# Maximizing the use of the Universal Periodic Review at country level

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

# Introduction

This guidance aims at providing practical advice on how UN entities at country level – acting jointly or individually – can engage in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process to support progress by Member States on human rights as well as on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the prevention and sustaining peace agendas.

## WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW?

**THE UPR** was created by the General Assembly in 2006. It is a unique, State-driven peer review mechanism whereby the human rights record of all States is reviewed every four and a half years, on equal footing, by fellow States during an inter-governmental Human Rights Council Working Group session in Geneva. All States, without exception, are engaged actively in reviewing the human rights record of their peers and in making recommendations to them.

**THE OBJECTIVE** of the UPR is to support all 193 UN Member States in better assessing their human rights needs as they evolve, in a timely and periodic manner. The UPR reviews all Member States' implementation of the human rights commitments and obligations as set out in the UN Charter; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; human rights treaties ratified by the State concerned; and voluntary pledges and commitments made by States. On the basis of this review, the UPR provides support to Member States to strengthen national human rights protection through recommendations. The UPR is a universal tool, applied to all Member States, just as the SDGs are universally applicable to all States.

**THE REVIEW** is based on three documents:
**1.** Information provided by the State, which takes the form of a 'National report';
**2.** Information compiled from UN entities, including UN human rights bodies, UN Country Teams and individual UN agencies, funds and programmes ('Compilation of UN information', prepared by OHCHR);
**3.** Information from other stakeholders, including national human rights institutions, NGOs and regional bodies, including regional human rights mechanisms ('Summary of stakeholders' information' prepared by OHCHR).

**DURING EACH REVIEW,** the Government first presents its national report, which is then followed by questions and recommendations from other States. The State under review then has the opportunity to make preliminary comments on the recommendations, choosing to either "accept" (support) or "note" them. The final report of the review with a clear State position on every recommendation is adopted some three months later at a plenary session of the Human Rights Council, and made available on the UPR website.

**THE THIRD CYCLE OF THE UPR** began in May 2017 and will be completed by March 2022. It focuses on assessing States' implementation of recommendations they accepted during previous UPR cycles, as well as on recent human rights developments in each country. States and other stakeholders, including UNCTs and individual UN entities, can also, on a voluntary basis, submit mid-term reports or annual updates, to register progress in implementing recommendations. The fourth UPR cycle is expected to start in October 2022.

## THE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK (MAF) OF THE UN DEVELOPMENT AND RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM

(pages 10 and 11) provides an important strategic direction for joined-up work at country level by the UNCT, led by the RC, on human rights, including during the UPR process.

# Multilateralism at work:

## HOW TO USE THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW TO ADVANCE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDAS AT COUNTRY LEVEL?

The ultimate objective of the UPR is to improve the protection of human rights in every country. The UPR recommendations accepted by a State – publicly in front of all its peers and other stakeholders - present an important entry point for positive engagement and advocacy on many issues within the mandate of UNCTs and peace operations.

## HOW CAN UN ENTITIES USE THE UPR IN SUPPORT OF THEIR WORK?

The UPR provides an opportunity for UNCTs, led by the RC, and individual UN entities to:

- **ASSESS THE REALITIES** of people's lives on a regular basis, identifying root causes of inequalities, conflict and violence and groups (at risk of) being left behind, including as part of the UNCT's Common Country Assessment (CCA). See relevant paragraphs 33 to 42 of the UNSDG guidance on CCAs.

- **ADVOCATE MORE FORCEFULLY** and strategically on issues of common interest. The peer element of the UPR means that States may take its recommendations more seriously, and that there is political will to implement.

- **ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE** on sensitive issues that may otherwise be delicate to raise.

- **FACILITATE A PLATFORM** for discussions between State entities and civil society actors on human rights.

- **CREATE AND MOBILIZE IN-COUNTRY NETWORKS** and alliances on key human rights, sustainable development and peace and security issues between State entities, UN entities, civil society and other relevant stakeholders such as national human rights institutions, trade unions, or the media.

- **RAISE MORE AWARENESS** around human rights and inequalities in society, and advocate for strategic and time-bound plans to advance human rights, including possible voluntary pledges or national plans to implement recommendations from human rights mechanisms.

