



Quarter 3

Progress Report

Strengthening Rwandan Civil Society Organizations' Capacity to influence Policy in 5 Districts

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

CSOs: Civil Society Organizations

E.S: Executive Secretary

GLIHD: Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development

HDI: Health Development Initiative

IMRO: Ihorere Munyarwanda Organization

FBOs: Faith Based Organizations

JADF: Joint Action Development Forum

JRLOS: Justice Reconciliation Law Order Sector

MAJ: Maison d'Accès à la Justice

MINIJUST : Ministry of Justice

RNGOF : Rwanda NGOs Forum on HIV/AIDS and Health Promotion

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project title	<i>Strengthening Rwandan Civil Society Organizations' Capacity to Influence Policy in the Justice Sector</i>
Project Summary	The project <i>Strengthening Rwandan Civil Society Organizations' Capacity to Influence Policy in the Justice Sector</i> is a project with the main objective of marketing the role of CSOs to state actors and bolster CSOs' relationships and participatory engagement with government. Furthermore, the coalition of CSOs Organizations namely Health Development Initiative (HDI), Ihorere Munyarwanda Organization (IMRO), Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development (GLIHD), and Rwanda NGOs Forum for HIV and Health Promotion (RNGOF), sought to build on their experience and successful record to enhance capacity and coordination of CSOs across the entire human rights and justice sector. It is in that purpose that, with the support of the Embassy of Netherlands, they organized various activities to engage justice sector CSOs on their role and advocacy in strengthening the justice sector both at District level and national level.
Name, position in organization and contacts of the person who compiled the report	Name: Betina MUHIMPUNDU Position: M&E, Policy Adviser Email: betina.lawyer@gmail.com Tel: +250787025670
The reporting period	Quarter 3: May, June, July, 2019
Name of the Lead Organization	HDI
Name of the Implementing partner	IMRO
Total budget received:	15,755,899 Frw
Unspent budget	The funds were insufficient to cover all the field activities.
Deadline for Reporting	5 th of the following month of the quarter
Background of activities	Activity 1: Facilitate justice sector CSOs empowerment meetings at the District level; Activity 2: Organize 11 roundtable meetings for District Councils and JADF committee members on justice sector CSOs' advocacy role (district level).
Overall goal	The organizations seek to build on their experience and successful record to enhance capacity and coordination of

	CSOs across the entire human rights and justice sector.
Specific Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market role of CSOs to state actors and bolster CSOs’ relationships and participatory engagement with government/ district. 2. Strengthen CSOs cross-collaboration to meaningfully engage in law and policy processes. 3. Increase CSOs capacity to conduct effective advocacy. 4. Leverage the courts as a tool for advocacy. 5. Build the evidence-base and increase innovation around CSOs impact.
List of activities	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Annual Planned Activities</u></p> <p><u>Activity 1:</u> Facilitate 22 meetings on justice sector CSOs empowerment at the District level;</p> <p><u>Activity 2:</u> Organize 11 roundtable meetings for District Councils and JADF committee members on justice sector CSOs’ advocacy role (district level).</p> <p><u>Activity 3:</u> Conduct 11 capacity building sessions training for CSOs on evidence-based advocacy, policy development and analysis; and agenda-setting and stakeholder engagement in 11 Districts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Realized Activities</u></p> <p><u>Activity 3:</u> Conduct 5 capacity building sessions training for CSOs on evidence-based advocacy, policy development and analysis; and agenda-setting and stakeholder engagement in 5 Districts.</p>

1. PROJECT PROGRESS

1.1. Activities

For this third quarter, one activity per District was conducted in 5 Districts:

- ✚ Capacity building for justice sector & human rights CSOs on evidence based advocacy for their active engagement with the District.

1.1.1. Capacity building for justice sector & human rights CSOs on evidence based advocacy for their active engagement with the District.

1.1.1.1. Nyanza District

The workshop took place on **12th July 2019** at **Heritage Hotel** and was attended by 20 members of Justice Sector CSOs and Human Rights Organizations working in Nyanza. It was opened officially by **Martin NSHIMYUMUREMYI, JADF Chairman in Nyanza**, representing the Mayor of Nyanza District.

At the beginning, the participants and the organizers all started by introducing themselves. Then the floor was given to the Trainer, **Aaron Clevis Mbembe, Advocacy and Policy Advisor from HDI**, where he started by the definition of “*advocacy*”. He started by asking the participants to give their different views in order to probe their knowledge on the concept.

