



ANNUAL
REPORT
2018

Promoting and strengthening the Universal Periodic Review

UPR Info

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UPR Info is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. It aims to raise awareness of the Universal Periodic Review and to provide capacity-building tools to all stakeholders, such as UN Member States, civil society, parliamentarians, media and academics.



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Table of Contents

Introduction	6
1. <i>UPR Info's</i> Programmes	8
1.1 Pre-sessions Programme	8
1.2 Stakeholders programme	13
1.3 In-country programme	24
2. Organisation	43
3. Finances	45
4. The Way Forward	52

Introduction

2018 saw *UPR Info* broaden its engagement with a wider range of stakeholders and introduce innovative activities to its programmes.

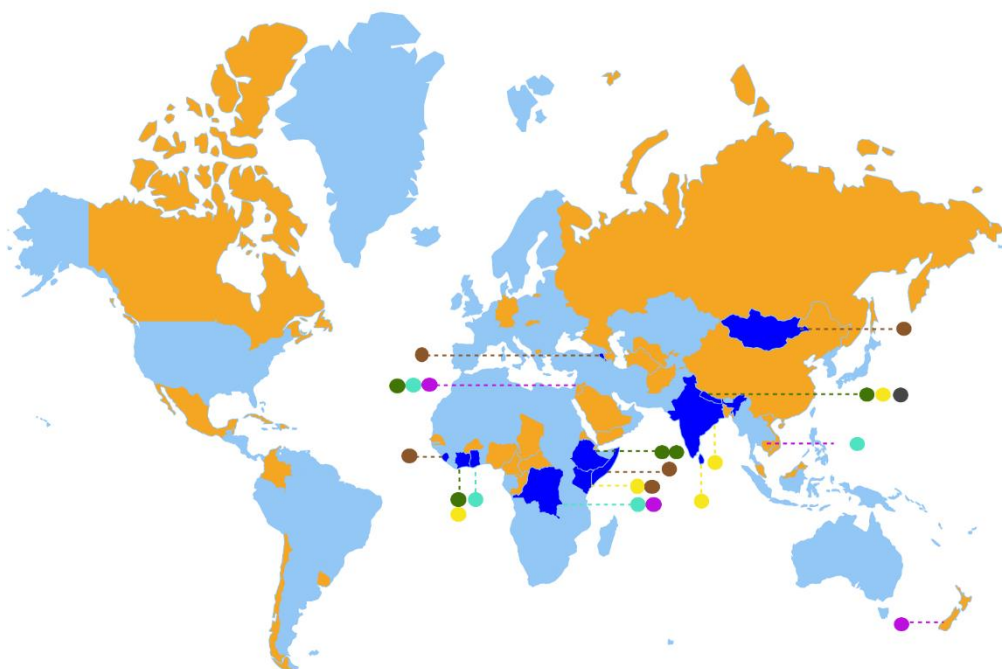
The **Pre-sessions** introduced a pilot project encouraging the participation of children at the Pre-sessions. In many countries, children and youth represent the majority of the population. *UPR Info* believes that it is important that their voice is heard on issues affecting their rights so that they can contribute to building an inclusive society based on rule of law.

Recognizing the role of national actors in implementing the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations, the **Stakeholders Programme** is increasingly engaging with States under Review, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and Parliamentarians to facilitate their effective engagement in the UPR process. The Programme also raises awareness about the synergy between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UPR.

To ensure the sustainability of its engagement, the **In-country Programme** provided training to its National Focal Points (NFPs), strengthening their capacity to advocate on human rights issues and monitor the implementation of UPR recommendations.

From a financial and administrative perspective, *UPR Info* established new human resources and financial procedures recognizing the importance of a rigorous and ethical management in the delivery of its activities.

In 2018, *UPR Info* collaborated with UPR stakeholders from around the world



UPR Info Offices:

Geneva, Switzerland and Nairobi, Kenya.

Pre- Sessions:

Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Canada, Germany, Bangladesh, Colombia, Cuba, Jordan, Malaysia, China, Congo, Central African Republic, Senegal, Chad, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Belize, Mauritius, Malta, Monaco, Chile, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Afghanistan, New Zealand, Yemen, Eritrea, Macedonia, Slovakia, Vanuatu

In-country activities:

Jordan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Armenia, Mongolia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Somalia

● Step 1 - Stakeholders' Submission Workshop

● Step 2 - In-country Pre-session

● Step 3 - UPR Strategy Workshop

● Step 4 - National Multistakeholders Dialogue on UPR Implementation

● Step 5 - Mid-term Workshop

1. *UPR Info's* Programmes

1.1 Pre-sessions Programme

Pre-sessions

The Pre-sessions have been an integral part of *UPR Info's* activities since their inception in 2012. Recognizing the limited opportunities for civil society and National Human Rights Institutions to engage in the UPR, the meetings were created to bridge the gap between these important stakeholders and the mechanism. They provide civil society and NHRIs with an international platform to present first-hand information to Recommending States on the human rights situation in the country under review on a range of issues including civil and political, economic and cultural rights. The goal of the Pre-sessions is to ensure that, thanks to the advocacy conducted by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and NHRIs during the Pre-sessions, human rights issues affecting rights holders are reflected in the recommendations formulated by Recommending States during the UPR working groups sessions.



Pre-session on
Bangladesh in April

The Pre-sessions take place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva three times per year, approximately one month in advance of each UPR Working Group. In 2018, three Pre-sessions were held in April, October, and December, respectively:

- Of the 42 States under Review at the UPR in 2018, **38 were examined** during the Pre-sessions.
- The meetings continue to see an increase in attendance, with an average of **36 representatives from Permanent Missions** present per meeting (up from 32 in 2017).
- States under Review continue to demonstrate their support for constructive engagement with other stakeholders through their attendance at the Pre-sessions, and in 2018, **26 of 38 States under Review were present at their own Session**. In a further effort to foster an inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders, UPR Info has recently offered States under Review the opportunity to deliver a two-minute statement on the progress made on the human rights situation in-country during the previous cycle.

The Pre-sessions are a critical forum to amplify the voice of national civil society organizations, and in 2018, **111 national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 8 NHRIs participated** in the meetings as panelists. All **17 speakers** who received grants from *UPR Info* to attend the Pre-sessions were representatives of national organizations. In addition, *UPR Info* strives to ensure a gender perspective for each Pre-sessions, and where possible gender parity is sought among speakers. In 2018, the number of female speakers reached **51.4%**.

2018 also witnessed the launch of a pilot project in partnership with Child Rights Connect to include **children as equal stakeholders in the UPR process**. During the November Pre-sessions, two girls were invited to speak as panelists at



Pre-session on Senegal in November 2018

the Pre-sessions on Senegal and Nigeria, providing them with a platform to communicate first-hand information regarding children's rights and broader human rights issues to Recommending States, in their own words. Based on the success of this pilot project, *UPR Info* has committed to including child speakers in the Pre-sessions of at least two countries under review in 2019.

UPR Info remains dedicated to building the capacity of civil society so that they may advocate successfully during and after the Pre-sessions. As such, participants are encouraged to attend *UPR Info*'s full-day training on the UPR and strategic advocacy. A tailored, country-specific segment is also offered for participants who receive a grant to attend the Pre-sessions. In 2018, a total of **8 trainings** were delivered to representatives of civil society and NHRIs, with the aim of providing participants with the tools necessary to influence recommendations made at the Working Group.

