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## **Legal Empowerment in Under-Resourced Regions**

### **Lessons Learned from Global Rights' Community-Based Paralegal Services in Nigeria and Uganda**

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## PREFACE

Global Rights: Partners for Justice is an international human rights capacity building organization that works side by side local activists in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Our core programs are Access to Justice, Women's Rights & Gender Equality, and Racial & Ethnic Equality. Our special initiatives are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex Rights and Natural Resources & Human Rights.

Global Rights believes in the dignity and equality of all human beings. But there are barriers that exist that deny people their rights. Systemic change to overcome those barriers begins with the individual and the community. Therefore, we work from the ground up. We accompany activists and partners, providing skills and adapting tools, in order for individuals to create change so that human rights can thrive for future generations.

Access to justice is the primary underlying principle that connects our programs and initiatives. We believe rule of law helps level the playing field for the most poor and marginalized. Global Rights opens up a range of legal empowerment tools for people within formal and informal systems that best fit their context to challenge structures and practices that are barriers to human rights fulfillment.

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# LEGAL EMPOWERMENT IN UNDER-RESOURCED REGIONS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM GLOBAL RIGHTS' COMMUNITY-BASED PARALEGAL SERVICES IN NIGERIA AND UGANDA

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## INTRODUCTION

Global Rights' capacity-building work under the USAID-funded Democracy Fund grant focused on several of the poorest and most underserved regions of Nigeria and Uganda where justice institutions are notably weak and/or absent and legal pluralism prevails. In these communities, many residents were unacquainted with what national law provides and what rights they are guaranteed. This was most graphically demonstrated by our Ugandan partners noting that the human rights provisions of the Ugandan Constitution are unavailable in the most commonly used local languages. In this climate, the responsible institutions frequently did not follow the law.

We worked hand-in-hand with our community-based partners to assist them in acquiring basic knowledge and skills needed to educate their communities about legal rights and assist individuals to seek remedies from officials, institutions, and other community decision makers thereby building a constituency for enforcement/observance of rights and laws. We helped our partners gain confidence and basic capacity, which serve as the foundation for these groups assisting marginalized populations assert rights and demand institutional responsiveness and accountability - necessary ingredients for systemic change. We placed special emphasis on women's rights: enhancing physical security by combatting domestic violence and sexual assault as well as augmenting economic security in relation to property rights within marriage and the family.

In this report, Global Rights summarizes the approach we used to develop and implement our paralegal capacity building programming in Nigeria and Uganda and lessons we have learned that we are using to fine-tune new programming in these countries as well as in other regions.<sup>1</sup>

## I. OUR MODEL FOR PARALEGAL SERVICES CAPACITY BUILDING

Given our local partners' unique understanding of local needs as well as their ability to channel local input for reforms, we place working with local partners at the core of our capacity building mission to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights norms. Hence, assessment of the community's legal needs and consultations with partners are a necessary first step to increase access to justice through paralegal services.

As typified by the pilots in Northern Nigeria and Uganda implemented under this project, most of the locations in which Global Rights has implemented its paralegal services capacity building programs are marginalized communities, where formal justice institutions are notable primarily in the best scenario for their weakness, in the worst scenario for their virtual non-existence. Legal pluralism is ubiquitous in our project areas.

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<sup>1</sup> We have not attempted here to duplicate the work of other organizations in issuing comprehensive guides for local organizations wishing to establish paralegal programs. See e.g., *Community-Based Paralegals: A Practitioner's Guide*, Open Society Justice Initiative, 2010.

Our model does not apply a “cookie-cutter” approach. Rather our programs adapt - in terms of content, methodology, sequencing of activities, and length and manner of engagement - to the community context, including the skill and knowledge level of partners and that of the community at large and in particular those most vulnerable in the community who are the targeted beneficiaries. One of the model’s most important aspects is that Global Rights’ programs retain sufficient flexibility to adapt and respond to conditions on the ground, including developments that could provide an unexpected window for progress as well as those that delay progress. Our aim is to assist our partners over time to acquire new skills, knowledge, and strategies, each building upon the prior. Our assistance provides partners with a “tool box” that they are able to employ in parallel or *ad seriatim* depending upon the problem to be addressed and the means deemed most effective to obtain a resolution most beneficial to the affected individuals.

To the extent feasible, our model incorporates a legal empowerment approach, starting with a needs assessment and community consultation. This approach continues through the training and assistance we provide to our partners, and on to our approach to the provision of paralegal services by our partners, emphasizing education and engagement in problem solving for individuals and the community at all steps.

Given the wide range of topics and issues to be addressed, paralegal training and technical assistance are best seen as a continuing process that starts with formal training sessions but continues through a variety of modalities to address specific needs.

## II. LEGAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

By undertaking assessments at the outset of project implementation, Global Rights ensures that local partners have ownership over the work and that the activities are responsive to their justice needs and context of their communities. In Uganda and Nigeria, Global Rights commissioned national consultants to conduct legal needs assessments that identified at the community level *inter alia* the most critical legal concerns, the status of dispute resolution mechanisms, including formal and traditional institutions, and the availability and capacity of legal assistance providers.<sup>2</sup> Assessments were conducted through a combination of document review, field visits, including individual interviews and community meetings, and validation through community consultations. The findings and recommendations informed training material content and methodologies, which Global Rights supplemented throughout implementation based on the specific partners’ needs and questions raised.

### A. Nigeria

A key starting point for the Northern Nigeria project was the then-recent observation of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women that implementation of the legally pluralistic system resulted in continuing discrimination against women, contrary to Nigeria’s obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This pre-identification of the targeted vulnerable

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<sup>2</sup> In contrast, in the Maghreb Global Rights developed a five-page assessment survey that aided our partners in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia to self-identify the most critical legal problems facing women in their communities; the status and responsiveness of local judicial and law enforcement institutions and procedures; and the extent to which and type of legal services currently available in the community or provided by the partners. From the assessment, the partners identified challenges such as the lack of sufficient knowledge, the need for specific types of training, and development of targeted activities.

population, the complicated interaction of three legal systems, and the practice of polygamy as creating legal difficulties for women and minor girls informed the assessment inquiry.

