



Promoting Human Rights in Africa

NANHRI Newsletter, January - April 2015

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Participants at a capacity building workshop for East African Community NHRIs

Message from the Executive Director



Thank you for taking time to read our quarterly Newsletter issue. As I write this, NANHRI has begun implementing its strategic plan for 2015- 2019. A key pillar of this plan is the recognition of the need to remain vigilant in anticipating and addressing emerging challenges to human rights and the subsequent prioritization of the same. We urge NHRIs to be conscious and actively program for emerging human rights issues that include conflict management, resolution and peace building; Business and Human Rights; International Terrorism and Sexual orientation and Gender Identity issues among others that have a direct bearing on the full enjoyment of human rights by all citizens.

NANHRI in this plan has equally identified groups who are potentially more vulnerable in so far as human rights protection is concerned and it shall seek to actively implement programmes for the benefit of these groups. These groups include children, women, and persons living with disabilities among others. Apart from the aforementioned focus areas, NANHRI will also seek to actively strengthen NHRI operations with regard to particular core NHRI functions and these include Complaints handling and investigations; Awareness raising, education, training, and research (including national inquiries and campaigns); Cooperation with civil society; and Engagement with regional and international bodies and mechanisms.

In line with our goal to provide support to NHRIs in order to enable them more effectively undertake their mandate of human rights monitoring, promotion, protection and advocacy; we have planned workshops and trainings to build capacity for NHRIs on different thematic areas. Some of the workshops are; the role of NHRIs in monitoring and implementation of decisions on Communications of the African Human Rights Bodies scheduled for 19-21 April 2015 in Banjul Gambia and learning incubator on reducing the overuse of pretrial detention from 19- 21 May 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda . In March we held training on Conflict Management Resolution and peace building during electoral process for East Africa Community NHRIS in Nairobi.

Despite many challenges facing NHRIs as they labour to fulfill their mandate including budgetary constraints, political interference from the Executive arm of government, delay in appointment of commissioners, the NANHRI secretariat is encouraged with steps NHRIs institutions are taking to entrench a culture of respecting, promoting and protecting human rights in Africa

Finally, we wish to thank all partners and members for their continued support to NANHRI in its efforts towards promoting a human rights culture on the continent.

Gilbert Sebihogo,
Executive Director, NANHRI.

‘UPR, Second Cycle, what lessons for NHRIs?’

During the 28th Annual General Meeting of the ICC held from 11-13 March, 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland, NANHRI organized a side event. The aim of the event was to assess the engagement by NHRIs with the UPR process this far and to identify challenges and good practices in so far as the implementation of UPR recommendations at the national level is concerned as well as to identify strategy and entry points, going forward, that can strengthen the implementation process at the national level.

Speakers at the event were Ms. Francisca Piccin of the UPR- info, Foster Hamuyube –Zambian Human Rights Commission, Mr. Khalid Ramli - National Council for Human Rights of Morocco, Mr. David Rutherford – New Zealand Human Rights Commission and Ms. Susan Blanc Thompson- OHCHR- UPR Section



Photo: Ms. Kagwiria Mbogori of KNCHR seated third right moderating at the event

The session was moderated by Ms. Kagwiria Mbogori, Chairperson of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights.

Building the capacity of EAC– NHRIs in Conflict Management, Resolution and Peace Building

A peer to peer exchange and capacity building workshop was organized by the Network of African NHRIs and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in the context of an ongoing project that seeks to strengthen the capacity of African NHRIs and more specifically the capacity of East Africa Community NHRIs in relation to their role in conflict prevention, resolution and peace building. The workshop which was hosted by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights was held in Nairobi on 23 to 25 March 2015.

The workshop was attended by 22 Officials from East African Community National Human Rights Institutions namely Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania. Also in attendance were representatives from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) , the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Kenya (IEBC) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA- Kenya). The workshop was facilitated by Experts from the sub-region .

The workshop was a practical step in cementing NHRIs crucial role in electoral process especially in the context of conflict management that is increasingly being recognized by human rights actors including those involved in managing electoral process. This recognition is largely backed by the evident link between human rights and elections as well as the link between democracy and human rights. These linkages, especially the one between democracy and human rights, further underscores the reason why a significant number of conflicts in Africa are triggered by elections.

Specifically, the workshop had six main themes: Elections and Human Rights, the electoral cycle approach for elections, status of EAC- NHRIs interaction with their respective electoral cycles and experience with early warning, action planning and the legal and institutional framework for elections in East Africa. These themes were designed to achieve the following objectives; enhancing the understanding of NHRIs of the electoral process, providing participants with an opportunity to look at their own needs, develop key recommendations to actors in the electoral process and how to apply the areas covered in their country setting, empowering NHRIs with knowledge and practical tools on the role that NHRIs could potentially play in the electoral process and sharing best practices on conflict early warning and subsequently be equipped with knowledge to apply early warning system in their own settings.



Photo: Participants at the workshop

News from our Members

The National Human Rights Council of Morocco (CNDH)

Engagements with other NHRIs

The CNDH held two training sessions for the national human rights commissions of Mauritania and Niger. The CNDH shared its experience in various human rights fields including but not limited to; reporting techniques, complaints handling, functioning of regional commissions, interactions with national and regional actors, the ICC accreditation process and the management of human and financial resources.