After giving clarity to the definition of advocacy, he continued and gave the channels of advocacy namely: Lobbying, Campaigning, Media and Coalitions. On each he gave practical examples linked with experience, on lobbying he gave the example of a mosquito that even though it's very small when it passes near ones ears you hear it and you do what is in your power to stop it. When it came to do advocacy through campaign some examples were given such as: football open borders, one-dollar campaign...etc.

He continued that when you are going to cut a tree you start by cutting one side another comes and cut another side step by step the tree will fall down. You contributed even though you didn't take the credit or the trophy on that advocacy issue. *One of the CSOS representatives gave the example of the campaign called “Gerayo amahoro” campaign which was caused by the increase of roads accidents.*

This was followed by advocacy through media whereby you send an evidence based advocacy and tweet the key message tagging the concerned duty bearer.

For advocacy through Coalition, he gave the example how the coalition made of IMRO, HDI, GLIHD and RNGOF and other 8 CSOs was effectively used. They went to the Parliament to advocate for the decriminalization of the law relating to safe abortion, and it was successful because of the coalition strength and power they used.

However, he also emphasized on what shouldn't be mistakenly taken as advocacy, to act as a political party, which is not advocating. That instead the CSOs should support effectively the government both at district or national levels.

Furthermore, he also made a clarification to the participants that advocacy is not about controlling the government it's rather about influencing.

Moreover, he also urged the CSOs that they should make themselves known to the authorities by attending the different meetings organized by the district and try to give their contribution. He gave his own experience on how they accessed to the Parliament network via their continuous visits to the parliament. He urged them to build good relationships around you starting from the receptionists of organizations for example to provide best wishes cards. Money is not a prerequisite to do advocacy.

Afterwards, he shared 10 steps for an effective advocacy namely:

- 1) To analyze first the problem;
- 2) To have a long term vision of the change you want to see;
- 3) To identify the solutions-or pre-conditions to achieving the long term goal;
- 4) To confirm which solution or pre-condition your advocacy will seek to secure- the goal of your advocacy;
- 5) To analyze the external context;
- 6) To analyze the internal context within your organization or network;
- 7) To think of your overall approach and your theory of change;
- 8) Draw up core elements of your strategy: Advocacy goal, interim outcomes, activities/ outputs, indicators (or measures of success), risks and assumptions, reporting and documentation for records keeping;
- 9) To develop key messages and recommendations;
- 10) To keep an ongoing monitoring and evaluation of your strategy implementation.

Afterwards, the training was followed by the questions and answers, followed thereafter by the practical exercises to put in practice the knowledge and the skills that the CSOs gained from the training.

Finally, the meeting was closed by **Martin NSHIMYUMUREMYI, JADF Chairman** who thanked a lot IMRO and the coalition for the interesting training, benefited by the CSOs which was going to increase their effectiveness in their daily life advocacy conducted at District level.



CSOs Participants, during the training.



JADF Chairman (left side) & JRLOS Coordinator (right side) during the opening of the training

1.1.1.2. Huye District

The workshop took place on 17th July 2019 at FOUR STEPS Hotel and was attended by 30 members of Justice Sector CSOs and Human Rights Organizations working in Huye. It was opened officially by **Jean Baptiste MUTABARUKA, the Director of Good Governance** in Huye District. He thanked IMRO for the initiative of the training. He said this training came at an appointed time whereby the CSOs really needed it in order to improve their way of serving for the citizens, as the CSOs are the eyes of the government where they collaborate in order to give timely services to the citizens.

At the beginning, the participants and the organizers all started by introducing themselves. Then the floor was given to the Trainer, **Aaron Clevis MBEMBE, Advocacy and Policy Advisor** from HDI, where he started by the definition of “*advocacy*”. He started by asking the participants to give their different views in order to evaluate the level of their knowledge on the concept.

In their attempt of definitions, some said that it's to link the leaders and the citizens, to resolve an issue as an end result, process to identify problems and raising awareness to the State Stakeholders, capacity to influence political decisions, policies and laws for public interest.

