



SEXUAL &
REPRODUCTIVE
RIGHTS IN AFRICA
(SRRA)

Digest

Vol1



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THE EDITORIAL

Welcome to the maiden edition of the Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa (SRRA) Digest. This Digest will run quarterly and feature articles written by students and alumni of the SRRA Master's, doctoral and postdoctoral programmes at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. While we aim to target both current and past students of the programme, we also encourage other stakeholders, researchers, policymakers, advocates on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), academics and members of civil society groups to contribute and share their thoughts on any SRHR issues of importance in the region.

The Digest aims to provide updates on laws, policies, programmes, and cases related to SRHR issues from different parts of the continent and at the national level. Although the articles are not academic, they are based on an academic and human rights framework. The primary

objective of the Digest is to keep readers informed about the latest developments in your surroundings and to increase the visibility of the SRRA programme.

This particular edition of the SRRA Digest features two important case reviews on topical SRHR issues, a summary of an event, recent developments in international law and an interview.

The first article by **Tsaone Mosweu**, Masters in SRRA student provides analysis of the passage of the anti- LGBTIQ+ Bill by the parliament of Ghana on 28 February 2024.

The second article features a case analysis of Non-Governmental Organisations Coordination Board v. Eric Gitari & Others (2019), Kenya, Supreme Court by **Letitia Mwavishi Shitagwa** and **Tracey Lichuma**, Masters in SRRA students.

The third article is presented by **Amon Aruho**, PhD in SRRA candidate on Fox Oywelowo Odoi, Prof. Sylvia Tamale, Rutaro Robert, Bishop James Lubega Banda & 18 others v. Attorney General & 3 Others, Consolidated Constitutional Petition Nos. 14, 15, 16 & 85 of 2023.

Danielle Visser, PhD in SRRA candidate, provides an update on the SRRA Study Group, a recent online initiative to promote continuous learning through engagement with diverse practitioners in SRHR.

This is followed by an article by **Maryanne Nkechi Obiagbaoso**, PhD in SRRA candidate and co-editor of the Digest on the recent UN Human Rights Council adoption of the resolution on protecting the rights of intersex people.

The final feature is an interview highlighting the impact of the SSRA programme on former Masters in SRRA student,

Charlemaine Husselmann, as well as how she continues to incorporate lessons from the programme in her current profession as a Project Manager at Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS).

The year 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of the SRRA programme. To observe the occasion, the Centre for Human Rights (CHR) will be hosting a colloquium on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of vulnerable groups, with a special focus on refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in Africa. The theme aligns with the sustainable development goals' (SDGs) agenda to 'leave no one behind'.

We would like to encourage alumni of the SRRA programme, scholars within and outside of the University of Pretoria, experts and practitioners in SRHR to send abstracts for this occasion. The deadline for the abstract call is 15 June 2024. Please find the link to the abstract call below:

<https://www.chr.up.ac.za/latest-news/3767-colloquium-on-the-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-of-vulnerable-groups-in-africa>

The SRRA programme is also preparing to welcome the 10th cohort of Masters students (LLM/MPhil) for the 2025 academic year. The deadline for applications is 15 August 2024. Please find the link to the application details below:

<https://www.chr.up.ac.za/srra>

Co-editors:

Maryanne Nkechi Obiagbaoso &

Yumba Bernadette Kakhobwe

A stylized, high-contrast illustration featuring the profiles of several diverse individuals. The faces are rendered in various shades of purple, pink, and black, with some areas filled with dense cross-hatching. The composition is layered, with some faces appearing more prominent than others. The overall style is graphic and artistic.

Feature Articles

The passage of the anti-LGBTIQ+ bill by the parliament of Ghana



Tsaone Mosweu

Masters student,
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Introduction

The passage of legislation targeting lesbians, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and other people of diverse sexual orientations who do not identify as heterosexual by parliamentary bodies has become a common issue in many parts of Africa. Such laws often reflect the deeply ingrained religious beliefs, societal attitudes and political ideas that stigmatise and marginalise LGBTIQ+ individuals. One of such instances is the passage of one of the extremely harsh anti- LGBTIQ+ Bill by the parliament of Ghana on 28 February 2024, sponsored by the coalition of religious and traditional leaders {1}. The Human Sexuality Rights and Family Values Bill proposes that people be punished by being imprisoned for 3 years for identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer {2}.

