



LASPNET
LEGAL AID SERVICE PROVIDERS' NETWORK



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2021 - 2022

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IDEOLOGY

A Centre of Excellence for Legal Aid

OUR IDENTITY

Our Vision

A free and just society.

Our Mission

To Provide Effective Advocacy, Networking and Collaboration for sustainable Legal aid services, Human Rights, Rule of Law and Access to Justice for the most vulnerable and marginalized people.

Our Goal

To improve networking, collaboration and coordination among legal aid service providers in Uganda.

Mandate

To provide strategic linkages and a collaborative platform for legal aid service providers (LASPs) in Uganda and maintain a common front to relevantly interface with Justice Law & Order (JLOS) on access to Justice and Rule of Law.

Strategic Pillar

Lobbying and Advocacy
Networking, Coordination and Partnership
Research and Knowledge Management
Institutional Strengthening and Development of LASPNET

OUR VALUES

- Team work
- Integrity
- Transparency and Accountability
- Inclusiveness
- Creativity & Innovativeness
- Excellence

OUR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

2020 - 2021



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



EAST • WEST
MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

USAID/Uganda Civil Society
Strengthening Activity (CSSA)

LIST OF ACRONYMS

A2J	Access to Justice
ACP	Assistant Commissioner of Police
ADC	Australian Development Cooperation
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSSA	Civil Society Strengthening Activity
CORDAID	Catholic Relief Development Aid
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
EU	European Union
HRs	Human Rights
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
ICNL	International Centre for Not for Profit Law
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IDLO	International Law Development Organization
IIMS	Integrated Information Management System
LASPs	Legal Aid Service Providers
LASPNET	Legal Aid Service Providers Network
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NLAP	National Legal Aid Policy
ODPP	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
ULC	Uganda Law Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RAJA	Rights And Justice Activity

1.0 FOREWORD

BY BOARD CHAIRPERSON



Dear members and partners, I greet you with utmost gratitude. I wish to yet again share with you the LASPNET Annual Report for the year 2021/2022. It's exactly two (2) years ever since we took the fort to steer the Network. On my own behalf as well as the other Board members, I am extremely humbled by the trust you accorded us from the onset, throughout our tenure in office until this day as the Network warms up to elect a new breed of leadership.

Our experience while serving on the LASPNET Board has been worthwhile. We take pride to have witnessed a steady growth in the Network's funding portfolio with the coming on board of new development partners who include European Union; East West Management Institute (EWMI); Freedom House; GIZ, CORDAID and HiiL. Whereas majority of these donors support short term projects, they have significantly enabled LASPNET to reduce on the burden of over depending on a single donor that is DGF whose funding came to an end effective 30th September 2022 in accordance with the signed partnership agreement.

The visibility of LASPNET remains unrivalled in many spaces due to its long term investment in creating strong partnerships with both state and non-state actors. The media for instance has continuously build trust in LASPNET as a reference point on access to justice, rule of law and human rights issues. The Judiciary also exhibited a vote of confidence in LASPNET by nominating our CEO (Dr. Sylvia Namubiru

Mukasa) on the Judiciary Taskforce that developed the Judiciary Anti-Corruption Strategy (Yet to be approved). We are immensely grateful for such strategic partnerships and confidence.

As a family, in this one year we have had two members of the Board ascend to the bench. Her Worship Bridget Nasasira, the Western Region Representative and His Worship Tonny Ojok Obonyo the Northern Region Representatives are now both Grade One Magistrates. For LASPNET, we have strategic partners and ambassadors of access to justice, legal aid and rule of law.

The work of LASPNET's lobby and advocacy arm is one which cannot be overemphasized. For instance, our protracted advocacy journey for the National Legal Aid law has started bearing fruits. That is to say, in February 2022, the Private Mover (Hon. Silas Aogon) was granted leave of Parliament to introduce the Private National Legal Aid law. Subsequently, in March 2022, the Private Mover received a certificate of financial implication from the Ministry of Finance underscoring the fact that the National Legal Aid law would help to enhance equity, fairness and socio-economic development. The latest update is that the Private Mover was able to present the bill on the floor of Parliament for the first reading on 27th September 2022. We are optimistic that more than before the National Legal Aid Bill 2022 will soon be enacted into law.

On the angle of institutional sustainability, the Board is glad to report that working closely with Management, we have been able to develop a Sustainability Plan 2021/2025 and part of our undertaking was to secure land for the Network. As we leave office, we handover to the incoming board a piece of land in Nakawuka Jjunga and urge them together with Management to take forward the task of mobilizing resources to construct the Legal Aid House. Like it is the case in life, as we pursue success, challenges are a given.

LASPNET continued to experience several challenges at the macro level that hampered its work. The continued closure of DGF affected the operations of both the Secretariat and its members. This was further exacerbated by the news of DGF closure after government suspended its operations in Uganda.

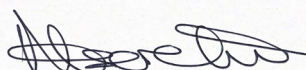
In relation to the above and to overcome the continued shrinking civic space and its impact on LASPs operations, LASPNET was a proud recipient of the Resilience plus fund which is aimed at building organizational resilience and sustainability of the Secretariat and some of its selected members including Human Rights Focus (HURIFO); Platform for Labour Action (PLA) and Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI). It's hoped that the Secretariat will cascade the best practices learnt from this project to benefit other members in terms of strengthening their capacity to respond to the fragile operating environment.

As the outgoing Board of Directors pave way for the new ones, I wish to

reiterate that despite the challenges, LASPNET remains a firm and strong Network thriving from growth to growth. On that note, we are confident that with the good will and support of the Board, Membership, Management and Staff, LASPNET's brand will be jealously guarded. We further remain available to offer guidance and support whenever service calls.

As I conclude, I wish to commend our Development partners both past and present for the unwavering financial and technical support. It's your trust and confidence that has kept the Network alive and functional. The Membership is also appreciated for choosing to be a part of LASPNET. Hasten to add, the Network is as strong as its members, that's why our members are highly valued.

To the outgoing Board, there is no great team I would have ever chosen to lead with than yourselves. Our philosophy was working together and achieving together. I thank you! The Management and Secretariat staff led by the able CEO, we hold you highly for having simplified our work. Your cooperation was top notch and no amount of words can express our gratitude to you.



Arthur Nsereko

Outgoing Chairperson, Board of Directors

2.0 THE ANNUAL STATEMENT

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



To all our esteemed Members, Stakeholders and Development partners, I am profoundly honored to present to you the LASPNET Annual report for the period July 2021 - June 2022.

Parliamentary Association.

Its noteworthy sharing that working with United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (UNOHCHR) and ASF we prepared a paper to the Judiciary providing our comments and views on the proposed State Brief, Bail and Sentencing guidelines and several of our recommendations were captured in the new set of guidelines launched by the Judiciary on 28th July 2022.

During the period under review, guided by its new Strategic Plan (2021/2025), LASPNET remained steadfast in fulfilment of our mandate of enhancing the promotion of Rule of Law and Access to Justice for rights holders in Uganda. The progress made by LASPNET and GNPf on advocacy for the National Legal Aid Law stood out among the so many successes we achieved this year. I therefore take this singular opportunity to appreciate all actors within and outside the Network that worked towards fast tracking the enactment of the National Legal Aid law. We are also glad that our development partners are in sync with the ongoing efforts to fast track the enactment of the National Legal Aid law. To re-echo the words of my Board Chairperson, the enactment of this law ought to have been done yesterday, therefore let's continue to support the Private Mover and Seconders as they progress with the next steps for having the NLAB passed into law.

On the part of Networking, Coordination and Partnerships, we have been able to maintain our membership at 53 LASPs spread across 80 districts in Uganda. At the recent AGM, two new members that is Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) and Urban Refugees Rights Programme (URRP) were admitted into the Network each coming on board with a unique mandate hence creating diversity within the membership and we are looking forward to admitting new members as individuals and organizations. LASPNET was also the convener of the Access to Justice Cluster under the Universal Peer Review (UPR) processes led by the National Coalition for Human Rights Defenders (NCHRDs). We significantly utilized the UPR space to develop the Access to Justice Report highlighting several gaps and recommendations for enhancing access to justice in Uganda. Some of the

Our long term expertise as a research hub on Access to Justice, Human Rights and Rule of law managed to gravitate us into several spaces. For instance, LASPNET was invited to make presentations by the Judiciary; Uganda Human Rights Commission and Uganda Women's

policy recommendations raised in the report included the need to challenge the continued practice of trying civilians in the court martial as well as the need to fast track the enactment of the National Legal Aid Law which recommendations were adopted at the UPR. Still under Networks, we continued to maintain our existing development partners in addition to bring on board new ones such as GIZ and HiIL.

More interesting to note, we were also able to discharge our mandate of strengthening the capacity of our members through a myriad of trainings on GBV under the EU project and navigating the CSO enabling environment by Paralegals under the Civil Society Strengthening Activity (CSSA) supported by EWMI and ICNL.

Quite significant for the year under review though joint effort of Management and aware of the need to adapt organizational sustainability we were able to secure a piece of land in Nakawuka, Jjunga in Wakiso district measuring one (1) acre where we intend to establish the Legal Aid House. We anticipate to have several facilities including conference and training facilities at the proposed Legal Aid House. High on the agenda in next few years will be to mobilize resources to identify development partners to support us actualize our dream for the Legal Aid House.

Not to say that the reporting period was smooth throughout, we also experienced bumpy slopes as evidenced by the continued shrinking civic space. That is to say, the continued suspension of DGF and later its exit from Uganda hugely impacted on the operations of Secretariat. DGF was our institutional donor funding about 75% of the staffing as well as programme implementation. As such we have had to lay off staff till we get alternative funding. In same vein many LASPs and Strategic


partners formerly funded by DGF will equally fill the pinch not to mention the beneficiaries, service providers and the wider economy which fed-off DGF.

Furthermore, on side of human rights violations, we witnessed attacks on the HRDs and Activists. For instance, the gruesome torture of Novelist and Satirical Writer Kakwenza Rukirabashaija remain fresh in our memories!





















The challenges notwithstanding, we have remained focused, resilient and enthusiastic to the future of Legal Aid and Access to Justice. To this end, allow me extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to our development partners including DGF, IDLO, UNDP, Freedom House, OXFAM, EWMI, ICNL, ADA, GIZ and CORDAID that supported our work as you will read from this Annual Report.

Finally, on my own behalf and that of Management and staff, I take the privilege to appreciate our outgoing Board of Directors for the job well done. We shall forever be grateful for their commitment, professionalism and oversight support that we benefited from as we went about our work. We are optimistic that the incoming Board will take forward the current and future intentions of the Network. For the Membership, we are extremely proud of you all. Last but not least, I thank my team at the Secretariat for the support and fidelity to your work amidst the challenges.

I wish you a pleasant reading!

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Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa
Chief Executive Officer

3.0 THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

 33 Radio Talk shows	 10 Capacity Building initiatives
 35 Paralegals trained	 34 TV Talk shows
 4 Board meetings & 8 Committee meetings	 2 Cluster meetings
 1 Press statements released & 1 Petition on Rule of Law, 3 Position papers on access to justice and Human rights	 2 Court orders executed successfully
 93 Networking & partnership meetings	 9 Researches and Publications on Access to justice and rule of law
 1053 Cases handled and closed while 462 referred under the LASPNET Call Center.	 14 Rapid Response Cases handled and closed
 106 Cases handled and closed under the Situational Room	 24 cases handled under the Social Web Application
 10 Paralegals enrolled under Rapid Response Scheme	 25,000 IEC materials on Access to Justice and Corruption delivered
 5 Call Centre Agents enrolled and supported the Mobile UNDP Call Centre	 10 Rapid response Lawyers continued to provide Legal Rapid Response
 8 Whistleblowers continued to support Corruption Monitoring Project	 12 Bailiffs continued to support Execution of Court Orders Project

4.0 THE YEAR 2020-2021 IN PICTURES



1. *LASPNET Secretariat staff during end of year retreat held from 16th to 18th December 2022 at Entebbe Andaritta beach hotel.*
2. *Hon. Justice Irene Mulyagonya and Mr. Arthur Nsereko awarding a certificate and Plaque to Mr. Gawaya Tegule at the CEOs Forum for diligently contributing to human rights promotion and protection on the 13th April 2022 at Hotel Africana.*
3. *A group photo of participants pausing with the RDC of Buikwe, Ms. Jane Francis Kagayi at the EU dialogue held on 1st April 2021.*
4. *Participants pose in a group photo with the guest of honor H/W Joy Nambozo at the Legal Aid Openday held in Kyegegwa.*
5. *The students of Muzza High school matching with Golola Moses during the GBV annual awareness day held on 2nd June 2022 in Mukono district.*
6. *Panelists at the National conference for on MHPSS held on 29th October 2021 at Hotel Africana.*

5.0 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS INTO THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT OF LASPNET FOR THE YEAR 2021-2022

In this year's (2021/2022) Annual Report, the Secretariat has attempted to undertake a comparative analysis of the operating environment and its impact on LASPNET programming in the last three years (2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021). The analysis is based on three (3) indicators namely; Membership composition, Manifestation of CSO threats and Challenging affecting LASPs.

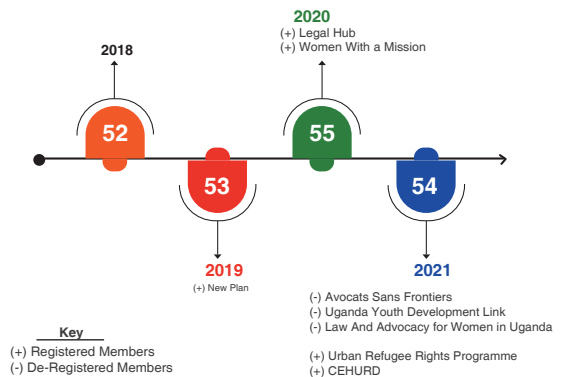
a) Membership composition

LASPNET membership in the last three years has remained consistent. In year 2018/2019 the Membership stood at 52 LASPs. There was an increment of one (1) member that is New Plan in the 2019 making the number of LASPs to 53. In year 2020, there was increment in the number of LASPs from 53 to 55 following the admission of two member organizations that is Legal Hub and Women with a Mission. However, the number reduced to 54 in 2021 following the admission of two organizations that is URRP and CEHURD and also deregistration of three members that is ASF which upgraded to level of strategic partner whereas the other 2 deregistered members included Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) and Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda (LAWU).

To note: Whereas the number of LASPs would have increased beyond the current numbers, LASPNET values a quality and relevancy of its membership and often

deregisters members who have constantly failed to meet their obligations. Therefore, the reduction in numbers shouldn't be interpreted as loss of confidence but rather strength in the purpose and core mandate and intentions of the Network. It rather not be about the numbers but instead relevancy and value addition a member brings to this forum.

Below is an illustration of the analysis on membership composition (2018-2021).

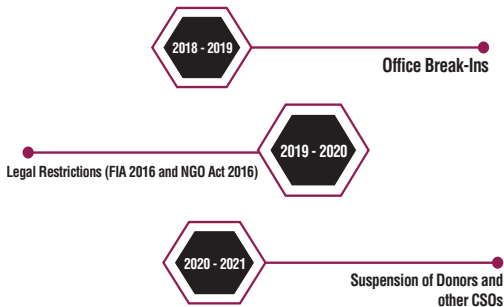


b) Manifestation of CSO threats

From the last three years (2018-2021), it's clear that the threats to CSOs operations including LASPNET have metamorphosed from Office Break-ins to legal restrictions including FIA and NGO Act and later suspension of donor's work the latest affected being DGF which is anticipated to exit from Uganda by the end of 2022. LASPNET therefore recommends that beyond strengthening physical security, there is need for CSOs to strengthen

their legal compliance to reduce on the regulatory overreach often associated with closures as well as invest in organizational resilience and sustainability. This would also necessitate institutions to diversify their income streams as a strategy for minimizing the risk of overdependence on one donor.

Below is an illustration of the analysis on manifestation of CSO threats.

