations. Countries are encouraged to meet with civil society to gather information for the report.
2. **A compilation of information from UN mechanisms prepared by the OHCHR:** This is a 10-page report with relevant information from treaty bodies, independent experts or special rapporteurs, UN agencies, and other relevant documents from the UN, compiled by the OHCHR.
3. **Summary of stakeholder/NGO submissions prepared by the OHCHR:** This is a 10-page summary of credible and reliable information provided by national stakeholders, NGOs, grassroots organizations, and other relevant groups. NGOs submissions are crucial to the UPR because they provide a direct and grassroots assessment of the human rights situation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> UPR Info and NGO Group for the CRC. "Fact Sheet No. 2, NGO Written Submission for the Universal Periodic Review: Information for NGOs"

<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."

## Activity 10: Reviewing Guidelines for NGO Reports

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Printout of 'Technical Guidelines for the preparation of documents' (Annex 4), printouts of the 'Outline of the Summary of OHCHR submissions' textbox (Annex 5)

**Objective:** *Participants are able to describe the structure of an NGO report to the UPR (knowledge).*

Before this activity, the facilitator should print several reports and data on the participants' thematic issues. The facilitator should distribute these to the participants at the beginning of this activity.

Provide each participant with the 'Technical Guidelines for the preparation of documents' (Annex 4). Give the participants 20 minutes to read the Guidelines. Working in pairs, give participants 30 minutes to draft an outline for their submission (based on the Guidelines), using the reports provided by the facilitator as a basis.

In the plenary, jointly draft a single outline based on the participants' work in pairs. Provide the participants with the outline suggested by the OHCHR, as shown below (Annex 5). **Ask the participants to identify which sections they would like to include in their report. Identify which sections the thematic group will write together and which sections will be drafted as a group.** The thematic groups should all contribute relevant information to section I, II.A, III, IV of the below table.

#### Box 6: Outline of the OHCHR summary of NGO submissions

- I. Background and Framework
  - A. Scope of international obligations
  - B. Constitutional and legislative framework
  - C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure
  - D. Policy measures
- II. Promotion and Protection of human rights on the ground
  - A. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms
    - 1. Cooperation with treaty bodies
    - 2. Cooperation with special procedures
    - 3. Cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
  - B. Implementation of international human rights obligations
    - 1. Equality and non-discrimination
    - 2. Right to life, liberty, and security of the person
    - 3. Administration of justice and the rule of law
    - 4. Freedom of religion or belief, association, and peaceful assembly and the right to participate in public and political life
    - 5. Right to work and to just and favorable conditions of work
    - 6. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living
    - 7. Right to education and to participate in the cultural life of the community
    - 8. Minorities and indigenous peoples
    - 9. Migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers
    - 10. Human rights and counter-terrorism
- III. Achievements, best practices, challenges, and constraints
- IV. Key national priorities, initiatives, and commitments
  - A. Pledges by the State
  - B. Specific recommendations for follow-up
- V. Capacity-building and technical assistance

Source: UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees



## Activity 11: Drawing Lessons from Sample NGO Reports

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Printouts of 2 sample submissions to the UPR (Annex 6), Printout of 'Checklist: Key elements for good NGO submission for the UPR' (Annex 7)

**Objective:** *Participants have identified best-practices for drafting an NGO report (learning).*

Divide the participants into at least six groups. Provide each group with two sample NGO submissions to the UPR and each participant with the 'Checklist: Key elements for good NGO submission for the UPR'. Ask each group to identify strengths and weaknesses of both reports that they have been given. They can use the Checklist as guidance but should not limit their observations to the points highlighted by this document.

# CHECKLIST

## Key elements for a good NGO submission for the UPR

- ✓ A maximum of 2,815 words (about 5 pages) for an individual submission and 5,630 words (about 10 pages) for a joint submission.
- ✓ The submission is focused on key human rights issues.
- ✓ Information on the human rights situation in the last 4½ years organised under the headings used in the OHCHR summary of stakeholders' information.
- ✓ Information on the implementation of accepted recommendations in the State under review.
- ✓ Each human rights issue addressed contains: a general statement defining the issue, examples to show the credibility of the general statement and recommendations.
- ✓ NGO information complements – but does not repeat – UN information. It should not consist of copying and pasting the Committees' concluding observations, as OHCHR already has this information.
- ✓ Issues are illustrated by examples to demonstrate that it is first-hand information, based on the NGOs' experience and not exclusively on media information.
- ✓ NGOs should use professional and technical language to show that they know what they are describing and refer to statistics, data and/or specific cases in footnotes. The OHCHR summary will not refer to individuals mentioned in the submission, except if they are emblematic cases.
- ✓ NGO recommendations to the State should be worded in a way that makes it easy to monitor their implementation. Action-oriented and concrete recommendations are easier to lobby for.
- ✓ An NGO submission is sent within the deadline (7 to 8 months prior to the review).<sup>12</sup>
- ✓ The submission is well written in one of the UN languages, preferably in English, French or Spanish to ensure that a maximum number of States can read it.
- ✓ The OHCHR cannot redraft NGO submissions and therefore cannot include information in their summary if the language is not up to professional standards. For those not fluent in a UN language, they may wish to get a professional translation of their submission.

