



FHRI e-Newsletter

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THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

CEON-U report questions 2016 Uganda elections

The Citizens Election Observers Network – Uganda (CEON-U) a consortium of 18 National and 23 sub-national civil society organizations, issued a preliminary statement on 20th February 2016 on its findings from the 2016 national Presidential and Parliamentary Elections titled *Uganda's Hope for Free and Fair Elections dashed*. The CEON-U aims at enhancing the integrity of the election process by providing evidence-based impartial assessments, deterring and exposing irregularities, and increasing citizen participation in Uganda's electoral process.

In short, CEON-U concluded that *"While Election Day processes and tabulation at the district level were conducted relatively well, with the exception*

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A cross-section of CEON-U Data Entry Clerks receiving reports of the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections from the observers at its National Data Centre at Hotel Africana, Kampala on 18th February 2016.

Makerere University Wins the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition at Ndejje University



His Excellency Donal Cronin, Ambassador of Ireland to Uganda giving his remarks at the opening of the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition at Ndejje University on 4th March 2016.

Makerere University emerged winner of the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition hosted by Ndejje University in Luweero district. On 4th and 5th March 2016, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) together with Ndejje University organized the 2016 human rights competition under the theme *"Towards democratic consolidation"*

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31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council urged to utilize Election Observer Mission reports on Uganda's 2016 General Elections

On 10th March 2016, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) called on the UN Human Rights Council to utilize the February 2016 Election Observer Mission reports authored by both Domestic and International Election Observer Missions. The reports would inform the dialogue with the Government of Uganda on the state of electoral democracy and the situation of human rights in the country.

Speaking at a Side Event organized by the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Program (EHAHRDP), OMCT, ISHR and FIDH in Geneva during the 31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council, Ms. Sheila Muwanga, the Deputy Executive Director (Programs) of FHRI and Vice President of FIDH -Africa Region, while acknowledging the relatively peaceful election day on 18th February 2016, flagged up some of the challenges documented with respect to the management of the elections, and respect for human rights which undermined the credibility and integrity of the electoral process.

Among the issues highlighted were the disregard and non-implementation of the electoral reform proposals mooted by various stakeholders; the ineffectiveness of the Electoral Commission in administering the poll; the irregularities experienced during the voting process, the persistent lack of public trust and confidence in the Electoral Commission; the legal and procedural lapses in the process of compiling the National Voters' Register; and limited voter information and education by the Electoral Commission.

Ms. Muwanga also pointed out police brutality and restrictions on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, attacks on journalists and media in the course of their work; harassment, arrest and detention of opposition politicians along with some of their supporters, undue limitation on freedoms of expression and access to information rights arising from the social media blackout sanctioned by the Uganda Communications Commission on 18th February 2016. All these scenarios painted a grim picture of the human rights situation during the February elections.

FHRI and FIDH called upon the UN Human Rights Council to take advantage of the events leading to Uganda's Universal Periodic Review scheduled later in the year to pronounce itself on the aforementioned issues.



Right Ms. Sheila Muwanga, the Deputy Executive Director (Programs) at FHRI speaking about Uganda's human rights situation at the Side Event organized by the East & Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Program, OMCT, ISHR and FIDH in Geneva during the 31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council on 10th March 2016, Geneva.

FHRI and FIDH visit Helsinki with the UN Special Rapporteur on Peaceful Assembly

'It was opportune for FHRI and FIDH to participate in the seminar on shrinking civic space', organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland on 15th March 2016 at the Finilandia,' said Ms. Sheila Muwanga, the Deputy Executive Director (Programs) of FHRI and Vice President of FIDH -Africa Region.

Giving a global perspective to the phenomenon on the shrinking civil society space, Mr. Maina Kiai, the UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly gave an account of his experiences from over 20 country visits he had made around the world. To him, the space for civil society was not only shrinking but had actually closed in some countries.

Ms. Sheila Muwanga gave an account of the shrinking civil society space in Uganda and in the region. Assessing the situation in Ethiopia, down to South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe, Ms. Muwanga noted that it was a mixed bag.

The Under Secretary of State in the Finish Government, members of the Department of Human Rights and some Members of Parliament discussed the challenges facing civil society and the operating environment in other parts of the world and the role Finland could play in promoting civil society space. Unlike other countries, for Finland it was the budget cuts to civil society work that had affected the work of civil society.

To follow the discussions at the Civic space seminar follow this link: [State of the Civil Society - Kansalaisyhteiskunnan nykytila 15 March 2016](#)

Nkumba University holds 11th Annual Lawyers Day

Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director of FHRI has encouraged students to always be creative in order to transform society.

Speaking at the 11th Annual Lawyers' Day organized by Nkumba University Law Society under the theme **"Can law be used as a tool to transform society?"** Dr. Sewanyana noted a wide range of initiatives that the legal fraternity can embrace in society. Referring to his own contribution as a lawyer, he highlighted a number of vibrant civil society organizations that have benefited from his support, and have tremendously contributed to changing society, such as Human Rights Network-Uganda, Citizen's Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda, Uganda Children's Rights NGO Network and Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns. He however noted that it requires commitment, diligence, honesty, and exemplary leadership for focused lawyers to make a difference in society. He urged students to read extensively and recommended one book: *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* by Robert T. Kiyosaki, which he believes can be very inspiring.

The Lawyers' Day was held on 18th March 2016 at Nkumba University and was also attended by different lawyers in the professional circles including Hon. Medard Lubega Ssegona, Member of Parliament for Busiro East and Prof. Fredrick Jjuuko from the Law School of Makerere University. The event was attended by 120 students (53 female and 67 male).



Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director of FHRI giving his keynote address at the 11th Annual Lawyers' Day at Nkumba University on 18th March 2016.

THE RESEARCH DIVISION

FHRI and ACTV discuss stakeholders report to the UPR Working Group



Meeting of the Civil and Political Rights Cluster under HURINET-U on 11th December 2015 at the Human Rights House to discuss issues to include in the UPR Stakeholders Report.

In preparation for Uganda's upcoming assessment at the 26th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) together with the African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV) authored a Stakeholders Report and submitted it to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR).

FHRI and ACTV are co-chairs of the Civil and Political Rights Cluster, a loose coalition of non-governmental organizations that work on civil and political rights issues in Uganda within the framework of Human Rights Network - Uganda. The cluster consists of 38 organisations

across the country who meet periodically to monitor progress towards the realization of civil and political rights in the country.

The first meeting of the Civil and Political Rights Cluster in preparation to Uganda's upcoming review was held on 11th December 2015 at the Human Rights House to identify issues to be included in the report. The meeting was attended by 10 representatives from member organizations that form part of the cluster and other members contributed using online services particularly those from upcountry.

Following this meeting, FHRI prepared a draft Stakeholders Report, which was discussed in a second cluster meeting on 15th March 2016 at the Human Rights House. The meeting was attended by 8 cluster members who provided feedback on the draft report.

