



HAGURUKA
Defending the rights of women and children

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Our vision is to create a society where the rights of women and children are respected; where women and children live free from violence and discrimination so that they can reach their full potential.

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FOREWORD



**NINETTE
UMURERWA**

NATIONAL
EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY

“ Covid-19 did not just create new challenges; it worsened already existing ones that were not given the attention they deserved. This provided an opportunity not only for our organization, but also for the globe, to work towards creating a world better than the one we had before this devastating pandemic.”

It is with great delight that I present our 2020 Annual Report which outlines our achievements and progress in the past year. Haguruka’s vision is to create a society where women and children’s rights are respected so that they may reach their full potential. As such, Haguruka has worked tirelessly over the last 30 years to both recognize and address the variety of challenges women and children face in claiming their rights.

With the year, 2020 came unprecedented challenges due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. Organizations such as ourselves were obliged to be flexible and adapt to the changing needs of our beneficiaries, while also respecting local rules and regulations to curb the spread of the deadly virus. However, with these challenges also came opportunity. Covid-19 did not just create new challenges; it worsened already existing ones that were not given the attention they deserved. This provided an opportunity not only for our organization, but also for the globe, to work towards creating a world better than the one we had before this devastating pandemic.

Despite the heightened challenges we faced, Haguruka is proud of its work over this last year. Our legal aid clinic was able to adapt to the changing needs of our beneficiaries due to the lockdown, while ensuring the safety of both them and our staff. Notably, during this time we conducted a rapid assessment research project alongside Irish Charity Trocaire to determine the barriers our beneficiaries faced and how to meet their needs in the most effective way. The results of this study allowed us to address immediate challenges our beneficiaries faced as well as determine best practices moving forward beyond the pandemic. Additionally, our partnership with United Nations Women allowed us to continue to host mobile legal aid clinics, where we were able to bring legal professionals to the vulnerable in remote areas facing a variety of issues and in need of legal assistance.

Our work this last year did not stop with our legal aid department. Alongside our many partners, we were able to address several other needs women and children in Rwanda face. These efforts included but were not limited to; community dialogues focused on GBV, sexual health and reproductive rights, researching access to justice barriers women with disabilities face and influencing respective legislation on the subject, and educating people at the community level of the rights of women in both society and the home. Moving forward, Haguruka is committed to take all that we have learned this past year as we continue to work towards realizing our mission.

ACRONYMS



CSO:	Civil Society Organization
DC:	District Committees
DIU:	Duteze Imbere Ubutabera
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
GESI:	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GOR:	Government of Rwanda
ICT:	Information and Communications Technology
IEC:	Information, Education, and Communication
IECMS:	Integrated Electronic Case-Management System
JRLOS:	Justice Reconciliation Law and Order Sector
JRLOSIII:	Justice Reconciliation Law and Order Sector Strategy III
LAF:	Legal Aid Forum
MAJ:	Maison d'Accès à la Justice/Access to Justice Bureau
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MINIJUST:	Ministry of Justice
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NWC:	National Women's Council
RCN:	RCN Justice & Démocratie
RGB:	Rwanda Governance Board
RLRC:	Rwanda Law Reform Commission
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA:	Swedish International Development Agency
TOT:	Training of Trainers
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

ABOUT HAGURUKA



Haguruka is a Rwandan Non-Governmental Organization, founded in 1991, to champion for the rights of women and children. In Kinyarwanda, “*Haguruka*” means to “*stand up*”, hence our organization’s purpose to stand up for women and children’s rights.

Through empowering women with knowledge about their rights and improving their access to justice across the country, we ensure that women can adequately claim their rights. In addition to that, the basis of our work towards combatting gender-based vio-

lence (GBV) and promoting gender equality is the national and international framework of Human Rights. We advocate for positive change of a society where women and children can claim and fully enjoy their rights.

OUR VISION

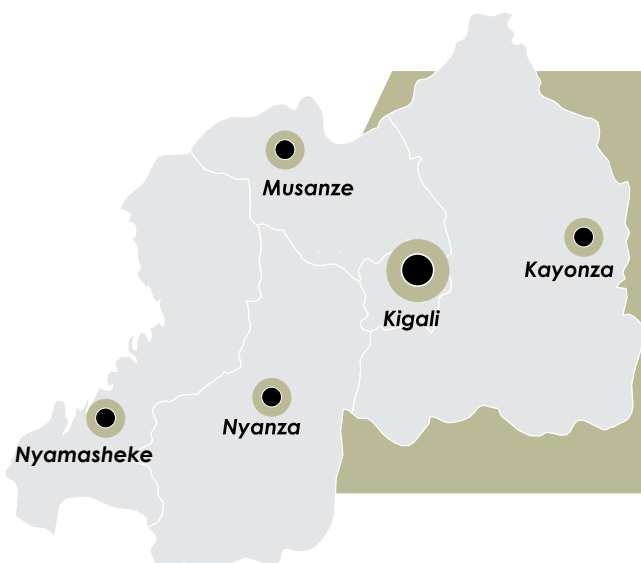
To create a society where the rights of women and children are respected; where women and children live free from violence and discrimination so that they can reach their full potential.

OUR MISSION

To promote and defend the rights of women and children.

OUR KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Haguruka attributes its success on its five key areas of intervention namely:
Legal aid and psychological counseling | Awareness-raising activities and social mobilization
Capacity development of partners and stakeholders | Research | Advocacy



GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Haguruka’s headquarters are in Kigali, with Provincial Centers in Musanze in Northern Province, Kayonza in Eastern Province, and Nyanza in Southern Province. This provides the base from which Haguruka coordinates a network of over 416 paralegals located in each and every sector of the country.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Haguruka is committed to achieving true gender equality in Rwanda, so that all women and children are able to reach their full potential.”

Our goals for the year 2020 hinged on increasing our efforts in advocating for the rights of children, girls and women as well as gender and disability inclusion. This was realized through strategic partnerships, dialogues, awareness campaigns, mentorships and through monitoring and evaluation activities. Even though the pandemic certainly obligated us to be flexible in this plight, this report details all of our accomplishments, what we have learned, and what we hope to do moving forward.

Beginning with our legal aid department, in addition to the provision of legal aid services at our offices, Haguruka was able to conduct several mobile legal aid clinics in order to service the vulnerable in remote areas. We were also able to conduct a series of community dialogue sessions, with an aim to increasing the public's understanding of laws and practices pertaining to women's rights. During the height of the pandemic and consequent lockdown, our staff continued to offer legal support by way of our toll free line.

Our organization also engaged in a series of projects in partnership with other CSOs to address other identified gaps in the social and economic welfare of Rwandan women. These projects focused on many issues ranging from sexual health and reproductive rights, to disability inclusion practices and rights, to research on the impact of the pandemic on women specifically.

The aforementioned achievements are followed by our enhanced monitoring and evaluation strategies. With this, we are able to identify our challenges, lessons learnt, and recommendations for the future.

Haguruka is committed to achieving true gender equality in Rwanda, so that all women and children are able to reach their full potential. We will continue to identify and remedy justice gaps in society for women and using our resources, to ensure that they are filled.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS & IMPACT



Among the many negative impacts of Covid-19, was the disruption of planned activities. Since March 16 2020, when the Government of Rwanda (GOR) instituted precautionary health measures to prevent the spread of the virus including the lockdown, some activities of Haguruka were postponed or even canceled while others were re-designed to be conducted virtually or remotely. Haguruka was therefore able to operate on a small scale through distant working as well as in small or one-on-one meetings.

