



2022
ANNUAL
SUMMARY
REPORT

**Covering Further
Ground Towards
A Just and Fair
Society**



Everyday justice for
Everyday problems

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MAKING SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN ANOTHER EVENTFUL YEAR

As we reflect on our work and especially program implementation throughout the past year, this report succinctly provides a snapshot of our overall performance with notable successes which include reaching 6.4 million people across the country with legal awareness provided by paralegals who also received and attended to 49,374 legal disputes.

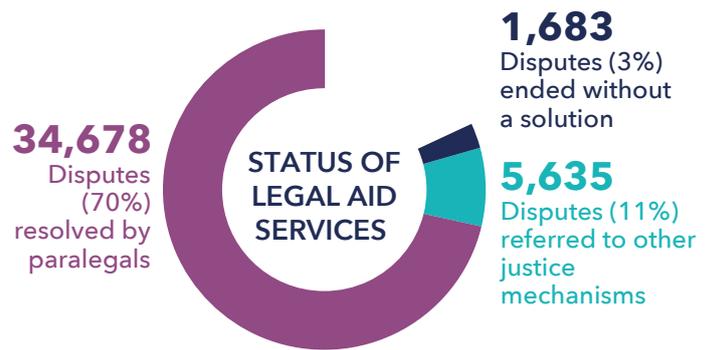
We commenced the execution of our 2022-2026 strategic plan which directs our organization towards a more comprehensive rights-based approach with increased focus and emphasis on gender equality, women and girls' empowerment, inequalities and discrimination, property rights, gender-based violence, political participation, economic empowerment and inclusion as well as access to health rights.

Amongst other developments the year also saw vital improvements to paralegals' work environment when the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs waived the pre-requisite registration fee for paralegals in the mainland, and a commitment by the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar to review the Legal Aid Act, 2018 to include provisions for a legal aid fund. Both governments also pledged to review unfavourable inheritance laws that impede the realization of women's and girls' rights.

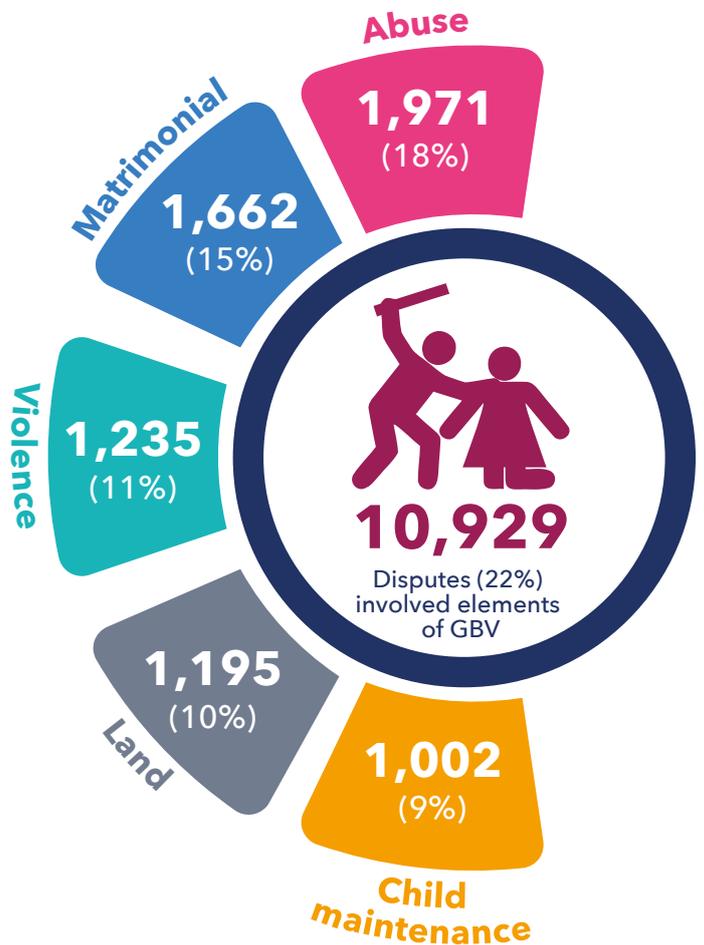
In Zanzibar, a first multi-stakeholder platform coordinated the annual 16 Days of Activism campaign, and there was also a formal recognition from the government of the contribution of Zanzibar's NGOs to the economic landscape of the isles.

This report concisely outlines results attained in each of our outcome areas, which are access to quality legal aid services; promoting legally-empowered communities; enhancing an environment conducive for access to justice; and institutional development and sustainability of the legal aid sector.

ACCESS TO QUALITY LEGAL AID SERVICES



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)



NEW PARALEGALS IN ZANZIBAR

50

New paralegal constituencies recruited thus reducing the number of shehias without paralegals by 35%



About

8,113

cases (72.2% of all reported GBV disputes) were brought by women, demonstrating that women are the main victims of GBV across the country



ADDRESSING GBV DURING 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Working with WILDAF in collaboration with the government and other development partners we spearheaded this annual campaign in the mainland.

As an initiative to raise anti-GBV awareness among the general public the campaign featured a caravan that toured Pwani, Morogoro, Dodoma, Singida, Shinyanga, Kigoma, Geita, Mara, and Arusha and particularly engaged bodaboda riders, Bajaj drivers and other public transport agents.

