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Refugee Law Project - Overview

The Refugee Law Project (RLP) was established in 1999 to provide legal aid to asylum seekers and refugees in Uganda. Over time the scope broadened to include the provision of counselling and referrals on a range of non-legal matters, including sexual and gender based violence, access to medical care, housing and education, as well as a well-established English For Adults language training programme helps refugees to speak on their own behalf in encounters with officials and Ugandan citizens, as well as broadening their opportunity base, whether in Uganda, in a third country, or back in their countries of origin.

The provision of direct support is complemented by education and training activities targeted both at duty bearers such as police, immigration officers, judges, magistrates and local government officials, and also at refugees themselves. In 2012, our skills-based departments were restructured into four thematic programmes; Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance (C,TJ&G), Access to Justice for Forced Migrants, Gender and Sexuality Programme, Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing (MHPW).

Each programme engages in a combination of service provision, research, advocacy and training, with a range of audiences from grass-roots settings up to international fora. Cross-cutting support functions (Finance, Human Resources, IT, Video Advocacy, Security, Logistics) are provided by Operations and Programme Support. With the gradual broadening of focus, the RLP is now most aptly described as a Centre for Justice and Forced Migrants.

Vision
That all people enjoy their human rights, irrespective of their legal status. This vision is supported by relevant international laws as well as the Constitution of Uganda.

Mission
To empower asylum seekers, refugees, deportees, IDPs and host communities to enjoy their human rights and lead dignified lives.

Mandate
» To promote the protection, well-being and dignity of forced migrants and their hosts
» To empower forced migrants, communities and all associated actors to challenge and combat injustices in policy, law and practice
» To influence national and international debate on matters of forced migration, justice and peace in Uganda
» To be a resource for forced migrants and relevant actors

Core Values
Independence
Innovation
Non-discrimination
Rigour
Respect
Professionalism
Accountability
Introduction

This Annual Report of the Refugee Law Project presents in summary the work of the organisation in the course of 2014. It was a year that put the organisation to the test and demonstrated both our commitment to our core values and our resilience in the face of adversity. In mid-March the organisation was ordered to suspend its activities in Uganda’s refugee settlements, pending the outcome of investigations into allegations that we had been ‘promoting homosexuality under the guise of human rights’. This suspension was subsequently extended to our Kampala office and remained in place for the rest of the year, only being lifted in late January 2015. This suspension, coupled with vilification in some public media, directly affected three of our four thematic programmes, or 75% of our programming; once again, refugees were made to bear the cost as one of the few service providers to them available was placed out of bounds.

Notwithstanding these challenges, including multiple instances of direct and severe harassment of individual staff members, RLP staff persevered and made effective use of the time freed up by the suspension to bring about improvements across all its programmes (Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance (C, TJ & G), Access to Justice (A2J), Gender and Sexuality (G & S), Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing (MHPW)), as well as in its administrative functions (Operations and Programme Support (OPS)). There was also notable growth in the organisation’s social media output, both on Facebook and Twitter.

While the year 2014 undoubtedly caused set-backs in our work and had a heavy punitive impact on refugees in desperate need of support services, it also brought into clear focus our extensive networks of allies. We are also glad to report that the resolution of the suspension, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the Prime Minister ultimately resulted in both a stronger relationship with Government and a better basis for RLP’s independent activities in support of forced migrants.

This Annual Report for the year 2014 is structured into five main sections corresponding to the four programme themes and Operations & Programme Support, and provides an overview of the activities conducted in the course of the year, as well as a summary financial report.
Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance Programme

The Conflict, Transitional Justice & Governance (CTJ&G) Programme confronts the challenges of dealing with the legacies of past atrocities and human rights violations while pursuing justice both locally and globally, promoting democratisation and good governance, and engaging in sustainable peacebuilding. These goals are achieved through a combination of strategies including ongoing direct support to victims and survivors, conflict analysis and early warnings, thematic research and documentation, appropriate policy development and advocacy at the local, national and international level. Specific activities include identification and referral of victims with untreated wounds, conflict events mapping, museum development; research on questions of justice, identity, ownership, belonging and rights; media engagement, policy development and advocacy. With field offices in Gulu and Kitgum, the programme is well situated to undertake practical work with survivors of mass atrocity and forced migrants while also conducting careful contextual analysis through a range of research, documentation, multi-layered stakeholders engagements and policy advocacy. This work is all coupled with extensive dialogue from the community level up to national and international policy fora.

Objectives of Programme:

» To analyse trends, gather evidence, and document the impacts of human rights violations
» To demonstrate lessons learnt based on evidence gathered of past atrocities
» To advocate for appropriate practical and policy measures with which to build peace, achieve justice, restore civic trust, and promote healing, national unity and reconciliation

Conflict Analysis Dissemination & Early Warning

The CTJG programme has significantly contributed towards improvement in understanding the legacies and responses to conflict in Uganda. The work of the programme has shown that current and future transitional justice and post-conflict development interventions will need to be more context appropriate and conflict sensitive if they are to be effective.

One key output of the Programme’s work in 2014 was the dissemination of early warning and conflict analysis research. This included disseminating the Programme’s Conflict Analysis Report to over 1000 key stakeholders, printing and distributing the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan II Baseline report, and publicizing the Conflict Analysis report across eight sub-regions through a series of publications launches. The Programme also finalised a Compendium of Conflicts in Uganda which is now ready for print. The Programme has also been active in producing policy and conflict assessment briefs. In 2014, this included the 4 conflict watch briefs, 2 rapid assessment research projects (one on the refugee influx from South Sudan and one on land conflict at Aswa Ranch), and a policy brief on the possibilities for a new programme on the Peace Recovery & Development Plan (entitled “Are we there yet? Brainstorming the successor programme to Peace Recovery Development Plan”). Additionally, the programme has worked with victims and partners to support
the parliamentary resolutions passed for LRA War Affected communities (April 2014) and the Joint Acholi sub-regional leaders resolution on a way forward for the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (May 2014).

The Programme has been active in community outreach through the use of radio advocacy. During 2014, the Programme participated in 21 live radio talk shows aired on Mega FM. The radio programmes act as permanent forum(s) for critical dialogue, public review processes, information gathering and sharing at sub-regional levels. The radio stations are critical in creating awareness and catalysing advocacy on conflict issues. The Programme also held several shows on Radio Wa (Lira District). This included 9 live radio shows entitled “Common Ground” and 8 pre-recorded shows on “Community Moment of Truth.” Finally, the Programme participated in 6 episodes of Gwokke Ki Kuku Kuku where they presented on a wide range of post-conflict recovery and transitional justice issues.

**Individual Repair and Healing**

In 2014 the Programme profiled a total of 74 victims (43 male and 31 female). In addition, 48 survivors were referred to Lacor Hospital for physical rehabilitation (26 Female and 22 Male). Currently, there are 142 deeply traumatised survivors who have been profiled and are awaiting counselling and follow-up in 2015. In terms of physical rehabilitation, 28 survivors who were profiled in 2014 have received physical rehabilitation from Lacor hospital. Another 20 survivors are still waiting for an appointment. The programme also monitored the outcomes for 16 rehabilitated victims by conducting follow-up visits in their respective homes and found that they were beginning to engage in livelihood activities made possible by their physical rehabilitation.

**Psychosocial Rehabilitation**

The Programme also seeks to provide psychosocial rehabilitation to survivors. In 2014, 60 survivors were given psychosocial counselling (42 females and 18 males). These survivors were found to have made significant improvement in their mental health by the end of the year. The Programme also held 8 group counselling sessions and conducted 1 communal cleansing in Paibona. Furthermore, a psycho-medical camp was held which benefited 32 participating survivors. Currently the programme is also conducting research on depression and transitional justice and 102 depressed survivors have been identified as potential interview sources for this ongoing project.
Community Healing

To promote community healing, the Programme has been active in community outreach and stakeholder engagement. To this end, 3 public information campaigns were held at our Gulu office. These reached over 180 key stakeholders over the course of three advocacy campaigns for World Mental Health Day, the Day of Elderly Persons, and the 16 Days of Activism campaign respectively. For World Suicide Prevention Day, a community mental health session was conducted with the Koro War Affected and Suicide Survivors Association. The event was attended by 89 participants (44 female and 45 male) and provided an opportunity for suicide survivors to share personal testimonies and explore the root causes of psychosocial trauma in Northern Uganda.

