



Minutes of Monthly Legal Aid Coordination Meeting, Mogadishu, Somalia
Thursday 15th October 2015

Venue: Ministry of Justice, Mogadishu **Date:** 15th October **state time:** 09:30am
Chair Salad Addow (Legal aid & Legal Awareness Coordinator)

Participants:

S/No	Name	Position	Institution
1.	Sahra Said Bile	Project Officer	UNDP
2.	Sahra Mohamed Ahmed	Legal Advisor	SWDC
3.	Cabdirahin Cumar Cali	Lawyer	SWDC
4.	Xawa Xaaji Sebriye	Lawyer	Association of Somali Women Lawyers
5.	Hindi Ahmed Farah	Deputy Director	SSWC
6.	Mohamud Mohamed Abdi	Lawyer	SSWC
7.	Sumayyah Ahmed	Executive Director	IFRAH Foundation
8.	Abdullahi Sheikh Nur Mohamed	Vice Chairman	TAB Soomaaliya
9.	Bishaaro Cismaan Kaanbul	Member	(SOWDEN).
10.	Ruqiyo Cali Cabdulle	Deputy Director	(SOWDEN).
11.	Xasan Nur Xalane	Lawyer	COGWO
12.	Cabdiqani Cabdullahi Maxamed	Lawyer	Somali Bar Association
13.	Abdi Mohamud Ali	Project Manager	CCORD
14.	Caasho Malaq	Director	BUURFULO
15.	Mohamed Sh. Cumar	Director	Central Prison
16.	Dahir Abdulle Rage	Director of Trainings	Custodial Corps
17.	Col. Mohamed Sh. Omar	Director of Central prison	Custodial corps
18.	Ismail A. Nuur	Lawyer	Supreme Court
19.	Hana Cabaas	LOA Coordinator	Attorney General's Office
20.	Mohamed Hassan Ali	Regional Coordinator	ISWA
21.	Sharmarke Yusuf Ali	Regional Coordinator	Galmudug
22.	Rahma Hassan Abdulle	Intern	MoJ
23.	Mohamed Muhidin Arale	Intern	MoJ
24.	Muhidin Hashi Dalmar	Intern	MoJ

Discussion/ reaction/ comments	
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.
AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction and roll call: 2. Special guests: (Director General. 3. Legal aid and legal awareness coordinator presentation about legal aid unit of the ministry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief introduction of the legal aid & legal awareness coordination unit TOR • Under developed strategic goals, and policies of the unit. • Partnership building between the ministry and the civil society organizations. 4. Updates from legal aid providers, overview of what they are doing in legal aid. 5. Discussion: how best can the ministry and the other relevant stakeholders including NGOs can work together?. 6. Discussion: Legal aid gaps and current response. 7. Discussion: Any other challenge or constraint affecting all agencies?.
1st AGENDA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and roll call • Special guest: Acting Director General 	<p>Director Opened the meeting and informed the participants that the purpose of the meeting is to share information by creating strong relationship between Ministry and legal aid providers in order to give the vulnerable people Legal Aid and Legal awareness for Better Access to Justice.</p> <p>Also DG Introduce the Legal Aid and Legal Awareness Coordinator (chairperson) his roles and responsibilities for development networking between Local NGOs working Legal aids and the Ministry of Justice in order to work smoothly and support for the Communities needed legal aid service to promote justice and Rule of Law.</p> <p>Lastly, the acting DG- recognized and appreciated that NGOs working for legal aids are importance agencies and they play a vital role for the promotion of Justice, strengthen the Rule of Law project and he claims that the Ministry of Justice will continue same this conference, then he welcomed the chairperson in order to continue the remaining agendas.</p>
<i>Chairperson requested Everyone to introduce him/herself.</i>	
2nd AGENDA Legal aid and legal awareness coordinator presentation about legal aid unit of the ministry (Chairperson)	<p>The legal aid coordinator briefly explained the legal aid and Legal awareness Unit of MoJ, emphasizing 'why legal aid' and 'why now' citing the provisional constitution of Somalia. The coordinator focused also the importance of the monthly legal aid coordination meeting to share information and discuss about the challenges, and concerns.</p> <p>Briefing the NGOs and CSOs about MoJ's strategic legal aid goals, the coordinator explained the underdeveloped policies and strategies to improve the national aid service. These policies include the national legal aid policy (which is now under development). This national policy is significant in order</p>

