



The Legal Aid Forum – Rwanda
Forum d'Aide Juridique – Rwanda

Report of the Survey on Paralegals in Rwanda

The Legal Aid Forum, Kigali – Rwanda
September 2009

The Legal Aid Forum is a membership based network encompassing over 30 national and international NGOs, international organisations, professional bodies, universities and faith based initiatives that provide legal aid services to the indigent Rwandan population or vulnerable groups (or that provide support to legal aid service providers in Rwanda). The mission of the Forum is to promote equitable access to justice for the indigent population and vulnerable groups, through the provision of accessible and high quality legal aid services. It is governed by its Statutes adopted by the members on 12 May 2009, amending the initial Charter adopted on 26 October 2006.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Preface – Access to Justice and Paralegalism in Rwanda.....	5
II. Introduction.....	6
III. Methodology.....	7
IV. Findings of the survey.....	8
IV. A. Identification, coverage, age and gender status.....	8
IV. B. Availability and work status	11
IV. C. Levels of education and training	11
IV. D. Legal issues covered and types of services provided	14
IV. E. Pedagogical resources and logistical/financial support provided to paralegals....	15
IV. F. Communication and monitoring mechanisms	16
IV. G. Paralegals and the local community	17
IV. H. Constraints faced by paralegals in their work.....	18
V. Conclusion and recommendations	19

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 – NAMES OF THE ORGANISATIONS AND NUMBER OF PARALEGALS COVERED BY THE SURVEY	6
TABLE 2 – IDENTIFICATION PROCESS OF PARALEGALS BY THE ORGANISATIONS	8
TABLE 3 – GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF PARALEGALS PER ORGANISATION (PER DISTRICT).....	9
TABLE 4 – AVERAGE AGE BRACKET OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	10
TABLE 5 – GENDER STATUS OF PARALEGALS	10
TABLE 6 – AVAILABILITY AND WORK STATUS OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	11
TABLE 7 – AVERAGE LEVELS OF EDUCATION OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	11
TABLE 8 – LENGTH OF THE INITIAL TRAINING PROVIDED TO PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	12
TABLE 9 – PERCENTAGE OF ORGANISATIONS SATISFIED WITH THE INITIAL TRAINING PROVIDED TO THEIR PARALEGALS	12
TABLE 10 – REASONS FOR INSUFFICIENT LEVELS OF INITIAL TRAINING (WHEN APPLICABLE).....	12
TABLE 11 – PERCENTAGE OF ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING REGULAR CONTINUING TRAINING TO THEIR PARALEGALS.....	13
TABLE 12 – PROFILE OF THE TRAINER PROVIDING INITIAL AND/OR CONTINUING TRAINING (PER ORGANISATION)	13
TABLE 13 – MAIN LEGAL ISSUES TREATED BY PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION).....	14
TABLE 14 – TYPES OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	14
TABLE 15 – PEDAGOGIC RESOURCES PROVIDED TO PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	15
TABLE 16 – PERCENTAGE OF ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FOR THE COSTS INCURRED/SOME LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO THEIR PARALEGALS	15
TABLE 17 – TYPES OF COSTS FOR WHICH A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION/SOME LOGISTICAL SUPPORT IS PROVIDED (PER ORGANISATION)	15
TABLE 18 – SYSTEMS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR PARALEGALS.....	16
TABLE 19 – MONITORING MECHANISMS OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	16
TABLE 20 – PERSON/ORGAN IN CHARGE OF THE MONITORING PROCESS OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION)	17
TABLE 21 – FREQUENCY OF THE MONITORING OF PARALEGALS (PER ORGANISATION).....	17
TABLE 22 – MECHANISMS USED TO INFORM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY ON PARALEGALS AND THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDE	17
TABLE 23 – PARALEGALS’ SELECTION CRITERIA OF THE TOPICS OF THEIR LEGAL INFORMATION/EDUCATION ACTIVITIES (PER ORGANISATION)	18
TABLE 24 – CONSTRAINTS FACED BY PARALEGALS IN THEIR WORK ACCORDING TO THE ORGANISATIONS....	18

I. Preface – Access to Justice and Paralegalism in Rwanda

Access to justice – a human right that guarantees the realisation of other human rights – is totally out of reach for the majority of the world's population. Finding clear and simple information about laws, rights and procedures is difficult and numerous economic and social barriers stand in the way of access to legal advice and representation in courts.

