



# HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER HRCRC

2019 END OF YEAR REPORT

HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLEX, REV FR KEVIN O'HARA CLOSE,  
OFF HILLTOP ROAD, ABAKALIKI.

[www.hrcrc.ng](http://www.hrcrc.ng)

[info@hrcrc.ng](mailto:info@hrcrc.ng)

Dear Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Fr. Kevin, and other members of the Board,

Compliments of the season and greetings from HRCRC Abakaliki.

This concise report, which builds on the mid-year report, highlights and summarises the year as experienced in and by HRCRC; as well as suggestions and recommendations for growth.

### **Administration**

The centre has continued to maintain the inherited pseudo leadership structure comprising of the Ag. Executive Director and the Heads of Departments. Regular meetings are conveyed to review, evaluate and plan activities and relationships.

Also, there have been refresher courses on our roles and boundaries in the implementation and execution of our mandate, and our in-house mediation and relationships.

Furthermore, we continue to be grateful for the passion and dedication to humanity exhibited by all members of the HRCRC team; this is despite the fact that there have been no remuneration and salary for several years now.

Currently, there are about 10 full time volunteers in HRCRC headquarters. They will be further delineated into their respective departments subsequently.

### **Access to Justice Department**

This department currently has in her employ Barr. Chioma Ikegbunam, Barr. Chukwuemika Udedibor, and Barr Onyedikachi Odi. Whilst Chioma and Chukwuemika completed their NYSC service last year with the center, they were prevailed upon to remain and they have graciously given their time, energy, passion and ingenuity to the department and the center since they agreed to remain without any remuneration. They have had a tremendous impact in building our relationship with the police, the correctional service, as well as the judiciary; all these whilst still participating in mediations and other activities in and by the center. Onyedikachi started volunteering for the center in June, 2019 and Barr. Jude Ogbunkwu still appears for the center during Gaol Deliveries.



This department in 2019 led several advocacies; notably amongst these are that to the new Chief Judge of Ebonyi State, the Prison Comptroller, the Police authorities and have being our major liaison with partner organisations such as the National Human Rights Commission. This department also led several sensitization campaigns to schools with the aim of revitalizing the Child Rights Clubs. Some of these schools include Urban Girls Secondary School, Ebonyi State University Secondary School, and Bishop Otubelu Secondary school.

In the year ending 2019, Access to Justice intervened in 70 retail cases detailed below:

Family Dispute / Domestic Violence	28
Family Dispute / Child Custody	4
Pregnancy / Maintenance	6
Defilement	1
Child Abuse	2
Intimidation	15
Intimidation / Debt	9
Marital Dispute	1
Accident	1
Environmental Disaster	1
Landlord – Tenant	2

Furthermore, there were a total of three Jail Deliveries carried out by the Chief Judge of Ebonyi State in 2019. HRCRC actively participated in all of these, and represented a total of 52 inmates.

### **Women and Children Department**

Women and Children Department is currently Headed by Eva Okafor and she is assisted by Emmanuel Nweke. This department led the drive to reactivate the Child Rights Clubs in schools across the state. This drive included advocacy and sensitization visits to Abakaliki High (Presco) School, Abakaliki, and to Comprehensive Secondary School, Oriuzor, Ezza North. The department also advocated to Ezza North Traditional Rulers Council, Oriuzor

Between January and December 2019, Women and Children intervened in 182 cases. Of these, 101 were successfully resolved, 75 are still on going and 6 were referred to other organisations.

## Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Department

Peacebuilding department is currently headed by Moses Ekeke, who is assisted by Blessing Aluma.

As one of the strategies to actualizing the objectives of the department, and facilitating the easy resolution of her retail cases, many advocacy visits and meetings have been embarked on. The department have made a nine advocacy visits to four traditional rulers of the 3 zones of Ebonyi



State within the period under-review.

Also, the department in collaboration with and support of the centre, have built the capacity of the local branches at *Izzicha, Ounenyimu ishieke, Onueke* amongst others in Conflict Management and Approach to Conflict Resolution. The department maintains a cordial relationship with all the community

leaders and local group members.

In 2019, the department registered 78 new cases, but handled a total number of 159 cases, categorized as follows: Land matters 42, Family dispute/intimidation 78, Landlord/Tenant 17, Debt 22. 121 out of these were resolved while 38 are still ongoing.

## Registry

This department, which is the face of HRCRC is handled by Uche Odah. She welcomes complainants, listens to them, makes initial recommendations, registers cases and assigns them to departments. This department also helps in collating statistical data for the center.