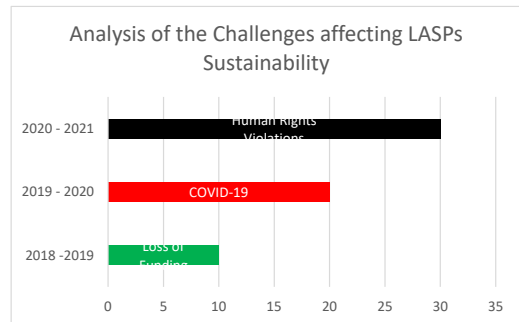


c) Challenges affecting LASPs Sustainability

The challenges documented overtime affecting LASPs functionality and sustainability include loss of funding due to lack of accountability and weak governance structures especially in the year 2018-2019. The outstanding challenge for 2019-2020 was COVID 19 and the subsequent lockdown which affected the operations of LASPs. During that time, legal aid services were classified as non-essential and as such lawyers denied access to travel to prisons and police to respond to emerging human rights violations including arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention. Equally, the year 2020-2021 was an election year, punctuated with human rights violations such as torture and enforced disappearances of citizens. Furthermore, it was during the same time that LASPNET was denied accreditation by the Electoral Commission to observe and monitor the 2021 general elections. To address

such constraint LASPNET redesigned its interventions on elections to focus on its core mandate of research and knowledge management as well as advocacy through deployment of Rapid response lawyers and paralegals to respond to human rights violations arising out of the pre, during and post-election period and generation of information related to access to justice, rule of law and human rights arising during the election period.

Below is an illustration of challenges affecting LASPs Sustainability.



6.0 HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The operating environment analyzed above notwithstanding, LASPNET has continued to leverage and consolidate its niche of promoting Legal aid as a vehicle for enhancing access to justice for the poor and vulnerable persons. This has been achieved through the Network's strategic thematic areas which include; Networking, Coordination and Partnerships, Lobby and Advocacy, Research and Knowledge Management and strengthening Institutional Capacity of its members. Under this segment we present the key highlights under each theme in summary.

6.1 Networking, Coordination and Partnerships

In the year 2021/2022 LASPNET sustained its collaborative platforms in several ways which among others included:

- Maintaining the existing partnerships with the different state and non-state actors who include: JLOS institutions; NSSF, UCBA, ASF, Development Partners among others.
- Convening of the 6th Annual PRE-AGM E-learning session under the theme: **“Growing and Sustaining a Resilient Legal Aid Sector in Uganda”** on the 21st October 2021.
- Launch of the Investigative Documentary titled **“Defiled by my Father”** on the 23rd October 2021 at Golden Tulip Hotel.
- Convening of two (2) regional engagement meetings between

Formal and Informal Justice actors on the 5th -6th August 2021.

- Convening of the National conference on MHPSS for SGBV Survivors under the theme; **“Strengthening Mental Health Psychosocial Services for SGBV Survivors in Uganda; Reflecting on the Milestones Challenges and Opportunities”** on the 29th October 2021 in partnership with CORDAID and TPO held at Hotel Africana.
- Conducting of 7th CEO Annual Forum under the theme **“The role of Legal Aid Service Providers (LASPS) in enhancing Sustainable Legal aid service provision in Uganda,”** on 11th April 2021 at Hotel Africana.

6.2 Research and Knowledge Management

In the reporting period, LASPNET undertook key research to strengthen evidence-based advocacy as well as provide relevant information for use by its members which included among others;

- Paralegal Voice Magazine (2nd Edition).
- Annual Access to Justice Trends Analysis, 2020.
- Training Handbook for CSOs and Paralegals on promoting an Enabling environment.
- GBV Training Manual and GBV Handbook for informal justice system actors.

Six papers on topical issues of Access to Justice and Rule of law which were prepared include;

- A paper titled “Perceptions on the Administration of Justice in Uganda” was presented at the 23rd Annual Judges Conference held on 31st to 2nd February at Mestil Hotel.
- A paper on the implication of the Speaker’s ruling on the Business of the 10th Parliament delivered during the online meeting convened by CEPIL on the 6th October 2022.
- A paper on the analysis of implementation of the CEDAW and Maputo Protocol in Uganda delivered at the UWOPA meeting
- A position paper on the proposed Bail, State Brief and Sentencing guidelines was submitted to the Judiciary Rules Committee and Chief Justice on the 2nd March 2022.
- Presentation on LASPNET’s Perspective on enforced Disappearances in Uganda and the Human Rights Implications in 2021 at the 24th UHRC consultative meeting held on the 22nd February 2022 at Fairway hotel.
- Conducted a 2-day residential meeting with the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee to discuss the National Legal Bill on
- Holding of the Development Partners Round Table Meeting held on 18th May 2022 at Serena Hotel.
- Convening of the Orientation and Lobby Breakfast Meeting with Committee and Caucus Chairpersons of the 11th Parliament on 21st June at Fairway Hotel.
- Convening of GBV Annual Awareness Days and use of social influencer like Golola Moses in Buikwe district on 19th May 2022, Kayunga district on 26th May 2022 and Mukono district on 2nd June 2022.
- Media engagements where a total of 78 media appearances and mentions were captured reporting about LASPNET’s work and events.
- Commemoration of GBV Awareness Days in Buikwe, Kayunga and Mukono, Masindi and Kasese Legal Aid Open Days and the 7th CEO’s Forum.
- Conducting of Legal Aid Open days in Masindi district on 29th April 2022, Kasese district on 7th June 2022 and Kitgum district on 22nd July 2022.

6.3 Lobby and Advocacy Engagements

On Lobby and Advocacy front, LASPNET achieved the following;

- Tabling of the National Legal Aid Bill (2022) in Parliament on 9th February 2022 by the Private Mover, Hon. Silas Aogon.

6.4 Institutional Strengthening and development

In the reporting period, LASPNET built the capacity of its members through undertaking several thematic based trainings as mentioned below;

- Training of Informal Justice Actors to effectively prevent and respond to Gender Based Violence (GBV) within the districts of Mukono, Buikwe and Kayunga held on 16th to 19th August 2021 at Colline Hotel Mukono.
- Training of Legal Aid Service Providers on Evidence Based Practice for Effective Service Delivery held on 27th October at Protea Hotel.
- Convening of the 6th Pre-AGM E-Learning Session virtually hosted by the Secretariat on the 21st October 2021.
- Launch of the LASPNET Strategic Plan 2021/2025.
- Training of Paralegals and CSOs on promoting an enabling environment held on the 13th to 15th July 2022 at Esella Country Hotel.
- A total of two (2) new Development partners that is GIZ and HiiL were brought on board.
- Two (2) new members that is Network namely; Urban Refugee Rights Programme (URRP) and Center for Health Human Rights and Development were ushered into the Network by the 12th AGM held on 22nd October 2020 at LASPNET Secretariat.
- Securing of land for the Network measuring one (1) acre in Nakawuka, Jjunga Wakiso district.
- Development of the DGF End of project evaluation report for the period April 2018-May 2021.

7.0 THE YEAR 2021-2022 IN DETAIL

7.1 NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP

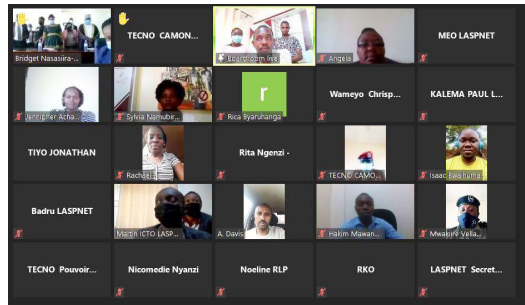
Through the Networking and Partnership building thematic area, LASPNET has continued to sustain its existing partnerships with both state and non-state actors, attract partnerships through engagements and meetings to respond to various human rights and rule of law issues in the country and solidification of the private public partnership in enhancing access to justice for the rights holders. This section highlights various networking and partnership activities undertaken during the reporting period.

7.1.1 LASPNET COVENES VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS WITH FORMAL AND INFORMAL JUSTICE ACTORS FROM NORTHERN & WESTERN REGION

On the 4th and 5th August 2021, LASPNET with support from IDLO convened a two-day virtual regional engagement meeting with informal and formal justice actors for Northern and Western region respectively under the theme **“Exploring synergies between formal and informal justice systems to enhance community justice initiatives.”**

The engagement meetings were purposed on harnessing effective strategies for fostering collaboration between formal and informal justice systems in the delivery of access to justice.

The meetings were attended by 71 participants (48 Male: 23 Female) from the Judiciary; ODPP; Police; Local Government; Cultural and Religious leaders as well as LASPs.



An online group picture of participants during the engagement meeting for western region

Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, the CEO of LASPNET, in her remarks underscored the fact that the community needed to know the laws and where to go to enforce these laws for access to justice to be realized.

Ms. Jennipher Achaloi, the IDLO representative while presenting on the role of Development Partner’s support towards strengthening of Community Justice, appreciated LASPNET for the innovative mind of convening the meeting amidst the pandemic as a way of ensuring continuity of Access to Justice initiatives. She noted that the theme of the meeting challenges development partners to show what they have done to enhance Access to Justice with the exception of providing funds.

In her remarks, Her Worship Susan Ayeko, acknowledged and comprehended the challenges people face in their quest for justice. She stressed the need to skill and build capacities of the informal justice actors. She added that the Ugandan legal system is clogged with cases filed more than ten years still pending hearing since the justice system is highly monetized and characterized by a lot of adjournments which slow down the justice chain and

yet those matters can be referred to Ker Kwaro or to religious leaders who can provide a fair and speedy remedy in their communities.

Similarly, on the 5th August 2021, the Western engagement took place and it was graced by the Chief Magistrate of Mbarara, His Worship Twakiire Samuel, the Imam of Mbarara - Imam Abdul Fattah Isa, and Board Representative -Western Ms. Bridget Nasasira among others.

H/W Twakiire Samuel, the Chief Magistrate of Mbarara, acknowledged that LASPNET is a key partner in the promotion of Access to Justice in Uganda. He explained that, he previously knew the role of informal justice actors however, he had no clear comprehension of their impact as it had been explained in the meeting. **“I have discovered that informal justice is as old as mankind! LASPNET has tried to answer questions of this nature through its numerous Access to Justice researches”** he added.

In conclusion, the two dialogues resulted into development of a paper presentation titled the **“The role of formal and informal justice as dispute resolution mechanisms; lessons from the regional engagement dialogues in Western and Northern Uganda.”** This paper was presented by the CEO at the National Advocacy Dialogue on Formal and Informal Justice Actors held on 19th August 2022 at Hotel Africa. Some of the recommendations highlighted in the paper included the need to recognize decisions of informal justice systems by formal justice systems; the need to popularize informal justice systems; the need to increase participation of informal justice actors on DCC structures; the need to undertake a comprehensive research on

the existing linkages between formal and informal justice systems as well as the need for development partners to fund informal justice systems to help decongest the formal justice institutions like courts of law.

7.1.2 Coordination of partners in implementation of the Lwengo Legal Aid Model

In the reporting period, LASPNET developed a documentary for the Lwengo crowdfunding project featuring partner voices from the Lwengo district Local Government and LASPNET highlighting the successes, challenges and opportunities under the project. This documentary was disseminated via membership Emails and WhatsApp groups purposely to create awareness and resource mobilization tool for the Lwengo crowdfunding project. The documentary can be accessed via the LASPNET YouTube Channel and through this link <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-bd&q=lwengo+crowdfunding+video>

Furthermore, the Lwengo Crowd funding project continues to be implemented by LASPs who are part of this initiative. That is to say, FIDA Uganda in Lwengo district, MCJL in Omoro district and UCLF in Kayunga district. They all have available office spaces provided by the districts leadership

7.1.3 The Implementation Execution of Court Orders Project in 21/2022

LASPNET in partnership with the Uganda Court Bailiffs Association (UCBA) with funding from DGF continued to implement the execution of Court Orders Project aimed at supporting the poor and vulnerable complete the justice chain

to enable clients realize benefits from litigation.

a) Case management

LASPNET retained court bailiffs who have supported execution of successfully litigated cases by LASPs. The project following suspension of DGF mainly focused on continuing cases since there were no new cases received.

Therefore in the reporting period, follow up of the pending 31 cases was undertaken and out of which 2 cases were executed successfully. The above cases were forwarded by LASPs such as Justice Centres, PILAC, CJAF, ULS-LAP and PLA.

It is worth noting that the follow up on pending cases has been constrained by the fact that some of the cases involve vacant possession which takes notice of 90 days hence affecting timely execution of pending cases; some of the cases have stalled in instances where the judgment debtors have died and there is need to change application for execution to include the administrators of the Estate of the deceased judgment Debtors.

Notwithstanding the above, the Secretariat continues to engage Uganda Court Bailiffs Association (UCBA) to ensure that all pending cases under execution are completed amidst the challenges.

7.1.4 LASPNET, NSSF and Wakiso Human Rights Committee Commemorate the International Human Rights Day.

LASPNET in partnership with National Social Security Fund (NSSF) and Wakiso Human Rights Committee coordinated and participated in the Human Rights Awareness week which took place from

6th to 10th December 2021. The activities during the week included provision of on-spot legal advice and counselling, sensitization on human rights and NSSF compliance as a result, over 400 clients benefitted and encouraged to save with the NSSF Scheme.

To crown off the long week activities, was the commemoration International Human Rights Day at Wakisha Resource Centre, Wakiso District under the theme ***“International Human Rights Day was held under the theme; Reducing Inequalities and Advancing Human Rights in Wakiso District.”***

The event was officiated by H.E Armand Aniambossou the, French Ambassador and in attendance were key dignitaries who included; Mr. Robert Kotchani, UNOHCHR Country Representative; Mr. Matia Lwanga Bwanika, LCV Chairperson Wakiso district, Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, LASPNET CEO, Ms. Shifrah Lukwago, Commissioner, UHRC among others.

Speaking at the function, the Chairperson of the Wakiso Human Rights Committee, Mr. Kasirye Elly appreciated LASPNET in a special way for the joint collaboration that made the celebrations a reality while Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa commended the Government of Uganda for adopting and enacting of progressive legal frameworks on human rights such as the National Action Plan on Business and Human rights. The CEO used this platform to urge government to cause for the enactment of the National Legal Aid law.

Further, the LC5 Chairperson Mr. Matia Lwanga informed the public about the challenges faced by the district including limited resources to functionalize the district arms, however, he expressed his

commitment towards functionalizing the Wakiso District Human Rights Committee amidst the limited resources.

Similarly, Ms. Shifra Lukwago, Commissioner at UHRC implored duty bearers to promote and protect human rights of all Ugandans.

His Excellency Jules-Armand Aniambassou, the French Ambassador appreciated the organizers of the event and pledged full support of the French Embassy towards the protection and promotion of rights at all levels. He further remarked that the Embassy will be in full support of the future International Human Rights Day.



The French Ambassador, H.E Jules-Armand Aniambassou (6th from left) posing with invited guests and district officials during the celebrations at Wakisha resource centre

On the sidelines, Baba TV captured a sensitization clip on human rights which was aired periodically as part of sensitizing the public.

Thus the celebration of the international Human Rights Day helped in bringing together the different actors to reflect on the state of human rights in the country as well as undertake commitments to respond the worrying human rights situation in the country.

7.15 LASPNET conducts Legal Aid open days

(a) Legal Aid Open day in Kyegegwa district:

LASPNET with support from the UNDP Spotlight Initiative held a legal aid open day in Kyegegwa district on 25th August 2022 under the theme ***“Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls and promotion of Access to Justice for all.”***

The hybrid event was graced by a total of 232 participants (157 Male: 75 Female) including Judicial officers; District officials (such as LCV Chairpersons, DHOs, CDOs); Media among others.

Due to COVID-19 guidelines and following SOPs, the Legal Aid Open day was broadcasted live on both zoom and Britop FM Radio to provide opportunity to the rest of public to hear the proceedings and to call in to ask questions that were answered. Similarly, to ensure a wider reach, Lawyers from LASPs in Western regions were mobilized and dispatched in various sub counties to provide on spot legal advice and counseling to communities.