- **SHOWCASE THE LINKS BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE 2030 AGENDA** and advocate for addressing human rights challenges and the 17 SDGs in a holistic way, as a way to accelerate progress on both agendas and leaving no one behind. UNCTs can ensure that this approach flows from the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UN Cooperation Framework) and results in tailored support for the implementation of national development plans and other relevant policy and programming frameworks and documents, see e.g. the new SDG Foundational Primer.

- **REINFORCE** and support the commitment by States to multilateralism, including through providing assistance in the implementation of UPR recommendations.

- **IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION** on human rights, opening an opportunity for States to engage with countries who made recommendations or donors in the implementation of recommendations (through best practices, technical cooperation, funding, etc).

**ENGAGING with the UPR is a means and not an end in itself!**

The issues raised within the UPR often highlight challenges and root causes that obstruct development or risk fuelling conflict or tensions. The UN can use the UPR strategically also in conjunction with other critical UN priorities such as delivering on the 2030 Agenda, prevention, sustaining peace and protection strategies. The UPR can inform the preparation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, including the Common Country Analysis, the Humanitarian Response Plan, the Humanitarian Country Team's Protection Strategy, the Integrated Strategic Framework in mission settings (e.g. Somalia) and other instruments for the United Nation's collective response to help countries address national priorities and gaps in their pathway towards meeting the 2030 Agenda. The value of the UPR also features prominently in the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights.

On average, countries accept nearly 85% of recommendations. UN entities, including UNCT members, peace operations and special political missions acting collectively or individually, can incorporate these into activities and advocacy strategies to increase protection of human rights in the country where they operate.

The UN Cooperation Framework internal guidance also provides important entry points for how to address human rights, including UPR recommendations (especially in paragraphs 3 to 28; 53 to 61; 97).

Good practices and successful experiences of UN entities strategically using the UPR to yield positive change already exist in many countries, including **Argentina**, **Moldova**, **Tanzania**, **Vietnam** as well as several others - see also the Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UNCTs (page 32).

Several individual agencies, funds and programmes have developed toolkits on how to use the UPR and other human rights mechanisms in their work (see annexed links). Many have been able to achieve impact through the UPR – including UNICEF in **Burkina Faso, Kenya, Niger, Kazakhstan** (addressing abolition of the death penalty in general or in relation to children), **Benin** (making ritual infanticide illegal) and **Seychelles** (decriminalizing same-sex activities) and UNFPA in **Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique and Tajikistan** as well as in **Mongolia, Armenia and Zambia** (on sexual and reproductive health

and rights). UNFPA reports that 90% of States took action on at least half of accepted recommendations made concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights during the second cycle, and showcases examples of States taking action also on such recommendations that were initially only noted, such as **Zambia and the DRC**. UNHCR has successfully engaged with the UPR to advocate for ratification of relevant treaties and better protection of refugee and asylum-seeking children, resulting in e.g. nine States ratifying conventions on stateless persons and improved protection for victims of trafficking in **Spain**. UPR recommendations on unaccompanied children have also been included and used in resettlement programmes of refugee children in **EU** countries. UNDP utilizes the UPR to provide human rights analysis in programming, e.g. though country fact sheets showing the status of UPR recommendations and their linkages to SDGs, for instance, in 19 **Arab States**. The UNDP Social and Environmental Standards ensure UNDP interventions utilize a human rights based approach. See also the examples gathered by OHCHR in the latest report on implementation and enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights and in the High Commissioner's most recent address to the General Assembly. OHCHR, UNDP and DCO are also holding regional workshops to strengthen linkages between the UPR and SDGs.

The UPR is one of many entry points for UN engagement on human rights and the recommendations explicitly supported by a Government constitute the most consensual one. As a peer review process, UPR recommendations are issued by fellow States and complement or reiterate other recommendations issued by UN expert human rights bodies such as the treaty bodies, special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, and OHCHR. In that regard, the Universal Human Rights Index is a practical tool as it compiles all recommendations issued by human rights mechanisms on each country and links them directly to SDGs (see figure 1 on the next page).

Since each State is reviewed every four and half years, UNCTs are encouraged to also use other sources and tools to get an updated assessment of human rights issues in the countries where they operate, including with the support of OHCHR which is currently present in over

70 countries. For countries without OHCHR presence, please contact and consult its UPR Branch.

