



HRAPF

NEWS LETTER

Welcome to a new year with HRAPF

Special points of interest:

- Reflection the year 2019
- Access justice program
- The Community Parallel Program
- Community Capacity Enhancement
- The Research And Advocacy Program

The HRAPF 2020 calendar begun on a light note with the annual beginning of year staff retreat. As has always been the practice of HRAPF to reflect on the past year and plan for the year ahead at the retreat, this year we met in Arua from the 6th of January to 10th January 2020 at the White Castle Hotel in Arua. At this retreat, we took a moment to review our progress as an organisation over the last 12 years,

and to take stock of our victories, loses, impact, challenging periods and the gains made thus far, and strategies for the year 2020.



Figure 1 showing the progress of HRAPF

As part of strategizing for the year, HRAPF staff are also routinely given an opportunity to reevaluate their positions within the organization, and the contribution that they make to the achievement of the organization's vision, through a fun exercise in

which we construct our staff structure, as below:



The staff also visited the new HRAPF field office in at Bolomoni Health Centre in the Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District, Northern Uganda

HRAPF legal aid clinic offers services to victims of GBV among the residents in the settlement and the surrounding host communities. For most of the staff, this was a first time visit, and thus an opportune photo moment.



As practice, it is not a complete retreat without our ritual beginning of year football tournament: Programmes department vs Finance, Administration and Operations Department! This year, the tournament ended in a satisfactory draw after a hard-fought battle by both sides.



We are excited and energized for the year ahead, and cannot wait to serve you better. But before we dive into the new year, allow us to share with you a little of what we are most proud of from 2019 across our four core programmes.

THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

Legal Aid Service Provision

"832 cases were handled at the main HRAPF legal aid clinic"

In the year 2019, HRAPF continued to operate a fully licensed legal aid clinic at the main secretariat in Kampala. The organization also worked with a pool of 182 community paralegals to provide primary legal assistance to vulnerable assistance, in addition

to the four regional legal aid centres in Kasese, Mbale, Lira and Lugazi. In August 2019, HRAPF also set up a legal aid clinic at the Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Bolomoni, Yumbe District to respond to cases of sexual and gender based violence.

Through these various avenues, HRAPF provided legal assistance to marginalised persons in 1245 cases.

273 of these cases were handled by the community paralegals, 149 cases were handled at the regional centres and 832 cases were handled at the main HRAPF legal aid clinic.



47 of the cases handled at HRAPF's main legal aid clinics were reported by women and elderly persons with land justice challenges in rural central Uganda, 187 cases were reported by persons living with HIV, 18 by women and health workers with land justice challenges, 204 by LGBTI persons, 226 by

sex workers and 92 by PWUIDs. A total of 1291 persons benefitted from actions taken in response to the cases handled at the legal aid clinic. These included 290 LGBTI persons, 154 PWUIDs, 420 sex

workers, 49 victims of sexual gender based violence, 179 children, 111 women living with HIV and 88 elderly persons with land justice challenges.

It is our belief as HRAPF that human rights cannot be truly protected unless the vulnerable and marginalised people understand their rights. We therefore worked to reach out to our target constituencies through 8 awareness sessions with people living with HIV,

10 sessions with People Who Use and Inject Drugs, 3 sessions on sexual and gender based violence in Bidibidi, 20 awareness sessions with LGBT persons and 8 sessions with sex workers. A total of 3,538 persons benefitted from the sessions by acquiring knowledge on the laws that affect them as well

understanding their rights and the human rights enforcement regime in Uganda. These included 742 persons living with HIV, 264 sex workers, 610 LGBT persons, 354 PWUIDs and 675 residents of the Bidibidi refugee settlement and surrounding



Awareness session with PLWHIV in Mityana

HRAPF recognizes the crucial role played by local council leaders in the various villages in protecting the rights of the people they lead. However, we are also familiar with the trends of human rights violations, especially against marginalised persons, that are often sanctioned, sometimes

even spearheaded, by the local area leaders themselves. To address this problem, five dialogues were held with local area leaders on sex workers rights in Lira, Bulenga, Kasese, Bwaise and Migyeera in 2019, reaching 171 local area leaders.

In addition, four dialogues were held with health stakeholders at the Ministry of Health, in the Greater Masaka and Elgon Regions to discuss access to health for sex workers and LGBT persons and two dialogues in Yumbe district on the prevention of and responses to sexual and gender based violence. The dialogues were attended by a total of 175 persons.

THE COMMUNITY PARALEGAL PROGRAMME

As at end of 2019, 182 community paralegals were operating across the country and offering paralegal advisory services to vulnerable groups. The community paralegals handled a total of 273 cases. Of

these, 52 were handled by LGBT paralegals, 143 by sex workers and 42 by PWUIDs. In order to reinforce the work that they do, share experiences and discuss challenges paralegals experience in the field,

HRAPF holds quarterly paralegal sharing sessions with the paralegals from the different groups. Seventeen paralegal sharing sessions were conducted, attended by a total of 308 paralegals.

