



RESOLUTIONS OF THE POST CONFERENCE TASKFORCE MEETING HELD AT FOREST COTTAGES ON TUESDAY 22nd JULY, 2014 FROM 10:00AM – 02:00PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Ms. Laura Nyirikindi | Board Chairperson, FIDA(U) |
| 2. Ms. Nicole Zarifis Ismene | Head of Mission, ASF |
| 3. Mr. Richard N. Muganzi | Executive Director, LASPNET |
| 4. Mrs. Elinor Chemonges Wanyama | National Coordinator, Paralegal Advisory Services |
| 5. Ms. Sandra Oryema | Legal Officer, PILAC |
| 6. Ms. Peace Kavuma | LAC/LDC |
| 7. Mrs. Berna Bakkidde Kiberu | Programmes Manager, LASPNET |
| 8. Mr. Jolly Mukooyo | Research & Advocacy Officer, LASPNET |

COMMUNICATION FROM THE TASKFORCE CHAIR/ SECRETARIAT

The Programmes Manager commenced the meeting with welcome remarks and provided highlights of the proposed post conference advocacy road map/ action plan as drawn from the deliberations of the inaugural post conference taskforce meeting.

Planned activities include the following;

- Meeting of the (12) LASPs/partners who are closely involved in the development of the National Legal Aid Policy, to develop a fundable concept note for the advocacy roadmap of the policy and bill.
- Convene a consensus building meeting of all LASPs and Partners, in order to develop ONE position paper on the nature of Policy and Bill required from government.
- LASPNET to organize a Half day CEOs/ Executive Directors and Chairpersons Meeting to interest them in the NLAP advocacy roadmap
- Meeting with the JLOS secretariat and Uganda Law Council, as the department spearheading the adoption of the Policy and as the current regulator of legal aid services respectively
- Schedule meetings with the Hon. Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, The first Parliamentary Counsel, Chair of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee in Parliament, Human rights Committee of Parliament, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, among other stakeholders

In light of the above road map, the Programmes Manager stressed that it is important that we agree on a collective Network agenda such that we all speak with one voice with regard to advocacy for



the Legal Aid Policy and Law. In the same spirit, the meeting was informed that there are ongoing consultations with the JLOS Secretariat for guidance towards this process.

The Secretariat also communicated that DGF had indicated to them that they have some cash balances from the National Legal Aid Conference, which they could consider using to support our advocacy activities.

Feedback received from the 1st Parliamentary Council in relation to the ongoing process of drafting a Legal Aid Bill suggests that input from LASPs is required to inform the drafting process.

TASK FORCE CHAIR

The Task Force Chair advised that a clear action plan for the advocacy initiative was required as a key deliverable from this meeting i.e. map out a clear advocacy strategy – identify concrete issues that we want to advocate for, the resources needed, the target stakeholders and what we want from each of them.

He emphasized that it is critical to keep the momentum high with regards to advocacy for the Legal Aid Policy and Law; we need to prepare a press release and engage the media to amplify our concerns but also to report on the undertakings from the second National Legal Aid Conference.

The Chair tabled as a proposal to the members, the need to consider electing an alternate Chair of the Task force because the Secretariat team is thin and very busy but also for purposes of ownership.

Draft a position paper to guide our advocacy efforts.

He highlighted the urgent need to take initiatives to influence the content of the policy and Bill as LASPs - for instance borrow from Tanzania where the Legal Aid Policy specifically adopted the Tanzania Network of Legal Aid Service Providers (TANLAP) as part of its implementation mechanism. Wise counsel received from the Hon. Justice Remmy Kasuule, Justice of the Court of Appeal, was to the effect that we should seize this opportunity to bring on board the issues that were earlier missed out in the Bill currently being drafted.

PLENARY DISCUSSIONS

Meeting agreed that there was need to be very specific in terms of what we seek to achieve in this advocacy campaign in order to increase our chances of success.

