

HDI NEWSLETTER

JULY 2022



SENSITIZING DUTY BEARERS ON CHILD RIGHTS

This July, we trained duty bearers from Gasabo District on fundamental principles as enshrined in the Constitution, child rights and the value of inclusion as embedded in the government's commitment to the principle of "Leave No One Behind." The group of trainees included the Social Economic Development Officers (SEDO), District Administrative Security Support Organ (DASSO) Coordinators and their assistants and Executive Secretaries on Cell level.





Addressing the participants, the Kigali City Legal Affairs Ernest Ngoga Nsengiyumva pointed out that it is their primary duty to respect child rights, to protect them from violence, to develop and sustain systems that promote the understanding of children rights. He reminded them that their actions must always be guided by the laws in place and fair judgment to avoid violating human rights of those that they are obliged to protect.

Nsengiyumva also reminded them that a child's detention should not exceed 15 days and cannot be extended. He added that where the Judge estimates that there is need to keep an eye on a suspect who is a minor, strict monitoring measures should be instituted wherever he or she lives.



The law relating to the protection of the child requires both administrative and judicial proceedings to primarily take into consideration the best interests of the child. For instance, Article 24 states that a child cannot be in detention during the judicial inquiries unless the charges against him/her are punishable with a term of imprisonment of more than 5 years.



- Ernest Ngoga Nsengiyumva

Kigali City Legal Affairs

Human Rights Approach

Touching on the 'Human Rights Approach to Development' topic, the Facilitator, Aaron Clevis Mbembe told the participants that human rights instruments are in place to protect the masses especially the vulnerable. He explained that vulnerable groups include persons who are likely to suffer from social discrimination and stigma and are in constant need of particular protection.

He said that these include children, sex workers, LGBTI community members, persons with disabilities and people living with HIV among others," he said. Addressing the leaders in particular, Mbembe reminded them that they have the responsibility

to influence positive mindset change within their communities and this can only be achieved through including all the members of the community to participate in decision-making. "To achieve this, local leaders should consider the legality of the ideas and how best they can be executed based on community needs and priorities that are inclusive and non-discriminatory," he said.

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- Aaron Clevis Mbembe

Facilitator, HDI Associate Director of Policy Advocacy



01

The SEDO of Rugando Cell, Kimihururu Sector Elise Niyonshuti said that she was leaving the workshop with a new outlook on how to serve her community better. ***She pointed out that she was not fully aware of the extent of discrimination and stigma that the LGBT and sex worker community faces and how this continues to block them from participation in their advancement.***

03

"I learnt that laws and policies protect all Rwandans despite their sexual orientation or their profession. For instance, I learnt today that the government coined the name 'Indangamirwa' for sex workers as part of its plan to promote inclusiveness and to reduce on the stigma and discrimination that they face. ***I am enlightened and will begin approaching them as I would any other person and accord them equal opportunities services," she said.***

Lessons learnt

02

The SEDO of Muko Cell, Jali Sector Fabien Ndayambaje said that he had learnt the value of getting closer to the people that he leads, knowing them better, understanding their needs, and their lifestyles. ***"There are many times when some people in our communities have problems that can even be easily solved but due to fear of stigma or discrimination, they feel uncomfortable approaching their us leaders. It is our duty to approach them, listen and build a safe environment to express themselves," he said.***

04

Jean Pacifique Tuyishimire from Kinyinya Sector, Murama Cell requested HDI to consider giving these training sessions once a year since the laws change. ***"Even as we speak, some laws are revised. These two days we have spent here have been an eye opener. We would like to request that every year, we are given refresher training like these to keep us updated," he said.***

Moving forward

In her closing remarks, the Officer of Good Governance and Social Affairs at Gasabo District, Pauline Rutazana, reminded the participants that as they are first points of contact for all citizens seeking support to fix challenges affecting society, the lessons learnt from the training provides insight into how to use the provisions set in the national constitution and other laws to deliver services better.

“These issues are brought to you in raw form. The lessons learnt here can help you to gauge the kind of support these people need and where you are unable to provide it, you can at least refer to them instead of dismissing them without any input,” she said.

Rutazana pointed out that the most important lesson drawn from the workshop was how they can rely on the laws and policies in place to engage those that they lead and deliver better services.

