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The coalition in partnership with Civil Rights Defenders-Sweden(CRD), considered it necessary to re-tool these organizations with the basic safety tools that we strongly believe will boost the existing safety and security tools as a way of averting both the intentional and unintentional harms during the course of their work. As the team leader at the coalition, we take note and appreciate the gratitude expressed by both the beneficiary organizations and individual HRDs that have been reached by our support. We do hope that this small contribution in form of equipment will in one way or another enhance your office work towards human rights protection and promotion in your respective regions. We look forward to continued partnership and collaboration.

For God and My country.

Uganda: Standing side by side with grassroots Human Rights Defenders



COVID-19 pandemic has hit hard globally, Human Rights Defenders(HRDs) have not been spared by the effects of the global pandemic.

The effects have however been worst felt by HRDs advancing rights of the most marginalized communities in the remote areas of Uganda. The effects of the pandemic only weigh heavy on already existing challenges of HRDs. Over the years, HRDs in Uganda have reported various concerns affecting them including; a restrictive legal framework, office break-ins, physical assaults, arrests, harassment and intimidation by both state and non-state actors and other challenges. All these concerns appear to be associated with their work as HRDs. Such risks increase the vulnerability of HRDs and as such they need to be reviewed from time to time due to the ever-changing context and in the face of the pandemic these reviews are timely.

The human rights situation within the natural resources sectors such as oil, land and other extractives in the Albertine (Hoima and Bulisa) continue to present concerns for various actors condemned by both the general public and religious leaders. Many multi-national companies are vested in the oil related activities at the expense of the rights of the local communities. This has created a lot tension between HRDs and other actors which has resulted into serious threats towards the legitimate advocacy work of HRDs. Unlike the Albertine, Issues of land, cultural wrangles, transitional justice and Gender based violence are the major issues prevalent in Northern

region. While many NGOs in Uganda face both direct and indirect threats, whether being singled out and targeted, or facing risks through proximity and circumstance they are increasingly aware that safety and security can no longer be viewed as a stand-alone component of wider NGO sustainability and resiliency, but that the threats they face (and the risks which result) must be approached from a holistic standpoint, understanding the ripple effects that an incident can have across the organization, and the cascading risks that might result from a singular event.

Early this year, the NCHRD-U capacity building team undertook a capacity needs assessment for human rights grassroots organizations in the Albertine and Northern region with the help of the focal persons.

A thorough risk assessment exercise was conducted for a number of organisations aimed at assessing the existing safety and security measures and protocols in places and also assessing the existing risks, vulnerabilities and capacities and make recommendations that will in turn enhance the protection, safety and security of HRDs in both regions at both individual and organizational level. Eight(8) organisations were visited in the Albertine region and eighteen(18) organizations in Northern Uganda with each of these organisations working on a specific thematic area as indicated below.

Organizations that participated in the assessment.



Organization	Thematic Area
Mid-Western Anti-corruption Coalition	Governance & Accountability
Navigators of Development Association	Land rights
Hoima Union of Persons with Disability	People with Disability
Global rights Alert	Oil & Extractives
African Institute of Energy & Governance	Oil & Extractives
Bugungu Heritage & Information center	Ethnic minorities/Cultural rights
Kakindo Women integrated Development Organization	Women rights
Bulisa Rural Development Organization	Land rights

Organizations in Northern Uganda

Organization	Thematic Area
Human rights Focus	Land rights
African Center for Treatment & rehabilitation of torture Victims	Torture
Gulu Women's Empowerment Development & Globalization	Women
Foundation of Women Affected by Conflict	Women Rights
Children of the World	Children rights
Kitgum NGO Forum	Governance & Accountability
Pader Media Club	Journalist
ULS-Pader	Pro-bono lawyers

Women and	Women rights
Health and rights Initiative	LGBTI rights
Women Peace Initiative	Women rights
Northern Uganda efforts for the Needy	Youth and Women rights
Champion of Human rights Agenda	HRDs
Tok-Powa	Land rights
Pader NGO Forum	Governance & Accountability
Human Rights Focus- Pader	Land rights
African Youth initiative Network	Youth
Lira District women and Persons with Disability	Women with disability

As community ties continued to severe, the coalition had to stand side by side with the most disadvantaged HRDs to ensure they have the necessary support to continue their activities. Whilst the coalition extended CCTVs, Laptops, Monitors, CCTV cameras, Flash disks, external backup drives, Face masks, laptop desk locks, Kaspersky and basic security tips, it was aware of the effects of the pandemic. Therefore, a consignment of PPEs and facemasks were provided to which members expressed appreciation to the Coalition as reflected in their testimonies below:



Pamela Agwech- Executive Director GWED-G.

It's really good to know that at the national level there is someone/ organization we can rely on for partnership as we operate at the grass root level, this is the kind of commitment I love. As we work with in the shrinking space we need such collaborations and commitments. This support means a lot to us and we are indeed grateful for the thought.



Victor Ochen –Executive Director AYINET.

NCHRD-U is a back up to our back up, there many needs in our work and this area of security is very imperative in safe guarding our properties from perpetrators in this world of uncertainty. We are glad to see that the risk assessment conducted has resulted into this support.



Janepher Baitwamase – Navigators for Development (NAVODA)

“There are many grass-root defenders who need such support especially in these uncertain times of COVID-19 and the upcoming 2021 general elections. This support is really going to change our operations as HRDs in the extractive sector.

Rashida Odong Executive Director

“We are very grateful for the support. It is a back up to our organization’s information system. It will help improve on our digital performance and safety in terms of data collection, storage and communication for example attending online meetings like zoom and E conferences. UWOPi, it is a real motivation to our work as HRDs.”



**National coalition of
Human Rights Defenders**



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Back end CCTV set up at MidWestern Anti-corruption coalition offices in Hoima



AFIEGO's Sandra Atugonza receives software and PPEs



Bugungu Heritage and Information centre in Bulisa equipped with a laptop and PPEs.



Assessment mission head and Capacity building officer Prossy Babirye and Program assistant Frank Kigoye in a group photo with the team from African Youth Network (AYINET) led by Victor Ochen at their offices.



Ms. Margeret Akullo receives a laptop from the NCHRD-U team at Health and Rights Initiative offices in Lira



Equipment handover inclusive of CCTV cameras to Mid Western Anti-Corruption coalition Hoima



Navigators for Development-Hoima receive equipment and PPEs from the coalition secretariat



Ms. Pamela Angwech 2018 Human rights Defender of the year and executive Director GWED-G and her team in a photo opportunity with the NCHRD-U team.



Leadership of Kakindo Women Intergrated Development Organisation receive PPEs



Solidarity visit by the NCHRD-U team to the Hoima Uganda Human Rights Commission office