"Being new to UPR, I find all the contents of the Pre-session training extremely useful. But the sharing from the Permanent Mission of Sweden was particularly insightful as you learn from their perspective as a Recommending State." – **A participant of Pre-session 31, Malaysia**

"We would like to extend our sincere thanks to you all for your excellent coordination and support and for having us at the pre-session. It was very impressive, and we had such great opportunities to deal directly with diplomats and Permanent Missions." – **A participant of Pre-session 32, Cambodia**



3 series of Pre-sessions 30, 31 and 32



38

States reviewed

173 speakers

111 National NGOs

36

Permanent Missions present on
average per Pre-session meeting

54 International NGOs

8 NHRIs

68%

26 out of 38
States under Review attended
their own Pre-session

2 child speakers
from Nigeria and Senegal

51,4% female speakers

8 UPR training sessions
for over **130**
CSOs and NHRIs representatives

Human Rights Council / Universal Periodic Review

UPR Info delivered three statements during the 2018 sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC) under General Debate Item 6. These statements called for participation, inclusiveness, and accountability of all national stakeholders in the UPR process to ensure effective follow-up and implementation of the UPR recommendations. *UPR Info* also invited States to establish National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRFs), including comprehensive human rights action plans containing baseline and target indicators. Reporting at the end of the cycle on actions taken by the three national powers, the legislative, the executive and the judiciary, will demonstrate a comprehensive approach toward preventing and responding to human rights violations. *UPR Info* also encouraged States under Review to report to the Human Rights Council on a yearly basis on progress made in five thematic areas of human rights and to share best practices in UPR implementation.

During 2018, *UPR Info* facilitated a side-event on the margins of the Human Rights Council on the role of the civil society in the UPR and engaged in policy dialogues on strengthening the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and improving the efficiency of the Human Rights Council.

UPR Info also convened a policy discussion among 12 Geneva-based NGOs to discuss the establishment of a fund to support civil society in the implementation of recommendations. The goal of the fund would be to facilitate the engagement of the civil society in the

implementation phase of the UPR, and to strengthen the fulfillment by States of their human rights obligations and commitments in the long-term. From this dialogue it was concluded that it would be more pragmatic in the third cycle to advocate for a CSO support fund at the country level, and any further discussions would include this proposal.

UPR Info provided live updates via its social media channels on the 29th, 30th and 31st UPR Working Group as well as on the adoption of UPR Working Group reports at the Human Rights Council.

1.2 Stakeholders programme

The Stakeholders Programme

Over the last 10 years a significant component of *UPR Info*'s work consisted in engaging mainly with CSOs and Recommending States towards the promotion and advancement of human rights. However, the call for action cannot exclusively lie on with these two actors. Through a meaningful engagement by all stakeholders, the UPR can become a powerful tool for the improvement of human rights situation on the ground. In this context, in 2018 *UPR Info* launched a new Programme that aims at increasing the engagement of other key stakeholders in the UPR, namely States under Review, Parliamentarians, National Human Rights Institutions and academia.

Both NHRIs and Parliamentarians can support civil society in the follow-up phase of the UPR and can make a significant impact on the ground. Yet today there is only limited awareness about how these stakeholders can engage effectively in the UPR. For this

reason, in 2018 *UPR Info* began to develop tools and support capacity building activities targeting these stakeholders.

Parliamentarians represent the nexus between the international and national human rights arenas, providing as one of the principal channels through which the international human rights mechanisms' recommendations reach the national level, in particular in their legislative, budget allocation and oversight

roles. *UPR Info* supported these critical stakeholders in 2018 through a variety of activities, including providing toolkits and informative sessions to Parliamentarians from Uganda, Germany and Belgium to raise awareness on the mechanism and on how they can leverage the mechanism to promote the advancement of human rights at the domestic level.



Exchanges with Belgian Parliamentarians



At a training for NHRIs

UPR Info has also increased its engagement with NHRIs over the past year by participating in training sessions organized by Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and providing technical support to representatives from Bangladesh,

the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Ivory Coast. NHRIs can provide independent and expert information on national situations, provide advice to Government on the implementation of UPR recommendations, monitor, follow-up and raise awareness on UPR and human rights at the national level, and review legislation with a human rights lens. It is therefore critical to

encourage the participation of these stakeholders in the UPR process.

Academia can also contribute to a constructive human rights discourse linked to the UPR through teaching-learning activities, research, and other forms of engagement to develop national policies. Their role becomes even more vital in countries where there is limited space for civil society. In 2018, *UPR Info* and our partners led informative sessions with representatives from China, Cuba, Indonesia, Iran, Norway, and Vietnam, which have underlined how academic expertise and insights are priceless in supporting Treaty Bodies and Independent Experts on issues fundamental to their work.

UPR Info continues to work with civil society organizations and to facilitate activities that support their engagement throughout the UPR process. In an effort to increase the engagement of minority and indigenous people, in 2018 *UPR Info* facilitated a session on the UPR mechanism and strategic advocacy for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Indigenous Fellowship Programme. To support the engagement and empowerment of women and youth, *UPR Info* also facilitated training sessions with young and women human rights defenders in cooperation with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Centre de conseils et d'appui pour les jeunes en matière de droits de l'homme (CODAP), World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and The World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). These actors are key to building a country based on rule of law, however, their voices are not always heard.

Where it is not possible for *UPR Info* to conduct activities in-country, *UPR Info* has provided training sessions in Geneva (for example, to CSOs from Eritrea), and online (in support of CSOs from the Central African Republic and Nicaragua).

The role of States during the UPR Working Group Sessions

States under Review



Preparation of the
Congolese Delegation
for their 3rd UPR session

The main responsibility for States under Review is to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights. To assist them in engaging in a constructive dialogue, *UPR Info*, in collaboration with the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), supported the delegations of Burkina Faso and the Republic of Congo as they prepared for the interactive dialogue of the UPR

Working Group session. During the exercises, *UPR Info* stressed the importance of providing information on progress realized in the implementation of the UPR recommendations, challenges faced by the country, and indications on plans to address human rights violations. The sessions offered *UPR Info* the opportunity to exchange with States under Review on best practices to implement UPR recommendations, the importance of national consultations, the establishment or strengthening of National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up, and the drafting of comprehensive human rights action plans with targeted indicators in involving all key national stakeholders in the process.

In February 2018, responding to the invitation of the Interministerial Department for Human Rights of the Kingdom of Morocco, *UPR Info* presented good practices in monitoring and implementing UPR recommendations at the Salon International de l'Édition et du Livre in Casablanca and during a Conference on the follow-up of UPR recommendations and strategic planning in the field of human rights in Rabat.

In May 2018, *UPR Info* facilitated a session with a delegation from line ministries of the Government of South Korea highlighting main levels of interventions in the UPR process to ensure an effective implementation of human rights recommendations.



Session with a delegation from line ministries of the Government of South Korea

Supporting the engagement of Small and Islands States

In February 2018, *UPR Info* advised representatives of Commonwealth Small States in collaboration with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative on methods of sustainable engagement in the UPR and with other stakeholders.

In November 2018, *UPR Info* also facilitated a session on the UPR mechanism for fellows from Bhutan and Afghanistan of the Human Rights Council Trust Fund LDCS/SIDS.

