

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



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Mr. Adrian Jjuuko

This is the 14th issue of the HRAPF Newsletter, our quarterly publication where we update our clients, partners and friends about the work of HRAPF. This issue covers the period between July - September 2017.

During this period, the staff restructuring at HRAPF took effect. The results have so far been promising. We held our 8th Annual General Meeting, marking our 9th year in existence. The Annual General Meeting elected a new Board of Directors, and we are thus excited to have Ms. Tabitha Netuwa, Ms. Rose Kamuli, Ms. Jacqueline Kasha Nabagesera, and Mr. Edward Ssemambo, Mr. Daniel Mugoya, Mr. Isaac Ssekatawa and Ms. Christine Nakamatte as our new Board members. The first three were co-opted basing on their expertise while the other four are members of HRAPF. The Board members will in the next quarter elect among themselves the different office bearers and we shall gladly share the news.

The Annual General Meeting also flagged off the evaluation of the current Strategic Plan which is ending on 31st December as well as the development of a new Strategic Plan. Ms. Solome Nakaweesi-

Kimbugwe, a consultant is facilitating this process. We shall also report about the progress of this activity in the next issue.

Work continued to be done under our three programmatic areas: Access to Justice; Legislative Advocacy and Networking; and organisational Building and Capacity Development. The Legal Aid clinic handled a total of 163 cases, benefitting a total number of 431 persons. In the last quarter we handled 171 cases benefitting 539 cases. The reduction is due to a change in approach where the number of cases concerning land and HIV are progressively and this points to the increased being reduced due to changed priorities. The Legislative Advocacy and Networking team had increased engagements with Parliament and concretised HRAPF's relationship with the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Capacity Building and Organisation Development Program supported the programs work of the organization and helped to keep us afloat.

Marginalised persons, particularly, LGBTI persons, sex workers and drug users continue to be victims of arrests without charges. Most are picked up in circumstances where no crime can actually be proved against them leading to arrests without prosecution. For sex workers, assaults from clients have become more common.

Thank you for supporting our work and for taking the time to find out what we do in the quest to take human rights to all.

UPDATES ON THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

The objective of this program is to promote sustainable access to justice in Uganda to the different communities that HRAPF targets. The work in this Program was implemented by the Access to Justice Division and the key outputs were as follows:

Provision of Pro bono legal assistance to marginalised groups

Legal aid to LGBTI persons:

43 LGBTI cases were handled during the quarter, the highest number of which were criminal arrests at 9 representing 21% of the total cases. 23 of the cases were handled to completion, while 20 remain pending. Some of the actions taken in the cases included police interventions, filing resolutions, court representation among others. As a result, clients got remedies including 11 releases on police bond, recovery of property, dismissal of criminal charges among others. 49 people benefitted including 20 Gay persons, 8 Transgender persons, 6 Bisexual persons, 5 Lesbians, 1 Intersex and 9 organisations. The team also followed up 22 cases pending from previous quarters. 15 of these cases were completed and 7 remained pending.

Legal aid to Sex Workers:

45 cases sex workers cases were handled in the quarter. The majority were cases of assault of sex workers at 16, representing 36% of the total cases. Various actions were taken on the cases including 31 police interventions, 5 mediations and 4 court interventions. As a result, clients were released without charge in 7 cases, released on police bond in 3 cases, assailants arrested in 3 cases, compensation granted in 2 cases, bail granted in 1 case among other remedies. A total of 116 persons benefitted from these interventions. 17 of the cases were handled to completion and 28 remained pending. The team also worked on 69 cases pending from previous quarters finalising 49 of these while 20 remain pending.

Legal Aid to Drug Users:

25 cases were received for the quarter. Unlike other cases, these cases were only criminal arrests. Most of them were criminal arrests without prosecution at 15 representing 60% while the rest were cases of criminal arrests with prosecution. 12 of the cases were handled

to completion while 13 remained pending. The interventions included 15 police interventions and 10 court interventions. As a result, clients were released on police bond in 7 cases, court cases dismissed in 2 cases, clients released without charge in 1 cases and clients granted bail in another. 47 people benefitted from these interventions. 26 pending cases were followed up and 9 closed.

Legal Aid in abortion cases:

These are of women, girls and health workers caught up with the criminal law on abortion. 5 cases were received and handled through 5 police interventions. This benefitted 3 girls and 2 women. The team also followed up on 5 cases pending from the previous quarter and 1 was closed.

Legal Aid to women and girls living with HIV/AIDS:

This focuses on women and girls living with HIV/AIDS in rural central Uganda. 23 cases were received in the quarter most of them being cases of child neglect at 11, representing 48%, followed by will making at 5. The interventions included drafting wills for clients, court representations and mediation. 60 persons benefitted from the interventions. 12 of the cases were closed and 11 remain pending. The team also followed up 22 cases and 17 of these were closed.

Legal Aid to the elderly, indigent women and children with land justice issues:

22 cases were received from this community with most of them being succession disputes at 7 representing 32% followed by fraudulent sales at 6. Interventions made in the cases include court representations, lodging caveats, and mediation. A total of 154 persons benefitted including 89 children, 38 women and 27 men. All the 22 cases were handled to completion.