<sup>12</sup> Check <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NewDeadlines.aspx> for the exact deadlines.

Source: UPR Info's Fact sheet 2: NGO written submission

## **Transition Activity 12: Describing Breakout Sessions and the Drafting Process**

**Activity duration:** 30 minutes

**Material required:** Printouts of Agenda for the Breakout sessions

Explain to the participants that during the upcoming training session, they will work in their thematic groups to:

- Review data and reports that they have already worked on and/or to collect new or additional data
- Draft sections of the final report that pertain to their thematic issue

A specific training for each thematic group has to be put together, based on the work that they have already done and identified needs.

Provide each thematic group with the agenda for their thematic training session. Allow participants time to read the agenda to ask any question that they might have.

Explain to participants that after the thematic training session, the groups will meet again to complete the report and to prepare for submission, lobbying activities, and to identify follow up action.

Explain to participants that the UPR covers all rights.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 5: Break-out Sessions – Drafting the Thematic Sections of the Report

### Objectives:

- Participants have reviewed and identified recommendations relevant to their thematic area from the first review of the country at the UPR (*realization*).
- Participants have chosen priority subjects for the report (*realization*).
- Participants are able to identify the type of information that should be included in each section of the report (*knowledge*).
- Participants will have identified what information they currently have and what information is still needed to draft their thematic section of the UPR report (*realization*).
- Participants will have developed a questionnaire addressed to missing information (*realization*).
- Participants are able to identify the components of a strong recommendation (*learning*).
- Participants have identified and agreed to 1-2 recommendations (*realization*).
- Participants have identified a drafting team and agreed to a timeframe (*realization*).
- Participants have revised the first draft of the thematic group's section of the UPR report (*realization*).

### Session duration:

15 hours 30 minutes

### Material required:

Printouts of most recent reports produced by the group, printouts from database (if available), printouts of the chart entitle 'Identifying thematic input into the reports' (Annex 8), printouts of the List of Recommendations textbox (Annex 9), paper, pens, flipchart, markers, printouts of the first draft of the thematic sections of the report, printouts of the Checklist: Key elements for good NGO Submission for the UPR (Annex 7), computers

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to assist thematic groups in drafting their section of the UPR report. Additional activities may be included in this training session to meet the particular needs of a thematic group (i.e. data collection, report writing, citations, etc).

### Activity 13: Reviewing Recommendations from the Last UPR

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Computers, paper and pens

**Objective:** *Participants have reviewed and identified recommendations relevant to their thematic area from the country's first review at the UPR (realization).*

Using the computer facilities, direct participants to the UPR information page:

- <http://www.upr-info.org>
- <http://www.ohchr.org/fr/hrbodies/upr/pages/uprmain.aspx>.

In their thematic groups, ask participants to read through all of the recommendations made to the participants' country during its previous UPR review.

Participants should identify and write down recommendations that relate to their particular thematic focus (namely children, women, and human rights defenders).

In the plenary, each group should read the identified recommendations to the group.

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### Activity 14: Identifying Key Priorities

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Recommendations from the last UPR review (from the previous activity), printouts of most recent reports produced by the group, printouts from their research database (if available)

**Objective:** *Participants have chosen priority subjects for the report (realization).*

Remind participants that the UPR report is very short. It is important that participants chose their subject areas carefully. It is much better to focus on two or three subjects (per theme), with solid data and strong recommendations, then to briefly cover many subjects.

In their thematic groups, give participants 30 minutes to re-read recent reports that they have completed and/or to review their primary and secondary data (if they have a database).

Participants should take note of:

- Subjects that are particularly critical (grave human rights violations, issues that have not been addressed or only summarily addressed by the government, etc)
- Subjects on which participants have significant credible information (primary and secondary if possible)

Participants should also identify recommendations that related to the subjects that they have chosen.

In the plenary, ask each participant to identify which subjects that they believe are particularly critical and which subjects are supported by significant credible information. For each, the participants should also identify the corresponding Recommendation. Make sure that participants explain their choices.