On the other hand, the function in Kyegegwa was presided over by Her Worship Joy Nambozo, the Chief Magistrate of Kyenjojo district who appreciated LASPNET and UNDP for the kind consideration to take the Legal Aid Open day in Kyegegwa where the demand for legal aid services remain enormous. She also observed that SGBV is on a rise and that it's partly caused by overstaying of children at home in addition to Kyegegwa being a host of Kyaka refugee settlement.

Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa in her remarks, commended UNDP for supporting legal

aid outreaches which are intended to strengthen access to justice for most poor and vulnerable and echoed the intention of the legal aid open day which was creating awareness on Access to Justice and SGBV in Kyegegwa as one of the Spotlight districts with high prevalence of SGBV.

Speaking on behalf of UNDP, Ms. Annet Mpabulungi Wakabi, the Team Leader Rule of Law and Constitutional Democracy recognized government efforts towards eliminating violence against women and girls in Uganda working under the coordination of Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. She noted that, while a lot of interventions have been implemented, there is still have high prevalence of violence against women and children in the country. In addition, highlighted the uneven distribution of legal aid institutions in the country hence the need to conduct more legal aid outreaches.

While presenting the district status on GBV, Ms. Birungi Agnes, the District Gender Officer noted that by the end of last financial year, the status of SGBV stood at 64.1% mainly comprising of early teenage pregnancies. She added that in the period (July – December 2019), a total of 975 early teenage pregnancies were registered and this increased drastically to 11,504 in the period January to December 2020. She requested participants and the whole district to join hands to fight against GBV among women and children by reporting the2 perpetrators and sensitizing the public about GBV.

The welcome remarks were made by Mr. Joel Magoba, the District Speaker on behalf of the LC 5 Chairman of Kyegegwa district who underscored the need for presence of more Lawyers in the district

in order to ensure timely handling of GBV cases which are rampant in the district. Therefore, he requested the CEO of LASPNET to at least consider designating a full time Legal Officer at the District Headquarters to handle clients with legal problems

(b) Legal Aid Open day in Amudat district

Similarly, the legal aid outreach in Amudat was held on 31st August 2021. The function was presided over by His Worship Sayekwo Emmy Geoffrey, the Chief Magistrate of Moroto, Nakapiripiriti districts. Also in attendance were district officials such as Mr. Lobot Joseph Nangole, the District LC5 Chairman, Mr. Masokoyi Wasswa, the Chief Administrative Officer, DPC Mwesigye James, Dr. Loyce Nangiyo, Representative of the DHO, Dr Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, CEO LASPNET as well as Legal Aid Service Providers and Media.

The event attracted a total of 248 participants (198 Male: 50 Female) who included clients that received legal aid as well as key invited guests. The event was also broadcasted live on Kalya FM.

Arising out this Legal Aid Open day, H/W Sayekwo pledged to expeditiously handle GBV cases before him in both Moroto and Nakapiripiriti by bringing nearer the court to people of Amudat. He therefore noted that in consultation with the district leadership, he would be conducting a Bi-weekly court sessions intended to reduce on case backlog in the district.

The outcome of these legal aid open days was the increased access to legal information and legal aid to clients with legal problems.

c) LASPNET and NSSF extend legal aid to communities and Children at Kabalye Remand home in Masindi District

On the 29th April 2022, LASPNET in partnership with NSSF convened one Legal Aid Open day at Boma grounds and an outreach at Kabalye Remand Home in Masindi district.

The event was organized under the theme **“Promoting Legal Aid Employees’ Rights by bringing Justice closer to the People”** and was presided over by His Lordship Hon. Justice Byaruhanga Jesse Rugyema of Masindi High Court Circuit.

The open day attracted a total of 133 clients (85 Male: 48 Female) who sought legal aid services on legal issues affecting their communities especially in relation to land grabbing, corruption, human rights violations and abuses among others.

Also in attendance were justice institutions such as Uganda Prison Services; Judicial Service Commission; Uganda Human Rights Commission and Legal Aid Service Providers who were given opportunity to showcase their services and products. Arising out of the legal aid open day, LASPNET and NSSF were able to extend legal aid services to the people of Masindi.

Similarly the event contributed towards increased awareness and provision of legal services in Masindi where LASPs presence remain unevenly distributed.

d) Legal Aid outreach in Kasese district and five sub counties

Building on the existing partnership and with additional funds from the UNDP Spotlight Initiative in the year 2022, LASPNET held a legal aid open day in

Kasese district aimed at providing legal aid and creating awareness on access to justice and sexual gender-based violence to the communities.

The Legal Aid Open day in Kasese district took place at Rwenzori Square and in five (5) different sub counties of Hima, Kitswamba, Bugoye, Karusandara and Lake Katwe. The event was organized under the theme, **“Elimination of violence against women and girls and Access to Justice for All.”** and was presided over by His Lordship Mugabo Emmy Vincent, the Resident Judge of High Court, Fortportal.

The open day attracted a total of 1,004 (422 Male : 582 Female) at the main square and sub counties to seek legal aid services on legal issues affecting their communities especially in relation to land grabbing, corruption, human rights violations and abuses among others. In attendance were justice institutions such as Uganda Prisons Services, Local Government, Media and LASPs such as ULS, LDC, JCU and UCLF who provided legal support services to clients. Through this legal aid open day, LASPNET and UNDP were able to extend legal services to the people of Kasese.

It also contributed towards increased awareness and provision of legal services in Kasese where LASPs presence is limited.

LEGAL AID OPEN DAYS IN PICTURES



The Guest of Honor H/W Sayekwo Emmy Geoffrey 3rd seated from left with other key guests at the open day held at Amudat district Local Government ground.



In the pictorial above, lawyers from LASPs attending to questions from participants from Mpara Sub-County in Kyegegwa district.



Uganda Prisons exhibiting products made by the inmates at the Legal Aid Open day held in Kasese.

7.1.6 LASPNET commemorates 16 Days of Activism against GBV among Girls and Women

On the 2nd December 2021 LASPNET together with its partners World Vision, Caritas Uganda, Buikwe district leadership joined other stakeholders and launched the 16 Days of Activism campaign under the theme **“Orange the world: End Violence Against Women Now.”** The campaign called upon all stakeholders to end GBV in greater Mukono and the country at large.



The Deputy RDC of Buikwe district Mr. Sanon Dhaala officially launching the 16 Days of Activism at Lugazi Town Council.

At the launch, Mr. Osborne Agwii the World Vision Program Manager in Buikwe district appreciated all stakeholders for joining hands to convene the launch of the 16 Days of Activism in Buikwe. He added there has been an increase in teenage pregnancies during the lockdown to 631 cases according to the research conducted by World Vision Uganda in 2021.

Ms. Maria Kaddu, EU Project Coordinator who represented the CEO at the event added her voice to appreciate the district leadership, partners and LASPs for accepting to work as a team during this campaign. According to her, LASPNET and EU, chose greater Mukono to

implement the GBV project due to high GBV incidences in that region informed by the baseline report carried out by LASPNET. While addressing the gathering, the District Police Commander of Buikwe District Kakirya Moses, called upon parents to withstand the temptations of marrying off their children under the pretext of absolute poverty instead they should aim at educating their children.

The event was closed by Mr. Sanon Dhaala, the Deputy RDC of Buikwe District, who implored partners, authorities, community leaders and Community Watch Committees to be very vigilant and report cases of child labour within the district. Furthermore, LASPNET identified champions such as High Court Judges, district leaders, women groups, children, security personnel among others to share messages towards commemoration of the 16 days of activism.

To further spice up the campaign, LASPNET identified champions such as High Court Judges, District leaders, Police, CSO Leaders, Women groups, Children, among others to share messages towards commemoration of the 16 days of activism.

The 16 days of activism Campaign in pictures





7.1.7 LASPNET revamps the GBV Mobile Toll-free line

LASPNET in partnership and with support from UNDP Spotlight Initiative, secured six (6) multiple Toll-free lines from UTL to facilitate the provision of on-spot legal aid services in various spotlight districts including Kampala, Arua, Amudat and Kyegegwa.

A table of the multiple toll-free lines for the GBV Mobile Call Centre

No.	District	Toll free line
1.	Amudat	0800111460
2.	Kyegegwa	0800111461
3.	Arua	0800111462
4.	Kampala	0800111463
5.	Kampala	0800111459
6.	Kampala (Main)	0800111401

Furthermore, the GBV Mobile Toll-free lines are manned by five (5) call agents stationed in various spotlight districts who were trained on customer care, client satisfaction and reporting.

A total of 54 cases related to GBV were handled through the GBV Mobile Toll-Free line between May and July 2022.

7.1.8 Bringing Justice closer to the vulnerable through coordination of the Call centre and other innovative approaches

a) LASPNET Call Centre continues to provide faster responder & referral services to clients

In the period under review, LASPNET continued coordinating partners such as PILAC, UCU, LDC and ULS who provided call centre agents to man the Call Centre. During this period, a total of 879 (514 Male: 360 Female) clients supported by the Call Centre. Majority of the cases received under the call centre were domestic violence; land and human rights. Noteworthy is that a total of 28 clients called in to appreciate the support offered by the Secretariat through the Agents as well the referral points which is an indicator of satisfactory services rendered under the Call Centre and by the LASPs under referral pathways.

b) Impacting lives through the LASPNET Situational Room

In the reporting period, the situational room attended to 100 clients were handled (43 Male: 57 Female) under the category of economic (2) and social (58). The above cases were handled with support from LASPs and other institutions such as UGANET, Kisenyi Health Centre III, Haba Na Haba among others.

Furthermore, in a bid to reinforce the work of the Situational Room to respond to the needs of our clients LASPNET on 27th April 2022 received assortment food relief items including 10 duvets and 10 boxes comprised of rice, sugar, salt, wheat, beans and cooking oil from Haba Na Haba under the Muhammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiative in Dubai.

c) Coordination of Legal Aid Rapid Response Mechanism

In the reporting period, LASPNET continued to implement the legal rapid response mechanism owing to the increase in the human rights violations especially for youths, HRDs and Activists through providing response to affected persons in accessing justice. It is imperative to note that the project was majorly affected by the continued closure of DGF that initially provided for Lawyers facilitation and coordination costs for rapid response activities.

On the other hand, with support from GIZ, LASPNET coordinated a total of 10 signed up LASPs Lawyers, Paralegals and Private Advocates to provide impromptu rapid response under the GIZ supported fund. Under this, a total of 14 case files with 31 clients (22 Male and 9 Female) were handled and these were mainly related to Violation of presidential directives on COVID 19; Theft; Criminal trespass and domestic violence. The suspects were supported to apply for bail and bond while others were released on caution. Additionally, a few selected Lawyers and Paralegals continued to voluntarily respond to human rights violations and other cases using their bicycles through undertaking police and prison visits within the areas of proximity.

d) Responding to Justice Needs through Social Web Application

Related to the above, the Social Web Application received 24 cases out of which 22 were closed while 2 cases were referred to specialized LASPs for further management. Despite this progress, there has been a downward trend in the utilization of the SWA. This is attributed to the fact that the lockdown was eased hence enabling clients to physically access lawyers in addition to reduction of funding following the continued suspension of DGF.

7.1.9 Sustaining Collaborations and Partnerships to Influence Access to Justice, Rule of Law and Human Rights

Throughout the reporting period, LASPNET ably participated in various engagements organized by member, its partners-both state and non-state actors in a bid to enhance service delivery in the justice sector.

A total of Ninety-Three (93) external membership and partner's meetings were attended by the Board and Secretariat and key among these included the following;

- The Chief Executive Officer participated as a discussant by making a presentation on Perceptions of the public on Administration of Justice at the 23rd Annual Judges Conference at Mestil Hotel on the 31st to 3rd February 2022.
- The Annual JLOS Government of Uganda/Development Partner Review Meeting held on 14th December 2021 at Munyonyo Speke Resort.
- The Annual CSO Leader's reflection retreat convened by UN NGO Forum

from 14th to 16th December 2021 at Jinja Source of the Nile Hotel.

- The International Anti-Corruption Day convened by the IGG and presided over by His Excellency the President of Uganda on 9th December at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds.
- Residential Partners reflection and learning conference organized by IDLO from 1st to 3rd December at Imperial Golf View Hotel, Entebbe.
- The 4th Women Human Rights Defenders Conference convened by Human Rights Centre Uganda on 24th November 2021 where the Chief Executive Officer was a panelist.
- The Roundtable meeting on Justice Accountability Reform Programme organized by EU at Serena Kigo.
- UPR Conference Pre-sessions from 22nd to 25th November 2021 convened by the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders – Uganda (NCHRD) at Kabira Country Club and Silver Springs Hotel Bugolobi respectively.
- A meeting for the Executive Directors and Chairpersons Space organized by UWONET on the 1st and 2nd June 2022 attended by Ms. Flavia Zalwango, Central Representative for the Board.
- The Chief Executive Officer made a presentation Invitation at the 24th UHRC Annual Report Consultative Meeting presenting on LASPNET's Perspective on Enforced Disappearances in Uganda and the Human Rights Implications in 2021.

7.1.10 Establishment of a Working Group on CSO enabling environment

comprising of substantive members who include: CSSA partners, EWMI, NGO Forum as well as State and Non-State Actors to be co-opted such as: Financial Intelligence Authority, Uganda Human Rights Commission, Uganda Law Reform Commission, Ministry of ICT, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, ODPP, Human Rights Centre Uganda, Inter Religious Council of Uganda, Uganda Women's Network, National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda, Network for Public Interest Lawyers, Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum, among others. As a result, an online working group meeting was conducted on 12th August 2022 to discuss the status of the 54 suspended CSOs by the NGO Bureau.

In addition to the above and still under the CSSA project, LASPNET together with CCSA partners convened a National Conference on the enabling Environment for CSOs which was preceded by cluster conference meetings held from 26th to 29th July 2021. Ultimately, the Conference was convened by ICNL on 18th August 2021. Following the conference, partners developed an action plan to inform various initiatives to be supported under CSSA.

7.1.11 Development Partners Round Table Meetings

LASPNET convened a Round table Development Partners meeting on 18th May 2022 at Sheraton. The meeting was attended by a total of 42 participants (19 Male: 23 Female) who included; Honorary members; Development partners (DGF, ADA, European Union, Freedom House; UNDP & UNODC); National Working Group members and Secretariat staff.

The rationale of this meeting was to provide a status update on the advocacy efforts for the enactment NLAB 2022 as well as present an Advocacy roadmap for the pending advocacy activities for the NLAB in a bid to solicit donor financial and technical support. The event was officiated by Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule who in his key note speech highlighted concerns over the delayed enactment of the NLAB. The partners appreciated the update on progress and the efforts undertaken by LASPNET and GNPf in regards to advocating for the enactment the NLAB into law in addition to pledging their continued support towards the realization of the NLAL.

7.1.12 Strengthening ongoing partnerships and New Development and Strategic Partners

Partnerships with both state and non-state actors continue to facilitate LASPNET in effective realization of its mandate of enhancing access to justice for the poor and vulnerable. In the reporting period, LASPNET continued to work with several partners such as HiiL; Barefoot Law; UCBA; NSSF; ULC among others. Furthermore, two (2) new Development Partners came on board to support the Network in addition to the ongoing Development partners.

The projects and support partners are expounded on below;

7.1.13 New Development Partners

a) GIZ

In the reporting period, LASPNET on the 2nd July 2021 executed a partnership agreement with GIZ to implement a three months (July to September 2021) project titled **“Strengthening Access to Justice for Human Rights Defenders,**

Activists and Victims of Prerogative Orders through provision of Legal Rapid Response.”

Key among the project activities included; Engaging a consultant to facilitate paralegals to undertake prison visits to document and compile lists of HRDs, activists and victims of prerogative orders; coordinate LASPs to provide legal representation for impromptu rapid response cases; convene inception and progress meetings with criminal justice actors and engaging consultants to conduct mini-criminal sessions at the Chief Magistrates Courts of Makindye, Buganda Road and Entebbe where a total of 570 clients were supported to access justice through release on bond, bail and caution.

b) Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL)

LASPNET executed partnership with the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL) to support the implementation of the HiiL Innovating Justice Programme, a three (3) months (October to December) 2021 project, focused on building the capacity of LASPs on how to integrate evidence-based working in handling and solving of people’s pressing family justice problems. The main activities implemented under the HiiL Project included conducting of a capacity building training of LASPs on family justice as well as development of an online platform to aid information sharing of LASPs on family justice issues.

