

UGANDA PUBLIC RESCUE FOUNDATION UPRF

(Non-Governmental organization for human rights and legal aid services of needy persons)



**Access to justice for all:
Empowering the communities:**

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

UPRF ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Chairperson's report

I am privileged to present yet a report of the Uganda Public Rescue Foundation for year ended 31st December 2015.

The year 2015 saw UPRF widen its coverage to reach the most vulnerable in need of legal aid services. The foundation opened three new branches increasing the total number of branches to 3. That is in Kampala, Lwengo, Bukomansimbi, and Jinja. The growth of the project has not only been in coverage but also the package of services being delivered by the nation has greatly improved. A number of new projects were started and integrated in uprf's original activities. The criminal justice programme implemented in Kigo, Kauga, Mpigi, Masaka, prisoners on remand is but one example with support from Trust Law (UK), UPRF started three new programmes in Kigo, Kauga, Masaka, one decongesting prisons and protection and promotion of children's rights respectively. UPRF is also spearheading an anti human trafficking campaign supported by the London Legal Support Trust.

We do appreciate the commitment, energy and zeal that many members and staffs have exhibited during the year 2015. It was a busy year and one that set the pace for many things that we shall be doing in 2016. This year marked the end of the strategic plan; we are working hard with the secretariat to ensure that we have another even more focused and award-wining strategic plan for the next five years. In this regard we look to the members and friends for support with ideas, innovations and resources on how to make our organization/platform stronger and more relevant.

We are grateful to all our valuable partners, members, friends and the general public, most especially LASPNET and Dr. Sewanyana Livingstone Executive Director FHRI for the support enjoyed in 2015

We look forward for serving you even better in 2016.

Yours sincerely



OLIVA NAKYANZI
Chairperson.

Director's report



It's with pleasure that I report about the successes and achievements of the year 2015. To a large extent 2014 was very successful and a land mark year in the history of the project foundation.

UPRF turned a new page in 2015. We have yet started another Journey with the implementation of the 2nd strategic (2016-2020) the five year program titled Broad approach to legal aid and Human rights in Uganda. This has been designed to address the democracy, access to Justice and human rights in Uganda and this program also goes beyond human rights and therefore interrogates the question of Values both civic values and rights in Uganda.

This program takes a holistic approach to human rights advocacy strategies, Legal Aid, legal Assistance and counseling, Research, Legislative Advocacy, Civic education, and also building strategic partnership for our future engagements.

The program reaches out to all people of Uganda in different districts, community based groups, Parliament, Universities, Judiciary, and Jlos institutions in Uganda.

It is now over a year since uprf began this ambitious campaign, the support and good will we have received is unprecedented while the position outcomes of our work have encouraged uprf to move terribly.

We looked at 2015 with pride and satisfaction, not arrogance, delivered from the achievement that were made possible through faithful partnerships and well coordinates alliances. Satisfaction, not complacency, derived from well earned results that inspired us to work harder and surpass our own expectations.

In 2015, UPRF maintained its stance as an unwavering defender of human rights and legal aid services, even in instances where such a stance was not entirely popular. Disregarding unfunded claims that the organization's stance in defending human rights is contrasting with Uganda values and derived from the need to please development partners, the organization joined other organizations in civil society to defend the human rights of vulnerable and poor people in Uganda, Access to Justice, advocate for access to safe abortion as a sexual and

reproductive health right, and lobby for the legal recognition of cohabiting couples through the marriage and divorce bill.

The report is an insight into work we done in the year 2015. This is of continuing reinvention and innovation. We piloted new programs, to continue enhancing our already functioning activities and we took every opportunity in offering legal aid, promoting human rights and the inherit dignity of people in Uganda using law as a tool of social justice.

We also extend our gratitude to the many organization most especially the law council for accrediting UPRF as a legal service provider and the umbrella of Legal aid service provider Network (LASPNET) for moral and technical support extended to us, Also to Many organizations that associated to work with us, Government, Private Sector and Media institution that directly work with us, The office of the Prime Minister, The Parliament of Uganda, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Internal Affairs and NGO Bureau (Formerly NGO Registration Board), National Planning Authority, Uganda Police, Uganda People Defense Forces, Ministry of Labor and Social Development and as well as Local Government and Residential District Commissioners all the country.

We remain eternally grateful to the people of Uganda who always associate with us. We thank our royal members and faithful for making a successful year for uprf, and look forward more successful year of defending human rights and making life better for the people of Uganda.

Thank you for making us proud and keeping UPRF relevant in the lives of the people of Uganda.

Yours, faithfully



YIGA ROBERT
Executive Director

ABOUT US

The Uganda Public Rescue Foundation was established in the year 2008 as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and as a company limited by guarantee, Accredited by Law Council of Uganda as a legal aid service provider. UPRF fights for human rights and offer legal aid to the indigent persons in all matters of law, civil and criminal nature. The organization's mission is fighting for human rights and improving access to justice for the poor people charged with criminal offences in fulfillment of constitutional requirements.

UPRF as a human rights & legal aid service provider founded on the 11th/Nov/2008 in Uganda, It was established by a group of human rights activists' lawyer with the objective of providing legal aid services to vulnerable and indigent persons to enable them access justice in Uganda.

UPRF is a human rights and legal aid service provider, social being, with a big heart, welcomes all people without discrimination;

UPRF is a much respected foundation in defending human rights, legal aid and advocacy for people's rights in Uganda, and is a well-renowned voice for the people of Uganda.

Doesn't seek to be loved as long as it knows it is doing the right thing. Ambition, knows where it is going and we are here to stay.

Destroyer of patriarchy;

Have many allies and enemies because it upsets the status quo;

Fight for human rights and justice, and makes a difference;

No one ever the same after talking with it;

UPRF commands respect;

It provides a shield against legal impunity.

OUR WORK

Uganda public rescue foundation works across the main areas;

Our objectives are;

Access to justice, in consolidate gains in access to justice through legal Aid, legal education, public interest, litigation and advocacy for law and practice reform.

