

A PUBLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS AND PROMOTION FORUM (HRAPF)



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Mr. Adrian Jjuuko

Welcome to the 13th issue of the HRAPF Newsletter, a quarterly publication that is aimed at updating our clients, partners and friends on the work that we have done in the foregoing quarter. This issue covers the period April to June 2017.

This quarter was particularly exciting as apart from the usual work that we do, we also undertook a major staffing reorganisation that saw new positions created in the organisation, and new people taking up the different positions. The new structure merged the Deputy Executive director positions into one- creating the new position of Deputy Executive Director, and two new positions- Director, Programmes and Director, Operations and Programmes Support. The Units were also consolidated into Divisions and the positions of Division heads created. The Division heads are three: Head, Access to Justice; Head, Research and Advocacy; and Head, Finance and Administration. Internal staff interviews were conducted for these positions and Ms. Joanne Nanyange became the Ag. Deputy Executive Director; Mr. Edward MWebaza, the Director, Programmes; Mr. Anthony Mutimba, the Director, Operations and Programmes Support. Ms. Patricia Kimera became the Head, Access to Justice Division and Ms. Flavia Zalwango, the Head, Research and Advocacy Division. The position of Head, Finance and Administration remained vacant. We congratulate the new office bearers and we are optimistic that the changes will make HRAPF grow stronger and more efficient. The new structure took effect in the second quarter.

HRAPF also got recognised for its work when I was named among the five finalists for the European Union's Human Rights Defenders Award 2017 and honoured together with the other finalists, at the Dutch Ambassador's residence on 25th May 2017. I was selected for leading HRAPF's work in strategic litigation and standing up for the rights of LGBTI persons. This is important recognition for our work that inspires us to move forward.

Our work during the quarter continued to be done under the three programs: Access to Justice; Research and Advocacy; and Organisational Building and Capacity Development. 171 cases, benefitting a total number of 539 persons were handled. LGBTI people continue being arrested without reasonable grounds, and arrests without prosecution are common as a result.

I hope that you will find this issue of the HRAPF Newsletter informative and enlightening, and that it will give all readers an insight into the work that was done in the second quarter of this year. Thank you for taking an interest in the work that HRAPF does in taking human rights to all.

UPDATES ON THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

The major objective of this program is to promote sustainable access to justice in Uganda specifically to the different communities that HRAPF seeks to serve, and this work is done under three distinct units: the Land and HIV Unit; the LGBTI Unit; and the Sex Workers and other Minorities Unit. This is an update of the work done in these units for the second quarter.

Provision of Pro bono legal assistance to marginalised groups

Legal Aid to LGBTI persons: 47 cases were received in the second quarter and these included assaults, criminal arrests with and without prosecution, family rejection, rape, employment matters, threatening violence and evictions. The highest number of cases handled was for criminal arrests without prosecution, which accounted for 27.7% of all cases. The total number of beneficiaries registered was 49, with Gays being the highest with 18 persons. A number of interventions were made in these cases, which included mediations, securing bond for arrested clients, getting clients released without charge, court representation among others. For organisational matters, the unit filed 2 resolutions for account opening; reserved and applied to register 5 company names; and advised 4 directors on their legal obligations.

Legal Aid to Sex Workers: 55 cases were received in quarter. Of these, 48 cases were concluded by the end of the quarter and 7 remained pending. The highest number of cases received was arrests without prosecution at 28 representing 51% of the total cases. These were followed by cases of arrest with prosecution at 22. The remedies provided included 32 police interventions, 13 court interventions and 1 mediation among others. 161 persons benefited from the legal aid. In addition, 32 cases pending from previous quarters were worked on.

Legal Aid to Drug Users: 31 cases involving drug users were received and handled in the quarter. 11 of these were pending at the end of the quarter and 20 had been closed. The highest number of cases involved criminal arrests with prosecution at 24, representing 77% of the total cases. The rest of the cases were

criminal arrests without prosecution. There were 16 police interventions, 3 court interventions, 2 mediation meetings and 1 prison visit. 125 persons benefitted directly from this legal aid.

Legal Aid in abortion cases: The services targeted girls, women and health workers caught up with the law on abortion. A total of 5 cases were received and handled in the quarter benefiting 3 women and 2 girls. 1 case pending from the previous quarters was followed up.

Legal Aid to women and girls living with HIV/AIDS: 31 cases were received and handled in the quarter. Most of the cases related to child neglect and land disputes. The remedies provided included drafting of wills, court interventions and mediation benefitting 31 people.

Legal Aid to the elderly and indigent women with land justice issues: These were also handled by the Land and HIV Unit. 20 cases were received and handled and most of them included trespass, unlawful evictions, and malicious damage to property. The remedies given included court interventions, mediation and lodging of caveats.

Strategic Litigation

The team also worked on pending strategic litigation cases. Legal representation in the *SMUG Registration case* was made twice on 28th April and on 27th June. The team also participated in the development of the applicants' submissions and rejoinder in the case and attended a legal strategising meeting to discuss the submissions. The team further followed up twice on two complaints filed with the Uganda Human Rights Commission (*Kim Mukisa and Jackson Mukasa v AG* and *Shawn Mugisha & Others v DPC Kabalagala Police*). They were informed that the complaints had not yet been heard because of the case backlog at the Commission. The *Lokodo Appeal* was also followed and court informed the team that the case had not yet been fixed for hearing because the Court of Appeal was concentrating on election petitions.