7.1.14 Continuation with Existing Partnerships

c) European Union

Building on its partnership, LASPNET continued to implement the EU two-year Project titled **“Empowering formal and**

informal justice system actors to handle and respond to GBV in Mukono; Kayunga and Buikwe districts.” Some of the main activities implemented under the EU project included development of the GBV Handbook and Manual, conducting of GBV Community Dialogues as well as the GBV awareness days in Buikwe, Mukono and Kayunga districts.

d) Australian Development Agency- Avocats Sans Frontiers (ASF)

LASPNET in partnership with Avocats Sans Frontiers (ASF) with funding from ADC continued to implement a three-year (2020-2023) project; **“Protecting procedural and constitutional rights through access to justice.”** The project seeks to enhance access to justice and human rights through promotion of procedural rights for pre-trial detainees.

Key among the project activities undertaken in the reporting period include; Coordination of 27 Paralegals/Human rights Monitors and Advocates who have continued to identify and were enter cases into the KOBO Toolbox. A total of 2107 cases have been entered during the reporting period, out these 731 were closed through securing bail, bond and legal advice on self-representation while 541 are pending.

e) East West Management Institute (EMWI)

In the reporting period, LASPNET continued to implement the USAID Civil Society Strengthening Activity aimed at promoting a more supporting enabling environment that sustains a vibrant civil society for a period of 6 months, April to October 2021. The project is implemented in partnership with International Center

for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL); Chapter Four Uganda; National Coalition for Human Rights Defenders (NCHRD); and Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa (CIPESA). The main activities implemented under CSSA include the development of the Training Paralegal Handbook and establishment of a working group on CSO enabling environment.

f) Freedom House- RAJA Project

In the period under review, LASPNET continued to implement the RAJA project focusing on enhancing access to justice for the poor and vulnerable in collaboration with various sub group members who include FAPAD, ULS, PILAC and RLP. Some of the activities implemented under the Freedom House project included convening of Mobile Legal Aid Clinics and Breakfast meeting with Committee and Caucus Chairpersons to advocate for the enactment of the NLAB.

g) UNDP Spotlight initiative

Building on the exiting partnership with UNDP, LASPNET continued to implement the Spotlight Initiative titled **“Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls.”** The Spotlight Initiative is aimed at capitalizing on existing Programmes and interventions addressing Harmful Practices, Violence against Women and Girls and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights in Uganda.

Some of the activities implemented under the Spotlight project included; Conducting of Legal Aid Open days and Operationalization of the GBV Call Centre.

h) International Development Law Organization (IDLO)

The IDLO project titled; **“Supporting Legal Aid Service Providers (LASPs) to enhance access to justice for the poor, vulnerable and marginalized in Uganda,”** is ultimately aimed at promoting community justice initiatives. Some of the main activities implemented under the IDLO project included conducting advocacy meetings for the NLAB; Supporting IIMS upgrade and support visits; conducting regional dialogues for formal and informal justice actors among others.

i) Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID)

LASPNET with funding from CORDAID under its project titled; **“Integrating Mental health and Psychosocial Support in CORDAID’s Thematic (IMPACT) Project”** in partnership with Transcultural Psychological Organisation (TPO). Some of the activities implemented under the CORDAID project included conducting of Local District and National Advocacy dialogues on Mental Health and Psychosocial support.

(j) OXFAM- VOICE Linking and Learning

LASPNET continued to coordinate Strategic Link to implement the OXFAM funded linking and learning project. The main activities implemented under the project included the continued maintenance of the digital platform and supporting grantees to upload content for Voice digital platforms; conducting of Kick Off Meetings for the 9 new voice influencing grantees at Kabira Country club hotel on the 14th and 15th February 2022; conducting of three (3) online linking and learning meetings with the three (3) grantees and undertook onsite mentorship visits to the grantees.

(k) Democratic Governance Facility (DGF)

In the reporting period, LASPNET continued to receive institutional support to implement the DGF project titled; **“Strengthening Collaborative Advocacy Platforms to Enhance Rule of Law, Legal Aid and Access to Justice for the Poor, Vulnerable and Marginalized in Uganda.”** Therefore, LASPNET utilized the DGF costed extension project to implement mainly desk work activities; undertake the development of the DGF end of project evaluation report, pay staff salaries as a retention strategy as well as facilitate overhead costs including rent and other utilities.

7.2. RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

LASPNET has continued to strengthen its evidence-based research and knowledge management thematic component. In the reporting period ending July 2022, with support of development partners who included DGF, IDLO, EU and EMWI, LASPNET produced a total of 5 evidence-based researches on Access to Justice; Rule of Law and Human rights and published standardized Manuals and Service Protocols in improving service gaps in legal aid service delivery.

These researches and reference tools continue to strengthen evidence-based advocacy by key in key stakeholders in the governance and security sector, Academia, Development partners, media and the public in addition to strengthening standards in service delivery among the LASPs. Some of the researches and reference tools include;

7.2.1 Annual Access to Justice Trends Analysis research (2020)

In the year 2020, LASPNET commissioned the development of the Annual Access to Justice Trends Analysis Research 2020 in December 2020. The research aimed at documenting emerging trends in delivery of access to justice in the wake of COVID-19 and impact of the new normal on Access to Justice as well as opportunities to inform policy recommendation. Upon finalization by the consultant on 6th January 2021, the report is now available for use and dissemination to the stakeholders.

7.2.3 Publication of the Second Edition of the Paralegal Voice Magazine

Following a compilation of Paralegal success stories, and testimonies in enhancing community justice amidst the COVID-19 lockdown, on the 27th August 2021, LASPNET published the 2nd edition of paralegal magazine which highlighted success stories and policy recommendations to improve paralegal work. The Magazine was disseminated online to different members who include among others LASPs, Development partners and Community paralegals.

7.2.4 Development and Launch of an Investigative Story on Corruption titled “Defiled by My Father: A quest for Justice.”

In the year 2020, LASPNET commissioned the development of a documentary story on Corruption to expose loopholes in the criminal justice system especially Police and ODPP induced by systematic corruption tendencies and maladministration. The documentary was validated by the Advisory Committee on Governance and Monitoring Corruption in JLOS and finalized by the Consultant.

Upon finalization, it was released on 7th October 2021 for public viewership via various social media platforms including Twitter and Facebook. Key stakeholders such as Uganda Police Force and the Media were involved in the online launch and pledged to follow up the case to ensure that justice is served for the victim. The online launch was widely covered by both the mainstream media and social media under the hashtag #DefiledByMyFather.

Subsequently, the story was launched on 25th October 2021 at Golden Tulip and this launch was graced by Dr. Rosiwtha Kremser, Head of Office of Austrian Embassy; Dr. Miria Matembe, a Senior Citizen and CCEDU Chairperson; Ms. Samali Wakholi, Asst. DPP and Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, the LASPNET CEO. Arising out of this launch various stakeholders pledged to leverage their mandates to fight GBV and institutional corruption within justice institutions.

7.2.5 Development of the Training Handbook for Paralegals and CSOs in enabling Environment

LASPNET with support of a consultant developed a training handbook for paralegals and CSOs on promoting an enabling environment aimed at supporting Paralegals and CSOs on how to navigate the restrictive operating environment.

The handbook was validated on 22nd November and 15th December 2021 respectively. Upon finalization, the handbook was published and a digital version was disseminated online to the stakeholders. As result, the handbook is currently used as a reference tool for equipping paralegals with knowledge and skills to navigate the restrictive CSO operating environment.

7.2.6 Translation of the Paralegal handbook in Two languages (Atesot & Runyakore)

LASPNET undertook translation of the Paralegal Handbook originally developed with support of DGF in 2018. The translated Paralegal handbook was translated in two languages of Atesot and Runyakore. The rationale for translation of these Handbooks is to enhance community justice so that informal actors such as community paralegals can comprehend the legal and procedural aspects for handling societal problems.

7.2.7 Publication of the Translated IEC Materials on Access to justice (posters & stickers):

Further a total of 2500 Translated Paralegal IEC Materials on Access to Justice in languages of Runyakore and Atesot were published on 26th February, 2022. So far, a total of 170 fliers and car stickers have been disseminated.

7.2.8 Development of the GBV Training Manual and GBV Handbook for informal justice system actors

LASPNET engaged a consultant to develop GBV training Manual and GBV Handbook for informal justice system actors. The knowledge products covered the concept of GBV, its causes and manifestations as well referral pathways. These were validated and later disseminated to various partners.

7.2.9 Development and dissemination of the EU project success story magazine.

LASPNET developed the EU project magazine titled **“Joining Hands to fight GBV; The Community Change Stories: A Documentation of Stakeholders’** and

Survivors. The magazine highlighted stakeholders’ and partner voices about the EU-GBV project as well as its registered impact, success Stories from beneficiaries in the project districts of Mukono, Kayunga and Buikwe Districts. It was launched and disseminated during the 3 GBV awareness days that transpired in the project districts on the 19th, 26th May and 2nd June 2022 respectively.

7.2.10 Desk research on topical issues prepared to contribute towards Access to Justice and Rule of Law

In the reporting period, LASPNET developed three (3) presentations and position papers on Access to Justice which were shared in different fora. These included;

- At the 23rd Annual Judges Conference held on the 23rd February 2022 at Mestil Hotel, the CEO as a panel discussant presented a paper on **“Public perceptions on the Administration of Justice in Uganda.”** The depth of analysis and research in this paper was overwhelmingly appreciated by the Judiciary to the extent that it was uploaded on the Judiciary website.
- A paper on the implication of the Speaker’s ruling on the Business of the 10th Parliament delivered during an online webinar meeting convened by CEPIL on the 6th October 2021 in which the CEO was a presenter.
- A paper on the analysis of implementation of the CEDAW and Maputo Protocol in Uganda delivered at the UWOPA meeting
- A presentation was prepared on access to justice for Women Human Rights Defenders delivered by the

CEO at the HRD Women conference convened by HRCU

- A position paper on the proposed Bail, State Brief and Sentencing guidelines was developed by LASPNET working closely with the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and its member LASPs under the criminal justice cluster i.e. FHRI, CJAF, IWILAP and CLA and submitted to the Judiciary Rules Committee and the Chief Justice on 2nd March 2022.

7.3 LOBBY AND ADVOCACY

In the year ending July 2022, LASPNET with support of development partners who included DGF, EU, IDLO, GIZ, Freedom House and ADA implemented various advocacy interventions aimed at enhancing Access to Justice; Human rights and Rule of Law as heightened below;

7.3.1 LASPNET Coordinated the Universal Periodic Review Cluster on Access to Justice

Following submission of the Access to Justice Cluster on the 14th July 2021 via the UPR Mechanism Portal, LASPNET participated in a four-day Uganda UPR Conference Pre-sessions from 22nd to 25th November 2021 convened by the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders – Uganda (NCHRD) in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], Defend Defenders and Centre for Health and Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) at Kabira Country Club and Silver Springs Hotel Bugolobi respectively. The conference was held under the theme **“Citizen Centered Universal Periodic Review”** and was aimed at generating consensus on Ugandan CSO Thematic recommendations.

The conference involved structured dialogue with Diplomatic Missions who comprised of representatives from the Embassy of Netherland, Sweden, Demark, Italy, Belgium, Austria and European Union. The government was represented by a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In addition, presentations were made by the 22 thematic cluster heads with emphasis to generate thematic agreed recommendations. In particular, Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa made a presentation for the Access to Justice Cluster in which she underscored the need for Government to enact the National Legal Aid Law which recommendation stems from the 2011 UPR recommendation.

7.3.2 Strengthening Access to Justice for HRDs and Activists through Rapid Response and Advocacy under the GIZ project

On 17th September 2021, LASPNET convened one inception meeting with key stakeholders comprising of Chief Magistrates of Buganda Road H/W Okello Miriam Ayo, Chief Magistrate of Makindye; H/W Basemera Sarah Anne and Entebbe Magistrates Court H/W Nakitende Juliet; Resident State Attorneys; Development partners, Advocates and Paralegals.

The meeting was attended by 33 (13 Females, 20 Males) participants and arising out of this meeting, the stakeholders were briefed about the project objectives, methodology and expected outputs and outcomes. Among the key outputs that emerged from the inception meeting include; the overwhelming commitment of the Judicial officer; Lawyers and State Attorneys to support the convening of the mini-criminal sessions in the Chief Magistrate Courts of Buganda Road,

Makindye and Entebbe, formation of a WhatsApp group by the Secretariat to ease coordination of the mini-criminal-sessions.



A group discussion during the inception meeting

ii) Mini Criminal Sessions Conducted

A total of 3 mini-criminal sessions conducted at Buganda Road; Entebbe and Makindye Chief Magistrates Courts on 26th July, 7th and 8th October respectively. As a result, 570 (545 Male: 25 Female) were supported to access justice through release on bond; bail and caution.



Court session taking place at Kigo Prison, presided of by the C/M of Entebbe court

7.3.3 GBV Community dialogues held in Kayunga, Buikwe and Mukono Districts under the EU project

On the 1st October 2021, LASPNET convened a Community Dialogue with Justice Actors and Local Government

leaders within the target project districts of Buikwe, Kayunga and Mukono districts respectively. The dialogue in Kayunga was attended by several dignitaries including H/W Sanula Namboozo, Grade One Magistrate; Mr. Ronald Mukoza, the Deputy Resident District Commissioner, Ms. Roseline Adongo, the Chief Administrative Officer Ahmed Matovu and the District Health Officer.



The invited guests and selected participants posing for a group photo during the dialogue at Kayunga district headquarters.

At the dialogue several dignitaries made remarks which underscored the increase in GBV cases manifesting in form of domestic violence, rape, defilement and child related offences such as early marriages as a result of Covid-19 thus called upon stakeholders to join hands and fight the vice.

Mr. Ronald Mukooza, the Deputy RDC of Kayunga appreciated LASPNET for considering to implement the GBV Campaign in Kayunga district through conducting a baseline survey to shape the project interventions while emphasizing the need for more awareness raising on GBV especially in Sub counties such as Bbaale where the vice is more rampant. He acknowledged the issue of economic empowerment as advanced by Dr. Sylvia as a backbone to development and called upon the community members to engage in government programs such

as the parish development model and “emyooga” a presidential wealth creation initiative that is aimed at eradication of poverty in communities H/W Nambozo Sanula, the Grade One Magistrate of Kayunga, remarked that Gender-Based Violence is deeply rooted in gender inequality, and continues to be one of the most notable human rights violations within all societies. **“Gender-based violence is directed against a person because of their gender, both women and men experience gender-based violence but the majority of victims are women and girls.” It is therefore not surprising that whenever GBV is mentioned, what comes to everybody’s mind is violence against women. So, using the ‘gender-based’ lenses in delivery of justice is important as it highlights the fact that many forms of violence against women are rooted in power relations between women and men”** she explained.

While closing the dialogue on behalf of the LC5 chairman and the District Woman counsellor of Kitimbwa Sub- County Ms. Namukose Fatumah condemned parents who reject the girl child because of early pregnancies. She gave an example of her own daughter whom she neglected out of anger after getting pregnant while at school. However, after being cajoled by concerned people, her daughter went back to school and graduated in Social Work and Social Administration. She concluded by encouraging parents to always give a second chance to young impregnated girls by taking them back to school instead of subjecting them to child neglect.

Similarly, on 14th October 2021 LASPNET held another Community Dialogue at Buikwe District Headquarters where Ms. Jane Francis Kagayi, the RDC of Buikwe

expressed her support to LASPNET in responding to GBV.

She noted children get involved in bad behaviors whenever their parents are not at home or being neglected by their fathers and hence, they end up becoming teenage mothers. She called upon all leaders at different levels to work together to handle GBV in all aspects. “GBV should be taken as a key concern and as representatives of the president in the district, we will provide all the necessary support that is needed to end GBV in the district” she said.