There was consensus on a clear analytical framework to guide the development of an action plan for the advocacy campaign as outlined below;



1. What are we advocating for?
2. How do we attain our advocacy goal?
3. Who are the stakeholders we are targeting?
4. What are the roles of taskforce members/partners?

The goal of this campaign was identified, discussed and agreed as advocacy for the National Legal Aid Policy and Law.

The discussions were premised on the fact that the first National Legal Aid Conference focused largely on bringing legal aid to the fore and the need for all to appreciate it as a human right while at the second National Legal Aid Conference, the focus was on highlighting the relevance of legal aid to the national development agenda in order for government to appreciate its critical role towards achieving a middle income state as espoused by Vision 2040. The meeting observed that it is now incumbent upon Government and all stakeholders to ensure that legal aid service provision in Uganda is properly regulated in order to make a meaningful contribution to the national development agenda.

Members agreed that the focus right now should not be on discussing the contents of the Legal Aid Policy but rather on advocating for the expeditious release of the certificate of financial implication by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the eventual adoption of the Policy by Cabinet. The meeting advised that all issues of contention can be brought forward strategically when the Policy and Bill are eventually brought before Parliament for debate.

One of the key concerns highlighted was the need for LASPNET to be accorded the same recognition such as is accorded to statutory bodies like Uganda Law Society and the Legal Aid Clinic at Law Development Center.

Members noted that during the State of the Nation Address, His Excellency the President alluded to the legal aid policy and access to Justice Bill; it was resolved that there is need to study and compare the proposals therein and identify issues for inclusion/advocacy otherwise there is a risk that Government may adopt the Access to Justice Bill in case its cheaper in terms of implementation.

The meeting resolved to develop a policy brief guided by the conference undertakings and to map out key stakeholders to engage using the same in order to popularize the legal aid agenda.

Members emphasized that in order to move this campaign forward in an effective manner; we need to interest key civil society players such as CEOs, EDs and Chairpersons of member Institutions.



They stressed that partners who have the potential to add value to this campaign but are not members of the Network should be co-opted.

Staff from member Organizations especially those that sit on the taskforce were encouraged to lobby their CEOs, EDs and Chairpersons to participate in person on this campaign.

It was observed that a risk analysis for our advocacy initiative should be performed in order to map out our allies and opponents and strategize accordingly to mitigate the risks if any.

The meeting unanimously agreed that in terms of strategy, we need to act fast and play on the 2016 election agenda since the legal aid issues affect the poor who constitute the largest percentage of voters. In that regard, it is anticipated that contenders for Parliament would be quick to identify with and support this campaign.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan was drawn guided by a clear analytical framework in the form of keys questions for consideration prior to the campaign as were proposed by the members:

1. What are we advocating for?

Fast tracking the adoption of the National Legal Aid Policy with focus on the following;

- Role of non state actors in the provision of services through cooperation agreements
- Appropriateness/ adequacy of frameworks of engagements
- Recognition/positioning of LASPNET at same level as statutory bodies such as Uganda Law Society and the Legal Aid Clinic of the Law Development Center
- Issues related to inclusion of traditionally marginalized groups into policy and programming

2. How do we attain our advocacy goal?

- Look out for comparisons and the possibility of amalgamating the Access to Justice Bill and the Legal Aid Bill/ Policy
- Press release (signed by the heads of prominent civil society institutions) with a clear stipulation of outputs from the Second National Legal Aid Conference, key deliberations/ undertakings targeting policy makers and elites



- Meeting of technocrats with JLOS, 1st Parliamentary council, Hon Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Finance and the Speaker of Parliament, among other key policy movers in order to present a policy brief and rally their support
- Meeting to interest key civil society players with clout such as CEOs, EDs and Chairpersons of member Institutions to participate in person on this campaign