Despite the difficulties of working during the pandemic, Haguruka registered significant achievements and impact. Listed below, are the key highlights achieved through our main areas of intervention in the past year.



LEGAL AID & PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELING



3266
people

Provision of legal aid to a total of 3266 people; 69% women and 31% men.

Provision of DNA testing to 41 GBV victims identified during mobile legal aid clinics and those received at the offices of the organization.

Through mobile legal clinics, 2968 right holders were supported; 59% women & 41% men.

Provision of legal representation to 187 individuals mainly related to GBV, paternity search, divorce, inheritance and succession cases, property cases, child custody and child support.



69%
women



31%
men



Mobile Legal Clinics

2968
right holders

59%
women

41%
men





AWARENESS RAISING & SOCIAL MOBILIZATION



1197
people



Through community dialogues on key laws & Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights, Haguruka reached 1197 people (61% women and 39% men) comprising of; youth, couples, women and girls.



61%
women



39%
men

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

40 community facilitators were trained on GBV legal frameworks and the facilitation of community dialogues on GBV.

Haguruka offered a capacity building training to 30 JLROS at district levels on Legal Aid Performance Standards (LAPS) and Human Rights.

Haguruka conducted a series of trainings on land governance and laws related to land matters that for 166 local authorities.

122 justice actors (61 women and 51 men) were trained on Legal Aid Standards & Procedures.

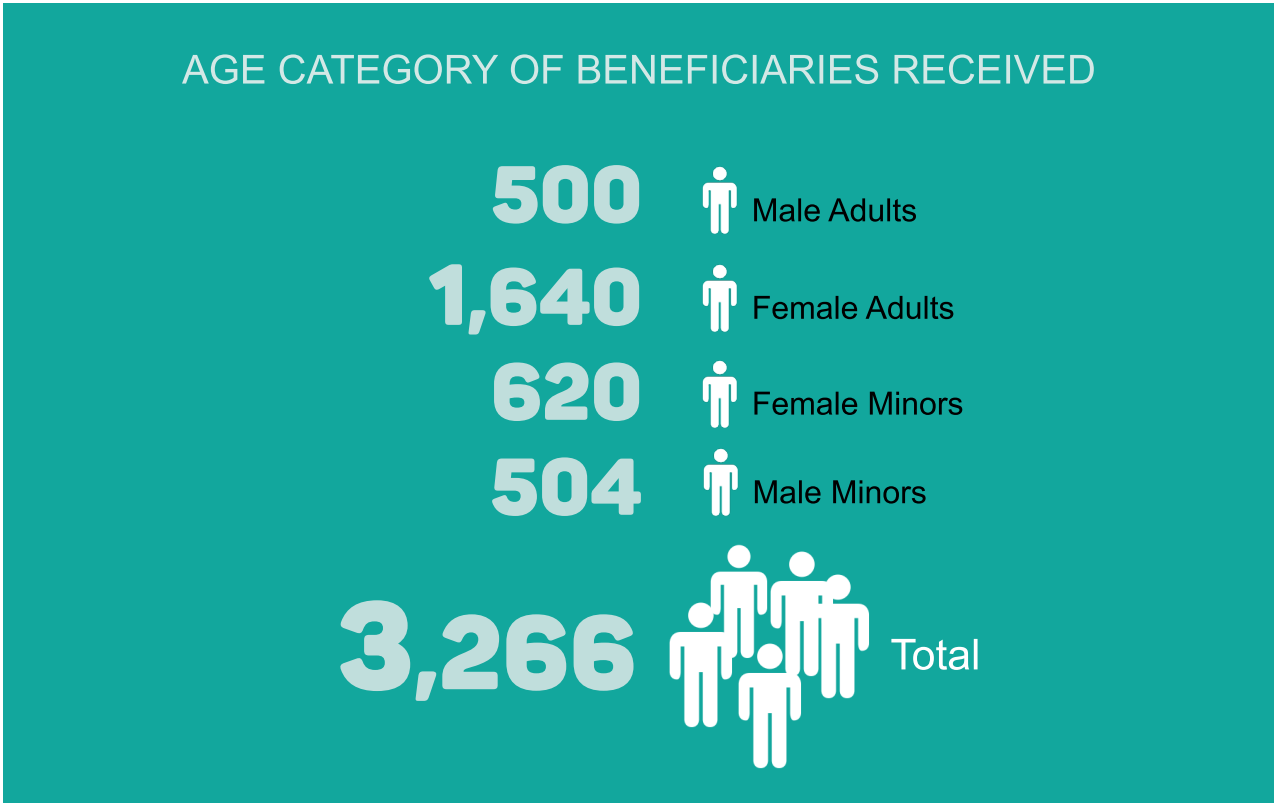
RESEARCH & ADVOCACY

In partnership with Trocaire, Haguruka conducted a research-based project titled “Rapid Assessment on Impact of COVID on Legal Service Provision for GBV Victims.” The objective of this research study, was to understand the critical aspects necessary to legal aid provision and consequently, how to adapt and adjust these responses to the restrictions put in place to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

1. LEGAL AID & PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING

In 2020, Haguruka provided a range of legal aid services to 3266 people in civil/family and GBV matters. The services provided incorporated but were not limited to; legal advice, mediation, orientation and referral, drafting court submissions, DNA support and legal representation. This assistance was provided through walk-in services to the legal aid centers/offices of the organization, through phone calls (toll free line) as well as through mobile legal aid clinics conducted in communities; where they took the services closer to the people, especially the most vulnerable in remote rural areas. Legal aid services enabled those who would otherwise find it difficult or impossible to access the services and support of a lawyer for their cases. With access to a lawyer and/or legal information, the poor and vulnerable gained access to justice and had their voices heard.

**Legal Aid Services in
Civil/Family and GBV matters**
3266
people



I.1. PROVISION OF DNA TESTING FOR VICTIMS OF GBV

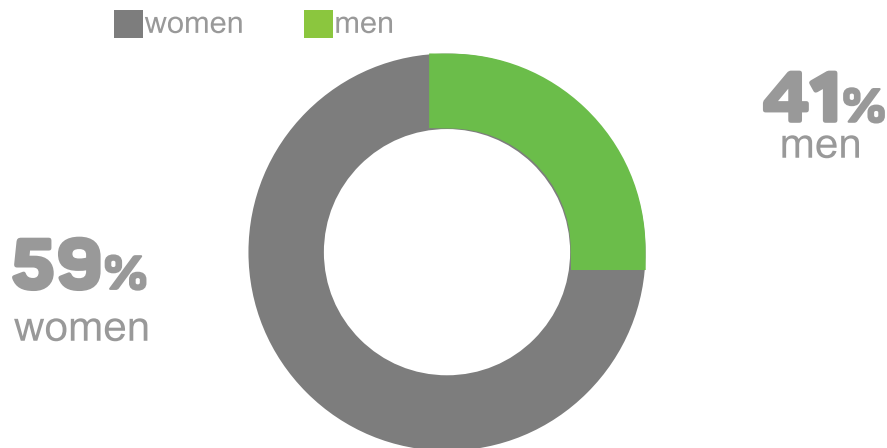
DNA testing is often used to help settle legal proceedings of a civil nature. Genetic technologies offer a full range of DNA testing and consulting services used in support of civil investigations. Among its functions, DNA testing determines the identity of the person in question, or disprove the identity of the accused. It can therefore be used to help settle sexual harassment, child support, custody and in-

heritance disputes, and divorce proceedings. It is in this regard that Haguruka provided DNA testing to 41 GBV victims identified during mobile legal aid clinics and those received at the offices of the organization. Haguruka lawyers also accompanied victims to the Rwanda Forensic Laboratory for DNA testing where necessary.

