



Minutes of November Legal Aid Coordination Meeting, Mogadishu, Somalia
Monday 23rd November 2015

Venue: Ministry of Justice, Mogadishu **Date:** 23rd November **start time:** 09:30am
Chair Salad Addow (Legal aid & Legal Awareness Coordinator)

Participants:

S/No	Name	Position	Institution
1.	Muse Macalin Maxamed	Prosecutor	Attorney General Office
2.	Samira Hussein Daud	Prosecutor	Attorney General Office
3.	Mohamed Sh. Hassan Ahmed	Legal advisor	MOJ
4.	Abdirisq Sh. Mohamed	BOD Member	SOWDEN
5.	Mohammud Mohamed Abdi	Lawyer	SSWC
6.	Caisha Malaq Mahdi	Director	Burfule Women development
7.	Ubah Mohamed Nur	Legal advisor	Galmudug State
8.	Abdullahi Moalim Muhidin	Lawyer	Somali Bar Association
9.	Abdulqani Abdullahi	Lawyer	Somali Bar Association
10.	Khalif W. Mohamed	,,,,,,	Custodial Corps
11.	Ibrahim Mohamed Cise	Deputy director of Cenral prison	Custodial Corps
12.	Hibo Adan Osman	Public relations	Ifrah Foundation
13.	Sumayyah Ahmed Ali	Executive Director	Ifrah Foundation
14.	Abdikadir Sh. Abdi	Protection coordinator	Hopline
15.	Rukia Sharif Ibrahim	Member	MOJ
16.	Rahma Hassan Abdullahi	Member	MOJ
17.	Ruqiyo Ali Abdulle	Deputy Director	SOWDEN
18.	Halima Mohamed Moalim	Lawyer	SWDC
19.	Noor Ali Farah	Secretary	TAB SOOMAALIYA
20.	A.fitah Ahmed Omar	Admin and finance director	MOJ Jubaland

Discussion/ reaction/ comments	
Objective of the meeting	<p>Main Objective of the meeting: is to share information, discuss and raise concerns, including requests for necessary legislative/policy reform and to monitor and evaluate the quality of legal aid services. Specifically, the meeting intends:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To bring together key players and stakeholders in the legal aid field to share experiences, engage each other to form a common vision for the future of legal aid. 2. To bring legal aid to the forefront of pursuit of justice. 3. To keep key players and stakeholders informed of developments in the field. <p>To share emerging challenges and best practices.</p>
AGENDA	<p style="text-align: center;">MEETING PROCESS & AGENDA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction and roll call: 5 minutes 2. Special guests: (Permanent Secretary: 5 minutes). 3. Review and endorsement of the last coordination meeting minutes and follow up on the action points (10 min). 4. Updates from legal aid providers, overview of what they have done in legal aid for the last month, (35 minutes). 5. Discussion: Legal aid gaps and current response. (25 minutes). 6. Discussion: challenge or constraint affecting all agencies? (10 minutes). 7. Presentation by SSWC on (How, why they do, and whom they intend for their legal aid service). (10 minutes) 8. Presentation by the Attorney General Office, AGO, on how better coordinate activities with AGO, and general suggestions. (10 minutes) 9. Any other Business (AoB). (5 minutes).
Topic	Discussion
1st AGENDA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and roll call • Special guest: Permanent Secretary 	<p>The Permanent Secretary (PS) of Ministry of Justice and Judiciary Affairs Dr. Ismail Jimale welcomed the members and officially opened the second monthly coordination meeting as he acknowledged, and recognized the importance of the meeting and the need to collaborate and coordinate state and non-state legal aid actors to better serve the Somali citizen. As the role of government was minimal due to the last two decades' conflict, the PS appreciated the role of the Somali non-state actors to fill the gap and do serve for the Somali citizen. As he continue, Dr Ismail emphasized the following points in his speech:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Government endeavor to play its mandatory role to make sure that all people be equal in front of the law, and specifically vulnerable people to have right for legal aid defence. Government strengths the establishment of independent justice institutions capable of