Relatedly, on 19th October 2021 LASPNET held another Community Dialogue at Mukono District Headquarters. The District Councilor Mukono District Ssegayu Lukeman, appreciated LASPNET on behalf of the District Chairperson for the work done in the selected Sub Counties within Mukono during the GBV community outreaches held on 18th October, 2021. He underscored the need to use the Dialogue as a platform to learn more about LASPNET’s work, as well as GBV and how to respond to it.



Hon. Justice David Batema posing in a picture with participants during a 3rd GBV community dialogue at Mukono district headquarters

While presenting and sensitizing participants on the impact of GBV in land, succession and inheritance, the

Resident Judge of Mukono High court circuit His Lordship Justice David Batema, commended Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa for the advocacy work she is doing and for standing out among others to fight for human rights and mostly women's rights. He pulled out four (4) critical points about gender perspectives in Uganda namely; Informed laws made by Parliament, informed by culture norms, by religion and lastly by training and orientation.

His Lordship appealed to members to give all children equal opportunities, in school, work and wealth whereby if women and girl children are being given land, it brings an opportunity for them to gain wealth and economic empowerment. To him, for a society to be more developed, both men and women should work together.

In her closing remarks, the RDC of Mukono, Ms. Fatumah Ndisaba, revealed how some environments are not friendly to the opposite sex.

7.3.4 Convened a Local District Advocacy Dialogue on MHPSS:

LASPNET with support from CORDAID conducted this event on 25th October 2021 in Terego district under the theme **“Exploring effective strategies for integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial support into Access to Justice and Health services for Sexual Gender-Based Violence Survivors in Refugees settlements.”** The dialogue was attended by 43 participants (29 Male: 14 Female) including the Judiciary; District Officials; Health practitioners; LASPs and Media. Furthermore, the strategies mooted by the participants at the dialogue included; the need to mainstream mental health among justice actors; strengthen referral pathways between legal aid service

providers and health centres; lobbying for increased budget allocation for CSOs and Health centres to handle mental health issues; undertaking capacity building trainings for LASPs lawyers and Health practitioners; conducting awareness campaigns on MHPSS.; mapping of areas that are highly prone to mental health related cases as well as establishment of GBV survivor shelters for rehabilitation.



A group photo of participants after the meeting

Similarly, on 29th October 2021, LASPNET held a National Conference on MHPSS under the theme; **“Strengthening Mental Health Psychosocial Services for SGBV Survivors in Uganda; Reflecting on the Milestones Challenges and Opportunities,”** at Hotel Africana. The conference aimed at collectively generating advocacy interventions towards integrating MHPSS into response mechanisms for SGBV Survivors. The conference was attended by 76 participants (42 Male: 34 Female) from Ministry of Health; Academia; LASPs; Media among others. The key recommendations arising from the conference included; the need to consider advocacy for policy amendments on legal and policy frameworks to bring them into conformity with the different cultural context in response to GBV; the need for service providers to use a multifaceted approach in responding to issues of mental health and as a way of contributing to reduction of GBV; capacity

enhancement and strengthening of all stakeholders i.e. Police, Judicial officers; LASPs, Media, Community, Legal Officers, Mental health practitioners in responding and handling GBV and establishment of a wellness centers for service providers that support GBV survivors among others.



A cross section of Panelists at the National Advocacy Dialogue on MHPSS at Hotel Africana

7.3.5 Conducted 3 GBV Awareness Days in Mukono, Buikwe and Kayunga districts

The GBV Awareness Days were held with an aim of creating awareness of GBV as well as standing in solidarity with the survivors. These took place on 19th May 2022 in Buikwe district, followed by Kayunga on 26th May and Mukono on 2nd June 2022. The Awareness Days were part of the interventions under the EU supported two-year (2020-2022) project titled **“Empowering formal and informal justice systems to respond and handle Gender-based Violence (GBV) in the districts of Mukono, Kayunga and Buikwe.”**

The events intended to strengthen GBV response and prevention mechanisms as well as increase awareness about GBV in the districts were celebrated under the project campaign slogan **“Let us join**

hands to fight GBV among women and children” literally translated as **“Tukwatire wamu okumalawo okukabasanya abakyala na’baana.”** In total the GBV Awareness days attracted a total of 869 participants (Males: 395 Female:474 including children) who included project partners including UGANET, AAV, JCU, UCLF and IWILAP, JLOS officials, paralegals and GBV Community Watch Committees (CWCs) and GBV district partners such as World Vision, Makerere Walter Reed Project (MUWRP), Loham Children Ministries as well as District leadership from the project target districts.

Among the Key note speakers and guests during the activities included Hon. Justice David Batema, Resident Judge Mukono High Court Circuit, Hon. Justice Eva Luswata as well as Mr. Nicolas Gonze the EU Head of Section, Governance and Social Inclusion who represented the EU. These in unison applauded LASPNET and the district leadership for taking tremendous strides in GBV response and prevention in the project focus districts.

The awareness days commenced with a series of activities aimed at raising GBV awareness in the districts including the airing of radio DJ mentions and jingles on community radios, the movement of a mobile caravan, a fitness crusade where the crowd puller, Mr Golola Moses entertained and also sensitized the community about GBV as well as marching through the districts led by a brass band coupled with skaters and bikers who disseminated flyers and posters with GBV awareness messages to the community members. The activities were crowned off with the launch the project success story magazine titled “Joining Hands to Fight GBV: Community Change Stories” and inspection of stalls for LASPs and GBV partners.

Conclusively, the GBV awareness days re-echoed the manifestations and effects of GBV in Buikwe, Kayunga and Mukono districts, highlighted the plight of GBV survivors, raised community awareness on GBV through various platforms such as the justice system actors and media, mobilized

the public to shun GBV and created public awareness about the project interventions and milestones. The public was hence empowered with adequate information to continue reporting incidences of GBV to mandated institutions and LASPNET.

GBV AWARENESS DAYS IN PICTURES



A group photo of participants at the GBV Awareness day in Buikwe district



A group of skaters and bikers displaying stunts while distributing GBV IEC materials to the communities during the GBV awareness day in Buikwe district.



A traditional dancing troupe entertaining participants at the GBV Awareness day in Mukono district.



Renowned Kick boxer Golola Moses who also happens to be the LASPNET End GBV Brand Ambassador.

7.3.6 Conducted Lobby and Advocacy Forums

ASF in partnership with LASPNET coordinated and participated in three local advocacy forums for Arua, Gulu and Kitgum and Masindi to deliberate with Criminal Justice Actors, Local CSOs and partner LASPs on emerging issues under the PTD project so as to inform policy and practice change within the criminal justice system. The Local Advocacy forums took place on 22nd, 24th November 2021 and 30th May 2022 in Arua at Berri Cottages, in Gulu and Kabalega Resort in Masindi respectively. These meetings were attended by Chief Magistrates, Representatives from the Uganda Police Force, Uganda Prison Service, Legal Aid Service Providers and Private practitioners from the districts.



A group photo of participants during the Local Advocacy Forum in Arua district

Some of the issues raised at the forum that continue to bedevil the justice system include continued arrests of suspects before investigation; limited awareness about bail/bond and its application; illegal detention of civilians in Military Court martial among others. In the same vein, stakeholders made various recommendations such as the need to conduct more Local Advocacy Forum (s)

to discuss issues of PTD as well as the need to consider opening up more LASPs within Masindi.

7.3.7 Coordinated the convening of one Mobile Legal Aid Clinic (MLAC) on 14th April 2022 in Kyangwali refugee settlement which benefitted 150 (78 Female: 72 Male) participants out of which 135 received legal assistance provided by PILAC students and RLP Lawyers community and children. The MLAC enabled the communities to be sensitized on SGBV, Access to Justice for refugees and referral pathways among others. Following the MLAC, one radio talk show was held on KKRC radio to create more awareness on access to justice and rights for refugees.

Furthermore, LASPNET coordinated the convening of one Community Dialogue by FAPAD at Lira Sub-county Headquarters on 24th April 2022 to deliberate on key access to justice issues affecting women, men, youth and children. During the community dialogue, a total of 104 participants received legal aid services, psychosocial support services and referrals. In the same vein, one radio talk show was held on QFM and it covered topics such as child sexual abuse, GBV, child abuse, land rights and other emerging issues arising out of the community dialogue. The PA- RAJA attended and represented LASPNET at the event. Also, FAPAD provided legal aid support to 100 (30Male: 70Female) survivors of child sexual abuse in Lira. This activity has increased child rights protection in Lira.

7.3.8 Status update on the Enactment of the National Legal Aid Law

In the reporting period, LASPNET held 9 strategic meetings on the Legal Aid Law. Key amongst them included; the

orientation of the newly identified Mover of the NLAB held on 20th August 2021; residential Meeting to refine the NLAB held on 5th and 6th November 2021 at Garuga Country Lake resort; debrief strategic meeting with Greater North Parliamentary Forum(GNPF) on 5th May 2022 at Piato Restaurant; reflective meeting with the Legislative and procedural department of Parliament on the 29th September 2021; debriefing meeting on the status on reintroduction of the new Legal Aid Bill to Parliament with the Mover, Seconders and GNPF on 4th March 2022 at Piato Restaurant; stakeholders consultative meeting on the NLAB 2022 held on 30th May 2022 at Hotel Africana and orientation of the Caucus Committees and Chairpersons held on 21st June 2022. All the above meetings provided opportunity for all the stakeholders and policy makers to review the bill and harmonize the Clauses that would stall its progress before presentation of the first reading in Parliament.

Notably, the Orientation meeting of the new Hon. Asuman Basalirwa led by the Chairperson from GNPF as well as Lead draft counsel John Tamale met the newly identified mover and briefed on the ongoing advocacy and next processes of the NLAB.

Subsequently, on the 16th September 2021, the Late Hon. Speaker of the 11th Parliament, the Rt. Hon Jacob Oulanyah pronounced a directive that led to the suspension of all pending legislations by the 10th parliament including the NLAB, 2021. This called for the drafters and Members of Parliament to re-strategize on how to re-introduce this Bill in Parliament. On the 29th September 2021, the new Mover Hon. Silas Aogon the Kumi Municipality MP and Chairperson GNPF attended a

reflective meeting with the members of the Legislative and Procedural Department to discuss the status of the NLAB 2021. The meeting provided a platform for the partners i.e. LASPNET and the GNPF to share its expectations; hear the views and the support needed from the Legislative and Procedural department of Parliament in regards fast track the enactment of the National Legal Aid Bill, 2020.

Similarly, on 5th and 6th November 2021 a residential meeting with the drafter, movers and a select members of the Legal Aid Think Tank (National Working Committee) was convened to receive the overview of the revised National Legal Aid Bill as well as obtain members' input and agree on the next steps.

As a result of the above continued engagements the Mover Hon. Silas Aogon, Chirperson and Member of Parliament, Kumi Municipality on the 9th February 2022, presented a motion before Parliament and was granted leave of Parliament to prepare and introduce the Private Members Bill for the first reading.

7.3.9 Leveraging on Cluster meetings to support research and Advocacy

In the reporting period, two cluster meetings were convened as follows;

a) Convening of the Social Justice Cluster Meeting

On the 4th March 2022, a social justice cluster meeting was convened virtually to discuss the plight of migrant workers to the Middle East for purposes of developing an advocacy position paper and petition addressed the Saudi Arabian Embassy in light of the prevailing human trafficking cases of Ugandans in the Gulf States.

However this actualization of the petition remained pending as at the close of the year under review, although the issues of labor externalization and tracking remain a pertinent human right issue.

Subsequently, the membership working group and Rapid Response Lawyers developed an online and physical petition calling upon H.E the President to consider re-opening DGF. The petition underscores the losses made ever since the closure of DGF in regards to job creation, revenue and social justice among others. The online petition has since collected 532 signatures whereas the physical petition is pending submission to the President through the office of the Speaker of Parliament.

7.3.10 Access to justice, Rule of Law and Human Rights enhanced through media and related information forums

LASPNET has continuously utilized various media platforms including: Newspapers; Radio and TV to educate, sensitize and advocate for Access to Justice; Rule of Law and Human Rights especially for the poor and vulnerable Platforms. The media engagements captured during the reporting period include the following;

7.3.10.1 Newspaper publications

The CEO provided a commentary interview on the current state of human rights and freedom of expression in the London-based magazine known as Index on Censorship.

Furthermore, the Lobby and Advocacy Officer wrote an opinion article on torture which was published in the Independent Magazine on 24th February 2022. The article can be accessed through the link:<https://www.independent.co.ug/increasing-torture-in-detention-cases/>

In addition to the above, on the 27th September 2021, two Newspaper pull outs were published paralegal stories in both New Vision and Bukedde newspapers. The pull outs are showcased the work of paralegals in enhancing community justice; highlighted challenges faced by paralegals as well as offer policy and structural recommendations to improve and recognize their efforts.

7.3.10.2 Media publicity during LASPNET events

Having stayed relevant on access to justice, human rights and rule of law issues, LASPNET enjoyed free media services in the local dailies and online newspapers. In the reporting period, a total of 78 media coverage and mentions were captured reporting about LASPNET's work and events especially during the 16 Days of Activism; Conferences and Trainings, Annual GBV.

Awareness Days in Buikwe, Kayunga and Mukono, Masindi and Kasese Legal Aid Open Days and the 7th CEO's Forum.

7.3.10.3 Press Statements released in the period

In the reporting period, on the 6th June 2022, LASPNET developed one press statement condemning the harsh and selective bail conditions by some Judicial Officers particularly at LDC and Buganda Road Courts. The statement also hinted on the frustrations encountered by opposition MP (Hon. Anne Ebaju) and Deputy Lord Mayor Hon. Doreen Nyanjura in securing bail and therefore called for their immediate release.

The statement made various recommendations including the need for Judiciary management to prevail over the judicial officers who misuse their discretion

to issue harsh bail conditions with the intent of failing justice to the accused persons as well as the need for the prosecution to respect the right to bail and desist from objecting to bail even when offences are bailable and suspects have produced requirement pre-requisite to grant of bail. As a result, on 7th June 2022 the suspects were released.



7.3.10.4 The A2J & Human rights Petitions & Position papers

During the reporting period, LASPNET prepared two petitions as highlighted below;

- On 2nd March 2022, working closely with the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and LASPs under the criminal justice cluster i.e. FHRI, CJAF, IWILAP and CLA prepared and submitted a position paper to the Judiciary Rules Committee on the proposed Bail, State Brief and Sentencing guidelines and the Chief Justice. The crux of the paper was to share views of CSOs on human rights concerns in the proposed Bail, State Brief and Sentencing guidelines.
- An online petition calling upon H.E the President to consider re-opening DGF. The petition underscored the losses made ever since the closure of DGF

in regards to job creation, revenue and social justice among others. The online petition attracted a total of 532 signatures and could have reached the Head of State thus informing his decision to lift the ban on DGF.

7.3.10.5 Radio Talk shows

A total of 33 radio talks shows were held to educate the public on various access to justice and human rights issues such as GBV, and EU GBV awareness days, NLAB, legal aid models developed by LASPs and DGF reopening elucidated below;

- The CEO appeared on Prime Radio on 06th September 2021; Impact FM (Uganda Eyogera Talk show) on 29th September 2021; KFM VPN morning talk show on 11th December 2021
- Two regional radio talk shows on KKCR FM and Akaboozi FM were held on 30th and 31st May 2022. The talk shows featured representatives from LASPs i.e. World Voices Uganda and Muslim Center for Justice and Law who discussed their cost effective legal aid models which include the Bataka Court model and E-Law/SMS Platform. The talk shows were purposed on creating awareness as well as popularization of legal aid models developed by LASPs.

7.3.10.6 Television Talk shows

In the reporting period, 34 TV talk shows were conducted under the partnership with various media houses;

MEDIA ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENTS IN PICTURES

INTERVIEW
EVENING SHOW

TALK fm
91.9 PRIME fm

EGGWANGALYO
TODAY
SEPT 2021
7PM

HOST
RONNIE MAYANJA

GUEST
SYLVIA NAMUBIRU
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LASPNET

91.9 Prime FM
LASPNET

SYLVIA NAMUBIRU
Executive Director LASPNET
(Legal Aid Service Providers Network)

EGGWANGA LYO
MONDAY 7PM
Host: Ronnie Mayanja



7.3.10.7 Contributing to a Reduction of corruption in JLOS through monitoring corruption and implementing the “Break the Silence Campaign.”