The facilitator should make a list of the subjects that were selected by the participants. As a group, agree on one or two subjects to address in the report. Make sure that the participants make this decision on the basis of the information available and/or the gravity of the human rights violation.

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### **Activity 15: Reviewing the Structure of the Report**

**Activity duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Material required:** Printouts of the chart entitled 'Identifying Thematic Input into the Reports' (Annex 8)

**Objective:** *Participants are able to identify the type of information that should be included in each section of the report (knowledge).*

Provide participants with the chart below (Annex 8). Ask participants to highlight the sections that they will contribute to, in accordance with the decision taken during the last session. As a group, discuss each of the selected sections and identify the content of each section. Each participant should complete the 'Description' column of their chart at the end of the activity.

**Chart: Identifying Thematic Input into the Report**

Outline		Description	What information do we have?	What information to we need?	Sources for missing information
Theme 1	Scope of international obligations				
	Constitutional and legislative framework				
	Institutional and human rights infrastructure				
	Policy measures	First hand information			
		Second hand information			
	Achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints				
	Key national priorities, initiatives and commitments	Pledges by the state			
		Specific recommendations for follow-up			



## Activity 16: Identifying Relevant Data

**Activity duration:** 3 hours 30 minutes

**Material required:** Printouts of the chart entitled 'Identifying thematic input into the reports' (used during the previous activity), printouts of most recent reports produced by the group, printouts from database (if available)

**Objective:** *Participants will have identified what information they currently have and what information is still needed to draft their thematic section of the UPR report (realization).*

Using their existing reports and database printouts for reference, in small groups ask participants to complete the column entitled 'what information do we have?' They should only focus on the selected thematic subjects. In the plenary, compile a comprehensive list of the information that they have currently. Lead the participants in a discussion about the number and credibility of their sources.

Ask participants in their small groups to identify any information that they think is missing (including information that should be check or confirmed). Make sure that the participants identify specific pieces of information, not general information (i.e. the number of girls in country who have reported sexual violence in 2009). Participants should complete the column entitled 'what information do we need'.

In the plenary, agree on what information is still needed and identify how this information can be obtained.

As a group, complete the '**source**' column of the chart.

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## Activity 17: Developing the Questionnaires

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Paper, pens

**Objective:** *Participants will have developed a questionnaire addressed to missing information (realization).*

Based on the results from the previous activity, ask the participants to draft questions for each piece of missing data. When possible, encourage the participants to use multiple-choice questions to ease data analysis. Remind participants that, if possible, each question should be subject specific, time specific, location specific and should request disaggregated data (if relevant).

## Activity 17: Notes for the Facilitator

### Example Questionnaire

Subject Area	Interviewee	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
Corporal Punishment	UNICEF	Do you have national and provincial statistics regarding the frequency of corporal punishment from 2009 - 2012? If yes, can we have a copy?	In which type of institution is there a significant rate of corporal punishment? a. Primary school (public) b. Secondary school (public) c. Primary school (Private) d. Secondary school (Private) e. Other	What are the root causes of CP in your opinion?	List the most frequent types of corporal punishment.

## Activity 18: Understanding What Makes a Strong Recommendation

**Activity duration:** 1 hour

**Material required:** Paper, pens, flipchart, markers, printouts of the List of Recommendations textbox (Annex 9)

**Objective:** *Participants are able to identify the components of a strong recommendation (learning).*

Provide participants with the following list of recommendations (Annex 9). In small groups, ask participants to identify which recommendations are strong and which are weak. For each, they should justify their classification. In the plenary, discuss the recommendations.

### List of Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Education should ensure that all children are in school by the end of 2014.
2. The Ministry of Education should issue a decree criminalizing the use of corporal punishment in schools by the end of 2014.
3. The Ministry of Education should increase their budget allocation for teacher salaries by 10 percent by 2014.
4. Parents should prevent their children from working in the mines.
5. The Ministry of Labour should issue a decree prohibiting child labour in the mining sector.

## Activity 18: Notes for the Facilitator

During the plenary discussion, input the following information. A strong advocacy message is:

1. **Action-oriented:** The recommendation should call for action.
2. **Audience specific:** The recommendation should specify which actor (which Ministry, for example) should be responsible for enacting the change. Remember that the government is the primary audience.
3. **Based on evidence:** The report should clearly show why such action is necessary. The recommendation should address an evidence-based problem that is outlined in the report.
4. **Specific:** Ensure that you are calling for specific action in the recommendation. A general recommendation is VERY difficult to implement.
5. **Time-bound:** Specify in the recommendation a timetable for implementation.
6. **Achievable:** The recommendation is much more likely to have impact if it is something that the government will in fact be able to achieve.

