



PURSUING JUSTICE

ASHAH RAZYN FOUNDATION (ARF)



ARF OFFICES

P.O BOX 30055,

Kampala, Uganda

Plot 109, Mbuya, Port Bell Rd (*BUGOLOBI*)

Telephone: +256-414-696426

Email: info@arfuganda.org

Web: www.arfuganda.org

LIST OF ACCRONYMS

<i>ARF</i>	<i>Ashah Razyn Foundation</i>
<i>PHRC</i>	<i>participatory Human Rights Clubs</i>
<i>NAPE</i>	<i>National association of Professional Environmentalists</i>
<i>HRCU</i>	<i>Human Rights Centre Uganda</i>
<i>LASPNET</i>	<i>LEGAL AID Service providers Network</i>
<i>CCEDU</i>	<i>CITIZENS Coalition for electoral democracy in Uganda</i>
<i>CSBAG</i>	<i>Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group</i>
<i>VV</i>	<i>Vital Voices</i>
<i>CU</i>	<i>Constitution of Uganda</i>
<i>UDHR</i>	<i>Universal Declaration of Human rights</i>

Word from the Board chairperson

PICTURE

2013 marked a significant mile stone in the history of Ashah Razyn Foundation (ARF). The year in which the organization was founded and marked a kick start off of its work in the provision of legal aid services to indigent Ugandans. ARF seeks to make public justice systems work for victims of abuse and oppression who urgently need to benefit from the rule of law. We fight for the restoration and non-abuse of human rights ranging from Civic rights, political, socio- economic rights. In our programs, we work with other stake holders in spearheading the various state human rights obligations. In 2013, ARF embarked on provision of legal aid, human rights advocacy and rule of law. This we did through partnership at all levels.

It is well known that currently legal aid in Uganda amounts to a patchwork of services provided by state and non-state actors. In summary: There is a legal aid policy vacuum. There is no national legal aid body to manage legal aid service provision. Tremendous energy needs to be added because access to justice for the rural and urban poor as well as vulnerable persons is restricted due to poverty; access to lawyers is limited, especially in rural areas; and the basic lack of knowledge on procedures of access to justice and available providers of support services is a major complaint.

As we move into 2014, we plan to embark so much on provision of legal aid and create a unified voice to for the marginalized people in the selected areas of operation, embark on a systematic and long drawn out struggle to gradually unleash their enormous productive potential from bondage that reduced them to sub – humans and instead be active participants in regard to respecting their human rights, access to justice and achieving sustainable development while improving their livelihoods.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Board of Directors, management committee and staff of ARF to express and extend my sincere gratitude to all our dear partners and networks as well as government for all the support they have accorded ARF in the operation of its work.

FOREWORD



Mwanga Mastullah Ashah Kiwanuka

Executive Director

I am honoured on behalf of Ashah Razyn Foundation (ARF) to present to you our Annual report for the year 2013. I beg to put it to you that ARF was established last year 2013 September which year we had to operate for only four months and the year ended. Therefore, at this point in our history, we thank the Almighty God for his blessings and guidance one, for enabling us establish the foundation and for furthering us to another level of running and implementing our strategic plan. 2013 is a very historical year for us at ARF and in the history of Uganda because it is a year in which we came out to un -veil ARF as an organization that had come out to also add its voice on the already existing organisations. Our emphasis is on human rights advocacy, rule of law and provision of legal aid to indigent Ugandans and any other vulnerable groups.

I wish to commend all our hardworking, very strong and active institutional staff for their perseverance and commitment exhibited last year 2013 and urge them to continue with the same. There is no doubt that with such committed staff, ARF shall fail to mark a number of mile stones in the growth, protection, promotion and fulfillment of human rights in Uganda. I also thank our Board Members who played a vital role in the establishment of the foundation and the support that they have accorded us.

Special thanks also go to our partners especially Vital Voices for their support to the foundation. We also wish to extend the so many networks and the larger community of Uganda for their financial, moral, and physical contribution to our work. Surely at the opening of ARF, we reached out to so many of you out there seeking partnership and bringing us on board and I must send our sincere regards to you all, for, you really showed us a positive reception and we hope that this shall continue as we fight for a better society free from human rights violations, rule of law as well providing legal aid to victims of human rights violations.

This report gives you insights about ARF in our Four Months of operation besides specific highlights drawn from experiences of the year 2013.