## UPR RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE JOINT SDG FUND

A concrete example of how the UPR now informs SDG programming and implementation is the **Joint SDG Fund**, which launched its first call for proposals in late 2019, focusing on integrated policy on social protection. To emphasize "Leave No One Behind" and a human rights-based approach, UNCTs were asked to explain how the proposed joint programme would assist the country in advancing human rights and in implementing specific recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms, including UPR.
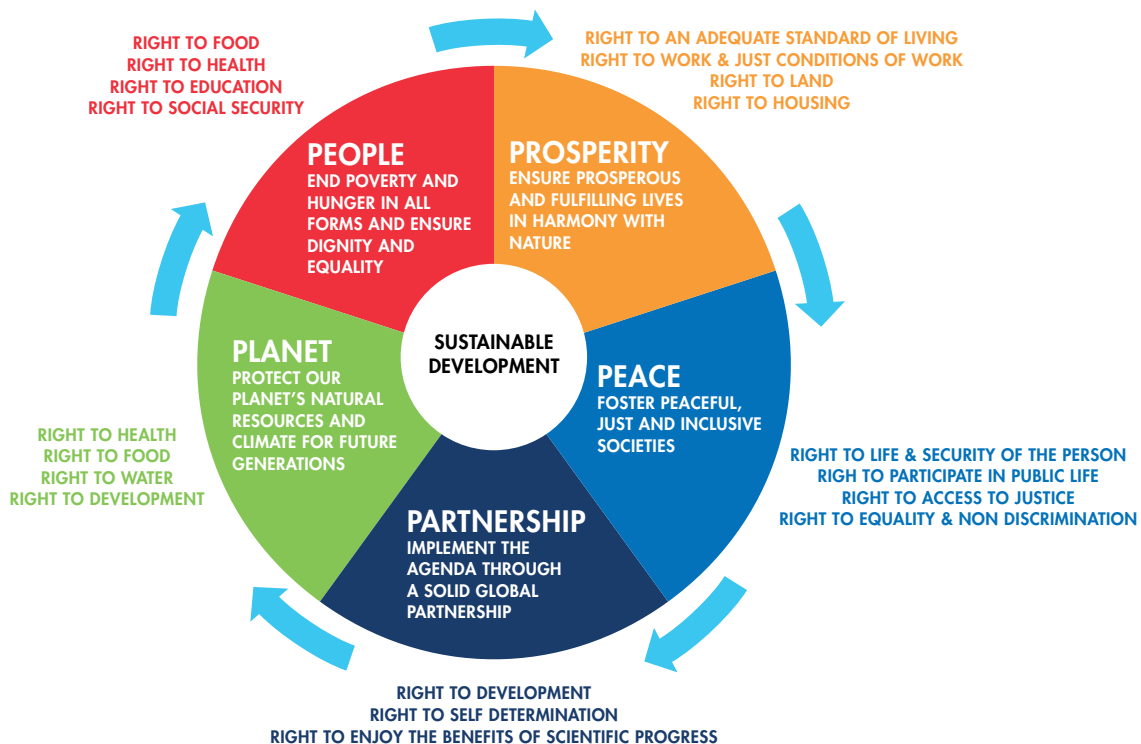
## WHY HUMAN RIGHTS ARE IMPORTANT IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

There is a close correlation between issues covered by Universal Periodic Review recommendations and SDG goals and targets (see Figure 2). Innovative approaches by Governments and the UN to link the outputs of human rights mechanisms, including the UPR, with efforts to achieve the SDGs, lead to integrated systems and plans to strengthen human rights-based approaches to development and to practical action on follow-up to human rights recommendations (see Human Rights Council report).

"In her address to the 40th session of the Human Rights Council, on 7 March 2019, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, said 'human rights are core to the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development is a powerful vehicle for the realization of all human rights'. Human rights provide an effective way of strengthening States' accountability in realizing SDGs. While Agenda 2030 is not a legally binding instrument, the international human rights treaties and national law are binding. When the SDGs are analyzed through the lenses of existing human rights instruments, many targets of the SDGs are transformed from a goal or aspiration into immediate rights.

*SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS (FIGURE 1)*



RIGHT TO FOOD
RIGHT TO HEALTH
RIGHT TO EDUCATION
RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING
RIGHT TO WORK & JUST CONDITIONS OF WORK
RIGHT TO LAND
RIGHT TO HOUSING

**PEOPLE** END POVERTY AND HUNGER IN ALL FORMS AND ENSURE DIGNITY AND EQUALITY

**PROSPERITY** ENSURE PROSPEROUS AND FULFILLING LIVES IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**PLANET** PROTECT OUR PLANET'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

**PEACE** FOSTER PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

RIGHT TO HEALTH
RIGHT TO FOOD
RIGHT TO WATER
RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

**PARTNERSHIP** IMPLEMENT THE AGENDA THROUGH A SOLID GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

RIGHT TO LIFE & SECURITY OF THE PERSON
RIGH TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC LIFE
RIGHT TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE
RIGHT TO EQUALITY & NON DISCRIMINATION

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT
RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION
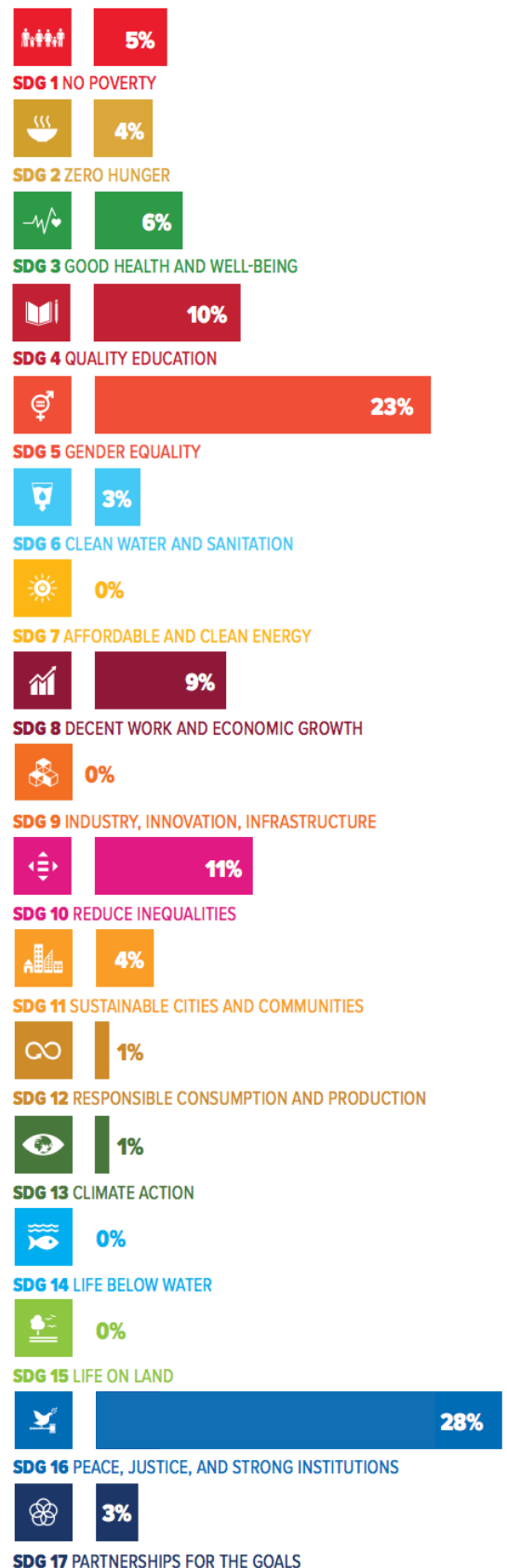RIGHT TO ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

Adopted in September 2015 by the 193 Member States of the United Nations, the Agenda 2030 is 'a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity'. The 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators cover a wide range of issues that mirror the human rights framework. Many of the SDGs cover economic, social and cultural rights. Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies covers aspects of civil and political rights including access to justice and fundamental freedoms. Goal 17 and many of the international targets under each Goal, addresses issues linked to international cooperation and the right to development.

The commitment in the 2030 Agenda to 'Leave no one behind' is grounded on human rights principles and standards of non-discrimination and equality. People get left behind when they lack the choices and opportunities to participate in and benefit from development. The key principles in ensuring that no one is left behind are participation, accountability, equality and non-discrimination.