Based on the above criteria, input the following analysis of the case-study recommendations into the plenary discussion:

1. This recommendation is too general. It does not call for SPECIFIC action. Additionally, it is not ACHIEVABLE. It does however identify the target audience and identify a time frame. This is not a good recommendation.
2. This is a good recommendation. It calls for SPECIFIC action, is AUDIENCE SPECIFIC, TIME-BOUND, and ACHIEVABLE.
3. This recommendation is okay. It calls for SPECIFIC ACTION, is AUDIENCE SPECIFIC and TIME-BOUND. Depending on the national context, however, it may not be ACHIEVABLE. Further research is needed to know whether it is actually possible. Depending on the collected data, it may or may not be calling for the best action.
4. This is not a good recommendation. It is not AUDIENCE SPECIFIC (the audience is the government, not parents). It is not TIME-BOUND or SPECIFIC (it does not explain HOW parents will be able to undertake the action). Alone, it is not ACHIEVABLE.
5. This is not a good recommendation. It is not EVIDENCE-BASED. The Child Protection Law and the Labour Code already prohibits child labour in the mining sector. This recommendation will not improve the situation.

## Activity 19: Identifying and Agreeing on Recommendations

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Paper, pens, flipchart, markers

**Objective:** *Participants have identified and agreed to 1-2 recommendations (realization).*

Break the plenary into small groups. Ask each group to identify 1-2 recommendations. Each group should present their recommendations to the plenary. As a group, discuss each recommendation and agree to the best two recommendations. Remember that a few strongly worded recommendations are better than many recommendations.

The facilitator should type the chosen recommendations at the end of the session and provided them to the participants.

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## Activity 20: Selecting a Drafting Team

**Activity duration:** 30 minutes

**Material required:** Flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *Participants have identified a drafting team and agreed to a timeframe (realization).*

In the plenary, identify two to three people who will be responsible for drafting the group's thematic section of the report. The drafting team should use the chart completed during the training and additional data collected.

During this session, participants will identify a clear timeframe for the drafting.

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## Activity 21: Reviewing the Draft Sections

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** Printouts of the first draft of the thematic sections of the report, printouts of the Checklist, Key elements for good NGO Submission for the UPR (Annex 7)

**Objective:** *Participants will have revised the first draft of the thematic section of the UPR report (realization).*

In small groups (2 or 3 persons), ask the group to revise the first draft of the report: content, structure, and grammar/autography. All suggestions should be agreed to and given to the drafting committee to revise the report. Remind participants to use the 'Checklist' during their revision to ensure that their section of the report meets the requirements of the UPR process.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 6: Before the Review at the HRC – Compiling the Report

### Objectives:

- Participants have selected a team of 2 – 3 people to draft the UPR report (*realization*).
- The participants have reviewed thematic reports and identified additional information required and/or necessary changes (*realization*).
- The participants have revised and agreed to recommendations (*realization*).
- The participants have reviewed and revised the final UPR report (*realization*).

### Session duration:

10 hours 30 minutes

### Material required:

Flipchart, markers, Printouts of the first draft of the final report, printouts of the thematic reports, printouts of the Checklist: Key elements for good NGO Submission for the UPR (Annex 7)

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to guide participants through the drafting and revision of their UPR report, based on the input from the thematic groups.

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### Activity 22: Selecting a Drafting Team

#### Activity duration:

30 minutes

#### Material required:

Flipchart and markers

#### Objective:

Participants have selected a team of 2 – 3 people to draft the UPR report (*realization*).

In the plenary, participants should select a team to draft the report. If possible, at least one person from each of the thematic groups should be selected.

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### Activity 23: Reviewing the Content

#### Activity duration:

3 hours

#### Material required:

Printouts of the thematic reports, flipchart and markers, printouts of the Checklist: Key elements for good NGO Submission for the UPR (Annex 7)

#### Objective:

The participants have reviewed thematic reports and identified additional information required and/or necessary changes (*realization*).

Participants should have been provided with all of the thematic reports prior to this session and should have read the reports.

Each of the thematic groups should present their report to the plenary. As a group, discuss the findings and the recommendations. Identify any areas that need additional work or information. The drafting team should take note of any changes required.

As a group, identify who will be responsible to follow up on missing information and a timeline. All information should be provided to the drafting team.

Remind participants to use the checklist in their evaluation of the thematic reports.

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## Activity 24: Reviewing Recommendations

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** Printouts of the thematic reports, flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *The participants have revised and agreed to recommendations (realization).*

All participants should have read the recommendations in the thematic reports before this session.

