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Executive Summary

2016 was a successful year for UPR Info Africa. Indeed, the year saw the Africa Regional Office officially launched at a very colourful event that took place on 19th April, 2016 at the Hotel InterContinental in Nairobi together with the formalisation of the creation and functions of the Board of Directors. Further, the office was able to fundraise and increase the number of staff in the office with there being greater prospects for raising more funds

The year saw UPR Info shift towards treating the UPR more as a process than an event that ends in Geneva. For this reason, the organisation came up with 6 sets of project activities that are contained in this report namely 1/ CSO Submission Workshops; 2/ In Country Pre-Sessions; 3/ Pre Sessions in Geneva; 4/ CSO Strategy Workshops; 5/ Multi-Stakeholders Dialogue on Implementation; 6/ Mid Term reporting workshops; and 6/ Trainings facilitated by UPR Info Africa. Consequently, there were projects in Niger, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda that were supported by the 2015-16 Follow up project that is funded through the UPR Info International office in Geneva. There were others that were supported by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Kenya including projects in Kenya, Uganda, Cote d'Ivoire and Somalia. Apart from these, the office was able to build the capacities of UPR stakeholders in Ethiopia and Burundi.

With regard to Pre Submission workshops, we realised that the quality of the implementation phase can be determined by how best CSOs prepare for a country’s Universal Periodic Review. In a bid to provide a holistic approach to programming around the UPR, UPR Info started working closely with civil society organisations all through the process including supporting them during the drafting phase as well. It is for this reason that there was increased engagement with the Pre Submission workshops.

In Country Pre Sessions were also new projects. UPR Info realised that it was important for grassroots actors to also engage with Diplomats representing the various Recommending States. These meetings provided an opportunity for the diplomats to better understand the issues and to propose recommendations that are a reflection of the needs of the State under Review. They also enabled CSO members to agree on the issues to focus on and have a coordinated approach. These In Country Pre Sessions built into the Geneva Pre Sessions that are organised by UPR Info one month
before the UPR sessions to provide a forum for CSOs to meet with the Permanent Missions/Recommending States in Geneva.

As for the CSO Strategy Workshops which are organised with CSOs immediately after the UPR sessions in Geneva, there were a total of 5 that were organised during the year 2016. These workshops seek to better equip CSOs in the various countries to utilise the UPR recommendations by ensuring that they co-ordinate their advocacy activities and also ensure that all the participating stakeholders understand the core value of the mechanism, which is co-operation. At the end of the meeting, CSOs are expected to develop a tentative implementation plan and a tentative action strategy.

There were also 2 Stakeholder Coordination/Government-CSO consultations held in 2016 in Sierra Leone and Niger. These meetings take place after the formal adoption of the UPR by the UN Human Rights Council. They mark the beginning of the implementation phase.

Apart from these, there was a mid term reporting workshop that was held in Cote d’Ivoire in November, 2016 and trainings that were held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and another for Somali CSOs that was held in Nairobi.

REPORT COMPILED BY

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1. MANAGEMENT REPORT

1.1 Pursuing the UPR Info Strategy

2016 was a successful year in terms of implementation of project. Indeed, all the actions of the UPR Info Africa office were guided by the following strategies.

A. The first strategy focusses on strengthening all stakeholder engagement with the mechanism:

1. Expand civil society participation in the UPR: Ensure that more NGOs involved in the UPR process;
2. Expand the inclusiveness of the participation in the UPR: more UN Agencies, institutions, embassies and parliaments should be fully involved in the UPR;
3. Establish in-country governmental structures for the UPR: An interministerial committee for the follow-up of the UPR in each government should be sought;
4. Establish trust between the actors: Provide opportunities for confidence building among stakeholders;
5. Connect CSOs with donors for the implementation of the activities.

B. The second strategy was more inward oriented. In this, UPR Info sought:

1. Deeper involvement in regional mechanisms/activities;
2. Long-term and sustainable relationships with human rights activists of the region, establish a closer network;
3. Expand the donors, address book in Africa.

1.2 Establishing UPR Info Africa Regional Office in Nairobi

1.2.1 Official Launch of UPR Info Africa

The UPR Info Africa Regional Office was officially launched at a very colourful event that took place on 19th April, 2016 at the Hotel InterContinental in Nairobi. The launch was attended by over 40 guests including Government of Kenya officials; diplomats; and civil society representatives. The speakers included Ms. Christine Alai, Chairperson, Board of Directors, UPR Info Africa; Mr. Jean-Claude Vignoli, Director of
Programmes, *UPR Info* Headquarters in Geneva; Ms. Marcella Favretto, Senior Human Rights Adviser, OHCHR; Mr. Jamie Pennell, First Secretary, Canadian High Commission, Nairobi; Ms. Stijn Janssen, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Nairobi; Mr. David C. Jourdan, First Secretary, Norwegian Embassy; and Ms. Maryann Njau-Kimani, Secretary, Office of the Attorney General and Department of Justice.

In her opening and welcome remarks, Ms. Alai reminded members present of the history of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as a mechanism that seeks to review the human rights record of all UN Member States. Mr. Vignoli appreciated the support from the various donors. He informed the meeting that *UPR Info* has been supporting UPR stakeholders since 2008 and to date, the organisation has grown and is collaborating with over 4,000 NGOs from all over the world; dozens of Governments; and advises UN agencies.

Ms. Marcella Favretto of the OHCHR reiterated the merits of the UPR as a unique process, which involves a State-to-State review of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States thus ensuring equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed. Mr. Jamie Pennell from the Canadian High Commission on his part reaffirmed Canada’s commitment to the UPR – both here in Kenya, across the continent and beyond while Ms. Stijn Janssen from the Royal Netherlands Embassy congratulated *UPR Info* for launching the office as this was a major step in bringing the work closer to where the real demand is. Mr. David C. Jourdan from the Norwegian Embassy expressed his joy at witnessing the realization of *UPR Info*’s presence in the field and added that UPR is a wonderful instrument for global discussion on individual countries’ human rights obligations.

Finally, in her key note address, Ms. Maryann Njau-Kimani, Secretary, Office of the Attorney General and Department of Justice, who was representing the Honourable Attorney General of the Republic of Kenya lauded the UPR for three reasons (i) the fact that it is the first ever human rights mechanism to achieve 100%
participation by all UN member States; (ii) that it is a real peer review mechanism between States; and (iii) that the UPR permits civil society to advocate and to take part in implementation of human rights obligations. Ms. Kimani reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of Kenya to the entire UPR mechanism and more importantly, to the implementation of all the Accepted recommendations while undertaking a realistic review of the Noted ones with a view towards their possible implementation. She thanked UPR Info for choosing to establish its regional office in Nairobi adding that this was not only an acknowledgement of the progress that Kenya has made as a country towards becoming a more human rights respecting State but also an appreciation of the democratic space enjoyed by Civil Society Organizations and other Non–State actors. She concluded by formally launching the UPR Info Africa Regional Office.

1.2.2 Registration of UPR Info Africa

In 2015, the Board of Directors passed a resolution that UPR Info Africa should be registered with the NGO Coordination Board which falls under the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. After several visits to the Board during the year, UPR Info Africa finally submitted its application for registration on 18th August, 2016. However, the Certificate of Registration had not been issued before the end of the reporting period.