To validate the report, two validation meetings were held. The first validation meeting was organized by HURINET-U on 18th March 2016 at Hotel Africana and brought together members from the wider civil society in Uganda. The second validation meeting was organized by FHRI with key government officials on 21st March 2016. Officials from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces and Uganda Police Force met at the Human Rights House and validated the report. Inputs from the meeting were incorporated into the final report that was submitted on 24th March 2016 to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to be discussed in Geneva during the 26th Session of the UPR Working Group in October 2016.

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE PROJECT

Validation of the Draft Model Local Policy Guidelines on land rights of former IDPs



A group photo of participants at one of the stakeholders' meeting validating the 1st draft of the Model Local Policy Guidelines (LPGs) at Lamogi Sub-County, Amuru District on 4th February 2016.

Under the Transitional Justice project which seeks to promote the land rights of formerly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) convened three stakeholders' validation meetings in the villages of Gira Gira and Okutire, and also at the Lamogi Sub-county in Amuru District. The meetings held between 2nd and 4th February 2016, were to validate the 1st Draft Model Local Policy Guidelines (LPGs) developed by FHRI on the land rights of formerly IDPs in Lamogi and Pabbo Sub-Counties.

These meetings both at the village and Sub-county level were based on FHRI's earlier findings from the Situation Analysis conducted in September 2016 in Lamogi and Pabbo Sub-Counties. The study seeks to understand the extent to which arbitrary deprivation of land has impacted on the rights of former IDPs in their bid to access and own land in the two Sub Counties in Amuru district.

The three validation meetings attracted a total of 162 key selected stakeholders drawn from Local Government officials, Local Councilors, youth representatives, traditional and cultural leaders, Community Based Organisations, women's groups and representatives of the district in areas of land, health, education and security. The validation meetings held between 2nd and 4th February 2016, in Gira Gira village, 70 (36 females and 34 males) participants took part, in Okutire village 41 (18 females and 23 males) as well as 51 (12 females and 23 males) participants were drawn from Lamogi Sub-county. Ms. Caren Kiptoo Programme Officer, Civil Society Great Lakes Project represented the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) at these meetings.

During these validations, the 1st draft Model LPGs was presented to all participants to ease land acquisition, management and disposal. Participants were invited to provide input in order to strengthen the guidelines. In this respect, some of the key issues where consensus was built include: participation of all relevant stakeholders on land matters in specific area locations; involvement of clan leaders in land dispute management; and that discussions on the sale of land should always be between family members and clan leaders with limited or no involvement at all of local leaders.

FHRI hopes that once agreed upon, adopted and implemented in Lamogi and Pabbo Sub-Counties, these guidelines would then be rolled out to other Sub-Counties in the district and eventually to other districts in the Greater Northern region.

This project is implemented under the auspices of FHRI's Transitional Justice campaign within the framework of the Great Lakes Civil Society Project, a partnership programme between Danish Refugee Council and FHRI. This initiative seeks to hold governments accountable to the commitments made for protecting internally displaced persons by proposing realistic policy solutions to conflict and displacement.



THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Makerere University Wins the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition *from page 1.*



A cross section of delegates at the opening session of the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition pose for a photograph at Ndejje University on 4th March 2016. **Front row, 4th left:** His Excellency Donal Cronin, Ambassador of Ireland to Uganda; **5th left:** Prof. Eriabu Lugujo, Vice Chancellor of Ndejje University; **6th left:** Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director of FHRI.



Students from Makerere University who won the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition pose for a photograph with Ms. Sophie Racine, the Component Manager for Rights, Justice and Peace (**Extreme Right**) Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) at Ndejje University on 5th March 2016.



Prof. Eriabu Lugujo, Vice Chancellor of Ndejje University giving his remarks during the 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition at Ndejje University on 5th March 2016.

in Uganda: counting the gains' The Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) supports the Students Leadership Programme at FHRI organized the event that registered 456 students (240 male: 216 female) from twenty-two (22) Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning in Uganda.

The Chief Guest, H. E. Donald Cronin, the Ireland's Ambassador to Uganda was pleased with the selected theme and timing of the students' competition. He acknowledged FHRI's efforts that have enabled students to engage in such debates on different human rights issues in Uganda. He pledged to support this initiative and invited the winners of the 2016 competition to meet with him at a future date to discuss their focus in upholding and fighting for human rights in Uganda.

Prof. Eriabu Lugujo, the Vice Chancellor of Ndejje University thanked FHRI for giving Ndejje University a chance to host the 9th Edition of the competition. In his welcome remarks, he challenged the youths to think outside the box and be the architects of their future. He encouraged them to be analytical, flexible, inquisitive, proactive, and above all be tolerant because, education only has pillars that open pathways for actions.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, the Executive Director of FHRI applauded all the participants in the competition. He also expressed his sincere gratitude to Ndejje University for successfully organizing the event. He urged the students to continue deepening their understanding of democracy and human rights issues as an effort towards attaining peaceful democracy in Uganda. Basing on their presentations, Dr. Sewanyana noted the improvement in the level of research and understanding of human rights issues among the youth. He said '*Unless Ugandans understand the value of human rights and democracy, it will be hard for the country to have genuine democracy.*'

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The 9th Inter-University Human Rights Competition *continued from page 5.*

In her closing remarks, Ms. Sophie Racine, the Component Manager for Rights, Justice and Peace from DGF acknowledged the effort by FHRI and the Universities that deliberately decided to engage students in such debates. She noted that DGF and her member countries realized that such programs as the Student Leadership Programmes offer effective platforms to promote good leadership and human rights. The judges commended the lead presenters for the hard work and commitment exhibited in their submissions. They noted and acknowledged the remarkable improvement displayed in time keeping, confidence, teamwork and mastery of the subject by the presenters. The panel of judges at this competition comprised of Mr. Asuman Bisiika, a retired journalist, Mr. Solomon Wilson Kirunda, from the Legal Committee of the Parliament of Uganda and Mr. Denis Kibirige from the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The overall star universities in this competition were awarded with certificates and cash prizes. Makerere University won with 83%, followed by Ndejje University with 79% and Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi with 77% respectively.

Every year the Students Leadership Programme at FHRI organizes an Inter-University Human Rights Competition for the University Students Human Rights Network, which to-date has membership of 37 institutions of higher learning in Uganda. The 2016 competition registered participation from the following institutions: Mountains of the Moon University, Uganda Technical College –Bushenyi, Makerere University Business School, Islamic University in Uganda - Mbale, International University of East Africa, Kampala University, Bishop Stuart University, Uganda Pentecostal University, Uganda Martyrs University-Nkozi, Kabale University, Makerere University, Busoga University, Kampala International University, Uganda Christian University-Mukono, Gulu University, Cavendish University, Busitema University, Ndejje University, Kumi University, Kyambogo University, Nkumba University, and National Teachers College -Unyama.

