

Training Session Plan

The Reporting Procedure under UN Human Rights Treaties & Civil Society



The International Federation of Health and Human Rights Organisations (IFHHRO)

IFHHRO forms a unique network of active organisations committed to the protection and promotion of health related human rights. Members and observers are human rights groups which address health-related rights violations, medical associations involved in human rights work, and organisations that have been created specifically to mobilize health workers for human rights protection.

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Version 2

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Learning Objectives

- To gain basic knowledge of the UN Human Rights Treaty monitoring process
- To understand the ways in which civil society actors can be involved in this process
- To identify opportunities to become involved in the reporting procedures of CESCRC, CEDAW and CRC



Target Group

Staff of health organisations with basic knowledge about human rights



Duration

2 hours and 30 minutes



Materials

- A4 paper in 4 colours
- Masking tape or Blu-Tack
- Markers
- 3 sheets of flipchart paper
- Small stickers



Training Aids

1. Background Note Treaties and Committees
2. Background Note Reporting Procedure
3. Status of Reporting Template
4. Concluding Observations and Shadow Reports Template
5. Overview cards treaties and committees
6. Overview cards reporting procedure (ideal situation)
7. Overview cards reporting procedure (deviations)
8. Overview cards reporting procedure (civil society involvement)



Handouts

1. Timeline of the reporting procedure
2. Resources



Session Plan

The session as a whole is meant for health organisations from one country which possess information that could be useful for the reporting procedure. The session plan is divided into two parts. Part one focuses on the reporting procedure and part two looks at possibilities for civil society involvement. The second part of the session also serves as a starting point for further action by identifying how the participants can contribute to the reporting procedure using their own information.

Part of this session can also be used as a basic introductory session on the reporting procedure for participants from different countries. For this purpose skip or replace steps 5, 8 and 9.

Other sessions about human rights in relation to health can be found online in the IFHHRO Training Manual 'Human Rights for Health Workers' at www.ifhhro-training-manual.org

Preparation

Read the background notes on the topic of this session included in Training Aids 1 and 2.

Prepare overviews of one country's status of reporting for the three Treaties using the template in Training Aid 3.

Copy the templates from Training Aid 4 on three sheets of flipchart paper and complete the information in the tables. Prepare a separate document with health themes from the Concluding Observations and shadow reports (see Training Aid 4).

Print Training Aids 5, 6, 7 and 8 on A4 paper in four different colours.

Make a sufficient number of copies of the timeline table (Handout 1) and the list of resources (Handout 2).

Part One	The Reporting Procedure (75 minutes)
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Step 1 Introduction & Objectives (5 minutes)

Explain to the participants that during this session they will be learning about the reporting procedure under UN human rights treaties and the role of civil society. The focus will be on the Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the Convention on all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

It can be a good idea to ask participants if they are familiar with the topic of the session: who has heard of the reporting procedure, who has been involved? The responses can serve as an indication of how detailed the explanations need to be during the session. It can also be used to identify participants who already have some affinity with the topic so that their experiences can be used during the session.

Step 2 Human Rights Treaties & Committees (10 minutes)

Give a brief overview of the three UN Human Rights Treaties and the Committees that monitor the implementation of these Treaties by hanging up the overview cards (Training Aids 5). The corresponding explanation can be found in Training Aid 1. This information will serve as a background to the main explanation, so that participants understand the framework within which the reporting procedure occurs.

Step 3 Reporting Procedure (20 minutes)

Explain all the different steps in the 'ideal situation' of the reporting procedure by pasting the overview cards (Training Aid 6) on the wall. Hang up the cards one at a time, and accompany each card with an elaboration of that particular step in the reporting process. Training Aid 2 contains a background note detailing the explanation that matches each card. The timeline that will emerge represents how the reporting process should ideally take place.

Step 4 Possible Deviations (20 minutes)

Explain the possible deviations from the ideal situation that can occur at each step in the reporting process using the overview cards (Training Aid 7). For each step of the reporting procedure ask participants what could go differently in reality. Then hang each card underneath the corresponding step. Information for all cards can be found in the background note (Training Aid 2).

At the end of the explanations participants will have two rows of cards hanging in front of them: a row in one colour depicting the ideal reporting process and underneath that a row in another colour which shows possible deviations.