1.2.3 Opening of UPR Info Africa office

UPR Info Africa was hosted by The East African Centre for Human Rights (EACH Rights) all through the year. However, upon submission of the application for registration with the NGO Coordination Board in August, 2016, UPR Info proceeded to sub lease an office within the same premises through the host organisation. Plans are at an advanced stage to move out altogether once the organisation is fully registered.

1.3 Staffing for UPR Info Africa office

UPR Info had only one staff member at the beginning of 2016, that is, the Regional Director, Mr. Gilbert O. Onyango. But after receiving support from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nairobi, the organisation recruited additional personnel namely Mr. Willy Buloso as Project Officer and Mr. Fredrick Kinama as Finance and Administration Officer bringing the total full time personnel to 3. However,
Mr. Willy Buloso left the organisation in November, 2016. Plans are underway to hire another officer to replace him.

1.4 Fundraising for UPR Info Africa

UPR Info Africa is grateful to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Netherlands and Norway for the support that they have given to the UPR Info Africa Regional Office through the UPR Info International Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. In order to cement this relationship, the Programme Director of UPR Info, Mr. Jean-Claude Vignoli, together with the Regional Director for Africa, Mr. Gilbert Onyango, paid a courtesy call to the Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi where they met with the Norwegian Deputy Ambassador, Mr. Vebjorn Heines and Mr. David Jourdan in April, 2016. He also attended the Norwegian Independence Day celebration that was held at the residence of the Norwegian Ambassador in Kenya. On several occasion, the Regional Director for UPR Info Africa attended several events organised by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi including celebration of Independence Day; Netherlands Alumni Association meetings, among others. There were also invitations to functions organised by the British High Commission.

As already noted above, UPR Info Africa received support to the tune of Euro Seventy Thousand (Euro 70,000) from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nairobi. This was to undertake activities in Kenya, Somalia, Cote d’Ivoire and Uganda. The office also secured the sum of Kenya Shillings One Hundred Thousand (Kshs. 100,000/-) from the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, Kenya in April, 2016 which went towards supporting the official launch. In May, 2016, the office partnered with Freedom House to undertake a project in Ethiopia.

UPR Info always seeks to develop robust partnerships in all countries where we worked. In Sierra Leone for example, UPR Info partnered for the first time with the private sector company LEOCEM who supported the CSO Strategy Workshop that was held in Sierra Leone in April, 2016. In Uganda, UPR Info partnered with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; HURINET-Uganda; Defend Defenders; Lutheran World Federation; and the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) to organise the CSO Strategy Workshop that was held in November/December, 2016.

In November, 2016, the office was approached by the Carter Foundation. The discussions are ongoing. Further, the organisation plans to reach out to the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, among others. In 2017, a lot of emphasis will be placed
on increasing the office’s visibility among the donor community, especially among the various Foundations with a presence in the country. To this end, the organisation has reached out to the Ford Foundation and Wellsprings Advisors.

2. PROJECTS ACTIVITIES REPORT

This part of the report is dedicated to the projects that were undertaken during the year 2016. It must be noted that these projects were conducted within the wider strategic framework of the entire organisation. It must also be recalled that UPR Info changed its strategy towards the end of 2015 so as to provide a holistic approach to programming around the Universal Periodic Review of the target countries so as to ensure that the organisation provides comprehensive support all through the entire process.

2.1 Areas of focus for the UPR Info Africa

According to the new strategy of offering holistic support, UPR Info’s areas of focus in 2016 included:

1. Supporting CSOs to draft their reports to the Human Rights Council.
2. Organising national consultations one year prior to the UPR where we seek to involve more actors and create UPR coalitions.
3. Supporting civil society and involving new NGOs by maintaining contacts already established with UPR activists in the region; connecting the activists within the region; identifying new potential NGOs to be involved in the UPR; creating UPR coalitions comprised of ESC and CP rights-related NGOs; and training journalists.
4. Organising In Country Pre-sessions by inviting NGOs and the NHRI to speak to Embassies of Recommending States that have a presence in the State under Review.
5. Organising Pre Sessions in Geneva and inviting NGOs and the NHRI to speak for with all the Permanent Missions, the UN Agencies to listen to NGOs.
6. Supporting CSOs to participate in the reviews.
7. Promoting publication of mid-term reports by contacting governments at mid-term to see if they need support in drafting their mid-term report; and encouraging UPR coalitions/NGOs to publish a report at mid-term.
8. Strengthening the NHRI by promoting the creation of a UPR focal point within the NHRI.
9. Strengthening Governments by organising discussions of national implementation plans, and training ministries on the UPR.
10. Extracting more accurate and relevant information from the regions by among other things, listing good practices in the region.
11. Developing UPR Info contacts with donors.

2.2 UPR Info Africa target countries

During the year 2016, UPR Info Africa undertook different and varying work in the target countries.

1 As a consequence of the Universal Periodic Review agenda established by the OHCHR, the organisation undertook work in Niger, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda that was supported by the 2015-16 Follow up project that is funded through the UPR Info International office in Geneva.
2 There were activities in Kenya, Uganda, Cote d’Ivoire and Somalia through support from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Kenya.
3 Countries that were reviewed in 2016 and those to be reviewed in 2017 through the organising of national consultations 1 year before the UPR.
4 Any country requesting the support of the Regional office. In this regard, UPR Info Africa supported Ethiopian UPR stakeholders to help them commence discussion around the development of an implementation framework; and trained Burundian CSOs on the UPR process.

2.3 Country specific projects

During the year, UPR Info not only concentrated on the implementation of the recommendations but also in the drafting of recommendations that are implementable. This part of the report is divided into 6 sub headings, which is also a reflection of the various stages of the UPR process, namely

1. Pre Submission Workshops;
2. In Country Pre-Sessions;
3. Pre Sessions in Geneva;
4. CSO Strategy Workshops;
5. Stakeholders Co-ordination Workshops;
6. Mid-term reporting Workshops;
7. Trainings facilitated by UPR Info Africa.

2.3.1 Pre Submission workshops

That the quality of the implementation phase can be determined by how best CSOs prepare for a country’s Universal Periodic Review process cannot be gainsaid. In a bid to provide a holistic approach to programming around the Universal Periodic Review, UPR Info actualised and further institutionalised activities that are aimed towards working closely with civil society organisations all through the process including supporting them during the drafting phase as well. To this end, UPR Info established contacts with CSO coalitions; undertook training and capacity building sessions where we provided them with among other things, international and national data and statistics of previous reviews and materials from other countries such as advocacy charters, etc. The first such Pre Submission workshop was held in Tanzania in September, 2015. Indeed, the lessons learnt from that meeting advised the development and delivery of similar meetings in 2016.

1. Uganda Pre Submission workshop held in Kampala in March, 2016

Uganda underwent her 2nd Cycle review on 3rd November, 2016. In preparation for the same, CSOs were expected to submit their reports to the Human Rights Council by 24th March, 2016. It is in this regard that UPR Info supported a Pre Submission workshop for Ugandan CSO at the Fairways Hotel in Kampala on 15th March, 2016 that brought together 17 participants from different sub clusters. The purpose of the meeting was to assess the progress the thematic groups had made thus far in developing and finalising their respective reports; to assess the quality of the thematic group reports; to review the reports with a view to ensuring that they complement each other; and finally, for UPR Info to establish linkages with the Ugandan CSO coalition. This ensured that the UPR brought out the best possible results; enhanced coordination and collaboration among CSOs; and CSOs undertook joint activities and advocacy all through the process.