On the route, paralegal organizations extended legal aid services to 160 people and reached 19,105 with legal education.

In Zanzibar, we launched the 16 Days of Activism campaign in partnership with the Ministry of Community Development during which local paralegals participated in a week-long exhibition where they also provided legal aid services.

Furthermore, we co-organized the Run 4 Binti Half Marathon with Smile for Community, an initiative to promote girls' menstrual health and rights, and 1,000 girls from five primary schools in Unguja received free sanitary pads. Paralegals also visited schools and helped raise rights awareness among students and teachers.

CLIENTS REACHED BASED ON CASE TYPOLOGY

SN	Type of case	Resolved		Ongoing		Referred		Ended	
		Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
1	Land	2,809	4,189	775	933	472	582	156	165
2	Inheritance	1,172	836	420	271	222	161	37	57
3	Marriage	5,405	2,483	873	454	593	333	119	240
4	Child maintenance	4,245	1,247	803	243	460	144	54	152
5	Civil	3,097	3,992	563	699	368	329	120	151
6	Criminal	874	868	202	238	314	224	86	62
7	Labour	264	296	97	136	71	85	25	23
8	Abuse	915	331	185	50	292	80	27	91
9	Violence against women	977	0	263	0	356	0	0	66
10	Rape	43	0	67	0	111	0	0	6
11	Defilement	12	17	1	14	6	14	2	0
12	Female genital mutilation	6	0	1	0	11	0	0	1
13	Sex servitude	15	2	1	0	12	0	0	3
14	Indecent assault	227	68	31	10	47	4	5	9
15	Human trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Teenage pregnancy	158	0	33	0	221	0	0	25
17	Child marriage	98	29	2	13	23	0	0	1
TOTAL		20,317	14,361	4,317	3,061	3,579	2,056	631	1,052

STATUS OF REPORTED GBV CASES

SN	Type of case	Resolved		Ongoing		Referred		Ended		Total
		Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	
1	Land	478	316	113	79	99	51	6	53	1,195
2	Inheritance	197	95	81	26	47	13	10	22	491
3	Marriage	862	213	231	66	158	33	13	96	1,672
4	Child maintenance	501	90	196	30	86	18	10	71	1,002
5	Civil	327	246	90	77	53	26	6	48	873
6	Criminal	177	137	41	52	83	61	15	1	567
7	Labour	52	35	6	4	25	10	2	13	147
8	Abuse	915	331	185	50	292	80	27	91	1,971
9	Violence against women	977	0	263	0	356	0	0	66	1,662
10	Rape	43	0	67	0	111	0	0	6	227
11	Defilement	12	17	1	14	6	14	2	0	66
12	Female genital mutilation	6	0	1	0	11	0	0	1	19
13	Sex servitude	15	2	1	0	12	0	0	3	33
14	Indecent assault	227	68	31	10	47	4	5	9	401
15	Human trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Teenage pregnancy	158	0	33	0	221	0	0	25	437
17	Child marriage	98	29	2	13	23	0	0	1	166
TOTAL		5,045	1,579	1,342	421	1,630	310	96	506	10,929

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

Under Strategic Objective 2 of our 2022-2026 strategic plan, we are geared to support socio-economic justice empowerment of women, girls and marginalized groups in land, property, and economic rights.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S PROPERTY (LAND) RIGHTS THROUGH LEGAL AID SERVICES

Protection of these vital rights for women aims to enhance their economic independence and the approach we employed was resolving inheritance disputes that mostly afflict women and girls. Our Access to Justice Program also collectively supports initiatives that are designed to lead to the reviewing of unfavourable inheritance laws through policy and legal advocacy.