Step 5 *Status of Reporting (20 minutes)*

Divide the participants into three groups (one for each treaty) and hand out copies of one of the completed tables from Training Aid 3 to each group. Ask the participants to study the tables in the handouts that show the status of reporting for each treaty. While studying the handout ask participants to compare the timeline of the ideal reporting procedure and the possible deviations with how their own government is doing.

Conduct a quick run through of the reporting status for all three treaties by asking a participant from each group to relate the information in the handout to the information in the timeline. The overviews will usually serve as good examples of the different ways in which the reporting procedure can take place in practice. This is also a good way to find out whether participants have understood the explanations. In this regard, it is useful to have an extra copy of the overviews at hand, so as to be able to make corrections or add information to what a participant is presenting.

Part Two Civil Society Involvement (75 minutes)
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Step 7 *Explanation of Civil society Involvement (20 minutes)*

All the necessary information for this step is included in the background note in Training Aid 2. Start by giving some general comments about the nature of the reporting procedure and the value and necessity of local civil society input. Next explain the ways in which civil society can be involved in the reporting process using the overview cards (Training Aid 8). Name and elaborate on the different options for civil society involvement written on the cards and paste them underneath the relevant steps in the timeline.

Step 8 *Concluding Observations & Shadow Reports (30 minutes)*

Explain to the participants that they will now have the opportunity to see how they can use their own information to contribute to the reporting procedure of CESCR, CEDAW and CRC.

Hang up the three prepared flip chart sheets from Training Aid 4 in different corners of the room. Each flipchart sheet shows what health themes have been included in the Concluding Observations and Shadow Reports of the last session for one country.

Divide the participants into three groups and ask each group to complete one table based on relevant information they have about the right to health in their country. Rotate the groups after 10 minutes and then rotate again until everyone has had the chance to add information to each table.

Step 9 *Prioritising (20 minutes)*

Provide each participant with three small stickers and ask them to paste a sticker next to three health themes on the flipcharts that they think should definitely be included in the Concluding Observations next time.

List the themes which have been selected on a separate sheet of flipchart paper starting with the theme that received the most stickers. Depending on the objective of the training this list can be used to make an action plan and as input for a shadow report.

Step 12 *Conclusion (5 minutes)*

Recap the key message:

- the main function of the reporting procedure is to monitor the implementation of a treaty and to promote compliance;
- the reporting procedure almost never takes place according to the ideal situation;
- there are many different ways in which civil society actors can be involved in the reporting procedure;

- civil society involvement is necessary amongst others to increase visibility of the procedure, provide independent information and to ensure follow-up;
- health organisations often possess information which can be a valuable contribution to the reporting procedure

Explain where more information can be found using Handout 2. Hand out the reporting procedure timeline and the list of resources (Handouts 1 & 2).

Training Aid 1 – Background Note Treaties and Committees

Treaties and Right to Health	Treaty Bodies	
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights <hr/> Right to Health: article 12 1	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) 4	- Consists of 18 independent experts - Meets twice a year for 3 weeks in Geneva one session in May one session in November 7
Covenant on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women <hr/> Right to Health: article 12 2	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 5	- Consists of 23 independent experts - Meets 2-3 times a year for 3 weeks in Geneva or New York 8
Convention on the Rights of the Child <hr/> Right to Health: articles 23, 24, 25 3	Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 6	- Consists of 18 independent experts - Meets 3 times a year for 3 weeks in Geneva January, May and September 9

The text in each cell of the table with a number in the lower right-hand corner represents an overview card from Training Aid 5. The cards need to be hung up and read out to the participants one by one, accompanied by the following brief explanation:

1, 2, 3 Treaties and the Right to Health

Before explaining the reporting procedure it is necessary to give a little background information on the framework in which this process takes place. This session will focus on three treaties that have provisions on the right to health. Although there is some overlap between the three treaties, each covers the right to health from a different perspective, the ICESCR contains a general provision on the right to health, CEDAW focuses on women, and CRC focuses on children.

4 - 9 Treaty Bodies

Attached to each treaty is a Committee which has the task to monitor the implementation of the treaty. The Committees consist of a number of independent experts from around the world. That they are independent means that they do not represent any country. These experts come together several times each year in Geneva or New York to assess how the relevant treaty is being implemented in a certain country and give recommendations for improvement. This is done by means of the reporting procedure, which will be explained next.