With oversight support from the Advisory Committee on Monitoring Corruption in the JLOS, LASPNET continued to implement the Corruption Project through documenting incidences of corruption and good practices within the three JLOS institutions and ended on 30th April 2021.

This activity was however hampered following the end of the project. Whereas monitors undertook to provide voluntary services to continue documenting information to enable LASPNET generate periodic institutional reports to the JLOS institutions, there was slow pace of generation of information therefore no institutional reports were submitted to the respective institutions. Nonetheless a project impact report was submitted to the Governance and Security Program formerly known as JLOS on the 13th September 2021 and the project findings were captured in the JLOS Annual Performance Report 2020/2021.

Consequently, the Network continued to leveraging on the Break the Silence on Corruption. In the reporting period, the Campaign was implemented through dissemination of Anti-Corruption Posters to the public at various events organised and participated in by LASPNET and a total of 2,200 posters on anti-corruption in the languages of English, Lugbara, Itesot, Luo, runyakore were disseminated during such as legal aid open days, commemoration of human rights days, GBV annual awareness days among others. As a result, the community has been empowered to report corruption cases to the various anti-corruption bodies

such as Police; Judiciary and ODPP.

7.4 INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

LASPNET has continued to enhance standards and strengthen the institutional development of the Secretariat and its member organizations. This was done through capacity-building initiatives for members; some of these include; Institutional meetings, IIMS utilization, Planning and Retreats. Below are some of the key achievements.

7.4.1 Evaluation of the Strategic Plan 2015/20 and Development of the new Strategic Plan 2021/25

At the expiry of the Strategic Plan in June 2020, LASPNET commissioned consultants to undertake an evaluation of the expired strategic plan and develop a new Strategic Plan 2021/25 to guide the interventions and programming of the Network in the next five years. The evaluation report and Strategic Plan were validated on the 9th July and approved by the Board on 30th July 2021 and officially launched on 22nd October 2021 at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The New Strategic which focuses on four critical pillars of Research and Knowledge Management, Lobby and Advocacy, Networking, Coordination and Partnerships as well as Institutional Capacity Building.

7.4.2 LASPNET convenes the 7th Annual CEO's Forum

With support from the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the 7th CEO's meeting was held on 13th April 2022 at Hotel Africana under the theme ***“The role of LASPs in enhancing sustainable Legal Aid Service provision***

in Uganda.” The meeting was graced by Hon. Justice Irene Mulyagonja, Judge Court of Appeal and Chairperson Uganda Law Council was attended by 84 (47 Male and 37 Female) participants drawn from the Parliament; IDLO; GNPf and LASPs such as ULS, FIDA, FHRI, WVU; LDC; GNPf and Media.

The meeting provided a platform for organizational heads of LASPs to deliberate on a wide range of issues pertaining access to justice and legal aid service delivery particularly topical and or tenacious matters related to sustainability of the legal aid.

The meeting also comprised panelists including; Ms. Diana Angwech, the Vice President of ULS who took the members through ULS’ mandate in addition to stating that ULS is supportive of the NLAB since its intended to close the access to justice vacuum; Ms. Suzan Baluka, Senior Legal Advisor Strategic Litigation at FIDA emphasized the need to include community paralegals into the draft bill as well as undertake evidence-based media stories that underpin the need to fast track the enactment of the NLAB 2022. Furthermore, Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, LASPNET CEO argued that the enactment of the Legal Aid Bill is long overdue amidst limited political will since the National Legal Aid Policy remains stuck at cabinet level since 2008. She therefore urged



CEOs pose for a group photo in the middle is Hon. Lyandro Komacketch, outgoing mover of the NLAB in the 10th Parliament.

government to at least gift Ugandans with this law if socio-economic development is to be realized as envisioned under NDP.

The meeting also provided opportunity for recognition of the two Advocates who included; Counsel Gawaya Tegulle and Eron Kiiza for their outstanding contribution to the promotion and protection of Human Rights through Public Interest Litigation in Uganda. In addition, Dr. Sylvia Namubiru, the CEO of LASPNET and Ms. Adriko Lillian, CEO of FIDA Uganda were also appreciated by LASPNET Board after the pair was recognized by Courtroom Mail as among the most 100 Africa’s Influential Women in Africa in the Legal Profession.



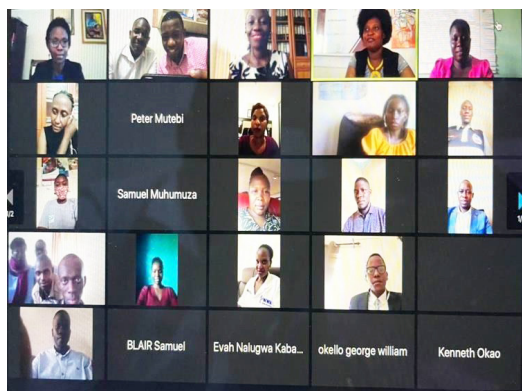
Hon. Irene Mulyagonja awarding a certificate to Counsel Gawaya Tegulle for his outstanding contribution in the human rights arena.

The meeting was crowned off by the Chief Guest Her Lordship Justice Irene Mulyagonja who commended LASPNET for its visibility and standing the test of time from when it was conceived. She informed the meeting that LASPNET remains dear to her having been one of its founder members. She appreciated the CEO for holding the fort and ensuring that LASPNET is one of the most recognizable Networks in Uganda. She promised to add her weight to advocacy efforts for the enactment of the NLAB. As the incoming Chairperson of the Uganda Law Council, she was happy and welcome to the

proposal of ULC at the helm of coordinating legal aid service provision. Arising out of the meeting was the generation of an Advocacy Road Map that spells out the various advocacy interventions to be undertaken by LASPNET and its members to fast track the enactment of the NLAB 2022 was developed.

7.4.3 LASPNET convenes Annual Pre-AGM Access to Justice Conference.

Prior to the Annual General Meeting, on the 21st October 2021, LASPNET held its Annual PRE-AGM in form of an E-learning session under the theme: **“Growing and Sustaining a Resilient Legal Aid Sector in Uganda.”** The session was informed by the survey findings on the impact of COVID 19 on LASPs.



An online picture of all participants during the E-learning Pre-AGM 2021 learning session

The E-learning session provided LASPs with an opportunity to learn innovative strategies for remaining innovative and resilient amidst the challenging CSO terrain in Uganda. During the session, members appreciated the support rendered by LASPNET towards building their capacity to effectively deliver on their mandates, especially under the EU project which is being implemented in Buikwe, Kayunga and Mukono districts.

The meeting was attended 22 participants (9 Male: 13 Female) from UCLF, FIDA, AVV, MCJL and ACTV and facilitated by Ms. Christine Birabwa, the Managing partner at Praxis Conflict Centre whose presentation focused on growing and sustaining resilient Legal Aid Service Provision and; Ms. Grace Nayiga, the Head Legal Aid and Community Justice at UGANET shared experiences on how to remain relevant and innovative during the pandemic.

7.4.4 LASPNET holds its 12th Annual General Meeting

The Network convened its 12th Annual General Meeting on the 26th October 2021 was held both virtually and physically at LASPNET Secretariat in which the New Strategic Plan 2021-2025 for the Network was launched.

The AGM was attended by a total of 42 participants (20 Female: 22 Male) who comprised of Board of Directors, LASPs and Honorary Members who included Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule; Ms. Theo Webale, Mr. Aaron Besigye. The matters presented for consideration at the AGM included: The Chairperson’s Report and Annual Report of 2020-2021; the Membership Report of 2020 – 2021 with 3 motions on Admission of new Members; Deregistration of Members and Hold of a Virtual AGM, Expansion of membership and Subscription as well as election of Office Bearers. Other matters included the Treasurer’s Report and approval of Audited books of accounts of 2020-2021, among others.



Front Seated L-R: LASPNET CEO- Dr. Sylvia Namubiru, Board Chairperson – Mr. Arthur Nsereko, Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule, Ms. Theo Webale and General Secretary- Board Ms. Elizabeth Kemigisha posing for a photo with the LASPNET staff and Members.

During the AGM, Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule presided over the launch of the new Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Members and Secretariat staff appended their signatures as a sign of commitment towards implementation of the Strategic Plan.



Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule launches the LASPNET strategic Plan 2021-2025 at the 12th AGM

Key outcomes of the AGM meeting among others comprised of admission of two new members who are: Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) and Urban Refugee Rights Program (URRP); relatedly, AGM approved the deregistration of three organizations that voluntarily withdrew their membership and these included: Avocats San Frontiers (who are now Strategic Partners under the ADA project); Uganda Youth Development Link and Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda; re-appointed Osillo & Co.

Certified Public Accountants as External Auditors for the last financial year June 2021 to July 2022; membership subscription was increased from UGHS 200,000 to UGHS 300,000 and; amendment of the constitution to include new categories of membership to include special and life membership.

AGM was crowned off with recognition of outstanding members in two categories of participation in LASPNET activities and Utilization of the LASPNET Integrated Information Management System (IIMS).

The organizations recognized were Muslim Centre for Justice and Law (MCJL) was awarded as the most Active member in the utilization of the LASPNET Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) whereas Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity was awarded a plaque and certificate of Appreciation for their diligent participation in the LASPNET activities for the period 2020 to 2021. The ceremony was presided over by Hon. Justice Remmy Kasule who applauded the recipients for their unwavering support to the Network.

7.4.5. Management of LASPNET meets to develop an institutional Sustainability Plan

LASPNET convened a Board and Management institutional sustainability meeting purposed to reflect and strategize on how to strengthen the sustainability of the Network on the 10th September 2021 at Allure Hotel.

At the meeting, the CEO Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa extended her appreciation to the Board of Directors and Stanbic Bank team for setting aside time to engage in the meeting and commended Stanbic Bank's selflessness in offering pro bono services

towards the development of the LASPNET Sustainability Plan.

Mr. Arthur Nsereko, Chairperson Board of Directors, re-echoed the CEO in commending Stanbic Bank for supporting LASPNET in the development of its Sustainability Plan.

Mr. Richard Sserumaga, Manager Stanbic Bank, together with his team from Stanbic facilitated the session which led to the development of the LASPNET Sustainability plan (2021/2025) hinged on three critical aspects of Raising, Savings and Investment. This Sustainability Plan was approved by the Board at its sitting 22nd December 2021 making it an operational document institutional. So far among the actions implemented from the Sustainability Plan is the procurement of Land for construction of the Legal Aid House.



Board of Directors, Senior Management Staff and a team from Stanbic Bank who attended the meeting at A'lure Hotel & Suites.

7.4.6 Membership and stakeholder's Capacity Development Programmes.

LASPNET facilitated 10 Capacity building trainings for its members and stakeholders aimed at strengthening their capacity to deliver standardized legal aid services to their clients. These are highlighted below;

a) Informal Justice Actors skilled in GBV response and prevention in Mukono; Kayunga and Buikwe districts

LASPNET with support from EU coordinated two capacity building trainings for Informal justice actors to effectively prevent and respond to Gender Based Violence (GBV) within the districts of Mukono, Buikwe and Kayunga from the 16th -19th August 2021 at Colline Hotel Mukono.

The training was facilitated by Hon Justice Eva Luswata, lead facilitator and three gender experts namely; Dr. Consolata Kabonesa from School of gender-Makerere University; Mr. Magoola Henry; and Ms. Asha Mwanga from Islamic Women Initiative for Justice Law and Peace (IWILAP).



Hon Justice Eva Luswata-lead facilitator, conducting the GBV training.

Further, the training focused on various topics which include: Unpacking the concept of GBV; legal and institutional framework on GBV prevention; GBV referral pathway as well as the role of informal justice actors in responding to GBV and was attended by 102 participants (50 Male: 52 Female) including CDOs; LCs; Community Paralegals; Youth; PWDs; Women as well as Cultural and Religious leaders.

The two sets of training climaxed with launch of a project entitled **“Empowering**

the formal and informal justice systems to handle and respond to Gender Based Violence – GBV” and awarding of certificates to participants by Mr. Kiganda Samuel – the District Community Development Officer of Buikwe District. As a result of the training, knowledge and skills of informal justice actors in Buikwe; Kayunga and Mukono on how to respond to GBV was strengthened and skills enhanced.

b) LASPs trained on Evidence Based Practice for Effective Service Delivery

On the 27th October 2021 at Protea Hotel LASPNET in partnership with HiiL under its project titled **“HiiL Uganda’s Innovation Programme.”** conducted a capacity building training for Legal Aid Service Providers (LASPs) on how to effectively handle family justice problems through application of evidence-based methods.

The training was attended by 25 participants (14 Male: 11 Female) from LASPs such as MCJL, RLP, UMSC, IWILAP among others.



Justice HiiL Sector Adviser Mr. Tim Verheij presenting to participants during the training at Protea hotel

In his presentation, the Justice Sector Adviser at HiiL, Mr. Tim Verheij appreciated LASPNET for accepting to collaborate with

HiiL to implement this project. He called upon member organisations to embrace it by transforming learnt ideas into practicability. He encouraged participants to incorporate more evidence-based practice into their work, in the best way possible by stepping up as role models to inspire peers through talking about values and morals.

Similarly, on 13th December 2021, a virtual follow up training on evidence-based methods for handling and resolving family justice problems was held. The training was facilitated by Mr. Tim Verheij, Justice Advisor at HiiL and it provided opportunity to LASPs to interact and share experience on how evidence-based to resolution of family problems and was attended by 24 participants (10 Female and 9 Male) including LASPs such as MCJL, AFODE, AAV, UCLF, UMSC, IRCU, FIDA Uganda. As result, the training contributed to the strengthened the participant’s knowledge and skills in the evidence-based practices in resolution of family disputes.

Furthermore, the key outcome of the LASPNET/HiiL partnership has been the development of an e-Family Justice platform which is currently being used by LASPs to access information on family justice as well as share success stories arising from family justice cases resolved especially at the community level.

c) Training of Community and LASP Paralegals on the CSOs enabling environment:

LASPNET in partnership Chapter four, CEPESA and ICNL convened a Paralegal Training on CSO enabling environment from 13th to 15th June 2022 at Esella Country Hotel. The training was attended by 35 (12 Female: 23 Male) participants who comprised of Paralegals from all regions across the country.

The training was facilitated by Mr. Peter Magellah (Chapter Four); Mr. Edwin Wanyama (CIPESA); Ms. Sheila Muwanga (FHRI) and Mr. James Nkuubi (Chituo Cha Katiba) who trained on modules such as introduction of human rights; freedom of associate; freedom assembly and freedom of expression and digital security.

The meeting was closed off by the Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa, CEO, who in her remarks underscored the fact that the shrunk operating environment continues to present CSOs and Paralegals with sustainability challenges in terms of how to thrive as individuals and institution in a very polarized society. As such she implored the paralegals to utilize the knowledge acquired to benefit their communities as well as act as frontline defenders to support the grassroots structures, CBOS in responding to dynamic attacks in the operating environment. The training enhanced the knowledge of Paralegals on human rights as well as navigating the CSO the operating environment.

d) Mentorship training for Voice Grantees

With support from Oxfam Voice under the Linking and Learning project, LASPNET in partnership with Strategic Link Consultants conducted onsite training visits and mentorship visits to equip the influencing grantee staff and rights holders with knowledge and skills in community engagement, social media Advocacy legal aid service delivery and referral mechanism for GBV survivors, the use of the documentation toolkit and Voice Knowledge products among others for efficient and effective Voice grant implementation.

The onsite trainings were facilitated by Project Coordinator L&L and Mr. Vincent

Mutonerwa, the Board member on merit in which six (6) grantees namely the Community Volunteer Initiative for Development (COVOID), Gulu Women Economic Development and Globalization (GWED-G) and Joyi Initiatives Uganda (JOYI) benefited from the training which took place between 10th -14th May, and 20th to 28th June 2022.

