



Canada

equitas

# Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Webinar for civil society – November 23, 2023



# Land recognition

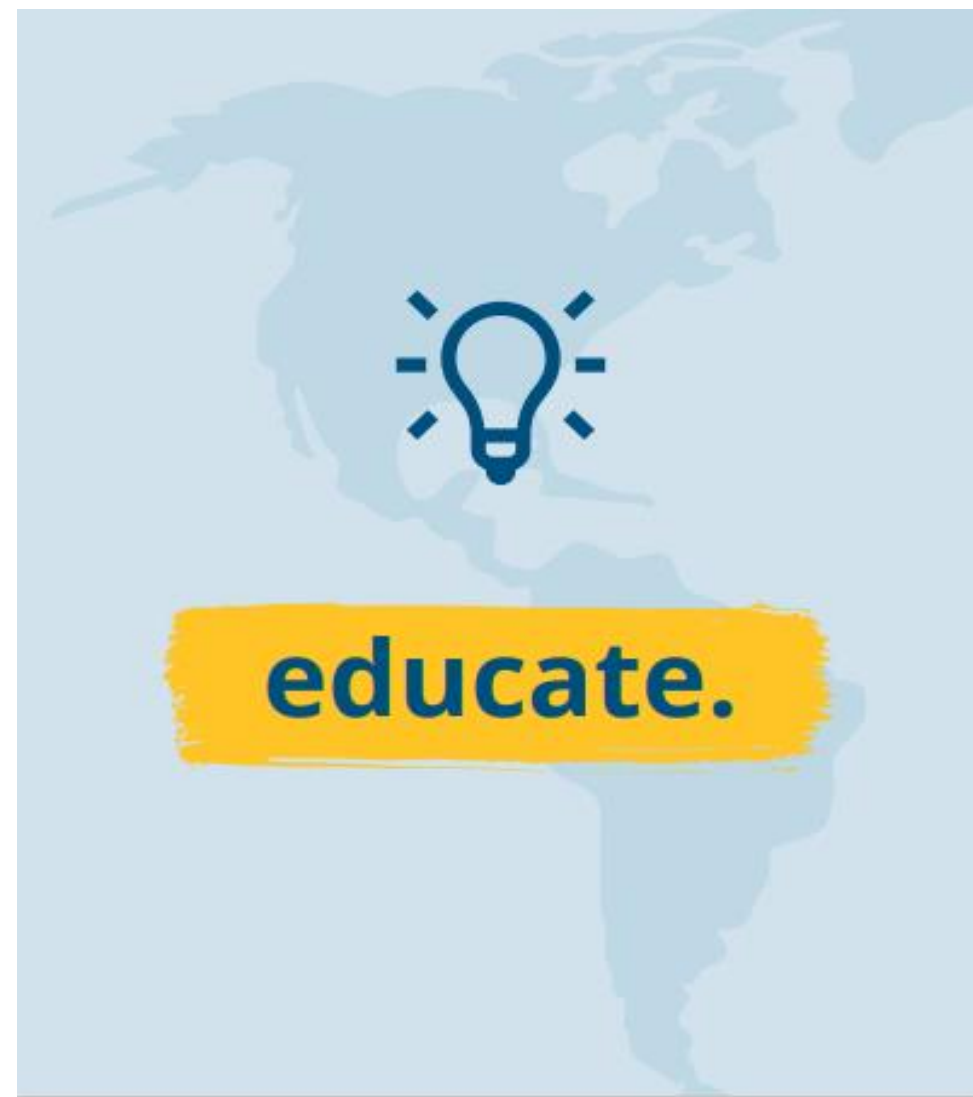
Equitas recognizes that its offices are located on the unceded Indigenous territories of the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk), xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səłilwətaʔt (Tsleil Waututh) First Nations. We also work on the territories of other First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

We also recognize that we work in different locations, so you may be participating in this event from another traditional Indigenous territory. We encourage you to take a moment to reflect and acknowledge this.

# equitas

educate. empower. change.