FHRI promotes sexual and reproductive health rights in Kalangala District

The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) is currently promoting the understanding of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) in Kasekulo and Kitobo landing sites in Kalangala. A rapid assessment of the current situation was conducted from 14th to 18th March 2016 in response to FHRI's past interventions that revealed the high prevalence of violations of SRHR. The initiative is supported by the Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA), and involves advocacy and capacity building of key stakeholders with the objective of catalyzing the communities' potential to bring out measurable improvements in the enjoyment of SRHR.

During the rapid assessment study conducted in the two landing sites, the team documented the experiences of paralegals, duty bearers and women. The findings revealed that the concept of SRHR is still alien to duty bearers, thus the urgent need to create more awareness. This will be achieved through equipping the paralegals with skills to monitor and document human rights violations of SRHR on the islands.

Using a human rights based approach, FHRI plans to strengthen community based oversight and advocacy mechanisms by building the capacity of paralegals and existing Village Health Teams to articulate the concept of SRHR, undertake human rights monitoring and reporting, and create or utilize civic spaces to share findings and advocate for policy and practice changes through training courses, neighbourhood assemblies, and documenting issue-based reports on health rights among others. The interventions will create awareness and empower community monitors in handling SRHR issues, and improve on their knowledge and skills in human rights monitoring and documenting related violations.



The FHRI team in a discussion with paralegals and Village Health Teams at Kitobo landing site, Kalangala District on 15th March 2016.

THE LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

Legal aid rapid response during the Uganda's general elections, February 2016

During the presidential and parliamentary elections held on 18th February 2016, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative together with CEON-U superintended a legal aid rapid response mechanism with over 300 members who comprised lawyers and paralegals stationed in various districts of Uganda. The legal team provided immediate legal aid assistance to citizens who faced election violence. The team had a Call Center at Hotel Africana on 18th and 19th February 2016 with a Toll Free number - 0800100016 to receive calls from people seeking assistance and information on what was happening on the Election Day.

The response team received 370 calls concerning various incidents touching on delayed delivery of voting materials, delayed voting, pre-ticked ballot papers, non-adherence to the voting rules and regulations, voter bribery, missing polling stations, missing names on the register and inability of election officials to use the biometric machine. Delays in the voting process were mainly reported from the polling stations in and around Kampala and Wakiso districts. Due to such incidences, the Electoral Commission extended the voting time to 7:00pm to enable all eligible Ugandans to cast their vote. There were few incidents of violence reported and these were responded to by the legal officers and paralegals in the different districts where the cases arose such as unlawful arrest and the unlawful detention of voters and election observers.

Legal aid camps held in Wakiso and Kiboga Districts

In the on-going effort to improve access to justice for the vulnerable and poor people in Uganda, the Legal Services Division at FHRI held legal aid camps in Kiboga and Wakiso districts in March 2016. During the camps, various activities were undertaken including provision of legal assistance, legal rights awareness, training of local leaders, and radio talk shows.

The Legal Aid Camps are conducted within the Legal Aid Programme (LEAP) funded by the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). The programme targets the rural and urban poor particularly women and children in six districts namely: Kampala, Wakiso, Kiboga, Kalangala, Kibaale and Bundibugyo focusing on criminal matters, gender based violence, land justice, family and civil matters, legal and human rights awareness, and alternative dispute resolution.

KIBOGA LEGAL AID CAMP: In Kiboga District, the legal aid camp was held from 22nd to 24th March 2016 in Bukomero Sub-County targeting 3 parishes of Kagogo, Mwezi and Kikooba. Priority was given to land matters due to the prevalence of land related conflicts caused by the unlawful occupation of public land and general lack/limited knowledge on land related laws amongst the population.

A total of 439 people comprising adults and youth (233 males: 206 females) attended the legal rights awareness sessions. The participants were sensitized on land matters with specific emphasis on the land tenure systems and the rights and obligations accruing from each system, the law of succession, and the procedure to follow in disposal of land including family land. 23 clients opened files during the camp with 20 land related cases, 2 criminal matters and 1 domestic case. The land related cases are attributed to the unlawful disposal of public land by the District Land Board which negates the rights of customary occupants, and disputes between landlords and *bibanja* holders as well as matrimonial property.

WAKISO LEGAL AID CAMP: The exercise kicked off at the Sub-county hall in Kasanje Sub-county targeting residents of Jjungo, Sokolo and Buyege parishes from 16th to 18th March 2016. Legal rights awareness sessions were held to equip participants with basic legal rights knowledge on land matters.

The rights awareness sessions attracted 136 people (75 males: 61 females). Issues such as spousal consent and the common tricks used by fraudsters were also discussed. Clients with land related cases dominated the new caseload. In Kasanje for example, ignorance of the law by both *bibanja* holders and landlords is the norm.

Although the camps were successfully conducted, it was noted that there is limited knowledge of land and property rights.



Left: Ms. Solome Nagadya, FHRI Legal Officer listening to clients during a legal aid camp held in Wakiso district between 16th and 18th March 2016.



Standing: Mr. Henry Kakande, Senior Assistant Secretary Bukomero Sub-County, Kiboga district introducing the FHRI Legal Team to the community members before starting the Legal Rights Awareness session on 22nd March 2016.

“You can change the world again, instead of protecting yourself from it.”

– [Julien Smith.](#)

Matilda speaks out

"I am now a respected married woman thank you FHRI"

is what Matilda said in reference to the legal support extended to her by Josephine Namukasa and Nassim Nakabugo Kimera, Legal Associates at the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI).

Nampewo Matilda is a housewife aged 46 years. She is a third wife customarily married to a one James Opendi since 1988. She gave birth to five children (all minors) who are the youngest children in Opendi's family. Nampewo's home since 1988 to date is on Crescent Street, Jinja Town. Her co-wives live in the rural setting of Kayunga and Bugerere where each of them carries out commercial farming on big chunks of land.

The difference in location and size of the homes triggered intrigue among the women because Nampewo was in the urban-based setting. Subsequently, her co-wives started claiming that Nampewo's house should be their family home. Her step-children who are 30 years and above were set to occupy Nampewo's home. The step-children mistreated Nampewo to the extent of pledging the certificate of title for the home as collateral to make Nampewo and her young children homeless.

Opendi was never helpful as his older children always ignored him. Nampewo sought police



Ms. Nampewo Matilda with her children and husband in front of her matrimonial house on Crescent Street, Jinja Town.

intervention but in vain until she approached FHRI in 2015.

FHRI intervention

FHRI intervened and organized mediation for family members at the client's home in the presence of all Opendi's children and wives. The parties were sensitized about the laws regarding a matrimonial home and other properties. An understanding and agreement was later reached where Nampewo and her young

children were granted full occupation of the house. A subsequent follow up after the mediation revealed that the older children of her co-wives had left the house after FHRI intervention.

FHRI further met with Nampewo and the husband to explore ways of protecting her legal interest in the matrimonial home. The husband agreed to transfer the certificate of title for the home into the names of Nampewo and her children.

Nampewo now happily lives in her matrimonial home with her children.

