10 STEPS TO WRITING A UPR STAKEHOLDER REPORT

SET THE STAGE

1 IDENTIFY YOUR EXPERTISE

- What issues do you work on?
- What are the outcomes you advocate for?
- Who can help do the work on this project? What can they do?
  - » Bring them on board as soon as you can.

2 IDENTIFY ALLIES

- What other organizations or experts might be interested in collaborating on the report (Steps 5-8) or "signing on" to your report once you're done (Step 9)?[1]
- Try to find allies in relevant networks or research institutions for up-to-date information.
- A single stakeholder report supported by a large alliance, or a collection of stakeholder reports submitted by a broader network, is more powerful than scattered submissions.

3 IDENTIFY THE RELEVANT RIGHTS

- Is the country scheduled for Universal Periodic Review? What is the connection between the work you do and the rights identified in human rights treaties?[2]
- Which articles of the treaties are most relevant?
- *Optional: Have any treaty bodies said anything to clarify these rights in General Comments*?

4 REVIEW THE PROCESS TO DATE

- What happened during the last UPR regarding these rights?
  - » Read the report of the working group.
  - » Read the addendum to the report, if any.
- Which recommendations from the last UPR are most relevant to your rights? Did the government accpt or reject those recommendations?
- Optional: *Read the documents from the last review by human rights treaty-body mechanisms.*
- *Optional: Are there national, state, or local laws on the issue? What have courts said?*

PLAN AND GATHER INFORMATION

5 CLARIFY YOUR ROLE

- How can you shed more light on these rights, what the government has done to implement recommendations from the last UPR, other developments since the last UPR, and related issues?[3] You might have:
  - » on-the-ground information from the work you do
  - » first-hand accounts about rights being denied, including voices of:
    - – victims whose rights have been violated
    - – advocates who work with victims
    - – witnesses to rights violations
  - » reports your organization has written
  - » other specialized knowledge
  - » other information you think the Human Rights Council should know about why your work is important or how rights can be better protected and promoted.

6 SET GOALS

- What are your goals for the upcoming review?[4] Think about what you want the delegates to say on your behalf, about the issues you care about, in these contexts:
  - » Delegates can ask the government's delegation questions.
  - » Delegates can make recommendations to the government under review about how it should better protect and promote human rights, and how it should monitor and assess human rights conditions.
  - » The government can accept or reject recommendations.

7 MAKE AND IMPLEMENT WORK PLAN

- How can you use your information (Step 5) to help achieve your goals (Step 6)?
  - » Gather the information.
  - » Keep track of the sources of information.
  - » Think about how you can ensure that the information you gather is credible, relevant, and up-to-date.
  - » Include steps to use the report as an organizing opportunity in your community after you submit it (Step 10), such as planning a local hearing.
- *Optional: Develop a communications plan for raising awareness about your issues and the opportunity offered by the UN review.*
- *Optional: Document additional information.[5] Consider:*
  - » *interviews*
  - » *observations*
  - » *media monitoring*
  - » *submitting written questions to authorities and gathering responses.*

IMPLEMENT

8 WRITE REPORT

- Set up a report-writing team to take the information from Steps 3, 4, and 7 and draft a brief report.[6] Incorporate your questions and recommendations (Step 6), revising them in light of what you learned in Step 7. Do not use "abusive" language.

9 FINALIZE AND SUBMIT REPORT

- Submit your final report to the OHCHR by the deadline.
- *Optional: Before you finalize your report:*
  - *Ask key stakeholders or other people to review and comment on the draft report.*
  - *Ask any allies (Step 2) to "sign on" to your report.*

10 ADVOCATE FOR YOUR ISSUE

- You can use your report in the context of the upcoming review to lobby delegates from other countries to encourage them to make recommendations.
- You can also use your report as a valuable tool for promoting social justice in the longer term.[7] There are many ways to get the word out:
  » Engage in education and outreach within your organization, to the public, and to the media.
  » Develop and implement additional strategies to use your report to promote justice for your community.
  » *Optional: Implement a communications plan (Step 7).*
  » *Optional: Engage in additional advocacy:*
    - *advocacy with delegates before the review.*
    - *lobbying the government to accept recommendations.*
    - *lobbying the government (federal, state, local) to implement any accepted recommendations.*
    - *monitoring implementation for the next review.*

ENDNOTES

1. See pp. 143-147 of The Advocates for Human Rights, *Discover Human Rights: A Human Rights Approach to Social Justice Work (July 2011)*, available at *www.discoverhumanrights.org/download_dhr_training_manual.html*.

2. For help with this step, see the "Where are the Rights?" on p. 47 of *Discover Human Rights*, available at *www. discoverhumanrights.org/download_dhr_training_manual.html*., and read pp. 124-132. Also see pp. 20-21 of The Advocates for Human Rights, *A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation, and Advocacy* (January 2011), available at *www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/final_report_3.pdf*.

3. For guidance, see pp. 21-24 of *A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation, and Advocacy*, supra note 2.

4. The activities on pages 130-147 of *Discover Human Rights,* supra note 2, may help with this step.

5. Consult pp. 24-64 of *A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation, and Advocacy,* supra note 2, for suggestions. Also see pp 79-91 of *Discover Human Rights,* supra note 2, on human rights strategies.

6. See pp. 65-81 of *A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation, and Advocacy*, supra note 2, which cover report-writing.

7. For advice on advocacy, see pp. 83-111 of *A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation, and Advocacy,* supra note 2.

USEFUL LINKS - UPR

Universal Periodic Review General Information and Links

Sessions
- ➲ The UPR Working group holds three two-week sessions per year. During each session 16 countries are reviewed (48 countries per year). Each review is facilitated by groups of three States, or "troikas", who act as rapporteurs. NGOs can attend the UPR Working Group sessions and can make statements at the regular session of the Human Rights Council when the outcome of the State reviews are considered.

Submission Requirements:
- ➲ Stakeholders' submissions should be sent through the a new online UPR submissions system (available as of 4 March 2013) and according to the deadlines here: *http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NgosNhris.aspx*. All UPR submissions must be submitted and received (through the On-line system for registration of contributions) not later than the day of the given deadline (11:59 p.m.). Late submissions will not be considered.

Quick Links:
- UPR website: */www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx*
- UPR sessions: *www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRSessions.aspx*
- UPR and civil society engagement: *www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NgosNhris.aspx*
- UPR - Practical Guide for Civil Society: *www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/PracticalGuideCivilSociety.pdf*
- UPR Road Map for Civil Society Engagement - *http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/IHRS/UPR/Documents/RoadMap_en_16.09.09.pdf*
- Guidelines for UPR submissions: *www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/TechnicalGuideEN.pdf*
- Online UPR submission System: *https://uprdoc.ohchr.org/Account/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f*
- Working with the UN Human Rights Programme - A Handbook for Civil Society - Chapter VII - UPR - *http://www.ohchr.org/en/AboutUs/CivilSociety/Pages/Handbook.aspx*
- UPR info **-** *http://www.upr-info.org/.* Geneva-based NGO that provides capacity-building tools to the different actors of the UPR process, including civil society.
- Sample UPR Submissions **-** *www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/sample_submissions_2.htm*