WOMEN'S PROPERTY RIGHTS



3,176 Inheritance disputes handled by paralegals



1,851
Disputes brought by females



1,325
Disputes brought by males



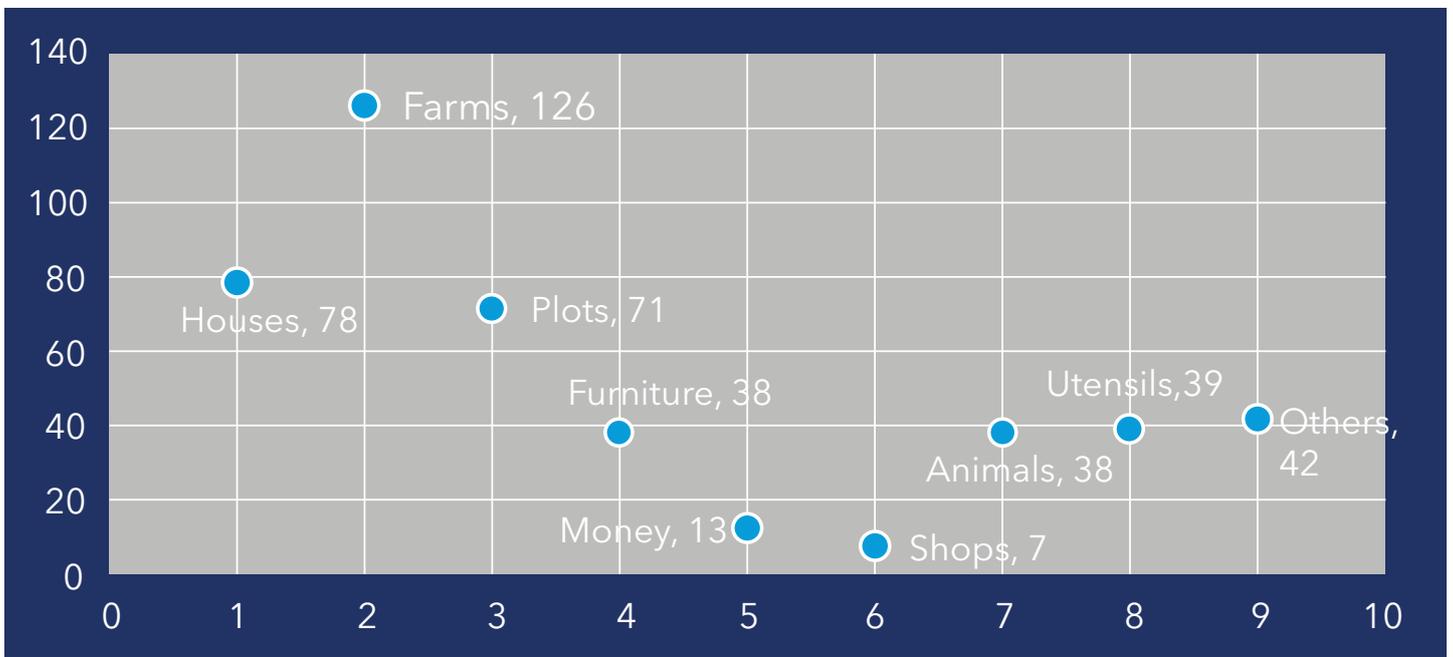
Of these cases, **1,172 (63.3%)** of those reported by women were resolved in their favour, consequently succeeding in securing them **farms, houses, plots, household appliances and other items, furniture, and money**

PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS IN AGRICULTURE, MARINE AND MINING INDUSTRIES

We commenced our thematic-specific program tailored to respond to the promotion of women's economic justice and rights in agriculture, marine and mining industries. The program will enhance legal capacities through legal aid and legal awareness provision to sectorial-based indigents, in particular women, and ultimately improve their economic situation.

The program is running for one year and is being implemented by the Lindi Association of NGOs (LANGO) with a marine economy- specific project, Community Support Initiative Tanzania (COSITA) with an agricultural project and Civic Social Protection Foundation (CSP) which has a project in the mining sector.

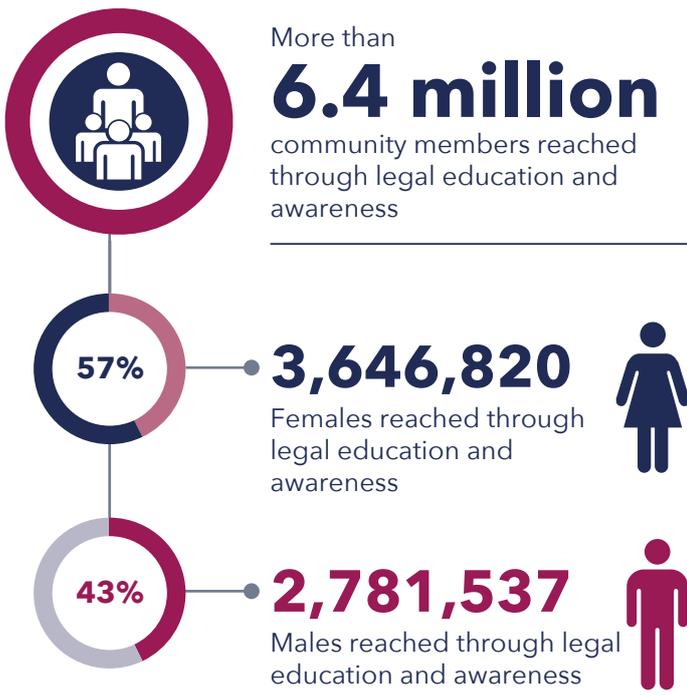
In Manyara, CSP's project is designed to empower women in business affected by construction of the perimeter wall to control mining activities in Mirerani to enable them to resume normal business. In the same region, COSITA is working to improve access and use of agricultural and livestock products for value addition and while also building women's skills for decision-making at the household level. In Lindi, LANGO is addressing women's economic skills shortages in the blue economy to help improve seaweed and sea cucumber farming



