



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW AND A PARLIAMENTARY CONTRIBUTION TO ITS WORK

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Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

- ❖ *The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which was created through the UN General Assembly.*
- ❖ Through the UPR, the Human Rights Council reviews, on a periodic basis, the fulfilment by each of the 193 United Nations Member States of their human rights obligations and commitments.



Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

- ❖ The ultimate aim of the UPR mechanism is to improve and make progress of the human rights situation in all respective countries as well as to eliminate human rights violations.
- ❖ The state under review has the primary responsibility to implement the recommendations.
- ❖ When it comes time for the second review of a state they are needed to provide information on what they have been doing to implement the recommendations made during 1st Cycle review four years earlier.



UPR Process and Outcome of the Review

A review of a State is based on a national report (implementation report) prepared by:

- ▶ the State under review;
- ▶ a compilation of United Nations information on the State under review prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); and
- ▶ a summary of information submitted by other stakeholders (including NHRIs, NGOs and civil society actors), also prepared by OHCHR.



UPR Process and Outcome of the Review

- ❖ The review itself takes place in Geneva in a session of the Working Group on the UPR, which is composed of the 47 member States of the Human Rights Council.
- ❖ It takes the form of an interactive dialogue between the State under review and the member and observer States of the Council.
- ❖ At the end of each review, the Working Group adopts an outcome document, which is subsequently considered and adopted by the Human Rights Council at a later session.



UPR of Bangladesh and role of JAMAKON

- ❖ Bangladesh was first reviewed in February, 2009 during the 1st Cycle UPR.
- ❖ Bangladesh received 42 recommendations of which only 2 were rejected.
- ❖ The JAMAKON played a vital role during 2nd cycle UPR of Bangladesh and follow-up on the implementation of UPR.



UPR of Bangladesh and role of JAMAKON

- ❖ JAMAKON acted as a bridge between the government and civil society during the follow-up of the implementation of UPR.
- ❖ After 1st cycle UPR the JAMAKON organized a policy dialogue with the Secretaries of different Ministries to discuss the implementation of 1st cycle UPR.
- ❖ Consequently, each ministry (28 relevant ministries) appointed the Focal Point for the JAMAKON on UPR and human rights more broadly.



UPR of Bangladesh and role of JAMAKON

- ❖ We organized around 10 workshops during 2012 throughout the country on thematic issues of human rights/UPR and drafted the report based on the inputs.
- ❖ Finally, the JAMAKON organized a two days national seminar in September, 2012 to share the draft stakeholder report to gain feedback from the stakeholders including government ministries, parliamentarians, NGOs and civil society organizations.
- ❖ The JAMAKON submitted its independent stakeholder/shadow report to the Human Rights Council in October, 2012.



UPR of Bangladesh and role of JAMAKON

In April, 2013 the JAMAKON organized a MOCK-UPR

- ❖ The Mock UPR provided the stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions to the delegation of the government and it prepared them for the review at the Human Rights Council.
- ❖ It was a useful preparatory step for Bangladesh during 2nd cycle UPR on 29 April, 2013.
- ❖ Around 150 participants from different Government Ministries, Members of Parliament, Diplomats, development partners, INGOs, NGOs, civil society organizations were present.



UPR of Bangladesh and role of JAMAKON

- ❖ The entire process adopted by the JAMAKON since 2011 brought a tremendous success to it to sensitize the government of the significance about the implementation status/progress of recommendations that made in 2009 thus made an updated and critical presentation on country human rights situation in the Human Rights Council for the 2nd cycle UPR in Geneva.
- ❖ Bangladesh was reviewed at the 16th UPR Session on 29 April, 2013. 94 delegations made 196 recommendations and Bangladesh accepted 164 recommendations.



UPR of Bangladesh and JAMAKON

- ❖ The JAMAKON maintains its priority on UPR and continues to play its role on the follow-up on the implementation of UPR.
- ❖ We have planned to adopt an action plan/monitoring tool on the implementation of 2nd cycle UPR
- ❖ We are in the process of organizing workshops/consultations on thematic areas for drafting the action plan on the follow-up of the implementation of UPR
- ❖ We have organized one workshop on this in June, 2014.



UPR of Bangladesh, role of JAMAKON in ensuring involvement of the Members of Parliament

- ❖ The major achievements of JAMAKON in lobbying with the government for the implementation of the UPR (received during 1st cycle): to review domestic legislation to bring them in line with international human rights standards.
- ❖ The JAMAKON made concrete recommendations to the government to amend the Children Act 1974 and consequently it was amended in 2013 in line with CRC. We also made recommendation to amend the Welfare of the Disabled Persons Act and the Protection of the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities, 2011 was enacted in line with the international standard.



UPR of Bangladesh, role of JAMAKON in ensuring involvement of the Members of Parliament

Lesson learned:

- ❖ The JAMAKON worked with the ministries for the advocacy and was successful in achieving its goals. However, we note that if we could have worked with the Parliament directly it would have saved time and resources instead of going through the channels.
- ❖ Any recommendation for amendment or enactment of laws needs to go to the parliament ultimately. Thus, working with the Parliament directly will expedite the process of implementation of the recommendations.



UPR of Bangladesh, role of JAMAKON in ensuring involvement of the Members of Parliament

- ❖ The JAMAKON strongly believes that Parliament can play a critical role in the implementation phase and beyond. Without parliamentary action-be it passing laws or overseeing government action-very few recommendations would actually be implemented.
- ❖ Thus, it is on the JAMAKON's priority for 2015 to involve more Members of Parliament among others and organize meetings, consultations, dialogues, workshops with them on UPR and human rights as a whole to enhance their understanding on this and their role and contribution.





THANK YOU