Training Aid 2 – Background Note Reporting Procedure

This background note contains the basic information to be passed on to the participants using a series of overview cards (Training Aids 5-8). An outline of the full timeline can be found in Handout 1. Each cell in the timeline table with a number in the lower right-hand corner represents an overview card on which a step in the reporting procedure is written. The explanation of each step can be found below. The numbers correspond with the numbers in the timeline table.

A note on terminology: Legal terms have been avoided where possible, and explained when necessary. States are referred to as 'country' or 'government' and a State Party is referred to as a 'treaty member'.

Explanation of the Reporting Procedure (Step 3 of the Session Plan)

1. Country becomes Treaty Member

The entire process begins when a country becomes a member to a treaty. This takes place when the government ratifies a treaty, after which it is legally bound to implement that treaty within the country. This means that the government has numerous obligations which it has to carry out in order to comply with the treaty. Most of these obligations relate to measures that need to be taken to implement the rights that are laid down in the treaty. An additional obligation is the reporting obligation. To comply with this obligation, governments need to periodically report to the relevant Committee on the progress made and the obstacles encountered in implementing the treaty. On the basis of this report and other information the Committee assesses the performance of the government in relation to the treaty. That, very briefly summed up, is the reporting procedure. The purpose of this process is to promote compliance with the treaties. Also important to mention in this regard is that the reporting procedure is public.

2. Initial Report

The first report needs to be submitted by the government half a year after it becomes a member to a treaty. Thereafter a report has to be submitted every 4 or 5 years, depending on the treaty. All Committees have developed guidelines for governments on what these reports should contain. A government report needs to address all issues covered by the relevant treaty, which means that in case of these three treaties it should include a section on the right to health. When the report has been received it is translated into the six official UN languages and posted on the UN website (see Handout 2).

3. Pre-sessional Working Group

After the Committee has received a government report it does not give recommendations immediately. Instead, a number of experts on the Committee (usually half) come together in what is known as a 'Pre-sessional Working Group' in order to discuss the report and other information received from UN agencies and civil society.

4. List of Issues to Government

Based on this discussion the Committee comes up with a list of issues and questions for the government. The purpose of this list is to provide the Committee with the opportunity to get more specific or more up to date information directly from the government. For the government the list also serves as an advance notice of the issues which the Committee is likely to address during the remainder of the reporting procedure. Examples of the type of questions in relation to the right to health that such a list may include:

- Please provide information on specific health policies or programmes, government expenditure on health, or the availability of health services.
- What steps are being taken to address a certain health problem occurring in the country?

- Please indicate whether there is an intention to amend certain laws which are problematic in relation to health.

5. Government response to list of issues

The government is requested to respond to the list of issues in writing within 6 weeks to 3 months depending on the schedule of the Committee. Both the list of issues and the government response is translated into the six official UN languages and posted on the UN website (see Handout 2).

6. Examination during a Committee Session

During a next session, the Committee will examine and assess the country situation and the implementation of the treaty on the basis of the government report, the list of issues and replies, and other information received from UN agencies and civil society. On this occasion the government will send a delegation to the Committee session in New York or Geneva. This delegation is first given the opportunity to present the government report. Next the Committee and the delegation engage in what is referred to as 'constructive dialogue'. During this dialogue the Committee asks questions (similar to those in the list of issues, but more detailed), and the government is given the opportunity to provide further explanations. Although the Committee may be very critical, the aim of this exchange is not to blame the government, but to constructively look at ways and means to better implement the treaty.

7. Concluding Observations

On the basis of the examination during the session and all information received the Committee draws up a document which is known as the 'Concluding Observations'. The document contains observations on both the positive and the negative aspects of the situation in the country and provides the government with recommendations on steps that should be taken to improve the implementation of the treaty. It is important to note that Concluding Observations do not present a full picture but are limited to those issues that are perceived to be most pressing by the Committee. The focus is on issues that the Committee wants the government to pay particular attention to until the submission of the next periodic report. The Concluding Observations usually also contain comments and recommendations in relation to the right to health. The Concluding Observations are also translated and posted on the UN website (see Handout 2).