In such circumstances – the reality for the poor and in particular for the rural community – paralegals can play a vital and catalytic role. As defined in December 2008 by the participants to the Conference on Access to Justice and Legal Aid in Africa¹, paralegals are persons without a law degree but possessing the relevant skills and training to provide legal advice and assistance needed by the people they serve. They can assist people to engage with the legal environment, empowering them to understand and claim their rights. In Rwanda, the services provided by paralegals to the disadvantaged, indigent or vulnerable population are without payment.

These rights are enshrined in international treaties as well as the Rwandan Constitution. Article 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 4 June 2003 and Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that *'all are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law'*. Specific articles guarantee access to information and the right to a fair trial. Yet all of these rights remain elusive if the practices and procedures do not help people to gain access.

As stated, paralegals can play a vital bridging role. With an in-depth knowledge of the local community within which they live and work they are able to provide targeted advice and education. They can identify problems and bottlenecks and through linkages with NGOs, lawyers and authorities, provide, where possible, simple and proximate solutions.

Recognising the important role of paralegals, the Legal Aid Forum in Rwanda is working in different ways to support their work. This survey is one aspect of that support. It aims to provide relevant information on the situation of paralegals and the practicalities of their work to organisations working with paralegals and more generally all stakeholders in the justice sector in Rwanda. This process should then enable them to better comprehend and assess the assets paralegals represent for the Rwandan population and identify potential areas of improvement for the paralegalism sector in Rwanda.

¹ *Thematic Conference on Access to Justice and Legal Aid in Africa*, Kigali, Rwanda, 1-4 December 2008, co organised by the Danish Institute for Human Rights, the East Africa Law Society and the Rwandan Legal Aid Forum.

II. Introduction

Organisations covered by the survey and total number of paralegals

In the spring of 2009, the Legal Aid Forum undertook a field survey on paralegals in Rwanda, collecting data from its member organisations working with paralegals.

Among the 34 organisations members of the Legal Aid Forum at the time, the 10 that were working with paralegals participated in the survey:

Table 1 – Names of the organisations and number of paralegals covered by the survey

Name of the organisation	No. of paralegals
HAGURUKA	383
AVEGA	228
DUFATANYE	42
ADEPE	12
AJPRODHO	20
CLADHO	100
Human Rights First (HRF) Rwanda	40
CESTRAR	8
COSYLI	14
Commission Diocésaine Justice & Paix (CDJP) Nyundo	185
TOTAL	1,032

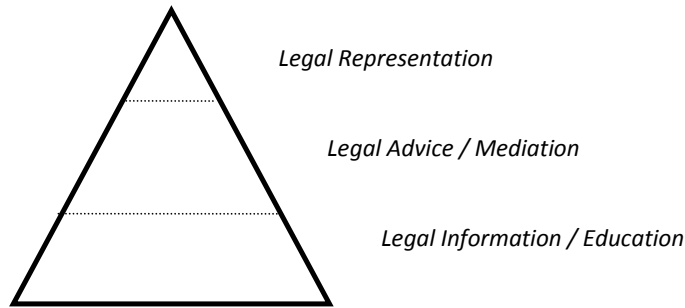
The above 1,032 paralegals do not include the law students who are working at the level of the four legal aid clinics of universities and institutions of higher learning (ULK Kigali, ULK Gisenyi, NUR Butare and INILAK).

Also, this number of 1,032 is not a fixed figure. It has already increased since the survey was done. Some associations working with paralegals were not integrated in this survey, either because their paralegal programmes were not yet fully operational at the time of data collection (ADL working with 2 paralegals, ARDHO with 5 paralegals, Penal Reform International with 10 paralegals) or because they were not yet members of the Legal Aid Forum (Lawyers of Hope working with one paralegal, Maison de Droit with 42 paralegals, Rwanda Women's Network with 214 paralegals). All these organisations will form part of the next surveys on paralegals initiatives in Rwanda.

Based on the above data, a minimum of 1,296 paralegals are currently working in Rwanda.

Definition of Legal Aid and Paralegals

A broad understanding of Legal Aid – based on the concept of the Legal Aid Triangle and the provision of free or subsidised legal services to those who cannot afford them – has been adopted the Legal Aid Forum as a working definition:



THE LEGAL AID TRIANGLE

As defined in December 2008 by the participants to the Conference on Access to Justice and Legal Aid in Africa, paralegals are understood as persons without a law degree but possessing the relevant skills and training to provide legal advice and assistance needed by the people they serve who usually do not accept payment from beneficiaries.

