

TANZANIA WOMEN JUDGES ASSOCIATION (TAWJA).

A SHORT PROFILE OF TAWJA ACTIVITIES.



BACKGROUND

TAWJA is a professional association of women judges and magistrates of all levels in the Judiciary of Tanzania. It was formed in 2000. Under the Constitution of TAWJA, the word *judge* includes magistrate. TAWJA is, nonetheless, a voluntary, charitable organisation so women judges are free to join it by paying membership fees. At the moment all the women Court of Appeal and High Court justices are TAWJA members. Women registrars, resident, district and primary court magistrates have joined the association in large numbers.

The office bearers of TAWJA comprise of a chairperson, vice chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer who are elected by the members biennially. These officers constitute the Executive Committee of the Association.

TAWJA specializes in disseminating human rights knowledge and skills to judicial officers as part of continued judicial education. The training programs are prepared and conducted by qualified trainers who successfully completed a training of trainer's course designed by Mrs Anne Goldstein, the Director of Training of the International Association of Women Judges. As of now, TAWJA has 20 trained trainers.

The Executive Committee and the trainers constitute TAWJA's Task Force. The Task Force is responsible for organising and conducting seminars for judicial officers, law enforcers and other stakeholders.

Vision: TAWJA's vision is equal justice for all without discrimination.

Mission: (1) TAWJA's mission is to sensitize the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and all peoples to promote, and enforce human rights for every person irrespective of his or her status, colour, race, religion, political affiliation or gender.

(2) Combat violence against women, children and other Vulnerable persons.

TAWJA's ACTIVITIES:

(a) Years 2001 to 2003: Jurisprudence of Equality Project (JEP).

- ✚ The International Association of Women Judges jointly with the Tanzania Women Judges Association, and with the generous sponsorship of the United Nations Women Organisation (UNIFEM), now UN WOMEN, initiated and executed the Jurisprudence of Equality Program.
- ✚ Under JEP, six women judges attended the International Association of Women Judges Training of Trainers Workshop at Entebbe, Uganda. The TOT was also attended by women judges from East, Central and South Africa.
- ✚ After the TOT, the trainers trained judges, magistrates and law enforcers in Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Arusha and Moshi High Court Zones. 230 judicial officers and law enforcers acquired knowledge and skills in International, regional and domestic human rights laws through JEP Seminars.
- ✚ The two year JEP project which was funded by UNIFEM expired in 2003 with the conduct of Follow Up Workshops at Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and Arusha to enable the trained participants to discuss and demonstrate court decisions they had made by applying the human rights knowledge and skills disseminated to them during the JEP Seminars.
- ✚ After the expiry of the UNIFEM sponsorship for JEP, the Judiciary of Tanzania in appreciation of the judicial education imparted to the participant judicial officers under JEP, funded two human rights/HIV/AIDS seminars in Dar es salaam and Mwanza High Court Zones and two other seminars at the Institute of Judicial Administration at Lushoto, Tanga between 2005 – 2007.

In 2006 the Rapid Envelope Fund (REF)

- ✚ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) funded a Human Rights/HIV/AIDS Seminar for Judicial officers in Dar es Salaam. The REF funded seminar was conducted by TAWJA, jointly with the Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA) as the implementing organisation. Thirty judicial officers benefited from the REF Human Rights/HIV/AIDS Seminar.

(b) Year 2007 to 2009: The Jurisprudence on the Ground

(JOG) Project:

- ✚ JOG was essentially an extension of JEP but under a different name because donors have different names.
- ✚ JOG was kindly funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) through the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) as the implementing organisation.
- ✚ 56 Judges and Magistrates in Dodoma and Ruvuma High Court Zones participated in the JOG Seminars. The JOG seminars were convened at Dodoma and Songea.
- ✚ **UNIFEM** funded one JOG seminar at Kigoma for 28 Judges and Magistrates from Mwanza, Tabora, and Rukwa High Court Zones. Two activists from **UNIFEM**, Tanzania participated in the seminar as observers.

TAWJA AND SWAA-T:

- ✚ Under the JOG Program, TAWJA networked with the Society for Women against AIDS in Tanzania (SWAA-T) which has Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in twenty districts in the country.
- ✚ TAWJA conducted a Training of Trainers Workshop at Arusha for SWAA-T's CBOs' leaders to empower them to train other leaders and members in human rights laws with a view to disseminate elementary human rights knowledge and skills to grass root level.
- ✚ To reach grass root levels of the community, TAWJA printed pamphlets on the Law of Marriage, domestic violence, inheritance, how to write a will, simple litigation and complaints against Judges and Magistrates with a view to demystify the court process and to facilitate free access to the courts of law.
- ✚ The pamphlets have assisted widows, widowers, orphans and other disadvantaged persons to know, how, when and where to file their cases in the event of misappropriation of estates, in custody of children disputes, breach of basic human rights, and in matters pertaining to divorce, distribution of matrimonial properties upon dissolution of irreparably broken down marriages, et cetera.

