Activity Report - UPR INFO – Nepal 2020

1. Introduction

In 2020 and to prepare for the 3rd UPR cycle of Nepal, UPR Info in partnership with the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal, Informal Sector Service as Secretariat of the UPR CSO Coalition and UNDP Nepal organized and delivered a series of training to civil society and NHRC on this UN’s mechanism.

The overall objective was to support national stakeholders produce good quality reports to feed the Review of Nepal and suggest SMART recommendations to resident diplomats, accompanied by advocacy leading up to the UPR Working Group.

Due to the current pandemic caused by Covid-19, UPR Info and partners had to change the delivery methods of these training and adapt through innovative strategies to support the technical capacity building of national stakeholders.

These activities fall within the new phase of UPR Info’s In-country Programme and aims at building the capacity of national stakeholders in Nepal and ensuring a national ownership of the third cycle to further improve the human rights situation on the ground.

Nepal timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission Deadline</th>
<th>In-Country Pre-session</th>
<th>Geneva Pre-session</th>
<th>UPR Working Group</th>
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</thead>
</table>

2. Country Context

Nepal has been a focus country for UPR Info’s In-country Programme since 2015. During this new phase, UPR info has been relying more on the role of the NHRI to lead the UPR efforts and national ownership of the improvement of the human rights situation.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty of international travels, UPR Info could not guarantee its presence and implementation of activities as per usual. Nonetheless, to sustain the technical support to national stakeholders, activities were maintained and adapted accordingly to the context. As such, UPR Info conducted consultations with its national implementing partners to find alternatives to the implementation of 2020 activities. Following this exchange, the outcome was that UPR Info should facilitate half of the sessions remotely and that the other half should be facilitated by the implementing partners. This option required that UPR Info transmitted the knowledge through a "Training of Trainers" (ToT) their colleagues.
As such, UPR Info organized a series of webinars preparing the NHRI to conduct consultations in regions ahead of the drafting of the stakeholders’ reports, as well as follow-up webinars with its constituents and other members of Nepalese civil society to provide concrete feedback on their draft reports.

Moreover, since the health crisis also affected the Geneva-based process and thus the Reviews were postponed by one working group session, UPR Info took the opportunity to increase the frequency of meetings with national partners and provide concrete technical tools to prepare for the Review via advocacy webinars, and a hybrid preparatory session ahead of the Pre-session.

Finally, the development of the national in-country Pre-session was again hampered by the pandemic and it only allowed for selected speakers to be present during the preparatory training and the pre-session itself. Nonetheless, the outcome of the process was successful as many resident embassies attended the online discussion in Kathmandu and other peer civil society partners could listen to the exchange.

UPR Info envisions continuing providing support to partners for the upcoming key UPR phases.

### 3. Activities

On 24th February 2020, the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal (NHRC) hosted at its premises a group of civil society representatives and its own commissioners to live-stream the webinar delivered by UPR Info. The webinar focused on technical guidelines and good practices for writing a “UPR Other Stakeholders” report ahead of the third UPR review of Nepal in November 2020.

The webinar was composed of three modules: the modalities of the UPR, OHCHR's technical guidelines and good practices for submitting a UPR report (using the matrix, linking the UPR to the SDGs, Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies), and an overview of the role of civil society and their advocacy opportunities before the Review.

After the webinar, participants had the opportunity to ask questions through the interactive platform and it was agreed that UPR Info would further assist with technicalities in the drafting process via remote support. The NHRI then proceeded to share the content of the recorded webinar amongst its regional offices and encouraged the participation of local and regional CSOs in providing information ahead of the Review.

The Training of Trainers developed by UPR Info aimed to equip national partners with the sufficient knowledge, skills, and technical understanding of the United Nations’ Universal Periodic Review process in order to facilitate training sessions for their own civil society and National Human Rights Institutions. The National In-Country Pre-sessions training was focused on advocacy skills for CSOs and NHRIs prior to the UPR to contribute to strengthening national UPR ownership and providing an enabling environment for the UPR to accomplish its potential of improved human rights at the domestic level. During the in-country activity, UPR Info intervened remotely to emphasize certain concepts, provide support to the implementing partners during the delivery of the sessions and feedback to participants prior
to the Pre-session. This ToT was delivered a month ahead of the national Pre-session to allow implementing partners sufficient time to organize and prepare for the event.

Finally, in the month of October and two months before the Working Group, a preparatory training was delivered for selected national in-country Pre-session speakers. Ten civil societies and coalitions working on diverse human rights issues joined the programme and participated in the training. Civil Society Training on UPR Advocacy was conducted on 12 and 13 October. Statements of the civil society representatives were recorded on the 14th, October with the support of journalists that could provide guidance on how to address an audience. Camera technicians working on the 15th of Oct edited and finalized the video statements. On the 16th of Oct., the UPR Pre-session was organized in participation of resident diplomats, staffs of various embassies, representatives of missions and national and international non-governmental organizations.

The Pre-session was a half-day event and all invitees participated through online platform as a safety precaution from COVID-19. After the welcoming speech and highlights on the objective of the programme, Swiss Ambassador to Nepal Her Excellency Von Capeller Oswald Elisabeth and Deputy Resident Representative and now Acting Resident Representative of the UNDP Bernardo Cocco made short remarks before the video statements were exhibited.