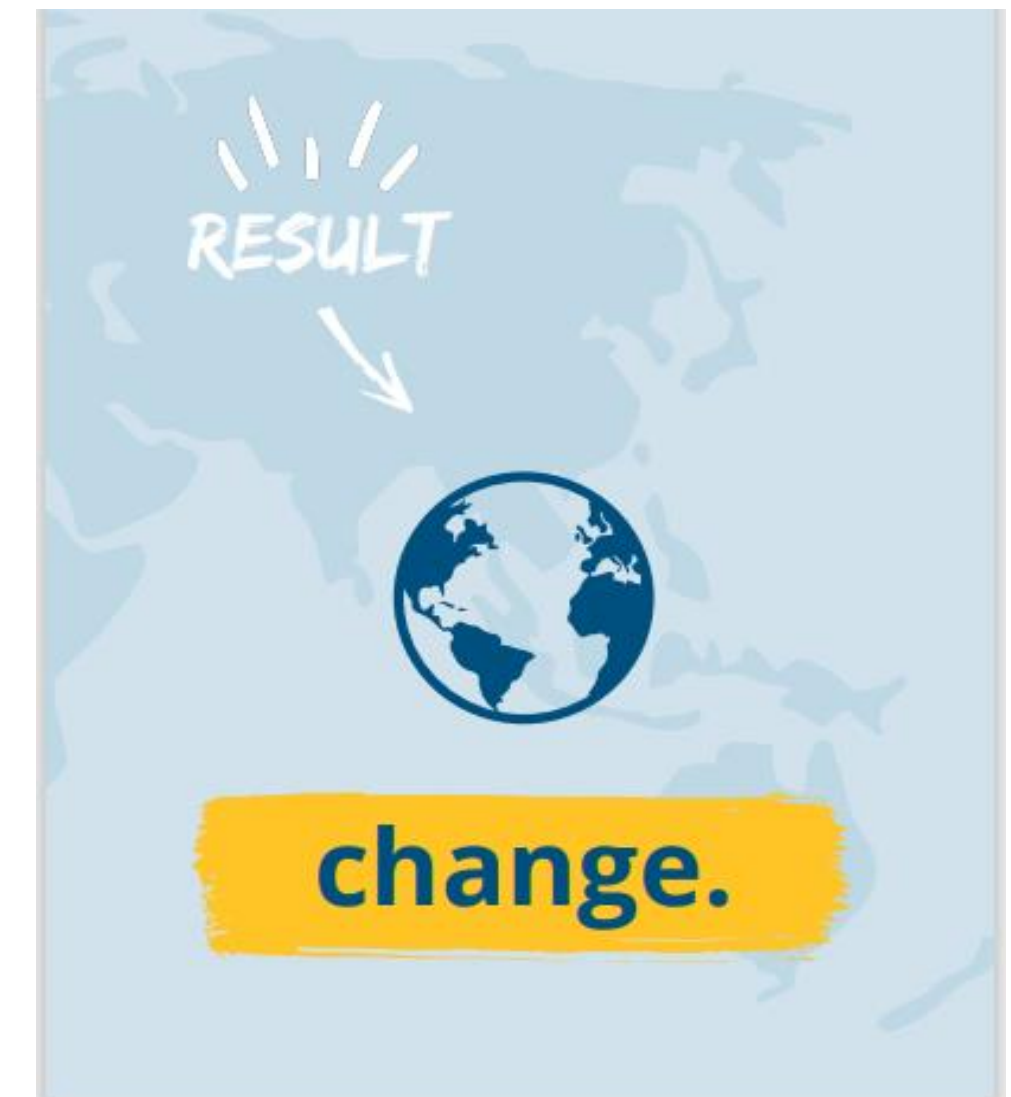
Equitas advances **equality, social justice and respect for human dignity** through transformative human rights education programs, in Canada and around the world.



We offer people opportunities to **strengthen their knowledge and skills**, and **develop attitudes** and behaviors conducive to inclusion and the promotion of human rights.



We encourage people to **claim their rights**, hold decision-makers to account and take action to **ensure that human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled**.



We **strengthen** people's **leadership** to develop collaborative solutions aimed at **building a more inclusive** and equitable world for everyone.

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# Facilitation Team

Jean-Sébastien Vallée, Director of Education  
Angie Osachoff, Director of Canadian Programs  
Annie Pettigrew, Senior Education Specialist  
Steve Tiwa Fomekong, Senior Education Specialist

## **\*Webinar recording\***

Please note that this session will be recorded, for reuse as an educational tool. However, the Zoom webinar features ensure that the cameras and microphones of the participants remain closed and **only the interventions of the facilitation team are recorded**. Please use the Q&A function to interact with the facilitation team or the group, but these interventions will not be recorded.



