



Experience by Mamas' Hope Organization for Legal Assistance (MHOLA) In Muleba District / Kagera Region / Tanzania

Background: Even though Tanzanian regulations, laws and policies promote gender equality and human rights, inequality still persists in Muleba district. Discriminatory cultural and traditional beliefs and customs as well as limited access to information lead to a gender gap in leadership positions, economic resources and participation in decision making in all spheres of life.

The solution was

- to raise awareness of regulations, laws and policies as well as of negative impacts of harmful traditions and customs
- to improve access to affordable legal aid services by training paralegals and strengthening capacity of local dispute resolvers
- to empower women and youth to generate their own income

Experience description

The project was kicked off with a launch event that informed stakeholders on its objectives and approaches. Thereafter different channels were used for awareness raising. To reach out to men, football leagues were organized. In addition selected community representatives were trained on laws promoting women rights and gender equality. Together with paralegals the trained representatives then provided legal aid services. Moreover some women and women leaders received training on governance and leadership skills. Members of newly established community social groups were financially supported and equipped with knowledge on income generation. Furthermore round table discussions with decision makers were conducted and a referral system to people who could assist in women justice was established.



Other characteristics



IMPACTS

- community members know where to report conflicts
- women increased their financial independence from their husbands
- less conflicts within families
- women groups now support other vulnerable people



CHALLENGES

- increased number of reported disputes due to increased awareness including a relatively high number of men reporting
- some husbands stop fulfilling their duties when women earn income, hence burden of taking care of the family falls on women



LESSONS LEARNED

- need for a good strategy on how to involve men
- commitment of members of the target group to the action plan is crucial
- continuous capacity building and awareness raising can change attitudes
- at grassroots level paralegals are vital to dispute resolution

Sector: Human Rights – Civil Society

Period: 2019 – 2022

Further material: <http://www.mhola.or.tz/>

Contact: Theresia Bujiku, t.bujiku@mhola.org

Raymond Laurent, r.laurent@mhola.org