Enhancing the Role of Recommending States

Precise, policy-oriented recommendations are crucial to effectively measure the conduct of States in the implementation of UPR recommendations and to assess the outcomes of that conduct. Without them, the ability of States to make meaningful policy choices to achieve human rights through the UPR would be significantly reduced. For this reason, *UPR Info* conducted a seminar for Recommending States in October 2018 in partnership with the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESC). The main objective of the training seminar was to equip the representatives of the Recommending States present in Geneva with the

knowledge and skills to effectively use the UPR in their work towards human rights promotion and protection.

According to an analysis conducted by *UPR Info*, less than 20% of UPR recommendations specifically address economic, social and cultural rights. Moreover, few of these recommendations are policy-oriented and consequently less impactful in guiding policymaking at the national level. For this reason, the seminar was focused on how to integrate more economic, social and cultural rights in the UPR. The linkages between SDGs and human rights were addressed and the benefits of adopting an integrated approach between these two areas were provided. During the two-hour session, panellists engaged in an interactive dialogue with Recommending States and shared practical examples on how to specifically apply the SMART methodology to recommendations focusing on economic and social rights.



The training seminar was attended by 23 delegates from different States including Germany, the Netherlands, Mexico, Romania, Jordan, Bulgaria and Senegal. The session was held in English, with French translation provided in order to encourage the participation of

Francophone delegates. The seminar took place prior to *UPR Info*'s Pre-sessions in advance of the 30th UPR Working Group session, complementing the training by providing participants with the opportunity to engage with civil society and providing them with first-hand and specific information of the human rights situation in the States under Review for that session.

Regional exchanges

UPR Info participated in and facilitated sessions during three regional conferences organized by the United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2018. The conferences took place in Uganda, Senegal and Capo-Verde, and addressed role of States, civil society, parliamentarians and NHRIs in the monitoring and implementation of UPR recommendations and the correlation between the UPR and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Applying a Gender Lens in our Work

Highlighting UPR Info's gender-based work in 2018

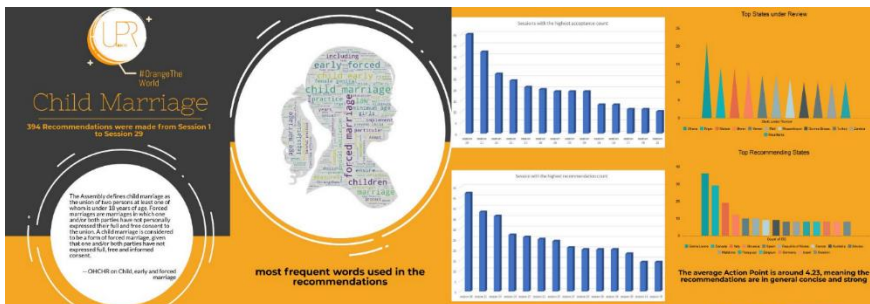
UPR Info aims to integrate a gender perspective and women's human rights throughout all its Programmes and activities.

Through the Stakeholders and In-country Programme, *UPR Info* encourages stakeholders to include a gender perspective in all stages of the review. This includes, for example, during consultations between States and NGOs working on gender issues in the preparation of the National Report before the Review, the formulation of specific-oriented recommendations on this topic by Recommending States, and the application of a gender analysis when researching the data in the monitoring and follow-up in the implementation phase. Throughout its capacity-building activities, *UPR Info* emphasizes the importance of delivering recommendations that adopt rights-holder language rather than victimizing rhetoric.

The Pre-sessions project is committed to ensuring a gender balance in the composition of its panels. Recognizing that the first had information shared by local NGOs offers a unique insight into the

level of gender equality on the ground, women's rights and gender are consistently represented throughout the panel discussions.

In November 2018, *UPR Info* took part in the global #OrangetheWorld social media campaign to raise awareness about violence against women and girls around the world. The event took place in the lead-up to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Throughout the campaign, *UPR Info* raised awareness of its database ([UPR Info Database](#)), a resource that allows users to explore recommendations delivered during the Universal Periodic Review including those made on women's rights. Furthermore, during the 16 days of the campaign, *UPR Info* regularly published infographics using the campaign's hashtag #HearMeToo on various subthemes relating to gender-based violence. This included domestic violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, human and sex trafficking, and sexual harassment.

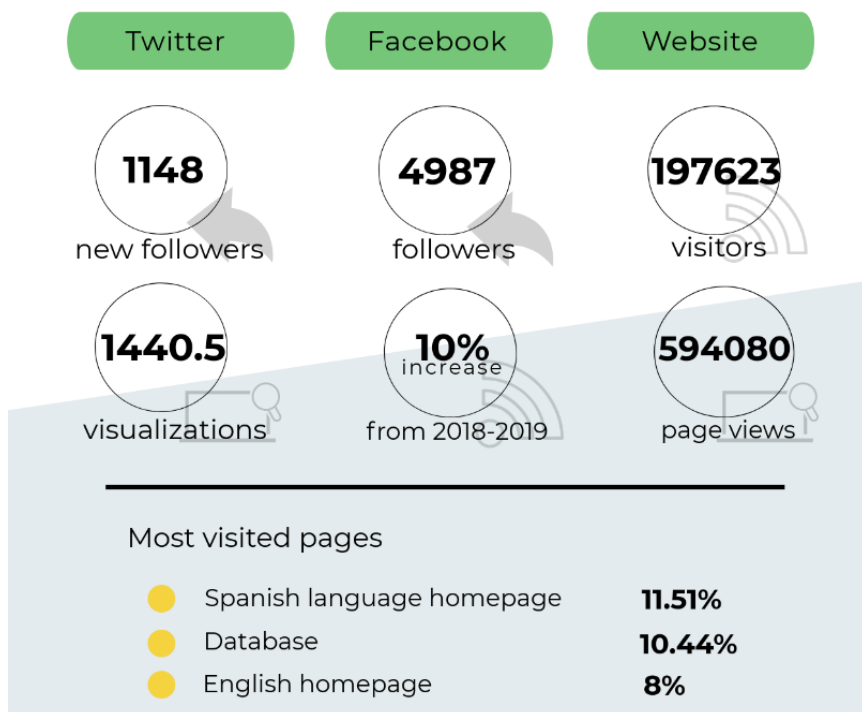


One infographic that *UPR Info* shared on social media as part of the #HearMeToo campaign.

UPR Info's social media outreach on women's rights and gender has been met with success in 2018. The organizations' engagement rate on Facebook reached nearly 60% on the day it announced its commitment to the #OrangetheWorld campaign, and the infographic shared on *UPR Info's* social media accounts for the

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against reached over 4,700 people. The information presented on domestic violence at the UPR reached nearly 1,700 persons on Facebook, and our publication on FGM reached nearly 2,800 individuals on Facebook and Twitter.

UPR Info Social Media Milestones



Feedback from followers has been overwhelmingly positive and we are pleased to observe a successful social media engagement during our campaigns, as *UPR Info* endeavours to apply gender analysis in all its work.

Linking the Universal Periodic Review to the SDGs

UPR Info believes that the SDGs and human rights are mutually reinforcing. Human rights obligations can offer a legal foundation and guidance in the implementation of the SDGs, and the SDGs can increase support for the realization of human rights obligations.

177 recommendations in the second cycle and 47 recommendations from the 27-30th sessions of the third cycle made explicit links to SDGs. These recommendations were all accepted by the States under Review which shows a broad consensus on the need for States to take steps to implement the SDGs and the UPR as an adequate forum to discuss the effectiveness of these steps. In some of these recommendations, States have simply pushed for the implementation of the SDGs, while in others they have emphasized the need for States to take measures to realize specific goals or especially ESCR, or to adopt, adapt or implement policies and strategies to implement the SDGs that seek to realize human rights.