- To provide high legal aid services to indigent persons like men, women, Disabled and children, most especially the Indigent and vulnerable persons.
- To promote the respect for Human rights and the rule of law in Uganda.
- To provide legal aid services to prisoners or persons who due to financial constraints
- To promote universal respect for human rights, implementation for the provisions of the universal declaration of human rights in Uganda.

- To carry out investigations through registered private detection agencies and therefore give reports to the concerned authorities on matter of human rights in Uganda.
- To act as arbitrators/mediators between the offenders and the victims in criminal and civil matters.
- To provide a forum for discussion through a close exchange between human rights organizations, community, individuals and government officials.
- To offer legal representation to especially under privileged persons including appeals and other procedural process that may require legal representation at all levels.
- To encourage and promote observance of the rule of law and legal protection of human rights and sensitize masses on HIV/Aids.
- To participate in internal Human Rights law seminars, conferences, regulars conferences and even other related issues.

UPRF VISION

A Ugandan society where all human rights are respected promoted and defended to ensure access to justice for all is a reality irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, religion or socio-economic status.

UPRF MISSION

- To become a leading provider of legal services of choice in order to ensure access to justice for the poor and vulnerable people so as to promote the socio-economic development of Uganda.
- To work with the poor and vulnerable communities especially women, children, disabled, to active justice, equality and equity though legal Aid provision, legal human rights education, research and advocacy net working and co-a lotion building.

UPRF GOAL

To contribute to the rule of law, and good governance in order to achieve social development

UPRF VALUES

- Equality of all persons before the law
- Passions for justice
- Respect for human dignity
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Service excellence
- Efficiency and effectiveness

High light of uprf Activities

The organization conducted and disseminated research which thoroughly challenges the misconception that Uganda culture does not support women's rights and vulnerable people. This stance earns the organization more respect, and respect, and more importantly improves appreciation for the human rights cause as a reputation of being a trustworthy and principle organization of integrity.



During legal awareness session and outreach held at kasangati by UPRF members.

In line with its institutional development objectives, UPRF avails opportunities for mentoring to its members and staff; scores of young lawyers and human rights activists benefiting from training on how to conduct community legal dialogue sessions, and staff from across the districts to attends a re-energizing team to build a retreat at the end of the year. Through such efforts, UPRF has been able to continue reposition its self as a sustain legal aid service provider, human rights and governance organization.



UPRF members and staffs meeting with Ms. Alison Kelly from Trust Law (UK) at UPRF offices Busega to discuss issues of human rights and legal aid

UPRF continued to offer free legal aid services and fights for rights of the citizens of Uganda, directly making a difference in thousands of individuals' lives. Perpetrators of violence brought to book, millions in misappropriate properties have been recovered, children' future been secured, and impunity also have been challenged. From seeming mundane cases to headline snatching cases, out lawyers confidently

intended to address injustice, bring peace to thousands of people particularly in their homes.

The Uganda Public Rescue Foundation has held a number of legal empowerment sessions of which includes community awareness in partnership with Foundation for Human Rights Initiatives (FHRI), UPRF held the legal awareness campaign/Sessions in Wakiso, Kampala and Masaka District purposely the awareness was based on Land Matters, Administration of Estates and also Criminal matters in the area of criminal Justice with FHRI and PILAC of Makerere University.

UPRF held different talk shows on a number of Radio stations of which include Kaboozi Radio, Suubi Radio, Prime Radio and Kingdom FM concerning issues of Land and Administration of Estates and UPRF also held press conferences among which include the one held at Buganda Road primary school forging the way forward on how to give legal aid to our fellow Ugandans from southern Sudan that were affected with war many media houses participated, the total number of participants were approximately 782 among which women were 482, men 300 includes children and several press conferences have been held at UPRF offices Busega kabale zone.

Further UPRF organized several training workshops attend by community leaders and members, local leaders, elders, children, Youths, Indigents in Kayunga, Mukono, Masaka, Mpigi, Wakiso, Jinja and Kampala. Also Outreach sessions have been held in Kigo, Kauga, Masaka, Luzira, Mubende, Jinja, Kabasanda, and Kitarya prison here UPRF interviewed the intimates for the purposes of legal representation of which, in these sessions the organization was able to offer legal aid to a number of prisoners. We went ahead to visit police cells mostly in the Districts of Kampala, Masaka, Jinja, Kayunga and Wakiso mostly the police officers at the stations and UPRF staffs attended the sessions.



UPRF visits prison on the program of Prison Decongestion, Kauga, Kigo, Mpigi, Masaka, Ntenjeru, Mbarara and Luzira Prison, during the year 2015

The training session was supplemented by use Documentaries and posters illustrating the various violations of human and legal rights. The posters were developed by

UPRF staffs and were distributed to the different participants for a multiplier effect. Around 8200 copies of posters printed and distributed. We plan to continue this activity in the coming year.

Outputs of the project activities, outcomes, challenges, Lessons learnt and Recommendations.



Mr. Kiyingi Juma (infront), Mr. Yiga Robert Executive Director, (Right), UPRF and matching with community and local leaders During outreach and human rights awareness campaign at Lunguja.

We piloted new programs, to continue enhancing our already functioning activities and we took every opportunity in offering legal aid, promoting human rights and the inherent dignity of people in Uganda using law as a tool of social justice. Below is a brief overview of the report. The annual report is set out according to (UPRF)'s thematic areas of work. Access to justice, Human rights, conflict resolution, peace building, Land Justice, Children Rights and transitional justice, sexual and reproductive health and institutional

development



Mr. Yiga Robert Executive Director (Left), Namuleme Annet Cathy and other UPRF members during the legal awareness session held 14 April 2015

In 2015 renovation and innovation are two concepts which high up on our agenda from the projects we were able to be involved, where we work. How we have achieved our objectives to the core of the organization to start with the launch of (UPRF) new logo with help of internationally renowned journalist MR. KANWAGI STEVEN and revamping of our website, created and designed by MR. GODFREY BALUKU.