I.2. PROVISION OF LEGAL AID THROUGH MOBILE LEGAL AID CLINICS

Under any circumstances, there are always challenges to providing access to justice. These challenges can also be worsened by a number of factors such as; poverty, lack of education and geographical location, among others. It is against this background that Haguruka established “Mobile Legal Aid” clinics, to mitigate all these challenges in the targeted districts. Mobile Legal Aid Clinics offered much more than legal advice, they also empowered right holders with knowledge about their rights and how to claim them effectively.

Percentage of men and women reached through mobile legal aid clinics



By bringing a legal officer from the offices to every doorstep in the country, even the most vulnerable people who otherwise would not be able to reach the offices or afford to hire a lawyer, were able to obtain free legal advice.

Haguruka organized 114 sessions of mobile legal aid clinics in different districts of the country namely; Nyamasheke, Nyaruguru, Gasabo, Nyanza, Rwamagana, Musanze, Rulindo, Gakenke, Nyamagabe, and Bugejira. A team of fully trained and equipped lawyers and paralegals were deployed. Throughout the year, they received and supported a total number of 2,968 beneficiaries/right holders (1754 women and 1214 men). Some beneficiaries were given legal advice while others were given appointments for further legal support such as mediation, advocacy, writing legal briefs, and court-submission through IECMS (Integrated Electronic Case Management System). Cases received were predominantly related to land disputes, gender based violence, birth registration and child support.

I.3. LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF GBV VICTIMS



Haguruka offers legal representation particularly to minors, indigent persons and victims of GBV. In 2020, Haguruka provided legal representation to 187 individuals mainly related to GBV, paternity search, divorce, inheritance and succession cases, property cases, child custody and child support.

Haguruka hired legal practitioners as consultants to represent victims of GBV and other vulnerable people with legal matters before the courts.

Since 2018, Haguruka recorded 395 cases (324 women and 71 men). Among the recorded cases, 303 cases (246 women and 57 men) are now closed. Haguruka won 255 cases (210 women and 45 men) and lost 48 (36 women and 12 men). So far, 92 cases (78 women and 14 men) are still remaining and will be reported in the next reporting period.

Legal practitioners work closely with Haguruka legal officers in the collection and preservation of evidence and ensure that right holders are informed about the progress and status of their cases. Beneficiaries receiving legal representation are also supported with legal briefs and other necessary documents pertaining to the case, as well as the submission of the legal briefs and evidence to the court through the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS).

I.4. LEGAL AID PROVISION TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Haguruka is committed to the provision of inclusive legal aid to persons with disabilities, especially girls and women with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. On December 15, 2020, 40 girls and women with disabilities from Nyanza District were offered legal aid support through one session of mobile legal aid clinic. This was



done to ensure that girls and women with disabilities have access to quality and free legal aid support. Legal aid services are generally difficult to obtain by vulnerable right-holders from remote areas. Through mobile legal aid clinics, girls and women with disabilities and other individuals such as teen mothers were informed about their rights and how to claim them. Furthermore, mobile legal aid clinics campaigns acted as a medium to raise awareness on the prevention of teenage pregnancies as well as gender-based violence within the community.

I.5. PROVISION OF LEGAL AID THROUGH HAGURUKA HOTLINE



The Legal Aid Hotline is a free, confidential phone service that connects beneficiaries to a legal officer. It further helps the organization to provide beneficiaries with a number of services including legal information, what to do next to resolve the legal problem, organize appointments for beneficiaries to obtain free legal advice, direct beneficiaries to the best place to go for more help, sending information and resources relating to the legal problem, and outcomes from the cases reported. Using Hotline to provide legal aid has enabled the organization to receive many people seeking for legal aid services, mainly during the COVID-19 pandemic as movements of people was restricted.

2. AWARENESS RAISING & SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

Building upon the existing experience with public education, Haguruka mobilized, and educated the broader Rwandan public on the functioning of the justice system and different key laws, including the law governing family and persons, inheritance and succession law, law on the prevention of gender based violence, land law and the law governing Abunzi, among others. Haguruka utilized several communication channels to ensure that the targeted communities in various districts of the country acquired basic knowledge on the concept of GBV and other laws. These channels included; community dialogues, radio shows, bulk messaging, printed IEC materials and legal guide booklets. In line with this activity, 1400 posters, 20696 flyers and 50 billboards on GBV referral pathways were developed and distributed.

IEC Materials
legal guide booklets

1400
posters

20696
flyers

50
billboards

Success Story:

**“Knowing
my rights
turned my
life around.”**

- Alliance

After giving birth at the age of 19, my brother resented me and told me that I had no value and hence no rights to the inheritance left by our parents because I brought a “curse” in my family when I had a child out of wedlock. He then started to physically and verbally abuse me telling me to take my child to his father. My life was filled with so much pain that I lost hope that life could get better.

Fortunately, I had the privilege to participate in the ‘safe spaces for girls’ in my cell and as the sessions went on, I opened up and shared my story. Through these dialogues, I learnt that I still have rights to my parents’ property even though I had a baby out of wedlock. I was then able to take my case to the local leaders and I got justice and obtained land and other properties. I am now happy that I am able to support myself and my child. Recently, I was elected to be the leader of the school drop-out group at the sector level which gave me an opportunity to meet with my peers and teach them about their sexual reproductive health and rights and GBV prevention, among many lessons that I learnt.

2.1.a. Community Dialogues On Key Laws

Through community dialogues on key laws, Haguruka reached 480 people (226 men and 254 women) in the districts of Bugesera, Kayonza, Ngoma, Musanze and Gasabo. They included local leaders and members of the community structures. Community dialogues provided an opportunity for participants to understand their rights, how to claim them, and more so the functioning of justice system. These dialogues profoundly contributed to the increase of knowledge on the Rwandan GBV legal framework, referral pathways, and services for the victims, women’s rights

and gender equality concepts in Musanze and Gasabo districts. Community dialogues also brought together families living in conflicts and model couples for a constructive exchange of ideas and pieces of advice between model couples and couples living in conflicts, with the aim to prevent GBV in families while promoting a culture of dialogues among couples.

Haguruka conducted eight community dialogues aimed at raising awareness (among both men and women) of the legal frameworks governing land laws and women’s land rights in Gatsibo district in Eastern

province. The community dialogues were held at the sector level during the citizens' forums (Inteko y'abaturage). In the past year, the community dialogues reached 2,825 citizens in Musanze district. During this phase, 736 village leaders (368 Village leaders

and 368 women representatives at village level) were also informed about the legal framework governing women's land rights and laws regarding land matters.