During the community out reaches and sensitization's we conducted, we found that: The multiple challenges of promoting the rule of law are not restricted to one region as opposed to another, but occur in every society at various degrees. During our operation and the wide scope of our work through research, we further found that promoting the rule of law in conflict affected countries like Uganda constitutes a particular challenge, because the very nature of armed conflict is violent conflict-resolution. Conflict prevention remains the most cost-effective and politically viable option in safeguarding the rule of law but this has not come to passing Uganda.

As we proceed into the 2014, ARF shall continue to implement our three year strategic plan. Under this, we shall aim at addressing the knowledge gap in Human rights awareness through partnership at all levels along side media houses. To achieve the above, focus will be on provision of legal aid. This will involve the provision of free legal services to the poor and vulnerable. We shall make sure that Legal aid extends beyond representation by a lawyer in a court but also to include legal advice and assistance on both civil and criminal matters. As you may all be aware, Legal aid is a right of every Ugandan citizen.

The major question is Can there be effective administration of justice to all in Uganda when the majority are too poor to afford legal representation? I leave you with that question and in our next annual report, we shall have answers for that as more emphasis is going to be put on legal aid to victims of human rights violations.

Vision

A society accessing quality legal assistance and free from all kinds of human rights abuses

Mission

To build and strengthen a sustainable, transparent, accountable and democratic society free from Human Rights abuse while spearheading access to justice through human rights based legal aid, advocacy, implementation and partnership at all levels.

Our values

At ARF, we understand and believe that strong local partnerships are crucial to achieving our set goals, mission and vision and that our laid strategies can take us to greater heights. To this end, our values are therefore;

- Equity and justice
- Transparency
- Inclusivity
- Professional excellence
- Upholding the rule of law, access to justice, democracy and good governance

Objectives:

- To provide legal aid services to the vulnerable groups of persons
- To empower communities to demand for their human rights
- To contribute to the justice system and the rule of law in Uganda
- To combat impunity and strengthening accountability, rule of law and democratic institutions`
- To advocate for human rights, law reform , better policies and practices.

Our Goals

- To make legal aid accessible
- To promote access to justice

- Contribute to the practice of law for the benefit of the people of Uganda in pursuit of achieving good governance
- To promote sustainable organizational and capacity building development

Key Objectives:

- To provide legal aid to indigent ugandans
- To empower communities to demand for their human rights
- To contribute to the justice system and the rule of law in Uganda through Advocacy, implementation and partnership at all levels

Executive Summary

Whereas Uganda's economy has shown steady growth for the past 10 years, this has not been reflected in the standards of living of the rural poor especially women and youth whose incomes on the contrary have continued to decline. ARF therefore, through WYE department mobilises solidarity groups, train them and encourage them in issues pertaining their development, legal rights and demanding for accountability. This department empowers women and the Youth economically and socially to improve incomes and standards of living. At the National level, Ugandas society is partly, or wholly, reduced to a theatre of gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law. Constitutional rights have been superseded by emergency laws and civilian courts by adhoc military courts. Armed actors have tended to be the principal agents of "law and order", often at the cost of basic human rights and customary practices. Military expenditures dominate national resources and budget allocations, while limited means, if any, are allocated to basic services and opportunities for economic prosperity. Police, courts and prisons are suffering capacity and competence gap, lack the incentives (or simply the operational tools) to guarantee and protect human rights. Conversely, the political and military environment is often not conducive to respect professional integrity and legal imperatives.

The majority of individuals and communities in Uganda are vulnerable, socially excluded and unable to enjoy and effectively claim their rights by virtue of their circumstances, sex or age among other factors: religious, cultural, political and socio- economic e.g. poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and ignorance. Other communities are disadvantaged and marginalised by virtue of their location and voicelessness e.g. minority tribes and those in rural settings and far to reach areas.

In the Participatory Poverty Assessment on Safety, Security, and Access to Justice, conducted by the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) in 2002, poverty was reported to severely constrain safety, security and access to justice, particularly for women. The poor reported that expensive, cumbersome and complex procedures severely reduced their use of formal justice systems. Constraints highlighted by the poor included lack of access to legal services, gender based obstacles and inadequate legal awareness among others. As a consequence of poverty, disempowerment severely constrains access to justice for the poor. On the other hand, failure to

realize legal protection through justice delivery agencies results in disempowerment of the users. The intersection between poverty and access to justice is therefore manifested in empowerment.