At the meeting, the facilitator shared with the participants some of the best practices with regard to the content of the CSO reports and in particular, what information to include in the same as they prepare for the advocacy phase of the process and implementation of the recommendation after their formal adoption. The facilitator also
shared with the participants some of the resources that are available on the UPR Info and OHCHR websites for them to use. The various groups presented their drafts reports to which the facilitator made comments on. Finally, the facilitator trained the participants on how to upload their reports on the OHCHR website.

2.3.2 In-Country Pre-Sessions

There is need for local civil society organizations and the diplomatic corps in a State under Review to hold dialogue. This is because the Diplomats working in the various Permanent Missions in Geneva and those in the capitals of the Recommending States rely on the information they receive from their colleagues working in the State under Review and civil society actors in those countries. For this, UPR Info came up with In-Country Pre-Session to be held in the capital of the State under Review at least 3 months before the actual review. These meetings provide an opportunity for the Diplomats representing the Recommending States to better understand the issues and to propose recommendations that are a reflection of the needs of the State under Review. The In-Country Pre-Sessions also provide an opportunity for civil society organisations to clarify their issues with the diplomats and enable CSO members to agree on the issues to focus on and have a coordinated approach.

1. Uganda In Country Pre Session held in August-September, 2016

Between 30th August, 2016 and 1st September, 2016, UPR Info, together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; HURINET-Uganda; Defend Defenders; and the Lutheran World Federation organised a workshop dubbed “Uganda UPR Pre Session-Voices from the ground: CSOs engaging in Uganda 2nd UPR” that was held at the Fairways Hotel in Kampala, Uganda. The purpose of the meeting was to build the capacity of CSOs and to provide them an opportunity to meet and dialogue with members of the Diplomatic Corps based in Uganda preparation for and anticipation of Uganda’s UPR set for November, 2016.
The meeting was opened by the Deputy Head of the German Embassy in Uganda Ms. Petra Kochendörfer and Mr. Mohammed Ndifuna, the Executive Director of HURINET - Uganda.

The meeting provided an opportunity for civil society actors to provide information to; lobby and advocate them prior to the Geneva pre-session scheduled for October, 2016. The meeting provided an opportunity for the members of the coalition to agree on the issues to focus on and have a coordinated approach.

This meeting was facilitated by UPR Info together with HURINET-Uganda and was attended on the first and second day by over 60 CSO participants. The third day was attended by over 80 participants comprising of over 20 members of the Diplomatic Corps based in Uganda and 60 CSO representatives.

The 3 day meeting was largely divided into 2 main parts, that is, 1/ capacity building and 2/ Diplomatic Dialogue. These were divided into several sessions with different objectives. The first part which was held on Day I and II entailed a CSO training on the UPR process that was facilitated by UPR Info. The participants were provided with important information that they will need in preparation for the 2nd Cycle. The second part, that is the Diplomatic Dialogue, was held on Day III. The objective of this session was to provide an opportunity for local human defenders to meet, discuss and share with the Diplomats present some of Uganda’s human rights issues and the situation on the ground. The CSOs were urged to raise evidence-based concerns and propose recommendations that are SMART which they (the Diplomats) would be sharing with the members of their respective Permanent Missions in Geneva in preparation for Uganda’s 2nd UPR Cycle.
The value of this In Country Pre Session cannot be overstated because Permanent Missions in Geneva rely on issues raised by civil society organization to develop recommendations to the State. It is therefore necessary to provide a forum through these In Country Pre Sessions for civil society organizations to meet with the various recommending States. Secondly, the In-Country and Geneva Pre-Sessions will form the basis for the development of an implementation framework for Uganda’s human rights action plan. Thus by organizing these Pre Sessions, UPR Info provided a forum for local civil society organizations to influence the UPR process right from the beginning by providing diplomats with the necessary information.

2.3.3 Pre Sessions in Geneva

The Geneva Pre Sessions are organised by UPR Info one month before the UPR sessions. They provide a forum for CSOs to meet with the Permanent Missions/Recommending States with at least 5 CSO representatives from the State under Review giving presentations in plenary.
In 2016, *UPR Info Africa* participated in 3 Pre Sessions in Geneva being for Tanzania, Uganda and Togo. The year saw an increase in the interest by national CSOs to participate in the Geneva Pre Sessions, to the extent that a good number of national CSOs paid for their own air fare and accommodation to travel to Geneva despite the fact that there are only 5 slots for CSO speakers per country. This may be attributed to the mobilisation that was undertaken by *UPR Info* during the In Country Pre Sessions that took part in the respective countries.

### 2.3.4 CSO strategy workshops

The CSO Strategy Workshops are organised with CSOs immediately after the UPR sessions in Geneva. They seek to better equip CSOs in the various countries to utilise the UPR recommendations by ensuring that they co-ordinate their advocacy activities and also ensure that all the participating stakeholders understand the core value of the mechanism, which is cooperation. Their objectives are to, (i) improve the CSOs’ knowledge of the UPR process; (ii) raise awareness of UPR recommendations made to the country; (iii) empower civil society representatives; and (iv) define the activities for the next months. By the end of the workshops, participants are expected to have (i) discussed and drafted a tentative implementation plan, meant to be shared with other NGOs and Government representatives; (ii) discussed and drafted a tentative action strategy for NGOs, meant to be shared with other NGOs and adopted an Outcomes Charter to be shared with Development Partners. During the year under review, *UPR Info* successfully organised 5 of them in Sierra Leone and Niger (April, 2016), Tanzania (June, 2016), Togo and Uganda (December, 2016). Even though the general objectives of the workshops were similar, each project was developed and presented differently bearing in mind the unique nature and needs of each and every single country.
1. CSO Strategy Workshop on the implementation of the UPR recommendations held in Bo City, Sierra Leone between 7th and 9th April, 2016

On 7-9 April 2016, UPR Info, the Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone (HRDNSL) and the Core UPR Working Group in Sierra Leone\(^1\) organised the “CSO strategy workshop on implementation of UPR recommendations”.

The workshop had a two-folded purpose. First, to better equip civil society in Sierra Leone to utilise the opportunities offered by the UPR framework to advance their human rights priorities; and second, to improve coordination among national human rights defenders. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Increase CSOs’ theoretical and practical knowledge of the UPR process
- Raise awareness of the UPR recommendations that Sierra Leone received during its second UPR on 27 January 2016
- Define CSOs activities for the next 4.5 years.

The core documents drafted during the workshop were:

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\(^1\) The Core UPR Working Group in Sierra Leone is comprised of the Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone, Western Area District Human Rights Committee, CSO UPR Monitoring Group, Prison Watch Sierra Leone and Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone.
• 4 implementation plans
• 4 action strategies
• 1 Outcome Charter

The implementation plans and action strategies were drafted and discussed during the workshop. The combined these documents comprise the ‘CSO implementation matrix’.

The CSO workshop (Step 1) was the first part of a holistic project geared towards employing the plethora of UPR entry points for collaboration between governments, civil society, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), UN agencies. Building on this first step, a CSO-government dialogue (Step 2) was planned for summer 2016, following the adoption Sierra Leone’s UPR report at the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council in June 2016.

Overall, 45 participants representing 40 CSOs working on diverse issues such as rights of prisoners; women’s rights; freedom of expression; rights of the child; LGBTI human rights; safety of journalists and human rights defenders attended. The three-day workshop was facilitated by two UPR Info representatives, one from the headquarters in Geneva and one from the UPR Info Africa Regional Office.