“I am sure that we have learnt, first-hand, how our actions while trying to do our jobs have involved us breaking the law unknowingly.

“We are all definitely going to leave this place when we are leaders that know better and are also determined to do better to serve those that we lead,” she said. She thanked HDI for organizing the workshops and appealed for annual refresher training programs.





AMPLIFYING CONVERSATIONS AROUND SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS THROUGH MEDIA PLATFORMS

Health Development Initiative (HDI) transforms harmful social norms into those that promote gender equality while amplifying dialogue between men and women, boys and girls, duty bearers and gender experts on different media platforms. Under the campaign ***#Duhindurelmyumvire and #Hinduralmyumvire, this has been done through radio show talks and social media platforms where harmful social norms that perpetuate gender based violence and unpaid care work have been discussed.***

“Even though significant strides have been made towards the realization of gender equality in Rwanda there is so much work that remains to be done and gender norms are as important as laws and policies since they all shape the society. When negative, they can lead to gender inequalities and negatively impact women and men.”

“When a man is expected to always be the main provider of a household, this not only brings pressure to the male gender but also put women on a constant circle of unpaid care work that even when offered opportunity, women still come back home to unpaid care work since their jobs are

considered second and they are expected to also submit to the authority of the main provider”

Donatha Uwajeneza a radio presenter at Isango Star, who has been conducting dialogues on the radio said that, from what her listeners have been sharing, there is a generational conflict when it comes to the understanding of gender and its place in the society. When discussing with different generations, some are expected to be assigned roles which hugely impact the way they relate at the family level. “For example, not all of my listeners have the same understanding when it comes to dowry, it is no longer mandatory when

couples choose to marry but I learned recently from my radio fans that there is an area in the Northern Province where women who are ready to get married, help their men with the bride price or help them build a house that he can be able to marry in dignity.”

Gender equality and social dialogue are both fundamental values and interlinked, to advancing opportunities for women and men to enjoy their full rights in the society.

These dialogues are essential in informing what needs to be addressed in policy as a tool to advance gender equality in Rwanda.

“ We have amplified the conversations on social and gender norms on both social media and radio stations because that’s where we can engage the public without holding physical meetings and get feedback through our hotline. For the past six months the #Hinduralmyumvire and #Duhindurelmyumvire campaign has gained a reach of 2.4 millions on social media and over 10,000 calls on our hotline.

- Juliette Karitanyi
Director of communications at HDI



GENDER CAFE: GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA IN IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

In July, HDI staff gathered under an internal ongoing gender cafe that started in 2021, to help program coordinators and HDI staff mainstream from gender not only in budget planning but ensuring efficient implementation in program activities. During the discussions on gender mainstreaming, we looked at gender disaggregated data.

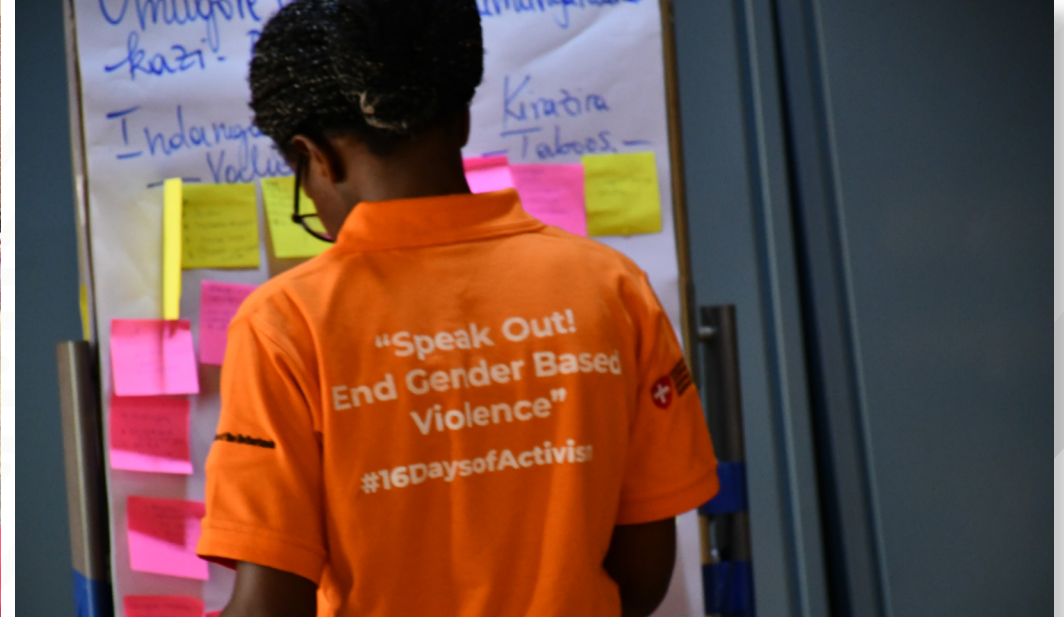
Annonciata Mukayitete explained that quality gender statistics, gender-disaggregated data and other relevant knowledge are key to mainstreaming gender into program's activities.