ARF PROGRAMME THEMATIC AREAS

- Rule of Law
- Legal Aid and Pro bono Services
- Socio - economic Rights
- Transitional and Social Justice
- Gender and the Law/Women and the Youth
- Policy Analysis and Advocacy
- Research
- Organisational Development

2013 PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

RULE OF LAW

The rule of law thrust aims at advocating for a system of rules and rights that enables fair and functioning societies. ARF defines this system as one in which the following four universal principles are upheld:

1. The government and its officials and agents as well as individuals and private entities are accountable under the law.
2. The laws are clear, publicized, stable, and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property.
3. The process by which the laws are enacted, administered, and enforced is accessible, fair, and efficient.
4. Justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are of sufficient number, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.

During the year, the programme made considerable achievements some of which are shared here under in;

Press Conference on Rule of Law, Human Rights and Manhandling of City Lawyer During Lord Mayors Impeachment

In a bid of advocating for the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights in the Ugandan society, ARF convened a press conference following 25th November 2013 incident at KCCA, of removing Kampala Lord Mayor Erias Lukwago with KCCA councilors meeting at City Hall. The press conference was to make a call against the un lawful acts which marred KCCA and areas surrounding Kampala.



ARF Executive Director responding to a question raised by the media personel, on her left is Mr. Olweny Charles-VEDCO and ARF Board Chair Person Mr. Wepondi GeoffreyR right.

The same conference condemned the unlawful acts of torture that were inflicted on one city lawyer who while carrying out his legal duties of delivering an interim order restraining and immediately stopping the 1st respondent (Kampala minister Frank Tumwebaze) from convening a meeting of KCCA and proceeding with a vote for the removal of the Applicant from the office of the lord mayor of KCCA, Mr Kiwanuka Abdallah was manhandled by security operatives both in plain clothes and in uniform at the entrance of City Hall gate. Police and plain-clothed security operatives also threw and manhandled councilor Allan Ssewanyana out of KCCA. MPs Ken Lukyamuzi and Latif Sebagala were barred from getting into the council chambers. All these acts subjected them to torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment contrary to Article five, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Uganda's supreme law, The 1995 Constitution

under Article 24. ARF conducted this press conference which was fruitful as it added on the other voice in the country for purposes of emphasizing rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights.

Media Campaigns



A cross section of participants and media houses during a rule of law press conference at ARF Offices-Bugolobi

RADIO TALK SHOWS

ARF was given space on Pearl FM as a key stakeholder to educate the public about human rights. This we did on the 23rd of March 2014 at Pearl FM studios. The talk show was participatory as listeners had a session to call in and there on, answers were responded to. This enabled us to achieve one of our objectives of creating awareness on human rights and the right to health in particular.

Legal Aid and Pro bono Services

The provision of legal aid to the indigent has emerged as a dominant intervention in enhancing access to justice for the poor. This comprises legal representation, mediation, advice and counseling, referral as well as legal education.

ARF is much aware of the fact that majority of Ugandans live below the poverty line and that their situation is further aggravated by lack of access to justice.

In the first year of operation, ARF offered quality legal assistance to indigent and vulnerable people in Uganda specifically in its areas of operation. ARF aimed at and sought to make public justice systems work for victims of abuse and oppression that urgently needed to benefit from the rule of law. We fought for the restoration and non-abuse of human rights ranging from civic rights, political and socio-economic rights most of whom were achieved through our sensitisations.

Through the provision of legal services to our beneficiaries, we were in position to address the concerns of the poor and vulnerable by focusing on challenges arising from: affordability of user costs, lack of legal representation, alienation due to technicalities and ignorance of legal rights.

Out reach model – as the name suggests, ARF adopted this model where services are taken to communities by our staff and trained paralegals. It takes the form of legal awareness sessions on key legal issues and basic human rights, legal education, mobile clinics. ARF employed the use of both the clinic model and out reach model of service delivery



ARF legal Officer Mariah Goorreti Nalwoga during an outreach model in Wakiso District

Training in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

ARF conducted two ADR activities in Namayumba and Gombe Sub counties which involved sensitizing masses in the chosen areas on the principle of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a mechanism of solving disputes without necessarily going to court. This involves diverse issues which involve complex issues of both law and fact as well as the advantages of ADR as opposed to court. Training such as in ADR enabled these vulnerable groups resolve their disputes at the family and community level. It further helped enhance awareness of legal and human rights and empowered communities to claim their rights and advocate for social, policy and legal change at community and national level.