Thematic Research

The programme has conducted a series of research projects on emerging critical transitional justice and conflict drivers within post-conflict northern Uganda. This has included research on the prevalence of suicide in post-conflict Acholi sub-region, untreated wounds, missing children, refugee influxes, the plight of the elderly and depression, and transitional justice in northern Uganda.

Survivor Groups

A good indicator of the programme’s successful work has been the development and strengthening of vibrant survivor groups. To date, a number of survivor groups have been established (Alany Pa Mony Lit Male Survivors of Sexual Violence, Alany Pa Mony Lit Female Survivors of Sexual Violence (both Alero Sub-County, Nwoya District), Kanya Kanya Male Survivors of Sexual Violence (Palaro Sub-County, Gulu District), Koro War-Affected and Suicide Survivors Group (Koro Sub-County, Gulu District), Tim Ki Komi Wek Icang (Awach Sub-County, Gulu District). Members of these groups have been trained across a range of practical fields such as agro-business (including bee keeping, vegetable production, village savings and loan association; tree planting, and modern farming methods), community basic counselling, and advocacy training to know how to advocate for victims’ rights to justice and reparations. These groups have been openly advocating at the village, parish, sub-county, district, regional, and national levels to bring attention to the violations their members experienced and to call for individual, community, and national reconciliation.

RLP has also worked with several pre-existing groups, such as the Attiak Massacre Survivors’ Association that have achieved great success in demanding reparations and advocating for their rights (the Attiak group was awarded 50 million shillings by President Museveni as compensation). The Ukony Too Ateda Omot Massacre Survivors’ group has similarly written a memo to the Ugandan government demanding compensation and scholarships to war orphans in Omot. The Burcoro Massacre Survivors’ Association demand to RLP for rehabilitation to address mental health trauma and reported spiritual attacks resulted in a cleansing ceremony held in Paibona Parish, Awach sub-county, Gulu District.

Stakeholders Engagement

A number of important field visits and conferences with key stakeholders took place during 2014. Key events included:

- The UK Department for International Development (DFID) team visited Gulu and Kitgum offices to review the activities of the field offices and to meet with the survivors and relatives of the victims of the Mucwini LRA massacre site.
- The Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) team participated in a community dialogue on
the role of traditional justice systems in Pawel and in community cleansing and psychosocial rehabilitation in Paibona Parish, Awach Sub-county.

» The fourth Institute for African Transitional Justice (IATJ IV) was held in Kampala. This annual event brings together transitional justice experts from across the continent and beyond to develop context-appropriate African Transitional Justice theory and practice. This year’s theme was “Global Transitions, African Resource Riches and the Future of Transitional Justice.”

» The 1st East African Transitional Justice TAFAKARI (Reflection) Forum on the subject of self-sustaining transitional justice in Africa was held in collaboration with FAHAMU Networks for Social Justice (a pan-African civil society organization based in Kenya) and was attended by 30 participants from Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, and South Sudan. The participants also travelled to Kumi and Gulu to meet with more than 50 survivors and conflict victims who are part of the Mukura Memorial Development Initiative (MMDI).

» The 1st National Dialogue on SGBV in post-conflict Northern Uganda was held for 95 participants (57 Males and 28 Females). The key findings on SGBV prevalence were shared with local members of parliament, Line Ministers, Development partners, local governments, and NGOs.

» A country-wide research on the attitudes of Ugandans towards forgiveness and reconciliation in peace building was done in collaboration with University of Notre Dame (USA). The preliminary findings were presented at an international conference on “Love and Forgiveness in Governance.”

» Media Advocacy training with Albertine Oil Reporters on Conflict Sensitivity. The Albertine oil reporters’ network was officially launched with the aim of enhancing transparency in the oil sector and increasing the knowledge base for conflict sensitive reporting.

The National Memory Peace and Documentation Centre

The National Memory Peace and Documentation Centre (NMPDC) seeks to document, archive
and communicate critical conflict related memories to support accountability and reconciliation in Uganda. A total of 6,528 visitors were recorded at the NMPDC during 2014 (4,597 male and 1,931 female). These visitors included researchers, religious leaders, donors, tourists, school children, university students, researchers, traditional leaders, and local leaders.

A permanent exhibition at the centre displaying the artefacts and archiving information about the legacies of conflicts in Uganda has been established. A month long traveling exhibition of artefacts and photographs collected from past exhibitions in Rwenzori, West Nile, Luwero and Acholi regions was held at the School of Arts at Makerere University in Kampala. As a result, some 300 visitors had the opportunity to learn about the legacies of past conflicts from different regions of Uganda.

The NMPDC is building an international reputation as a hub for conflict and peace information in Uganda. The Centre hosted the “Project Cross Road” International Justice with Avocats San Frontiers. This project seeks to understand what international criminal justice is about by sharing individual perspectives of different stakeholders such as victims or community service organisations working on issues of International criminal Justice. The NMPDC also held a dialogue with the cultural leaders of West Nile in June 2014 during the Ombaci memorial prayers. At the dialogue, the cultural leaders called for a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission to be established in Uganda.

The centre has engaged in community outreach by organising and supporting 3 memorial prayers for survivors and victims of conflict in three areas: Namokora in Kitgum on 18 August, Omot in Agago on 22 October, and Ombachi in Arua on 24 July. During the memorial prayers, the NMPDC team documented video testimonies from victims and survivors. Sharing such testimonies helped promote community and individual healing. In terms of advocacy, the memorial prayers brought together top government officials, district leadership, local leadership, religious leaders and traditional leaders. Pledges and commitments were declared during the memorial prayers. For example, in Omot the presidential assistant on behalf of the Government declared that a house will be built for each of the twenty-eight households in Omot.

Additionally, the outreach team at the Centre held “Travelling Testimony Exhibitions” in 5 districts (Kitgum, Arua, Luwero, Kasese and Kampala). The purpose of the presentations was multipurpose.
They sought to foster collective experiences on conflict memory, to create dialogue among different communities affected by conflict, to employ arts and traditional culture as a form of expression for conflict and reconciliation narratives, to expand the Centre’s conflict database, and to promote healing for war-affected communities.

**Documentation for Accountability and Reconciliation**

The Programme undertook several important documentation tasks in 2014. They completed the documentary *Lets Save the Future: Acholi Traditional Reburial Rituals* that showcases some of the traditional peace building practices of the Acholi people in Northern Uganda. The programme also worked to document un-exploded ordinances in Northern Uganda. In the course of this work, a total of 60 bombs were de-activated with support from NMPDC and the testimony of 10 affected community members was documented. A documentary in trailer form is currently under production chronicling this work.

**Engaging Young People in Transitional Justice**

Having youth engage with processes of transitional justice is a goal of the Programme. In the course of 2014, the Programme successfully engaged young people through a combination of research, drama, policy discussions, and advocacy activities including a validation workshop held in May which involved 107 young people in addition to community representatives, government stakeholders, non-governmental organisations and community service organisations. RLP was invited to share their journey working with young people in transitional justice at a round table meeting hosted by the International Centre for Transitional Justice. A Guideline for working with young people in transitional justice was also drafted in 2014. The programme worked with 5 schools to set up transitional justice clubs which will encourage young people to engage with critical transitional justice issues (the schools include Kitgum High School in Kitgum, St. Mary’s Aboke in Lira, and Sacred Heart S.S, Gulu High School, and Sir Samuel Baker all found in Gulu).