During the three-day workshop, the participants analysed all of the 208 UPR recommendations that Sierra Leone left pending during its review on January 27 2016. A core added value of the workshop was that participants established new partnership with CSO colleagues as well as identified ways in which they can communicate and collaborate with the government and other stakeholders in the implementation phase. The unanimously adopted Outcome Charter is further evidence of the usefulness of the workshop. This document is vital when CSOs meet the government and other actors to display that CSOs speak with one voice on a specified set of priority issues that guide their UPR activities.

UPR Info was able to meet with a substantive number of UPR stakeholders prior to the workshop. During two days prior to the workshop, UPR Info met with UNDP, the British High Commissioner, the Irish Embassy, the EU Delegation in Sierra Leone, Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and national CSOs. In addition, UPR Info enjoyed very productive meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Excellency Mr. Kamara, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, all of whom pledged their support to both the CSO workshop and the CSO-government dialogue. As a sign of this genuine commitment, Deputy Minister of Justice, Mr. John Arrow Bockarie, delivered the key note speech during the Opening Ceremony of the
CSO workshop. As is to be expected, the level of engagement with UPR differs between stakeholders but all expressed a sincere willingness to contribute to a successful follow-up phase of the implementation of UPR recommendations in Sierra Leone. UNDP specifically expressed their interest in UPR Info training the UN Country Team on the UPR modalities and representatives from the British High Commissioner and the Irish Embassy informed about the recommendations that their respective governments as Recommending States had extended to Sierra Leone. They also elaborated on how they follow up on their recommendations and related support to national CSOs. OSIWA and the EU Delegation also shared their respective views on the UPR. It should be noted that the Deputy Head of Mission of the Irish Embassy gave an appreciated welcome speech during the Opening Ceremony and representative from UNDP participated actively in the training and shared many valuable insights from the UN level. In addition, representatives of the Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone (HRCSL) participated actively throughout the workshop and Commissioner Brima Abdulai Sheriff contributed with opening remarks during the Opening Ceremony as well as chairing the ceremony itself. While the strengthening of HRCSL financial resources and independence was touched upon during the UPR in Geneva, its cooperation with CSOs will be paramount for the continuation of the project.

To facilitate the participation of human rights defenders from districts outside of the capital and ensure all participants would be better focused on the workshop, the event took place in the second largest city of Sierra Leone, Bo City, centrally located in the country, instead of Freetown. Drawing on the feedback from participating actors the workshop was a timely exercise and successful in meeting its objectives. The ownership now lies with the CSOs to transform lessons learnt during the workshop into activities geared to contribute to a successful implementation process. UPR Info together with the Core UPR Working Group will continue to support them in their UPR endeavours.
2. CSO Strategy Workshop on the implementation of the UPR recommendations held in Niger between 12th and 14th April, 2016

From 12 to 14 April 2016, UPR Info and the National Human Rights Commission of Niger (CNDH) co-organised a workshop called "Strategic Workshop of Civil Society and Other Actions on the Implementation of the UPR Recommendations".

The workshop had two goals. First, to better equip civil society in Niger to use the opportunities of the UPR mechanism so that it can highlight its priorities in the field of human rights. Second, to improve coordination among human rights defenders. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Improving theoretical and practical knowledge of CSOs on the UPR mechanism;
- Raise awareness of the UPR recommendations that Niger received on 18 January 2016 during its second review;
- Define CSO activities for the next 4.5 years

The main documents written during the workshop were:

- 4 Implementation Plans;
- 4 Action Strategies;
- 1 Outcomes Charter.

Implementation Plans and Action Strategies were developed and discussed by the various Thematic Groups which later finalized and presented them to UPR Info after the workshop. Once combined, these documents formed the "CSO Implementation Matrix" which was later shared with all the participants.

Overall, 21 CSOs working on issues such as nomadic rights, women's rights, freedom of expression, children's rights, freedom of the press, good governance, etc, were
represented by 60 participants. The three-day workshop was co-facilitated by a representative of UPR Info and the National Human Rights Commission of Niger (including the president and vice-president, secretary general, executives and commissioners, administrative staff were present and actively participated.

During the three-day workshop participants analyzed all the 169 recommendations of the UPR that Niger received in January 2016. A major success of the workshop was the fact that the participants established new partnerships with their CSO and CNDH colleagues. They were also able to identify ways to communicate and collaborate with government and other stakeholders in the implementation phase. The Outcomes Charter that was adopted unanimously and the willingness to create a coalition for the UPR demonstrated the interest that the different stakeholders at the workshop have for civil society. This document will also be used by the CNDH and the CSOs, who will soon present a copy to the government. The Outcomes Charter demonstrates the willingness of actors to speak with one voice on a set of priority issues that will frame their activities within the UPR.

The presence of the Ambassador of the European Union and the UNDP and its Deputy Resident Coordinator of the United Nations at the workshop is to be noted. On the other hand, the Government of Niger was represented by the Director of Juvenile Legal Protection, who is the focal point for the UPR within the Ministry of Justice. Their presence was very important as their involvement in the next steps will be decisive in ensuring a successful and lasting implementation of the UPR recommendations. Until the organization of Stage 2, their role will only increase, so UPR Info and the CNDH met after the workshop the Ministry of Justice to consolidate the collaboration for the months to come.
3. Civil Society Feedback Session and Development of Follow up Strategies 27-29 June, 2016 held at the Blue Pearl Hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Between 27-29 June, 2016, UPR Info, together with Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) and the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) organised a workshop dubbed “Civil Society Feedback Session and Development of Follow up Strategies” that was held at the Blue Pearl Hotel in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The purpose of the workshop was to (i) disseminate the recommendations in the outcome report to CSO partners; (ii) identify thematic opportunities, over the five year period until the next UPR; (iii) to develop a strategy for lobbying the government of Tanzania to accept as many recommendations as possible; (iv) to develop a strategy to push for implementation of the recommendations; (v) to encourage the Government of Tanzania to organize a meeting with CSO groups to discuss measures to implement the recommendations arising from the review.

Main activities that were undertaken during the strategy workshop were to:

- Discuss, develop and draft a tentative implementation plan, meant to be shared with other NGOs and Government representatives;
- Discuss, develop and draft a tentative action strategy for NGOs, meant to be shared with other NGOs;
- Discuss, develop and disseminate an Outcomes Charter.

This meeting that was facilitated by UPR Info was attended by a total of 80 participants dealing with diverse issues. These comprised of 44 participants from Dar es Salaam and 36 from Up Country. Of these 43 participants were men while 37 were women. The meeting was officially opened on the first day by Mr. Amon Mpanju, Deputy
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs. Thereafter, participants were debriefed on Tanzanian’s UPR that took place at the Human Rights Council in Geneva on 9th May, 2016. Finally, participants were introduced on how to develop an implementation plan. After the said presentations, participants were divided into 9 thematic groups to discuss and write the implementation plans. The groups Child Rights; Economic and Land Rights; Freedom of Expression; General and Political Right; HRDs and Civil Society; Other Vulnerable Groups; Pastoralist and Indigenous Rights; Social Rights; and Women Rights.

During the three-day workshop, the participants scrutinised all the UPR recommendations that were made to Tanzania. These comprised of 227 recommendations of which 129 were Accepted (56.8%); 72 were Noted (31.7%); and 25 Recommendations left Pending until the formal adoption to be held in September, 2016. To this end, the primary intended outputs and outcomes of the workshop were achieved.