# Webinar objectives

- Gain a better understanding of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR);
- Identify opportunities for civil society to contribute through the UPR;
- Strengthen our ability to engage, as members of civil society, in the UPR4 process, and in particular in the consultation activities proposed by Equitas.

SOCIAL  
CHANGE  
is a  
TEAM  
EFFORT

equitas



# Schedule

- 15 min Opening
- 15 min Sharing: *Where are we now?*  
*How do we get involved?*
- 20 min UPR presentation
- 20 min Civil society engagement through the UPR
- 15 min Sharing: *What do we want?*  
*What can we do?*
- 5 min Evaluation





# Instructions

- If you have any technical problems during the session, please contact [epu-upr@equitas.org](mailto:epu-upr@equitas.org).
- Please use the **Q&A** function to ask questions or share your ideas. The facilitation team will do its best to answer, depending on the time available.
- At times, we'll be using *Mentimeter* to let you share your experiences and views.
- This webinar is more informational, but organizations interested in engaging in UPR discussions are encouraged to register for the engagement sessions.
- We encourage you to participate with enthusiasm and respect for all those present!



# Where do we stand? How do we get involved?

Please use the *Mentimeter* application to answer the following questions:

1. What are the **first 3 words that** come to mind when you think of the Universal Periodic Review?
2. Has your organization carried out or planned **any activities in connection with the UPR**? If so, which ones? (*If you feel comfortable, please name your organization in your answer.*)

**Reply link:** [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)

**Code:** 4640 9812



# Universal Periodic Review (UPR)



# What is the UPR?

## REVIEW

- Mechanism enabling the *Human Rights Council* to **examine** whether UN member states are **meeting their** human rights **obligations and commitments**.

## PERIODIC

- Cycles of around 4.5 to 5 years
- 4<sup>e</sup> cycle: 2022-2027

## UNIVERSAL

- All member states are examined in each cycle



# What is the purpose of the UPR?

*"The ultimate goal of the UPR is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and thus bring about significant change for people around the world."*

**Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
(OHCHR)**

Source: *About the UPR*, OHCHR website, [Basic facts about the UPR | OHCHR](#)



# What obligations are covered?

The UPR assesses the extent to which **States comply with their** human rights **obligations**, in accordance with:

- the [Charter of the United Nations](#) ;
- the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) ;
- human rights instruments to which the State is a party (human rights treaties ratified by the State concerned);
- voluntary commitments and pledges made by the State (e.g. national human rights policies and/or programs);
- applicable international humanitarian law.

Source: *About the UPR*, OHCHR website, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/basic-facts>



# How does the UPR work?

## PEER REVIEW

- Conducted by the 47 (elected) member states of the *Human Rights Council*.
- The 193 member states may ask questions, make observations or recommendations.

## BASED ON 3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE\*

- National report
- Summary of information from the United Nations
- Summary of *stakeholder* submissions: civil society, Indigenous organisations, national and regional human rights institutions, etc.

\*These 3 reports are published on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, several weeks before the examination: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ca-index>



# UPR information sources

## National report (20 p.)

**Prepared by the State**  
Ideally, after consultation with  
stakeholders

## Compilation of the UN (10 p.)

**Prepared by OHCHR**  
From reports of treaty bodies,  
special procedures, including  
State comments, and other  
official UN documents