III. Methodology

The data used in this survey was collected through interviews conducted by the Secretariat of the Legal Aid Forum.

The questionnaire focused on paralegals and the interviews usually took between 30 and 45 minutes.

The interviewee was generally the organisation's executive secretary or equivalent (coordinator, head of mission, etc.) or in a few cases the legal advisor.

Depending on their specificity, some questions were not answered by all organisations. The total number of answers amounts hence to less than ten in some tables.

Also, in some cases, multiple answers to a particular question were possible, which explains that the total number of responses exceeds the number of respondents in some of the tables. Additional information extracted through cross tabulation of these answers has also been integrated in the comments.

For some questions, practical examples were requested in order to verify that the question was correctly understood.

The findings of the survey are presented below, based on the various data collected which concern the identification, coverage, age and gender status of paralegals, their availability and work status, their level of education and training, the legal issues and types of services they provide, the pedagogical resources and logistical/financial support they receive, the communication and monitoring mechanisms put in place by their organisations, the relations of the paralegals with the local community and the constraints they face in their work. Finally, a number of recommendations on the paralegalism sector in Rwanda are made in the concluding part of the report.

IV. Findings of the survey

IV. A. Identification, coverage, age and gender status of paralegals

Paralegals' identification

Table 2 – Identification process of paralegals by the organisations

How did your organisation identify its paralegals?	No. of answers <i>(multiple answers were possible)</i>	Percentage <i>(out of 10 organisations)</i>
The persons contacted us directly	6	60%
They were already members of our organisation	3	30%
The authorities contacted by the organisation identified them	4	40%
Faith based organisations (Churches, Mosques...) contacted by the organisation identified them	2	20%
Local schools (teachers, etc.) contacted by the organisation identified them	2	20%
No of respondent organisations	10	

Half of the organisations identify their paralegals through a combination of mechanisms, this favouring a diversified access to the paralegalism sector.

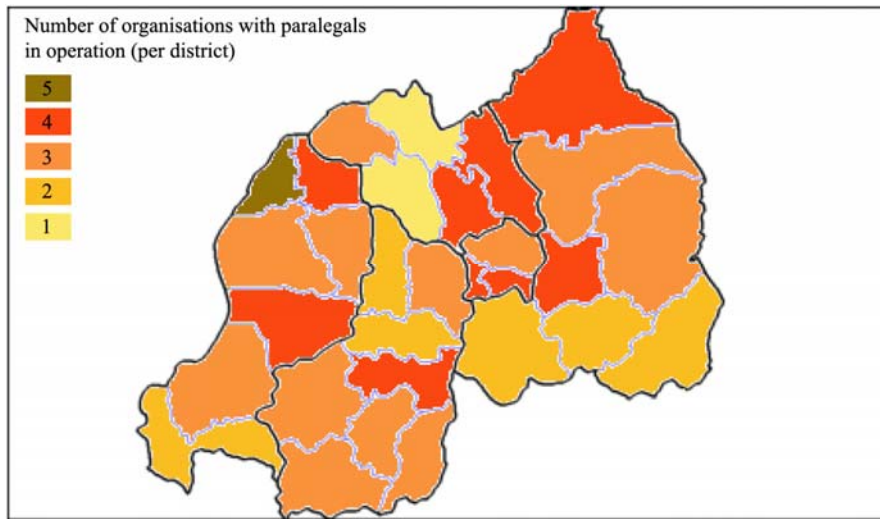
More than half of organisations were directly contacted by the persons interested to work as paralegals (among which two thirds combined it with one or several other identification mechanisms).

Also, for half of the organisations, paralegals were identified by their local environment (e.g. local authorities, churches, mosques, schools), showing that paralegals are identified right at local level and well established in the community in which they will work.

Only one third of the organisations identified paralegals among their members.

Paralegals' coverage

Table 3 – Geographical coverage of paralegals per organisation (per district)



Paralegals cover all of Rwanda's 30 districts. However, in terms of organisations, this coverage is uneven going from a maximum of 4 to 5 organisations per district with paralegals in operation (for 10 districts – the highest number being in Rubavu district), to 3 organisations per district (for 12 districts) and a minimum of 1 to 2 organisations per district (for 8 districts – the lowest number being in Gakenke and Burera districts). This coverage shows that remote districts tend to have a lesser number of organisations present with consequently fewer paralegals active in these areas.

