

Human Rights & Conflict Resolution Centre



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2022 End of Year Report
Concise Narrative Report

This Report Concisely presents the activities of HRCRC for the year ending 2022.

Human Rights and Conflicts Resolution Centre HRCRC
23/12/2022



ST PATRICK'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Dear Chairman and members of the Board of Trustees,

Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Ihwo SPS,

St. Patrick's Missionary Society,

Season's Greetings from HRCRC Abakaliki.

This concise report builds on the midyear report circulated earlier in the year; whilst summarizing the activities and initiatives of the year 2022.

INTRODUCTION

2022 was a transition year for HRCRC and indeed for our mother organisation St. Patrick's Missionary Society as a new leadership team both at all levels were elected and appointed. At the regional level, we welcome **Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Ihwo SPS**, the New Regional Leader of the West Africa Region of St. Patrick's Missionary Society, and the new team. We are grateful for their willingness to serve and wish them success, Godspeed and Blessings in this new challenging role. Also, we thank Fr. Kevin O'Hara SPS as he transits to another mission.



ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENTS



HRCRC has tried to maintain the administrative structure of the Centre as depicted by and in the organogram. Still worthy of note is the fact that the staff cum volunteers have not received any salaries or remuneration for over five years. However, their dedication to duty, continuous presence in the office,

attending to cases, and their humane and selfless dedication to the human and peace cause is indeed inspirational.

Thus, current admin structure along with the names of their lead is:

Ag. Executive Director: George Etamesor

Peace Building and Conflict Resolution: Jude Mgbechikwere

Women and Children: Eva Okafor

Access to Justice: Chioma Ikegbunam Udeh Esq

Counselling: Emmanuel Edet

Registry: Uche Odah

RETAIL CASES

As a fallout of past interventions and continuous interventions and collaborations with other organizations, - both government and non-government, HRCRC continues to be a hub of reports of cases ranging from Human Rights abuses from individuals, security agencies and the notorious state security outfit – *ebubeagu*; both by referrals from other organizations or as walk ins.

Notably, this year saw to the addition of a new department to the services of HRCRC – Counselling Department. This is a very remarkable development as HRCRC is currently the only verified psychosocial



service provider with a qualified psychologist in her employ in Ebonyi State. Thus, especially in the areas of Sexual and Gender Based Violence SGBV, HRCRC gets plenty of referrals to help with the trauma.

Furthermore, statistics of reports and responses from survivors indicate that our little activities and sensitizations on the issues of Mental Health and Trauma is pricking the consciousness of individuals to the importance of psychosocial and mental consciousness.

RETAIL CASES AND INTERVENTIONS

In the year ending, HRCRC **Access to Justice Department** intervened directly in a total of **112** Cases.

Family Dispute/ Domestic Violence & Maintenance	50
Children Custody/ Maintenance	4
Pregnancy/ Maintenance	3
Debt/ Intimidation	3
Fraud	1
Rape	3
Landlord/ Tenancy	1
Physical Assault	1
Paternity	1
Malicious damage	1
Maintenance	7

Also, the department intervened in 24 litigations in both criminal and civil courts; as well as 13 inmates awaiting trials in both custodial centers of the Nigerian Correctional Service, Ebonyi State who were granted bail and discharged during Gaol Deliveries and conventional court processes.

Total **112**

HRCRC **Peace Building and Conflicts Resolution Department** intervened directly in **98** case.

Land disputes	65
Intimidation	10
Debts	4
Landlord & Tenant	5
Property	1
Total	98

HRCRC **Women and Children Department** intervened directly in

Family Dispute/Domestic Violence/Maintenance	58
Child Custody	8
Paternity	2
Child Abuse	3
Forced Marriage	1
Rape	1
Property	4
Pregnancy/maintenance	1
Cases carried over from 2021	10
Total	88

The Counselling Department usually gets referrals from other first responding departments as a follow-up to our efforts at providing holistic interventions. It is our hope to intensify mental health sensitization in the coming year to get direct referrals for this department from other organizations.

Thus, HRCRC intervened in a total of **298** cases for the year 2022 directly. This number does not include spontaneous interventions necessitated by exigent issues.

BRANCHES

HRCRC currently have active branches in 16 communities, while 8 others are dormant and



passive, and 3 new ones are in the process of being inaugurated. Due to our inability to organise the branch summit yet, and the economic situation of the State, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain the vigour of branches, their activities and even attendance to State monthly meetings.

We continue to be very grateful for their generosity and willingness to serve. This generosity is evident in the spirit with which agreed simply monthly activities are carried out by all branches in the different communities in the State.