The provision of legal aid service and fight for the rights of the citizens of Uganda remains a core function of the work we are to do, so we have continued to help the public through our legal aid services, offering estimated 8250-12000 legal aid counseling.

UPRF has continued to work taking justice for all, spreading awareness through community dialogues, educating the public about their rights and continued carrying out research on how to help the public access economic justice. UPRF has also started providing outreach legal aid services in the areas where it has never operated before.



UPRF staffs attending to Mr. Mugisha Steven (left) whose rights have been violated during Outreach/awareness session at Kibinge Bukomansimbi District

UPRF enhance justice for all, and also piloted a new program scheme of training young lawyers on how to represent themselves in court. Through the pilot scheme we have trained 120 in Buganda region.

Along with human rights organizations and support of the Wider Pro bono Centre, we have created the emergency action fund for human rights violence victims and the purpose of the victims fund is to provide support outside the traditional services rendered to victims, to holistically address their physical, sexual, emotional and psychological needs.

A profound innovation that year tried to make gender justice part of the cultural understanding among communities. We engaged cultural leaders in Buganda to manage and impress them on the importance of human rights in the community. In an effort to find positive cultural norms which we have used to promote human rights in Buganda and we carried out research on Buganda cultures. We also published our findings and hopefully consolidated culture and rights for people of Uganda and not against them.

We know the importance of working with legal aid service providers in advancing the public about their human rights, so that we have continue to network and create working partnerships with a number of legal aid service providers.

UPRF notably is proud of working with the Uganda police force with which always facilitate on gender and human rights to enable them craft an accountability mechanism towards victims. By making the police draft the accountability mechanism themselves and we moved them reflecting on their experiences in changing their practices appreciate that victims have their rights and are not merely source of evidence.



Hon. Shifrah Lukwago (right) shaking hands with Uprf staffs Mr. Samuel Mutebi and Byamurebere Edward during the awareness.

Violation of human rights is rapidly increasing in Uganda while the public remains hush on this issue, some people in Uganda are unable to access their human rights. So many people are unable to access information about justice and as a result some people are denied ownership over their property rights. So in that year 2016 Uganda public rescue foundation will work on opening up the debate on understanding human rights and how to access legal aid services. Taking on cognizance of the global development with specific focus about human rights

Different levels of human rights abuse and neglecting are continuing in Uganda. Given that many interventions in fighting for human rights is failing because the people are not aware. With that year 2015 (UPRF) worked so hard to see that at least some people are aware of their human rights and can access justice and legal aid services as well to enable over 13000 people in Buganda access justice through awareness programs, protection and enforcement of human rights.

This organizations' success is incumbent on building a pool of talented young lawyers who will continue to work on advancing the work we do and the people's movement in Uganda. Many mentoring workshops are organized where over 100 young lawyers are trained in ensuring community dialogues and legal aid awareness activities and these also shall remain the core focus of our legal literacy programs.



Community members and local leaders attended legal aid awareness workshop held at kabale zone Busega Parish Left Mr. Yiga Dan Chairman L.C.1 Central B Zone and Mr. Yusito Chairman Kigwanya Zone Busega parish and other local leaders

In recognition to the work of UPRF it does to fight for human rights of the needy, so in 2015, recognized by the international Non government organizations (NGO's) as leading legal aid service providers as to strengthen our institutional development, UPRF has also made partnerships with other international (NGOs) like Trust Law (UK) and National organization like Muslim Centre For Justice and Law, foundation for human rights initiative (FHRI), justice centre Uganda and other service providers to be partnered with, so as to improve and build on individual and community legal aid services as in strengthening the government capacity in Uganda. In addition to this, that year 2015 the office of the high commissioner for human rights also recognized Uganda public rescue foundation as one of the leading human rights defenders in Uganda.

JUSTICE FOR INDIGENTS AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

At Uganda public rescue foundation we don't believe in pity, but we do believe in seeking justice for our clients most especially indigents, to do this we work hard to continue educating the communities about their rights and the law; we also continue doing the following providing legal counseling and mediation, litigate cases and give the people of Uganda the protection plus support they need to get justice.



UPRF members participated in access to Justice Conference(Right) Mr. Yiga

Robert Executive Director UPRF Justice Remmy Kasule, Ms. Sylvia Namubiru ED. LASPNET and other participants from different organization.

Legal aid

More legal aid services was offered by Uganda public rescue foundation including reconciliation, legal awareness to empower clients to self-represent themselves in the family and child court, follow ups of cases within the community, drafting legal documents, and representations in the courts and at family/clan meeting. Through legal aid provision, so that year 2015 (UPRF) will continue witnessing the people of Uganda at the grassroots as in challenging negative social, cultural and patriarchal practices across the spectrum of legal issues.



UPRF held legal awareness session local leaders and community attended the Awareness in front Mr. Kimera Muhamed chairman LC 11. Busega Parish being attended to by the staffs of UPRF Mr. Mutebi Samuel and Mr. Byamurebere at Muslim Girls P/s Busega

An estimated number of about 13000 people have received legal aid counseling from Uganda public rescue foundation. This is because everyone who come at (uprf) to seek our help and so follow up is made up of about 5-10 lawyers escorting the client to attend the mediation sessions on the invitations of the parties.

Ordinarily cases take 3-4 years to be completed within the formal justice system. So quick and effective resolution of disputes is necessary to help the people of Uganda seek justice in a timely manner Through offering alternative mediations the organization successfully ensure that it reduce to 75% of case backlog in the high court of Uganda and also ensure that 70% of our clients secure immediate and cost effective solutions to their legal problems.

To further advance the legal aid services we have provide, that year 2015 in Buganda, we have piloted our self representation project. This has enabled us to help more victims in getting justice through teaching them how to represent themselves in the local community courts outside of Kampala office. To do this, our legal officers highlight the salient legal issues in individual cases, however this also gave an in

depth analysis of various options as we have trained the young lawyers with the legal processes and how to answer questions in court. Practical skills courts etiquette has also been included. Through our pilot over 12000 people in Buganda have received coaching to self-representation in village community based courts.