It also appears from the interviews that paralegals are mainly operating at sector and cell levels, i.e. the levels that are closest to the populations, especially in rural areas where districts cover large territories. This is in line with the fact that paralegals are usually based in the communities in which they work (see Table 2), ensuring their good knowledge of the various issues faced by the population, their proximity and their geographical accessibility.

Paralegals' age and gender status

Table 4 – Average age bracket of paralegals (per organisation)

Name of Organisation (and No. of paralegals)	Average age bracket		
	20-30	30-40	Above 40
HAGURUKA (383)		X	
AVEGA (228)		X	
DUFATANYE (42)		X	
ADEPE (12)	X		
AJPRODHO (20)	X		
CLADHO (100)	X		
HRF Rwanda (40)		X	
CESTRAR (8)			X
COSYLI (14)		X	
CDJP Nyundo (185)	X		
TOTAL by organisations (and No. of paralegals)	4 (317)	5 (707)	1 (8)

Most paralegals are between 30 and 40 years old and a significant number between 20 and 30 years old. This predominance of paralegals between 30 and 40 years old shows that paralegals are quite well experienced, with a good knowledge of the social issues and dynamics of the local community in which they intervene.

Table 5 – Gender status of paralegals

Gender of paralegals	Average number	Percentage
Men	308	29.8%
Women	724	70.2%
Total	1,032	100%

Based on organisations' statistics, it appears that more than 70% of the paralegals are women.

IV. B. Availability and work status of paralegals

Table 6 – Availability and work status of paralegals (per organisation)

Name of organisation	Full time		Part time	
	Salaried	Volunteers	Salaried	Volunteers
HAGURUKA	0	0	0	383
AVEGA	0	0	0	228
DUFATANYE	0	0	0	42
ADEPE	1	1	0	10
AJPRODHO	0	0	0	20
CLADHO	0	0	0	100
HRF Rwanda	0	0	0	40
CESTRAR	1	7	0	0
COSYLI	0	1	0	13
CDJP Nyundo	0	0	0	185
TOTAL	2	9	0	1,021

Out of the 1,032 paralegals working for the 10 organisations interviewed, only two are salaried.

Almost all paralegals work part time, which can be explained by the fact that they are unpaid for their services and must therefore have a salaried job to sustain themselves and their family.

As outlined by the organisations, most of them lack financial resources that prevents them from hiring more salaried paralegals and which lead them to a widespread use of volunteer paralegals.

However, as mentioned above, paralegals play an important bridging role between the rural population and NGOs, lawyers and authorities. Paying paralegals for their services would contribute to ensure a more effective paralegal system and increase the motivation factor.

IV. C. Levels of education and training of paralegals

Paralegals' level of education

Table 7 – Average levels of education of paralegals (per organisation)

What is the average level of education of your paralegals?	No. of answers	Percentage
Primary education	1	10%
Post primary education ²	3	30%
Secondary education	6	60%
Total	10	100%

² Obtained the primary school level and other training which is not secondary education.

Paralegals have a fairly good level of general education. Only 10% of the organisations use paralegals whose average education level is primary school. The majority of the organisations work with paralegals who obtained their secondary school certificate. In comparison with the country's average level of education, this is very high³.

Given the type of services provided by paralegals, it should however be highlighted that the high quality of such services depends more on the specialised and focused basic and continuing training received by paralegals than on their level of general education.

Paralegals' level of training

Table 8 – Length of the initial training provided to paralegals (per organisation)

How long is the initial training provided to your paralegals?	No. of answers	Percentage
1-2 days	2	20%
3-7 days	5	50%
8-30 days	1	10%
More than a month	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 9 – Percentage of organisations satisfied with the initial training provided to their paralegals

Do you think this training is sufficient?	No. of answers	Percentage
Yes	1	10%
No	9	90%
Total	10	100%

Table 10 – Reasons for insufficient levels of initial training (when applicable)

If not, why this training is not sufficient?	No. of answers	Percentage
Longer training needed / training needed in other areas	6	66.7%
Same as above & lack of means	3	33.3%
Total	9	100%

³ Data from the Ministry of Education (for 2006/2007) records 95% of primary school net enrolment, but for a completion rate of 52% only. Regarding secondary school, the gross enrolment rate does not exceed 18%. *EDPRS 2008-2012*, September 2007.