**Challenges**

The Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance programme was the only programme not to be directly affected during the suspension of activities by the Office of the Prime Minister in 2014. However, the programme was hindered by several physical challenges. This included the irregular electricity power supply at the NMPDC and the high cost of running the generator. Furthermore, the programme’s teams have difficulty accessing villages due to bad roads during rainy season.
Access to Justice for Forced Migrants Programme

The Access to Justice Programme seeks to bring legal aid services closer to forced migrants, build the capacities of justice institutions on issues of forced migration, and empower forced migrants to better demand and defend their rights. The Programme provides free legal assistance to individuals and groups of forced migrants. Such assistance includes follow-up of cases at police stations and detention facilities; representation before courts of law and other quasi-judicial bodies; drafting of legal documents and the promotion of alternative dispute resolution. The Programme seeks to improve legal and human rights awareness and community empowerment through information sessions, English for Adult classes, RESPECT University courses, community policing, public information materials, encouraging the formation of support groups and training of community interpreters. The Programme also conducts studies on access to justice and uses the findings to seek solutions by engaging with the various stakeholders involved including police, Directorate of Public Prosecutions, prisons, the judiciary, UNHCR, and the Office of the Prime Minister.

In addition to the Kampala office the Programme has offices in the western districts of Mbarara and Hoima to provide legal assistance and psychosocial support to forced migrants in the refugee settlements of Nakivale, Oruchinga, Kyaka II, Kyangwali and Kiryandongo.

Objectives of the Programme:
- To provide free legal representation and advice to forced migrants
- To promote legal and human rights awareness among forced migrants
- To develop the capacities of justice, law enforcement, and other institutions
- To promote networking among service providers
- To conduct legal research and advocacy

Provision of Free Legal Representation and Advice

The Access to Justice Programme legal representation team represented 180 cases in 2014. In addition, they conducted 65 police follow ups, drafted 57 legal documents, conducted 26 prison visits, provided legal advice, and conducted mediations through alternative dispute resolution. The result of this work was an increased number of acquittals and dismissals of cases for want of prosecution. The resultant increase in the number of cases disposed of by courts led to a general reduction of case backlog in the courts of law. By working with the police, unnecessary and/or prolonged detention of clients was averted and the programme further contributed to the decongestion of police cells and prisons wards. Finally, the Programme supported the amicable settlement of disputes through the practice of restorative justice.

The Programme’s work in providing free legal representation and advice had the following direct outcomes in ensuring client’s access to justice:
- 44 released on bail (39 released on bond and 5 police files closed)
- 11 convictions in cases lodged by clients (6 convictions, 5 non-custodial sentences: 2-fined, 2-community service, 1 cautioned and release)
- 12 clients acquitted
- 24 cases dismissed for want of prosecution 15 clients fined in lieu of custodial sentences
- 34 successful mediations on tenancy, maintenance and malicious damage to property
- 12 deportation cases successfully handled
- Legal advice extended to 128 clients on tenancy, RSD, divorce, etc.
- 10 released from prison after diligent follow ups with prisons and courts.
- At the close of 2014 there remained 30 ongoing cases
Legal and Human Rights Awareness and English for Adults (EFA)

The Programme conducted a total of 25 information and community policing sessions which included 10 community policing session and 15 information sessions. These sessions are designed to better ensure the participation of forced migrants in service provision by increasing their knowledge on law, rights, and processes. This includes developing a better understanding of actors and issues such as the police, Office of the Prime Minister, Civil Society service providers, and emerging issues affecting forced migrants. The impact of these sessions can be seen in the increased awareness of the law and the concept of rights and duties among participants as well as improved relationships between forced migrants and service providers (RLP - Police etc.). It can also be seen in the improved service delivery by actors such as RLP and the police along with better co-existence between forced migrants and host communities.

The Access to Justice Programme also holds English for Adults (EFA) language courses for refugees and forced migrants. These courses seek to improve communication between learners and host communities. Learners in the courses are able to enrol for higher education and favourably compete for scholarships and awards. They also learn about their rights thereby becoming more confident in asserting themselves and demanding their rights. In 2014, there were 939 learners enrolled for class and facilitation. Of this number, only 39 learners dropped out of the class prior to the suspension of our activities in Kampala in May 2014.

Past students have been able to join higher institutions of learning including Kampala International University (KIU) and Bugema University. 5 past learners have been able to secure employment opportunities and achieve self-sustenance (1 at OPM as interpreter, 2 KCCA, 2 internet café). EFA graduates have also positively enhanced the visibility of RLP among the community. Finally, the debates held during the courses contributed to learners’ listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Developing the Capacities of Justice, Law & Order Institutions

The Programme trained 318 justice and law enforcement officers on Sexual Gender Based Violence and Persecution (SGBVP), legal frameworks, prevention and response mechanisms, the synchronisation of work and the rights of detainees. Of this number 209 were police officers or police surgeons while another 109 were prison officers. This training increased knowledge among justice, law and order institutions, improved the quality of services for forced migrants provided by stakeholders, improved communication between court officials and forced migrants, emphasised the role police and prison officers have to play in preventing and responding to SGBV, and promoted a discussion among all actors on the challenges faced by police in delivering services to clients. This work led to an improvement in case handling techniques as well as strengthening the relationship between prison authorities and RLP.

Networking and Coordination

The Programme attended 53 coordination meetings in order to share best practices and reduce duplication in service delivery. These meetings also sought to improve the referral systems between RLP, legal aid service providers, and other service providers. This has resulted in better service delivery and satisfaction with quality of service rendered to forced migrants. A significant success is the inclusion of refugee issues in the National Action Plan for the first time, a feat achieved through the programme’s continued cooperation with Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Research and Advocacy

Ongoing research included a research project on the informal justice system and one on the psychosocial effects of detention on forced migrants. In this second project, a concept note and questionnaires were developed. Both research projects are intended to increase awareness on informal justice and psycho-social effects of detention, promote reparative justice, improve psycho-social support services, reduce case backlog, and form the basis for clinic assessments of forced migrants and arguments for alternatives to detention. The projected impacts of the research projects are promoting peaceful co-existence between forced migrants and host communities, informing policy and practice reforms in the penal and prison systems, and improving the treatment of detainee forced migrants.

In 2014, the Programme also produced several papers and a press release. The first was a paper on statelessness and citizenship that was submitted to the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights for recommendations on protecting the rights of stateless persons. The second paper was on freedom of movement and the non-expulsion of non-nationals submitted to HURINET for consolidation and eventual transmission to the African Commission. The findings from this paper form the basis for policy reform and jurisprudence in Africa and it strengthened networking between RLP and other partners who were contributing towards the civil society human rights report (Uganda’s Shadow Report). Finally, the programme released a press statement on the security of Rwandan refugees. This statement targeted those institutions responsible for offering protection to persons with legal and physical protection needs.

Learning Points Identified

Access to justice goes beyond legal representation and encompasses a variety of services and needs. The Programme recognises the need to focus on quality and depth of service not quantity. Primary legal aid is just as important as secondary legal aid. The importance of client-service provider relationships is central to the programme’s work. Client’s needs must always inform programming rather than assumptions about their supposed needs. Additionally, legal assistance is most effective when applied at the earliest opportunity. Finally, the Programme notes the necessity of building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders including Line Ministries, the Office of the Prime Minister, UNHCR, legal aid service providers, and other service providers.

Challenges

The suspension by the Office of the Prime Minister in 2014 limited the Programme’s activities. This particularly affected our interactions with clients and limited case follow-ups. Further challenges include corruption in the justice system and the criteria for granting bail to forced migrants (which is set with especially substantial sureties). Regarding the English for Adults (EFA) courses, one challenge is learners who drop out without giving notice to facilitators and seek to resume studies after long absences.
Gender and Sexuality Programme

Gender and Sexuality has a strategic vision of a conducive environment in which all people understand, attain, recover and enjoy their sexual and gendered being and rights regardless of legal status. Its mission is to actively engage individuals, families, communities and institutions, whether as victims, perpetrators or stakeholders, at local, national and international levels to transform practice, policy and discourse on gender and sexuality towards greater inclusivity and access for all. Gender & Sexuality’s goal is to be a leading programme nationally and internationally in providing, documenting and disseminating inclusive SGBVP prevention and response interventions and services as well as conducting research, training and advocacy in the areas of gender, sexuality and forced migration.