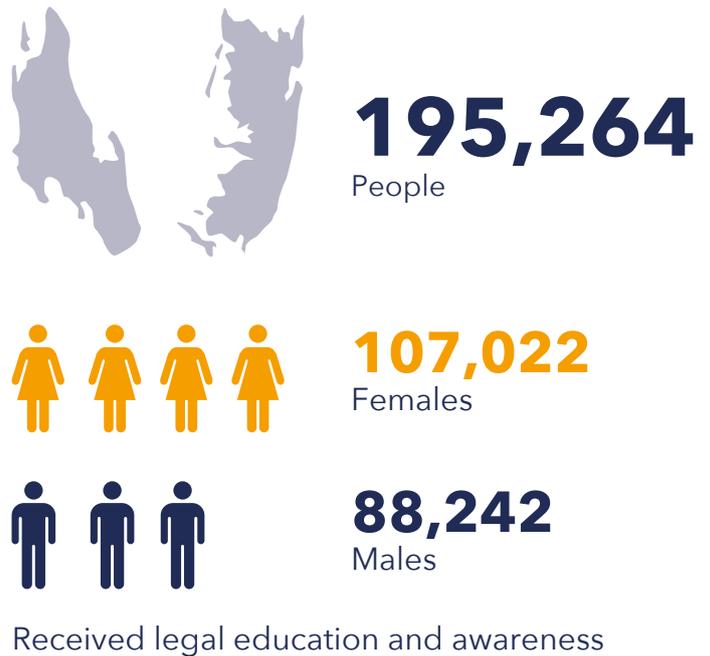
The distribution of inheritance property secured by women around the country

LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

With an annual target of 7,000,000 community members, the figures below represent 92% of our goal. In the initial six months of 2022 the reach had surpassed the target of 3.5 million set for the reporting period, achieving 123%.



LEGAL EDUCATION IN ZANZIBAR ALONE



UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID SERVICES

We have improved the delivery of legal aid services with the use of the Haki Yangu app which links more than 1,000 paralegals to the app's users with 4,500 people to date taking full advantage of the portal; 315 cases including matrimonial, land, child maintenance and inheritance disputes have already been received and resolved. This platform has additionally enabled users to expand their knowledge of the law while paralegals also use it to access learning opportunities that help them to upscale their skills and thus continue to provide quality legal aid

services. Five courses are available through the app and 167 paralegals have already enrolled with 67 having successfully completed their courses and awarded certificates.



HAKI YANGU APP

4,321 Downloads of the App

1,061 Downloads by paralegals

3,260 Downloads by clients

LEGAL EMPOWERMENT FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS AND STREET CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS

Through a project jointly implemented by Railway Children Africa (RCA) and Wote Sawa in Mwanza, about 38,762 people (21,110 females and 17,652 males) comprising community members, children, medical doctors, justice actors and members of NPA-VAWC child protection committees were reached for the purpose of devising legal awareness and child protection mechanisms. At the closure of the project the recorded reach was 90% of the targeted number of beneficiaries set for legal awareness.

51

Children supported with temporary shelter through trained persons



15 (6 girls and 9 boys) were rescued street children



11 (5 girls and 6 boys) were children living and working on the streets (CLWS)



25 were victims of abuse and exploitation while employed as domestic workers



Among the 51 children 38 were enrolled back into school

AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE

We conducted various advocacy initiatives aimed at reforming legal and policy frameworks including structural inequalities within the access to justice system as outlined below starting with initiatives at the national level in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, with the aim of delivering benefits to individual citizens particularly women and children.

REGISTRATION FEE WAIVER FOR PARALEGALS AND LEGAL AID PROVIDERS

The Legal Aid Symposium 2022 which we co-hosted provided a forum for discussion around the efficacy of the Legal Aid Act No. 1 of 2017 as a tool for enhancing legal aid services for a just and inclusive society. This was the main agenda of the event which was organized by LSF in collaboration with the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs. The Ministry announced the revocation of the TZS 30,000 registration fee for legal aid providers and paralegals which had been one of the major drawbacks against paralegal services since the enactment of the Act in 2017. The move to discard the fee has consequently sparked an increase in paralegal registration and certification, a stark difference to their prior situation.

NATIONAL LEGAL AID CAMPAIGN

In December the Government through the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs initiated a stakeholders' planning meeting for a three-year mega national legal aid campaign which will be known as the Mama Samia Legal Aid Campaign. This is an initiative prompted by the Minister for Constitutional and Legal Affairs and approved by her Excellency the President to address pressing legal issues in communities that require concerted and focused efforts of all legal aid stakeholders. The planning team was chaired by the permanent secretary at the ministry and co-chaired by our CEO.

GUIDELINES FOR ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) MECHANISMS



With reference to increasing the accessibility of quality legal aid services for marginalized communities and women, four training manuals on alternative dispute resolution (reconciliation, mediation, negotiation and arbitration) were finalized.

The development of the manuals and guidelines which was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs primarily aimed to guide ADR practitioners including paralegals to help restore peace and harmony in their local communities through these mechanisms.



ADVOCACY FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LEGAL AID SECTOR IN ZANZIBAR

In collaboration with the President's Office - Constitution, Legal Affairs, Public Service, and Good Governance we hosted the 2nd Zanzibar Annual Legal Aid Forum from December 13 - 14 under the theme "Sustaining Quality and Sustainable Legal Aid Provision" with the goal to address national challenges in ensuring access to and sustaining quality legal aid services for the poor and vulnerable in Zanzibar.

The Forum brought together 145 high-level delegates and participants from the government, non-state legal aid providers including paralegals, state justice sector actors including the judiciary, police, prisons and social welfare department, and various legal aid experts in Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania. The forum yielded a commitment from the government and a charge to the Law Review Commission as well as the pertinent ministry to work on reviewing the Legal Aid Act, 2018 to include provisions for the legal aid fund with immediate effect.

