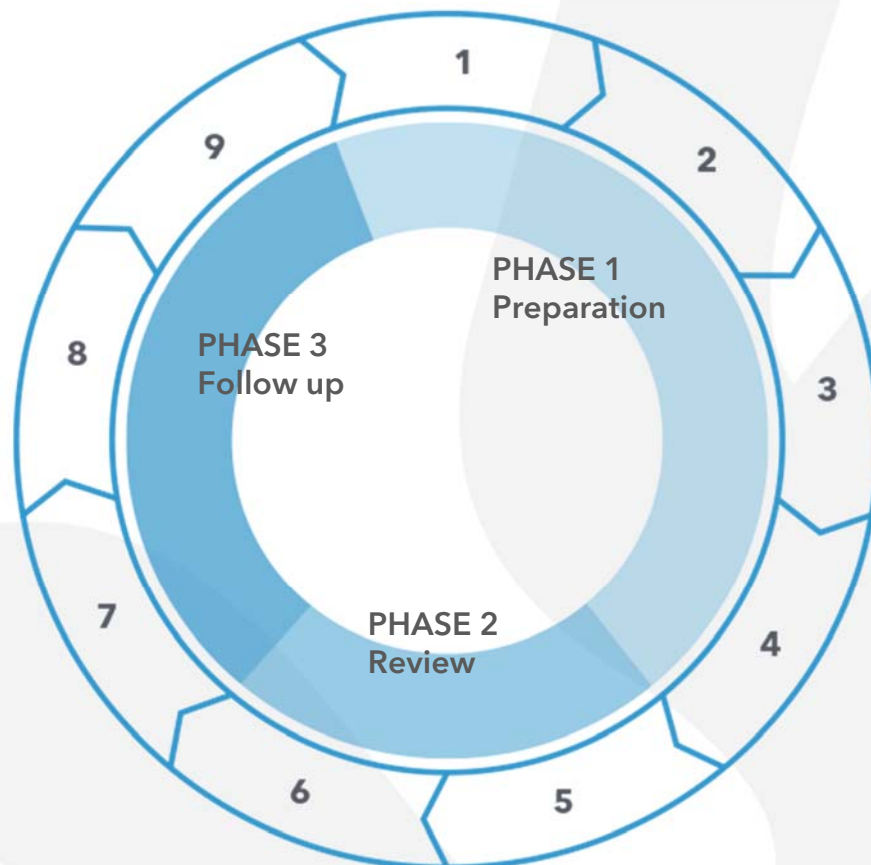


The UPR Cycle

The UPR process is an ongoing cycle of 4,5 years. It can be divided into preparing the review including national consultations, engaging in the review in the UN Human Rights Council and finally implementation of the recommendations by the state. Each of these phases can be divided further into several steps.



- 1 Knowledge about the mechanism
- 2 Stakeholder reports
- 3 Consultation of the national report
- 4 Advocacy of other states and NHRIs
- 5 Interactive dialogue: advocacy and PR

- 6 Outcome report: direct commenting
- 7 Dissemination of recommendations and systematic implementation
- 8 NHRI coordination
- 9 NHRI monitoring

STEP 1

Knowledge about the Mechanism

First priority should be to set aside the resources needed for the NHRI to develop in-house expertise on the process well in advance of the start of the national process.

Another important task is to inform about the process and enter into cooperation and dialogue with non-government stakeholders (for example civil society organisations, CSOs, NGOs and, if possible, the state).

The process should be started at least 12 months before the review.

STEP 2

Stakeholder Reports

The NHRI is encouraged to submit its own report parallel to the state's report. The report cannot be more than five pages and should focus on the human rights developments in the country in the past four and a half years. It is advised to put focus on the adopted and rejected recommendations in the former UPR review to assess the status on them. It can be recommended that the NHRI makes a list of priority of human rights topics.

Deadline for the report: six months before the coming review.

STEP 3

Consultation of the National Report

The main purpose of the national hearing process in regards to the national report prepared by the government, is for stakeholders to influence and provide input to the final national report. The NHRI should, among other things, try to influence the consultation process to make it as inclusive as possible.

Besides commenting on the national report, consultations with the state is also a possibility for the stakeholders in order to present their own reports and evaluations of the human rights situation and to discuss it with the governmental bodies.

Deadline: The National Report has to be submitted by the latest 6-13 weeks before the review.

STEP 4

Advocacy of other states and NHRIs

The members and observers the UN Human Rights Councils meet as the UPR Working Group when engaging in UPR. Before the review, members of the Working Group can prepare written questions. The NHRI can approach other states in the Working Group (directly or indirectly) and encourage them to address specific human rights issues and recommendations during the review.

It varies how far in advance of the review it makes sense to approach the different states in the Working Group.

STEP 5

Interactive Dialogue: Advocacy and PR

The review is an interactive dialogue, which takes place between the Working Group and the states under review. The venue is the UN building, Palais des Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland. NHRIs should attend the review, if it is at all possible. The NHRI can also use the webcast both by encouraging stakeholder to watch it and to raise awareness.

The governmental delegation presents the national report and will respond on questions and viewpoints raised during the review. The NHRI will thereafter be allowed to speak, where it will be able to comment on the governmental delegation's presentation and present views from its own report.

The duration of the review is three hours.

STEP 6

Outcome Report: Direct Commenting

The review results in a report of 30 pages summarising the review process. The report is ready 48 hours after the review.

When the UN Human Rights Council convenes again there is a one-hour plenary session. The state will present the recommendations it has adopted and rejected and a debate will take place allowing other members states, the NHRI and other independent stakeholders to take the floor. After the session, the plenary will adopt the report. These sessions are also webcasted live.

The session takes place 4-6 months after the review.

STEP 7

Dissemination of Recommendations and Systematic Implementation

The NHRI can play a role in helping the state plan and carry out the recommendations, to the extent possible, and in ensuring national awareness of the outcome of the UPR.

The NHRI can, for example, help provide a systematic overview of the implementation by assisting the state in developing a national human rights action plan where the adopted UPR recommendations have been included.

Because of the long preparation of the UPR process, which is every four and a half years, states have approximately four years to implement the adopted recommendations.

States are encouraging to voluntarily submit mid-term reporting to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to share progress in implementation of the UPR recommendations. The NHRI can play an important role in the reporting process.

STEP 8

NHRI Coordination

In order for civil society, the NHRI and other stakeholders to engage actively in the follow-up process it can be a good idea with a joint approach - to put pressure on a reluctant state or to cooperate with a more positive state.

The outset should be the recommendations that the state has voluntarily adopted as an outcome of the UPR.

NHRI coordination with the state, civil society and other stakeholders can be used in all steps in the UPR cycle.

STEP 9

NHRI Monitoring

In some states the development of indicators will be a part of implementing the recommendations, in other cases it will not. The NHRI should encourage the state to develop and use indicators as they are a transparent tool to monitor progress.

NHRIs - possibly in cooperation with CSOs - should initiate its own independent monitoring of the human rights situation in the state as the reporting done by the NHRI and other stakeholders will be included in the next review.