4. CSO Strategy Workshop on the UPR held in Lome, Togo from 5th to 8th December, 2016

Following the recommendations made to the Togolese State in the framework of the UPR, a CSO working group was established to monitor the UPR in Togo. If this is not followed up by concrete actions then it will remain a dead letter and will not lead to a greater inclusion of civil society by the government in implementing the recommendations of the Second Universal Periodic Review that was held in Geneva on 31 October 2016 in Geneva. There was solid participation of the Togolese government in the workshops that were co-organized by Amnesty International - Togo, CACIT and UPR Info.

The two workshops co-organized by these three NGOs are the result of a long collaboration and reflection: how to ensure that Togolese civil society meets peacefully, and recognizes that working with the UPR mechanism is aimed at collaborating with
the Government? How can we ensure that journalists understand better how the UN mechanism works? The three objectives pursued were:

- Improve the theoretical and practical knowledge of journalists and CSOs on the UPR mechanism;
- Raise awareness of the recommendations of the UPR that Togo received on 31 October 2016 during its second review;
- Define CSO activities for the next 4.5 years.

The workshops sought to consolidate the existing situation because in Togo, many CSO actors are already in regular dialogue with the government, so it is a matter of sustaining it and extending it to new CSOs. In this regard, the adoption of an “Outcomes Charter” for Togolese CSOs is worth noting, because the promises it makes are ambitious. On the journalists' side, there was increased interest in the UPR, but it must be admitted that their understanding remains superficial. It is necessary to train specialists and encourage them to become "trainers of trainers".

The main documents prepared by CSOs during the workshop were:

- 5 implementation plans were started;
- 5 action strategies were started
- 1 roadmap for immediate CSO activities;
- 1 Outcomes Charter.

The development of the documents were discussed at the workshop with the understanding that the various thematic groups would finalize them in due course. These documents will form a "CSO Implementation Matrix" that will be shared with all participants.

Overall, 50 CSOs working on different issues attended such as the rights of persons with disabilities, women's rights, freedom of expression, children's rights, press freedom, good governance, LGBT rights, etc. The two workshops were co-facilitated by a representative of UPR Info, CACIT and Amnesty International - Togo

During the four-day workshop, participants analyzed all the 195 recommendations of the UPR received by Togo in October 2016. A major success in the workshop was the participants’ established new partnerships with their CSO colleagues from different regions of Togo. Participants were also able to identify ways to communicate and collaborate with government and other stakeholders in the implementation phase. The Outcomes Charter was adopted unanimously. The CSOs expressed the will to create
a coalition for the UPR. This document will also be used by the CNDH and the CSOs, which will soon be formally submitting it to the government. The Outcomes Charter demonstrates the willingness of actors to speak with one voice on a set of priority issues that will guide their activities within the UPR.

The presence of the European Union, Brazil and Germany are to be noted. The first workshop was opened by Ms Nakpa Polo, State Secretary for Human Rights; The workshop for CSOs began with the opening words of the Minister of Justice of Togo, HE Mr. Kokouvi Pius AGBETOMEY, who encouraged the participants to continue organizing and professionalizing themselves. On the other hand, the Togolese government was represented by Mr. Denis Minekpor Kokou, Director of Legislation and Protection of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice of Togo, for training journalists. The presence of all these actors was eminently important, as their involvement in the next steps will be decisive in ensuring a successful and lasting implementation of the UPR recommendations. Until the organization of Stage 2, their role will only increase.

The two workshops were held at Ghis Palace, a hotel in the suburbs of Lomé. It was decided not to stay in the city center to ensure the constant participation of journalists and CSOs, but not to leave Lomé completely in order to allow the officials to come and open the workshop.

5. CSO Strategy Workshop on the UPR held in Kampala, Uganda from 28th November, 2016 to 2nd December, 2016

Between 28 November and 2 December 2016, UPR Info, together with the Human Rights Network Uganda (HURINET), OHCHR Uganda, Defend Defenders and Lutheran World Federation Uganda organised the “CSO Workshop to develop implementation plans and action strategies for UPR Recommendations” held at Silver
Springs in Kampala, Uganda. The objectives of the workshop were to (i) debrief national CSOs on Uganda’s second cycle UPR and disseminate the recommendations the state received; (ii) to develop thematic implementation plans outlining CSOs expectations on the Government in the implementation phase and corresponding action strategies detailing how civil society can contribute to implementation; (iii) to plan on how to advocate for pending recommendations to be accepted by the Government (iv) to plan upcoming UPR activities; (v) to adopt an Outcome Charter setting out CSO priorities during the five-year UPR implementation process.

The main activities that were undertaken during the strategy workshop aimed at:

- Debriefing national CSOs on Uganda’s second cycle UPR
- Developing draft thematic implementation plans outlining CSOs expectations on the Government in the implementation phase
- Developing draft thematic action strategies detailing how civil society can contribute to implementation
- Adopting an Outcome Charter

The workshop was part of a broader project meant to accelerate partnership between UPR stakeholders to ensure inclusive and sustainable implementation of UPR recommendations.

The five-day CSO UPR Strategy Workshop was attended by over 100 participants representing more than 100 civil society organisations, the vast majority coming from outside the capital. 44% of participants identified as women and 56% as men. The meeting was officially opened by remarks from James Nkuubi, National Stakeholders’ Forum for the UPR/HURINET, Gilbert Onyango, UPR Info Africa, Hassan Shire, Defend Defenders, Javier Sanjuan, OHCHR Uganda and Mohammed Ndifuna, HURINET. Thereafter, participants were debriefed on the complementary dynamics of UNs human rights machinery and Uganda’s second UPR that took place at the Human Rights Council in Geneva on 3rd November 2016. Throughout the following days participants were divided into thematic clusters that worked with their respective implementation plans and corresponding action strategies. Samples from these documents were presented to the plenary for comments, questions and feedback from UPR Info staff. The facilitators put particular emphasis on the need for CSOs to work in cross-thematic coalitions to have an impact on the UPR and to seek partnership with a diverse range of UPR actors. Additionally, synergy effects between UPR implementation and realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals were highlighted. The idea of invoking SDG indicators as measurements for tracking
implementation of UPR recommendations was introduced, showcasing that activities undertaken to implement a recommendation often also contributes to implementing the SDG agenda.

On the final day an Outcome Charter was discussed and unanimously adopted. Besides setting out thematic priorities for CSOs to jointly work on up until the next UPR of Uganda in 2021, it also mandates the CSO UPR Steering Committee, consisting of all CSO thematic cluster heads, to establish terms of reference that transforms it into the National CSO UPR Coalition that remains seized on inclusive UPR follow-up throughout and between UPR cycles.

During the five-day workshop, the participants scrutinised all the UPR recommendations that were made to Uganda in the second cycle. These comprised of 226 recommendations of which 143 were accepted (63%); 65 were noted (29%); and 18 left pending (8%) until the formal adoption to be held in March 2016. To this end, the primary intended outputs and outcomes of the workshop were successfully achieved.

2.3.5 Stakeholder coordination (Government-CSO dialogue) workshops

The formal adoption of the UPR by the UN Human Rights Council marks the beginning of the implementation phase. In order to ensure that all national stakeholders are equipped with the tools to make the most of the implementation phase, UPR Info, together with its partners usually organise 1) a one-day workshop among civil society organisations, and if requested by the Government; a technical training for Government officials sharing good practise on UPR implementation and, 2) a one-day dialogue between CSOs and the Government. During these meetings, UPR recommendations and a corresponding implementation plan are discussed.
between CSOs and the Government thus paving the way for future cooperation that will positively impact the human rights situation in the country. During the year under review, UPR Info organised and facilitated 2 of these workshops. However, efforts to organise a third one in Tanzania proved futile. We hope to undertake it in 2017.