If the president endorses this Bill and it is passed into a law, Ghana will be an addition to the 36 African countries that have criminalised homosexuality {3}. If the Bill becomes law, it will

expose many individuals to the risk of arrest and imprisonment, violent attacks, stigma and discrimination simply because of their identity. It would criminalise the work of teachers, health care professionals and service providers, humanitarian actors, and many others who offer professional services to key populations and all people who desperately need them.

According to BBC News, this will as well affect donors since those who provide funds for organisations targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals will be faced with 5 years' imprisonment, while those involved in LGBTIQ+ advocacy that include children will be sentenced to 10 years in prison {4}. Beyond its legal consequences, this Bill has the potential to exacerbate stigma, discrimination and violence against LGBTIQ+ people. It will also instill feelings of fear and intimidation preventing those identifying as LGBTIQ+ from freely expressing their true identity and accessing essential services and support networks. It could potentially lead to an increase in HIV transmission and sexually

transmitted infections because those affected will be afraid to access professional services, while service providers will be afraid and discouraged from providing services to affected groups. At the core of the passage of this Bill is representation of a violation of fundamental human rights principles including the right to equality, nondiscrimination, privacy and freedom from prosecution. This Bill as well goes against article 3 of the African Charter as it clearly indicates that every individual should be equal before the law and should be entitled to equal protection of the law regardless of their diverse identities {5}. It as well undermines Resolution 275 of the African Commission which strongly criticises systematic attacks by both government and non-government actors targeting people based on perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity {6}.

This could undermine and reverse the gains that Ghana has made in HIV prevention and treatment, in expanding medical, legal and protection services for survivors of gender-based

violence, and in advancing human rights, including as a member of the Human Rights Council. All of this could jeopardise the achievement of Ghana's development ambitions as it will perpetuate systemic discrimination and marginalisation, denying LGBTIQ+ people their inherent dignity and humanity.

Conclusion

It is worth noting that the passage of anti-LGBTIQ+ laws have a profound effect on individuals, communities and society, it undermines human rights and the rule of law. It perpetuates stigma, discrimination and violence worsening health disparities and social inequalities. This requires a concerted effort in working together towards a world where everyone is able to exercise their full human rights, and no one is left behind as per the agenda 2030 principle for sustainable development.

Non-Governmental Organisations Coordination Board v. Eric Gitari & Others (2019), Kenya, Supreme Court



**Letitia Mwavishi
Shitagwa**

Masters student,
SRRA,
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Tracey Lichuma

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Summary of facts

In April 2012, Eric Gitari, on three separate occasions, submitted six names to the Director for registration of NGOs intending to address violence meted out on the LGBTQI Community. The NGO Coordination Board rejected the application, citing that the names and objectives of the proposed organisations were repugnant to public policy and in conflict with Sections 162, 163, and 165 of the Penal Code {7}. The Court of Appeal (by a majority of 3:2) had affirmed the decision of the High Court that the NGO Coordination Board had contravened the right to freedom of association as provided in Article 36 of the Constitution. The minority held that the Directors' action to reject the proposed names did not discriminate against the LGBTQI and that the right was not absolute. They further found that Article 27 on discrimination based on a person's sex did not infer sexual orientation but the gender of the person. The appeal was dismissed, leading to this case.

Issue

Whether the refusal to register the organisation was unconstitutional as it violated their freedom of association enshrined in Articles 27 and 36 of the Kenyan Constitution {8}.

Analysis and determination

The Court opined that the freedom of association is recognised in international and regional statutes ratified by Kenya in tandem with Article 2(5) of the Kenyan Constitution, including Article 22(1) of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and Article 10(1) of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.