REVIEW OF THE ZANZIBAR GOOD GOVERNANCE POLICY FOR INCREASED WOMEN'S INCLUSIVENESS IN GOVERNANCE

We provided support to the President's Office, Constitution, Legal Affairs, Public Service and Good Governance in reviewing the Good Governance Policy

of 2011. The review sought to incorporate current governance, transparency and accountability issues including increasing the participation of women and girls as right holders and beneficiaries in holding the government accountable for transparency in fighting corruption. The draft policy was presented to stakeholders for validation and the final manuscript was completed in January 2023.

ADVOCACY FOR A WIDOWS' RIGHTS PROTECTION FRAMEWORK IN ZANZIBAR

Widows across the country continue to be excluded from the progress made in raising the status of other vulnerable groups in spite of Tanzania having ratified international instruments and plans such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action.

This year we supported the Zanzibar Widows' Organization (ZAWIO) and the Law Review Commission of Zanzibar to conduct a study on laws hindering the full realization of widows' rights with a view to coming up with a reform white paper. Upon its completion the paper will be presented to the President of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar for onward directives.

EFFORTS TO COUNTER INCREASING RATES OF VIOLENCE AND KILLINGS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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LSF-UN WOMEN PARTNERSHIP ON WOMEN'S PEACE AND SECURITY (WPS) AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Towards the end the year we initiated a partnership with UN Women Tanzania through a Twitter campaign initiative on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and gender-based violence (GBV). Given our shared values and UN Women's priorities, it is anticipated that this will be the first of many such joint initiatives. The initiative was conducted as part of 16 Days of Activism and was in collaboration with 10 other partners including the embassies of Denmark and Ireland, AWLN and the Global Peace Foundation.

This campaign provided an opportunity for us to contribute to shaping the narrative around the intersections of GBV and WPS, as well as to underwrite our knowledge regarding WPS and awareness-raising within communities, and also in the shaping of the first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Altogether, this campaign resulted in the engagement of 4,526 interested parties, and discussions remain underway for future joint initiatives on WPS and GBV, including a proposed webinar with key stakeholders, CSOs and WROs to provide training on WPS and intersections with GBV.



ENDEAVOURS TO STRENGTHEN REGIONAL LEGAL AID NETWORKS

As Chair of the East and Horn of Africa Paralegal Network we attended a regional technical legal aid consultation along with the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs (Chair of the East Africa Legal Aid Network) aimed at harmonizing and concretizing the two regional networks' work plans for better strengthening of institutional and legal frameworks that foster access to justice within the region.

The meeting concurred to hold a regional network symposium in Rwanda this year following the initial planning session in October 2022 in Rwanda.



IMPROVING POLICE GENDER AND CHILDREN DESKS TO ADDRESS GBV

We supported the annual police gender desk meeting which involved police gender officers from across the country to evaluate the function of gender desks, and gauge their successes, challenges and opportunities for strengthening and improving services to victims and prevent GBV towards women and girls.

Some of the core issues that were addressed included the request for police gender desk offices to be separate from police posts, investing in infrastructure and technology which would include the establishment of a GBV call centre to enable citizens to report and receive support 24 hours and seven days a week, the fast-tracking of rape cases, and the need for a specific timeline for finalizing and strengthening an online system for reporting and tracking GBV cases, especially those transferred to the judiciary for prosecution.

COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND LEADERS FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO JUSTICE



6,244

Local government officials (2,909 females and 3,335 males)



4,926

Traditional leaders (2,062 females and 2,864 males)

Were empowered to comprehend land rights, human rights, access to justice, environmental protection, conflict resolution and kadhi courts Acts.

In highlighting co-operation between legal aid providers and local authorities, the Korogwe District Commissioner established a legal aid desk where Korogwe Urban paralegals provide a weekly clinic on Thursdays for local residents.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LEGAL AID SECTOR

This focuses on enhancing the support of access to justice and legal aid actors to collectively work together to a high standard in the delivery of legal aid services in a sustainable, effective, accountable and acceptable manner.

CAPACITY BUILDING TO PARTNERS AND PARALEGALS

In efforts to align capacity development initiatives with the 2022-2026 strategic plan, we reviewed our capacity development approach, capacity building activities and results for both our secretariat and our partners; we also reviewed and developed the organizational capacity assessment (OCA) tool for paralegals.

CAPACITY BUILDING TO GRANTEES



1,062

Paralegals received capacity building on the web-based monitoring and results system, report writing (narrative and data), governance, financial management, and data management.



547
Female paralegals trained



515
Male paralegals trained



360

Board chairs and executive directors of all 184 paralegal organizations were trained in good governance and accountability.



135
Female leaders trained



225
Male leaders trained



MONITORING AND REPORTING

By the end of the year monitoring visits had been conducted in all 31 regions both in the mainland and Zanzibar including those carried out by individual zonal coordinators (volunteers). We also conducted a joint monitoring visit with the staff of our main donor the Royal Danish Embassy in Morogoro.

The visit provided a first-hand opportunity for staff from the embassy to see how we carry out routine monitoring visits, and understand the data and insights that these visits provide

Paralegals play a vital role in increasing the reach of legal aid services in local communities across the country.