LITIGATION

The sum of taking cases to court is to ensure the formal enforcement of people's rights and accountability for rights violation. Otherwise the enforcement of people's rights becomes discretionary to the whims of the person violating them in Buganda about 100 cases and above has been completed and receives judgment in the court. so our office is Kampala and has not lost any single case in the court.



His worship Alaari Muhiirwa Kagolo (Middle) Right Mr. Yiga Robert Executive Director (UPRF) after Legal awareness Session and the launch of UPRF offices at Busega Kabale kampala- Uganda

LEGAL AWARENESS

Promoting gender justice through legal awareness of the human rights of people is the ways we can use to improve access to justice. In 2015 we have increased people's awareness of their rights. Community dialogues are a big part of work we are to do to promote and increase awareness in order to encourage people seeks justice using the law. So during our community awareness sessions we used music, dance and drama to communicate and relate with experiences of the community.

Through encouraging the community we believed we can strengthen and resolve to change and promote people's rights. The awareness sessions conducted in market places, sub county headquarters, Local Levels, as well as trading centers we conducted 5 legal aid awareness sessions for Uganda parliamentarians in their various constituencies (the awareness activities to attract a large crowds) for example masaka and kayunga over 2500 people attended.



Workshop to improve and build on individual and community legal aid services as in strengthening the government capacity in Uganda Legal Awareness held at Kayunga.

As a result of our community legal dialogue, (uprf) has witnessed a dramatic rise of about 20% in the cases reported from the community worked with. When people are aware of justice mechanisms in place they can resort to them in settling their disputes. Often people violate because, they believe they can get away with it. A weak legal framework promotes legal impunity for human rights violation. For example there has been no human rights service provider in masaka. It is therefore not surprising that some areas of masaka have got some cases of defilement and domestic violence.

However the supportive legal environment and more accessible legal awareness sessions (UPRF) will continue to provide in masaka, so in 2015 there was a dramatic increase in cases reported compared to other years back.

This illustrates the increase in the number of cases reported in various locations where Uganda public rescue foundation operated in 2015



A launch of the Research Report at Protea Hotel 2nd second right Mr. Yiga Robert Executive director (UPRF) first Right Mr. Matovu Seth Mugenyi (UPRF) Chief Justice Benjamin Odoki, Principal Judge Bamwine, Ms. Racheal Odoi Technical

Advisor Justice Law and order Sector (JLOS) and HIL Innovative Justice from Netherlands.

DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The purpose of the victim fund is to provide support outside the traditional services rendered to victims, to holistically address their physical, sexual, emotional and psychological needs.

The victims fund is rendered by the human rights organizations so it can enabled us help the victims heal and continue pursuing redress for the rights violation experienced.

The victim fund recognizes that victims are situated in different life experiences, environment and power situation; therefore any organization has the discretion to refer a victim to Uganda public rescue foundation o access the fund. The role of (UPRF) is serving as a gateway to access the victims' fund for the appropriate redness sought by the victims.



Mr.Yiga Robert (Front) Left Executive Director (UPRF) after the training at sanctum Hostel at Entebbe in the middle Mr. Solomon Webalearaali Executive Director Street Law Uganda and Facilitators Dr. Rchard Asaba and Prof. Akiiki from Makerere university and other participants from Uganda land Aliance and Street Law.

Our organization lacks the resources and structures to provide even the most basic of services such as materials necessary for sensitization processes, transport, emergency feeding and others. Once a victim has reported a case to us receives the cancelling and legal advice as well, hence the victims fund filed has filed the above gap.

The Uganda public rescue foundation has managed to offer holistic support to victims. So with the availability of the victims fund violation of human rights among the people of Uganda can be at least prevented and (UPRF) we have provided support

to the public in order to fully access legal aid services well. So as a result of the victims fund we have also addressed the physical, emotional and psychological needs of victims.

Furthermore with the victims fund can enable Uganda public rescue foundation to take up cases on merits rather than geographical location.



UPRF awareness campaign with Nakiwate Asha from Uganda Human Rights Commission in front next to Patience .A. Ratenda from Justice Centres Uganda and Ms Nakabugo Nassimu from Foundation for Human Rights Initiatives (FHRI).

The victims fund will also enable us respond to any victim violation in Uganda without being confined to any specific geographical location of the country. Cases we address are normally drawn from any part of the country so long as there is public visibility of a given case or sister organization found it worth of follow-up. Cases taken up by victims fund are land cases, domestic violation, assisting the people of Uganda in conflict with the law, medical examination after sexual violence with the women, medical treatment and litigation of cases. Hence all cases we take involve media.

CHILD RIGHT PROTECTION

Children in Uganda experience harm, abuse and exploitation with little protection. In our effort to protect Ugandan children we have enter into partnership with local leaders and other development partners support the launch, implementation and monitoring of the ‘*KEEP THE CHILDREN SAFE*’ component of UNICEF’s country program action plan for 2014 to 2016 with the aim of influencing changes in attitude, negative cultural practices and increase awareness of the children’s rights.

Our work is targeting all districts in Buganda mainly masaka Kampala, wakiso, kayunga and others where incidents of child abuse are high and cultural practices that are contrary to child rights and protection are prevalent. Negative attitudes toward children’s rights are largely engulfed in belief the concept of child rights is a Central value that breeds undisciplined children so Uganda public rescue foundation is

looking forward to change the this perception and increase awareness of children's rights and protection.



Identifying legal issues regarding child protection in the communities and to share knowledge and information about the child rights and protection laws

UPRF TEAM OF TRAINERS

To do this Uganda public rescue foundation has trained a team of trainers on the child rights and equip them with information and skills on conducting community dialogues by using creative and inclusive dialogues, brainstorming, question and answer, buzz groups games and visual aids.