THE COMMUNITY CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

Human Rights Workshops/Training of Duty Bearers

The Community Capacity Enhancement Programme of HRAPF focuses on building the capacity of duty bearers, marginalised persons and marginalised people's organisations to effectively demand for and enforce the rights of all persons, particularly the marginalised, and to ensure the effective participation of mar-

ginalised persons in issues relating to human rights protection and good governance. This is done through conducting Human Rights Workshops / Trainings for Duty Bearers, offering Institutional support to marginalised and Most at Risk Population Groups, and conducting Community

We also reached out to 181 police officers on the legal regulation of drug use and the rights of persons who use and inject drugs in Uganda, as well as 31 police officers on the concept of marginalisation and the rights of LGBT persons in Uganda. In all these trainings, the objective is always to ensure that the

police officers understand the limits of the criminal laws that they enforce, as well as the rights of the people they interact with in the course of enforcing these laws.

In recognition of the central role of local council leaders in the enforcement of the law and the protection of the rights of the grassroots populations, HRAPF engages Local Council Leaders on the provisions of the Local Council Act and the mandate of Local Council leaders under the Act, as well as on the rights of marginalised persons generally. In 2019, we are proud to have engaged 254 LC leaders on their powers

under the Local Council Courts Act and their human rights obligations to their constituents, and 94 LC leaders on aspects of marginalisation and the rights

Another aspect of protection of the rights of the vulnerable and marginalised through training duty bearers is the engagement with health service providers. In 2019, HRAPF engaged 437 health workers on the concept of marginalisation and the right to health for LGBT persons in Uganda. We also engaged with 232 health workers on the legal regime

Paralegal Trainings.

HRAPF trained 216 police officers on the legal regime governing abortion in Uganda and aspects of human rights enforcement in the criminal justice system .



Police officers attending a workshop on the legal regime



after a successful workshop with Local Council Leaders in Mityana

governing abortion in Uganda, focusing on discussing the limits to the liability of health workers providing comprehensive abortion care services and emergency obstetric assistance and the rights of persons interfacing with the criminal justice system.



Health Workers in a workshop on the legal regime governing abortion in Uganda

Institutional Support for Marginalised and Most at Risk Population Groups

HRAPF works with over 60 organisations providing different services to the various key population groups across the country. Part of supporting the growth and development of these organisations is ensuring that they meet the statutory requirements for non-governmental organisations/companies limited by guarantee in Uganda. We therefore conduct-

ed a capacity assessment at the beginning of the year for all the organisations we partner with in order to ensure that they are supported throughout the year to meet their statutory obligations. We therefore conducted a training for 40 leaders of LGBT organisations to discuss the requirements of the

law for such organisations, as well as the gaps in statutory compliance identified through the assessment exercise. In addition, we offered technical support to four organisations to develop human resource manuals, filed annual returns for 28 organisations, supported 9 organisations to hold their annual general meetings, initiated a mentorship programme to support

one organisation by building the capacity of their staff through mentorship and interaction with HRAPF staff holding similar positions for purposes of mentorship and learning. A training on documentation of human rights violations was also conducted for 13 persons from organisations that HRAPF works with under the Right Here Right Now Platform.

We also took steps to im-

prove awareness of marginalised communities on their rights and the laws that affect them. We reached out to 164 sex workers through awareness raising drives on the laws regulating abortion and the human rights concerns arising out of enforcement of these laws.

Six workshops for KP Leaders on Human rights and Advocacy were conducted in the six regions attended by a total of 117 participants

and 22 Key Populations Champions were fully trained on Advocacy to remove Legal and Policy barriers to access to HIV and Legal services and enrolled on a mentorship programme to gain practical experience in human rights advocacy.

Community Paralegal Training

We are proud to have added, in the year 2019, a total of 94 community paralegals to the pool of fully trained community paralegals. Of these, 28 work with the community of sex workers, 25 work with the community of Persons Who Use and Inject Drugs, 10 were LBQ women, 10 work with transgender persons and MSM and 21 work with the refugee community in the Bidibidi settlement.

HRAPF has continued to support the paralegals trained to further enhance their capacity by supporting one community paralegal with tuition to carry on his studies for the Bachelor in Laws course, and one community paralegal to pursue a diploma in Law from the Law De-

velopment Centre. A refresher course was also conducted for community paralegals working with persons living with HIV/AIDS, attended by 19 Community Paralegals.