The facilitator should write the following guidance for drafting a recommendation on a flipchart:

1. **Action oriented:** The recommendation should call for action.
2. **Audience specific:** The recommendation should specify which actor (which Ministry, for example) should be responsible for enacting the change. Remember that the government is the primary audience.
3. **Based on evidence:** The recommendation should address an evidence-based problem that is outlined in the report.
4. **Specific:** Ensure that you are calling for specific action in the recommendation. A general recommendation is VERY difficult to implement.
5. **Time-bound:** Specify in the recommendation a timetable for implementation.
6. **Achievable:** The recommendation is much more likely to have impact if it is something that the government will in fact be able to achieve.

The report should clearly show why such action is necessary. The As a group, review all of the recommendations. Make sure that only the strongest recommendations are included in the final report. Encourage the participants to debate the recommendations and to make revisions.

The drafting team should make note of all agreed changes.



## Activity 25: Reviewing the Final Report

**Activity duration:** 5 hours

**Material required:** Printouts of the first draft of the final report, flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *The participants have reviewed and revised the final UPR report (realization).*

All of the participants should have been provided with the final report a few days before the training. They should attend this session with comments.

In small groups, ask the participants to discuss the final report and suggest changes. Encourage participants to use the 'checklist' to evaluate the report. Participants should look at structure, content, and autography.

In the plenary, ask each group to present their suggested changes. As a group, agree on which changes should be made to the report.

The drafting team should take note of all changes.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 7: At the Review at the HRC

### Objectives:

- Participants are able to describe the review process and to identify avenues for NGO participation (*knowledge*).
- Participants are able to explain elements of successful lobbying argument (*learning*).
- Participants will have identified lobbying messages (*realization*).
- Participants have identified lobbying targets and have drafted an action plan for lobbying activities (*realization*).
- Participants have drafted lobbying material, to be completed by a select team (*realization*).
- Participants have identified lobbying targets (*realization*).
- Participants have adapted their message to their advocacy targets (*realization*).
- Participants have drafted an action plan for lobbying activities (*realization*).
- Participants will have selected a representative(s) to attend the UPR in Geneva on their behalf (*realization*).

**Session duration:** 19 hours

**Material required:** PPT (5), Sample outcome document (Annex 10), Role play (Annex 11), Final UPR report, List of countries on the Human Rights Council (Annex 12), computers, projector

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to assist the participants in their preparation and participation in the UPR session at the Human Rights Committee.

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### Activity 26: Overview of the Review Process

**Activity duration:** 1 hour

**Material required:** PPT (5), Sample outcome document (Annex 10), computer, projector

**Objective:** Participants are able to describe the review process and to identify avenues for NGO participation (*knowledge*).

Begin the activity by asking the participants to describe the interactive dialogue and the informal adoption of recommendations during the UPR, as presented during Activities 7 and 8.

Show the participants part of the webcast version of a UPR session (available at: <http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc>), if possible of their country. End this activity by presenting PPT (5) and provide participants with an overview of the review process. The overview should look at both the interactive dialogue between the state under revision and the other states in the Human Rights Council as well as the informal adoption of recommendations, with specific attention to avenues for NGO involvement. Use the information presented in the Notes for the Facilitator into the presentation.

## Activity 26: Notes for the Facilitator

### Interactive Dialogue

Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center has summarized the Review session as follows:<sup>16</sup>

The actual review consists of three and a half hours of interactive dialogue between the country under review and the UN member States. During this session, the country under review has one hour and ten minutes to introduce its report, respond to questions or recommendations, and to make concluding comments at the end of the review. Countries are allowed to ask questions and suggest recommendations to the country under review for 2 hours and twenty minutes.

**Table 2: Three-and-half-hour interactive dialogue at the UPR Working Group session**

Country under review (1 hour 10 minutes)	Introduction of the country's report	Estimated time that the country uses to introduce its national report. Usually a high level representative of the country under review presents the report. For example, Colombia's government sent the Vice President to introduce the government's report
	10-30 mins	
	Time to respond to question and recommendations	Estimated time that the country under review takes to respond to questions and recommendations raised during the interactive dialogue by other countries.
	25-45 mins	
	Final remarks	At the end of the review, the country under review can take few minutes to make final comments. Estimated time is 5 to 10 minutes.
	5-10 mins	
UN member states (2 hours 20 mins)	Countries ask questions and make recommendations	A total of two hours and twenty minutes is allotted for countries to ask questions and make comments or recommendations to the country under review. Countries that are part of the Human Rights Council can speak for up to 3 minutes and observer countries 2 minutes. However, the total time is usually divided among the all speaker. Approximately 180 recommendations are made per review. The number of recommendations depends on the level of interest, preparation, and engagement of other UN countries and NGOs with respect to the country under review.
	140 mins	

### **NGO involvement:**

Only NGOs with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council are allowed to attend the UPR review as observers. NGOs can attend the review but are not allowed to make oral statement. However, NGOs can undertake the following activities:

- **Lobby 'friendly' states** to ask questions or to make particular recommendations (lobby should occur 1 – 2 months before the event). Because NGOs may attend but not speak at the review session, lobbying

<sup>16</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review." Revised by *UPR Info* according to the new modalities of the second UPR cycle.

countries about important human rights issues is the only way to make sure recommendations will be raised during the review.