## Immortalising Cyril Anadebe



On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, Rev. Fr. Kevin O'Hara SPS concelebrated a memorial mass with Rev. Fr. Vincent Agumbiade SPS for Cyril Anadebe. During the mass, a plaque was unveiled in the lobby in Cyril's honour and a candle was lighted in his memory.

## Partnerships

HRCRC has continued to uphold her partnership with other organisations and agencies, as well as making new collaborations that have helped enhance our work include media organisations, National Human Rights Commission, The Ebonyi State Police Command, Child Protection Network, and other CSOs in the state. These partnerships have eased some of our activities; especially vis-à-vis the enormous task of the center with no funding.



## Media Campaign

HRCRC has continued to improve on her media campaign with more mention of her activities in online platforms led by the News Agency of Nigerian NAN, and other national news platforms. Also, HRCRC has an expanding reach locally with more publications regularly in People's Guide Newspaper, Citizens Advocate Newspaper and the People's Leader Newspaper. Furthermore, we have strengthened our ties with Radio Nigeria Unity FM, Abakaliki; this partnership, in collaboration with Development Integrity Goal Foundation bred a weekly One Hour Phone-in Program tagged Office of the Citizen. On this program, pressing social issues are discussed by HRCRC and other invited guests. Also, we explore the Human Rights Desk on same radio station to be invited to participate in a radio commentary on any of the Human Rights.



We also constantly update our Facebook page @[HRCRC.Abakaliki](#) with our activities, as well as our website [www.hrcrc.ng](http://www.hrcrc.ng).

## Trainings

As part of activities on the Peaceful 2019 Electioneering in Ebonyi State project, HRCRC carried out several trainings and workshops for various facets of the Ebonyi Society. Details of this is contained in the Project Narrative Report annexed to this report.



Also, in collaboration with National Human Rights Commission, and Youths for Human Rights, HRCRC carried out a one day training on Human Rights and implementation of the just domesticated Administration of Criminal Justice Law for Police Officers of the Ebonyi State Police command. Certificates signed by The State Coordinator NHRC, The Executive Director HRCRC and the

State Director of Youth for Human Rights were presented to participants after the training.

### **International Human Rights Day**



To mark the 2019 International Human Rights Day, HRCRC, in collaboration with National Human Rights Commission, as well as other Human Rights CSOs and media houses in the state had a series of activities which included radio shows and advocacies, and a culmination of a roadwork on December 10 around Abakaliki Metropolis.

### **Branches**

HRCRC branches continue to be one of the center's greatest asset and advantage. Recognising this fact, we have continued to expand the units and branches, paying visits, building their capacity and getting them involved in all our activities.

Also, monthly meetings have continued to hold. However, attendance have continued to dwindle; mostly due to scarce resources; as members have to transport themselves to the headquarters for the meetings.

## Child Safeguarding Workshop

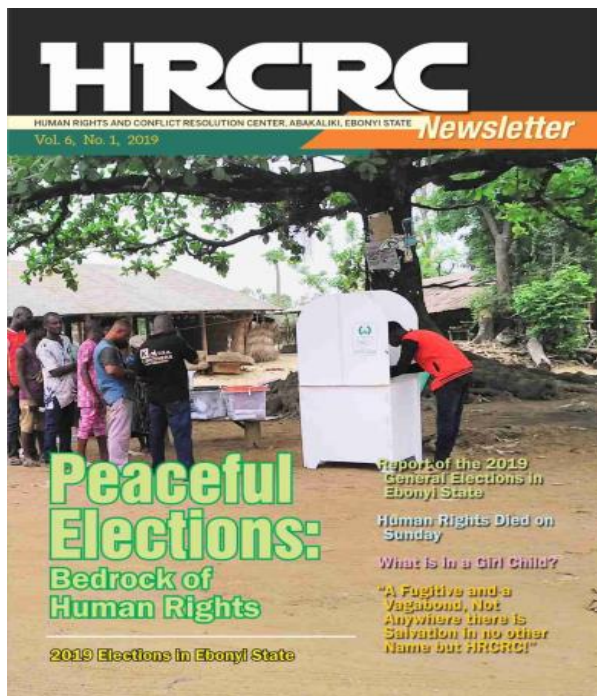
St. Patrick's Missionary Society Child Safeguarding Officer, West Africa District, Mr. Raphael Okusaga was in HRCRC to conduct a child safeguarding workshop and sensitization as part of his duty as the safeguarding of all SPS parishes and projects.