8. Government follow-up to Concluding Observations

Although the Concluding Observations are not legally binding, the government is expected to use them to implement the treaty. During future sessions the Committee will ask what steps the government has taken to follow-up on previous Concluding Observations.

9. 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc. Periodic Reports

Four or five years later, depending on the treaty, the government is obligated to submit another report, and the cycle repeats itself...

Explanation of Possible Deviations (Step 4 of the Session Plan)

The first nine cards in one colour depict the ideal situation. In reality the reporting procedure does not usually go as smoothly. To illustrate in what way things can go differently at each step of the process the next eight cards in a different colour will be pasted underneath the previous cards. At this point it is possible to involve the participants by asking them what could go wrong at each step.

10. Not a member

Obviously, when a country is not a member to a certain treaty the whole reporting procedure does not take place. There are two possibilities: either the treaty has been signed but not ratified, or the treaty has been neither signed nor ratified. Why is it important to know the difference? A government is only bound by a treaty when it has ratified the treaty. However, by signing a treaty a government indicates that it agrees with the principles contained in that

treaty and has the intention to ratify it in the future. In addition, once a government has signed, it commits to not taking steps that go against the principles of the treaty.

11. In relation to the government report there are three possible deviations:

- The government has not submitted a report. When this happens the Committee will send reminders to the government to encourage them to produce a report. If this still does not lead to the submission of a report the Committee may eventually decide to consider the situation in that country in absence of a report.
- It is possible that the government submits its report much later than the designated deadline. This delays the reporting procedure, and late reports often include outdated information. For example, if a report was due in 2004 governments will often only include information up to that year, even if the report isn't handed in until 2008. To remedy this situation a Committee may occasionally ask a government to combine several reports that are still due.
- Even if reports are handed in on time they may still be inadequate. There are countless ways in which a report can be deficient, and it is safe to say that the 'perfect government report' does not exist. Two common deficiencies are that government reports tend to be uncritical and that they often focus only on the legal framework and policies without describing implementation measures and the actual situation in the country.

12. Delay due to backlog of the Committee

Due to the fact that Committee members meet only two to three times a year they have to contend with a backlog of government reports that still need to be examined. For this reason government reports can often not be dealt with immediately, causing a delay in the reporting procedure. This is a serious problem and over the past years Committees have been trying to find ways to improve this situation. Approaches have included additional sessions and a division of the Committee into parallel chambers so that reports can be examined simultaneously.

13. Important Issues not included

The amount of issues that can be included in the list of issues is limited and the Committee has to make a choice as to what issues will be addressed. This means not all issues relevant to the right to health situation in a particular country can be covered. Particular issues or aspects of issues may be omitted because the Committee has decided to give priority to other issues, or because the Committee is not aware of a certain issue

14.

As with the report itself, similar problems can occur in relation to the government response to the list of issues. See number 11.

15.

A government delegation can be called inadequate when it is unable to provide the Committee with useful answers to the questions put forward. In the early days of the reporting procedure governments would often simply send the representative that was already present in Geneva or New York to a Committee session. These days the reporting procedure is taken more seriously and governments often send a delegation consisting of various experts on the issues that are covered in the treaty. Nevertheless, it still occurs that the value of the constructive dialogue with the Committee is reduced because the delegation members do not have the necessary knowledge.

16. Important issues not covered

As with the list of issues the content of the Concluding Observations is limited by the maximum length of the Concluding Observations, the priorities of the Committee and the information available to the Committee. While the Concluding Observations are the official outcome of the reporting procedure and the main point of reference it is relevant to note that

they contain only a fraction of what was discussed during the constructive dialogue with the government delegation. More detailed records of these exchanges can be found in the summary records of the treaty body sessions (see Training Aid 5).

17. No follow-up or inadequate follow-up

This card speaks for itself; governments often fail to follow up on the Concluding Observations or the follow-up measures are inadequate. The Concluding Observations are not legally binding, and without outside incentive there can be little to no political will to make use of them.

Explanation of Civil Society Involvement (Step 7 of the Session Plan)

At this point during the session the next ten cards (again in a different colour) will be hung up to explain the possibilities for civil society involvement.

Before explaining the ways in which civil society can participate, some general comments need to be made on the nature of the reporting cycle and the value of civil society input.