2.1.b Awareness Raising On Child Rights & Child Law Through Radio Spots

Haguruka continued to use a multi-media strategy to promote and sustain community participation in the promotion of children's rights during the crisis period of COVID-19. Under the COVID-19 Response activities, Haguruka developed and aired Radio & TV spots on children's rights and abuse. The Radio and TV spots were aired for 30 days via Radio Rwanda and 5 other community radios namely; RC Musanze, RC Rubavu, RC Rusizi, RC Huye & RC Nyagatare, and for 8 days on Rwanda Television respectively. The overall goal of the multi-media approach was to promote and sensitize the community on children's rights and prevention of child abuse.

The aired Radio and TV spot yielded amazing results one of them being increased awareness of the Haguruka's toll-free line. Haguruka has now received many cases on our toll-free as a courtesy of the aired Radio and TV spots.

2.2. Awareness Raising On Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights

Sexual and reproductive health is a very personal issue and concerns all people, whether young or old, male or female, for a large part of their lives. This issue begins to affect people's lives at adolescence when they are aware that they are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. As this is such a major life change, this growing awareness of sexuality can affect the manner in which people conduct themselves. It is in this view that interventions to ensure good sexual and reproductive health for people especially the youth have life-long term benefits.

To contribute to the awareness of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Haguruka organizes community dialogues on key SRHR topics. These dialogues target women, girls, couples, and youth (boys and girls) in the districts of Musanze, Gasabo, Kayonza and Bugesera. Trained community facilitators under the supervision of Haguruka staff (District Officers) lead the discussions on relevant SRHR topics.

2.2.a. Dialogues For Girls On Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights

Haguruka conducted 20 community dialogue sessions with 120 girls in Musanze and Gasabo districts. These dialogues were a safe space for girls to discuss their private issues especially regarding VAWG and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. The safe spaces were an important opportunity for girls to share their different experiences in relation to SRHR concepts, including menstruation and hygiene, prevention of teenage pregnancy as well as the use and method of contraceptives, among others. Girls demonstrated an increase of knowledge on types of sexual and gender violence, key SRHR concepts, and are able to access SRHR services with no fear of negative judgement. Community facilitators encouraged girls to be responsible and take decision over their bodies to avoid unplanned pregnancies.



Success Story: //

I have hope of a better quality of life.”

- Jackline, 29

When I had my second baby as a single mother, I was chased away by my parents and went to live on my own with my children, though in a very tough condition. Before attending dialogue sessions on SRHR, I did not know that I could access contraceptives because in my community, only married women were allowed to access them. When I was selected to attend dialogues with girls, I felt uncomfortable as I was a single mother. However, the warm hospitality of the facilitator made me comfortable enough to attend. During the sessions, a nurse came to teach us about contraceptives as a way of avoiding unplanned pregnancies. I then learned about the different methods of birth control and took a decision to visit the health center with the support of the nurse. I was able to access and use contraceptives and today, I am happy because I am safe from unplanned pregnancies. In addition to that, I now joined a saving cooperative in my community that gives me hope of a better quality of life.

2.2.b. Dialogues For Women On Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights



During this reporting period, Haguruka conducted 20 dialogue sessions with 120 women. These sessions provided safe spaces for women to come together to freely share and discuss topics, which they learned with their husbands during the couples' community dialogues. Discussions mainly involved their personal experiences regarding gender and Sexual Reproductive health and Rights issues such as family planning, use of contraceptives and hygiene, among others. These discussions aimed to build women's confidence to control their own bodies and to break the culture of silence as a factor to violence. According to their witnesses, women's participation in household decision-making increased because they know their rights and are empowered to claim them.

2.2.c. Dialogues For Couples On Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights

Couples and individuals need access to improved SRHR information and services to be able to improve their quality of life as well as participate in the social and economic development of their countries. During this reporting period, HaguruKa conducted 20 dialogue sessions with 120 couples (120 women and 120 men) in Musanze and Gasabo districts. Dialogues with couples aimed to raise awareness on gender equality and equity, women's rights, and SRHR concepts.

“This project came at the right time. Dialogue spaces connected us to other people who have had similar experiences and we have learnt a lot from them. We are more aware of our rights and better equipped to promote and defend them.” – Participants.

HaguruKa increased its efforts to demonstrate how the realization of reproductive rights through improvements in SRHR is a necessary condition to achieve poverty reduction at household levels. During dialogue sessions with couples, participants understood that they have the right to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children, and to have the information and means to do so. They also understood that decisions concerning reproduction should be made free from discrimination, coercion and violence. Couples witnessed that access to and utilization of quality voluntary family planning services by individuals and couples increased according to their reproductive intentions.

2.2.d. Dialogues For Youth On Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights

Young people are commonly affected by lack of information about their sexual rights. As a result, some young girls are married against their will, others are sexually abused and others contract sexually transmitted diseases. In response to this issue, HaguruKa organized youth community dialogues to enhance the knowledge of representatives of the National Youth Council from Bugesera and Kayonza districts on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights and prevention of early pregnancy in the community.

Marie Chantal, a female participant expressed: “Whenever I got my period, I could not go to school because I felt ashamed thinking it was a sickness. These dialogues helped me to understand that my period is normal and not something to be ashamed of. I will no longer miss my classes because of it.”

The SRHR community dialogues were conducted in 5 Sectors in Bugesera & Kayonza districts namely; Mayange, Musenyi, Gashora and Mwogo Sectors; and Mukarange, Kabarondo, Gahini, Rukara and Nyamirama Sectors, respectively. In total 320 participants including 182 women and 175 men were reached. As a result of these dialogues, participants gained information about SRHR which helped them to change their attitude and behavior towards SRHR concepts.

Success Story:

**Inspired
to inspire
others.”**

- Mukeshimana, 29

These safe spaces were very inspiring to me as I was raised in a Christian home where anything related to sex and contraceptives was never discussed. I have now learnt how my body changes at each stage and ways to prevent unplanned pregnancies. More so, after learning about SRHR, I shared that knowledge with my friend who gave birth and dropped out of school. I challenged her as I was also challenged, to change her negative center to get more information so that she can take charge of her body. My friend was able to access contraceptives and was assisted to go back to school.

3. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

3.1. Refresher Training Of Facilitators on GBV

Community dialogues on GBV prevention serve as a forum for community members to discuss GBV issues face-to-face, identify their root causes and consequences, and develop local solutions to prevent and respond. Through participatory and interactive discussions led by trained community facilitators, community dialogues on GBV encourage participants to share their views about the topic. During this reporting period, Haguruka trained 40 individuals on GBV legal frameworks and the facilitation of community dialogues on GBV. The training enhanced the capacity of community dialogue facilitators from both Kayonza and Bugesera districts to lead and facilitate community dialogues on GBV prevention. Participants from both districts identified actions that can be taken to address the issue of GBV, as well as priorities that should be addressed with other stakeholders and influential leaders at the community level. Dialogue sessions have been selected as the primary method to engage communities in order to encourage open and free discussion and diverse opinions in the process of communal problem solving around issues of GBV.