LEGAL EDUCATION TARGETING DUTY BEARER

Uganda public rescue foundation send a great trained team of trainers into communities to hold community dialogues and legal education targeting duty bearers comprised of representatives from the head office district, sub county, and local council leadership including community development officers, the local police, local councilors and other community and cultural leaders; children along with peer educators will also be trained on children rights and responsibilities.

The misconception in the community is that child rights is a way of spoiling children is one Uganda public rescue foundation work hard to change. Given that the participants in the legal education dialogues cut across religion, gender, education, profession and age, so in that case Uganda public rescue foundation have enable to improve on overall knowledge on child rights, child protection and prevention of violence and abuse in the communities. The community dialogues presented a great opportunity for our trained team to identify legal issues regarding child protection in the communities and to share knowledge and information about the child rights and protection laws, how to detect child abuse and refer cases to relevant authorities, cultural practices which have a negative impact on the child protection and proposals on how to address these issues.

The coupling of children's rights and responsibilities underlined the fact that our awareness campaigns was not be intended to spoil children but to protect and ensure

their wellbeing. Nevertheless, the right to child participation and the importance of listening to young people's voices and involving them in decision making processes that can affect them meet with considerable resistance.



Community dialogues presented a great opportunity for our trained team to identify legal issues regarding child protection in the communities and to share knowledge and information.

Through involving the children we have been able to give children a say in how we keep the law in communities can also help them learn more on children's rights. This was also open up to us about the challenges the face their fears and offer ideas on how we can help improve their protection in their communities. Most importantly inspired children to take ownership of their rights. The biggest lesson have taken with us from the dialogues is that children strongly believe their involvement is critical for improving their protection. We therefore need to continue working hard with children and community leaders as to encourage more children's involvement in planning and decision making processes on issues related to children. So Uganda public rescue foundation now is glad because of our dialogues duty bearers more aware of their responsibilities in protecting children.

While we make great strides, we know there is more to do. Uganda public rescue foundation has found out that cultural practices and poverty presented a significant protection concerns. So in the region defilement is fueled by the culture of force, as well as early marriages, mistreatment of children of different marriages; and orphans living with extended families are particularly susceptible to exploitation.

General improvement has weakened the traditional support capacities of the extended family and clan system. This is that the families and communities are no longer willing to assume responsibility for the care of orphans or vulnerable children. This in urn can lead to development of child headed households and increasing number of children participating in child labour - under harmful conditions in order to survive.

Evidently addressing poverty and social – economic circumstances is crucial to helping and protecting more children and their children and their families.

All in all the dialogues helped us in identifying community concerns in child protection and this also gave us feedback on how to set our priorities. Most importantly we left the Central region with the knowledge that the communities will actively participate in promoting the protection of children through conserving human rights and legal aid services.



Mr. Yiga Robert Executive Director 2nd right left next to Mr. Mpagi Sunday Head of Litigation uprf dialogue with community member and local leaders.

In 2015 we created our own ending violence. Justice for children program, so our work in masaka to enhance access for children and their families through protection and enforcement of human rights and is one of our success stories. Levels of child abuse in masaka are very high and many interventions in child protection fail because children are not involved. That year 2015 Uganda public rescue foundation made outreaches and awareness programs and also involves children and empowered to have ability demand for their rights and report child abuse and neglect.

UPRF DIALOGUE

In addition to offering legal aid services to children and their families Uganda public rescue foundation held about 20 community dialogues involving children and their families in discussions about child rights and responsibilities plus the role of the communities in child protection.

All over our awareness campaign at least reach over 12,000 children in masaka through trainings of children’s club patrons, teachers and club peer leaders. Information on child rights mainstreamed into education materials in some schools and we have also created child friendly interactive (IEC) materials which instrumentals in spreading awareness. Our interactive snakes and ladders board game

tailored to educate children about their rights in particular will be a huge success and is highly demanded.

In addition to this child rights committees set up in schools and continuously monitored by Uganda public rescue foundation.



HIS. Worship Alaari Muhirwa Kagoro at UPRF offices signing in Visitors Book being assisted by Mr. Mutebi Sam.

During our project period children were able to access legal counseling and representation in cases where they are abused, neglected and abandoned. So as a result of the awareness we registered an increased number of children themselves reporting cases to Uganda public rescue foundation offices in Masaka.

In order to strengthen community support structures and promote responsible child care Uganda public rescue foundation created child care Advocates selected from within the local communities to compliment and sustain our impact on ground. Our child care advocates can be more easily accessible to the grass root population; they carry out awareness and sensitization as part of their role. As a result we reached more people and lessen the dependency on Uganda public rescue foundation staff. This can be invaluable in aiding cost effective, sustainable and timely handling of cases and access to justices.

Peaceful family environment are optimal for the nurturing and upbringing of children. So through our provision of legal aid services we helped over 12,000 vulnerable children and their families using mediation and counseling. We played a key role in setting several family disputes across homes in Masaka and thus we were able to create health living environment for children in their homes.

Many of the challenges faced in seeking justice for children lie in court processes which are lengthy and riddled with delays. To respond to this problem we will try to ensure that the majority of the cases we handle are resolved out of court through mediation. The high poverty level in community is still a challenge and many clients

cannot afford court fees or costs attached to attend the court proceedings like transport. Uganda public rescue foundation will therefore try to where possible to support some of the neediest clients using clients' emergency fund.

The communities in masaka have little faith in the judicial system and cite corruption in government offices including the court and police as the reason for this. So address this problem our office will vigilantly follow up cases with the police and court on behalf of our clients.

Local councils and district officials in the communities will be sensitized about the laws relating to child protection. As a result child protection improved immensely over the project period and we see more active referral of children over the abuse and neglect cases to Uganda public rescue foundation offices and to the child care advocates. District officials do understand that they are accountable to the communities for the observance of child rights and as a result we see better morning of educational institutions and improvement in the local environment in the area of child protection.

