

ORGANIZATIONAL BRIEF

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA (CHRDA)

INTRODUCTION

In 2005, Barrister Felix Agbor Nkongho (Balla) established CHRDA, an organization devoid of political affiliations and driven solely by a commitment to noble ideals. With a captivating vision, CHRDA stands as a beacon dedicated to the advancement and safeguarding of human rights and democracy, radiating a spirit of unyielding devotion to these fundamental values.

HISTORY AND ORIGIN

The Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa.

(CHRDA) is an independent and apolitical non-governmental organization in Africa. CHRDA is a non-profit making organization created purposely for the promotion, protection and respect of human rights and democracy. To achieve these goals, CHRDA complies with national and international laws governing nongovernmental organizations and their activities. Before 2005, CHRDA was known as the committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Cameroon. In 2005, it was renamed the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa. While drawing inspiration from a series of discussions in the University of Notre Dame law school among young, energetic and aspiring students, the founder of CHRDA, Bar. Felix Agbor Nkongho (Balla) did not only rename the organization on paper but its regional offices were also created in Cameroon, Sierra Leon, and the United States of America. Our work ranges from human rights monitoring, documenting and reporting, humanitarian aid, Research, and provision of pro bono legal aid to victims of human rights violations, peace and democracy, empowerment of conflict victims and vulnerable groups, advocacy, sensitization, and a host of other activities.

MISSION

CHRDA is a Civil Society, Human Rights and Humanitarian Organization, whose mission is to enhance the promotion, protection, and respect of human rights and democracy, good governance, develop strategies and gather resources in securing compliance with human rights norms, partnership with other institutions to improve human rights situations, keep violations/abuses to a

minimum, and encourage ratification of international treaties and agreements related to human rights and the rule of law.

In addition, CHRDA provides legal services to victims of human rights violations/abuses at the national and international level (National Courts, African Commission, UN, etc.), humanitarian response to survivors of catastrophes including armed conflict, Legal Assistance to Victims of Human Rights abuses (individual and groups) by working in close collaboration with legal practitioners who render pro bono services, collaborate with members of the Legislative, Judicial and Executive arms of Government so as to bring the necessary legal changes, which serve as a liaison with other domestic and international Non – Governmental Organizations focused on human rights, ranging from educational Institutions, Governmental and Intergovernmental bodies to charitable organizations.

OUR ULTIMATE STANDARDS

Neutrality:

CHRDA remains neutral in its work as well as weekly, quarterly and periodical reports/publications on human rights, governance, and humanitarian developments.

Humanity:

We value our staff, volunteers, interns, donors, and resource persons who foster and promote our mission with the intention to see our goals attained, as well as the beneficiaries we serve.

Diversity:

We are a civil society, Human Rights, and Humanitarian Organization. We promote and protect human rights and our priority varies in that regard as per the need of our communities. We engage professionals, learners and institution's representatives in our programs and all other stakeholders.

Non-Discrimination:

CHRDA upholds the principles of equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination in all its activities. We recognize the multiplicity of the sociocultural heritage of all stakeholders. Without discrimination, we involve all stakeholders from different cultural and political backgrounds

taking into consideration gender equality. We equally mainstream gender equality in our programming. Cooperation: To achieve our goals, we network, partner, and establish strategic communal relationships with all patrons.

WHERE WE WORK

We currently implement projects, and operate in Cameroon with offices in Buea-Southwest Region (head office) and Bamenda Northwest Region and the Far North regions.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND THEIR EXPERTISE

HUMAN RIGHTS:

Our human rights department is dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Our major activities include:

1. Monitoring, documenting and reporting of human rights violations.
2. Capacity building workshops and trainings on human rights for human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and other civil society stakeholders.
3. Advocacy and lobbying for policy changes in the domain of human rights, at the national, regional and international level.
4. Human rights case management.
5. Research and publication of human rights documents.
6. Pro-bono legal services and habeas corpus, through the aid of CHRDA's legal department.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE:

We focus on providing emergency assistance, relief, and support to individuals and communities affected by crises, disasters, or conflicts, with a goal to save lives, alleviate suffering, and promote human dignity in crises, while also working towards long-term sustainable solutions. Some key responsibilities and activities of our humanitarian department include:

1. Needs assessments and monitoring.
2. Emergency response planning and implementation.
3. Food, shelter, and non-food item distribution.
4. Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs.
5. Health and medical services.
6. Protection services (child protection, gender-based violence prevention).
7. Livelihood support.
8. Disaster response, disaster risk reduction and management.
9. Community engagement and participation.
10. Coordination with other NGOs, UN agencies, and government entities.
11. Fundraising and resource mobilization.
12. Advocacy and policy influence.

GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT:

The Gender Department aims to promote gender equality, women's rights, and inclusive decision-making processes, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and harmonious society.