1. Multi-stakeholders Dialogue between government and CSOs on the UPR Recommendations held in Niger on 11th – 13th July, 2016

From 11 to 13 July 2016, UPR Info, the Government of Niger (Ministry of Justice) and the National Commission for Human Rights of Niger (CNDH), with the financial support of the European Union, co-organized a "Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation ". UPR Info and its partners provided a full-day UPR training for journalists the day before the workshop.

![Image](https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/niger_step_2_letter_of_intent_for_cooperation.pdf)

As a direct result, a human rights network for journalists was established with the aim of boosting objective reporting on the national human rights situation. To build on this, a press conference marked the end of the national dialogue in which representatives from all actors debriefed journalists on the content of a Letter of Cooperation agreed on by all actors. Presently, parliamentarians are on the course of creating a Parliamentary Human Rights Committee. In Niger we managed to go beyond increasing actor’s knowledge of the UPR to fine-tune their working methods to the benefit of long-term UPR strategies. In sum, we are cautiously optimistic of the positive effects that the UPR can

bring to the overall human rights situation in Niger. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Improving theoretical and practical knowledge of line ministry representatives on the UPR mechanism;
- Identify and connect civil society with those representatives;
- Agree on the next opportunities for partnership and adopt a joint letter for cooperation.


On 3-4 August 2016, UPR Info, the Government of Sierra Leone’s Justice Sector Coordination Office; the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL); and the Core UPR Working Group in Sierra Leone³, with the financial support of Sierra Leone Cement Corp Ltd (LEOCEM) and UPR Info, organised an inclusive multi-stakeholder national dialogue on the implementation of

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³ The Core UPR Working Group in Sierra Leone is comprised of the Human Rights Commission Sierra Leone, Western Area District Human Rights Committee, CSO UPR Monitoring Group, Prison Watch Sierra Leone and Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone. UPR Info signed a partnership agreement with the Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone (HRDNSL) making them our focal partner organisation for the implementation of this event.
UPR recommendations that the country received during its second review on 27 January 2016. The event brought together representatives from an array of government ministries, departments and agencies, and civil society organisations with the objective to ensure that all national stakeholders will be equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools for maximum cooperation in the implementation phase of the UPR. The meeting aimed to foster effective dialogue between CSOs and Government representatives by creating a space for them to meet and discuss how to transmit the recommendations to positive human rights change on the ground.

The June meeting was the culmination of a nine-month project that began in December 2015, with the Pre-session on Sierra Leone in Geneva, and in April 2016 when the UPR strategy workshop for CSOs was held in Bo City. A new opportunity for collaboration will arise in 2019 with the mid-term report of Sierra Leone.

The Opening Ceremony was addressed by Mr Gilbert Onyango, Regional Director of UPR Info; Alphonsus B.M. Gbanie, Core UPR Working Group; Ms. Inga Krastina, Head of Political, Press and Information Section at the Delegation of the EU to Sierra Leone; Mr Arne Johansen, Honorary Consul of Norway and Sweden to Sierra Leone and Managing Director of LEOCEM. A passionate Key Note speech underlining the need for all stakeholders to genuinely commit to the UPR process was given by Mr. Brima Sheriff, Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone. After a timely tea break, CSOs and government representatives where divided into two parallel meetings to prepare for the following dialogue day. In the preparatory CSO meeting participants took stock of activities carried out since the workshop in Bo and familiarised themselves with the final UPR Working Group Report of Sierra Leone to inform themselves on which recommendations had been accepted and which had been noted. CSOs also seized the opportunity to fine tune their strategies to maximise the influence of their presentations to government during the second day. UPR Info shared best practices on how to interact with government and stressed the need to be willing to compromise and negotiate in a transparent manner. The focus of the Government meeting was to bring representatives from ministries, departments and agencies up to speed with the Sierra Leone’s UPR timeline and to identify their role in the implementation of the recommendations. This meeting was also attended by a representative from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

On the second day, 4 June, a multi-stakeholder dialogue was organised between CSOs and Government representatives to discuss the way forward, including identifying the opportunities for cooperation on how to implement UPR recommendations on the ground. As a launch pad, the day started with UPR Info giving
a presentation on the importance of indicators to measure the implementation rate of recommendations. The session stressed the importance that all stakeholders agree on the same set of indicators, and that these are incorporated into the national implementation plan. The day continued with thematic representatives from civil society presenting suggestions on activities to be undertaken by the government and civil society to advance implementation, while also mapping out crucial partners, SMART indicators for follow-up and timeframes. Government representatives interacted with questions and comments which lead to several fruitful exchanges. It was understood that the lack of information sharing both within ministries and between ministries and civil society constituted a barrier for data collection on the human rights situation in the country. Before wrapping up the event, a Letter of Cooperation between the government and civil society was adopted, paving the way for an inclusive implementation phase.

Sierra Leone has the potential of becoming a good example of cooperation among UPR stakeholders. The NHRI and CSOs are well-versed in the modalities and entry points of the UPR and have taken key steps to formalise partnerships with the donor and diplomatic community within the framework of the UPR. The Government has expressed its willingness to work closely with all sectors of society and civil society to ensure the full implementation of all supported recommendations, and it is now time to go beyond words to realise that commitment. Even though the dialogue-day lacked the high-level of participation of government officials that was initially envisaged, the dialogues that took place did so in an open and transparent manner showcasing that the previous disconnect between these stakeholders can be bridged by the common interest of ensuring implementation of UPR recommendations. UPR Info will continue to support UPR activities in Sierra Leone and look forward to sustained cooperation among all stakeholders.

2.3.6 Mid-term reporting Workshops

1. Mid term reporting workshop held in Abdijan, Cote d’Ivoire on 9th and 10th November, 2016

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4 Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Sierra Leone, Addendum, A/HRC/32/16/Add.1, para. 21, p. 4
The Ivorian Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (hereinafter referred to as ‘The Coalition’, with financial and technical support of UPR Info, and with the financial support of the Embassies of Germany and Switzerland, organized a capacity building workshop for Civil Society Organizations to draft the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mid-term report.

The workshop, which was attended by thirty-five (35) participants from Ivorian Civil Society Organizations, was held from Tuesday 9 to Wednesday 10 November, 2016 at the Hotel Belle Côte located at the Palmyra Riviera in Abidjan/Cocody. The first day consisted of five speeches followed by three training sessions on the UPR mechanism, the drafting of mid-term reports and good practices for the preparation of the UPR reports. The second day was devoted to the group work and the plenary session. It is expected that the participants will continue this work in 2017, under the aegis of the Coalition, with a view to finalising the mid-term civil society report (or even a joint report between civil society and the Ivorian government, should opportunities allow).

The workshop brought together 35 participants (plus guests) from different CSOs that are very active in the use of the mechanism. Representatives of the Ivorian Ministry of Human Rights; the National Human Rights Commission; the Human Rights Division of the UN Office in Cote d’Ivoire and the International Service for Human Rights (SIDH/ISHR) also participated in the workshop. The workshop was opened by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation.
The Swiss Embassy has previously supported the Coalition, which enabled it to develop recognized expertise on the UPR. Other international organizations, such as ISHR, have also contributed their expertise to the Coalition in the past. The ambition was therefore to benefit from what has already been undertaken, and to be able to go into more detail. It was also an opportunity to begin an assessment of the implementation of the recommendations and to hear what NGOs working on different themes could share with the others.