This requires moving beyond assessing average and aggregate progress towards ensuring progress for all population groups or individuals. (…) Realizing the commitment in SDGs to 'leave no one behind' and to reach the farthest behind first requires a precise identification of the target populations. It is therefore necessary to systematically collect data that is disaggregated enough to demonstrate the level of access to all groups as specified in the 2030 Agenda, especially the most vulnerable – including children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants. Some of the marginalized groups may also be identified through a review of reports and recommendations of human rights mechanisms (including the UPR)."

*Extracts from* **Why Human Rights Are Important in Achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria**, *by Edward Kallon, Resident Coordinator Nigeria, published on November 1, 2019.*

*UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS (FIGURE 2)*



SDG 1 NO POVERTY — 5%
SDG 2 ZERO HUNGER — 4%
SDG 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING — 6%
SDG 4 QUALITY EDUCATION — 10%
SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY — 23%
SDG 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION — 3%
SDG 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY — 0%
SDG 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH — 9%
SDG 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, INFRASTRUCTURE — 0%
SDG 10 REDUCE INEQUALITIES — 11%
SDG 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES — 4%
SDG 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION — 1%
SDG 13 CLIMATE ACTION — 1%
SDG 14 LIFE BELOW WATER — 0%
SDG 15 LIFE ON LAND — 0%
SDG 16 PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS — 28%
SDG 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS — 3%

*FOUNDATIONAL PRIMER ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, page 14*

# Practical steps for UN entities' engagement with the UPR

This guidance highlights key entry points for UN entities during each of the three stages of the UPR process: before, during and after the review.

UNCTs can find out when their respective country is scheduled to be reviewed through the UPR [website](#). Each RC is also informed directly about the timing of the UN human rights mechanisms' planned engagement with their specific country on an annual basis in a letter from OHCHR and the [UN SDG task team on leaving no one behind, human rights and the normative agenda.](#)

**PRIOR TO THE REVIEW: START PREPARATIONS WELL IN ADVANCE**

Approximately 6 months prior to the review, the documents on which the reviews are based are prepared, i.e. the national report, the compilation of UN information and the summary of other stakeholders' information. All three are equally important as they offer different perspectives on the human rights situation in the country. They assess the human rights situation in the country and the level of implementation of previous recommendations.

WHAT CAN UN ENTITIES DO PRIOR TO THE REVIEW?

- Convene an UNCT **internal dialogue** on the human rights situation in the country and the main issues to be addressed, with a view to developing (or updating) the UNCT's human rights strategy in the country, including in the CCA. This is also a good opportunity to review the recommendations addressed to the country by other human rights mechanisms, as compiled in the [Universal Human Rights Index](#), and assess their status of implementation in the CCA.

- Engage in a **discussion with Government**, and other national stakeholders, on the status of implementation of recommendations emanating from all UN human rights mechanisms, including UPR.

- **Provide advice** to Government on actions to enhance the national human rights protection systems in the country (whether legal, institutional or at policy levels) ahead/in preparation for the review, including: undertaking voluntary pledges; establishing or strengthening national human rights institutions in line with the [Paris Principles](#); adopting national human rights [action plans](#) and corresponding budgets; establishing [national mechanisms](#) for reporting and follow-up to recommendations from human rights mechanisms; ratifying new human rights instruments; extending open invitations to [special procedures](#) of the Human Rights

Council, or other similar measures.

- Begin preparations for the **joint UNCT report** as a contribution to the UN compilation report for the review. Guidance is sent to each RC by OHCHR about one year before the UPR. This provides an opportunity for UN entities to make available information and analysis of issues deemed critical so that the review benefits from factual, high-quality and updated information to inform the recommendations issued to the country concerned. Individual UN entities may also make additional submissions to the UN compilation report, if they so wish. Their submissions together with all reports from other stakeholders are made publicly available in advance of the country review. Since the beginning of the third cycle, to date, 61 UNCTs have provided joint submissions and individual UN entities have provided 317 submissions for the UN compilation reports.

- **Convene dialogues and facilitate broad-based national consultation processes** among State entities, national human rights institutions, civil society and regional bodies, including regional human rights mechanisms, on human rights challenges.  This process can be a useful entry point to discuss critical challenges for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- **Facilitate reporting** by the Government, including by providing information about the guidelines for UPR written submissions, perhaps through training sessions or material facilitated by OHCHR. The Government's preparation of the national report should follow a participatory national consultation process.