We conducted a field assessment of the legal needs of women in three states – Bauchi, Kaduna, and Kano – using a team of three national experts, the leader of which was a social development expert with significant justice sector demand side evaluation experience. The other team members – recruited by the primary assessor – were an expert on gender and development and a legal practitioner expert in the legally pluralistic system in Northern Nigeria. The team gathered information in-person during week-long visits and discussions with a wide range of interlocutors in each of the three States through the following means:

- Individual interviews with women
- Focus group meetings with women
- Interviews with judges and registrars of Sharia and magistrate courts
- Interviews with women’s empowerment advocates
- Interviews with lawyers and civil society groups providing *pro bono* legal and paralegal services
- Interviews with government officials

The lead assessor developed several questionnaires for specific interlocutors as well as specific agenda items to be discussed in the focus groups. Meetings were arranged with the assistance of a local facilitator in each state. Field-based information was supplemented by desk review of related law and socio-economic information.

Women were consulted to hear their views on:

1. The most pressing problems
2. Level of awareness of legal and/or human rights
3. Availability of services to provide assistance in relation to problems
4. How they seek remedies for the identified problems
5. Awareness of, access to, and experience with and/or perception of legal aid providers and institutions responsible for providing remedies

Others were consulted for their views of:

1. How laws applied to and how institutions addressed concerns of women
2. Barriers to women’s access to justice and availability of remedies
3. Primary human rights/legal issues for the target population
4. Appropriate modalities/approach for program to achieve its objectives/target population

The “take-away” findings of the Nigeria assessment included the following, which informed the content and methodology of our capacity building as well as our work with our partners in paralegal services program design and implementation:

- Low levels of rights awareness
- Limited literacy
- Lack of access to free legal information, advice, and assistance
- Language issues

- Common use of mediation to resolve disputes
- At least some women felt more comfortable with Shar'ia courts than national courts given familiarity with common language, and ease of access through proximity, affordability, and timely decision making
- Need to include men/religious leaders, and other influential community leaders in awareness raising/sensitization activities
- Women in prison/detention a particular sub-population of concern
- Legal issues were: family relations with an emphasis on minor girls – specifically marriage (including forced and underage marriage), divorce, custody, inheritance; domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, including sexual abuse of minor girls; and girls' right to education

## **B. Uganda**

Our legal needs assessment in Bundibugyo District was conducted by a law lecturer from Makerere University with significant experience as a legal consultant with expertise in gender issues and who had participated in our initial feasibility study of starting up operations in Uganda. The assessor working in close collaboration with our Country Director gathered information through the following means:

- Desk review
- Preparatory meetings with local civil society groups to identify relevant informants
- Interviews with key government officials
- Workshop with civil society organizations to identify key human rights and legal concerns
- Field visits including community meeting in two communities in the district

The findings included the following, which similar to Nigeria were factored into all aspects of our programming:

- Poor representation of women in leadership of civil society due to their extreme marginalized position in community
- Low level of awareness of human rights and law by the community
- Many non-English speakers with a lack of legal information in predominant local languages
- Access to formal justice institutions and legal providers are limited, further exacerbated by distance to administrative centers and community had little confidence in these institutions
- Traditional culture strong, including traditional dispute resolution mechanisms as well as Local Court Councils (i.e., court composed of local elected officials)
- No paralegal services present
- No other international non-governmental organizations present
- Lingering impact of armed conflict (conflict internal to Uganda as well as “overflow” from neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Populations most in need of rights' protection – women and children – receive inadequate protection of women's and children's rights
- Primary human rights issues for these populations: gender-based violence, in particular domestic violence, property (land) rights particularly for women, sexual abuse of minor children (defilement), and child neglect

### **C. Assessment Criteria**

Based on our experience conducting legal needs assessments in Nigeria and Uganda as well as implementing capacity building activities based on those assessments, we have developed a set of inquiries as a starting point for future legal needs assessments for the implementation of paralegal services capacity building. While these inquiries provide a general framework, it is essential that each legal needs assessment is designed to effectively and adequately explore the specific community in which project work is to be established and that the assessor maintain an independent view as to what questions and issues are germane.

Given the locations Global Rights' targets for paralegal services capacity building, community-specific documentation available outside the community tends to be limited. An initial desk review can be useful to obtain basic information such as development plans and census data. However, the main focus of the legal needs assessment will be a community-level inquiry with information obtained primarily through in-person interactions between the assessor and a wide range of local interlocutors. The mode of data collection required has considerable implications for the qualities and qualifications needed by the person(s) recruited to conduct the assessment. The assessor must be sufficiently skilled and organized in gathering information through oral communication as well as have the interpersonal skills to create an atmosphere in which local interlocutors, spanning a wide range of abilities and knowledge, can receive information about the potential project intervention as well as feel at ease to discuss human rights concerns, including very personal and/or sensitive matters.

Additional challenges confronted include language. In Uganda for example, the assessor did not have a common language with some community members in more remote areas of the project location, which required adjustment to facilitate communication. Careful preparation and planning, including adequate attention to logistics, are critical for assessments to obtain the desired information, particularly given limited time availability when using consultants.

#### **Preliminary Inquiry Framework:**

- Identify vulnerable population(s) and the most critical legal needs of this population
- Identify general level of awareness among that population of legal and/or human rights and remedies
- Map norms, structures, and procedures for providing remedies (including all present in legally pluralistic context)
- Identify demographic trends that inform program design/implementation, e.g., poverty, education levels/literacy rates, ethnicity, religion, languages in use, and majority/minority status
- Identify means of communication (and languages used) accessible to the target population and public at large, e.g., radio, newspaper, mobile telephone use, internet
- Identify factors that implicate logistics/resources of programming, e.g., dispersed rural population, available means of transport, including presence or lack of public transport, ease or difficulty of covering terrain, particularly in inclement weather, size of territory to be covered by programming, security situation, electricity, distance from target population to administrative center, distance of program area from Global Rights' Country office
- Assess presence, effectiveness of, and access to formal administrative and judicial institutions