3. Who are the stakeholders we are targeting?

- 1) The Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament
- 2) Hon. Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
- 3) Hon. State Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs/ Deputy Attorney General
- 4) Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
- 5) JLOS Leadership Committee Chair
- 6) JLOS Secretariat
- 7) Development Partners i.e. Dutch, DGF, EU, DPG
- 8) 1st Parliamentary Council
- 9) Committees of Parliament i.e. Human Rights Committee and the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee
- 10) Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA)
- 11) State Minister for Internal Affairs
- 12) Equal Opportunities Commission
- 13) Uganda Law Council Chairperson, Legal Aid Subcommittee Chair and the ULC Secretary
- 14) Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development



4. What are the roles of Task Force members/ partners?

S/N	TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS	ASSIGNED LASP/PARTNER
1.	Development Partners i.e. Dutch, DGF, EU, DPG	FIDA, FHRI, ASF
2.	Speaker of Parliament	FIDA, FHRI
3.	Human Rights Committee of Parliament	PILAC, FHRI, ASF
4.	Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee of Parliament	PILAC, FHRI, ULS (ED)
5.	Uganda Law Council	FIDA, ULS, LASPNET (chair)
6.	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	LASPNET (Chair), JCU (Coordinator), PILAC, CEPIL (programmes manager)
7.	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Deputy Attorney General	LAC (Chair), ULS (President), ASF
8.	JLOS Leadership Committee (Ag. CJ, PJ)	FHRI, ACTV (Mrs. Margaret Ssekajja), LAC (Chair), FHRI, ULS
9.	JLOS Secretariat	LAC, Justice Adonyo, ASF, CEPIL (Programmes Manager)
10.	1 st Parliamentary Council	LAC (Manager), ULS, ACTV (CEO), UCLF
11.	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development	LAC, MIFUMI, UCLF
12.	Equal Opportunity Commission	PILAC, MCJL, UGANET
13.	Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA)	MIFUMI, UGANET, FIDA
14.	State Minister for Internal Affairs	



KEY ACTION POINTS

The following actions were identified for prompt implementation to boost the campaign:

- ❖ LASPNET to prepare a work plan, concept note and budget for the campaign
- ❖ LASPNET to prepare a Press Release highlighting the key undertakings from the second National Legal Aid Conference
- ❖ ASF to prepare a policy brief for dissemination to key stakeholders during meetings with technocrats i.e. Why do we need the legal aid policy and law? Where is the gap in the absence of this regulatory framework?
- ❖ A breakfast meeting for orientation purposes should be organized for technical teams assigned to engage with key stakeholder
- ❖ LASPNET should follow up with the Ag. Senior Technical Advisor, JLOS for a copy of the Access to Justice Bill and we explore possibility of amalgamating or picking issues for inclusion into the policy
- ❖ Secretariat to coordinate all the meetings, communication and endeavor share updates after every meeting
- ❖ Before the press release, the prepared draft should be shared internally with LASPs for input
- ❖ Carry out physical visits to member Organizations to meet CEOs, EDs and Chairpersons to enlist their support and direct participation in this campaign and also follow up with phone calls by the Executive Director, LASPNET.
- ❖ Create an emailing list for all Institutions and Individuals for purposes of this advocacy campaign
- ❖ All activities to be scheduled between mid August and Mid November 2014
- ❖ For consistency and Institution memory, LASPNET Secretariat should retain the sole chairmanship of the task force
- ❖ Next meeting should sit at FHRI to consider the policy brief (ASF offered to facilitate the meeting)



Guidelines provided for the development of a Policy brief

- Why do we need the policy?
- What is happening and where is the problem (status quo)?
- Consider undertakings from the conference
- Build up from the Second National Legal Aid Conference press statement
- Refer to the proposed Legal Aid Policy
- Maximum 2 pages

ADJOURNMENT

The Taskforce Chairperson adjourned the meeting on a note of appreciation to all members in attendance for the brilliant ideas; to ASF for the continued technical and financial support towards various initiatives; promising to work closely with DGF and other resourceful partners towards the realization of the goals of this advocacy campaign.