



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Fellowship Programme in Human Rights

About the Centre

The United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (the Center) was established to promote and protect human rights and democracy in the subregion, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions A/RES/53/78 (1999), 54/55(2000), and subsequent resolutions on its activities notably 56/230 (2001), 57/176 (2002), 65/187 (2011), 70/163 (2015), and 77/205 (2023). The Centre supports capacity-building, technical cooperation, public information, and the development of partnerships to strengthen human rights frameworks across Central Africa.

The Centre's fellowship programme derives from SG Report A/57/394 (2002), which underscores the need for continued training, cooperation, and institutional support to enhance human rights and democratic governance in the subregion. These are further supported by several resolutions including most recently resolution 77/205 (2023).

Context and Rationale for the Fellowship Programme

In line with its capacity-building objectives, the Centre is launching a Fellowship Programme in Human Rights aimed at junior professionals, civil servants in relevant fields, and civil society actors from across the Central Africa subregion. The fellowship will equip participants with theoretical and practical knowledge of human rights mechanisms, advocacy strategies, and policy implementation at national and regional levels.

This initiative aligns with the Centre's previous efforts in continuing training scholarships, as highlighted in the 2002 report of the Secretary-General, which emphasized the need for hands-on learning experiences for emerging human rights professionals in Central Africa.

Activities and Responsibilities

Fellows will engage in various activities, including but not limited to:

a. Capacity-Building and Training

- Participate in interactive training workshops, seminars, and mentoring sessions on human rights norms, democracy, and good governance.
- Gain hands-on experience with human rights monitoring, reporting, and advocacy through field exercises.
- Receive specialized training on human rights-based approaches (HRBA), gender equality, and sustainable development.

b. Research and Documentation

- Conduct research on key human rights challenges in Central Africa, contributing to policy recommendations.
- Draft reports, policy briefs, and advocacy materials for the Centre's stakeholders.

- Contribute to the Centre’s Human Rights and Democracy newsletter and online resources.

c. Networking and Partnership Engagement

- Engage with United Nations agencies, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, and regional mechanisms to learn more about their work in the area of human rights and democracy.
- Participate in subregional workshops and technical cooperation activities, promoting best practices in human rights governance.
- Work on collaborative projects with fellows from diverse professional backgrounds to enhance understanding and share knowledge and experiences.

Supervision and Mentorship

The Fellow “Human Rights” will be supervised by a designated Human rights officer at the Centre. Each fellow will be assigned a supervisor who will provide guidance, support, and professional coaching throughout the fellowship.

Duration and Renewal

- The fellowship will last for three months, with the possibility of renewal once (up to a maximum of six months) based on progress and availability of resources.
- Fellows will receive a stipend to cover living expenses and logistical support from the Centre.

Expected Outcomes and Post-Fellowship Engagement

Upon completion of the programme, fellows are expected to:

- Submit an end of fellowship report for validation.
- Apply human rights-based approaches in their professional roles.
- Contribute to the advancement of democratic governance in their respective countries.
- Join an alumni network to promote continued collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the subregion.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for the Fellowship Programme in Human Rights, applicants must meet the following criteria:

a. Professional Background

- The programme is open to junior professionals, civil servants, academicians and civil society actors working on human rights, democracy, governance, and related fields.
- Applicants should have a demonstrated interest in human rights, rule of law, and democratic governance within Central Africa.
- Professionals engaged in human rights advocacy, legal reforms, election monitoring, or peace and security initiatives are strongly encouraged to apply.

b. Nationality and Regional Representation

- Applicants must be nationals of a Central African country, specifically from member States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS):

Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

- The fellowship strives for geographical balance to ensure fair representation across the subregion.

c. Academic qualifications

- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in law, political science, international relations, human rights, social sciences, or a related field.
- A master's degree or equivalent experience in human rights, democracy, or governance is an added advantage but not mandatory.
- Professional experience in communication and information management is desirable.

d. Language Proficiency

- Candidates must have proficiency in either French or English, with working knowledge of the other language highly desirable.
- Knowledge of Portuguese or Spanish (spoken in some ECCAS countries) will be an asset.

e. Commitment and Availability

- Candidates must be available for full-time participation during the three-month fellowship, with the possibility of renewal once (up to a maximum of six months)
- Must be willing to engage in practical assignments, fieldwork, and collaborative research projects as part of the fellowship.

Other Considerations

- The Centre promotes gender parity and diversity in its selection process.
- Fellows are required to commit to ethical standards in line with UN principles.
- The selection process will uphold principles of gender balance and inclusivity.
- Participation in the fellowship does not guarantee employment with the United Nations or its affiliated entities.

Application guidelines

An application file comprising a cover letter; an updated Curriculum Vitae (CV); one letter of recommendation from academic or professional referees familiar with the applicant's work in human rights, democracy, or governance; copy of the highest academic degree obtained; proof of nationality (copy of passport or national identity card) should be sent to caro-ohchr@un.org no later than **16 May 2025**.