Our major activities include:

1. Gender mainstreaming: Integrating gender perspectives into policies, programs, and practices.
2. Research and education: Conducting research, teaching courses, and providing training on gender-related topics.
3. Policy development: Creating and advocating for policies that promote gender equality.
4. Community engagement: Building partnerships with organizations and communities to advance gender equality.
5. Support services: Providing resources, counselling, and support for individuals affected by gender-based discrimination or violence.
6. Advocacy and activism: Promoting gender equality through awareness campaigns, events, and activism.
7. Monitoring and evaluation: Tracking progress toward gender equality goals and assessing program effectiveness.
8. Capacity building: Strengthening skills and knowledge of staff, students, or community members on gender-related issues.
9. Creating inclusive environments: Fostering welcoming spaces that respect and value diversity.
10. Addressing gender-based violence: Providing support, resources, and initiatives to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

PEACE AND DEMOCRACY:

Peace and Democracy is one of the Departments of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa. The department has as focus to address pressing issues as a leading advocate for innovative conflict resolution approaches throughout Cameroon. Over the past six years, there has been considerable discourse surrounding peace and conflict in Cameroon. With this, the department has as task to carry out situational analysis on the Anglophone conflict, political transition and other democratic issues. The activities of the department gear towards promoting good governance, peace, strengthening democratic processes, and addressing key political and social challenges in Cameroon.

Activities/area of intervention:

1. Peacebuilding and conflict management.
2. Mentorship.
3. Peer mediation.
4. Democratic processes.
5. Outreach education to students/youths/communities on culture of peace.
6. Conflict Analysis.

Target population:

1. Youths.
2. Women and men.
3. Traditional and Administrative authorities.
4. Religious bodies.
5. Other vulnerable groups of persons (e.g. Internally Displaced Persons).

RESEARCH:

The research department typically aims to advance knowledge, drive innovation, and inform decision-making.

Objectives include:

1. Conducting high-quality research: Producing rigorous, impactful, and peer-reviewed studies.
2. Advancing knowledge: Expanding understanding in specific fields or disciplines.
3. Informing decision-making: Providing evidence-based insights for policy, or societal decisions.
4. Fostering innovation: Developing new technologies, products, or processes.
5. Collaboration and partnerships: Building relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
6. Mentoring and training developing research skills and expertise among staff and students.
7. Securing funding: Attracting grants, contracts, and other resources to support research activities.
8. Disseminating research findings: Sharing results through publications, presentations, and public engagement.
9. Evaluating and improving research quality: Assessing and enhancing research methodologies and outcomes.
10. Supporting strategic goals: Aligning research with organizational objectives and priorities.
11. Encouraging interdisciplinary research: Fostering collaborations across disciplines and fields.
12. Promoting research ethics and integrity: Upholding highest standards of research conduct and integrity.

PROJECTS:

The department has been progressing steadily achieving significant goals in resource mobilization through donor search, grant writing and project implementation.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of CHRDA project department's activities from January-November 2024.

The role of the project department is to mobilize resources (material, financial) for the implementation of activities to generate outputs and outcomes that will contribute to the achievement of the goal of the organization; and create a positive impact in the lives of community members.

Resource mobilization has mainly been through the search for potential donors through the internet and collaboration and partnership with national and international organizations; and the implementation of projects resulting from grant awards.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Our communications department typically handles internal and external communications, to effectively, convey the organization's message, mission, and work. Our key responsibilities include:

1. **Media Relations:** Building relationships with media outlets, pitching stories, and managing press coverage.
2. **Content Creation:** Developing engaging content (written, visual, video) for various channels, such as social media, websites, newsletters, and reports.
3. **Social Media Management:** Managing social media presence, creating content, and engaging with online communities.
4. **Public Relations:** Creating and maintaining the organization's public image, handling crises, and ensuring consistent messaging.
5. **Internal Communications:** Facilitating communication among staff, management, and stakeholders through newsletters and intranet.
6. **Branding and Visual Identity:** Developing and maintaining the organization's brand, logo, and visual identity.
7. **Campaigns and Events:** Organizing and promoting events, campaigns, and fundraising initiatives.
8. **Storytelling:** Collecting and sharing stories of impact, beneficiaries, and successes to display the organization's work.
9. **Reputation Management:** Monitoring and addressing online reviews, feedback, and concerns.
10. **Strategic Communications Planning:** Developing communication strategies aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.
11. **Raising awareness about the organization's mission and work, and amplifying the impact of programs and services.**

CONCLUSION

As a civil society, human rights and humanitarian organization, CHRDA has been implementing ongoing projects, documenting human rights violations, gender based violence, advocacy, sensitization and humanitarian outreach. We have been able to touch the lives of teenagers, youths and vulnerable women affected by conflict through several programs in our empowerment centre and CIT unit on economic empowerment and the acquisition of digital skills. CHRDA has also done publications ranging from the famous Unheard Voices of the Anglophone War Victims to other publications on Physical and Digital security. Strategic orientation against the backdrop of the unpredictable and complex situation of armed conflict in Cameroon's North West and South West Regions where we operate.

THANK YOU!