- Identify community norms for dispute resolution/problem solving, in particular resolution of the most critical legal needs of target population (here intra-family disputes effecting the rights of women and girls), e.g., extent of use of formal justice system as compared/contrasted with use of traditional justice system and/or other means
- The extent traditional and/or Sharia systems and standards are widely used, and identify how these standards align with human rights norms and highlight any conflicts
- Map availability of legal assistance/information providers if any including potential partners or collaborators with or referrals for a paralegal program<sup>3</sup>
- Map community-based organizations already present and working with population of concern and feasibility as potential partners for implementing a paralegal program
- Explore opportunities for collaboration of paralegal services program with lawyers/legal aid council/bar association, in particular women’s bar association
- Identify types of training and resources that would be needed in order to best prepare paralegals to meet needs of target population within the project area legal and cultural context
- Identify key interlocutors or institutions needed to consult on establishment of new program to ensure local buy-in
- Assess receptivity of community, legal providers, and institutions to the project
- Identify barriers to members of target population accessing/utilizing legal assistance/information
- If project to be implemented in different states/regions within same country, identify significant differences/similarities between the regions/states that should inform project design/implementation including demographic patterns linked to applicable institutions or laws
- Identify gaps/capacity building needs of officials/institutions (e.g., formal or traditional courts/administrative bodies) responsible for protecting/promoting the human rights of the identified target population

#### **D. Lessons Learned in Conducting Assessments for Paralegal Capacity-Building Programming**

**Fine-tune Criteria for Selection of Assessors and Scope of Work for Assessment Inquiry.** When retaining consultants to conduct assessments, the Scope of Work should include adequate definition of *inter alia*:

- Further qualifications required of the consultant, e.g., experience, such as legal/human rights/traditional systems knowledge; skills including oral and written communication as well as the criteria for selection
- While consultants should approach the assessment with an independent view, adequate specification of the areas of inquiry to be pursued during the assessment should be set out so as to ensure that information is gathered on all aspects needed to make programming implementation decisions.
- Terms of reference should include intermediate “check-ins” or review discussion to ensure all relevant information is being captured.

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<sup>3</sup> Global Rights conducts further in-depth assessment of potential partners at the point of project implementation, in particular in relation to the award of sub-grants. See Sections III.A., B. below.

- Terms of reference should make explicit that the consultancy contract is completed only upon the delivery of a professionally acceptable product.

**Broaden assessment inquiry.** Given the types of concerns identified by local communities, careful consideration should be given to including within the scope of the legal needs assessment – at least in some cases – greater attention to economic and social rights, including rights to health and education. In tandem, a legal needs assessment that includes such inquiries should attend to the availability of administrative (in addition to judicial) remedies.

**Greater specificity on traditional system used in legally pluralistic settings.** Beyond acknowledging that traditional norms are at play in local communities, assessments should, to the greatest extent possible, provide specific information about traditional leaders/decision-makers, norms, and procedures. Assessors should ensure that such traditional leaders are included among their interlocutors, providing the basis for an initial assessment of how procedures and norms applied may comply with or violate human rights norms. Inclusion of such interlocutors in the assessment would also provide information on how the paralegal program could seek to influence the norms applied by such decision-makers so they are more consistent with human rights standards.

**Weakness or absence of justice institutions.** Beyond acknowledging the weakness or absence of justice institutions in project areas as an obstacle to access to justice, assessments should, to the greatest extent possible, provide recommendations for how paralegal services programming can include capacity building activities specifically intended to enable our partners to begin to address that obstacle, including advocacy, linkage to lawyers organizations, capacity building for justice officials, etc.

**Challenge posed by preliminary project design preceding in-depth community/partner assessment.** For purposes of seeking and obtaining funding, our capacity building projects – particularly those in new geographies – are designed after a preliminary assessment but prior to an in-depth community assessment and/or assessment of specific partners’ strengths and needs. These implementation assessments, particularly those of partners’ baseline knowledge and skills, greatly affect the appropriate types and sequencing of capacity building as well as indicators for monitoring and evaluation. This reality presents a significant challenge to Global Rights in developing appropriate project designs that maintain sufficient implementation flexibility to be adapted to the partners’ abilities and needs. Funding streams that would permit a more general concept to be further defined after assessment would facilitate more finely tuned capacity building projects.

### III. CONSULTATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS TO HONE IMPLEMENTATION

Upon completion and review of the legal needs assessments in Nigeria and Uganda, the respective Global Rights Country Office in collaboration with the assessors organized a community consultation and validation exercise, the purpose of which was to reaffirm that the needs assessment appropriately identified the community needs, priorities, and proposed modalities of Global Rights’ intervention. The written report was disseminated in advance to key local stakeholders, including all persons who were consulted during the assessment. Through the community consultation process, Global Rights already begins to inform and seek cooperation and support from local institutions, opinion shapers, and decision makers.

Similarly, as our partners began implementation, they continued to work with these local officials to gain support.

In Nigeria, an initial presentation and discussion of the assessment with stakeholders was followed by staff one-on-one meetings and a focus group with civil society. The validation process alerted us to the importance of framing the language of local advocacy messages to emphasize “justice” given negative reactions at least in some parts to “rights” language. It also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the programming pay adequate attention to populations that experienced “aggravated marginalization,” for example women belonging to an ethnic or religious minority.

In Uganda, one validation meeting was held with government officials and other key leadership in the district while a second workshop was held with civil society. Given the weakness and/or absence of formal justice institutions in Bundibugyo District, it was understood by those participating in the consultation that interventions aiming to improve access to justice would ultimately need to entail a component of advocacy for policy reform. In both Nigeria and Uganda, given that most of the priority legal needs identified disproportionately affect women, the validation exercises were particularly key for hearing more from women and women’s organizations about how the paralegal training capacity building needed to be fine-tuned to take into adequate consideration women’s views of justice and the need to focus on building their capacity to know their rights and how to use them. The participants agreed that given low levels of understanding, Global Rights’ capacity building would focus on providing skills to enable partners to conduct community human rights education/awareness and provide accompaniment to institutions.

### **A. Selection of Partners**

A key aspect of the needs assessment and community consultation was early discussions/information exchanges with local community-based organizations, both for purposes of obtaining information on basic needs, but also for purposes of identifying potential partners for Global Rights’ capacity building activities. The assessment provided insight into the civil society groups already present and importantly the extent of ongoing engagement and credibility in the community, including particular groups of concern. It also permitted an initial estimation of these groups’ organizational capacity and the extent to which their ongoing activities provided a natural “fit” with the addition of paralegal services to their tool box as a means for broader community mobilization for reform as well as individual legal assistance.

In Uganda, most of the community-based organizations in the project area engage in a range of development activities, a smaller number with a general focus on human rights in terms of monitoring and documentation, but none addressing legal issues or access to justice. Hence, all potential partners would be adding paralegal services to a range of services available to their clients.