RESEARCH AND STUDIES

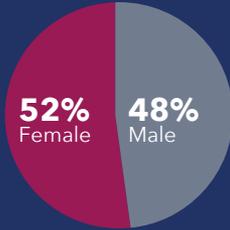
Three studies were initiated in the second quarter and were completed in September. The study report on five years of the implementation of the Legal Aid Act, 2017, for instance, indicated a positive development in relation to legal aid services initiatives with 68% of stakeholders claiming to know the Act. The study however noted a number of both institutional and operational setbacks including the lack of a state-supported legal aid infrastructure, primarily a legal aid fund. The two reports on the final evaluation of the Urban Legal Empowerment Program on the one hand, and women's property rights on the other have been submitted.

A key recommendation from the final evaluation of the former was to scale up the program both vertically and horizontally to ten regions from the current five. The report on the study of women's rights to property strongly highlighted the ability of paralegals to help realize women's rights to own land and land-related properties.

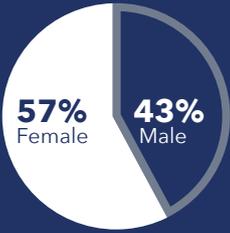
A total of 198 women (69.2%) among those who were interviewed said they had secured their properties thus reinforcing the parameter that paralegals are the right agents for facilitating women's access to their rights especially in rural areas.

21

Current number of staff at LSF



Staff composition



Board composition

Our Governing Board Chair Beng'i Issa (right) presents a certificate of appreciation to former board member and Chair of the Audit and Compliance Committee, Focus Rutinwa whose tenure came to an end in 2022

GOVERNANCE

We welcomed three new board members on 3rd October. The two males and one female member bring our board gender composition to 57% female and 42% males.



AWARD

CHAMPION OF INSTITUTIONAL GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES

The 2022 Rising Woman initiative which was held as part of International Women's Day announced LSF as overall winner of the 2022 Rising Woman Award in recognition of the organization's eminent institutional gender equality policies and practices.

We have a 56% and 57% respective women representation ratio in our management and board respectively, both of which are headed by women.



GRANT MAKING



TZS
4.7
BILLION

In 2022 more than TZS 4.7 billion was disbursed to grantees of which about TZS 278.525 million supported thematic specific women economic rights projects and about TZS 600 million was issued to facilitate strategic and innovative interventions in access to justice carried out by various public and NGO partners that work to promote and protect human rights for all, particularly for women, girls and marginalized groups.

INNOVATION IN THE GRANT MANAGEMENT PROCESS



We continue to invest in tools that ensure efficient grant management and this year we finalized the development of a grant management software whose initial testing is currently underway.

This platform will maximize proficiency in managing grants and it is anticipated that our partners will be trained in its use in the near future.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Our external audit for the year 2021 which also appraised our grantees was concluded in April 2022. The unqualified reports to us and all grantees were issued and approved by the board in the same month followed by the endorsement of the annual general meeting in October. The 2022 audit began in February 2023 and was completed a month later.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Our risk identification, assessment and mitigation measures for minimizing organizational risk exposure are presented in a risk register which maps both internal and external risks. Feedback on risk management for 2022 has been provided in every quarter with the results demonstrating that our risk monitoring was at an acceptable level.

Additionally, the risk registers for the first, second quarter third quarter were updated and audited by our internal auditor. Risk management training for board members and staff was conducted in the 4th quarter in conjunction with the preparation of our organizational risk management framework.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

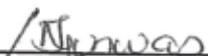
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

		<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
		TZS'000	TZS'000
	Notes		
Revenue from non-exchange transactions			
Grant income	7	7,095,748	9,542,490
Other income	8	9,772	28,963
		<u>7,105,520</u>	<u>9,571,453</u>
Expenses			
Employee costs	10	1,439,529	1,330,776
Operating costs	9	715,477	784,471
Grants implementation costs	11	4,657,727	7,169,677
Depreciation and amortization charge	13&14	283,015	257,566
Total Expenses		<u>7,095,748</u>	<u>9,542,490</u>
Other gains / (Losses)			
Gain on foreign exchange transactions	12	82,777	46,404
Donor's funds Liquidation	21	(432,643)	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		<u>(340,094)</u>	<u>75,367</u>

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

		2022	2021
		TZS'000	TZS'000
	Notes		
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and Bank balances	16	1,998,426	3,961,097
Receivable from exchange transactions	14	74,635	268,360
Receivable from non-exchange transactions	15	251,211	1,253,445
		2,324,272	5,482,902
Non-current assets			
Property and equipment	17	706,496	663,283
Intangible assets	13	120,049	10,574
		826,545	673,857
TOTAL ASSETS		3,150,817	6,156,759
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Deferred grant revenue	20	2,141,539	4,990,301
Other payables	18	63,077	32,852
		2,204,616	5,023,153
Non-current liabilities			
Deferred capital grants	19	826,545	673,857
TOTAL LIABILITIES		3,031,162	5,697,010
NET ASSETS		119,655	459,749
Represented by			
Accumulated surplus		119,655	459,749
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		3,150,817	6,156,759

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors for issue on 14th April 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:


 Ms. Beng'i Issa Mazana
 Chair of the Board


 Ms. Lulu Ng'wanakilala
 Chair Secretary to the Board and Executive Director

EXCERPTS FROM OUR 2022 - 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Moving towards a more comprehensive rights-based approach that will look at the Access to Justice Program holistically and place emphasis on the quality product.
- More focus and emphasis on gender equality, women and girls' empowerment, addressing inequalities and discrimination, property rights, GBV, political participation, economic empowerment and inclusion as well as access to health rights.
- Increased focus on evidence-based policy and regulation advocacy through research, active cooperation, engagements and partnerships with the government and vital development partners including private sector.
- Consideration of national and global agenda on development and access to justice as furthered in various plans and instruments including TZ FYDP III, ZNZ DEV VISION 2050, and SDG 2030.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Increasing accessibility of quality legal aid services to the marginalized groups in particular women and girls.