- **Make available UN data and information** to the Government on the human rights situation in the country, particularly on groups that are being left behind, for purposes of national reporting.

- **Encourage and build capacity of NGOs and national human rights institutions to submit information** by informing them how to participate in the reporting process and consider supporting them in this. Be conscious of the risk for reprisals against them for engaging with the UN and mechanisms to address them.

- Inform the Government about the possibility of **funding from the UPR Fund for their participation** (funding travel

of one official per developing State per session).

- **Ensure that media is aware** of the UPR review. Use both traditional and social media to engage and stimulate a discussion on issues of relevance, including to showcase the UNCT's work on human rights and demonstrate the linkages with the 2030 Agenda, sustaining peace and other national priorities.

### DURING THE REVIEW: ENGAGE WITH THE UPR SESSION IN GENEVA

All written submissions considered during the review are made publicly available on the UPR website. All the UPR Working Group sessions are broadcast live on UN Web TV and can be viewed by anyone.

WHAT CAN UN ENTITIES DO DURING THE REVIEW?

- **Encourage Government, the national human rights institution and NGOs to participate** in/attend the UPR session in Geneva, perhaps also by helping them find funding.

- Consider attendance also by the **RC/HC/DSRSG/UNCT members** in the UPR Working Group session as well as participation in side-events and meetings in the margins of the session – as well as during the Human Rights Council session adopting the UPR outcomes some three months later.

- Since the beginning of the 3rd UPR cycle there has been an **increase in the number of recommendations** made to the State under Review (**on average more than 200**). Delegations have been led by one or more Ministers with an **average of 20 high level state officials from line Ministries or key State Entities**. Increasingly, UPR delegations have included representatives of the three branches of the Government and, in one case, the delegation was co-led by a senior Minister, a Senator and a member of the Supreme Court.

- **Engage with Member States' permanent missions** in Geneva who may reach out to UN entities in country or at HQ seeking expert advice on issues as they consider what recommendations to make.

- Use the live webcast of the UPR session to **convene local stakeholders** and partners, including civil society and

the media - for instance to watch it jointly followed by a round table discussion, and use social media to raise awareness of the review.

- During the months between the UPR Working Group session and the Human Rights Council session adopting the UPR outcomes, **engage with all the relevant sectors of Government to encourage it to accept recommendations considered critical**, also on sensitive issues on which it may initially be hesitant, and offer UN support for implementation efforts.

- **Organize a UNCT discussion** to identify opportunities for further engaging with Government on possible adjustments to the UN Cooperation Framework and country configuration in support of the commitments made by the Government under the UPR.

## AFTER THE REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The recommendations that comprise the outcome of the review are publicly available and provide an excellent entry point for UNCTs and individual UN entities to advocate for implementation and discuss follow-up activities with the Government, civil society and development partners.
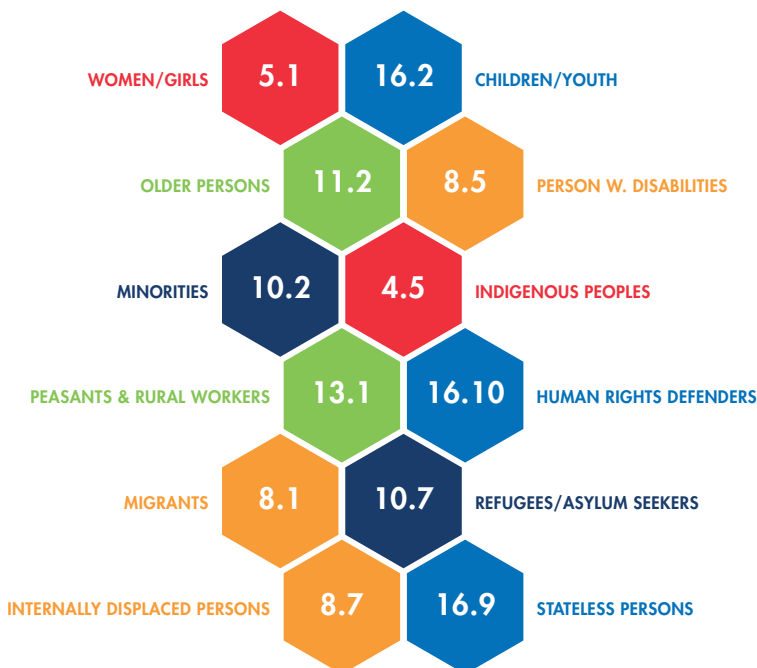
WHAT CAN UN ENTITIES DO AFTER THE REVIEW?
- **Support dissemination** and translation of the recommendations in local languages (including to traditional and social media, parliament, civil society, local authorities and communities), including by co-organizing targeted information sessions and encouraging mobilization for follow-up together with the authorities and various stakeholders. Use the High Commissioner's letter as well as infographics and matrices of recommendations prepared by OHCHR after each review, which thematically cluster accepted recommendations to facilitate follow up action within the mandate of each UN entity.

