

Tanzania Human Rights
Defenders Coalition

Newsletter



REFRESHER TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCERS ON HANDLING OF HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE CASES

Southern Coastal Zone:
Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma

Venue: Tiffany Diamond Hotel
Date: 25th July- 26th July 2022



Message from the THRDC National Coordinator

Dear reader,

On behalf of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) and the Door of Hope to Women and Youth Tanzania, I would like to introduce you to our newsletter.

For the past ten years, Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition has been at the forefront in improving the working environment of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Tanzania. The Coalition has been taking part in building the capacity of HRDs including the law enforcers such as the Police Officers to ensure that human rights are observed.

The number of cases related to gender based violence, child abuse and human rights violations have generally been escalating to an unprecedented level. Incidences of violations are reported by CSOs, Media and law enforcers.

Police Force and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution are among the key state departments responsible with the enforcement of the laws and prosecution of GBV cases and child abuse.

In assuming these duties it is important that Police Officers and Public Prosecutors are adequately equipped with relevant knowledge on human rights and how to handle these cases.

It is with this backdrop that, Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition in collaboration with its Zonal Coordinating Unit in the Southern Coastal Zone (Door of Hope) have conducted a

capacity building session for the Police Officers and Public Prosecutors to improve their capacity to handle cases related to GBV, child abuse and other human rights cases.

Some of key achievements from this training include: Strengthened collaboration in information sharing on issues related to human rights violations to ensure fair and timely trial of cases; An agreement by the law enforcers and CSOs to construct safe houses for GBV and child abuse victims in Coastal Southern zone; Increased understanding on human rights, Gender Based Violence and Child abuse cases where it was established that the number of violations has been escalating. Approximately 1180 offenses of sexual violence and child abuse were reported to the Gender and Children Desks in the regions of Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma from January to June 2022.

THRDC and its members will continue to train law enforcers in their respective zones as part of a collective movement to reduce the level of human rights violations in our country, specifically GBV and child abuse cases.

We hope that, this newsletter will shed light on the training and other ongoing joint efforts to empower law enforcers in our country.

Happy reading!

Onesmo Olengurumwa,

National Coordinator – Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition
(THRDC)

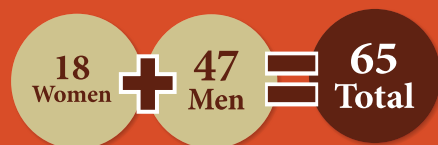
65 LAW ENFORCERS TRAINED ON HOW TO HANDLE GBV, CHILD ABUSE AND HUMAN RIGHTS CASES IN SOUTHERN COASTAL ZONE

On 25th and 26th July 2022, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition in collaboration with the Door of Hope to Women and Youth Tanzania conducted a 2 days refresher training for law enforcers on handling of human rights, Gender Based Violence and child abuse cases. The training was conducted at Tiffany Diamond Hotel, in Mtwara Region. A total of 65 law enforcers from Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma regions attended the training where 47 were men and 18 women.

The training was attended by law enforcers including Police officers and Officers from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Police officers who attended the training include Regional Commissioners, Officers commanding Districts (OCDs), Officers Commanding Station (OCS), Police gender desks officers and officers from the DDP office.

Generally, the training intended to enhance understanding and build their capacity in the promotion, protection and defending human rights in exercising their daily mandates. The training addressed participants' knowledge gaps on women rights, children rights and human rights in general.

Number of Law Enforcers who participated in the training



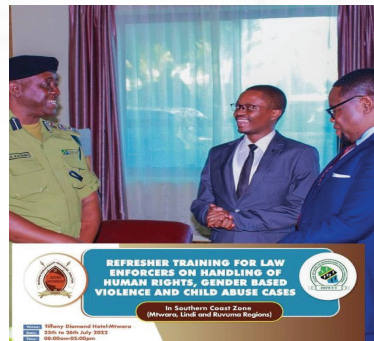


The Guest of Honor, Commissioner of Community Policing – Faustine Constantine Shilogile