To encourage the debate on adopting an integrated approach between human rights and development, *UPR Info* organised, in partnership with the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), a policy dialogue entitled “The UPR and the SDGs: Towards Implementation and Follow-Up” in November 2018.

The event offered the opportunity to reflect on the potential of the UPR to inform policymaking in the area of sustainable development, and for the SDGs to serve as a source of inspiration for strengthening the continued relevance of the UPR in the context of sustainable development.

UPR Info believes that an integrated approach has an enormous potential for strengthening coherence, efficiency and accountability in follow-up to international obligations and

commitments. In an effort to turn this vision into a reality, best practices were shared by the panellists. Among the insightful suggestions, States, CSOs and United Nations (UN) agencies were encouraged to include in their reports explicit references to SDGs in their analysis and in the recommendations suggested (in the case of CSOs) and that these references should be kept by OHCHR in the summary reports; States and NHRIs should more systematically include the monitoring of the SDGs in their own work; and UN agencies could integrate both the SDGs and the recommendations formulated by the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms (UPR, Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures) in The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) developed with the partner country.

Website and database

The *UPR Info* website and database represent key tools to inform stakeholders and the public about the UPR and to monitor the implementation of recommendations. To support its users, *UPR Info* provides the following service:

- Publication of over 3000 documents linked to the UPR on *UPR Info* website;
- Development of an online registration system to receive country updates;
- Update of the website to better respond to the users' needs;
- Regular publication of news and articles to inform them about the work of *UPR Info*, key dates and events and UPR related development;
- Development of an internal management system to improve the updating of *UPR Info* database of recommendations.

Multilingualism is important to ensure that rights holders have access to information. *UPR Info* commits to offer more tools and

training available in English, French and Spanish to support the engagement of UPR stakeholders in their work.

1.3 In-country Programme

Introduction

In the second year of the 2017-2019 In-country Programme, *UPR Info's* headquarters in Geneva and its Africa regional office organised activities across **Africa and Asia**. An energetic 2018 saw Stakeholders' submission workshops in the Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); In-country Pre-sessions in Cambodia and Jordan; UPR Strategy Workshops in Jordan and Ghana, Multi-stakeholder dialogues on UPR implementation in Ghana, India and Sri Lanka; and Mid-term reporting workshops in Armenia, Kenya, Mongolia and Nepal. The events brought together governments, civil society, National Human Rights Institutions, Parliamentarians, UN agencies, and the media to bolster the UPR process at the national level.

As the needs and circumstances inevitably vary between locations, the design of each activity is devised in **collaboration with partner organizations on the ground** to ensure that they add value to ongoing initiatives. Nonetheless, a common feature of the steps is that they all seek to **equip participants to optimize their input** at each of the entry points provided by the mechanism. This is done through technical support to report writing, production of UPR Advocacy Factsheets and the development of action strategies. Of equal importance is the need to **foster trust, transparency and deliberations between national stakeholders**. Therefore, the programme contributes to national consultations prior to the

review and at the mid-term stage to feed first-hand and credible information into the review and to evaluate progress halfway between cycles. The interaction between national civil society groups and Recommending states at the Pre-session not only contributes to relevant recommendations being made to the State under Review, but moreover paves the way for partnerships between the diplomatic community and national CSOs. By participating in the In-country Programme, many local human rights defenders were for the first time enabled to bring their concerns and solutions to the United Nations human rights machinery. Combined, the **constructive approach** championed by the programme boosts the UPR to deliver on its promise of an improved human rights situation at the domestic level.

In 2018, the programme added emphasis on the mutually **reinforcing nature of the SDGs and the UPR** in the implementation process as well as **ensuring active participation of NHRIs across activities**. The successful system of National Focal Points continued in Cambodia, DRC, India, Jordan, and Sri Lanka. The skills of the NFPs have been enhanced over time and several of the focal points took a more substantive role in training sessions compared to previous years.

Highlights from the year included the Letter of Content between CSOs and the Government in Sri Lanka in which the parties agreed to hold annual multi-stakeholder meetings to assess implementation of UPR recommendations, and to identify solutions to obstacles. In Mongolia, the mid-term reporting process was proceeded by consultations throughout 19 provinces and involved government officials, grassroots civil society groups, and the NHRI. In Cambodia, a system of 11 working groups was created which issued thematic submissions and developed UPR Advocacy Factsheets to influence recommendations. This concerted advocacy effort contributed to Cambodia receiving its first ever

UPR recommendations on LGBTI rights. The Government of Ghana agreed to establish a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations and also to organise an annual human rights conference. Following the training organised by *UPR Info*, the NHRIs from the DRC and Ivory Coast submitted a UPR stakeholder report for the first time.

The Five Steps of the In-country Programme (ICP)		
Step	What?	Why?
Before the Review	Step 1 CSO submission workshop	To enhance the quality of CSO submissions and SMART UPR recommendations
	Step 2 In-country Pre-session	To replicate the Geneva-based Pre-session at the national level in order to amplify the voice of CSOs. The national Pre-session provides a platform for exchange between the diplomatic community and local CSOs on human rights concerns and action-oriented recommendations.
After the Review	Step 3 CSO strategy workshop	To share the outcomes of the review with national CSOs, and to draft a follow-up matrix outlining how CSOs can support the government in implementing recommendations.
	Step 4 National multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation	To gather representatives from the government, civil society and independent institutions to discuss the necessary building blocks for an inclusive and sustainable approach to implementation of UPR recommendations.
	Step 5 Mid-term workshop	To support civil society and the government to take stock of implementation halfway between one review and the next, with a view towards introducing solutions to overcome gaps in implementation.

In-country activities in 2018

Jordan



Jordan had its third UPR review in November 2018. To strengthen national ownership and optimise stakeholder's input and follow-up to the review, *UPR Info* partnered with Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Jordan to implement a Stakeholders' Submission workshop, an In-country Pre-session and a UPR Strategy Workshop in the country.

Step 1: Stakeholders' Submission Workshop – February 2018

- The attending **44** CSO representatives, **45%** women, received a training on how to submit a Stakeholder's report in accordance with the OHCHR technical guidelines;
- **5** civil society UPR reports were submitted as a result of the training; and
- **7 issues** (Development, Environment, Business & human rights, Women's rights, torture, migrant workers, and rule of law) contained in the CSO UPR submissions developed as a result of the training were addressed in the OHCHR's Summary of Stakeholders' report to Jordan.

Step 2: In-country Pre-session – September 2018

- The attending **74** CSO representatives, **62%** women, received a training on how to advocate for their human rights issues in the UPR;
- **21 diplomats** as well as delegates from UN agencies and the European Union (EU) Delegation attended the diplomatic Pre-session hosted by the UN in Jordan at which **10** civil society representatives, **70%** women, informed about the national human rights situation and provided suggested recommendations; and
- Strengthened collaboration between diplomatic missions in Jordan; the National Centre for Human Rights (NHRI); civil society organisations and coalitions; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), EU and media representatives.

Step 3: UPR Strategy Workshop – December 2018

- The attending **22** government officials, **9** CSO representatives, and **2** NHRI representatives received a training on the implementation of UPR recommendations;
- **90%** of participants responded that the information and tools shared at the workshop would benefit them in their work; and
- **3 thematic action plans/strategies** (marginalised groups; economic, social and cultural rights; civil and political rights) were developed jointly by State representatives and CSOs for the implementation of human rights recommendations.