- Integrate the recommendations into the **CCA data and analysis repository** and cluster them thematically with others in the repository to facilitate tracking of implementation and support to the country.

- Support States in creating or strengthening institutional

mechanisms (such as inter-ministerial committees) to **co-ordinate efforts in implementing recommendations** of the UPR and other UN human rights bodies and mechanisms. Advise on how to help establish effective national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up to recommendations is available here and here.

- In countries where human rights reporting mechanisms exist alongside national arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda, support exchange of information between relevant ministries and authorities, and other stakeholders, to ease reporting burdens and improve the quality of reports (including Voluntary National Reports), as well as to achieve the **whole-of-Government and whole-of-society engagement** required by the Decade of Action and the SG's Call to Action for Human Rights.

- Support **monitoring of the implementation of recommendations**. This could include encouraging States to establish a recommendations implementation plan and a national recommendations tracking database, which can be linked to the SDGs as e.g. that of **Paraguay**. Open source software exists for such databases. More guidance is available here.

- **Engage in discussions and advocacy** with Government, parliament, civil society, donors and development partners to address the issues reflected in the recommendations, including through support by recommending States who are active donors in-country and other stakeholders in those countries who may be able to offer technical and financial support and best practices (academia, private sector, philanthropists, civil society, local governments, etc.).

- Use UPR recommendations as **advocacy tools** and entry points for policy dialogue on specific topics, including those perceived as sensitive.

- Make use of UPR recommendations **to fine tune the UNCT** analysis related to the human rights situation in the CCA, particularly relating to removing obstacles to leaving no one behind.

- Identify, publicize and use strategically **links between the recommendations and relevant SDGs** and their targets, as shown in this table and here. A database showing how nearly two thirds of UN human rights recommenda-

tions are linked to the SDGs is available here. Support the Government and other stakeholders in identifying how implementation of one can accelerate implementation of the other as part of the Decade of Action.

- Support **the development or updating of concrete national strategies and plans**, e.g. national human rights action plans to implement recommendations, including through technical advice by specialized UN entities and OHCHR. Encourage the Government to also take recommendations into account when developing national development and SDG action plans.

- **Integrate** UPR and other human rights recommendations into the development and review of the UN Cooperation Framework; joint programmes; agency country annual work plans; work plans of thematic groups (where existing); as well as in relevant country discussions, which take place in internal coordination processes, focused on evidence-based risk assessment and prevention.

- **Leave no one behind:** Use human rights recommendations as a tool in identifying and addressing issues related to marginalized populations and root causes of their exclusion. See guidance here, as well as guidance on the human rights-based approach to data and to development programming.

- Provide **advice or funding to support implementation** of recommendations that fall within the priorities and mandates of UNCT members collectively or individually. A financial mechanism called the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance can support implementation of recommendations at the request of State, see examples here.

- Include the recommendations into the **priorities of the funding framework** for the UN Cooperation Framework.

- Encourage and support the Government to submit **midterm reports** on progress achieved in implementing recommendations two years in, analysed on the basis of broad and participatory national processes, as an additional impetus for concrete positive change.

- Analyse recommendations that were not accepted but only "**noted**", with OHCHR's support, and develop strategies on actions that could be taken to move forward on these more sensitive issues, if of strategic importance to sustainable development, peace and security, or human rights, and if in line with international human rights standards.

- Use information from the UPR in **briefing materials** for incoming RCs and Heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes at country level, as well as in briefings for country visits by senior UN officials.