During the Pre-session, recorded video statements of 10 speakers from different CSOs on various HR issues were exhibited. The video statements were in the following order:

i. Beyond Beijing Committee (BBC)
ii. Blue Diamond Society (BDS)
iii. Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP)
iv. Conflict Victim's Common Platform (CVCP)
v. Children Zones of Peace (CZOP)
vi. Dalit NGO Federation (DNF)
vii. Durban Review Conference Follow-up Committee (DRCFC)

After exhibiting the videos, the diplomats / representatives from diplomatic missions and embassies had an opportunity to interact with CSOs and the NHRC to get first-hand information on the human rights situation in Nepal.

Below is a break-out of the activities conducted in partnership with national stakeholders:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 UPR Submission Webinar | Remotely : online | • Local CSOs  
• NHRC            | 24 February 2020 |

• Co-organized with National Human Rights Commission of Nepal
• 12 participants, among them 5 women (41%)
• Outcome: 8 UPR reports submitted by workshop participants to OHCHR
• Achievements: The NHRC showcased the webinar in different regions to CSO and other NHRC representatives.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Training of Trainers on UPR pre-sessions</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>CSO, NFP, UNDP/OHCHR, NHRC/PDO</td>
<td>9 participants, 5 of which were women (55%); Participants from implementing partners of both Georgia and Nepal; Outcome: 2 national in-country Pre-sessions implemented in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>UPR Submission Webinar: Follow-up</td>
<td>Remotely: online</td>
<td>Local CSOs, NHRC</td>
<td>Deadline extended due to Covid-19: opportunity to optimize submissions; 9 participants, among them 3 women (33%); Outcome: 8 UPR reports submitted by workshop/webinar participants; Achievement: in-depth discussions with participants about their UPR stakeholders report and feed-back sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>UPR advocacy factsheets webinar</td>
<td>Remotely: online</td>
<td>NHRC, CSOs</td>
<td>Co-organized with the NHRC; 20 participants; Achievement: NHRC and NFP translated material and template and shared the content of the webinar with other stakeholders in other regions; Outcome: 12 UPR Factsheets developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Webinar on the Role of the NHRC in the UPR</td>
<td>Remotely: online</td>
<td>NHRC</td>
<td>30 participants, 17 of which were women (57%); Achievement: webinar was followed by NHRC constituents across the country. UNDP made an intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pre-session speakers' preparatory briefing and mock-session</td>
<td>Hybrid: online</td>
<td>Selected CSO/NHRI speakers</td>
<td>Co-organized with INSEC Nepal and NHRC Nepal; 10 participants (selected speakers) of which 5 were women (50%); Outcome: 10 video-statements for the In-country Pre-session, with subtitles in English; Simultaneous interpretation Nepali-English; Translation of material into Nepali</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Webinar on the role of Recommending States at the UPR</td>
<td>Remotely: online</td>
<td>Resident Embassies</td>
<td>Co-organized with the NHRC and UNDP; 7 participants, among them 5 women (71%); Achievement: 2 UN Agencies (UNRCEO, UNDP), 2 States (USA, Switzerland) and EU Delegation sharing with other Member States.</td>
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**Promoting and strengthening**

**29 June 2020**

**30 September 2020**

**7 October 2020**

**14.16 October 2020**

**9 October 2020**
7 In-country Pre-session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hybrid: online and in-person</th>
<th>Resident Embassies</th>
<th>International community</th>
<th>Local CSOs</th>
<th>NHRI (PDO)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-country Pre-session</td>
<td>16 October 2020</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Co-organized with INSEC Nepal, UNDP and NHRC
- 70 participants, 10 speakers
- Achievements: Congratulations by Swiss Ambassador and Resident Coordinator. Questions to speakers from UNDP, Finland and EU Del.
- Cooperation with media: a journalist and news anchor held a presentation on how to deliver statements.

The In-country pre-session was then followed by the Geneva-based Pre-session were participants coordinated efforts to address a variety of issues and thus complement efforts carried out at national level.

4. **Outcomes**

Step 1: UPR Submission Webinar

- 17 participants from CSOs and NHRC (47% women)
- Co-organised with NHRC Nepal, who then shared the content with regional constituents and CSOs
- National consultations organised by NHRC in regions and the results of these consultations were reflected in National Report and the Presentation of the national Delegation during UPR WG (first time in the UPR of Nepal)
- Follow-up webinar to optimise draft reports ahead of the submission
- 8 UPR “Other Stakeholders” Reports submitted
- Reports reflected impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights as well as an analysis of the implementation of the 2nd cycle thematic recommendations by using the OHCHR’s tool “UPR matrix”

Step 2: In-Country pre-session

- 20 CSO participants trained on the development of UPR Advocacy Factsheets
- 30 NHRC officers (57% women) trained on the specific roles and responsibilities of the NHRI at the UPR
- 7 Kathmandu-based diplomats (71% women) trained on the role of recommending States at the UPR
- 70 people attended the hybrid Pre-session: 10 speakers (50% women); 10 embassies and UN agencies, 40 CSO auditors
- A training of Trainers organized ahead of the activity for our National Focal Point, INSEC (as coordinators of the CSO UPR coalition) and NHRC, to facilitate the hybrid format of the workshop and pre-session dialogue
- 10 video-stamens delivered
✓ Cooperation with media: a journalist and news anchor held a presentation on how to deliver statements.
✓ A webinar on how to draft UPR Factsheets for advocacy resulted in 12 UPR Factsheets developed by CSOs and NHRC covering issues related to women’s rights, Dalit rights, transitional justice, children’s rights and other issues.
✓ Participants welcomed the opportunity to interact with international stakeholders and stated it was the first time such a platform was offered in Nepal
✓ A CSO coalition organised a watch-party of the UPR WG and discussion on how the recommendations received and dialogue was focused on vulnerable people.
Promoting and strengthening the Universal Periodic Review
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