Table 11 – Percentage of organisations providing regular continuing training to their paralegals

Does your organisation provide any regular continuing training to your paralegals?	No. of answers	Percentage
Yes	4	40%
No	4	40%
Depending on the availability of funding	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Although all organisations provide some initial training to their paralegals, its duration is quite short as it usually does not exceed seven days and most of the organisations deem it insufficient. Moreover, less than half of them provide regular continuing training.

The biggest challenge identified is that longer training covering more legal areas is needed. The issues faced by paralegals are indeed very varied. As shown in Table 13, paralegals deal with a wide range of legal areas, it is therefore vital that their initial training be more comprehensive and regular continuing training be systematised.

Table 12 – Profile of the trainer providing initial and/or continuing training (per organisation)

Who conducts the training (initial and/or continuing)?	No. of answers	Percentage
Legal officers of the organisation	6	60%
External trainers	3	30%
Legal officer or external trainer according to the type of training given	1	10%
Total	10	100%

The fact that 70 % of the organisations use an internal trainer is encouraging as it means that most of them have the human resources available to provide continuing training in a sustainable way but lack the logistical means to do so. Organisations that do not have the human resources to provide training must therefore rely on external trainers which entails higher costs. They can thus ensure the training of their paralegals only when such financial means are available.

IV. D. Legal issues covered and types of services provided by paralegals

Legal issues covered by paralegals

Table 13 – Main legal issues handled by paralegals (per organisation)

What are the main legal issues handled by your paralegals?	No. of answers	Percentage
Civil cases mainly	6	60%
Conflicts related to worker's rights mainly	2	20%
Both civil and criminal cases	2	20%
Total	10	100%

The two organisations that have paralegals handling mainly worker's issues are trade unions.

Out of the remaining eight organisations, the paralegals of six of them concentrate their work on civil issues whereas the paralegals of the two remaining organisations cover equally civil and criminal matters.

The survey shows that civil cases dealt with by paralegals are mostly on land, inheritance and family matters. Regarding the criminal cases, paralegals intervene mostly on domestic violence (and to a lesser extent on theft, genocide related crimes and arbitrary arrest).

Types of services provided by paralegals

Table 14 – Types of services provided by paralegals (per organisation)

Services Organisation	Legal information / education	Legal advice	Mediation	Orientation/ Accompaniment before courts / administrative authorities	Writing legal conclusions
HAGURUKA	X	X	X	X	
AVEGA	X	X	X	X	
DUFATANYE	X	X			
ADEPE	X	X	X	X	
AJPRODHO	X	X		X	
CLADHO	X	X	X	X	
HRF Rwanda	X	X	X	X	
CESTRAR	X	X	X	X	X
COSYLI	X	X	X		
CDJP Nyundo	X	X	X	X	
TOTAL	10	10	8	8	1

The paralegals of all organisations provide legal information/education and legal advice. Also, most of the paralegals provide mediation services and orientation/accompaniment to their beneficiaries.

IV. E. Pedagogical resources and logistical/financial support provided to paralegals

Pedagogical resources provided to paralegals

Table 15 – Pedagogical resources provided to paralegals (per organisation)

What pedagogic resources are provided to paralegals to assist them in their work?	No. of answers	Percentage
Books / manuals / guides	5	55.6%
Legislation	3	33.3%
Both of the above	1	11.1%
Total	9	100%

More than half of the organisations provide relevant books, guides and manuals to their paralegals while one third provide them with copies of the legislation that is relevant to the services they are requested to deliver. One organisation provides them with both.

Logistical/financial support provided to paralegals

Table 16 – Percentage of organisations that provide a financial contribution for the costs incurred/some logistical support to their paralegals

Do your paralegals receive from your organisation a financial contribution for the costs incurred/some logistical support?	No. of answers	Percentage
Yes	9	90%
No	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 17 – Types of costs for which a financial contribution/some logistical support is provided (per organisation)

Types of costs	No. of answers (multiple answers were possible)	Percentage (out of 9 organisations)
Transport	9	100%
Communication	5	55.6%
Stationery/Photocopies	5	55.6%
Food	1	11.1%
No. of respondent organisations	9	

As seen above, very few paralegals are paid by the organisation for which they work. However, nine organisations out of ten contribute financially to the costs incurred by their paralegals or offer them some logistical support. Such contribution/support includes transport in all cases. Two thirds of the organisations combine it with additional kind(s) of support, mostly communication and/or stationery. This support enables paralegals to cover larger areas than just their nearby community and to communicate with the head office of

their organisations, local authorities, etc.

