



Centre for Human Rights  
and Democracy in Africa

**CHRDA**

Promoting and Protecting Human Rights and Democracy



**CHRDA** | **20**  
**ANNUAL REPORT** | **23**



**CHRDA**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge our funders, the relentless efforts and contributions of our staff in the successful implementation of our projects as well as our partners.

## THE PURPOSE AND FOCUS OF THIS REPORT.

This report is an overview of who we are and the work we have done for the year 2023.

This report does not cover all activities of the past months in detail, but highlights all major activities.

To view our activities visit [www.chrda.org](http://www.chrda.org) and to stay updated with our daily activities, follow our social media handles.

- **Instagram:** chrda\_official
- **X :** chrda\_africa
- **Facebook:** chrda.org
- **LinkedIn:** Center for human rights and democracy in Africa
- **Play store:** Community Reporter

## 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 nonprofit 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 Defense 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 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.

## **OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

- Advocacy.
- Sensitization.
- Monitor, document and report on the human rights situation in Cameroon.

### **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

Protection: keep people safe from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation and foster an environment that is conducive to respect for the lives and dignity of people affected by armed conflicts and any kind of situations of violence.

Provide relief to persons affected by violence/armed conflict in order to preserve/restore acceptable living conditions (until their basic needs are met by authorities or via their own means).

Sustainable livelihood: An aspect of our development programming. Enhance people's capacity to acquire basic necessities in order to satisfy the basic needs for themselves and their households, in the effect of emergency response CHRDA Empowerment Centre serves as the primary platform for this program.

## **GENDER**

Promote gender equality, women empowerment and women's rights -Advocate for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. Gender task force's (team of gender specialist) provision of input on gender perspective (gender mainstreaming) to all our project conception and design.

## **PEACE AND DEMOCRACY**

Advocate for policies that help prevent conflicts - Mediate in conflicts at local/national and international level - Making the rules known (sensitization) -Develop knowledge products (tools, methodologies, updates, reports) to further position CHRDA in the areas of conflict prevention and peace building.

## **RESEARCH**

Charged with producing relevant and constructive perspectives on current issues through the highest academic standards. We carry out interdisciplinary research on crosscutting issues relating to human rights methods and theories across the different departments of CHRDA.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The communication department is in charge of disseminating information within and out of the organization. This is the only official means for the dissemination of information in the organization. The department is also in charge of developing advocacy and sensitization tools, project briefings and all forms of internal communication from drafting press releases to statements

and developing terms of reference, and also managing the official website and social media platforms of the organization.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

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 center 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. Specifically, we made the following significant achievements in the first half of the year, and we look forward to doing more before the end of 2023.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

CHRDA successfully published over 15 statements condemning human rights violations and abuses in Cameroon and especially in the North West and South West Regions, 12 monthly reports on the ongoing-armed conflicts in the Far North Regions. In line with the campaign and advocacy, we initiated an online campaign against drug consumption, a campaign for the reduction of house rents in student residential areas. In terms of building capacity, we trained 300 lawyers on strategic litigation, and more than 500 community leaders, journalists, human rights defenders, religious and traditional leaders on community mobilization, good practices in the civil space, human rights monitoring, documentation and reporting. We also improved their capacities on digital and physical security in conflict situations. We visited four Cameroonian Prisons and recorded the deplorable prison conditions amid risks of transmittable deceases.

To contribute to the protection of Human rights in Cameroon, we filed at least 50 habeas in the Northwest and Southwest Regions to demand for the release of those arbitrarily arrested and

detained. CHRDA equally intervened at the level of police cells to aid the release of those arbitrarily arrested and detained by elements of the Cameroon Military and as a result, at least five people were able to gain freedom and we are still following up with a number of cases.

A major achievement of the institution accomplished through this department was the attendance and contribution of CHRDA in the 77th Ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. Through its monitoring and reporting role, it released a statement on the Execution of unarmed civilians in Bamenyam, Bamendou of the West Region and took part in a Panel Discussion on Current Status of Human Rights situation around the world organized by the International Society for Human Rights.

## **HUMANITERIAN**

Since January 2023, the Centre for Human Rights Democracy in Africa has directly empowered more than 100 women and youths as direct beneficiaries of our empowerment centre programs and trainings on digital and information technologies and accessories production. The first session of the capacity building training, hosted in March with 50 participants.

CHRDA also has a fashion and academic training program for vulnerable women affected by conflict. Through the production of women accessories, participants benefitted from trainings on how to recycle waste materials to create traditional and modern fascinators, beaded products and necklaces, jewellery and to revamp old bags and shoes. On information and communication technologies, participants were drilled on how to use the digital ecosystem to market their products on the internet, through creating blogs, digital marketing with a focus on social media marketing. Emphasis was laid on the importance of digital marketing tools over mainstream marketing, due to the growth of e-commerce.

In addition, following the violent attack on the Egbekaw Community in Mamfe, CHRDA and the Mammi De Bolonia Foundation donated household Items in the form of food items, buckets, mattresses to the victims.





*Figure 1: Participants of CHRDA Empowerment program on IT*



*Figure 2: Women Accessories from the Empowerment Training*



*Figure 3: Participants of the March Empowerment Program*

## **GENDER EQUALITY**

Apart from ensuring and bringing gender mainstreaming to all our programs and projects, our gender task force carried out significant women and youth empowerment activities throughout the 2023 working year.