The onsite trainings improved the grantees knowledge and understanding in project planning and management, utilization of the Voice digital platforms, strategies of undertaking community engagements among others.

e) Refresher training for mobile call center Agents

In the reporting period, LASPNET with funding from UNDP convened a refresher training for Mobile Call Agents on 20th May 2022 at the Secretariat. The training aimed at re-introducing the concept of the project activity to the old mobile call agents and to bring the two new mobile agents up to speed with the project activity.

It was attended both physically and virtually by 10 participants (7 males, 4 female) who comprised of 5 call agents and 6 Secretariat staff who included the Director of Programmes, Information Communication and Technology Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Project Assistant UNDP, Call Centre Coordinator (Ag), and Project Assistant UNDP. The training equipped the Call Agents with knowledge and skills on usage of handsets; collection of data, reporting; customer care relations i.e. Management and satisfaction as well as the overall concept of the project.

7.4.7 The Secretariat Capacity Strengthened to deliver on LASPNET mandate

The Secretariat staff was supported with a total of 2 capacity development opportunities while 6 staff also participated in several different capacity development opportunities. These included:

i) Personal and Organizational Staff Security Training

On 19th November 2021, staff benefited from a Security training facilitated by Mr. Lubowa Henry, Area Manager Saracen Security Services. It was held in the aftermath of the twin bombings in Kampala at Jubilee Insurance House and Central Police Station on 16th November 2021. The training exposed staff to knowledge and skills on how to use fire extinguishers and detection of bombs. Staff and management on strategies for strengthening personal and organizational security.



LASPNET Staff members having drills to guard against any possible security threat around them and the Secretariat

ii) Training of Staff on Self-care and mental wellness

LASPNET held its Annual Management, Staff Evaluation and Planning retreat from the 16th to 18th December 2021 at Anderitta Beach Hotel. The retreat was intended to among others take stock of the year's performance including how staff

had applied and used the knowledge of the previous capacity development to improve on their performance.

During the retreat staff were also taken through a Well-being Session by Mr. Karis Moses Oteba, the Protection Officer from Defend Defenders. For instance, the facilitator urged staff to remain productive by ensuring that their physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing is in check. Additionally, he implored the team to prioritise their health first since it is the only thing that can impede them from obtaining their full potential at work.

In the same retreat, the staff undertook institution planning for the year 2022 under the organization's thematic areas of Research and Knowledge; Lobby and Advocacy; Networking, Coordination and Partnership; and the Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development. The official activities of the retreat were closed off by remarks from Mr. Vincent Mutonerwa, the Board Member on Merit who appreciated the staff for their work and commitment towards the institution and assured them fruitful and eventful year 2022. At the climax of the retreat, the staff held a Beach Party where they dined, wine, shared gifts using the idea of secret Santa Claus and later danced off the year's fatigue till late.



A group picture of staff posing at the annual retreat

Arising out this retreat was the development of the Annual Institutional Work plan for the period Jan-Dec 2022 for consideration and approved by the Board.

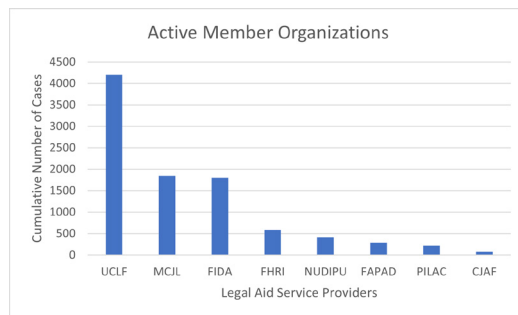
iii) Staff Capacities and skills enhanced.

In the reporting period, six secretariat staff benefitted from various capacity development opportunities from other stakeholders as seen below;

Name	Position	Dates	Training Benefitted
Ms. Nakawombe Olivia	LAO	January 18th-20th 2022	CSSA Advocacy Skills Training Workshop
Mr. Kayanja Denis	CCC	7th June 2022	Training of Advocates on Trauma Informed Approach in Litigation
Mr. Rica Byaruhanga	M&EO	June 13, to June 17, 2022	Communication Technical Training focusing on content strategy and creation of digital space
Mr. Mutebi Peter	NCPO		
Mr. Kayanja Denis	Ag. CCC	June 20th-24th 2022	IDLO Community Justice Initiative Implementing Partner's Trial Advocacy and ADR Training

f) LASPs continuously supported use of IIMS

Currently, the IIMS has a total of 32 organizations enrolled although 9 organizations active and using the system. In a bid to improve usability members have been continually trained on its utilization and troubleshooting issues as they arise. Further, a virtual consultative meeting was held on 18th February 2022, where LASPs were encouraged on the benefits of utilizing the IIMS. The meeting recommended several actions which among others include; development of a documentary to popularize the IIMS as well as reaching out to inactive individual members to interest them to use the IIMS. This led to 5 inactive organizations to start using the IIMS which include FIDA Gulu, FAPAD, LDC-Fort portal and FIDA Kabale and HURIFO.



g) Cases Registered on the IIMS System

Therefore, arising from the continued support to LASPs, and consultative meeting, a total of 10150 cases were entered into the IIMS up from 10114. Out of those entered 6163 were civil cases against criminal which stood at 3987. The gender stood at 3374 for as male cases and 6776 female.

Relatedly, LASPNET with support from IDLO conducted the one regional Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) support visit to LASPs and Paralegals in the Northern Region aimed at assessing the functionality and utilization of the IIMS, as well as introducing the new paralegal referral pathway to LASPs. The visits took place on the 24th and 27th of November, 2021.

i) Functionalization of the Paralegal Database

In the reporting period, Paralegal database was deployed and installed to additional 4 LASPs such as HURIFO, FAPAD and FIDA during the IDLO IIMS support visits in the Northern Region that were held from 24th to 27th November 2021. The LASPs were also trained on how utilize the system.

Additionally, a consultant was commissioned to upgrade the IIMS with a USSD code to make the paralegal database more accessible and usable.

7.4.8 LASPNET Board and Committees

A total of 4 Board Meetings were held in the reporting period to discuss policy and provide oversight functions to programmes, activities, finance monitoring, supervision of recruitment, attending to membership issues as they emerge. In addition, a total of 8 Committee meetings were held including Planning and Programmes Committee; Audit and Finance Committee; Governance and Administration Committee, Advisory Committee on Governance and Monitoring and Public Interest Litigation Committee to provide oversight. Board and Membership scorecards to be inserted here.

7.4.9 Staff Motivation through rewarding best performing staff of the year

Annually, the best performing staff of the year are recognised by Management. This practice acts as part of motivation and encouragement to staff to exhibit high levels of commitment and performance towards achieving organisational goals.

Recognition of the best staff of the year is done through a ballot. The staff who emerges as the best staff must have aggregated the highest results from 4 quarters. The criteria and indicators used in voting includes: Efficiency; Teamwork; Diligence and Punctuality; Flexibility, Good attitude and Actual performance in terms of meeting set targets. Therefore, in the year under review Ms. Daphine Achen, Research and Knowledge Management Officer was voted as the best staff of the year and awarded with a plaque and monetary gift. The second runner up was Mr. Sulaiman Kabugo, Project Assistant GIZ and Online legal Advisor.



Ms. Daphine Achen and Mr. Sulaiman Kabugo receive their accolades for best staff of the year 2021 and 1st runner up respectively.

7.4.9 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021/2022



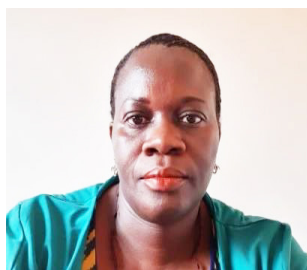
Mr. Arthur Nsereko
Chairperson



Ms. Shiella Nabacwa
**Muwanga Vice
Chairperson**



Ms. Elizabeth Kemigisha
General Secretary



Ms. Grace Nakulira
Treasurer



H/W. Ojok Tonny Obonyo
Northern Representative



H/W. Bridget Nasasira
Western Representative



Ms. Zalwango Flavia
Central Representative



Ms. Annet Khauri Gyabi
Eastern Representative



Mr. Vincent Mutonerwa
Member on Merit

Scores for Board participation in LASPNET's activities for the period July 2021-June 2022

Sn.	Board Activities	Date for the Activity	Mr. Arthur Nsereko	Ms. Sheila Muwanga	Ms. Elizabeth Kemigisha	Ms. Grace Nakullira	Her Worship Bridget Nasasira	His Worship Tony Ojok	Ms. Annet Kharuri	Ms. Flavia Zalwango	Mr. Vicent Mutonerwa
			Chairperson - Board	Vice Chairperson	General Secretary	Treasurer	Western Representative	Northern Representative	Eastern Representative	Central Representative	Member on Merit
1	Board Meetings - (30th July 2021)	30th July 2021, 1st April 2022	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2	Governance and Administration Committee Meeting - (27th July 2021)	27th July 2021, 29th March 2022, 28th June 2022	3	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	3
3	Planning and Programme Committees - (28th July 2021)	28th July 2021, 24th March 2022, 23rd June 2022	0	3	3	0	2	3	2	2	
4	Public Interest Litigation Committees - (29th July 2021)	29th July 2021, 25th March 2022, 24th June 2022	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Audit and Finance Committees - (29th July 2021)	29th July 2021, 30th March 2022, 29th June 2022	3	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
6	Advisory Committee on Governance and Corruption - (26th July 2021)	26th July 2021, 27th June 2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
7	1st AGM Task force meeting	8th September 2021	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
8	2nd AGM Task force meeting	24th September 2021		0	1	1		0	0	0	1
9	3rd AGM Task force meeting	8th October 2021	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
10	4th AGM Task force meeting	15th October 2021	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
11	Annual General Meeting	22nd October 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
% Participation of the board members in the LASPNET Activities			95%	92%	88%	92%	86%	86%	80%	80%	93%

**7.4.10 LASPNET SECRETARIAT TEAM DURING PERIOD UNDER REVIEW
(JULY 2021 TO JUNE 2022)**



Dr. Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa
Chief Executive Officer

She heads the Secretariat who provides overall Administrative and Strategic leadership. In addition, she oversees the day to day running of the programmes and financial sustainability. She also links the organization to key stakeholders and board members.



Mr. Badru Walusansa
Director of Programmes

He is responsible for overall development and functioning of the programmes department as he provides technical and supervisory support to the programs team.



Mr. Geoffrey Lutaaya
**Ag. Director Finance and Administration/
Project Accountant EU**

He is responsible for overall development and functioning of the finance and administration department where he provides technical and supervisory support to the finance team. In addition, he is responsible for the financial management of the EU project.



Ms. Nadhifah Muhammed
Executive Officer

She provides administrative support to the office of the Chief Executive Officer and the secretariat in addition to coordinating the CSSA project.



Ms. Maria Kaddu
Coordinator European Union

She is responsible for the implementation of the European Union project.



Ms. Daphine Achen
Research and Knowledge Management Officer

She coordinates research in key areas vital for LASPNET interventions and Programme development. She is also the focal person for the corruption monitoring and Execution of court orders within the Network.



Mr. Martin Ojambo
Information and
Technology Officer

He is responsible for managing and day to day maintenance of the computer systems within LASPNET. He is more specifically responsible for the smooth running and functionality of the Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) at LASPNET.



Mr. Rica Byaruhanga
M&E Officer

He supports the functioning of the M&E system through development of tools, frameworks, results monitoring, planning, reporting, supporting project evaluations, quality improvement initiatives, data use, data quality, assessments, capacity building and feedback for program improvement among other duties.



Ms. Justice Nambowa
Training and
Membership Officer

She supports the Training and Membership component of the Network and is currently responsible for the implementation of the IDLO project



Mr. Mubiru Peter
Networking, Partnerships
and Coordination Officer

He is responsible for maintaining and developing existing memberships and partnerships through communication and information sharing of key activities to network members. She also plays a role in capacity development of membership as well as liaising with partners.



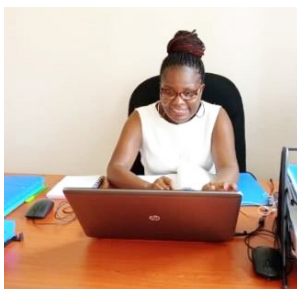
Ms. Mary Etit
Finance and
Administrative Officer

She provides financial management and administrative support to the secretariat.



Ms. Nakawombe Olivia
Lobby and Advocacy
Officer

She provides support in coordinating Lobby and Advocacy activities for the Network.



**Ms. Nawamango
Juditha
Human Resource
Officer**

She is responsible for the functionality of the human resource system of the Secretariat



**Ms. Susan Lumu
Inhouse Counsel**

She is responsible for coordination of the ADC-ASF project.



**Ms. Namulinde Joy
Accounts and
Administrative Assistant**

She provides support to the finance and administration officer in financial accounting and reporting standards. Secretariat logistics and administration.



**Ms. Linda Gidudu
Program Assistant
UNDP**

She provides support to the programmes department in the docket of lobby and advocacy.



**Mr. Kenneth Okao
Project assistant
Membership**

He provides support to the programmes especially managing membership records and database. He further maintains the documentation and archiving of the records and continuously updates the membership directory of the Network.



**Mr. Mawanda Hakim
Program Coordinator
Voice Linking and
Learning.**

He provides support to the Oxfam Voice Linking and Learning Project.



Mr. Alvin Mutebi
Project Assistant
RAJA

He supports coordination of the RAJA project.



Ms. Kigozi Nathanelia
Project Assistant
Research & Knowledge

She offers research assistant support to the Research and Knowledge Management Unit.



Mr. Keitirima Duncan
Coordinator Call Centre
(On study)

He provides coordination of the Call center agents as he supports day to day running of activities in the call Centre unit.



Mr. Kayanja Denis
Ag. Call Centre
Coordinator

He provides coordination of the Call center agents as he supports day to day running of activities in the call Centre unit.



Mr. Kabugo Sulaiman
Online Legal Advisor

He offers on spot legal advice to clients with legal issues through the social web application



Ms. Angel Naggita
Situation room
Coordinator

He supports in the day to day running of the situation room activities through offering fast responder services to call in clients.



Mr. Barongo Barnabas
Project Accountant

He supports with administrative and accounting functions of the EU project.



Mr. Shaban Khamisi
Social Media Influencer

He supports in publishing and sharing content of activities that are usually carried out with in the network and as well look out on any cases that are recorded on social media that might require the secretariat attention.



Ms. Nalwiga Scovia
Program Assistant

She supports the secretariat in keeping records as well as archiving documents by creating & maintaining company databases to ensure quick retrieval of information such as files, signed documents and many others.



Ms. Achieng Proscovia
Volunteer Record Management

She provides support to the programmes department, front desk management and other administrative functions as assigned at the secretariat.



Ms. Ndagire Jane
Project Accountant
Linking and Learning

She provides support to the finance and administration department with her main key focus under the voice Linking and Learning Project.



Mr. Paul Kalema Lincoln
Volunteer UNDP

He supports the GBV Mobile Call Centre



**Mr. Kasule Gabriel
Driver**

He provides reliable and safe driving and delivery services to LASPNET.



**Mr. Herbert Nasasira
Driver**

He provides reliable and safe driving and delivery services to LASPNET



**Mr. Paul Sebagere
Volunteer Driver**

He provides reliable and safe driving and delivery services to LASPNET.



**Mr. Silus Ssemwezi
Office Assistant**

He is responsible for maintaining a clean office environment in addition to running errands.



**Ms. Namubiru Peace
Office Assistant**

She is responsible for maintaining a clean office environment in addition to running errands.