Strategic Litigation

The team also followed up on pending cases in the High Court, the Court of Appeal and at the Uganda Human Rights Commission. However, no substantive progress was made on the cases.

Capacity Strengthening and technical support to marginalised groups

Continuous engagement of Community Paralegals:

One paralegal quarterly sharing session was organised for sex worker paralegals and was attended by 7 paralegals. They reported having worked on a total of 9 cases between July and September. They also shared the challenges they face in doing their work and discussed ways of dealing with such challenges.

Engagement in partners' activities: The Division was engaged in different partner activities, including Pride 2017 preparations; security working group meetings; round table discussion on rights of health workers

and the LGBTI community; and meeting by the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders to discuss referral systems; meeting by LASPNET to validate a research on Human Rights Defenders; dialogue organised by FEM Alliance to discuss Intimate Partner Violence among Lesbian women, Bisexual women and transgender men; Annual General Meetings for I Freedom Uganda; and made organisational visits to Tranz Network Uganda, Rainbow Mirrors Uganda, Uganda Harm Reduction Network and Freedom and Roam Uganda.

Legal and Human Rights Awareness



HRAPF Legal Officer, Ms. Betty Balisalamu, addressing participants at the legal aid camp in Kasanje

Awareness sessions: 5 awareness sessions were held during the quarter reaching out to 411 persons. The first session was conducted with persons living with HIV at Mpigi Hospital on 14th August attended by 81 participants; the second session was held with sex workers in Lugazi on 24th August attended

by 35 participants; the 3rd session was conducted with persons living with HIV at Ziobwe Health Centre IV in Luweero district attended by 94 persons; the 4th session was held with persons living with HIV at Kiboga General referral hospital attended by 126 participants; and the last session was conducted on 27th September with persons living with HIV at Ssekanyonyi Health Centre IV attended by 75 participants. The sessions were used to discuss the human rights of the different populations, the patients' charter and will making among others.

Legal aid camp: 1 legal aid camp was held in Kasanje, Wakiso District on 11th August 2017 and attended by a total of 22 persons. Instant legal aid was given in 5 cases and the camp was also used to create awareness on human rights and land justice.

UPDATES FROM LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING PROGRAM

This program is largely implemented by the Research and Advocacy Division and aims at influencing legal and policy reform in favour of

marginalised groups. The following was done:

Policy and Legislative analysis

Uganda translations of 2 quick scans on the laws and policies that affect the HIV response among Men who have Sex with Men and Women who have Sex with Women were finalised and 500 copies of each printed. These are being distributed. The submissions on the

Sexual Offences Bill were also finalised and a proposal for its amendment extracted and shared with the Parliamentary Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

Strategic Litigation

4 consultative meetings were held with communities of marginalised persons to discuss a possible challenge to the Vagrancy Offences, reaching out to a total of 88 persons. The 1st meeting was held with leaders from the sex workers community on the 10th of August 2017 attended by 21 participants; the 2nd with leaders from the LGBTI Community on 17th August attended

by 16 participants; the 3rd with the leaders from the community of people who use drugs on 24th August 2017 attended by 25 participants; and the 4th with leaders of market vendors and petty traders on 31st August attended by 26 participants. In the meetings, HRAPF's position paper on the case was discussed and views on the case collected.

Building strategic partnerships for Policy and Legislative Advocacy

Engagement with Parliament: Working with the Centre for Health, Human Rights and Development, Ipas Africa Alliance and Marie Stoppes, the Division held a meeting with Members of Parliament that were identified as champions of sexual and reproductive health rights for women. The meeting was held on the 29th and 30th of August 2017 in Entebbe.

The Division also partnered with the Network of African Women Ministers to hold a meeting with Members of Parliament on the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development and the Committee on Health to share findings of the research into enforcement of criminal abortion laws in Uganda. The meeting was held on 27th July 2017 at Hotel Africana and it was attended by 24 persons.

Engagement with the Police: A meeting was held with the Director of the Police's Directorate of Human Rights and Legal Services. The meeting was used to share the findings of the research reports into enforcement of criminal abortion laws, enforcement of vagrancy laws, the legal regulation of drug use and the legal regulation of sex work in Uganda. One meeting was also held with Ag. Commissioner of the Anti-Narcotics Division of the Uganda Police Force on the possibilities for employing the harm reduction model in police operations. Consequent to that meeting, a meeting was held with the Asst. Commissioner Inspection and Legal Affairs in the Ministry of Internal Affairs to discuss our position on the Narcotics law and the possibilities of reform to allow for provision of harm reduction services to Persons Who Use Drugs in Uganda.

HRAPF recognizes police officer



At HRAPF's 8th Annual General Meeting, the organisation recognized ASP Philemon Ameru the O/C of Katwe Division Police Station, one of the police officers trained by HRAPF on LGBTI issues, for contribution to the protection of the rights of sexual minorities who come into conflict with the law. A plaque was given to him.