ARF staff and Participants pose for a group photo after training in ADR at Gombe sub county headquarters in Wakiso District

Mediation Exercises

ARF conducted one mediation exercise pertaining the assault of one of our beneficiaries Ms. Nanfuka Joyce a resident of Gombe Sub County, Wakiso District. A mediation exercise was conducted because we believed that this process could facilitate an early resolution of this claim and offer both parties a less adversarial environment in which to do so than going to court and would therefore fasten access to justice. The complainant was represented by ARF lawyer whereas the respondent Mr. Nondo Mohamad was represented by his lawyers from Mwebe, Sebagala & Co. Advocates. The issues between the two parties were amicably resolved and saw the two back home as husband wife. While legal aid interventions do not in principle transform the poverty situation of the recipients of services, ARF believes that it contributes to the empowerment of individuals and communities – a key ingredient of poverty reduction efforts.

Provision of legal Opinions on any matter arising

ARF offered legal opinions on ten (20) legal matters which arose from our beneficiaries. These were on beneficiaries request and some were at our own investigation after analyzing a problem. The legal opinions ranged from compliance advice on transactions or private arrangements,

review of standard forms of agreement, advice on legal and regulatory compliance and identifying legal hitches and loopholes and how to circumvent them. This was done after detailed research by legal assistants who discussed their opinions with the senior Advocates and a common opinion of the law was formed and put down in writing.



A participant expresses her self during a legal training in Wakiso District

Training and sensitization on Land laws and rights

Land is the most important resource in Uganda because people depend on it for cultivation and therefore their livelihoods. In Uganda, as elsewhere in the world, unequal access to land is one of the most important forms of economic inequality between men and women and has consequences for women as social and political actors. Land is a basic source of livelihood providing employment, the key agricultural input, and a major determinant of a farmer's access to other productive resources and services. Against this background, ARF conducted land

sensitizations in its districts of operation. This ranged from the districts of Wakiso, Bududda and Kiryandongo districts respectively.



Human Rights Sensitization

In understanding human rights advocacy, ARF educated the participants and reflected on demand for human rights in reference to the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Local government act, Budget act, Children act and Health act. Institutional framework was reflected i.e Government has set up a number of institutions to increase citizen involvement in policy processes & decision making, such a Parliament, National planning Authority, IGG, convention on the rights of the children , Rights based approach etc under which Participants were educated on why they need to advocate for human rights.



ARF's Geoffrey Turyamusima during a creation awareness sensitization in Buikwe

Training of Trainers in Gombe Sub County

ARF conducted one TOT in Gombe Sub –County Waksio District. The goal of the Training was to establish a team of resource persons and equip PHRCs with knowledge in rule of law, advocacy, design and delivery of effective goal oriented human rights monitoring and violation tracking in our districts of operation.

The Specific Objectives were;

- To orient PHRCs about ARF work
- To increase PHRCs knowledge about monitoring service delivery
- To guide participants in training delivery in terms of content and process
- To develop the Action Plan for the respective community trainings.



Participants pose for a group photo after the TOT in Gombe Sub county-Wakiso District

INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING

A number of activities were conducted for purposes of strengthening ARF;

Setting up and establishment of the legal Resource Centre



Part of the shelves in ARF legal resource centre

Board meeting

ARF conducted its first board meeting on Wednesday 16th October 2013 at 2:00pm at ARF Offices. This was the first ever Board meeting of ARF. Its major objective was to familiarize the board members with ARF work. This meeting helped in strategizing ARF plans for the entire year 2013 and its future plans.



ARF staff Pose for a group Photo with Board Members after the first ever ARF Board Meeting at ARF offices.

ARF Staff Capacity Building.

ARF conducted weekly staff meetings. These aimed at training ARF staff in various disciplines ranging from resource mobilization, human resource, networking, project planning and management among others.



ARF staff makes a submission during a training in resource mobilisation training in December 2013

Annual Reflection and Planning meeting

We conducted the Annual Planning meeting in December at Rida Hotel-Seeta with support from our Board members. This meeting aimed at reviewing our 2013 performance and the plans we carried forward into achieving our set objectives for the year 2014.