3.2. JRLS Training On Legal Aid Performance Standards (LAPS) & Human Rights.

Haguruka offered a capacity building training to 30 JRLS at district levels on Legal Aid Performance Standards (LAPS) and Human Rights. The legal aid standards ensure a greater consistency in the delivery of legal aid services by various actors and they are expected to boost a more effective and systemic control of the quality of legal aid services. The standards offer a guide to legal aid providers on each area of focus as well as the indicators for quality measurement of the services provided. The training manual was used by Haguruka and other key justice actors to train legal aid providers including advocates, legal officers, paralegals, and law students. The knowledge, skills and tools acquired from the training greatly contributed to the improved quality of legal aid services provided to vulnerable right holders. In addition to that, the trained staff from JRLS took the initiative to organize with the local leaders to conduct community legal education sessions in their respective districts.

3.3. Training Of Local Authorities On Land Governance & Laws Related To Land Matters

Haguruka organized a series of trainings on land governance and laws related to land matters that convened 166 local authorities. These trainings were attended by 69 Executive Secretaries and 69 Chairpersons of the land committees at the cell level, 14 Paralegals from Haguruka, and 14 Land Sector Managers in Gatsibo district. 47 of the participants were women hence representing 28% of the total members. Through these trainings, participants were able to understand, apply and harmonize the legal framework governing women's land rights and laws regarding land matters. Furthermore, at the end of each training, they were given simplified legal guide booklets on the land law to provide them with the basic information on how to provide legal advice pertaining to land matters, to the community at the grass-root level.

3.4. Training of Justice Actors On Legal Aid Standards and Procedures

a. Training of paralegals

Given the shortage of lawyers outside Kigali, paralegals are critical for vulnerable Rwandans to access justice as they are the ones providing basic legal aid services in communities, thus empowering paralegals means empowering communities. It is against this background that Haguruka in partnership with RCN J & D trained 34 paralegals (7 men 17 women) from Nyanza and Kayonza districts from October 18th -21st, 2020. Participants were trained on Legal Aid Standards, Formal Justice System and Informal Justice System, and GBV pathways. This came after the adoption of the new legal aid standards. Paralegals were hence trained on the new legal aid standards related to interviewing, confidentiality and conflict of interest, substantive and ethical limits of their interventions, procedural time limits, evidence collection, and basic substantive law. These trainings contributed to the enhancement of the paralegals' capacities to provide quality basic legal aid and information to community members in the respective

districts. Haguruka also incorporated trainings on the Paralegal Handbook on the Workings and Complementarity of the Formal and the Informal Justice Systems and Organs developed with support from DIU. The handbook was distributed to paralegals in the project's target districts.

b. Training of MAJ staff

In a bid to improve the quality of legal aid services provided to indigents and vulnerable members of the community, Haguruka conducted two trainings on Legal Aid Standards (LAPs) that gathered 88 MAJ legal officers; 44 men and 44 women. Participants used this platform to constructively discuss topics related to gender-based violence (GBV), civil and criminal standards. Furthermore, they were trained on the rights of minors in conflict with the law during investigative and pre-trial phases. In addition to that, participants learned about legal assistance of victims of offense during both investigative and trial phases.

3.5. Training Local Leaders On GBV Prevention & Response

Leaders at the local level and community-based structures play a significant role to ensure the sustainability of project activities. This is why it is necessary to closely work with them and equip them with knowledge and skills so that they take over the project activities once the project phases-out.

It is in this regard that Haguruka organized a training for 170 executive secretaries of cells in Musanze district. The major purpose of the training was to deepen their knowledge and skills on GBV prevention, referral pathways, reporting and response, as well as key gender concepts.

3.7. Training Of Teachers On SRHR & GBV Prevention.

From November 13th-15th, 2020 and December 4th-6th 2020, Haguruka conducted trainings for teachers on SRHR and GBV prevention in Gasabo and Musanze districts respectively. This activity reached 84 teachers (54 women and 30 men) and provided them space to share how the SRHR topic is thought in their respective schools. Some teachers expressed that they feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality issues with adolescents and young people. Another challenge they pointed out is the limited time allocated to this topic in most schools as it is regarded as bonus information. They also raised the issue of scarcity of information materials on Comprehensive Sexuality Education. At the end of the training, teachers reported to have gained basic knowledge on the relevant CSE topics in the module, the Methodology of delivery, different CSE approaches and their impact. Teachers committed to change their attitude and behavior regarding reproductive health topics. Furthermore, participants gained more knowledge on the abortion law in Rwanda. To respond to the need of CSE materials in schools, Haguruka printed the existing CSE module developed by REB and distributed in schools that worked with the project.



4. RESEARCH & ADVOCACY



4.1. Rapid Assessment On The Impact Of Covid-19 On Legal Service Provisions For Victims Of Gender-Based Violence.

During the 2020 year, Haguruka partnered with Trocaire to conduct a research-based project to further understand the legal barriers women faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project was titled “Rapid Assessment on Impact of COVID on Legal Service Provision for GBV Victims.”

The objective of this research study was to understand the critical aspects necessary to legal aid provision and consequently, how to adapt and adjust these responses to the restrictions put in place to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

To gather the relevant data, Haguruka conducted a series of over the phone interviews with their legal professionals across the country to discuss the barriers they are facing to delivering their services, and how beneficiaries have been impacted as a result. Certain beneficiaries were contacted for comments as well, of course with their consent.

Through these interviews, It was clear that especially during the total lockdown period, face-to-face meetings were impossible, and any and all court proceedings were halted. Women were also trapped in their homes with their abusers with no hope for relief. Haguruka alone serviced more gender-based victims during the two-month lockdown period in 2020 than were total number of GBV victims served in all of 2019.

In attempt to still service beneficiaries while also abiding by regulations regarding the pandemic, legal professionals were instructed to work from home and manage the helpline and their online correspondence from there. This allowed some semblance of legal services to still be offered so beneficiaries did not feel alone and lost, and foundational work on cases and/or advice could be completed still.

Ultimately, this research project confirmed the need for adaptive legal aid services in the event something like this were to happen again. When looking across the globe, there have been a number of good practices that we believe the Rwandan government should aim to implement. For example, in Spain women can send text messages to an online chatroom that will provide the organization with their GPS location so that they may receive immediate psychological sup-

port. This is especially important in regions where access to internet is scarce, which is an issue in remote areas of Rwanda.

Another recommendation is to pool resources of multiple organizations seeking to achieve the same goal so that awareness and education around the nation is increased. Encouraging associated organizations to collaborate will only improve our service to the public.

Conclusively, though Covid-19 introduced a series of new challenges for legal professionals everywhere, it also exacerbated already existing issues. Therefore, there is much to be learned from this experience so that a world better than the one before the pandemic began can be created.

Haguruka alone serviced more gender-based victims during the two-month lockdown period in 2020 than the total number of GBV victims served in all of 2019.

5. GENDER EQUALITY & DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTIVITIES



5.1. Dialogue On The Impact of Guardianship For Girls & Women With Intellectual & Psychosocial Disabilities

Disability mainstreaming is a process that promotes inclusion and addresses the barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from full and equal participation in society. It entails identifying the need for changes in that agenda and requires changes in goals, strategies, and actions so people with disabilities (both women and men) can influence, participate in, and benefit from development processes. Mainstreaming Disability in programs specifically involves non-disability service providers and development organizations including persons with disabilities on an equitable basis, in the same settings as non-persons with disabilities.