ASP Philemon Ameru receives his award during HRAPF's 8th Annual General Meeting

Engagement with the Equal Opportunities Commission: A meeting was held with the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission to discuss HRAPF's possible engagement with the commission. A Memorandum of Understanding was finalised and signed between the two entities.

Engagement with the Uganda Human Rights Commission: A meeting was held with the Director in charge of Research and Documentation at the Uganda Human Rights Commission to discuss the work that HRAPF does as well as the researches that were conducted in 2016 by HRAPF. The meeting was also used to discuss further engagements with the Commission.

Other engagements with partners: Facilitated 2 awareness sessions organised by the Uganda Harm Reduction Network on the legal and human rights framework for persons who use drugs; facilitated 4 awareness sessions organized by Women's Network for Human rights and Advocacy (WONETHA) for sex workers on human rights and the law; attended 2 meetings with Coalition to Stop Maternal Mortality due to Unsafe Abortions; and worked with KANCO, Uganda Harm Reduction Network, Community Health Alliance Uganda and East African Harm Reduction Network on advocacy for implementation of the harm reduction model in Uganda and development of the East African Community Policy Guidelines on Harm Reduction Services for Persons Who Use Drugs.

Supporting publicity and dissemination

Developing Publications: 7 publications were developed during the quarter. These were: the two translations of the quick scan on laws and policies affecting the HIV response; the popular version of the 2016 Annual Report; the LGBTI violations report; the analysis of the Data Protection and Privacy Bill; the newsletter for the 2nd quarter; and the Human Rights Advocate Magazine. The two quick scans and the Annual Report were finalised.

Dissemination of publications: A total of 3,564 publications were distributed in the quarter to HRAPF's target communities, Members of Parliament, Police, Government Ministries and Department, Development partners, and partner organisations.

Media engagement: 1 opinion piece on the enforcement of vagrancy laws in Uganda was published in the Observer newspaper. 3 radio talk shows were held during the quarter on Family Radio and Kingdom FM on current issues. 2 TV talk shows were held on Record TV and on NTV to discuss rights of a suspect and issues of abortion respectively.

Awareness sessions: 3 awareness sessions were held with health workers under the Uganda Private Midwives Association in Soroti and Wakiso districts and sex workers in Mbale district on the legal and policy regime governing abortion in Uganda. They were attended by 21, 23 and 31 persons respectively.

Regional and international engagements

HRAPF continued to be visible in regional and international circles. The Executive Director attended a short course on Constitution Building in Africa at the Central European University in Budapest; he also visited HRAPF's partners UHAI-EASHRI, and KELIN in Nairobi Kenya as part of the strategic planning process; attended a CSO meeting with the German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel; and participated in the Bergen Exchanges on Law and Social Transformation in Bergen, Norway. HRAPF also contributed to the Draft principles on Decriminalisation of Petty offences in Africa which are being worked on by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' R

UPDATES FROM THE ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

This program aims at building HRAPF into a strong and vibrant human rights advocacy organization. The following are the updates for the 3rd quarter.

Human Resource management and development



Staffing: HRAPF had a total number of 27 in the quarter including three Interns and one Researcher. The three Interns were from Makerere University Law School under the Public Interest Law Clinic and a Senior Six Vacationist who was joining Law School. Ms. Linette Du Toit, who had been a volunteer with HRAPF was bade farewell.

Ms. Linette Du Toit receives a farewell present from the Executive Director Mr. Adrian Jjuuko during her farewell ceremony

Security: Security assessment for one staff was conducted; staff attended a security and risk management training organized by the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa; and 3 staff attended a training on Digital Security organized by the Defenders Protection Initiative.

Staff welfare: The Units ensured consistent improvement of staff welfare through daily cleaning of premises; daily provision of lunch; regular stocking of first aid equipment; and monthly conducting of recreational and team-building activities.

Strengthening governance structures and building membership



Annual General Meeting: HRAPF's 8th Annual General Meeting was organized on 12th August 2017 at the organisation secretariat. It brought together members of the organisation, partners and development partners. A new Board of Directors was elected to govern HRAPF for the next three years. The former directors were given plaques in recognition of their the selfless service and guidance given to the organisation during their tenure.

Participants at the 8th Annual General Meeting



Some of the members of the newly elected Board of Directors posing for a photograph with the Trustees at the Annual General Meeting

Strengthening HRAPF's Monitoring and Evaluation

The process for the evaluation of the HRAPF strategic plan 2012 – 2017 also begun. A consultant was hired to conduct the evaluation and she already held meeting with HRAPF's target communities, partners, donors and staff. This process is supposed to appraise how HRAPF managed to implement the plan and feed into the development of a new one.

For more information, contact us:

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF)

Plot 390, Professor Apolo Nsibambi Road,
20 meters off Balintuma Road, Namirembe

P.O.Box 25603, Kampala- Uganda

Tel: +256 414 530683/ +256 312 530683

Email: info@hrapff.org

Website: www.hrapf.org