

Draft: UPR Concept Note

Development of a Web-Portal (Ghana's UN UPR Web-Metrics) and Strategic Civil Society Organization Workshop on the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Mechanism.

Theme: *CSO's Report Submission; The Use of Technology amidst COVID-19 in the promotion of Ghana's Human Rights record under the UN UPR Mechanism for the 4th Cycle Review.*

Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Venue: Accra City Hotel, Accra-Ghana

ORGANIZERS: POS Foundation in Collaboration with the Ghana UN Universal Periodic Review CSO Platform

FUNDED BY: United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], Ghana

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1. Introduction

1.1 About the Universal Periodic Review

In 2006, the United Nations General Assembly near unanimously adopted Resolution 60/251, to establish a Human Rights Council (replacing the Human Rights Commission) with the responsibility of promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. One of the key mandates of the Council is to undertake a Universal Periodic Review (UPR), on the fulfilment of each State's human rights obligations and commitments. The UPR is therefore a unique Human Rights mechanism where each of the 193 UN Member States are peer-reviewed and examined on their entire human rights record every five years regardless of its size or political influence, under the same rules and supervision. States are required to respond not only to all recommendations made by its peers, but also to provide data on the implementation of recommendations it has previously accepted, including voluntary commitments. It remains a co-operative process that requires the full participation of the State under Review and complements the work of all UN treaty bodies. The UPR is a very important process for advancing the realization of human rights Nationally, Regionally and Globally.

1.2 Ghana's Universal Periodic Review

Ghana's human rights record was reviewed by the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), UPR Working Group (WG) in May 2008 (1st Cycle) and in October 2012 (2nd Cycle). The country underwent the 3rd Cycle review on 7th November, 2017 and received 241 recommendations. In the draft report of the UPR WG, 200 recommendations enjoyed the support of Ghana while 41 were noted. During the formal adoption that took place in March 2018, Ghana accepted an additional 12 recommendations (10 accepted and 2 partially accepted) out of the 41. That brings the number of the total accepted recommendations by Ghana to 212 out of 241, while 29 recommendations were noted.

1.1 Ghana UPR Context

Prior to Ghana's 3rd review by the UPR WG of the Human Rights Council, Ghanaian CSOs came together in a broad-based coalition, led by the POS Foundation, to prepare and develop thematic reports. The process included a '*CSOs Pre UPR Reports Submission Workshop*' that was held in March, 2017. As a result, **CSOs submitted over 10 thematic reports to the HRC** by deadline of 30th March, 2017. In an effort to undertake coordinated and sustained lobbying among the various Recommending



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States, an **In-Country Pre-Session** themed ***‘Diplomacy meets Human Rights’*** was organised in Accra, Ghana from 6th to 7th September, 2017 where factsheets on respective thematic areas of rights were developed by CSOs as an advocacy and lobbying tool in the process. **This was followed by the Geneva Pre-Session in October, 2017 organized by UPR Info.**

During the development of the State report, the Government of Ghana consulted CSOs before it was submitted to the HRC. After the Review that was held at the HRC in Geneva on 7th November, 2017, UPR Info in collaboration with POS Foundation [the secretariat for The Ghana Human Rights NGO’s Forum] organised a 3-day ***‘CSOs Strategic Workshop on the Implementation of the UPR Recommendations’*** that was held in Accra, Ghana from 27th - 28th February and 15th March, 2018. The workshop led to the **development of a draft Implementation Plan and Action Strategy for the 212 accepted recommendations.** Subsequent media training workshops were organised to aid in the monitoring process.

Following the immediate aftermath of the adoption of the State’s UPR Outcome Report, POS Foundation in partnership with UPR Info and the Government of Ghana (Attorney General and Ministry of Justice) organised a **3-day *‘Multi-Stakeholders National Dialogue on the Implementation of the UPR Recommendations’*** held on Wednesday, 22nd August, 2018, Thursday, 23rd August, 2018 and Friday 24th August, 2018 at the Kempinski Hotel, Accra. This meeting brought together the CSO coalition, the Government of Ghana, Development Partners/Diplomats and the other UPR Stakeholders to promote full cooperation between the Government of Ghana and CSOs. This set the basis for a fruitful national dialogue underpinned by trust and transparency. All these activities under the 3rd review was funded by DANIDA and UPR Info Africa/Geneva.

2-Day National Strategic Multi Stakeholder Workshop on Mid-Term Reporting under the UPR Mechanism. Under the UPR Mechanism, Member States are encouraged to submit mid-term reports to the HRC before the end of a cycle which serves as a guide to the monitoring process. Consequently, the POS Foundation with funding from the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] organised a 2-day National Strategic Multi stakeholder Workshop on Mid-Term Reporting under the UPR Mechanism. This workshop brought over 70 participants drawn from CSOs, representatives from Ministries, Department and Agencies [MDAs] and the Inter-Ministerial Committee set up by government on the UPR to build their capacity on the UPR reporting and monitoring process while collating activity reports towards the draft and submission of a mid-term report to the UN Human Rights Council. The workshop was under the theme; ***‘Training and Compilation of reports towards the submission of Ghana’s Mid-Term report on the 3rd***

UPR Cycle.

1.2 Objectives

- To train participants on the importance and the use of the UPR Web-Metrics (Portal) for reporting under the UPR.
- To provide tools to enable participants collate activity reports to be inputted on the UPR Web-Metrics.
- To Provide an opportunity to deepen the understanding of members of CSOs in the reporting process for the UPR 4th cycle Review.
- To reactivate the work of the UPR CSO technical committee responsible for the consolidation of reports.
- To create public awareness on recommendations accepted by the state through media coverage.

1.3 The Expected Outcomes of the meeting

- A Well-built UPR Web-Metrics (Portal).
- Brief Analytical report on the State of accepted recommendations.
- Well-informed CSOs on the reporting process and system.
- Reactivated UPR CSO Technical Committee.
- A well-informed media and the public on the UPR process and recommendations.

2. Duration of UPR Activities:

- **September 2021 to September 2022** - Civil Society engagement on report preparation
- **June 2022** - CSOs Report Submission to the UN Human Right Council
- **January 2023** - State Review (Ghana)

3. Implementing Partners

The POS Foundation: The POS Foundation is a Human Rights Civil Society Organization which focuses its activities in the areas of Human Rights Advocacy and Development, Law/Policy Reforms, Youth Development and Social Accountability. With



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a track record of successful projects, the organization has strategically positioned itself as one of the leading Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Ghana in the area of justice reforms and access to justice, advocacy for the right to information, convener for civil society platform on the UN Universal Periodic Review in Ghana, Drug Policy reforms etc. and currently serves as the secretariat for the **Ghana Human Rights NGOs Forum** (with the aim of presenting a united front for Human Rights NGOs in Ghana). Under its access to justice campaign, the POS Foundation has successfully facilitated the Justice For All Programme for remand prisoners since 2014. www.posfoundation.org

UNDP: UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in some 170 countries and territories, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

4. Methodology

The meeting will be conducted in a participatory manner where all stakeholders/participants will be actively involved in the plenary discussion and within the various breakaway thematic group discussions. The meeting will adopt other forms necessary during the programme to achieve the need impact.