Capacity Strengthening and technical support to marginalised groups



Elizabeth Kemigisha, our Legal Assistant, facilitating at the paralegal sharing session

Community Paralegal Trainings:

The 3rd module of the paralegal training for LGBTI paralegals was conducted between the 2nd and 5th of May 2017. It was about the concept of human rights and specific civil actions and was attended by 10 trainees. This was the last module and the paralegals received their certificates at a colourful pass-out ceremony after being placed at HRAPF for a week to get practical experience. 10 women leaders from the villages of Ssisa and Namayumba in Wakiso district were also trained as paralegals to offer legal first aid on land matters. These paralegals used the knowledge gained in the training to handle a total of 53 cases during the quarter.

Continuous engagement with community paralegals

Sharing Sessions: One paralegal quarterly sharing session was held

on 16th June 2017 and was attended by 33 paralegals. The paralegals shared the work they had done and the challenges they face in doing their work. Collectively, they had handled 31 cases, been involved in 8 meetings and organised 3 outreach sessions with their community members.

Refresher Courses:

Two refresher courses were also held for already trained LGBTI paralegals on 17th - 19th May 2017 and on 6th - 8th June 2017. These were collectively attended by 19 paralegals. The courses focused on new legal developments in the laws affecting LGBTI persons including laws like the NGO Act, bills like the Sexual Offences Bill and court judgements like the judgment in the case of *Adrian Jjuuko v Attorney General*. The intention was to keep the paralegals abreast with all these developments to aid their work.

Paralegal Magazine:

The team also produced the pioneer issue of the Paralegal Magazine. The magazine documented stories of the pioneer paralegals, and will be published annually. 1000 copies were printed and are being distributed.

Legal and Human Rights Awareness

The programme organised a total 12 sessions to reach out to target groups on human rights and to provide legal aid. These included 3 paralegal outreach sessions with LGBTI paralegals; 1 legal aid camp for LGBTI persons; 1 consultative meeting with male and transgender sex workers; 5 awareness sessions with health workers and the elderly and indigent women with land justice issues; and 2 trainings for Local Council leaders on land rights and justice.

The paralegal outreach sessions were held on 2nd May; 8th May; and on 16th May. They collectively reached out to 97 LGBTI persons. A legal aid camp was held in Mbarara reaching out to 30 LGBTI persons. The consultative meeting with male and transgender sex workers was used to discuss their challenges and was held on 13th June 2017. 3 of the awareness sessions were for the elderly and indigent women with land justice issues reaching



HRAPF trained paralegals Peter Yiga and Ronald Wonder addressing participants at one of the paralegal outreach sessions.

out to 242 persons and registering 31 cases for legal aid; while the other 2 sessions were held with Health Workers from Nyimbwa Health Centre III and Kalagala Health Centre II to discuss rights of HIV patients. The training for Local Council leaders reached out to 64 leaders from Namayumba and Kasanje sub – counties in Wakiso district.



The program also held 4 radio talk shows on Kiboga FM, Mboona FM, Musana FM, and Family Radio to discuss issues of human rights, rights of HIV patients and land justice. 25 people called in and their legal and human rights concerns were addressed.

The HRAPF team with trained Local Council leaders in Namayumba-Wakiso District

UPDATES FROM LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING PROGRAM

This program is implemented by the Research and Advocacy Unit and aims at influencing legal and policy reform in favour of marginalised groups. This is achieved through continuous engagements with policy makers, law enforcers and lawmakers in order to advocate for legal reform and raise awareness of the issues affecting our target communities, as well as publicising the work that HRAPF does.

Policy and legislative analysis

Legal analyses: Two new quick scan booklets were developed and 1000 copies of each printed. One is on laws and policies affecting the HIV response among Men who have Sex with Men and the second is on the laws affecting the HIV response among Women who have Sex with Women. Distribution of both publications is underway. These quick scans and the two quick scans about Transgender persons and Persons Who Use Drugs published earlier were translated to Luganda during the quarter, to increase their accessibility to the target populations. An legal analysis of the charges against Dr. Stella Nyanzi was done, and a statement condemning them issued.

Research projects: The team also developed a research

brief for the research report on abortion that was launched last year. The brief is intended to summarise the findings and recommendations in the report to ease dissemination to stakeholders. The brief will be printed and shared in dissemination meetings. During the quarter, the abortion research report continued to be disseminated to sex workers, the Ministry of Health Maternal and Child Health Technical Working Group, professional medical councils, the Uganda Law Reform Commission and the Office of the DPP among others. The purpose of these continuous engagements was to raise awareness on the law and the dangers it poses for the respect and protection of human rights of women, girls and health workers.