	<p>addressing the justice needs of the people of Somalia by delivering justice for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To achieve these goals the ministry of justice will all relevant stakeholders including both NGOs legal aid providers and other important civil society actors by creating Public private partnership (PPP) establishment to share information to develop national plans, strategies and goals. ➤ As much as the government appreciates and respects the role of the non-state actors to help the Somali citizen, PS stressed that the NGOs shouldn't attempt to take away the role and responsibilities of the Somali government. Instead, NGOs should work how better strengthen the Somali government to accomplish its mandatories and responsibilities. By collaborating we can serve Somalia better. ➤ On its side, the Ministry of Justice will make sure to facilitate participative policy formulation, planning and programmatic co-ordination to advance the national strategic objective and priorities outlined under Legal aid and Rule of law in the Somalia. By participating coordination/consulation meetings, NGOs should put forward their suggestion; comments and the challenges they are facing to perform their jobs. ➤ The goal of the legal aid service has to be only supporting vulnerable people in their legal rights, and that is should be the only option for promoting Justice in the country. ➤ The PS encouraged creating Health work relationship between the Ministry of Justice and local legal aid providers (NGOs). <p>Finally, the PS- recognized and appreciated that Legal Aid Coordination meeting to be held in MoJ <i>"I am very glad to attend a Legal Aid coordination Meeting in Somalia, it shows that there is huge difference between Somalia and some other third world countries as we are talking about exercising legal aid practice thanks to the local NGOs and our international partners to improve Justice Institutions.</i></p> <p>Then he welcomed the chairperson in order to continue chairing the remaining agendas of the meeting.</p>
<p><i>Chairperson requested Everyone to introduce him/herself.</i></p>	
<p>2nd AGENDA Review and endorsement of the last coordination meeting minutes and</p>	<p>The Legal Aid and Legal Awareness Coordinator acknowledged the participants for coming to this important meeting. To remain those who attended and those who didn't attend the last coordination meeting, the chairperson once again revealed the main goals and specific objectives of this meeting, to share information and discuss common</p>

<p>follow up on the action points (Chairperson)</p>	<p>challenges facing bay all. As he continue, the chair noticed the participants that, beside other agenda item, every month the will be two percentations; one by an important judicary institution and second by one local legal aid providers. For this meeting, Attorney General Office, and Save Somali Women and Children. As he continues, the Chairperson reviewed and summarized the last coordination meeting minutes, which was held on 15-October 2015 at the Ministry of Justice, the Coordinators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reviewed and read major topics of the last meeting minutes such as challenges, suggestions, comments and highlighted remarks raised by the participants. ❖ The coordinator revealed that the legal aid and legal awareness unit of the Ministry of Justice is going to organize a consultation meeting in December 2015 on a drafted national legal aid policy to govern and improve and the quality of legal aid service in Somalia. The chairperson emphasized the importance of the NGOs’ input to this policy, and there will be official invitation to participate the consultation meeting to review the national legal aid policy. <p>Finally- the chair appreciated the participants and opened the discussion for the rest of the meeting agendas.</p>
<p>Discussion!</p>	
<p>3rd AGENDA</p> <p>Updates from legal aid providers, overview of what they have done in legal aid for the last month</p>	<p>All the participants clearly recognized the effective role of Ministry of Justice to take the lead to improve the quality of the national legal aid service. As the discussion continues, each and every NGO was given chance to talk about the activities they have done for the last month. Here are the following updates:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Somali Women Development Center (SDWC): claimed they do legal aid for all civilian case including GBV. For the last month, SWDC claimed they provide legal aid for 54 cases with deferent kinds (domestic, family, GBV and criminal cases). Most of the beneficiaries were vulnerable people. ❖ Somali Bar Association: have a legal aid department to provide service to all criminal and civil cases. SBA has a larg schope as it has many registred professional lawyers than other NGOs. The association provides unlimited legal aid service for the vulnerable people and as they said they don’t have the exact number they provided legal aid for the last month since each of their registered professional lawyers provid legal aid voluntary whenever they see.