Fusing Culture and Human Rights

The CNDH contributed to the Moroccan Contemporary Movies and Human Rights Festival, held at the Filmoteca de Catalunya in Barcelona, from 13 to 23 January 2015. This event was co-organized by the CNDH, the Filmoteca de Catalunya, ARTEDA and APAIUC (Spanish NGOs), in cooperation with the Moroccan Embassy of Spain and the Moroccan Cinema Center (CCM). The screened movies addressed several human rights issues in Morocco.

Tanzania Commission on Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG)

Welcoming New Commissioners

Six new Commissioners were appointed to the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance to serve for a period of 3 years. Hon. Bahame Tom Mukirya Nyanduga is the new Chairperson of the Commission. Hon. Bahame Nyanduga also served as a Commissioner and Acting Chairperson at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Also appointed is Hon. Iddi Ramadhan Mapuri as the Vice- Chairperson and four other officials as commissioners. They are Hon. Mohamed Khamis Hamad, Hon. Dr. Kevin Mandopi, Hon. Rehema Msabila Ntimizi and Hon. Salma Ali Hassan. Their appointment started effectively since January 6, 2015



CHRAGG appointed new commissioners (Chairman Bahame Tom Nyanduga, centre)

Hon. Nyanduga is a lawyer by profession. He holds a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Dar es Salaam, Masters in Law from London and Postgraduate Diploma in Law from the Hague. Until his appointment, he served in various capacities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Tanganyika Law Society, and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Where he worked as Commissioner and Acting Chairperson of the Commission.

The Office of the Ombudsman of Namibia

Legal Aid Clinic to the public

The Office of the Ombudsman in its mission to guarantee access to justice to citizens regardless of their social, economic, political and religious standing in the society partnered with the Law society of Namibia and secured the services of legal counsels who volunteered to offer advice to the public on various legal issues including but not limited to; labour laws, domestic violence, wills and estate, divorce. Commendably, financial advisors from the Namibian Financial Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA) offered financial advice on proper management of resources and being self reliant. This exercise took place on Friday, 6 February 2015 at the UN plaza in Katutura and attracted about 200 people from all corners of Namibia.



Adv. Danie Small, a Namibian legal practitioner giving advice to clients.

By: Eileen Rakow



Uganda Human Rights Commission

Chairperson Mr. Kaggwa visits Bunyoro Sub Region to assess the Human Rights situation.

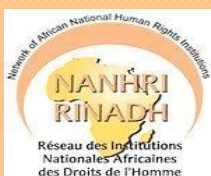
The Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) Mr. Med K Kaggwa carried out spot visits to the districts of Hoima, Masindi, Kiryandongo and Buliisa during the month of January 2015, to strengthen partnerships with the various local government administrations and other stakeholders based in the region.

The visit was to among other things assess the general human rights situation in these areas and to discuss ways of improving the working relationship between UHRC and the institutions visited in the quest to protect and promote human rights in the Country. The UHRC Chairperson and his team were able to interact with UHRC stakeholders based in the Bunyoro sub region and to appreciate the prevailing human rights issues, the working conditions and the challenges they face in their human rights work in the region. The UHRC team held meetings with District Police Commanders, District Prisons Commanders, Chief Administrative Officers, Resident District Commissioners, Chief Magistrates and the District Chairpersons in the four districts visited, who assured them of their commitment to support the human rights cause.

The UHRC Chairperson also used the opportunity to inspect some police stations and prisons in Kiryandongo; a remand home in Masindi and a Health Centre at Buliisa to assess the human rights situation and make appropriate recommendations.

While in Kiryandongo district, the UHRC team was informed of some of the teething human rights issues in the area which among others included the problem of land wrangles that were reported to take long to be resolved and the need for government to handle land evictions without infringing on the rights of affected communities. There were concerns of court and tribunal cases taking long to be resolved due to inadequate information and financial constraints, in addition to complaints of delayed payment of pension benefits to retired civil servants, which were reported to violate the rights of those affected. It was resolved that UHRC should sensitize citizens on their duties and obligations, in addition to claiming rights in order to achieve the protection and promotion of human rights in Uganda. UHRC was also asked to lobby government to improve the prison and remand home facilities in Kiryandongo district.

By: Patricia Nduru, Director, Monitoring and Inspections



NETWORK OF AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
Réseau des Institutions Nationales Africaines des Droits de l'Homme



National Commission on Human Rights of Burkina Faso

The National Commission on Human Rights of Burkina Faso held its first regular session of 2015 from 18 to 20 February 2015 at its new headquarters. This session of the governing body had the following as the meeting agenda: Review progress reports of projects and financial expenditure, the functioning of the commissions' bodies, review and adopt rules of procedure, review the 2015 prospects



Photo: Members of the governing body meeting

Though faced with challenges of inadequate staff and interference from the different arms of government, the commission successfully achieved the following; organized a training workshop for commission staff on monitoring of places of detention, developed the organisation's website and conducted a workshop to determine the urgent needs of the Commission to achieve its objectives. This was done in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The commission also adopted an Action Plan to be implemented in the year 2015 in two thematic areas: Review of the establishing law of the commission to comply with the Paris Principle and adoption of the strategic plan to act as a guiding reference in the implementation of the various interventions.

By: Somitié SOUGUE, Secretary-general

Upcoming NANHRI events

Workshop on the role of NHRIs in monitoring and implementation of decisions on Communications of the African Human Rights Bodies from 19- 21 April 2015 in Banjul Gambia

Learning incubator on reducing the overuse of pretrial detention from 19- 21 May 2015 in Kigali , Rwanda.

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