THE RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

Our Research and Advocacy Programme was particularly busy in the year 2019. Given the fluid socio-legal landscape during that year, a lot of attention was devoted to researching and understanding the implications of various laws and policies on the different rights of marginalised persons. Four major researches were published during the year, and these were:

- The study on human rights abuses and violations against LGBT persons in detention,
- The study on the impact of the legal and policy framework on access to justice to transgender persons in Uganda,
- The study on the treatment of People Who Use and Inject Drugs within the criminal justice system,
- A baseline study on access to HIV testing and treatment services for sex workers and MSM in Uganda and Malawi - The study on the impact of the legal framework on the lived realities of Intersex persons in Uganda
- A training manual and reference handbook on laws and policies affecting access to HIV services for LGBT persons were also developed during the year to support training efforts for the capacity enhancement of LGBT persons.
- analysis of the Sexual Offences Bill was published and discussed with Members of Parliament.

Other publications developed and published in 2019 include an updated version of the Compendium on the normative legal framework impacting on LGBTI persons in Uganda; Issue 6 of The Human Rights Advocate Magazine on Harm Reduction strategies and the protection of the rights of PWUIDs in criminal law enforcement; Issue 3 of the Paralegal Magazine; The 2018 Uganda report on human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and the 2018 Report on the

Protection and Violation of the rights of sex workers in Uganda. A total of 5,818 copies of the various publications were disseminated over the course of the year, and the resource center was kept maintained and available for use by members of the communities we serve and other interested parties.

In the year 2019, we launched a campaign for the decriminalisation and declassification of petty offences in Uganda. This was done in conjunction with partners from across the continent who are interested in ameliorating the human rights abuses occasioned in the enforcement of the laws on being idle and disorderly and being a rogue and vagabond. These various partners came together to form the Coalition for the Declassification and Decriminalisation of Petty Offences in Uganda, which brings together over 40 entities (CSOs, Government

MDAs and individuals). We hosted a retreat to discuss and develop a strategy for the coalition, which we are now implementing.

We have developed various publications on this campaign, including motor vehicle stickers, fact sheets, Issue 5 of the Human Rights Advocate and the research report on “Enforcement of the Idle and Disorderly

Laws and its impact on the human rights of marginalised persons”, copies of which are available on our website and our resource centre at the main secretariat. HRAPF also participated in three African regional meetings on the decriminalization of Petty offences in Africa.

To top it all off, HRAPF filed the case of Francis Ateenyi Tumwesigye v Attorney General (Constitutional Petition No.of 2019) challenging the constitutionality of section 168 (1)(c) and (d) on the grounds that they are vague and subjective, violate the right to the presumption of innocence, which is a prerequisite of the non-derogable right to a fair trial, and are discriminatory on the grounds of social and economic status. The case is still pending hearing.

HRAPF generally uses various media platforms to further spread awareness on critical human rights concerns for the people that we serve. In 2019, for instance, we held 4 radio talk shows and 2 TV shows were held to discuss the LC elections, the “idle and disorderly” laws, sex workers rights, land rights, children’s rights and the civic space in Uganda. We also held one radio talk show on gender based violence in Arua, targeting the residents in the Bidibidi refugee settlement and the surrounding host communities. We also published six press statements in commemoration of Women’s Day, International

Media and Publicity



A radio talk show on the legal regime governing sex work in Uganda

Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, International Day of Access to Safe Abortion Services, International Intersex Awareness Day, World AIDS Day and International Human Rights Day.

THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

HRAPF prioritises the welfare of our staff, and this is one of the core functions of our Institutional Development Programme- to ensure that staff

work in a conducive, healthy environment, are well motivated and healthy. By ensuring the wellness and happiness of our staff, HRAPF's most important asset, this programme essentially keeps HRAPF running, and our major highlights each year from this programme are always the beginning of year staff retreat and end of year staff party.



HRAPF kicks off each year with a beginning of year staff retreat, at which staff are encouraged to reflect on the year past and plan for

the year ahead in a relaxed environment free from the daily pressures of office. For 2020, this retreat was held at The White Castle Hotel in Arua

END OF YEAR STAFF PARTY

As is usual, we gathered together at Maya Nature Resort for our annual end of year staff party- a time to unwind, play games, relax and congratulate ourselves on the year just past. Last year, we also got to play our ritual Programs vs Administration Team football match, which ended in yet another draw



Some of the staff members at the party

While all the staff at HRAPF work hard to meet both expectations of ourselves and our clients, each year, HRAPF recognises individuals whose performance has been particularly outstanding. For 2019, the Executive Director recognised the outstanding performance of Ms. Justine Balya as the Staff of the year. Ms. Sophie Keturah Namugenyi and Ms. Linette du Toit also received honorary mentions for the outstanding efforts during the year, and Ms.

Hellen Naggirinya, who was recognised as the most improved staff for the year. The awards were presented by Ms. Christine Nakamatte, a HRAPF board member, and Ms. Freda Kewodi, a HRAPF Trustee.



Ms. Hellen Naggirinya – Most improved staff



Ms. Justine Balya – Staff of the Year 2019