They also gave an example of the advocacy that was successfully conducted towards the women who were beaten by their husbands but who were not getting the general health coverage (mutuelle de sante) from MINISANTE because in MINISANTE regulations and instructions those cases were not supposed to be taken care of. Afterwards, Profemme Twese Hamwe in coalition with other Human Rights CSOs, conducted an advocacy up to the point that it was taken to the parliament, there was a change of instructions from the Ministry of Health and the women beaten by their husbands started to be covered by the mutuelle de sante in the treatment of the wounds occurred in the household violence. The advocacy was done at the grassroots first, it was taken to the Districts level meetings and Profemme Twese Hamwe took the case to the Parliament as umbrella representing those other CSOs.

The trainer processed by asking to the participants were they could do the advocacy and gave them an example of one of his colleagues who wanted to find the solution of a small issue for public interest concerning their staff, and he went to the location he was supposed to go and met the Security Guard and told him what he came to do, then the Security Guard told him that it was impossible and he went back to work and reported the incident and even gave all the arguments. But they now asked him whom he talked to, and he replied that the Security Guard is the one who told him that it was impossible.

Afterwards, the Trainer asked the participants, where should they do advocacy? On which level of the duty bearers the issue should addressed? They replied that there should be the Stakeholders that take decision. The other question raised by the Trainer was on the proof that shows that they are the one who did the advocacy? They replied that there should be a research paper to prove it; the minutes of the meetings, reports... etc. However, the majority of participants said that it was difficult to find the evidence proving that they were the one who conducted the advocacy. He continued with the teaching where he showed them how they must have their advocacy monitored and evaluated through reporting to the various institutions of the concerned sector.

Moreover, he also gave the participants the channels through which advocacy may be done namely:

- 1) Lobbying namely formal lobbying and informal lobbying face to face with the duty bearer especially for sensitive issues;
- 2) Campaigning is always formal because the authorities must be well informed about it;
- 3) Media through radio broadcasting or TV shows whereby they would talk about the advocacy issues; and
- 4) Coalitions with other CSOs in order for the increase of power and credibility for an effective advocacy.

The teaching was followed by the 10 steps for an effective advocacy.

Afterwards, the training was followed by the questions and answers.

Finally, the meeting was closed by **Jean Baptiste MUTABARUKA, the Director of Good Governance**, who appreciated the teachings and requested that as the time was short that the trainings should be given enough time for the future.



The participants during the training in Huye



Group photo with the CSOs representatives

1.1.1.3. Musanze District

The workshop took place on 19th July 2019 at FARAJA Hotel and was attended by 30 members of Justice Sector CSOs and Human Rights Organizations working in Rubavu District. It was opened officially by **Cyprien KAZUNGU, the Director of Good Governance** in Rubavu District. He thanked IMRO for the initiative of the training. And urged the justice sector and human rights CSOs representatives to be attentive and follow well the training in order for them to gain much from it, in order to give timely services to the citizens.

At the beginning, the participants and the organizers all started by introducing themselves. Then the floor was given to the Trainer, **Aaron Clevis MBEMBE, Advocacy and Policy Advisor** from HDI, where he started by the definition of “*advocacy*”. He then proceeded by asking the participants to give their different views in order to probe and evaluate their knowledge on that concept. He also asked any practical examples of advocacy done by the Justice Sector and Human Rights CSOs presents. *The first practical example as a case of advocacy was given by the Representative of Transparency International. She stated that they did an advocacy to the District so that the general problem of lack of water could be resolved and it was successfully done.*

The second example of advocacy was given by CLADHO, which did an advocacy on the problem of teen mothers who got impregnated but because of our culture and fear, the teens didn't want to talk about the perpetrators, they approached them with the main purpose of giving them support but also in order to get the information about the men responsible of their pregnancy. Afterwards, with the support and collaboration of the District and the police some of the perpetrators were caught and judged.

The third one was shared by ACORD Rwanda which also made an advocacy for orphans who lost their possessions by their families after the death of their parent. Afterward, they made a project and we looked for advocates in order to assist them, their cases were taken to Court, there was an impact and a favorable judgment was rendered and their possessions were given back to them.