“Overall, Gender-disaggregated data are essential to assess the effects of program implementations measures on activities or programs. Data allows us to measure the effectiveness of an implemented program.

We could be lying to ourselves if we are organizing a local authorities meeting, and only 90% percent of the participants are male. We need to be intentional in our selection of participants, encouraging our partners to bring in more women to participate, people living with disabilities since representation matters and we are here to serve the underprivileged so that they can have a voice and have space at the table.” She said

“This helps in knowing different needs for beneficiaries but also helps in responding to their needs. This exercise will help us in the reporting, so that we can take into consideration and respond sensitively to the needs of our beneficiaries.” She added





During the discussions, HDI staff learned that when strategies are put into place to overcome challenges, collecting data will allow them to determine how well the solution is performing, and whether or not their approach needs to be tweaked or changed over the long-term.

Although women and other vulnerable people face some sort of injustice, understanding these data will help us not to look at these issues as statics, but rather than attaching stories and lifestyle to these stories which will eventually help us solve the problems.

It is useful and sobering to have challenges and issues listed in the way, it has to address issues and make the beneficiaries seen, not by only statistics but also their stories that differ from others.

HDI staff committed to look at vulnerable people not only as beneficiaries but as partners, seeing the world in their lens, since they know their issues and could offer solutions to their problems. The problem with former ways of mainstreaming gender, it's because most of the time, the LGBT, people living with disabilities and women's

issues are overlooked and not seen in the eyes of those who need help.

Therefore, the power of data helps all of us make society fairer. It also shows that those who hold power for a longtime, are actually ready and want change to happen. Not in their lens but because they particularly care. That's the sharing of power, that's how people with privilege actually come in solidarity to help those who are underrepresented.

I AM EMPOWERED ENOUGH TO SPEAK FOR FELLOW GIRLS - TUYIZERE

My name is Françoise Tuyizere, and I am based in Kiramuruzi Sector, Gatsibo District, Eastern Province. I am 15 years old, and I am a student at Nyabisindu Secondary School. From a very young age, I was interested in public speaking and making a difference in my community.

As I approached my teenage years, I joined a youth club, but I really wasn't getting the kind of information and tools that I felt were sufficient to lead me on my path to speak for myself and my peers on a higher level on topical issues like teenage pregnancies. However, toward the end of 2019, I was lucky to be one of the adolescents invited for a training program that would help me push my advocacy dream forward. I was trained on issues related to advocacy, Sexual Reproductive Health, and Rights (SRHR), child rights and how they interconnect to contribute to full access to youth friendly SRHR information and services. I have learnt a lot since. This training opportunity has offered me the relevant information and self-confidence that I can rely on to do the advocacy that I and my peers need to make autonomous and healthy decisions around our sexuality and bodies.



It is also a good guide as I pursue my dream to influence decision making and create allies among duty bearers who include parents, teachers, policy makers, local leaders, and service providers to support and effect sustainable changes in relation to child rights, especially, on the SRHR agenda.

What surprised me most during the training sessions was learning that any human being has a right to do advocacy. I thought only local leaders and people who are wealthy are allowed to do so. I didn't know that even a teenager like me can go to any gathering or public office and speak for themselves or others.

What I have gained so far

Since I started the training, I have had the confidence and the right information which has enabled me to request the Nyabisindu Secondary School administration to grant me an opportunity to talk to my peers. So far, I have successfully given at least 10 talks regarding SRHR and child rights at our school assembly.