## Summary of stakeholders (10 p.)

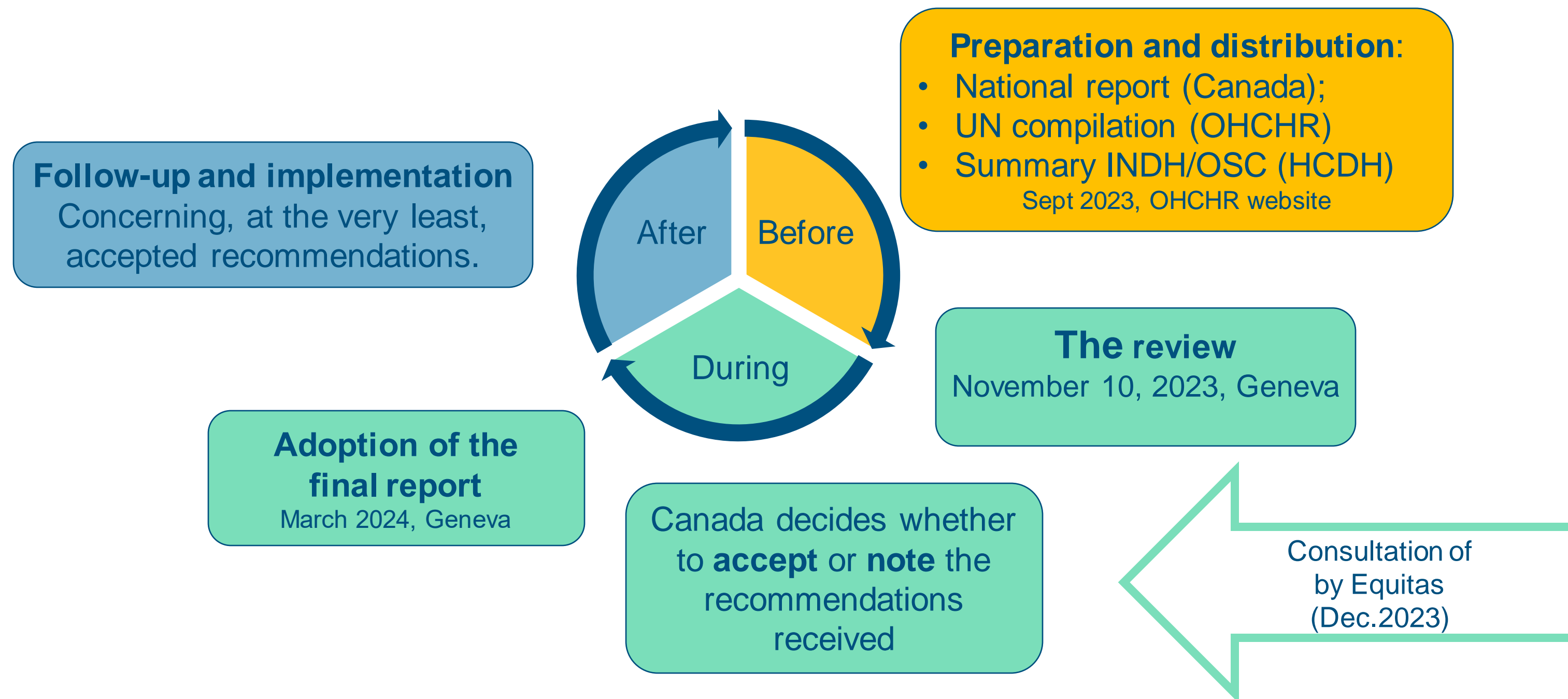
**Prepared by OHCHR**  
Based on credible and reliable  
information  
provided by **civil  
society, Indigenous organisations  
, national  
and regional human rights  
institutions, etc.**

The quality of OHCHR reports  
depends on the quality of the information provided



# The UPR cycle

## The example of Cycle 4 in Canada





# How does the review work?

## *The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*

### 1<sup>e</sup> Step:

- Geneva, November 10, 2023, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3.30 hrs)
- At a session of the UPR Working Group (WG)\*,
- In the presence of the 193 UN member states, which could intervene
- In the presence of CSOs, Indigenous organizations and other observers, who could not intervene
- Covering the 3 reports already shared
- States submitted questions in advance
- 3 rapporteurs (troika), drawn by lot from the Board, facilitated the session: Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Belgium.
- The Canadian delegation was led by the Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and included Shalene Curtis-Micallef, Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General of Canada, and various representatives from the provinces and territories.
- **Interactive dialogue between Canada and the States:**  
Canada presented the elements to be considered (progress, challenges, etc.), then the States formulated questions, statements or recommendations, to which Canada could respond or react.
- **Report of the working group**, available on the OHCHR website:  
[OHCHR | Universal Periodic Review - Canada](#)

The **Recommendations** are particularly important because Canada must respond to them.