	<p>to facilitate access to places of prison and detention, and insuring the rights of those accused to access a lawyer all stages. The Coordinator also emphasized the importance of Civil Society Organizations to share their information and experience with MoJ to have common vision and way forward for the national legal aid service. To Make sure that all legal aid lawyers meet required standards of experience and competence, and have the systems in place to meet their clients’ needs, the coordinator explained that The legal aid unit will establish a set of checks and balances in place to ensure that legal aid providers comply with the required service standards. The unit may also carry out audits or quality checks on providers to ensure that their services reach the required standards of quality and value.</p> <p>Finally- before opening the discussion for the remaining agenda, the Coordinator introduced Sahra Bile “Project Office-UNDP- to the group to have a brief presentation of UNDP’S Rule of Law Project. As part of PSG 3 Sahara explained UNDP’s support to the Somali people in creating an enabling environment for stability, rule of law and good governance – starting with the strengthening of legal institutions in order to increase competency, efficiency and accountability. Sahra encouraged the NGOs to continue the legal aid work event if they don’t get fund from the international agencies, as she said “ <i>Because this is our country, we better do the work</i>”</p>
<p>The time for discussion!</p>	
<p>3rd AGENDA</p> <p>NGOs and CSOs updated in formations and discussions.</p>	<p>All the NGOs and SCOs representative persons clearly recognized and congratulated the effective role of Ministry of Justice to take the lead of the national legal aid service. As the discussion continues, each and every NGO was given the opportunity to speak and explain what they do, how they do in legal aid. 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. The organization has lawyers (not specific) and 30 paralegals, and they are active in 7 police stations in Mogadishu. ❖ Somali Women Lawyers (SWL): do legal aid specifically for Children, IDPs, and women. SWL is active in all police stations in Mogadishu and specifically focus on Women. ❖ Somali Bar Association: have a legal aid department and provide service to all criminal and civil cases. The association claimed that 40% of their legal aid service is targeted to the poor people. ❖ Somali Women Development Network (SOWDEN): focused their legal aid merely for GBV victims. As they claimed they work for the prevention of GBV practices. ❖ Buurfuulo: active in Hamarweyn, Hamar jajab, Waberi and Bondhere districts of Mogadishu. They mainly work with traditional elders to resolve the conflicts and refer the incidents to other local NGOs to provide legal aid.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Center for Research & Development: active in Shangani and Hamar jajib. They promote to resolve the conflict in formal justice systems, traditional justice and Sharia. ❖ Save Somali Women & Children (SSWC): provides legal aid and focus specifically the vulnerable people, and IDPs. In addition SSWC do legal education, community mobilization, and reconciliation. ❖ COGWO: with support from international agencies, COGWO provides legal aid specifically to women and vulnerable people in the community. As they claimed, COGWO works with police stations, and prisons. ❖ TAP SOMALIA: focuses the vulnerable people and provide legal aid and legal awareness to the community. ❖ IFRAH foundation: support women who are under FGM and girls who are at risk in Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The foundation closely works with Attorney General’s office and provides legal aid.
<p>4th AGENDA Discussion: How best can the ministry and the other relevant stakeholders including NGOs work together?</p>	<p>Discussing the best ways can MoJ and the legal aid providers works together, participants suggested the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain like this kind of monthly coordination meeting in orders to strength the collaboration between MOJ, NGOs and other SCOs. ➤ Information sharing between MoJ and legal aid providers regarding the best way to improve the national legal aid service. ➤ MoJ should provide and facilitate the needed documents for the legal aid providers. ➤ MoJ should always collaborate with the legal aid providers and have them their opinion by inviting them the conferences to improve the legal aid policies and strategies. ➤ Moj was urged to improve the quality and transparency of the Justice institutions. ➤ Promote primary prevention programs to reduce Gender based violence and other civil and criminal acts. ➤ Train GBV WG members, government and other GBV actors and service providers on the application and use of the GBV guidance notes and implementation tools. ➤ Strengthen community protection mechanisms by advocating with custodians of traditions and religions to abolish harmful traditional

	<p>practices such as solving dispute with illegal ways and shame.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide legal aid awareness through workshops, forums, TVs and radios to the citizen to raise awareness about their legal rights. ➤ Practicing our Sharia law to resolve the civil and criminal violence.
5th AGENDA Challenges faced by the legal aid providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Madina Hospital is the only acceptable one that the courts refer the gender based violence cases to examine the victim. However, the hospital was accused to neglect some cases or have no modern tech equipments to check the validity or the falseness of some cases. Therefore it was suggested that shouldn't only be restricted Madina hospital to examine such cases. ✚ Some police station in Mogadishu cannot be accessed easily by the legal aid providers, therefore, it was recommended to establish legislation that allows the NGOs to easily undertake their tasks. ✚ Lastly the most common challenges facing by all the legal aid providers is Security as the country is not yet safe to go after some cases and arrest the perpetrators.
6th AGENDA Legal aid gaps and current response.	<p>Most of the NGOs have raised that there is huge need for legal aid provision in Somalia to the vulnerable groups in the community as the rate of violence against the vulnerable people in the community such women and children are very high. Though that gap to provide legal aid exists, the response from the legal aid providers and government is minimal.</p>
Remarks	<p>Representatives from custodial corps mentioned they have children in prison for around 20 girls and 30 boys who don't have guardian and requested CSO to provide assistance for these children.</p>
Conclusion	<p>All the above Recommendations and Challenge was taken honestly 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>
End Meeting	12:30 PM

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