

**CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
AND PEACE ADVOCACY
(CHRAPA)**



**CENTRE POUR LA DEFENSE
DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET
DE LA PAIX (CDHP)**

Non Profit Registration No. 525/E.31/067/SCAB

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations



**CHRAPA ANNUAL REPORT
JANUARY 2021 TO DECEMBER 2021**

1. Executive Summary

Within the framework of CHRAPA's mandate to promote and protect human rights, and within the context of the ongoing conflict in the two Anglophone regions, the year 2021 was characterized by continuous school shot downs, ghost towns which have the paralyzed economy, burning and looting of private and public properties and indiscriminate arrest, detention, kidnappings and killings by both the Non state armed groups and the military. Despite the high level of insecurity, schools in major towns timidly resumed with students go to school in assorted dresses. Economic activities had also started in some communities that were abandon as IDPs are gradually returning. Although the level of insecurity remains high, and with pressure from various international Organizations as well as the United Nations, it is hope that the Cameroon government will give room for dialogue so that peace can return to the two restive regions. It is within the context of this atmosphere that CHRAPA carried out it's activities in 2021 and this report describes the activities carried out in the course of the year.

Key activities carried out during this period as per CHRAPA's thematic areas included the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Although activities related to this component were scale down because of the challenge to access communities, radio programmes were used to raise awareness on human rights in general and the rights of women and children in particular. CHRAPA also joined other civil society organisations to call on the government of Cameroon to look for peaceful solutions to the Anglophone crisis. The paralegal service provided counselling and court representation to vulnerable victims of human rights violations. CHRAPA through this programme, provided assistance to victims of trafficking, GBV and other forms of abuse.

The reporting period also witnessed an increase in number of complaints from 2020 to 2021. Most of these complaints were related to the excesses of the military which has perpetuated grave human rights violations on individuals and whole communities including burning of houses, torture to outright killings. CHRAPA condemned this in very strong terms. In comparison to previous years, less than 30% of complaints in CHRAPA outreach offices were resolved. Many complainants found it difficult to come and follow up their complaint given that many have ran into the bushes and the community paralegal services are no longer functional. Capacity building remained a priority for CHRAPA throughout the year as the skills and knowledge of many were enhanced. CHRAPA also received several students from the University of Buea, 6 students from the Pan African Institute for Development and 5 students from National Polytechnic Bamenda for internship. The students successfully completed their internships and returned to their institutions. CHRAPA staff also took part in trainings that could help staff improve on the quality of their work. With regards to lobbying and advocacy, CHRAPA participated in many activities organized by different organisations with regards to lobby government to take positive action in ending the crisis. While working partnerships with previous stakeholders were maintained, more partners, both at the local and international levels were made. New partnerships at the local level included; the Reach Out Cameroon within the framework of the project on Empowering Teenage Mothers and also UNHCR as member of the Legal Task Force. CJRAPA is also a member of the Gender Based Violence Area of Responsibility Sub Cluster and Child Protection Cluster Chaired by UNICEF and UNFPA.

Furthermore, CHRAPA continued to collaborate with the administration at all levels. CHRAPA continued to work with the Divisional Delegation of Social Affairs whereby the Delegation has continued to make referrals to CHRAPA to intervene in cases of child abuse. CHRAPA also benefitted from capacity building programmes organized by the Regional Delegation of Women empowerment and the Family. The Judicial Police equally supported CHRAPA to track down victims of trafficking, corruption of youth, and also to forward case files to court.

CHRAPA this far received support from US Embassy in Cameroon through its Africa Regional Democracy Fund Programme, United Nations Slavery Fund, UNDP, UN Women, Vital Voices Global Exchange Fund and also Local Funding -Freewill contributions and donations from CHRAPA good will ambassadors.

02. BACKGROUND OF THE ORGANISATION

CHRAPA is an independent, non-governmental, non-partisan, non-sectarian human rights organization established in May 2001. It is a national organization with international dimension. The centre has been monitoring, documenting and following up human rights violations in Cameroon since its creation. It has special consultative status with ECOSOC of the UN and also with the AU ECOSSOC. In accordance with this status CHRAPA can now designate permanent representatives to the UN Head quarters in the New York and UN Offices in Geneva and Vienna and attend UN Conferences and Meetings. The organization is also expected to submit Quadrennial Reports, written statements and make oral presentations in UN conferences and meetings. CHRAPA also entertains good collaboration relationship with the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms. The organization may affiliate/collaborate with national and international institutions with similar goals and objectives. CHRAPA works with local communities in the North West, Southwest, Adamawa and Littoral Regions of Cameroon with its main goal to promote human rights and peace and facilitate the development of democratic culture in Cameroon. This goal is achieved by working in collaboration with communities, grassroots institutions and organizations. In this domain, it promotes human rights through education and sensitization using different communication mediums. It protects human rights through monitoring, intervention, legal assistance to victims, and implementation of national and international human rights instruments. It also lobbies and advocates competent public authorities to follow up ratify and implement UN human rights instruments and redress victims of gross human rights violation. The underlying principle behind the work of CHRAPA is to see to it that the rule of law is respected and by this, people's fundamental rights of Equality, Non Discrimination and Participation as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are respected.

2. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

1. Promotion of Human Rights

a) Education and Sensitisation

With support from its different partners and within the framework of the Programme promoting Access to Justice as a Means to Promote Social Cohesion and Access to Justice Paralegal, CHRAPA carried out several education campaigns on human rights promotion, access to justice and the rule of Law. These activities were supported with funding from UN Women, National Endowment for Democracy, UNDP of Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls in the Northwest and Southwest Regions. Sensitization and education talks took place in over 50 communities and over 50,000 people were reached. This was thanks to over 20 volunteers that CHRAPA hired to carry out this outreach activities



Mass sensitization activities



Visit of constituted Groups



UNDP M&E Staff at CHRAPA community Paralegal Centre



Visits to constituted groups in

2. TRAININGS.

2.1 TRAINING OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES.

The Centre for Human Rights and Peace Advocacy carried out several trainings of women leaders across the 7 regions of the Northwest Region, male political leaders, youth groups judiciary amongst others. This trainings for women and traditional leaders had as objective to empower women leaders and traditional authorities with skills and knowledge on human rights, rule of law, governance and leadership as a means to promote social Cohesion. After the training, the women and men also continued to trained other people and to mobilize grassroots women to take an active part on strategies to address the conflict in the region. The women thanks to knowledge gathered during the training presented a position papers during National Dialogue Event



Group Picture of Traditional Leaders after the training



Pictures of trainings with women

2.2 ORGANISED PRESS CAFES

Within the framework of the Project *'Rights Based Approach to Providing Access to Justice as a Means to Promoting Social Cohesion'*, the Centre for Human Rights and Peace Advocacy (CHRAPA), organized three Press Cafés at its Conference Hall on the 25th of September 2020 on the theme- what should be the content of the National Dialogue, the 22nd of October on the theme- what should the content of the special status recommended for the north west and south west regions and the third was on the theme- understanding the special status as content in the decentralization code. The Press Café provided a safe space for civil societies, members of the community and the press to discuss topical issues affecting the nation with the objective of generating ideas as perceived by the common man and also to make recommendations for lobbying and advocacy on issues that need to be changed or improved upon



CHRAPA Executive Director after Press Café giving a press statement either condemning or upholding



B. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

i) Complaint Documentation and Follow-up/ Case Management of Violations During the course of the years the Paralegal component of the ‘Access to Justice’ programme, recorded 200 complaints. Out of the 200 Complaints, over 65% of came from women victims of violence and the rest came from other members of the society. Most of the complaints came from CHRAPA outreach office in Belo and also from other divisions. A significant proportion of the complaints in Belo, Ndop, Bafut and Santa could not be handled due to increase insecurity that most of the villages had to fled. A majority of the cases concerning women were related to gender based violence and included but not limited to; battery, assault, domestic abuse, land conflicts, desertion, denial of inheritance, sexual and emotional abuse, rape, denial of inheritance to mention the least.

While the rest of the other cases were either case of assault by the Military or by gun men. Unfortunately due to the generalized state of lawlessness in the region, most complaints can not be follow up. However, the paralegal unit successfully provided legal support to 3 children who were victims of rape. Other victims, receive counseling, and other forms of individual protection assistance. With regards to the current socio-political crisis in the Northwest Region, CHRAPA also followed up and documented several incidences of human rights abuses. Arbitrary arrest have become rife with many young people arrested incommunicado on grounds of mere suspicion. There were many horrible acts committed by the Security Forces as well as the Non State Armed Groups on each other and also on the civilians. Several people both military, non state armed group members and civilians were killed and their heads cut off. As earlier mentioned, most victims are unable to follow up their cases. Many have resorted to contained their trauma and to remain silence because all acts of torture, arbitrary arrest and detention as well as killings are justified under the terrorism law. Soldiers who committed these atrocities

have never been tried and above all, the Cameroon government through the government spoke person has provocatively congratulated the Armed Forces for their “sense of professionalism and efforts to bring calm and order in the Anglophone Regions”.

CHRAPA in very strong terms have continued to condemn the excesses of the military and has call on the government of Cameroon to take its responsibility as the duty bearer to protect it’s citizens. As a human rights organization, we have clearly observed beyond reasonable doubt that crimes against humanity are being committed in Cameroon by the government forces right up to this moment that we are concluding this report. If care is not taken, given the wanton killings and destruction of property, the world will sit to watch another Rwanda Genocide replay itself in Cameroon.