The nature of the reporting cycle:

- As stated before, the central objective is to promote compliance with the treaty.
- Ideally it is part of an ongoing and integrated process aimed at improving the human rights situation in a country.
- Governments, however, tend to perceive the reporting procedure as an ad-hoc activity.
- Very often therefore the reporting procedure amounts to an isolated diplomatic exchange that occurs only between the Committee and the ministry of foreign affairs.

Civil Society involvement can:

- improve visibility and public awareness of the reporting procedure;
- help ensure that it is an ongoing and integrated process;
- provide the Committee with independent information.

The following explanation will provide a general overview of the type of work that civil society actors can do at different steps of the reporting cycle. Although providing alternative information in the form of a shadow report is the most common way for civil society input, it should be made clear that there are many more (potential) aspects to civil society involvement.

18. Lobby for ratification

This step speaks for itself. If the government has not ratified the treaty the reporting procedure does not take place, so the only option is to lobby for ratification.

19.

Participate in report preparation:

Committees encourage governments to involve civil society in the preparation of their reports. During sessions Committee members usually ask government representatives whether they have in fact involved civil society. Some governments do not involve civil society at all, others may hold civil society consultations while preparing the report or involve civil society directly in the preparation. It is up to civil society actors how and to what extent they choose to participate in this government procedure. Whatever their choice, they should remain cautious about maintaining independence and remember that it is not their task to do the work of writing a report for the government.

Remind government of reporting obligation:

If a report has not been submitted (in time) civil society actors can try to persuade the government to prepare a report by reminding them of the reporting obligation. This, together with reminders from the Committee may eventually lead to the submission of a government report.

20. Shadow Report

This card should be pasted underneath card 17 to indicate that shadow reports can be submitted any time after a government report has been submitted until two weeks before the Committee session.

A shadow report is the main way in which civil society can submit alternative information to a Committee. Alternative information is very much welcomed by all Committees. There is much that can be said about the production of a shadow report, and only a few points will be made here. A shadow report can:

- cover all the rights in a treaty / selected issues / only one topic;
- be written by one organisation, although Committees encourage the formation of coalitions to create a combined report;
- give a realistic account of the situation in a country, including information about the actual implementation of the treaty;
- provide information on relevant issues that the Committee would otherwise not have known about;
- influence the contents of the list of issues and Concluding Observations.

21. Involve national media

Involving national media is a way to increase public awareness of the treaty monitoring process so that it becomes part of public debate instead of only an exchange between the government and the Committee. This can include holding press conferences and distributing press releases at different points throughout the process as well as ensuring that the media has access to the government report, shadow report, list of issues and replies, and the Concluding Observations.

22.

Submit information:

There are different ways in which civil society actors can submit information for the pre-sessional working group. The information can take the form of a shadow report, but it can also consist of specific suggestions for the list of issues or other preliminary information.

Attend/participate:

It is possible for civil society organisations to attend or participate in the pre-sessional working groups. The precise procedures for attendance or participation depend on the working methods of the different Committees.

23.

As with the preparation of the government report it may be possible to contribute to the government replies to the list of issues. If the government is late in responding to the list of issues the government can be reminded. Civil society actors can also send their own replies to the list of issues and a response to the government replies either in a shadow report or separately.

24.

Civil society actors can try to influence the selection and stress the importance of a knowledgeable delegation. It may also be helpful to arrange a meeting between civil society and the delegation before the Committee session to try and provide input and to discuss possibilities for cooperation and/or follow-up.

25.

Present information to the Committee:

The Committees (except CRC) set aside time during a session where civil society organisations have an opportunity to make a brief oral statement to the Committee. These oral statements are usually meant as accompaniment to a shadow report and as an opportunity for the Committee to ask further questions.

There may also be possibilities to meet with Committee members informally before the dialogue with the government to suggest questions or provide other input for the session.

It is possible for civil society representatives to attend the meeting between the Committee and the government delegation as observers. This is the only way to obtain a full picture of the proceedings as the summary record is only a summary and the Concluding Observations only cover the main points.

26.

Disseminate Concluding Observations:

Making sure that the general public is aware of the Concluding Observations is a means to stimulate implementation and promote accountability. It can also be necessary to distribute the Concluding Observations to relevant departments within the government, as very often only the foreign ministry which was directly involved in the procedure is aware of them.