1

Promoting legally empowered communities, in particular women and girls.

2

Enhancing an environment that is conducive to sustainable access to justice.

3

Institutional development and sustainability of the LSF and the legal aid sector.

4

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Our overall goal is to increase access to justice for all, in particular for women, girls and marginalized groups. There are currently so many factors as discussed in the context section which hinder accessibility of access to justice in particular for women, girls and marginalized groups. In consideration of these facets we have devised this plan towards enhancing access to justice for all in particular for women, girls and the marginalized groups. In this plan's desired outcomes access to justice is translated to mean the ability for women, girls and marginalized groups to realize their civic, social, political and economic rights and entitlements.

This will be achieved through grant making and management which is our core role. Moreover, we will also work to improve partnerships, advocacy, learning and sharing, capacity development to implementing partners, and fundraising.

We will continue to seek engagement with access to justice stakeholders including the government, legal aid providers and like-minded organizations at the domestic and regional levels employing mixed model empowerment projects such as economic justice focused interventions, gender-based initiatives, alternative dispute resolutions solution (ADR), partnerships, networking, improving judicial system, criminal justice, policy advocacy and working with research institutions for documenting best practices and lessons.

The key results for the program's actions will be the expansion of accessibility of quality legal aid services to women, girls and marginalized groups while building legally-empowered communities by ensuring the existence of an environment conducive to sustainable access to justice, and importantly ensuring institutional development and sustainability of LSF as an institution and the legal aid sector at large.



WHEN A COMMUNITY UNITES AGAINST A GIANT

MBAMBA BAY

In numerous cases paralegals provide legal aid to individuals with very successful outcomes, but it's not often that one comes across a situation where the efforts of paralegals have led to a collective communal effort to accomplish a positive end.

The granite-strewn hills around the shores of Lake Nyasa in southwestern Tanzania provide a backdrop to the remote village of Lundo. Here stories of crocodiles in the deep streams that meander around the rice fields can make the hairs on one's back stand however tragic incidences are few and far between. On a hot Sunday afternoon our SUV pulls up by the side of a dusty road where several people are gathered under a tree fanning away irritating insects. Our host, Jacob Ngonyani, a local paralegal, welcomes us and introduces us to the group who are some of the residents of the village.

Their story is one of triumph against a giant with more influence and deep pockets. Over twenty years ago the Anglican Diocese of Ruvuma entered into an agreement with the village to hire 101 acres of its communal land to farm sugarcane and build a sugar factory. This agreement remained favourable to the villagers until the point down the road where the diocese figured out that its plan was no longer feasible and opted to change the use of the land into a hire scheme. Under this new direction villagers who had anticipated employment opportunities and substantial royalties to

the village were suddenly being offered the same land for hire at an annual fee of TZS75,000 that every farming individual was now required to pay to the diocese.

The local paralegal organization, aware of the conflict especially because it was a major development, sought to extend legal education to generate broad awareness among villagers with the aim to galvanize sufficient public strength to enable the village to reclaim the land. Zakaria Kambanga, a leading figure in the effort recalls the process:

"Following the enlightenment we received over time by way of legal empowerment we made the conscious decision to come together and begin our struggle from the village level right up to the District Commissioner's office. When the District Commissioner took up the case and reviewed its entire course he came to the conclusion that the land must be returned fully to the village. From that point onwards every farming villager was allocated a portion for which they pay a royalty of just TZS10,000 a year, money that goes into communal development initiatives including the building of a new village office. Crucially we now harvest an average of twenty rice bags per portion which sell for up to TZS200,000 each thus enabling us to not only provide for our families but also have sufficient money for our children's school fees".

This collective approach spearheaded by paralegals is commended by Stahimili Ngongi, the local social development officer, who in addition to tracing her involvement in the efforts to return the land into the hands of the villagers points to the constructive and tireless legal awareness work the paralegals have been engaged in over the years.

"If you examine the statistics from seven years ago when I started work here you will notice a significant decline in domestic cases where from five cases a week we now receive about two in a month. This is attributed to the widespread empowerment they impart on our community on a regular basis that sheds light on our social and economic rights. Perceptions of equality have also changed drastically; if today were a working day you would have seen men working alongside women here something that was never easily possible a few years ago", she explains.

On-going legal aid and education services around the country that have been more robust since LSF initiated its programme that provides access to justice to everyday people who normally cannot afford such services have uplifted many communities both socially and economically. The opportunities that now are accessible to the residents of Lundo provide them with a more solid foundation upon which they will be able to confront poverty head-on and crucially transform their fortunes. This speaks loudly to the vital role that paralegals play in the lives of ordinary people, giving them a real chance at a better future for them and their families.