- Include an analysis of the implementation of the UPR recommendations in all reviews of the country's progress against the 2030 Agenda.

*SDG TARGETS AND GROUPS TYPICALLY LEFT BEHIND (FIGURE 3)*



| | |
|---|---|
| WOMEN/GIRLS | 5.1 |
| CHILDREN/YOUTH | 16.2 |
| OLDER PERSONS | 11.2 |
| PERSON W. DISABILITIES | 8.5 |
| MINORITIES | 10.2 |
| INDIGENOUS PEOPLES | 4.5 |
| PEASANTS & RURAL WORKERS | 13.1 |
| HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS | 16.10 |
| MIGRANTS | 8.1 |
| REFUGEES/ASYLUM SEEKERS | 10.7 |
| INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS | 8.7 |
| STATELESS PERSONS | 16.9 |

# Countries where there is no UN presence in-country

There are 130 UNCTs, covering all of the 164 countries where there are United Nations programmes. The 2030 agenda as well as the UPR, however, are universal and cover also the 28 countries where there currently is no UN programmatic presence on the ground. These include many developed States who have been recommended through the UPR to increase their support to development and the agenda 2030.

In these countries, it falls on UN entities' **regional presences** (including UN information centres; OHCHR's regional offices and the UN Development Coordination Office regional teams) and HQ-based regional teams to consider taking the practical steps described above – including in cooperation with local civil society, national human rights institutions, parliamentary human rights committees, regional human rights mechanisms and other regional organizations.

**Regional organizations** actively engage with the UPR, including on countries where there is no UNCT. For instance, to date, the Council of Europe has made 67 submissions to the UPR; the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency 38 submissions; the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe 77 submissions; the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 34 submissions; and the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights has made four submissions.

Several UN entities, such as UNESCO and UNHCR, regularly submit information from their Headquarters to the UPR concerning countries where they have no in-country presence. The above-mentioned Regional Monthly Reviews or country-specific discussions at the Secretary-General's Executive Committee may provide a forum for UN coordination on critical issues arising in the context of the UPR of countries without UN local presence.

# Useful links and resources

## Best practices and country case studies

- **MAINSTREAMING HUMAN RIGHTS IN DEVELOPMENT – STORIES FROM THE FIELD – UNDG**

- **UNDG GUIDANCE NOTE ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR RCS AND UNCTS**

- **UNDG WEB-BASED GUIDE ON STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT WITH UN HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY**

- **UNFPA: "LESSONS FROM THE FIRST CYCLE OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW: FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS"**

- **UNFPA: "LESSONS FROM THE SECOND CYCLE OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW: FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS"**

## Other UN guidance on integrating human rights into sustainable development and peace and security agendas

- **UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK**

- **UN COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS: COMPANION PIECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK GUIDANCE (FORTHCOMING)** *(No link available yet.)*

- **LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: A UNSDG OPERATIONAL GUIDE FOR UN COUNTRY TEAMS**

- **THE UN INTER-AGENCY COMMON LEARNING PACKAGE (CLP) ON HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH (HRBA) TO DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING:**

- **SDG FOUNDATIONAL PRIMER ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

## On the UPR

- **UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW**

- **UPR SESSIONS**

- **UPR DOCUMENTATION BY COUNTRY**

- **INFOGRAPHICS ON UPR AND SDG SYNERGIES ARE PART OF THE AVAILABLE UPR DOCUMENTS**

- **HC LETTER AND ANNEX**

- **MID-TERM REPORT ON THE UPR**

- **OHCHR INFORMATION NOTE FOR RESIDENT COORDINATORS, UNCTS AND OTHER UN ENTITIES REGARDING THE UPR (THIRD CYCLE)**

- **UPR: INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS' WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS**

- **UPR CONTACT INFORMATION**

- **UPR TRUST FUNDS (FOR FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE)**

- **UPR INFO'S WEBSITE (NOT AN OFFICIAL UN SOURCE)**

## On recommendations from all human rights bodies (UPR, treaty bodies and Special Procedures):

- **UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS INDEX (UHRI)**

## On follow-up mechanisms

- **NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP (NMRF)**

- **NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKING DATABASE (NRTD)**

- **NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLAN (NHRAP)**