- **Organize a national viewing** of the live broadcast of the UPR session (sessions are accessible through OHCHR's website)
- **Hold a side event:** As during the Human Rights Council, NGOs have the possibility to hold side events during the session of the Working Group.<sup>17</sup>

### **Informal adoption of outcome document**

Approximately 48 hours after the dialogue, the UPR Working Group adopts a report summarizing the list of questions and recommendations raised during the review. The report is prepared by the OHCHR in collaboration with the country under review. The report includes the following:

1. Assessment of the situation of human rights in the reviewed country, including positive developments and challenges;
2. Identification of best practices;
3. Proposals for cooperation in the promotion and protection of human rights;
4. Provision of technical assistance;
5. Summary of comments, questions, and recommendations made by countries;
6. Accepted and noted recommendations by the country under review;
7. Recommendations that the country would like to defer decision-making on.<sup>18</sup>

During the adoption, a brief presentation is made to the UPR Working Group, highlighting recommendations made during the review and the State's acceptance or rejection of thereof. At this session, the report is informally adopted by the Council. After this meeting, modifications can be made to the report – including voluntary commitments from the state under review and accepting pending recommendations. The revised document is formally adopted by the Council few months later, at the HRC session.

NGOs should lobby their government before the informal adoption of the outcome document and before the formal adoption of the final document. They should lobby the government to make voluntary commitments and to accept particular recommendations made during the review session.

## **Activity 27: Lobbying States (Role Play)**

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** Role play (Annex 11), flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *Participants are able to explain elements of successful lobbying argument (learning).*

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.upr-info.org/en/how-to/role-ngos> (Accessed 23.04.13)

<sup>18</sup> Summary of report taken from: Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."

Divide the participants into two groups (Group A and Group B). Give each group their unique role-play directions (Annex 11). Give the participants the following instructions:

- Group A will represent the government of Country 1. Group B will lobby Country 1 to encourage them to adopt particular recommendations (using recommendations from their actual submission).
- Group B will represent the government of Country 2. The group will pressure the government of Country 2 to adopt particular recommendations (using recommendations from their actual submission).

Before beginning their role play, each group should develop their advocacy message (for when they are acting as NGOs) and their position (for when they are acting as the state).

- **Advocacy message:** The group should identify the interests of the target government. Which subjects would they consider favorably? Why would it be in the interest to make a certain recommendation?
- **Government Positions:** The group should identify the interests of the government. Which type of recommendation is it likely to accept? Why? What type of information will they need before making a recommendation? What types of recommendations will they avoid?

After each presentation, analyze the outcome of the role-play. In particular, ask the participants:

- Was the recommendation and/or question good? Why or why not?
- How could it have been improved?
- Did the group make a logical argument about why their question and/or recommendation should be adopted?
- Was it tailored to their audience?
- How could it have been improved?

## Activity 28: Identifying Key Lobbying Messages

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** Final UPR report, flipchart, markers, computer

**Objective:** *Participants will have developed lobbying messages (realization).*

Divide the participants into their thematic groups. Ask participants to draft their advocacy message, on the computer. The message should be structured as follows:

- Problem statement
- Evidence supporting the problem statement
- Request for action (in this case, a request for the advocacy target to pose a certain recommendation during the UPR examination of the participants' country)

The facilitator should provide with the participants with the Guidelines, found in the annex, and provide the groups with support during the drafting process.

Each group should present their message to the plenary. The other groups should ask them questions and provide constructive feedback to clarify and improve each message. Each group should revise their message based on the feedback.

Each thematic group should give the facilitator their message at the end of the activity. Two or three days after this activity, the facilitator should provide the participants with additional comments and suggestions.

Explain to the participants that they will need to memorize their message. During the following activities, the facilitator will randomly select participants and ask them to recite their advocacy message.

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## Activity 29: Developing Lobbying Material

**Activity duration:** 5 hours

**Material required:** Final UPR report

**Objective:** *Participants have drafted lobbying material, to be completed by a select team (realization).*

Divide the participants into their thematic groups. Ask each group to develop at least two templates for 'lobbying' documents (not more than one page). All of the groups should present their models. The plenary should select one model to use.

