giz human rights newsletter

News and information from the Project

1st Issue, November 2012

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Photo: NPA

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Dear Partners,

It's been a busy few months for us all and so much has happened. Yes, we have been seeing each other at meetings, events and activities, but it seems like there are always more things to discuss if we only had more time! It's a shame our time is always limited, but we do want to thank you all for the support we have received during the first few months of implementation, and we feel we owe you a regular update on what is going on.

So we thought we would circulate a brief newsletter to inform you all of the recent accomplishments, upcoming events and progress in general. It means you can be informed before activities happen, and that should lead to a higher quality of service delivery on our part. We hope you have a minute to read the sections that are interesting to you, and of course we would be happy if you have any advice for content of this little communiqué, which we want to distribute on a quarterly basis.

Thanks again for working with us and happy reading.

Warm regards,

Bolaji Aina and the Human Rights Team!

How the Project works

GIZ Country Director Martha Gutierrez and NPA Board Member Silvia Tereka open the first planning workshop in April 2012

Strengthening Human Rights in Uganda was approved by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development in October 2011. The goal of the Project is "Improved capacity of selected state and non-state actors to make better use of accountability procedures and protection mechanisms for the observance of human rights, especially the rights of disadvantaged groups."

The Project's multi-level approach

Policy level: The Project supports the National Planning Authority (NPA) of Uganda for the integration of the rights-based approach into national development planning and sector policies.

Implementation level: At the level of implementation, the Project advises the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) for enhanced observance of human rights and investigation of human rights abuses. The project is also engaging in a series of institutional building interventions to enhance the capacity of the EOC to better fulfil its mandate.

Furthermore, support is given to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and the School of Statistics and Applied Economics (SSAE) at Makerere University for gathering of relevant data and development of governance and human rights indicators to inform policy formulation and development planning in Uganda.

Societal level: At civil society level, the Project supports the professionalization of human rights-related media works for strengthening public discourse and opinion building on human rights.

What we are doing

Sharing the Vision

Image: NPA

The Vision 2040 is now on display for civil society, giving the NPA a chance to present the ideas involved and draw some feedback from the public. This is seen as an effort to improve the important link between the NPA and civil society, to promote buy-in from non-government

organisations and the public, and to create a platform for dialogue to make this document a nationally-owned, collaborative instrument.

On the 6 November, Dr Patrick Birungi presented the Vision 2040, describing its foundations, intentions and approaches to an audience of key civil society actors. This provided the chance for inquiries from the audience as well as some in-depth feedback from the panellists: Madam Rita Matovu, Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Margaret Sekaggya, Executive Director of the Human Rights Centre and UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Uganda, Livingstone Sewanyana, Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, and Fredrick Ssemwanga, who is the Parliamentary Liaisons Officer with the National Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace.

The panellists spoke on issues such as civil society participation, which will be important for efficient planning initiatives such as the Vision. Other areas of concern included strength governance in relation to mineral extraction which is play a major role in economic development, as well as further work on gender imbalances, minority relations and the Ugandan identity, culture and languages.

We hope that this and other such dialogues will make future work easier for the team of experts working on the Vision by allowing them a close interaction with civil society, who is of course, the end-user of all policy. Also along the way, interactions such as this will improve the quality of the final draft by ironing out areas of difficulty. And last but not least, this event should be thought of as one activity amongst many, aimed at bringing the NPA closer to its constituency for the purpose of visibility and a good working relationship with the public.

Human rights-based approach to policy making

In mid-October, staff members from both management and departmental levels at the NPA underwent special training provided by the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC). The human rights-based approach refers to the application of the principles of accountability, transparency, non-discrimination, participation, equality, empowerment and human rights standards in all processes.

For the NPA, a human rights-based approach means embedding these principles into development planning and policies, improving the consultative interface with civil society to ensure democratic participation in governance. When it comes to dealing with sensitive issues, differing and contentious viewpoints must be taken into account, as do the needs of Uganda's minorities and disadvantaged groups.

The UHRC provided most of the trainers, with an additional resource person, Margaret Sekaggya, who is the former

Chairperson of the UHRC and the current UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders. The opportunity for our project partners to support each other in this way is a result of the multi-level approach taken by the project in choosing suitable partners. Not only does this allow for sharing of skills, experience and knowledge between different institutions, it also allows for the different stakeholders to build strong partnerships around thematic issues on human rights and governance.

The two-day event included presentations from experts on various aspects of human rights in development and planning, as well as group work such as an in-depth analysis of the legal frameworks on human rights in Uganda. At completion of the training, the participants were able to identify numerous measures that should be taken by various stakeholders such as the NPA, UHRC, GIZ and others. The measures recommended by participants included:

- strengthening the partnerships between the NPA and other stakeholders such as civil society, the UHRC, army and police;
- further sensitisation and training initiatives by the UHRC; and
- development of a Human Rights National Action Plan by the NPA.