The mid-term report is consistent with the monitoring and periodicity principle promoted by the UPR mechanism. With a view to strengthening best practices in the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations, the Human Rights Council invites States to produce a mid-term report on the implementation of the recommendations received.

As stakeholders in UPR, CSOs can also produce, on a voluntary basis, mid-term reports that provide a status report on the implementation of the recommendations. These reports are effective tools for assessing the status of implementation of recommendations.

The overall objective of the workshop was to 'Strengthen the capacity of Ivorian civil society organizations in the preparation of the mid-term review of the Universal Periodic Review'. The specific objectives pursued were:

- Exchange experiences between UPR Info and Ivorian CSOs on good practices in drafting the mid-term report;
- Strengthen the Ivorian CSOs in their role of advocacy and complementary actor to the State with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the UPR;
- Reinforce the dynamic already created in the past and prepare the ground for the drafting (and sharing) of a mid-term report in 2017.

The workshop took place over a two-day period in order to transmit a large number of tools necessary for the implementation of the recommendations. UPR Info, which has been working for several years on the implementation of the recommendations, has developed several concepts, collected good practices from across the African region (and beyond). The ideas exchanged during this workshop were based on the joint experiences that UPR Info and the ICIDDH were able to acquire after these years of involvement in the Ivorian context.
2.3.7 Trainings facilitated by UPR Info Africa

Capacity building is a very important part of the work of UPR Info. To this end, the office undertook several trainings upon request. These are highlighted below.

1. Training of Ethiopian UPR stakeholders in preparation for mid term reporting held on 10th May, 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

In preparation for Ethiopia’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Mid-term reporting on the follow-up to accepted UPR recommendations in January 2017 and looking ahead to the third cycle of review, Vision Ethiopian Congress for Democracy (VECOD) and UPR Info hosted a day long roundtable bringing together 15 representatives of government, civil society, the media and other stakeholders to discuss the Ethiopia’s UPR and seek greater cooperation between the Government of Ethiopia and other stakeholders in government-led implementation initiatives. The objective of the roundtable was therefore to ensure the continued and meaningful participation of civil society in the UPR process and to carve out expanded space for civil society to engage GoE on broader issues of civic space and democratic reform by using the UPR process as an entry point.

In preparation for the roundtable, on Monday, 9th May, 2016, UPR Info held a briefing meeting with Ato Tadele and Blain from VECOD and Samson Hailemariam. The aim of the meeting was for UPR Info to get an update on the progress made thus far; to secure a better understanding of the Ethiopian context; to establish the plans that had been put in place in preparation for the roundtable dialogue that was to be held the following day; and to discuss the opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the project. It was agreed that all efforts will be made to encourage the CSOs present to participate actively and contribute to the discussions.

VECOD and UPR Info organized the one-day UPR Roundtable Dialogue at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Addis Ababa on Tuesday, 10th May, 2016. Since most of the participants were new to the process, the meeting was generally divided into four main parts namely: 1/ securing a better understanding of the UPR; 2/ presentation on the Ethiopian UPR process thus far; 3/ a presentation on some of the good practices and strategies for implementation of the recommendations; and 4/ the development of a roadmap. All the presentations were made by the consultant who allowed for plenary sessions where participants sought clarifications on the same.
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In the presentations, the facilitator first sought to create a better understanding of the Universal Periodic Review. To this end, the topics that were covered in the presentations included (i) What is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR); (ii) The Objectives of the UPR; (iii) The Framework for the UPR; (iv) The different UPR Stakeholders. These were followed by presentations that touched more specifically on Ethiopia’s UPR with a view to bringing the participants up to speed in terms of what transpired during the 1st and 2nd cycles.

Some of the possible proposals that were made to improve Ethiopia’s UPR include that (i) the UPR could be coordinated with all ministries that are relevant to the implementation of any recommendation; (ii) the UPR recommendations could be linked with the existing or ongoing policy reforms and other processes in the country and within organizations; (iii) relevant and SMART indicators can be developed that will assess the success of implementation.

The meeting agreed that there is need to

1. Prepare for the 3rd cycle reporting process
2. Draft a mid-term implementation report
3. Develop an implementation framework

Some of the gaps and recommendations that were noted were the limited understanding of human rights and the UPR; the reducing civic space and capacity of civil society organisations to engage on human rights issues; the lack of participation of Government Ministries, Department and Agencies; and the lack of a coordination structure; and the low levels of public awareness. Indeed, there was deep suspicion between the different actors. Therefore, there is need for a lot more consultation and trust building among the different stakeholders to enhance trust.

2. UPR training for Burundi CSOs on 21st November, 2016

On 21st November, 2016, UPR Info conducted a training for 20 grassroots CSO participants from Burundi. The workshop was meant to train them on how to utilise the UN human rights system. UPR Info made a presentation specific on the Universal Periodic Review process. The meeting was held in a different country due to the ongoing crisis in Burundi and the threats to human rights defenders.
3. UPR training for Somali CSOs on 19th and 20th December, 2016

On 19th and 20th December 2016, UPR Info, organised a meeting titled “Workshop for Somali CSOs on the development of implementation framework for UPR recommendations” whose specific objectives were to:

- To disseminate the UPR recommendations to CSO partners.
- To identify thematic opportunities, over the four-year period until the next UPR, to continue to push for implementation of the recommendations.

The key output were to ensure that-

- UPR recommendations are disseminated and analysed by participating CSOs
- The recommendations received by Somalia are sorted into thematic clusters
- A team set up to follow up on implementation of specific thematic areas.

Unlike projects in other countries, this meeting was not held in Somalia but in Kenya due to security reasons. It took place at Maanzoni Lodge which is a resort just outside of Nairobi. This helped the participants to stay focused on the workshop and also ensured that all the participants remained at the workshop for the entire duration.

Even though we had initially planned to have at least 15 activists from Somalia attending the workshop, the same was not possible 1/ due to unforeseen communication challenges; 2/ due to the fact that it was impossible to trace and
contact the NGOs that submitted reports during the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} Cycles as some of them no longer exist.

There were a total of 15 participants were present in the workshop being representative of 6 CSOs that work in Somalia with some of them based in Nairobi, Kenya. A few of the CSOs that were present had submitted their reports as organisations but not necessarily the individuals that were present were involved in the process. Some of those that submitted had done so through The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (also known as Defend Defenders). The key thematic areas that were represented in the workshop included

1. Gender based violence.
2. Protection of human rights defenders and journalists
3. Protection and advancing the rights of workers
4. Media and freedom of expression.
5. Shelter and nutrition
6. Health
7. Education

Some of the lessons learned were as follows-

- UPR \textit{Info} needs to conduct more sensitization in Somalia on the UPR mechanism to ensure that CSOs use the avenue to create impact.
- UPR \textit{Info} should build the capacity of government officials in Somalia to ensure that they are well acquainted with the UPR mechanism.
- There is need to bring more CSOs on board to ensure that the engagement and creation of the plan becomes more reasonable, realistic and representative.
2.3.8 Other UPR activities

1. Kenya’s 2nd Cycle UPR Implementation Validation Workshop and Launch held at the Intercontinental Hotel, Nairobi on 30th May 2016 and 3rd June, 2016 respectively


The workshop was attended by officials from various Government Ministries, Department and Agencies together with civil society organizations. It was facilitated by Mrs Emily Chweya from the Department of Justice who after introductions went ahead to give a brief background to the development process of the UPR Matrix. She reminded participants that Kenya was first reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in May 2010 during the 8th session of the Human Rights Council. The second cycle review held on the 22nd - 27th January 2015 during the Human Rights Council’s 21st Session. During this review, Kenya was Accepted 240 recommendations.