Once the model has been selected, each thematic group should draft the advocacy document related to their subject. These documents should clearly state the objective, the requested intervention (what question or recommendation we would like the country to ask), and why it is important that the question or recommendation be posed. The document should be very short and easy to read (not more than 1 or 2 pages).

In the plenary, review all of the documents and agree on the content.

Each group should provide the facilitator with a copy of their advocacy document at the end of the activity, for further comments or suggestions.

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### Activity 30: Identifying 'Friendly' Countries

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** List of countries on the Human Rights Council (Annex 12), flipchart, markers, computers

**Objective:** *Participants have identified lobbying targets (realization).*

Explain to participants that NGOs should identify countries in the Human Rights Council that might be sympathetic to their issues and schedule meetings with representatives from embassies, consulates, and missions in the participants' country and/or Geneva.<sup>19</sup> Countries usually ask the same type of question or make the same type of recommendations, corresponding to their foreign policy (for example, posing recommendations about the death penalty, child rights, etc). Reviewing the types of recommendations made by countries during previous sessions will help you identify the best possible lobbying target.

Ask the participants to work in groups of two. Give each pair a target country (the countries should be preselected by the facilitator). Each group should complete the chart below, on their computers, as follows:

1. Use <http://www.upr-info.org/> to identify the type of recommendation that the country has posed during the previous UPR cycle (if possible)
2. Do Internet research to identify the country's foreign policy, particularly in regards to their policy on the participants' country. Collect policy documents, action plans, declarations, etc. (notably on the site of the Embassy or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
  - On the basis of the collected document, the groups should identify the country's priorities.
  - Particularly interesting document should be save on the computer that they are using.

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<sup>19</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."



3. Identify possible political risks for the target country. Why would they not want to make specific recommendations?

Each sub-group should present their findings on their country to the plenary. In the plenary, the group should agree on which countries they will target and what recommendations are particularly pertinent for each.

### Chart

Criteria	Response
Subject of recommendation during the previous UPR cycle	
Policy focus in Africa related to Human Rights	
Policy focus in the participants' country related to Human Rights	
Political risks	
Suggested approach	

## Activity 31: Adapting their Message

**Activity duration:** 4 hours

**Material required:** Message, Chart (previous activity), computer

**Objective:** *Participants have adapted their message to their advocacy targets (realization).*

Based on the results of the chart developed during the last activity, each thematic group should adapt their message to the countries that they have selected. The message should be directly drafted on the computer.

Each group should present their message to the plenary. The other groups should act as the advocacy target and should suggest improvement during the exercise. The thematic groups should revise their message based on the outcomes of this activity.

At the end of the activity, all of the revised messages should be given to the facilitator for additional suggests and comments.

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## Activity 32: Drafting an Action-Plan for Lobbying Activities

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** Flipchart, markers

**Objective:** *Participants have drafted an action plan for lobbying activities (realization).*

As a group, draft an activity timeline for country-based lobbying activities, including the identification of resources required (printing, etc) and who will be responsible for each activity.

## Action Plan

Theme	Target	Proposed date	Material	Person in charge of organizing the activity	Who should participant in the activity	Speaker	Person who will respond to questions	Note taker	Person responsible for follow up

### Activity 33: Identifying the Team for Geneva

**Activity duration:** 1 hour

**Material required:** Flipchart and markers

**Objective:** Participants will have selected a representative(s) to attend the UPR in Geneva on their behalf (*realization*).

Participants should select one or several representatives to attend the review in Geneva, Switzerland, **depending on the availability of resources**. The selected person(s) should have a thorough understanding of the subject and the report.

## Notes to Self

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## Session 8: After the Review

### Objectives:

- Participants will be able to describe the process by which the HRC officially adopts the outcome document of the UPR and avenues for NGO intervention during and after this session (*knowledge*).
- Participants have identified recommendations from the UPR outcome document to use as the basis for follow-up action (*realization*).
- Participants have identified follow-up activities to advocate for selected recommendations from the outcome document (*realization*).

**Session duration:** 5 hours 30 minutes

**Material required:** PPT (6), UPR outcome document, flipchart, and markers, computer, projector

### Facilitator's Notes:

This session is designed to provide participants with an overview of the official adoption process and to help participants identify ways that they can be involved in the UPR follow up.

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### Activity 34: Overview of the Official Adoption and Follow-up Action

**Activity duration:** 30 minutes

**Material required:** PPT (6), computer, projector

**Objective:** Participants will be able to describe the process by which the HRC officially adopts the outcome document of the UPR and avenues for NGO intervention during and after this session (*knowledge*).