### **B. Sub-grants**

Following the completion of the needs assessment and community consultation, the Global Rights staff explained the proposed paralegal capacity building program to potential local partners and circulated a Call for Proposal. Interested organizations were requested to respond with a proposal - including activities, budget, timeline, and monitoring and

evaluation indicators - about how they would utilize capacity building and financial assistance to initiate a paralegal services program in their communities. In parallel with review of the submitted proposals, Global Rights assessed each partners' basic organizational capacity according to a standardized checklist of criteria.

On the basis of the submitted proposals, Global Rights Uganda engaged in dialogue with the partners to better ensure that each understood the aims of the project and their role in carrying out activities to achieve those aims. The proposal writing stage – involving written and oral feedback that resulted in the submission of revised proposals - provided an early opportunity for Global Rights to build capacity as well as to further assess the skill level of the potential partners for purposes of developing the project approach and training materials. A similar procedure was followed by the Nigeria Country Office. Sub-grant contracts were signed with all of our partners, which conditioned monetary disbursements on meeting established periodic reporting benchmarks. [See further discussion of training and technical assistance provided through the sub-grant process under Sections V. and VI. below].

Through this project, Global Rights has fine-tuned its procedures for entering into capacity-building sub-grants with partners. The templates and procedures for structuring Global Rights' relations with its partners through sub-grants developed under this project have been adopted for use in all Global Rights activities, subject to project-specific modifications. Our proposal and sub-grant contract templates reflect an increased emphasis in our selection criteria on the potential partners' engagement, knowledge, and ability to effectively implement the content of paralegal services activities while continuing to focus on basic organizational capacity sufficient to manage sub-grant funds and a program.

### **C. Lessons Learned about Partner Selection**

**Clearly defined sub-grant relationship enhances capacity building project implementation/results.** The sub-grant process is a key step in establishing the parameters of Global Rights' relationship with its partners, which will extend throughout project implementation. Given the importance in setting the tone and clarifying expectations, we have learned that it is essential to invest adequate time and attention to establishing this relation on a sound footing. In particular, through the process, it is essential that Global Rights and our partners gain a clear and shared understanding of *inter alia*:

- the capacity building assistance that will be provided by Global Rights
- the nature of the activities for which partners will receive capacity building
- the nature of the activities partners are agreeing to undertake utilizing Global Rights' capacity building assistance, including establishing selection criteria for and recruiting/training/supervising volunteer paralegals who provide paralegal services
- identify responsible person(s) in partner organization for project implementation/supervision
- the partners' obligations to engage actively with Global Rights' capacity building
- the partners' reporting obligations, including documenting, compiling, and analyzing data relevant to outcome indicators
- the population and geographic area to be covered and how partners will conduct outreach to the population of concern particularly where transportation infrastructure is limited and/or population is dispersed

#### IV. DEVELOP RELEVANT GUIDES FOR USE BY PARALEGALS

Based on the information gleaned from the needs assessments and community consultations, Global Rights developed targeted training materials for providing paralegal services in Bundibugyo District in Uganda and Bauchi, Kano, and Kaduna States in Nigeria. These materials were tailored to the role paralegals would serve in their community as well as the legal areas on which they would focus. In Uganda, the materials focused on four recurrent local problems: domestic violence, child neglect, sexual abuse of children, and land rights. In Nigeria, the materials again focused on the most pressing community problems: family law, domestic violence, sexual abuse of children, and pre-trial detention. Both sets of materials also highlighted the role of institutions responsible for addressing these issues and how paralegals could assist individuals in engaging with these institutions. In both Nigeria and Uganda, the process of developing training materials spanned approximately three months. The process of materials development ran in parallel to that for partner selection and completion of the sub-grant contract.

Given low levels of human rights/legal awareness/knowledge in the target communities, it was evident that a key role of the paralegals in both programs would be community-based education in addition to information and assistance to individuals. In order to be useful for the paralegals, the materials needed to address both aspects. In addition, given our training of trainers (ToT) approach, the materials also addressed training methodology, emphasizing participatory and interactive approaches including buzz groups, role plays, use of flip charts, use of warm-up games/exercises, and example discussion questions.

Our Nigeria and Uganda projects used different approaches in developing training materials. Despite the difference in form, the materials developed in each country covered similar topics and served similar multiple purposes and audiences as 1. Trainer's manual; 2. Learner's manual; and 3. Paralegal resource manual. In Uganda all information for use in the training, legal and communication skills, and information specific for trainers was included in one manual. Separate sections in most modules designated "training tips." In addition, each module featured culturally appropriate pictures relevant to the topic to be discussed.

The Ugandan paralegal manual contained basic information on:

- The role and qualities of a good paralegal, including Code of Ethics
- Human rights and access to justice
- Sources of law in Uganda
- How courts, police, prisons, and relevant social service/protection systems work
- Specific areas of law, including domestic violence, child neglect, child sexual abuse, juvenile justice, and land rights
- Community education and training methodology
- Tips for mediation, counseling, letter writing

Each module in the Uganda manual was organized according to the following template:

- Learning objectives
- Tools
- Introduction of topic
- Related national (or sometimes international) law

- Means of redress or procedures/institutions to deal with the problem

Both the Nigeria and Uganda manuals also included appendices with excerpts from relevant national laws and international conventions. In Uganda, we also provided our partners with copies of the Ugandan Constitution.

In Nigeria, we developed three separate manuals, one for training paralegals, one for training trainers including core activities, lessons plans and sample templates for use by paralegals, and one resource guide for reference by paralegals containing legal and practical information that they would need to know to provide services.

**Trainer Materials.** In Uganda, our paralegal manual includes a separate module on “How to Conduct a Training,” which addressed how to conduct and evaluate training together with a sample training outline. It contained units on:

- Community approaches and mobilizing for training
- Initial steps to training
- Training methodologies
- Logistical arrangements for training
- Evaluating a training

In Nigeria, the facilitator’s manual serves as a teacher’s guide for conveying the substantive and skills information contained in each module of the learner’s manual. It provides objectives, suggestions for the use of interactive, participatory methodologies, suggested materials and exercises on each topic. It also includes how to begin a training with introductions and discussion of expectations, activities and approximate time for each activity, and how to conclude a training with evaluation and wrap-up/summary of learning. It also includes simple templates to be used for exercises related to paralegal skills training.

Global Rights used the materials in training our partners [See Section V below], who in turn utilized them to train volunteer paralegals as well as for reference guides for the provision of legal information and assistance to individuals, conduct community education and awareness raising, and advocacy.