In this meeting, we urged our board members to help us develop or clarify charity's plans for 2014, and support our planning process. Our Board members also requested to guide the direction of ARF, identify necessary resources and the people we need to get there - and also help ARF measure and evaluate our performance.



ARF staff pose for a group photo after the annual Planning and reflection meeting in December 2013 at Ridah Hotel

ARF-Vital Voices Partnership Meeting.

In a bid of building ARF and strengthening ARF through networking, we had an interface meeting with Vital Voices representative MS. Megan Abott at our offices. The purpose of the this meeting was to introduce ARF to Vital voices and forge away forward of how we could work together. The meeting was so fruitful as we became partners with Vital voices and we must say at this point that we are partners with Vital Voices of America.



ARF staff and Vital Voices Megan Abott during a partnership meeting at ARF offices in Bugolobi

Membership

ARF joined and gained membership of very crucial and key membership coalitions which are in line with ARF mandate, goals, objectives, mission and vision. We are currently members of the Legal aid service providers Network(LASPNET), Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), National Association of professional environmentalists (NAPE), National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (NCHRD) among so many others.



ARF executive Director third right during the legal training on earth juris prudence at forest cottages-Bukoto

Collaboration and Networking

ARF sent out over two hundred partnerships letters to stake holders that we though could support our cause. The kind of partnership we sought was in general introducing ARF and its thematic areas. The partnership also sought audience for ARF and also be included on various key stakeholders mailing list. This was successful as 170 organisations replied to us and we eventually became partners. These organisations have brought us on board through invitations to attend their meetings with which they think we can add value.



ARF Executive Director presenting ARF strategic Plan to the World Bank at the World Bank offices-Rwenzori Courts

Global Mentoring walk

ARF continued working through her members, networks, and or partners for increased representation and participation but also embarked on building and strengthening networks for a collective voice on human rights, rule of law and matters touching provision of legal Aid. These networks were very critical for our advocacy as they helped us navigate through the corridors of power. In 2014, ARF will seek to strengthen these networks to ensure that the voices of the poor and any indigent Ugandans are reflected in National development programs.



ARF staff participates in the Global mentoring walk along Jinja road Kampala

Internal strengthening of standardized management system.

We concentrated on preparation working tools to strengthen our management and human resource. Among these tools;

- Financial management policy
- Human resource policy
- Staff registration book
- Visitors book
- Lunch and security personnel
- Well-articulated core program activities.
- A clear structure with well-defined roles and responsibilities.

Challenges

The demand from the public on ARF is far stretching on the limited financial resources at its disposal. This arises due to the fact that ARF does not have any single donor. This therefore has a bearing on the internal operations and the service delivery on the side of ARF. Therefore the sustainability of ARF is put to context on the strategies it is to consider in future in raising resources to fulfill its mandate.

At a broader level ARF is seen as an organisation that responds to the legal needs of the poor through provision of legal aid and pro-bono services to the poor. Therefore its scope and mandate is being challenged to respond to the different legal practices, legislation and human rights concerns. We currently depend on our Board Members who cannot fully fund our strategic plan. We were therefore beset with a number of challenges which limited our effectiveness, efficiency and impact. They include: inadequate funding, ARF dependency on Board members among others.

Lack of permanent premises for the ARF Secretariat. This affects the effective running of the organization. ARF is renting the premises where it operates. It's expensive yet we entirely depend on our Board members.