\*The UPR Working Group meets 3 times a year and is made up of the 47 States elected to the Human Rights Council. For a list of the Council's (elected) member states, visit: [Membership of the Human Rights Council for the 17th cycle, 1 January - 31 December 2023 | OHCHR](#)

# How does the review work?

## *The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*

### **2<sup>e</sup> Step:**

- In Geneva, March/April 2024 (1h – Exact date to be confirmed)
- At the 55th regular session of the *Human Rights Council*
- Plenary session dedicated to reviewing and adopting the final document.
- In the presence of States, NHRIs and CSOs with consultative status, which can express their views on the final document.
- Final report published by OHCHR:
- [OHCHR | Universal Periodic Review - Canada](#)

***Would you like to see the UPR in  
action?***

Sessions are recorded and available online!  
<https://media.un.org/en/asset/k14/k14bhl5fi4>



# Response to recommendations

## *The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*

### Immediately after the review (November 2023)

- On November 10, 2023, Canada received 357 recommendations from 121 states. Some identical recommendations were grouped together for a total of **332 recommendations**.
- They concern federal, provincial/territorial or even municipal jurisdictions.
- The Canadian delegation worked with the Troika and the OHCHR to study the recommendations and, if necessary, request clarifications from the States concerned.
- At this stage, Canada starts to reflect on its position on each recommendation, either to **A) Accept; B) Note** or **C) Consider for further response**, after consultation with Canadian authorities and other stakeholders.



Consultation of  
by Equitas  
(Dec.2023)

### Before adoption of the final report (March 2024)

- **Addendum 1:** Canada must clearly present its position on all recommendations and the reasons for not accepting a recommendation.
- At this stage, each recommendation must be : **A) Accepted** or **B) Noted**
- Canada's deadline to respond: **February 12 2024**

# The UPR: a dialogue national and international

FORMAL PROCESS OF THE REVIEW		
August 2023	National	Preparation of national report (including impact assessment of previous cycles)
Nov. 2023	International	<b>Peer review</b> as part of the UPR Working Group in Geneva
Feb. 2024	National	<b>Preparation of the government's position</b> on the recommendations received
March 2024	International	Review and adoption of the UPR <b>outcome document</b> in Geneva.

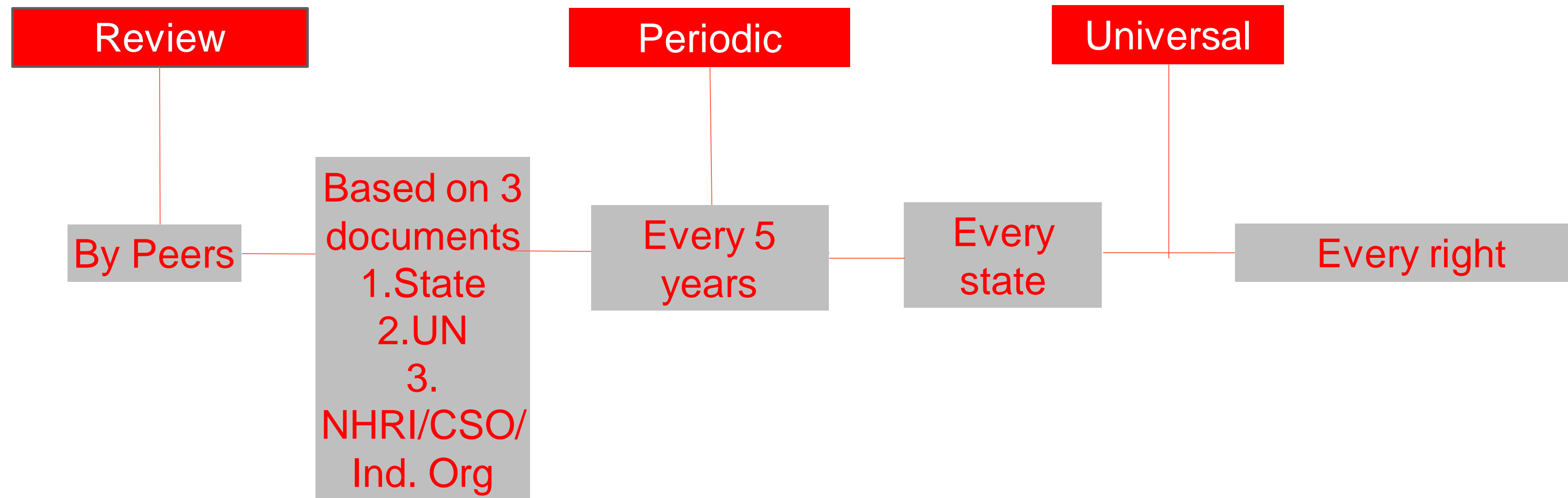


MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION OF REVIEW RESULTS		
	National	Development of an <i>Implementation Plan</i> for UPR recommendations and commitments.
	International	Drawing up a <i>technical assistance plan</i>
	National	2-level assessment: progress made in implementing recommendations; assessment of the impact of these measures on improving the human rights situation in the field.
	International	Voluntary mid-term report