The written materials were geared for a literate English-speaking/reading audience, but strived to use simple straightforward language so as to be user-friendly and better ensure comprehension. However, an important part of the training was how such information could be effectively conveyed to semi-literate and illiterate community members. In Nigeria, the paralegal toolkit, which was intended to be a resource for field-based paralegals, was translated into the predominant local language Hausa to expand the group who would be able to effectively serve as paralegals. Translations are expensive, time consuming, and often complicated by the limited pool of qualified translators for some local languages, further extending the budget and implementation timeline.

In Uganda, our partners recommended that training materials including the human rights provisions of the Ugandan constitution be translated into one or more locally used languages such as Lubwisi or Rutooro so as to make this information more available to the community. However this was not feasible due to the additional funding required. It did however point out that even national laws and norms are unavailable to some non-English speaking communities, pointing toward possible advocacy efforts by local groups with responsible

authorities to enhance access to justice by translating important national documents into locally used languages.

Benefitting from the assessment and consultations, Global Rights incorporated important information on the local context and attitudes into the training materials so as to be an explicit part of the training discussions. For example, in Uganda, the paralegal manual raised the question of the relationship between polygamy and domestic violence. It also outlined, in addition to the human rights aspect, the negative social and health impact of problems identified by the community including domestic violence and child abuse/neglect. Including such information in the materials allows these issues to be discussed openly during training sessions. The Uganda materials also incorporated case studies as a means for illustrating typical problems and for use as a basis for discussing issues and how trainees would act/respond to such a situation.

Given the importance of neutrality and fairness as well as the ability to effectively explain/convey legal information in a simple straightforward manner or mediate between persons with a dispute/difference of opinion, both the Uganda and Nigeria curricula addressed the role of the paralegal as well as qualities and skills needed for paralegals. The Uganda manual also included a template for a paralegal Code of Ethics to be used by partner organizations with all their volunteer paralegals. Review and signature of the Code of Ethics reinforces the role and responsibilities of the paralegal, clarifying that s/he is not a lawyer, has a duty of impartiality and confidentiality, underscores the inappropriateness of acceptance of payment, and a range of other ethical considerations. [See Uganda Paralegal Manual, Annex 2].

In Uganda, the training materials were compiled by the lawyer who participated in the needs assessment and community consultations and has extensive community-based training experience in particular in relation to issues affecting women and children. The drafter worked in close coordination with our Country Director as well as our Access to Justice Director. In Nigeria, our Legal Officer who participated in assessment and community consultation activities and had considerable training experience developed the materials in collaboration with our Access to Justice Director.

### **Lessons learned about developing training materials**

**Increased emphasis on organizational capacity to run a paralegal service.** As noted in Section VI, most if not all of our partners in Nigeria and Uganda needed considerable assistance in developing the capacity to manage a paralegal service. To address this situation, our training materials should include more information on the establishment and administration of a paralegal service program, more focus on case management, more examples of templates for record keeping and data collection, systems and procedures for collecting and maintaining information on services provided, including for purposes of follow-up/follow through. Particular organizational/management issues arise given that a vast majority of the paralegal services provided by our partners are not done from an office setting, but either through mobile outreach by the paralegals or individual paralegals being contacted in their own communities for assistance/information. This reality complicates recordkeeping, attention to follow-up, reporting on individual cases and trends as well as consistency of institutional responses, and overall supervision and attention to the quality/accuracy/appropriateness of information/services provided.

**Explore feasibility of greater use of materials in the public domain.** While it is important that training materials are developed specific to the local community in which the project is implemented, it appears likely that materials already available in the public domain, including laws, templates, and other guides to paralegal services could be utilized to a greater extent. The process of preparing materials was quite time and resource intensive so early engagement in material development is important for timely implementation of training as is the incorporation to the greatest extent possible of materials in the public domain from national and international sources. Consideration could also be given to providing partners with copies of relevant substantive and procedural laws rather than excerpts in combination with training on the sources of law and how to find laws, constitutions, human rights instruments, etc.

**Fine-tune ToR to develop training materials.** When using a consultant to develop training materials, it will be important to fully clarify in the Terms of Reference as well as in early discussion the goals and intended audience/use of materials, procedure for developing the materials, including early discussion of approach, initial outline, draft deadlines together with procedure for review and revision, and format and structure requirements.

**Distinguish skills for individual assistance from those for community education.** Our partners provide legal information to different audiences – individuals, officials, media, and communities – and for different purposes – attempting to resolve specific problems, general awareness raising, issue advocacy. The materials would benefit from highlighting the different means and skills needed for each.

**Field test and stagger development of materials.** Consideration could be given to field testing training materials prior to final printing and publication so as to allow for revisions depending upon feedback. If training will be done over a number of sessions, materials could be developed for each individual session rather than all at the outset. Staggered development of materials as well as field testing could facilitate fine tuning later training materials to the demonstrated knowledge and skill level of the participants.

## V. TRAINING PARTNERS TO DELIVER PARALEGAL SERVICES

Implementation of paralegal services programming requires partners to have or gain proficiency in three areas: a. substantive capacity to provide legal information and assistance; b. organizational capacity to operate, manage, and supervise a paralegal services program; and c. pedagogical capacity to train staff/volunteers to provide legal information and assistance. Following the needs assessment, community consultations, selection of sub-grant partners, and development of training materials, our programs in Nigeria and Uganda conducted formal training using a training of trainers (ToT) approach that addressed these three aspects.

Global Rights' ToTs in Nigeria and Uganda were approximately three days in length. In both countries, the main trainer was the primary drafter of the training materials and had also participated in the needs assessment and community consultation process at the project's outset so was known to the community and participants and vice versa. In Nigeria, our Legal Officer conducted the training and provided follow-up technical assistance, while in Uganda, a law professor experienced in community-based training and women's issues provided the formal training together with our Country Director. Our Country Director then provided the continuity and capacity building through technical assistance. In Nigeria, fifteen

representatives from each of our three partner organizations participated in the ToT, for a total of 45, while in Uganda five representatives from each of our three partners participated, for a total of 15.

Based on the legal needs assessments and community consultations, the ToTs focused on:

- Who/what is a community-based paralegal, what is (and is not) the role of a paralegal, and the basic qualities and skills needed to fulfill that role
- Human rights basics and substantive law (e.g., domestic violence, criminal law)
- Organization and role of justice actors - courts and police – including all relevant in legally pluralistic contexts
- How to train paralegals

Participants received a full set of training materials together with basic materials such as pens and paper.