During his visit, a sensitization visit was carried out to the staff and students of Comprehensive High School, Oriuzor, some Traditional Rulers and a workshop on child safeguarding was facilitated by Mr. Okusaga on all HRCRC staff, and executives of all branches.

After the workshop, all participants signed up to the SPS Child Safeguarding policy – staff signing individually and executives signing on behalf of their branches. This document will now be signed by all who wish to volunteer with the center.

## 2019 Newsletter



The HRCRC 2019 Newsletter has been published. Virtual copies are available at <https://hrcrc.ng/2019/11/14/hrcrc-2019-newsletter-is-out/>.

## **Audit**

Due to lack of projects and funding for the center, there has not been any audits done even if it is recommended annually. We therefore undertook to have a 3-year audit done this year to bridge the gap. Copies of the 2019 Audit Report are annexed to this report.

## **Mid-Year Retreat / Communique**



HRCRC conducted a retreat in the middle of the year for staff of the center. The one day engagement which was tagged ‘Reconnecting with the Roots and Vision of HRCRC’ was facilitated by Mr. Christopher Okorie, Member, Board of Trustees and State Coordinator, National Human Rights Commission. At the end of the retreat, a communique was issued

and is annexed to this report.

## **Award**

HRCRC was notified of being awarded for her contributions in promoting peace during the conduct of the last General Elections. The Award presentation will hold sometime next year.

## **Board of Trustees Meeting**

No BoT meeting held in 2019 due to the General Elections inhibiting the first and Fr. Kevin O’Hara was unable to convene the second due to logistical reasons. This is deeply regretted.

## **Challenges**

- The major Challenge confronting the center over the last few years remains **Funding**. Lack of sustainable funding is a great inhibition to the impact HRCRC could have been making. Motivation of staff, especially with no remuneration remains a miracle.
- Most of the cases reported to and handled by the center are from indigent persons. Thus they are unable to fund or assist the necessary intervention / action needed. Thus, with the paucity of funds available, the center has to rely on creative ways to handle such matters in order to remain relevant to the society.
- Inability to enforce our Resolutions renders the center almost toothless.
- Ebonyi State is still largely rural and most cases come from these rural areas. The Cars in the center are old and worn out and the bad roads take their toll on them. Thus, a lot of resources go into trying to keep the cars road worthy.

- The center is in dire need of computers as the three laptop computers currently in the center are old and faulty.
- We are yet to pay for the certificate and sign designating Fr Kevin O'Hara Close.
- No signposts indicating the location of the center. This is especially becoming imperative with the upsurge of Human Rights groups and bodies in Ebonyi State.
- Some parts of the perimeter fence is still down.
- The compound looks untidy and not green; hence the need for lawns and trees.
- Access Road to the office complex is still in a terrible state and all efforts to get government's attention to the road has failed.

#### Exigent Needs

- Vehicles
- A lawn mower to enable landscaping of HRCRC compound and planting of more trees and lawn
- Laptop Computers
- A borehole
- Signposts

#### Recommendations

- The Board of Trustees should take a more proactive interest in the existence of the center by performing their oversight functions.
- The Board of Trustees should front a sustainable source of funding for the center. One idea that could be explored by the board is an annual fund raising ceremony for the center.
- The Corporate Affairs Commission CAC should be notified, as is legally required of the changes in the members of the BoT, as well as other information.
- More capacity building and refresher courses for HRCRC staff.
- One of our greatest advantages and strengths as an organization is our branches all over the state. Whilst we intensify efforts to keep and grow this advantage, it has been strongly suggested that we host a one-day **Branch Summit** for all branch members; as a sort of renewal and recommitment.

- As the center approaches her thirtieth year of existence, it is recommended that a documentary depicting the journey so far, and our success stories be done both for documentation and as part of the center's résumé.

## **Conclusion**

We are continually grateful to Fr Kevin for his continuous support and encouragement. We are also grateful to St. Patrick's Missionary Society and her benefactors; through whose support the work of justice is continued in Ebonyi State. We also thank Irish Aid for their support in the just concluded Peaceful Electioneering Project and we thank you – Esteemed Board of Trustees and especially Mr. Christopher Okorie for his active involvement in the affairs of the Center especially in the year ending.

Warmly,



**George Etamesor**

*Ag. Ex. Director, HRCRC*

27/12/2019