Source: *L'Examen périodique universel: Relever les défis du 3<sup>e</sup> cycle*, Organisation internationale de la francophonie, 2017, p.21 : [https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/e pu2017-weboif\\_version\\_finale.pdf](https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/e pu2017-weboif_version_finale.pdf)



# How does the UPR work?



Source: *L'Examen périodique universel: Relever les défis du 3<sup>e</sup> cycle*, Organisation internationale de la francophonie, 2017, p.20 : [https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/epu2017-weboif\\_version\\_finale.pdf](https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/epu2017-weboif_version_finale.pdf)

# What are the States committing to?

*"The primary responsibility for implementing the recommendations contained in the final report lies with the State. The UPR ensures that all countries are accountable for progress or failure in implementing these recommendations. [...]The State is required to **provide information on the mechanisms put in place** to implement the recommendations made, as well as on any developments in the field of human rights."*

**Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**

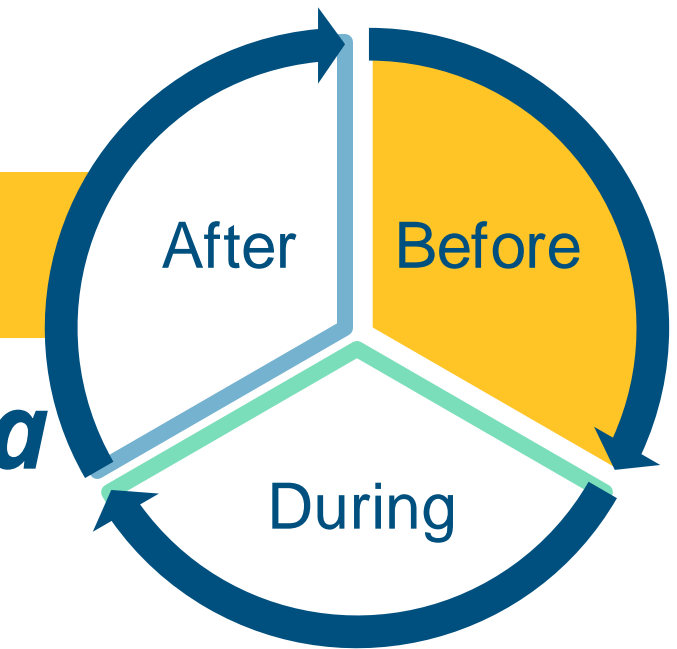


# Engaging civil society through the UPR

NGO, Indigenous organizations,  
community groups, etc.

# How to get involved

*The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*



## Before the Review:

### A) Submitting communications for the *Stakeholder Communications Summary*:

- Individual or consortium papers, to be submitted to the UN before April 2023
- Open to organizations with or without consultative status
- Guidelines to be followed<sup>1</sup> : organization identification, length, language, non-confidentiality, etc.
- 64 submissions to the UPR<sup>2</sup>

### B) Contribute to the National Report

- In May 2023, Canada shared the draft report with 285 Canadian partners and stakeholders.
- A summary of the contributions is attached to the National Report, in Appendix 2: *What we heard*<sup>3</sup>

### C) Participate in the UPR info pre-session:

- In August 2023, Geneva-based NGO UPR info facilitated a pre-session to give organizations an international platform to inform member states about the human rights situation in Canada.

<sup>1</sup> To find out more about the guidelines, see OHCHR's *Practical Guide pratique pour la société civile*, p.11 to 17: [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Universal\\_Periodic\\_Review\\_FRE.pptx](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Universal_Periodic_Review_FRE.pptx)