Using PPT (6) as a basis, provide participants with an overview of the official adoption of the outcome document by the Human Rights Council. Additionally, provide participants with an overview of possible follow-up activities for civil society. The Notes for the Facilitator includes information that can be used during the presentation.

### Activity 34: Notes for the Facilitator

#### Formal adoption process:

The outcome document is officially adopted at the next regular session of the Human Rights Council, usually about four months after the Universal Periodic Review. During the formal adoption, the country under review can answer questions and respond to recommendations made during the review process. The official adoption session is allocated one hour.

The Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center described the formal adoption session as follows:<sup>20</sup>

Table 3: Official adoption of the outcome document		
60 Minutes	20 minutes	Country under review makes a formal statement and replies to questions and recommendations.
	20 minutes	Countries express their opinion on the outcome document. Human Rights Council member States have 4 minutes for each intervention and observer countries 3 minutes.
	20 minutes	NGOs can make "general comments". Each speaker has only 2 minutes for intervention. NGOs should coordinate before speaking at the session. (See Page 23)
<i>All comments made during this session by countries and stakeholders are compiled in a separate document (not included on the outcome), called Summary of Views and General Comments<sup>21</sup>.</i>		

#### NGO involvement during the formal adoption:

OHCHR summarized the avenues for NGO's involvement in the official adoption as follows: "Only NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) can be accredited to participate in the plenary session of the Human Rights Council as observers. During the Human Rights Council session, NGOs may submit written statements, and organize parallel events. In the plenary meetings, NGOs are able to observe the proceedings and to make oral statements, provided that they are inscribed on the list of speakers, and can be given the floor during the 20 minute-segment allocated to them."<sup>21</sup>

#### Follow up activities for NGOs:

Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center identified the following list of suggested follow up activities for NGOs:

1. **Organize a press conference:** Publicize the results of the outcome document that has been approved by the country under review, which means it has accepted recommendations and made voluntary commitments for improvement. Also highlight recommendations that were rejected and/or put on hold.
2. **Use the media:** There are many media tools like the use of Facebook, Twitter, blogs and other avenues that can be used to spread the word, educate the public, and put pressure on the government to fulfill its UPR obligations. Each subsequent review will be based largely on implementation efforts and improvement in key areas identified in the previous review.

<sup>20</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."

<sup>21</sup> OHCHR. "A Practical Guide for Civil Society: Universal Periodic Review."

3. **Organize meetings:** Discuss the relevance of the outcome document with your community, and how community members can engage in the implementation process.
  4. **Develop a strategy to monitor implementation:** Organizations should monitor government progress as well as problems or limitations during the four years between reviews.
  5. **Participate in implementation:** NGOs should engage in dialogue with the government to share expertise in the human rights field of concern, and to make the process and methods of implementation as effective and targeted as possible.
  6. **Organize a web casting:** Organizations in other countries have successfully organized events to inform civil society on the results of the review. Groups can host a webcasting event showing the interactive dialogue for their communities.<sup>22</sup>
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### Activity 35: Selecting Key Recommendations for Advocacy Action

**Activity duration:** 2 hours

**Material required:** UPR outcome document, flipchart, and markers

**Objective:** *Participants have identified recommendations from the UPR outcome document to use as the basis for follow-up action (realization).*

Working in pairs, ask participants to read through all of the recommendations in the UPR outcome document. Each group should select 2-3 recommendations that they would like to use as the basis for follow up action (advocacy, lobbying, etc). **Remind participants that they should select recommendations that are specific, measurable, and call for action from a particular agent of the government.**

In the plenary, each group should present the recommendations they selected and why they made their selection. Lead the group in a discussion about the selected recommendations. As a group, agree on 2-3 recommendations. Follow up action will be focused on these recommendations.

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<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center (2010). "A Practical Guide to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review."



## Activity 36: Developing an Action Plan

**Activity duration:** 3 hours

**Material required:** Recommendations selected during the previous activity, Flipchart and markers

**Objective:** *Participants have identified follow-up activities to advocate for selected recommendations from the outcome document (realization).*

In the plenary, ask the participants to identify possible follow up activities to advocate for the recommendations select during the last activity. As a group evaluate the options on the basis of:

1. Probable short term impact
2. Probable long term impact
3. Available resources

If the participants are interested developing a long-term advocacy strategy, the facilitator can provide them with an action-training and targeted support.

Otherwise, participants may want to select one or two of the identified activities to implement together. In this case, they should develop an action plan during this session, identifying required resources, organizations/persons who will take responsible for different activities, and a timeline for activities. The more detailed the action plan, the more useful it will be.