**Methodologies.** Trainings use a range of participatory, interactive methods. Some substantive legal information was conveyed through short lectures interspersed with questions posed by the facilitator to the participants, which was followed by group discussion and questions-and-answers. Brainstorming was used as a means to quickly elicit ideas from participants about a relevant topic, which would then serve as the basis for discussion. For example, what did the participants understand by the term “human rights” or “law” and how were these relevant to their communities. Cases studies approximating real-life situations paralegals may encounter – including work on these by groups of participants, which then explained their resolution of the problem to the entire group - were used to test participants’ understanding of legal concepts and institutions as well as their skills in addressing specific legal issues. Some case studies were included in the written materials provided to participants, while others were described orally by the presenter. [Example case studies can be seen on page 24 of the Nigeria Facilitator’s Manual and page 35 of the Uganda Training Manual].

Role plays are another methodology employed in which participants “starred” in the role of paralegal and client to demonstrate a legal problem and permit paralegals to practice skills. [An example role play can be seen on page 16 of the Nigeria’s Facilitator’s Manual].

The venue for trainings determined the type of visual materials that could be used. In Nigeria, the trainer was able to utilize PowerPoint to augment her presentation whereas in Uganda where the venue lacked such machinery, the presenters used printed materials, flip charts and/or blackboards. Participants engaged in participatory, interactive approaches during the ToT and also discussed how to use such methods when carrying out subsequent step-down trainings with paralegals and community education at large.

**Training on human rights/legal issues that confront/challenge community norms.** Our projects in Nigeria and Uganda addressed multiple issues implicating community norms in particular those related to the status of women and children, e.g., polygamy, domestic and other gender-based violence, child abuse and neglect, and women’s access to property/resources. These issues not only touched on deeply entrenched practices, but open discussion sometimes required reference to anatomical parts and/or graphic descriptions of gender-based violence to which many participants - particularly in mixed groups of women and men - were unaccustomed.

As a foundation for beginning to examine such issues, training featured an introductory discussion of the universality of human rights, in particular the basic premise of the dignity and equality of all persons. As a further means to promote a full consideration of such issues and re-examination of views, discussion went beyond formal legal norms to examine negative health and social consequences. Training also encouraged participants to develop a comprehensive understanding of the type of assistance they might be called upon to provide in order to address common problems. For example in addition to legal information or assistance, paralegals might refer and/or accompany a rape victim to medical and/or social services authorities, police, and assist to find alternative shelter.

In our project areas, the distance between some national legal standards and community norms, e.g., age of marriage, were considerable, presenting significant challenges in training as well as in preparing paralegals for providing assistance in their communities where solutions fully consistent with human rights might be unavailable in the short-term. Numerous case studies were used as the basis for exploring how women and children were disadvantaged by practices pursued by at least some community members. Discussion of such issues in mixed-sex groups particularly where men were in the majority was sometimes difficult, particularly for women to express their point of view. The main Global Rights' trainers in Nigeria and Uganda were women nationals of the country (although not from the local community), providing a role model.

More closely aligning consensus in these project communities with human rights norms begins with the empowerment of paralegals that through training re-examine for themselves the validity of long-held attitudes or beliefs and then through their work with individuals and the community share that information with others. As noted by one of our partners in Bauchi, Nigeria, "Before this project, I thought rape was a private matter. Now I know that rape is a crime that the state punishes." A partner in Bundibugyo, Uganda noted similarly that through the project, "domestic violence [is] becoming a public issue not a private problem." While participants in the Uganda project included men practicing and supportive of polygamy, other men provided a counterpoint to this position, giving forceful voice to the negative impact of polygamy "as the leading form of human rights violation against women." This partner emphasized the importance of the "involvement of men as vehicles of change [on such issues] in the community." After training, participants retained differences of opinion, leaving questions about how some participants would work as paralegals in community education functions and in providing individual assistance.

**Training to train.** Our ToTs included basic presentations and discussions to enable participants to prepare and conduct step-down training of law and skills to paralegals and education for the community at large. In Nigeria, this phase of the training utilized a specially designed Facilitator's Manual, while in Uganda, the trainer used the chapter in the Paralegal Manual devoted to this topic. [See Section IV above.]

**Logistics of the ToT.** Global Rights covered the costs associated with conducting the training as well as the participation by the partners. In Nigeria, the training was residential, involving accommodation, travel, and *per diem* costs. In Uganda, the training was non-residential, but *per diem* and travel costs were provided to participants, some of whom came from considerable distance.

## **Lessons Learned in Conducting Training**

**Sequencing of ToT.** Global Rights' model focuses on expanding the reach of our training; hence it includes a training of trainers' element. However, our experience during this project has shown that the sequencing of the implementation of the ToT component must be adjusted to the knowledge and skill set of our partner organizations. To ensure that substantive knowledge and skills are sufficiently cemented before step-down trainings are conducted, future programs should to the extent possible separate substantive and practical skills training of a first wave of paralegals from the skills training provided for training others. In this way, we will endeavor to follow up this first round of training with hands-on work with partners as they put newly learned skills into practice. Those found to have particular aptitude and ability will participate in additional training of trainers.

**Overall length, periodicity, and scope of training.** Given the significant amount of information and skills to be developed through training, future paralegal capacity building programs should plan and budget for more lengthy formal training periods. In addition, the longer overall period of training should be divided into a training series with multiple formal training sessions. Each session should cover a limited number of topics with "homework" preparation in between sessions and review of prior learning. An initial formal training could be designed to provide sufficient basics for the partners to begin to provide paralegal services on one or a limited number of topics, the number of topics expanded with each new training session. Interspersing formal training with practice would enable partners to test and reinforce their knowledge and skills. We have already incorporated this revised approach into new programming being implemented in Sierra Leone.

**More skills practice.** Our formal training focused on delivering and discussing substantive information. Future capacity building projects should plan and budget for more extensive practicing of skills during the formal training. In particular, participants should have the opportunity to practice client skills such as interviewing and counseling, mediation, advocacy with authorities, both formal and traditional, and drafting simple letters, complaints, and agreements, including those related to mediated results and how the agreement would be enforced. Particular attention to mediation skills is warranted in the types of communities in which we work as it is frequently a preferred method of dispute resolution, due to both choice/practice and the lack of realistic options for alternative methods for resolving disputes given weak or non-existent formal structures. Skills practice would also be helpful in how to track information and keep records, such as completion of case intake forms, complaint forms of local agencies, and simple report writing as well as basic skills on how to find laws, rules, and procedures. A skills practice component of the training could also involve "field visits" to local justice institutions in order to familiarize participants with these institutions and vice versa.