Objectives of the Programme:
» To provide counselling and make referrals for sexual and gender based violence survivors
» To model gender-inclusive screening for sexual and gender based violence protection
» To build the capacity of duty bearers on sexual and gender based violence advocacy and lobbying
» To monitor client’s satisfaction with services received
» To raise awareness on sexual and gender based violence related issues

Client Support

Counselling and Referral of SGBV Survivors
The Programme attended to clients from 6th January up to 23rd May 2014. They were halted at this point in May due to the suspension of RLP activities by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). During this period, a total of 1,915 referrals took place. This number contains repeat clients as well as multiple referrals. From this total, a total of 278 clients were received. These clients were referred to the Gender and Sexuality Programme from other RLP programmes, external agencies, or from support group leaders. The remaining 1,637 referrals were external referrals that the Gender and Sexuality Programme made to external service providers, support groups, or other programmes at RLP.
The breakdown of referrals is shown in the table below. Note that the referrals received by the Gender and Sexuality Programme are in bold italics. The referrals the programme made to external agencies or other RLP programmes are not bolded or italicised.

**The Types and Total Number of Referrals in 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Type of Referral</th>
<th>Number of Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RLP’s internal referrals</td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Referrals from external agency</td>
<td><strong>102</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Referrals from support group leaders</td>
<td><strong>94</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Medical referrals</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Legal referrals</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Referrals for Antenatal/Neonatal/Postnatal care service</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Referrals for HIV testing</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Referrals for PeP</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Referrals for HIV/AIDS services</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Referrals to Support Groups</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Referred Internally</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Successful referrals for durable solutions</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,915</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The programme conducted 687 counselling sessions. During this period, 785 client interactions with 620 clients were recorded. Of these 620 clients, 513 came only once, 107 had more than one session, the highest number being 7 sessions for one client who is now resettled in Sweden.

There were several milestones achieved in the counselling and referral sessions:

- 76 clients adhering to Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- 346 clients were willing and able to test for HIV
- 37 people (13.6% of the clients that tested) enrol for Ant-Retroviral Therapy (ART)
- 128 family counselling sessions were held that laid the basis for family acceptance of survivors of rape and for those with children born out of rape
- The programme also documented 53 transitions of clients from being victims to survivors of SGBV
- Of 159 clients that were referred to support groups, 94 (59%) became members. The support groups are a hope building strategy where members meet people that have gone through similar experiences and receive peer help among other benefits
- 93 clients accessed quality pre, neo and post-natal care
- 26 home visits were conducted to follow up cases and to prepare resettlement referrals
- 191 resettlement cases were identified, which is 31% or 1 in 3 of the total cases handled

**Referrals for Durable Solutions**

One of the programme’s key activities is to identify and prepare cases for resettlement as a durable solution. A total of 191 resettlement cases were identified in 2014 alone. From these cases, 128 refugees from 33 families were resettled in the United States of America, Netherlands, Norway, Canada and Sweden. The highest number to be resettled in one family of 12 that was resettled to Canada.
Providing Model Gender-Inclusive Screening

RLP prides itself on the fact that it provides non-discriminatory services to all clients that walk through its doors. Among these is gender-inclusive screening for sexual and gender-based violence for both males and females. 2014 statistics indicate that 452 refugees were screened by RLP for incidents of sexual violence. Of these, a slight majority were females (249) while the males screened were 203. The total number of clients that screened positive for SGBV were 246, which was 54% of the total number (452) of clients screened. Further disaggregation of this data shows that 53 of 203 males screened positive for SGBV (26% or one in four males). Regarding the females, 193 of the 249 females screened positive for SGBV (77.5% or three out of four). These statistics show that women make the majority of SGBV victims and that the larger part of SGBV funding should address their needs; however, they also indicate that a significant number of men are also victims of SGBV and should be appropriately planned for.

The systematic screening also highlighted certain facts relevant to the programme. The Programme was able to provide video documentation of four clients. The idea was to follow clients from the time they present their issue through the whole process of recovery. This provided valuable lessons on the challenges and obstacles involved in working with SGBV victims and also enabled the Programme to pick valuable lessons on how services can be improved. These video documentaries were filmed with the consent of the clients and draft findings were used in major national and international fora for advocacy against SGBV.

Building the Capacity of Duty Bearers

Refugee Law Project through the Gender & Sexuality Programme has been working with a range of stakeholders (public and private) and government line ministries since 1999. The work, especially on Sexual Gender Based Violence and Persecution (SGBVP), has demonstrated the lack of comprehensive understanding of the physical and psychological sequelae of SGBV and how to respond to them (medically, psychologically, and legally), particularly in the case of men and boys and sexual minorities. This is part of a more general lack of understanding of gender and sexuality, and how these are impacted by sexual violence. The overall goal of the trainings of duty bearers is to enable them become knowledgeable on Sexual Gender Based Violence and Persecution (SGBVP) and to be able to provide quality, compassionate, non-discriminatory and timely SGBVP prevention and response services to all survivors within urban refugee communities.

Objectives of the trainings include:

» To enhance stakeholders’ knowledge on SGBVP among the urban refugee population
» To equip stakeholders with information and knowledge on relevant laws and policies on Sexual Gender Based Violence and Persecution (SGBVP) and context relevant policy instruments
» To improve the capacity and skills of stakeholders in the prevention of and response to SGBVP cases of refugees and asylum seekers in accordance with international human rights standards and standards set by the 1995 Constitution of Uganda and the Refugee Act
» To create awareness about the rights and duties of refugees and asylum seekers and the roles of the Government of Uganda and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) towards the promotion and protection of refugees both during displacement be they males, females or gender and sexual minorities.
» To impart skills so that the trained stakeholders can transfer the knowledge, ideas, rules, and standards learnt during the course into credible investigations and court practices in the response to and prevention of sexual and gender based crimes.
» To reinforce attitudes and behavioural change among the stakeholders so that they can maximise and effectively improve the protection of refugees and asylum seekers. A specific
example of this is the case of male survivors of sexual violence. Many victims of sexual violence do not disclose to service providers unless asked the right questions in a supportive environment.

To help ensure that stakeholders accord fair treatment to all refugees and asylum seekers with the same standards of individual respect, and social justice that apply to the rest of Ugandans.

In 2014, the Programme conducted 19 SGBV trainings of police, prisons and medical personnel in which a total of 657 personnel were trained as shown in the table below:

### Gender and Sexuality Programme Trainings Conducted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Trainings</th>
<th>Number of Sessions</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Medical students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Medical practitioners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Legal students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Service providers in UK (Global summit)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Refugee support group leaders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Support group on financial management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Police officers trainings</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prisons officers trainings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>652</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key Milestones Realised

As a result of building the SGBV capacity of stakeholders, a number of milestones were realised by the Programme. The police and medical practitioners requested RLP to facilitate a dialogue between them in order to improve their capacity in dealing with these issues. The trainings also enable improved access to medical services for RLP clients. The Programme disseminated 550 copies of Police Form 3 and 3A. The trainings to support groups have equipped them with knowledge to develop project proposals, produce narrative reports and also handle their finances. Programme members also participated in detention monitoring visits and a total of 9 police stations and 10 police posts were monitored. An interest group was also formed by 20 students from the Mulago Medical School. Lastly, the Programme received consultation from 50 prison officers and 58 police officers on issues pertaining to SGBV among refugees and asylum seekers in their custody.