During this reporting period, Haguruka organized dialogue sessions on the Impact of guardianship for girls and women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. This was a good opportunity to discuss the concept of disability under Rwandan law particularly, on the challenges faced by girls and women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in access to justice. Participants understood the concept of disability, different models of disability inclusion, and the difference between disability and impairment, and the link between disability and human rights. Participants were also made aware of the challenges faced by PWDs especially those with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in access to justice and barriers that hinder their participation. Participants committed to ensuring disability is mainstreamed into their work. Participants expressed the need to review and amend Rwandan laws to allow persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities exercise their legal capacity without putting them under the custody of others.

5.2. Provision Of Start-Up Capital To Teenage Mothers

Teenage mothers face several challenges such as financial constraints, poverty, community and family stigmatization as well as other issues regarding their health, livelihoods and education. To economically support them, Haguruka in partnership with Women for Women International provided financial support

to 40 vulnerable teenage mothers from Kayonza and Bugesera districts, to start their own income generating activities. This aimed to empower vulnerable young women/teen mothers to start their businesses and embrace resilience on their journey to economic independence. 6,000,000 RWF in total were provided to selected teen mothers in Kayonza and Bugesera districts. Teen mothers from Bugesera got 3,000,000 RWF and those from Kayonza 3,000,000 RWF. Each teen mother from the selected got 150,000 RWF Rwandan francs. The support was provided based on the business plans drafted and reviewed by Women for Women International and Haguruka staff.



Empower vulnerable young women/
teen mothers to start their businesses

6,000,000_{RWF}
Total amount

3,000,000_{RWF}
Teen mothers from Bugesera and
Kayonza districts

150,000_{RWF}
Each selected teen mother got

6. MONITORING EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL) ACTIVITIES

PROJECT EVALUATION FOR THE INGO Z'AMAHORO PROJECT

Haguruka conducted the end-line of the “Ingo z’amahoro” (meaning Peaceful Homes) project to determine the relevance and level of achievement of project objectives, development effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation covered the work done in the period of three years. Focus group discussions were conducted with women, girls, boys, couples, and Key Informant interviews with local leaders and schools benefited from the project activities.

Right-holders of “Ingo z’amahoro” said:

“Before this project started, we were so uncomfortable to share our stories because we were victims of violence but could not do anything about it. Attending these dialogues with other couples helped us to open up, learn and share our experiences with others. Role model couples inspired us profoundly and helped us to resolve our family conflicts in a peaceful way”.

The exercise revealed that, there is need to continue putting much emphasis on the “proximity approach”, which is key for creating an environment that is conducive for prevention of GBV and increase of awareness on SRHR. The use of community dialogue sessions, women safe spaces, and role model couples are critical for empowering girls and women. Picking successful examples of healthy couple relationships from the neighborhood accelerated mind set change in favor of gender equality and better lifestyles. Community-based facilitators also contribute to the durability of interventions. Additional best practices include training a critical mass of community volunteers for facilitation of dialogue sessions, regular coordination meeting and sharing of information with local authorities.

Success Story:

“From negative to positive masculinity.”

- Alex shares his transformation story.

I grew up in a culture where my mum was the one doing all the domestic work while my father was the breadwinner of the family. I used to hear him telling my mother that she spent money carelessly because she did not work for it. When I got married, I was also the one working and my wife stayed home to take care of the family. We have some small houses we rent, an income I also got and managed. I used to ask my wife to give me a report on how she used the money I gave her for shopping and I would use the language my father used when talking to my mum. I never valued my wife’s ideas and contribution in the decision making over our properties.

We then joined the couple’s sessions as a model couple because judging from the outside, we seemed peaceful. I was good to people publicly but privately unkind to my wife. During the dialogue on women’s rights and negative masculinity I was touched because I was treating my wife harshly as I abused her verbally, emotionally and sexually thinking it was how a real man was to behave.

Through of these sessions, I changed my behavior. Today, I am a man who supports my wife’s ideas in fact, we plan together. I also share household chores with her and she now manages our rentals and saves the income towards her capital to start her own business.

ACTIVITIES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic inflicted unprecedented havoc on children, families, and communities around the globe, disrupting vital services and putting mil-



lions of lives at risk. While people were receiving essentials like food and medicine, it was also important to think of essentials from a young girl's perspective. Sanitary napkins and bars of soap are the basic requirements for girls to stay healthy and free from infections during their menstrual cycle. It is in this regard that, Haguruka provided these requirements to teen mothers and women participating in SRHR dialogue sessions from Musanze, Gasabo, Ngoma, and Bugesera.

Furthermore, among the measures to stop the spread of the Covid-19, Haguruka also distributed personal protective equipment to the staff including: re-usable face masks, alcoholic hand sanitizers, face shields as well as the construction of glass windows in the legal department office to prevent up close contact of the staff and beneficiaries

CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNT & RECOMMENDATIONS

VIII.1. Challenges

Due to the COVID 19 restriction measures, some of the activities including meetings, training, mobile legal clinics and community dialogues were suspended.

Haguruka continued to experience a higher demand of people seeking for psychosocial and legal support that exceeded the available resources.

Persons with disabilities still face challenges of limited access to information provided in accessible formats for PWDs, accessibility of the physical environment, transportation, services, information and communication, lack of economic resources to have access to justice such as paying for quality legal counsel and court fees, among others.

Challenges to maximize the potential of services of the Haguruka shelters due to financial constraints.

The majority of Haguruka beneficiaries have limited knowledge about their rights, key laws and legal procedures which hinders them from receiving or accessing legal assistance.

VIII.2. Lessons Learnt

Due to the pandemic, activities to support communities were increasingly relied on digital technology to continue providing key services to the communities. Using the toll-free line, Haguruka was able to continue providing legal aid to its beneficiaries.

Along the process, Haguruka learnt that activities such as community dialogues, mobile legal clinics, provide a platform for vulnerable people to raise their awareness on their rights, key laws, and legal procedures. We also learnt that this activity is only achieved through our collaboration between local authorities and other concerned institutions.

VIII.3. Recommendations

Ensure that the COVID-19 response plans to address violence against women recognize the intersectionality of GBV and Disability.

Put in place domestic violence shelters as essential services.

Designate safe spaces for women where they can report abuse without alerting perpetrators.

Develop and expand online SGBV services to increase accessibility.

Step up advocacy and awareness campaigns on GBV and disability.

CONCLUSION

Haguruka expresses great appreciation to all its partners and donors for their support during the implementation of different programs and projects.

This vote of thanks is also addressed to all staff, paralegals and community facilitators for their efforts that realized the successful execution of Haguruka's activities and programs which made a positive impact on communities and transformed many lives of Rwandans.