Concerning whether the freedom of association included associations whose activities were contrary to the law, the Court held that Sections 162, 163, and 165 did not distinguish

between homosexual and heterosexual offenders. The said sections did not intend to limit the LGBTQI's right to freedom of association. Mr Gitari intended to register an organisation that advanced the rights of LGBTQI and did not correlate to the offences stipulated in the penal code.

The Court was persuaded by a similar case in Attorney General of Botswana v. Thuto Rammage and 19 others {9} where the Botswana Department of Civil and National Registration refused to register a civil society termed LEGABIBO on the basis that same-sex conduct was criminalised by the Penal Code {10}. The Court held that freedom of association and assembly protected the rights of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals to register a society that promotes the rights of the members of that group. Even though the Penal Code prevented same-sex acts, it does not prevent them from associating.

The Supreme Court agreed with this, emphasising that state organs are mandated to uphold national values, human dignity, equity, inclusiveness, human rights, and non-discrimination and protection of the marginalised. Freedom of association is vital to the functioning of any democratic society; it is therefore inherent to everyone, irrespective of their views/opinions.

Conclusion

The appeal was dismissed, allowing the registration. The Court, however, did not delve into legalising or decriminalising same-sex marriages but focused on freedom of association for the LGBTQI community.

Significance

The decision of the Court potentially paved the way for further recognition and protection of LGBTQI rights in other spheres of life, including employment, healthcare, and education. This decision contributes to social progress by fostering inclusivity, challenging stereotypes, and encouraging a more accepting and diverse society. It sends a message to the world about Kenya's commitment to human rights and equality. The recognition of the right of freedom of association is a stepping stone to analysing their sexual and reproductive health issues, including gender identity, and addressing and implementing strategies that need to exist.

Fox Oywelowo Odoi, Prof. Sylvia
Tamale, Rutaro Robert, Bishop
James Lubega Banda & 18 Others v.
Attorney General & 3 Others,
Consolidated Constitutional
Petition Nos. 14, 15, 16 & 85 of 2023.



Summary of facts

In 2023, the Parliament of Uganda passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act. The Act criminalised homosexuality, its recognition, promotion, financing and normalisation. As soon as the President of Uganda assented to the Anti-Homosexuality law on 26 May 2023, four Constitutional Petitions were filed in the Constitutional Court by a total of 22 private citizens and human rights activists challenging virtually all the seventeen sections of the Anti-Homosexuality Act for their alleged contravention of human rights and freedoms that are guaranteed under the Uganda Constitution, and international human rights instruments to which Uganda is a party.

The petitions were opposed by the Attorney General of Uganda & 3 others. The court benefitted from an amicus brief filed by the Secretariat of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/ AIDS (UNAIDS).

Issues

Whether all the seventeen (17) sections of the Anti-Homosexuality Act, of 2023 are inconsistent with the right to equality, dignity, health, privacy, freedom of speech, expression, thought, conscience, belief, religion and freedom from discrimination as guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and international instruments that Uganda is a party to.

Analysis and determination

In arriving at a decision, the court held that the Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2023 complies with articles 2(1), 21, 23, 29, 32, 38, 40, 43, 89(1), 92 and 93 of the Constitution of Uganda, except sections 3(2)(c), 9, 11(2)(d) and 14 of the said Act that contravenes the Constitution of Uganda. The impugned sections criminalise the letting of premises for

use of homosexual purposes, the failure by anyone to report acts of homosexuality to the Police, and the engagement in acts of homosexuality by anyone which results in the other person contracting a terminal illness like HIV/AIDS.

The court emphasised Legislation and judicial decisions from sister jurisdictions that have decriminalised consensual homosexuality between adults in private spaces. The court also noted the absence of consensus at the global level regarding non-discrimination-based sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

Furthermore, the court took note of the conflict between individuals' right to self-determination, self-perception and bodily autonomy, on the one hand; and the communal or societal right to social, political and cultural self-determination, calling for a delicate balance between individual autonomy and communal interests. The court

looked at recent developments in the human rights jurisprudence including the decision of the US Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organisation* {11}, where the Court considered the nation's history and traditions, as well as the dictates of democracy and rule of law, to over-rule the broader right to individual autonomy.