8.0 CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNT, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

8.1 Challenges

In the reporting period, several challenges were encountered during implementation which included;

a) Increased disregard of rule of law

The operating environment continued to be characterized with increased incidents abuse of rule of law and judicial processes by some judicial officials through applying harsh and selective bail terms with the intention of denying various suspects especially in the category of opposition politicians and activists their constitutional right to bail. This doesn't only undermine human rights but also continue to reflect infringements on the judicial independence.

b) Deteriorating condition of observation and protection of human rights violations

LASPNET has continued to observe a downward trend in respect for human rights and rule of law. Manifestations of such violations include torture which is meted out on dissenting activists notably Kakwenza Rukirabashaijja who was brutally tortured while in Prison before fleeing the country. In addition, the unlawful arrest and detention of human rights activist Norman Tumuhimise and his crew at Digitalk demonstrate increased suppression of Freedom of Expression in Uganda.

c) DGF's suspension and exit from Uganda

In relation to the above, due to the suspension of DGF, LASPNET was constrained to effectively respond to the human rights violations following the scale down on operations of Rapid Response Lawyers. Other organizational programming areas were affected by the continued DGF suspension during the reporting period. The affected Programme areas included corruption monitoring, researches, lobby and advocacy initiatives which were all previously funded by DGF. Despite the support received from other donors to meet the DGF gap, it's evident that most of new donors funding mechanisms is short term hence limiting on sustainability.

d) Persistent delays in remittance of Subscription fees by the members

Payment of subscription is still not being effected in a timely manner by some LASPs, others lack complete commitment to meet membership subscription obligations as at close of the financial year on 30th June 2022, only 20 out of the 53 LASPs had cleared their dues. This is partly attributable to the COVID-19 which left most member organizations crippled and unable to effect payment hence leaving the Network dependent on development partners which is not a sustainable status in the long run.

e) Emerging economic crisis

Uganda continues to experience an economic meltdown resulting from the global economic crisis. This has subsequently resulted into high cost of living, affected programme implementation in addition to loss of jobs thus contributing to unemployment and poverty which is a huge hindrance for access to justice. This is because 80% of Uganda's population cannot afford services of a private lawyer in a country that still has no state funded legal aid scheme. The looming discussions on oil and its exploration, if not handled transparently would otherwise, turn out to be a double-edged sword for Uganda. Furthermore, there are anticipated injustices likely to arise out of the oil production which include among others displacements without prior compensation of the project affected persons (PAPs) which will require a lot of legal aid services especially for the poor and vulnerable communities.

(f) Shrinking civic space

During the reporting period, we continued to observe incidents of state overreach on CSOs by various regulatory bodies including NGO Bureau and Financial Intelligence Authority. For instance, a total of 54 NGOs were suspended over allegations of non-compliance. However, on closer observation most of the NGOs suspended are those that critical of government excesses and or operating on issues of governance and accountability such as Chapter Four and CCEDU among others.

8.2 LESSONS LEARNT

a) Intensification of fundraising efforts to identify institutional donors

Following the continued suspension and later exit of DGF from Uganda which was the main institutional donor paying for the majority staff and administration costs of the organization, it has been a lesson to appreciate the importance of developing institutional sustainability plan and to identify more possible partners willing to sustain the organization during such prevailing circumstances as well as coming up with localized ways of resource mobilization.

b) Adapting community-based programme implementation

This has enabled LASPNET register significant successes under implementation of the EU GBV project in Mukono; Kayunga and Buikwe. Most importantly, it has built citizen agency through community empowerment programmes in form of outreaches to the extent that the district officials and community members greatly feel LASPNET's impact on ground and can also attest to its contribution to the fight against GBV. As a lesson learnt, the Network has now embarked to designing more community-based programmes and the most recent project to adapt such a model is the UNDP Spotlight where Community Legal Aid Mobile Clinics (LAMCs) will be implemented in 8 Spotlight districts of Arua, Terego, Amudat, Kitgum, Kasese, Kampala, Tororo and Kyegegwa.

c) Collaborations and Partnerships:

The members are willing and able to collectively offer support in various LASPNET engagements whenever

approached and called upon. For instance under advocacy, LASPs such as FIDA Uganda, JCU, LDC-LAC and ULS have demonstrated support towards moving in a harmonized direction in advocating for the enactment of the NLAB into law. Furthermore, LASPs such as IWILAP, AVV, JCU, and JURIA partnering with LASPNET to implement various Programmes such as the EU supported GBV project as well as supporting UNDP supported open days and Mobile Legal Aid

robust approaches in fundraising as well as exploring non-conventional funding opportunities such as crowd funding and foundations.

b) There is need for LASPNET and its members to adapt community-based programme models that can accelerate ownership and impact within the broader community. Para legalism and legal volunteers should be strengthened to deliver services in absence of traditional LASPs.

7.1 OPPORTUNITIES

a) Increased trust from the public, media and strategic partners: This has enabled LASPNET to remain relevant and a key influence in the area of access to justice; human rights and rule of law.

c) To address the challenge of disregard of rule of law, LASPNET and like-minded organizations need to amplify advocacy efforts focusing on constitutional and legal reforms pursued through strategic litigation.

b) Donor willingness to continue funding governance and accountability work; despite the continued shrinking civic space as well as new donors coming on board to fill up the gap.

d) The members are encouraged to appreciate that meeting the requirement to pay membership subscription should be a priority rather than a choice if the Network has to implement its sustainability plan.

c) Organizations' abilities to adapt resilience and survival instincts; to navigate the fragile operating environment through coalitions and cooperation.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In every challenge is a hidden opportunity and or lessons to exploit for better outcome. Therefore, and whereas we cannot stop challenges, the same can be mitigated through undertaking several remedies as discussed below;

a) To address the issue of DGF exit from Uganda, LASPNET and its members recommends the need to undertake

9.0 CONCLUSION

LASPNET intends to pick from lessons learnt and opportunities to galvanize efforts that will ensure effective research and advocacy interventions to fast track the enactment of the National legal aid Law. This will be undertaken in a participatory, coordinated and collaborative manner in a way that builds synergies and cooperation amongst the members and key stakeholders.

In addition, efforts will be undertaken geared towards resource mobilization to address the funding gap left behind by DGF. This will involve identification of other potential institutional donors to support LASPNET and its members.

LASPNET remains grateful to all its Members; Strategic Partners and our Development Partners who have relentlessly supported the operations and growth of the Network.

10.0 MEMBERSHIP FOCUS

This section highlights some of the interventions implemented by our member organizations based on the information as provided by the organization and or captured by the membership office for the period under review (July 2021-June 2022).

NO	LASP	Activity detail
1	FIDA- Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in the annual, international 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign in Lorukomo manyatta, Lorukomo - Napak district. • Convened Annual General Meeting at the Onomo Hotel in Nakasero on 11th December 2021. • Held a security round table meeting with a delegation from the European Union in Lwengo focusing on promoting gender-responsive governance and women's effective participation in public life held on 31st January 2022 in Masaka –Brovad Hotel. • Convened an Advocacy meeting on inclusion of women with disabilities in government economic empowerment programs was held on 17th March 2022 at Wampewo Secondary school Ntake in Jinja. • Conducted an online webinar and CLE training on 28th June 2022 focusing accelerating Gender Equality through intellectual property law to catalyze the development of local artisans and innovators.
2	FAPAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted Capacity building to Local Leaders on 15th February 2022. • Conducted a Mobile Legal Aid clinic on 16th May 2022.
3	ACTV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a training of Health workers on Torture and the value of professional documentation in accessing justice by survivors held on 29th January 2022 in Jinja, Kamuli, Kampala and Mukono districts. • Convened a strategic engagement with the Canadian Fund for Local Initiative to discuss key issues regarding collaborations to fight against torture in Uganda held on 31st May 2022. • Conducted an engagement meeting with the Coalition Against Torture in Uganda (CAT) on identifying law & policy gaps impeding torture prevention and accountability in Uganda held on 16th June 2022

4	RLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a 2-day training for prison officers to build their capacity as officers interfacing with forced migrants in prisons in the refugee hosting districts of Lamwo & Kitgum held on 16th & 17th March 2022 Lamwo & Kitgum at Catcus hotel. Conducted a Mobile Legal Aid Clinic in Kyangwali refugee settlements on 14th April 2022 Commemorated the World Environment Day 2022 on 15th June 2022 in Kiryandongo.
5	CEPIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convened a launch of media guidelines to cover demonstrations on 17th June 2022.
6	PILAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a Mobile Legal Aid Clinics in Kyangwali refugee settlements on 14th April 2022
7	CEHURD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined the world to mark World Patient Safety Day by releasing a press statement urging Government Must Prioritise Safety of Health Workers to Protect Patients during Covid-19 and beyond on September 16th, 2021. Joined the drive effort to save lives through the blood donation at Kasangati on 17th June 2022.
8	UGANET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held the launch of the UGANET ground breaking event for its permanent home on 8th October 2021. Hosted the first ever 2021 Philly Lutaaya Awards at Onomo Hotel in Kampala on November 30th 2021. Participated in the CSO call for an end to persistent stock-outs of life – saving HIV medicines in Uganda on 27th July 2022.
9	Justice Defenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handled several land mark cases prominent among them was for a one Diana Luutu who had spent 23 years in prison for a crime she didn't commit. After her hearing at the court of appeal in November 2021, Diana was acquitted and released. Awarded the Access to Justice for All prize in the World Justice Challenge. A global competition that recognises high-impact projects that protect and advance the rule of law.

10	HRAPF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joined the rest of the world to commemorate the International Human Rights Day by releasing a press statement titled: “Human rights amidst pandemics: The need for equality and inclusion of the most marginalised in covid-19 recovery and the fight against HIV/AIDS” • Released a statement on the Human Rights situation for criminalized minorities in Uganda at the 69th Ordinary session of African Commission on Human and People’s Rights on 16 November 2021. • Conducted awareness sessions with sex workers on 1st April 2022. The awareness session was attended by 30 participants.
11	Interreligious council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed an MOU with Hatchile Consults Limited to explore new approaches for enhancing services and informing the policy discourse.

11.0 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**LEGAL AID SERVICE PROVIDERS NETWORK
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2022**

MANAGEMENT ASSERTION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

This section represents LASPNET management's confirmation of its statutory responsibility for information in the financial statements and information provided during the course of the audit.

LASPNET management is required according to its Constitution to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the organization as at the end of the financial period and of its income and expenditure. LASPNET management is responsible for ensuring that disbursements are utilized for the purpose of the organization. Management is also responsible for ensuring that the organization keeps proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable assurance its financial position. Management is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organization.

Management accepts responsibility for the preparation of quarterly accountability reports submitted to the different donors, which were prepared using appropriate accounting policies and estimates in conformity with the funding guidelines. Management is of the opinion that all the accountability reports for the year ended on June 30, 2022 give a true and fair view of its operations and that the regular accountability reports have been used as a basis for preparation of the income and expenditure statement for LASPNET as of June 30, 2022. LASPNET management certifies that there were no irregularities in the administration of the funds and that the financial statements of the organization for the year ended June 30, 2022 are free from material misstatements. Management further accepts responsibility for the maintenance of the accounting records that may be relied upon in the preparation of financial statements as well as adequate systems of internal controls.

Nothing has come to the attention of management to indicate that the organization will not remain a going concern for at least twelve months from the date of this statement.

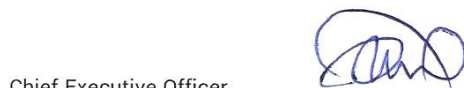
This assertion is certified by the management of LASPNET on 06/10/2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Chairman



Treasurer



Chief Executive Officer

Date 06th October / 2022

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Legal Aid Service Provider's Network (LASPNET)

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the Financial statements of Legal Aid Service Providers Network set out on pages 11 to 25 which comprise the statement of comprehensive income, statement of financial position as at 30th June 2022, statement of changes in accumulated fund, statement of cash flows and the notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Except as Stated Under the Key Audit Matters section of this report, In our opinion the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Legal Aid Service Providers Network as at 30th June 2022 and it's financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and the requirements of the Ugandan NGO Act 2017

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) and Guidelines issued by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of Legal Aid Service Providers Network in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Uganda, and we have fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key Audit Matters are those matters that, in our professional judgement, were of most significant in our audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of our audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming our opinion thereon, and we do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

One of the Institutional donors is pulling off operations in Uganda and this will impact heavily on the operations of the organisation's activities

Responsibilities of the Management and Those Charged with Governance of the Financial Statements.

The Management is responsible for the preparation of the Financial Statements in accordance with the IFRSs And for such internal control as the management determines is necessary to enable preparation of the Financial Statement that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT.....contd

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the company or cease operations or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Financial statements as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the Financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- > Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the fund accountability statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- > Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- > Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- > Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events and conditions that may cast doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw your attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- > Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT.....contd

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide those charged with governance with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may be reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with those charged with governance, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key matters. We describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should be communicated in our report because of the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by the NGO Act 2017, Sec 30(4) we report to you based on our audit, that:

1. We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of our audit;
2. In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the NGO so far as appears from our examination of those books; and
3. The NGO's statement of financial position and statement of comprehensive income are in agreement with the books of account.

The Engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditors report is CPA Owora Fredricks.



CPA Owora Fredricks

Practicing No. 0223



Certified Public Accountants

Date 14/10/2022

Place :Plot 473 Kigowa Road,Ntinda



LEGAL AID SERVICE PROVIDERS NETWORK (LASPNET)
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2022
STATEMENT OF INCOMES AND EXPENDITURES

	Notes	2022 Budgeted Ushs.	2022 Actual Ushs.	2021 Actual Ushs.
Incomes				
Grants.	3	5,248,848,888	4,267,683,632	3,217,965,869
Member's Contributions.		16,200,000	6,360,000	8,670,000
Other income	3	-	62,380,701	34,936,585
Total Income		5,265,048,888	4,336,424,333	3,261,572,454
Expenditures				
salaries, wages & Benefits - DGF	4	1,208,340,955	1,132,916,338	1,095,468,983
Rental Expenses - DGF	5	30,000,000	30,000,000	30,000,000
Enhance Capacity of Legal aid service providers - DGF	6	102,563,264	84,872,758	441,366,722
Strengthen the coordination and synergies among LASPs - DGF	7		-	17,055,000
To promote research and policy advocacy - DGF	8	19,318,000	19,318,000	301,115,722
Strengthen the institutional Development - DGF	9	94,352,942	89,030,704	207,856,644
contribution to the JLOS Anti -corruption strategy - DGF	10	11,953,285	11,953,285	138,857,900
United Nation Development fund (UNDP)	11	195,882,687	142,752,771	172,511,182
The International Centre for Not -for -Profit Law (ICNL) project	16	51,451,000	41,069,280	10,384,000
European Union	18	1,019,892,151	816,952,879	310,688,418
International Law Development Organisation (IDLO)	17	456,607,462	203,359,937	236,981,687
Oxfam Linking and learning	12	457,599,920	421,491,902	261,992,435
Cordaid Project	13	54,214,879	53,980,079	77,915,000
Freedom House- RAJA	14	262,356,082	184,584,479	14,472,918
ASF-ADA Project	15	425,560,000	365,786,324	26,125,812
The International Centre for Not -for -Profit Law (CASSA) project	19	86,825,275	69,855,294	11,217,912
Other expenses (partnerships)	24	53,200,000	45,263,220	10,095,000
General Administrative Expenses	21	235,991,484	180,593,850	137,274,667
Bank charges and commissions expenses	22	15,725,988	14,923,393	15,725,988
German Agency for International Cooperation- GIZ	27	192,752,500	191,178,904	
Membership fees	23	10,000,000	4,000,000	
Total Expenditure		4,984,587,874	4,103,883,397	3,517,105,990
Surplus/ Deficit for the year			232,540,936	(255,533,536)

LEGAL AID SERVICE PROVIDERS NETWORK (LASPNET)
 ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2022
 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30TH JUNE 2022

	Notes	2022 Ushs.	2021 Ushs.
ASSETS			
Non Current Assets			
Land	28	85,000,000	-
Current Assets			
Cash & Bank balance	2	1,363,599,490	1,135,669,347
Trade Receivables & Other receivables	20	16,850,000	16,850,000
		1,380,449,490	1,152,519,347
Total assets		1,465,449,490	1,152,519,347
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Capital Fund b/f	26	990,805,380	1,246,338,916
Surplus for the year		232,540,936	(255,533,536)
		1,223,346,316	990,805,380
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	25	242,103,174	161,713,967
Total equity and liabilities		1,465,449,490	1,152,519,347

The report of the Auditors is on Page 8

The notes on Pages 15 to 27 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the board on 06/10/2022


 Chairperson BOD


 Chief Executive Officer


 Treasurer BOD

Contact Us:

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Legal Aid Service Providers Network



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