I have also been invited to the Village and Cell level to give talks. I have been privileged to be invited by the Executive Secretary of Kiramuruzi Sector to speak at several meetings and other gatherings where I have addressed local leaders and the general community on child rights and SRHR.

So far, he has invited me thrice. Besides speaking, I have also written about 15 poems which I have been invited to perform at youth gatherings.

In my opinion, the poetry has been very instrumental in gauging my knowledge of the training I have received on SRHR and child rights because I have received lots of positive feedback from both young people and adults after my performances.

I have also been involved in encouraging and assisting one of the adolescents in our youth club not only to openly speak about being sexually assaulted by an adult but to report the matter to the authorities.

The challenges

My biggest challenge I had was dealing with pushback when I was starting out. I was beginning a conversation about topics that many people didn't fully understand or were not ready to talk about openly, especially in the rural area.

This meant that many people, including adults, used to make discouraging comments calling me names like 'talkative' or 'self-centered' but I did not stop. Today, some of these parents ask me to talk to their own children because they now believe in my contribution.

The Future

Moving forward, I have drafted an action plan and I have outlined the essential steps on how to push for advocacy countrywide.

I am continuing with the training and at the end of the program, I will seek support on how to move forward with my plan to take what I have learnt to schools, local government, and others.




STAKEHOLDERS SPEAK

 **GIZ Rwanda**
@giz_rwanda

We concluded, yesterday 27th July, a 2-day workshop organized in collaboration with [@HDIRwanda](#) for security officers of [@Gasabo_District](#) on fundamental principles of human rights under the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 and other laws [1/2].



 **Osée NKURIKIYIMANA** 🇷🇼
@Osee_w_i_Rwanda

Replying to [@Osee_w_i_Rwanda](#) [@Janeuwimana](#) and 5 others

Iyo rero abakundana bageze ku kigero cyo kubana batumva neza icyo ihame ry'Uburinganire n'Ubwuzuzanye bivuze, usanga ariho havutse ibibazo bimwe na bimwe by'ihohoterwa, gucana inyuma, kuvunishanya, n'ibindi bitari byiza.

Kwihugura ni ingenzi.

Thank you [@Janeuwimana](#) & [@HDIRwanda](#)

 **Uwingabiye Jolie Silène**
@JolieSilene

Replying to [@RWN_WomenNet](#) [@RwandaNGOForum](#) and 9 others

So sad.
Much efforts are needed to make sexual reproduction health and rights services accessible and affordable [@HDIRwanda](#) [@urphsa](#) [@chbrwanda](#)

 **Amiel NZAYISENGA**
@Amiel3418

Replying to [@Janeuwimana](#) [@_HobeRwanda](#) and 4 others

Tuvuge Uburinganire mubakiri bato, aruko tubanje kumvako ari umuhungu/umukobwa bose bashoboye, nta murimo wahariwe gitsina runaka! Mugihe hari ubushake ntihabeho guhezwa kumwe muribo bitewe nigitsina kiwe! [@HDIRwanda](#)

HDI wishes to thank our partners and supporters

- AMPLIFYCHANGE
- BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH IMPERATIVE
- CATHOLICS FOR CHOICE
- CDC
- DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO RWANDA
- DFID
- EAHP
- FEMNET
- FOSI/OSIEA
- GIZ
- GLIHD
- GLOBAL HEALTH CORPS
- IMBUTO FOUNDATION
- IMRO
- MINISTRY OF GENDER AND FAMILY PROMOTION
- MINISTRY OF HEALTH
- MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
- MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID
- PLAN INTERNATIONAL RWANDA
- PROMUNDO
- PSA
- PSF/EMORY UNIVERSITY
- PYXERA
- RBP PARTNERS
- RNGOF
- RSOG
- RWANDA BIO-MEDICAL CENTER
- RWANDA EDUCATION BOARD
- RWANDA GOVERNANCE BOARD
- SAAF/IPPF
- SISTERLOVE INC.
- SOCIETY FOR FAMILY HEALTH
- STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION
- STOP TB PARTNERSHIP
- TEARFUND
- THE CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS
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- THE EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF NETHERLANDS
- THE GLOBAL FUND
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- WELLSPRING PHILANTHROPIC FUND
- WHO
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- IPPF-Asociación Profamilia
- IRH
- JHPIEGO/MCGL
- RWAMREC
- THE NEWTIMES