The court also considered the uniqueness of Uganda's Constitution which obliges courts of law to take into account the country's sociocultural norms, values and aspirations when resolving any disputes before them. Therefore, the court opined that the Anti-Homosexuality Act, in general, is a reflection of the sociocultural realities of Ugandan society, and was passed by an overwhelming majority of the democratically elected representatives of Ugandan citizens.

Conclusion

The upshot of the judgment was that the consolidated petition substantially failed with orders stating that only Sections 3(2)(c), 9, 11(2)(d) and 14 of the Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2023 failed to pass constitutional muster, and the petition was struck out.

Significance

The court's decision is a dent to the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights of the LGBTI community in Uganda, yet Uganda is a signatory to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol) that obligate it to protect and respect sexual and reproductive health and rights of all its citizens and adopt positive cultural practices for citizens to fully realise the same.

This decision is retrogressive, negatively impacts inclusivity, creates stereotypes and speaks to how sociocultural norms prevail over inherent human rights provided under Chapter 4 of the Ugandan constitution. It sends a message to the world about Uganda's non-commitment to international instruments that it has ratified.





Danielle Visser

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Monthly Presentations to Broaden Horizons on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa

In the heart of the Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa (SRRA) Master's programme at the University of Pretoria, a transformative initiative has been established to nurture a deeper understanding and ignite debate on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) issues amongst the students. Monthly presentations are a key component of this initiative, tailored specifically for the Master's students

enrolled in the SRRA programme at the University of Pretoria.

These presentations aim to broaden the knowledge and perspectives of SRRA Master's students and enhance their grasp of the intricate and essential aspects of SRHR. Through these sessions, students delve into the complexities of SRHR, gaining insights into both the challenges and opportunities that define the field. The presentations feature a diverse array of topics presented by experts in the field, offering SRRA Master's students a holistic and nuanced view of SRHR. Examples include the role of research in advocacy, the protection of indigenous women's reproductive health and rights in regional and international human rights law, context and methods in SRHR research practice in Africa, research with pregnant and parenting adolescents or on ethical issues conducting research on abortion, the influence of social capital in the utilisation of sexual reproductive health services among the youth in Ghana (a community-based cross-sectional study), sex-selection

as a harmful practice, and adopting gender-transformative approaches in advancing women and girls SRHR.

By participating in these monthly presentations, SRRA Master's students are not only expanding their academic understanding but also honing their critical thinking skills and preparing themselves to be future leaders and advocates in the SRHR field. This initiative reflects the Centre for Human Rights (CHR) commitment to providing a comprehensive and enriching educational experience for the students, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to SRHR in Africa and beyond.

On 29 February 2024, Ms Kerigo Odada, a doctoral researcher from the SRRA programme, graced the platform to shed light on, "The role of advocacy in research". Ms. Odada, an esteemed advocate and researcher, delved into the critical interplay between advocacy and research in advancing SRHR in Africa. Her presentation emphasised the significance of advocacy as a

powerful tool to drive change, influence policy, and bridge the gap between research findings and actionable solutions. She highlighted real-world examples where effective advocacy has led to policy reforms, increased funding, and improved access to SRHR services for marginalised communities.

Ms. Odada also underscored the importance of collaborative efforts between researchers, advocates, policymakers, and communities, to ensure that research is not only scientifically sound but also socially relevant and impactful. Her insightful presentation sparked meaningful discussions among students, prompting them to reflect on the role they can play as advocates and researchers in championing SRHR in Africa.

On 27 March 2024, Dr. Sindiso Nkomo, a post-doctoral researcher from the SRRA programme, took the stage to explore the vital topic of, "The protection of indigenous women's reproductive health and rights in regional and international human rights law". Dr Nkomo provided a comprehensive

overview of the legal frameworks and mechanisms that safeguard the reproductive health and rights of indigenous women at both regional and international levels.

Her presentation delved into the challenges faced by indigenous women in Zimbabwe in accessing SRHR services, including discrimination, cultural barriers, and lack of awareness about their rights. Dr. Nkomo emphasised the importance of recognising and respecting the cultural, social, and economic rights of indigenous women, and how regional and international human rights law can be leveraged to protect and promote these rights effectively.