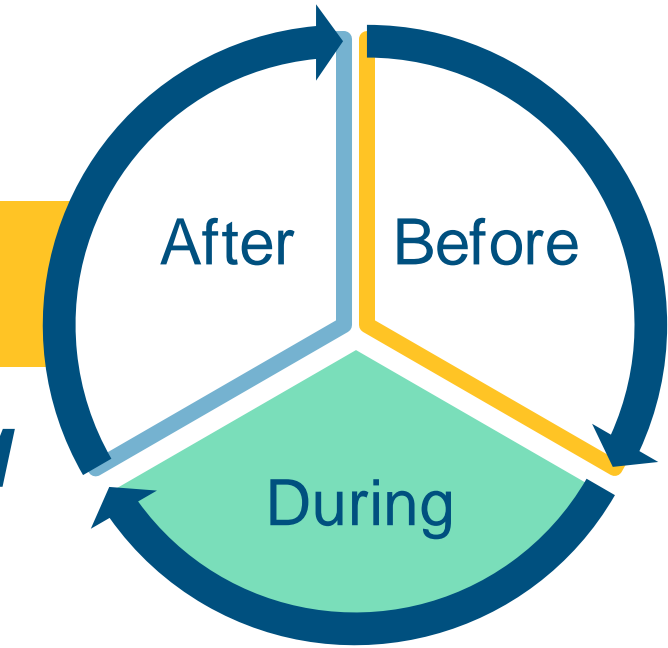
<sup>2</sup> The full versions of the stakeholder communications are published here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ca-stakeholders-info-s44>

<sup>3</sup> Annex 2 is available on the OHCHR website: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/uprca-add-info-s44>



# How to get involved

*The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*



## During the Review:

**Stage 1 (November 2023):** Attend working group session in Geneva

- Only NGOs with consultative status can be accredited to **observe in person**.

**Stage 2 (March 2024):** Attend and/or contribute to the plenary session for adoption of the final document, in Geneva.

- Only NGOs with consultative status can be accredited to **observe in person and/or contribute** to the plenary.
- 20 minutes allocated to civil society. 2 minutes per intervention, in person or through a pre-recorded video.

Registration on the OHCHR website. First come, first served.

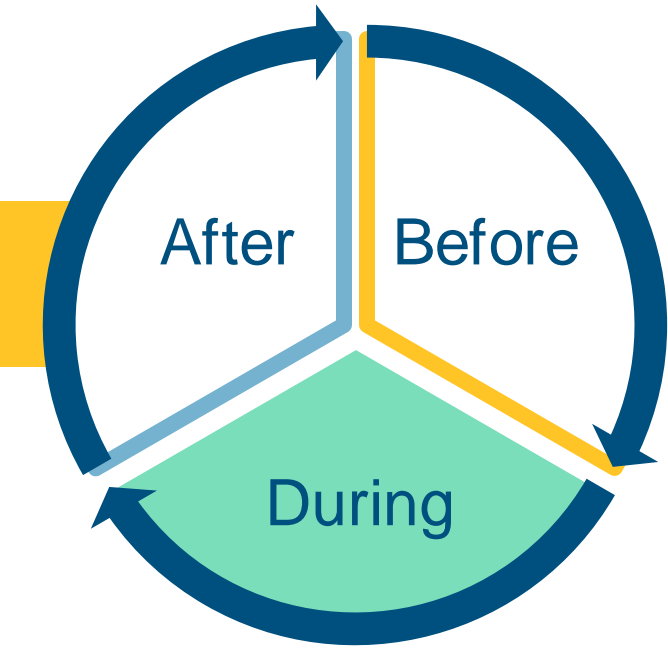
***Sessions are open to the general public!***

Sessions are recorded and available online.

<https://media.un.org/en/asset/k14/k14bh15fi4>

# How to get involved

*The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*



## Now!

*After receiving the recommendations... and before Canada's formal response!*

**A) Read the recommendations you receive**, especially those concerning your areas of interest and/or expertise.

## **B) Make your voice heard!**

- Sign up for an engagement session to bring perspectives that will inform Canada's response - Places limited. One person per organization: *November 27 to December 8, 2023*  
**and/or**
- Fill in the form to share your perspectives - *before December 10, 2023*

***Didn't you receive the invitation to the consultation?***

Write to us and we'll send it to you!