Translate Concluding Observations:

Concluding Observations are translated into all six UN languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese). If another language is spoken in the country translation is necessary. Translation can also mean a conversion of the Concluding Observations into a format that is more accessible to different groups.

27.

After the Concluding Observations have been published and disseminated there are numerous ways to stimulate the government follow-up. Civil Society actors can for example:

- inform government officials or institutions responsible for specific issues about the existence of related recommendations in the Concluding Observations;
- monitor the implementation of the treaty in general and the Concluding Observations specifically;
- raise general awareness about the treaty monitoring process and the issues addressed;
- undertake advocacy in relation to the recommendations of the Committee.

Additional Resources

UN Report of the Working Methods of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies Relating to the State Party Reporting Process, HRI/ICM/2011/4.

Available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/icm-mc/documents.htm

This report contains detailed information on all aspects of the reporting process in relation to all the UN Treaty Bodies.

Judith Asher, 'The Right to Health, A Resource Manual for NGOs', Commat, 2004 pp. 127-141

Available at: shr.aaas.org/pubs/rt_health/rt_health_manual.pdf

This manual covers the reporting procedure of CESCR, CEDAW and CRC, and provides suggestions for the participation of NGOs from the perspective of the right to health.

There are also several guides on civil society participation in the reporting procedure of specific Treaty Bodies created by NGOs and/or by the Treaty Bodies themselves. These can be found via the websites listed in Training Aid 5.

Training Aid 3 – Status of Reporting Template

Complete a table for each treaty for one country and make the necessary number of copies. See Handout 2 for resources on where to find all the necessary information.

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International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Member since	Last report submitted	Reports due	Committee Session
<i>Year or 'not a member'</i>	<i>Number of report (eg. Initial or 2nd) and year</i>	<i>Number(s) of report(s) and year(s)</i>	<i>Month and year Last or next session (whichever is closest) at which a report was or will be examined</i>

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Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women

Member since	Last report submitted	Reports due	Last/Next examination

----- ✂ -----

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Member since	Last report submitted	Reports due	Last/Next examination

----- ✂ -----

Training Aid 4 – Concluding Observations and Shadow Reports Template

Copy the following tables on three individual sheets of flip chart paper and complete columns one and two by filling in keywords of health themes from the Concluding Observations and Shadow Reports from the last session of one country. See Handout 2 for resources on where to find all the necessary information. The other columns need to be completed by the participants during step 8 of the session.

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Health themes in Concluding Observations	Health themes in Shadow Reports	We have information about this		Other relevant themes that we have information about	
		WHO	WHAT	WHO	WHAT

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Health themes in Concluding Observations	Health themes in Shadow Reports	We have information about this		Other relevant themes that we have information about	
		WHO	WHAT	WHO	WHAT

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Health themes in Concluding Observations	Health themes in Shadow Reports	We have information about this		Other relevant themes that we have information about	
		WHO	WHAT	WHO	WHAT

Additional Information

It can be helpful to prepare a separate document with the complete Concluding Observations on health and information on health themes from the Shadow Reports so that participants have access to the full information while completing the tables.

Training Aid 5 – Overview Cards Treaties and Committees

Print the cards with the different steps from the overview on coloured paper (9 sheets). Note that the overview cards provided in the other Training Aids need to be printed on a different colour paper. Keep the cards in order for use during step 2 of the session.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Right to Health: article 12

Committee on
Economic, Social and
Cultural Rights
(CESCR)

- Consists of 18 independent experts
- Meets twice a year for 3 weeks in Geneva
May & November

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Right to Health: article 12

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

- Consists of 23 independent experts
- Meets 2-3 times a year for 3 weeks in Geneva or New York

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Right to Health:
articles 23, 24, 25

Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

- Consists of 18 independent experts
- Meets 3 times a year for 3 weeks in Geneva
January, May & September

Training Aid 2 – Overview cards reporting procedure (ideal situation)

Print the cards with the different steps from the overview on coloured paper (9 sheets). Note that the overview cards provided in the other Training Aids need to be printed on a different colour paper. Keep the cards in order for use during step 3 of the session.