Dr Nkomo's thought-provoking presentation sparked a robust discussion among students, encouraging them to consider the intersectionality of gender, culture, and law in the context of SRHR. Her insights catalysed students to delve deeper into the complexities of indigenous women's reproductive health and rights and explore innovative ways to address the challenges and gaps in existing legal frameworks.

The recent presentations by Ms. Kerigo Odada and Dr. Sindiso Nkomo have enriched the monthly series, offering SRRA Master's students valuable insights into the role of advocacy in research and the protection of indigenous women's reproductive health and rights in human rights law. These sessions have deepened the students' understanding of SRHR issues, inspiring them to think critically, engage in meaningful dialogue, and consider innovative approaches to address the multifaceted challenges facing Africa's diverse populations.

While these presentations have already made a significant impact, there is still more to come. The SRRA programme at the University of Pretoria is committed to continuing this enlightening series with monthly presentations on a wide range of topical issues. By consistently offering these educational opportunities, the SRRA programme of the CHR aims to ensure that SRRA Master's students are well-

equipped to tackle the complex and evolving landscape of SRHR in Africa.

As the series continues to unfold, SRRA Master's students can look forward to further expanding their knowledge, engaging with experts in the field, and contributing to constructive discussions that drive positive change in the realm of SRHR.



Recent Developments

UN Human Rights Council adopts resolution protecting rights of intersex people



**Maryanne Nkechi
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On Thursday, 4 April 2024, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution to protect the rights of intersex people. This novel step is aimed at “combatting discrimination, violence and harmful practices” perpetrated against intersex people. Some of these harmful practices include infanticide and forced medical treatments. The resolution requires the UN’s Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHC) to prepare a report “examining global discriminatory laws and policies, violence and other harmful practices, and root causes, while also addressing best practices, such as legal interventions that will be read at the council’s 60th session, likely in 2025” {12}. The resolution was initiated and led by South Africa, Finland, Australia and Chile and was adopted by 24 countries present.

This resolution is groundbreaking as it marks the evolution of “growing international resolve to address rights violations experienced by people born with variations in their sex characteristics. {13}”

For decades, intersex advocacy groups and human rights organisations have been advocating against medical procedures being conducted on intersex children to normalise their sex to be conforming. Some of these procedures have resulted in scarring and psychological trauma for intersex children. Despite the growing campaign to end medical procedures on intersex children, some parents continue to face persistent pressure from surgeons to carry out these procedures on their children who are too young to partake in the decision-making process {13}. Also, on several occasions, the UN human rights treaty bodies such as UN Committee against Torture, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities; UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; Special

Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences; Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children; Chairperson of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe; and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, End violence and harmful medical practices on intersex children and adults have condemned such medical procedures and have recommended the prohibition of forced or coerced medical interventions that are carried out without full, free, and informed consent {13}.

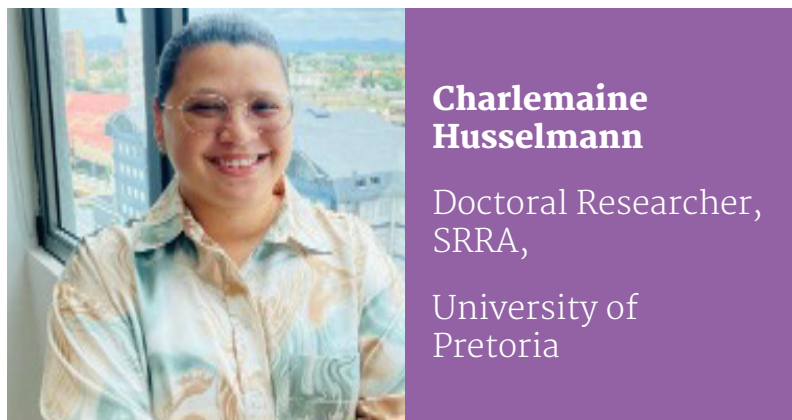
The resolution is an opportunity to correct myths and ensure that intersex children live healthy lives, are free to grow up and make decisions about their bodies.