Strategic litigation

The Unit organized and held a training in strategic litigation for all the lawyers at HRAPF. It was attended by 11 lawyers. The training was aimed at improving the capacity of the lawyers to identify and handle strategic litigation cases. The Unit also held a legal strategy

meeting on 11th May in consequence of the Judge in the case of *Frank Mugisha and Others v URSB* allowing the parties to file written submissions in the case. The meeting brought together 34 legal experts and activists to review the draft submissions.

Building strategic partnerships for Policy and Legislative Advocacy

Engagement with Parliament: The Unit held a meeting with Members of Parliament associating under the Uganda Women Parliamentarians Association where they shared the HRAPF analysis of the Sexual Offences Bill and made recommendations for amendment of some of the proposed clauses in the Bill. The meeting attended by 26 persons.

Engagement with Police: The Unit engaged the Anti-Narcotics Division of the Uganda Police Force to discuss the issues arising from the new Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act, HRAPF's research report on implementation of drug use laws

in Uganda and how this implementation affects the human rights of drug users as well as their access to Sexual Reproductive Health and HIV prevention and care services.

Meetings with partners: Meetings were held with the Coalition to Stop Maternal Mortality due to Unsafe Abortions; the African Reproductive Rights Initiative; the National Stakeholders Forum on the Universal Periodic Review; Initiative for Social and Economic Rights; the Equal Opportunities Commission; and with staff from UHAI - EASHRI.

Supporting publicity and dissemination

Developing publications: 8 publications were developed in the quarter. These included 4 translations of the Quick Scans, the HRAPF Annual Report 2016, the Paralegal Magazine, the newsletter for the first quarter and the research brief on the abortion research report. 3000 copies of publications were printed.

Dissemination of publications: A total of 3,433 publications were distributed to different stakeholders including government agencies and ministries, media houses, development partners, target communities, partner organisations among others.



The Director Programs Mr. Edward Mwebaza addressing the participants during the People's Parliament show

Awareness sessions: 6 awareness sessions were conducted with sex workers in the districts of Kasese, Nakasongola, Masindi, Bugiri and Busia to discuss the legal and policy regime on abortion in Uganda. These sessions reached out to a total of 125 sex workers from the different districts. 4 such sessions were also held with Midwives in the districts of Mbale, Iganga, Mukono and Masaka reaching out to 55 persons.

HRAPF Legal Assistant Justine Balya facilitating at an awareness session with sex workers in Bugiri



Media engagement: The Unit also continued to engage the media through the various media outlets including print media, social media, television and radio. 3 opinion pieces were written and published in the Observer newspaper by the Unit on issues affecting the rights of HRAPF's target communities. HRAPF joined a dialogue with journalists under the Health Journalists Network of Uganda to discuss issues of sexual and reproductive health. This meeting was held in partnership with Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) and the Coalition to Stop Maternal Mortality due to Unsafe Abortions (CSMMUA). The Unit also organised the recording and broadcasting of an episode of the People's Parliament Show, which focused on issues of abortion. The show was broadcast on NTV on Saturday 24th June 2017.

Regional and International engagements

HRAPF attended the sixth Changing Faces Changing Spaces conference represented by the Executive Director who was on a panel on LGBT litigation strategies in Naivasha, on 14th- 16th June. The Executive Director also attended and presented at the Global Convening on Strategies towards Decriminalisation of Homosexuality, 09-11 May 2017, Swakopmund, Namibia. He also participated in the IDAHOT celebrations at the Dutch Embassy in Pretoria where a book he co-edited with HRAPF member Sylvie Namwase 'Protecting the Rights of Sexual Minorities in contemporary Africa' was launched under the auspices of the Centre for Human Rights.

University of Pretoria on 17th May. Ms. Nanyange, Legal Officer attended a meeting in Addis Ababa on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights organised by the Centre for Reproductive Rights.

HRAPF's Executive Director among finalists for the EU Human Rights Defenders Award 2017

The Executive Director was recognized among the five finalists for the EU Human Rights Defenders Award 2017, for his role in fighting for the rights of marginalized persons. We are excited about this.



UPDATES FROM THE ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

This program aims at building HRAPF into a strong and vibrant human rights advocacy organization. Work under this program was done under two distinct units during the second quarter: the Finance Unit and the Human Resource and Administration Unit.

Human Resource management and development

Staffing: HRAPF had a total of number of 28 in the quarter comprising of 27 full time staff, and 1 volunteer. In the month of June, one staff, Ms. Fariida Ikyimaana left the organisation. A restructuring was done, and 22 staff of the 28 were retained. One staff appraisal was conducted during the period.

HRAPF bids farewell to Ms. Ikyimaana (centre) at the mid-year reporting event



Security: In terms of security, the team contracted Defenders Protection Initiative (DPI) to assess the security of staff personal and professional security. The Security Reference Person, Ms. Sophie Keturah Namugenyi, also participated in a security awareness training organised.

Operating environment: As reported at the beginning of 2016, HRAPF was occupying an extra suite of offices adjacent to the main Secretariat. However, this was vacated after construction of the new office block at the main secretariat was concluded.

Strengthening governance structures and building membership

One Board of Directors' Meeting was held in April to consider and approve reports for the previous quarters, approve the budget and work plan for the 3rd quarter and discuss organisation policies.

For more information, contact us:

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