The overall result of our awareness activities ensured community participation, achieving better levers of legal literacy, and improving referral systems to enforce child rights. We also manage to secure more effective service delivery, and create greater demand for accountable leadership and responsive justice for the poor, vulnerable and marginalize especially needy persons. Hence Uganda public rescue foundation continued to be the major referral centre on legal related issues within masaka

LAUNCH OF UPRF LAND RIGHTS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

That year 2015 Uganda public rescue foundation broke new ground in objective to promote economic justice and rights for the needy persons. We have provided outreach legal services in masaka where we have never operated before. Why does this matter? Following the conflicts in masaka and Mityana, the return process can be riddled with an increase in land conflicts. Boundary disputes are one of the most prevalent problems in masaka and these land disputes are the leading causes of economic disempowerment of the people of Uganda.



Launch of UPRF land rights Awareness campaign at Masaka District

UPRF'S OUTRECHES

In response to increasing reports of the dispossessions of needy persons (UPRF)'s outreaches awareness programs designed to educate the communities in masaka on the property rights of the people and a better understanding of the factors of preventing the economic empowerment of the youth within the divisions of masaka.

Working with the volunteers who are experts in livelihood and agricultural economics. (UPRF) conducted a workshop on economic justice for the needy persons in masaka. We changed our approach to maximize our impact on the ground, through using a gender perspective on economic justice and commercial laws for the needy persons, we improved the way the young lawyers conduct legal education with in the communities; and so doing we discovered that our definition of poverty and wealth differed from that of the communities we worked with and using the language that can be understood. Perhaps community dialogues are a great way of getting a clear picture, listening to a louder voice and getting to grips with the law operates on the ground and its effect on the livelihood of the needy persons.



UPRF conducted a workshop on economic justice for the needy persons in masaka. We changed our approach to maximize our impact on the ground, through using a gender perspective on economic justice and commercial laws for the needy persons.

Our research in masaka highlighted the magnitude of the marginalization of the needy persons with regard for human rights and accessing justice. We have also learnt that the low levels of literacy about human rights and limited access to justice are making it difficult for the needy persons to achieve all we have also seen that patriarchy perpetuates gender inequalities in the ownership of resources. We have also learnt that men have the decision making powers over proceeds from the sale of agricultural produce and it was from our community dialogues that dispassion of women widows orphans and the youth was being justified on cultural grounds to serve the personal interests of the male opportunities

Through the community outreach we hope to improve community commitment to the people's rights, improve access to land, improve access to legal justice for people and improve policy environment for economic and legal rights. So we;

- Mobilized the community for the outreach sessions in collaboration with the government authorities and the local leaders.
- Ascertained obstacles on economic empowerment of women such as restricted decision making powers, low literacy levels and poor access justice and start the process of addressing these obstacles.
- Educated women on their property rights and economic justice
- Gave legal advice to over 15000 people in masaka district.
- Initiated the process of obtain community support for securing and protecting people's property rights and in particular decision making powers over proceeds from the sale of agricultural produce. We were able to establish cultural institutions having a strong influence in settling land and property disputes and sharpening the community perceptions on the people's issues.
- Collected information on the socio-economic context with regard to promoting economic justice for women and the youth as well as identifying strategies to address

emerging concerns in the socio-economic context. We were able to determine that the most marginalized groups are widows are a prior area in our future interventions.

- Identified a core group of members to work on promoting economic justice for the needy persons and the youth in strengthening their capacity to do this.

But that's not all, as a result of the community outreach sessions we saw that men are albeit reluctant in approaching the importance of securing and protecting women's property rights. Most importantly the women in masaka are hungry to take ownership of their rights.

While we make a great start of a rally on community support to protect women's property rights and secure economic justice for women in masaka, more needs made to empower women economically. We also involved microfinance institutions to ensure that they meet the needs of women farmers and help them gain better access to micro-finance loans; so we need to reach yet more women by ensuring that more youth have access to information that is pertinent to their rights and livelihoods.



Hon. Shifrah Lukwago posing in the photo after the awareness session held at Busega kibumbiro kampala- District

ENHANCING THE RIGHTS TO OWN PROPERTY

For a long period of time the women's movement generally viewed cultures as a barrier to enhancing the rights of women. The focus on attaining equality, justice and empowerment was concentrated on identifying, highlighting and discouraging negative cultural practices. At Uganda public rescue foundation we are moving away from this view and decided instead to explore we can use culture to work for women and not against them.

In 2015 we decided to take an innovative approach and research culture and gain insider knowledge of reconciling culture and women's rights. Using Buganda and masaka as the case studies, we talked to the communities, share knowledge and make some great discoveries which will demonstrate to us that culture and rights are not explicit out of sync but that they can in fact work complimentarily. The communities in masaka are so eager to share their

experiences and knowledge; they are even keen to learn how to protect themselves using the law.



Mr. Matovu Seth Mugenyi and Mr. Byamurebere Edward interacting with the community members during the outreach activity in Jinja District

Combining multi- strategies in making gender justice part of the cultural understanding of communities; uprf provided legal aid services to victims of masaka in an empowering manner; enhance the capacity of local communities and informal religious and cultural institutions to protect people from human rights violations; Uganda public rescue foundation documented and published our research for the purpose of influencing scholarship and international human rights discourse.

- Two researches on culture and human rights on the Buganda were produced as knowledge products to strengthen advocacy for protection against SGBV. Given the abundance of literature on Buganda culture our study was academic, providing a historical analysis of how and why culture change happens. It has been published as a scholarly academic research. In contrast, because of the limited literature on kiga culture, our study largely relies on the reflections of women in interfacing with both culture and consequently, the kayunga study was produce as a popular literary version.
- At a dissemination workshop 115 opinion leaders law enforcement officers, academician, judiciary, cultural and religious leaders to discuss the study findings. Cultural leaders and authorities were recruited because of their perceive influence as agents of change in promoting women's rights. The fact that the workshop was officiated, Ultimately we found that culture and rights can work complimentarily. Our research deflected the notorious belief that women's rights were culturally alien and non-existent and we unearthed the unacknowledged truth that violence against women is the individual choice of an abuser and not necessarily that of culture.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MARRIAGE, PROPERTY AND CULTURE

Culture is a fundamental part of identity and awareness of power of culture is important in understanding people, behaviors and attitudes, gender relations and the notion of “development”. Many crimes committed against women in Uganda are attributes to culture and over the years it has become difficult to determine whether culture is as is widely believed to blame for the violations against women. We decided to get to the bottom of belief and find out whether in fact culture is contrary to the protection of people and their rights. We met over 150 people in Masaka made of poor women and men, development field workers. We held lively focus group discussions of Baganda culture, interviewed cultural leaders and also set up a legal aid clinic to give the community much needed legal advice.