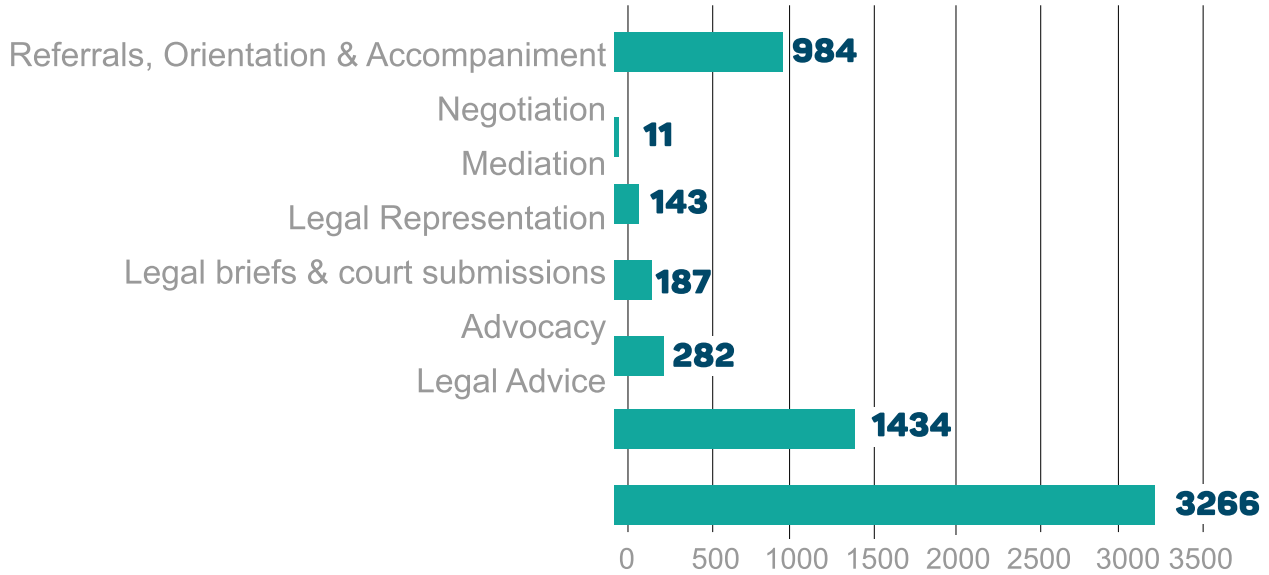
Despite the COVID-19 restriction measures, most of the planned activities were implemented. However, two advocacy meetings on women's participation in the decision making and access to justice for persons with disabilities respectively, were put on hold.

Although the pandemic was a hindrance to many operations, Haguruka continued to provide legal aid support to vulnerable beneficiaries through toll-free line. Community based paralegals also continued to provide basic legal aid support in their communities.