This being said, whatever the level of contribution/support offered by the organisation, some expenses remain in any case supported by paralegals.

IV. F. Communication and monitoring mechanisms of paralegals

Table 18 – Systems of communication between the organisations and their paralegals

How do you communicate with your paralegals?	No. of answers <i>(multiple answers were possible)</i>	Percentage <i>(out of 8 organisations)</i>
Telephone	8	100%
Communicating through focal points in the field	2	25.0%
Regular meetings	4	50.0%
Field visits	1	12.5%
Surface mail (by post)	1	12.5%
No. of respondent organisations	8	

All respondent organisations use phones to contact their paralegals, six out of which have recourse to other ways of communication, mostly regular meetings with their paralegals.

Table 19 – Monitoring mechanisms of paralegals (per organisation)

How does your organisation monitor the activities of its paralegals?	No. of answers <i>(multiple answers were possible)</i>	Percentage <i>(out of 10 organisations)</i>
Reports	6	60%
Meetings	3	30%
Field visits	3	30%
Evaluation	4	40%
No. of respondent organisations	10	

All ten organisations monitor the activities of their paralegals, six out of ten combining two different types of mechanisms.

The most common monitoring mechanism is by reports (six organisations out of ten). This form is a rather indirect as the paralegals report themselves back to the head office. However, three out of six combine reporting with additional mechanisms such as meetings, field visits or evaluation.

Table 20 – Person/Organ in charge of the monitoring process of paralegals (per organisation)

Who is in charge of the monitoring process in your organisation?	No. of answers	Percentage
Legal officer/ agent of the organisation	6	75%
Organisational bodies (GA, Board, Committees) of the organisation	2	25%
Total	8	100%

In most cases, the monitoring is carried out by the legal officer or equivalent of the organisation, who is the person most in contact with paralegals. In two organisations, the monitoring is done by its organisational bodies (General Assembly, Board, Committees, etc.).

Table 21 – Frequency of the monitoring of paralegals (per organisation)

Frequency	No. of answers	Percentage
Weekly	3	30%
Monthly	1	10%
Quarterly	2	20%
Six-monthly	3	30%
From case to case	1	10%
Total	10	100%

The monitoring of paralegals is frequent for four organisations that carry out monitoring on a weekly or monthly basis. Overall, more than half of the organisations monitor their paralegals a minimum of four times a year.

IV. G. Paralegals and the local community

Table 22 – Mechanisms used to inform the local community on paralegals and the services they provide

How do community members learn about your paralegals and the services they provide?	No. of answers	Percentage
During local meetings	7	77.8%
By contacting the local authorities	1	11.1%
By radio broadcasts	1	11.1%
Total	9	100%

In a majority of cases, community members are informed about the existence of paralegals and the services they provide during local meetings. Since several local meetings take place regularly, e.g. after *Umuganda*, at cell and *Umudugudu* levels, etc., these local meetings are indeed a very effective way of reaching out to a large part of the local community.

Only one organisation uses radio broadcasts to inform the local community about paralegals operating at their level.

Table 23 – Paralegals’ selection criteria of the topics of their legal information/education activities (per organisation)

When paralegals conduct activities of legal information/education for the local community, how are the topics chosen?	No. of answers	Percentage
Based on the problems in the local community	4	50.0%
Based on the topics on which the paralegals were themselves trained	1	12.5%
Decided by the organisation	1	12.5%
Based on the problems in the local community & validated by the organisation	1	12.5%
Based on the problems in the local community & on the topics on which the paralegals were themselves trained	1	12.5%
Total	8	100%

Most of the time, the selected topics relate to problems faced by the local community, which shows that paralegals’ information/education activities address to a large extent the needs and expectations of the local community.

IV.H. Constraints faced by paralegals in their work

Table 24 – Constraints faced by paralegals in their work according to the organisations

What constraints are faced by the paralegals during their work in the field?	No. of answers	Percentage
Lack of financial and logistical means	3	30%
The level of paralegal’s education is limited / insufficient training	3	30%
Employers are not receptive	1	10%
Lack of financial and logistical means & insufficient training	3	30%
Total	10	100%

According to the organisations, the main constraints faced by paralegals in their work are two-fold: (i) their lack of financial and logistical means and (ii) their insufficient training.