Workshop on Awareness about Women's Rights in Marriage held on 2th march 2015

Our study found that marriage for Baganda women meant (and still means) a concession of power and dependence on men and culture is increasingly being protected to suit dominant male interests. Some of the negative practices which are commonly sanctioned as “cultural” but violate and lead to economic destitution and socio cultural exclusion of women where; the custom of “bride price” which is used to enforce the idea that men have proprietary rights over their wives; polygamy, domestic violence, the lack of decision making powers, lack of property rights and disinheritance.

It is naïve to think that women's rights abuse, poverty, marginalization and oppression can be tackled using modern legal instruments. Reviling in negative aspects of culture makes communities defensive and ultimately fails to gain their support for the human rights agenda. To affect the desired change as we have done and are continuing to do it is imperative to promote positive aspects of culture in order to make women's rights part of the cultural agenda.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Our work on reproductive rights is of our success that year 2015. In Uganda abortion is still a topic considered taboo even among lawyers who have frequently exposure to cases of sexual violence. The taboo has resulted in a myriad of contrasting and poorly informs the public, medical and legal opinions and on the topic, religious, cultural and archaic Beliefs are still obstacles to advocacy efforts for safe abortion. Women are being denied authority over their reproductive right and consequently are being stripped of their rights to make informed choices. Under our objective to promote sexual and reproductive health right for women in Uganda, Uganda public rescue foundation has to hold workshops for lawyers from diverse

backgrounds in private practice, the judiciary, the ministry of justice, department of republic of prosecution, legislative draft department, women organizations, the donor community, academia as well as Uganda public rescue foundation staff and board members to understand the law on abortion.

In the workshop a wide range of preconceptions about abortion are identified and challenged. Participants are presented with opportunities for introspective examination of their personal beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions concerning abortion. In this we discovered that the majority of lawyers in the workshop have differing knowledge on the law governing abortion. So can also let us find that lawyers' views on abortion are influenced by societal and patriarchal biases.

Advocacy for safe abortion from a health perspective is still a challenge. Although there are number of reports with data on the magnitude of unsafe abortion along with efforts to train health providers in the prevention and management of unsafe abortion, medical practitioners are reluctant to offer services from safe abortions out of fear of "violating the law" and social reprimand. Legal ambiguity discourages women and service providers from securing and providing safe abortion services and while Uganda continues to debate abortion in hushed whispers deafening cries. We are at the forefront of ensuring the legal understanding of the Maputo protocol which the legal providers for safe abortion in case of sexual violence and where it preserves the health and life of an expectant mother. Through the workshops we were able to dramatically shift the attitudes of participants from the belief that Uganda public rescue foundation's advocacy for safe abortion is promoting an illegal activity to a consensus to clarify the ambiguous legislations on abortion. Increasing awareness of the best practices and legal framework of other organization such as CHEHUD, help create more confidence in our efforts to advance reproductive health and rights of women. By the end of our workshop participants were more confident with the concept of advocacy for safe abortion and understand the need to make it culturally and socially acceptable for women to have ownership of this reproductive right.



Mr. Kiyinji Juma, Mr. Jafari Muhamed and Mr. Nkwanga Musa legal officers of UPRF During an outreach activity held on 13th march 2015.

During the experts' workshop, participants are equipped with various tools and strategies for promoting safe abortion as a reproductive health rights. These include the examination of international treaties and agreements, interpretations, of comparative abortion laws and their implications for commonwealth member states, and detailed guidelines on how to respond to well financed and politically connected anti-choice opposition. The global context of safe abortion as a global concern both in terms of public health and the women's sexual and reproductive rights.

Given the controversial nature of a abortion, the successful realization of women's rights to safe abortion is highly dependent on the development of a coordinated action and agreement on the roles and responsibilities of key actors.

Since receiving safe expert guidance on safe abortion this strengthened our working partnerships between the medical and legal professions in order to infuse rights based approach on safe abortion into medicine and clarify the legal obligations of medical workers to save live and advance women's rights.

SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Our interaction with women in masaka reveals that violence is very prevalent in the region often hiding itself in the intimacy of thousands. The unwillingness to report cases of SGBV is still a major hurdle for victims. Reasons including loss of hope, insensitive treatment by authorities, fear of causing "trouble" in home environments and fear of repeated assaults not only prevents victims of SGBV from reporting cases to the authorities but also them from seeking medical attention at health centers.

In masaka land the prevalence of attitudes such as violence against women is "normal" and "keeps them in their place" are held not only by misguided community members but also legal and medical professionals as well as in institutional organizations like the police.

Unfortunately even when cases are reported survivors still experience a multitude of frustrations because of the long, drawn out justice process. Many prosecutions of cases of SGBV fail because of the lack of medical evidence, police investigations last too long, corruption is prevalent, victims have to travel long distances to court, incur several expenses, and too often victims cases are trivialized. In short the cost of justice is simply too high for survivors.

The basic knowledge of rights and rights abuse exists in the community but is eroded by social factors on the ground, the reality is that marital disputes signify the breakdown of marriage and women are careful not to report violence occurring from these disputes in order to avoid getting perpetrators into trouble or being seen as threatening the stability of the family, or perceive as failures in their own lives.

So that year 2016 we will dig deep to help women in masaka and address the prevalence of SGBV in the region

VICTIMS COMING TO US

Instead of the victims coming to us, we worked hard on taking justice to victims and in so doing we reached bigger audience in the heart of the settings that breed violence and manage to help over 150 victims.