Focus group discussion with Legal Aid Beneficiaries



Some of the beneficiaries of legal aid together with the DGF representative and FHRI Staff during the focus group discussion held in Dr. Sarah Ntiro Board Room, Human Rights House, Nsambya on 28th January 2016.

In 2015, FHRI recorded a 21% increase in the number of cases from the poor and vulnerable people accessing justice. Land matters still formed the bulk of cases since 2012 at 46% followed by domestic, criminal, civil and commercial each at 20%, 15%, 14% and 5% respectively.

(Findings by Ms. Laura Nyirikindi in 2016.)

On 28th January 2016, the Legal Aid Team and Ms. Laura Nyirikindi held a focus group discussion with legal aid beneficiaries of FHRI's legal aid work to share their experiences.

The meeting sought to assess the impact of FHRI's legal aid work, the major challenges they face and to chart a way forward.

Testimonies given by legal aid beneficiaries *continued from page 8.*

Hereunder are some of the testimonies and appreciation messages specifically directed to the lawyers and FHRI. The meeting was attended by 10 beneficiaries (6 female: 4 male) from Jinja, Kampala, Mityana and Wakiso districts.

“.....njagala okwebaza aba Human Rights okutuyamba ku misango ejibadde jitutawanya olw’okubanga obusobozi tubadde tetuyina.”

Translated as; ‘I want to thank FHRI for helping us with our cases which had turned a problem because we did not have resources to handle them.’ Mutyaba Hurana

‘.....nze nali nsobbedwa wamu ne family yange, ebibanja bibiri (2) nga babitwala ate kumulimu nga banyimiriza. Ekintu kye nali nsigaza kweja mu bulamu bwensi..... naye aba FHRI bannyamba nnyo’

Translated as ‘.....together with my family, we were very challenged, two pieces of my land (bibanja) were almost being taken, whereas at the same time I had lost my job. I almost committed suicide but FHRI helped me a lot’ Ssa-ka Godfrey

‘.....we reported the matter to Police but Police did not intervene and the buyer took us to court. We approached Human Rights where we were given a platform to air our grievances. With the help of FHRI, we managed to get the file hidden by Police and eventually we got back our land’ . James Musisi.

RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW

CSOs apply for amicus curiae before Supreme Court

Civil society organizations(CSOs) in Uganda led by FHRI filed an amicus curiae application before the Supreme Court in the recent election petition of *Amama Mbabazi vs. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Electoral Commission and the Attorney General (Election Petition No. 1 of 2016)* which challenged the presidential election results of the 2016 general elections. The CSOs applied to join the petition as friends of court on grounds that: i) they are committed to promoting constitutionalism, respect for and observance of human rights and electoral democracy, ii) they fully participated in the 18th February 2016 polls as election observers and were therefore in position to feed court with specific information about the conduct of the elections and iii) the petition



2nd Left : Mr. Crispy Kaheru, Coordinator, CCEDU together with other CSO representatives preparing to submit the amicus curiae application to the Supreme Court on 10th March 2016.



L-R: Dr. Josephine Ndagire, Director, Legal Services Division and Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director of FHRI attending the Supreme Court session during the hearing of the CSOs application for amicus curiae on 12th March 2016.

raised an important constitutional question of public interest.

Among other CSO that supported the 10th March 2016 joint application to the Supreme Court included Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-Uganda), Chapter Four Uganda, Human Rights Network Uganda, Center for Constitutional Governance, Kituo Cha Katiba - Eastern Africa Center for Constitutional Development, Legal Aid Service Providers Network Uganda, and Transparency International. It should be noted that FHRI was among the CSOs accredited by the Electoral Commission to observe the 2016 elections, as chair of the CEON-U.

The unanimous Supreme Court ruling of the case delivered on 31st March 2016 dismissed Hon. Amama’s petition and recognized President Museveni’s re-election as legitimate. But according to Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana the FHRI Executive Director, the ruling was not a surprise to civil society. He noted that civil society agitated for electoral reforms to be established but government ignored them. He therefore called upon the relevant authorities to consider the urgency of addressing the electoral reforms as recommended by the Supreme Court, otherwise in their absence, the possibility of a credible election in Uganda will remain a farfetched dream.

Among the issues court noted to have kept coming up from previous election petitions are the incumbent’s use of his position to the disadvantage of other candidates, use of state resources, unequal use of state owned media, and late enactment of relevant legislation. Court urged the Legislature and Executive to start thinking about the crucial need to address these electoral reforms.



Hon. Bart Katureebe, the Chief Justice of Uganda delivering the unanimous ruling in the petition of Amama Mbabazi vs. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Electoral Commission and the Attorney General (Election Petition No. 1 of 2016) at the Supreme Court on 31st March 2016.

FHRI intensifies Public Interest Litigation

The Supreme Court summoned FHRI legal representatives; M/S DN Kabugo & Co. Advocates and M/S Lukwago & Co. Advocates to a pre-hearing of the bail petition (*Foundation for Human Rights Initiative vs. Attorney General; Constitutional Appeal No.3 of 2009*) on 14th January, 2016. The Supreme Court Appeal seeks a declaration to reverse the Court of Appeal ruling that the grant of bail is subject to the discretion of a presiding judge. The pre-hearing for the parties intended to agree on hearing dates and the issues for court determination.

The pre-hearing was presided over by Hon Lady Justice Dr. Esther Kisakye-Kitimbo JSC. During the pre-hearing, court ordered that written submissions be prepared, filed and served upon the Attorney General before January 21, 2016. The Attorney General was ordered to respond and file a rejoinder by 4th February 2016 and the appeal was fixed for hearing on February 25, 2016. However, when the appeal came up for hearing on 25th February 2016, the Attorney General failed to appear. In the Interest of Justice, the Court adjourned the matter to 3rd March 2016. Court has forwarded the file for further management as a result of constant adjournments, due to the absence of the Attorney General during hearings.

On the other hand, the Rights, Rule of Law Programme (RRLP), in collaboration with the Public Interest Law Clinic of Makerere University, have started an on-going project on Clinic Legal Education for law students of Makerere University. The students are required to submit a well-researched legal opinion, upon making an in-depth analysis and review of the FHRI treason petition (*Foundation for Human Rights Initiative vs. Attorney General; Constitutional Petition No. 53 of 2011*). The case challenges the acts of the state perpetrated through its security agencies namely: the police and the army and the Directorate of Public Prosecution, regarding arresting and charging with treason and terrorism any person exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, speech, conscience, assembly, demonstrating together peacefully and unarmed as unconstitutional. The research will be carried out under the instruction and supervision of the PILAC leadership. Upon completion, a comprehensive legal opinion will be submitted to the RRLP on 2nd May 2016.