### Monitoring Client Satisfaction

In a bid to provide comprehensive quality services to clients, the Programme recognised that there
is a need to monitor clients’ satisfaction on the services that they receive. As a result, clients were requested to provide feedback through the client satisfaction form on medical services got through referrals made by the Programme. An SSPS database was created in which to record the responses of the clients, analyse them, and also offer interventions where necessary. These statistics helped inform the roundtable discussion that the programme had with the police and medical practitioners in order to bridge structural gaps. The statistics also informed trainings of police and medical personnel. In addition a meeting with Ntinda Family Doctors was held to give feedback because they are RLP’s key medical referral on SGBV issues. The data was also used to map new service providers and also streamline referrals to more effective service providers.

**Raising Awareness on Sexual Gender Based Violence**

One of the Programme’s objectives is to raise awareness on SGBV among refugees and their host communities through community outreach sessions. These sessions are led and facilitated by support groups through their leaders and RLP plays a technical role. The group leaders were trained by RLP’s Gender and Sexuality Programme on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) matters. The aim of the session was to inform other group support group members as well as the community members in which they reside about what they had learned concerning SGBV using an interactive approach. The support groups that participated in these community sessions include the Association of Female Refugees in Africa (ASSOFRA), Men of Hope, the Elderly person’s group, and Living With Hope among others. Overall, 3,703 persons, both refugees and nationals, participated in 33 community outreach sessions that were help in Kampala and the surrounding suburbs with a high refugee concentration such as Nabulagala, Katwe, Nsambya, and Kabalagala. This included 1,125 participants in information sessions, 374 in in-group awareness raising sessions by support groups, 864 in community policing, and 1,340 in support groups outreaches.

An unexpected outcome of these community outreach sessions was a video conceived and produced by the Men of Peace (Nakivale Refugee Settlement) support group entitled ‘Unbearable Experiences.’ This video is being used by RLP and other support groups to further raise awareness of SGBV affecting men and boys. Another milestone brought about by the community sessions was the increased number of client referrals made by support groups. These came to 94 for both men and women. The sessions also facilitated a more progressive working relationship with the police, prisons, support group leaders and community leaders. This relationship saw RLP being offered free radio and TV airtime to talk about SGBV. During 2014, there was also improved national and international media interface for example the Acholi Google-Group, Facebook, Twitter, Huffington
Post, BBC, and international websites among others.

National and International Advocacy and Leadership

Programme members, led by the Programme Manager, engaged in national and international fora to create awareness about SGBV as explained below;

» There was an institutional visit by UN SRSG-SVC
» The Programme was engaged in the Kampala GBV taskforce
» The Programme participated in the validation of the International Protocol on Documenting and Investigating Sexual Violence in Conflict
» The team participated in the development of the International Protocol on Documenting and Investigating Sexual Violence against Men and Boys
» Modelling “Priorities for Uganda” on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict
» The Programme participated in a UNHCR side session on the inclusion of male survivors of sexual violence among vulnerable categories of refugees that was held in June 2014
» RLP collaborated with War Child and Plan in organising a one day seminar on conflict-related sexual violence against Men and Boys; this was held in London and included online presentations by two survivors from Kampala
» RLP’s Director was on the expert panel Conflict Related Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in the Global Summit on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict, London, June 2014
» The Programme organised and delivered several presentations and training sessions at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence
» The Programme Manager participated in the 2nd MenEngage Global Summit in Delhi that resulted in the Delhi declaration
» The Programme, in collaboration with the International Human Rights Clinic at the University of California Berkeley, also contributed a commentary on the ICC Gender Guidelines
» A representative from the Programme provided input into the first training of humanitarian workers by CERAH in Geneva
» The Programme provided input in an expert discussion on the role of the military in GBV prevention and response held in Sweden
» There was also participation in the review of IASC GBV guidelines by the Programme
» Finally, RLP’s Director was requested to contribute an opinion piece to the ICRC Review

Learning Points Identified

Training and empowering support group leaders increased SGBV awareness in the communities. Engaging legal and medical students is an effective but long term strategy in preventing and responding to SGBV. There is need to conduct more police and prison officer training, especially outside Kampala, focusing in areas that have high refugee settlements or populations.

Challenges

In implementation of its work and activities, the key challenge was the suspension of RLP activities by the Office of the Prime Minister from May 2014 onwards. Client interface was suspended and as a result most of the programme work was stalled leaving only the trainings and community outreaches spearheaded by the support groups ongoing. A further result was that key funding was not secured.
Mental Health and Psychosocial Well Being Programme

The Programme is geared towards enhancing the mental health and psychosocial well-being of refugees, asylum seekers, and other forced migrants in Uganda. War, discrimination, psychological harassment, physical and sexual violence, targeted murders of families and close associates, and political or other persecution that force refugees and other displaced persons to flee their countries of origin create a breeding ground for psychological un-wellness. This may include great emotional distress, grief, depression, anxiety, and/or other mental health illnesses and disorders. The Programme aims to ensure that refugees, asylum seekers, and other forced migrants receive the necessary psychosocial and mental health assistance to help them adopt positive ways of adjusting and coping with the daily demands of living. The programme implements its interventions from a perspective that people who have undergone similar experiences can be helped to draw on their own resources to improve their situation. As such, the programme is shifting from dealing with the “individual” to harnessing refugee capacities in the healing process.

Objectives of the Programme:

» To provide proper treatment and care for people affected by psychological and psychosocial issues
» To promote resilience and self-reliance through building knowledge, skills, and providing social and economic resources for forced migrants
» To build capacity of key stakeholders in addressing mental and psychosocial issues of forced migrants
» To influence policy and practice through research and advocacy at national and global level so as prioritize the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of forced migrants

Counselling

During 2014, the Mental Health and Psychosocial Well Being Programme saw 228 persons over a period of 5 months. The shortened time period was due to the suspension of the RLP’s activities by the Office of the Prime Minister. In 2013 when RLP was able to conduct their work for the entire year, the Programme saw 629 persons. During the 5 months of 2014, the 228 persons who came to the programme included 213 individuals, 10 families, and 2 couples.

Therapeutic Groups
In Kampala, 2 therapy groups for depression and PTSD were established. The benefits of these groups for participants include discovering new connections and finding meanings through other individuals’ experiences. Participants are also able to discover their thoughts and feelings by listening to their own words. By participating in these therapy groups, the individuals are able to learn and get support from one another.

Screening and Assessment Tools
The Mental Health and Psychosocial Well Being Programme introduced a mental health and psychosocial problem screening tool to be used by Intake and Assessment team. To date 200 people have been screened. The Programme also introduced a Client Counselling record form for counsellors. The programme developed and administered the Mental Health Assessment tool for psychological research. This tool has since been used in prisons and about 50 prisoners were interviewed. These new screening and assessment tools have let the team create a database and analyse data from the tools. This tool will continue to be useful for reporting, fundraising, advocacy and planning.

Therapy Room
The program acquired space, items, and materials for the therapy room. The room is equipped with...
Counselling materials like toys, a sand tray, and a music system. This space and the material within are designed to offer a counselling space which both provides stimulation and privacy. In this room, clients and staff engage in relaxation techniques to release tension.

**Prison Visits**

In the course of 2014, the Mental Health and Psychosocial Well Being programme conducted 30 individual counselling sessions and 10 group counselling sessions. They also formed 1 support group in Kakiika Prison. Through these sessions and the support group, inmates have been able to cope better with harsh prison conditions. Activities include linking inmates to legal officers and improving care for inmates such as by seeking to get greater food or to reduce the likelihood of torture being inflicted on inmates. Another key aspect is re-establishing relations between inmates and their families.

**Home Visits**

A total of 57 home visits were done in 2014. During home visits, the team assess the living conditions of clients, offer psychoeducation to enable clients to understand the conditions they may be going through, and enable them to develop coping mechanisms. These visits are also an opportunity for the programme to address the challenges and crises among clients and foster positive interaction among family members. These visits successfully improved harmony in homes after family therapy.

