



## HRAPF FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

### *FEBRUARY UPDATE*

Special points of interest:

- Updates on enhancing Access to Justice.
- Capacities of stakeholder communities built
- Advocacy engagements
- Institutional development activity.

Welcome to the sixteenth issue of our newsletter where we bring you updates on what we have been up to in the month of February. Following weeks of intense planning in the month of January, implementation begun on a high note in February. Our legal aid clinic continued to serve our clientele, whom we assisted to pursue and secure various legal remedies. We also had various engagements with our target communities continued strengthening our existing networks, and formed new alliances with different stakeholders, including law enforcement and health service providers.

## Enhancing Access to Justice

In the month of February, we received 111 cases requiring legal intervention. 87 of these were handled directly by our legal aid clinic, while 23 were handled by trained community paralegals, who were given both financial and technical support in

handling the cases. Our interventions ranged from police and court visits, to engagement of local council leaders. We assisted clients to pursue remedies in 47 LGBT cases, 45 sex worker cases, 24 cases involving People Who Use and Inject Drugs

(PWUIDs), 5 involving People Living With HIV (PLWHIV), 5 land and 4 abortion-related cases.

### ENHANCING CAPACITIES OF STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITIES.

We were able to sensitize 120 health workers and police officers in the Districts of Jinja, Buikwe, Bugiri and Ssembabule.

The goal of the Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) program is to actively encourage the effective participation of marginalised persons and Most at Risk Population groups in human rights advocacy, by equipping them, and other key stakeholders with the requisite knowledge, skills and support.



### Training duty bearers.

In the month of February, 31 police officers in Kamuli district, and 120 health workers in the districts of Jinja, Buikwe, Bugiri and Ssembabule were sensitized about the legal and policy framework governing abortion in

Uganda. The trainings are key to enabling the health workers and police officers understand the legal parameters, within which an abortion can be procured in Uganda, and ultimately curbing the high incidence of unsafe abortion

*(A picture of Health workers after a training on the left)*



## *Paralegal training.*

During the month, we took 10 members from the MSM and transgender community, as well as 10 from the refugee community, through training on criminal law and how the Ugandan criminal justice system operates. With this knowledge, the trainees will be able to provide legal assistance to their peers when they get caught up in the criminal justice system, or

when they seek redress from it.



*A paralegal training in Yumbe District.*

## *Community outreach.*

In the month of February, we reached out to over 236 members from the sex worker, LGBT, drug user and refugee communities in the districts of Kayunga, Busia, Kampala, Masaka, Mbarara, Kalungu and

Yumbe. During the outreach sessions, we sensitized the community members about the rights, the various laws that impact on those rights and the various avenues through which they can seek redress for

abuse of, or infringement on their rights.

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## *Institutional support for community-led organisations*

We supported two LGBT-led organisations to register as companies limited by guarantee, and one organisation to file resolutions and open bank account. We also gave technical and finan-

cial support to 3 LGBT-led organisations to conduct induction meetings for their board of directors, to enable them understand their roles.

This kind of support is key to ensuring that or-

ganisations that work towards enhancing access to essential services, such as health, for our target communities, are legally compliant, and are thus in position to continue operating.

## *Advocacy Engagements.*

In addition to legal aid service provision and human rights and legal trainings, we do employ advocacy as a tool towards realisation of rights for our target communities. Here is a look at our advocacy engagements for this month.

## *Coalition building.*

### **Decriminalising petty offences in Uganda:**

Last year we initiated the formulation of a coalition to decriminalize and declassify petty offences in Uganda. This year, we are continuing with efforts to

grow the coalition, and this month, we have Mr. Issa Ssekitto, a board member of the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, as the latest addition to the team

## *Fighting unsafe abortions in Uganda .*

HRAPF is also a member of the Coalition to Stop Maternal Mortality due to Unsafe Abortion. We attended the first quarterly meeting for this year, and contributed to the development of a road map towards ending the pandemic of unsafe abortion in Uganda.



*HRAPF legal officers participate in the CCMUA meeting.*

## Stakeholder engagement

**Addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Yumbe District:** We held a dialogue with duty bearers in the Bidi-Bidi refugee settlement in Yumbe, with the aim of developing advocacy strategies that will influence behavioral and attitude change towards

GBV, among the community members in the settlement. The dialogue was key to strengthening collaboration and response from duty bearers on GBV, and sexual and reproductive health rights for women and girls in the settlement. It was also key to increas-

ing knowledge on the legal and human rights framework on GBV and SRHR among community leaders in the settlement, as well as increasing demand for SRHR services.

## Media Advocacy.

In the picture, Our Legal officer discusses the legal framework on Sexual and Gender Based Violence to the West Nile Region on Arua One FM station.

Our key media engagement for this month was a radio talk show on the socio-cultural practices that influence Gender Based Violence (GBV) in communities. The show was instrumental towards influencing attitude change among

people of the West Nile Region in relation to GBV, enlightening them on the different forms of GBV, how it manifests, the legal framework governing it, and how to seek redress against it.



## Strengthening human resources.



Among our key priorities for institutional development is staff wellness, which is promoted through engaging staff in various team-building and recreational activities.

We celebrated the month of love with a week-long wardrobe challenge that required staff to adorn their best red, black and white attire. Ms.Hellen Nagirinya emerged win-

ner, and was crowned "Queen of the Wardrobe."

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