Cambodia



To increase the momentum ahead of Cambodia's third UPR in January 2019, *UPR Info* partnered with the Cambodian Center for Human Rights to implement a Stakeholders' Submission workshop, an In-country Pre-session in Phnom Penh.

Step 1: Stakeholders' Submission Workshop – March 2018

- The attending **70** CSO representatives, **44%** women, received a training on how to submit a Stakeholder's report in accordance with the OHCHR technical guidelines;
- **10** joint thematic submissions and **one** cross-sectoral submission were submitted as a result of the training;
- **11** UPR Advocacy Factsheets were developed by participants which had attended the training;
- **12 issues** (Labour rights, Trade Union rights, LGBTIQ rights, land rights, fundamental freedoms, elections, disability rights, women's rights, children's rights, migrant workers, minority rights and rights of indigenous peoples) contained

in the CSO UPR submissions developed as a result of the training were addressed in the OHCHR's Summary of Stakeholders' report to Cambodia.

- **86%** of participants responded that they had improved their knowledge on the subject matter as result of attending the workshop.

Step 2: In-country Pre-session – November 2018

- The attending **67** CSO representatives, **51%** women, received a training on how to advocate for their human rights issues in the UPR;
- **19** diplomats and representatives from the EU Delegation and 6 UN agencies attended the diplomatic Pre-session hosted by the EU Delegation in Cambodia at which **13** civil society representatives, **54%** women, informed about the national human rights situation and provided suggested recommendations;
- **85%** of the recommendations suggested by CSOs in the UPR Advocacy Factsheets matched with those made by representatives of Recommending States at the UPR working group;
- Accomplished a gender diverse environment amongst Pre-session speakers (54% women), and Pre-sessions participants (51% women); and
- **84%** of participants responded that the information and tools shared at the workshop would benefit them in their work.



In preparation for the Ivory Coast's third cycle UPR set for April 2019, *UPR Info* co-organized a Submission Workshop in collaboration with the National Commission of Human Rights of Côte d'Ivoire (CNDH-CI) and the UPR Recommendations Follow-up Committee.

Step 1: Stakeholders' Submission Workshop – August 2018

- A total of **36** participants received training on how to submit a Stakeholder's report in accordance with the OHCHR technical guidelines;
- As a result of the workshop **5 joint** submissions covering Civil and Political Rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Women's and Children's Rights, Rights of Vulnerable Groups including Living People with Disabilities, War Victims and Toxic Waste and **5 individual** submissions were submitted;
- The NHRI submitted for the first time a UPR report and played a catalyst role in bringing together the government and the civil society.



Ahead of the review of the Democratic Republic of Congo that is set for April 2019, *UPR Info* held 2 Submission Workshops in the country. The first one which was held in Kinshasa and also brought together participants from other provinces of the DRC, was co-organized by *UPR Info* and The Carter Center at the Human Rights House in cooperation with the joint human rights office of the United Nations. The second one was co-organized in Goma by *UPR*

Info and Ligue des Droits de la personne dans la région des Grands Lacs (LDGL) and it brought together a range of CSOs from North and South Kivu, representatives from 11 cities.

Step 1: Stakeholders' Submission Workshop – Juillet 2018 (Kinshasa and Goma)

- A total of **64** participants attended the Kinshasa meeting with **44%** of them being women. All the participants received training on how to submit a Stakeholder's report in accordance with the OHCHR technical guidelines;
- The workshop led to the submission of **3** thematic reports as coalitions on: 1/ the rights of children and vulnerable groups (representing 13 organisations); 2/ women's rights (representing 8 organisations); and 3/ civil and political rights (representing 21 organisations) and several individual submissions. The report submitted by the coalition of women's rights is an example of good report including the learning acquired during the training; providing disaggregated data, a human rights and gender equality-based approach and reference to the SDGs.
- The NHRI submitted a UPR report for the first time.
- Considering the size of the country and particular human rights violations occurring in the Eastern part, an additional submission workshop was implemented in Goma on 2-3 July 2018, organized by *UPR Info* and Ligue des Droits de la personne dans la région des Grands Lacs (LDGL). The



meeting in Goma was attended by **51** participants of which **22%** were women. The participants were drawn from a range of CSOs from a total of **11** cities from North and South Kivu. In Goma, the Working Group developed a joint CSO submission on **8** issues namely Women's rights; Human Rights Defenders; Civil and political rights; Conflict resolution; Freedom of association and expression; Access to Justice; demining and land resources; and Poverty reduction. In addition, **4** individual reports were submitted covering the issues of sexual violence, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples and youth.

New Zealand



UPR Info partnered with the New Zealand Human Rights Commission (NZHRC) to strengthen CSOs' advocacy ahead of New Zealand third UPR review to be held in January 2019.

Step 2: In-country Pre-session – October 2018

A total of **69** civil society participants joined one of the 3 advocacy trainings co-organized by *UPR Info* and the New Zealand Human Rights Commission in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington, 23 to 25 October 2018. Those trainings aimed at presenting advocacy entry points to the UPR process for CSOs and to get the participants ready for the In-country Pre-session on 26th October 2018. The national Pre-session held in Wellington gathered **32** embassies based in Wellington and **14** CSO speakers from different part of New Zealand. CSO speakers could brief diplomats about the human rights situation in New Zealand on a wide range of issues ahead of New Zealand third UPR review to be held in January 2019.



In Ghana, *UPR Info* partnered with POS Foundation and UNDP to organise the CSO Strategy Workshop that was held on 27th and 28th February 2018 followed by a validation workshop that took place 2 weeks later, that is, on 15th March 2018 and attended by civil society organizations and media.

There was the Ghana Multi-Stakeholders Dialogue that was co-supported by *UPR Info* and POS Foundation in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice. The meeting brought together representatives of Government Municipal, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MMDAs); the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ); CSOs and the media. The meeting provided a platform for Government to review and consider the Implementation Plan that was drafted by CSOs during the Strategy Workshop that was held from 27th - 28th February and 15th March 2018.

Step 3: UPR Strategy Workshop – February-March 2018

- The CSO Strategy Workshop that was held on 27th and 28th February 2018 was attended by over 70 participants while the validation workshop held on 15th March 2018 was attended by over 60 participants drawn from civil society organisations and media. Out of the total of 130 participants at the two meetings, **25%** were women;
- Participants gained knowledge in developing an Implementation Plan and Action Strategy and finalized the Implementation Plans and Action Strategy;
- The utilization of the data contained in the Advocacy Factsheets that had been developed prior to the Pre-sessions made it easier to define the indicators while

elaborating the Implementation Plans thereby reinforcing the fact that the UPR is a process and not an event.

Step 4: Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation – August 2018

- **170** participants took part out of which **42%** were women;
- The meeting was attended by **37** participants from Government, **93** participants from NGOs, and **40** participants from media over the 3 days ;
- The Government of Ghana agreed to establish a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations and also to organise an annual human rights conference;
- The National Dialogue and the general open civic space provided to CSOs by the Government of Ghana has created a conducive environment for CSOs to advocate for human rights and take practical measures to continually improve upon them.

Sri Lanka



UPR Info partnered with the National Fisheries Solidarity Organization Sri Lanka to organize a Multi-stakeholder dialogue in Colombo together with the Government of Sri Lanka and other domestic stakeholders on UPR implementation following the adoption of the country's third UPR Working Group report in March 2018. Previously, *UPR Info* and partner organizations had implemented a Stakeholders' Submission workshop, an In-country Pre-session and a UPR Strategy Workshop in Sri Lanka.