Country
becomes
Treaty Member

Initial Report

Pre-sessional Working Group

List of Issues to Government

Government response to List of Issues

Examination
during a
Committee
Session

Concluding Observations

Government
follow-up to
Concluding
Observations

Periodic Reports

2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.

Training Aid 7 – Overview cards reporting procedure (deviations)

Print the cards with the different steps from the overview on coloured paper (8 sheets). Note that the overview cards provided in the other Training Aids need to be printed on a different colour paper. Keep the cards in order for use during step 4 of the session.

Not a member:

signed, not ratified

not signed, not ratified

not submitted

late submission

inadequate report

Delay due to
backlog of the
Committee

**Important issues
not included**

no response

late response

inadequate response

Inadequate
government
delegation

Important topics
not covered

No follow-up

**Inadequate
follow-up**

Training Aid 8 – Overview cards reporting procedure (civil society involvement)

Print the cards with the different steps from the overview on coloured paper (10 sheets). Note that the overview cards provided in the other Training Aids need to be printed on a different colour paper. Keep the cards in order for use during step 7 of the session.

Lobby for
ratification

Participate in
report preparation

Remind government
of reporting obligation

Shadow Report

**Involve National
Media**

Submit information

Attend / Participate

Contribute to
government replies

Remind government

Send own response

Meet with delegation
beforehand

Influence selection of
delegation

Present information to the
Committee

Meet informally with
Committee Members

Observe
Constructive Dialogue

Disseminate

Translate

Inform government
officials / institutions

Monitor
implementation

Report to Committee

Advocacy / Lobby

Awareness- raising

Handout 1 – Timeline of the Reporting Procedure

IDEAL SITUATION	Country becomes Treaty Member 1	Initial Report 2	Pre-sessional Working Group 3	List of Issues to Government 4	Government response to List of Issues 5	Examination during a Committee Session 6	Concluding Observations 7	Government follow-up to Concluding Observations 8	Periodic Reports 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , etc. 9
DEVIATIONS	Not a member: - signed, but not ratified - not signed, not ratified 10	- not submitted - late submission - inadequate report 11	Delay due to backlog of the Committee 12	Important issues not included 13	- no response - late response - inadequate response 14	inadequate government delegation 15	Important topics not covered 16	- no follow-up - inadequate follow-up 17	REPETITION OF THE CYCLE
CIVIL SOCIETY INVOLVEMENT	Lobby for ratification 18	- participate in report preparation - remind government of reporting obligation 19	- submit information - attend / participate 22		- contribute to government replies - remind government to respond - send own response 23	- present information to the Committee - meet informally with Committee Members - observe constructive dialogue 25	- disseminate Concluding Observations - translate Concluding Observations 26	- inform government officials/ institutions - monitor implementation - report to Committee - advocacy - awareness raising 27	
SHADOW REPORT 20				- meet with delegation beforehand - try to influence selection of delegation 24					
INVOLVE NATIONAL MEDIA 21									

Handout 2 – Resources

Civil Society Involvement in the Reporting Procedure under UN Human Rights Treaties

Official Website

www.ohchr.org

This is the official website of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Most documents related to the reporting process can be found here. Lists of issues, Concluding Observations, etc. are posted here first. Many of the documents are made available in all six UN languages. For a first-time visitor the website can be difficult to navigate, therefore here a guideline:

1. Click on 'Human Rights Bodies'
2. Under 'Treaty-based bodies' choose the relevant Committee
3. On the website of the relevant Committee there is information available about the treaty, the committee, civil society participation, as well as useful links.
4. Government reports, lists of issues, Concluding Observations and some shadow reports can be found under 'Sessions'

UN Human Rights Treaties Database

www.bayefsky.com

This is an unofficial, but very accessible, database. All official documents related to the reporting process and the committees can be found here organized by country, theme and type of document. The summary records of treaty body sessions can also be found here. A downside of this database is that it is not updated as often as the official website and that all documents are only made available in English.

Shadow Reports

Many shadow reports for the three Committees can be found on the official website under 'sessions' in the column 'information provided to the committee'.

Many shadow reports for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women can be found on http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/ngocedaw_resources.htm

Shadow reports for the Committee on the Rights of the Child can be found on www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.25/annex-vi-crin.asp