Furthermore, please note that on 10th and 11th February 2016, Dr Livingstone made a presentation on, *"An Overview of the Electoral Process in Uganda: A perspective of Civil Society Organisations"* before judges of the Supreme Court, Constitutional Court/ and or Court of Appeal and High Court in Kampala respectively. During the presentation, he examined the current electoral process in light of the presumptions underlying the right to vote. These presumptions included an informed electorate that understands their rights, power and obligations; an enabling regulatory framework; a conducive environment for one to exercise the right to vote; an independent and proactive election management body; and an effective dispute resolution mechanism. In his closing remarks, he underscored the possibility of non-compliance with election laws during the 2016 general elections, such as: the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Parliamentary Elections Act 2005, Presidential Election Act 2005, Electoral Commission Act 1997 and the Political Parties Act 2006, resulting into a bulk of election petitions.

RIGHT TO LIFE PROJECT

Capacity Building Forum on the Death Penalty held



Front row, L-R, 6th from the left: Hon Alice Alaso, Hon. Justice Dr. Benjamin J. Odoki, Chief Justice of Uganda (RTD), Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director FHRI, Hon Medard Sseggon, Ms. Leah Ssepuya, British High Commission; Dr. Brian Kalenge, Dean Faculty of Law, Uganda Christian University (**Front Row-extreme right**).

The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) with support from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) hosted a one-day capacity building forum on the abolition of the death penalty in Uganda on 15th March 2016 at Hotel Africana. Attended by 58 delegates drawn from Judiciary, Prisons, Parliament, Civil Society Organisations, academia, the media, and the British High Commission, the forum appraised the Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2015 as well as strategies to have it debated before Parliament.

Capacity Building Forum on the Death Penalty *Continued from Page 10.*

In his welcome remarks, Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, the Executive Director of FHRI welcomed the Bill as a positive step towards the progressive abolition of the death penalty. He noted that ever since the Supreme Court ruling in *Susan Kigula*, there are many actors that have come on board and the campaign continues to enlist broader support.

During the forum, Hon. Justice Dr. Benjamin J. Odoki, Retired Chief Justice of Uganda gave his opinion and reflections on the case of *Susan Kigula & 416 vs Attorney General*. Justice Odoki noted that although the death penalty is a controversial issue, there is a progressive shift towards its abolition.

Also present at the forum was Hon. Alice Alaso Asianut, Soroti Woman Member of Parliament (MP), who made a presentation on the Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous Bill, 2015 in Parliament. She noted that the campaign is still facing challenges and strategies have to be drawn to get more leverage. Other Members of Parliament in support of the Bill who participated in the forum included Hon. Medard Lubega Ssegona, Busiro County East - Wakiso District; Hon. Angelline Osegge, Woman MP, Soroti District and Hon. Stephen Ochola, Serere County - Serere District.

Other presenters at the forum were Dr. Brian Kalenge, Lecturer Faculty of Law, Uganda Christian University, who highlighted the 'Worldwide trends: abolition statistics and international standards on restricting the death penalty' Mr. Solomon Kirunda, Principal Legal Counsel, Parliament of Uganda, who explained the 'Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous Bill, 2015' and Ms. Aliyo Natukunda, Superintendent, Uganda Prisons Service, who made a presentation on "Prisons' perspective on the death penalty", explained the trauma and torture that the victims and other inmates face at the time of execution.

Mr. Patrick Lwanga Zizinga, an ex-death row convict recounted his experience in prison. He noted that the justice system still needs to be reformed to avert miscarriage of justice of which he was a victim. Mr. Evans Gabula, another ex-death row convict testified that over 280 death row inmates who backed Susan Kigula petition in 2003 died before their 14th year in prison due to the excruciating death row conditions. He likened long sentences to virtual death penalty.

Also in attendance were Parliamentary Clerks to different committees of Parliament, the Principal Legal Counsel; representatives from Uganda Prison Service, Uganda Law Reform Commission, academia, human rights defenders, civil society organizations, media, ex-death row convicts. The Right to Life project team was represented by Ms. Lucy Peace Nantume, the Project Manager and Ms. Connie Numbi the Project Officer.

The unsung heroes of the progressive abolition of the death penalty campaign in Uganda



Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, FHRI Executive Director speaking to the Prison Officers and the death row inmates after the Constitutional Court ruling on 10th June 2005.

A few days after her release from Luzira Prison Ms. Susan Kigula, now an ex-death row convict had this to say, "It is like I have been dropped in another country, this is not the Uganda I left. Everything is different. It's now a new experience altogether." Ms. Kigula was sentenced in 2002 after being found guilty of murdering her husband Constantino Sserem-

ba spent close to 16 years in prison on death row. Her release, like many others is just one of the outcomes of the campaign for the abolition of the death penalty in Uganda that started way back in 1993 by FHRI.

Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana was introduced to the idea of campaigning against the abolition of the death penalty in Uganda by Ms. Vivien Stern and the Late Ahmed Othman, founders of Penal Reform International (PRI) at a Conference held in Tunisia in 1991. In 1992, the Late Fiona Hunter, the first Africa Regional Director for Penal Reform International visited FHRI. Together with Dr. Sewanyana they visited Uganda Prisons Service and met with Mr. Joseph Etima, who was then the Commissioner General of Uganda Prisons Service. Mr. Etima authorised their access to Uganda prisons particularly the condemned section; a moment that made Dr. Sewanyana realise the plight of the condemned prisoners.

Later, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) incorporated the death penalty issue in her human rights campaigns. From the onset, the campaign met resentment from public and government institutions. And despite the confrontation FHRI faced in creating awareness of the campaign, debates ensued in form of articles, press interviews, talk shows, meetings and workshops.

In 2003 FHRI commissioned Katende, Sempebwa & Co. Advocates to file a constitutional petition challenging the application of the death penalty in Uganda.

Continued to Page 12

The unsung heroes of the progressive abolition of the death penalty campaign in Uganda *continued from pg 11.*



A cross section of lawyers from Katende, Sempebwa & Co. Advocates discussing the Supreme Court hearing of the death penalty case on 3rd July 2008.

With prisons support, Ms. Kigula was chosen as the lead petitioner in the *Susan Kigula, Fred Tindigwihura, Ben Ogwang & 414 others vs Attorney General Case*.

A Civil Society Coalition on the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda (CADP) spearheaded by FHRI was formed to lead the advocacy work around the Constitutional Petition. The Coalition comprised of seven members namely: FHRI, Amnesty International, Friends of Hope for Condemned Prisoners, Human Rights Network-Uganda, Public Defenders Association of Uganda, Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-U) and Uganda Joint Christian Council.

CADP provided a forum for the members to speak out and strengthen the campaign.

Following a two year hearing, the Constitutional Court ruled that sentencing criminal offenders under the mandatory death sentence was unconstitutional; a major victory in the campaign. The ruling delivered on 10th June 2005 upheld the death penalty as a lawful penalty but would now be at the discretion of the trial judge. The death sentences of convicts who had spent three years and above on death row were commuted to life imprisonment. Convicts whose appeals had not been exhausted were directed to have their cases reviewed by the High

Court under mitigation, hearings.