**Ensuring adequate participation/representation of women.** A minority of the participants in the Uganda training/paralegal services activities were women. This appeared to result at least in part to limited literacy among women and the need for paralegals to be literate. In the future, further attention should be devoted to understanding better the factors limiting women's participation, including the timing and other logistics of training as well as requiring partners to address gender mainstreaming in their sub-grant project proposals. In Northern Nigeria, a majority of the participants were women.

**Pros and cons of broader community participation.** Inclusion in training of participants other than those who will serve as paralegals including religious/traditional leaders, officials, and media, can serve to increase immediately the “receptivity” and understanding of local actors/institutions of the project and human rights norms as well as “spread the word” about the paralegal services to be offered. However, the inclusion of such participants could also serve to create a backlash to the project work; hence such participation should be carefully weighed.

## **VI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

Following the ToT, our programs in Nigeria and Uganda continued their support and advice through near daily phone and email contacts as well as field visits, as our sub-grant partners conducted step-down trainings of their field paralegals and implemented paralegal services in their communities. Such assistance included our Uganda Country Director providing legal information and advice by phone to partners accompanying clients to court during breaks in the proceedings. We also assisted our colleagues expand their networks with other civil society actors as well as national justice and human rights officials by including them in our other access to justice activities such as a Ford Foundation-funded seminar in Uganda. Given an identified weakness, our support to partners in Uganda included assistance from our financial officer on financial reporting. In Nigeria, we provided supplemental hands-on skills-building assistance. In both countries, we worked with partners throughout this sub-granting process on how to better document and report on their activities, in the process refining our narrative and financial report templates, and how to better measure and demonstrate the impact of their activities.

In Uganda, Global Rights assisted the partners to refine their project designs to include as a first activity to target their project work, the conduct of a rapid needs assessment in the area in which they intended to start their paralegal services. Through community meetings and other means, each partner selected a group of local residents to be trained as paralegals, using criteria including the qualities of a paralegal set out in the training manual as well as attainment of a basic level of education. In Nigeria, our partners were women-led organizations, whereas in Uganda, most of the ToT participants were men. Our Uganda Country Director emphasized with the partners the importance of gender balance, particularly given the issues flagged of highest community concern. In recognition of the importance of such balance, two of the three partners ensured that women comprised at least half of their volunteer paralegals, while for the NGO working in the most remote sub-district, women comprised one-quarter of the paralegals.

Using the materials, knowledge, and skills obtained through the ToT, each of our partners in Nigeria and Uganda conducted step-down trainings for volunteers who would serve as paralegals in their local communities. In Uganda, those who conducted the step-down training had prior training experience in addition to that provided by Global Rights. The Nigerian partners trained a total of 150 paralegals, while the Ugandan partners trained 42. In Uganda, the partners included local officials, such as the Police Community Liaison Officer and District Community Development Officer, as presenters during the step-down trainings to better acquaint the volunteers with these institutions in their locality. In Nigeria, our staff attended several step-down trainings conducted by partners to provide assistance where needed as well as to assess and provide feedback on the quality of our partners’ ability to accurately and effectively convey to their paralegals both knowledge and skills.

Through our technical assistance, Global Rights emphasized the importance of the partner organizations monitoring and supervising the work of their volunteer paralegals on an ongoing basis in order to answer questions, address problems, and oversee the accuracy and quality of legal information or assistance provided. Each partner convened regular group meetings of their paralegals throughout the project period to share experiences, discuss selected cases for purposes of seeking guidance/raising questions, and review problems.

With sub-grant funds, our partners were able to obtain basic equipment needed for operating a paralegal services. In Nigeria, partners used sub-grant funds to obtain computer equipment, while in Uganda, partners procured bicycles for purposes of reaching more distant communities and T-shirts to identify themselves as affiliated with the paralegal projects.

**Assessing/evaluating partners' implementation.** Global Rights monitored the partners throughout the project implementation using field visits and extensive feedback, including requests for additional documentation or explanation, on periodic written performance/activity reports submitted in accordance with the sub-grant. Monitoring visits allowed Global Rights to determine how well partners were able to use the knowledge and skills gained as they trained their volunteers and began to operate a paralegal program, to identify gaps, and to provide supplementary information and advice based on needs.

Our Uganda Country Director met with the partners managing the projects in their offices located in the District seat as well as observing the work of paralegals out in their communities. For example, during a first post-training visit to our partners in Bundibugyo, our Country Director discussed with the partners additional capacity building needs to enhance implementation, in particular report writing, case recording, and financial management. In a subsequent field visit, assistance was provided in regard to report writing and given an identified need for assistance with financial reporting, our financial officer also participated in the field visit to provide in-person advice and respond to questions. Our Country Director also discussed specific cases with the partners (in addition to receiving written descriptions) taken from their project activities that demonstrated particular problems and how the paralegal had tried to address the problem. Discussion of individual cases enabled Global Rights to ascertain the level of understanding of legal information and the appropriateness/effectiveness of any follow-up action taken. During the field visits, Global Rights also met with local government officials to obtain their feedback on project implementation.

In Nigeria, our staff met with the partner trainers subsequent to the ToT to address open questions and assess their readiness to recruit volunteers and conduct step-down trainings. We also attended several step-down trainings conducted by partners to provide assistance where needed as well as to assess our partners' ability to accurately and effectively convey to their paralegals both knowledge and skills. We also provided hands-on skills-building assistance through an additional workshop for partners that focused on areas such as management of paralegals, client interviews, case intake and case analysis. We also participated in and observed a "typical day" with our partners as they provided services, giving feedback and responding to questions. Similar to Uganda, we used the discussion of individual cases to explore the understanding and approach of our partners.

## Lessons Learned on Technical Assistance

**Continued emphasis on limited role of paralegals.** Throughout the project, we continuously underscored the limited role of a paralegal and that a paralegal is not a lawyer. It remains essential that programs ensure that paralegal services' partners understand and observe the important but limited function they can play and the line between paralegals and lawyers, a line that is likely easier to blur given the difficulty of accessing lawyers in the regions where Global Rights implemented these programs.