Regarding the former, this concern has been emphasised above (see Tables 16 and 17) since whatever the level of contribution/support offered by the organisations, some expenses remain in any case supported by paralegals themselves.

The latter is in line with the fact that the initial training provided to paralegals is deemed insufficient by 90% of the organisations (see Table 9) and that regular continuing training is not yet systematised (see Table 11).

V. Conclusion and recommendations

As shown in the survey focusing on 1,032 paralegals distributed among 10 organisations, paralegals in Rwanda provide a wide range of legal services to the local community, including legal information/education (most of the time, based on the problems face by the local community), legal advice, mediation services, orientation/accompaniment of their beneficiaries, etc. Paralegals can in many ways be likened to paramedics providing front-line advice and assistance.

In their interventions, paralegals deal mainly with civil issues (mostly on land, inheritance and family matters) and in some instances with worker's issues (this is the case for trade unions) or criminal matters (mostly on domestic violence).

In terms of profile, most paralegals are between 30 and 40 years old, therefore experienced and knowledgeable of the social issues and dynamics of the local community in which they intervene. Given that paralegals have to build confidence and knowledge while providing legal aid services to their beneficiaries, and that they also need to develop good working relations with the local institutions, this average age offers greater potential for an effective intervention of paralegals in their local community. The gender dimension is also well represented with more than 70% of women among paralegals.

Accessing the paralegalism sector is made through quite different mechanisms: the persons interested to work as paralegals often take the initiative to contact directly the organisations with paralegals programmes. Potential paralegals are also identified by their local environment (e.g. local authorities, churches, mosques, schools) directly in their own community. This diversified access helps ensuring that paralegals' social background is representative of the Rwandan society and that paralegals are responsive to the needs of the local community.

In view of the findings of the survey, the following recommendations on potential areas of improvement for the paralegalism sector in Rwanda are made to the organisations working with paralegals and more generally all stakeholders in the justice sector in Rwanda:

Geographical coverage

Although paralegals mainly operate at sector and cell levels and are therefore close to the local community, all areas do not benefit equally from their services. The survey noted that remote districts are less likely to have a presence of organisations working with paralegals. Yet needs are overwhelming in such districts.

- *Develop medium and long term strategic plans to balance consolidation and improvement of paralegals' services with expansion to targeted areas where currently few paralegals are working;*
- *Strengthen information sharing, coordination and joint planning between organisations working with paralegals to assist in ensuring that paralegals' services are not concentrated in the same areas but more equitably distributed in all parts of the country. In such process, make use of the existing forums and networks such as the Legal Aid Forum;*
- *At the local level, promote links among paralegals operating in a same area, in order to facilitate the exchange of information, the referral of cases, etc.*

Work status

In relation to the work status of paralegals, the survey showed that almost all paralegals are volunteers and therefore working on a part-time basis. However, as mentioned above, paralegals play an important bridging role between the rural population and NGOs, lawyers and authorities. Paying paralegals for their services would contribute to ensure a more effective paralegal system and increase the motivation factor. But most of the organisations lack so far the financial resources to develop such a scheme.

- *In order to mobilise funding enabling the payment of more paralegals, an effective and coherent paralegal system should be explored (preferably following a calibrated approach that would link training needs, requirements, regulation and quality supervision frameworks to the level of services provided). In this regard, collaboration is needed between all organisations working with paralegals. Such strategic orientation could be discussed within the structure of the Legal Aid Forum.*

Training

On average, paralegals appear to have a fairly good level of general education. The survey however shows that their initial training as paralegals (usually provided internally, by the legal officer or equivalent) is quite short and their continuing training not yet organised on a systematic basis. Consequently, paralegals' training is found insufficient (both in terms of duration and topics covered) by most organisations and considered as one of the major constraints paralegals face in their work.

- *For organisations to reach a more organised and consistent training scheme for their paralegals, share existing materials and work together using the mechanism of the Legal Aid Forum to develop a standard paralegals' curriculum and training manuals based on the specificity of paralegals' work, using a participatory and practical methodology suited for adult learners, and which could be adapted to meet the training needs of specific organisations;*
- *Given the high specificity and ever changing nature of the law, ensure that regular continuing training is provided to paralegals by the legal officer or equivalent of the organisation;*
- *In order to use more effectively the limited resources available, engage with the other organisations on how training initiatives could be combined;*
- *At local level, develop support mechanisms (such as regular meetings, focal points, visits, etc.) for paralegals to share experiences, improve their knowledge and assist each other in their work.*

Logistical/financial support

Paralegals are generally not as well equipped as one could have expected, in particular regarding logistical/financial support, the lack of which is considered by the organisations as one of the major constraints paralegals face in their work. As outlined above, although almost all organisations contribute financially to the costs incurred by their paralegals or offer them some logistical support (related to transport in all cases, and sometimes combined with communication and/or stationery), some expenses remain in any case supported by paralegals with the risk that people may be deterred from becoming or continuing to work as paralegals.