In 2006, a Constitutional appeal was lodged before the Supreme Court of Uganda by Katende, Sempebwa & Co. Advocates. Three years thereafter, on the 21st of January 2009, the Supreme Court of Uganda delivered the long awaited judgment upholding the imposition of the death penalty in Uganda as a legitimate sentence.

Although the death penalty was upheld, there has been a major shift towards the progressive abolition of the death penalty. There are 208 (197 men: 11 women) death row inmates as of 2nd March 2016. Since the Kigula ruling, there are only 79 (75 men: 4 women) new sentences passed on death penalty. Since the 21st of January 2009, 13 death row women inmates have been released including the lead petitioner Ms. Susan Kigula who left prison on 22nd January 2016.



Left : 4th left; Ms. Susan Kigula, poses for a photo with FHRI staff during her courtesy visit to FHRI at the Human Rights House, Nsambya on 9th February 2016.

**"A sign of hope is the increasing recognition that the dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil. Modern society has the means of protecting itself, without definitively denying criminals the chance to reform. I ...appeal...for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary."
Pope John Paul II**

ALTERNATIVES PROJECT

Benefits of keeping women out of prison



L - R: Her Worship, Stella Amabilis, Senior Magistrate and member of the FHRI Working Group addressing participants during the workshop for Magistrates and members of the Judicial Studies Institute Ms. Diva Mukisa, Coordinator, Alternatives Project and Ms. Alison Hannah, Executive Director PRI look on in Kampala on 11th March 2016.

On 11th March 2016, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative and Penal Reform International (PRI) jointly organised a workshop in Kampala for 23 Magistrates and members of the Judicial Studies Institute. The workshop sought to raise judicial awareness on provisions regarding non-custodial measures in the UN Bangkok Rules and to present findings and recommendations from the FHRI-PRI report *“Who are women prisoners? Survey results from Uganda”*. The workshop also attracted judicial officers working in magistrates’ courts, who deal with the bulk of criminal cases in the country as key actors in implementing the UN Bangkok Rules in the daily work of their courtrooms.

There was broad consensus amongst

participants at the workshop that there are many benefits to keeping women out of prison in Uganda. They observed from a practical point of view, that community sanctions are cheaper and reduce the pressure on an already over-crowded penal system. Community sanctions mean that the family unit is maintained, and presents enormous advantages for children in the household who continue to be protected and cared for and can remain in education far longer.

The magistrates raised a number of challenges which they felt prevented them from using more non-custodial measures for accused women: many women struggle to find appropriate sureties for bail due to poverty; ref-

ugees in particular find it hard to prove they have a fixed place of abode; many women don’t have a lawyer at all and even if they are represented, lawyers rarely have sufficient time to discuss their case in advance and to uncover key aspects of a bail application such as a woman’s pregnancy. It was noted that cash bail was not always the best option when dealing with poor women and that it was also possible to find out from a local chairperson where a woman resides to ensure her attendance at court, and that this can be reinforced by telling the accused that they must report to court even if granted bail. It was also suggested that access to lawyers should be improved especially in rural areas by reinvigorating the usage of pro bono services as the law requires.

The magistrates called for continued sensitization of judicial officers at all levels on the UN Bangkok Rules including incorporating gender issues into the curriculum in induction and refresher courses provided by the Judicial Studies Institute. They called for the introduction of legal aid centers so that women can access quality legal representation regardless of their economic circumstances. Finally, they recommended that steps be taken to empower women economically, because the financial dependence of women to men can be a significant factor to trigger domestic violence.

The training was delivered by Ms. Frances Sheahan, from PRI and Ms. Diva Mukisa from FHRI, with opening remarks from Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director FHRI and Ms. Alison Hannah, Executive Director PRI.

FHRI and Africa prisons project host second exchange visit under the East Africa criminal justice civil society e-network

From 3rd to 5th February 2016, six NGOs from Uganda and Kenya participated in an exchange visit organised and hosted by the African Prisons Project (APP) in partnership with the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI). The participants visited and interacted with prisoners and prison staff making a difference in women’s prisons in Uganda with the support from APP. Participants visited FHRI and APP offices, Luzira Women’s prison, Luzira Upper prisons, both in Kampala district, and Muinaina Prison and Kaweeri prison in Mubende District, Central Uganda. The participants included Ms. Jane Kuria, Chief Executive Officer, Faraja Foundation, (Kenya); Mrs. Tibaga Talitwala-Gacheru, Administration and Finance Lead, Visual Education Strategic Program Africa (VESPA), (Kenya); Ms. Teresa Njoroge, the Founder and Executive Director, Clean Start Solutions, (Kenya); Ms. Juliet Nabbosa, Project Officer, Yearning Voices Foundation, (Uganda) and representatives from FHRI and APP.



FHRI and Africa prisons project host second exchange visit under the East Africa criminal justice civil society e-network *continued from pg 13.*

This was the second exchange visit carried out and funded by the East Africa Criminal Justice Civil Society e-network. The e-network was established by Penal Reform International (PRI) and FHRI to promote sharing of best practices, information updates and to dialogue on criminal justice reform in the region, including specific initiatives on alternatives to imprisonment, juvenile justice, and the rights of women prisoners.

The exchange visit provided an opportunity for the NGOs and prison staff to learn from each other's experiences and good practices on working with women offenders and how to implement the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the UN Bangkok Rules), so as to inform and improve their work with women offenders in their home countries.

The exchange visit to Kampala was such a success. We saw overwhelming support and demand for the E.A regional stakeholders' continued engagement, which lends more credibility to the adage 'bigger and better next year'

Ms. Teresa Njoroge, the Founder and Executive Director, Clean Start Solutions, Kenya.

'The exchange visit to Kampala was such a success. I personally made great connections, especially with the inmates at Luzira Women and Upper Main Prison - had insightful conversations with the prisons officers in charge of the four prisons we visited and met dynamic people transforming the criminal justice system in Uganda and those affected', Ms. Teresa Njoroge.

It was agreed that further collaboration between the prisons and NGOs should be developed to enhance the success and impact of the projects being facilitated in prisons, while increasing sustainability and fostering networking and collaboration. Faraja Foundation offered to call for a stakeholders' meeting in Nairobi to introduce APP, which has expanded its work to some of the prisons in Kenya. It was also suggested that NGOs in Uganda working with prisoners and women in prison form a coalition to prevent duplication of work, as well as improve sharing of best practices.



L-R, Ms. Jane Kuria, Chief Executive Office, Faraja Foundation, Mrs. Tibaga Talitwala-Gacheru, Administration and Finance Lead VESPA, and Ms. Teresa Njoroge, the Founder and Executive Director, Clean Start Solutions, Kenya outside Kaweeri prison, Mubende District.



Participants in a meeting at the Human Rights House during their last day of the visit, 5th February 2016

The East Africa Criminal Justice Civil Society Network Newsletter March 2016

Welcome to the March 2016 edition of the East Africa Criminal Justice Civil Society Network newsletter.