HRCRC is currently in the process of retraining all branches with a new uniform developed training manual. This is with the objective of further building their capacity to confront the challenges of Human Rights abuses and Conflicts; especially in the Ebonyi Volatile sociocultural context.



SOME INITIATIVES

Digitalization

We have continued to improve on our digitalization of our processes, and also reduce our paper use significantly. This is both as a contribution to mitigating the effects of Global Warming, and also making HRCRC more efficient in today's world. Currently we employ audio recordings in our mediation sessions and we are hoping to improve this to audio visual recordings and documentations of processes; for evidential intent and to aid internal review and learnings.

Open Government Partnership OGP



The revival of OGP in Ebonyi has continued unabated. Unlike the former 3 thematic areas aimed particularly at fiscal responsibility, HRCRC was able to advocate for a fourth thematic area – Peace building and Conflict Management; this is with

the peculiarity of violent conflicts in the State. As already reported, HRCRC is a member of the OGP Steering Committee in the State, and also the Lead Organisation of this New Thematic Area.

Ebonyi Civil Society Network / Situation Room

As already reported, HRCRC was a frontline organisation in the forming of a Civil Society Coalition in Ebonyi State. Thus we are the only permanent member of the coalition leadership as the host, and HRCRC also serves as the secretariat of the coalition.

The Network is now formally registered with the state Ministry of Women Affairs and



Social Development as Ebonyi State Situation Room, and in the process of registration with the CAC.

Ebubeagu Menace

The abuses and threats of the State owned Militia group – Ebubeagu continues to threaten the peace of the state. The idea of arming known individuals belonging to various cult groups and outlaws, without any formal or informal or adequate training is alarming; especially in the backdrop of this political season. The negative effects are already apparent.

The state government claims that the group were legally set up. However, discreet investigation by HRCRC reveals that there is no Law in the State Setting up the group. Thus, HRCRC has formally written to the State's Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, The Speaker of the Ebonyi State House of Assembly and the Clerk of the Ebonyi State House of Assembly; requesting for the law setting up Ebubeagu. We are yet to receive any response or acknowledgment. We intend to go to court in the coming year to challenge the legal existence of this group.



INEC Collaboration



As Elections approach, HRCRC is partnering with INEC on Voter Education. We are in charge Sensitizing Izzi Local Government Area of the state. Also, in collaboration with other organisations, HRCRC is

promoting a campaign on Vote not Fight, Election No be War in the state, and particularly coordinating the campaign in Ebonyi North Senatorial Zone of the State. So far, we have had media engagements on the above subjects, and engagements with major stakeholders including INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner, the Police, Political Actors, Persons with Disability, amongst others.

Internal Policies and Capacity Building

HRCRC has continued to provide both in-house and external capacity buildings for staff and volunteers to make us more efficient in our interventions. Some of these include trainings and meetings in Sexual and Gender Based Violence SGBV, Budgetary Processes and Fiscal Responsibility, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion GESI, amongst others.

An output of these capacity buildings is a review of known existing policies and development of new ones. The process is ongoing with our GESI Policy, Child Safeguarding Policy, Recruitment Policy, Branch Manual, etc. These are subject to verification and ratification of the Board.



Odomoke Land

The half plot of land gifted HRCRC is now subject to litigation as the earlier reported claimant proceeded to customary court to challenge ownership. However, as the case proceeds, the community leadership is still on our side – insisting that the land was gifted HRCRC by the community.



Other initiatives include our collaborations with other organisations to carry out workshops for school students in Human Rights and Peace Building, for other organisations in Trauma Consciousness and Counselling,

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A very urgent change to the Members of the Board of Trustees.
- Two SPS members to be members of the new constituted board.
- Update of all CAC records accordingly.
- Renewal of Bank accounts.
- Registration for EFCC SCMUL, TIN, and others.
- More oversight from the board.
- Annual Fund Raising Dinner / Event organised by the BoT to fund activities for the year.

CONCLUSION

We are continuously grateful to St. Patrick's Missionary Society and her benefactors; through whose support the work of justice and peace is continued in Ebonyi State through the auspices of HRCRC. We thank the new leadership of the society both at the Central and at the Regional level. We are grateful to Fr. Emmanuel Ihwo SPS and his team for the enormous support they have shown to HRCRC since assuming office. And, we thank you – Esteemed members of the Board of Trustees for your continued support for HRCRC.

We pray and look forward to a more engaging and productive year 2023

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Warmly,

George Etamesor

Ag. Ex. Director, HRCRC

23/12/2022

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