**Support Groups**

There are five groups in Kampala three in Nakivale, 1 in Kakiika prisons (Mbarara), and 2 in Rhino Camp. All these groups are able to engage in self-advocacy. For example, the Elderly person’s group is engaging with Office of the Prime Minister about possible support. The Association of Female Refugees in Africa (ASSOFRA) is engaging with the African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV) to support them in training. Finally, several Associations of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are seeking space for meetings.

The refugees in support groups are able to initiate income generating projects by themselves. A clear example is ASSOFRA engaging in soap making. The benefits belonging to these groups include increased social capital for
members in order to cope with difficult circumstances while also finding a way to preserve their culture and identity. For example, the Association of Burundian Mothers in Uganda have particularly engaged in activities that will help their children, many born and raised in Uganda, learn about their Burundian culture.

Livelihood Support

The Programme has 10 groups with functional projects in Kampala along with 3 groups in Nakivale. These projects have increased both incomes for the beneficiaries and their access to basic needs such as habitation, food, medical care and education for the children.

Examples of projects include the PWDs group selling 4 batches of broilers, a success that led them to buy a new batch of boilers. Women with Hope saved 3.5 million UGX from their income generating activities. ASSOFRA saved 1.5 million UGX from their liquid soap making project.

Advocacy

The Programme increased its use of social media in order to promote awareness on critical issues. In 2014 this included an article on World Aids Day (1 December), another article on the international day of older persons (1 October), sharing reports, and publishing a picture essay on persons with disabilities day (3 December). The Programme also used public events to disseminate their materials. Such advocacy has successfully influenced actors such as the UNHCR and their implementing partners to recognise international advocacy days such as the Day of African Child or Youth Day which is a change from the past. Overall the Programme has increased the presence of their core issues in the media through channels such as UBC, NTV, and Voice of America. The Programme also launched a research report and video documentary on the psychosocial challenges of refugee women and girls.

Research

The Programme produced the following research publications during 2014:

- From the Frying Pan to the Fire: Psychosocial Challenges Faced by Vulnerable Refugee Women and Girl in Kampala, RLP, Kampala, March 2014
- We have a Right to Love: The Intersection of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Disability for Urban Refugees in Kampala, Uganda, October 2014, New York
- ‘Caught between a rock and a hard place: Challenges of refugees with disabilities and their families in Uganda’, which was published by Routledge as a chapter in “Crises, Conflict and Disability: Ensuring Equality”, edited by David Mitchell and Valerie Karrfor for the Routledge Advances In Disability Studies series.
- Experiences, Disorders and Coping among detained refugees in Uganda’s Prisons

In addition the Programme is working on developing a bio-psychosocial assessment tool for victims of torture in partnership with ACTV and Independent Medico-Legal Unit of Kenya.
Skills Building for the Programme Team

The Programme invested in skills building activities for the following subjects:

» Play therapy
» Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
» Interpersonal Group Therapy
» Family therapy
» Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
» Use of Social Media
» Research
» Presentation and Facilitation Skills

Developing Networks for Advocacy and Better Service Delivery

The Programme furthered developed networks with the following institutions. These relationships will help the Programme and the Refugee Law Project to better ensure service delivery and engage in advocacy.

» School of Psychology, MUK
» Teachers College, Columbia University
» Butabika Hospital
» East African Mental Health and Psychosocial support network
» World Federation For Mental Health
» Movement for Global Mental Health
» Guest lecture for Law Students at PILAC on ‘Counselling Skills’

Challenges

The Mental Health and Psychosocial Well Being Programme was greatly affected by the suspension of RLP by the Office of the Prime Minister. The suspension prevented the team from directly interacting with clients during much of 2014. Nonetheless, the Programme continued to pursue work internally and has begun offering services to clients with the lifting of the suspension. The Programme is also continually seeking new connections through networking and improving their skills set through training in order to offer the best quality of services possible to clients.
Operations and Programme Support

The Operations and Programme Support (OPS) function of the Refugee Law Project provides cross cutting institutional and programmatic support to the four thematic programmes. The support functionality is structured into distinct technical units including:

» Assessment, Intake and Community Interpretation
» Information and Communication Technology
» Human Resources and Programme Monitoring
» Video Advocacy
» Finance

Assessment, Intake and Community Interpretation

Direct client intervention forms the core of RLP support to forced migrants. The Assessment, Intake and Community Interpretation Unit is the first point of reference to clients and provides a range of preliminary support in the areas of general client assessment, referrals, resettlement coordination, client file management, and community interpretation. It is through the Unit that cases are referred to the different RLP programmes for individual case management: Access to Justice, Gender and Sexuality, Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing and Conflict, Transitional Justice & Governance. In some instances, if the nature of the case is not within RLP’s mandate, cases made be referred to external organisations.

General Clients Assessment

In general client assessment a total of 988 clients were assessed (473 male and 515 female). In terms of country of origin, there were: 745 from the DRC, 59 from Rwanda, 23 from Sudan, 13 from South Sudan, 22 from Ethiopia, 55 from Burundi, 13 from Eritrea, 2 from Uganda, 1 from Kenya, 1 from Mali, 1 from Gambia, 1 from Guinea, and 52 from Somalia.

Referrals

Of the 988 a total of 631 were put forward for internal referrals:
- 292 being referred to the Gender and Sexuality programme
- 154 referred to Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing programme
- 185 referred to Access to Justice programme

Another 243 clients were given external referrals to the following institutions and agencies:
- 13 to the Office of the Prime Minister
- 89 to Police
- 45 to Hospitals
- 46 to UNHCR
- 19 to Jesuit Refugee Service
- 7 to Uganda Red Cross Society
- 5 to the Windle Trust Foundation
- 10 to the African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims
- 9 to INTERAID

Resettlement coordination

Resettlement is one of the durable solutions provided to refugees. The selection of refugees whose issues meet resettlement criteria is determined by the individual RLP programmes that prepare their cases. The programmes then send the cases back to the Assessment and Intake Unit for review and coordination with external resettlement agencies. In 2014, resulting from the suspension, only 24 cases were prepared for resettlement. Of this number, 16 cases were sent to the Director for endorsement. From this 11 cases were referred for resettlement to Hebrew Immigration Aid Services
(HIAS) and 8 cases were identified as needing updates and so were sent back to the programmes.

Client file management
The Assessment, Intake and Community Interpretation team updated 115 files over the course of 2014. Clients bring in hard copies of their important documents including police reports, medical reports, rejection letters, tenancy agreements etc, and the Unit stores them in secure storage cabinets.

Training Coordination
Stakeholder capacity building is one of RLP’s intervention strategies, and this we do through trainings that are focused on the various duty bearers ie police, immigration and judicial officers. The trainings are aimed at empowering and creating awareness among the duty bearers of the plight and constitutional rights of forced migrants and thus improve responses to issues affecting them. The Operations and Programme Support facilitates in coordinating all capacity building activities for RLP’s thematic programmes, and in the course of 2014 the following stakeholder sessions were organised.

There were a total of 455 Stakeholders trained on SGBV and Human Rights in 2014. This included 123 prison officers trained from the Uganda Prisons Service, 292 police officers from the Uganda Police Forces, and 40 Line ministry officials, transitional justice practitioners, academicians, researchers from across the African continent and beyond as part of the 4th Institute for African Transitional Justice (IATJ IV). In terms of community policing, 864 Community members were reached. These training sessions created good working relationships between RLP and stakeholders in the community particularly the police forces. The training attracted many police officers who felt the certificates were beneficial preparation for the UN deployment in Somalia and Sudan. RLP’s engagement with community policing though the training session has attracted more clients to RLP.

Information and Communication Technology
Timely and accurate sharing of information forms an important component of all RLP interventions. The information and communications technology (ICT) unit provides communication and information management support within the organisation.

The Unit achieved a number of milestones in the course of 2014. This included a positive growth in
the Listserve with a total of 35 emails sent out in 2014. Considering that 75% of RLP was suspended for much of 2014 it is an impressive increase compared to 44 emails sent out during the entirety of 2013. The Information and Communication Technology team also conducted training on social media for staff. Finally the website was entirely re-designed.