Organisational development at the NPA and EOC

During the Capacity Needs Assessment conducted in July by Mrs Monika Lüke, a human rights lawyer, the NPA expressed interest in building on the organisational development of the institution. Several departments talked of the difficulties in gaining access to line ministries relevant to their work – this lack of access impeding on the NPA's ability to support the sectors as intended. Other staff showed interest in an integrated system of knowledge management within the NPA itself, allowing information to be shared more easily and widely.

The strategy of GIZ in partnering with institutions such as the NPA, the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), is not just to improve human rights directly, but to strengthen the relevant and responsible authorities in their ability to provide services to improve human rights.

As such, Mrs Steffi Leupold and Mr Zie Gariyo, both organizational development (OD) experts, conducted their first mission at the NPA in September to analyse the structure, character and interrelations and make suggestions. A positive vision for the NPA's future in policy design, with a strong role in research and budget formulation was clearly iterated by staff. The need for an improved system of knowledge management and sharing of information between departments was confirmed. Many staff felt the organigram requires additional recruitment in the technical positions, given the initial priority of filling management positions. And it was also suggested that administrative processes need strengthening as the Authority grows and changes in the Board and other organisational structures occur.

Meanwhile, a similar consultancy took place at the EOC. Mr Albert Eckert and Mr Rober Akeny began a strategic planning process together with the Members and technical staff. As initial steps, the EOC will focus on establishing a clear picture of Uganda's demand in terms of service provision in equal opportunities. As much of this demand comes from outside of

Kampala, the EOC will form strategic networks in cooperation with stakeholders, institutions and civil society in order to extend its reach. This will also work to popularise the issue of equal opportunities in Uganda, making people aware of the action required to reduce imbalances in society.

The findings from these two analyses have helped us to identify necessary approaches for improving the capacities of both institutions to fulfil their mandates.

Amongst others, we will be conducting trainings with the NPA on knowledge management and staff hand-over methods in mid-November. A second training for the Board, Heads of Departments, Senior Planners and Planning Officers will focus on integrating the human-rights based approach into planning, policy assessments and partnerships with civil society. The EOC will also undertake activities in follow-up to the first strategic planning assessment, beginning with a stakeholder analysis and consultations.

Debate on gender-based violence

From the 25 November to 10 December, the international *16 Days of Activism* will be celebrated. The theme of this campaign is the fight to eradicate violence against women. All over the world, organisations will be putting on events to raise awareness and address this topic that is, alarmingly, still a problem everywhere, not just in Uganda.

As gender-based violence is an important aspect of human rights work, we also thought it necessary to take part in this campaign. As such, we will be hosting an event together with several partners aimed at deepening the analysis on the topic. We are inviting six high-profile thinkers to inform and entertain us in a public debate, targeting in particular, Kampala's student community and policy makers amongst our partners. The event will take the form of a competitive debate, allowing issues to be discussed in an academic setting, with the audience providing the final verdict on which team has been more convincing on putting forth their arguments.

The purpose of this event is to improve the quality of content-related discourse available to students, provide a platform for thought-provoking debate around the subject, and expose students and policy makers to each other's ideas, all the while undertaking informative advocacy against gender-based violence. We hope to see you there!

News from partners

The **Equal Opportunities Commission** will be launching the project which we are supporting in mid-November. A special event will mark the beginning of a two year partnership with GIZ and the Democratic Governance Facility.

In September, the **Uganda Human Rights Commission** ran a refresher course for commissioners in various areas of their work from mediation and judgment writing to gender sensitivity and international human rights mechanisms. A two-day workshop and a further five-day training at the Judicial Studies Institute were conceived as an effort to improve the performance of Commissioners, with a wide range of facilitators employed to deliver material on the numerous aspects of the UHRC's work.

The **Uganda Bureau of Statistics/ Makerere School of Statistics and Applied Economics** carried out a Multi-Stakeholder Governance Assessment Training on indicators with the support of the Project. Stakeholders from a wide variety of Government institutions and NGOs participated. During the training, survey questions were developed from established and original indicators by the stakeholders. Areas covered by the indicators were Human Rights, Access to Justice, Elections and the Electoral System and Accountability and Transparency, which will now be integrated into household surveys, which will be routinely conducted by UBOS starting from April 2013, thus allowing human rights indicators to be better measured.

The Project will place a development worker from German Media Institute (Deustche Welle) in the **Department of Journalism and Communication at Makerere University** to support the development of training curriculum on human rights for students. The development worker will also carry out specialized trainings for postgraduate students of the Department in online journalism, film production and radio journalism.

The **National Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace** through its Kampala branch will commemorate the "16 Days of Activism" with the theme: "From Peace in Homes to Peace in the World" with a March and a Dialogue between citizen, cultural and political leaders on the topics of Women's freedom of expression in Uganda today. In parallel, a fair will take place along this program where all partners of *Strengthening Human Rights in Uganda* will exhibit their Institutions.