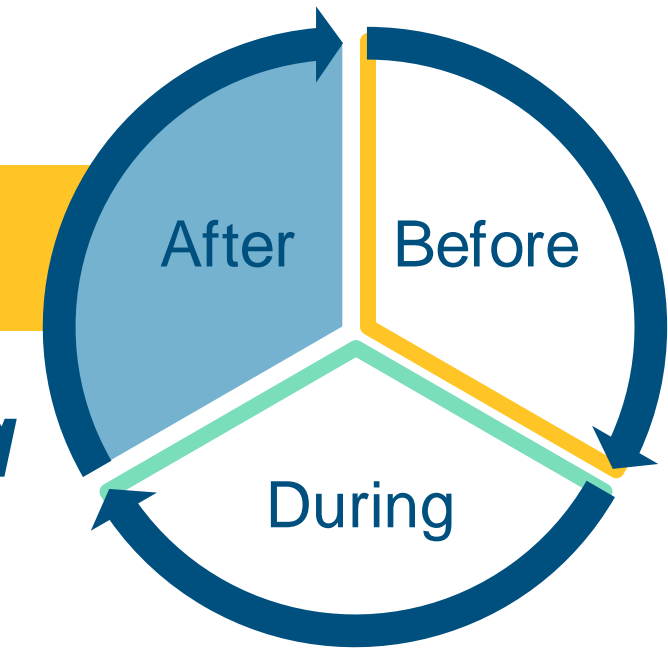
[epu-upr@equitas.org](mailto:epu-upr@equitas.org)

**equitas**



# How to get involved

*The example of Cycle 4 in Canada*



## Post-review (implementation phase)

- Participate in the implementation of recommendations, particularly those concerning your areas of interest and expertise.
- Make Canada's commitments and obligations known, especially to the groups of people directly concerned;
- Encourage and strengthen the capacities of duty bearers and responsibility holders to meet their commitments and responsibilities, in line with the recommendations;
- Monitor and/or document progress in implementing recommendations, particularly those concerning your areas of interest and expertise;
- Etc.

# What do we want? What can we do?

Please use the *Mentimeter* application to answer the following questions:

1. What are your expectations of the consultation process facilitated by Equitas?
2. What could you do, personally or as an organization, to ensure that Canada's UPR4 leads to real progress on human rights? (*If you are comfortable, please name your organization in your response*).

**Reply link:** [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)



# Reminder: next steps

- Engagement sessions: Nov. 27 to Dec. 8
- Consultation form: to be completed by **December 10, 2023**
  - Alternatively, if you prefer to send your input directly to Canadian Heritage (coordinator of Canada's UPR process) you can do so at: [fptringsengagementdroitsfpt@pch.gc.ca](mailto:fptringsengagementdroitsfpt@pch.gc.ca)
- Summary report of the Equitas consultation: January 2024
- Plenary in Geneva for the adoption of the UPR final report: March 2024
- Implementation of recommendations: 2024-2029

***Want to make your voice heard?***

*Complete the online consultation form!*

***Available from November 27 to December 10, 2023***

# Question period

Please use the **chat** function to ask questions or share your ideas. The animation team will do its best to answer, depending on the time available.



# Evaluation

## Thank you for your participation!

Please send us your comments, questions and suggestions about this webinar via the **anonymous feedback** form.

### **Reply link:**

for the French evaluation form: <https://forms.office.com/r/J2nqRHpXkG>

for the English evaluation form: <https://forms.office.com/r/TxjL30BLth>

*\*\*\*If you are watching this webinar offline, please share your comments with us before December 10, 2023\*\*\*.*

# Resources

- Human Rights Council: [OHCHR | Universal Periodic Review - Canada](#)
- Government of Canada: [Universal Periodic Review - Canada.ca](#)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Tirer le meilleur parti de l'Examen périodique universel au niveau des pays, orientations pratiques*: [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/UPR\\_Practical\\_Guidance\\_FR.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/UPR_Practical_Guidance_FR.pdf)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Examen périodique universel. Guide pratique pour la société civile*: [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Universal\\_Periodic\\_Review\\_FRE.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Universal_Periodic_Review_FRE.pdf)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Universal periodic review: tips for engagement at Country level for National Human Rights Institutions and Civil Society. [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/Tips\\_21Sept2020.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/Tips_21Sept2020.pdf)
- Organisation internationale de la francophonie. *L'Examen périodique universel: Relever les défis du 3e cycle, Organisation internationale de la francophonie, Guide interactif*: [https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/epu2017-weboif\\_version\\_finale.pdf](https://www.francophonie.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/epu2017-weboif_version_finale.pdf)
- UPR Info. Civil Society at the UPR. Comprehensive guide to engagement with the Universal Periodic Review, 2017. [UPR Info Publications | UPR info \(upr-info.org\)](#)
- UPR Info. Best practices of federal states in the UPR process, 202i. [UPR Info Publications | UPR info \(upr-info.org\)](#)

## ***Do you have questions?***

Contact Equitas and we will do our best to respond: [epu-upr@equitas.org](mailto:epu-upr@equitas.org)