Social Media outputs also experienced a significant increase in 2014. Facebook likes increased from 1,033 Likes in 2013 to 1,764 Likes and 117 posts in 2014. This was an increase of 731 new Likes. On Twitter there was an even more substantive increase from 2 tweets to 172 tweets between 2013 and 2014.

Social Media 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>1,033 Likes</td>
<td>1,764 Likes, 117 posts</td>
<td>731 new Likes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>2 tweets</td>
<td>174 tweets</td>
<td>172 new tweets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Human Resources and Programme Monitoring

Human Resources constitute a key input in the delivery of RLP’s interventions. The Unit offers technical advice and support in respect to all the Human Resources related activities and commitments that align with the institution’s strategic plan and other programmatic and project based human resource needs.

Specifically the Unit routinely supports in the development and implementation of human resources programmes, policies, procedures and initiatives; institutional workforce planning and employment; performance reviews, internal staff capacity strengthening, succession and career planning, and professional conduct.

The Unit also supports all programmes in the development and review of logical frameworks, development of integrated annual work plans, and on periodic (quarterly) monitoring and evaluations on the basis of the results chain (outputs, outcomes, and impact). The output of the M&E processes feed into the management discussions for strategic, programmatic and administrative interventions. In 2014 the Unit achieved several milestones. For internal capacity building, the Unit supported training in developing and managing projects, evidence based management, and social media training. Across the programmes the following number of staff received training.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing:
- 5 for Developing and Managing Projects
- 1 for Evidence Based Management
- 1 for Social Media Training

Conflict, Transitional Justice, and Governance:
- 1 for Evidence Based Management
- 12 for Social Media Training

Gender and Sexuality:
- 4 for Developing and Managing Projects
- 2 for Evidence Based Management
- 2 for Social Media Training

Operations and Programme Support:
- 6 for Developing and Managing Projects
- 6 for Evidence Based Management

Access to Justice for Forced Migrants:
- 4 for Developing and Managing Projects
- 2 for Evidence Based Management
- 2 for Social Media Training
The Unit has facilitated routine monitoring discussions to establish the performance of projects and the routine programme activities. In the course of 2014, the Unit conducted one project induction, four monitoring discussions, and two trainings on results based management. These discussions were conducted in order to facilitate the continuous process of streamlining and overseeing programme delivery across all programmes.

Finally, the Human Resources Unit introduced a new policy of leave plans and holiday allowance in order to maximise health benefits for employees.

**Video Advocacy**

The use of video is one of RLP’s trend setting, innovative methodologies in delivering high impact advocacy interventions. The Video Advocacy Unit supports programmes in audio-visual capture and processing and dissemination of key messages geared towards delivering particular changes.

The Unit registered a number of deliverables across thematic areas over the course of 2014. These
included the development and production of 11 videos and short clips.

These films included:
» Forgiveness? Unlocking Transitional Justice in Post Conflict Uganda
» Parenting the Missing
» Interviewing Male Survivors: Methodological Reflections
» Hidden Bruises
» 4th Institute of African Transitional Justice
» 16 days of activism against gender violence
» Unbearable Experiences
» Let’s Save the Future
» Ugandan Civil Society files historic petition against the Anti-Homosexuality act 2014
» H.E Yoweri K. Museveni visits the RLP exhibition tent in Arua during the centenary celebrations
» End Child Detention

These video projects documented the experience of clients and activists involved with RLP and promoted recognition of marginalised sexuality issues including sexual violence against men and boys.

The Video Unit also actively networked during 2014 in order to improve their skills through training and support. This included establishing connections with organisations including the Video for Change Network Africa and the Radio Netherlands Training Center (RNTC).

**Finance and Grants**

The operational sustainability of RLP significantly depends on the financing resourcing available to support programme costs and administrative overheads. The Finance and Grants units provide support in fundraising, resources allocation, control, and financial accountability.

As a part of the University, the Refugee Law Project follows the the University’s finance procedures.
and all expenditures are subject to internal audit. A full external audit is conducted on an annual basis.

Total income from grants in 2014 was US$ 3,563,052 and total expenditure was US$ 3,663,339. As a result, RLP ended 2014 with a deficit of US$ 100,287.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Amount in US$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>3,563,052</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Amount in US$</th>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Justice</td>
<td>217,229</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender &amp; Sexuality</td>
<td>297,571</td>
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<td>Conflict, Transitional Justice &amp; Governance (CTJ&amp;G)</td>
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<td>Mental Health &amp; Psychosocial Wellbeing</td>
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<td>625,563</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>3,663,339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List of Donors in 2014

- United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT)
- Fund for Global Human Rights
- Institute for Development Studies (IDS)
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)
- Akiba Uhai
- Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) – Access to Justice
- Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) – Beyond Juba Process II
- Finnish Refugee Council (FRC)
- Notre Dame University
- University of Oxford
- Prince Claus Fund
Refugee Support Groups

Support groups have become an integral part of RLP’s intervention strategy alongside individual and household support. The groups provide space in which to build new support systems within refugee communities to replace the lost traditional ones, and are thus a source of empowerment, self-esteem and self-reliance for refugees. The groups ensure continued healing when organisational services—which are often donor-dependent and insufficient to meet demand—are unavailable. They also frequently become a source of new referrals to our services. Over the years, RLP has helped establish 15 support groups that are directly and indirectly affiliated to different thematic programmes.

RLP’s relationship with the support groups

RLP has been the force behind the establishment of the support groups and plays the following roles:

i. Provides a meeting space for the Kampala-based groups
ii. Helps in preparing the associations’ constitutions and registration processes
iii. Provides mentoring to group leadership structures
iv. Offers training for the groups on issues relevant to their needs
v. Oversees election of leaders and does general monitoring of their activities
vi. Sources funding for group activities and, where necessary, offers fiscal sponsorship to groups that are yet to be registered to open their own bank accounts.

vii. Provides accompaniment, upon request from the group leadership, to key group activities (e.g. outreach activities to community leaders and other service providers)
viii. Offers technical support (e.g. proposal writing, constitution development, editing reports, editing video)

Refugee Support Group Descriptions

Association of Persons with Disabilities in Kampala

The Association of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) currently has a membership of 200 individuals including refugee PWDs and their families. The support group was established in 2010 with only 8 members. The objectives of the group include: provision of psychosocial support to refugee PWDs and their families; fighting stigma and discrimination against PWDs; providing a collective voice to advocate for PWDs’ rights; advocacy for mainstreaming of PWD issues in organisational plans; and promoting self-reliance through income generating activities.

Their activities have therefore included training of stakeholders on challenges faced by PWDs; awareness creation in their communities; developing education and communication messages on disability; identification of cases within their communities; home visits for those who cannot move; and fundraising.

i. The group is currently aiming to register as a Community Based Organisation (CBO), and as such have managed to raise 250,000 UGX for this cause.

ii. The group’s first proposal for an income generating activity in poultry farming was granted funding by a private foundation.

Somali PWDs Group

The PWDs in the Somali community formed their own group after experiencing challenges communicating with other refugees because of language barriers and for ethnic reasons. The group has 31 registered members and has an elected leadership. They meet regularly to discuss issues affecting them as PWDs.
The Association of PWDs in Nakivale
This association was formed in 2012 with the aim of bringing together PWDs in Nakivale refugee settlement to support each other and currently has a membership of 50. They have since been given training in business skills and tailoring. The association members meet regularly and provide social support to other group members. They also help identify the most vulnerable in their communities and refer these individuals for further assistance through established referral pathways.

Association of Elderly Refugees in Kampala
The group currently has a total of 70 members. The group was formed to address the peculiar needs of elderly refugees; to create awareness on the usefulness and contribution of elderly refugees to society; and to get a better understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of older refugees in their role as caregivers and useful members of society. This group is also currently acting as a collective voice in advocating for the human rights and psychosocial needs of elderly refugees.