LESSONS LEARNT

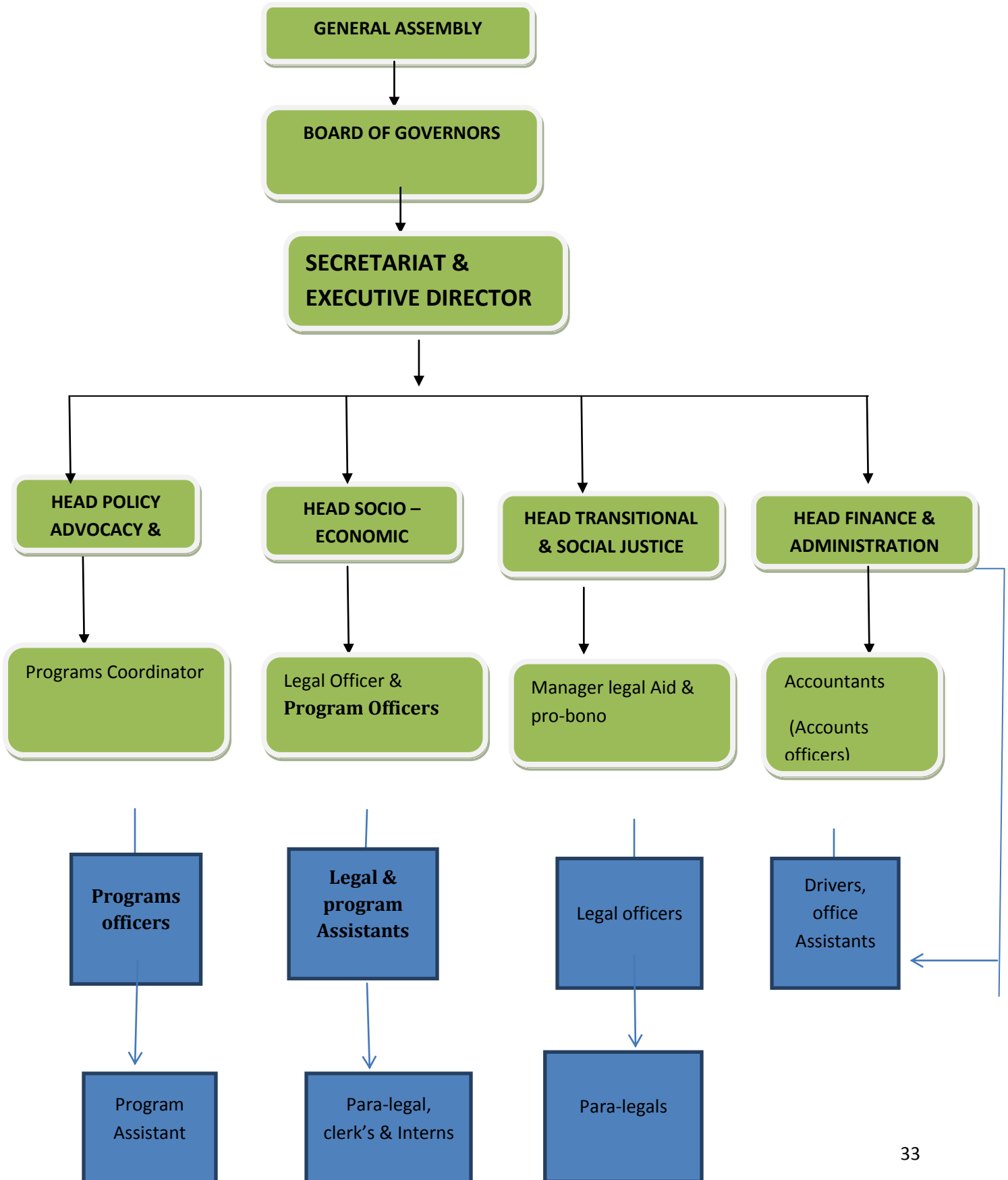
We learnt that there is a lot of ignorance about the law and basic human rights among our people. It came to our knowledge that so many people at the grass root are not aware of their legal rights. In 2014, we have planned to increase on our community outreaches and sensitizations to close the knowledge gap between human rights, law and the day to day occurrences in regard to the human rights violations

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

ARF planning committee continued with operations to provide strategic guidance to the operations of ARF, its members, networks and partners. At the beginning when we had just opened office, given the powers vested in the promoters of ARF, appointed a fully fledged Board comprised of;

Name	Title
1. Weponndi Geofrey	Board Chairperson
2. Nabugolola Fatumah	Vice Chairperson
3. Abdallah Kiwanuka	ARF Insider Director
4. Okurut Felix	Treasurer
5. Enock Mutambi	Fundraising Director
6. Nagodyo Asmailah	Member
7. Mwanga Mastullah Ashah	Board Secretary(ARF Executive Director)

ARF Organizational Structure



ARF 2013 PICTORIAL

First page inside





Across section of participants during a global mentoring walk along Jinja Joad



ARF Namirembe Juliana during a family law sensitization in Buikwe



Participants pose for a group photo during one of the enormous sensitisations conducted in Gombe sub county-Wakiso district



Participants during a para-legal training in Buikwe District



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