Step 4: Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation – August 2018

- **40** CSOs, including HRDs, participated in to the preparatory workshop ahead of the dialogue-day. 47% of participants were women;
- **40** civil society members, including Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), **25** government officials, **2** OHCHR representatives **one** Commissioner from the NHRI participated in the Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation;
- **75%** of participants responded that they had improved their knowledge on the subject matter as result of attending the workshop;
- **One** Letter of Cooperation in which the Government of Sri Lanka and civil society actors committed to annual multi-stakeholder meetings to assess implementation.

India



India underwent its third UPR in May 2017. *UPR Info* teamed up with the Working Group on Human Rights and the UN to conduct a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on UPR Implementation in New Delhi with the Government of India, CSOs and the NHRI as well as other national stakeholders in 2018. Previously, *UPR Info* supported a UPR Strategy Workshop in India to kickstart the follow-up process.

Step 4: Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation – October 2018

- **40** CSOs, including HRDs, participated in to the preparatory workshop ahead of the dialogue-day;

- **32** civil society members, including HRDs, **15** government officials, **2** NHRC representatives, **2** OHCHR representatives, **2** representatives from academia, and **one** representative respectively from UNDP, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Swiss Embassy also participated in the event.
- **90%** of participants responded that they had improved their knowledge on the subject matter as result of attending the workshop.

Armenia



UPR Info in partnership with Open Society Foundation Armenia arranged a public hearing together in Yerevan with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia to measure progress of implementation of the recommendations the State received in its second review in January 2015. Earlier in the cycle, *UPR Info* and partner organisations conducted a UPR Strategy Workshop, a Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation and a mid-term workshop for national CSOs.

Step 5: Mid-term reporting workshop – April 2018

- **65** CSOs representatives and HRDs, **1** representative respectively from the EU Delegation, UNDP and UNICEF attended the civil society mid-term workshop. In total **54%** of the participants were women;
- **2** CSO representatives, **16** government representatives, **one** representative respectively from the NHRI, UNDP, and EU participated in the public hearing of the government mid-term report. In total **60%** of the participants were women;

- **2** mid term reports, one joint CSO mid-term report and one from the Government of Armenia were supported by *UPR Info* and submitted to OHCHR; and
- **60%** of participants responded that the documents and tools shared at the mid-term workshop were either *good* or *excellent*.



Nepal



To mark the mid-term stage in Nepal, *UPR Info* partnered with the National Human Rights Commission, Informal Sector Service Center, Women's Rehabilitation Center, Beyond Beijing Committee, Children as Zone of Peace, FIAN Nepal, INSEC, The Lutheran World Federation Nepal, and the European Union in Nepal to support the drafting of the civil society mid-term report and to conduct a multi-stakeholder validation meeting in Kathmandu. In the aftermath of Nepal's second UPR, *UPR Info* and partner organizations held a UPR Strategy Workshop, and a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on UPR implementation to launch the follow-up process.

Step 5: Mid-term reporting workshop – April 2018

- **112** CSOs representatives and HRDs attended the validation meeting. **One** representative respectively from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, the NHRI, and OHCHR also participated in the validation meeting of the civil society mid-term report. In total **46%** women of the participants were women;
- At the diplomatic briefing **13** CSO representatives, one NHRI representative, **5** diplomats, **9** UN representatives, and **2** EU representatives participated;
- **One** mid term report was submitted to OHCHR supported by the National Coalition for UPR, supported by UPR Info;
- **76%** of participants responded that they had improved their knowledge on the subject matter as result of attending the workshop; and
- **72%** of participants responded that the information and tools shared at the workshop would benefit them in their work.

Mongolia



To measure implementation progress between reviews, *UPR Info* and Open Society Foundations (OSF) Mongolia organised a validation meeting of the respective UPR mid-term report from the Government of Mongolia and the Mongolian Human Rights NGO Forum. *UPR Info* had previously engaged with UPR stakeholders in the country and co-organised a UPR Strategy Workshop and a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on UPR implementation.

Step 5: Mid-term reporting workshop – May 2018

- Translated all recommendations to Mongolian;
- Conducted **19** provincial and **4** regional consultations jointly implemented by the national partner organisations and the

NHRI to assess implementation of 2nd cycle UPR recommendations;

- **32** CSOs representatives and HRDs, (13 from the regions), **52** government representatives, **3** representatives from the NHRC, **7** media outlets, **2** representatives from academia, and **1** representative from the Embassy of Germany, EU Delegation, Embassy of Canada, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Embassy of the Czech Republic, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, United States Embassy, and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) respectively attended the mid-term event. In total **63%** of the participants were women.
- At the diplomatic briefing **20** CSO representatives and **one** representative respectively from the United Nations Country Team, the Embassy of the Czech Republic, the EU Delegation, and FAO participated.
- **2** mid term reports, one from the Mongolian Human Rights NGO Forum and one from the Government of Mongolia were supported by *UPR Info* and submitted to OHCHR.

Kenya



After the adoption of the Working Group report the Government of Kenya with technical support from Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR); the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; and *UPR Info Africa* among others, developed a comprehensive UPR Implementation Matrix that was launched on 3rd June 2016. The document set the activities to be undertaken and indicators to assess progress. As is a good practice, Kenya's was expected to draft a mid-term review report in July 2017 and in this regard, the Kenya Stakeholders' Coalition on the UPR which has a

membership of over 100 NGOs and is led by a Steering Committee commenced the process of developing a Mid-Term Report. A series of meetings were held that culminated in the finalization of the same in December 2018. The said meetings were co-supported by *UPR Info* (both Nairobi and Geneva), Lutheran World Federations, Kenya Human Rights Commission, AMREF, and Pendekezo Letu.

Step 5: Mid-term reporting workshops – January to December 2018

- A series of meetings and consultations were held to draft the Mid-Term Report. The meeting was attended by over **61** different organisations. Thereafter, the coalition held several drafting retreats to populate the data collection tools. The Steering Committee thereafter completed the Mid-Term Report;
- Through the above, different NGOs have realised the efficacy and power of the UPR process to bring change and for that reason have not only sought to participate but also come to the fore to fund and support the entire process;
- The Kenyan process has proved that it is possible for NGOs that work on different topics to partner in a broad coalition and that human rights are inter-related and inter-dependent;
- The Government of Kenya developed its own report and submitted in July, 2018.



Capacity-building activities

In addition to workshops held within the framework of *UPR Info*'s 5 steps of engagement in the UPR process, the organization provided capacity building workshops in **Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia** and **Rwanda** to enhance the capacity of different UPR stakeholders to enable them utilise the UPR process.

Training of Trainers

UPR Info launched a system of National Focal Points in 2017 to address the increased demand for sustained engagement between activities in selected target countries covered by the



organization's 2017-2019 In-country Programme. In 2018, NFPs were active and remunerated by *UPR Info* in Jordan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and India, offering tailored support to national stakeholders before and after the review of the respective state. The majority of the NFPs are integrated in *UPR Info*'s partner organizations and are thus supervised by both the hosting organization and a Programme Manager at *UPR Info*. Others operate on a consultancy basis and are contracted directly by *UPR Info*. Some of the NFPs have previously been interacting with the UPR and the UN human rights machinery, while others were newcomers to the arena when recruited.

The nature of the support extended by the NFP to national stakeholders depend on where in the UPR process the state is. Their engagement is aligned with the five steps of the In-country programme, but also goes beyond that to conduct follow-up actions to harness the momentum created by the steps.