UN WOMEN, TANZANIA:

Training of Trainers Workshop for Judges: 21st March to 1st April, 2011

To enable more Judges and Magistrates to get human rights training under JOG, the United Nations Women Organisation (UN WOMEN) funded a Trainers Workshop

(TOT) for 14 judges, and Registrars at Arusha. The 14 learned TOT trainers increased the number of TAWJA's trainers from six to twenty thereby expanding the training capacity of TAWJA to cope with the high demand of training judicial officers, law enforcers and other human rights activists in international, regional and national human rights laws particularly those pertaining to women, children and other vulnerable persons in order to promote and protect equal rights, equality before the law, and equality of each and every person without discrimination.

(C) Year 2009 to 2011: The Millennium Development Goal 3 Project: (MDG 3 Project).

The MDG3 Project is generously funded by the Royal Government of the Netherland for Tanzania, Bosnia Herzegovina and the Philippines.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were developed out of the eight chapters of the United Nations Millennium Declarations signed in September, 2000.

The 8 goals are:-

- 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,**
- 2. Achieve universal primary education.**
- 3. Promote gender equality and empower women.**
- 4. Reduce child mortality.**
- 5. Improve maternal health.**
- 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.**
- 7. Ensure environmental sustainability.**
- 8. Develop a global partnership for development.**

✚ The International Association of Women Judges is the implementing organization of the MDG3 Project in the three aforementioned countries, including Tanzania.

✚ The IAWJ has coined a name for the Project. It is called Stopping Sexual Exploitation by Authority (Sextortion).

✚ In March this year, TAWJA conducted MDG3 Sextortion Seminars for judges and magistrates in Arusha, Mtwara and Sumbawanga to disseminate human rights knowledge and skills particularly those relating to sexual abuse and exploitation by authority. The goal was to sensitize judicial officers to protect and promote human rights especially human dignity and respect in public institutions. 83 judges, magistrates and law enforcers participated in these seminars.

- ✚ In May this year, TAWJA will conduct 3 MDG3 Sextortion seminars at the Institute of Judicial Administration in Lushoto, Tanga for 120 Second Year Diploma in Law students most of who are primary court magistrate trainees.

CHALLENGES.

1. TAWJA needs to urgently build her training capacity by setting up an independent office, engage a part time program officer who will oversee research and data collection by at least two part time research assistants, and a part time secretary/administrative assistant.
2. Research and data collection will enable TAWJA to compile/translate landmark human rights decisions for circulation within the judiciary and in other jurisdictions to improve the quality of administering justice in our country and elsewhere in the world with a view to attain equal justice, peace and stability from the family to national and international levels.
3. Since TAWJA expects to host the 12th Biennial IAWJ Conference in May 2014, the Program officer and her staff will be vital links in preparing for the said World Assembly of Women Judges. As of now IAWJ has over 4,000 women judges in 102 countries in Africa, North America, Canada, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and South America.
4. As the world has now become a small village accessible by internet, TAWJA needs to build the capacity of her members and office workers so that they can access and post cases, data and other details on TAWJA's website, as well as to be able to access IAWJ and other members countries' websites to keep abreast with the development of human rights knowledge, skills and other international and regional legal matters affecting women, children and human race. TAWJA recognizes that to cause or bring change in the realm of social justice, one has to have correct information, knowledge and skills for resolving disputes, creating awareness and mobilizing human and other resources.

CONCLUSION.

TAWJA sincerely appreciates the moral and material resources she has obtained from UN WOMEN, Tanzania. In the same breath, TAWJA looks forward to collaborating with IAWJ and UN WOMEN, Tanzania to promote equality, equal rights, and to eradicate violence against women and vulnerable persons. Furthermore, TAWJA will continue to cooperate with women judges in the world with determination to promote understanding, good will, peace and stability in Tanzania and in the world.

In this regard, TAWJA requests UN WOMEN, Tanzania and stakeholders interested in promoting and protecting human rights especially women and child rights,

to support TAWJA's budget proposals up May, 2014 and beyond which proposals were submitted by TAWJA's treasurer, Katarina Revocati.

I humbly beg to submit.

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