It is now almost two years since the East Africa Criminal Justice Civil Society Network was set up and issued the first edition of the e-newsletter. Since then, **over 153 people from NGOs and other criminal justice stakeholders in the region have joined the Network!** 12 e-newsletters have been issued to members, with 'open rates' above average and two successful exchange visits between NGO members of the Network have been organized. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed during this time.

Follow the link below to read more.. <http://www.fhri.or.ug/index.php/pages/whats-new/item/80-east-africa-criminal-justice-civil-society-network-newsletter>

PARALEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES PROJECT (PAS)



Monitoring Community Legal Volunteers in Busia District

A recent monitoring visit was conducted by the PAS Secretariat team between 14th and 18th March 2016 to track progress and the impact of the PAS program on the communities in Busia.

During the visit, PAS staff held meetings with stakeholders in the criminal justice system including the judicial officers at the Chief Magistrates Court, the police officers including the District Police Commander (DPC), Officer in charge of investigations (OC CID) and the Community Liaison Officer (CLO); head teachers and pupils; community leaders including LC.I and III leaders; Community Legal Volunteers (CLVs) and special interest groups such as women, youth and children in the Sub Counties of Busime and Lunyo.

PAS deploys a preventive approach and offers quick solutions to minor disputes at the grassroots using mediation. Disputes are diverted from the formal justice system. The feedback received from these officials was encouraging. All groups applauded the timely introduction of the CLV program in the district. At Court, in particular, the officials testified to the reduction in civil disputes because of the assistance by the PAS officers.

In their recommendations, beneficiaries urged the PAS team to continue with educating the communities against middle men who are unqualified and give wrong advice to the desperate litigants.

All in all the new program has had a great impact in finding solutions to the community more especially in preventing disputes at village level through mediation, legal representation and legal rights awareness sessions.

The CLVs program rolled out in April 2015 aims at improving access to justice in civil cases for the vulnerable people in Busia district and was officially launched in November, 2015. 40 CLVs and a Legal officer were recruited and trained to implement the programme.



A CLV addressing a challenge during the monitoring visit in Lunyo Sub-County conducted by the PAS Secretariat between 14th and 18th March 2016.

CITIZENS' COALITION FOR ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN UGANDA



FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE Election Observation report focuses on women participation in the electoral process

On 22nd February 2016, the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative/Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda and Women in Leadership Development (FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE) released a preliminary report based on the observations carried out during the election period. The findings showed an increase in women's participation in the electoral process compared to previous elections. The report indicates that women participated more than men at a ratio of 97 females: 76 males. There was also an increase in women contesting for mainstream parliamentary positions from 38 in 2011 to 91 in 2016. Other findings indicate an increase in voter turnout at 61.08% in comparison to 59% in 2011. The report also looks at issues such as the opening of polls, voter turnout, participation of women, deployment of security personnel, election violence, access to media, closure of polls and vote counting, and participation of the People With Disabilities and the elderly and the conditions under which they voted.

An extrapolated observation was believed to be a valuable tool in providing a more in-depth and broader understanding of the electoral process. On 25th October 2015, Long Term Observers were deployed to 25 districts of Uganda from where they remitted reports based on their observations. Observers were deployed in the following districts: Mbale, Soroti, Kapchorwa, Busia, Njeru, Mpigi, Nakaseke, Mukono, Kalangala, Luweero, Kalungu, Wakiso, Kampala, Kabale, Kibaale, Hoima, Masindi, Kasese, Rukungiri, Lira, Nebbi, Arua, Adjumani, Kaabong and Oyam. An additional 117 observers were deployed in 117 polling stations, in 57 districts of Uganda on the Election Day. The focus on selection of districts and places to observe was based on areas in Uganda which are: hard to reach, areas prone to ethnic clashes, hotspots which had the potential for violence to erupt, and also those areas where women contested for mainstream or direct parliamentary seats.

Background: CCEDU under FHRI together with WLEDE, received support from the European Union in 2015 to undertake observation of the electoral process before, on the Election Day and, post-election period of Uganda's 2016 General Elections. The major aim of the observation mission was to assess voter turnout and to evaluate women participation in mainstream parliamentary seat contests. A set of recommendations were made and can be found in the report at the following link: <http://www.fhri.or.ug/index.php/2015-07-22-14-08-32/press-release/58-preliminary-statement-2016-general-elections-election-day-observation-closure-of-polls/file>



“Topowa – Honour your vote” campaign winds up

As the 2016 general elections got closer, CCEDU’s **“Topowa, Honour Your Vote”** campaign steadily became a significant rallying call in motivating Ugandans to remain keen and vigilant on election issues.

Rehema a voter in Lugazi had this to say: ***“We appreciate the gesture of voter education from CCEDU.”***

While the Topowa campaign continued to run using the 360 degree multi-media messaging approach until the eve of the election day, the caravan activations reached a climax in the Central region. CCEDU carried out 46 community interactive activities which attracted between 1,000 and 5,000 people during each activity and over 100 Group and Community activities attracting groups of 50 to 500 people during each activity in the Central region. Launched on 22nd September 2015, the caravan with its nationwide procession made stopovers in over 30 districts in Eastern Uganda, Northern Uganda, West Nile Region, Southern Uganda, Western Uganda and the Central Uganda providing a broad coverage of the country.

These activations were executed as both education and entertainment events to share pre-election information with the general public that was not easily reached or enthused by conventional media. Top and upcoming musicians in each of the activation areas were invited to perform at the event tailoring their performances to reflect the Topowa mobilization messages. In January 2016, increased endorsement efforts from religious leaders, opinion leaders and celebrities were registered in an effort to connect, sensitize and mobilize specific audiences.

Online engagement was also accelerated as Election Day drew near with open forums like ‘Twitter chats’ geared towards providing direct feedback to public electoral concerns. CCEDU-led Topowa online campaign was consequently nominated among the top 5 fast growing NGO social media profile in Uganda with a vast coverage in the 2016 social media awards spearheaded by SMS Media company as a result. The campaign continued to awaken Ugandans’ interest towards participation in electoral politics and created awareness on the need for Ugandans to participate in election activities. ***“I will eat their money but that will not deter me from voting the right candidate.”***Chebet Francis, from Arua commented.



Residents of Nakawa watch the proceedings of the Topowa - Honour your Vote” activation in Nakawa Market, Kampala district on 28th January 2016.



Some of CCEDU’s messages promoting peace during and after the 2016 national elections. **Left:** A cross-section of motor-cycle riders (boda-boda) displaying one of CCEDU’s peace messages after Uganda’s National elections. **Right:** A lady with her child at their home displaying CCEDU’s message.

FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE conduct Election Day observer trainings



Election Day Observers undergoing a training at Eureka Place Hotel Ntinda on 4th February 2016 before their deployment to the respective districts where they monitored elections on 18th February 2016.



Ms. Sayson R. Meya, Adviser - Human Rights, Conflict and Gender at the Delegation of the European Union to Uganda giving her remarks at the training of Election observers in Kampala, Eureka Place Hotel on 4th February 2016.