Resolution on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Intersex Persons in Africa ACHPR/Res.552 (LXXIV) 2023

<https://achpr.au.int/en/adopted-resolutions/resolution-promotion-and-protection-rights-intersex-persons>



Interview



Please tell us your name and what you do.

My name is Charlemaine Husselmann and I am a full-time Project Manager with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Namibia/Angola office. I am currently managing a project that is co-funded by KAS and the European Union aimed at strengthening the participation of women, youth and marginalised communities in democracy. I am also a part-time lecturer at the University of Namibia teaching the fourth year module Sociology of Gender and Sexuality. In addition to my work, I am also an online student at the University of Namibia in my final year pursuing my LLB.

As an alumna of the Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa (SRRA) Master's programme, how would you describe your experience and how has it impacted the work you currently do?

I would describe my experience as one of the best I have had in all my years of study. I had the opportunity to meet great minds in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and also gain a more in-depth understanding of the subject matter I am so passionate about. It has led to me diving deeper into the topics in my work and my studies as the participation in the programme has led to me pursuing my LLB degree to gain a better understanding of the law and how we use it to advocate on issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially on access to abortion as well as access to comprehensive health services for the youth which is my main interest and focus. I also had

the opportunity to meet and make great friends with my classmates from the graduating class of 2019 and to learn from them which is still ongoing today as we keep in touch.

In participating in the programme, the knowledge I gained has shaped how I do my work as a Project Manager and incorporating the materials into my work with KAS as we do work with civil society organisations.

Please tell us about the great work you are doing on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

My current focus and work are on providing capacity building to Namibian civil society organisations to empower them to become greater actors of change in Namibia and work towards advocating for the rights and welfare of Namibian citizens. One of our modules Human Rights and Advocacy will draw heavily on the knowledge I gained as many of

my Namibian people do not know their rights and how to advocate for them, especially on issues of sexuality and reproductive health. We also incorporate such issues in a module titled Women, Gender and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) where we dive into the specific challenges women face and the challenges they face in fully realising their rights.

In my newly appointed part-time work as a lecturer in Sociology of Gender and Sexuality, I hope to share the knowledge I gained with aspiring activists and help shape the knowledge of the youth. Linking their knowledge of the subject matter with that of law and how they can work towards advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Why did you choose to focus on this SRHR issue(s)? What inspired you?

I have also had a passion for SRHR issue(s) since my

participation in the module of Sociology of Gender and Sexuality when I was doing my Bachelor's degree at the University of Namibia. Since graduating with my BA in 2012 I have only grown in my passion for advocating on such issues, pursuing my first master's degree in Gender and Development Studies and then being accepted and completing my second master's degree with the Centre for Human Rights in SRHR. My work with the youth during my time with LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia as a helpline counsellor and then as their Gender Programme Manager only exposed me to the policy and legislative side of such issues. I was able to engage in policy review at regional and national levels on several SRHR issues as well as becoming a community activist in advocating for these issues in my country.

What would you consider to be your greatest achievement?

I would consider my greatest achievement being able to share my knowledge with individuals from my community which leads to them making active changes in their lives. Working with civil society organisations and sharing my knowledge with them has also led to them including advocacy on SRHR issues within their work especially when they do work with the youth.

What are the challenges and risks you face while doing this work?

The greatest challenge I face in my work is the changing of mindsets of community members especially in the more rural areas of Namibia. As a very conservative patriarchal society, it is often a challenge to address issues such as access to abortion on demand and youths' access to contraceptives when much of the moral compass in the country is guided

by culture and Christianity. It is a challenge to have often open dialogues on these issues as they are not viewed as important or essential to the Namibian public as we still operate with several laws from the South African Apartheid era.

The greatest risk I face when doing my work is often the hostility that is shown by the older generation when such issues are brought up. Many older persons in the community become visibly angry and hostile when issues such as access to abortion or access to contraceptives for the youth are brought up as it is viewed as promoting sexual activity.

As a professional in this field, do you think that the information and services provided for SRHR are adequate? Please explain.