She informed participants that on 22nd - 25th September, 2015, various stakeholders drawn from government, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and civil society organizations attended a workshop at the Lake Elementaita Lodge, Naivasha.
to develop the implementation matrix for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Cycle UPR recommendations. The matrix lays down specific government actions and indicators geared towards the implementation of the accepted UPR recommendations. The matrix was further reviewed and drafted by a working group on 23\textsuperscript{rd} and 24\textsuperscript{th} May 2016.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Maryann Njau-Kimani, Secretary Justice and Constitutional Affairs gave her opening remarks to officially open the workshop. She welcomed participants to the workshop. She thanked the various government ministries, departments and agencies that had given their initial input to develop the draft implementation matrix. She thanked the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, \textit{UPR Info Africa} and Kenya National Commission on Human Rights for their technical and financial support to the process. She proceeded to add that the full implementation of the recommendations will be in line with the Constitution and Vision 2030 and will boost Kenya’s human rights record. It will ensure the full enjoyment of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the citizens. Further the implementation of the Accepted recommendations already falls within the mandate of the respective government ministries, departments and agencies and as such will not occasion new duties to government agencies. She concluded by wishing the participants fruitful deliberations.

Thereafter, the participants were taken through the Government of Kenya’s UPR Implementation Matrix. This was followed by the comments in plenary where participants were given an opportunity to raise any questions or make comments on the matrix. They were reminded to bear in mind that the matrix has to cover the duration of 4.5 years and as such the specific government actions need to be realistic.

Ms. Marcella Favretto of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights commended the drafting team for a job well done. She also wanted to know how the monitoring of the matrix would be done and how data collection to measure progress on issues will be done. She was informed that a column called ‘Progress made’
would be added to the matrix and the progress of implementation reviewed annually. Then the participants were divided into three groups namely; (i) Civil and Political Rights; (ii) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and (iii) Group Rights.

Thereafter the matrix will be published and officially launched on Friday, 3rd June 2016. The Office of the Attorney General is also currently working on a framework to engage the county governments as some of the recommendations will require the county government to implement.

3. CHALLENGES

During the year, UPR Info achieved over 60% success in holding the former Step 2, that is, the Multi Stakeholder/Government-CSO dialogue. We experienced immense challenges especially in Rwanda and Tanzania. The reasons for this vary from country to country. In Tanzania for example, there is little trust between government and CSOs while in Rwanda, there was little cooperation among CSOs. Indeed, one can draw an inference between the openness of a country to the UPR and the number of recommendations that are Accepted, for example Rwanda Accepted 20% while Tanzania, Accepted 58%. In countries where we were able to implement the Multi Stakeholder/Government-CSO dialogue, they had actually Accepted a larger percentage of recommendations, for example Kenya Accepted 76%; Sierra Leone 85%; and Niger Accepted 99%.

4. GOING FORWARD

Going forward, UPR Info proposes to come up with a new project called ‘Building the National Human Rights Architecture’ whose overarching goal is to increase and strengthen the capacities of national stakeholders to employ the Universal Periodic Review as a driver to improve the human rights situation in any project country. The project is geared towards enriching both newcomers and CSOs that have previously been engaged with the UN human rights system including the Universal Periodic Review. In order to ensure success, UPR Info seeks to achieve seven underpinning objectives namely;
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- **Quality UPR recommendations made to a State under Review.** Here, the recommendations should be SMART (that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant/Realistic and Time-bound). This is important because good quality and SMART UPR recommendations constitute the prerequisite for a successful implementation process that results in tangible human rights improvement in the country.

- **Collaboration among Government, NHRI and CSOs.** In order to realise inclusive and sustainable implementation of UPR recommendations, it is imperative that all national stakeholders work together in a spirit of trust and constructiveness.

- **Funding for CSOs to undertake UPR activities.** While the United Nations (UN) has two funds to facilitate States UPR engagement, no such funds are available to sustain CSOs to undertake UPR activities throughout and between UPR cycles. This project will therefore endeavour to establish partnerships between the donor and diplomatic communities and national CSOs.

- **Involvement of journalists.** As an agenda-setting entity, media constitute a powerful UPR actor. It is therefore critical that journalists are included in the project in order for them to monitor and report on the UPR process in an informed and accurate manner.

- **Identify Recommending States’ foreign policy objectives.** In order for CSOs to execute effective advocacy, it is essential to identify the Recommending States’ foreign policy objectives and ensure that they correspond with those being proposed by CSOs.

- **Expand the human rights knowledge among grassroots CSOs.** It is vital that local activists broaden their understanding of human rights beyond the immediate scope of their activities. This fosters solidarity among organisations working on diverse human rights topics and boosts advocacy activities.

- **Strengthening international advocacy skills.** For grassroots CSOs, the UPR is often the first exposure to international advocacy. In this regard, they will benefit from guidance on how to engage with the UN human rights system. Since the UPR is not an isolated mechanism, its complementarities with the other international human rights mechanism will be highlighted in all activities.

The project takes a holistic approach to the UPR, situating it within the wider scope of the UN human rights machinery. It follows that the project activities are interlinked and that the substance of each activity develops on the former. The following project activities are foreseen to realise the objectives mentioned in the previous chapter;

### Before the review
1. **CSO submission workshop.** This meeting takes place before the submission of the CSO reports. Thus the purpose of the activity will be to among others, (i) build the capacity of the participants by training them on the history, importance, stages, process and opportunities of the UPR; (ii) share with the participants some of the good practices on lobbying and advocacy and how best to utilise the UPR. The meeting will seek to provide tools for the CSOs to enable them develop and finalise reports that will eventually push the human rights envelop in the country. The workshop provides an opportunity to develop and deepen collaboration among CSOs through a formidable coalition.

2. **CSO consultation meeting.** Following the submission, CSOs convene for a one-day meeting planning to discuss the roadmap/next steps including drafting of UPR Advocacy Factsheets, identifying lobbying strategies for like-minded States and engaging the respective Governments.

3. **CSO lobbying in capital.** Continuous lobbying at the domestic level takes place culminating with the series of pre-sessions before the review in Geneva.

4. **In-country pre-sessions.** CSOs will utilise their submissions to advocate for their suggested SMART recommendations and update Embassies of Recommending States on the human rights situation in the country.

5. **Geneva pre-session.** A second pre-session is organised by UPR Info in Geneva one month before the UPR where Permanent Missions will be briefed by CSOs and the NHRIIs. Through this triangular approach, CSOs have a real opportunity to influence what Recommendations are made to the State during its review.

**After the review**

1. **CSO UPR workshop.** The purpose of this activity is to analyse the Recommendations that the State will have received during its review and outline CSOs expectations on the Government in the implementation phase. In parallel, CSOs will also create a five-year action strategy detailing the actions they can or shall undertake to contribute to implementation of those recommendations.

2. **Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation.** After the adoption of the Working Group Report, the Government, CSOs, and the NHRI (and other UPR actors) convene to discuss how to make the implementation process an inclusive and sustainable event. During the event, CSOs introduces the instruments they developed in the CSO UPR Workshop. This exercise is dedicated to solidify the collaboration among the national UPR stakeholders, paving the way for fruitful partnerships.