	<p>However, Aballa, SBA representative for the meeting that he provided legal aid service for for 2-cases in the last Month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Somali Women Development Network (SOWDEN): focused their legal aid merely for GBV victims. As they claimed they work for the prevention of GBV practices. However, they haven't mentioned any cases they undertook for the last month. ❖ Save Somali Women & Children (SSWC): provides legal aid and focus specifically the vulnerable people, and IDPs. In last Month there was no critical cases that they provided legal aid. SSWC claimed they provided 16-20 small cases related to family distractions, IDPs disputes and other unforeseen action occurred in IDP Camps. In addition, SSWC provide legal education, and reconciliation for the community in IDP comps. ❖ Somali Hopline for Civil Society forum:- is a nonprofit organization, supporting for Institutional Development, Monitor Human rights violation, and awareness raising to police institutions in Lower Shabelle region of Somalia. However, Hopeline didn't mention any cases they supported so far as they claimed that there are no police and judiciary institutions working in Lower Shabelle region. However this claim was disapproved by the Attorney General office that was present in the meeting. <p>Beside the above mentioned legal aid providers, there were other NGOs participated the coordination meeting, however they didn't present any cases they defended for the last month. However, the NGOs participated the discussion of other agenda items of the meeting.</p>
<p>4th AGENDA Discussion: Legal aid gaps and current response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each and every one of the participated NGOs agree that there is huge need for legal aid service, however, it was raised that there is huge fund challenge to cover up the gap. ➤ It was suggested to work voluntarily instead of always depending on outside sources of funds.
<p>5th AGENDA Discussion: challenge or constraint affecting all agencies?</p>	<p>It was agreed that the challenges raised in the last meeting minutes are yet unsolved and needs to take actions against. However, it was agreed that many of these challenges will be resolved with the finalization of the national legal aid policy.</p> <p>In addition, some other challenges have been raised in this meeting</p>

	<p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Participants from GalMudug region raised that there are huge need for no legal aid services and also improving the quality of judiciary institutions. Most of the severe cases occurs in the region are transferred to Mogadishu based courts and hospitals to remedy. ✚ Many of the Somali citizens trust to turn to traditional clan elders instead of the formal justice institutions for protection. While many are ignorant the legal institutions and their framework. Therefore, it was suggested to educate the people about their legal rights and duties, about the formal justice institutions and about ✚ Whereas others are willing to take up legal action against, however because of fear of reprisal they tend to hide and keep silent over the injustices they were subjected to.
<p>6th AGENDA Presentation by SSWC on (How, why they do, and whom they intend for their legal aid service).</p>	<p>SSWC: - It is a Somali women non-governmental humanitarian organization at a national level founded in 1992 in Mogadishu, by a group of Somali women intellectuals from cross-section of the community.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>Capacity building, awareness raising, advocacy and lobbying, debates/meetings, mobilization, networking, petition writing, research and documentation, media deployment.</p> <p>Focus area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhancing Resilience and Economic Growth in Somalia , Banadir, Bay and L. Shabelle ✓ Strengthening the role of women organizations, Banadir, Galgudud, Bay, Hiraan, L. shabele, Middle shabele ✓ Building the community capacity on sexual and gender based violence, Banadir ✓ Providing Gender-based Violence (GBV) Response Services and Prevention Activities for Somalis in Somalia. ✓ Enhance Somali women’s Protection and Empowerment through vocational Training, Capacity Building, Awareness Raising campaign and Proving various peace Support, Mogadishu

	<p>Why legal aid important for SSWC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SSWC main responsibility is protection of women and children against GBV and SGBV. Therefore to enhance access to justice for GBV survivors, sswc strive to provide necessarily legal aid service to the vulnerable people sufficient capacity to seek justice through formal legal mechanisms and justices system. ✓ It reduces the risk of GBV by arresting the perpetrators. ✓ In a month SSWC deals with 16-20 cases, sometimes the number of survivors who want to pursue with legal action against perpetrators may increase from this range. ✓ Save Somali Women & Children (SSWC) is specifically interested in GBV cases such as rape, denial of resources, physical assault, and, sexual assault.
<p>7th AGENDA Presentation by the Attorney General Office, AGO, on how better coordinate activities with AGO, and general suggestions.</p>	<p>Attorney General Office- representatives of the Attorney office, clearly explained the procedural Law for legal aid and the best ways that can be developed strong coordination Justice institutions and NGOs to support the vulnerable people who need for legal aid. In addition, AGO explains the ways and procedures of monitoring prisons. Every Lawyer can follow the all stages of the case.</p> <p>After presentation the participants asked question to AGO representatives, here are the main questions discussed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If an NGO or Individual wants to visit or monitor a Prison, and take permission letter from the DG- MOJ, is it fine? ➤ The challenge of contradiction between some of the government offices. For example AGO may permit an NGO to visit the prison or police station, however, the authorities of the prison or police station sometimes may not collobrate.
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>All the above Recommendations and Challenge was taken in honest and will be responded according to priorities the chair told the participants. The coordinator concluded the meeting and noticed the next month's meeting that will be shared letter.</p>
<p>End Meeting</p>	<p>12:30 PM</p>

Date and Time for the next meeting, to be confirmed and communicated later!