



UPR Info and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights organize:

Seminar

Making your recommendations count: SMART UPR recommendations for ESCR

Draft Concept Paper

Date: Monday, 1 September 2022

Time: 10:00- 12:00

Format: Meeting in person

Venue: UNOG

As the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) embarks on its 4th cycle, from November 2022 to February 2027, OHCHR is seeking to further increase the impact of the mechanism at country level and enhance implementation of UPR recommendations for greater fulfilment of human rights globally. Recommending States play a key role in highlighting human rights concerns for action on the ground. OHCHR underscores the indivisibility of rights, whether civil, cultural, economic, political or social rights. In order to ensure a greater balance between civil and political, and economic, social, and cultural rights, we are particularly encouraging Member States to focus on economic, social and cultural rights, and notably economic equality, an issue of significant urgency in our times. The seminar will aim to provide related guidance and good practices to support such recommendations and relevant follow-up.

Background

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique, State-driven peer review mechanism whereby the human rights record of all States is reviewed, on equal footing, by fellow States during an inter-governmental Working Group session in Geneva. All States are engaged actively in reviewing the human rights record of their peers and in making recommendations to them to improve the human rights. If a State supports a recommendation made during its UPR, it commits to implement that recommendation before the next review.

The recommendations are, therefore, the main tool through which the UPR can contribute to the improvement of human rights in the State under Review. Often States make general recommendations to the State under Review. If a recommendation is general, it is harder for the State under Review to identify constructive actions to implement them. To avoid that the potential of the mechanism to improve human rights is undermined, it is important that Recommending States formulate recommendations that are precise and action oriented.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UPR Info encourage States to use the SMART methodology when formulating UPR recommendations. The SMART method can be a

useful approach to create more effective recommendations. In addition, the characteristics of the SMART recommendations ease the monitoring work during the follow-up phase of the UPR, since they provide concrete elements that can be used as indicators of progress while holding States accountable.

Focus and Objectives

The seminar, organized in partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), will offer state representatives with good practices to use the UPR not only as an effective human rights mechanism but also as an effective accountability mechanism for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Two months before the beginning of the 4th UPR cycle with the 41st Working Group, the event will be an occasion to inspire diplomats in making action-oriented recommendations to promote economic equality and broader enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

More specifically, the objectives of the seminar are:

1. Share a methodology (SMART) to formulate action-oriented recommendations for the UPR;
2. Highlight the good practices from Recommending States in the formulation and follow up of UPR recommendations to promote economic equality and economic, social and cultural rights.

Methodology and format

The seminar will be 2 hours long.

It is expected that opening remarks will be limited to 4 minutes maximum per speaker.

OHCHR [The (first or second speaker)] will share norms, experiences and guidance on addressing economic inequality and promoting economic, social and cultural rights, drawing on the [Repository on UPR good practices of engagement by the UN system at country level](#) and the [Examples of good practice at country level reported in the UPR 3rd cycle](#), and with consideration of progressive taxation. This section will last 20 minutes.

UPR-Info [The (first or second speaker)] will present the SMART methodology and provide good practices on how to formulate action-oriented recommendations. This section will last 20 minutes.

Following the panelists' interventions, the moderator will give the floor to three State representatives who will be invited to share good practices on their engagement with the UPR. To prepare the way, we invite the identified States to frame their interventions/comments around the following guiding questions:

- *Can you highlight one example of good practice put in place by your country in using the UPR effectively to achieve a change on the ground?*
- *What recommendation was received, how was it perceived at the national level, what analysis and planning were developed to implement it, what were some (1-2) key challenges and what*

has been the impact to date? Please share one key lesson from the experience that you think will be useful for fellow-Member States.

- *What is your country's experience of highlighting economic, social and cultural rights as a result of the UPR process?*

The 3 intervening States will speak for 3 minutes each. The last segment of the seminar will be open for questions and discussion – 40 minutes.

Wrap-up – 10 min.

The event will be in English.

Speakers:

1. Chitrlekha Massey, Advocacy and Outreach ESCR & SDGs and COVID -19, OHCHR
 2. Alisa Clarke, Human Rights Officer, UPR Branch, OHCHR
 4. Nicoletta Zappile, Programme Manager, UPR Info
- Chair: Mona M'Bikay Executive Director, UPR Info