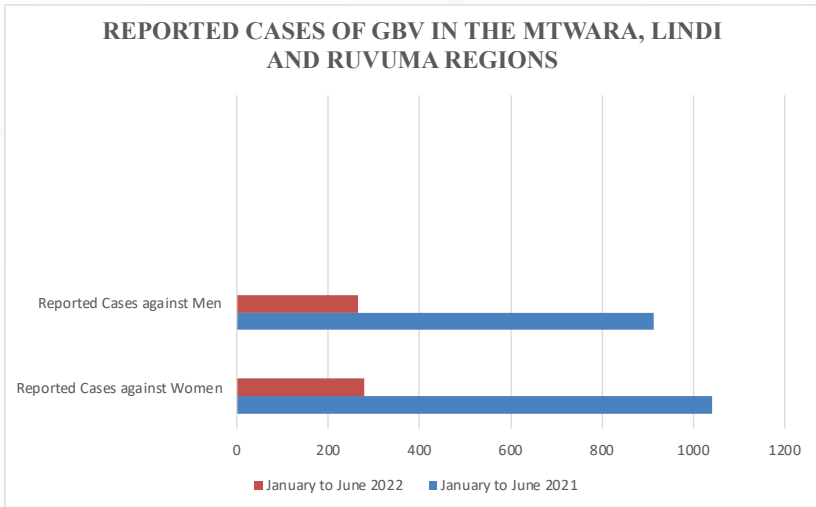
THE STATE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE IN THE SOUTHERN COASTAL ZONE

The number of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and child abuse cases in Tanzania have been raising to unprecedented level.

Southern Coastal Regions of Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma are among key areas that have been affected to a very large extent.



According to information from the Police Force, approximately 1180 offenses of sexual violence and child abuse were reported to the Police Force in the Southern Coastal Zone from January to June 2022. Among them 914 victims were women while 266 were men. However, this number seems to be smaller compared to cases reported to the police in the period of January to June 2021 were approximately 1320 crimes of sexual violence and child abuse were reported to the Gender and Children Desks in the South Region. In that period in 2021 a total of 1042 victims were women and 278 victims were men.



Insp. Adelina Adolph Ndyamukama from Mtwara Police Gender Desk



HERE'S HOW THE COMMUNITY WILL BENEFIT FROM THE TRAINING OF LAW ENFORCERS IN THE EASTERN SOUTHERN ZONE

- Strengthened collaboration in information sharing on issues related to human rights violations to ensure fair and timely trial of cases

“Prosecutors and Police Officers must work together to ensure fair and timely trial of GBV and child abuse cases.”
Renatus Mkude –Office of the Director of Public Prosecution



- Safe Houses for GBV and Child Abuse Victims to be Constructed in the Coastal Southern zone

The need for safe houses emanates from the fact that there is no safe houses established in the Southern Coastal Zone for GBV survivors, including children. CSOs and Law Enforcers are committed to establish safe houses for GBV and child abuse survivors to secure their safety and reduce stigma against the survivors. The Regional Police Commissioners from Ruvuma and Lindi Regions offered land for construction of the safe houses in their respective regions.

The Regional Police Commissioners from Ruvuma and Lindi Regions offered land for construction of the safe house in their respective regions.

- Continuous refresher trainings for law enforcers on handling of human rights, Gender Based Violence and child abuse cases to be conducted based on Zones.

THRDC in collaboration with its partners will continue to conduct related trainings based on zones. It should be noted that these trainings were previously conducted at the national level. It has been established that trainings conducted at the zonal level are more effective since law enforcers at the lower ranks are also given a chance to learn. Practically, those of the lower ranks are the ones meeting frequently with the communities.



Dr. Clement Mashamba-Senior Lecturer at Law School of Tanzania (Standing) facilitating a topic on Investigating and Prosecuting GBV and Child Abuse Cases

- THRDC members are committed to expand the provision of legal aid to GBV and child abuse victims in the Southern Coastal Zone. It has been noted that there are very few organizations in Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma that have enough resources for provision of legal aid. THRDC and Door of Hope Tanzania are committed to ensure that strong legal aid canter are established in the Southern Coastal Zone.



Challenges

Among the determined barriers when dealing with GBV cases in Coastal Southern zone are existence of conflicting laws. For example, the Marriage Law Act No. 29 of 1971 that allows a girl child to be married at the age of 14 with the consent of the parents which is against the law of the child.

Other challenges include delays in reporting GBV and child abuse cases, lack of safe houses to GBV victims especially women and children in the Coastal Southern zone which leads to loss of evidence and disappearing of victims/witnesses and lastly, insufficient knowledge on the causes and effects of GBV in the community.





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