UPRF WORK ON THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The home is supposed to be where the hearts rests. Yet most violence against women is experienced in the home and perpetrated by people women, love , trust or are related to moreover, people often violet the law out of ignorance or the belief that society would excuse them for doing so thus compounding social impurity.

In 2015 we are pleased to celebrate the enhancement of the domestic violence act 2014 which broaden and define violence in a very expansive manner.

Type of violence	Definition
Economic	Using economic power deprive another person of economic and financial resources which the victim is entitled to.
Emotional	Verbal or psychological abuse.
Physical	Causing bodily harm or endangering the life, boy health or development of the victim.
Sexual	Any conduct of a sexual nature that a buses, humiliates, degrades or violates the dignity of another person.

The act lifts the heavy veil that in the past protected domestic violence by framing it as a private matter. We are overjoyed that because of the domestic violence act women will no longer have to suffer in silence. To ensure there was widespread knowledge about the act.

- We created a poster on the domestic violence act.

The poster describes the domestic violence act that outlines the salient components of the act.

- A booklet on the international criminal court which describes the court and its mandate, the procedure in the court, the jurisdiction of the court, the relation between Uganda and the (ICC), and the sexual and gender based violence aspects of the international criminal court law.

These materials form part of the information education and the communications and advocacy materials to be used in the national and international advocacy to end legal impunity for gender based violence.



Workshop to empowering medical professionals with the 'know how 'on sexual and gender based violence has so far better equipped practioners with knowledge and skills to properly

handle cases of this nature and has enabled them to acknowledge their individual as well as joint roles in accessing justice for victims.

Although the rules and regulations are not yet in place, the passing of the domestic violence act will be hugely instrumental in enabling women to secure justice and putting a stop to impunity for abusers. We are positive that the domestic violence act will help support the creation of a violent free society.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Sexual and gender based violence is the most common form of daily violence against women. In Uganda sexual based violence is very common but hidden crime which many women experience but few ever report. This is a general belief that matrimonial disharmony is a private matter that justice for victims is unattainable.

Sexual and gender based violence poses a major back to women's rights in Uganda. A significant to the successful prosecution of cases is poor medical evidence. The lack of appropriate knowledge, competencies, and essential tools, has lead to health professionals mishandling cases of sexual and gender violence and losing critical evidence as a result of this. In addition, health care providers often work in isolation from their professional counterparts in the legal and justice fields. This can often mean that cases of sexual and gender based violence are not reported to authorities for legal redress in law enforcement agencies and public health providers.



Mr. Muganzi Richard (Right) former Executive Director LASPNET, HIS. Worship Alaari Muhiirwa Kagoro (middle) spokesperson to Judiciary and Mr. Yiga Robert Executive Director (UPRF) during the training and awareness campaign.

In an attempt to address this state of affairs, we continued to work with medical professionals to develop joint strategies on how to combat sexual and gender based violence in Uganda. Our aim is to create a responsive and sensitive health care system with a holistic approach to sexual and gender based violence.

To undertake this challenge we collaborated with organizations and develop a training manual on sexual and gender based violence. The manual contains nine modules detailing both critical and legal aspects of sexual and gender violence. It featured useful insights on the effects of sexual and gender violence on women’s health, how to detect and document sexual and gender based violence, and to assist victims through the law, empowering medical professionals with the ‘know how ‘on sexual and gender based violence has so far better equipped practioners with knowledge and skills to properly handle cases of this nature and has enabled them to acknowledge their individual as well as joint roles in accessing justice for victims.

The coming together of the medical and legal sectors has forged a strategic partnership that is immensely important on the path towards strengthening and protecting women’s rights. Emphatically it has demonstrated the professional crossovers between lawyers and doctors, resulting in better understanding and appreciating of their complimentary roles in the pursuit of justice.

POLICING GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Despite the fact that Uganda have signed up to many international human rights treaties obliging the state to undertake it’s duties in upholding it’s citizens’ human rights, offences such as rape and hold defilement are on increase, and most often affects young girls and women. Often women experience insensitive treatment, are accused of provoking violence they experience and are subjected to further degradation from the police when they report cases of sexual and gender based violence against them.

As part of our “empowering communities by expanding access to gender justice to the women Uganda” projects we sought to collectively design an accountability tool for the law enforcement agencies in northern Uganda with the focus on police. With the support of Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC) we held a three day work shop in 2015 for SGBV for the law enforcement agencies.



Mr. Mpagi Sunday Head of Litigation UPRF, legal awareness on women empowerment.

The participants came from Uganda police force, ministry of health, social and probation welfare officers, lawyers on NGOs in Uganda dealing with SGBV in post conflict situations. A team of international experts from UPRF also present and brought their practical insights,

passion and diplomacy to the table. We also coordinated sectoral approach for the law enforcement agencies that have to improve on justice and accountability to victims of SGBV. We also saw a good turn up of ranking police officers attend our work shop and this was sign of importance they attach to issues of gender which, largely be dismissed as an incontinence at best, and imperialist, at worst. So through the training we were able to impact important knowledge as in helping police officers properly tackle general gender issues in their work.

In the training we introduced officers to issues such as sexuality and sexual rights – issues that is generally regarded as taboo. The training workshops will allow us to;

- Create partnership with the police force who are a key players involve in protecting women against sexual and gender based violence.
- Initiate the change in individual attitudes by building officers gender analytical skills an enhancing their knowledge on gender issues.
- Enhance officer’s personal awareness and appreciation of the diversity and impact of sexual violence.
- Get officers to acknowledge their important duty in protecting girls and women from sexual violence. (The officers have worked with contend that they are not living up to their role and expectations)



UPRF legal officer Mr. Matovu Seth Mugenyi was attending to local leaders Mr. Yiga Dan Chairman Central B Zone and Mrs. Edith Sentongo Chairperson L.C.1 Kibumbiro B Zone Busega Parish during outreach programs at Busega Kampala.