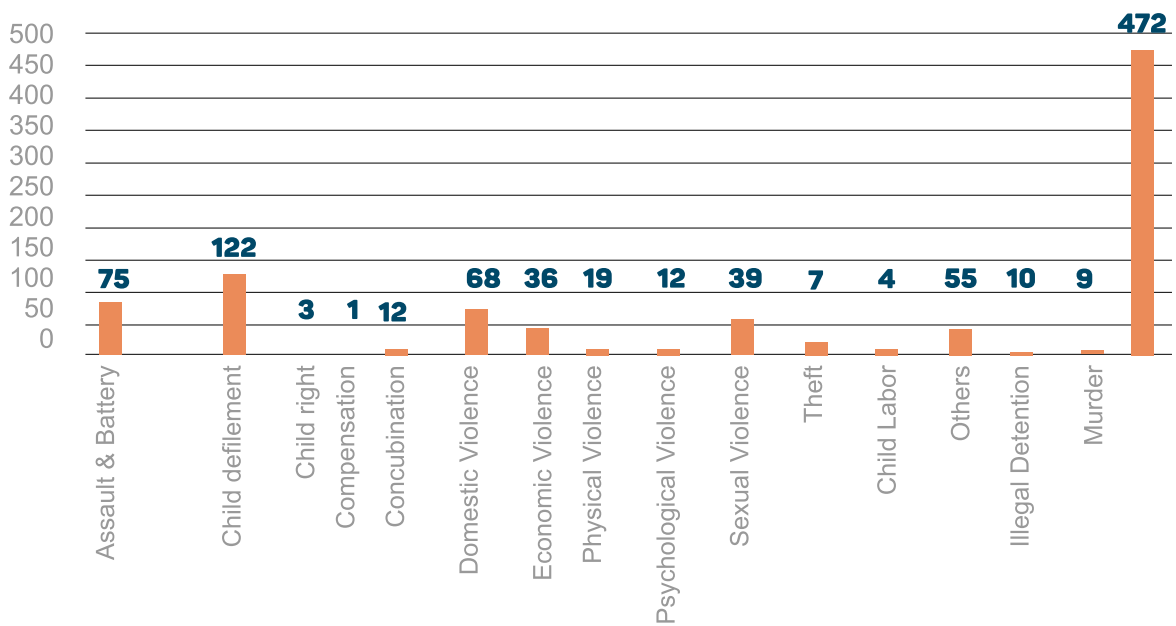




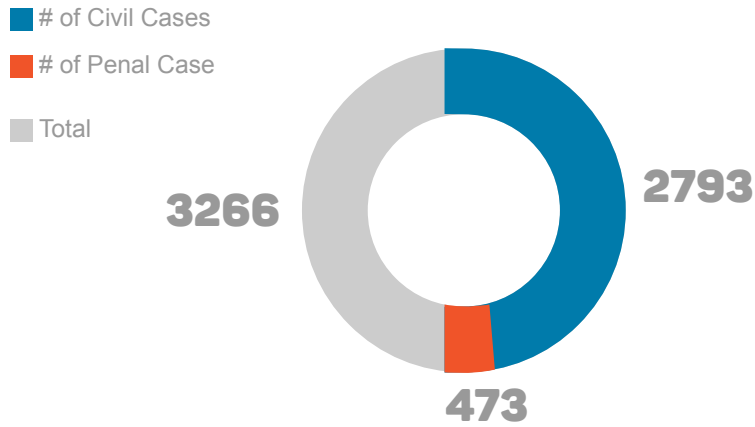
TYPE OF LEGAL AID PROVIDED



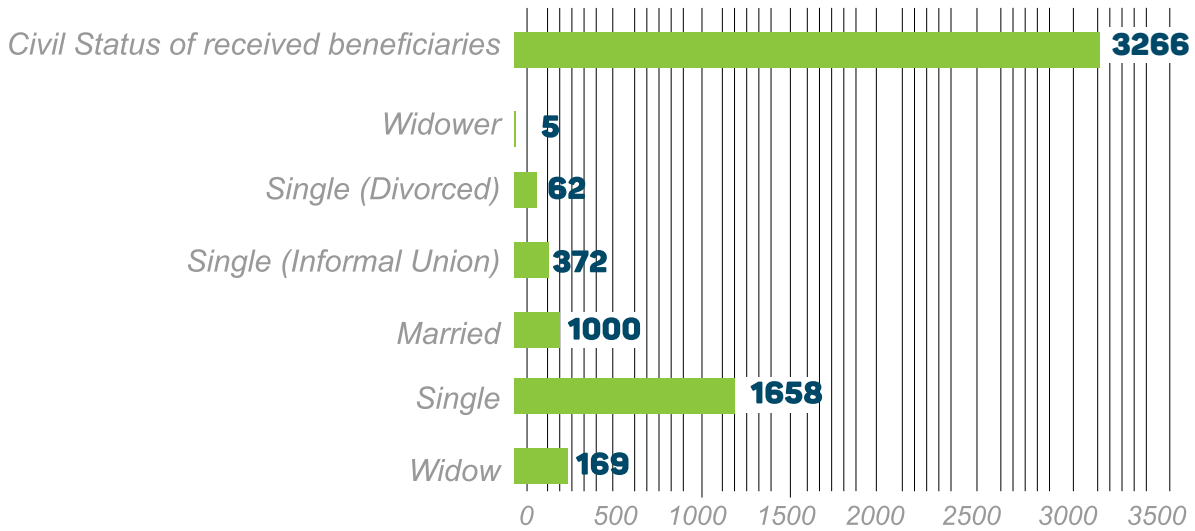
OF PENAL CASES REPORTED



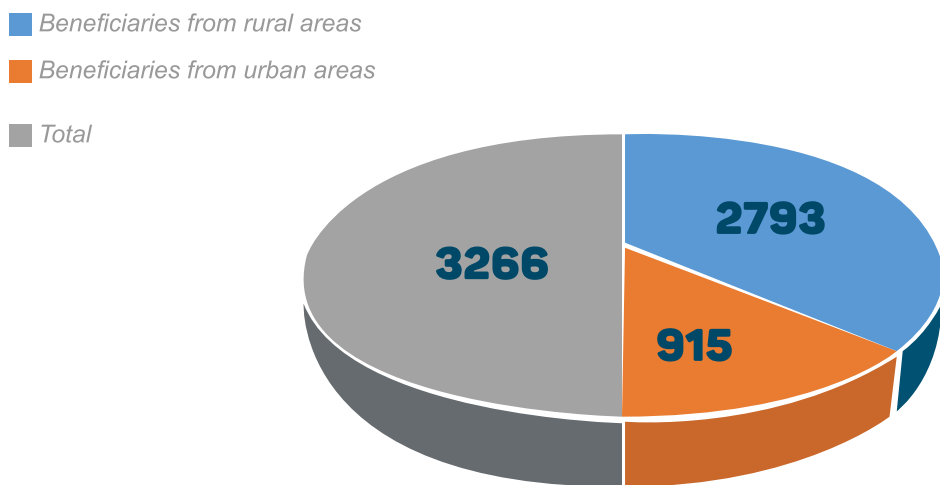
NUMBER OF CIVIL AND PENAL CASES REPORTED



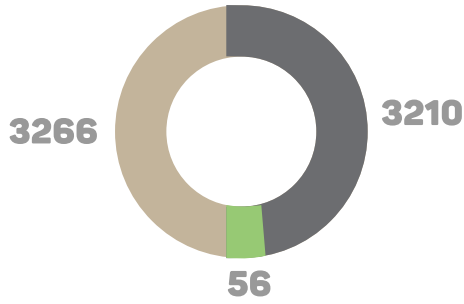
CIVIL STATUS OF RECEIVED BENEFICIARIES



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF RECEIVED BENEFICIARIES

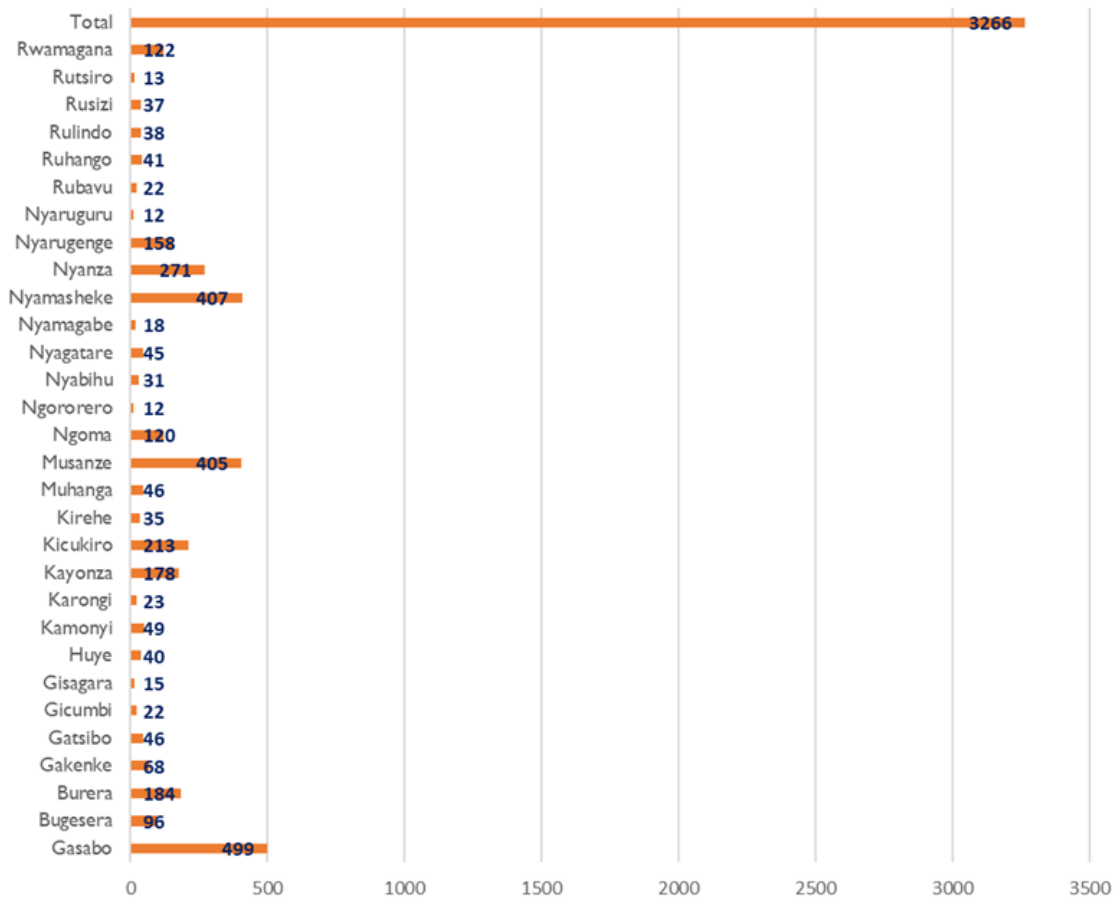


PWDS VERSUS PERSONS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

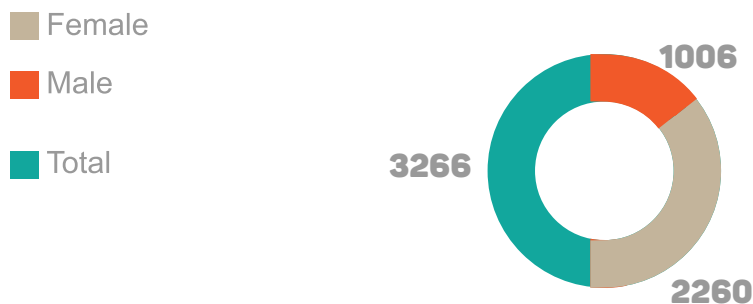


■ # of Beneficiaries without Disability ■ # of Beneficiaries with Disability ■ Total

NUMBER OF RECEIVED PER DISTRICT



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS DISAGGREGATED BY SEX





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