Afterwards, the Trainer asked them what were **the evidence proving that they were the one who did that advocacy**, *the Representatives from CLADHO replied that they made publications on those advocacy achievements and cases handled; there are also some reports that they submitted at MINIJUST, at National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA), even at Musanze District.*

When it came to *the Representative of ACORD Rwanda she said that the evidence they had was made of witnesses on behalf of whom the advocacy was done. The affected children wrote an official letter thanking ACORD Rwanda for its support and they submitted the letter to Musanze District. She added that there are also judgments to prove those advocacies done.*

So, the Trainer continued with the teaching where he gave to the 3 main prerequisite components, in order for advocacy to be called so:

- 1) Decision makers (Duty Bearers);

- 2) An advocate and an influencer; and
- 3) Right Holder, marginalized and vulnerable groups, Victims;

This was followed by the view of the Director of Good Governance who compared the advocacy with the example of Jesus who stood by God, our Father in Heaven, on behalf of sinners so that they could not die in sins but get everlasting life.

However, the trainer made the difference between making an advocacy in law as pleading in legal aid and advocacy for human rights. The first one being just legal aid through pleading.

He also mentioned the public interest litigation which is also another kind of advocacy but for the interest of multitudes of people. He also ended up with the 10 steps for an effective advocacy.

Afterwards, the session was followed by questions and answers. It was ended by the practical exercises whereby the participants played through scenario of advocacy where they trained themselves on how they will be able to express themselves on a given issue, once they meet a stakeholder.

Finally, the meeting was ended by the closing remarks of the **Anaclet HABINSHYUTI, JADF Coordinator** in Musanze District, where he thanked IMRO and the coalition for the great initiative of the training, in which they gained a lot knowledge and skills that will help them in their daily work.



CSOs representatives during the training.



Group Photo with the CSOs Representatives

1.1.1.4. Rubavu District

The workshop took place on 25th July 2019 at DIAN FOSSEY Hotel and was attended by 20 members of Justice Sector CSOs and Human Rights Organizations working in Rubavu District. It was opened officially by **GAHUNDE Gilbert, the Director of Good Governance** in Rubavu District. He thanked IMRO for the initiative of the training. He said this training came at an appointed time whereby the CSOs really needed it in order to improve their ways of serving the citizens.

At the beginning, we all started by introducing ourselves. Afterward, the floor was left to the Trainer, **Betina MUHIMPUNDU, Advocacy and Policy Adviser** from IMRO, where she introduced IMRO and the coalition and also shared briefly the overall objectives of the capacity building and went on with the training session. She started by the definition of “*advocacy*”, whereby she asked the participants to give their different views in order to evaluate their knowledge on the concept.

As attempts of definitions, *one gave the condition that it has to be a specific problem that needs to be solved; raising awareness about an issue; to give information; to be the voice of a citizen who has a problem; to be voice of many; to know well the existing laws concerning an issue; a mediator between someone who has a problem and the one who can solve it; capacity building to the citizens who have problems... etc.*

Afterwards, the trainer gave the whole definition of advocacy as: “*An initiative intended to influence the views, position and/or actions of a government, institution, private company, individual or anyone who has power to bring about change on the issue in question*”.

She also made a clarification that there is a way of *advocating “for” someone* or *advocating “with” someone*. There she gave the example of the CSOs coalition made of IMRO, HDI, GLHID and RNGOF and others that when they went to the parliament in order to advocate on behalf of the teens who could not access to free medical care to hospitals without being accompanied by their parents, the members of the parliament asked them to bring with them those teens they were advocating for. So they had to bring them the following day and advocated "with" them. However, when they were advocating for Female Sex Workers on the decriminalization of the law related to their profession, they could not bring them to the Parliament because the latter feared for their privacy, therefore they went without them, and they advocated "for" them.

Afterwards, she also shared with them the four channels through which advocacy could be done namely: lobbying, Campaigning, Media and Coalitions. And at each channel, she was giving practical examples to help the participants to understand them in a better way. Afterwards, she also gave them the 10 steps of an effective advocacy as given in previous Districts. In these steps, she emphasized on evidence based advocacy and on monitoring and evaluation, that the CSOs should make advocacy with tangible evidence on the matter. *When I asked one of the CSOs which was advocating for education of small children at kindergarten level what was the evidence showing that it's their organization that achieved it, she told me that there were testimonies from their mothers, however there was no written proof proving that.*

Furthermore, she also told the participants that in their vision of advocacy, it must be **S.M.A.R.T**

S: Specific;

M: Measurable;

A: Achievable;

R: Realistic;

T: Time bound.