**Link to lawyers.** Ideally, paralegal programs should be able to have broad access to the advice and services of an attorney. The availability of a lawyer is important where assistance is needed with more complicated cases or cases that warrant litigation. Also just the possibility of a lawyer's involvement provides a paralegal program with additional leverage in advocating or resolving disputes. A real challenge in the areas where Global Rights implemented these programs, particularly in Uganda, was the unavailability of *pro bono* legal services. In Nigeria, the project attempted to link the paralegals with local bar associations. While present and hypothetically available for providing free legal assistance, *pro bono* lawyers were so few in number and so over-stretched that the paralegals were largely unable to engage attorneys in the more serious cases presented by their clients. In Uganda, there were no lawyers in the region to which to refer and without specific funding, no free legal aid provider was willing/able to provide services. This lack of the possibility of recourse to or back-up by a lawyer or litigation significantly weakens the position of paralegals as they try to advocate or mediate disputes. This is a thorny issue that significantly frustrates access to justice particularly in remote areas, to which Global Rights will continue to strive to seek solutions. The absence of legal professionals serves to underscore the fundamental importance of training and equipping paralegals in remote areas.

**Monitoring organizational capacity and skills.** The host of practical skills needed to successfully implement a paralegal services program can only partially be addressed through formal training. Technical assistance should to the greatest extent feasible monitor and provide frequent feedback on the partners' systems for organizing the paralegal services including record keeping on cases, actions, and follow-up, selection criteria, training and supervision of paralegals, etc.

**Partners in severely under-resourced areas.** Our emphasis on working with marginalized communities virtually guarantees that a significant percentage of our partners will have limited organizational capacity. Our sub-grant procedures are intended to ensure that partners have at least a minimal level of organizational capacity to permit successful project implementation. The ability to utilize the knowledge and skills provided through our capacity building depends upon our partners being able to operate a paralegal services program, which includes management of the program, organizing paralegal activities, recruiting, training, and supervising volunteer paralegals, intake and recordkeeping, ability to independently attract donor funding, etc. While Global Rights focuses on programmatic capacity building, our project staff of necessity provide a wide range of assistance related to organizational capacity including financial management, data collection and compilation, reporting, and evaluation. Our Nigerian and Ugandan partners required extensive and a wide range of support and capacity building in order to better ensure project effectiveness and sustainability. Global Rights responded to this challenge to the extent allowable within the set project parameters by modifying timelines within the program as well as conducting additional field visits and providing other forms of and more frequent direct support.

Building the organizational capacity of partners specific to the implementation of a paralegal services program should be more specifically factored into/identified as an activity/goal in Global Rights' project proposals for paralegal capacity building to be provided either directly by our staff or through collaboration with specialized organizational capacity building organizations.

## VII. OVERARCHING LESSONS LEARNED AND LOOKING FORWARD

**Community awareness-raising precedes individual assistance.** In communities such as those in which Global Rights conducted this project where rights awareness is low, paralegal programs are most appropriately preceded by specifically denominated broad-based community human rights/legal awareness education as done in our Maghreb program or the paralegal program in its preliminary stages will focus largely on this aspect.

**Greater attention to local traditional dispute resolution mechanisms.** The importance of preparing paralegals to work in and across multiple legal systems was incorporated into the program design and training. Global Rights' future programming should address more explicitly how, given the specifics of each local context, paralegals can navigate the legally pluralistic system including how to utilize their knowledge of formal legal/human rights norms in conjunction with their familiarity with traditional norms in seeking solutions from traditional institutions.

**Enhancing human rights may require shift in community norms.** A theme that runs through much of our paralegal work is the disadvantaged and discriminatory treatment of women and children. Our work has demonstrated that to be most effective, discussions of human rights and formal legal norms should be paired with attention to the reasons/rationale for the continuation of local norms that harm women and seeking means to align these norms with human rights values rather than presenting human rights as parallel to and separate from community norms. In particular, engaging men in the discussion of the negative impact of such norms is important as well as the engagement of community leaders and decision makers.

**Multi-disciplinary program design.** Paralegals frequently encounter problems, e.g., child neglect, sexual abuse of minors, for which long-lasting solutions require social and/or health interventions in addition to legal sanctions. Future Global Rights' paralegal services programming will consider the feasibility of collaborating with social services/health care partners to provide more comprehensive "one-stop shop" services.

**Policy on standardization/credentialing community-based paralegals.** At the time of Global Rights' training, neither Nigeria nor Uganda had either a standardized/recognized paralegal curriculum or a paralegal credential. This is an area on which Global Rights is considering focusing attention, particularly in light of ongoing discussions led by the organized bar in Uganda as part of an overall legal aid reform. The value of training standardization and credentialing for paralegals must be carefully evaluated so that any adopted requirements do not significantly restrict the feasibility of paralegal programs working in very rural, underserved areas.

**Use of mediation when significant power imbalance between parties.** Women's organizations have expressed the concern that mediation carried out by community-based paralegals – particularly in contexts where there is a lack of other options for

remedies/recourse – reinforces existing injustice/power imbalance experienced by women rather than remedying it, particularly in relation to victims of domestic violence. Future Global Rights’ programming should specifically highlight this concern/danger and address techniques that might be employed to seek to mitigate power imbalances between the parties.

**Limited funding dictates that most paralegal services done by volunteers.** Through this project, Global Rights was able to provide capacity building as well as sub-grant funding to support partners as they initially start-up their paralegal services programs. The limited availability of funding for community-based organizations (particularly those in rural areas) dictates that most of the paralegal services have to be provided by volunteers. Assisting partners in developing the skills to attract additional and independent sources of funding is an additional by-product of Global Rights’ capacity building. At least one partner in Bundibugyo successfully leveraged the sub-grant from Global Rights to attract \$40,000 of new funding to continue its paralegal program in FY12.

**Policy/reform advocacy including public expenditure tracking.** In our project locations, the institutions responsible for ensuring rule of law and access to justice were frequently weak or lacking altogether due at least in part to national resources failing to reach local communities. Looking forward in our work with partners in these locations, we will consider incorporating knowledge and skills building that would better enable communities to advocate for receiving their “fair share” of such resources. This is a methodology Global Rights plans to pilot in a community-based project on citizen participation in natural resources exploitation in Congo-Brazzaville.