4. SUPPORT TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

CHRAPA during the year, carried out several activities to support IDPs, with support from UN Women and other Funders, below is an overview of what was done. Within the framework of the project ‘Improving the protection of women and girls affected by the conflict in the South West and North-West Regions of Cameroon’, with support from UN Women and the Italian government, CHRAPA from August to December 2019, carried out several activities to meet the objectives of this project. Objective: Increased economic support to GBV survivors, public awareness and social mobilization against Sexual and gender-based violence





5. RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

Two staff, a Livelihood Officer and a GBV Officer were recruited. This was preceded by the recruitment and training of 14 community paralegal officers to work in 4 Divisions. That is Mezam, Momo, Ngoketujia and Boyo. Five community mobilizers were also identified in each of these Sub Divisions to work with the paralegal officers. The project team also received training on GBV and the Rapid Income Generating Activity (RIGA) concept from UN Women staff

The paralegals throughout the project implementation period, participated in community sensitization and education programmes on SGBV, documented and forwarded complaints to CHRAPA office for action to be taken and also identified beneficiaries for RIGA. They also carried out several campaigns on the 16 days of activism in their various communities. Output 1: IDPS and Host community are exposed to GBV prevention activities Baseline:0; Target 26,000 For this output, 26,000 people were earmarked for awareness raising in the project target community. Communities were sensitized through meeting of constituted groups, visits to churches and through community mass sensitizations. In all, 28,456 people were directly contacted through meetings in constituted groups like, quarter meetings, njangi groups, church groups, mass sensitization in funerals, church rallies amongst others while over 50,000 have been reached through the radio, social media, like facebook, instagram, whatsapp groups and other mass sensitization forums. Direct sensitizations constituted 8598 youths, 9837 women, 8914 men, 758 Mbororos and 400 Persons living with disability. To complement these sensitization activities, others were reached through community radio programmes. Five hundred (500), flyers, 500 posters and 1000 T-shirts, a banner and Roll ups were also produced with the UN Women logo and the Italian Government Logo not only to create awareness but also to enhance visibility of the Funders. We will also want to note that many men were reach during sensitization and education campaigns.

This was thanks to the fact that, the men recruited as paralegal officers could easily penetrate male cycles. Female paralegals and female community mobilizers, had challenges to move in several locations for security reasons due to the prevalent crisis. Also more men were targeted as it is an advocacy project to deter violence against women (VAW), thus targeting men for behavioral change was necessary to reduce rape, battery and other forms of gender based violence on women Output 2: Cases of GBV are reported by the community to protection actors and documented cases. Baseline:0Target: 500 A total of 3147vulnerable cases were identified. These number included women who were vulnerable to be GBV victims as well as survivors. Out of this number 1043 had suffered one form of GBV or the other and 15 were raped cases and another 15 cases of sexual assault. Below is a summary of the GBV cases identified, documented and actions taken between August 2021 to December 2021 .

6. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING

i) National Level

CHRAPA in 2021, remained the Chairperson of the Union of Northwest Human Rights Organisations. It also occupied the vice chair of the Cameroon Association for Voluntary Development CAVOD. CHRAPA also carried out several presentations on human rights and the rule of law for trainings organised by local partners like the Centre for Gender Justice for Women Empowerment, Africafonique, Community Action Advocacy Group, the Gender and Disability Network , the Socio Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities amongst the least. CHRAPA also participated in the national coordination meeting organized by the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedom, and European Union in the capacity of regional representative for the Northwest Region. CHRAPA additionally participated in several consultation meetings with diplomatic services in Cameroon including the United States Embassy and the French Cooperation and the United Nations Sub Regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy OCHA Northwest and UNDP.

ii) International Level

CHRAPA participated in the 40th 41st and 42nd sessions of the Human Rights Council in Geneva in March, June and September of 2019. Thanks to the generous support of CAGI NGO Service in Geneva. During this participation, several side events were organised and oral presentations were made on Agenda Item 02, 03, 05 06, 08 and 10. CHRAPA also accredited other organisations to use its space and make statements to promote and protect human rights. These organisations included World Barua, World Alliance of Religious Peace, OCAPROCE International amongst others. CHRAPA and the World Alliance for Religious Peace, also continued with the advocacy programmes started in 2016 on the draft bill for the ‘Treaty on Peace’.

8. CONCLUSION

CHRAPA throughout the year carried out several activities to achieve its goal which is to promote and protect human rights. Despite the numerous successes recorded, CHRAPA's limited finances, as well as limited human resources continue to be a handicap for CHRAPA to reach out to all the communities that needs its services. CHRAPA has continued to work on developing effective fund raising strategies, as well as mobilizing and engaging communities in the design and implementation of projects to ensure community ownership and sustainability of it's projects. It will also continue to lobby for funding from partners, communities and good will ambassadors who have continued to support it's work

Done in Bamenda 20th of January 2022



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chongsi Ayeah Joseph".

Sign: Chongsi Ayeah Joseph

Executive Director