However, **she made clear that there is no uniform way of doing advocacy;** that, instead, one had to be flexible and change according to the need of the moment and according to the demand or requirements of the duty bearer. She also made clear that influencing was not equivalent to control, that they must avoid to try to control the decision makers or the duty bearers, that our role is only to make them change their views without pressuring them. She continued that the CSOs should collaborate with the authorities in a fair and pacific manner, as our target is to find together the solution of the specific issue, even though the credit will only be given to the Duty bearer.

The session was ended by practical exercises, whereby the participants put in practice what they have learnt. This was done through a sketch scenario, in which there were mainly two roles namely the role of the Duty bearer and the role of an advocate who would try to deliver a key message on an issue to be advocated for.

Finally, the training was ended by the closing remarks of **Me SERUGO Michel, JRLOS Coordinator** in Rubavu District. He really appreciated the training and made the wish that the training should be conducted often in order to help and empower the CSOs to keep improving their daily work.



The Trainer teaching during the training



Group photo with the CSOs representatives



Participants during the Practical exercises on scenarios of advocacy

1.1.1.5. Rusizi District

The workshop took place on **26th July 2019** at **Rusizi Progress Hotel** and was attended by 16 members of Justice Sector and Human Rights CSOs of Rusizi. It was opened officially by **NIYIBIZI Jean de Dieu**, the **Director of Good Governance**, representing **Mayor of Rusizi District**.

At the beginning, we all started by introducing ourselves. Afterwards, the floor was left to the Trainer, **Betina MUHIMPUNDU, Advocacy and Policy Adviser** from IMRO, where she introduced IMRO and the coalition and also shared briefly the overall objectives of the training and went on with the training session part. She started by the definition of “*advocacy*”, whereby she asked the participants to give their different views in order to probe their knowledge on the concept.

However, *the main issues raised by the participants were the lack of financial means to conduct the advocacy. As a reaction to that question, the trainer urged them that they shouldn't wait for finances, instead they should do first their duty and address the issues to the concerned duty bearers to their own level whether at village, cell, sector or district level, and make a follow up on the raised issues. She continued that even though it may happen most of the time that they don't get any financial support in the implementation, at least they would have done their part.* Moreover, she also gave the participants the channels through which advocacy may be done namely: lobbying, campaigning, media and coalitions and this was linked with practical examples. She also gave them the 10 steps for an advocacy to be effective and reach far. Afterwards, she asked the participants to share with others any of their experiences of advocacy.

The CSOs representatives from IBUKA gave his own experience on how his organization tried to do advocacy on behalf of the genocide survivors who were victims of the non- execution of some of Gacaca judgments and were not able to get their possessions taken by the genocide perpetrators and their families. The Duty bearers that they tried to approach told them that the problem was still pending and were helpless on that issue. Consequently, they kept waiting without knowing what could the following steps to be made towards that issue. However, he told us that during the training he was able to notice the part of the puzzle that was missing in their previous actions. Then, he committed himself to change the strategy, using the four channels of advocacy especially lobbying and through coalition with other CSOs, make a petition on the issue until they could see a change.

This was also the case of the representative of Transparency International who came across the problem related to the complaints of citizens who were expropriated from their lands as a result of roads constructions and were not given other lands or refunded. Some entrepreneurs who hired citizens for specific tasks and when the project was finished closed their doors without any notice, and the CSOs were helpless on the matter.

After the training, we continued with the practical exercises in which the participants put in practice what they have learnt. This was done through a sketch scenario, in which there were mainly two roles namely the role of the Duty bearer and the role of an advocate who would try to deliver a key message on an issue to be advocated for.

At the end, the training was closed by **MUTARUTINYA Theogene, JADF Coordinator** in Rusizi District. *Afterwards, he thanked IMRO and the coalition for the interesting training. He admitted that himself benefited much from the training, that he was able to capture all the mistakes that he did while addressing different issues encountered in the course of his daily duties. He continued that the pillar in which they fail to perform in imihigo is the pillar of good governance particularly justice sector, caused by the lack of enough partners to support them in this sector.* In his closing remarks, he hoped that, with the knowledge and skills received, the CSOs representatives present at the training would be able to improve their work and play their role effectively for the benefits of the citizens of Rusizi.