The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative/Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda and Women in Leadership Development (FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE) together with the Citizens Election Observers Network Uganda (CEON-U) trained and deployed Election Day observers (Election-Day Observers) across the country to promote participation, deter fraud and ensure transparency during the voting process.

The Election Day observer trainings were a follow up on earlier trainings conducted by FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE in September and October 2015 for 30 Long term Observers (LTOs). The training of Election Day observers was conducted at several venues in Kampala on 4th February 2016 at Eureka Place Hotel and 17th February 2016 at FHRI offices; and in Mbale on 9th February 2016 at Shine-on Hotel. With support from the European Union, 124 Election Day observers were trained and deployed to observe Election Day activities in 117 polling stations covering 55 districts in the four regions of Uganda.

93 trainees attended the training session in Kampala while 31 trainees participated in the Mbale session. Areas that were given special attention in deploying observers included hard to reach areas, places with recent discovery of mineral resources, places vulnerable to tribal and ethnic conflict, political hot spots and most importantly areas where women stood for direct parliamentary seats, an issue of special interest to the FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE's observation mission.

Whereas FHRI/CCEDU and WLEDE primarily set out to observe and assess the extent of participation of women in the electoral process, other key themes that were of interest include the extent of participation in the election by persons with disability (PWDs), and other special interest groups, access to media by the candidates for the various elective offices, the deployment of security forces, and voter turnout at the elections.

Special focus was put on the Electoral Commission's code of ethics for election observers, polling day processes, and the transparency of the vote. Observers were asked to report accurately and impartially.



Some of the potential Long Term Observers with their trainers at the Long Term Observers Training at Eureka Place Hotel,



CITIZENS ELECTION OBSERVERS NETWORK-UGANDA (CEON-U).



CEON-U report questions 2016 Uganda elections *continued from page 1.*



Left : A cross section of journalists at a Press Conference during CEON-U's release of her Preliminary Statement on its findings from the 2016 National Presidential and Parliamentary Elections at Hotel Africana, Kampala on 20th February 2016. **Right:** Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Chairperson, CEON-U (2nd left), Mr. Crispy Kaheru, Coordinator CCEDU (2nd right), and Dr. Martin Mwondha, National Coordinator, CEON-U, (Extreme right) together with CEON-U delegates at the Press Conference.

of certain locations, the credibility of the overall election process was undermined by fundamental and structural flaws. The context in which Uganda held her elections cannot allow for free, fair and credible elections."

CEON-U statement focused on the tabulation process observation, which involved deploying observers to all 112 district tally centres and four at the National Tally Centre. It also reflects on CEON-U's six-month, nationwide observation of the pre-electoral process. CEON-U deployed 223 long term observers (LTOs) in all 112 districts of Uganda, and to complement LTO findings, several organizations under CEON-U also observed specific aspects of the election including media, campaign financing, security, gender and women's participation. CEON-U deployed more than 1250 observers on Election Day to all 290 constituencies across all 112 districts. Among the LTO assignments, included conducting a sample-based observation (SBO) that involved deploying 700 sample-based observers to a random, representative sample of polling stations.

The issues raised in CEON-U's findings from the electoral process put special emphasis on Uganda's legal framework for conducting credible elections; the concentration of power in the Presidency and the use of excessive force by security agencies; the widespread abuse of state resources; the general atmosphere during the election campaigns; the participation of women in elections; and the observation of freedom of speech and participation of media in the entire electoral process.

CEON-U continued to observe the local council elections and a final report on the entire election shall be released at the end of May 2016. Details of the preliminary statement can be accessed on the following link: www.ceonu.or.ug/index.php/ugandas-hope-for-free-and-fair-elections-dashed

EVENTS DIARY: APRIL—JUNE 2016

Paralegal and Village Health Teams training on Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights, Kalangala district, 18th - 22nd April.

Paralegal Advisory Services steering committee meeting, 21st April 2016.

Legal Aid Camp in Wakiso district, 23rd May – 27th May 2016.

Legal Aid Camp in Kalangala district, 30th May – 2nd June 2016.

Launch the 2016 CEON-U Election Observation Mission report, May 2016.

Launch the issue based report on Human Rights and Elections, 14th June 2016.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

FHRI Staff empowered with new knowledge and skills

FHRI conducted in-house training for staff to increase their productivity and motivation. Under the Rights and Rule of Law Program (RRLP), FHRI organized two sessions on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Advocacy with support from Freedom House staff. Two additional learning opportunities in the areas of drafting and use of policy briefs as well as updating staff on the current and important health information and concerns were offered.

Planning policy advocacy: use of policy briefs

On 24th March 2016, the Research division organized a capacity building session for FHRI staff focusing on planning policy advocacy and use of policy briefs. The training held at the Human Rights House was conducted by Dr. Christopher Mbaziira, Associate Professor at the Makerere University, School of Law.

The aim of the session was to enhance FHRI's advocacy and lobbying strategies through use of policy briefs. The session focuses on developing advocacy plans and how to develop and draft policy briefs. A hands on approach was used to ensure that the staff understood the concept and the benefits thereof.

Understanding an advocacy strategy

On 12th February 2016, Ms Jill Kyatuhaire, Advocacy Specialist from Freedom House met with FHRI key program staff at the Human Rights House in Nsambya. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate the initial process of developing the FHRI advocacy strategy.

During the meeting, participants were taken through the key essentials of an advocacy strategy and the wider aims and objectives of a strategic plan. At the end of the meeting, participants agreed to have a follow up meeting to discuss the aims and objectives of an advocacy plan, specifically tailored to FHRI and brain storm on the broader FHRI advocacy statement.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Subsequent to the first M&E training that took place on 17th December 2015, Mr. Janani Luwum, M&E Specialist from Freedom House conducted the second M&E training with the FHRI M&E focal group and project heads on 9th March 2016 at the Human Rights House.

Participants were taken through the understanding of indicators and their application at the different stages of the results chain, data quality approach to M&E; verification and use.

FHRI staff tipped on health

Chances are that if cancer is detected early, it can be treated. Not to let this chance slip away, FHRI staff benefited from a half day health camp conducted by the AAR team led by Dr. Fred Matovu, AAR Kabalagala Branch Manager at the Human Rights House on 22nd March 2016.

AAR medical team sensitized participants on some of the prevalent diseases and infections especially on the different cancer types namely prostate, breast and cervical; how to detect it and subsequently avoid it. The medical camp also afforded staff a chance to discuss health concerns with AAR. The Medical team also conducted breast and cervical cancer screening on site.



A cross section of FHRI Staff members who attended the capacity building session focusing on planning policy advocacy and use of policy briefs at the Human Rights House, on 24th March 2016.



Right: Ms. Jill Kyatuhaire making her presentation during the initial meeting on developing the FHRI advocacy strategy on 12th February 2016.



Staff who attended the second M&E training at the Human Rights House on 9th March 2016

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