Rafiki Theatre has just had two films produced, chronicling their work in the Mount Elgon area. Rafiki is a partner organization that uses the medium of theatre to promote non-violence and contribute to sustainable peace and development in Africa. The films can be viewed on their website http://www.rafiki-theatre.org/.

The **Human Rights and Peace Centre** at Makerere University School of Law is holding its Advanced Seminars on Religion, Rights and Peace. The series will expose students, religious leaders and human rights actors to a platform for academic thinking and exchange on issues of governance, peace and stability.

Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung has conducted baseline surveys for a project on Youth Participation in Disability Rights Awareness.

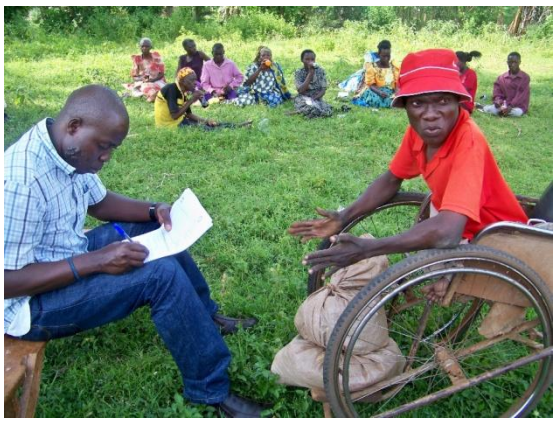

Photo: DSW

The surveys began in five of the six parishes which make up Kasawo sub-county and two health centres of Kitovu & Kigogola. The survey now continues in the Budongo Sub County in Masindi district.

Who are the Human Rights team?

Having now completed most of the initial housekeeping, we have slowly expanded and are now pleased to announce that our full team is onboard. You have probably seen us all around but you may like to know who is who, what they are doing, and what their backgrounds are. So please, a brief introduction…

Bolaji (Abigail) Aina is the Project Coordinator. She joined GIZ in 2002 and has worked in the area of gender, children and human rights.

Israel Katongole is the Advisor for M&E and focal person on cross-cutting issues. Israel has 6 years of German Development Cooperation experience, both at the policy and operational levels. Under GIZ, he has worked with Government of Uganda projects, particularly with the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Office of the Prime Minister. He also has several years of experience as an educationist. His academic training in Social Sciences was the springboard that paved way for advanced training in Education, Oral Literature and Development Policy, thus shaping his professional path and service.

David Manyonga is the Advisor for Governance and Human Rights having oversight roles for supporting the project's four government partners (NPA, UHRC, EOC, UBOS). He hails from Zimbabwe and has over the past decade been a technical expert and coordinator of governance, anti corruption, research and advocacy projects for international organizations in the USA, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and more recently with Actionaid International in Uganda. He is well travelled in Africa and has huge a passion to democratic governance. He is also our newest addition to the team, so please make him feel welcome!

Faustine Nakazibwe is the Advisor for Civil Society Engagement and Rights Education. Her experience ranges from programme implementation to policy advocacy. She has also engaged in development research and academic training and has published two books and journal articles. Faustine professional orientation in Social work and Social administration is enriched with advanced education in Comparative Social Work as well as Poverty Reduction and Development Management, with local and international exposure.

Fred Kauke is the Project Administrator for the Human Rights Project. His experience comes from working in the private sector, with Bidco Uganda Limited, where he was Finance and Administration Officer for 5 years. He also worked previously in the media industry with WBS Television as an accountant.

The Project also engages short and long term consultants and interns based on the specific needs for project and partner activities.

Human Rights and Governance – recent news

"Is Uganda a failed state?"

This question was asked by *The Independent* to Mr Museveni's political advisor, Moses Byaruhanga, after Professor Jjuko of Makerere University's School of Law, amongst other political and academic analysts, have recently made claims to the affirmative.

A failed state, says Byaruhanga, is one "that has failed to govern some parts of her territorial borders […] we have managed to control all our borders and also to send some a contingent of the army to keep peace in Somalia, and in Central Africa Republic hunting Lord's Resistance Army warlord, Joseph Kony." Therefore, Uganda is by no means a failed state, though Byaruhanga adds "Prof Jjuko's pronouncement helps us as government to know where people think that the National Resistance Movement has gone wrong."

Important for a stable state, so Byaruhanga, is democracy through free and fair elections, the protection of people's rights, and the prosecution through an effective judiciary of persons found in contravention of the law. Of particular importance here is the action government has been taking to stamp out corruption, which costs the country its public resources and reduces the efficiency of implementation. Lastly, Byaruhanga exults Uganda's media-friendly environment, important for freedom of expression and press, and thus a vital part of a healthy democracy.

See www.independent.co.ug/column/interview/6571-uganda-isnt-a-failed-state for the full article.

Thank you for taking the time to read about recent events and coming activities. Please feel free to send your brief updates and a photo for our next newsletter which will appear in early 2013.

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