2. PROJECT RESULTS

- **Result 1:** CSOs gained knowledge on effective advocacy, especially on evidence based advocacy and in Monitoring and Evaluation techniques;
- **Result 2:** They were able to acquire knowledge on the importance of timely reporting to JRLOS Secretariat of any Human Rights abuse and any hindrance to access to justice by citizens;

- **Result 3:** They were enabled to their better alignment to the District priorities, especially on accountability and timely reporting both towards their supporting partners, to JADF Committee and District JRLOS Secretariat;
- **Result 4:** CSOs defined their agenda to prepare for their effective and vibrant contributions during District meetings.

3. PROJECT INDICATORS

In all the five Districts, they set an **advocacy agenda on issues to be presented during JADF meetings** namely:

- 1) The problem of teen mothers to be advocated for;
- 2) The legal rights for the teen mothers to get the recognition of their children abandoned by their fathers;
- 3) The problem of increase of HIV prevalence in schools needs to be advocated for;
- 4) The problem of under age children to access to quality education and in good conditions of work;
- 5) To fight against malnutrition;
- 6) The teen mothers to be regrouped into development associations for them to be financially free;
- 7) The problem of management of the youth that comes back from Iwawa for their reeducation after drugs abuse;
- 8) Women whose husbands are incarcerated as a result of genocide don't speak with the genocide survivors in the Rugerero Sector in Rubavu District;
- 9) The mismanagement of the problem of drugs abuse by youth;
- 10) The problem of lack of employment in youth;
- 11) Linked with the District *imihigo*, there is a problem of neo-natal mortality;
- 12) The issue of Female Sex Workers who do illegal commerce need to get into associations then get financially independent and leave the shameful professional, hence reducing the HIV Prevalence;
- 13) The patients under mutuelle de sante who are neglected compared to those with private medical insurance;

- 14) The necessity of putting in place a specific law on behalf of the Human Rights Fighters;
- 15) The proliferation of diseases caused by the lack of water;
- 16) For the purpose of tourism, there is a need of dustbins and washrooms at Lake Kivu borders;
- 17) The problem of bad roads in Gacamahembe village, Gihundwe sector, Burunga cell in Rusizi District;
- 18) There should be a creation of special schools on behalf of children living with disabilities;
- 19) The people with disabilities do not profit from businesses caused by high taxes;
- 20) Children born with HIV should be helped into self-acceptance and be able to be accepted in the society;
- 21) The problem of non- execution of judgments rendered by Gacaca Courts on behalf of the genocide survivors;

4. SUCCESS STORY

The most successful story happened in Huye District, CSOs that were giving legal aid support noticed a problem in the society: they were helping vulnerable citizens to write for them Court submissions caused by the fact that the latter didn't have financial means to pay for representation fees in court, and they would go to court to plead for themselves, but this was not really helping much.

Afterwards, those Justice Sector CSOs did a lobby in the parliament giving the argument that the CSOs involved in legal aid should be given the capacity to give a lawyer to represent those vulnerable citizens without asking them to pay for it. And the advocacy was successful up to the point of changing the related laws at national level.

5. CAPACITY BUILDING

There was an empowerment and a capacity building enhanced especially for members of Justice Sector and Human Rights CSOs in their advocacy role. As we are still implementing the project, there is an ongoing process of change of mentality.

6. ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

When comparing the project’s achieved results with the Justice sector strategic plan¹ in the national priorities we see that it fulfills the fifth goal on capacity building and training in justice sector in its point related to human rights. *Indeed, it is well stated that: “The availability of adequately trained human rights advocates at both national and local levels is important for Rwanda to successfully implement human rights policies and monitor compliance to international statutes on human rights to which Rwanda is a signatory.”*

Furthermore, when it comes to the alignment of our project achieved results with the African Union Agenda 2063², we find that they answered to the eleventh, twelfth and seventeenth goals comprising respectively: Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice & the rule of law entrenched, Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels and full gender equality where we saw that women are considerably increasing in many spheres.

Moreover, when we look on the alignment of our project with of the African Sustainable Development Goals³, it achieved its sixteenth goal: *“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”*.

7. NETWORKING

The training was being conducted with the support of HDI, as one of the coalition members of this project. Indeed, the organisation provided for us its Advocacy and Policy Adviser to conduct the training in 3 Districts. This shows a great partnership and collaboration as a good team for the effectiveness of the project.