The association’s activities to date include meetings with group members and with stakeholders such as UNHCR and its implementing partners; psychosocial support for the sick through home visits; and the provision of basic needs that are mobilised from members. The association members have drafted a constitution and the final copy will be out soon. The group has collected 230,000 UGX through fundraising to be used for its registration as an association.

Peer Counsellors Associations
There are four peer counsellors groups: the Nakivale, Kyaka II, Kyangwali, and Kampala associations. These groups were formed after receiving training in basic counselling skills. The purpose of creating these teams was to create structures within the communities that could deal with the day-to-day psychosocial challenges facing refugees. The peer counsellors are therefore mainly comprised of refugees, a few staff members of implementing partners, and teachers in refugee settlements.

Their activities currently include provision of psychosocial support to refugee children in schools; awareness creation on the dangers of sexual and gender based violence and the effects of torture; and identification of those most vulnerable to psychosocial problems.

Refugee Youth Associations
There are three youth associations with which RLP works. These are the French Club in Nakivale, COBRUWAS in Kyangwali settlement, and the Pacesetters Association in Kampala. These support groups are mainly for young adults between the ages of 19-29 years. This age bracket is a critical high-risk group with unique challenges. Currently it has a membership of 65 individuals.

These associations provides a free platform for youth to share experiences and challenges. They are also involved in music, dance, and drama giving them the opportunity to engage in productive leisure activities. They are currently raising funds through their annual subscription fees and an additional registration fee every time they attend their monthly meetings to create a basket fund from which they can borrow for income generating businesses.

In the settlements especially, the youth association members engage in home care and mentoring for orphaned children; taking care of the sick; building houses for the elderly; promoting proper sanitation and good hygiene among communities; and building child-friendly spaces for child headed families.
Child Right Groups
Children’s Club (MCC) for children aged 8-12 years and Freedom Children’s Club (FCC) for those aged 13-18. These clubs have meetings the first Saturday of every month because many of the children are of school going age. Their activities include debates on relevant issues affecting their lives such as discrimination in schools and the communities; developing social and life skills; building relationships and becoming equipped with negotiation skills; and raising awareness of the risks of child trafficking and child abuse. The clubs are a platform for the children to know their rights and learn to interact with others.

Association of Torture Survivors – Kampala and Nakivale Settlement
The Association of Torture Survivors (ATV) Kampala has been in place since March 2011 and the Nakivale chapter since 2012. The Association began with very few members and the majority were Congolese. Currently, the Association has grown to over 350 members including those from other countries like Rwanda and Burundi.

The ATV has been a healing ground for many of the survivors and it has united them as one since they all went through similar experiences. The majority of members are involved in various businesses such as making bags, carpentry, mechanics etc and are thus able to take care of their families. The association also advocates for a torture free society through celebrating the UN Day in support of Torture Victims and through sensitisation activities such as drama, music and dance, and poems. They have also prepared memos that have been circulated in offices such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights officer in Kampala, UNHCR, Office of the Prime Minister, and RLP.

Association of Refugee Professionals
The Refugee Professionals Association was started in 2011 to cater for the needs of refugees working in professional environments. It was also formed in recognition of the untapped human resource present in the refugee communities, which when well utilised, would lead to improved livelihoods. The Association currently has a membership of 80 registered members; 50 in Kampala and 30 in refugee settlements.

Objectives of the Association
i. Identification and registration of all professionals among refugee communities in and around Kampala and in the settlements.
ii. Building a website with a database of refugee professionals with different expertise and sets of skills as a way of increasing their visibility and exposing them to the job market.
iii. Helping to establish different associations of refugee professionals along different competencies to create a platform for information and experience sharing, confidence building, peer support, and a platform for collective advocacy.
iv. Establishing a network of community outreach.

Their current activities include teaching French for different clients; operating clinics, and running personal businesses. They also have monthly meetings at RLP.

Men of Hope Refugee Association Uganda (MOHRAU)
This is an association that brings together male survivors of sexual violence; the group emerged out of RLP’s work with individual survivors since 15th September 2011. The group was formed due to increasing numbers of males presenting with challenges resulting from sexual violence and the need to overcome these challenges. Since then the initial group of six men has grown to over 80. The group meets on a regular basis (once a week) to provide peer support. They also provide significant input into international advocacy initiatives of RLP as well as working within the refugee community.
to change perceptions of survivors of rape. The group is currently developing a multi-disciplinary publication.

Women Refugees Association in Africa (ASSOFRA)
ASSOFRA is a women only association. When it began in 2009 it was called ASSOREF (Association for Francophone Refugees) and it brought together French speaking refugees and asylum seekers; both male and female. Following internal conflicts and misunderstanding between the male and female members, the women decided to form their own section because they believed that the men hindered them from realising their potential. This female section later became ASSOFRA (Association of Female Refugees in Africa). The name change also reflected the fact that the members felt that the old name excluded non French-speaking refugees and asylum seekers. Since this change ASSOFRA has expanded rapidly to include female refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, Southern Sudan, the DRC, and Somalia. They currently have 65 registered members.

ASSOFRA’s vision is to have a mobilised and unified social and economic forum to advocate for a promising future for the refugee women in Uganda and Africa at large. Their mission is to promote and enhance a suitable environment for refugee women to exercise their rights without any restraints. It has a well established leadership structure with a constitution and is being registered as a community based association.

Activities include provision of psychosocial support to members through home visits; social and emotional support during sickness; and support during loss and other relational challenges. Members also often identify foster families for placing unaccompanied girls and provide mentorship for these girls. They have a savings scheme from which they borrow money to enhance their businesses at a minimal interest rate and a welfare fund which members can borrow from interest free in case of sickness.

ASSOFRA holds two weekly meetings: the Wednesday meeting is an income generating activity where members contribute some money that is put into a revolving fund while the Friday meeting is a general meeting aimed at encouraging sharing lessons from the field, mobilising resources, exchanging ideas, and strengthening the engagement of refugees.

Living With Hope (LWH)
This support group is composed of persons living with HIV/AIDS. Formed in June 2012, the group brings together both male and females refugees and asylum seekers living with HIV/AIDS. The group has a strong leadership structure and RLP provides technical and mentoring support. LWH meets every first Wednesday of the month. The group also makes referrals to RLP especially those that join the group for VCT and ART.

During their meetings, the group discusses challenges and jointly proposes solutions to them. Positive living is never an easy life especially in a group in which some members are still in denial. According to the group, most of the members strongly believe that they acquired HIV/AIDS through sexual violence and torture that they experienced either in their countries of origin, during flight, or at their homes in their host communities.

Families with children born out of rape
This is a support group formed by women with children born out of rape that was established in 2011. The group has now grown to include some men especially in the settlements. The group is in a transition to include fathers as well after realising that the burden of raising children born out of rape affects both women and men. The major challenges are how to bring up these children;
how to cope with the shame associated with the rape experience; and how to defend the children against external victimisation, particularly if the child is male. Such challenges follow the women even when they get re-married because new husbands will often require the women to leave the children behind. Current membership is 45.

**Men of Peace**

This an association of male survivors of sexual violence formed in January 2013 during a research project by RLP and Johns Hopkins University of Public Health to develop a screening exercise for identifying male survivors of sexual violence. This support group is located in Nakivale which is one of Uganda’s largest refugee settlements hosting over 75,000 refugees. The current membership of the group is 140 encompassing refugees of various nationalities.

Men of Peace is one of our fastest growing refugee support group in terms of numbers. The group is using music, dance, and drama to carry out advocacy on the plight of male survivors of sexual violence by highlighting the severe lack of appropriate support services.

**Men of Courage**

This is a group of male survivors of sexual violence in northern Uganda who suffered at the hands of government soldiers (NRA) in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Although such sexual violence happened two decades ago, they still continue to struggle for survival and many still have untreated wounds. This group is mentored through the Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance Programme of RLP. Currently membership is 35 and the group still continues to grow as a result of community sensitisation and increasing awareness.