In 2018, *UPR Info* invited its NFPs who were active in 2018 and those who will facilitating activities planned in 2019 to a five-day workshop in Geneva. Representatives from civil society organisations and national human rights institutions from Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Conakry, India, Ivory Coast, Kyrgyzstan participated to the training.

The *Training of National UPR Info Focal Points* resulted in:

- Strengthening the capacity of NFPs to engage in the UPR process in their respective countries;
- Equipping the NFPs with the necessary tools to increase their contribution to the substance of in-country activities;
- Providing NFPs with practical tools to become trainers competent to enhance capacities of grassroots organisations and NGOs in their respective country;
- Fostering South-South exchanges and knowledge sharing.

2. Organisation

Executive board

The Executive Board is in charge of reaching the organization's goals. It is composed as follows:

- **Miloon Kothari** (India) – President
- **Kamelia Kemileva** (Switzerland) – Secretary
- **Saida Manieva** (Kyrgyzstan) – Treasurer
- **Professor Edward R. McMahon** (United States) – Board Member
- **Julien Bonnet** (France) - Board Member

Secretariat



Mona M'Bikay
Executive Director



Hans Fridlund
Programme Manager



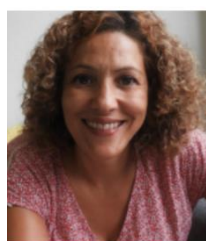
Ashleigh Shields
Programme Manager



Nargiz Arupova
Programme Manager



Nicoletta Zappile
Programme Manager



Saïda Laurent
Finance &
administration
manager



Laura Sinner
Programme Assistant



Gilbert Onvango
Regional Director
Africa



Fredrick Kinama

Finance &
Administration
Officer



Koffi Leon Kouame

Programme Officer

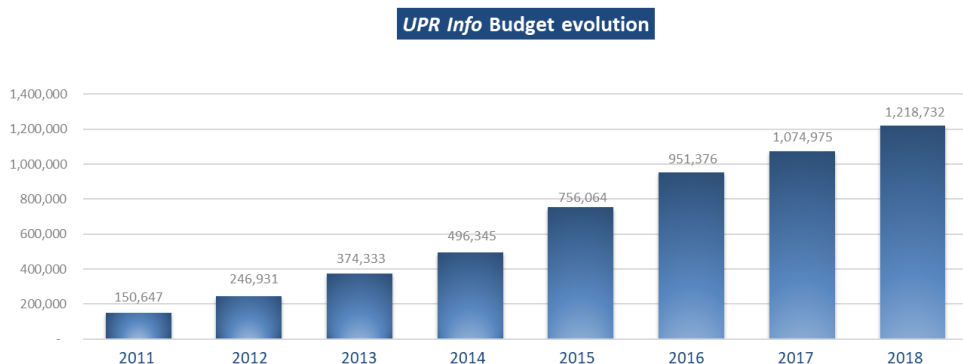
The We Pay Our Interns Initiative, founded by staff at UPR Info, is composed of 47 partners organizations. The work of *UPR Info* would not have been possible without our internship programme. We thank those who worked with us in 2018 for their contribution and dedication.



3. Finances

In 2018, the total budget for all our programmes was 1'218'732 CHF.

***UPR Info* budget evolution (2011 to 2018) – in Swiss francs**



UPR Info's budget has increased from CHF 150,647 to CHF 1,218,732 in 8 years, from 2011 to 2018 (an increase of 88%). This has been made possible through the creation of new programmes, adapted to the needs of UPR stakeholders, the professionalism and commitment of the teams, the fulfilment of commitments and, of course, the funding of donors who are convinced by our activities and values.

Evolution of our three Programmes (2016-2018)

Stakeholders Programme

The budget of the Stakeholders Programme (initially the CSO Programme) increased from CHF 170,442 to CHF 238,673 in 3 years

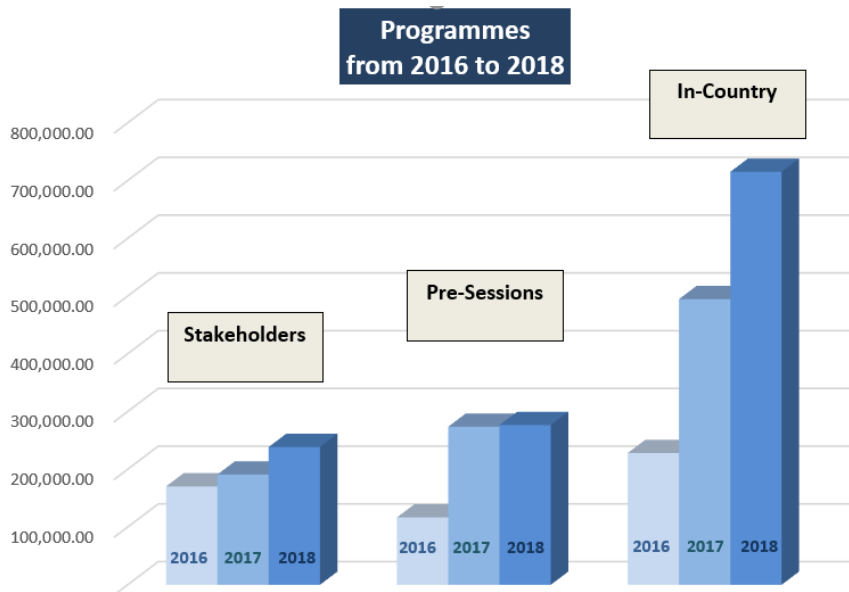
(+29%). Initially, the Programme was focused on providing a database to share information. Today, this focus has grown to include an emphasis on building the capacity of a wider range of stakeholders including States, civil society organisations, National Human Rights Institutions and Parliamentarians, and providing adapted online tools throughout the UPR process.

Pre-sessions Programme

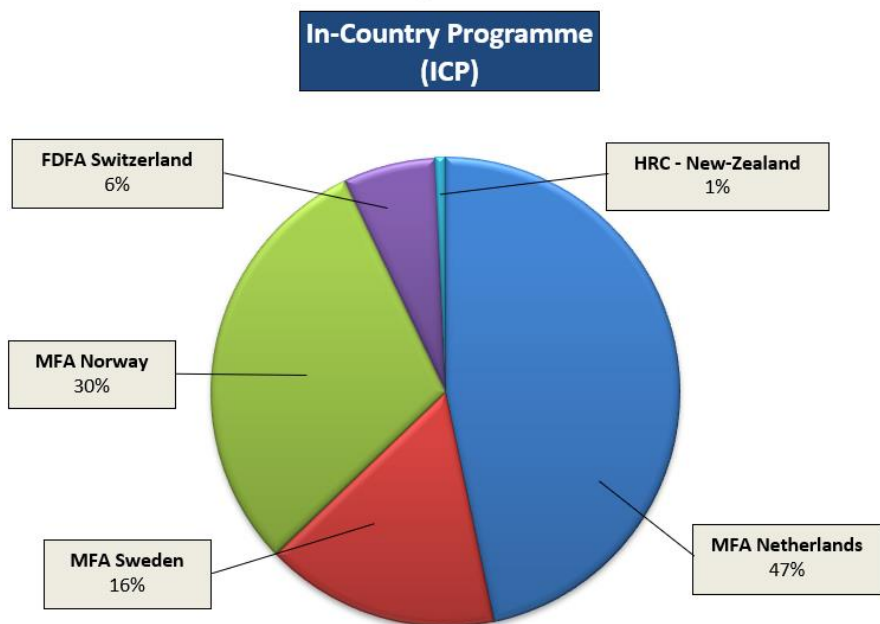
The budget of the Pre-sessions Programme increased from CHF 116,663 to CHF 276,662 in 3 years (+58%). This programme allows civil society organisations and national human rights institutions to prepare and support their advocacy at the international level. The demand for funding from donors increases every year. More specific requests for support in regions are identified.