The Gender task force of CHRDA carried out an outreach and sensitization in commemoration of the menstrual hygiene day 2023, reaching out to 300 women in host communities for IDPs within Buea, We make use of our digital platforms for online advocacy and sensitization, through drafting short messages to targeted audience. The gender department has also been actively involved in GBV documentation and case referrals.

The gender department engaged strongly in advocacy against Gender Based Violence. The 16 days of Activism against GBV was designed around four key points, which were Advocacy for more

funding, Involving Men and Boys as front line Actors, Empowering Vulnerable Women and engaging all Actors in the fight against GBV. Not limited to running campaigns, the department organized and participated in activities, creating a ripple effect of awareness on GBV. Some of the activities were:

- Round table discussions on how to enhance the participation of men and boys in the GBV Agenda organized by CHRDA and GIZ.
- Training with UN Trust fund to end violence against Women.
- Working sessions with Protection Actors in Dschang (West Region) to denounce GBV.
- Empowerment of 40 Women and Girls in Conflict Affected North West and South West Regions.
- Another highlight of the activities this department carried out was contributing to the production of the movie “The Assaulted”. This movie was an advocacy tool against GBV.



*Figure 3: Outreach and sensitization on menstrual hygiene day 2023*



*Figure 5: Outreach and sensitization on menstrual hygiene day 2023*

## **PEACE AND DEMOCRACY**

CHRDA organized several conferences and workshops aimed at advocating for peace and youth engagement in politics at the community and national levels. We targeted mostly Grassroots Civil Society Organization, we equally carried out media campaigns online and on mainstream media (TV and Radio) to educate the public on the need conflict prevention, hate speech and youth participation in politics at the municipal and national levels.

During our conferences/workshops, resolutions are arrived at ways to engage stakeholders, institutions, national and international organizations can facilitate peace, women and youth engagement processes in politics. We have also written statements and recommendations to the South West Peace and Development Forum.

In the second half of the year, stakeholder engagement was a major objective in this department. As a stakeholder, CHRDA took part in a roundtable discussion for conflict resolution and Peace

building in Cameroon organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. CHRDA also organized a Stakeholder engagement meeting with 30 mentees under the project Engaging Youths in Civic Processes in the south west region.

Beyond Cameroon, CHRDA attended the regional consultation on the “Right to Development as a tool for transformation and its nexus with Peace and Security in Ethiopia.” The presentation by CHRDA shun light on the initiatives this department underwent for peace processes at all levels of the community. In addition, 2023 saw the launching of the Permanent Regional Consultation platform between Elections Cameroon and other stakeholders on the Electoral Process and CHRDA participated in this launching represented by the President of CHRDA.

## COMMUNICATION

The Communication department worked throughout the year to ensure CHRDA’s identity visibility and branding. To this effect, campaigns and international days were commemorated accordingly to celebrate and raise awareness on topical issues in Cameroon and beyond. Press briefings on the human rights situation in Cameroon were done. CHRDA made use of traditional media such as the radio to discuss its Midterm Report. It made use of its social media platforms on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X to run a social media campaign on volunteerism dubbed “Everyone Did” and another against Fake News. Through social media, CHRDA declared its stance on the attack on Muea and condoled with the victims of the Mbankolo landslide.

## RESEARCH

Under research, we have published several books and articles in the first half of the year. The impeccable Unheard Voices of the Anglophone war victims, which demonstrates on the ground experience of the impacts of the arm conflict in the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon. The centre has equally published:

- digital and physical security of human rights defenders meant to equip human rights activities and media personals on
- a handbook on Gender Based Violence

- digital citizenship
- child soldier



*Figure 6: Unheard Voices of the Anglophone War Victims*



*Figure 7: The Unheard Voices of the Anglophone War Victims*

## **CAPACITY BUILDING/TRAININGS**

Since January, CHRDA has been able to build capacity of more than 250 direct participants in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of the country. Participants

Of this, trainings include lawyers, civil society organizations, community leaders, and journalist/media personals. Some of our trainings include:

- Building the Capacity of Community leaders in supporting women’s participation in conflict resolution in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)
- Building the capacity of lawyers in the South West Region on strategic human rights litigation. This is one of our several workshops towards facilitating access to accountable,



fair and independent Justice in the Crises-affected Regions of the North West, South West and Far North Regions of Cameroon. Funded by the Open Society Foundations (OSF)

- Building the capacity of journalists/media persons on media coverage of human rights violations and denial of access to accountable, fair and independent justice for persons arbitrarily arrested and detained in relations to the conflict in the Northwest, Southwest and Far North regions of Cameroon. Funded by the Open Society Foundations (OSF)
- Building the capacity of over 50 actors selected from Faith Based and Civil Society Organizations in the North West Region on human rights monitoring, documentation, accountability and reporting. Funded by the Open Society Foundations (OSF)



*Figure 8: Northwest lawyers participating in training*



*Figure 9: Building Capacity of Community leaders in the SW*



*Figure 10: capacity of journalist in the SW*



*Figure 11: Building capacity of lawyers on strategic litigation in the SW*

## **STATEMENT TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS**

We heartily acknowledge the support and confidence so far 2023 from our donors and partners. We remain grateful to them for walking with us and we look forward to doing more in the future. Together let us create a better world.

### **STAFF**

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