¹The Justice Sector Strategic Plan at https://www.judiciary.gov.rw/fileadmin/SC_Info/Basic_info/Strategic_Plan_2013-18_SC.pdf accessed on 03/08/2019.

²Africa-SDGS-2018-Compact-Edition at <https://sdgcafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AFRICA-SDGS-2018-Compact-Edition.pdf> accessed on 03/08/2019.

³ Africa-SDGS-2018-Compact-Edition at <https://sdgcafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AFRICA-SDGS-2018-Compact-Edition.pdf> accessed on 03/08/2019.

8. ANALYSIS, IMPLICATIONS, LEARNING + RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Analysis and Implications

After the training sessions conducted in the five Districts, we noticed that the capacity building was really needed at District level, because the CSOs representatives did not really have enough knowledge and skills to be able to tackle with the issues that they were encountering and be able to conduct an effective advocacy on behalf of citizens.

After the training sessions, the participants were able to formulate short key messages, which was a great challenge at the beginning, as they didn't have a straight line through which to address their issues. Indeed, we noticed that among the participants, there was a great confusion between the concepts of awareness, capacity building and advocacy. However, after the training the participants were enlightened and were finally able to differentiate them.

As implications, even though the training was scheduled for only one day, the participants were able to catch the most important and left the training room with at least a small package of knowledge and skills. we hope that from now on, the CSOs Representatives from all the five Districts namely Nyanza, Huye, Musanze, Rubavu and Rusizi will be able to assist the District in raising the various issues encountered by the citizens in order to find their solutions in good collaboration with the duty bearers at District level.

8.2. Overall Challenges

1. The late attendance of the CSOs representatives during the capacity building session;
2. CSOs find most of the time hard in finding financial support in their planned projects;
3. Poor understanding of CSOs on their advocacy and service delivery roles;
4. Lack of enough empowerment of JADF which reduces their authority in the execution of their work;
5. No clear monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the CSOs activities from MINALOC down to the district level and “*Umurenge*” level. There is no clear framework within which the activities of these CSOs could be monitored;
6. No steady stream of income for local CSOs, which makes their employees sometimes work as volunteers hence reducing their effectiveness.

8.3. Recommendations

1. To create CSOs focal points for a continuing training and capacity building;
2. Contribution of CSOs to District activities especially in justice sector;
3. Active attendance of Justice Sector and Human Rights CSOs to the meeting held by District JADF and other stakeholders;
4. Reporting CSOs activities to District;
5. The CSOs should participate actively to all levels of law making in order to make advocacy for the citizens in sensitives law changes;
6. The District should increase the budget allocated to Justice sector and good governance sector;
7. To increase capacity of citizens to participate in decision making productively;
8. To increase also capacity of mediators at local level to interpret laws;
9. To increase skills about the laws in place among CSOs;
10. CSOs should put in place a research institution for their advocacy to be relevant and effective, and especially for their advocacy conducted to be well documented and recorded for the future.

9. SUSTAINABILITY

The activities contributed to the overall, long-term sustainability of the project's objectives in the sense that the Justice and Human Rights CSOs will now be able to make evidence based advocacy and contribute meaningfully to the District priorities for their effective involvement into advocacy and policy making.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

During our implementation process we encountered some obstacles such as the late attendance of some CSOs participants, which was a real challenging obstacle to the implementation of this project. For the future, we only hope for the change of mentality from some of the CSOs representatives.

11. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, we can say that this project entitled “*Strengthening Rwandan Civil Society Organizations’ Capacity to Influence Policy in the Justice Sector*”, organised by IMRO in coalition with other members of CSOs namely: Health Development Initiative (HDI), Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development (GLHID), and Rwanda NGOs Forum for HIV and Health Promotion (RNGOF).

This project really came at an appointed time whereby many CSOs involved in justice sector and human rights did not really have enough package of knowledge on how to conduct an effective and evidence based advocacy.

In general, the implementation of activities conducted in Nyanza, Huye, Musanze, Rubavu, and Rusizi went timely well.

However, caused by the short time in which the capacity building sessions were conducted (one day), there was no enough time for practical exercises from which the Justice Sector and Human Rights CSOs would have benefited more. Therefore, there is a need of creating another platform in the future in order for them to be tough and empowered, which will, consequently, foster their involvement, partnership and collaboration with the District.

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