In-country Programme

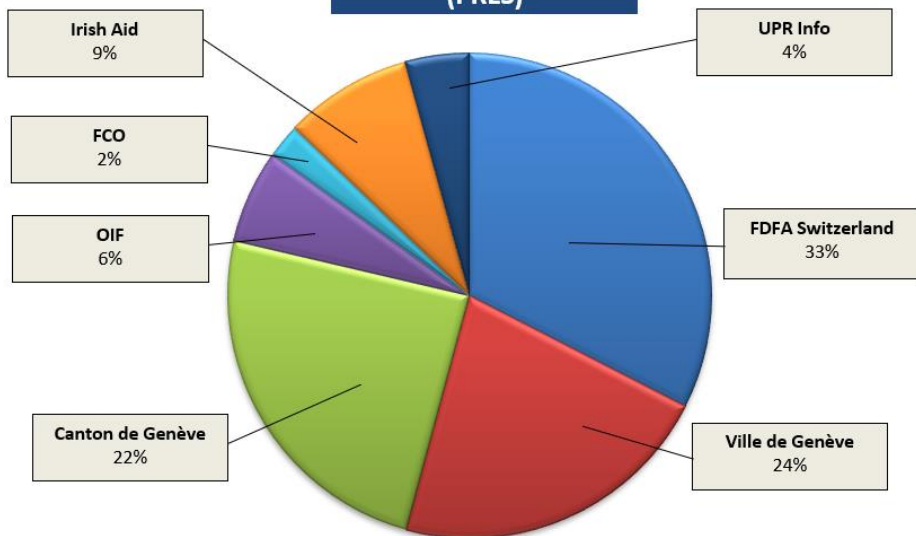
The budget of the In-country Programme increased from CHF 228,162 to CHF 715,203 in 3 years (+68%). This programme is implemented on the ground in partnership with local organisations. The budget increase comes from specific projects implemented to provide a technical assistance in some countries that are not part of the 5 steps engagement of *UPR Info*.



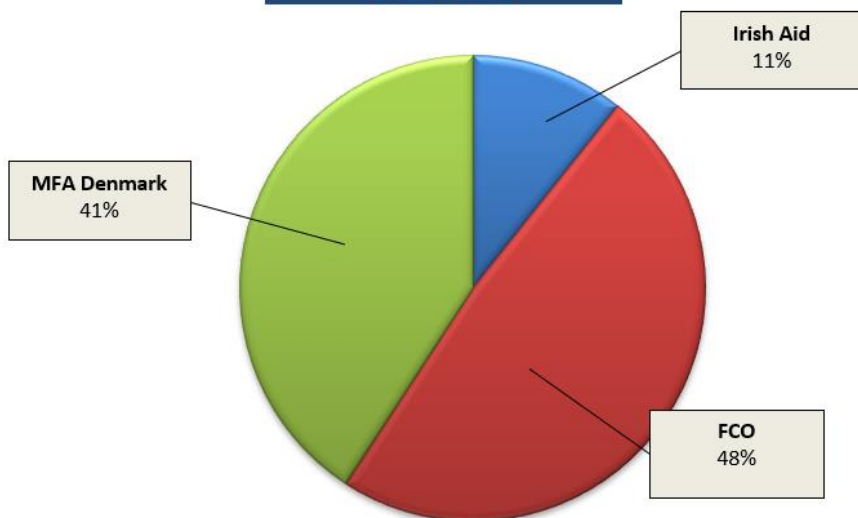
Funding source by programme in 2018



Pre-Sessions Programme (PRES)



Stakeholders Programme (STH / CSO)



Donors

UPR Info's activities were supported by 11 donors in 2018. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to each of them for making our work possible and thereby ensuring that the UPR is an effective tool to advance human rights:

- *Canton of Geneva, Service de la Solidarité Internationale*
- *City of Geneva*
- *Irish Aid*
- *Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom*
- *Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland*
- *Government Offices of Sweden*
- *Human Rights Commission of New Zealand*
- *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands*
- *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*
- *Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations in Geneva*
- *Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations in Geneva*
- *Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway*



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA





Kingdom of the Netherlands



UDENRIGSMINISTERIET
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK



Human Rights Commission
Te Kahui Tika Tangata



REPUBLIQUE
ET CANTON
DE GENEVE

POST TENEBRAS LUX



Government Offices of Sweden

Partners

UPR Info would like to thank its local and international partners that assisted us in implementing our activities on the ground. Their support allowed us to make the UPR an inclusive process and to ensure national ownership.

- *Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Jordan*
- *OHCHR*
- *Cambodian Center for Human Rights*
- *European Union Delegations*

- *UNDP*
- *La Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme de la République Démocratique du Congo*
- *The Carter Center*
- *Le Bureau Conjoint des Nations Unies aux Droits de l'Homme*
- *La Ligue des Droits de la Personne dans la Région des Grands Lacs*
- *Le Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme de Côte d'Ivoire*
- *Comité de Suivi EPU*
- *New Zealand Human Rights Commission*
- *POS Foundation*
- *National Fisheries Solidarity Organization*
- *Working Group on Human Rights*
- *Open Society Foundation*
- *INSEC*
- *National NGO Coalition for the UPR in Nepal*
- *Kenya National Commission on Human Rights*
- *Lutheran World Federation*

4. The Way Forward

In a time where some human rights are questioned and civic space is increasingly restrained, *UPR Info* remains committed to the promotion of the respect of human rights in line with the organization's vision of an inclusive society promoting the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination.

It is often said that the third UPR cycle is the one of implementation. To support UPR stakeholders in the monitoring and implementation of UPR recommendations, *UPR Info* will reinforce its three programmes to strengthen the UPR mechanism.

The Pre-sessions will be integrated into a larger programme of **Policy and Advocacy** that will aim to better respond to the capacities needs of its beneficiaries. It will further develop advocacy and capacity-building tools, including a child-friendly guide to the UPR that will be launched on the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in support of the engagement of children along the UPR process.

In 2019, the **Stakeholders Programme** will offer online training and will design a curriculum to support States, NHRIs and civil society organisations creating actions plans with indicators to monitor the implementation of UPR recommendations.

National Human Rights Institutions play the role of catalyst in promoting human rights and act as a bridge between the Government and civil society. For these reasons, in 2019 *UPR Info* will intensify the work with these key stakeholders. In the same vein, *UPR Info* will raise awareness about the important role Parliamentarians play in the UPR process.

As the **In-country Programme** approaches the end of its first three-year phase, *UPR Info* will be conducting an evaluation of its programme to evaluate lessons learned and launch its second phase. Based on the outcomes of the first two year of the programme, *UPR Info* will adapt the structure of its workshops after the Review, support civil society organisations in drafting actions strategies and, upon request, supporting States in the development of their human rights action plan.

UPR Info will continue to develop partnerships with local and international organizations to expand our outreach and be able to respond to the growing request for technical assistance we receive.



*Promoting and strengthening the
Universal Periodic Review*

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