No, I do not believe so especially in a country like Namibia with very far spread out places and many individuals are

not reached with information and services. The current legislation and policy environment in Namibia is not as conducive to the advancement of SRHR issues. Furthermore, where attempts are made to advance SRHR issues in the country it is often hindered by the mindset of conservative patriarchal leaders who are still of the belief that to recognise the rights of individuals such as same-sex persons in the country will ruin the moral fabric of the country, as well as to legalise access to abortion on demand.

In your opinion, how can SRHR information and services be improved for your target community? Going forward, what are some of the changes you would like to see?

For starters, there is a need to extend information and services to the most vulnerable and isolated in the Namibian country. As a country with vast spaces between towns and individuals, there is a need to spread outreach activities to

these communities on what SRHR services are available and all information about them. Access to contraceptives is a huge challenge as many women and girls struggle to reach clinics to access such services. Furthermore, sensitisation training of our parliamentarians on these issues is necessary as some of them still hold very conservative views which can be detrimental to the well-being of Namibian citizens especially women, girls and persons from the LGBTI+ community.

Some of the changes that I would like to see an active community engagement on these issues and an understanding of the need for access to key services such as abortion for the health and well-being of pregnant women who are faced with an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy.

Additionally, the repealing of legislation such as the Combating Immoral Practices Act 21 of 1980 and the Abortion and Sterilisation Act 2 of 1975 as examples of legislation that

hinders the advancement of certain sexual and reproductive health services and rights.

I also wish to see a change in how health providers engage with youth on the issue of contraceptives and how to have a healthy sex life as many youths do not know this and engage in risk-taking behaviours due to a lack of knowledge and support because of conservative held views by service providers.

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Digest submission guidelines and format

The Digest will have four feature sections as follows:

Feature articles: This section will provide abridged information about specific SRHR topics or recent court decisions. It will provide explanations behind these happenings while examining potential SRHR implications. The topics and/or case summaries will report facts and provide context and analysis.

Events: This section will provide summaries of important events, activities or meetings on SRHR.

Recent Developments: This section will provide updates on recent developments in SRHR either at the international or regional level. It will project the works of human rights bodies and identify any developments.

Interview pieces: This section will contain interviews conducted with either alumni of the SRRA programme or individuals who are doing great work on SRHR. The interviews will gather insights, opinions and stories that project their work on SRHR. I think we can take this to the end of the Digest and include the guidelines for future contribution

Digest submissions should:

Contribute to contemporary debates or key developments relating to SRHR on the continent, however, comparative analyses with other contexts are also welcome;

Besides critiquing and identifying challenges, forecast the future with reflection on opportunities at local, national, regional and international levels by multiple actors;

They must serve to promote and advocate for SRHR in a critically engaging manner and not simply state, describe or summarise legal principles, case decisions or recent developments;

The contribution should not have already been published in another publication;

The Digest aims to be accessible and understood by a wide audience, including those outside of academia, as such submissions must be written in English, and avoid technical and complex language and legal jargon where possible;

To facilitate our anonymous review process, please provide your full name and present position, institutional affiliation and acknowledgements;

If the article has already been published elsewhere, provide full details, including whether it has been shortened, updated or substantially changed for the SRRA Digest;

For reasons of space, the editors reserve the right to edit and shorten contributions that are too long or to refer them back to authors for shortening;

References and footnotes

- No footnotes are required. Rather try to work explanations into the text.
- Use the abbreviated Harvard style of referencing, for example: “Child abuse is rising (Author 1999:10)” or “According to Author (1999:10), child abuse is rising”.
- Keep references to the absolute minimum – preferably only for publications from which direct quotes have been taken, or for backing up potentially contentious statements.
- Provide a list of the key references at the end of the contribution.
- Feature articles should be no longer than 1500 words
- Case reviews feature articles should be no longer than 1500 words
- Current policy debate and development should be no longer than 1000 words
- Contributions for the events and updates section should be no longer than 1000 words.

All submissions should be sent by email to **maryanne.obiaobaoso@up.ac.za** and **yumba.kakhobwe@up.ac.za**