- *Develop programmes/interventions that would allow for paralegals to be reimbursed of all the expenses/costs they incur in their work.*

Pedagogic resources

In comparison to the level of logistical/financial support received, paralegals are better equipped with pedagogic resources (legislation, books and manuals). However, since their initial training is generally found insufficient by the organisations and their regular continuing training not yet systematised, their need of adequate pedagogic resources is especially important.

- *Ensure that the existing pedagogic resources (copies of the legislation, relevant books, guides and manuals published by organisations working with paralegals, the Legal Aid Forum, etc.) are largely and regularly distributed to paralegals;*
- *Paralegals who are to date only provided with copies of the legislation should also receive the above mentioned existing books, guides and manuals;*
- *Develop additional pedagogic resources to assist paralegals in their work.*

Monitoring mechanisms

Concerning monitoring mechanisms of paralegals, the survey showed that all the organisations monitor the activities of their paralegals, often through a combination of different types of mechanisms. The most common monitoring mechanism, i.e. reports prepared by paralegals and sent to the head office of their organisations, is sometimes combined with additional mechanisms such as meetings, field visits or evaluation.

The monitoring of paralegals is made on a weekly or monthly basis for almost half of the organisations. Overall, all respondent organisations maintain regular contacts with their paralegals through the use of phones, very often combined with regular meetings. Most organisations entrust the monitoring to their legal officer or equivalent person.

It should be emphasised that monitoring is a crucial process that enables organisations to follow-up activities undertaken by their paralegals and to assess the impact of paralegals' work in relation to the expected results and specific objectives of paralegals' and organisations' interventions.

- *Develop comprehensive monitoring systems starting with proper documentation (using the client forms of the Legal Aid Forum or equivalent system, filing, record keeping, etc.) and reporting mechanisms, but also including additional tools such as field visits and meetings with the paralegals, their beneficiaries, the local community, etc. in order to monitor the activities directly in the field and on a systematic and frequent basis;*
- *Integrate these monitoring activities right from the designing phase of paralegals' programmes/interventions, with corresponding allocated resources (human, logistics and financial);*
- *In order to ensure consistent and regular monitoring of the paralegals, appoint one qualified staff (preferably the legal officer or equivalent of the organisation, as currently) as the person in charge of this monitoring. In a view to enable then the organisation to adopt strategic decisions, ensure that the results of the monitoring are reviewed and discussed during the meetings of the Board, General Assemblies, etc.;*
- *As a continuation of the training provided by the Legal Aid Forum to its member organisations on documentation, monitoring and reporting, provide capacity building training of paralegals on the use of monitoring systems and tools;*

- *Develop reporting format and guidelines, so that paralegals provide their organisations with relevant information, combining qualitative and quantitative information.*

Communication with the local community

If the information about the existence of paralegals and the services they provide is usually communicated to the local community during local meetings, radio broadcasts that are also a very effective way to reach out the population are seldom used. The cost of such broadcasting could explain why most of the organisations, confronted to limited resources, prefer to concentrate their efforts at the regular local meetings to communicate this information.

- *Whenever possible, continue using communication channels that do not entail specific cost, such as public meetings organised by local authorities/institutions, religious communities, etc.;*
- *Develop additional tools (e.g. brochures) that will also contribute to the information of the local community on the paralegals' availability and services. Such brochure should contain information about the following: Who are the paralegals in the community and which organisations provide paralegal services? What type of services can the beneficiaries expect from paralegals? Where can the beneficiaries find paralegals? When (on what days of the week and times) can the beneficiaries access paralegal services? How can the beneficiaries access a paralegal, do they need to bring any specific documentation, e.g. their identity card or case documents?*
- *Explore the use of the mass media to widen the impact of information at local level, investigating the potential/cost/target for radio broadcasts and developing a project with national and/or local radios that would enable organisations to broadcast information on paralegals' services possibly according to a regular defined time slot.*