"We have traditionally worked closely with our community and local leadership and a case like this one is the fruit of everyone's sweat. The fact that our services are free means more people can access them and our commitment to increasing legal awareness remains steadfast because we see the remarkable impact of this noble work", concludes Ngonyani.

THE SPIRIT OF A MODEL MAASAI WOMAN CHARTS HER WAY OUT OF POVERTY

ARUSHA

From its onset, the Access to Justice Program has encompassed an array of aspects all of which seek to address critical issues that have for many years defined the collective misfortunes that millions of Tanzanians contend with on a daily basis. The program, amongst other things, is designed to ensure that women by far and large have the basic foundations in place to uplift their economic welfare and consequently turn their personal fortunes around while concurrently improving the chances of their families to lead better lives.

In perspective, UN Women in its 2022-2025 Strategic Plan maintains that: *"Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home. But they also remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. Gender discrimination means women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and constitute a small minority of those in senior positions. It curtails access to economic assets such as land and loans. It limits participation in shaping economic and social policies. And, because women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue economic opportunities".*

In Leitayo, Arusha, Agnes Mollel, a young, exuberant wife and mother of three, is happy to welcome anyone to her homestead where livestock pens sit side by side with her chicken runs, and her husband's agricultural hardware is kept under the shade of an acacia tree anticipating the onset of the new cultivation season.

The family lives in a thriving community where in almost every other plot a house is under construction.

"I engage in small-scale activities that earn me a living. I bake and sell buns; I do beadwork, soap-making, rear chickens and I also have goats. In essence these changes to my life and the skills that I have successfully put to use are the direct results of economic empowerment education that I received when I attended training sessions put together for women entrepreneurs by CEDESOTA. At this juncture much of what was previously difficult for us to accomplish as a family has become so much bearable because I have financial input in the family budget. My husband has less to deal with - things like school fees for our children and other necessities are now sufficiently taken care of", she explains.

Arusha-based CEDESOTA (Community Economic Development and Social Transformation) is funded by LSF and works to advocate for a business environment conducive to the entrepreneurial prosperity of women through influencing city planning for equitable allocation of business spaces. The organization strives to address critical barriers especially to urban women entrepreneurs by conducting transformative awareness campaigns, dialogues, meetings and trainings to impart prerequisite knowledge and skills on entrepreneurship and women's rights. It also works in Tanga and Manyara regions.

These activities are implemented within the context of LSF's Urban Legal Empowerment Program through which CEDESOTA receives direct funding.

Its Executive Director, Jackson Muro, points to the finer aspects of the project, shining a spotlight in essence to once less-advantaged women:

"Our approach to empowering women entrepreneurs incorporated the involvement of their husbands or partners to enhance transparency in the home but equally importantly to seek the support and input of their spouses. This was crucial particularly because we understand that these economic activities are the bedrock of their family livelihoods and as such the involvement of both partners would be immensely beneficial. We also taught them the need to indulge in more than just one business venture. This was paramount some economic pursuits are seasonal and it would therefore be detrimental to concentrate on just one activity thus exposing one to the high risk of being forced to shut the business down and consequently slip back into the poverty trap. Along with other vital skills and awareness we have imparted upon them, their collective performance has been commendable in that at the start of the project their profits were on average 10% - 15%, however as we speak these figures have risen from 30% - 40%".

Agnes enlightens further: *"As a result of the entrepreneurship education that I received I have been able to increase the number of chicks. How I did that was through income I realized from selling beaded decorations and buns and use the proceeds to purchase layer hens. The money I earn allows me to take care of various concerns including being able to buy presents for a new mother which is a Maasai tradition whenever a woman has a newborn. In the past I always asked for such monies from my husband but not anymore thanks to the empowerment I received. My circumstances today are a stark difference from standard Maasai expectation because as a woman I otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to be economically independent; my life is*

expected to be at the mercy and will of my husband".

Agnes' husband, Lazaro, who farms and also works in tourism asserts that empowering a woman economically enables her to make a significant contribution to the broader economic welfare of the family.

"Traditionally, we the Maasai tend to override women's power to make decisions, however times are changing and I personally have seen it first-hand with the way my wife has been able to support our family even during times when my income becomes less stable. It's abundantly clear that the entrepreneurship awareness she has benefitted from through training sessions provided under LSF's funding has made a tremendous difference to our livelihood here", he says.

Muro further highlights that in the beginning some of the women reported that their families could only afford one meal a day but since gaining entrepreneurial skills and putting them to use their domestic economic situations have also improved and they now afford three meals every day. This speaks to the strengthened economic power of women and is evidence of the transformation they can guarantee when sufficiently empowered.

This family presents a snapshot of the positive outcomes of the focus on women's economic empowerment which comprises a critical component of the Access to Justice Program. Today thousands of women like Agnes across the country can boldly face the challenges of daily life with the confidence that their own determination and the ready support of their spouses and families are the pillars they can lean on. When they are able to turn their livelihoods around and improve the possibilities of realizing their economic dreams they become champions for even more women just like them.



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Plot No. 1129
Chole Road, Masaki
P. O. Box 31480
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
+255 222 601534

info@lsftz.org
www.lsftz.org

   @LSFTanzania